

Enrique's Journey: Three Kinds of Context

Roger Rouse

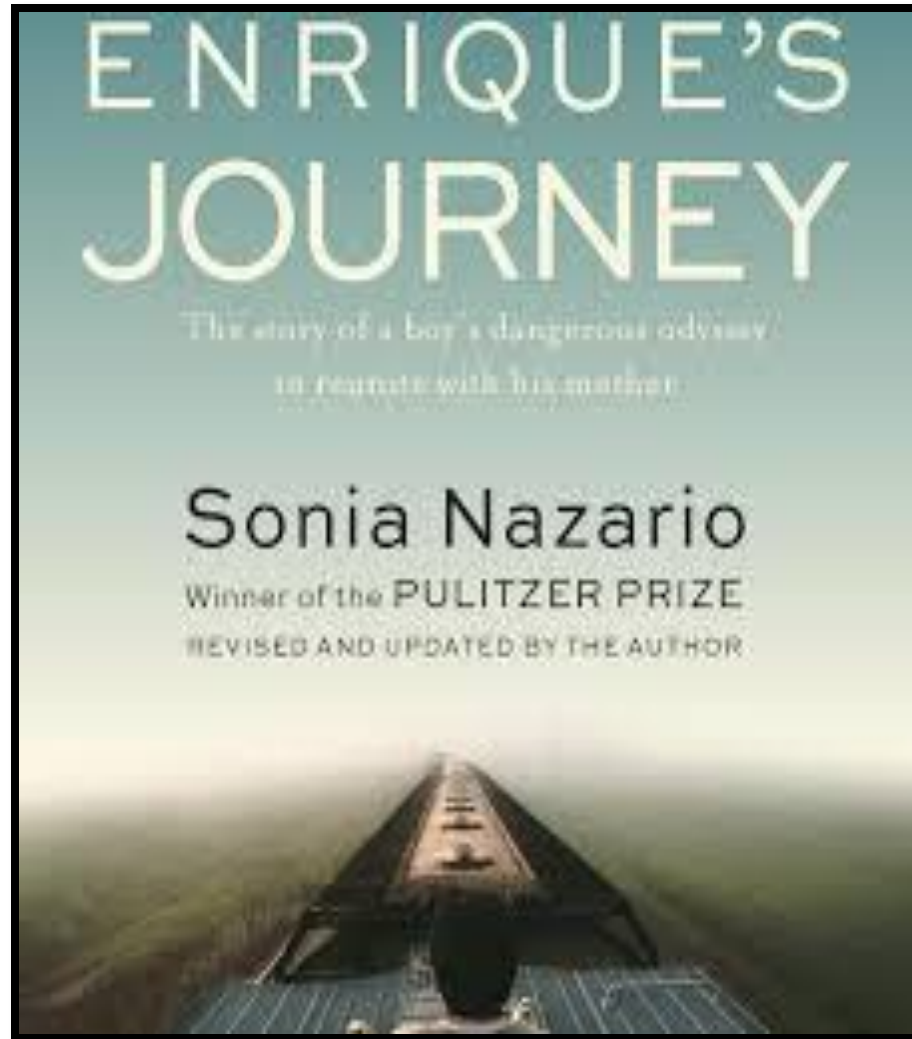
March 3, 2016

(expanded and updated 3.4.16)

I: The Immediate Context for Readers

II: The Familial Context

III: The Broader Context



Originally published 2006; our edition 2014
Research 2000-2013



I: The Immediate Context for Readers



The Guardian, July 12, 2014

Rio Grande border to US sees 57,000 young migrants in nine months

Surge in number of unaccompanied children crossing border from Central America poses a humanitarian challenge



Obama warned parents in an interview with ABC News: "Do not send your children to the borders. If they do make it, they'll get sent back. More importantly, they may not make it."

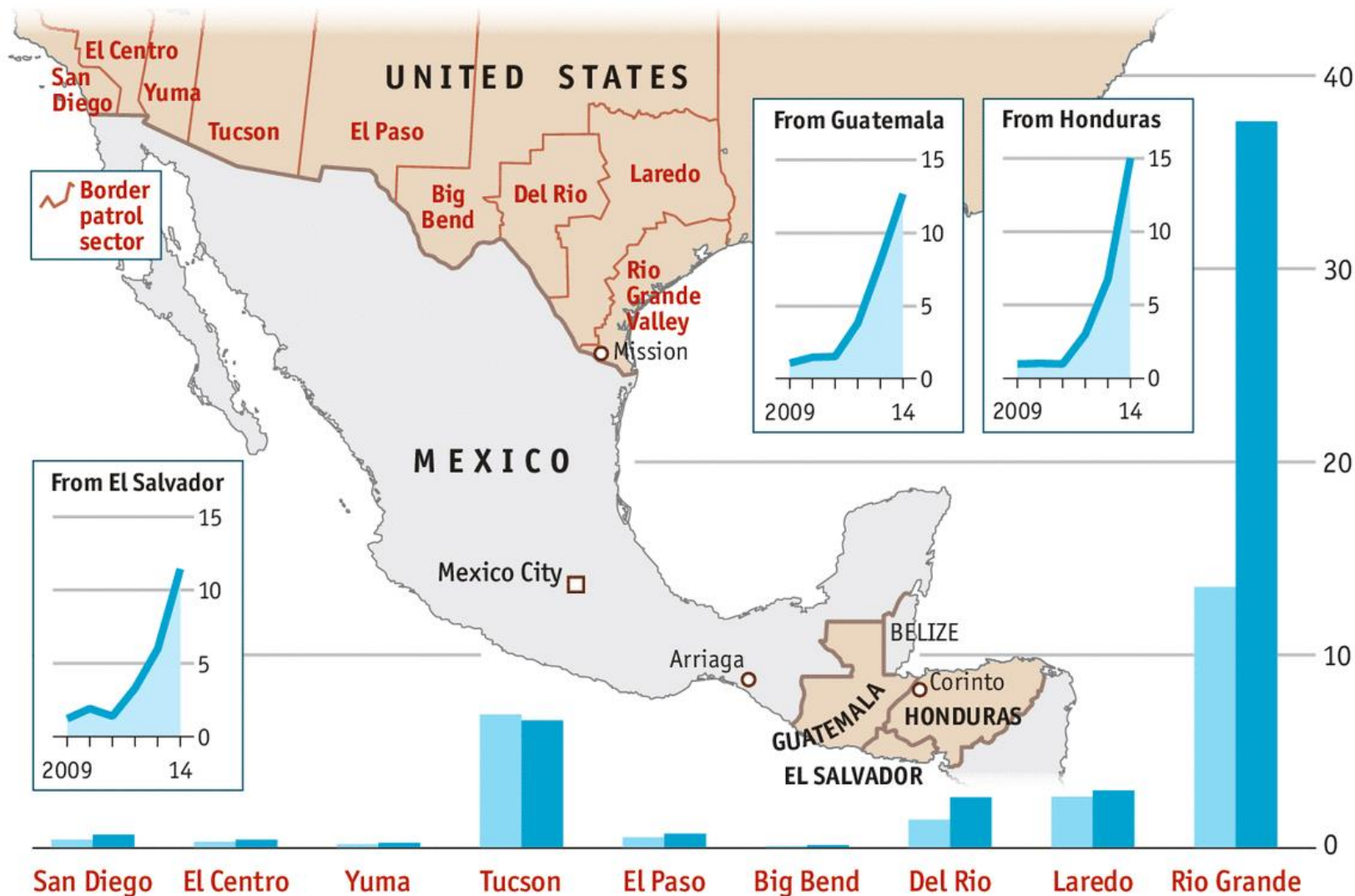
The surge from Central America

Unaccompanied children* caught crossing the US-Mexico border, '000

Fiscal years ending September 30th

2013†

2014†



Source: US Customs and Border Protection

*Under 17-year-olds †October 1st-June 15th

Southwest Border Unaccompanied Children Apprehensions

OCT. 1, 2014 TO NOV. 30, 2014

5,129

OCT. 1, 2015 TO NOV. 30, 2015

10,588



PERCENT CHANGE:

106%

Southwest Border Family Unit Apprehensions

OCT. 1, 2014 TO NOV. 30, 2014

4,577

OCT. 1, 2015 TO NOV. 30, 2015

12,505



PERCENT CHANGE:

173%

An estimated

**11.7 million
Mexicans**

**1.3 million
Salvadorans**

**851,000
Guatemalans
&
491,000
Hondurans**

live in the United States.

**Thus, the
immigration reform
efforts now unfolding have
significant implications for
the region.**

Photo: David McNew / Getty Images

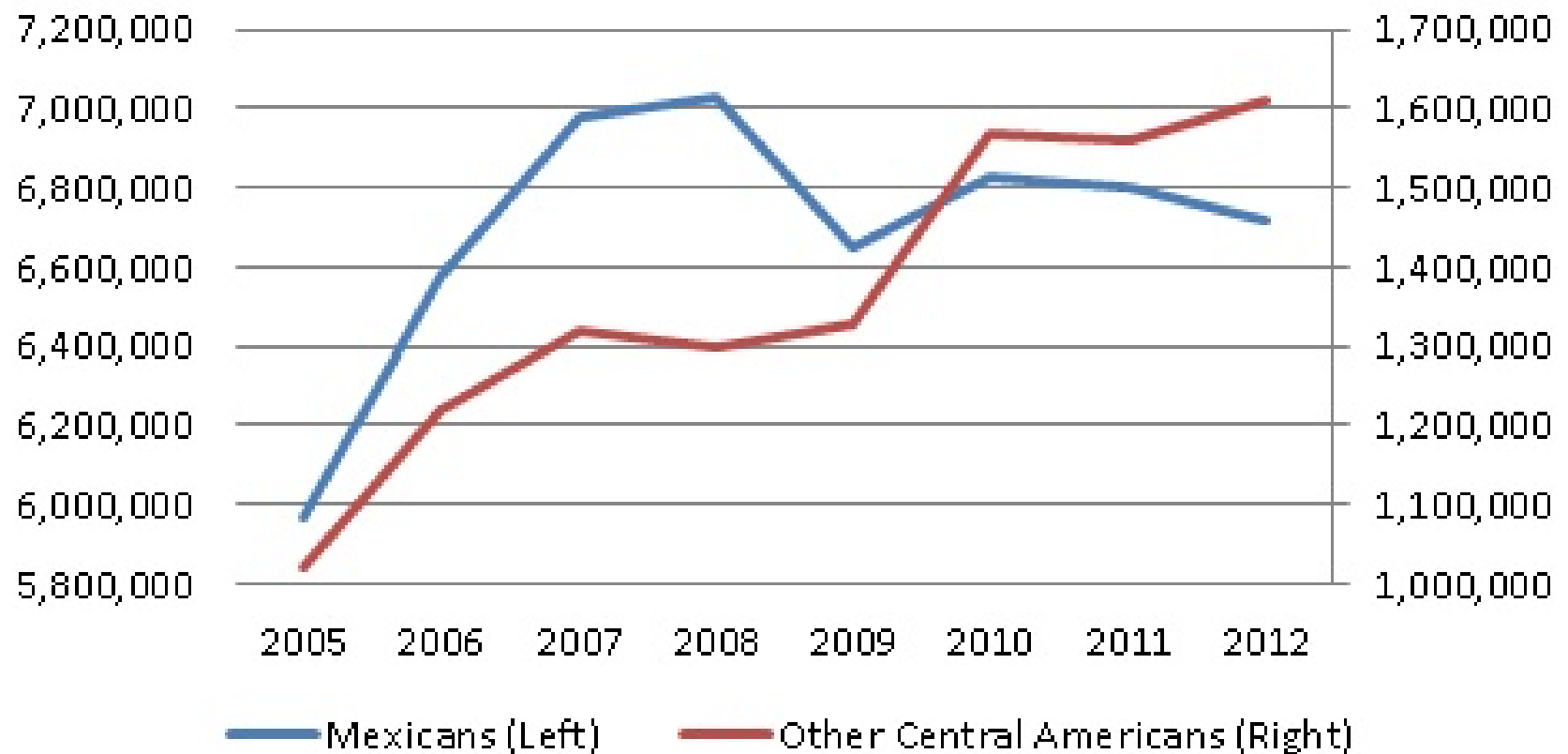
Border Patrol apprehensions

Of the 364,768 illegal immigrants apprehended in 2012, the vast majority came from these countries:

**Apprehensions by nationality,
fiscal year 2012**

Mexico	265,755
Guatemala	35,204
Honduras	30,953
El Salvador	22,158

Stock of Unauthorized Immigrants



Migrant Routes Through Mexico





Gov. responses – mainly emph. militarized deterrence

U.S. gov.

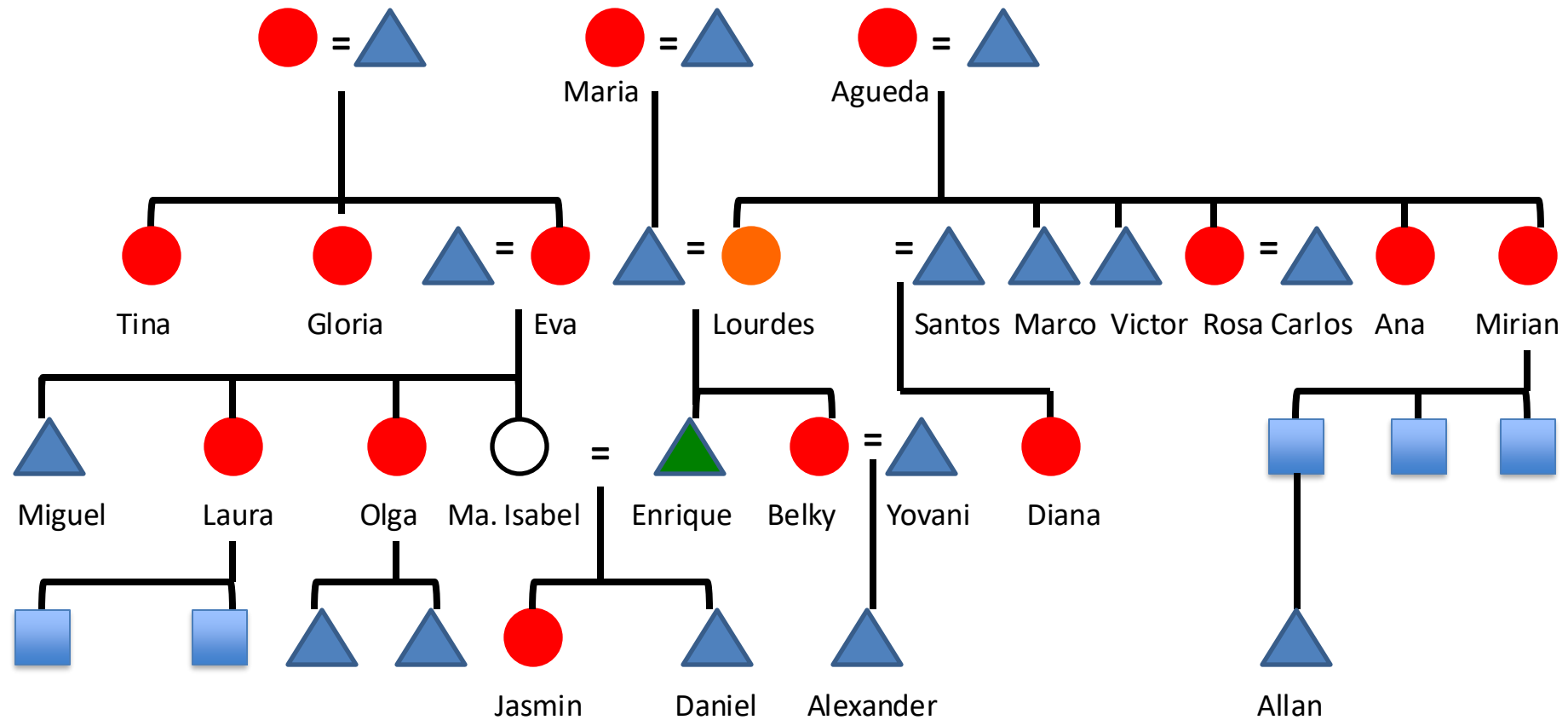
- detention, deportation
- incr. enforcement along its southern border
- getting Mex. gov. to:
 - incr. enforcement along *its* southern border (sending U.S. personnel to help)
 - prevent people crossing *northern* border into U.S.

Mex. gov.

- making it harder to ride trains

II: The Family Context – Enrique & Ma. Isabel's Families

Roger Rouse, 3.3.2016



● = woman; ▲ = man; = = partnered with...

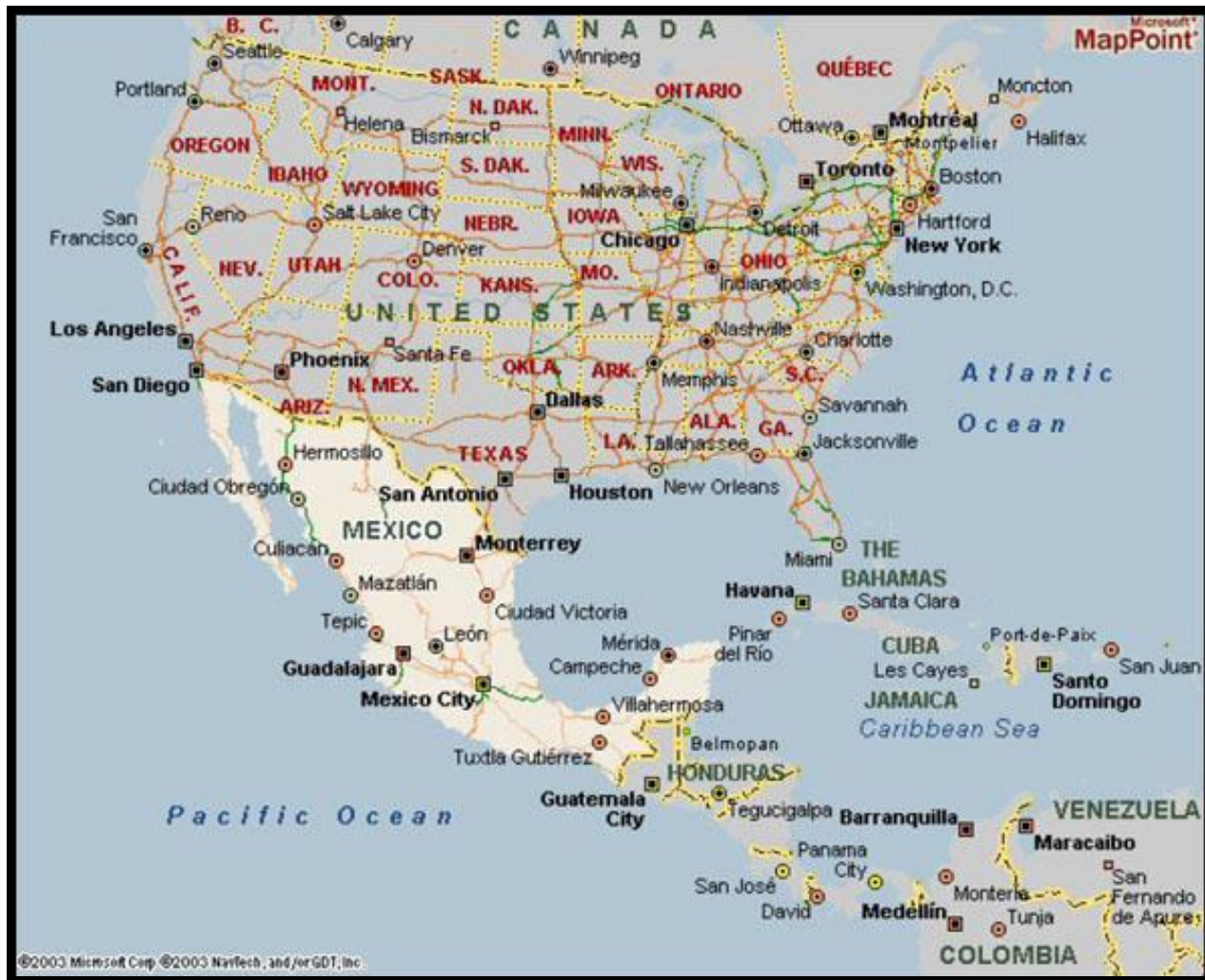
Vertical line = descended from...; horizontal line = sibling of... [siblings not necessarily in birth order from L to R]

III: The Broader Context

(A) Nazario

- core of text – almost nothing
- Afterword – focuses:
 - on indivs., govs./countries
 - on sit. at time of research (2000-2013)
 - for section on U.S., on v. controversial conserv. sources w/o reference to counter arguments

(B) Alternatives?



**Capitalism, imperialism, and migration –
Honduras, Central America, and the U.S.**

Central America's population < 50m



	Country size (sq km)	Population (m)	People per sq km
Belize	22,966	0.36	15.8
Costa Rica	51,100	4.84	94.7
El Salvador	21,041	6.38	303.1
Guatemala	108,889	16.27	149.4
Honduras	112,090	8.43	75.2
Nicaragua	130,370	6.30	48.3
Panama	75,420	4.01	53.1

Sources: IMF WEO April 2015 (Population); CIA World Fact Book (Country Size)

Don't ask what's wrong with Honduras or the individuals born there.

Ask what's wrong with *our relationship* with the working class in Honduras

Ask to what extent problems in Enrique's relationship with Lourdes represent:

- the implosion within intimate relationships
- of problems with the workings of capitalism
- as they've been played out in the part of the capitalist system that links the U.S. to Honduras and the rest of Central America

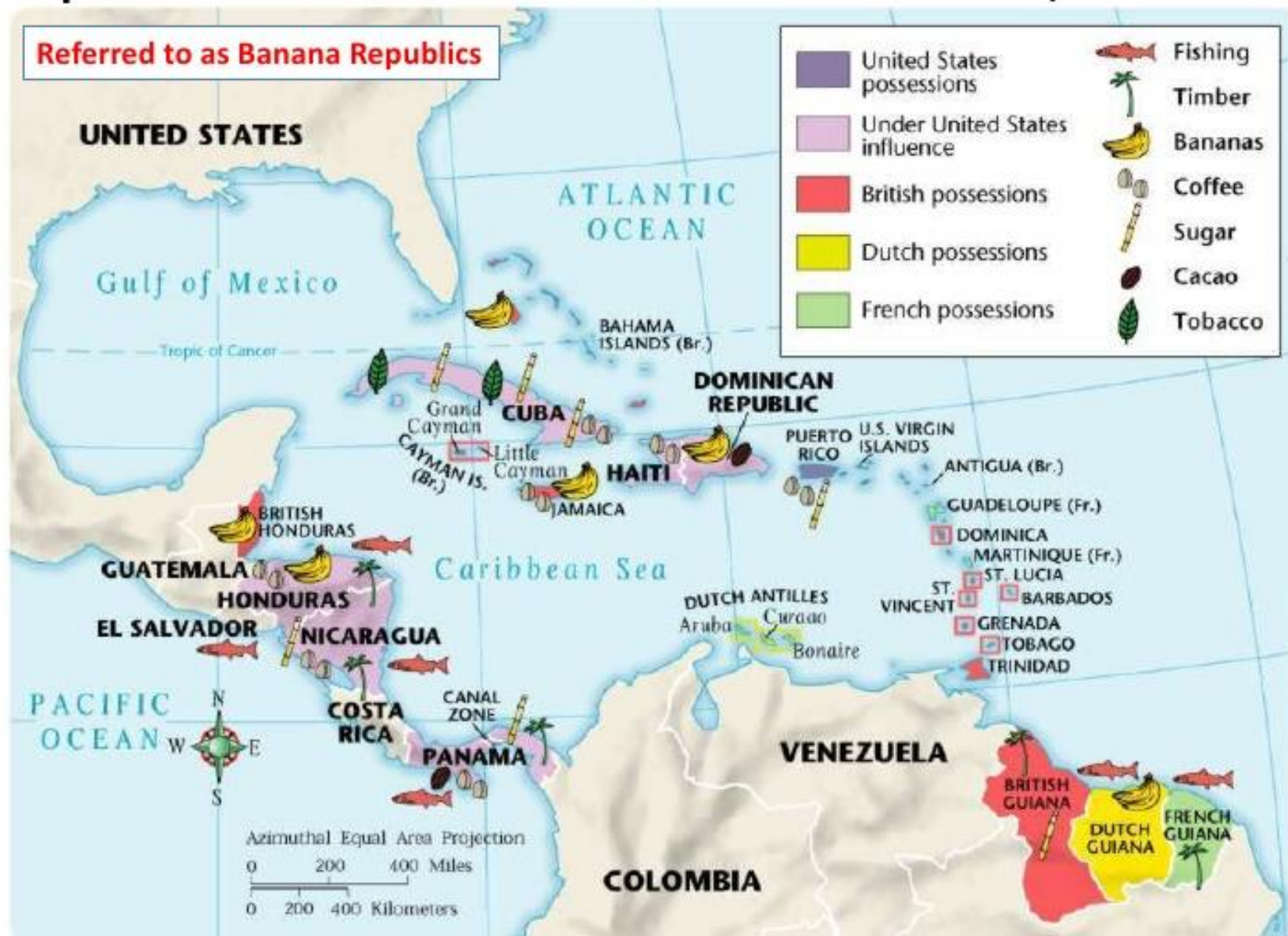
Easy to demonstrate that U.S. imperialism has been and still is a major influence on Honduras (and Central America more generally) – see following slides

Harder to get people to recognize the class dimensions of this process – i.e. that imperialist outcomes the result of:

- powerful capitalists in the U.S.
- acting in cooperation with capitalist elites in Hond. (long dominated by just ten oligarchical families)
- via their disproportionate influence on gov. policies
- to largely suppress popular challenges
- in ways that have harmed workers, esp. in Honduras

Imperialism in the Caribbean and South America, 1898–1917

Referred to as Banana Republics



AMERICAN INVOLVEMENT IN LATIN AMERICA, 1898-1939



HONDURAS
Intervention: 1903, 1907, 1911, 1912, 1919, 1924-1925

THE UNITED FRUIT COMPANY'S CARIBBEAN 'EMPIRE'



United Fruit has principal divisions at the cities and towns named on the map.

INVOLVEMENT IN CENTRAL AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN, 1978-1992



HONDURAS

U.S. supports contra rebels from bases in Honduras, 1981-1990

Recent history of Honduran relations w/U.S.

1960s- late1970s – elite domination via military rule, w/U.S. backing

1980s+ -- in context of revolutions in region, U.S. and supportive elites promote three broad changes:

- expansion and modernization of military
- formal democracy (but limited choices)
- shift to neoliberal capitalism, espec. 1989+; intensified from 2005 with introduction of CAFTA (Central American Free Trade Agreement)

During the 1980s and early 1990s, wars in Central America led to vast numbers of people being killed. The great majority were killed by U.S.-backed governments in Guatemala and El Salvador and the U.S.-backed “contras” fighting the revolutionary and then democratically elected government of Nicaragua.

El Salvador	75,000 killed
Nicaragua	80,000 killed
Guatemala	200,000 killed

U.S. military and economic influence in Honduras was vital in supporting these efforts.

These wars also provoked the first waves of mass migration from Central America to the United States.

See Julie A. Charlip (2011) Central America in Upheaval, in Thomas H. Holloway ed., A Companion to Latin American History.



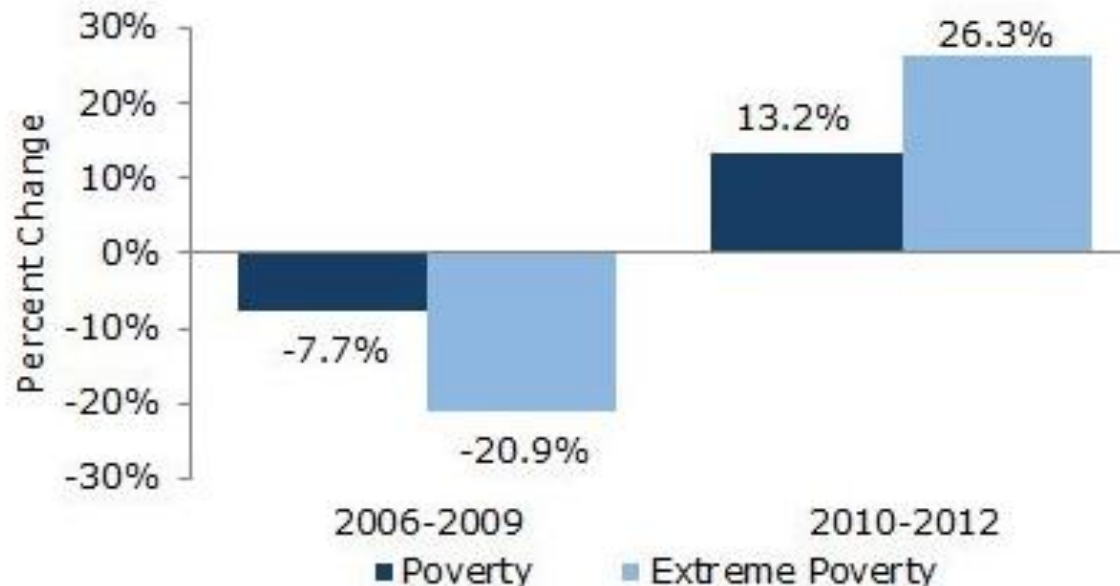
2005 – introd. of CAFTA (Central American Free Trade Agreement), reinforcing neoliberal project in region

2006-2009 – Pres. Zelaya elected in Honduras -- promotes reformist agenda that reverses sig. parts of neoliberal agenda

2009 – overthrown in coup by Hond. elites linked to foreign capital

2009+ -- renewal of neoliberal project – w/full support of U.S. gov. -- v. harmful to most Hondurans

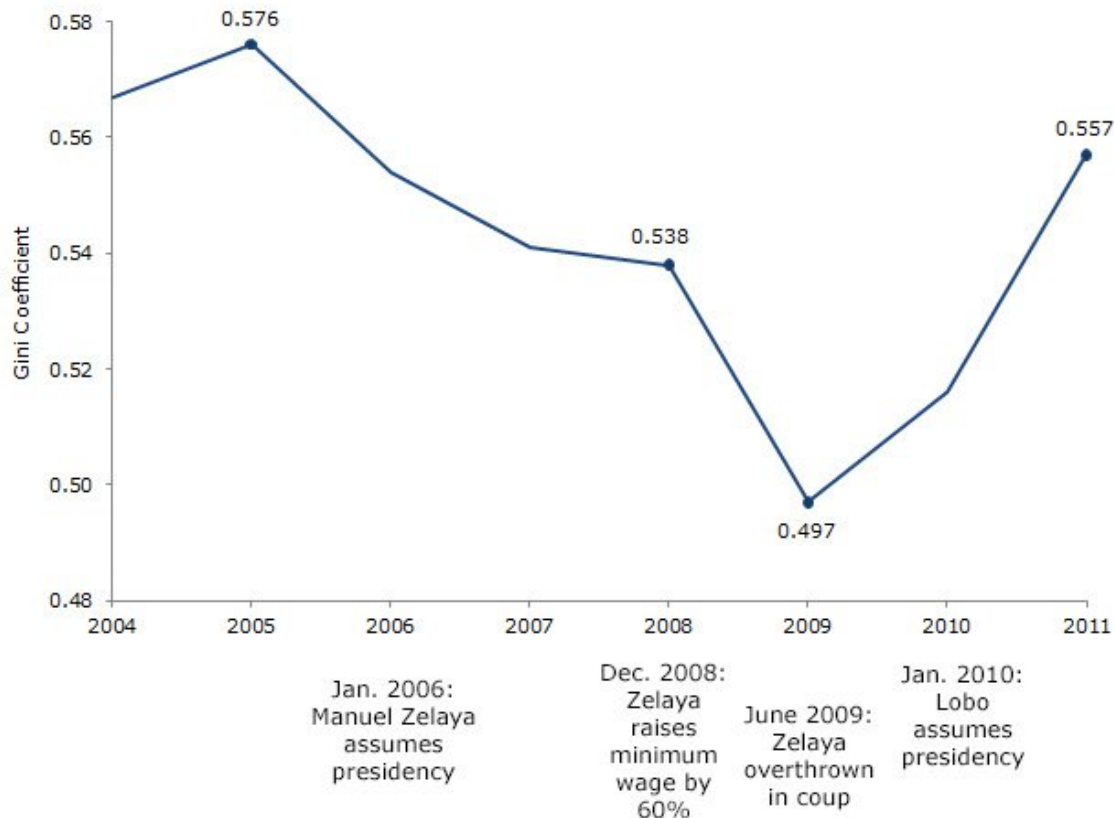
There has been a reversal of Zelaya-era improvements in poverty. During the previous administration social spending increased, it has declined since. Whoever wins the upcoming election will have to place a greater emphasis on addressing this social degradation.



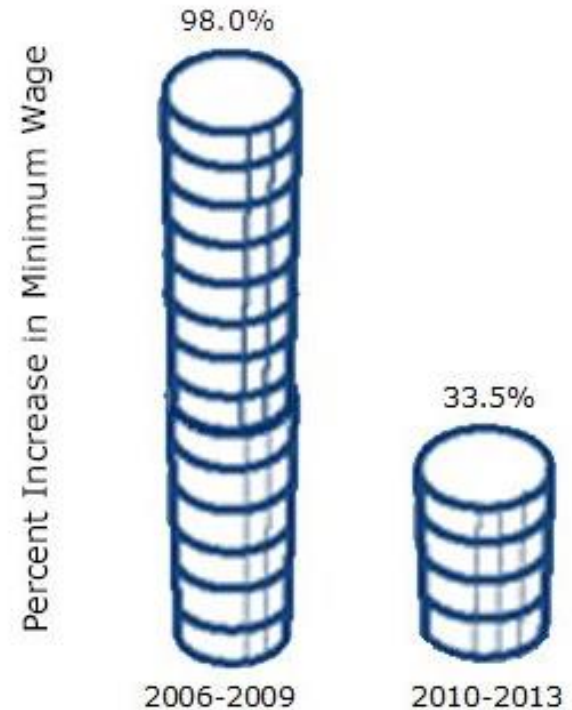
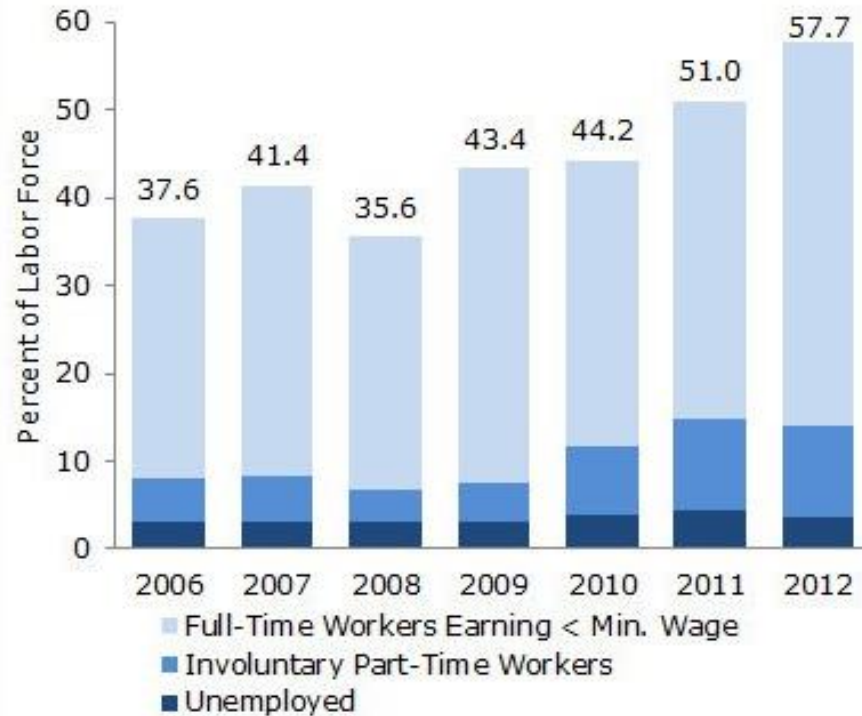
This and subsequent slides from Jake Johnston and Stephan Lefebvre (2013) Honduras Since the Coup: Economic and Social Outcomes. Washington D.C., Center for Economic and Policy Research. <https://cepr.net/documents/publications/Honduras-2013-11-final.pdf>

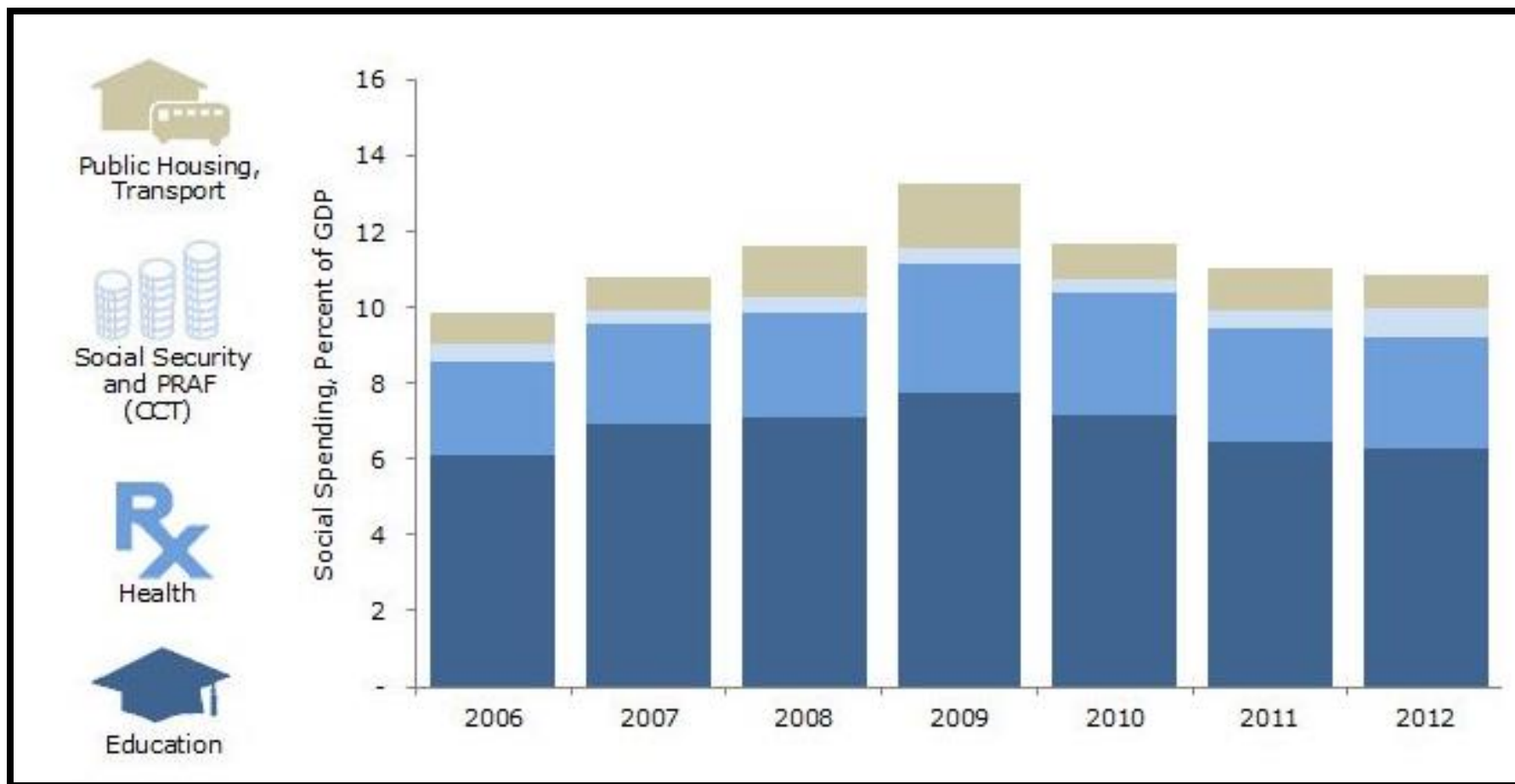
Since the 2009 coup d'état that removed the democratically elected president Manuel Zelaya, inequality, poverty and other social indicators have worsened. Honduras is now the most unequal country in Latin America.

In the two years following the coup, Honduras has experienced a 12.3 percent increase in its gini coefficient, reversing the gains made during the Zelaya administration.



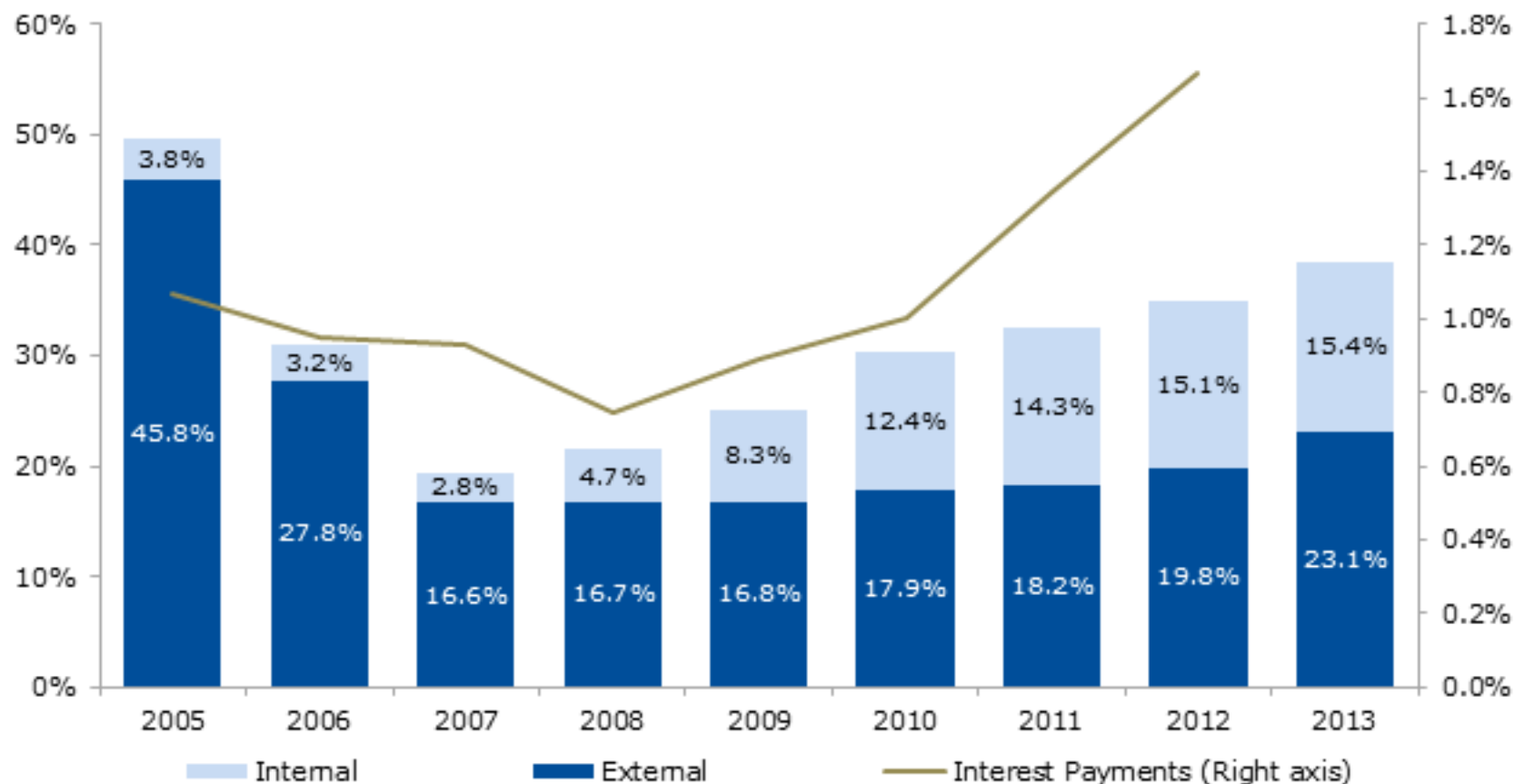
Employment conditions have deteriorated with an increase in involuntarily part time workers and those earning less than the minimum wage. At the same time, wage increases have been much slower in the post-coup years.





Rise and fall of social spending

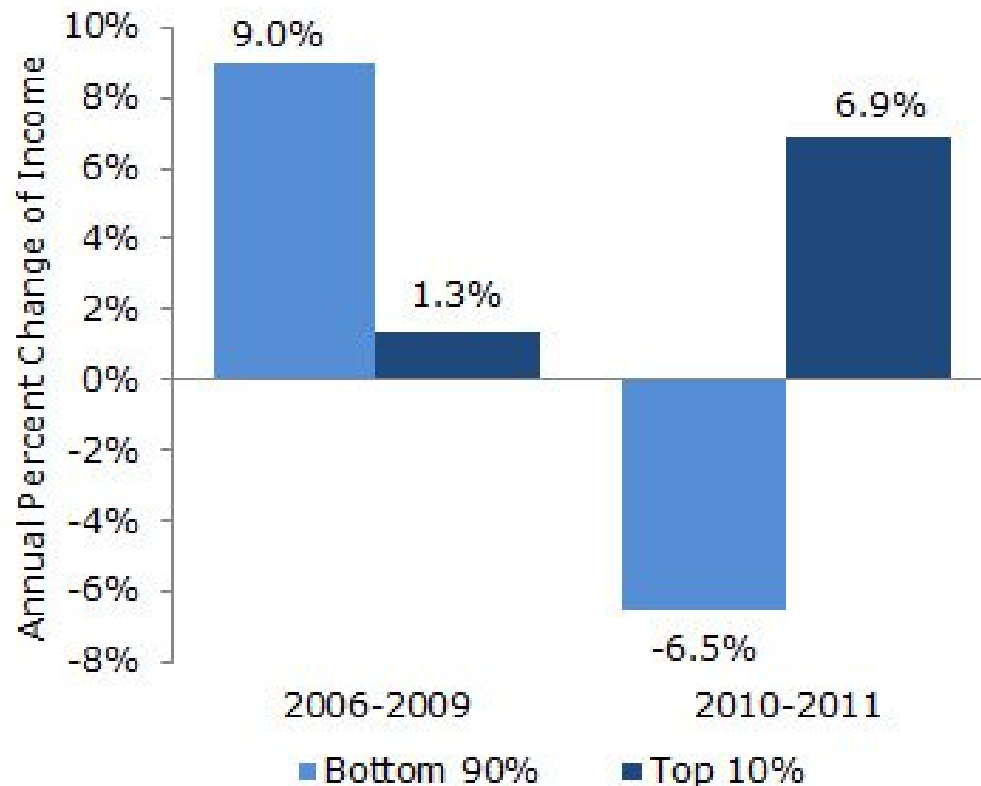
Honduras: Debt and Interest Payments as Percent of GDP



Source: Secretaría de Finanzas, various years.

Renewed emphasis on pleasing foreign bankers

This has resulted in large gains for the top 10 percent of Honduran households, who captured over 100 percent of income gains in 2010 and 2011.



Policies continued after election of Pres. Hernandez in 2013.
Do they represent a brutal kind of class warfare?

Capitalism as a world system

Sig. changes – e.g. since 1970s, growing global dominance of neoliberal capitalism

Sig. continuities – capitalists pursuing profits and power

- class dynamics
- capitalists, workers, intermediate groups
- imperialism

Capitalists and migration

- migration long shaped by imperialism
 - economic considerations
 - reserve armies of labor
 - maintenance and renewal costs
 - political and cultural considerations
 - legitimation – e.g. via scapegoating
 - alliance-making and breaking
(including subsidies to small businesses and professional-managerial workers)
 - shaping conduct of daily lives

Some Recommended Background Materials

Mainly for your own use (see following slides), but some might be helpful with students – e.g.

Dana Frank (2015) Just like old times in Central America. Foreign Policy

<http://foreignpolicy.com/2015/03/09/just-like-old-times-in-central-america-honduras-juan-orlando-hernandez/>

Agus Morales (no date, probably 2014) Crossing Mexico. Medecins sans Frontieres.

<http://exodus.msf.org/en/mexico.html>

Kate Swanson et al (2015) A Year After Obama Declared a “Humanitarian Situation” at the Border, Child Migration Continues. NACLA

<https://nacla.org/news/2015/08/27/year-after-obama-declared-“humanitarian-situation”-border-child-migration-continues>

“Yet Another Victim of the American Dream”: Honduran Migrants Speak Out

<http://lawg.org/component/content/article/81/1507>

David Bacon (2014) Immigrant Labor, Immigrant Rights. NACLA

<https://nacla.org/article/immigrant-labor-immigrant-rights>

Movies: Which Way Home (documentary); Sin Nombre (fiction)

The Economic and Political Situation across Honduras and the U.S.

[Note: The best magazine on US relations with Latin America is NACLA. It's worth checking on a regular basis. It's articles are short and generally quite accessible.]

Dawn Paley (2010) The Honduran Business Elite One Year After the Coup.
NACLA

<https://nacla.org/news/honduran-business-elite-one-year-after-coup>

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/jul/15/honduras-human-rights-war-drugs>

Jake Johnston and Stephan Lefebvre (2013) Honduras Since the Coup: Economic and Social Outcomes. Washington D.C., Center for Economic and Policy Research.

<https://cepr.net/documents/publications/Honduras-2013-11-final.pdf>

Dana Frank (2015) Just like old times in Central America. Foreign Policy

<http://foreignpolicy.com/2015/03/09/just-like-old-times-in-central-america-honduras-juan-orlando-hernandez/>

Some Recent Social Struggles in Honduras and the U.S.

<http://www.theguardian.com/global/2014/jan/07/honduras-dirty-war-clean-energy-palm-oil-biofuels>

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/mar/03/honduras-berta-caceres-murder-environment-activist-human-rights>

<https://www.globalwitness.org/en/press-releases/global-witness-releases-new-data-murder-rate-environmental-and-land-activists-honduras-highest-world/>

<https://www.globalwitness.org/en/press-releases/honduran-hitmen-kill-fifth-indigenous-land-activist-amid-protests-against-mining-and-illegal-logging/>

David Bacon (2014) Immigrant Labor, Immigrant Rights. NACLA
<https://nacla.org/article/immigrant-labor-immigrant-rights>

Migration between Honduras, other parts of Central America, and the U.S.

(See brief articles from The Guardian website from July 2014 to October 2015 on the following slide.)

Kate Swanson et al (2015) A Year After Obama Declared a “Humanitarian Situation” at the Border, Child Migration Continues. NACLA

<https://nacla.org/news/2015/08/27/year-after-obama-declared-humanitarian-situation-border-child-migration-continues>

“Yet Another Victim of the American Dream”: Honduran Migrants Speak Out

<http://lawg.org/component/content/article/81/1507>

These help track the story about Central American migration to the U.S. as it unfolded in 2014 and 2015 amidst the surge in arrivals, especially by children. Check with The Guardian for continuing updates.

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/jul/09/central-america-child-migrants-us-border-crisis>

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/jul/12/rio-grande-border-us-united-states-children-migrants>

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/aug/23/migrants-mexico-train-the-beast-fleeing-poverty>

<http://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2015/oct/12/obama-immigration-deportations-central-america>

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/oct/12/deportation-migrants-flee-honduras-guatemala-salvador>

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/oct/13/mexico-central-american-migrants-journey-crackdown>

Movies

Documentary: Which Way Home

Fiction: Sin Nombre