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In a 2010 *American Sociological Review* article, Andrés Villarreal (hereafter AV) presents evidence of dramatic skin color stratification and indigenous disadvantage in contemporary Mexico based on the 2006 MIT Mexico Panel Study. AV uses regression models to predict educational attainment, occupational status, and household income for Mexicans according to three interviewer-reported color categories. For all of these outcomes, he finds that individuals with the darkest skin tone have the lowest socioeconomic status, followed by those with intermediate skin colors, even after controlling for individual characteristics. AV does us an important service by drawing our attention to the role of skin color in Mexican social stratification, which has generally been denied or overlooked. He also notes the need for more research to address two issues that his data did not allow him to investigate. First, whether the color categories he uses are affected themselves by class (as in “money whitening”). Second, whether socioeconomic status (SES) differences by color are a product of color discrimination in the current generation or the result of class origins, which may capture accumulated disadvantage due to racial discrimination in previous generations.

In this comment, we address these two points and use two innovative datasets that allow us to reanalyze the effect of color and

ethnicity on SES in Mexico and address the data limitations that AV notes. We sought to replicate AV’s analysis on most variables because we believe it is excellent methodologically, but we now have innovative and new data that includes controls for class origins, a more comprehensive definition of indigeneity, and a more objective measure of skin color. Although we find general support for AV’s conclusions about the effect of skin color in the Mexican stratification system, especially in educational attainment, we find that the color categories AV uses are affected by class. Moreover, class origins appear to be more important, and they seem to mitigate some of the inequality that AV attributes to skin color differences. In the case of educational attainment, by controlling for class origins and using more accurate measures of color and indigenous ethnicity, we discover that the magnitude of indigenous and skin color disadvantage is smaller than AV finds. Regarding occupational status, class origins and education largely explain color differences, and color and indigenous status do not

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