



Immigrant Incorporation Touches the Body

How Inequality Runs Much Deeper than Often Thought

HOUSTON, TX, USA, February 20, 2017 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Recent research published in [Social Problems](#), a flagship academic journal of sociology, sheds new insight in thinking about immigrants and their everyday hardships in the United States.

Drawing on three years of participant observations with a West African community in California, Dr. Hana Brown (Wake Forest University) examines how the socialization of immigrant bodies influences their incorporation into U.S. society. Members of the community Dr. Brown focuses on, Liberian immigrants, come from agricultural societies and undergo bodily incorporation – a term used by Dr. Brown to capture the social struggle these Liberian immigrants go through to retrain their bodies to perform everyday physical activities that are taken for granted in the U.S. Bodily incorporation acts as a central concern for how Liberian immigrants carry out their daily lives.

The results of this study demonstrate the importance of the body and the everyday actions which allow individuals to take part and contribute toward American life. For Liberian immigrants, resocializing their body took place while participating in institutions, such as places where they worked. Adherence to U.S. standards of dress and performance reduced the view of immigrants as outsiders, while also adding pressures for immigrants to engage with those standards. Given the agricultural background to which Liberian immigrants were accustomed, they faced obstacles in manually using technologies such as telephones, ATMs, and computers. Incorporating their physical activities to these technology-based standards often led to late fees or being unable to access social services. As a result, Liberian immigrants ended up experiencing economic stresses and burdens which undermined their incorporation to U.S. society.

For further information, please contact Jason Smith at jsm5@gmu.edu. The article appears in the February 2017 issue of *Social Problems* and is entitled, "[Immigrant Bodily Incorporation](#): How the Physical Body Affects Identity, Mobility, and Transnationalism."

Social Problems is the official publication of The Society for the Study of Social Problems and one of the most widely respected and read professional journals in the social sciences. This quarterly journal presents accessible, relevant, and innovative articles that uphold critical perspectives on contemporary social issues. For additional commentary, you can follow the journal on Twitter at [@socprobsjournal](#).

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