



# STRANGERS AT THE GATES

New Immigrants  
in Urban America

EDITED BY

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University of California Press  
Berkeley and Los Angeles, California

University of California Press, Ltd.  
London, England

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Strangers at the gates : new immigrants in urban  
America / edited by Roger Waldinger.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0-520-23092-2 (cloth : alk. paper) —

ISBN 0-520-23093-0 (pbk. : alk. paper)

1. Immigrants—United States—Social  
conditions. 2. Immigrants—United States—  
Economic conditions. 3. Alien labor—United  
States. 4. Cities and towns—United States—

I. Waldinger, Roger David.

JV6475 .S77 2001  
305.9'0691—dc21

2001027085

Printed in the United States of America

08 07 06 05 04 03 02 01  
10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

The paper used in this publication is both acid-free  
and totally chlorine-free (TCF). It meets the mini-  
mum requirements of ANSI/NISO Z39.48-1984  
(R 1997) (*Permanence of Paper*).

חֵזֶר אֲחֶיךָ וְאֲחֶיךָ לֹבְמוֹךְ כִּי־גֵרִים חִיתָם בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם

"The stranger who lives with you shall be to you as one of your citi-  
zens; you shall love him as yourself, for you were strangers in the  
land of Egypt."

Lev. 19:34

To the memory of my grandparents,  
Lola and Maximillian Kessler and Beatrice and Ernst Waldinger

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This book owes its origins to Demetrios Papademetriou, long one of the most thoughtful and knowledgeable figures on the immigration scene. Demetri sought to engage me in a project that was then only a glimmer in his imagination: an international effort to bring together researchers, advocates, and policy makers to increase understanding of immigrants' transformation of the urban regions on which they were converging throughout the world. As anyone who knows Demetri would have predicted, the idea soon became reality; the Metropolis Project, as it is now known, has repeatedly demonstrated the value of the endeavor Demetri initiated. This volume, funded by a generous grant from the Ford Foundation, represents part of the U.S. research contribution to the Metropolis Project. It is a pleasure to express my gratitude to Demetri, for involving me in Metropolis, and to Mary McClymont, vice president of the Ford Foundation, and Taryn Higashi, program officer, for seeing value in this study of new immigrants in urban America.

I am no less grateful to UCLA, my home university, both for its institutional support and for the lively intellectual environment it has provided. This project was initiated when I was director of the Lewis Center for Regional Policy Studies, a unit of UCLA's School for Public Policy and Social Research. I wish to thank Founding Dean Archie Kleingartner and his successor, Dean Barbara Nelson, for their support

of me and of the center. Many thanks also to Margaret Johnson, the center's assistant director, and Belinda Vigil, then the center's administrative analyst, for their dedication and for their assistance on behalf of this project and the many others I carried out while director.

The best part of this project was the intellectual company it entailed. The colleagues I enlisted in writing this book saw value in an effort to coordinate our voices, which meant that we spent considerable time together discussing matters of substance and methodology. I am grateful to them for what they taught me and for their interest and good humor in bringing this project to fruition.

A special word of thanks is needed for my two closest collaborators: Claudia Der-Martirosian and Nelson Lim. In addition to her contribution to this volume, Claudia supervised the overall project, doing so with her customary meticulousness and care, for which I remain most appreciative. Nelson's enthusiasm and expertise never failed to move the project ahead. Thanks also to Vincent Fu, Youxin Huang, and Eric Kostello for their invaluable research assistance.

Naomi Schneider, my editor at the University of California Press, was always encouraging and did much to see this book through to publication. Naomi's authors universally ring her praises, and I now know why.

Without a sabbatical, I would never have found the time for the writing and editing required to finish this book. A year of uninterrupted writing and reflection was an extraordinary privilege, putting me in debt to the taxpayers of California, who ultimately made it possible. I hope the Californians among the readers of this volume will conclude that it indeed merited their support.

Many thanks also to my wife, Hilary, and to my children, Max, Mimi, and Joey, who cheerfully put up with my book-writing preoccupations but correctly reminded me that immigration was not the be-all and end-all of life. I am also grateful to Silvia Reyes, whose assistance contributed immeasurably to keeping our household afloat.

This book is dedicated to the memory of my grandparents, who arrived in the United States as refugees at the very eve of World War II. They were always proud to have become Americans. But they would have been happier if others had been equally fortunate—for they never forgot the disaster that befell those who could not escape.

## Chapter 1

# STRANGERS AT THE GATES

Roger Waldinger

As America enters the twenty-first century, it is clear that the twentieth was the century of immigration. True, the doors closed in the mid-1920s—and for many, especially during the dark days of World War II, they remained fatally shut until it was too late. But even during the heyday of immigration restriction, the back door remained open, which means the Mexican presence also then grew. A temporary migrant farm labor program in 1943—known as the Bracero program—augured the shape of things to come: immigration began growing in the late 1940s, and the path since then has been ever upward, indeed at an ever-steepening slope. By the end of the century, the numbers of newcomers equaled the flow seen at the century's dawn.

Immigration is again transforming the United States—and does so in a particular way, since the newcomers head for urban America. Today's newcomers are far more likely than their native-born counterparts to live in the nation's largest urban regions, making immigration, now as in the past, a quintessentially urban phenomenon.

Thus, the immigrant masses are once again huddling. They are also congregating, as before, in a handful of places. Nonetheless, the new map of immigrant America looks very different from the old. New York still ranks as a premier immigrant destination; likewise, Chicago retains a significant attraction for the foreign-born. But immigration's



center of gravity has decisively shifted south and westward. San Francisco, earlier an immigrant town, remains a magnet for the foreign-born, its pull intensified by the region's vastly greater population. But the capital of today's immigrant America is unquestionably Los Angeles, that ill-defined blob sprawling over five southern California counties. And at the other end of the country, Miami, though a much smaller metropolis than the rest, holds the nation's densest concentration of immigrants; it was the very first to receive the new immigrant tide and is still an entry point of extraordinary magnitude.

The newcomers' tendency to gravitate toward this particular cluster of places affects immigration's impact; it also influences the prospects for immigrant America. The urban centers at the heart of immigrant America have very limited attraction for the native-born, which is why much of the United States has been slow to be touched by the reemergence of mass immigration, the expanded foreign-born population notwithstanding. By the same token, the impact of immigration is magnified in those few places on which the newcomers converge—precisely why established residents of regions such as Miami, Los Angeles, or even New York have been so prone to immigration anxiety. There may well be an irrational side to these allergic responses to immigration, but one should not underestimate the rapidity of the ethnic shifts engendered by immigration and the unsettling effects of these changes. Moreover, one can find plenty of good reasons to think that immigration's effects may not be completely benign. After all, these very largest places earlier welcomed other migrants, most notably African Americans and Puerto Ricans, who started out at the bottom and then lingered there, as did a disheartening number of the migrants' offspring. The advent of a large group of newcomers may spell bad news for those urban residents still at the margins, struggling to move ahead at a time when the changing shape of urban economies puts all less-skilled workers at risk.

Life in the big city scares off the native-born, who, voting with their feet, have been departing the immigrant metropolis for other places, where, as it happens, the foreign-born are not so frequently found.<sup>1</sup> But the metropolis offers something essential to the foreign-born: their friends, kin, and compatriots, whose presence provides most, if not all, of the resources needed to get started. Immigration is a network-driven phenomenon, with newcomers naturally attracted to the places where they have contacts and the buildup of contacts facilitating later moves to the key immigrant centers. The importance of networks explains

why immigration is so geographically channelized: the decisions of *prior* migrants exercise a long-term effect on the options available to those who follow them.<sup>2</sup>

But if immigrants find virtues in congregating together, it is not quite so clear that they have selected the best places. Much of urban America has gone through the wringer over the past half century. Many cities have actually lost population, and manufacturing, long the key to the urban economic base, has been severely hemorrhaging jobs. Still, immigrants have generally stayed away from the least robust urban centers. Los Angeles, Miami, and San Francisco have all been gaining jobs and people during recent decades, despite their ups and downs, most notably the deep slump into which Los Angeles fell during the first half of the 1990s. As for New York and Chicago, although their periods of greatest dynamism belong to history, the economies of these number one and number three urban centers have shown remarkable buoyancy throughout the past several decades.

Each of the top immigrant destinations represents a going enterprise—and how could it be otherwise, since immigrants always move in search of jobs. The potential problem with the continuing attraction of urban centers for the foreign-born lies in the job structure. The economy of today's immigrant metropolis has been completely overhauled. Large urban economies still contain plenty of jobs for people who arrive with few skills and must start at the very bottom. But, relatively speaking, there are far fewer such positions than in the past and the number is continually dwindling. While the same generalization holds for the U.S. economy in general, it applies with particular force to these capitals of immigrant America, whose persistent role in the economic landscape rests on a particularly deep transformation in the ways of making a living. The leading immigrant destinations have shifted heavily to jobs requiring higher skills and education. Although this change does not stop newcomers from finding an entry berth, it may well make it harder for them—or their children—to hew to the path of upward progress followed by earlier immigrants and their descendants. And immigrant concentration is unlikely to make matters any easier, with job and wage competition among immigrants an inevitable side effect of the newcomers' tendency to cluster.

Of course, all of these processes are likely to work themselves out in distinctive ways: the leading immigrant destinations are far from uniform in structure or history; more important, they have come to harbor immigrant populations of very different types. The axes of variation are multi-

ple, involving national-origin composition, the degree of ethnic heterogeneity, and skill makeup, to name just the most important. And it is not simply a matter of East versus West Coast, or older metropolis versus new. Each immigrant destination is in important ways distinct from any other, reflecting both the ways in which geographic and historical particularities shape immigrant flows and the impact of the region's place in the urban hierarchy on the options available to arrivals from abroad.

Thus, this book is an attempt to reckon with the new immigrant America in those places where its presence is most pronounced: the urban regions of Los Angeles, New York, San Francisco, Miami, and Chicago, listed in order of the size of their respective immigrant populations. Though the book touches on aspects related to the impact of immigrants on these regions, its main concern is the issue at the heart of the contemporary immigration debate: can today's newcomers make it?

Many researchers have already weighed in on that question, but no one has yet taken full account of immigration's fundamentally urban aspect. That so many new arrivals come with relatively low skills is a central aspect of today's reality, but other considerations are also key. Of equal importance, immigrants flock to those places where the low-skilled worker—regardless of ethnic background—is in particular trouble. It is for that reason that immigration's urban convergence calls out for special attention.

This book builds on the research of the many scholars who have concerned themselves with the urban dimensions of immigration. Even so, gaping holes in our knowledge base reflect the striking degree to which scholarly attention has been skewed toward some urban regions and away from others. Consider, for example, the contrast between New York and Chicago. The Chicago School of Sociology emerged in the 1920s as an attempt, in part, to understand the ways in which the immigration of the early twentieth century worked itself out in its urban context. Though the intellectual influence of the Chicago School persists, research on the new immigrant Chicago is virtually nonexistent. By contrast, New York, home to many "New York schools," but none of sociology, has proved fertile ground for immigration researchers, whose thread of important, insightful publications spans from the early 1970s to today. Until recently, Los Angeles received relatively little serious scholarly attention, perhaps because few researchers had met the prerequisite for serious study of the region: overcoming their prejudices against LA's particular form of urbanism and urban living. But researchers appear to have moved beyond their bias; the past few years

have seen an outpouring of books and other publications on Los Angeles, many of them zeroing in on immigration and the region's ethnic transformation. Immigration scholars have also been hard at work studying Miami, a city that shares many traits beyond its sun belt location with Los Angeles. Immigration studies in Miami, however, have tended to give short shrift to the demographic side, and the great majority of work focuses on the dominant group, the Cubans. By contrast, San Francisco, a region with almost as many immigrants as Miami, though of entirely different origins, has been almost completely—and unaccountably—neglected, an occasional monograph excepted.

This book therefore seeks to consolidate our understanding of these leading immigration centers, adding to the established scholarship where it exists and extending the information for those more neglected immigrant urban regions. But we are also attempting something different: to go beyond the single case study to compare the immigrant experience across this tier of leading immigrant destinations. While we certainly expect to find some similarities, the unique characteristics of each of the places and the differences in their respective immigrant flows highlight the ways in which the urban context matters.

Like many other studies of immigration, this book relies on the decennial censuses of population—long the workhorses of immigration research. For all their utility, however, the censuses suffer from one crucial flaw: they rapidly become dated. The 1990 census painted a portrait of America as it looked in the spring of that year, a picture of diminishing utility in the early twenty-first century. At a time when the relevant results from the 2000 census are not yet available, however, we do possess an alternative instrument for apprehending immigration's contemporary reality: the Current Population Survey (CPS), the Census Bureau's monthly vehicle for tracking population during the intercensus years. In years past, the Census Bureau periodically added a question about place of birth and parents' place of birth, but these items appeared only every few years. Starting in 1994, however, the bureau made questions about place of birth and parents' place of birth a permanent feature of each month's survey, enabling us to capture the changing reality of immigration through the late 1990s.

Although the CPS universe is far smaller than that of the census, one can combine surveys from subsequent years to build up a sample of very respectable size—indeed, one sufficiently large to study particular places, such as our five urban regions, or subgroups, such as immigrants and their descendants. This book makes particular use of a combined

TABLE I.1. SAMPLE SIZE, WEIGHTED:  
CURRENT POPULATION SURVEY,  
1994-1998, MERGED DATABASE

<i>Total Population</i>			
	Native-born	Foreign-born	Total
Los Angeles	17,135	7,569	24,704
New York	23,762	6,695	30,457
San Francisco	7,952	2,214	10,166
Chicago	10,858	1,622	12,481
Miami	3,604	2,193	5,797
All other	310,204	18,712	328,915
Total U.S.	373,514	39,006	412,520

  

<i>Ages 25-64</i>			
	Native-born	Foreign-born	Total
Los Angeles	7,386	5,109	12,495
New York	11,349	4,532	15,881
San Francisco	4,049	1,601	5,650
Chicago	5,344	1,122	6,466
Miami	1,517	1,435	2,951
All other	155,396	12,159	167,554
Total U.S.	185,041	25,957	210,998

Note: Totals fail to sum to 100 due to rounding errors.

sample concatenating observations from the 1994 through 1998 Current Population Surveys.<sup>3</sup>

Admittedly, we pay a price for our effort to bring the story up to date. Although the total combined sample is quite large ( $N = 412,520$ ), sample sizes diminish as we move to units of smaller geographic scale and, within them, break down the population by ethnicity or nativity. Consequently, we have focused on the larger urban region rather than the key city that lies at its center or even the somewhat larger metropolitan area attached to the urban core. Thus when we write of New York, Chicago, or any other of the urban places to which we refer, we mean the urban region, or "consolidated metropolitan statistical area," to use the official Census Bureau designation, and not the city. (See table I.1 for weighted frequencies for the total population and for persons ages 25 to 64 years old in Los Angeles, New York, San

Francisco, Chicago, Miami, and all other areas combined, cross tabulated by nativity.)

Although the regional focus necessarily eclipses the differences between urban and suburban areas that have so long lain at the heart of much urban analysis, it is in many respects a more useful unit than any of the smaller alternatives. The distinction between urban and suburban lacks meaningful reality in newer urban regions such as Los Angeles, Miami, and most of San Francisco, with the exception of the rather small cities of San Francisco, Berkeley, and Oakland. From the beginning, the sun belt cities had little urban concentration and rates of density far lower than those in the East; their sprawl made for a multi-nucleated metropolis, where any given center possessed limited economic function. Moreover, the self-proclaimed cities of the sun belt are best thought of as cities in only a nominal sense. While the City of Los Angeles contains the most extraordinary combination of urban and suburban within a single municipal jurisdiction, much of the urban core, as defined in terms of urban functions, lies entirely outside the boundaries of the city of Los Angeles. Chicago and New York, of course, remain much more in the nineteenth-century mold, their downtowns ever dense and still packed with employment within a range of higher-order economic functions. Nonetheless, growth is increasingly on the periphery; these areas have absorbed many of the central city functions and, as in the sun belt, spread out over a wide space. In other words, the city, such as it is, has been steadily embedded within a regional economy, in which the broad suburban expanse is increasingly urbanized and finds itself attracting a population of ever greater diversity—of which the immigrants are one important component.

### Urban Fates and Immigrant Destinies

This book looks at the nexus between urban fates and immigrant destinies. Each chapter responds to the question posed earlier—Can today's newcomers make it?—tackling the issue from different perspectives. Drawing on data from the five gateway regions, the chapters provide fruitful regional, interethnic, and native-born comparisons, focusing on wage trends, rates of employment and adequate employment, displacement, ethnic niches, poverty, and the new second-generation immigrants. Although the raw material is quantitative, all of the authors have sought to make the discussion accessible even to readers with little or no back-

ground in statistics. Throughout the book, our emphasis is on graphic display of quantitative findings, which makes the numbers easier to apprehend. Many of the chapters use more complex statistical procedures, but the details are always relegated to the footnotes, and we have tried to present results in ways that lend themselves to intuitive interpretation. The remainder of this chapter, however, places our work in its appropriate intellectual context, outlining the key debates that we have sought to address.

### Immigration and the Urban Condition

"The problem of the 20th century," announced W. E. B. DuBois almost 100 years ago, "is the problem of the color line."<sup>4</sup> At the time, the acuity of the insight may not have been crystal clear, and few were then ready to pay much attention to the arguments of a DuBois. At the turn of the twentieth century, the United States was in the throes of a mass migration, the arrival of so many apparently swarthy migrants from southern and eastern Europe the main source of ethnic disturbance for American elites of the day. In relatively short order, the foreign-born became the unwanted, as restrictionist legislation passed first in 1921, and then modified in 1924, fundamentally closed the gates. Without replenishments from abroad, the teeming immigrant masses Americanized; although still viewed with derision until well past midcentury, the degree of hostility and apprehension lessened.<sup>5</sup>

The fading of immigration from Europe more or less coincided with the advent of the Great Migration; as African Americans headed for northern cities in search of opportunity, they provided a convenient target on whom Euro-Americans, new and old, could project their anxieties and fears, a process that also allowed the racially dubious new immigrants to eventually become "white."<sup>6</sup> For African Americans, however, the urban promise soon turned to disillusion. Like their immigrant predecessors, African Americans initially found a place at the very bottom of urban social structures, but the task of moving up from and consolidating those initial gains proved deeply problematic.<sup>7</sup>

Accounting for this difference in experience became one of the central social science preoccupations of the past several decades, and researchers put forth various explanations. The most deeply influential view, enunciated with greatest force by the Kerner Commission more than three decades ago and reiterated and strengthened by a number of commentators, most notably the Harvard sociologist William Julius Wilson, emphasized the role of timing.<sup>8</sup> From this perspective, African

Americans had the great misfortune of entering the large urban areas just when their economies began to shift in ways that decreased opportunities for the less skilled. The basic bottom-level, entry positions began to disappear. Opportunities somewhat farther up in the job hierarchy became increasingly hard to obtain. White workers, after all, were never all that willing to help African Americans get good-paying factory jobs, and as the most desirable blue-collar jobs became less available, resistance to integration stiffened. Geographic shifts in production and residence made matters still worse: jobs went to the suburbs, but the force of residential segregation made it hard for black workers to follow; over time, even the suburban factory base eroded, as jobs leaked out to low-cost areas, first in the United States and then abroad. In some urban centers—Buffalo, Detroit, St. Louis, and Youngstown, to name just a few—deindustrialization delivered a knockout punch. Elsewhere, most notably in the very largest urban agglomerations with which this book is concerned, a different type of urban economy, organized around the processing and transmission of information, emerged. But this new economy did little for less-skilled African American workers, who once may have managed to hold a job in the factory sector but lacked the proficiencies required by employers in the service sector. Those too young to have known the blue-collar city in its heyday grew up with other problems. In the well-known views of William Julius Wilson, the unhappy coincidence of events—the disappearance of the factory sector, the out-migration of the black middle class, and the resulting social isolation of the poor—gave rise to an "urban underclass." Lacking the regulative structure of work, as well as the institutions, informal connections, and role models provided by the more complete ghetto community of old, African American ghetto dwellers altered behavioral patterns and attitudes, responding to the changes around them in self-defeating and self-reproducing ways.<sup>9</sup>

Just as Wilson's argument gained unprecedented influence, urban America began to change in ways that are seemingly incomprehensible in light of the story just told: immigrants began flocking to urban regions that purportedly had no place for anyone but the highly skilled. To be sure, many of the immigrants were among the highly educated professionals beckoned to the city by the new, information-based urban economy. Indeed, from a historical standpoint, socioeconomic diversity provides contemporary immigration with its most distinctive feature: yesterday, the newcomers almost always started out at the very bottom; today, many begin at the middle of the job ladder, if not on the upper rungs.

Still, the urban immigrant destinations with which this book is concerned have been receiving immigrants who bear a distinct resemblance to the arrivals of yore—at least in the sense of lacking the baseline skills of the native-born population, a gap particularly glaring when the comparison focuses on the dominant group, native-born whites. As we will note, not every region attracts less-skilled immigrants to the same degree, and there is a good deal of divergence on this axis from place to place. But from the standpoint of the received academic wisdom about urban America, there is something deeply peculiar in the experience of all the key immigrant regions: not only has the foreign-born population burgeoned, these new, less-skilled urban residents are finding a place in the job structure and often working at surprisingly high rates.

If the received diagnosis of the sources of urban distress is correct, then the immigrant pattern represents a significant anomaly. Curiously, immigration experts have not registered much surprise. On the contrary: successful immigrant entry into the economy bears out a crucial tenet of the migration theories elaborated over the past two decades. Whereas we used to think about migrants as “the uprooted,” to quote Oscar Handlin’s famous immigration history of almost five decades ago, we now describe them as “the transplanted,” to cite a slightly less celebrated but no less influential history produced 35 years later.<sup>10</sup> The shifting metaphors of scholarly discourse about migration convey the essence of the new approach: we now understand that migrants do not move as solo adventurers but rather as actors linked to associates here and there, with the ties lubricating and structuring their transition from one society to the next. Rephrased in the jargon favored by the scholarly literature, the connections that span immigrant communities constitute a source of *social capital*, providing social structures that facilitate action—most important, the search for jobs and the drive to acquire the skills and other resources needed to get started in a new world and, with luck, subsequently move up the economic ladder.<sup>11</sup> By contrast, *social isolation* appears to characterize the contemporary urban underclass, its members lacking strong ties to others who have the baseline resources needed for successful insertion into the economy and all the other roles associated with regular work.

As concept, *the underclass* has infiltrated deeply into the vocabulary of contemporary social scientific thinking about urban America and its residents. But its conceptual status seems almost certainly less than scientific: it provides a seemingly neutral label for categorizing undesir-

ables, all the while obscuring interest in the nature of the domination they experience, as clearly implied by the term. After all, there is no underclass without an “overclass,” but the latter somehow never gets mentioned in the discussion. Fortunately for them, immigrants enjoy some degree of inoculation from application of the term. The underclass, as concept, has the rhetorical convenience of providing a non-racialized tag for African Americans, a more stigmatized group than immigrants, who occupy a far more accepted role in the American imagination and dream. On the other hand, that more privileged status seems contingent on the willingness and ability, at least among low-skilled immigrants, to continue working at difficult, poorly remunerated jobs and under conditions that most Americans will not accept.<sup>12</sup> For the most part, immigrants appear to be avoiding this danger, although some groups are more marginal to the economy than others, and many commentators have raised a red flag concerning the future of immigrant children. Those worries have already stimulated some analysts to label immigrants as a potential underclass, as suggested by chapter 5 in this book. Anxiety about the prospects for the least-skilled immigrants is far from unreasonable, yet one must note that the availability and application of the underclass category is itself a source of additional liability.

### Assimilation

At the top of the immigration research agenda is the question of how the newcomers change after they have arrived. The conventional wisdom, both academic and popular, says that the immigrants *should* change by entering the American mainstream. The concept of assimilation stands as a shorthand for this point of view.

Although it is the point of departure from which almost all scholarly assessments begin, this particular perspective necessitates a skeptical look. “Assimilation” is surely a peculiar scholarly concept, resonating with that normative vision of national life that prescribes a direct relationship between the individual and the nation, unmediated by ties of an ethnic type. Not surprisingly, it sets up an artificial contrast between immigrants depicted as distinctive from the start and a national self, imagined in homogeneous terms—that is, as mainstream—whereas in fact it is riven by all sorts of divisions. That immigrants are surely different is beyond dispute, and yet the concept of assimilation hides the degree to which crucial differences are created through the process of

migration and by members of the host group. To mention the most obvious example, farmers and factory owners deliberately and systematically recruit migrant laborers precisely because the latter have different orientations to work than do native-born workers; at the same time, the stigmatized conditions in which migrant workers find themselves generate unfavorable stereotypes that impede subsequent mobility.<sup>13</sup> And the dictionary provides a more expansive definition of assimilation than the social science literature allows—namely, *acceptance*, a condition that implies change on the part of dominants, not just newcomers. However, the scholarly literature on assimilation has yet to conceptualize the mechanisms whereby dominants might exclude immigrants and perpetuate the disadvantages that they experience.

For the purposes of discussion, we might do better by shifting to a more descriptive level and making the terms of discussion more modest. It is probably enough to ask whether immigrants are making progress, though even here complexities of varying sorts quickly arise. In a sense, everyone agrees that newcomers typically begin with a set of liabilities: problems in speaking English, skills or credentials that may not be appropriate to the U.S. labor market, and a lack of exposure to the ways of American society, including the signals and credentials that tell employers that a foreign-born worker can indeed do the job as he or she suggests. Over time, these difficulties are eased. As settlement deepens, immigrants, regardless of skill level, see their earnings and occupational status improve. If we focus on absolute rates of progress, the line is pitched at an upward angle.

But most of the scholarly and policy debate focuses on relative rates of progress, and rightly so. In a sense, all of our social indicators are measures of relative well-being; that a person living below the poverty line in the United States might enjoy considerable comfort as compared to someone from an impoverished Third or Fourth World country is beside the point. Moreover, the very notion of assimilation, problematic as it is, implies a convergence between immigrant and host country expectations: over time, immigrants, and certainly their children, are increasingly likely to aspire to the conditions enjoyed by the average resident of the United States.

In this light, the research consensus has moved from an optimistic to a somewhat pessimistic view. The earliest, most influential view derived from the work of the labor economist Barry Chiswick. Analyzing data from the 1970 census, and thus comparing the very earliest of the “new immigrants” with their counterparts who arrived during the 1950s and

earlier, Chiswick found that immigrants began with a disadvantage, but their prospects quickly improved. After the passage of roughly 20 years, immigrants' earnings surpassed those of natives of the same ethnic background. As implied by the terms of comparison, not every group progressed at the same rate; although Mexican immigrants advanced more slowly than newcomers from Europe, over time, they did better than comparable Mexican Americans.<sup>14</sup>

Chiswick's optimistic view was quickly challenged by his fellow economist, George Borjas, who objected on methodological and substantive grounds.<sup>15</sup> Chiswick extrapolated immigrant rates of progress based on an analysis of a cross section of the U.S. population taken at a single point in time. Controlling for other background characteristics, he contrasted immigrants living in the United States for, let's say, 5 years with those residing in the country for longer durations of 10, 15, or more years. But this comparison assumed that the characteristics—both measured and unmeasured—of recent immigrant cohorts would essentially resemble those of their predecessors, making the experience of the earlier immigrants a good predictor of the outcomes of those who arrived later.

Borjas quite reasonably questioned this assumption. Migrations are known to be selective: moving is hardest at the outset, making those with the highest skills, greatest resources, best connections, and greatest propensity for risk the most likely to spearhead a move. Over time, selectivity diminishes, increasing the probability that later arrivals will compare unfavorably with the pioneers who established the initial beachheads. Moreover, the U.S. immigration system changed, starting in the mid-1960s, in ways that lowered the barriers to migration, further reducing selectivity. Thus, contrary to Chiswick's assumption, it seemed unlikely that the trajectories of earlier immigrants would provide a reliable guide to the experience of more recent arrivals.

Although Borjas confirmed that immigrants do indeed move up over time, he also demonstrated that the rate of progress was falling. Analyzing the 1980 census, he showed that the newcomers of the 1970s were moving ahead more slowly than those of the 1960s, who, in turn, were marching forward less briskly than those of the prior decade. Borjas subsequently extended the same analysis, with analogous though still more depressing results, to the 1990 census. Most important, Borjas showed that recent immigrants do not catch up with, let alone surpass, their statistical counterparts among native-born workers. And there is a still more disturbing twist: as the comparison pairs native-born and

foreign-born workers of the same ethnicity, it tells us that Mexican immigrants, more than a quarter of all immigrant workers, suffer from a growing gap relative to Mexican Americans, themselves a disadvantaged group.<sup>16</sup>

Borjas's results have been challenged and criticized, but they have largely carried the day,<sup>17</sup> as evidenced by their acceptance and endorsement in the National Research Council's highly influential 1997 report *The New Americans*. As Mark Ellis shows in chapter 4 of this book, consideration of the distinctive regional concentration of the immigrant population puts the basic Borjas finding in a very different light. Immigrants are lagging behind natives, Ellis tells us, not simply because their personal characteristics reduce their competitiveness in the labor market but because of trends in the particular labor markets where immigrants cluster. Nonetheless, Ellis also underscores one of Borjas's most fundamental points: the gap separating new immigrants, especially the low skilled, from natives is growing.

That gap now takes on a dimension not present in the earlier stages of the immigration debate. The new immigration began at the tail end of a period of historically high equality; since then, the distribution of wealth and income has shifted in ways that make the United States a far more unequal society than it once was. For immigrants, that change carries significant peril: real wages among less-skilled workers, of all ethnic stripes, have taken a very sharp hit over the past two decades. Less-skilled immigrants are striving to make it in a labor market oversupplied with poorly educated workers and in which the terms of compensation have shifted sharply against the less skilled.<sup>18</sup> Not all immigrant groups are equally affected by this change; indeed, for some, especially those among whom highly educated, scientific professionals predominate, the burgeoning demand for highly educated labor is good news. But the groups with a more distinctly proletarian cast, most notably the Mexicans, are facing a structure that may well impede their rate of upward movement. The new economy has done nothing to dampen the demand for less-skilled immigrant labor, nor to dislodge less-skilled immigrants from the places that they have established, as we shall see in chapter 3. And immigrants' children may not face pressures of equal severity, as suggested in chapter 8. Still, the facts of the case—high levels of regionally concentrated migration occurring at a time of greater inequality—provide grounds for concern.

### Ethnic Persistence

Although the literature on the economic progress of immigrants quickly becomes preoccupied with matters of technical detail—as suggested by the terms of the debate between Chiswick and Borjas described earlier—its substantive concern is quite straightforward. For economists, “assimilation” can be innocently understood as the process by which the economic welfare of immigrants comes to converge with that of natives. Economists certainly understand that any trend toward economic convergence yields related shifts in patterns of residence, association, and self-identity, but their concerns principally involve the dollars and cents of the matter.

The sociological literature casts a wider net. Indeed, the canonical texts on the topic were mainly preoccupied with the social aspects of assimilation, at the expense of the economic dimension. Sociologists now agree that economic progress is the linchpin of assimilation, driving all other shifts in the social structure of ethnicity. Still, it is easy enough to tie together the possible pieces of the package. At the outset, immigrants stick together. Lacking resources and the know-how needed to function beyond the ethnic community, they depend on one another, a dependency that leads newcomers to settle in neighborhoods densely populated with immigrants and to work in the ethnic niches where their compatriots cluster. Over time, the type of economic assimilation described by economists diminishes dependency, as immigrant options increase. As settlers move away from the occupations and neighborhoods of greatest immigrant density, their exposure probabilities change. In turn, they are increasingly likely to encounter out-group members, and in contexts that encourage closer associations. While the immigrants themselves are likely to retain strong in-group attachments, their children are unlikely to share ties of equal intensity. Thus, the social networks of immigrant descendants from the second generation on increasingly cross ethnic lines, leading to new forms of affiliation and identity that eventually replace those characteristic of the original immigrant group.<sup>19</sup>

This volume, in contrast to the earlier work reported in our book *Ethnic Los Angeles*, does relatively little with the sociological interest in these broader dimensions of ethnic change; such important topics as residential integration, intermarriage, and language shifts remain outside of our purview.<sup>20</sup> Rather, we focus, perhaps narrowly, on the labor market aspects of the immigrant experience.

Nonetheless, many of the broader concerns raised by the sociological literature are echoed in the chapters that follow. As noted previously, the traditional approach assumes that immigrants begin in occupational and residential clusters, in which propinquity to coethnics promotes continued interaction within the ethnic circle. However, the search for opportunity soon leads to dispersion along one dimension, if not several, lowering exposure to ethnic insiders. Thus, the established perspective emphasizes the discontinuities that are created as immigrants respond, in individualistic fashion, to options that arise as integration deepens.

But that view reflects the intellectual context in which sociologists have framed and elaborated the concept of assimilation. On the one hand, the canonical account of assimilation emerged in a period very different from today, when immigration had reached its lowest level, and not even the most farsighted of social scientists could imagine the events that would transpire after 1965. Under those circumstances, an effort to illuminate the integration of ethnic groups in American society could be decoupled from a sociology of immigration itself. On the other hand, classical thinking about assimilation bears the clear traces of modernization theory, with its assumption that ethnic ties were culturally based vestiges of older forms of social organization, bound to wither as immigrants acculturated and substituted universal for particular loyalties.

By contrast, the sociology of immigration of the type that has emerged over the past 20 years, with its emphasis on social capital, outlines a trajectory of a very different type. Notwithstanding disagreement over a host of particulars, most scholars now agree that immigration is a fundamentally social process, eased by the connections that link settlers to newcomers. Seedbed newcomers may move without help and tumble into jobs more or less by accident, but they soon find themselves in a position to assist new arrivals. As long as the immigrants are few and their resources limited, only close associates are able to access help. But the buildup of a population inevitably expands and diversifies the types of social networks that an immigrant community includes. Greater numbers then create the basis for institutions, both formal and informal, that bring immigrants together in recurrent, systematic, and more durable ways. The process of migration creates the seeds out of which a new ethnic social structure grows; defensive needs—the awareness of alterability, the hostility displayed by outsiders—further hasten and intensify this development.<sup>21</sup>

Thus, social structures emerge out of migration because of the problems they help the migrants resolve; that they also serve the uses of outsiders with whom the migrants come into contact provides a further fillip. A now massive and familiar body of literature tells us that the embedding of migration in social networks improves the quality of information circulated in immigrant communities and generates trust that serves as social capital among newcomers, who are often deprived and rarely able to access helping mechanisms available to the mainstream.<sup>22</sup> As it happens, the predilections of immigrants match the preferences of employers, who try to reproduce the characteristics of the workers they already have and continue to dip into the immigrant hiring pool. Once established, the social organization and social relations of the immigrant community operate with an independent effect. Consequently, the web of ties linking immigrants to one another shapes and constrains their ability to pursue opportunity, creating information fields and mobility channels that structure the fabric of ethnic life in durable and significant ways. And thus, unlike the older approach of assimilation, with its emphasis on social discontinuity, the newer approach accents those processes leading to social reproduction.

This new perspective appears in the literature in any number of forms, most notably in such concepts as the ethnic enclave, ethnic economy, and ethnic niche, all of which are attempts to understand the characteristics and consequences of the distinctive clusters that immigrants establish in the economy. As discussed in greater detail in chapter 7, most of the sociological work in this vein has focused on those concentrations characterized by high levels of immigrant self-employment. Researchers have been particularly interested in the Cuban ethnic enclave in Miami, where immigrants are not only working on their own account but appear to be employing a considerable number of their coethnics. The various chapters in this volume provide a view of the Cuban ethnic enclave that clashes with much of the literature, a point to which we will return in the concluding chapter. Whatever can be said about the Cuban ethnic enclave, the type of situation that it purportedly represents is relatively uncommon: for the most part, immigrants in business are working on their own with few, if any, nonkin employees. And where entrepreneurship takes spectacular form, as among Koreans, Iranians, or Israelis, for example, the drive to set up one's own business dries up the ethnic labor supply; thus, recourse to nonethnic labor is not an uncommon aspect of the immigrant business scene.<sup>23</sup>



Despite the emphasis on self-employment, it seems reasonable to contend that it represents a single instance of the broader phenomenon denoted by the concept of the ethnic niche. As argued earlier in this chapter, the network-based nature of migration and employment systems funnel and cluster immigrants into specific economic activities. Although these clusters sometimes entail self-employment, they more frequently involve occupational and industrial specializations in which immigrants find themselves working as wage and salaried employees. The lessons revealed by my earlier work on New York and Los Angeles show that the tendency to concentrate in ethnic niches is a distinguishing trait of the immigrant experience, characterizing migrant streams of various types.<sup>24</sup> As in the earlier work, the chapters in this book define an ethnic niche as an occupational or industrial specialization in which a group is overrepresented by at least 50 percent. Chapters 6 and 7 provide ample additional intellectual context, as well as all the details involved in operationalizing the niche concept.

### The Second Generation

Migration is an arduous experience, best undertaken by those ready to run risks and prepared to struggle to make it under adverse conditions. For that reason, immigrants have a relatively youthful profile; they arrive as adults but at that stage in adult life when they are either bearing or bringing up young children. Consequently immigration soon yields a second, even more fateful, result: the emergence of the second generation, a population categorized as children of foreign-born parents who are either born in the United States or born abroad and brought to the United States at a very young age.

Questions about the future of the second generation were common early in the twentieth century. At the time, contemporaries lacked the knowledge we now possess; they could not imagine that the children and grandchildren of foreign-born, unskilled workers would eventually climb up the totem pole, helped by the New Deal, the GI Bill, Veterans Administration (VA) mortgages, and a system of high wages and reduced inequality. Rather, the knowledgeable observers of eight to nine decades ago fretted over those developments that they could readily observe: more good jobs required extended levels of education, and the children of immigrant workers seemed unwilling to stay in school.<sup>25</sup>

In the end, those anxieties were for naught: the descendants of the eastern and southern European immigrants who arrived at the turn of

the twentieth century have now climbed to the pinnacle of American society, or thereabouts. But our leading researchers think it unlikely that a similar scenario awaits the offspring of the new, late-twentieth-century immigration. In their view, the immigrants of the turn of the twentieth century had the advantage of sharing a common European heritage with the then-dominant white Anglo-Saxon Protestants (WASPs) and that blunted discrimination's edge. The old factory-based economy also allowed for a multigenerational move up the totem pole. Immigrant children could do better than their parents if they stayed in the educational system through high school, after which well-paid manufacturing jobs would await them. The third generation would continue on through college and beyond, completing the move from peddler to plumber to professor, the dirty secret being that the wages of brain work did not always rival the earnings enjoyed in the skilled crafts.<sup>26</sup>

According to the hypothesis of *segmented assimilation*, a term coined by Alejandro Portes and Min Zhou (who has also authored chapter 8 in this book, on the new second generation), the offspring of today's poorly educated immigrants are likely to experience a very different fate.<sup>27</sup> The low-skilled immigrants of the turn of the twenty-first century, visibly identifiable and coming from everywhere but Europe, enter a mainly white society still not cured of its racist afflictions. The immigrants arrive willing to do the jobs that natives will not, but the children want more; not clear is whether the children's careers can live up to "their U.S.-acquired aspirations."<sup>28</sup> The conundrum of the contemporary second generation is heightened by the continuing transformation of the U.S. economy. Although low-skilled jobs persist, occupational segmentation has "reduced the opportunities for incremental upward mobility through well-paid, blue-collar positions." The advent of the hourglass economy confronts the immigrant children with a cruel choice: either acquire the college and other advanced degrees needed to move into the professional and managerial elite or else accept the same menial jobs to which the first generation was consigned. But the immigrants' children may simply say, "no thanks," in which case a new underclass is in the making.

In her chapter Min Zhou draws on a completely new data source to address the educational and employment trajectories experienced by the emerging second generation, and there is no need for me to preempt her message here. But as I dissent from the overall program, a few cautionary words may be in order. On the one hand, one might not have

expected the discussions of immigrant children's prospects to have turned so pessimistic so quickly, given the distinctive economic characteristics of the post-1965 immigrants. As I have already noted, socioeconomic diversity is a salient feature of the new immigration, quite in contrast to the situation among the immigrants of 1890-1920, who were concentrated at the bottom of the occupational distribution. In particular, high-skilled immigrants have played a modest but significant role in immigration to the United States since the enactment of the Hart-Celler Act in 1965.

Moreover, there is little question that many, possibly even most, immigrant children are heading upward, as exemplified by the large number of Chinese, Korean, Indian, and other students of Asian origin enrolled in the nation's leading universities, some the children of workers, others the descendants of immigrants who moved right into the middle class. This rapid ascent evokes parallels with the past, most clearly the first- and second-generation Jews who began appearing at City College and then Columbia, Harvard, and other prestigious schools in numbers that discomfited the then dominant WASPs. As Stephen Steinberg pointed out some years ago, it was the Jews' good fortune to have moved to America just when the educational system was expanding and moving away from its classical past and to have converged on the Northeast, where opportunities to pursue schooling were particularly good.<sup>29</sup> But even so, *schleppers* greatly outnumbered scholars, and the proportion of Jews who made their way to Harvard or its proletarian cousin, the City College of New York (CCNY), was dwarfed by those who moved ahead as skilled workers, clerks, or small business owners. In this light, the Asian advance into higher education remains phenomenal; in the Los Angeles region, for example, 18- to 24-year-olds in every Asian group (Vietnamese immigrants who arrived in the United States after the age of 10 included) attend college at a rate that exceeds that of native-born whites, with native-born Asians leagues ahead of native-born whites on this count.<sup>30</sup> And, ironically, the current backlash against affirmative action seems likely to accelerate rather than reverse this trend—quite a different turn of events than that which transpired in the Ivy League 70 years ago.<sup>31</sup>

On the other hand, there is good reason to believe that the children of the immigrant working poor will undergo a rather different and far less brilliant fate. It is not simply the case that the earnings of less-skilled immigrants are lagging behind. One must also remember that their households are often large, containing many children, which de-

presses per capita income and increases the likelihood that the children will grow up in poverty—bad news, as we know from the large library of research demonstrating that growing up in poverty is associated with decreased school achievement. Even so, the projection of an underclass future seems to involve quite a stretch, and not simply because the underclass concept is of dubious value, as I have already argued. The ghetto underclass may be the result of social isolation, but that term hardly applies to the environments in which the children of immigrants grow up. As we shall see in chapter 3, employment rates among low-skilled immigrants are generally impressive, indeed sufficiently so to make work normative (granted some possible exceptions, such as the Dominicans in New York). The population density of persons with jobs is itself a source of social capital, improving the quantity and quality of job-related information and embedding job seekers in informal networks that transmit skills once jobs are acquired. Is it unreasonable to assume that the deep embedding of immigrant networks in the labor market has no salutary effect on the opportunities available to newcomers' children?

It is also worth recalling that the embedding of immigrant communities in the labor market is, at least in part, a response to employers' favorable views of the work ethic and behavior of the foreign-born; for that reason, one can expect that immigrant children are received quite differently than were the offspring of the African American migrants to the cities of the East and Midwest. The penetration of immigrant networks is also now very deep. To take the Los Angeles case, which I know particularly well, although there are still plenty of immigrant sweepers and sewers, there are also quite a few foremen and skilled workers, which in turn provides the second generation with access to higher-level job opportunities. Because immigration itself generates ample needs for bilingual speakers (whether in hospitals, department stores, or factories), it creates positions for which the children of immigrants are ideally suited. Consequently, anxiety over prospects for second-generation immigrants may be warranted, but the more dire scenarios should be assessed with a good deal of care.

### **Making It in the Capitals of Immigrant America: An Overview**

Having filled in the intellectual background, I use the remainder of this chapter to offer a taste of the topics addressed and arguments

advanced in the chapters to follow. Chapter 2, which I have coauthored with Jennifer Lee, further sets the stage by reviewing immigration trends, both in the nation at large and within the five urban regions on which this book focuses. We also highlight the distinctive settlement pattern developed by the immigrants as they have put down roots. We argue that the action takes place in America's five leading immigrant destinations, since the immigrants have become more regionally concentrated over the past several decades. But these key immigrant regions are not of a piece; rather, they differ strikingly in the skill composition of their immigrants, the diversity of their immigrant flows, and the timing of arrival, disparities that are heightened by divergent trajectories of urban economic change. Taking a comparative view of immigrants in their regional concentrations, we highlight similarities and differences entirely ignored by the literature's focus on change at a national level or overlooked by the case study work linked to individual places.

Most of the literature on the transformation of the urban economies studied in this book emphasizes the extraordinary employment difficulties experienced by less-skilled members of native-born minority groups. But immigrants—often poorly educated, recently arrived, and lacking in English fluency—are finding jobs, and doing so at remarkably high rates. Chapter 3 focuses on this paradox and its broader ramifications, emphasizing the importance of comparisons that take into account gender and nativity status. Although less-skilled immigrant men may be more likely to be employed than their African American counterparts they soon discover that finding “adequate employment”—in terms of compensation or hours—is far more difficult. On the flip side, African American men have a more arduous time finding a job but are more likely to find themselves adequately employed once they find one. By contrast, the persons at greatest risk are less-skilled immigrant women, who encounter many more employment problems than their white and African American counterparts and for whom nativity universally depresses employment and often depresses employment adequacy. Thus, immigrants may have ample access to social capital, as the literature suggests, but those resources are not available to all. Even immigrants who benefit from the connections that link them to employers find that those ties work less efficiently in moving them to jobs of adequate quality.

Chapter 4, by Mark Ellis, takes up the same theme and inquires about immigrant progress by comparing wage trends of foreign- and

native-born workers in America's five urban immigrant regions. As I have noted, immigration scholars have largely concluded that immigrants are falling behind their native-born counterparts. But as Ellis points out, this consensus rests on analyses done entirely at the national level, whereas the bulk of immigrants are living in the five regions that are the focus of this book. Furthermore, these are places where natives are relatively underrepresented, and the economic structure is shifting in ways quite different from the changes transpiring in the nation as a whole. Ellis finds that the regional comparison reveals a very different portrait of the widening economic bifurcation between the foreign- and native-born than national trends indicate. At a national level, factors related to the national-origin and skill composition of the immigrant population explain much of the gap between the native- and foreign-born. But in the leading immigrant destinations, immigrant disadvantage results mainly from the restructuring of regional economies, making it more difficult for the foreign-born to translate their skills into decent wages. Compared to the native-born, whose wages in these regions are even higher than they are nationally, the disparity between the foreign- and native-born increases dramatically. Ellis points out that the differential change in wage structures implies that the native- and foreign-born work in dual labor markets whose lines of segmentation have cemented over the past decade.

Next we turn to William A. V. Clark's chapter on immigrant poverty and the emergence of an immigrant underclass. Though noting the bifurcated immigrant population of highly educated newcomers working in the high end of the occupational spectrum and their poorly educated and low-skilled counterparts trying to rise out of poverty, Clark argues that immigrant poverty levels are cause for concern. He finds that in the five regions, immigrants overall are doing much better than the native-born black population but worse than the native-born white population, with only four exceptions—Los Angeles, Phoenix, Houston, and Denver—where both native-born populations have lower poverty rates than the foreign-born. Regional differences abound, with the most vulnerable groups varying by place and ethnic origin: Central Americans in Chicago, Mexicans in Miami, and Russians and Southeast Asians in Los Angeles. The critical factor in escaping poverty, Clark finds, is securing employment, a daunting task given immigrants' low skills.

The question of whether and how immigrants affect the employment prospects of African Americans has been a central concern for academics

in many disciplines. Chapter 6, by Nelson Lim, investigates this question by comparing African American and immigrant niches over a two-decade period: 1970–1990. In 1970 African Americans and immigrants converged in the same niches, but by 1990 African Americans dominated niches in which immigrants barely penetrated. Did immigrants push African Americans out of some niches, or were they instead pushed up or pulled into better niches by factors bearing little or no relationship to immigration? Lim's chapter argues for the latter of these possibilities, pointing to the endogenous forces that have transformed African American niches in all five immigrant regions, and in remarkably the same way. On the one hand, immigrants made inroads into those African American niches marked by low status and subordination—for example, jobs in the hotel industry or domestic service. By contrast, African Americans made use of their higher levels of education to penetrate better quality niches in the public sector, consequently diminishing the effects of immigrant competition. African Americans have been pulled up, not out.

I continue the analysis of the ethnic niche in chapter 7, coauthored with Claudia Der-Martirosian, in which we switch the focus from African Americans to immigrants. Although the literature has been true to its assimilationist bias, viewing the ethnic niche as a transitional phenomenon limited to new arrivals and low-skilled groups, we find the opposite to be true. Notwithstanding the important differences among the five urban regions, ethnic niches stand out as a characteristic of almost every immigrant group in all five locales—high skilled and low skilled, refugees and entrepreneurial types—with concentration persisting even as immigrant cohorts put down roots. We also take the discussion of niches in a new direction by inquiring into the noneconomic characteristics of ethnic niches, with an emphasis on the cognitive skills required by niche jobs and the physical circumstances under which the jobs get done. We show that although skill sorts immigrants into “good” and “bad” niches, ethnicity works as a fundamental structuring factor, such that groups occupy niches of the same type, regardless of locale. In general, we conclude that concentration, not dispersion, is the road to economic mobility and that the quest for advancement takes a collective rather than an individual form. But we do find one startling exception to the broader pattern: Cubans in Miami, who, contrary to the accepted conventional wisdom, show relatively low levels of ethnic niching and have established niches of exceptionally low quality.

Chapter 8, by Min Zhou, focuses on the prospects of mobility for today's second generation. Zhou poses the following question: Are the offspring of today's immigrant generation facing an unprecedented second generation decline? Most of the second generation has not yet reached adulthood, but significant numbers are now leaving the parental household, with diverse trajectories emerging as young adult immigrant offspring leave school and enter the labor market. In general, the second generation is surpassing the first on a number of indicators including high school graduation rates. Asserting that mobility is not reducible to class differences, Zhou argues that ethnicity seems to be exerting its own effect—accelerating upward progress for some while hindering mobility for others. Whether the second generation's expectations will be met depends on two factors: (1) educational credentials and school-acquired skills and (2) ethnic connections. Zhou's chapter casts doubt on the scenario of second-generation decline since today's second generation is surpassing the first generation's progress. However, she also cautions that the population is diverse, as already manifest in the mobility patterns; Asians are moving up the ranks most rapidly, Mexicans most slowly, and other Hispanics and blacks somewhere in between. What Min Zhou and Carl Bankston find in their work *Growing Up American* is applicable: groups that maintain a distinctive identity and social structures that promote continued cohesion have advantages in getting ahead.<sup>32</sup>

## Notes

1. The relationship between immigration and the migration of natives remains a matter of much controversy. In a variety of publications William Frey (“Immigration and Internal Migration ‘Flight’: A California Case Study,” *Population and Environment* 16 [1995]: 353–375; “Immigration and Internal Migration ‘Flight’ from U.S. Metropolitan Areas: Toward a New Demographic Balkanization,” *Urban Studies* 32 [1995]: 733–757) has found a negative correlation between immigration and net internal migration, which he has interpreted as immigration-induced “flight.” By contrast, Richard Wright, Mark Ellis, and Michael Reibel have argued that natives' tendency to leave areas of high immigration densities reflects not so much a response to immigration as such but rather to other shifts in the economic structure of those places (“The Linkage between Immigration and Internal Migration in Large Metropolitan Areas in the United States,” *Economic Geography* 73, no. 2 [1992]: 232–252). Although the body of literature on this subject is already quite large and rapidly

growing, the basic facts—as opposed to their interpretation—do not seem to be in dispute: America's leading immigrant destinations experience a net outflow of their U.S.-born residents, although the rate of out-migration varies by socioeconomic characteristics.

2. Douglas Massey, Joaquin Arango, Graeme Hugo, Ali Kouaouci, Adela Pelligrino, and J. Edward Taylor, "Theories of International Migration: A Review and Appraisal," *Population and Development Review* 19, no. 3 (1993): 431-466.

3. The Current Population Survey is a monthly survey of a national probability sample of approximately 60,000 households. In light of the limited size of the two populations of interest to us—immigrants, on the one hand, and persons living in the five consolidated metropolitan statistical areas (CMSAs) of interest for this book, on the other—we have sought to increase the size of these target populations by merging the March CPS samples from 1994 through 1998. However, the nature of the CPS precludes use of each year's full CPS sample. The CPS retains respondents during a two-year period, interviewing individuals for four consecutive months, dropping them from the sample for the next eight months, and then reinterviewing them for another four consecutive months, after which they are dropped from the sample completely. Consequently, half of the persons interviewed in any given month reappear in the following year's sample in the same month. To avoid duplicate cases, we retained nonoverlapping halves of the 1994, 1995, 1996, and 1997 samples and included the entire 1998 sample. This procedure tripled the size of the total sample. We used a set of weights developed by Jeffrey Passel of the Urban Institute to adjust for mistakes in the original weights developed by the Bureau of the Census for the 1994 and 1995 March Current Population Surveys. Passel reviews the problems and diagnoses in a document that he kindly made available to us: "Problem with March 1994 and 1995 CPS Weighting," memorandum for CPS Users (Washington, D.C.: Urban Institute, August 21, 1997). A summary of the problems, as well as the procedures implemented by Passel, appears in Jeffrey S. Passel and Rebecca Clark, *Immigrants in New York: Their Legal Status, Incomes, and Taxes* (Washington, D.C.: Urban Institute, 1998), available at <http://www.urban.org/immig/immny.html#VII>.

4. W. E. B. DuBois, *The Souls of Black Folk: Essays and Sketches* (Chicago: A. G. McClurg, 1903; New York: Johnson Reprint Corp., 1968).

5. Thomas Archdeacon's *Becoming American: An Ethnic History* (New York: Free Press, 1983) provides an admirable history of immigration, as well as of the complicated reactions it has elicited.

6. On the process by which the old "new immigrants" became white, see David Roediger and James Barrett, "Inbetween Peoples: Race, Nationality, and the 'New Immigrant' Working-Class," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 16, no. 3 (1997): 3-44. On the Great Migration, James Grossman's *Land of Hope: Chicago, Black Southerners, and the Great Migration* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989) is the best recent contribution.

7. See Thomas Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1996).

8. National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, *Report* (New York: Bantam, 1968).

9. William J. Wilson, *The Truly Disadvantaged: The Inner City, the Underclass, and Public Policy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987); idem, *When Work Disappears* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1996). Over the years, the sociologist John Kasarda has been a particularly influential exponent of the skills-mismatch hypothesis. His chapter "Cities as Places Where People Live and Work: Urban Change and Neighborhood Distress," in *Interwoven Destinies: Cities and the Nation*, ed. Henry Cisneros (New York: W. W. Norton, 1993) provides a particularly succinct and clear expression of his views, which he has elaborated in many publications over the past 15 or so years. For other examples, see "Entry-Level Jobs, Mobility, and Urban Minority Employment," *Urban Affairs Quarterly* 19, no. 1 (1984): 21-40; "Jobs, Mismatches, and Emerging Urban Mismatches," in *Urban Change and Poverty*, ed. M. G. H. Geary and L. Lynn (Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press, 1988), 148-198; and "Structural Factors Affecting the Location and Timing of Urban Underclass Growth," *Urban Geography* 11, no. 3 (1990): 234-264. William J. Wilson liberally cites Kasarda's findings, while endorsing his views, in his various influential books.

10. Oscar Handlin, *The Uprooted* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1953); John Bodnar, *The Transplanted* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987).

11. For a state-of-the-art review, see Alejandro Portes, "Social Capital: Its Origins and Applications in Modern Sociology," *Annual Review of Sociology* 24 (1998): 1-24. Douglas Massey, Rafael Alarcón, Jorge Durand, and Humberto González, *Return to Aztlan* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1987) documents the network-driven nature of U.S.-Mexican migration and the way in which networks can be converted into social capital.

12. For a critique of the "underclass" literature and concept, see Loic Wacquant, "Three Pernicious Premises in the Study of the American Ghetto," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 21 (June 1997): 341-353.

13. Indeed, as shown in chapter 7, Mexicans, America's overwhelmingly largest immigrant group, are concentrated in jobs that are undesirable on almost all counts, a condition that is likely to set a ceiling on future progress.

14. Barry Chiswick, "The Effect of Americanization on the Earnings of Foreign-Born Men," *Journal of Political Economy* 86 (October 1978): 897-921.

15. George Borjas, "Assimilation, Changes in Cohort Quality, and the Earnings of Immigrants," *Journal of Labor Economics* 3 (October 1985): 463-489.

16. George Borjas, *Friends or Strangers? The Impact of Immigrants on the U.S. Economy* (New York: Basic Books, 1990); idem, *Heaven's Door: Immigration Policy and the American Economy* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1999).

17. For example, Barry Chiswick, "Is the New Immigration Less Skilled than the Old?" *Journal of Labor Economics* 4 (April 1986): 168-192; Harriet Duleep and Mark Regets, "Measuring Immigrant Wage Growth Using Matched CPS Files," *Demography* 34, no. 2 (May 1997): 239-249.

18. Richard Murnane and Frank Levy, "United States Earnings Levels and Earnings Inequality: A Review of Recent Trends and Proposed Explanations," *Journal of Economic Literature* 30, no. 3 (September 1992): 1333-1381. Borjas, however, concludes that the changes in the wage structure in the United States as a whole account for only a relatively small share of the drop in the immigrant entry wage between 1970 and 1990 (*Heaven's Door*, pp. 36-37); for an alternative interpretation, see chapter 4 of this book.

19. The canonical work on assimilation remains Milton Gordon's *Assimilation in American Life* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964); for a recent defense of assimilation and review of supporting evidence, see Richard Alba and Victor Nee, "Rethinking Assimilation Theory for a New Era of Immigration," *International Migration Review* 31, no. 4 (winter 1997): 826-874.

20. Roger Waldinger and Mehdi Bozorgmehr, *Ethnic Los Angeles* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1996); see especially chapters 4 and 5.

21. See, for example, Massey et al., *Return to Aztlan*.

22. Alejandro Portes, "Economic Sociology and the Sociology of Immigration," in *The Economic Sociology of Immigration*, ed. Alejandro Portes (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1994), 248-281.

23. For a literature review, with ample footnotes, see chapter 7.

24. Roger Waldinger, *Still the Promised City? African-Americans and New Immigrants in PostIndustrial New York* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1996); idem, "Ethnicity and Opportunity in the Plural City," in *Ethnic Los Angeles*, ed. Roger Waldinger and Mehdi Bozorgmehr (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1996), 445-471; idem, "The Making of an Immigrant Niche," *International Migration Review* 28, no. 1 (1994): 3-30.

25. See Roger Waldinger and Joel Perlmann, "Second Generations: Past, Present, Future," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 24, no. 1 (1998): 5-24.

26. Herbert Gans, "Second-Generation Decline: Scenarios for the Economic and Ethnic Futures of the Post-1965 American Immigrants," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 15, no. 2 (1992): 173-192; Alejandro Portes and Min Zhou, "The New Second Generation: Segmented Assimilation and Its Variants among Post-1965 Immigrant Youth," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 530 (1993): 74-96.

27. Portes and Zhou, "New Second Generation."

28. *Ibid.*, 85.

29. Stephen Steinberg, *The Ethnic Myth: Race, Ethnicity, and Class in America* (New York: Atheneum, 1981).

30. Lucie Cheng and Philip Yang, "Asians: The Model Minority Deconstructed," in *Ethnic Los Angeles*, ed. Roger Waldinger and Mehdi Bozorgmehr (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1996), 305-344.

31. For more on the comparison of Jewish and Asian second-generation offspring, see Joel Perlmann and Roger Waldinger, "Second Generation Decline? Immigrant Children Past and Present—A Reconsideration," *International Migration Review* 31, no. 4 (1997): 893-922.

32. Min Zhou and Carl Bankston III, *Growing Up American: How Vietnamese Children Adapt to Life in the United States* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1998).