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**Dynamics of Migration:
International Migration**

Occasional Monograph Series
Number Five, Volume Two

ICP Work Agreement Reports

INTERDISCIPLINARY COMMUNICATIONS PROGRAM
Smithsonian Institution

INTERNATIONAL PROGRAM FOR POPULATION ANALYSIS

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The Dynamics of Migration: International Migration

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Investigators

Wayne A. Cornelius
Carmen Inés Cruz
Juanita Castaño
Elsa M. Chaney

INTERDISCIPLINARY COMMUNICATIONS PROGRAM
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M.C. Shelesnyak, *Director*
John T. Holloway, *Associate Director for Operations*

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Foreword

This volume, one of a series of ten occasional monographs, contains some of the results reported by investigators who have studied population-related topics during the past several years as participants in the International Program for Population Analysis (IPPA).

The principal objective of the IPPA has been to broaden the base of knowledge and understanding of population dynamics by generating a new capability in analysis and evaluation, primarily in less developed and developing countries, for use by governments who wish to develop adequate population policies. One of the approaches to this objective has been the offer of modest work agreements (subcontracts) to qualified individuals who wished to work in population dynamics, especially investigators new to the field who were without major professional or financial support from other sources, and who showed promise of emerging as leaders and innovators in the exploration of contemporary population concerns.

At the inception of the Program in 1972, it seemed reasonable to believe that a considerable reservoir of talent had been untapped, that many individual population scholars and other social scientists throughout the world were isolated from the mainstream of knowledge in the field by distance, geography, culture, and lack of established affiliation. It was surmised that these scholars held, or could acquire at modest cost, many of the pieces of the immense puzzle that must ultimately be assembled.

During the past four years, the IPPA has attempted to mobilize some of this dispersed and often neglected talent. Emphasis was placed on goal-directed work oriented toward applications to practical nation- or region-specific population problems. The initiative for individual projects came both from ICP staff suggestions and from investigators' unsolicited proposals.

Proposals from scholars already engaged in population research were given full consideration; but particular attention was paid to applications from

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investigators new to the field but with demonstrated relevant competence, innovative approaches, and promise as nuclei of new population dynamics groups in less-developed and developing countries.

Out of a total of 317 proposals from all over the world, 52 were selected for support by a careful and thorough process which included both internal Interdisciplinary Communications Program (ICP) evaluation and peer review. In each case, a judgment was made as to whether the results would be useful in the formulation of workable Third World population policies and translatable into national commitments to viable action programs. No project was funded for more than \$50,000—the average was less than \$24,000. Most were for a period of one year or less.

The work agreements were tailored to individual situations, with the hope that a flexible approach would reduce the administrative burden at both ends and still maintain an essential degree of responsiveness. In addition, whenever an investigator undertook work in a country other than his own, it was required that a host country national be involved as a contact and professional collaborator. This requirement was intended to help ensure the relevance and suitability of the study to local conditions, correct interpretations of observations, and the practical application of results.

These investigators were not selected and then left to work in a vacuum. Other elements of the IPPA were designed specifically to maintain communications channels which, by making information from the Program available promptly and in usable form, linked these investigators to each other, to colleagues in related areas, and to the population community at large. These elements included continuous monitoring and assistance by the ICP professional staff and, when appropriate, participation in one or more of the sixteen IPPA workshop/seminars, six of which were held in Third World countries. Work agreement investigators, together with others on the IPPA mailing list of more than 4500 names, received semi-annual annotated bibliographies on selected population topics and *Population Dynamics Quarterly (PDQ)*, the IPPA newsletter with worldwide circulation. A number of investigators were first made aware of the IPPA through *PDQ*, and articles by many of them have appeared in its pages.

Even now, as the Program is being concluded, it is difficult to assess accurately the effects of the IPPA experiment—and it was an experiment in the fullest sense of the word. During the past four years, it has been shown that a great deal of unrecognized talent exists, that it can be reached by well-designed techniques, and that it can be productive. New approaches and perceptions have evolved. For example, the increasingly popular concept of population impact analysis grew largely from IPPA's concern with developmental determinants of fertility in selected countries.

Foreword

In compiling this book and its companion volumes, no attempt has been made to reproduce the complete reports submitted by the investigators. To varying degrees, the reports have been edited, condensed, and sometimes rearranged in format. In some instances, highly specialized terminology has been changed to make the material more readable by a diverse and multidisciplinary audience. Hopefully, these editorial liberties—made necessary by constraints of space and money—have not obliterated the essential flavor of the reports or obscured their principal findings. ICP assumes full responsibility for any changes made in the original manuscripts, since stringent time limitations have made it impossible to return the modified versions to the authors for review. Readers who wish additional information on any of these reports are encouraged to contact the authors directly.

Four years is a short time in which to devise and implement an undertaking of this diversity, let alone evaluate its long-term contribution to the solution of a problem of such magnitude. We hope the contents of this volume and the others in this series will be interesting and informative to a wide variety of readers with eclectic viewpoints. More importantly, we hope these first efforts will serve as a pattern and a source of encouragement for future efforts, and that the network of interpersonal contacts which has been established will continue to flourish.

M. C. Shelesnyak
Director

Interdisciplinary Communications Program

John T. Holloway

Associate Director for Operations
Interdisciplinary Communications Program

Introduction

A U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service agent, arresting an illegal immigrant to the United States for the third time asked, "What can we do to prevent you from doing this again?" "Shoot me," replied the Mexican.

Thus, the dilemma. On the one hand are the tremendous pressures on southern U.S. borders caused by wage differentials of eight- or ten-to-one for unskilled workers, a long-established pattern of migration from Latin America to the United States, a thriving network of communication between the resident Latin community and prospective immigrants, and U.S. employers who are willing—even eager—to employ immigrants regardless of their legal status. On the other hand are the weak and sporadic enforcement efforts by the U.S. Government to keep out illegal immigrants, an understandable attitude on the part of a government reluctant to employ the draconian measures needed to seal its borders.

The result is an increasing number of illegal Latin American aliens entering the United States. The INS (Immigration and Naturalization Service) calculates that the number of illegal aliens arrested in the United States during the past 10 years has increased from 100,000 to 800,000. Since the INS estimates that only one out of three or four illegals is ever apprehended, the total number of illegal entries could be as high as three million annually. Added to this number are the half-a-million or so foreign visitors to the United States each year whose departures cannot be traced; most of these immigrants are thought to be of Hispanic origin.

In the United States, political pressure mounts for Congress and the INS to do "something." Some groups call for new laws and stricter enforcement of existing laws to penalize employers for hiring illegals. Groups sympathetic to the immigrants call for measures to protect the civil rights of the

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immigrants and to provide a humane mechanism by which they can acquire legal status in the United States.

Policy change in this area is severely hampered by lack of information. Who are the migrants? How many are they? Where do they come from? Why do they come? What do they do when they arrive? Do they become permanent residents, or do many return home after accumulating savings?

The largest group of illegal immigrants to the United States comes from Mexico and, not surprisingly, information about this group is the most extensive, though suffering from a paucity of data. In the past, most of this information came from interviews with illegals who have been detained in the United States by the INS or with recent deportees upon their arrival in Mexico. In this monograph, Cornelius reports on the scene from a different perspective. During his research on internal migration in Mexico, he discovered that migration to the United States was closely bound with the economy and ecology of rural Mexico. In his report, he analyzes the actual and potential impact on both the sending and receiving communities, from information provided by successful immigrants who routinely enter and exit illegally from the United States each year with little or no trouble from the authorities.

Compared to what is known about Mexican immigrants, still less is known about immigrants from other Latin American countries. The other two reports in the monograph provide the first systematic study of one of the larger non-Mexican, Hispanic immigrant groups—the Colombians. These studies are unique in at least one other aspect—they represent the combined efforts of two research teams, one American and one Colombian, which simultaneously studied prospective immigrants in Colombia and residents in the Colombian community in Queens, New York. No effort was made by either team to identify the legal status of immigrants, but a large number of those interviewed were probably either illegals or immigrants who intended to overstay a tourist visa.

The contrasts between Mexican and Colombian immigrant groups, described in this monograph, are striking. But there are also some interesting and relevant similarities. The Colombians are well educated, on a par with native New Yorkers, while the Mexicans have little education, usually primary school or less. Most Mexicans are seasonal migrants, coming to the United States for the harvest or planting seasons every year and then returning home. The Colombians tend to become permanent residents, although they almost all dream of returning home some day.

While one group is almost exclusively urban and the other rural, both usually find jobs in the lowest economic stratum—jobs shunned by native Americans. Both tend to be highly regarded workers and are sought after by

employers. Both groups are young, motivated, and willing to accept sub-standard working conditions.

Do they hurt the labor market for native Americans or constitute a potential or actual burden on American society? The research provides no definitive answer to the first question. By accepting lower wages and inferior working conditions, they are able to overcome the natural competitive edge enjoyed by the ordinary citizen. At the same time, the presence of relatively cheap immigrant labor undoubtedly makes certain economic activities viable such as domestic service, textiles, and field labor which would otherwise disappear or be mechanized. As for the second question, the barriers to entering the United States, while not effective in keeping out determined people, do tend to select for those who are highly motivated economically. Such people are seldom unemployed, and they pay most, if not all, of the same taxes paid by U.S. citizens.

The popular idea that Colombian and Mexican immigration to the United States represents a net loss to the sending countries also appears to be incorrect. According to Cornelius, seasonal migration to the United States is so important to the rural Mexican economy that, were it to cease, it would cause a large-scale depression in Mexican agriculture—sending thousands, if not millions, more rural migrants to Mexican cities. Other knowledgeable persons point out, however, that the possibility of seasonal migration to the United States enables the Mexican Government to postpone long overdue reforms which will have to be adopted eventually to create a more realistic and stable Mexican rural economy.

The Colombian case is somewhat different since many of the immigrants are well educated and skilled. Here, the charge of "brain drain" must be taken seriously. While not constituting a large proportion of the immigrants, Colombian professionals coming to the United States frequently represent a large proportion of the graduating classes of Colombian universities. This is especially true in medicine; perhaps the majority of young Colombian doctors serve their internships in the United States when they finish medical school. On the basis of this study, Cruz and Castaño conclude that most of these doctors eventually go back to Colombia and that the additional training they receive in the United States more than compensates for their three- or four-year absence from Colombia early in their careers. In other professions, the general consensus among Colombians interviewed by Chaney in New York was that most professionals would return to Colombia, even at substantially lower salaries, if jobs were available.

The absence of the average Colombian immigrant from the homeland is typically compensated by the remittance of significant sums to relatives in Colombia. Those immigrants who do return to Colombia usually have ac-

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cumulated substantial savings which are then invested in a home or business, enabling the individual to advance economically and socially in a way which would otherwise not be possible.

Perhaps more important, the possibility of coming to the United States represents a psychological safety valve which provides what may be the one chance in life to escape from the frustrations of a rigid economic and social class structure. For women, the experience can be especially liberating. For example, married immigrant women tend to have fewer children, greater labor force participation, and more equal status within marriage than women who remain behind in Colombia. Single women in their 20s and 30s have a far better chance of finding a mate in the United States than in Colombia where social norms label them old maids.

The importance which these kinds of opportunities play in contemporary Mexican and Colombian society would be difficult to overestimate. Cornelius found it was the rare Mexican family that did not currently have, or had not had within the last two years, at least one family member working in the United States. Chaney reports that the idea of coming to the United States, for at least some time, occurs to nearly every Colombian. Especially among young persons, it is the "in thing" to do.

Under these circumstances, the numbers of immigrants, which can seem alarming, are themselves meaningless without knowledge of the facts behind them. It is in this regard that the studies in this volume make their major contribution.

David N. Holmes, Jr.
ICP Staff Social Scientist

Outmigration From Rural Mexican Communities

Wayne A. Cornelius

Abstract

The determinants and consequences of rural outmigration were evaluated for nine rural communities in the Los Altos region of the State of Jalisco, Mexico. The investigator found that government investment in rural community development was valuable only if the local economic structure afforded opportunities for its utilization.

This report presents preliminary findings from a study of the causes and consequences of outmigration from rural communities in Mexico. Findings are tentative, since analysis of a final seven-month period of data gathering will not be completed until May 1977. A major report updating and expanding on these findings will be submitted to the Smithsonian Institution and other sources of financial support for the project in the fall of that year.

Our research has two principal objectives: 1) To assess the impact of public policies and programs on outmigration from rural communities in Mexico and identify those which encourage peasants to remain in their home community and those which encourage migration; and 2) to evaluate outmigration's impact on the social, economic and political life of rural sending communities and identify steps the government might take to lessen problems caused by heavy population loss from outmigration.

These objectives have been pursued through an intensive, comparative study of nine rural communities in the Los Altos region of Jalisco, Mexico.

Note: ICP social scientist Calman J. Cohen helped prepare this report for publication. Correspondence should be directed to Dr. Cornelius at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139.

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The region consists of 17 municipios, the politico-administrative equivalent of United States counties, which comprise the northeast corner of Jalisco. The region lies northwest of Mexico City and northeast of Guadalajara. This region was selected as the project site because of the heavy outmigration it has experienced since early this century and because it is near several major Mexican cities (León, Guadalajara, and Mexico City) which might serve as potential destinations for migrants leaving rural communities. Official census data for 1960 and 1970 show that the region was one of the two geocultural regions experiencing the country's highest outmigration rates during that period. Despite a high rate of natural population increase, between 3.4 and 3.5 percent a year, the total population in the Los Altos region grew only 0.8 percent because of heavy outmigration. While the region was selected originally because of its contribution to rural-to-urban population in Mexico, it was later found to make a large contribution to Mexican migration to the United States. As a result, the scope of the research was broadened to include international migration and the relationship between internal and international population flows.

The Research Sites

Rural communities in the Los Altos region suffer from most economic and social conditions which promote outmigration from rural areas in Mexico generally, that is, high rates of natural population increase, unemployment and underemployment, low wage scales for landless workers, lack of new land for cultivation, highly variable rainfall and temperature conditions and poor and constantly eroding soil. The region's informal motto—"Los Altos, land of poor soil and hardworking people"—describes the situation accurately. Since rainfall is scant and few large-scale irrigation facilities have been built, the region's predominantly agricultural economy is based on dry farming to raise corn and beans and on dairy farming. Commercialization of crops is minimal as most of the crops are used for the family and livestock. While tractors are used on large landholdings, agricultural technology is generally primitive with wooden, iron-tipped plows still widely used. Landholdings have been fragmented severely; plots average between four and ten hectares. (A plot of 50 hectares is usually considered the minimum size necessary to justify the use of a small tractor.)

Social structure in most Los Altos communities, including small and medium-sized towns, seems quite rigid, with a high degree of inequality in land distribution and personal income. The influence of the Catholic Church, which incited thousands of Alteños to armed rebellion against the central government between 1927 and 1929, pervades, contributing to the economic and political conservatism of the population. Illiteracy remains high, affect-

Outmigration from Rural Mexican Communities

ing at least 30 percent of the adults in most communities. Land tenure systems are mixed, sometimes within a single community, and include small private holdings, communal or ejidal holdings, sharecropping, and latter-day haciendas employing landless laborers. The racial composition is predominantly mestizo.

A major problem in the Los Altos region, as in most rural areas of Mexico, is rapid population growth within a nonexpanding structure of employment opportunities. Since most regional industries are highly capital-intensive enterprises which process dairy products, industrial jobs are scarce. These firms are concentrated in the region's two largest cities, Tepatitlán and Lagos de Moreno. The result is too many people for the number of jobs available, which is the most important factor promoting outmigration from the region. This movement, either temporary or permanent, has probably involved at least half of the region's economically active population since 1940.

Our fieldwork was done in nine rural communities ranging in size from 491 to 4,589 inhabitants. Communities were selected to provide maximum variety in the kinds of government programs, land tenure systems, and outmigration rates over the last 35 years. Taken together, the nine communities have experienced the full range of government interventions which have characterized Mexico's rural development policy since 1940. Two of the communities, Azulitos and Dieciocho de Marzo, are ejidal, created in the 1930s in Mexico's national land reform program. In three other communities, Belén del Refugio, Matanzas, and Tlacuitapa, the land tenure patterns are quite mixed, with both ejidatarios (holders of land granted under the agrarian reform program) and private small holders comprising large shares of the population. The principal land tenure systems in the communities of Santa Maria del Valle, Unión de San Antonio, Comanja de Corona and Villa Hidalgo are small private holdings and sharecropping on larger, privately held parcels.

In terms of permanent outmigration rates for the 1960-1975 period the communities may be grouped as follows:

<i>High</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Low</i>
Comanja de Corona	Azulitos	Villa Hidalgo
Tlacuitapa	Unión de San Antonio	Santa Maria del Valle
Belén del Refugio	Dieciocho de Marzo	
Matanzas		

Virtually all temporary outmigration is to destinations within the United States. In terms of temporary outmigration during that period the communities can be grouped as follows:

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<i>High</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Low</i>
Tlacuitapa	Unión de San Antonio	Comanja de Corona
Belén del Refugio	Santa Maria del Valle	Dieciocho de Marzo
Matanzas	Azulitos	
	Villa Hidalgo	

Data-Gathering Methods

In-depth, unstructured interviews were tape recorded with more than 80 residents, ranging from local notables to landless workers, throughout the nine communities. The interviews, ranging from one to three hours long, focused on local history, economic and political conditions, local organizational activity, the community's relationships with government agencies, migration patterns, and local impact of outmigration and return migration. Special interviews were conducted with migrants who had worked in the United States and wives of those working there now.

Data needed to analyze fertility, mortality, and migration patterns in the communities were gathered from official census records and local registries of vital statistics. Annual birth and death statistics from 1940 to 1975 were compiled by examining more than 105,000 handwritten certificates. This was necessary because birth and death statistics at the locality level are not compiled by the Mexican government or the Catholic Church. In some cases, church and public school censuses were compared with statistics from local civil registries.

The research team conducted a complete population census of the nine communities in January 1976, recording data from 2,959 households containing 16,492 individuals. The census furnished data needed to calculate outmigration rates between 1970 and 1975, along with information on age and sex distributions, places of birth, outmigration patterns during this period, and demographic characteristics of household units.

Interviews with state-level government officials and government documents provided much of the data on economic and demographic conditions and government investments in the region. Officials in federal agencies involved in development programs affecting the Los Altos region also were interviewed. Finally, data were exchanged with members of the Facultad de Economía of the Universidad de Guadalajara who are also engaged in demographic research in parts of the Los Altos region. The university and this research group have established a long-term collaborative relationship.

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A DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF THE RESEARCH COMMUNITIES

Population Growth

Mexico has one of the highest population growth rates in the world. The population more than doubled between 1940 and 1970 and, with a current growth rate of 3.5 percent a year, is expected to double again within 20 years. Until the mid-1950s, however, Mexico was regarded by demographers as having a relatively stable population; both fertility and mortality were high. Then, as a by-product of development, a sharp decline in mortality rates, particularly infant and female mortality, hurtled Mexico into the high-growth category. The country's immediate demographic future has already been determined. High natural increase is anticipated because of the expected continued decline in mortality and because of Mexico's pyramidal age structure; more than 46 percent of the population is under 15 years of age.

Azulitos and Dieciocho are ejidal communities formed on expropriated land during the 1930s. Comanja de Corona dates back to the early Spanish colonial period when it was an important mining center. Villa Hidalgo, Unión de San Antonio, and Belén del Refugio were founded in the early or mid-nineteenth century. Several of the communities were severely affected between 1910 and the early 1930s by the Mexican Revolution and the Cristero rebellion. The Cristero revolt had a particularly important impact on demographic patterns in the region. It was then that large-scale emigration to the United States began, and a large share of the population was reconcentrated by the government in larger towns and cities to deprive the Cristero rebels of sources of assistance. Comanja de Corona, virtually deserted at times during this period, never regained its former economic or demographic status. The impact of years of armed conflict is equally evident in the population growth fluctuations in the other communities.

Between 1950 and 1970 the national population grew a formidable 87 percent, or 3.3 percent a year, while the municipios grew much slower. Highest growth rate among the municipios was in Lagos de Moreno, the largest, most prosperous city in the northern part of the region. Smallest population gain was in Ojuelos, the most arid and impoverished area.

All municipios where our communities are located have experienced heavy outmigration. Comparing each community with its municipio, it can be seen that four lost population faster than their municipios and four lost population more slowly. Contrary to regional trends, one community, Dieciocho de Marzo, gained population.

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Fertility and Mortality Trends

For communities that grew slowly or lost population while the rest of Mexico experienced rapid growth, the question to be answered is whether fertility and mortality trends contributed to the apparent population loss.

Between 1940 and 1975, the national birth rate declined slightly while the death rate plunged, causing a high rate of natural increase. Jalisco's crude rates are similar. Because the Los Altos region is predominantly rural, the crude rates there are higher than the national rates, though the basic pattern of continued high fertility and declining mortality is the same.

The graph of the estimated crude vital rates by calendar year for Mexico and the nine communities combined (presented in Figure 1) shows that population loss by the communities cannot be attributed either to rapidly declining fertility or an increase in deaths. Actually, population growth from natural increase is higher in the communities than in Mexico.

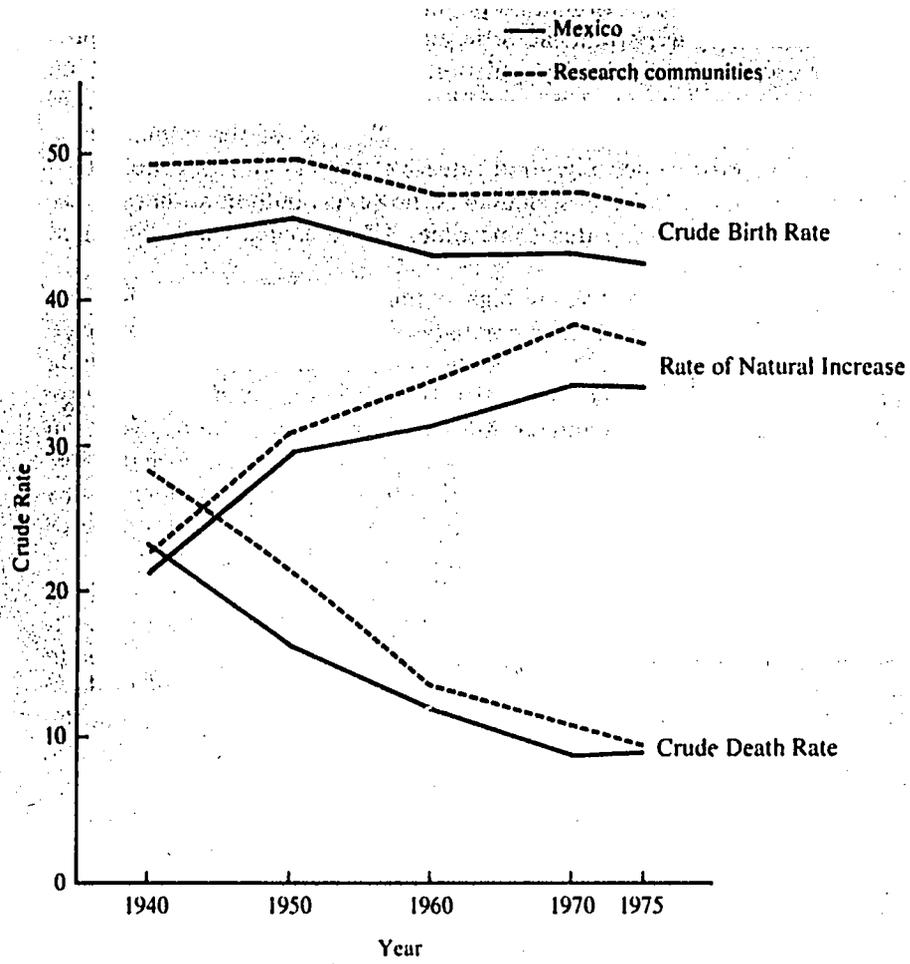
Other types of data gathered in the communities corroborate these findings. First, data on infant and child mortality, which has the greatest long-term impact on population growth, show that the proportion of infant (0-11 months) and child (1-4 years) deaths decreased by more than 5 percent between 1950 and 1970; the national rate dropped only 1.8 percent during the same period. In 1950, infant and child deaths accounted for well over half of all deaths in the communities. Additional data show that the average number of living children has not declined in the last 40 years. For six of the nine communities, in fact, the average number of living children at the time of birth registration was higher in 1970 than in any decennial year since 1930. This is probably because of an increase in child survival rates rather than an increase in fertility. Our population census reveals that the average number of living children in households with a woman in the fertile age group (15-49 years) was 4.36. Completed families in the communities often have eight or more surviving children.

Analysis by community shows that all have high fertility rates. The highest in recent years were registered in Unión de San Antonio and Santa Maria del Valle, communities in which Catholic Church influence seems strongest. In both cases, local priests have been quite vocal in opposing most means of contraception. We have also found that the presence of a resident physician or community health clinic does little to reduce family size. Interviews with community physicians showed that they either distrust modern contraceptive techniques or lack competence in teaching their use.

The age structure of the communities between 1950 and 1970 cannot be determined from the official census, but data from our census reveal an age pyramid similar to that of the national population. Nearly half the population is under 15 years of age; a broad base which will probably broaden as infant

Outmigration from Rural Mexican Communities

Figure 1
Estimated Crude Vital Rates by Calendar Year,
for Mexico and Research Communities Combined, 1940-1975



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deaths decline. This will increase the proportion of population depending on older age groups. In fact, the number of people in the under-15 age bracket, as well as the dependency ratio, is higher in the communities than in the rest of the country. In short, fertility and mortality trends indicate that the communities' problems in coping with rapid population growth are only beginning.

Migration Patterns

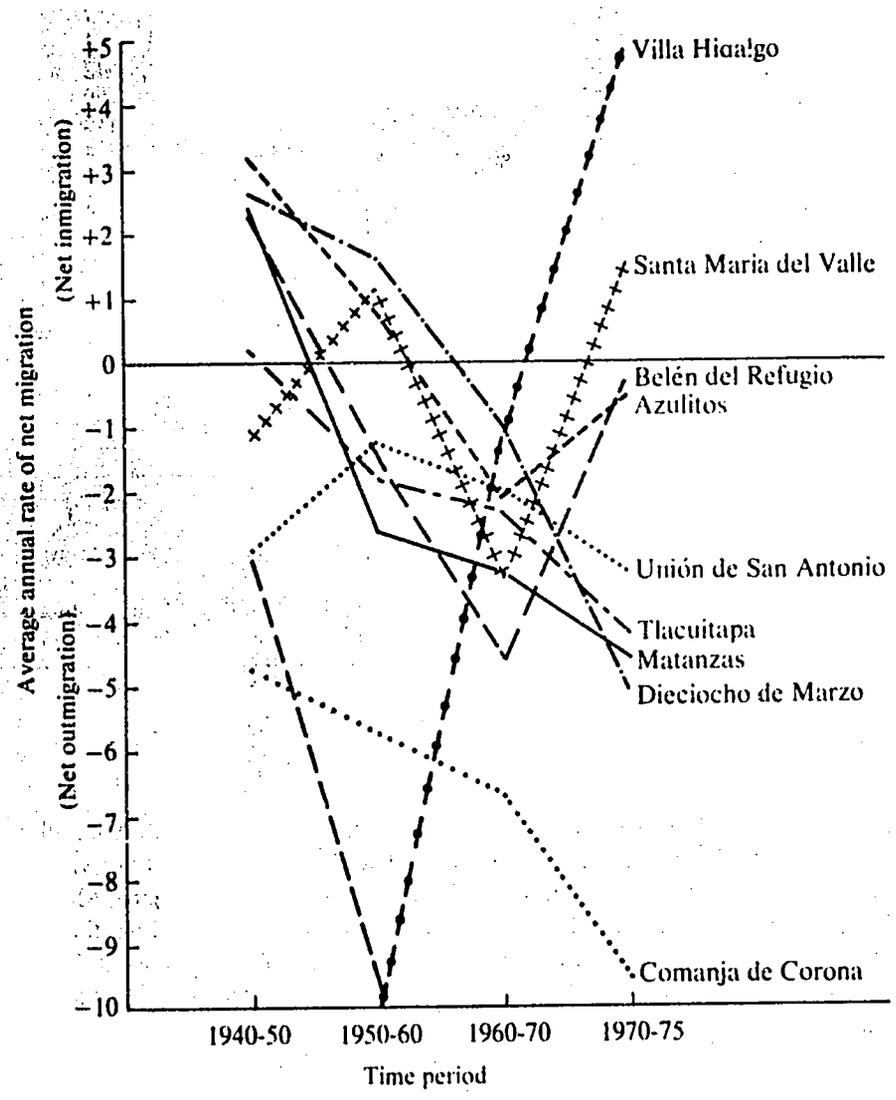
Given that the communities are growing more slowly than the rest of the country, despite high rates of natural population increase, outmigration becomes an extremely important factor in explaining their demographic profiles. Four communities gained population from immigration between 1940 and 1950, and again between 1950 and 1960; all were losing population from emigration by the 1960-1970 period. Since 1970 two of the communities returned to the positive net migration category, and in two more the outmigration rate declined. In five communities, however, outmigration rates increased significantly during this same time. These changes are illustrated graphically in Figure 2.

Our 1976 census shows that the high outmigration communities lost between 2.7 and 4.3 percent of their population from outmigration in a single year. A total of 652 individual household members and more than 150 whole families left the nine communities in that time. The impact of outmigration on Comanja de Corona, Tlacuitapa, Matanzas, and Dieciocho de Marzo in recent years has been so great that they registered negative growth rates between 1970 and 1975, even though births continued to outnumber deaths in these communities by a ratio of more than six to one. These communities had all been growing, though slowly, during the preceding decade.

The impact of outmigration on age and sex distribution is also visible in several communities. Our census respondents were asked the age, sex, birthplace and destination of household members who had lived at home in January 1975 but no longer lived there. The results are presented in Tables 1 and 2. (Persons who moved within the community are excluded from the tabulations.) Two-thirds of those migrating were in the prime reproductive age group, 15 to 29 years. More than 60 percent were males, however, many were likely to return to their home community after brief employment elsewhere. This can be inferred from the breakdown of migrants by destination. A much higher proportion of male migration is to destinations within the United States; our unstructured interviews indicate that most migration to the United States is temporary. By contrast, temporary wage-labor migration by females is rare. Interviews indicate that most females who migrate leave permanently.

Outmigration from Rural Mexican Communities

Figure 2
Average Annual Net Migration Rates, By Community



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Table 1
Age and Sex of Migrants Leaving Research Communities,
January 1975 - January 1976*

<i>Age group**</i>	<i>%</i>		<i>N</i>	
0-4 yrs.	1.8		7	
5-9	0.8		3	
10-14	3.0		12	
15-19	22.7		90	
20-24	30.1		119	
25-29	13.6		54	
30-34	6.8		27	
35-39	3.3		13	
40-44	3.5		14	
45-49	1.5		6	
50-54	2.8		11	
55-59	1.3		5	
60-64	1.0		4	
65-69	0.8		2	
70+	7.3		29	
	100.0		396	

<i>Sex†</i>	<i>Male</i>		<i>Female</i>	
	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>
All migrants	60.3	310	39.7	201
Migrants to Mexican destinations	55.4	209	44.6	168
Migrants to U.S.	75.4	101	24.6	33

*Source: Author's population census, January 1976.

**Among migrants whose age and destination are known.

†Among migrants whose sex is known.

Destinations of individuals leaving the communities between January 1975 and January 1976 are reported in Table 2. The destinations are overwhelmingly urban with large cities predominating, especially Guadalajara; Mexico City; León; Los Angeles, California; and Chicago, Illinois. More than 41 percent of the individual migrants leaving during this period went to the United States. In fact, only Guadalajara exceeded Los Angeles as a destination.

A larger proportion of families than individuals migrated to a nearby rural or small-town destination. Only a handful of families left for the United States. This supports our finding from unstructured interviews that most

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Table 2
Destinations of Individual Migrants Leaving Research Communities,
January 1975 - January 1976*

<i>Destination**</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>
Nearby rural communities	5.8	25
Nearby small towns (cabeceras)	4.2	18
Other rural communities or small towns in Jalisco	1.4	6
Major cities in Mexico		
Guadalajara, Jalisco	15.8	68
Mexico City	9.8	42
León, Guanajuato	5.3	23
Aguascalientes, Ags.	3.9	17
Monterrey, N.L.	1.6	7
Tijuana, Baja Calif.	1.4	6
Torreón, Coah.	1.2	5
Nuevo Laredo, Tamps.	0.9	4
San Luis Potosí, S.L.P.	0.7	3
Mexicali, Baja Calif.	0.5	2
Other localities in Mexico (except Jalisco)	6.5	28
Localities in United States		
Los Angeles, Calif.	13.5	58
Other California localities	12.8	55
Chicago, Illinois	3.5	15
Other Illinois localities	1.9	8
Dallas, Texas	0.7	3
San Antonio, Texas	0.5	2
Other Texas localities	3.5	15
Localities in other states	4.9	21
TOTAL	100.3	431

*Source: Author's population census, January, 1976.

**Among migrants whose destination is known.

migration across the border is temporary and involves only one or two members of a household. When whole families migrate, the move tends to be permanent, regardless of destination.

Both families and individuals migrating permanently showed strong preference for large cities, avoiding smaller ones in the region. This suggests that powerful incentives, mainly economic, would be needed to induce them to consider a destination outside of a major urban center. The migrants' prefer-

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ences reflect an accurate perception of the restricted economic opportunity structure in nearby small and medium-sized cities. Reconciling the rural population in larger provincial urban centers where they can be "serviced" and provided with nonagricultural jobs more easily and efficiently is an attractive alternative to the existing pattern of urban growth centered in a few large metropolitan areas. The success of such a policy would depend on the government's ability to greatly stimulate new jobs in provincial cities and reduce wage differences between provincial cities and metropolitan areas. It would also require a massive, sustained effort to make potential migrants aware of new opportunities in secondary cities.

Our data indicate that all of our communities except Unión de San Antonio and probably Comanja de Corona have experienced net immigration at some point in the last 35 years. This is reflected in Table 3. The proportion of community residents born in another locality ranged from 15.6 to 47.4 percent. Most migrants to the communities have come from nearby, smaller localities.

The high proportion of non-native residents in Azúlitos and Dieciocho de Marzo reflects their recent origins; they were created during the agrarian reform program of the 1930s. Even in these communities, however, limited immigration has occurred in recent decades. Other communities, especially Belén del Refugio, Santa María del Valle, Unión de San Antonio, and Villa Hidalgo, have received substantial numbers of migrants from nearby villages since 1950. Given the high rate at which native-born residents of these

Table 3
Percent of Research Communities' Population
Born in Other Localities*

Community	%	N
Azulitos	30.0	433
Belén del Refugio	31.6	585
Comanja de Corona	15.6	74
Dieciocho de Marzo	29.2	163
Matanzas	17.7	236
Santa María del Valle	47.4	742
Tlacuitapa	18.4	277
Unión de San Antonio	33.3	953
Villa Hidalgo	30.2	1,360

*Source: Author's population census, January 1976. Persons whose birthplace is unknown are excluded from the figures.

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communities were leaving between 1950 and 1975, fill-in migration—largely in response to better economic opportunities and living conditions—played a major role in stabilizing or expanding their populations during these years.

IMPACT OF OUTMIGRATION ON SENDING COMMUNITIES

The most important consequences of outmigration for social, economic and political life in the communities appear to stem from temporary migration to the United States. This section deals with the consequences of outmigration, most of it permanent, to destinations in Mexico.

The key factor that conditions outmigration's impact on these communities is natural population increase. Many negative economic and social consequences often associated with heavy outmigration have not materialized in most of the communities because it occurred while rates of natural population were increasing considerably. Until recently, natural increase, combined with immigration from surrounding communities, has more than offset population loss from outmigration in most communities. Since the population was constantly replenished, severe labor shortages did not develop, and a shift from labor-intensive to capital-intensive mechanized agriculture has not occurred.

Land held by departing migrants was not withdrawn from cultivation, so agricultural production levels have not been harmed by outmigration. Land was generally left with relatives, sold to incoming migrants, or kept by departing migrants who cultivated it with hired hands or sharecroppers. In Azulitos and Dieciocho de Marzo there is evidence that outmigration has led to greater concentration in land ownership; local ejido leaders have taken advantage of a clause in the agrarian reform law that requires an ejidatario who is absent from his plot for more than two years to forfeit its title. Using this clause, some leaders have illegally appropriated and consolidated the parcels of migrants who fail to return in time. In communities where the local political boss has less control over the land tenure system, there is no evidence that outmigration leads toward greater inequality in land distribution. In general, outmigration has benefited the communities by reducing population pressure on limited land resources. In several communities fragmentation of land holdings through the inheritance system has increased, along with the number of surviving children in each household. Yet this problem undoubtedly would have been much worse without heavy outmigration.

The most direct and important economic impact of migration on the communities comes from the cash migrants send back home to their relatives. Remittances from those who migrate to Mexican cities are less important than those from U.S.-based migrants for two reasons. Firstly, migrants stay-

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ing in Mexico generally earn and remit less. Secondly, migration within Mexico tends to be more permanent than movement to the United States and involves a higher share of whole families. Those left behind usually are grandparents or other members of the extended family who may need support. However, when only one or two members of the nuclear family migrate, they retain obligations to their closest relatives. In such cases, family members staying in the community may derive most of their income from migrant remittances. Their purchasing power may increase, benefiting local commerce and near-by small-town marketing centers.

Most migrant remittances go to individual families for use in buying goods, rather than for the collective benefit of the community. Migrants from several communities, however, have contributed cash to community development projects ranging from beautification efforts to important infrastructure investments like electrification or installing potable water and sewage systems. The number of contributions for collective goods seems to depend largely on the level of organization among migrants in their destination area. The communities most successful in getting former residents to finance community development projects, Unión de San Antonio and Santa Maria del Valle, have benefited from strong organizations formed by their hijos ausentes (absent sons) in major cities. These organizations seem to provide channels of communication and mechanisms of social control which induce migrants to meet their obligations to the home community. Local priests have also been successful in using networks of hijos ausentes to raise contributions regularly for their churches.

Outmigration also seems to have increased the capacity of some communities to secure government benefits through the brokerage services of permanent emigrants who have contacts in Mexico City or Guadalajara-based government agencies.

There appears, however, to be a threshold point in the outmigration process beyond which the costs of outmigration to the sending community outweigh the benefits. As long as close relatives of permanent emigrants remain behind, the flow of remittances is likely to continue and the local economy remains viable. When a large share of these nuclear family members die or move, an irreversible process of decline may begin. The loss of too many people of reproductive age may cause long-term, absolute depopulation and the community eventually may die. Among the communities we studied, only Comanja de Corona seems destined to such a fate, probably within the next ten years. However, three other communities which have been losing population in absolute terms since 1970 may find it difficult to reverse economic and demographic decline unless their losses through outmigration are offset by natural increase or immigration from surrounding areas.

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The existence of an apparent threshold point suggests that government agencies should exercise caution when seeking investments to make in rural community development. Without adequate investigation of local conditions, scarce resources could be squandered on communities which cannot be saved demographically. This, in turn, could deny aid to other communities which might remain viable with external stimulation. An excellent example of the kind of investment to avoid is the road built in 1972 to serve Comanja de Corona, whose chances for long-term survival were already poor. The road has only hastened the community's extinction.

PUBLIC POLICIES AS DETERMINANTS OF OUTMIGRATION

One unfortunate characteristic of the literature on migration in Third World countries is its lack of attention to public policies and their impact on migration flows. When public policy is discussed, it usually is to speculate which kinds would best reduce the flow of migrants from rural to urban areas. The possibility that government interventions might promote rather than brake outmigration is rarely considered. This study examines a range of government policies and programs as possible determinants of the rate and pattern of outmigration from the communities.

Mexico has no national population redistribution policies; the closest is its policy of promoting industrial decentralization with tax incentives. The government has, however, pursued a variety of programs which might be regarded as accidental, hidden or indirect population redistribution policies. These usually lack an explicit spatial dimension. While they may be rationalized as helping to reduce rural outmigration, they usually are formed without detailed consideration of their effects on national population distribution. This is particularly unfortunate since these indirect policies can often have more impact than those designed for that purpose.

The most important of these indirect policies tend to relate to economic development programs dealing with industrialization, import and export, pricing to favor industry over agriculture, minimum wage differences in rural and urban areas, infrastructure investment that favors large cities, and a variety of plans addressed to problems of rural poverty and underdevelopment. The policies of primary importance in this study are land reform, irrigation, programs that raise agricultural productivity through Green Revolution technology, agricultural price supports, policies to improve agricultural marketing, rural industrialization programs, and government investments in rural education, health care, potable water, sanitation, electrification, communications, and road building.

Government decisionmakers usually assume that most types of government investments in the rural sector encourage peasants to remain in their

home communities. This assumption, however, does not fare well against evidence collected in this study. Rather, most government interventions not only seem to have failed to reduce outmigration, they have in some cases apparently accelerated the outmigration process.

Land Reform

Two communities, Azultos and Dieciocho de Marzo, were established as ejidos under the federal government's agrarian reform program in the 1930s. Most of their initial inhabitants were employed previously as landless workers on adjacent haciendas. Ejidal land has been added since then to the communities of Tlacuitapa, Matanzas, Belén del Refugio, and Villa Hidalgo. In all communities affected by this type of government intervention, land reform seems to have made only a short-term impact on outmigration.

Azultos attracted migrants during the 1940s and managed to keep a positive net migration rate through the 1950s, though just barely. By the 1960s, however, the community was losing population through outmigration. In 1967 the government expanded the ejido, temporarily improving the man/land ratio, a factor our informants credit with reducing outmigration during the 1967-1975 period. Similarly, in another ejidal community, Dieciocho de Marzo, land reform seems to have retained and attracted population through the 1950s, then experienced net outmigration during the 1960s, a trend that increased sharply between 1970 and 1975. In this case, the shift from positive to negative population change was probably delayed by the community's high access to irrigation facilities. It is part of the most important government irrigation district in the region.

The ejido created in Matanzas had fewer acres and poorer soil than the communities just described. It experienced immigration only during the 1940s, and the rate of population loss from outmigration has increased steadily since then. The same pattern is true in Tlacuitapa, even though it has a much larger and richer tract of ejidal land. It is too soon to assess the demographic impact of ejidos created in Belén del Refugio and Villa Hidalgo because the land became available to community residents only in 1972. Community leaders in Belén, however, insist that the ejido there has helped retain population in recent years, as may be seen in the drop of the community's outmigration rate between 1970 and 1975. The two small ejidal tracts established near Villa Hidalgo are unlikely to have any major impact on demographic trends there especially since the community's occupational structure has shifted sharply away from agriculture since 1970.

The basic problem which seems to reduce the impact of land reform on outmigration in most of these communities stems from institutional rigidity of the production structures created by the agrarian reform program. The

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program was designed to meet the needs of the rural population at the time of distribution. Little provision was made to expand the ejidos to accommodate the numerous offspring of the original ejidatarios. Ejidal communities can petition the government to expand into surrounding territory, but few extensions have been granted, usually after decades of petitioning. Such ampliaciones granted by the government tend to provide only land which is not suitable for profitable cultivation. In the majority of cases, population growth has continued without a corresponding expansion of cultivatable land. The result has been a sharp deterioration of the man/land ratio, which has tended to lower the living standard in ejidos and increased dependency on temporary employment in the United States to supplement family incomes. The long-term outcome has been permanent outmigration. With completed families of eight or more children—only one of whom may inherit the rights to his father's land—the only alternatives available to other sons are to become a landless laborer or to migrate. Ejidal plots were too small to support many dependents and the soil quality was usually substantially worse than that of privately-held land in the same area. It comes as no surprise that the children of ejidatarios are among the most migration-prone groups in the community.

While land reform may reduce outmigration for ten to twenty years, its longer-term impact seems negligible. Our data strongly suggest that land reform cannot be a successful long-term deterrent to outmigration unless the program includes provisions to absorb population growth generated by natural increase.

Public Services and Community Infrastructure

The Mexican government's investments in the countryside, especially over the last five years, have broadened the public services and physical infrastructure in the rural communities. This has created several highly visible symbols of development: Roads, schools, dams, community health centers, stores to distribute price-controlled consumer goods, warehouses that buy crops and animal products at government-supported prices, and various other community facilities. While many such investments have increased the quality of life for rural dwellers, our study indicates that they have not provided incentives sufficient to keep them in the communities. In fact, investments in some social services probably accelerate outmigration by increasing population pressure on local land resources and nonagricultural employment opportunities.

Investments in health services, potable water, and sewage systems, for instance, have contributed much to reduced mortality rates, increasing

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population pressure on local resources. The same can be said of roads, which increase access to medical facilities in nearby towns or cities.

Investments in irrigation and marketing facilities, as well as agricultural price supports, have increased family income levels; this may have deterred some potential migrants from leaving. Respondents in Belén del Refugio cite the government's price supports program since 1970 as an important incentive for remaining on the land. In Santa Maria del Valle a new government purchasing facility for milk seems to have helped reduce outmigration in recent years.

Government interventions which increase family income, however, may not necessarily reduce rural outmigration, particularly temporary labor migration. This is apparent in communities like Belén del Refugio which have prospered in recent years. Numerous empirical studies have shown that below a certain income level most people do not see migration as a viable alternative. Once this income level, or threshold point is reached, however, an individual may consider migration to increase his economic possibilities. He may also invest more of his expanded income to educate his children, thus increasing their tendency to migrate. Often this investment in human resources rather than in productive resources makes good sense. Financing the preparation and successful migration of a child to the city to gain cash remittances seems to be a common strategy in the communities. In fact, the peasant's returns on this kind of investment often compare favorably with returns on investments in agricultural production.

Government investments in rural schools may also promote outmigration by raising the mobility aspirations of peasants' children, or by providing them with skills better fitted to urban than agricultural employment. Data from our next period of field work should help assess the effect of education on values and aspirations among the young. Clearly, though, the education received by children in these communities does not make them appreciably more employable in the home community. Primary education in rural Mexico is essentially basic literacy training. Even if emphasis should shift toward greater technical or vocational training, this would not reduce outmigration and might accelerate it unless new nonagricultural jobs are created locally at a sufficient rate.

The introduction of electricity in the 1960s and early 1970s led to a major improvement in the quality of life in several of the communities. In Santa Maria del Valle, for instance, this also led to the establishment of small factories for processing milk into cheese. After electricity was introduced to Villa Hidalgo in the late 1960s a textile industry flourished. In other communities, however, electrification has failed to expand local job opportunities to any significant degree; hence, it has made little contribution to reducing outmigration.

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The impact on outmigration of road construction seems to vary. In Comanja de Corona, the building of a road accelerated the exodus by making it easier for people to leave and by increasing their awareness of economic opportunities outside the community. This may also have occurred in Unión de San Antonio, which was connected to major paved highways by three feeder roads built since 1970. By contrast, the increased access to urban markets over the roads seems to have played a major role in the economic and demographic resurgence of Santa Maria del Valle since 1970. Labor-intensive methods of construction were used to build roads to Tlacuitapa, Comanja de Corona, Matanzas, and Unión de San Antonio under the government's program of "caminos de mano de obra" (labor-intensive, feeder road construction). Like other public works projects, these construction jobs reduced outmigration temporarily by creating demand for local labor. But the deterrent effect of such investments on outmigration does not seem to persist beyond completion of the project.

The effects government investments in public services and infrastructure have on outmigration depend on the local economic opportunity structure as it exists and changes over the years. Santa Maria del Valle, for instance, has switched since the 1960s from a net loser to a net gainer of population through migration. Public services and infrastructure were introduced to a community whose agriculture-based economy was quite viable because of abundant rainfall, relatively large private landholdings and proximity to a major marketing center. Some crops and milk were being sold before the government intervened in the 1960s and early 1970s. In Villa Hidalgo the government introduced electricity and other services into a stagnant agricultural economy but followed this a few years later by a major, privately-initiated expansion of nonagricultural employment opportunities. In these communities, government interventions interacted with other economic conditions to lower the rate of outmigration. In communities lacking such economic advantages, government investments in services and infrastructure have failed to reduce outmigration or accelerated it.

Again, our findings suggest that careful studies should be undertaken before government investments so as to identify communities most likely to be destabilized demographically by interventions, along with those least likely to be affected this way.

Rural Industrialization

Our research indicates that the most demographically destabilizing mix of public policies affecting rural communities might consist of social services, especially health care, and physical infrastructure, especially roads; all in

the absence of efforts to stimulate new local jobs, especially the nonagricultural variety.

The greatest flaw in the Mexican government's rural development strategy appears to be its lack of attention to expanding the local employment base needed to support a rural population that is growing rapidly in response to the government-induced decline in mortality rates. Our research indicates that programs to create nonagricultural jobs for rural dwellers might be the most effective policy to reduce outmigration. Villa Hidalgo, for example, was losing population through outmigration at a rate of 9.9 percent a year during the 1950s. Between 1970 and 1975, however, it gained population through immigration at a rate of 4.8 percent a year. The cause for change was the creation of several jobs in small textile factories established in the community since 1967.

Many peasants in our communities realize that their long-term needs cannot be met by simply distributing more land for agricultural production. Soil and climate, fluctuations in prices, and uncertain access to credit and fertilizer make agriculture too precarious in most of the communities. Moreover, the anticipated natural population increase cannot be absorbed by the agricultural sector, even with expanded land resources. When asked, "What would have to be done to keep so many people from migrating?" residents are quick to respond: "Bring some industries here." One community leader contends that outmigration from his community would virtually cease if factory jobs paying 60 pesos a day, about twice the current wage for agricultural laborers, were made available. His argument, of course, would probably apply more to the young than to the older residents who have grown accustomed to the higher wage scales in the United States. Moreover, it assumes unrealistically that the lack of decently-paying jobs is the sole factor affecting decisions to migrate. Still, evidence indicates that government programs which expand nonagricultural employment opportunities would probably have a major impact on migration.

Such opportunities might be created in the rural communities or nearby small cities easily accessible by public transportation or bicycle. Labor-intensive industries which process agricultural or animal products would be especially appropriate. As Villa Hidalgo demonstrates, however, small-scale industries which manufacture various nonagricultural products might also prove economically viable. This kind of industry might be created by direct public investment or by providing private entrepreneurs with incentives like credit, tax exemptions and improved marketing systems which are less biased against small producers of manufactured goods.

Unfortunately, efforts to stimulate small-scale, labor-intensive rural industrialization receive low priority in Mexico's rural development strategy. Although the share of government revenues spent on rural development has

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increased from 12 to 20 percent in the last five years, few of these resources go to industrialization. The government's main investment in this area has been a program to create cooperatively managed industries in ejido communities, under the FONAFE (Fondo Nacional de Fomento Ejidal). This program, begun in 1971, is restricted to ejido communities. No FONAFE projects were operating in any of the Los Altos region's 17 municipios in 1975. The Mexican Ministry of Industry and Commerce also operates a small program for rural industrialization, but its resource commitment is tiny. Moreover, no projects have been initiated outside the region's principal cities.

Since the 1940s, most government investments in the rural sector, as well as investments by the World Bank and other international institutions, have favored large scale producers of agricultural products, located mostly in high-productivity, irrigated districts. When these investments create jobs, they do so indirectly by increasing the demand for labor by large-scale producers. Since large-scale producers have not been compelled to use labor-intensive technology, the impact of these investments on rural unemployment and underemployment has been slight. Of course, agricultural production, not job creation, has been the government's main goal in investing in the rural sector. By reducing the need to import basic food commodities, Mexico hopes to lessen the balance of payments problem. The problem of rising food import costs can be addressed most efficiently, at least in the short run, by continuing to assist large-scale agricultural producers with massive infrastructure investments and other benefits. The goal of reducing rural outmigration or diverting migrants from the largest cities, however, is ill-served by such a strategy.

Human Fertility Regulation

The impact of Mexico's new population control (*paternidad responsable*) program on outmigration cannot yet be assessed. In 1972 and 1973 the federal government set up family planning clinics in most major cities; contraceptive information is reportedly being provided by some rural health care centers. For the most part, however, government efforts at population control have centered in urban areas. Contraceptive information and services remained conspicuously unavailable in our communities through 1975. Indeed, the widespread changes in attitude toward ideal family size which are necessary for effective fertility regulation are not evident in these communities.

Our interviews suggest, however, that much more could be accomplished in this area with adequate government commitment; opposition of the Catholic Church is no longer the principal obstacle, our respondents say.

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Instead, the most important problems seem to be lack of access to information and medical advice, low family incomes, low education and low financial security for older people. The problem with the elderly may be eased by the Mexican government's current effort to incorporate the rural population into the national social security system. If this succeeds, the need for large families to provide financial security for parents in their old age will be reduced.

MIGRATION TO THE UNITED STATES

Originally, our project focused on internal migration, primarily from rural communities to urban centers within Mexico. We soon discovered, however, that at least 40 percent of the outmigration involved movement to the United States; about 70 percent of this is illegal.

Data for this section of our report are drawn from in-depth, unstructured interviews with nearly 80 residents, the 1976 census, local birth and death records, participant observation, and archival research in Mexico and the United States. Our in-depth interviews have been conducted with migrants recently returned from the United States, the wives of migrants now working there and with community leaders, merchants, priests, doctors and teachers.

Historical Background

A notable characteristic of migration to the United States from the Los Altos region is its persistence over time. Temporary migration dates back at least to 1884, when the railroad linking Mexico City to El Paso, Texas—through the region—was completed. Even before the Revolution of 1910, there were substantial numbers of people from Los Altos working in the mines of Arizona, Montana, and other western states. The movement was greatly accelerated by the so-called "Cristero" rebellion, a major civil insurrection which devastated the Los Altos economy from 1927 to 1929. Petitions for land reform sent to the Mexican Government by *Alteño* peasants during the 1920s and 1930s sometimes stressed heavy emigration to the United States as evidence of the desperate economic situation in their communities. During the Great Depression, petitions sought land redistribution to provide economic opportunities for the thousands of Mexican workers driven out of the United States by unemployment and by the forced repatriation program carried out from 1929 to 1932 by the U.S. Government.

Recent historical research by other scholars suggests that this early wave of migration to the United States was an important, though generally overlooked, feature of rural Mexico from the late nineteenth century to 1930. In

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the United States, however, the phenomenon becomes a public concern only during periods of economic downturn and high unemployment.

The pattern we found for most of our research communities shows a gradual, long-term increase, both in legal and illegal movement. In most of these communities today it is rare to find a family in which at least one member has not worked in the United States within the last two years. In fact, most local government officials—*presidentes municipales*, *delegados*, *comisarios ejidales*—have a history of migration to the United States. As population pressure increases, there appears to be more movement across the border than ever before. The sons of *ejidatarios* who received plots during the agrarian reforms of the 1930s are finding it impossible to support their families on income from their fathers' land. As a result, kinship networks spread ever farther into the interior of the United States.

Who Migrates?

U.S.-bound migrants from the communities are predominantly male. (A few unmarried young women go, mostly to work in factories, but usually they migrate as part of a family.) Most of the men are from ages 17-45, while the prime age group seems to be from 17-29. Among our interviewees there were also individuals who made their first trip at the age of 12 or 14, as well as a 68-year old man who continues to spend several months each year working in the fields of California. Most migrants have had three or four years of primary school. The majority are single when they migrate to the United States for the first time. Married men leave their wives and children behind primarily because of the high cost of maintaining them in the United States. By going alone they can save more money faster.

Landless agricultural workers—*peones*, *jornaleros* and *medieros* (sharecroppers)—are by far the most migration-prone groups. Following them are the *ejidatarios*, or recipients of land under agrarian reform, many with plots too small or of such poor quality, that they cannot provide an adequate family income. In *ejido* communities, it is the landless sons of *ejidatarios* who constitute the most migration-prone group. Small private landholders (*pequeños propietarios*) and small merchants or artisans are the least likely to migrate. Private landholders usually have more land and considerably higher incomes than *ejidatarios* and landless workers. They can afford to buy more livestock, particularly dairy cattle, which provide a steadier income that is less dependent upon adequate rainfall for crop growing.

Those who migrate legally are usually middle-aged men with above-average incomes and long histories of employment in the United States. This group can afford to obtain legal entry papers. Often they have developed

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close relationships with U.S. employers who can assist them in legalizing their status, or they have relatives with citizenship in the United States who can also help them obtain papers. Those who migrate illegally are among the poorest in the community. People at the very bottom of the economic scale are not likely to migrate to the United States, however, because they even lack the resources needed to cover transportation and the fees charged by the coyotes—the professional smugglers who get migrants across the border and to a place of employment.

Migratory Patterns

Some residents migrate to the United States only when there is severe economic necessity caused by a drought, crop failure or some other temporary condition which severely reduces the family income. They are target migrants, seeking only to earn enough to maintain their families until the next harvest, pay off a debt, or maybe purchase a bullock to cultivate their land.

Others are professional migrant workers who spend at least six months a year working in the United States. They go until they are too old, until their economic situation is satisfactory, or their children are self-supporting, enabling them to maintain an adequate living standard without seasonal employment in the United States. In these cases, migration becomes an accepted, inevitable feature of family life. Because of the lack of local income-earning opportunities, wives and children simply resign themselves to the temporary absence of the father. When the men return, they spend their time tending livestock or local business interests, working at odd jobs, fixing up their houses, or just vacationing with their families.

Although most professional migrants have obtained legal entry papers, most have made at least one illegal entry into the United States. Nearly all of the older men also spent at least one period legally in the United States as contracted laborers, under the so-called "bracero" agreements between the United States and Mexico during the 1940s and later from 1950 to 1964. When the last bracero agreement ended, they continued to go to the United States illegally until they could obtain entry papers.

A few of the middle-aged men who now migrate back and forth between the United States and Mexico were born in the United States to parents working there during the early waves of emigration in the 1920s. They returned to Mexico as young children during the Depression or the repatriation period. Then during the mid-1950s they began returning seasonally to the United States—legally, of course, because of their U.S. citizenship by birth. In such families several generations have participated in migratory movement, with fathers and sons often working in the United States simultaneously, though usually for different employers.

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The preceding discussion indicates that most migration to the United States is temporary. The average length of stay seems to be from six to eight months, with many of the migrants leaving in March and returning in early December. The longest period of continuous employment in the United States among our interviewees was nine years, but for most long-stayers, two or three consecutive years seems to be the norm.

Motives for Migration

Why do they go? Except for the professional migrants who have more or less made it economically, the decision to go to the United States seems to be prompted in most cases by sheer economic necessity, rather than a desire to accumulate capital. The flow seems to be most sensitive, over time, to fluctuations in rainfall. In those communities almost totally dependent on agriculture, severe drought or rains which arrive too late for the crop-raising cycle, seem to produce massive emigration to the United States. Even in climatically good years, however, poor soil, erosion, low wages for landless workers, the high cost or unavailability of chemical fertilizers, lack of credit, and lack of employment opportunities for those entering the labor force combine to produce high rates of emigration.

One of the most basic factors promoting outmigration from the communities is too many people for the amount of cultivable land and the number of nonagricultural employment opportunities. The average completed family in these communities has about eight children. Mortality rates have fallen sharply since 1940 because of improved health care and sanitation, and fertility rates remain quite high. Most families practice no birth control, due to low education, low incomes, and the pervasive influence of the Catholic Church.

However, even if population growth were brought into line with employment opportunities in such communities, emigration to the United States would undoubtedly continue, as long as the wage differential for unskilled or low-skilled jobs between the United States and rural Mexico remains as large as it is today. The bulk of the population in the communities is landless, with wages for landless workers in these communities averaging from 25 to 30 pesos (\$2 to \$2.80) per day. By contrast, those who worked recently in U.S. agricultural jobs received between \$2.50 and \$3.00 per hour; those who held factory jobs received between \$4 and \$5 per hour. Some hold two jobs simultaneously, working 16 hours a day for \$60 to \$65. The rule of thumb is that community residents can earn and save more in one to three months of work in the United States than they could in an entire year at home.

This phenomenon can be better understood by taking as a point of departure the rational individual who attempts to maximize utility (wealth, prestige, security) through migration. For most residents, going to the United

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States is a rational decision, in terms of differential economic returns for one's labor, as well as the high probability of finding a job. While some who migrate may feel they are being exploited by U.S. employers as a source of cheap labor, they are just as likely to feel that by emigrating they are escaping even more egregious exploitation by the local political boss or wealthy landowners who pay starvation wages for longer hours of labor, under poorer conditions, than most low-status jobs in the United States.

For many peasants, illegal migration is a sensible gamble. The risk of deportation or not being able to find a job, they figure, is substantially less than the risk of having an inadequate income if they stayed at home. The uncertainties of weather, fluctuations in market prices, and frequent scarcities of materials like fertilizer make farming a precarious venture. Under such circumstances, migration can be seen as a rational process of risk reduction rather than risk taking.

Along with economic rationality, there are other factors which make emigration appeal to certain communities and age groups. Young, single men, for instance, may migrate to escape parental authority, to demonstrate their machismo, or to save enough to marry and form their own home. Community tradition or norm structure may also play a major part. Several of the communities have developed norms of attitude and behavior which strongly support migration to the United States. It is a highly institutionalized feature of community life, with little or no social stigma attached to illegal migration. One who is caught and deported has simply had bad luck; one who evades the INS increases his status among his peers.

Where Do Migrants Go, and Why?

Migrants going to the United States favor southern California, Texas, and the Chicago area. For those seeking agricultural jobs, California is preferred over Texas because of its higher wages. Those with papers and money for transportation tend to seek better-paying jobs in the industrial, construction, or service sectors of northern cities like Chicago and Detroit. Illegal migrants with limited resources usually prefer California because agricultural jobs are plentiful and quick to obtain. The poorest migrants tend to prefer small towns or rural areas with lower living cost.

Migrants who went to the United States instead of major cities in Mexico were consistent in their reasons: Lower wages and greater problems finding work make Mexican cities less attractive. Those who migrate to Mexico City or Guadalajara may not live much better than they did at home. They say most large Mexican cities are terrible places to live, with too many people, a frantic pace, and too much traffic, noise, and pollution. Respondents say the United States offers superior living conditions in small towns or suburbs.

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Illegal Entry into the United States

Raising the money to finance a trip to the United States is no major problem for most migrants. They may sell some cattle or borrow from relatives or a local money-lender. Those going illegally can buy false birth certificates or entry credentials for about 500 pesos, or \$40; there is heavy traffic in such documents in many Los Altos communities. Some migrants obtain tourist visas, then overstay them to work. Most travel to the border by bus but the more affluent with papers sometimes go by plane. Migrants who cross the border by fording the Rio Grande in Texas are known as *mojados*, or wetbacks; those who vault the wire fences along the California border are known as *alambres*. Some have crossed by crawling through drain pipes extending across the border between cities.

Most of those entering the United States illegally use coyotes, or professional migrant smugglers. Easily found in the bars and streets of most Mexican border cities and "staging" communities, they show the migrant where and when to cross the border. Once across, the migrant meets the coyote, who then takes him to his destination. The going price ranges from \$250 for most places in California to \$400 for the northern cities like Chicago. Charges depend on distance and difficulties with surveillance. Some coyotes offer a package deal which includes help crossing the border, transportation to the place of employment, and falsified birth certificate and social security card. The minimum cost of an illegal migration is usually between \$240 and \$320. In some cases, an employer will pay for the coyote's services and have him recruit workers in the community.

Coyotes and the unscrupulous border-state lawyers who charge exorbitant fees to migrants seeking to arrange legal entry or residence papers do business at the rate of millions of dollars a year. This unfortunate business stems directly and inevitably to restrictions limiting immigration to the United States from the combined countries of Latin America to 120,000 a year. This results in waiting periods up to two and one-half years for a U.S. visa.

The migrants we interviewed say that crossing the border and evading the INS is the easiest part of the migration experience. The big problem is finding a job. Even those who made six or more illegal entries were rarely arrested more than once. As INS Commissioner Leonard Chapman admits: "The guy we apprehend has to be very unlucky indeed." The 2,000-mile border is so porous that some migrants working in southern California were able to spend their weekends in Mexican border cities.

The migrant who is caught far from the border after working several weeks in the United States usually returns to his home community. Those caught soon after crossing the border usually make another attempt within the next few days. The second try almost always succeeds.

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Migrants who work in the fields run a higher risk of capture than those employed in factories, restaurants, or other urban-based businesses because they are more visible when INS agents arrive. Respondents noted that the raids come less frequently during peak work periods, leading them to believe that the employers and the INS make tacit agreements to ensure an adequate work force during harvest and other times when migrant labor is in high demand.

Migrant Participation in the U.S. Labor Market

At least 60 percent of the migrants from our communities usually work in the United States as agricultural laborers, harvesting lettuce, tomatoes, melons, oranges, and other kinds of fruit. Others work in factories that process agricultural products. Most men who have worked north of the border for any length of time have also held jobs in the service, commercial, or industrial sectors. The range of jobs held is broad, involving nurseries, construction firms, railroads, foundries, shipyards, cement companies, furniture factories, copper mines, restaurants, hotels and motels, car washes, butcher shops—even an employment agency. Those migrating legally are more likely to find nonagricultural jobs than illegal migrants.

Those migrating for the first time usually begin in the agricultural sector. Many prefer to do so. Field jobs are easier to find, and starting wages for menial unskilled industrial jobs are often so low that a migrant can earn money faster in the fields. This is especially true if he is paid on a piece-work basis for the number of cartons or packing crates he fills a day. On the other hand, this kind of work is less stable than most industrial or service jobs, and the risk of detection by the INS is higher.

Most migrants seem to find work within a week or two after crossing the border. Most jobs come from directly approaching potential employers, but some migrants use relatives or friends. The time needed to find work declines with each trip to the United States; professional migrants often return each year to work for the same employer, who helps them obtain the papers they need.

Most concern over the influx of illegal migrants stems from their alleged impact on the U.S. labor market. Labor union leaders, government officials and some Chicano spokesmen argue that the illegal migrants tend to be concentrated in the low-wage, low-skill sector of the labor market where they compete with disadvantaged Americans, especially Blacks and Chicanos.

Interviews with migrants who were supervisors in the United States suggest that their employers preferred to hire illegal workers for certain kinds of less desirable jobs, particularly in agriculture. The illegal worker is

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highly productive, dependable, and willing to accept dirty, physically punishing tasks, low wages, poor working conditions, and low job security. Yet these same job characteristics, our respondents say, make this work unattractive to U.S. citizens, particularly the young. In agriculture, the main impact of illegal migration seems to be the depression of wage scales for certain types of unskilled jobs—not the displacement of native Americans from them. Illegal migrants are not necessarily paid less than legal workers. Rather, wages paid for certain types of jobs, particularly in agriculture, are uniformly low. Ironically, the migrants with papers who complain about illegal migration lowering U.S. wage scales have made previous illegal trips themselves.

The supervisors we interviewed contend that many low-skill, low-wage agricultural jobs now held by illegal Mexican workers would be eliminated through mechanization if the supply of illegal migrant labor were stopped. Raising minimum wage levels and improving working conditions to attract American workers would probably have the same effect. Even if the jobs survived stiffer U.S. regulatory measures, the nature of the work would probably continue to deter most American job-seekers.

Our study suggests, however, that Mexican migrants—both legal and illegal—compete directly with U.S. citizens for certain types of nonagricultural jobs, particularly in factories and construction. Yet the degree of competition varies considerably among job categories. For some work the migrants—with their low levels of skill and education, and their lack of facility with English—are severely handicapped in competing with American workers. The problem of job competition, therefore, seems far more complex than most critics of Mexican migration admit. Blanket charges that “illegal Mexicans are taking jobs away from disadvantaged Americans” need considerable qualification. The impact of illegal Mexican migration on job-seeking by Americans seems to vary significantly from one sector of the economy to another, as well as among job categories within sectors.

Tax Users or Tax Payers?

A second major concern regarding the impact of Mexican immigration is the use of government-sponsored services and programs by the migrants. Contrary to popular beliefs, migrants from our communities seem to use such programs remarkably little. Of 30 respondents questioned, only three said they ever collected unemployment compensation. When work runs out, they simply return to Mexico. None had received free medical care, food stamps, or welfare benefits. The only three with children enrolled in U.S. schools had entered the country legally.

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On the other hand, nearly all respondents paid U.S. social security taxes, and about half had personal income taxes withheld from their wages. Some paid property and school taxes on houses. All paid state sales taxes where required. Thus, all evidence indicates that these migrants paid into the U.S. government treasury more in taxes than they collected in benefits from tax-using programs. Our findings on this are corroborated by another major study of illegal aliens in the United States which found that Mexican migrants were much less likely than aliens from other countries to use tax-supported programs and services (North and Houstoun 1975).

Impact of Migration to the U.S. on Migrants' Communities of Origin

In most of our communities, cash sent home by migrants working in the U.S. is tremendously important, both to the household and to the community. The migrants and wives we interviewed said they regularly sent home from \$100 to \$300 a month. Sent by mail, the funds usually come in a check or money order which can be cashed in local stores or nearby banks.

Because researchers disagree on the amount of remittances and their importance to the Mexican economy, we have begun collecting data from the records of one of Mexico's largest banks, the Banco Nacional de México, which handles about 24 percent of all banking transactions in Mexico. The average amount remitted according to the bank's records on a randomly selected day was \$95.53. Since most migrants said they sent remittances at least twice a month, this national data corresponds closely with the \$200-a-month average reported by our respondents.

The Banco Nacional de México data show that migrants in California, Illinois, and Texas were the principal sources of remittances. This distribution corresponds with our interview data on migrants' destinations. Beneficiaries of remittances processed by the bank were located not only in high poverty Mexican states like Zacatecas and Michoacán, but also in the Federal District that includes Mexico City. This could reflect the large number of Federal District residents with relatives permanently established in the United States, or it could indicate that temporary migration across the border does not necessarily cease when peasants move to Mexico City. (Cornelius 1975)

Apart from the money migrants send back, most also bring back between \$50 and \$4,000; the average is from \$250 to \$350. Most earnings, however, are sent back to relatives or spent in the United States for food, housing, clothes and entertainment. The amount remitted in recent years seems to have declined, because of inflated living costs. Even so, the remittances are crucial to the maintenance of the migrants' families at home.

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Young, single migrants seem to remit substantially less than older men. They also tend to spend more on consumer goods like clothing, stereo sets, and cars, as well as on alcohol and gambling. While a sizable number in all age groups seems to squander most of their earnings on nonessential consumer goods and entertainment, most migrants make some kind of investment in real estate or producer goods after they have returned home. The most frequent investment is in land, either for cultivation or building a home, but others have invested in livestock, house construction or improvements, pick-up trucks, tractors, irrigation pumps, furniture or education and health care for their families. Those most successful in the United States often try to start a small business and may even take their families on vacation to Acapulco or Mexico City.

Consequences of migrant investments in small businesses can be dramatic. Before 1967, one of our nine communities was so economically depressed it was losing many inhabitants through permanent emigration. Most of those remaining depended on income earned in the United States. Since 1970, however, the community has grown at a rate of 9.2 percent a year, attracted migrants from surrounding villages and towns, and experienced the greatest boom in its 137-year history. There is, in fact, a significant labor shortage in the community. What happened? In 1967, a migrant who had worked nine years in the United States used the \$1,600 he saved to buy two small, hand-operated cloth-weaving machines. Setting up a small factory in his home, he manufactured women's and children's clothing for sale in nearby cities. As the business profited, his neighbors took note. Today the community has about 180 small clothing factories, home-based enterprises that supply clothing to department stores in many cities. Some of the primitive machines have been replaced by sophisticated, motorized machinery—virtually all of it bought with U.S. earnings. Those who continue to work in the United States today are generally middle-aged men who leave families behind to operate the home factories while they earn more investment money to expand their textile production. Few family heads do this, however, because most are able to finance business expansion through locally-generated profits and credit from private banks. One family in four owns a textile factory; the others depend primarily on earnings from jobs in these factories.

This is our most striking success story. In two other communities, most savings from U.S. employment seem to have been invested in durable consumer goods like passenger cars and household appliances, rather than producer goods. The ratio of producer to consumer goods has improved, but it is not nearly as high as in the first community. In all communities, however, local commerce has benefited substantially from migrant remittances and investments.

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Some returned migrants have also introduced agricultural innovations picked up in U.S. field work, like the cultivation of strawberries and carrots. Contrary to the fears of some Mexican government officials, emigration to the United States does not seem to depress agricultural production. The emigrant who owns land either leaves his family in charge of cultivating and harvesting, rents it out, or enters into a sharecropping agreement with another resident. Land rarely lies idle during the migrant's absence. Even those who move permanently to the United States seem to retain their community landholdings; by keeping them in production with hired hands, they supplement the family income. Thus, the migrant in the United States may actually generate income-earning opportunities at home by delegating agricultural tasks, putting more land into cultivation, or by establishing small, nonagricultural businesses in the community.

While decades of migration to the United States may not have improved economic conditions significantly in many rural sending communities, it is probable that their economic situation would be much worse today if heavy migration to the United States had not occurred. The internal distribution of income and land within most of our communities is probably as unequal as in the 1930s. Yet the ability of the poorest third or half of the population to supplement their incomes and expand their landholdings with earnings from the United States has prevented a far more unequal distribution of wealth.

Neither Mexico nor rural Mexico is the appropriate unit of analysis in any attempt to assess costs and benefits of migration to the United States; a much more differentiated approach is necessary. Any cost/benefit analysis must take into account the probable economic situation of the family or community in the absence of migration to the United States, given the limited supply of cultivatable land, the slow rate of job creation locally, and the extremely high rate of natural population increase in most rural Mexican communities since 1940. Finally, to the extent that temporary migration to the United States has reduced permanent outmigration from rural communities to Mexico's cities, it also has reduced the permanent loss of valuable human resources needed for the long-term economic development of these communities.

Social and Political Consequences

It is important that returned migrants often assume prominent leadership roles in their communities, either as a government representative or at the head of a committee that seeks community services and other improvements through negotiations with the government. Moreover, community emigrants permanently established in the United States are often an important source of contributions for key community improvements like electrification and potable water systems. The Mexican Government usually requires the re-

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ceiving community to raise a large part of the needed funds on its own before the projects are approved. The U.S. emigrant population, as well as permanent emigrants in large Mexican cities, often provide crucial aid in raising these matching funds.

Migration to the United States has also stimulated the demand for education in the communities. Migrants often return with a heightened sense of appreciation for the economic advantages of formal education and try hard to keep their children in school, in hopes that the next generation will not have to make the sacrifices or work at the degrading, physically debilitating jobs their fathers had in the United States.

Migration impact on these communities has not been completely positive, however. Social dislocations have occurred; some migrants have abandoned wives and children to form new families in the United States. Some of the younger, single migrants have reportedly returned with a drug problem. These are the kinds of social problems most often emphasized by local priests in their discussions of the migration phenomenon. The priests are hardly unbiased observers, however, since they find it more difficult to maintain their traditionally strong control over the local population after several decades of heavy emigration to the United States, and they often complain about migration as a spiritually as well as morally corrupting experience. More objective observers in these communities report that family abandonment, drug abuse, and other social problems resulting from migration are rare.

Why Migrants Return to Mexico

Much debate over the impact of Mexican migration on the U.S. economy and social services turns on the question of whether Mexican migrants and their families settle permanently in the United States, or maintain a pattern of seasonal or shuttle migration. To explore this question further, we asked each migrant interviewee why he returned to Mexico after his first period of employment. Why did he not remain in the United States and form a family there, if single, or if married, bring his family across the border to live? The factor cited most frequently was high living costs. Even some migrants who have become more or less permanently established in the United States told us they plan to return to Mexico permanently. Though their wages are much higher in the United States, they complain that they are saving less due to the spiralling cost of living.

Migrants also dislike other aspects of life in the United States, such as the severe winters, environmental pollution, racial discrimination, vice and other corrupting influences on the young, the fast pace of life, and the fact that one must work constantly to survive—there are no periods of relative inactivity, as there are at several points in the agricultural cycle in Mexico.

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Many of those who migrate to the United States never seriously consider moving there permanently. Most simply plan to return to Mexico when their seasonal jobs end, when they have saved a certain amount of money, or when cold weather arrives. A strike at work may prompt a swift return to Mexico. Others return because the separation from their families is intolerable, because a child is about to be born, or because of illness. Still others return because they have a leave of absence from their employer in Mexico and they would lose their job if they failed to return on schedule. Ejidatarios must, by law, return after two years, or lose their plot of land. Differences in social status or prestige are an important concern for others. One fifty-year-old informant, who was born in the United States and spends six months each year working there, told us:

In the States, I am just another pebble on the beach. Over here I am *Mr. Sánchez*. Here, people come to me, in this little town. I feel like I am living. Over there I don't, because I am just the Mexican who works with so-and-so. And after 17 years, that belittles you!

For whatever reason most of those who migrate to the United States do not want to stay there permanently. Even those who have lived there many years, improving their economic situation substantially, hope to return eventually to Mexico, perhaps to start a small business, buy a ranch, or make some capital investment enabling them to make a comfortable living in their home community.

Implications for U.S. Immigration Policy

One of our informants has worked for many years as a ranch foreman in California, hiring and supervising both legal and illegal migrants from Mexico. He argues strongly that if the United States and Mexican governments were to come to an agreement allowing unrestricted entry of Mexican migrant workers for a maximum stay of six months each year, at least 75 percent would return to Mexico on schedule. As he put it: "More than six months of field labor is too much for anybody." While his argument is less applicable to migrants in nonagricultural jobs, they also seem to have a well-established pattern of temporary migration.

Such arguments should not, however, be interpreted as endorsement of a new bracero agreement modeled on the earlier contract labor agreements between the United States and Mexico. Quite the contrary: All of the migrants we interviewed oppose a new agreement of this type, which would bind them to a single U.S. employer, who could alter their pay scale, pay them irregularly, or commit other abuses at will. They argue that exploitation of Mexican workers was much worse under a system in which the migrant had no opportunity to switch employers or to determine the duration

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of his job with a particular employer. They now earn more, faster, as undocumented workers than they did as braceros during the 1950s and early 1960s. They strongly favor an intergovernmental agreement to legalize entry into the United States for specified periods of employment; this would at least reduce the physical dangers of unassisted illegal border crossings, and exploitation by coyotes and others who profit by the existing situation. But they strongly oppose any restrictions on their movements or their opportunities to switch employers once inside the United States. What they seek, in other words, is free market competition among employers who seek their services.

From what we have learned about illegal migration, it would appear that nearly any kind of restrictive legislation enacted by the U.S. Congress would have only minimal impact on the flow of Mexican workers unless it were accompanied by a huge, and incredibly costly, enforcement mechanism. The mind boggles at the kind of bureaucratic and policing apparatus which would be required to meet this task, and at the potential threat to civil liberties for native Americans which such an apparatus might pose.

It is impossible to legislate away the tremendous migratory pressures that exist at the U.S.-Mexican border which result from the enormous wage differences between the two countries, severe socioeconomic inequalities within Mexico, and perception of the United States by large sectors of the Mexican poor as a land of opportunity. Under these conditions, the most draconian police actions might fail to discourage the prospective illegal migrant. It is hard to overestimate the determination of a landless peasant with malnourished, chronically ill children when he cannot find adequately paid work locally and sees no prospect of improving his lot significantly. The nature of the migratory phenomenon and the difficulty of containing it were expressed by an illegal migrant who had been caught for the third time. "What can we do to prevent you from doing this again?" an INS agent asked him: His reply: "Shoot me."

Thus, unless circumstances change, the Mexican illegal workers will probably continue to enter the United States in increasing numbers. Short-term control efforts should focus on the U.S. demand for migrant labor rather than the Mexican labor supply. They should concentrate on those sectors of the U.S. economy where illegal Mexican migrants and disadvantaged Americans are competing directly for jobs, especially nonagricultural. The levying of stiff fines against U.S. employers who hire illegal migrants is probably the least desirable policy for limiting demand. Within the agricultural sector, at least, such a plan probably would depress wage scales further, eliminate any fringe benefits the illegal workers have, and remove the migrants and their contributions from the social security system as employers "go underground" to avoid government penalties. Rather than crim-

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inalize the hiring process, it would be better to improve labor laws and enforce them better, making it more expensive for employers to use illegal migrant labor. This would be more effective in reducing demand for migrant labor and in reducing exploitation of the migrants who are employed.

The consequences for Mexico of a severe restriction on the flow of migrants to the United States must also be assessed with care. The safety valve function of migration by the most economically disadvantaged sectors of the Mexican population should not be underestimated. Temporary migration to the United States tends to reduce permanent outmigration from poor rural communities to large Mexican cities. It enables poor rural families to stay at home and achieve socioeconomic mobility without abandoning their rural base. We feel that a severe restriction in the flow of migrants to the United States would considerably increase permanent outmigration to large Mexican cities, along with a sharp increase in the frequency of land invasions and peasant confrontations with landowners and government officials in rural areas.

It could be argued that the long-term solution to the problem of illegal migration lies in fundamental structural changes in the Mexican society and economy, and that such changes are likely to occur only by pressuring the government for large-scale land redistribution. The massive flow of funds into many rural communities from migrants in the United States has undoubtedly taken pressure off the Mexican government to provide rural income-earning opportunities. If the flow stops, the most likely outcome is accelerated migration to Mexico's largest cities. This would increase the exorbitant social costs of these massive urban agglomerations instead of bringing out a broadly based, well-organized movement to force structural change in the countryside.

The Mexican government could do much more to reduce migratory pressures along the border, at least in the medium-to-long run. Much greater attention could be devoted to programs which create nonagricultural employment opportunities for rural dwellers. Efforts could also be made to reduce population pressure on rural land by reducing the current urban bias of the Mexican government's population control program. Yet, even if the Mexican government invests greatly expanded resources in job creation schemes, decentralized family planning campaigns, and other programs over the next ten or fifteen years, it seems unlikely that Mexico's rural sector can absorb all of the surplus labor. If so, migration to the United States—both legal and illegal—will persist, especially if wage differentials between the two countries remain large. This outlook suggests the need to continue efforts to reach bilateral agreements addressed to both the supply and demand sides of the migration process, providing the most fair and humane solutions possible.

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APPENDIX

A NOTE ON THE REPRESENTATIVENESS OF RESEARCH FINDINGS
ON ILLEGAL MEXICAN MIGRATION TO THE U.S.

In this paper we reported preliminary findings from an intensive study of residents and emigrants from nine rural communities in the region of Los Altos, state of Jalisco, Mexico, primarily during the period from 1940 to the present. (Some of our historical research on the communities extends back to the mid-19th century.) Because we are aware of the spatial and temporal limitations of our research, we have considered the idiosyncracies of our sites in interpreting our findings. We are aware, however, that the findings of a case study of this type are always subject to challenge on the grounds that the communities studied are not representative. The purpose of this note is to provide additional background on our sites, to let the reader evaluate the representativeness of our findings and to relate them to the conclusions of other studies of illegal migration from Mexico to the United States.

Students of regional differences within Mexico may argue that the region represented in our study, Los Altos de Jalisco, differs from other Mexican regions in racial composition, specifically its above average proportion of tall, light-skinned, light-eyed people of French and Austrian descent. Such physical characteristics might be an advantage in illegal migration to the United States, making it easier for Alteños to find employment and evade detection. Such physical traits, however, prevail in only one of the nine Los Altos communities in our study. In fact, the population of the region as a whole is predominantly mestizo, as is most of the Mexican population. Residents of one community are predominantly Indian; it has the highest per capita rate of temporary migration to the United States. We could see no significant difference between this and the other communities in terms of finding jobs and avoiding deportation. In short, our findings cannot be explained by reference to race.

Migration from the Los Altos region to the United States is a long-standing phenomenon, dating back to the late 1880s. It might be argued that this has produced extensive kinship networks which provide migrants from the region with job-finding assistance which is less available to other migrants. In fact, we found about half of our respondents had no friend or relative in the United States when they first migrated. Moreover, recent historical research by other investigators shows that labor migration to the United States from other parts of Mexico also began in the late nineteenth century (Griego 1973, Gil 1975, Rosales n.d.). So all available evidence suggests that the Los Altos region is not significantly different from other regions serving as starting points for migration to the United States.

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In terms of the migrants' success in finding jobs in the United States and the amount of money they are able to earn, save or remit to their families in Mexico, our findings differ substantially from the findings of several other empirical studies of illegal migration to the United States. Specifically, these studies found that half or more of the illegal migrants interviewed could not find a job in the United States before they were arrested and deported, and that even among those who did, only a small minority earned enough to cover the migration costs and send home enough to maintain their families in Mexico. By contrast, our informants report a high rate of success in obtaining jobs, and most claim to have earned a substantial return on their investment in migration to the United States. These discrepancies might be attributed to the nonrepresentativeness of our communities or our individual informants. We believe, however, that they reflect primarily certain major differences in research design and the composition of the population studied.

The studies cited are based primarily on interviews with illegal Mexican migrants who were arrested and deported by U.S. authorities. The interviews were conducted in INS detention centers and other U.S. or Mexican government offices immediately following deportation. Our research deals with the total migration flow from the communities under study: legal and illegal migrants to the United States as well as to localities within Mexico, illegals who were arrested and deported as well as those who have not been apprehended while in the United States. Most of our informants who migrated illegally to the United States fall into these categories.

INS records show that the Mexican migrants arrested and deported are a small part of the total flow. They are usually apprehended within 72 hours of crossing the border—an insufficient time to find stable employment and send earnings to Mexico. Therefore, research findings on job-seeking success and cash remittances based on interviews with this sector of the migrant population may suffer from a major, systematic, downward bias. Illegal entry into the United States is a learning experience; our interviews indicate that the probability of deportation declines with each entry. Thus, those apprehended tend to be first-timers, considerably younger and less experienced than those who escape detection. Moreover, for many migrants, arrest and deportation do not end their migratory experience; their next attempt, usually within a few days, is likely to be successful.

Another possible source of bias in interviews with apprehended migrants, which may help explain the contradiction in our findings, is the interview setting. When migrants are interviewed in detention centers and other government offices they may underreport success in finding jobs or in the amount of money they sent home; they do not want to make things worse for themselves or other illegal migrants. We believe more accurate data can be gathered by interviewing returned migrants in the privacy of their homes.

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We also realize that the returned migrant may exaggerate his success to impress the interviewer or to save face after an unsuccessful experience in the United States. For that reason we have not relied exclusively on interviews to form our conclusions about migration's economic impact on the families and communities we studied. The objective indicators of success—quality of housing construction, variety of durable consumer goods in the home, the amount of land, livestock and farm machinery owned, and the number of children in school—strongly suggest that temporary migrants to the United States have achieved a higher living standard than the average non-elite residents in their communities. This is especially true of those who secure legal entry papers or resident status in the United States, usually after at least one illegal entry; but it is also true of those who continue to migrate illegally. Success stories told by returning migrants may play a big part in the peasant's notion of abundant economic opportunities in the United States, but the material basis for such tales is quite visible to young men entering the labor force.

Because of the clandestine nature of most Mexican migration to the United States and the vast, scattered population involved, a statistically representative, random sample is virtually impossible to obtain. It is difficult to define the relevant universe of people and sample it with any precision. Our own study does not attempt this, and studies based on interviews with apprehended illegal workers do not achieve it. Each of the major studies completed to date has dealt with a segment of the relevant population, a different part of the same elephant. A variety of studies using different designs and methodologies is needed to illuminate the larger phenomenon with which we are concerned, and to provide a basis for intelligent and humane policy decisions affecting it. We believe that rigorous, comparative research focusing on the phenomenon from the perspective of the Mexican campesino and his community can make an important contribution to public discussion and policy in this area.

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Colombian Migration to the United States (Part 1)

Carmen Inés Cruz

Juanita Castaño

Abstract

In this study, the investigators explore some of the factors influencing the causes, composition, and consequences of Colombian migration to the United States before and after the passing of the 1965 U.S. Immigration Act. The demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of the migrants and their selectivity are examined as well. In addition, some partial results of a questionnaire-survey conducted on the basis of a small sample of immigrant-visa applicants at the Consular Offices of the United States in Bogota are presented. This small sample, not necessarily representative, illustrates the demographic, occupational, and general socioeconomic characteristics of prospective emigrants, their reasons for migrating, their expectations, and other aspects involved in decisions to migrate.

On the basis of available records, estimates, and indications of significant numbers of Colombians residing abroad, one can speak of clearly defined migration currents emanating from Colombia.

At present, the greatest number of Colombian migrants are concentrated in four countries: Venezuela, the United States, Ecuador, and Panama. Some of these migrants lack legal authorization from the host country to remain there as permanent residents. These people are often defined as "illegals," "tourists," or "indocumentados."

Note: ICP social scientists David N. Holmes, Jr. and Amparo Menendez Carrion helped prepare this paper for publication. Correspondence to Carmen Inés Cruz may be directed to Corporacion Centro Regional de Poblacion, Carrera 6a, No. 76-34, Bogota D. E., Colombia.

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Panama first attracted Colombian migration. This migration current began at the end of the 1920s and intensified by the late 1940s. The migration of Colombians to Venezuela and the United States seems to have started by the end of the 1940s. The migration current to Ecuador is the most recent; it started during the 1970s.

Only rough estimates and approximations exist on the number of Colombian emigrants to these countries. The 1971 Venezuelan Census reports 180,114 Colombians, while Colombian President Lopez Michelsen, in a speech before a group of Colombians in New York, indicated that "the number of Colombians that live in Venezuela is controversial. Some estimate it as one million, but I believe that it is below half a million." An estimated 22,550 Colombians in Ecuador were reported for 1973 while, at present, some observers suggest that "documented or not, 60,000 Colombians would be residing in Ecuador."

The 1970 U.S. Census reported the presence of 63,538 Colombians in the United States. In January 1975, 69,614 Colombians reported their addresses to the Immigration and Naturalization Service of the Department of Justice. Of these, 64,061 indicated "resident status" while 5,553 indicated "non-resident status" of some kind. Some observers estimate that about 350,000 Colombians live in the United States at present. Others consider this figure a bit exaggerated, estimating the number at 250,000.

Even though the migration of Colombians to the United States is the second largest out of Colombia, it is considered by many experts as the most important migration current due to the greater selectivity attributed to these migrants. The argument has been made that the greater the physical, socio-cultural, and legal barriers between country of origin and country of destination of the migrant, the smaller the current and the greater the likelihood that migration will be selective. Emigrants to the United States are confronted with the greatest barriers: Greatest distance, high transportation costs, and different language and cultural patterns, as well as quantitative and qualitative restrictions on entering and remaining in the country as legal immigrants. It is thus likely that the migration current to the United States is the most selective.

Despite conclusive evidence to support the selective migration argument, there is also evidence that selectivity varies from one place to the other and from one period to another, and tends to decrease over time. New circumstances emerge which allow migrants to overcome barriers they could not have overcome before. New means of transportation appear which reduce physical distances, credit systems are established which allow the migrant to finance the high costs of transportation, and so on. The appearance of such factors allows migrants with less selective characteristics to be able to overcome the obstacles implicit in the act of migrating.

SOURCES OF STUDY DATA

Colombian data on emigration were found to be of low reliability. They lack set definitions and criteria, and exhibit inconsistencies and discontinuities in the level of aggregation in which the information was presented (see Appendix A). After careful examination, these national statistics were discarded.

Since United States immigration data are more reliable than emigration data, statistical sources from this country were utilized. The archives of the Department of Statistics of the INS (Immigration and Naturalization Service) and the Office of Security and Consular Affairs of the State Department were found to provide the most reliable statistics on the background, composition, and evolution of Colombian migration to the United States.

The data base for the study also includes estimates and information provided by qualified observers: Colombian and United States scholars involved in the study of migration who are familiar with the complexities of the issue of Latin American migration to the United States, former and present officials from Colombia and the United States, and international organizations responsible for making and implementing migration policy, and persons of diverse nationalities and backgrounds who are in direct contact with the migrants (social workers, community leaders, clergymen, and teachers). Valuable information was provided by Colombian immigrants who arrived in the United States at different periods of time, as well as by prospective emigrants.

LEGISLATION

Colombian Emigration Legislation

The first laws on international migration in Colombia appeared in 1823. To the present time, this legislation refers to emigration on only two occasions.

In 1922, Article 16 of Law 114 established that the government would ensure that potential foreign employers of Colombian emigrants guarantee, in written contracts accompanied by a fee, assistance to migrants in cases of illness or repatriation. No further reference to this regulation or its implementation was found by the authors for subsequent years. Presumably, it had little or no application since until recently Colombians have emigrated individually rather than collectively. Only in the present decade has some reference been made to the state's duty to protect the labor rights of nationals working abroad.

The second reference appears in Decree 1397 of August 18, 1972, promulgated to encourage the return of Colombian professionals residing abroad and "whose return to the country is necessary for the formulation and implementation of economic development, cultural, health, and related pro-

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grams" (Article I). This decree was made operative through a program commonly referred to as "retorno de cerebros" ("the return of brains") which lasted for one year.

Colombian legislation on emigration was a low priority until 1957; before then, there was no awareness of the issue and the country was still preoccupied with stimulating immigration. Since then, however, when Colombian emigration reached significant levels and became a debatable issue among scholars and the press, the neglect has seemed unjustifiable.

Immigration Legislation of the United States

The immigration legislation of the United States provides a tool for understanding some variations in the volume and composition of Colombian immigration.

Measures were introduced in 1920 for the qualitative and quantitative control of Eastern Hemisphere immigration. In 1965, similar measures were introduced for Western Hemisphere immigration. Prior to 1965 (as was the case for Eastern Hemisphere immigration prior to 1920) only a minimum of restrictions were applied to the entrance of Western Hemisphere immigrants. The objective of these restrictions was to bar from the United States persons of questionable background (those with a criminal record, drug charges, prostitutes, vagabonds, agents of contagious diseases, and so forth.)

The measures adopted in 1965 will be examined here for they represent a turnabout in the treatment of Western Hemisphere immigrants and, therefore, of Colombian immigrants.

On October 3, 1965, at the base of the Statue of Liberty, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the 1965 Immigration Act indicating: "This law says simply that from now on, whoever wants to immigrate to America must be admitted on the basis of their skills and their close family relatives who have already immigrated to this country."

The adoption of this law ended heated debates about the immigration issue in the United States. One investigator summarized the two positions on the issue: The first emphasizes humanitarian considerations. This school of thought favored the abolition of the quota system according to national origin applied to countries of the Eastern Hemisphere and the termination of the Asian Pacific Triangle Policy. It also supported an immigration policy that emphasized the reunion of families and increased the number of immigrants admitted from countries other than those of northern Europe. The second position emphasizes the preservation of American culture and calls for the maintenance of the American society "as it was." In general, those who adopted this stand on the issue did not oppose the termination of the Asian Pacific Triangle Policy, but favored a policy that would continue the quota system. Many of them argued that numerical restrictions should be

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placed on Western Hemisphere immigration as well. Emphasis on the reunion of families was accepted, but at the same time, the adoption of measures that would protect the American economy and the employment market for Americans was favored. The adoption of the 1965 Immigration Act represented a compromise between these two points of view.

There were four major implications of this Act for Eastern Hemisphere immigration. First, the quota system by national origin was abolished. Second, a ceiling of 170,000 immigrants per year was established, with no more than 20,000 immigrants from the same country to enter the United States during the same year. To this total were added parents, spouses, and single children of U.S. citizens who could immigrate without being subject to numerical restrictions. Third, the system of preferences that determined the priority for admissions was modified. The 1952 Immigration and Naturalization Act (McCarran-Walter Act) had granted priority to "highly qualified immigrants whose services are required with urgency in the United States." This measure was replaced by new criteria which established the following priorities: First preference—single children of United States citizens (no more than 20 percent); Second preference—spouses and single children of permanent residents (20 percent plus that quantity not required by the first preference); Third preference—professionals, scientists, and artists of exceptional ability; Fourth preference—married children of U.S. citizens (10 percent plus the quantities not required in the first and third preferences); Fifth preference—brothers and sisters of U.S. citizens (24 percent plus the quantities not required by the first four preferences); Sixth preference—skilled and unskilled workers for occupations where the supply of labor is scarce in the United States (no more than 10 percent); Seventh preference—refugees to whom conditional entrance or change of visa could be granted (no more than 6 percent); No preference or without preference—applicants not included in any of the above categories (any number not required by the applicants with preference).

The fourth implication of the Act for Eastern Hemisphere immigration was that applicants (except parents, spouses, and children of U.S. citizens or permanent residents) were required to have a certificate of employment. The law is clear: "No workers will be able to enter the United States unless the Secretary of Labor certifies that there are not enough able and qualified workers in the country to perform that job, and that the presence of immigrants will not adversely affect the salaries and working conditions of the residents of this country."

For Western Hemisphere immigration, the adoption of the 1965 Immigration Act meant many more drastic changes. Prior to the Act, there were no numerical restrictions on Western Hemisphere immigration, and the requirements for admission were minimal. With the adoption of the Act, there

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was a clear attempt to reduce and be more selective of this immigration. Two major changes can be distinguished. First, a ceiling of 120,000 immigrants per year was established. However, there was no explicit formula or recommendation on how to distribute these quotas among Western Hemisphere countries or what criteria should be followed to determine the proportion for each country. According to consular officers of the United States in Bogota, as well as Immigration and Naturalization Service officials in Washington, the number of immigrants admitted per country would depend basically on the number of applications made in each country. This meant that countries with a greater number of applications would have the greatest number of immigrants admitted. The question of whether a constant relationship would be maintained between the number of applications and the number of admissions, or if other criteria would be used in determining the volume of admissions per country, was not resolved by our respondents. Second, except for parents, spouses, and children of U.S. citizens and permanent residents, a certificate of employment was required for Western Hemisphere immigrants. That exemption allowed families to reunite, and thus presumably would implement the humanitarian values that the law says should be upheld. At the same time, however, it created preferences for persons who could not fulfill the requirements for obtaining a certificate of employment. The requirement of a certificate of employment automatically defines a system of preferences. Thus, it is not true, as some argue, that because all applications are equally excluded from the system of general preferences, they have an equal option for being admitted, and only a time factor affects their admissibility. (Visa applications are considered according to the order in which they are made).

In sum, the United States has been attempting to encourage the reunion of families of citizens and permanent residents of the United States, as well as protect the labor market for Americans and the U.S. economy, by allowing preferential admission of immigrants with superior qualifications and training who probably can make major contributions to the country.

The certificate of employment requirement of the 1965 Act was effective in December 1965. The numerical restrictions became effective in July 1968. The period between the passing of the Act and its full implementation is known as the "transitional period."

For the purposes of this study, the investigators considered three major effects of the 1965 Immigration Act. First, because the Act gives priority to the better qualified and requires a certificate of employment for admission, it encourages the immigration of professionals and highly skilled workers from the Third World. For developing countries, such emigration represents a great loss, given the high cost of training these people and the relatively small proportion of those with high qualifications. Edward M. Kennedy,

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among other Senators, expressed his concern on the effects of this "brain drain" on developing countries.

Second, the exclusion of Western Hemisphere immigration from the preference system granted to Eastern Hemisphere immigration proved to be a great disadvantage for the former.

Congressman Peter W. Rodino said:

It becomes clear from the last four years' experience since July 1, 1968, when the ceiling of 120,000 came into effect for Western Hemisphere immigration, that this hemisphere does not benefit with the exclusion from the system of preferences and limited ceiling by country, as some argued it would in 1965. The 120,000 ceiling has proven to be extremely inadequate . . . natives of this hemisphere including families of American citizens and permanent residents now have to wait one-and-a-half years to obtain a visa. This contrasts with what happens for the Eastern Hemisphere where relatives have preferential status and which, with the exception of the natives of the Philippines and some dependent areas, can obtain their visa the moment they apply . . .

Finally, as a result of the quantitative and qualitative restrictions imposed on Western Hemisphere immigration, illegal migration to the United States has increased. These illegal immigrants establish their residence in the United States without the necessary immigrant visas denied to them because they do not fulfill the requirements established by the 1965 Act or because, even though they do fulfill them, they are not willing to wait the time it takes to obtain the visas. These migrants enter the country through Mexico, Canada, and Puerto Rico without visas, or with false visas or permits. They also enter the country with legal papers that authorize them to remain in the country for a limited period of time and to undertake only specific and restricted employment (tourists, students, government officials, temporary workers, et cetera). But they either undertake jobs for which they were not authorized (salaried employment, for instance) during their authorized length of stay, or once the temporary visa expires, remain in the U.S. without authorization to stay in the country as permanent residents.

THE DATA: DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

Before examining the statistics on Colombian immigration to the United States, a few remarks are in order.

First, the figures on "admitted immigrants" differ from the figures on "immigrant visas granted" even though they refer to the same fiscal year. Visas granted are not necessarily used; those who obtain them may change

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their minds and decide not to use them. Furthermore, a visa may be granted, and thus computed, in a fiscal year other than the year when it will actually be used; Those who obtain their immigrant visas may postpone their trips and be admitted and registered as immigrants in subsequent years. Consequently, the information on "admitted immigrants" has greater significance in this study than "immigrant visas granted." Our analysis is based on the former group.

Second, the capacity of these statistics to reflect the real volume of Colombian immigration to the United States becomes questionable from the time that the 1965 Immigration Act came into effect. The phenomenon of illegal migration from the Western Hemisphere intensified with adoption of the Act. Illegal migrants clearly escape immigration statistics.

The quantitative data will be analyzed along with information obtained from additional sources, which includes the observations of qualified respondents (scholars, officials, and community leaders) as well as the results of interviews with Colombian immigrants who established themselves in the United States at different points in time.

Evolution of the Migration Current

New York City is not only the United States city where the majority of Colombian immigrants live, but is also the place where the first immigrants arrived. In the past (much more than today), for Colombians as well as other Latin Americans to think of the United States was to think of New York. The observation that those who wish to come to the United States were actually thinking of "a trip to New York," was repeatedly made by Colombians who have been residing in the United States for some time and was supported by informed observers.

In fact, Colombian migrants who established themselves in New York City decades ago, were found to be the best source of historical information on the migration current of which they were a part. A Colombian couple who migrated to the United States in 1940 comments:

In those days [before 1946] to travel outside of Colombia was unusual; it took a long time and was very expensive; it can be said that we Colombians lived in severe isolation from the rest of the world. Transportation means were scarce and communications systems were inadequate. Only very few Colombians came to the United States and less resided here. Those of us who lived in New York at the time formed the largest Colombian colony in the United States. In spite of this, though, we were a very small group. Maybe because of it and because life was not as busy as today, it was easier to maintain close contact with the members of the colony. When a Colombian arrived in

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New York, he was usually a family member or an acquaintance, or there was always someone who would put him in touch with other Colombians. All of us were eager to help the newly arrived. We were like a family in exile.

Statistics indicate that between 1936 and 1945—the decade of the Great Depression and World War II—1,825 Colombian immigrants were admitted, only 1.5 percent of all Colombian immigrants admitted since 1936. Observers indicate, however, that “also persons who were not coming to reside in the United States, entered with immigrant visas since these were easy to obtain.” This suggests that the actual volume of immigrants was somewhat lower than that which the figures for admitted immigrants for the period reveal.

No figures on admitted immigrants from Colombia are available prior to 1936. Since immigrant visas granted during the 1926-1935 period reached a volume 1.6 times greater than the 1936-1945 period, this suggests, however, that the volume of admitted immigrants for the years immediately before the Depression and the beginning of World War II might have been greater if not comparable to that observed for the 1926-1935 decade.

The second distinguishable period in the evolution of Colombian migration to the United States begins in 1945 and ends with the adoption of the 1965 Act, the period between July 1, 1945, and June 30, 1965 (fiscal years 1946-1965).

During both the first and second periods, laws allowing unlimited immigration of nationals of the free countries of the Western Hemisphere were in force. Colombians, as well as other Latin Americans, not subject to the system of preferences or to numerical restrictions as were natives of the Eastern Hemisphere, could migrate to the United States if only they fulfilled a few minimal requirements.

During the 1945-1965 period, a total of 55,004 Colombian immigrants were admitted. Of these, 14.6 percent (N=8,049) arrived before 1955 (accounting for 6.6 percent of Colombian immigrants admitted since 1936), while 85.4 percent (N=46,955) arrived between 1956 and 1965 (accounting for 38.7 percent). The migration of Colombians to the United States for the 1945-1955 period was 4.4 times greater than that recorded for the previous decade. Between 1956-1965, it was 5.8 times greater than that registered for the post-war decade.

The third period clearly begins on December 1, 1965, when some of the measures introduced by the Immigration Act of October 3, 1965 came into effect. For the purpose of utilizing U.S. statistics, this third period can be said to stretch from July 1, 1965 (beginning of fiscal year 1966), until the present. This period includes the so-called “transitional period” (December

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1, 1965, to June 30, 1968) during which measures introduced by the 1965 Act that affected Western Hemisphere immigration were only partially coming into effect. The full act came into effect on July 1, 1968.

From 1966 to 1975, 64,427 Colombian immigrants were admitted to the United States. This figure is 1.4 times greater than that recorded for the previous 10-year period. Of all Colombian immigrants admitted to the United States in the past 40 years, 91.9 percent (N = 111,382) arrived within the last two decades. The 1966-1975 period by itself accounts for 53.2 percent of the total. When one adds the indeterminate number of illegal migrants that increased considerably from 1968 on, about two-thirds of the total number of Colombian immigrants entered the United States between 1966 and 1975. This, despite the fact that precisely during these years quantitative and qualitative measures for restricting the admission of Western Hemisphere migrants came into force. It can then be concluded that, even though the emigration of Colombians to the United States had already started by the first half of this century, it intensified in the second half and became significant, particularly during the last 20-year period.

Characteristics of the Migrants: Who Are They?

In the opinion of some Colombians who migrated decades ago:

In general, Colombians who arrived in the United States before 1955 were well-educated people and relatively well-to-do. One frequently found intellectuals, artists, and students among these migrants, who would rather live in this country than in their own because they wanted to advance their knowledge or keep up to date with new developments in science and the arts, something which was difficult to achieve in Colombia given its relative isolation from the rest of the world. Also, ambitious young men and entire families would come, in spite of being in a good financial position in Colombia, for they perceived greater possibilities for advancement in the United States. Today, however, almost anyone who wants to come can do so; they arrive without anything, to see what they can find. (Personal Communication)

Data on the first identifiable groups of migrants are limited due to the absence of records on migrants' characteristics for the time, and the reduced number of information variables available and the level of aggregation in which they are presented. The presence of significant numbers of illegal migrants in the last few years places an additional limitation on our knowledge of overall Colombian migration to the United States.

Sex distribution. Data on sex of the immigrants are available only for the years 1960-1975. In this period, slightly more than 50 percent of the immigrants were female. For 1967, the difference is even greater in favor of

females (63.4 percent female and 36.6 percent male). For 1970, however, the volume of males admitted to the United States is closer to female immigrants (49.6 percent and 50.4 percent, respectively).

Some authors have observed that females predominate in migration to distant areas. Another author, based on the findings of surveys applied in South American countries, indicates that "... sex composition of the migrants is generally biased towards males or females whether the current is short or long distance." Clearly, we cannot assert this is a fact on the basis of sex composition of immigrants admitted to the United States exclusively. The effects of U.S. immigration legislation on sex composition of the immigrants should not be discarded. Since it is not possible to compare the proportion of visas granted to men and women with the sex composition of the total visa applicants, we can only point out that for all years considered, the proportion of Colombian females admitted as immigrants to the United States is greater than the proportion of males. Why this is the case deserves further consideration and analysis. It could be related to labor demand in the host country, or to the emphasis that U.S. immigration legislation places on the reunion of families, or to certain cultural patterns related to women and the family in Colombia.

Age distribution. Statistics were obtained for years from 1958 on, except for 1959. The available data are reported in 10-year age groups, except for the data for the first one, which are disaggregated in 5-year age groups. It should be noted that this form of aggregation makes the comparability of these data difficult. Most data on age distribution are disaggregated in 5-year age groups. The 10-to-19-years age group presents particular difficulties for it reduces to a single category migrants with different possibilities of participation in the labor market as well as different capacities to participate in migration movements.

Close to 50 percent of Colombians admitted as immigrants for the 1958-1975 period are between the ages of 20 and 39, that is, a population in their economically active years. When the age of admitted males and females is considered separately, no noticeable differences emerge with respect to the general tendency. For both sexes the 20-to-29-years of age group is the largest. For both sexes these percentages decrease from 1966 on, even though the 20-to 29-age group continues to be the largest.

Among admitted female immigrants, an increase in the percentages which correspond to the oldest age brackets (40-49, 50+) is observed since 1967. This could be due to the new immigration policy adopted in 1965 which, as already indicated, emphasized the reunion of families encouraging the entrance of parents of U.S. citizens and permanent residents. Even though a similar increase is observed among males, it is greater among females, which suggests that more mothers than fathers are brought in by U.S. citizens and

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permanent residents. This is consistent with the greater longevity of females,* with cultural patterns of family life, and with the greater proportion of women older than fifteen in Colombia.**

Occupational distribution. Table 1 shows Colombian immigrants admitted to the United States by occupation, 1958, 1960-1975. Of all Colombian immigrants admitted in the period for which data were available, 61.2 percent are in the "non-employed" category. This includes housewives, children under 14, students, retired persons, and other relatives with no occupation outside the home. This group, which is the largest of all Colombian groups, presumably does not receive a salary and would not constitute a threat to the American labor market. However, this is true of those who migrate at an advanced or very early age, but not necessarily for those who identify themselves as housewives. As Chaney points out, in another part of this volume, "The wives of Colombians residing in New York seem to work outside the home in greater proportion than when they were in Colombia." A significant number of Colombian women who identify themselves as housewives become economically active once they arrive in the United States.

For the period under consideration, 38.8 percent of admitted immigrants belong in the employed categories. Professionals and technicians constitute the second largest group of admitted immigrants (8.1 percent), followed by artisans (7.0 percent), office workers (6.7 percent), and skilled workers (5.9 percent). Domestic workers, service sector workers, administrators and owners, vendors, low-skilled workers and agricultural workers, together represent no more than 11 percent of the employed category.

Table 1 shows occupational distribution disaggregated per year for the last 17 years. Independent of the volume of Colombian immigrants admitted to the United States each year, the proportion of each occupational category is maintained relatively constant: the "non-employed" category is greater than 50 percent for all years, and the "professionals and technicians" category is almost invariably the second or third largest group (except for 1974

*		1938-1951	1951-1964
Life expectation at birth for	males (years)	40.0	45.5
	females (years)	43.8	50.7

Source: Lopez Toro, Alvaro. 1968. *Análisis demográfico de los Censos Colombianos: 1951 y 1964*. CEDE: Bogotá.

**		1938	1951	1964
Tasa General de Masculinidad (men per 100 females)		98.2	98.8	97.7

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Table 1
Colombian Immigrants Admitted to the United States
by Occupation, 1958, 1960-1975

Year	Occupation											Total No.	Total %
	1 %	2 %	3 %	4 %	5 %	6 %	7 %	8 %	9 %	10 %	11 %		
1958	14.3	3.2	1.4	12.6	3.8	3.9	0.7	0.3	1.0	5.0	53.7	2891	100.0
1960	11.4	3.4	1.6	11.0	4.8	5.0	0.8	0.4	2.1	7.0	52.5	2989	100.0
1961	10.0	3.4	1.7	12.8	4.3	4.0	0.9	0.4	2.1	5.4	55.0	3559	100.0
1962	10.4	3.3	2.2	14.0	4.3	3.9	0.8	0.6	2.3	4.9	53.3	4391	100.0
1963	11.0	3.2	2.5	13.6	4.7	4.3	0.4	0.5	1.5	4.5	53.8	5733	100.0
1964	8.8	3.1	1.6	9.4	4.8	3.7	0.8	0.3	1.5	4.2	61.8	10446	100.0
1965	7.3	3.0	1.4	6.8	4.5	3.9	1.1	0.2	1.3	4.9	65.6	10885	100.0
1966	7.6	2.7	1.3	5.2	4.9	3.4	0.8	0.3	1.1	4.9	67.8	9504	100.0
1967	8.6	1.6	0.5	3.0	3.1	2.7	0.4	0.1	1.2	10.2	68.6	4556	100.0
1968	10.6	1.2	0.4	4.9	11.9	3.8	0.5	0.2	2.0	10.5	54.0	6902	100.0
1969	8.5	0.7	0.3	7.6	16.6	4.7	0.5	0.1	2.0	5.3	53.7	7627	100.0
1970	5.8	0.5	0.3	4.9	16.3	5.7	0.3	-	1.1	2.5	62.6	6724	100.0
1971	6.7	1.2	0.3	2.5	6.9	6.1	0.5	0.3	2.4	3.4	69.7	6440	100.0
1972	7.1	1.8	0.3	2.7	4.9	6.8	0.4	0.1	5.8	2.5	67.6	5173	100.0
1973	5.7	1.7	0.8	3.1	5.1	10.8	0.7	0.2	5.4	1.7	64.8	5230	100.0
1974	4.8	1.8	0.8	3.9	5.6	15.6	1.3	0.6	5.1	2.1	58.4	5837	100.0
1975	4.8	1.7	0.5	3.3	7.1	14.0	0.7	0.2	4.3	0.9	62.4	6434	100.0
Total	8488	2265	1078	7043	7401	6224	732	277	2475	4846	64492	105321	
	8.1	2.2	1.0	6.7	7.0	5.9	0.6	0.3	2.3	4.6	61.2	100.0	

Rank According to Volume

1 Professional, technical and kindred workers	2
2 Managers, administrators and proprietors	8
3 Sales workers	9
4 Clerical and kindred workers	4
5 Craftsmen and kindred workers	3
6 Operatives	5
7 Laborers	10
8 Farm laborers and farm foremen	11
9 Service workers (except private household)	7
10 Private household workers	6
11 Housewives, children, and people without occupation	1

Source: U. S. Department of Justice, 1958, 1960-1975. *Annual Reports*. Immigration and Naturalization Service, Washington, D. C.

and 1975 when it is the fifth and fourth largest category, respectively). For these two years, office workers, skilled workers, and domestic workers become the second and third largest groups. The service sector category (administrators and owners, vendors, unskilled workers, and agricultural workers) is the smallest for all years.

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Since 1964, some variations can be observed in the volume of the traditionally largest groups. The non-employed category increases considerably as does the artisans category; later, the skilled workers and service sector workers categories increase. Meanwhile a decrease in the proportion of professionals and technicians, administrators and owners, office workers, vendors, and domestic service workers categories, respectively, is noted.

Those tendencies vary for 1967 and 1968 when the volume of domestic service employees admitted increases to an extent not repeated in any other year in the period. This increase is due to a greater demand for this type of service, as well as to the relative laxness in granting immigrant visas to persons without special qualifications during the transitional period, December 1965 to June 1968.

In the present decade, skilled workers, artisans, professionals and technicians, and service sector workers, are the occupational groups with the largest admission figures.

In sum, for the period under consideration, for each economically active Colombian immigrant admitted, 1.6 Colombians were admitted who, at the time of admission, were considered to be economically dependent. This larger group was admitted on the basis of their kinship with those admitted for professional and occupational qualifications, with U.S. citizens or with permanent residents. This fact suggests that a considerable proportion of Colombian immigrants were not economically active in Colombia, usually because of age or status as homemakers.

Colombian immigrants admitted on the basis of their occupational qualifications (N = 40,828) represent a considerably selective population. Professionals and technicians constitute the largest occupational group (N = 8,488), representing a fifth of the economically active categories. When artisans, office workers, and skilled workers are added to this category, these four groups account for 71.1 percent (N = 29,156) of those admitted on the basis of occupational qualifications. A fifth group can only be considered as immigrants with limited occupational qualifications—domestic service employees, service sector workers, unskilled workers, and agricultural workers. It should be noted, however, that persons with training in occupations that are in low demand in the U.S. labor market declare themselves to be within certain occupational categories for which demand is high in the host country—positions for which they may be highly overqualified—so they can obtain the work certificate required for an immigrant visa. This is the case of secretaries and teachers who declare themselves as domestics. Consequently, it is possible that the low qualifications category covers immigrants who possess a level of qualifications and training superior to that required for the occupations for which they were hired. Then it is plausible

to argue that the positive selectivity shown by the data could actually be greater.

Even though a high selectivity is observed for the whole period under consideration, it does tend to decrease in the present decade. The volume of professionals and technicians admitted decreases, as does the volume of office workers, administrators and owners. The volume of skilled workers, artisans, and service workers increases. This reflects variations in the demands of the labor market of the host country.

Composition of the Professionals, Technicians, and Related Professions Category

This category is the most significant among the groups of economically active immigrants admitted for the period under consideration, both in terms of its volume and in terms of the loss such emigration may represent for the country of origin.

Detailed information was obtained for as far back as 1954 on Colombian immigrants within this category. New aggregations were made by the authors on the basis of available data so as to identify the professional categories most greatly affected by emigration to the United States. These data appear in Table 2.

Between 1954 and 1975, 51.3 percent of Colombian professionals admitted to the United States as immigrants were health scientists, teachers, and engineers. Health scientists make up 24.5 percent of the total, while teachers constitute 13.6 percent, and engineers 13.2 percent. This is similar to the distribution found in a study on emigration of professionals and technicians from Argentina.

The health sciences contributed the largest number of highly qualified Colombian immigrants. This group includes doctors, nurses, dentists, dietitians, nutritionists, and therapists (Table 3).

The emigration of doctors, nurses, and dentists is discussed here, for these persons are quantitatively the most significant of the health sciences professionals, particularly between 1964 and 1969.

Physicians—According to the inventory of ASCOFAME (Colombian Association of Medical Schools), there were 8,650 physicians in Colombia in 1968. Data from a study in progress (Jaime Arias) on the emigration of Colombian physicians to the United States show there were 9,427 physicians who emigrated in 1970.

The 8,650 physicians reported by ASCOFAME yield a rate of 4.3 doctors per 10,000 inhabitants for that year, that is, one doctor for every 2,300 people. Only four countries in Latin America have rates lower than that of Colombia: Bolivia, Ecuador, El Salvador, and Guatemala. The United States had a rate of 14.9 doctors per 10,000 inhabitants for 1969.

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Table 2
Colombian Immigrants Admitted to the United States as Professionals, Technicians, and Related Professions

1954-1975				
Year	Health Sciences Professionals (1)	Teachers (2)	Engineers	Technicians
	No.	No.	No.	No.
1954	12	2	21	12
1955	23	2	22	16
1956	30	4	30	6
1957	38	8	46	17
1958	75	9	64	33
1959	73	8	52	15
1960	81 *	5	36	22
1961	77 *	67	30	46
1962	107	95	38	79
1963	132 *	124	48	118
1964	210 *	170	62	178
1965	140 *	180	70	180
1966	113	160	84	154
1967	137	53	74	46
1968	170 *	81	110	171
1969	117 *	11	103	153
1970	91	37	53	72
1971	121 *	12	71	43
1972	133 **	39	60	59
1973	120 **	45	38	37
1974	66 **	40	28	53
1975	91 **	47	24	49
Total	2,157 (24.5%)	1,199 (13.6%)	1,164 (13.2%)	1,559 (17.7%)

1) Includes doctors with various specializations, 28 veterinarians, dentists, optometrists, pharmacologists and professional nurses.

* Includes also nursing school students.

** Includes also therapists and dieticians.

2) Includes professors and primary, secondary and college instructors of various fields.

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Table 2 (continued)

Year	Auditors and Accountants	Religious Workers (3)	Other	Total (100%)
	No.	No.	No.	
1954	-	-	11	58
1955	-	-	9	72
1956	-	-	14	84
1957	-	-	16	125
1958	-	-	38	219
1959	-	-	26	174
1960	-	-	196	340
1961	43	35	57	355
1962	74	26	36	455
1963	100	52	57	631
1964	126	26	152	924
1965	89	29	111	799
1966	77	17	118	723
1967	10	10	56	392
1968	82	23	92	729
1969	93	20	150	647
1970	43	16	78	390
1971	34	33	120	434
1972	15	21	39	366
1973	14	30	16	300
1974	17	27	47	278
1975	16	21	63	311
Total	839 (9.5%)	386 (4.4%)	1,502 (17.1%)	8,806 (100%)

3) Includes clergymen and other members of religious communities.

Source: U. S. Department of Justice. 1954-1975. Immigrants admitted into the United States as professionals, technicians, and related professionals, students, and other occupations by country or region of latest permanent residence and occupation. Immigration and Naturalization Service, Washington, D.C.

According to some projections, once the new graduates, mortality, emigration, and immigration are taken into account, Colombia would have 11,659 physicians for 1976. Due to population increases, 12,356 physicians would be required in 1976 to offer the level of medical care offered in 1968. This means a deficit of 697 physicians for 1976. According to these projections, to obtain a barely adequate ratio, 16,445 physicians would be needed in Colombia for 1976. There is thus an estimated deficit of 4,786 physicians in Colombia for 1976.

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Table 3
Colombian Doctors, Certified Nurses, and Dentists
Admitted As Immigrants to the United States, 1954-1975

Year	Doctors	Certified Nurses	Dentists
1954	12	-	4
1955	18	5	1
1956	15	15	2
1957	25	13	3
1958	51	24	6
1959	51	22	6
1960	47	32	6
1961	52	21	6
1962	75	32	7
1963	90	41	16
1964	158	51	14
1965	82	56	12
1966	80	33	10
1967	116	21	6
1968	116	50	17
1969	47	67	28
1970	36	34	12
1971	78	29	12
1972	82	21	2
1973	75	17	3
1974	37	18	3
1975	68	14	2
Total	1,411	616	178
Annual average	664	28	8

Source: U.S. Department of Justice, 1954-1975. Immigrants admitted to the United States as professionals, technicians, and related professionals by country or region of latest permanent residence and occupation. Immigration and Naturalization Service, Washington, D.C.

In light of such a deficit, the opinion of qualified observers was consulted on the implications of the emigration of Colombian physicians to the United States. These were physicians who at some point had been to the United States as immigrants, had studied there, or knew colleagues who had. One observed:

I graduated from the National University ten years ago. Three years later the great majority of my fellow students were in the United States

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working there as interns. Today most of them have returned and have established their practices in Colombia. This is not only true for my graduating class but seems to be the general pattern among my colleagues.

And the physician adds:

The young doctors who work as interns in Colombian hospitals are underpaid, while they know there is a market for their services in hospitals of the United States, where they can receive salaries which, from the point of view of Colombia, are attractive. I would say, without the need to resort to statistics, that the great majority come back to work in Colombia after five or ten years, during which time the immigrant doctor works very hard but is able to acquire valuable experience and make some savings. This is why I feel that the emigration of Colombian physicians to the United States does not have all the negative consequences usually attributed to it. In my estimation, that stage in their careers can be regarded as a period of professional training and accumulation of knowledge as well as financial resources. Furthermore, it guarantees professional prestige upon return, this of course, for those who have been interns in the "right" hospitals.

Even though these observations might be thought to present too rigid a picture of the way migrant physicians behave, it contributes to the understanding of the issue and its significance for Colombia. A reformulation of the issue may be in order, for if it is proven that the period of temporary emigration indeed represents a period of professional training and acquisition of knowledge and economic resources, Colombia would be facing a situation whereby its original investment in medical school graduates would be greatly increased with their return. The real loss would be represented by those physicians that do not return. Some authors estimate that, once mortality, desertion from the profession, emigration, and immigration (principally the return of Colombian physicians) are considered, the annual loss of physicians by Colombia is no greater than 1 percent.

Future studies on the emigration of Colombian physicians and the implications for the country of departure should include an analysis of the economic factors that pressure young medical school graduates to emigrate and, at the same time, an examination of the possible impact of the high value by the profession and patients attributed to the mere fact of having gone to certain schools or worked in certain hospitals of the United States.

Nurses—A figure of 1,968 nurses for 1965 was recorded in Colombia, that is, a ratio of 0.6 nurses for every 10,000 inhabitants for that year. In Latin America, only the Dominican Republic has a lower ratio (0.5), while the United States had a ratio of 33.5 per 10,000. Furthermore, as noted by a

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nurses' school instructor, "Many young women complete their studies but do not practice their professions once they graduate because they marry and instead devote all their time to homemaking or they find a better paying and less demanding job." To these losses from the profession is added emigration.

No information is available on the countries to which nurses choose to migrate. There are indications, however, that the great majority of migrant nurses go to the United States. U.S. statistics show that 616 nurses were admitted as immigrants in the past 22 years, an average of 28 per year. The greatest number of immigrant nurses were admitted during the 1960-1965 period. During the present decade, the volume has decreased; only 14 Colombian nurses were admitted in 1975.

"It is not for lack of employment that so many of us leave Colombia; it is because in Colombia the pay is low and we are considered as second-rate professionals by physicians and people in general. On the other hand, nursing is a respected profession in the United States; the pay is good, and there is always work for us there." This is the opinion of a nurse who would like to emigrate to the United States. Many of her colleagues observed, furthermore, that contrary to what happens with physicians, taking courses or working in the United States does not significantly improve a nurse's status on return to Colombia. These are probably the reasons why those who emigrate seldom return.

Dentists—According to the inventory of Minsalud-IMPES, there were 2,743 dentists in Colombia in 1970, a ratio of 1.3 per 10,000 inhabitants. Only seven Latin American countries had lower ratios. In 1965, the United States had a ratio of 5.0 dentists per 10,000 inhabitants.

Clearly, the supply of dentists in Colombia is not as precarious as that of nurses or physicians.

According to observers from the Ministry of Health, most dentists who emigrate go to the United States. U.S. statistics show a total of 178 Colombian dentists admitted as immigrants for the last 22 years, a yearly average of 8.0. They show, furthermore, that the greater immigration of Colombian dentists occurred between 1963 and 1971. The numbers have decreased significantly since 1972.

There is no information on the return of dentists to Colombia. Presumably though, since the income level of a dentist who is able to establish his practice in the United States is by far superior to that which he could obtain in Colombia, a dentist rarely returns.

However, if the present tendency of the volume of emigrant dentists to decrease continues, their emigration should not constitute a reason for concern, as it does not significantly affect the supply of dentists in Colombia.

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Engineers—Between 1954 and 1975, 1,164 engineers were admitted to the United States as immigrants (an average of 53 per year). Following the same pattern as the health science professionals, most engineers entered the United States between 1963 and 1969, the number showing a marked tendency to decrease since 1970.

The projected yearly demand for new engineers is 2,795. Approximately 1,443 engineers graduated in 1970. In that year, the number of engineers in Colombia was 13,854. This leaves a deficit of 1,352 engineers.

These estimates and figures are regarded with great skepticism among engineers themselves, who think that even though open unemployment is not frequent among their colleagues, underemployment and underutilization are.

One author in this study of the Colombian university system observes:

The employment market may be quantitatively restricted and professionals may not find a job. This is not usually the case, however, since given the level of training and the connections that university graduates have, in general, due to their social status, other possibilities emerge for incorporating them into the labor market even though they may be in lower paying activities or in activities not congruent with the training received.

In the case of engineers, this seems to be the result of the inability of the country to absorb adequately the increasing number of engineers graduating every year (Table 4). Already, in the 1950s, there was a great increase in the number of graduates. In the '60s and '70s, the volume of graduates continues to increase, presumably as a consequence of the prestige this career acquires—mainly among middle class students who see in it a possibility for improving their social status. To respond to this increasing demand, 57 public and private universities and 109 schools of engineering offered a variety of specializations and training in 1973. In early 1976, the President of the Colombian Association of Engineers, citing official estimates, indicated that there were 22,000 engineers in Colombia and that close to 30,000 students were enrolled in the various engineering schools of the country. Assuming a drop-out rate of 25 percent, the population of engineers would double in only five years, he observed. He projected a somber future for this profession, arguing that to utilize the existing supply efficiently, programs of great scope would be required in the public as well as in the private sectors, something he sees as unlikely.

Presumably, a great number of engineers would have become interested in emigrating, given the situation outlined above. That the tendency of the volume of engineers who emigrated to the United States since 1970 has decreased, may be due to greater restrictions in the granting of immigrant visas rather than to less interest on their part to emigrate.

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Table 4
Engineers* Graduated from Colombian Universities**
1942 - 1973 (Five-Year Periods)

Five-year periods	Number of Graduates	Percentage Increase over Previous 5-year Period
1942-1946	361	
1947-1951	645	78.7
1952-1956	1,058	64.0
1957-1961	1,761	66.4
1962-1966	3,543	101.2
1967-1971	5,502	55.3
1972-1973	3,021	
Total	15,891	

* Includes all engineering branches offered by Colombian universities.

** Refers to all public and private institutions delivering higher education programs with functioning licenses or already approved by ICFES.

Little is known about the incorporation of engineers into the U.S. labor market or their tendency to return. A mechanical engineer who left Colombia seven years ago and lives in New York, comments:

Most Colombian engineers are able to find jobs and connect themselves with companies that offer good promotion possibilities, but it is not unusual to find colleagues who admit their frustration because, in spite of being employed and working very hard, they feel underutilized. Given the system of labor division and specialization in this country, the tasks which they are assigned to are quite limited and frequently do not require the training they have. Many engineers, in other words, are well paid but perform the tasks of intermediate technicians. I also think that as long as the market for engineers in Colombia does not show signs of improving, most of my colleagues will not want to return. They go to Colombia often, but just to visit.

The observations made by Colombian physicians and engineers coincide with some of the results of a study where a sample of 30 Colombian professionals residing in Chicago was analyzed. Generally, professionals emigrate to the United States in search of better wages and working conditions. Engineers mentioned mainly the great competition in Colombia, but insisted that it is not easy to be absorbed into the U.S. labor market as engineers, and that frequently they have to do so as intermediate technicians. Physicians referred to their desire to work within a professional environment of a higher

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scientific and technological level which would allow them to advance in their studies; they also mentioned the importance of obtaining higher wages.

Teachers—Professors, instructors, and teachers constitute 13.6 percent of all Colombian professionals admitted as U.S. immigrants for the past 22 years. As in the case of nurses, even though unemployment is not a serious problem among teachers, they receive low wages and are considered second-rate professionals in Colombia.

Even college professors face the problem of low wages. This frequently forces them to undertake other activities in the private sector or other universities, in addition to teaching, or they teach in addition to their principal employment.

What jobs do emigrant teachers accept in the United States? More than for any other professional, a lack of proficiency in the English language is a serious obstacle. Presumably, therefore, most teachers who migrate to the United States would undertake activities other than teaching.

An observer comments that a woman with a teaching certificate or previous experience as a teacher is in demand in a private home as a tutor, or works as a secretary, since it is unlikely that she could obtain a teaching position even in bilingual schools due to her language problem, as well as to the excessive supply of teachers in the United States. As far as a man is concerned, his qualifications as a teacher do not constitute an advantage over others of the same age that have had different training.

As for university professors, who also have certificates of training as engineers, psychologists, sociologists, et cetera, but lack formal training as teachers and also face the language barrier and the saturated employment market, they presumably occupy themselves in activities related to the practice of their original professions or to others for which there is a demand. It is unlikely that they will teach in colleges or universities in the United States.

No information is available to substantiate the above hypotheses. Neither is information available on the return of teachers. Based on the reasoning in the case of immigrant nurses as well as the opinions emitted by qualified observers, it could be hypothesized that teachers tend to stay, particularly when one considers that their staying in the United States does not represent a substantial improvement in salary or status. Nevertheless, since teachers' jobs seem to open up under circumstances which are less advantageous than those of nurses, it is likely that the return of teachers may be greater.

The following findings emerge from the information gathered on professionals and technicians admitted to the United States in the past 22 years:

The greatest number of Colombian professionals and technicians who migrated to the United States came between 1963 and 1969, that is, during the years preceeding the adoption of the 1965 Immigration Act and the

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transitional period. Immigration figures remained high throughout 1969, presumably because those who obtained their visas during the preceding fiscal year were admitted in 1969.

In 1970, when the act was fully in effect, the number of professionals admitted was reduced by 40 percent compared to the previous year. Subsequently, a tendency for the figures to decrease is observed. A slight increase occurs for 1971 and 1975 which is not sufficiently significant to lead to the assumption that the trend, observed since 1970, changed.

The professional categories most affected by emigration to the United States are a) universal in nature (medicine, nursing, dentistry) rather than local (law and political sciences), b) technical (engineering, surgery, optometry, bacteriology) rather than those which do not require sophisticated technology (social work, psychology), or which c) confer a limited social and professional prestige and are low paying (teaching, nursing), or are d) prestigious in the sense that they attract more persons than the market can adequately absorb (engineering, architecture).

DISTRIBUTION OF COLOMBIAN IMMIGRANTS IN THE UNITED STATES

All 54 states and territories of the United States have Colombian residents. However, there is a definite tendency for Colombian migrants to concentrate in a few states. The State of New York, for example, attracted the greatest volume of Colombian migrants for the 1966-1975 period, accounting for 45.3 percent of all Colombian immigrants admitted. New Jersey is the state with the second greatest attraction. However, it accounts for only 12.8 percent of the total. New Jersey is followed, in order of densities, by Florida, California, and Illinois. Together, these are the five states that have attracted the greatest volume of Colombian migrants between 1965 and 1975 (80 percent of all immigrants admitted during the period). Together with Connecticut, Puerto Rico, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Texas, these are the 10 states and territories that attract most Colombians—90 percent of all those admitted between 1966 and 1975. The remaining 10 percent are distributed among the other 44 states and territories of the United States.

Not only do Colombians concentrate in these 10 states, but within the states, they concentrate in a limited number of cities, usually in the largest ones (New York, Miami, Los Angeles, Chicago) and in neighboring cities.

New York City undoubtedly has the greatest attraction for Colombians. (This pattern is common to immigrants from other countries.) New York, California, Illinois, New Jersey, Texas, Florida, and Massachusetts account for 70 percent (N=4,736,052) of all immigrants admitted to the United States between 1956 and 1975.

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Also, a great concentration of Colombian migrants in the coastal states of the northeastern region, which represents a small fraction of the vast territory of the United States, is observed.

What might account for the tendency of immigrants to concentrate in certain areas? One can speculate that it is probably due to four factors: the localization of employment resources, the attractiveness of a cosmopolitan environment, the greater sociocultural affinity that can be found there, and the chain-like effect of migration.

Those cities and states traditionally identified as the headquarters of the largest industrial complexes, are regarded as the most important potential sources of employment. These continue to attract immigrants even though a great number of industries which are quite labor intensive (principally textiles), have moved to southern states which offer considerable tax exemptions and where cheaper labor is available. Presumably, immigrants do not have enough information on the possibilities of employment in other cities and regions of the United States; they operate on the basis of the notion that the greatest employment opportunities are in traditional areas. Of course, higher income levels in the North could be a retaining factor, even though the cost of living is higher than in the South.

Second, large cities may be attractive to the migrants because of their cosmopolitan atmosphere, their well-established Latin communities, and their bilingualism. Large cities offer the migrant a variety of resources not always available in smaller cities. This seems to have significant weight in the selection of a place of residence, even though once established in the "great city," migrants may not use the services that attracted them there in the first place. This preference is consistent with the tendency exhibited by internal migration in Colombia to move to ever-larger areas. Since Colombian migrants come mainly from intermediate and large-size urban centers, it is to be expected that their migration movements will tend to be towards larger cities.

Third, by virtue of the chain-like effect of migration, concentration of the migrants tends to increase: In places where Colombians concentrate the most, the possibility is greater that other Colombians will immigrate there as parents, spouses, children, friends, and acquaintances can provide information and support.

Finally, in the case of Colombian migration to California, Florida, and Texas, the climate is similar to that in Colombia, and the Latin atmosphere is prevalent given the presence of various Latino groups (Mexicans, Cubans, and other Central and South Americans) in these states.

THE SURVEY

Who migrates to the United States? Why? What characteristics do the migrants share? These were some of the questions the authors attempted to explore through a survey of prospective emigrants.

The authors are aware of the limitations implicit in use of the survey method to study migration. The decision of the investigators to use this method, despite its limitations, was based on the argument that, treated with caution, it could be a useful tool for obtaining information complementary to the study.

Methodology

The reliability of the data depended basically on the type of information requested and on the way it would be collected. Initially, semi-structured interviews with the prospective emigrants, were proposed. However, it was not appropriate to interview the people in the offices of the Consulate of the United States and the investigators could not approach the prospective emigrants at their homes either, since their addresses were confidential information. Therefore, a questionnaire-survey was deemed most acceptable. The risk implicit in this approach was that those requested to fill out the questionnaire might associate it with a consular procedure for screening visa applicants. This would have invalidated the information obtained, for it would have tempted prospective emigrants to provide information which could help them obtain visas. To minimize such risk, the questionnaire was handed out in sealed envelopes to each applicant, along with a letter of introduction from the institution conducting the study that explained the purpose of the survey, the absence of any links between the Consular Offices of the United States and the study, as well as the inability of the authors to influence decisions on the granting of the visa. The prospective emigrants were invited to fill out the questionnaires anonymously and to return them in enclosed self-stamped envelopes.

Information requested included migration history, occupational and sociodemographic history of the applicant and his family, communication channels that linked them to the United States, motivation to emigrate, images of the society of origin and the society of destination, et cetera.

The Sample

The sample had characteristics which define it as a predisposed sample. It included only persons who would allow the investigators to probe particular aspects and specific hypotheses. These persons had applied for, or were in

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the process of obtaining, an immigrant visa to the United States; by such action they were explicitly stating their intention to emigrate to that country.

A total of 70 questionnaires were distributed as a pre-test in August 1975. On the basis of the results thus obtained, a few modifications were introduced in the final survey. One thousand forms were distributed during October, November, and December. By February 15, the deadline, only 9.6 percent of the sample had replied. This was a very low turnout; however, from the point of view of this study, it was enough to provide some illustrations of prospective emigrants.

Results

Sex distribution. Fifty-two females and fifty-one males responded. The difference between male and female respondents is minimal and is lower than that observed among admitted immigrants: As shown in Table 5, 55 percent of Colombians admitted to the United States between 1966-1975 were female. Only in 1964 and 1970 was the percentage of females less than 53 percent. In the sample under consideration, however, they only comprise 50.5 percent.

The number of males and females that applied for, or were in the process of obtaining, their immigrant visas is not known. Furthermore, there was no control over how many of those who received the questionnaires were male and how many were female. Therefore, it is not possible to conclude whether the men or women opt differentially for emigration, or if the criteria

Table 5
Age, Sex, and Marriage Status of the Sample

Age	Males		Females			Total			
	Single	Married	Total	Single	Married	Separated, Widowed	Total No.	%	
Less than 21 *	5	0	5	5	1	0	6	11	10.7
21-25 years	3	5	8	4	2	0	6	14	13.6
26-30 years	2	17	19	6	8	1	15	34	33.0
31-40 years	1	3	4	8	3	-	11	15	14.6
41-50	1	9	10	1	3	2	6	16	15.5
51 or more	0	5	5	4	1	3	8	13	12.6
Total	12	39	51	28	18	6	52	103	
	23.5%	76.5%	100%	53.8%	34.6%	11.5%	100.0%		
			49.5%				50.5%	100.0%	

*Of the 11 persons in this age group, only two were less than 19 (they were 13 and 16 years old).

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of selection and the possibilities in the work market of the host country determine that more females than males emigrate to the United States. It is also not possible to establish if the distribution on the sample reflects the sex composition of the population of prospective emigrants, or if more females than males decided to respond to the survey. In any event, the sex distribution of the sample approaches that shown for Colombians admitted as immigrants for the period 1960 to 1975.

Marital status and age. Most respondents are married (55.3 percent, N=57); 38.8 percent (N=40) are single, and 5.9 percent (N=6) identified themselves as widowed, separated, or divorced. Thus, more than half the respondents are or have been married.

When the variable "sex" is introduced, important differences in marital status appear. While 76.5 percent (N=39) of all male respondents are married, only 34.6 percent (N=18) of the female respondents are married. On the contrary, while 23.5 percent of the male respondents are single, 53.8 percent of the female respondents are single, and 11.5 percent (N=6) are widows, separated, or divorced. No male respondents were within the widower, separated, or divorced category.

It is not possible to compare the information obtained on marital status of prospective emigrants to similar information on admitted immigrants, since the latter was not available.

The sample revealed a definite concentration in the 26 to 30 age group. A third of the respondents were within this age group. This is consistent with findings of internal migration studies in Colombia. It is also consistent with the age distribution recorded by the Department of Justice on admitted Colombians.

Fertility. Those who view with apprehension the immigration of Latin Americans to the United States frequently argue that these migrants bring the high fertility patterns of their countries of origin. To probe the validity of this argument in the case of Colombian migrants, a few fertility-related questions were included in the questionnaire. Additionally, 1970 U.S. Census data on the fertility of Colombian immigrants living in the metropolitan area of New York were examined.

Almost half the respondents (48.5 percent) do not have children; since 39.2 percent were single, a little more than one-ninth of the respondents are or have been married and do not have children.

A significant majority (77.3 percent) of the respondents with children had from one to three children; 18.9 percent have four to six children, and 3.8 percent have seven or more.

It does not necessarily follow from these findings that prospective Colombian immigrants will exhibit low fertility patterns. The available data only

indicate actual family size. Furthermore, the sample population is young. At least some of them can be expected to continue to have children.

An indication of the fertility that prospective immigrants may reach—particularly those who do not have children and those who have not completed their reproductive cycles—can be obtained from their declared preferences on family size and their attitudes on birth control. Of all respondents, 53.4 percent stated that the ideal number of children for a family is one or two; 34 percent indicated the ideal number is one to three. On the other hand, 80 percent indicated favorable attitudes towards family planning; 11.6 percent were against it, and 8.4 percent “did not know how” they felt.

The 1969 Colombian National Fertility Survey—applied to a sample of 2,590 urban and 2,736 rural women—provides a basis for comparison. It should be noted, however, that the visa applicants’ sample includes men and women surveyed in 1975-1976 while the former refers only to women surveyed six years ago. According to the National Fertility Survey, number of children preferred was an average of 3.4 for the urban sample and 4.4 for the rural sample. On contraception, 61 percent of the urban sample showed a favorable attitude; 58 percent of the rural sample did. In the six years which have passed since the 1969 National Fertility Survey, some significant changes have taken place in Colombia. The availability of contraception information has increased, family planning programs have been extended, population and sexual education programs have been established. Such factors may have contributed to the diffusion of contraception, its greater acceptance, and an increasing preference for smaller families among Colombian immigrants.

Due to their high educational levels and urban backgrounds, prospective emigrants are likely to exhibit a much lower fertility level than the Colombian population as a whole. Clearly, various studies in Colombia indicate that education and urbanization are inversely related to fertility.

It is pertinent here to note the figures of the 1970 U.S. Census which Powers and Macisco present in the other study in this monograph and on which they comment:

The fertility of Colombians in New York was rather low compared to all ever-married women in New York City. Among ever-married women 16-44, Colombian women averaged 1,798 children ever born per 1000 compared to 2,035 among all ever-married women. The generally lower fertility of Colombian ever-married women occurred among all age groups and even among those not in the labor force.

Furthermore, even though the data present difficulties for comparison, it should be noted that according to preliminary results of the 1973 population

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census of Colombia, Colombian women 15-44 averaged 2,850 children ever born per 1000 women. Those living in the so-called urban areas (1,500 inhabitants or more) averaged 2,442 children ever born per 1000, while those living in rural areas (less than 1,500 inhabitants or dispersed population) averaged 3,799 children ever born per 1000 women ages 15-44.

All this means that the fertility of Colombian women who live in New York is not only lower than that observed among women living in urban areas of Colombia, but lower than that observed among all ever-married women living in New York City as well.

The fertility figures of the Colombian Census include women 15 years of age, while the United States Census only considers women 16 and older. Since fertility among 15-year-old women is quite low, no serious errors are made when comparing Colombian women ages 15-44 to those ages 16-44 in New York to analyze their fertility. On the other hand, while the statistics on fertility of New York women presented in another section of this monograph refer exclusively to ever-married women, those presented in the preliminary 1973 census also include single women 15-44. This would mean that for every 1,000 women between the ages of 15-44, 2,850 children were born. Once the single women are excluded, this rate would substantially increase, since from other sources it is learned that 45.6 percent of the female population of Colombia between the ages of 15 and 44 are single.

Education. The level of education of the sample is shown in the table below.

Table 6
Educational Levels of Immigrant Visa Applicants

Level of Education	No.	%		
Never attended school	0	-		
Primary incomplete	3	2.9	14.5	low
Primary complete	12	11.6		
Technical or commercial school	15	14.6		
Secondary incomplete	29	28.2	53.5	medium
Secondary complete	11	10.7		
University incomplete	18	17.5		
University complete	12	11.6	32.0	high
Postgraduate studies	3	2.9		
Total	103	100.0%		

Note that 14.5 percent have completed their college education; 28.2 percent completed high school or have some university training, while a slight majority (57.4 percent) exhibit intermediate (42.8 percent) and low (14 percent) educational levels.

Comparing the sample's educational level with that reached by a cohort of 100 children of school age (7 years) we find that all of the 103 prospective emigrants have some education and only 2.9 percent have not completed primary education, while in the cohort considered, 23 percent never went to school and 55.4 percent are unlikely to ever complete primary school; 2) 11.6 percent of the sample concluded their schooling after finishing primary school, while only 9.7 percent of the cohort reached this level; 3) 10.7 percent of the sample finished secondary school, compared with only 3.7 percent of the cohort; and 4) the sample contains 14.6 percent university graduates, while only 1.1 percent of the cohort ever achieve this level of education.

It becomes clear that the sample constitutes a selective segment of the population of Colombia relative to total population, urban population, and to population of the largest urban centers where the availability of educational resources is greater.

This suggests that the educational level of the migrants is likely to be higher than that of the society of origin as a whole.

Employment. Excluding all Colombians who responded to this survey who do not participate in the employment market (housewives, students, the retired, or disabled) the sample is reduced to 87 subjects. Of these, 77 percent are employed, while 9.2 percent do not work either because they are waiting for their visas to come through or because they did not find employment (6.9 percent). The others did not respond.

The sample reveals a level of unemployment which is remarkably low when compared with Colombian national figures for recent years.

Of the economically active respondents, most identified themselves as white collar, a few as blue collar, and about a sixth as "independent workers." Close to 50 percent indicated they have been in their present job for two to four years, and one-third declared they have been in the same job for five or more years.

Only a fourth indicated some dissatisfaction with their present employment, mainly in terms of low wages. Only a few mentioned the lack of stability in their employment, limited possibilities of promotion, and underutilization of skills. Another fourth indicated they were very satisfied with their present employment, and slightly less than half said they were "satisfied" with their employment.

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It should be noted that not only present unemployment but also previous experience with unemployment can pressure an individual to migrate. Even though only 6.9 percent of the sample is presently unemployed, close to a third said they were unemployed at some time in the last 10 years. A fourth of those affected by unemployment in the 1965-1975 period said that this experience had repeated itself on three or more occasions. Furthermore, over one-third indicated that they have been unemployed for one year or more when adding up all the time they had been unemployed in the last 10 years.

The table below shows the occupational distribution of the respondents, irrespective of whether they were presently employed or unemployed.

Table 7
Usual Occupation of Immigrant Visa Applicants

Occupation	%
Professionals	14.5
Technicians	16.5
Clericals	13.6
Vendors	7.8
Artisans	11.7
Factory Workers	9.7
Services	8.7
Non-employed (housewives, students, disabled)	15.6
No response	1.9
	100.0 (N=103)

Clearly, those occupations which entail low levels of qualification are the least represented. The majority of economically active respondents were within the intermediate or high skill occupational categories. Overall, however, the economically inactive and the low and intermediate occupational categories conform the majority of the sample.

That 14.5 percent of the respondents are within the "professionals" category constitutes a significant proportion relative to non-emigrant Colombians with similar qualifications. The same observation can be made with respect to the percentage of "tecnicos" in the sample.

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Origin and spatial mobility of the respondents. Respondents were requested to list the place where they resided permanently and not temporarily, since in going to Bogota for a visa, they might have indicated Bogota as place of residence despite not being permanent residents.

Even though 31 percent of the sample was born in rural areas or small towns, only 1 percent lived in small towns at present, and none lived in the countryside. Of all respondents, 52.5 percent were born in one of the four largest cities of Colombia (Bogota, Cali, Barranguilla, Medellin) and 79.7 percent lived there at present. Bogota is the place of permanent residence for 60.2 percent of the sample population.

As expected, this is an eminently urban population by virtue of birth or migration. This contributes to the explanation why Colombian emigrants prefer the large cities of the United States, and is in accordance with the tendency of internal migrants to move to ever greater urban areas.

Table 8 shows where the respondents prefer to reside in the United States. The preferences indicated coincide with those observed among immigrants admitted for the 1960-1975 period. The reasons most frequently cited by respondents to explain such preferences were a) that they had family and friends there, b) that it would be easier to find employment there, and c) that they felt greater attraction for these cities; they wanted to see them or had been there and liked them very much.

Table 8
Places in the U.S. Where
Immigrant Visa Applicants Prefer to Reside

Prefer to live in:	%
City of New York	27.2
Miami	12.0
City of New York or Miami	15.2
Cities in Connecticut	2.2
Cities in California	
Los Angeles, San Francisco	13.0
Other states and cities	13.0
No preference	17.4
	100.0 (N=103)

Looking into the migration history of the respondents, it was found that only 13.8 percent had never migrated within their own country. However,

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more than two-thirds had been born in one of the two largest metropolitan areas of the country, which would explain why they had not migrated internally. More than half (53 percent) had resided in four or more places, and 7 percent had lived in six or more places. Those who had migrated the most had been born in small towns. Interestingly, respondents who had not completed secondary education had migrated the greatest number of times. Most of those (87.5 percent) who had ever migrated internally always moved to more urbanized areas.

In sum, respondents are a population with experience in internal migration and with a tendency to migrate towards ever-greater urban centers. Their preferences for places of residence in the United States coincided with those chosen by Colombian immigrants admitted to the United States during the past 15 years.

Trips outside Colombia. Slightly more than two-thirds of the respondents (67 percent) had travelled abroad at some point in their lives. Slightly more than half (51.4 percent) had been only to the United States, 41.4 percent had been to the United States and other countries, and only 7.2 percent had been to countries other than the United States.

Of the 63 percent of respondents who had previously been to the United States, only one-fifth had remained there for less than one year, two-fifths had lived there from three to five years, and one-fourth had lived there for six years or more.

The reasons most frequently cited for the respondents (37.1 percent) for having visited the United States were the desire to visit family and friends and for relaxation. One-fourth declared that the purpose of the trip had been to seek new employment opportunities or to study, while 13 percent indicated they had been there for work-related reasons—their own, or their spouses. This suggests that 74.2 percent of those who had visited the United States had not first decided to establish residence there. Therefore, such a decision was made after a visit to that country.

All respondents had family or friends in the United States. Only 5.8 percent said they never communicated with them, but the majority of these respondents, however, had already been in the United States. The others indicated that they communicated with their family or friends frequently (73.8 percent) or sometimes (15.5 percent). No response came from 4.9 percent.

Previous experience in the United States and the presence of family and friends with whom close contact was maintained suggests that the emigrant visa applicants know a great deal about the life and opportunities in the United States. In fact, when asked their sources of the best and most information on the United States, 75.8 percent of the sample said it came from

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personal experience and from the experiences of family or friends who lived there. Of little importance as sources of information were television, movies, and newspapers.

Thus, the act of migration does not seem to represent an adventure or a trip to the unknown. Respondents were migrating to a society which is familiar to them and where they are certain to find support of family or friends already there.

SUMMARY

The study reveals that from 1960-1976 the proportion of Colombian females admitted as immigrants to the United States is consistently greater than the proportion of males. This finding could be related to the structure of labor demand in the receptor country, or to the emphasis that United States immigration legislation places on the reunion of families as a basis for selection of immigrants, or to certain cultural patterns related to women and the family in Colombia. Also during the 1960-1976 period, 1.6 non-employed migrants were admitted for each economically active one. The former were admitted on the basis of their kinship to permanent residents or citizens of the United States or to economically active immigrants. Those admitted on the basis of their occupational qualifications represent a considerably selective population, mostly professionals and technicians. Only a fifth of the employed category could be considered to have low skills. It is suggested that Colombian migration to the United States is not prompted by unemployment exclusively, but by a search for more gratifying occupations, both in terms of income and social status (nurses are a case in point). It was also found that in many cases the migration of Colombian professionals to the United States is of a temporary nature, which suggests that rather than a loss, migration might in these cases represent a gain for the country of origin. Emigrants who return to their countries, do so often with additional training and financial resources. Such is the case of physicians.

This study also reveals that there is a tendency for Colombian immigrants to concentrate in a few states of the country of destination, and within those states, in the largest cities (particularly New York). Nevertheless, Colombians are found in all 54 states and territories of the United States. Only five states (Hawaii, Montana, South Dakota, Wyoming, and Guam) contained less than five Colombians in the 1966-1976 period.

Interestingly, survey results indicate that the migration of Colombians to the United States does not qualify as an "adventure" or a "trip to the unknown." In general, applicants wanted to migrate to a society which is already familiar to them either because they had been there before or be-

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cause they had families or friends residing in the country of destination, who could provide them with information about opportunities there.

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Appendix A Sources of Information

UNITED STATES STATISTICS

Four sources of information were of particular value for the study:

- U.S. immigration legislation
- "Report of the Visa Office" of the U.S. Department of State which contains information on visas for each fiscal year (July 1 to June 30 of following year).
- "Annual Report: Immigration and Naturalization Service" of the U.S. Justice Department. The report contains valuable information on emigrants admitted. Extensive information on the movement of foreigners and some important features of such movements are provided for each fiscal year.
- The Archives of the Department of Statistics of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, as well as those of the Office of Security and Consular Affairs of the U.S. State Department. These contained the most complete information on the migration current of Colombians to the United States.

The oldest INS statistics on the entrance of foreigners to the United States are of 1820. Since 1907, statistics distinguish foreigners admitted as immigrants from those that are in transit, tourists, or who remain for short periods of time. This information is not disaggregated by country until 1926. These are the oldest statistics to illustrate reliably the emergence of the migration current between Colombia and the United States and its evolution during the first decades.

The U.S. Department of Justice statistics do not begin to show figures for South Americans admitted by country until 1936.

COLOMBIAN NATIONAL STATISTICS

Little could be said about Colombian emigration on the basis of national statistics. Data on occupation, sex, age, nationality, and marital status of

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travellers who leave the country are available since 1930. These data, however, give no indication on whether travellers leave the country as emigrants or tourists, nor do they indicate the country of destination. Since 1953 an attempt has been made to correct this lack, and information is recorded on type of visa granted. However, the categories utilized and the inconsistencies that the recorded figures reveal, make national statistics of little use.

Travellers who leave Colombia are grouped into two categories: Those who hold "long-term visas" and those who hold "short-term visas." The former include visas that authorize the individual to remain for one year or longer in the country of destination: The figures which appear here are considered as volume of emigrants. Thus, whoever leaves the country with a long-term visa is automatically considered an emigrant. Thus, official statistics are aggregating categories of travellers who only because they have authorization to remain one year or longer in a foreign country do not necessarily become emigrants. This is the case of students who travel to take one-year courses, for instance, and who are considered a separate category only from 1958 to 1964, while for 1953-1957, 1965-1969, they seem to have been included in the "emigrant" category.

The information on country of destination presents serious difficulties. The "migration card" was recently established. It is to be completed by travellers who enter or leave Colombian ports. It contains information on age, sex, marital status, country of origin, country of destination, type of visa, purpose of trip, et cetera.

The information obtained through migration cards, however, seems of low reliability. Frequently travellers do not fill in the card. Thus, the number of travellers (migrant and non-migrant) seems to be affected by serious under-registration. Furthermore, when the information is indeed obtained, it is not confronted with additional documentation, and thus a certain margin of error is to be expected.

Compare the figures which appear in Table 9, which are extracted from the statistical yearbooks of DANE from 1966 to 1970, with U.S. Department of Justice Statistics for the same period. DANE figures frequently cited in books, documents, the press, imply serious distortions. Those who utilize them without additional statistics might reach the conclusion that to the sustained growth of emigration registered in the 1955-1962 period, an unprecedented growth follows in the 1963-1965 period, to then decrease sharply and reach an insignificant level in 1970 when the emigrants registered are 15 in total. If to those Colombians admitted to the United States as immigrants are added the Colombians admitted in other countries, the discrepancy would increase, and with it the underenumeration of national statistics.

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Table 9
Comparison of the Data of the National Department of Statistics
And the Justice Department on Admitted Immigrants, 1966-1970

Year	National Department of Statistics* Colombians who leave with long-term visas	United States Department of Justice** Colombian immigrants not admitted to the U.S.
1966	4,018	9,504
1967	3,049	4,556
1968	3,786	6,902
1969	797	7,627
1970	15	6,727

Source:

* National Department of Statistics. 1966-1969. *Anuarios Generales de Estadística*.

** U.S. Department of Justice. 1963-1970. *Annual Report*. Immigration and Naturalization Service.

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Colombian Migration to the United States (Part 2)

Elsa M. Chaney*

Abstract

Colombian migration to the United States has a long history, is of substantial proportions, and fulfills an important role in giving Colombians an opportunity for social mobility, lacking in their own country. The principal destination is an area of Queens known as Chapinero. Despite the fact that the Colombians appear to blend well with the native population, are self-sufficient, and generally well adjusted, they all dream of returning home some day. They cling to Colombian culture and, as a result, Chapinero is more like a remote province of Colombia than an ethnic barrio of New York City. The principal motives for migrating are first and foremost, economic, then obtaining an education for children, and finally finding a marriage partner.

Twenty minutes from Grand Central Station, down the steps of the Queens-Flushing elevated line at Roosevelt Avenue and 82nd Street, is "Chapinero" (CHAH-PEEN-AIR-OH), the commercial center of New York's Colombian Colony in Jackson Heights, Queens.** Nicknamed by Colombians for one of Bogotá's middle-class suburbs, Chapinero at first

*Background demographic data on the Colombian population from the U.S. Census were provided and analyzed by Mary G. Powers and John J. Macisco, Jr.

Note: ICP social scientist David N. Holmes, Jr. helped prepare this paper for publication. Correspondence to Ms. Chaney may be directed to the Department of Political Science, Fordham University, Bronx, New York 10458.

**"Colony" is used throughout this report as a synonym for ethnic group. As used by Colombians, it means just that and does not have, for most of them, any conscious connotations of a minority controlled economically and politically by a metropolitan power. However, there may be some justification for considering the Hispanic and Afro-Caribbean migrants as colonials in the classic sense. The colonial relationship is discussed elsewhere in this report.

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does not appear to differ from hundreds of other business/residential communities in Queens and Long Island. Nor are the Colombians themselves any more visible. Their presence in Jackson Heights and in the greater New York City metropolitan area goes largely unnoticed, in spite of the fact that they may number as high as 100,000–250,000 persons.

Every four years, it is true, the *New York Times* notes the large numbers of Colombians who travel to their consulate on East 46th Street in Manhattan and vote in their country's presidential elections. Colombia is one of the few countries which makes arrangements for its citizens to vote in its embassies and consulates all over the world. But outside of this now ritual news story and a few feature articles in the Sunday supplements, only an occasional inventory of New York's Hispanic population acknowledges the Colombian presence.

Not all Colombians live in Chapinero: today they are dispersed throughout the New York-New Jersey metropolitan area. Thus, the Colombians lack the first prerequisite of an actual colony—territoriality. But even more crucial to their invisibility, Colombians—along with Dominicans, Ecuadorians, Peruvians, and other Latin American migrants—are often thought to be Puerto Ricans by Anglos. The fact that Colombians have not yet succeeded in organizing themselves (in spite of three or four abortive attempts) and have never participated as a group in local politics or community affairs helps conceal their existence as an ethnic minority.*

A large number of Colombians are "turistas"—some observers estimate perhaps 60 percent of the total. These are persons who arrive in the United States with valid tourist documents, find work, and stay on after their tourist cards expire. Many persons from other Caribbean and South American countries live similarly in the United States. It was a common observation of those interviewed for this study that "every family has its 'illegal' or knows one," and this is an added reason to maintain a low profile. Concern about the visibility of the colony has recently centered around the prominence of Colombians among the "traficantes," those connected to the transportation and sale of drugs. Some suggested this as the cause of an accelerated movement in recent years of Colombians out of Jackson Heights, Elmhurst, and Woodside, for the purpose of losing themselves in the general population. Although criminal elements represent only a small percentage of the total, they are viewed by their compatriots as "spoilers" who have added immeasurably to the problems of discrimination and suspicion that law-abiding and hardworking Colombians say they face in the larger society.

* Ethnicity, for the purposes of this study, is defined as the consciousness of belonging to a group with which one shares a cultural heritage.

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However, not a single one of the many Colombian men and women interviewed for this study doubted the existence of a Colombian colony. For Colombians, the colony is no less real as the rallying point for their ethnic identity simply because it is not a visible, territorial entity around which they can draw boundaries and take an accurate census of the inhabitants. Nor are they any less emphatic in their conviction that they are distinct in heritage, culture, and language not only from the North American society but also from other Hispanic groups, particularly the dominant Puerto Ricans and, to a lesser extent, the Cubans. Often the first thing Colombians wish the outsider to understand is that they are not Puerto Rican. Colombians base the distinction partially at least on language. They are acknowledged to speak the purest Spanish on the continent, and they consider Puerto Rican—especially Neoyorican—Spanish to be little more than a dialect. Relations with the Cubans are tinged with jealousy. Many Colombians think that Cubans dominate the Hispanic business concerns in New York City and even in Chapinero.

The bulk of Colombian migrants appear to have arrived during the 1960s, but many of the residents of Chapinero apparently came 20 years ago, after the Korean War, and the first arrivals probably came after World War I. At this point in their history, they have opted for selective adaptation to the United States, while preserving a strong cultural identity in which the myth of the return to Colombia plays a large part.* Indeed Colombians and many Caribbean migrants perhaps ought to be called conditional migrants because their move is not based on a once-and-for-all decision—even if they arrive legally on an immigrant visa—to leave their homelands forever. The decision to remain usually is made in stages after their arrival in the United States, and many never make any definite decision to stay.

These and other characteristics of the Colombian migrants to New York City have important social and political implications not only for the migrants themselves, but for the host society. In many ways, Colombian problems and strategies for solving them are common to the other large groups of Hispanics who have arrived in eastern seaboard cities of the United States in the past two decades. Almost imperceptibly, New York City has become an extension of the Afro- and Latin-Caribbean and of several South and Central American countries, principally Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Panama, and

*Colombians, obviously, do not talk about their projected return as a myth. However, the return is mythical to the extent that the date typically is postponed every few years and comparatively few persons or families return permanently to Colombia. Among those interviewed for this study, a typical comment was that many had gone back, found they could not re-adapt to Colombia, and "were seen again in a year or two on the streets of Queens." The myth is important because it provides a reason for maintaining strong ties with Colombia and for not getting involved in U.S. politics or community affairs.

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Honduras. Thus we are dealing not only with a new set of immigrants distinct from the old immigrants of Western Europe and Great Britain, but with the long, difficult, love-hate relationship of the United States to the Caribbean and Latin America.

The microsocial focus of this report is concerned with how the individual migrant defines his or her situation and acts within it. This report inquires particularly into the experiences of Colombian migrants after their arrival in New York City. For its conceptual framework, the report follows current thinking among social scientists on the behavior of immigrants in the United States which discards both the melting pot paradigm—the eventual disappearance of immigrant groups into a new cultural and genetic blend—and what Gordon (1964) has called the “Anglo-conformity model”—the complete assimilation by immigrants of the core values of white, middle-class, Protestant America. Most students of ethnicity now acknowledge that immigrants to the United States have not behaved in either of these two ways, but that a pluri-ethnic model—diverse ethnic groups, often re-enforced by racial distinctiveness—more accurately describes not only the probable adaptation pattern of the new immigrants, but also the behavior of the older immigrant populations.

But even this model of cultural pluralism—a comfortable one because it salvages the notion of a democratic society in which competing groups acquire political resources and vie for power—may not be adequate to describe the experience of all Hispanic groups, particularly when they include many persons without documents. And, because of the relationship between the United States and the Caribbean and Latin America, the neo-colonial and exploitative aspects of the migrant experience have to be explored.

In several studies of migrants, a distinction is made between colonials and former colonials who go to the mother country, and immigrants who have never been in a colonial relationship to the host country. As Domínguez (1975) notes, Caribbean migrants to the United States are not like European immigrants searching for the New Land and the New Frontier. Psychologically, Caribbean migrants are more like the natives of a European colony who seek to improve their condition by going to the mother country.

To the extent that, for the foreseeable future, cultural pluralism will be a dominant characteristic of the North American society and polity, it may provide a useful, if partial, framework for analyzing Caribbean and South American migrant groups. As Domínguez also suggests, pluralism “is not the creation of Anglo-American educators, politicians and administrators: it is an alternative to ‘non-assimilation’ sought by many of the minority group members themselves in the light of the persistence of ethnic and racial cleavages in the American society” (1975 p. 62).

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The model of continued ethnic diversity and separateness appears to fit most exactly the Colombians' own view of their participation in and adaptation to North American life. There is no indication that Colombians have the least desire to melt into any larger entity, not even into a new Hispanic melting pot, a possibility Glazer and Moynihan (1970) suggest might be the future of the diverse Spanish-speaking groups in New York City.* Indeed, the very idea appalls Colombians (which is not to say that they reject out of hand the idea of eventual strategic political coalitions among those of Hispanic heritage).

Even less desirable to Colombians is any suggestion that they exchange their Latin heritage for a set of Anglo cultural characteristics. While they universally profess admiration for North American technological progress, work discipline, and talent for organization, it is questionable whether members of the colony desire anything more than the minimum necessary adaptation to North American ways. The old image of Prospero and Caliban (as interpreted in the work of the Uruguayan writer Rodó) still gives Colombians a sense that they have a far superior world-view than their North American colleagues: A greater appreciation for music, art, and beauty; a deeper grasp of spiritual and humanistic values; a more rounded, integrated, and whole personality than the North American who is seen as one-dimensional, uncomplicated, and conformist in contrast to the moody, individualistic Colombian. The complexity of the Colombian character behind the façade of smiling graciousness was often stressed by those interviewed in this study. In general, Colombians appear to approve of their convoluted thought processes and modes of action, but they also stress the negative features of Colombian individualism, which pose particular difficulties in organizing the colony. The preoccupation of migrants with the problem of preserving and transmitting Colombian values to the second generation, many of whom know Colombia only through visits to relatives at vacation times, is one more strong indication that Colombians hope to avoid assimilation and loss of identity in the larger North American society.

METHODOLOGY

The statistical information for this study was provided by a special tabulation of data from the 1970 U.S. Census. The remainder of the report, an examination of the lifestyle and attitudes of Colombians living in Jackson Heights, is based primarily on a series of interviews with men and women

*See also Domínguez (1975).

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active in professions or roles which bring them into close daily contact with Colombians as patients, clients, students, customers, and colleagues. These people include educators, priests, and entrepreneurs in ethnic enterprises such as restaurants, real estate and travel agencies, other small business people, political figures, journalists, persons active in the colony's sports club network, and doctors and dentists. Because of the current connotation of the word informant in the colony (in relation to the Immigration and Naturalization Service and the Narcotics Bureau), these persons are referred to throughout this report as experts even though they fulfill the role of knowledgeable informants in the anthropological sense. Besides interviews with this panel of experts, several other small studies and some four years' acquaintance with and informal observation in the colony provided additional information. This report does not pretend to be an exhaustive account of Colombians in New York City; it is not based on systematic survey data and much of the description and analysis must be regarded as tentative. It does offer a profile of the Colombian colony in Jackson Heights, outlines the present situation of the immigrants, and identifies crucial areas for future research.

THE NEW IMMIGRANTS IN NEW YORK CITY: THE CENSUS DATA

The Colombian migrants who step off the plane at Kennedy Airport into the arms of waiting relatives or friends find themselves in a city where the overall ethnic composition is shifting in favor of Spanish, French, and English-speaking peoples of the Caribbean and immigrants from certain less-distant South American countries. Present trends indicate that these migrations are rapidly replacing the large-scale European migrations of earlier decades.

Despite the 1965 United States Immigration Act, which for the first time imposed a global quota on the Western Hemisphere, the numbers of South American and Caribbean immigrants to the United States have been increasing. In the years 1966-1974, immigrants from the English- and Spanish-speaking Caribbean increased by some 400,000, representing 18 percent of the total immigration, a large jump from 8 percent in the previous decade (1957-1965). One country, Jamaica, experienced an astounding 715 percent increase! While South Americans represented 6 percent of the world total of immigrants in both periods, their absolute numbers grew by 20 percent from one period to the next.*

*Some of these populations recently have been the subjects of small-scale studies undertaken by anthropologists, economists, political scientists, sociologists and demographers, many with prior research experience in the countries from which the new migrants come. Most of these studies still are in progress, and most are confined to a single group of migrants. For further information on the general situation, especially of Caribbean migrants, see Bryce-Laporte 1976, Domínguez 1975 (which has the most complete bibliography), and Sutton 1973.

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These figures mean that the ethnic composition of major U.S. urban centers is rapidly changing. Many of the new immigrants cluster in the Eastern seaboard cities, with the largest proportion in New York, making this city a significant extension of the Afro-Caribbean and Latin-Caribbean region. The 1970 U.S. Census of Population shows, for example, that while total foreign stock population (those who identify themselves as of foreign birth or foreign parentage) in New York City is decreasing, there have been absolute and proportional increases of persons of Latin origin. Including Puerto Ricans, Hispanics grew from about 5.5 percent of the city's population in 1960 to 10.4 percent in 1970. If migrants living in the city without appropriate documents were included, these figures would be substantially higher (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1973b).

The Colombians in New York

Statistical information on South American migrants is practically nonexistent; even in the U.S. Census they disappear into the category of other Spanish and South America, since only Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, and Cubans are reported separately. For this reason, a special run of 1970 Census data was made to yield basic information on the Colombian population in the greater New York metropolitan area. This population includes persons born in Colombia and those with one or both parents born in Colombia. Although the census material was dated by the time it became available, it is the most recent source of such detailed information.

The data focuses on the socioeconomic situation of Colombians in New York City in 1970, with particular attention given to education, labor force status, occupational patterns, and income. Attention is also given to marital and fertility patterns and other social and demographic characteristics. Colombians are compared to the total population of New York City in terms of age, education, income, employment status, occupation, and marital status.

Demographic profile: Age, sex, and residence. The age distribution of the Colombian population age 5 and over shows that Colombians are younger, on the average, than the general population of New York City in 1970. This is primarily the result of a larger proportion of Colombians, ages 25-44, in the young adult, working-age category. Almost half the Colombian population is in this age group compared to 27 percent of the total population of New York City (Table 1). There are also slightly larger concentrations in the groups ages 5-15 and 16-24, and much smaller proportions over age 45.

Women constitute a majority (55.8 percent) of Colombians 16 and over—a situation typical of New York City in general and of other recent migrant groups (Table 2). Women are particularly predominant among the small number of persons 45 and over, which may reflect the immigration of so many female domestic workers from Latin America.

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Table 1
Age Distribution of Persons 5 Years Old and Over, by Sex, for the Total Population and Colombians, New York City, 1970

Age	Total Population			Colombian Population		
	Both Sexes	Males	Females	Both Sexes	Males	Females
Total 5 years old and over	7,279,064	3,389,418	3,889,646	26,201	11,909	14,292
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
5-15	19.0	20.8	17.5	22.4	24.6	20.6
16-24	15.4	15.4	15.3	17.3	18.0	16.7
25-44	27.3	27.8	26.9	46.0	47.0	45.0
45-64	25.2	24.4	25.9	11.4		14.0
65+	13.1	11.6	14.4	2.9	2.1	3.6
5+	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
16+	81.0	79.2	82.5	77.6	75.4	79.4
45+	38.3	36.0	40.3	14.3	10.4	17.6
65+	13.1	11.6	14.4	2.9	2.1	3.6

Table 2
Persons 5 Years Old and Over, by Sex and Age, Total Population and Colombians, New York City, 1970

Age	Total Population			Colombian Population				
	Both Sexes	Males	Females	Both Sexes	Males	Females		
Total 5 years old and over	7,279,064	100.0	46.6	53.4	26,201	100.0	45.4	54.6
5-15	1,385,469	100.0	50.8	49.2	5,869	100.0	49.8	50.2
16-24	1,118,374	100.0	46.6	53.4	4,532	100.0	47.4	52.6
25-44	1,989,077	100.0	47.5	52.5	12,045	100.0	46.5	53.5
45-64	1,833,290	100.0	45.0	55.0	2,981	100.0	32.7	67.3
65+	952,854	100.0	41.3	58.7	774	100.0	32.0	68.0
16+	5,893,595	100.0	45.5	54.5	20,332	100.0	44.2	55.8
45+	2,786,144	100.0	43.8	56.2	3,755	100.0	32.7	67.3
65+	952,854	100.0	41.3	58.7	774	100.0	32.0	68.0

New York City has long attracted migrants from other parts of the United States and from the rest of the world. Although the proportion of the total New York City population who had been living abroad five years earlier (in

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1965) was only 4 percent, about 18 percent of the total population in New York City was foreign born. Colombians are similar to other New Yorkers in that a large percentage were born elsewhere and many are recent arrivals. Nearly two out of every five Colombians age 5 and over in New York City in 1970 lived abroad in 1965; that is, they are recent migrants. Between 1965 and 1970, about the same proportion of Colombians age 5 and over (33 percent) as other New Yorkers (31 percent) changed residence within the United States.

Marital status and fertility. A larger proportion of Colombian women 16 and over are recent migrants (39 percent had been living abroad in 1965). Migrants often include disproportionate numbers of young single persons, and proportionally more Colombian women than all New York women 16 and over have never been married. This varied with age, however, with larger proportions of Colombian women 25 and over who have never been married, and a smaller proportion of those 16-24 who have never been married. Thus, it is not the youngest group which is disproportionately single (Table 3).

Table 3
Marital Status of all Women and Colombian Women 16 Years Old and Over, by Age, New York City, 1970

Marital Status	Age				
	16+	16-44	16-24	25-44	45+
<u>All Women</u>					
Total	3,208,559	1,642,201	597,379	1,044,822	1,566,358
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Never-Married	22.9	34.6	65.4	17.0	10.6
Ever-Married	77.1	65.4	34.6	83.0	89.4
<u>Colombian Women</u>					
Total	11,349	8,821	2,382	6,439	2,528
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Never-Married	29.8	33.7	59.4	24.2	16.2
Ever-Married	70.2	66.3	40.6	75.8	83.8

Source: Special Tabulations. U. S. Bureau of Census. 1970.

Among women 16-44, the marital status of the Colombians is similar to that of all women in New York; that is, about one-third are single and two-thirds have been married. The major differences occur among those without husbands present. Proportionately fewer Colombian women are

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separated, widowed, or divorced, and more are married with husbands absent than among the total population, 16-44. Other disparities become evident when the marital status of specific age groups is examined. Among those 16-24, proportionately more Colombian women than all women have been married or are married with a husband present. This is probably related to the fact that a larger percentage of younger Colombian women than all women have only an elementary level of education, and poorly educated women tend to marry at a younger age. Among women 35-44, a much larger percentage of Colombian women than all women are single, and a smaller percentage have ever been married. The difference is greatest among married women with husbands present—about 53 percent of Colombian women 35-44, compared to 67 percent of all women in this age group.

The fertility of Colombians in New York is rather low compared to all ever-married women. Among ever-married women 16-44, Colombian women average 1,798 children ever born per 1000, compared to 2,035 among all ever-married women (Table 4). The generally lower fertility of Colombian ever-married women occurs among all age groups and even among those not in the labor force. In fact, fertility is lower among Colombian women not in the labor force than among all women not working. A larger proportion of Colombian ever-married women than all ever-married women are in the labor force, and the number of children ever-born per 1000 Colombian women in the labor force is higher than among all women in the labor force.

Education. Colombians are more like other New Yorkers with respect to education than some other recent migrant groups. The median years of school completed is 11.8 both for the total population and for Colombians 16 and over. Also, 48 percent of both the total New York City population and the Colombian population, 16 and over, are high school graduates (Table 5).

There is some variation by sex and age. Colombian men 16 and over are more highly educated than all men, both in terms of median years of schooling completed and percent of high school graduates. By the same criteria, Colombian women are somewhat less educated than all women. A larger proportion of Colombian women than all women have eight years of school or less, or an elementary education. This variation is undoubtedly linked to the current preference system in the immigration law that favors applicants for occupations with a shortage of labor, which has included domestic service for many years. The immigration priorities also include highly skilled occupations such as physicians and other medical professions, which may account for the relatively high percentage of Colombians with some college education (Table 5).

As with the total population, the median level of education and the proportion finishing high school is highest among the younger age groups. However, Colombians in the youngest age group, 16-24, do not compare as

Table 4
Number of Children Ever Born to Ever-Married Women 16-44 in the
Total and Colombian Population, by Age and Labor Force Status,
New York City, 1970

Age Labor Force Status	Total		Colombians	
	Ever- Married Women	Children Ever Born per 1000	Ever- Married Women	Children Ever Born per 1000
16-44				
Ever-Married	1,073,492	2,035	5,846	1,798
In Labor Force	430,299	1,541	3,074	1,612
Percent of Total	40.1	-	52.6	-
Employed	410,744	1,533	2,917	1,625
At Work	394,427	1,528	2,773	1,629
Full Time	176,784	1,532	1,528	1,594
Part Time	217,643	1,526	1,245	1,671
Unemployed	19,455	1,702	157	1,363
Not in Labor Force	643,193	2,365	2,772	2,004
16-24				
Ever-Married	206,508	999	968	850
In Labor Force	84,405	507	446	657
Percent of Total	40.9	-	46.1	-
Employed	80,229	491	437	659
At Work	76,660	484	394	632
Full Time	34,639	579	185	773
Part Time	42,021	405	209	507
Unemployed	4,151	806	9	-
Not in Labor Force	122,103	1,339	522	1,015
25-34				
Ever-Married	441,868	1,999	2,922	1,727
In Labor Force	155,727	1,377	1,451	1,431
Percent of Total	35.2	-	49.7	-
Employed	148,252	1,362	1,354	1,442
At Work	142,326	1,350	1,292	1,462
Full Time	65,970	1,384	747	1,369
Part Time	76,356	1,321	545	1,589
Unemployed	7,437	1,690	97	1,278
Not in Labor Force	286,141	2,338	1,471	2,018
35-44				
Ever-Married	425,116	2,575	1,956	2,373
In Labor Force	190,167	2,133	1,177	2,195
Percent of Total	44.7	-	60.2	-
Employed	182,263	2,131	1,126	2,219
At Work	175,441	2,129	1,087	2,188
Full Time	76,175	2,093	596	2,131
Part Time	99,266	2,157	491	2,257
Unemployed	7,867	2,187	51	1,667
Not in Labor Force	234,949	2,932	779	2,641

Source: Special Tabulations. U. S. Bureau of the Census. 1970. Table 16.

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Table 5
Years of School Completed by the Total Population 16 Years of Age and Over and by Colombians 16 Years of Age and Over, by Age and Sex, New York City, 1970

Years of School Completed	Both Sexes		Males		Females	
	Total	Colombians	Total	Colombians	Total	Colombians
Total 16 years + Percent	5,893,595 100.0	20,332 100.0	2,685,036 100.0	8,983 100.0	3,208,559 100.0	11,349 100.0
Elementary	29.0	29.9	27.7	25.3	30.0	33.5
Less than 5 years	6.5	7.2	6.0	5.7	6.9	8.3
5 to 7 years	10.4	13.4	10.3	11.4	10.5	15.0
8 years	12.0	9.3	11.4	8.3	12.5	10.1
High School	51.3	53.1	48.7	52.1	53.5	53.8
1 to 3 years	22.6	21.9	23.5	22.2	21.8	21.7
4 years	28.8	31.2	25.2	29.9	31.7	32.1
College	19.7	17.0	23.6	22.6	16.5	12.7
1 to 3 years	9.7	10.8	10.9	14.3	8.8	8.1
4 years	10.0	6.2	12.7	8.3	7.7	4.6
Median years	11.8	11.8	11.8	12.1	11.8	11.3
Percent high school graduates	48.5	48.2	48.8	52.5	48.2	44.8

favorably with the total population on either variable as those at the older ages. Proportionately, more than twice as many males and females have only an elementary level of education. The relatively lower education level may occur because the younger groups include more persons who are still students. The younger age groups may also include more youngsters of Colombian birth or parentage who have difficulty finishing school in the United States. (This is purely speculative, however.)

Among both Colombians and the total population, 16 and over, those in the labor force are more highly educated than those not in the labor force. This is especially true for women. About 48 percent of all women, 16 and over, have completed four or more years of high school (Table 5), compared to 63 percent of women in the labor force. Comparable figures for Colombian women were 45 percent and 50 percent, respectively. More than three-quarters of all women, 16-24, in the labor force are high school graduates, as are 60 percent of Colombian women in this age group. A similar picture emerges for men. About 49 percent of all men, 16 and over, are high school graduates, but 55 percent of those in the labor force are high school graduates. Comparable figures for Colombian men are 53 percent and 55 percent, respectively.

Colombian Migration to the United States (Part 2)

Employment and occupation. Colombians have high labor force participation rates relative to other New Yorkers. About 85 percent of Colombian men and 58 percent of Colombian women, 16 and over, are in the labor force. Comparable figures for the total population are 74 percent and 42 percent, respectively (Table 6). Among those in the total civilian labor force, Colombian men and women are employed to about the same extent as the entire New York population—for example, 95.6 percent of Colombian men are employed as compared to 96.1 percent of the total male civilian labor force 16 and over. Compared to other minority populations in New York City, such as the Puerto Ricans, Colombians fare rather well in the labor market. However, unemployment is slightly higher among Colombians than among the total population. The overall unemployment rate is 4.4 percent for Colombian men, 16 and over, compared to 3.9 percent for all men in New York City in 1970. Yet, among the youngest age group, 16-19, the unemployment rate of 10 percent for Colombian men is lower than the 11.9 percent for the total population. The unemployment rates for Colombians, as for all others, are highest in the 16-19 age bracket and lowest among those 25-44. Among the rather small male population ages 45-64, the unemployment rate of 5.7 percent is about twice as high as for the total male population in the same age group. Among employed men 16 and over, most are employed full time (35 hours or more per week). In fact, the proportion employed full time is higher among Colombians than among the total male population 16 and over—90 percent compared to 87 percent.

Among women, a similar picture emerges. Of those in the civilian labor force, most are employed and work full time. A larger proportion of Colombian women than all women are also employed full time—81 percent compared to 76 percent. A larger proportion of Colombian women than all women are unemployed—5.3 percent compared to 4.5 percent. As with Colombian men, unemployment is much higher for the younger age groups, 16-19 and 20-24, and the unemployment rate for Colombian women 16-19 is more than twice that for all women 16-19.

Labor force participation patterns differ considerably according to the school enrollment status of young people and, for women, according to the presence of children in the home. Among all men, 16 and over and enrolled in school, only 42 percent are also in the labor force, and 95 percent of these are employed at least part time. Comparable figures for Colombians are 53 percent and 95 percent, respectively. A somewhat lower percentage of females than males who are enrolled in school are also employed.

The labor force participation of women is modified by their marital status. Among Colombian women, as among all women 16-44, the widowed and divorced are the largest proportion in the labor force, followed closely by single women. Married women with husbands present have the lowest labor

Table 6

Labor Force of the Total Population and Colombians 14 Years Old and Over, by Age and Sex, New York City, 1970

Age and Sex	Total Population	Total in Labor Force		Civilian Labor Force (%)			Not in Labor Force	
	Number	Number	Percent	Total	Employed	Unemployed	Number	Percent
Total Population								
Male 16 years +	2,685,036	1,985,324	73.9	73.5	96.1	3.9	699,712	26.1
16 - 19	236,806	79,399	33.5	32.9	88.1	11.9	157,407	66.5
20 - 24	284,189	207,330	73.0	70.8	93.6	6.4	76,859	27.0
25 - 44	944,255	861,624	91.2	90.8	96.8	3.2	82,631	8.8
45 - 54	425,171	388,251	91.3	91.2	97.3	2.7	36,920	8.7
55 - 64	400,848	332,133	82.9	82.8	96.8	3.2	68,715	17.1
65+	393,767	116,587	29.6	29.6	94.3	5.7	277,180	70.4
14+	2,813,274	1,994,176	70.9	70.4	96.0	4.0	819,098	29.1
14 - 15	128,238	8,852	6.9	6.9	86.0	14.0	119,386	93.1
Female 16 years +	3,208,559	1,348,315	42.0	42.0	95.5	4.5	1,860,244	58.0
16 - 19	244,960	80,242	32.8	32.7	92.7	7.3	164,718	67.2
20 - 24	352,419	202,482	57.5	57.4	95.8	4.2	149,937	42.5
25 - 44	1,044,822	488,107	46.7	46.7	96.0	4.0	556,715	53.3
45 - 54	517,456	284,378	55.0	55.0	95.9	4.1	233,078	45.0
55 - 64	489,815	226,092	46.2	6.2	95.8	4.2	263,723	53.8
65+	559,087	67,014	12.0	12.0	92.8	7.2	492,073	88.0
14+	3,332,589	1,354,003	40.6	40.6	95.5	4.5	1,978,586	59.4
14 - 15	124,030	5,688	4.6	4.6	86.1	13.9	118,342	95.4

Table 6 (Contd.)

Colombian								
Male 16 years +	8,983	7,675	85.4	85.4	95.6	4.4	1,308	14.6
16 - 19	893	329	36.8	36.8	90.0	10.0	564	63.2
20 - 24	1,257	1,032	82.1	82.1	91.9	8.1	225	17.9
25 - 44	5,606	5,340	95.3	95.3	96.9	3.1	266	4.7
45 - 54	703	659	93.7	93.7	95.9	4.1	44	6.3
55 - 64	276	204	73.9	73.9	89.2	10.8	72	26.1
65+	248	111	44.8	44.8	96.4	3.6	137	55.2
14+	9,379	7,685	81.9	81.9	95.6	4.4	1,694	18.1
14 - 15	396	10	2.5	2.5	-	-	386	97.5
Female 16 years +	11,349	6,623	58.4	58.4	94.7	5.3	4,726	41.6
16 - 19	746	288	38.6	38.6	84.4	15.6	458	61.4
20 - 24	1,636	1,029	62.9	62.9	99.1	0.9	607	37.1
25 - 44	6,439	4,013	62.3	62.3	94.7	5.3	2,426	37.7
45 - 54	1,279	922	72.1	72.1	94.3	5.7	357	27.9
55 - 64	723	275	38.0	38.0	90.9	9.1	448	62.0
65+	526	96	18.3	18.3	93.8	6.3	430	81.7
14+	11,788	6,639	56.3	56.3	94.7	5.3	5,149	43.7
14 - 15	439	16	3.6	3.6	-	-	423	96.4

Colombian Migration to the United States (Part 2)

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force participation rates of all married women. Apparently, the labor force activity of women is restricted, in part, by the presence of children, especially young children.

Just over half (53 percent) of the ever-married women are in the labor force compared to three-quarters of the never married. The picture is not simple, however. Among Colombian ever-married women with no children under 18, only 57 percent are in the labor force, compared to 68 percent of those with children between 6 and 18. Of those with some children under six, only 32 percent are in the labor force. There is also a higher unemployment rate among those with some children under six than among all other Colombian women. However, there is little difference among working women in terms of part-time and full-time status. Among employed women, those with some children under six have less part time employment than those with no children under six.

Age also influences the extent to which women participate in the labor force. Among both the ever married and the never married, a larger proportion of women, 25-44, are in the labor force than either younger or older women. About 54 percent of ever-married women, 25-44, are in the labor force compared to 46 percent of those 16-24 and 48 percent of those 45 and over. Since education also affects labor force participation, as noted earlier, the more highly educated ever-married women are in the labor force to a greater extent than those with a low level of educational attainment. For example, 58 percent of ever-married women with more than 12 years of school are in the labor force, compared to only 46 percent of those with eight years or less of school (Table 7).

Income. Although Colombians have high labor force participation rates compared to other New Yorkers, they do not enjoy the same position with respect to income. The median income of all Colombians, 16 and over with income, is \$4,791, compared to \$5,049 for all persons with income (Tables 8 and 9). Colombian men are disadvantaged relative to all men with income; Colombian women fare better, on the average, than all women with income, with a median income of \$3,820, compared to \$3,440 for all women. This advantage stems from higher median incomes for Colombian women in the youngest and oldest age groups. In the prime working ages, 20-64, the median income of Colombian women is lower than that for all women.

There are almost no Colombians (1.4 percent), men or women, in the top income category of \$15,000 or more, compared to about 6 percent of all persons and 9.5 percent of all men in New York City. Also, there are proportionally fewer Colombians with incomes below the poverty level—under \$4,000. Both in the total population and among Colombians, more women than men have incomes below the poverty level. About 53 percent of Colombian women have incomes under \$4,000, as do 56 percent of all women.

Table 7

Labor Force Status of Colombian Women by Years of School Completed, Age and Presence of Own Children,
New York City, 1970

Age, Marital Status, And Presence of Own Children	All Women	IN THE LABOR FORCE												NOT IN LABOR FORCE
		Total		Total Employed		Full Time		Part Time		Employed Not at Work		Unemployed		
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
<u>8 years or Less</u>														
16 years and over	3,803	1,945	51.1	1,801	92.6	960	53.3	775	43.0	66	3.7	144	7.4	48.9
Ever-married	2,955	1,348	45.6	1,266	93.9	701	55.4	523	41.3	42	3.3	82	6.1	54.4
Percent	77.7	69.3	...	70.3	...	73.0	...	67.5	—	56.9	...	—
With no children	1,308	586	44.8	569	97.1	332	58.3	219	38.5	18	3.2	17	2.9	55.2
With own children	1,647	762	46.3	697	91.5	369	52.9	304	43.6	24	3.5	65	8.5	53.6
None under 6	694	462	67.5	427	92.4	205	48.0	204	47.7	18	4.3	35	7.6	32.5
Some under 6	953	300	31.5	270	90.0	164	60.7	100	37.0	6	2.3	30	10.0	68.5
Own child. Under 18	1,106	620	56.0	572	92.2	297	51.9	257	44.9	18	3.2	48	7.8	44.0
Never-Married	848	597	70.4	535	89.6	259	48.4	252	47.1	24	4.5	62	10.4	29.6
<u>9-11 years School</u>														
16 years and over	2,461	1,354	55.0	1,287	95.1	681	52.9	528	41.0	78	6.1	67	4.9	45.0
Ever-married	1,576	828	52.5	803	97.0	395	49.2	337	42.0	71	8.8	25	3.0	47.5
Percent	64.0	61.2	...	62.4	...	58.0	...	63.8	...	—	...	37.3	...	67.6
With own children	631	355	56.3	348	98.0	167	48.0	142	40.8	39	11.2	7	2.0	43.7
With own children	945	473	50.1	455	96.2	228	50.1	195	42.9	32	7.0	18	3.8	49.9
None under 6	392	263	67.1	259	98.5	114	44.0	127	49.0	18	6.9	4	1.5	32.9
Some under 6	553	210	38.0	196	93.3	114	58.2	68	34.7	14	7.1	14	6.7	62.0
Own child. Under 18	606	331	54.6	327	98.8	158	48.3	145	44.3	24	7.3	4	1.2	45.4
Never-Married	885	526	59.4	484	92.0	286	59.1	191	39.5	7	1.4	42	8.0	40.6

(Continued on next page)

Table 7 (contd.)

12 years School														
16 years and over	3,648	2,307	63.2	2,193	95.1	1,062	48.4	1,044	47.6	87	4.0	114	4.9	26.8
Ever-married	2,612	1,427	54.6	1,344	94.2	653	48.6	626	46.6	65	4.8	83	5.8	45.4
Percent	71.6	61.9	...	61.3	...	61.5	...	60.0	...	—	...	72.8	...	88.4
With no children	1,149	766	66.7	720	94.0	382	53.1	303	42.1	35	4.8	46	6.0	33.3
With own children	1,463	661	45.2	624	94.4	271	43.4	323	51.8	30	4.8	37	5.6	54.8
None under 6	78	391	67.6	376	96.2	167	44.4	187	49.7	22	5.9	15	3.8	32.4
Some under 6	885	270	30.5	248	91.9	104	41.9	136	54.8	8	3.3	22	8.1	69.5
Own child. Under 18	799	455	56.9	424	93.2	191	45.0	211	49.8	22	5.2	31	6.8	43.1
Never-Married	1,036	880	—	849	—	409	—	418	—	22	—	31	—	—
Over 12 years School														
16 years and over	1,437	1,017	70.8	992	97.5	398	40.1	584	58.9	10	1.0	25	2.5	29.2
Ever-married	822	478	58.2	466	97.5	226	48.5	236	50.6	4	0.9	12	2.5	41.8
Percent	57.2	47.0	...	47.0	...	56.8	...	40.4	...	—	...	—	...	81.9
With no children	364	262	72.0	250	95.4	123	49.2	123	49.2	4	1.6	12	4.6	28.0
With own children	458	216	47.2	216	100.0	103	47.7	113	52.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	52.8
None under 6	176	132	75.0	132	100.0	62	47.0	70	53.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	25.0
Some under 6	282	84	29.8	84	100.0	41	48.8	43	51.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	70.2
Own child. Under 18	242	155	64.0	155	100.0	80	51.6	75	48.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	36.9
Never-Married	615	539	87.6	526	97.6	172	32.7	348	66.1	6	1.2	13	2.4	12.4

Table 8
Total Population 16 Years Old and Over by Income in 1969, by Age and Sex, New York City, 1970

Age and Sex	Total with Income		Income					Median Income
	Number	Percent	< 3,999	4,000-6,999	7,000-9,999	10,000-14,999	15,000 or more	
Both Sexes								
16+	4,668,989	100.0	41.3	16.9	16.8	11.0	5.8	5,049
16-19	243,469	100.0	85.4	12.5	1.7	0.3	0.2	1,486
20-24	508,143	100.0	48.4	34.2	13.8	2.9	0.6	4,152
25-34	834,696	100.0	28.0	29.3	23.4	15.2	5.2	6,381
35-44	725,186	100.0	26.5	27.4	21.1	16.1	8.7	6,548
45-64	1,505,661	100.0	30.0	26.4	20.4	14.6	8.5	6,257
65+	851,834	100.0	71.3	14.2	6.4	4.1	3.8	2,223
Males								
16+	2,453,933	100.0	27.8	23.8	21.9	16.9	9.5	6,788
16-19	121,982	100.0	87.6	9.9	1.9	0.4	0.2	1,417
20-24	242,686	100.0	48.8	29.0	16.2	4.9	0.9	4,116
25-34	488,148	100.0	14.8	27.9	27.3	21.8	7.9	7,700
35-44	421,004	100.0	12.2	24.9	26.2	23.3	13.4	8,371
45-64	803,468	100.0	14.5	23.4	26.6	21.6	13.7	8,266
65+	376,845	100.0	57.7	19.5	9.6	6.5	6.6	3,437
Females								
16+	2,215,056	100.0	56.3	26.3	11.2	4.4	1.8	3,444
16-19	121,487	100.0	83.2	15.0	1.4	0.2	0.1	1,563
20-24	265,657	100.0	47.8	39.1	11.5	1.1	0.3	4,179
25-34	346,548	100.0	43.7	31.1	17.9	5.8	1.3	4,583
35-44	304,182	100.0	46.4	30.8	14.1	6.2	2.3	4,304
45-64	702,193	100.0	47.9	29.7	13.2	6.4	2.7	4,194
65+	474,989	100.0	82.2	10.2	3.8	2.2	1.6	1,639

Colombian Migration to the United States (Part 2)

Table 9
Colombians 16 Years Old and Over by Income in 1969, by Age and Sex, New York City, 1970.

Age and Sex	Total with Income		Income					Median Income
	Number	Percent	<3,999	4,000-6,999	7,000-9,999	10,000-14,999	15,000 or more	
Both Sexes								
16+	15,337	100.0	38.9	37.9	14.5	7.2	1.4	4,791
16-19	651	100.0	86.0	10.5	2.5	0.9	0.0	1,501
20-24	2,158	100.0	50.1	37.5	10.2	2.1	0.0	3,990
25-34	5,948	100.0	32.0	40.8	17.8	7.8	1.2	5,133
35-44	3,740	100.0	28.5	41.0	16.1	11.3	3.0	5,608
45-64	2,301	100.0	39.4	40.5	13.0	6.1	1.0	4,780
65+	539	100.0	81.2	2.9	6.1	4.6	0.0	1,875
Males								
16+	7,827	100.0	25.3	38.1	22.0	12.2	0.2	5,954
16-19	405	100.0	93.8	4.7	0.0	1.5	0.0	1,213
20-24	1,021	100.0	40.8	39.1	16.7	3.2	0.0	4,550
25-34	3,349	100.0	16.9	43.1	25.5	12.4	1.8	6,249
35-44	1,928	100.0	11.5	38.6	25.5	19.3	4.8	6,981
45-64	914	100.0	27.9	35.9	21.4	12.1	2.5	5,889
65+	212	100.0	67.0	20.2	4.2	8.4	0.0	2,468
Females								
16+	7,510	100.0	52.9	37.7	6.9	2.0	0.4	3,820
16-19	246	100.0	73.1	20.3	6.5	0.0	0.0	2,575
20-24	1,137	100.0	58.4	35.9	4.4	1.1	0.0	3,547
25-34	2,599	100.0	51.3	38.2	8.0	1.9	0.5	3,905
35-44	1,814	100.0	46.5	43.5	6.1	2.6	1.1	4,215
45-64	1,387	100.0	46.9	43.3	7.9	2.1	0.0	4,176
65+	327	100.0	90.5	0.0	7.4	2.1	0.0	1,698

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Comparable figures for men are 25 percent of Colombian men and 28 percent of all men.

REASONS FOR MIGRATION

Why are Colombians leaving their homeland in such large numbers to come to the United States? And why do they appear to favor Queens—particularly the three contiguous communities of Jackson Heights, Elmhurst, and Woodside—as their settlement area? The experts consulted for this study speak of three distinct migratory periods, each with its own push variables.

1918-1948: The Traditional Migrants

The years immediately after World War I marked the first arrival of small numbers of highly qualified Colombian professionals and other skilled men and women such as nurses, laboratory technicians, accountants, pharmacists, and bilingual secretaries. Many were students in U.S. universities who decided to remain. These persons originally were drawn to Jackson Heights as a residential community that met their criteria for permanent settlement through its proximity to Manhattan, suitable housing, schools, churches, and pleasant atmosphere. Any number of Long Island or New Jersey communities would have fulfilled their requirements equally well; the choice of Jackson Heights was fortuitous. After the first persons settled, they naturally drew their friends and acquaintances to the same area. All these people either came legally (there was no quota in those days) or regularized their status as permanent residents. Today, most have been U.S. citizens for many years.*

These migrants are termed traditionals because they apparently differed little from European immigrants in their adaptation to and assimilation of the dominant culture. The more recent waves of Colombian migration bringing far greater numbers of their countrymen and women to the United States—along with the new emphasis on ethnicity in the 1960s—have given many of these older residents the opportunity to reaffirm their Colombian identity, and perhaps other opportunities as well. For example, it appears that these persons form not only the entrepreneurial but also the leadership élite of the colony, insofar as an identifiable set of leaders can be said to exist. Of the few Colombians of any prominence in cultural, community, or political affairs (related to the colony and in the larger community as well), most appear

*An oral history project which would locate and interview a sample of the oldest Colombian immigrants is needed. It would help to verify the impressionistic data given here on settlement patterns and characteristics of the first Colombian migrants.

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to be long-time residents of 15-30 years. Paradoxically, while insisting on their "Colombian-ness," these persons are the most Americanized. Hendricks (1974) calls such persons the cultural brokers of the Hispanic colonies. The archetype is the travel agent who not only provides the physical link between the United States and the home country but typically performs a wide variety of other tasks such as giving legal advice on migrant status, on securing permanent residence, and on other legal matters;* preparing tax returns and other documents; acting as an informal employment agency; and offering such practical services as driving lessons and small loans.

1948-1962: "La Violencia"

During a period of about 10-12 years, the phenomenon of "La Violencia" (the Violence)—widespread armed insurrection and guerrilla activity in the rural areas stemming from complex political and social roots—precipitated large-scale movements of people within Colombia.** Studies of internal migration in Colombia indicate that the rural population took refuge in nearby towns (not only from the Violence, but from the poverty and misery of the countryside), while the residents of these small urban centers headed for the larger cities and the capital (Bernal n.d.; Cardona 1969; McGreevey 1963).

Thus, while it seems improbable that the Violence had a direct effect on Colombian migration to the United States, there is strong evidence that the resulting uncertainty and malaise indirectly spurred migration during this period. Nevertheless, many of the experts in Queens share the common belief that "La Violencia" was the principal cause of the arrival of Colombians in the 1950s and early 1960s.

Several of the experts say that towards the end of this period, some Colombian veterans of the Korean War (Colombia's was the only Latin American expeditionary force to join UN troops in Korea) decided to settle in the United States and naturally gravitated to Queens. Thus Jackson Heights continued to expand its Colombian population with first-generation immigrants. Some theorists hold that a population constantly re-enforced by new waves of immigration tends to preserve its ethnic identity much longer than one in which the bulk of the migrants come in one period.

1962-Present: Economic Exiles

The gradual abatement of the Violence coincided with a depression of the rural economy in Colombia. The introduction of modern agricultural

*Because Colombian jurisprudence is based upon Roman law, lawyers are one professional group which does not migrate or, at least, Colombian lawyers do not practice law in the United States.

**For the best account of this period, see Fals Borda (1969).

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methods and machinery tended to exclude from the market all those who could not afford the new technology and further restricted economic opportunities for peasants in the rural areas, contributing to an ever-accelerating movement of people towards the cities (Zschock 1969). The agrarian reform program of the 1960s (much less radical than its public image) affected relatively few of Colombia's peasants; moreover, some analysts now claim that even if it had succeeded, it would have done little to stop migration to the cities because there was not enough land to give sufficient numbers of peasants plots of viable size. An added ingredient was the high rate of population increase (3.6 to 3.2 annually) during the preceding two decades.

While the experts for this study did not agree on all the variables producing the new waves of migration, they did agree that the vast majority of Colombians have come to the United States in the years since 1960 and that these newer migrants are primarily economic exiles.

Some estimates of unemployment and underemployment rates in Colombia today run as high as 20-25 percent of the workforce (Jungito 1974; Slighton 1974).^{*} Colombia cannot even provide enough jobs to maintain the present rates of employment, much less provide jobs for the tremendous numbers reaching working age each year. The problem is particularly acute for migrants to the city, for many studies show that persons born in the cities who have managed to acquire some education and are socialized to city ways compete much more successfully for the few available jobs. While there is some evidence that Colombia has recently entered a period of significant downturn in its population growth rates, even if these trends continue they will not affect numbers entering the workforce for at least the next 15 years.

Most of the study experts believe that the migration beginning in the 1960s has been much less selective than earlier waves. Instead of primarily professionals and skilled workers, the majority of the migrants now are unskilled persons from lower social strata. Most of those consulted said few Colombians would leave their country permanently if they could find economic opportunities at home. Often the primary motivation for families is the impossibility of educating their children if they remain in Colombia. The reason most often cited by families for their migration to the United States is to enable their children to break out of the cycle of little education and low paying jobs. Moreover, the competition for places in Colombian universities is keen; Colombians have heard that the vast New York State/New York City systems with their many campuses and community colleges are more accessible. An added incentive is the fact that, until the present, education in

^{*}For a summary of studies on this complex problem, see Slighton (1974) article and Urdinola (1974).

the New York City system of colleges and universities has been free. (Fiscal ills have just forced the introduction of a tuition charge for the first time in the history of city institutions of higher learning.)

The predominant view that migration is economically motivated is sometimes tempered by what may be nothing more than an appealing bit of folklore: "El colombiano es viajero (o aventurero) por naturaleza"—that is, the Colombian is by nature a wanderer and would migrate even if there were sufficient economic opportunities at home. Another reason suggested for motivating some individual to leave Colombia is a series of frustrations, only one of which is economic. One of these frustrations is *frustración sentimental*. An example of this is the single woman who leaves in search of marital opportunity. If she is over 30, she may believe that her chances to marry in Colombia are zero, and that she will have more opportunity in the United States. Another case is the married woman, and occasionally the married man, with overwhelming marital problems who substitutes migration for the divorce-with-option-to-remarry which cannot be obtained in Colombia.*

Another frustration is professional—the impossibility in Colombia of commanding a salary comparable to what a professional person can earn in the United States, and the lack of opportunity for professional development. Much of the earlier migration of highly qualified professionals, the consultants for this study believe, was motivated principally by this professional consideration. Now, they say, this reasoning also plays a part in the calculations of mid-level professionals. "If a secretary, accountant, bank clerk, can learn fluent English, that fact alone will put him or her in another professional/economic category entirely on return to Colombia," one expert remarked. Another interviewee, who is a foreman in a textile concern, said that he had been able to learn much about advanced machines and technologies in the several manufacturing concerns for which he has worked in the United States. If he goes back to Colombia, he says, he will be able to obtain employment at a supervisory level, an impossibility for a man of little formal education if he had never emigrated.

One facet of professional migration noted by several informants is the loss of status. In Colombia the honorific title of doctor is conferred on many persons who in fact have never earned that degree (in much the same way that the title of Colonel was conferred until recently in the South). For the professional who was a recognized, prestigious person in the much smaller professional/academic world of Bogotá or a provincial city, the indifference and lack of deference experienced in the new environment can cause real

*Divorce in Colombia was approved in January 1976, but only for civil marriages. Legal separation for Catholic marriages—the great majority—is a long, difficult, and costly process which does not permit remarriage unless ratified by the Catholic Church in Rome after a further complicated process which often takes years.

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anguish and depression. One becomes a "don Nadie," a Mr. Nobody, lost in the mass. If approximately equal economic and advancement opportunities were offered to professionals in Colombia, the experts believe, few persons at this level of achievement would ever leave their country.

Finally, several of the experts remarked that in the past decade the idea of spending at least some years in the United States is something nearly every Colombian considers at one time or another. Among young persons, "es la moda de ir"—"It's the 'in thing'." Hendricks (1974) observes the same phenomenon among Dominicans: "The almost universal assumption, especially among older children, is that one day they will go to New York themselves" (p.38).

CHAPINERO: GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

While Colombians live everywhere in the greater New York metropolitan area, their earliest settlement and greatest concentration has been in the Jackson Heights neighborhood in Queens. Bounded on all four sides by expressways or major traffic arteries and on the north by LaGuardia Airport, the community retains many characteristics of its majority population—ethnics of predominantly Irish, Italian, German, and Jewish extraction.

Jackson Heights developed after the completion of the elevated line in 1916 through an area of truck gardens along Roosevelt Avenue. However, only half the housing was built before 1939 (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1972). Planned as a residential community, it is made up mainly of one- and two-family residences (many in the form of row houses with front and back yards but with no space between houses because their side walls are connected) and three- to seven-story apartment buildings, containing 21,000 units. The houses predominate in the area between Northern Boulevard and the upper limits of the district bordering the airport; the apartment buildings are concentrated in the 4 by 10-block area bordered by Roosevelt Avenue and Northern Boulevard on the south and north, and by the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway and Junction Boulevard-94th Street on the east and west. A recent study shows few differences in persons living above or below Northern Boulevard.

The fact that no rascacielos (skyscrapers) shut out the sun and sky gives the area a sense of openness and spaciousness that often was stressed by the panel of experts as the main factor in drawing Colombians to the area. Queens, which contains 46 percent of all the one- and two-family homes in the city, is by far the most residential of New York City's five boroughs. Manhattan, by contrast, has only 1.6 percent of such homes. Several panel members remarked that Colombians could not live in the high-rise apartment buildings of Manhattan. Nevertheless, the population of Jackson Heights is

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dense—85,714 persons lived in the 247 blocks making up the 18 census tracts in 1970, or 3,617 persons per square block (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1972). However, the density ranges from a high of 100 families per acre in the apartment sections to only 20 families per acre in the housing sections north of Northern Boulevard (New York City Planning Commission 1969).

Hispanics have been moving into Jackson Heights for many years; they are concentrated now in the areas directly to the north and south of Roosevelt Avenue (which puts many Colombians in Elmhurst) and in an area bordering Mt. Olivet Cemetery to the extreme northeast.

Immediately to the east of Jackson Heights lie East Elmhurst and North Corona with high percentages of Blacks (44 percent in the former neighborhood and 75 percent in the latter). The Black population of Jackson Heights is, in contrast, only 1.6 percent (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1972). The highest percentage of Blacks (15.6 percent) registered in Jackson Heights is in the extreme northeast corner next to East Elmhurst. It is thought that many of these Blacks are Puerto Rican and Dominican.

High proportions of professional, managerial, and white collar employees, and relatively high incomes also confirm that the area is distinctly middle-class. Welfare dependency is minimal (New York City Planning Commission 1969).

In a study on Jackson Heights carried out as part of the New York City Neighborhood Project of the Bureau of Applied Social Research, Columbia University, most respondents said they liked the area—two out of three assigned it a rating of very good or good. Newcomers (the survey indicated that about one-quarter of the respondents had lived in the neighborhood less than three years) were enthusiastic—82 percent were positive in evaluating the neighborhood. Most of the complaints centered around the noise (from the elevated line, the traffic, and the planes landing at LaGuardia) and the dirt from incinerators, factories, and the airport. According to the survey (in which the different ethnic groups were represented in proportions roughly equal to their presence in the population), more Jews and Italians wanted to move while Hispanics and Blacks were least desirous of leaving Jackson Heights.

The area used to be called the place where young families started out, a stepping stone on the way to the suburbs. Typically, they would come into the area with their first child and move on with the second or third (New York City Planning Commission 1969). One reason this pattern may not be followed by Hispanics is that, as a group, they seem much more satisfied with Jackson Heights as a place to live than the older residents. Another reason, according to several real estate agents on the panel of experts, is that many Colombians are buying homes in Jackson Heights, in the area north of Northern Boulevard, as well as in other Queens communities. Indeed, quite

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a number of the real estate agencies in the community employ Colombian associates in order to take advantage of what the panel sees as a general trend among the Colombian migrants to invest, as soon as possible, in buying a home even if they intend to return to their homeland at some future date. The purchase is seen as an investment which will be easy to sell when the family is ready to depart.

Many Hispanics, including Colombians, may live temporarily in other boroughs of New York City and gravitate to Queens when their incomes permit. They agree that, for Hispanics, to move to Jackson Heights, Elmhurst, or Woodside is to arrive. Rather than a midpoint on the way to a more affluent suburb on Long Island, Jackson Heights represents fulfillment for Colombians who like to live in barrios buenos (good neighborhoods), as one informant put it. Whether what some experts see as the beginning of an outmigration from the area to escape identification with the negative features of being Colombian is an actual trend is impossible to say at the present time.

Many of the experts also noted that Jackson Heights appeals to Colombians because it is the place where they can encounter Colombian culture. They would stay, these persons believe, even if their financial situation permitted them to move. An inventory in Chapinero of business concerns; restaurants, and other agencies of Colombian interest—for example, travel agents who offer round-trip excursion trips to Colombia at holiday times and booksellers who vend Colombian newspapers and magazines—as well as the network of regional clubs suggests that this is indeed the case. Chapinero is also the place to eat Colombian food and to buy the ingredients for cooking it from the small ethnic grocery stores in the neighborhood. Descending the elevated line at 82nd and Roosevelt, one is within walking distance of at least six Colombian restaurants (there are about 20 divided among the three neighborhoods). There is even a bakery specializing in Colombian pastries.

Not all the businesses are so obviously related to the colony. Among the panel of experts, for example, are entrepreneurs who run a florist shop, a jewelry store, and a television/radio appliance and repair shop. The first two of these enterprises are run by women. Despite the number of small businesses, Colombians (and other Hispanics) do not find many employment opportunities within the confines of Jackson Heights, and most of them go outside the district to work.

LIFESTYLE OF THE MIGRANTS

The stereotype of Latins in New York and their living arrangements, as portrayed in the popular press, is three or four families or 20-30 single men inhabiting a single apartment or dwelling. They double up to save as much

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money as possible, frequently to send to the home country. Hendricks (1974) notes that this pattern is typical for Dominicans, and he records their perception that in Jackson Heights such multiple occupancy is not allowed. Dominicans regard Jackson Heights as a definite step up on the social scale; many fewer appear to live there than in North Corona and East Elmhurst. Real estate agents confirm that the rooming house seldom exists in Jackson Heights, and zoning laws appear to be better observed than in the neighboring districts for reasons which remain obscure. If some dwellings are occupied by more than one family, it is usually a temporary arrangement, and the norm towards which Colombian families work is for each to have its own separate living arrangement. If families do take in roomers, it is done discreetly.

Living arrangements tending towards home ownership also are influenced by the fact that Colombians appear to migrate as families. Although many single persons come to the United States, the typical Colombian migrant either accompanies members of his or her nuclear family or follows within a few months. The custom (common among Dominicans, according to Hendricks) of leaving younger children behind in the care of grandparents or relatives in the village or provincial city is not common among Colombians.

Colombian families tend to be close, and many experts believe this closeness is accentuated by three variables which affect family patterns in the United States. Panel members mentioned over and over again the changed role of women and the new relationship of parents to children as families strive to preserve the Colombian lifestyle. Women and children's roles are, in turn, dependent upon the way the husband and father defines his role, and many on the panel believe the men do change their habits. "Men become better husbands in the United States," one asserted, "because they no longer hang around their buddies in the bar or cafe as they used to in Colombia." Others remarked that women like the United States better than their menfolk for the same reason: "The machismo of the male is frenado—blocked"; "the man tends to stay at home much more"; "he does not have the same opportunities to stray as in Colombia." At times men also help with women's work, doing the shopping in the supermarket, for example, or taking the laundry to the laundromat.

Women

Colombian wives appear to work outside the home in paid employment to a much greater degree than they would if they had remained in Colombia (although patterns there have changed markedly in the past few years, both in Bogotá and in the provincial cities). Male and female informants agreed that there is little resistance on the part of males to wives working because the added income is an absolute necessity—at first, simply for survival and later for savings to return to Colombia. Sometimes families owe a travel

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agent or relatives for their airfare; all incur large initial expenses in buying basic furniture and household goods. For all these reasons, one informant remarked, the "ama de casa"—the housewife—"is practically unknown" in the colony.

Does the Colombian woman adapt more quickly and enthusiastically to the new environment, and is she more satisfied to live in New York than the male? This certainly was the view of the panel. If the Colombian woman is happier, perhaps the difference has something to do with relative status. Men, even though they earn more money than they could in Colombia, often must accept menial jobs that might be several steps below what they are qualified to do. Women also work in jobs they might not consider taking in Colombia (as domestic servants, for example, or as cooks or waitresses in restaurants). But even if the work lacks status, many for the first time earn a wage and, within certain limits, gain the freedom to act as persons in their own right. Whatever her actual work situation, the Colombian woman may well feel her life has improved, at least in certain aspects, while the male often may not have the same conviction.*

Such impressions, if correct, would appear to contradict another stereotype—that of the woman migrant, enclosed in her ethnic community and dealing only with her friends and the small Hispanic entrepreneurs in her neighborhood. She never learns more than a few necessary words of English and, in general, leads a much more restricted existence than the male. Whether this stereotype is accurate for any immigrant group today is doubtful. It certainly is not typical for the Colombian woman who, most likely, holds a job outside the home, studies English diligently, views herself as more independent than in Colombia, and thinks at least somewhat favorably about the migratory experience.

Despite these positive aspects of her situation, the married woman migrant probably would rather not have left her homeland at all, and certainly on her visits back home will not admit what she does in the United States to earn money. She will probably pretend she does not have to work at all, since a mark of middle-class success is the family in which the wife is able to stay at home.**

*These observations apply to the professional woman to a lesser degree; in Colombia, nearly one-third of married women who are university or normal school graduates work, compared to only 13.8 percent of the remaining married women. Of married women who are high school graduates, 16.6 percent work; of those with primary instruction or without education, only 11 percent work.

**This attitude reflects a cultural norm still shared by some members of the middle class in Colombia, in which the symbol of economic success of the family head is the wife who stays at home and is not obliged to engage in any paid employment. The importance of this norm appears to be diminishing somewhat as Colombian women gain greater access to education. However, other cultural norms, which are not weakening, dictate that mothering, especially in the child's early years, is a full-time occupation. (For further discussion, see Pineda 1975.)

Children

Colombian parents often express concern about the problem of holding the family together and fear that certain values related to proper behavior (particularly those involving authority, obedience, and respect) are being eroded. Many parents see the public schools as the culprit. Teachers, in their view, are much too casual and informal and do not re-enforce the strict socialization patterns prevailing in the Colombian home. Parents also fear drugs and other forms of delinquency in the public schools and do not admit that these problems may also be prevalent in the Catholic schools.*

Such perceptions make it almost imperative that parents enroll their children as soon as possible in a parochial school. A number of those interviewed said they had seriously considered sending their children back to Colombia to be educated; in almost every case, they viewed Colombian education as superior, not only in content, but also in style. A youngster in a good, private colegio (secondary school) in Colombia would graduate with the equivalent of at least one, if not two years of U. S. undergraduate college instruction, well grounded in philosophy, the classics, languages, and pure as opposed to applied learning. He or she also would be properly socialized through the formality and authority surrounding the educational enterprise in the home country. Barring this ideal, the parochial school—both grammar school and high school—is viewed as the only other option, as soon as the family is in a position to pay the tuition.

Often the Colombian clashes with the church or school organization which, typically, is dominated by the elderly Irish pastor. Evidence from many sources indicates that Hispanics often feel discriminated against even though a typical congregation may be as high as 30-40 percent Hispanic. What they take for prejudice, however, may only be a consequence of their lack of understanding of the system. For example, they find the parish school full because they do not realize that admission of their children is tied to their financial performance in the church envelope system, or because they do not know they must register in the parish when they arrive in the neighborhood. One parish, for example, requires a year of regular Sunday contributions before children are accepted in the school. A Hispanic priest remarked that parents often do not succeed in enrolling their children for several years, not only because of financial considerations but also because they do not understand school registration procedures (even such a simple requirement as arriving on time for the enrollment). In this particular parish school, however, the lower grades have become progressively hispanicized,

*No children were interviewed for this present study, although several young adults participated in long interview sessions apart from the more formal questioning of their parents; thus, their side of the question is not well represented here.

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as Italian and Irish children move away from the neighborhood. Last year, about 25 percent of the high school graduating class had recognizable Spanish surnames. However, in the diocese as a whole (which includes Brooklyn and Queens), fewer than 15 percent of the children registered in the parish schools have Spanish surnames (Kelly 1975). By comparison, 20 percent of the children in the public schools of District 30, which takes in most of Jackson Heights, have Spanish surnames.

The Church

Does the Catholic Church itself play any part in the Colombia adaptation experience and cultural preservation efforts in Queens? There is a program called the "Spanish Apostolate," sponsored by the Diocese of Brooklyn-Queens and presided over by the Reverend René Valero, a young and energetic North American priest of Venezuelan descent. However, he is hampered because there are only three other North American priests in the diocese who are native speakers of Spanish. A 1973 survey identified another 30 North American priests in Brooklyn-Queens who consider themselves fluent in Spanish. Most of these have been trained in the language and in the rudiments of Hispanic culture and psychology at the diocesan Institute of Intercultural Communication which has ties with the Catholic University at Ponce, Puerto Rico. More recently, some have participated in a program in Colombia arranged by a concerned young Irish priest attached to St. Joan of Arc Parish. In Queens itself, there are about a dozen Colombian priests who have come to the United States on their own—"out of private frustrations and/or difficulties with their own bishops," one of them explained. They have attached themselves to parishes on an individual basis, but there is no coordinated program among them, and they have almost no contact with diocesan structures.*

Of 227 parishes in the Brooklyn-Queens diocese, 90 have Sunday Mass in Spanish, and 28 of these are located in Queens. The Masses are celebrated either by native speakers of Spanish (25 percent) or by priests who have been trained in the language program mentioned above. However, only five sisters (nuns come overwhelmingly from Irish and Italian middle-class families) in the entire diocese, however, have been identified as able to speak Spanish! Many of those interviewed for this study mentioned the tendency to underestimate or disguise the changing character of the parishes in Queens. Kelly remarks that even in areas "where there are acknowledged to be large numbers of Spanish speaking, parish estimates of the number of

*Some of the information in this and the following paragraph is condensed from a report by Kelly (1975).

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Spanish within their boundaries usually fall far short of the actual figures'' (1975 p. 4). This underestimation leads to a fairly common situation: One Spanish Mass celebrated on a hot summer day in the stifling church basement, while upstairs other parishioners enjoy their multiple Masses in air-conditioned comfort.

Some parishes do make notable attempts to reach Colombians and other Hispanics with the liturgy celebrated in a lively setting, including typical Spanish music and instruments; the homily and announcements in Spanish; and missions preached by Spanish-speaking clergy (one recent mission featured three priests invited from Colombia). In one parish, a fervent charismatic movement attracts hundreds of Colombians as well as other Hispanics. The leader in this parish is a Colombian priest who is also active in the charismatic movement nationally.

In spite of these efforts, however, neither the Church nor the school appears to form any real center of Colombian life, with the possible exception of Ascension Parish, home of the charismatic Catholics, which attracts persons from many parts of Queens to its highly participatory services and its social events.

Clubs and Associations

Colombians are not active in clubs or associations. They do not seem to have reached the point where they are able to form effective organizations of their own, nor do they generally join in those dedicated to local community concerns, although some Colombian businessmen belong to the Rotary Club of Jackson Heights.

At least four major attempts have been made in the past 10 years to organize the colony along cultural/civic lines. The consensus of the panel (some of whom were deeply involved in these efforts) was general disgust with the actions of their fellow Colombians which prevent such associations from succeeding (the average life span of these organizations was nine months each). Some of the complaints (enthusiastic inaugural meetings attracting several hundred, followed by meetings attended by only seven or eight persons; too many vying for the leadership; attempts to use the organizations for political ends or personal profit) echo those recorded in Rogler's history (1972) of a Puerto Rican migrant association. Such difficulties are probably common to all early attempts to organize an ethnic community. Several of the experts think that some Colombians believe they have bettered their position and do not want to be reminded of their lower-class status in Colombia by associating with their peers.

Besides these attempts at colony-wide organization, there are a dozen soccer clubs organized along regional lines (such as the Club Medellin and

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the Club Cali) which play at Flushing Meadows Park in the summer and recreate on their club premises in winter. Here they also engage in a favorite Colombian indoor sport—electing regional candidates for the yearly selection of the queen of the colony. These clubs attract only a limited number of the least affluent males, and one attempt to organize them into a functioning league, UNDECOL (Unión de Colombianos), failed. There also are at least two small but active Colombian professional associations, both comparatively new—one of medical doctors and the other of various professional persons.

The Colombian Liberal and Conservative Parties are active in Queens at election times, and it is widely believed that close Colombian elections could be decided by the voters of Jackson Heights and the neighboring districts. Several members of the panel scoffed at this notion, pointing out that in fact few of those qualified to vote bother to do so. Although more than 5,000 Colombians voted in the last Colombian presidential elections in New York City, they probably represented only 10 to 20 percent of those eligible.

Political organizations are even more ephemeral than associations. Typically, they open a temporary headquarters, publish one or two issues of a political handout, then disappear until the next elections. In 1974, several Hispanics attached to the U. S. Democratic Party tried, without success, to organize the first Hispanic club in Queens, opening a storefront headquarters on the Junction Boulevard boundary of Jackson Heights to serve the surrounding districts. The leaders estimated there were some 200,000 Hispanics in the area who were U. S. citizens, and they believed that "if we unite all the Hispanics in Queens, we will be able to have a big say in who is elected to run for any office in the borough." One political leader on the panel of experts thinks Colombians in the United States have put their normally active political interest en suspenso, suspended it because the time is not yet propitious for their full-fledged political participation.

The panel of experts was unanimous in agreeing that there is no real focus—religious, cultural, educational, civic, political—around which the life of the colony revolves. The main concerns of Colombians are home and work. They remain isolated from other Hispanics and even from other Colombians, except for informal contacts with relatives, friends, neighbors, and coworkers. All the experts expressed concern over the alienation of Colombians in Queens, most of whom depend almost entirely on their individual resources for the affective, cultural, and recreational dimensions of their lives.

WORK: CENTER OF THE MIGRANT EXPERIENCE

The principal reason Colombians come to New York City is to find work. The New York job market, the U. S. unemployment rate, and the progress

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of recovery from the recession were the topics most often mentioned by members of the study panel. It was their perception that employment is the main concern of the migrants and the major factor in their decision to leave their homeland. A theme panelists mentioned over and over was that the Colombian comes únicamente para luchar—only to struggle to better him or herself. Many have more than one job.

Whatever their qualifications, the majority of Colombians apparently go to work in factories—or desire to do so. Not only is the salary better, but factory work is, in the Colombian view, a bit more decent than washing dishes in a restaurant. Many are mechanics and the Colombian is universally considered to be highly skilled in this trade. Others work in a great variety of jobs, but as a group they cannot compete for the best jobs. Colombians, like other new immigrants, arrive in the United States at a time when technological advances (combined in the past several years with a contraction of the economy) mean that they are not as readily absorbed as immigrants of former times who encountered a situation of vigorous geographic and industrial expansion. Typically, the new immigrants work in low-skilled, low-salaried jobs that defy automation—as restaurant workers, day laborers and construction workers, janitors and custodians, parking lot attendants, baggage handlers, gypsy cab drivers (those who drive without a license from the official city taxi commission), and the like. By doing work which no one else in the host society wishes to do, the new immigrants perform needed and useful services which offer low financial rewards and little prestige or recognition. Although they are sometimes viewed as competitors, they rarely take jobs away from North American workers, who often feel it is better to collect unemployment compensation or go on welfare than work in any of these jobs.

Many of the panel members are convinced that factory owners and other employers are now able to distinguish between Colombians and other Hispanics. It is their view that employers often prefer Colombians over Puerto Ricans as workers and not only those without proper immigration documents who can be paid lower wages. They offer a variety of reasons for this preference: "Colombians are harder workers"; "Colombians are more disciplined, they do not stay home from work, they arrive on time"; "Colombians are more educated, more refined than the uncultured, vulgar Puerto Ricans, many of whom have done nothing but cut sugar cane"; and even "Colombians are more obedient, more respectful"; "Colombians are not troublemakers like the Puerto Ricans."* None of the panel members, even

*The Colombian attitude toward Puerto Ricans is ambivalent. Many panel members recognized that the Puerto Rican community plays a crucial political role benefiting all Hispanics in the city. Several remarked that Puerto Ricans were the only immigrants with a concern for others outside their own ethnic group. Others declared that it is common knowledge in the colony that Puerto Ricans are generous and ready to help other Hispanics find work and housing, and to assist in dealing with government and city bureaucracies.

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when challenged, thought that the passivity and respectful attitude of the Colombian worker might be negative qualities. This positive view of docile Colombian behavior may be related to its function in shielding fellow workers without documents. Many Colombians, say the panel, want to preserve a low profile and not make waves because of the large numbers of illegal immigrants in the colony.

Whatever the reasons for such docility, in the short run it apparently leads to great exploitation of Colombian workers; factory salaries sometimes are as low as \$70 a week. It also leads to resentment on the part of Puerto Rican workers who have no reason not to be troublemakers over substandard working conditions and wages because they are citizens and cannot be deported. In the long run, the growing reputation of Colombian workers as passive (and the almost universal view of the panel that this is good) may be harmful at a time when conflict and hard bargaining are the normal tactics for extracting benefits from the political system.

Whatever kind of work he or she does, the Colombian will most probably go beyond Jackson Heights and the surrounding residential areas to find it. Only 12 firms (including LaGuardia Airport) within the three districts making up Queens Community Planning District 3 employ more than 50 workers, and several of these are firms which probably do not hire many Hispanics. Added to these are the retail trade and smaller manufacturing enterprises, many of which cater almost exclusively to Hispanics. Indeed, 22.8 percent of the residents work in wholesale or retail trade (not all of them, of course, necessarily within Jackson Heights); 19.7 percent of the population are employed in the manufacturing sector; 11.5 percent in finance, insurance, or real estate; 6.3 percent in professions and related services; and an equal number in business-related repair services (U. S. Bureau of the Census 1972). The leading kinds of employment for residents are in clerical occupations, professional and technical tasks (including teaching), and services. Forty-four percent of the total labor force is female. Table 10 shows the distribution of the economically active by occupation.

Is there upward mobility for the Colombian through hard and conscientious work, as has been the case for other immigrants in the past? From this very limited study, it is impossible to draw any firm conclusions. Several of the panel believe that the more recent Colombian migrants lack aspirations. This is so, they say, not only because to rise from the deadend jobs in which most work (and which permit little time for study, even for the essential mastering of English) is extremely difficult, but also because Colombians tend to view their stay in the United States as temporary. Therefore, they do not exert themselves sufficiently, even after some years of residence, to find better employment.

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Table 10
Occupations of Jackson Heights Residents, 1970 Census

Occupation	All Residents		Females
	Number	Percent	Percent
Clerical and kindred workers	12,740	29.8	74.4
Professional and technical, including teachers	7,323	17.1	39.5
Service, including cleaning, food, custodial, personal and health	4,464	10.4	40.2
Managers and administrators, including self-employed	3,842	9.0	15.6
Operatives	3,799	8.8	59.3
Sales	3,489	8.2	34.0
Other	7,088	16.7	
	42,745	100.0	44.0

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1972, Part 1.

Yet this does not mean Colombians are entirely dissatisfied with their situation and prospects. Panel members reiterated that many Colombians discover, upon arrival, that they must work harder than they ever did in Colombia to achieve their dreams; yet the dreams themselves suddenly become much more attainable. Relatively speaking, all work is better paid in the United States and enables families to join the society of consumers—to own a television, refrigerator, stereo, even a car. Moreover, they routinely do things that they would only rarely, if ever, have been able to do in Colombia—buy readymade clothes in a store, go out to eat in a restaurant, take the children to the beach or theater, go on a vacation or take a weekend trip in their car. Despite this relative material affluence, residents of Jackson Heights have a long way to go to reach the median U. S. income which was just over \$11,600 in 1970 (U. S. Bureau of the Census 1972).

Some panel members speculated that the easy credit system contributes to the Colombian ambivalence about work. With credit, it is possible to enjoy many amenities without waiting. Moreover, once a family has credit cards, it often remains in debt, adding new items before the previous purchases are entirely paid for. This means that the breadwinner(s) must keep on working. As several panel members pointed out, this may be the reason that the return

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to Colombia is postponed again and again, always to a more distant future when the family has acquired and paid for all the consumer goods it wishes to take back to Colombia and has the requisite nest egg in the bank. Colombian customs laws are also an obstacle—even small electric appliances, if they are new, cannot be taken into Colombia without paying high duties. Household goods must be obviously worn and used to escape duty, which makes it much less worthwhile to pay the heavy transportation charges. Thus, if a family decides to go back, it must have enough cash in hand to replace all the household appliances and goods acquired through years of hard work and the credit system, since simple arithmetic indicates that one is better off to return with nothing more than personal clothing. Simple arithmetic also shows that a great deal of cash will be needed, since the cost of everything in Colombia will run several times more than in the United States; hence, the return to Colombia is put off once again.

But some do make it. The dream of going back is more tangible for a few because they are buying a house in Colombia to live in after their return. Several Colombian realty companies have even opened Queens branches to sell property to Colombians who are planning repatriation. In one case, a young woman without documents works as a domestic servant (even though she is trained as a secretary) because she has calculated that this is the way she can earn the most money to make payments on the house she is buying in her provincial city. Her seriousness—several on the panel said that the desire to own a home among Colombians is "primordial"—is shown by the fact that she could not attend her mother's funeral because she lacked the proper visa for leaving, and because she knew that she would have difficulty returning*.

COLOMBIANS IN NEW YORK: ALIENS BY CHOICE

There was almost universal agreement among the panel that no Colombian would make a permanent change in residence if he or she were not forced to do so by circumstances. Since Colombians come to the United States unwillingly, they "will always be aliens," according to one expert. An official of the Colombian Consulate mentioned as evidence the reluctance of Colombians to become U. S. citizens, an attitude which the Colombian Government encourages, he said, because it does not wish them to sever the last ties to their homeland.

The myth of the return is kept alive not only by long-range planning in which work plays the crucial part, but also by the day-to-day links Colombians preserve with the homeland. Not one person on the study panel

*This incident is described in greater detail in the case studies which follow in Appendix A.

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thought that Colombians in the colony were more interested in the local scene than in Colombia. "Colombians live pegados—glued—to the happenings in the homeland." "Colombians know much more about the sports (politics, gossip) in Colombia than about similar events here." "Colombians are obsessive in their attachment to the homeland." are typical comments. This attachment is nurtured by Colombian daily newspapers—15 of them from the capital and various provincial cities—which can be bought in many places throughout New York City, with a lag of only a day or two. The most popular magazines from Colombia also are available.

It is routine for most Colombians to visit the homeland at least every two or three years. The airfare offered by some of the non-IATA-affiliated airlines puts such trips within reach of nearly everyone (the round-trip fare at Christmas 1975 was, for example, \$288). Colombians also receive visits from political figures (President López Michelsen visited as a candidate and made another visit in the fall of 1975), Colombian beauty queens, sports stars, folkloric ballet groups, musical conjuntos, and singers which keep them in constant touch with their own culture. Indeed, Jackson Heights is as accessible from the Colombian capital as any distant province of Colombia; in many ways it is a province of Colombia. At the time President Lyndon Johnson began new negotiations over the Panama Canal, there was a joke making the rounds in the colony that if Johnson would give Panama back to Colombia, the Colombians would return Jackson Heights to the United States. But just as anyone who is banished temporarily to a distant province because of economic or other considerations longs for the familiar streets of the capital or the beloved plaza of a native village, Colombians want to go home.

For all these reasons, many Colombians never really adapt to their surroundings, and life continues to have a transient quality, tempered always by a belief in the return to Colombia. The panel agreed that most Colombians, particularly the mass of migrants who came in the 1960s and early 1970s view their lives as extremely hard; find New York (if not the Jackson Heights neighborhood) inhospitable and alien; suffer from the rigors of a climate which perversely produces both arctic winters and tropical summers; gradually come to view their situation as exploitative when they realize that their wages, while high compared to those in Colombia, actually are low compared to those enjoyed by citizens of the United States. These pessimistic views are balanced by an appreciation that there is at least some improvement in the family's prospects and that there is little opportunity in the still much loved homeland.

Perhaps the situation was best summed up by one expert, an intermediate professional who has lived in the United States for 12 years:

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The Latin, in general, is very much attached to his homeland—and because it is easy to remain in communication, the Colombian stays very well informed about what is going on there. Never does the Colombian leave off feeling Colombian, and this means never regarding himself as an immigrant, that is, as one who wants to completely establish oneself here and to create something that is going to endure. The idea is to plan for a relatively short stay. Even though the Colombian might be living here 20 or 30 years, the attitude still remains much more that of a transient who does not want to put down many roots because the true home is elsewhere. In this, the Colombians differ from the typical European immigrants who come to establish themselves and to stay here

This attitude goes far in explaining why the Colombians do not organize, why they do not participate actively in community affairs, why they don't wish to commit themselves to anything. This creates a sensation of instability because everything here has the quality of being temporary.

APPENDIX A: CASE STUDIES

AN IMMIGRANT MARRIED COUPLE'S EXPERIENCES IN NEW YORK CITY

Editor's Note: The couple interviewed is from Colombia; the husband is 45 years old and the wife 40. They emigrated to the United States in 1957 and have been living in New York since then. On entering the United States, they decided that a slight change in their family name—from "Riaño" to "Riano"—would make its pronunciation easier for Americans.

My name is Julia de Riano and I was born in Bogotá. My mother was a widow with three daughters; the money for her daughters' expenses came from a small flower shop she ran. I'd help her with the shop whenever I got some time away from school work.

Ever since I was a student in elementary school, I cherished the fancy idea of becoming a lawyer, and I would dream of being a lawyer for the defense. When I was about to start high school, I realized it would be difficult for me to get into the university, but I kept hoping that something would happen to make this possible. I didn't want to close that door completely and persuaded my mother to get me enrolled in a business-oriented high school rather than in a school for secretaries.

All through my high school years I became increasingly aware that I could never be a lawyer since we had a difficult time living on my mother's earnings. I changed my options and thought of being a teacher. Later I would learn that this was also impossible and that, after high school, I would have to give up my studies and start working to help my mother or at least to pay for my own expenses.

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I must confess that this made me feel bitter and angry and made me resent my country, my life, and everything around me. I knew that I was intelligent and that I was determined to study hard and do well, but that was not enough because in Colombia education is a privilege of the well-to-do and I had the bad luck to be poor. Even with great effort, I'd only get to be something that I hated: a secretary.

Just after graduation, I got a job in a law firm. While working there, it occurred to me that if I got the training I could become a paraprofessional. The work I was doing was interesting, but the pay was bad and to increase my earnings, I did some typing at home—letters, forms, theses—and also knitted children's clothes that my mother would sell in her shop.

I quit that job because the salary was too low. I got another job and then another, and none of them appealed to me. Finally, I took a one-year course on fingerprinting sponsored by the Civil Register, where I was offered a job after completion of the course. This was nice, interesting work and the salary was relatively high. For four years I worked there, and was promoted several times. I was pleased both with my job and the money I was making.

Interest in the United States

In the meantime, my eldest sister and her husband had traveled to New York City where my brother-in-law took specialized courses. When the courses were completed, they decided to settle in the United States. They wrote to us frequently commenting on that country's wonders and urging us to visit them. In 1956, when I was 21, I became excited about the idea of a vacation in the United States. I requested a three-months leave of absence from my job and soon I was on my way to New York. I had only my ticket and little money, but I didn't worry because I knew that my sister and her husband would take care of my expenses.

I stayed with my relatives at their apartment in Queens. The first days were all exciting, but then, when my brother-in-law had to go to his courses and my sister to her job, I'd stay all by myself in the apartment and be bored to death. My English was so poor I couldn't even enjoy TV. I decided then that I had to get a job which would keep me busy as well as let me earn a few dollars. I didn't talk about this at home but walked to a garment factory area. After wandering about for a while, I saw a sign advertising a job opening. I applied for the job; it was my good luck that almost everybody there spoke Spanish. In a few minutes I had a job; they set me working with a machine; it was easy but I had to be fast.

I recall that we were paid by the piece, and that at the end of the first week I had received seven dollars. I was so slow. But this job experience gave me some self-assurance and the following week I was looking for a lighter.

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better-paid job. When, after three months, my vacation came to an end, I had accumulated some dollars and I could go shopping and take home presents for my family.

Deciding to Settle in the United States

On my way back to Bogotá I made up my mind: I would return to the United States. True, I would have to work hard, but, on the other hand, my earnings would be enough for me to save and ensure a more comfortable life for myself in the future. I couldn't manage to do that if I stayed in Colombia where, even with a good salary, I was able only to cover immediate expenses; I could not save. And then I was continually annoyed by the atmosphere and the narrow-mindedness of the people surrounding me. This was not so in the United States where I could be myself and not be afraid of others' opinions about me. There I could work wherever I got the best salary and not care whether other people thought my work menial. I also thought that, had I come to the United States earlier, I could have attended law school instead of just a business high school.

Back in Bogotá, I didn't tell anybody about how much I had worked during my vacation. I only said—like most people back from their holidays—that I had enjoyed myself enormously and seen many exciting places.

My husband was at that time my sweetheart. He is five years older than I and was born in a town near Bogotá, but when he was little he moved to Bogotá with his family. He was a bookkeeper and worked in a government agency. His salary was rather low, hardly enough to help his large family. For this reason, our marriage plans were postponed year after year, thus upsetting my mother who considered our engagement too long and bad for my future.

I told my sweetheart about my U.S. experience and the possibilities in store for us if we decided to settle there. He was mildly enthusiastic and we agreed to get married and spend our honeymoon in New York City. He would then be able to assess the situation personally and make the final decision. Adding to all this was an old friend of ours who was living in the United States and had come to Bogotá for a few days. He exaggerated a lot. He'd say, "In the United States there are more cars than people," and, "It's so easy to buy a car, even servants can have one," and similar dazzling stories. According to him, the United States was paradise itself.

Getting Visas for the Trip

We got married and applied for the resident visas we were going to need if we decided to settle in the United States. In 1957, it was as easy to obtain a

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resident visa as a tourist visa. In New York our relatives helped us and in a few days we were living comfortably in a small apartment in the Bronx. We didn't have enough money to live in Queens which we would have preferred.

Looking for a Job

Soon we were both working in factories: I, sewing on buttons with a machine, and my husband moving some switch around. He changed jobs several times until he found one that appealed to him in a lab manufacturing electronic equipment. There he was trained in the handling of rather complex machinery.

With his skills and experience with machines, he was able to move to better positions from one lab to another. He has been working in the same company for several years now. He has a good salary and a position of responsibility.

Learning English

When we came to this country, our knowledge of English was almost non-existent. But we didn't have any problems because for the first years we didn't need English in our jobs—not much at least. For the rest of our activities we managed and got along even if we didn't speak it. Anyway, we had always thought that one important thing for us to do if we wanted to quit working in factories and make some progress was to speak good English. We attended several schools but without much success. Finally, we decided to buy a set of records, a complete English course. Every day at home after work, even while taking care of the children, we'd study hard. In this way and by speaking to the people we met daily, we got a good grasp of the language.

Getting Adapted

I must say that we were certain since our first days here that it would be easy for us to adapt to the country. In view of this we decided to settle down in the United States and not live in Colombia again. In our former country, the opportunities to enable us to become what we really wanted to be and do what we liked, had been denied to us. For this reason, we became naturalized Americans.

In the meantime I was still sewing buttons. I was fast and since I was paid by the piece, I got a good salary. It was hard work, and when the work day was over I was dead tired. I left that job when my first child was about to be born. When my children were little, I always tried to get some work which I could do at home while taking care of them. For example, I learned to retouch photographs and make ornaments that I'd sell to a store. I wanted to

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take care of my children because I trusted no one but myself for this. I have always been active and resourceful, and this is something good if your efforts are rewarded.

When my two older children were school age, I got a job on a school patrol. The pay was good and I could be home to take care of my children when they were home. I had this job for ten years until a short time ago when many employees—myself among them—had to be laid off because of New York's financial crisis. For this reason, I received good compensation.

With my husband's earnings and mine we have been able to save. Seven years after we arrived here, we moved from the Bronx to an apartment in Queens, and a little later we bought a house, and then another house, and a car, too. We have recently set up a small shop that I run with some help from my husband who lends a hand in his leisure time. Our business's outlook is good. We don't expect to get rich, but, only to get something for a more comfortable future for us and our children.

My two older children study in private Catholic schools. They have been reared Colombian-style, that is, with not as much freedom as American children enjoy, because in my opinion that is going too far. Our kids respect us and accept our authority and I don't think they suffer because their schoolmates enjoy more freedom than they. On the contrary, I sometimes hear them criticizing their friends' behavior.

We all speak Spanish at home, although our children speak English better than we do. My husband and I have tried to keep our native tongue and pass it on to our children, since in that way it's easier to keep family customs which we find good.

Feelings about Colombia

My mother died several years ago, and my unmarried sister who had remained at home came to this country with our help. She lives on her own now in another city. In Colombia the only relatives I have are twice-removed, and sometimes I exchange letters with them. Almost my husband's entire family lives there. My husband has always helped his family, more now than when he was living with them.

We never felt like going back to Colombia. In the eighteen years that we have spent in the United States, I only went to my country once: a few years ago, when my mother died. I had a nice feeling when I was back in Bogotá because I could see the people and places I love, but at the same time there was something unpleasant, perhaps because I had forgotten some of the depressing aspects of Bogotá and its people—the unsafe streets, the dirt, the abandoned children, and the beggars. All this shocked me and my children. I believe the situation has worsened lately. People are always on the defen-

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sive, afraid of being attacked or kidnapped when they have money. It's horrible!

On this trip I was more convinced than ever that our coming here was a wonderful decision and that I wouldn't go back to that country for anything in the world. We don't read Colombian papers, but we are aware of what is happening there because we talk with Colombians who travel frequently. Their stories are similar to those I read in the American newspapers—on the rare occasions when they write something about my native country—about poverty, kidnappings, drugs, lack of safety in the streets, corruption, and all the rest. So, why should I buy Colombian newspapers?

We have never been interested in investing our savings in Colombia because the government is not responsible for anything and the peso is being devaluated every day. I positively believe that nobody can make any progress in Colombia—except those who are rich. It's a shame, but things are getting worse every day in our poor country.

FROM SECRETARY TO HOUSEMAID

Editor's Note: The woman interviewed was born in Colombia. She is 35 years old and single. She came into the United States in 1972 with a tourist visa and has been living in the metropolitan area of New York City.

My name is Cecilia Gomez. I was born in Cali, the eldest of three children, where I spent my childhood and part of my adolescence. My father owned a small industry that yielded enough income to cover our house expenses. When I was 14, my father's business took a sharp turn for the worse. For reasons I cannot remember, he thought things would improve if we moved to Ibaguè, a smaller and less attractive town, closer to Bogotá. We took a house in a commercial area of the city where living conditions were far from pleasant.

My younger brother, my sister, and I went to study in the intermediate category of private schools. After elementary school, my sister and I took a three-year business secretarial course.

After completing my business courses, I didn't find it too difficult to get a job. If I got bored or heard about a better one, I would switch to a new job, and then to another, and to another. I was not happy with being a secretary. The work was badly paid and boring. I was and still am active. I prefer something more dynamic, something requiring both imagination and creativity, but in secretarial work—at least that is what I felt—I had to reproduce what others did, transcribe what others said. It was mechanical and tedious.

After trying several jobs, I finally found one where I stayed longer. The work was less tedious here. I had some freedom and could make a few decisions, but it was a dead-end job because there were no possibilities of

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advancement. Why? My boss was filling the only position I could have been promoted to, and "a secretary couldn't think of filling such a position."

My salary was not high but I could save most of it because I was living with my parents who didn't need my financial help. Because of this, I could pay for vacations to the Atlantic Coast, to San Andres Island, and once to Venezuela. I could take advantage of my trips and bring back goods which I would sell among my friends with relatively good profits.

Life was then a dreary routine and there seemed to be no possibility of change. There was not a single chance that things would really improve. Furthermore, I was surrounded by people who were always complaining about the narrowness of their environment. But they never did anything to overcome their frustration.

A Rising Interest

I cannot say exactly how and when my interest in traveling and settling in the United States began to grow. I had long been acquainted with people who traveled to that country. Some were established there and once in a while they would come to visit their families in Colombia. Others would travel to cities like Miami and bring back merchandise that would sell quickly because American clothes were in style. I realize now that the "elegant" clothes we bought could be bought for little money in Miami's second-hand stores.

I also learned about the United States during my English classes in secretarial school. Those lessons were very good indeed, but afterwards I did not use the language. In a few years I had forgotten almost everything; my English was poor when I came into the United States.

One of my best sources of information on the United States was my parents' friends, who had been living in the United States for several years. They would regularly come to Ibaguè and visit our family. They had been doing well. They had worked very hard and succeeded in establishing all their family there. They would tell us about the almost limitless opportunities available in that country, but they would add that one has to work hard and forget about some comforts common in Colombia. (Author's Note: Our subject was referring to domestic help for housework and child care services in particular.)

At the beginning of 1971 I started thinking what my accomplishments were and what my prospects would be in ten years. I decided to go to the United States, but I kept this to myself. If what I had heard was true, I would be able to get a job. I didn't mind working hard if that would bring me money, a comfortable living, and the possibility of building a future. I also considered the possibility of things not turning out well, but decided that this would not

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be so tragic, because I could always go back to my country where my family would be waiting for me, ready to let me be with them again.

Preparing for the Trip

Chances of getting a resident visa for the United States were poor because I didn't fill the requisites: I didn't have close relatives in the United States or needed skills. Even if secretaries were in great demand, I wouldn't be qualified for a job because of my poor English. I realized that the thing to do was to secure a tourist visa. This was also hard to obtain since my savings, which were enough to pay for the ticket and for the first week's expenses until I could find a job, were not enough for the deposit I had to make in the Banco de la República for the duration of my "tourist" trip. The only way out was to get a letter from somebody I knew in the United States, inviting me and agreeing to cover my expenses during my stay there. Then I could skip the bank deposit.

I wrote to my parents' friends in the United States, about my interest in going there, explaining that their letter wouldn't tie them up in any way because I had money, and that if after a while I realized things were not turning out well for me, I would go back to my parents' home.

I never got a reply to this and after several months I wrote again; I think I wrote three times, but never received an answer.

Few people knew about my travel plans and the steps I was taking. My parents had a dim idea of what was going on. Although I was sure that they wouldn't object to my going away, I also knew that they would be saddened by this.

Finally, the friend of my parents came down to Colombia and I could ask him about my letters. He sheepishly acknowledged receiving them, but he said that he hadn't answered because, first, he didn't know my father's opinion on the matter and, second, he as well as his wife didn't consider me the kind of person who could adapt to life in the United States. He told me that I was used to being served, that I helped little with the household chores, and that consequently I would suffer and would not be able to adjust. There was some resistance on my father's part, but with my mother's support I persuaded the friend that there were no risks involved in this trip because I could always come back home. I also persuaded the friend that I would find it easy to adjust to the new circumstances.

A few weeks later I received the letter of invitation I was expecting so anxiously, and I got the tourist visa. Some days later I was on my way.

Traveling and Settling Down

The family friend and his wife lived in a town close to New York. I flew from Bogotá to New York where they were waiting for me. They took me with them to their house where I was going to live.

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On the day after my arrival I was surprised by the wife, who told me, "Well, let's go and look for a job; go get ready." I was taken rather aback and felt shaky. I would have preferred to wait a few more days before starting this looking-for-a-job business, but I couldn't refuse. After all my promises, I had to look as if I were strong and determined. A few hours later I was on the street, walking beside her.

We went into a factory where there was a sign announcing openings. We were still waiting for the man in charge of new personnel when the woman told me: "You don't have to talk; I'll do it for you." She shouldn't have worried, though, because between my English being so poor and the panic I had gotten into, I couldn't have uttered a single syllable. She answered the man's few questions quickly, and when he asked to see my "green card" (permanent resident visa) she said that I didn't have it with me at the moment but that later I would bring it to him. I was amazed. This was more than I had expected. Without even opening my mouth, I had gotten a job in a couple of minutes. Now they wanted me to start working that same afternoon. My companion's cunning seemed incredible to me.

We went back home with the great news: I had a job! I ate lunch and left for my new job feeling uneasy with myself. The job consisted of checking out packing cases before they were loaded and sent out to the wholesalers. I cannot recall how much they paid me per hour, but it was little. I didn't mind, because I had a job that would provide me with some dollars and would prove that I was capable of doing something.

The First Job

In that factory, most of the employees or, more exactly, workers, were aliens: Dominicans, Puerto Ricans, and a few South Americans, Italians, and Greeks. The work requiring greater responsibility was done by the men. They were in charge of the supposedly more complex machines, risky operations, and work such as moving heavy material. The women's work consisted of simpler operations than the men's and, in consequence, their salaries were lower.

The work was easy, almost stupid, and I felt I was underemployed. I was disgusted by the other girls' behavior and language. Although they spoke Spanish, I found it difficult to understand them because their expressions, their accent, and the slang they used were foreign to me, and I hated their gross vocabulary.

I am sure that my uneasiness showed because few people liked me. On several occasions I heard some of the girls talking about me with disapproval. They said I was vain and didn't want to rub elbows with them, which was true. The only person I talked to was a South American lady who was very kind.

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Some months later the supervisor—through my South American friend—asked me if I wouldn't like to try working for a little while one of the machines which the men operated. (It was a cutting machine.) If I liked doing that I could remain there. I accepted immediately because the pay was better, and because I was able to leave the hateful women's section. I learned my new job quickly and well. The men were surprised, while the women were upset at what they considered an unfair promotion since most of them had had more time than I at the factory. The men—my new coworkers—were kind and helpful, but I never made friends with anybody in my job.

I never presented the "green card" and nobody in that factory requested it again.

The World Outside the Job

I was still living in the companion's home. They helped me a lot and treated me as if I were their daughter. Through them, I met many Colombians. It seemed to me that the woman was a specialist who could solve any problem a fellow Colombian might have that happened to be within her range.

My English had not improved at all. Living in a Colombian home was the problem. Also in my job I didn't have to speak English. I decided to study English in a school. I changed several jobs and several schools, too. My jobs were improving little by little in salary, but the work itself was always simple and mechanical and I was not acquiring any skills. I didn't need much training to learn how to push a button or pack cases and flasks. The schools didn't help me much either because the courses were poor and the evening students who came to school after a long day of hard work did poorly. They were not pressed to do better. When I got bored in one school, I would quit and after a while go to another in the hope that it would be better, but I couldn't leave my job to take the time to enter a good school.

Problems of the Illegal Alien

I never worried about my condition of both working full time and being a student tourist, and the problems that it could bring. I thought that the worst that could happen was being deported. But this was not so terrible. I was lucky because in all the time I have been here I was scared to death only once. That was the time some officials from the immigration department came early one morning to the house. They said they were looking for somebody they had been informed about. I was in the kitchen preparing my breakfast when they knocked at the door. The friend was cool and invited them to come in and check the house. They inspected the second floor first

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and I had time to hide in a room next to the kitchen, which they skipped. After that scare, I never had the same experience. Of course, I tried to avoid going places where I could have been picked up.

My Present Job

After more than two years working in factories and living with the friends, I learned about a job as a "live-in" maid in a family household. I accepted, and this is where I'm working now. I clean the house and take care of three children. The work isn't heavy since there are all sorts of mechanical appliances. I don't have to cook because the lady I work for takes care of that. The children and both parents are kind and polite to me. My role in this household is important because it permits my employers to lead an active social life and travel extensively with no worries about the house or the children.

I have a weekly salary of \$110, which is more than I received in any factory. I don't have to pay rent or buy food. Every week I have two days off. I rented a room together with one of my girl friends, and in this way we have a room of our own on our days off. This is nice because the house where I work is in one of those rich suburbs far from the city. On those two days, I visit my friends, do some shopping, and enjoy myself.

Doubts About my Accomplishments

When I try to balance the time I've spent here, I am sometimes assaulted by doubts about how much I have really accomplished. I am saving money, of course, and with those savings I bought a house for my family in Colombia. I could never have achieved this goal if I had stayed in my country because a secretary's salary can hardly pay rent. Even then, the work I do most of the time is simple, and I am not learning anything or improving in some way. The only things I get are a salary and practice speaking English. Although the family respect me and I am introduced by them as "the kids' Spanish teacher," I do not have any social life with them.

Homesickness

For a long time I've had a yearning to return to my country to see my parents and friends. I cannot do this, only because I don't have a resident visa. If I leave this country, I'll not be able to enter it again and it's important for me to remain a few years more, at least until the house payments are completed. But as soon as I get the visa and cancel my debt, I'll go back to Colombia even though I often wonder whether I'll be able to fit again into such a narrow world.

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Several months ago I took the first steps to get a resident visa because I would like to leave the door open for my eventual return to this country. A lawyer and the family I work for are helping me. I have made some progress and hope to get it.

Letters to Colombia

I often write to my family and old friends in Colombia, but I never tell my family about any difficulty I meet or bad experiences I've had in this country. That would upset them and I prefer to think that they are happy believing I am doing well and feel happy. They don't even have a clear idea about the kind of work I am doing. I am afraid that they wouldn't understand my reasons for accepting this job and, according to their values, I would only be a "housemaid."

Neither do I tell the whole truth about my life and job to my friends in Colombia. I know how old-fashioned people are in my country. They wouldn't understand, and I would only be supplying them with material for gossip. In my letters I tell them that all is well and that I am very happy. The friends who came before me wrote things like that, and I now believe that they, too, were hiding something.

Relations with other Colombians

I have few friends. Sometimes it's dangerous to make friends with somebody one doesn't know much about. Also making new friends is difficult. People are very independent in this country. Regarding my fellow Colombians, I prefer not to be too much with them. Nobody knows who among them is in the drug business and that's dangerous. We have such a bad reputation that we have to avoid someone unless we know the person very well. Many people mistake me for a Greek and I don't set them straight unless it is for something important. There are certain situations in this city, and above all in these times, when it's better to be anything but a Colombian. I am not insulting my country or my fellow countrymen, just telling the sad truth about Colombians having a black reputation in New York.

AN ILLEGAL COMES BACK HOME

Editor's Note: The woman interviewed is 46 and worked as a domestic in New York for 31 1/2 years. Her object was to save money and pay for her five children's housing and education.

"I am happy with my life and with what I've accomplished, and now I'm going to stop working." These are the words of a Colombian woman on her

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way back to her country after living for six years in the United States as an illegal alien. The woman is 46 and lives in a small suburb of Medellin. "Not even once in all these six years did I visit my husband and five children, not even for Christmas, because I was an immigrant with no documents to show the authorities."

Rocio is short and dark-skinned. She is wearing a well-cut suit, elegant shoes, and her hair is fashionably styled. Nobody would take her for a housemaid. She is one of the many "economic" migrants to the United States. She had wanted to own a house and give her children an education, and now she was returning after many years of hardship and heavy work during which she lived as an "illegal" in the shadows of society.

"I never expected to stay for so long," she confides. "In fact, this little doll you see in my tote bag is three years old. I bought it for my daughter, the youngest of the family, long ago when I was thinking of returning to Colombia. I couldn't, though, and I'll tell you why. Now my daughter is eleven and I don't know if she still plays with dolls. She was only five when I left."

A little worried, the mother goes on. "My husband couldn't find a good house for the price we had in mind; instead, he chose a much more expensive house and I had to stay three more years. But now it's completely paid for. Every payment was made with my earnings. I also bought all the appliances for my house. I am taking with me a TV set, electric iron, sewing machine, and many other things. We have some friends in Customs and with their help we'll avoid paying taxes. I have paid US \$200 for overweight baggage plus US \$250 air cargo.

"Yes, señora. All this means that I had to save all my salary and that I didn't do anything else in all those years but work and save. Once in a while I took a short trip. I love to travel and see places. My church organized two of these trips: one to Miami and another to Washington. Aside from this, nothing, nothing. I saved it all.

"The point is that we didn't have any other way out. Our families are modest, country people, let's say. My father was a mason; my husband and I didn't have any schooling. To tell you the truth, my husband is a good man, although he likes the bottle and women a little too much. I am the strong one in our family, and I decided to migrate by myself because I knew that we wouldn't save enough if my husband came with me. I am very disciplined and also, with whom could we have left the children? We have a mature, responsible woman who takes care of them, but it's not enough if one of the parents is not there. This idea of traveling, I have to tell you, was mine, and my husband had to agree.

"But now I don't know how they are going to receive me, especially my husband. I am a bit nervous in spite of the pills I've taken. You'll have to excuse me."

There are tears in her eyes. After a while she is in control of herself again and goes on, absorbed in her story.

"Can you imagine that I never saw it? My house! Well, sometimes I talked over the telephone with my family. We were always in touch, of course. Every month I'd send money to my eldest son to meet the new house payments. My son is 22 now and when I left him he was a 16-year-old kid; he is a grown man. But I am happy because thanks to my efforts he is now a car mechanic and soon he'll start his own family. My second child—a son, too—is about to graduate as a mechanic; and the third one—a daughter—wants to study nursing. That's why I am taking the sewing machine, to sew so I can help her study whatever she wants. But I am not going to work outside, no señora, nevermore!

"How did I arrange my trip and work there? No travel agencies for me, thank you. At that time my elder sister had been living in the United States for four years. She came with a brother who settled down there with his family. They all have resident visas. I traveled with a tourist visa. My sister worked as a housemaid, and she got me a job in the house of a rich lady who owns several boutiques on Fifth Avenue and who is a friend of the lady my sister works for. This lady had an 11-year-old daughter and a 17-year-old son and she didn't want her daughter to be alone in the house after school.

"I came to love that girl as if she were my own daughter; sometimes she reminded me of my children. At night I would think of them. I am not going to say that I didn't cry many times, but never in front of the people I was working for. They are fond of me, they love and respect me. They are good people. I shared the house cleaning with the señora, but the kitchen was mine. I had a room for myself, a TV set, my own bathroom, and a day off every week. Sometimes I didn't go out, but I stayed home and rested, and nobody would disturb me.

"One of the things that struck me at that house was that even when I was a newcomer and they didn't know me, everything was left open and dollar bills would be laying around the house. If a bill was dropped, nobody asked for it, but, of course, I always put everything in its place, on a table. These people had many valuables and rich ornaments that I would have liked—while I was cleaning—to have opened the drawers and looked at them. I am sure they wouldn't have been annoyed. Both husband and wife were always polite and kind with me. Before I left they arranged a dinner party for me and invited my brothers and some of their relatives who had met me.

"Being a housemaid in the United States is not the same as in Colombia. I don't have any reservations when I speak about my job; everybody in my neighborhood always knew about it. I am not a career woman but just a countrywoman without pretensions. How could people believe that I was working at something else? And besides, this was honest work, and I am not

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ashamed of having done it. On the contrary, I am proud of what I achieved. Go back to the United States? No, señora, I am 46 and I'll never go back, not even on a visit, no! Well, since I lived there without a visa for so many years, who knows if I will not be allowed to return, but who cares? If my brothers wish to see me, they can come down to Colombia. I am never going to leave my family, my house, or my town."

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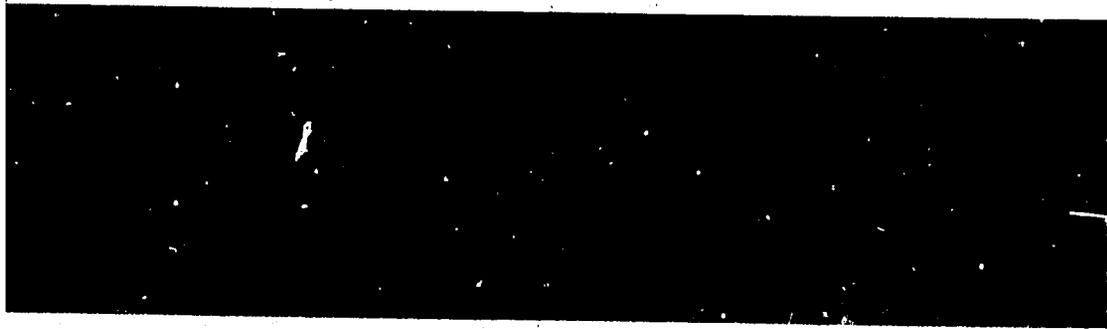
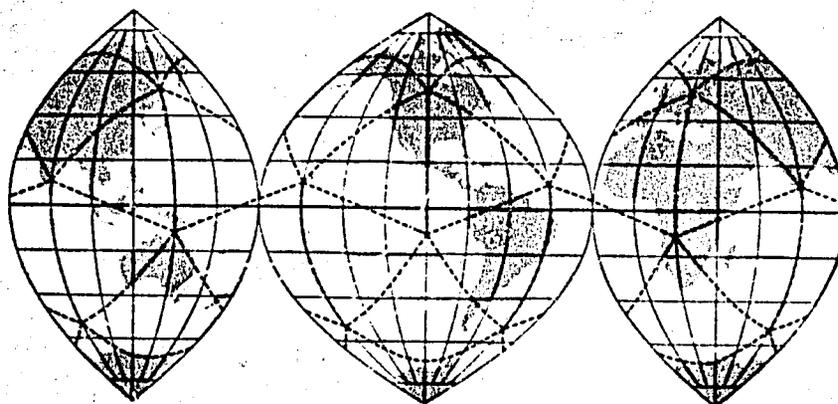
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Smithsonian Institution
1717 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W.
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