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## Networking the Globe

**PAMELA JAMES HAD A TYPICAL LIFE** for a young woman of some promise living on a small Eastern Caribbean island.<sup>1</sup> She was living away from home, being educated to become a teacher. Her education, not available to many, would lead to one of the few available career paths for promising young men and women. By these standards she was doing well. But migration overseas might offer better opportunities and a better standard of living, so she often considered leaving her country, as did her family members and friends, who thought they could improve their lives through out-migration. In London when I interviewed her, Pamela told me the story of how she came to live there.

I was going to be a teacher. I had gone to the University of the West Indies in Trinidad. I knew that it wasn't what I'd settle for. Prospects for teaching there are slim, and you only move up with age. There's no promotion, per se. No middle management. You just reach a certain age and, *boof*, you go up [get promoted]. I was living at home and not earning enough to buy a property! And my sister and her husband were finding it hard to make ends meet. Even with a job you couldn't see yourself doing well.

My uncle came here in the 1950s. I didn't know him at all, 'cause I was so young when he left [our island]. After thirty years away he brought his family back home on holiday. He even agreed we were just living [and not getting ahead]. He said, "Oh, in London they're looking for teachers. There's a man who is looking to recruit teachers." And he told my sister about it and she got in touch with him. My uncle sent back [to my sister] a TES, that's the *Times Education Supplement* [the education newsletter that advertised the recruitment notice].

You have to know that at that time it was the Thatcherite period. Oh, it was bad, horrible. Teachers were leaving their jobs to drive cabs and such. She [Thatcher] began the process of selling off national properties to put money in the pockets of the rich. She crushed manufacturing here, and now the economy is run on services. She instituted a community tax, but people with large properties didn't pay as [in relation to what] they own. She had lots of policies to cripple the poor. She was a very heavy-handed bureaucrat. A whole generation of women followed her style—there are still plenty of them around. Anyway, a lot of people migrated to Australia. A lot of people were in retraining.

My sister contacted the man [the education director]. He said, "Right. Come right up." They had been recruiting [whites] in the U.S., in Australia and New Zealand, and other places. But not from the Caribbean. You understand, he [the education director] was a Caribbean man himself. He brought up forty [black] teachers and their families. Myself and two others were secondary teachers, the rest were primary school teachers. I did PGC, postgraduate retraining [to be certified to teach primary school]. No, I wasn't the only single person. Some people were single, but they had kids. But, you understand, I had my extended family with me.

At this point, I asked her, "Did you ever think of migrating to England before then?"

Oh no. England doesn't present the kind of prospects—I would have gone to Canada instead. You know, we [who had not migrated] had this idea of the English being crusty and behind the times. You know, relatives who returned from England do not look as shiny and spiffy as those who were coming back from the U.S. So, no, I didn't think about coming to England. But then I could live anywhere. I fit in but I brought my environment with me.

In many ways, this excerpt from Pamela's life story is typical of many immigrants, and can be considered a model for the ways sociologists and economists normally understand the migration process. It describes a woman who left her economically poor but culturally rich Caribbean island homeland and moved to a more economically stable life in an international urban metropolis in the more developed Western world.<sup>2</sup>

Upon hearing a story like this, many migration theorists might understand it as an *economically driven* one. They might suggest that the relative

poverty (despite her educational attainment) that Pamela and her sister suffered pushed them to move away. Or they might infer instead that these migrants were pulled toward better prospects for job advancement and property ownership. Many scholars would interpret Pamela's story either in terms of the push factors that drove her away from the economic malaise of her homeland or in terms of the pull factors that drove her toward greater economic opportunity in the developed world. While such interpretations are comfortingly familiar, they fail to explain fully the complexities of Pamela's decision and that of other black Caribbean migrants who leave their native lands to migrate to more affluent nations abroad.

Ironically, while most exponents of push-pull theory would repudiate social Darwinism as an antiquated social model based on an economic worldview more appropriate to the world of fixed assets posited by Adam Smith than to current, more fluid conceptions of economic wealth, those scholars who support push-pull theory retain many elements of social Darwinian thought that my research challenges. Push-pull theory assumes that individuals act out of notions of their own future economic welfare and that out of such individual economic decision making arises social benefit. Thus most such scholars assume that it is the best and the brightest who have the energy, desire, and skills that make them the most likely to migrate; hence the migration process, like the social Darwinian struggle, becomes a means of sorting out the wheat from the chaff, enabling generally the most talented and fit to enter the migration process in the first place. My research indicates that migrants do not select themselves but rather are selected by others who facilitate the moving process on the basis of the character traits best adapted for survival in the new environment. Ironically, these character traits comport well with those demanded by the proponents of the nineteenth-century gospel of wealth (such as Horatio Alger, Andrew Carnegie, and others who lauded the characteristics of piety, diligence, future orientation, and ability to defer present gratification in pursuit of long-term goals).

In contrast to economic reasoning, theories of *migration networks* or *migration chains* focus instead on social mechanisms that facilitate movement, arguing that potential movers achieve migration by activating the connections they have to others already in their chosen destinations, that is, the people who have migrated before them. These theories model migration as a series of linked dyads, in which one migrant in a pair helps another, and the one who received assistance then helps yet another migrant, and so on.

The linked pairs form a chain of migrants who follow one another to a single destination. As new links are added to the chain, the migration stream of that particular group is perpetuated. This understanding has been widely influential in shaping the way we think about why people move, and about how they choose where to go. However, my research indicates that networks are far more complex, extensive, and long lasting in their impact on migrants' lives than this dyadic notion of immigration networks posits.

Pamela's story might alternatively be interpreted, then, as one involving a complex of immigrant social networks—social entities thought to be made up of family, fictive kin, and friends linked together by the assistance they receive from one person and give to another in the form of information and material resource transfers. In this excerpt, evidence of Pamela's involvement in networks is clear. She received help indirectly from the education director and her uncle, and directly from her sister; and each of those who helped Pamela helped many others besides Pamela.

Both push-pull and chain migration theories have had long-standing impacts on migration theory and policy development. In light of these theories, Pamela's story seems unremarkable. But one would have to ignore some basic facts in order to have her story fit the conventional migration models, for in many ways her story tells us something quite different than both theories would predict.

For one, theory suggests that migration flows are rooted in individual incentives: migrants decide to move in response to push or pull factors, or they choose to activate their connections to migration chains. But while Pamela explains that she, her sister, and her sister's family all had contemplated leaving their island home, their target destination was neither London (where they ended up) nor anywhere else in Europe. Their choice was, instead, Canada; Pamela even states a preference for the United States over England. How is it that they move transcontinentally and uproot their lives, to live, work, and perhaps die in a place they never really considered a desirable option? If (as theory explains) migration is driven by a migrant's own desires, a story like Pamela's would not make much sense. It was the good opportunity afforded to her—by someone in a place she really did not care to be, someone she really did not know but who had experience in moving a number of people like her—that made taking the chance to move to Britain something she did not want to pass up.

To understand this point, think of the difference between *choice* and *chance*. Pamela's migration story is less about the exercise of her individual

choices and preferences in making economic change, and more about taking advantage of the chances for change that come about because and only when network members solicit new migrants to fill opportunities available in certain times and spaces. Here we see that the impetus for Pamela's migration began neither with her own efforts to seek work nor with a conscious choice she made to call on someone she knew. The move began with the actions of her uncle—a veteran (not potential) migrant in a destination (not sending) country. Pamela had thought about moving for a long time but did not actually move until the opportunity to do so was created and made available to her *by someone else*.

If we are mistaken in measuring migration from the vantage point of the potential immigrant who we assume initiates her or his own migration by calling on contacts in more developed nations, at what point does migration networking begin? Those at the destination (the uncle and the education director) made migration happen for Pamela, and for scores of others, when her desire to move and her acquaintance with migrants in a number of destinations were insufficient. Looked at this way (and contrary to what migration theorists predict), migration in the network context occurs not when potential migrants decide to migrate and switch on their connections to overseas others but instead when people who have already migrated actually create opportunities and then choose a newcomer to take advantage of one of these opportunities. That Pamela and the others followed this uncle (and Jocelyn, who ultimately disbursed information about the opportunities) may indicate that potential migrants have a lot less agency in choosing their destinations than we might think, and may also imply that the one who hoards opportunities to migrate actually holds the decision-making power. More important, the fact that a potential migrant knows someone overseas is not equivalent to that migrant having network connections. The "someone overseas" would have to be someone who controls access to the jobs and other information that ease the relocation and resettlement process, and indeed would have to be one who chooses to use his or her knowledge and power to enable a potential migrant's overseas move. The evidence for this is that Pamela claims she knew people in three destination options: people in Canada, where she most wanted to go; "spiffy" people in the United States who came back to visit often; and others in England whose demeanor and appearance did not induce her to migrate there. Instead of choosing Toronto or New York, Pamela and her sister moved to their least desirable choice, London, and they did so at the impetus of someone she claims she hardly knew.

A third enigma in this excerpt suggests that the chain model most commonly employed in migration studies might not accurately describe much network migration. Pamela reports that she did have help in arranging her relocation to London, but the helping network she describes is clearly more complex than a series of dyads in a chain. One woman (Pamela's sister Jocelyn) helped Pamela, but she also helped seven other teachers and their families to migrate and secure jobs. Jocelyn in turn was helped by one man—the education director—but he helped, altogether, forty teachers who brought their families. If we focus on the helper (Jocelyn or the education director) instead of on a single migrant being helped (Pamela), this story of a number of immigrants connected to a key individual invokes not the image of a dyadic chain but more the image of a wheel, in which several spokes are connected to one hub. Pamela's sister and the education director are hubs, central figures who ensure the arrival of the teachers and family members whom we can consider spokes. When hubs hoard overseas opportunities, solicit spokes to fill them, and do this repeatedly, ensuring job placement and housing success for a whole group of migrants, they create extensive networks that are dyadic only on the smallest scale. To rely on the chain model to describe migration, we would need to ignore the broader network-organizing work these individuals do.

Fourth, one can read additional significance in the fact that this uncle was someone with whom Pamela was merely acquainted and someone with whom she did not keep in contact. We expect that migrant network ties are strong, that is, they are connections between people who are intimates or who have bonds of obligation.<sup>3</sup> This man acted out of neither benevolence nor obligation but, if anything, out of a detached sort of altruism or activism. The uncle (and the education director) was reportedly motivated by concern that black immigrants from the Caribbean be afforded the same opportunities as the white immigrants that education officials were trying to recruit from Canada and Australia. Jocelyn (as explained later) was motivated by her own religiosity and used her knowledge of job openings to handpick those she deemed pious enough to be in her new postmigration community. Neither of these people had strong ties to the migrants they helped but instead activated weak ties. They became aware of job openings and decided they knew where to find the right people to fill them—for example, the uncle provided invaluable aid in the migration of Pamela and her sister, despite his tenuous ties to them.

Consequently—and this is the fifth and final point—theory understands network assistance as helping with border crossing and perhaps job seeking but presumes that once the emigrant has moved and begun work, the newcomer's connection to the information giver seemingly ceases to have a great deal of significance in the newcomer's life. Perhaps that is why migration theorists have for decades focused on *assimilation* and *acculturation* (whether and how well the new migrant adapts to his or her new surroundings) as the new immigrant's greatest challenge. It was not clear how the newcomer gets postmigration information. Pamela says, by surprising contrast, that she did not think twice about whether life in the new and less-than-desirable country was at all strange. Instead, she argues that she fit into the new environment just fine because "I brought my environment with me." She fit in because she joined a transplanted community of Caribbean people—some who had migrated before her and some who made the trip when she did but in any case a community organized by her hubs. Stories like Pamela's show that the one-who-helps-many also shapes the newcomer's postmigration experience for years to come by community building via networking in their mutual workplaces and neighborhoods.

We return to Pamela's and Jocelyn's migration stories in later chapters as we examine the migration experiences of many such Caribbean persons who now live in London and New York. Suffice it to say, however, that the seemingly unusual or aberrant elements in Pamela's story were echoed by the nearly one hundred immigrants and potential immigrants I interviewed while conducting the research project described in this book. As I hope is clear, existing theory about the formation and perpetuation of migration networks is scanty, at least in terms of its ability to explain these other migration factors. New theory is required because, while migration scholars have written much about networks, there is little in the available theory that explains why someone moves to a place she did not really intend to go, following someone with whom she had little contact prior to migration—a person who brings several other migrants in similar fashion—and then feels quite at home once she moves because the other migrants help to form a ready-made community at the new destination. Surely having at least tenuous connections to a network is important, but perhaps more important is the central figure who lends assistance to so many others in the network configuration. As I argue in this book, this key figure is the reason that networks are formed and maintained, because he or she enables migration and resettlement for

dozens if not hundreds of international movers. Moreover, this person's actions help to secure socioeconomic mobility for the entire ethnic group he or she helps to create in the chosen destinations.

This figure is central in the sense that he or she surrounds him- or herself with a configuration of new migrants (drawn from a pool of potential migrants) with whom he or she creates strong economic and cultural ties in what may best be described as a hub-and-spoke network of immigrants. The ties among the immigrants appear and solidify as the hub works to bring the newcomers into the destination country and helps them find jobs and housing. In the best-case scenarios, when all is said and done, groups of people connected in this way transform their lives, sometimes in ways that mean escaping poverty and prospering socially and economically. This is a major feat given that most groups that come to a more economically developed country in this way are unwelcome, for whether by virtue of their nation's relative poverty or because people in destination countries understand themselves as the migrants' racial betters, newcomers like these are most often seen as undesirable additions to the populations of wealthier nations. This book describes how migration and mobility occur and explains what role the network plays in both processes. This chapter starts that discussion by outlining the theories that sociologists and economists use to explain who moves internationally and why, especially those theories that center on the immigrant social network—now understood to be an important catalyst to new migration and a key element in whether a group succeeds or fails socioeconomically.

### Theorizing About International Migration

Some researchers argue that we are in a new and fourth phase of global migration, marked by an increasing rate of postindustrial international movement that began in the mid-1960s and has been dominated by outflows from the developing nations of the southern hemisphere and Asia (Castles and Miller, 1993; Massey et al., 1998).<sup>4</sup> The standard interpretation of history suggests that former immigrant-sending nations have of late become receiving nations, a change that has garnered a flurry of social and economic research meant to explain exactly why it has occurred and what the societal repercussions are (Massey et al., 1998). Other interpretations suggest instead that all countries have sent or received migrants, although roughly only twenty-five nations have accepted three-quarters of the world's immigrants in recent years (Zlotnik, 1999). We may pose here three questions that theorists have tried to



answer with regard to the “new” migration of “people of color”: *What causes migration? Who makes migration happen? Which migrants are successful?*

### What Causes Migration?

Economists believe that forces at both the macro- and the microlevels (that is, at the level of the social structure and the individual level, respectively) interact with one another in ways that bring about economic equilibrium, or a steady state of economic activity that produces predictable outcomes. The idea behind economic modeling is to find out what inputs best predict those outcomes, assuming that knowing and controlling the inputs to the equilibration process would allow us to bring about desirable economic outcomes. Neoclassical economic models of migration once held sway over theoretical thinking about migration, during which time we developed both macro (focusing on inputs at the societal level) and micro (focusing on the actions of the individual actor) economic models.

One important set of macro-inputs are wages. High wages are presumably a pull factor that attracts migrants to jobs that offer more pay than other jobs. Economists have theorized that economic imbalances in factors of production (labor, capital, and raw materials) or factor prices (wages for labor, costs for capital, and commodity prices for raw materials) generated states of disequilibrium in national economies and thus in the world economy (Todaro, 1969, 1976). For example, places that have fewer laborers than jobs are assumed to have to pay workers more, while places with an abundance of unutilized labor may pay their workers less. High wages, then, are a pull factor that attracts migrants from low wage areas. For a time it was decided that the solution to the macrolevel problem was to encourage development—if we work to increase local employment and provide wage-earning opportunities at home, the incentive to leave would presumably disappear. However, research showed that economic development was actually a catalyst rather than a salve for increasing migration pressure because it severely disrupts the developing economy and society (Massey, 1990a, 1990b), at least in the short run (Commission for the Study of International Migration and Cooperative Economic Development, 1991; Vogler and Rotte, 2000). Furthermore, the real trigger to the initiation or cessation of any group’s tendency toward international movement is the attainment of bearable conditions of life in the area of origin—after which people find migration not worth the effort—not the fact that the nation from which they come is still “developing” (Massey et al., 1998, p. 8).<sup>5</sup>

At the microlevel, migration was understood to be undertaken by economic actors who rationally and individually weighed the returns of migration. As long as, after paying for the trip, they would reap more in wages than if they stayed in their home country, rational individuals would choose to migrate (Todaro, 1976). Further research found, however, that migrants moved whether or not they actually received higher wages at the destination. Models were then modified to try to predict the likelihood of moving based on the *expectation* of wages rather than on the actual wage received (that is, the models included estimations for expected levels of unemployment as well as expected earnings), but even these and further modifications to the prevailing economic models were in the end insufficient to explain the increasing levels and growing upward trend in international migration from certain nations. Why? Well, the models could not explain why, if wage differentials are real incentives to international movement, all laborers in a poor country do not try to move away to get more money. These macromodels also failed to explain why some nations with very low wages did not send migrants in any great number while other less impoverished nations sent far greater numbers. Nor did these modified macromodels explain why the extent of global migration overall was small given that the numbers of poor and the disparities between wealthy destination countries and poor nations of origin are so great (Arango, 2000, p. 286; Massey et al., 1998, p. 7). Critiques like these emerged partly because economic models failed to predict levels of migration accurately and could not efficiently suggest effective recommendations for creating policy that would help control the flow of migration.

### Who Makes Migration Happen?

Reading prevailing theory in neoclassical economics, the “new economics” of migration, and network migration theory you would learn that the impetus for migration is found in the individuals and family or community groups resident in the country of origin. To say this more succinctly, migration scholarship would have us believe that prospective migrants cause their own migration to happen.

Neoclassical economic models are based on the assumption that people make rational choices, so the decision to move out of one’s country for not very high wages, or to do anything else economically “irrational,” could not easily be predicted by mathematical models. Scholars in the new economics of migration suggested that problems in predicting migrants’ economic behavior lay in

faulty models, not irrational decision makers. They noted two problems with the way decision making was modeled. First, they suggested that nonmigrant members of the potential migrant's household are involved in making the decision to send someone away to work. According to Stark (1991) and his followers, households decide to send one of their residents overseas for all kinds of reasons that involve their need for temporary and relatively large infusions of extra (or *target*) income, to finance projects like enlarging or building a home, paying tuition, or recovering from financial crises such as the disabling of a wage earner or crop failure. Out-migration is the necessary solution for people in poorer and less developed economies who have less access to credit and insurance markets than earners in more developed economies do. Evidence supporting this family-household aid model may be found in a glance at the enormous economic volume and social value of remittances, or transfers of wealth and earnings from foreign-born individuals to others in their country of origin. Migrants in the United States are believed to have sent \$70 billion overseas in 1995—a 250-fold increase over the dollar value of remittances in 1970 (Castles, 2000, p. 276)—but these figures are likely an underestimate; in 2002–2003, new calculations showed that we were grossly underestimating remittance values (Scott-Joynt, 2004). Newer estimates show that in 2005, \$52 billion was sent back to Latin America and the Caribbean alone (Smith, 2005). In 1990, between 10 and 13 percent of Mexican American householders and between 15 and 25 percent of Mexican immigrant householders supported kith or kin outside of their own household (Glick, 1999, p. 758). Recent migrants and those on temporary sojourns are most likely to send remittances (Glick, 1999), and a startlingly high number of migrants report that they are migrating only temporarily (Piore, 1979). Clearly, many post-1965 migrants work for more than their own individual well-being.<sup>6</sup> Second, traditional models expected that absolute income levels would drive migration, as if migration results simply from Third World poverty versus First World riches. The new economics school argues that relative income disparity (relative to some marker of economic well-being for one's own reference group) and not absolute poverty drives migration. "In brief, if one is poor among poor, incentives to migrate might be lower than if one is poor among (relatively) rich" (Vogler and Rotte, 2000, p. 488). But even with modifications, these models still claim that the impetus for migration can be found among potential migrants in sending countries.

Similarly, network theories of immigration presume that when migrants are ready to move, they will. In these models, migrants move when they

activate ties to persons they know in the desired destination, soliciting from them the help or information (that is, *social capital*) they need to carry out a move. The social capital available in the network presumably remains untapped and at the disposal of potential migrants until and unless the potential migrants take advantage of these network resources. Massey and colleagues (1993) explain that the costs of migration are lower for potential migrants with network connections than for those without and that simply having these connections may actually cause one to undertake an international journey:

Once the number of network connections in an origin area reaches a critical threshold, migration becomes self-perpetuating because each act of migration itself creates the social structure needed to sustain it. Every new migrant reduces the costs of subsequent migration for a set of friends and relatives, and *some of these people are thereby induced to migrate*, which further expands the set of people with ties abroad, which, in turn, reduces costs for a new set of people, *causing some of them to migrate*, and so on. [p. 449, emphasis added]

Further, in their discussion of ways that maturing networks imply ever declining risks for potential migrants, Massey and his coauthors also tell us that the potential migrants are the decision makers in this networking process:

When migrant networks are well-developed, they put a destination job within easy reach of most community members and make emigration a reliable and secure source of income. . . . This dynamic theory accepts the view of international migration as an individual or household decision process, but argues that acts of migration at one point in time systematically alter the context within which future migration decisions are made, greatly increasing the likelihood that *later decision makers will choose to migrate*. . . . Once begun, international migration tends to expand over time until network connections have diffused so widely in a sending region that *all people who wish to migrate can do so without difficulty*; then migration begins to decelerate. [Massey et al., 1993, pp. 449–50, emphasis added]

Portes and Bach (1985) suggest similar thinking when they explain why migrants tend to concentrate themselves spatially in ethnic clusters. Here they suggest that settlement locations and job sites are chosen according to newcomer preferences for remaining near kin:

Overall, the entire process of immigrant settlement is “sticky” because new

arrivals tend to move to places where immigrants have become established, and later generations do not wander far off. . . . [The logic behind this, we argue, is that] by moving away from places where their own group is numerically strong, individuals risk losing a range of social and moral resources that make for psychological well-being as well as for economic gain. [p. 55]

In sum, neoclassical, new economics, and network migration theorists have assumed that the primary decision maker was always a person in the country of origin. While having ties to the destination is certainly crucial to the relocation process of any person who is unwilling to be a pioneer and strike out on his or her own, the existence of ties to veteran migrants is by itself an insufficient catalyst to ensure that the person's migration will take place when he or she desires it. "Studying social networks, particularly those linked to family and households, permits understanding migration as a social product—not as the sole result of individual decisions made by individual actors, not as the sole result of economic or political parameters, but rather as an outcome of all these factors in interaction" (Boyd, 1989, p. 642). To answer the question *Who makes migration happen?* one should consider that the immigrant social network itself and the interpersonal ties it represents are both important factors in international migration. However, we need to know far more about how network ties are activated, and about how information and assistance travel along these ties, if we are to explain better the migrant network experience. As Pamela's example suggests, both the existence of network connections at a destination *and* a key figure's willingness to transmit the information to help the potential migrant actually succeed in the migration and adaptation processes may be required.

### Which Migrants Are Successful?

Much of the "new" research on the "new" (post-1960) immigration is focused not on new ways of understanding immigration, per se, but instead on issues of incorporation, or whether and how immigrants "succeed" after crossing the borders in destination countries. Modern vocabulary in this area questions the extent to which new arrivals ever achieve *Americanization*, *incorporation*, or *adaptation*, but these echo older terms—*assimilation* and *acculturation*—and as such do not invoke new ideas at all (DeWind and Kasinitz, 1997). In addition, the term *ethnicity* also has emerged as a factor by which the relative success or failure of foreign-born groups could be assessed. (While it may be

a factor in how immigrants fare, as bodies neither the newer nor older sets of literature focus explicitly on the condition of race or racism for these nonwhite newcomers.)

The literature is only slightly divided on the question of migrant success. Some writers say that migrants come to wealthier destinations for target earnings, so success should be measured by whether these targets are achieved, not whether the migrants have established a new and permanent way of life. As Piore (1979) suggested and Stark (1991) later reiterated, large numbers of the new immigrants chose to migrate in order to achieve something in particular, perhaps by earning a specific amount of income, and planned to return to their homelands. These earnings would be applied toward the achievement of a target milestone that would be extraordinarily difficult to achieve in the absence of migration, such as building a new house, adding rooms to an existing house, or earning enough to fully educate one's children in societies where schooling even for young children requires tuition payments. Piore (1979) further suggested that "failed" migrants are those who stay in destination countries long after they intended to return. Even if they succeed in gaining earnings, they do not (or are unable to) return to their homelands as they expected to when they first moved. Often, target earnings and expected lifestyle improvements are never achieved, and migrants find themselves living lives quite different from what they thought they would have (Mahler, 1995; Menjivar, 2000). Policymakers and researchers have also suffered failed expectations. They had hoped that when they admitted laborers they were solving temporary labor shortages with only temporary workers, so they gave little thought to issues of migrant incorporation. To their surprise, and often disdain, they have faced a different reality. "To paraphrase a European aphorism, 'We imported labor, and we got people'" (DeWind and Kasinitz, 1997, p. 1096). The newcomers are not just workers who came to do a job, but people who have created new lives as they have stayed on and become variously interwoven into the fabric of their new societies.

In times past and now, immigration has been seen as a force potentially damaging to a nation's well-being (depending on the kind of migrant stock available), even if that nation is one with a booming economy that could put foreign labor to good use.<sup>7</sup> The "immigrant threat" has occupied thinkers from the nineteenth century until today, as they have worked to assess the value of each new or potential migrant group and have recommended policies to control immigration. Although the explicit racial bias in the public and

political discourse lessened during the 1960s, when several nations of “non-white” persons secured their sovereignty independent of the colonial powers that had previously controlled them (Bonilla-Silva, 2000; Winant, 2002), many theorists have argued that this “threat” was based primarily on racial difference (Waters, 1990; Almaguer, 1994; Salyer, 1995; López, 1996; Paul 1997; Clifford, 1997). As discussed earlier, the search was on to figure out the mechanisms that caused migration and how we can best understand international movements in order to control them, but national governments found their controls largely ineffective at sufficiently regulating migration. Then questions about the ability of the new immigrant group to succeed economically became joined to questions about the quality of the culture that arrivals would import along with their nonwhite bodies. Studies of assimilation were launched to explain varying socioeconomic success among groups—explanations that avoided racial labels and focused on culture and ethnicity instead. These thinkers suggested that immigrant success is marked by cultural and economical assimilation (rather than by the immigrants’ achievement of economic targets).

A few researchers intent on explaining differential immigration success have focused specifically on the structural reasons for segregated economic, social, and geographic outcomes among persons of foreign birth status. Some have found that Western economies are structured to require consistent inflows of immigrant labor to continually replenish bodies to hold up job ladders by filling the spaces on the bottom rungs (Piore, 1979; Sassen, 1988). Markets are sorted into primary and secondary sectors. Native-born workers are concentrated in the primary labor market, identifiable by the higher skill and capital-intensive nature of their jobs, which are known to be more stable. The secondary market, where immigrants are concentrated, has lower paid, labor-intensive, unstable, lower- or de-skilled jobs that are far less attractive; workers are subject to greater instability (firings, layoffs, downsizing, and pay cuts) and dangers, and their employers invest far less in their training (Massey et al., 1998). Race similarly sorts workers: the primary labor market is largely reserved for whites while those considered nonwhite are forced into degraded employment; such “occupational apartheid” is argued to so degrade the secondary market workers that their ethnic-racial group is similarly anointed with low racial status (Steinberg, 1991; Brodtkin, 1998). Researchers who study market structures in these ways argue that advanced economies sort job seekers of different nationalities into a bifurcated or dual labor market (Bonacich,