Stony Brook University

An Exploratory Study of Undocumented Immigrants in a Suburban Northeast Community

A Dissertation Presented

By

Edward Hernandez

to

The Graduate School

in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements

for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

Social Welfare

Stony Brook University

May 2009

Stony Brook University

The Graduate School

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Abstract of the Dissertation
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Doctor of Philosophy
in
Social Welfare
Stony Brook University
2009

The United States has been unsuccessful in regulating unauthorized immigration. The uneven enforcement of a variety of Federal laws has left local communities to deal with an influx of new undocumented immigrants. A large, steady flow of undocumented immigrants have entered the United States since the 1990s. Many new immigrants settled in non-traditional immigrant destinations creating conflict within those communities. Failed immigration policies may have diverted immigration flows to these new destinations. The research questions posed in this study attempt to understand how immigrants select communities and their experiences in those communities. Forty-five comprehensive interviews were conducted with mostly Mexican, undocumented immigrants in Farmingville, New York, a non-traditional immigration destination. Farmingville has been in the national spotlight as a focus of the immigration debate. The Mexicans have migrated either due to poor economic conditions or to improve their lives. Some women migrate to reunite with their families or check on their husbands in the United States. Migrants appear to have either familial or social connections to the destination communities. Illegally entering the United States is often difficult and dangerous. Men traditionally find work at open- air hiring sites known as "corners." Workers seek steady work and are generally well treated, although many have experienced non-payment or poor treatment by employers. Women work in "off-the-books" employment or use fake employment documents. Living conditions have improved over time, but can still be substandard. The migrants are basically ignored by existing community members, but most report bad experiences. The immigrants have been beaten, robbed, or harassed by neighborhood groups comprised mostly of white teenagers, and do not fully trust the police. The threat of immigration authorities is always present, but viewed as a fact of life. Issues of the journey, work experience, life in the community and separation from family have caused psychological problems for some of the migrants. Migrants approve of comprehensive immigration reform permitting a return to Mexico to visit and, work and drive legally. The immigrant's goal is to work in the community without interference or harassment. Almost all of the immigrants would like to return to Mexico permanently.

Table of Contents

Notes on Terminology

The terms “Latino” and “Hispanic” are used interchangeably throughout the study are the terms “migrant” and “immigrant.”

Acknowledgements

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The Horace Hagedorn Foundation, Darren Sandow, Executive Director

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Chapter One: The National and Local Context

Various attempts have been made to regulate the flow of immigrants into the United States, since the first comprehensive immigrant legislation, the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. Previous attempts at legislation traditionally dealt with quotas and legal immigration without addressing the growing numbers of people overstaying their visas or crossing the borders unchecked or unmonitored. These undocumented individuals settled in gateway communities and disappeared into the fabric of American Society.

It was not until 1986 that the first real attempt to address this population was initiated. The conflict between the new laws, a rich immigration history, and tradition has resulted in limited immigration law enforcement and unclear policy directives from the Federal government charged with regulating immigration. The United States government has turned a "blind eye" to the reality of the shifting demographics of immigrant populations to new non-traditional destination and the impact of the new immigrants on these destinations. Without a consistent national policy, local communities have been forced to develop their own solutions to the influx of new undocumented individuals. Local communities are left to struggle with the issues surrounding the new immigrant populations without the benefit of clear guidance or policy from those charged with making and enforcing the laws.

There is no place more representative of this struggle than Farmingville, New York. Equally important as the shift in the immigration demographics, and its effects

on these new destinations, is the personal impact that it has made on those involved. This study will tell the story of the people that migrated to Farmingville seeking a better life for themselves and their families; their experiences in coming to Farmingville, working and living in the community; and their hopes for the future. Owing to the rallying of various forces, on all sides of the immigration issue within the community, Farmingville has been pushed into the national spotlight, and, at one point in the early 2000s, was the media epicenter of the national immigration debate. The national spotlight has largely shifted to other areas, but the unresolved immigration issues continue to impact the community.

An Overview of Immigration Policy

The passage of the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (IRCA) was the first comprehensive legislative attempt to control illegal immigration (Fix and Passel, 1994). IRCA changed the strategy to deter illegal immigration from the interception of people at the border or job-site apprehension to an employer based sanction strategy, making the hiring of immigrants who are here without proper work-authorizing documents a civil, and possibly, a criminal violation. In addition to the employer sanctions, public benefits were denied to undocumented immigrants. IRCA tracked the immigration status of applicants for welfare. IRCA was not totally negative; at the same time that enforcement activities were increased and employer sanctions were instituted, legal status was extended to unauthorized immigrants who could prove that they had been in the country continuously since 1982. Almost three million previously unauthorized residents were legalized as a result of IRCA. While

the amnesty component of IRCA was successful, the employer sanction component was difficult to enforce owing to the preponderance of fraudulent documents and limited enforcement resources.

The next action was the dual passage of the 1996 Illegal Immigration and Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act (IIRIRA) and Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act (PRWORA). The IIRIRA allowed for the deportation of undocumented immigrants (National Immigration Forum and DeCastro, 2004) under a variety of crimes listed as "aggravated felonies," at the same time stripping the courts of the authority to review the decisions. It also blocked the ability of immigrants to adjust their legal status, and it toughened border enforcement. PRWORA made citizenship a requirement for eligibility for public benefits such as Food stamps, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), and temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF). As a result, the enforcement burden of these laws to provide (or deny) basic public assistance benefits fell on the states where the immigrants located. Not only did the responsibility of the benefits shift, but the costs to provide services to unauthorized immigrants shifted to the states as well.

The pattern toward tighter, more restrictive immigration policies started to reverse itself as the reality of the need for an immigrant labor force and the difficulties of both border and worksite enforcement became clear. A deal on reconciling immigration policy, was imminent until the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001. Concerns over the integrity of the United States borders and the tracking of unauthorized individuals within the borders put a halt to comprehensive immigration reform. The impact of the Patriot Act and subsequent legislation after September 11th

had more of a direct impact on Middle Eastern and South Asian populations. However, all immigrant groups were adversely affected (National Hispanic Leadership Council, 2004).

The Patriot Act and subsequent legislation increased border security and the tightening of access to such documents as driver's licenses, had a chilling effect on undocumented populations in the United States. Tighter borders reduced the traditional return migration to Mexico during the non-peak working season out of fear of the inability to re-enter the United States. "Non-match" letters were sent to employers, and when the names associated with particular social security numbers did not match the employee name many undocumented workers in traditional, steady employment were forced out of work. Driver's licenses in most states were no longer issued to undocumented individuals forcing them to either give up driving or drive illegally. This denial also prevented undocumented immigrants from obtaining key documentation that would provide access to actions such as opening bank accounts.

Recent attempts at immigration reform at both ends of the spectrum, with stricter border and internal enforcement or earned legalization for undocumented immigrants residing in the United States, have failed. With Congress hopelessly deadlocked in 2009 about the development of a comprehensive solution to the millions of unauthorized immigrants in the United States, communities continue to struggle with their local presence.

The failure of Congress to take legislative action did not end Federal attempts to address immigration. The Office of Homeland Security took a leadership role with selective enforcement of current immigration laws. These actions began with the

"Secure Border Initiative" in November, 2005. The Initiative led to stepped-up enforcement action, which included more border control officers, increased detention of unauthorized immigrants, border protection, and increased interior enforcement through raids by immigration authorities. The resultant actions of the Initiative made it more difficult for unauthorized immigrants to seek and maintain employment because of increased documentation requirements prior to an employer making a hire. It also put an end to "catch and release" border enforcement policies, which resulted in the detention and processing of individuals apprehended while crossing the border rather than simply apprehending the immigrants, taking information, and redirecting them back to Mexico (Ewing, 2008).

As a result the Homeland Security and other Executive Branch efforts, border crossing became more difficult owing to penalties that could be imposed on those apprehended more than once, or more dangerous, by forcing border crossers to take more difficult and deadly routes through the desert or mountains into the United States. The ramped-up enforcement has been enforced sporadically and has achieved mixed results. Very public employment raids have achieved a media bonanza and have put fear into the immigrant community. The reality behind the raids demonstrates that, even with a ten-fold increase in the arrest of undocumented immigrants in their workplace, from around 500 in 2002 to around 5,000 in 2007, this is still a tiny percentage of the estimated 7-8 million undocumented workers in the workforce. Despite an 84% increase in the number of undocumented immigrants removed from the United States, to slightly over 300,000 between 2002 to 2007, it is

still estimated that well over 400,000 unauthorized immigrants entered the United States in 2007 alone (Pew Hispanic Center, 2007).

The lack of comprehensive Federal immigration legislative action has led states to attempt to fill the perceived void in addressing issues around unauthorized immigrants. In 2005, when Federal immigration reform efforts failed and the Secure Border Initiative began, 300 immigration-related bills were introduced by state legislatures (National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL), 2008a). In 2006, the activity doubled with 570 bills introduced and 84 laws enacted. In 2007, the activity tripled from the prior year to 1,562 bills introduced and 240 laws enacted. NCSL further reports 2008 activity was similar to 2007 with 1,305 bills and resolutions introduced in the January to November 30 period and 205 laws enacted (NCSL, 2008b). The top three areas of legislative activity were (1) identification/driver's licenses with 203 bills introduced and 30 laws enacted, (2) employment with 198 bills introduced and 18 laws enacted, and (3) law enforcement with 214 bills introduced and 10 laws enacted.

While all of the bills that were introduced were not negative, clear attempts were made to limit the ability of authorized immigrants to live and work in various communities. It should be noted that less than 20% of the bills and resolutions introduced were ever enacted. This low level of successful legislative action is representative of the ongoing debate on immigration at the local level and of the divided opinion within local communities. The division of opinion within communities and between states was profound. The Progressive States Network (Newman et al, 2008) examined the nature and impact of state level immigration laws

passed in the 2008 state legislative sessions. State actions were categorized as inactive, integrative, somewhat integrative, mixed, somewhat punitive, and punitive. The states with the largest undocumented immigrant populations enacted no significant anti-immigrant legislation in the last two legislative sessions. The report also noted that only 11% of the undocumented population that is currently in the United States lives in states that passed what the authors considered punitive legislation. The discussion regarding who has the responsibility for immigration enforcement continues. Does it fall on the Federal government or do states have a role in regulating undocumented immigrants?

Questions arise as to whether the preponderance of local legislation proposals, an increase in enforcement activities, and the attempts to close the border, have an impact on the Latino population in the United States. The Pew Hispanic Center (2007) surveyed Latinos on the impact of the heated-up immigration debate through a randomly selected, nationally representative sample of 2003 Hispanic adults (with a margin of error of 2.7%). When asked if the immigration debate made their life more difficult, 72% of foreign-born Latinos said yes compared to 53% of native-born Latinos. Regarding jobs, 19% of the foreign-born, Spanish-dominant Latinos and 13% of the English dominant/bilingual foreign-born Latinos said it would be more trouble getting or keeping a job in contrast to the 5% of the native-born Latinos who responded. While a surprising 32% of native-born Latinos (citizens by birth) worried about deportation "a lot/some," this was still a much lower percentage than foreign-born, English-dominant/bilingual (56%) or foreign-born Spanish dominant Latinos (74%). Foreign-born Latinos perceived discrimination as a major problem more often

with schools (73%) and in the workplace (65%) than the native-born (51% and 46%, respectively). The 2002 National Survey of Latinos asked about workplace discrimination without breaking down the sub-categories, where 41% of the Latinos surveyed felt that it was a major problem at that time, the percentage increased to 58% in the 2007 survey. The 2007 survey supported what the subtitle of the report implied "As the Illegal Immigration Issue Heats Up, Hispanics Feel a Chill."

The Immigrant Experience 1990-2008

Examining how the government addresses immigration issues from a public policy perspective is only part of understanding the entire immigration picture. Placing the government's policy action (or inaction) in the context of the trends in immigration is an equally important part of understanding the dynamics involved. More restrictive policies, with their limited and uneven enforcement, and increased border control efforts, have done nothing to reduce the flow of unauthorized newcomers to the United States.

The best analysis of immigration trends between 1990 and 2000, using data collected by the United States Census, has been conducted by the Urban Institute (2002). In addition, Passel, Capps & Fix (2004) used the March 2002 U.S. Census Current Population Survey to analyze the population of undocumented immigrants in the United States. The following statistics are taken from the data presented in these two studies.

Between 1990 and 2000, according to the census, 13 million immigrants entered the United States. Six states account for 68% of the foreign-born population:

California (28%), New York (12%) Texas (9%), Florida (9%), New Jersey (5%), Illinois (5%). The overall percentage is down from 1990 when 75 percent of the foreign-born population resided in these states. Passel et al (2004) show a slightly different distribution when examining only the undocumented population: a total of 65% lived in the six traditional destination states: California (27%), Texas (13%), New York (8%), Florida (7%), Illinois (6%), New Jersey (4%). The national average growth rate of the foreign-born population between 1990 and 2000, according to the census, was 57%. Of the six states with the highest foreign born populations, only Texas (91%) exceeded the average growth between the two censuses. The overall number of immigrants continued to increase during this period. The below average growth rate in the states with the largest foreign born populations, along with a steadily growing foreign born population, point toward the emergence of new destination states.

Census 2000 (Passel, Capps & Fix 2004) has shown that foreign-born populations more than doubled in 19 states during the 1990's. New growth states saw an average growth rate of 145%, more than double the national average. New growth states and the corresponding percentage increase for foreign-born population include the following: North Carolina (274%), Georgia (233%), Nevada (202%), Arkansas (196%), Utah (171%), Tennessee (169%), Nebraska (165%), Colorado (160%), Arizona (136%), and Kentucky (135%). Passel et al (2004) have estimated that undocumented individuals make up more than 40 percent of the foreign-born population in 10 states. They also estimate that the rapid growth of unauthorized immigrants in Arizona, Georgia, and North Carolina may already have moved these

states past New Jersey on the list of states with the largest percentages of undocumented populations.

Census 2000 reports that the United States has 31 million immigrants or 11% of the total population. This 11% is still below the highest recorded percentage of immigrants, which was 15% in the 1900 Census. A mid-decade estimate has this number of immigrants increasing to 35.7 million or 12% of the total population (Van Hook, Bean, and Passel, 2005). It also is estimated that 10.3 million are undocumented, representing 29 percent of the foreign born population. A later estimate by Passel (2006) places the unauthorized population at 11.1, up from the 8.4 million reported in Census 2000. The net increase in undocumented immigrants averaged 500,000 per year in the 1990s and 450,000 per year between 2000 and 2005. The peak migration years were between 1999 and 2000, with an overall decline in the post September 11th period, 2002-2004 (Passel and Suro, 2005). A later analysis (Pew Hispanic, 2007) estimated that the high migration rate continued until mid-2006. The increase was estimated to be 495,000 people per year in 2005 and 2006 or an 8% increase in unauthorized migration. Newer estimates indicate a decline in the unauthorized immigrant population from a peak of 12.4 million in 2007 to an estimate of 11.9 million by the end of the first quarter of 2008 (Passel and Cohn, 2008). Passel (2006) reported that 66% of the unauthorized population has been in the United States 10 years or less, with 44%, or 4.4 million people being here 5 years or less. Passel and Cohn (2008), in later research, support the assertion that most unauthorized immigrants are more recent arrivals. They estimate that 44% of unauthorized immigrants in the United States, or 5.3 million, arrived since 2000. In breaking down

the origin of unauthorized immigrants, Mexicans make up 57%, or 6 million people, and 2.5 million people, or 24%, are from other Latin American Countries. Asians comprise about 9%. Europeans and Canadians comprise about 6% and 4% are from the rest of the world. In addition to the population data, unauthorized immigrants have a direct impact on the legal or citizen population. It is estimated that 6.6 million families have either the head of the household or their spouse living in the United States without authorization. It was further estimated that 64% of the children living in unauthorized families, or 3.1 million children, are U.S. citizens by birth.

Women are a significant part of the undocumented immigration experience. Estimates show that women, nationally, comprise 42% of the unauthorized adult population, which includes non-Hispanics (Passel, 2006). Based on observations and data (collected for this and other projects undertaken within Farmingville, that did not select subjects based on scientific sampling methods), the percentage of female unauthorized immigrants appears to much less in the Farmingville area. The Pew Hispanic Center (Gonzales, 2008) used the 2007 Current Population Survey to examine Hispanic women in the United States. Forty-eight percent of all Hispanic women were either born in the United States or to U.S. citizens abroad. Of the remaining 52%, 57% of immigrant Hispanic adult women have arrived in the U.S. since 1990 with 60% of these women being born in Mexico. The analysis did distinguish as to whether the foreign-born population was legal or unauthorized. Foreign-born Hispanic immigrant women are more likely to be married (63%) than native-born Hispanic women (44%) or non-Hispanic women (54%). Foreign-born Hispanic women tend to be in the labor force less (54%) than native-born Hispanic

women (64%) or non-Hispanic women (61%). Passel (2006) using the 2005 Current Population Survey, found similar results with 54% of unauthorized women (not only Hispanics) in the labor force versus 63% of legal women immigrants, and 72% of native women. A higher percentage of foreign-born Hispanic women have less than a high school education (49%) than their native-born (22%), or non-Hispanic (10%) counterparts. Weekly full-time earnings are reported as a $615 average for non-Hispanic women, $540 for native-born Hispanic women, and $400 for foreign-born Hispanic women. These factors could contribute to the differences in the rates of poverty among non-Hispanic women (11%), native-born Hispanic women (18%), and foreign-born Hispanic women (22%).

The large number of recent, unauthorized, immigrants has an impact on the new immigrants and on their destination communities. The Urban Institute (2004) cites several public policy considerations that are necessary to respond to the new populations. Research shows that the recent immigrants have fewer marketable skills, lower incomes, and speak less English. They are likely to need benefits and services such as health insurance, interpretation, and English courses. The new rapid growth states will lack the service infrastructure necessary to meet the needs of the new immigrants with few organizations, bilingual teachers, and support services available. Welfare reform has left much of this population ineligible for federally funded programs, while many of the states further restrict access to the state-funded safety net programs, leaving this population with unmet needs and supports.

An analysis of undocumented population by Passel (2006) places 7.2 million individuals in the workforce or 4.9 percent of the total. The labor force participation

rate of undocumented men is 94 percent, exceeding both legal immigrants (86%) and US citizens (83%). This is largely due to the younger age of this group and the lower percentage that are disabled, retired, or in school. By contrast, undocumented women are less likely to be in the labor force, only 54%, which is lower than legal immigrant women (63%) or women who are US citizens (72%). Passel et al (2004), in earlier analyses, attribute these differences to a higher proportion of undocumented women of childbearing age who are more likely to have children and stay at home.

Most unauthorized Mexican immigrants migrate to the United States, specifically, to work. Undocumented immigrants, in general, tend to dominate the low wage and low skilled workforce. The Mexican migrants are no different. The influx of new low wage, low skilled workers in middle class communities, such as Farmingville, can add to the concerns of the existing residents and conflicts within the communities.

Passel (2006) analyzed the workforce statistics of unauthorized immigrants in the United States. Passel (2006) reported that unauthorized immigrants are 4.9% of the total workforce in the United States. However, unauthorized immigrants comprise 9 percent of the total lower wage workforce and 23% of the total lower skilled workforce. In examining the various types of employment obtained by unauthorized immigrants, there are a disproportionate number of unauthorized workers represented in service occupations (31%) as opposed to native workers (16%), construction (20% versus 7%), and leisure/hospitality (17% versus 8%).

Capps et al (2007) support the assertion that immigrants dominate the low wage workforce through the analysis of the numerical gains and losses of various categories

of workers. The total number of low-wage workers declined by 1.2 million from 2000 to 2005. Despite the overall loss in the number of low wage workers, the immigrant gains are hidden in the overall numbers. Most of the total loss in the low wage workforce was by native women, 1.8 million, who moved to higher paying jobs or totally left the workforce, while the number of native men increased by 50,000. At the same time, the number of immigrants in the low wage workforce increased by 620,000, of that number 460,000 were unauthorized (400,000 men and 60,000 women). In terms of changes in the overall working population between 2000 and 2005 (ages between 18 and 64), the native-born working population increased 4%, the legal immigrants working population increased 10%, and unauthorized working population 30%. These data point to an increasing labor force participation by immigrants and unauthorized workers that are either adding to the total workforce or offsetting the losses of native workers in the low wage and working class workforce.

Many of the Mexican immigrants send money from their earnings in the United States back to their families. The money that is sent home has been referred to as "remittances." The remittances are, likely, an indication of the economic well-being of a particular immigrant group in the United States. Remittances to Mexico increased from $13.4 billion in 2003 to $26 billion in 2006 (Pew Hispanic Center, 2007). According to Pew Hispanic's analysis of the 2007 Current Population Survey, remittances increased an average of 26.5% annually. Beginning in mid-2006, the percentage increase in amount of remittances declined to 6.5% and declined further to 3.4% in the first quarter of 2007. These trends may reflect declining immigration, a

reduction of employment due to a poorer economy, increased workplace enforcement, or a combination of these factors.

The Hispanic Immigration - Invasion or Assimilation

The largest of the immigrant groups in the United States are the collection of nationalities that comprise the "Hispanic" category. The Hispanic designation adopted in the 1970s refers to anyone residing in the United States of Spanish-speaking origin. While there is an extensive debate between the terms Hispanic and Latino (and the differences they may represent), for the purposes of this study, the two terms may be used interchangeably. Hispanics trace their origins to numerous countries, mostly in Central and South America, whose common thread is the Spanish language. The cultures and traditions of each country are largely heterogeneous, although there are some commonalities across the Hispanic spectrum. As a result of the Census designation, despite the differences, Hispanics are placed into one large general category.

The rapid influx of Hispanics into the United States, and the resulting large increase in population related to other groups, has led the anti-immigration movement to term this growth an "invasion." Questions arise as to whether the Hispanic immigration of today is really very different from any of the previous ethnic migrations regarding Hispanic assimilation into the mosaic called America or, as a group, do they remain isolated.

The Pew Hispanic Center has been a leader in surveying and understanding the Hispanic experience in America. The Pew Hispanic Center (2004), in a nationally

representative sample of 2,288 Latino respondents, including 1166 registered voters, surveyed Latinos regarding political and civic participation which included the shifting characteristics of Latinos. Most of the respondents felt that it was very or somewhat important to change in order to blend into the United States (73%). While changing to blend in is important, at the same time, 93% of those surveyed felt it was very or somewhat important for Latinos to maintain their distinct cultures. Latinos felt that they were not the only group for whom it was important to change in order to blend into the United States; a similar percentage, 70 %, also felt that it was very or somewhat important for all racial or ethnic groups to change in order to blend into the United States. Latinos also recognized that maintaining a group's distinct culture was very or somewhat important for all racial and ethnic groups (83 %).

A key perceived indicator of assimilation is the acquisition of the English language by immigrants. Regardless of the long-term plans of immigrants, the use of English is critical to acceptance by local communities. The 2004 survey found that an overwhelming majority (88%) of the respondents felt that it was very or somewhat important for future generations of Latinos to speak English. This issue was also examined in some detail in the 2002 Survey of Latinos by the Pew Hispanic Center (2002) with similar results. The 2002 survey reported that 89 percent of Latinos felt it was necessary to learn English to succeed in the United States as compared to 86 percent of whites and 86 percent of African-Americans. Foreign-born Latinos felt stronger than native-born Latinos 91 versus 86 percent with regard to learning English. Similar trends on the necessity to learn English were found for more

Spanish dominant Latinos (92%) when compared to Bilingual Latinos (88%) and English dominant Latinos (86%).

In examining the assimilation issue further, the 2004 survey asked what an immigrant must do to become part of American society. Seventy-nine percent responded "believe in the Constitution," 65% "vote in the United States," 55% "speak English," and 54% "become United States citizens." The data from the two surveys were supported by Hakimzadeh et al (2007) who analyzed a compilation of data from 6 Pew Hispanic surveys. The first generation Hispanics that spoke English "very well" was 23% and "pretty/very well" was 35%. English proficiency rose in the second generation to 88% speaking "very well" and 91% speaking English "pretty/very well," and even higher in the third generation to 94% "very well" and 97% "very/pretty well".

The need to speak English in public settings and employment is obvious. The language spoken at home is a more telling statistic on language assimilation. Hakimzadeh et al reported that only 7% of first generation Hispanic immigrants spoke mainly or only English at home. This rose to 48% in the second generation and 75% in third generation homes. At the same time, the retention of the Spanish language decreased over the generations. By the third generation in the United States, 29% of the respondents spoke Spanish "very well" and 52% spoke Spanish either "pretty" or "very well." Alba (2004), using Census 2000 data, reported similar findings. By the second generation, 92% spoke English "well" or "very well" and by the third generation 72% spoke only English in the home. Alba also noted that bilingualism was more prevalent in border communities.

Self-described affiliation is a telling statistic that will provide insight into assimilation. Foreign-born Latinos used their country of origin to describe themselves 95% of the time compared to 74% of native-born. While only 32% of foreign-born Latinos used the term "American" to describe themselves, 90% of the native-born used the term. In comparing the generations, this distinction was more apparent with 32% of the first generation Latinos using the term "American," jumping dramatically to 85% of second generation, and 97% of third generation Latinos. Similarly, the first and only term used to describe themselves by first generation Latinos was that 68% identified with their country of origin, 24% identified as Latino or Hispanic, and 6% described themselves as American. This shifted dramatically in the second generation to 38% with their own country, 24% Latino or Hispanic, and 35% American. Further shifts were seen in the third generation with 21% with the country of origin, 20% Latino or Hispanic, and 57% American. Over the generations, Latinos increasingly identified themselves as Americans. Considering that 66% of Latino immigrants have been in this country less than 10 years, the change over the generations has not be realized when compared to other immigrant groups where primary migration occured decades earlier.

Language and cultural assimilation is one aspect of the immigration debate. The attachment of immigrants to their native country and plans to either return home or stay in the United States is another often cited issue for undocumented immigrants. Waldinger (2007), using data from the 2006 National Survey of Latinos (n=2000) examined three factors: remittances, weekly phone calls, and travel to their native country to determine a level of attachment of foreign-born Latinos to their native

countries. In examining weekly phone calls to their country of origin, Latino non-citizens phone home at least once a week which was at a higher rate than citizens, 46% versus 31% and non-citizens are slightly more likely to send remittances, 54% versus 46%. Ease of travel for citizens make it more likely that citizens have returned to their native country in the last two years (38%) than non-citizens (25%). An examination of further issues of assimilation and identification show that non-citizens are more likely to identify themselves with their country of birth (67%) than citizens (54%) and consider their country of birth as their "real homeland," 59% versus 33%. The opposite was true when asked about their plans to stay in the United States, 81% of Latino citizens planned to stay in the U.S., while 69% of non-citizen Latinos had the same plans. Without distinguishing between citizens and non-citizens, Waldinger reported that foreign-born Latinos who considered their native country their "real homeland" were more likely to engage in transnational activities (having active segments of their lives in two countries simultaneously). The participation in transnational activities decreased, and the plans to stay in the U.S. increased as a function of the time foreign-born Latinos spend in the United States.

To shed further light on the connection of Mexican migrants to the United States, Suro (2005) used the Survey of Mexican Migrants completed by 4,836 individuals in a non-scientific sample to examine several issues, including intention to stay in the United States. Only 17% expressed a desire to remain in the United States for their entire lives, 42% wanted to remain "as long as they can," and 27% had plans to remain less than 5 years. The percentages varied by the city where the surveys were completed, the age of the respondent, and the length of time the respondent had been

in the United States. The desire of most of the respondents was to eventually return to Mexico which contradicted the findings by Waldinger.

As a group, Hispanics have demonstrated a need and desire to become part of America. Over time, they have learned the language and identified with America and American values. The patterns of assimilation are probably not too different from the generations of immigrants before them. Why is the rapid influx of Hispanics into the United States referred to as an "invasion"? The following case study will shed some light on the issue and how new destination communities react to an influx of new, largely, undocumented immigrants.

Farmingville – A Case Study

Nowhere has the clash of shifting demographics and inefficient and broken immigration policies been more evident than in Farmingville, New York -- at one point in the early 2000s considered the epicenter of the national immigration debate (Public Broadcasting System, June 22, 2004; Jones, 2001). Farmingville has received national attention on numerous occasions (Public Broadcasting System, June 22, 2004). It also has been the subject of an award winning documentary that has been on the film festival circuit and was aired on national public television (Public Broadcasting System, June 22, 2004).

Farmingville is a suburban hamlet about 50 miles east of New York City, on Long Island. According to the 2000 Census, Farmingville has about 16,500 people, over 90 per cent white. With the recent influx of between 1000 to 2000 new Hispanic day laborers, the demographics noticeably shifted.

In May, 1998 the first of several community meetings was held on the issue of men standing on street corners seeking work. Over 300 people attended. Most of the audience was against the presence of hundreds of Latino day laborers seeking employment on the corners in Farmingville. The government officials present were short on answers. Several areas were to be explored to address the perceived problem including existing laws, Immigration and Naturalization Services (INS, now ICE) intervention, and improved local policing.

In October, 1998 the first meeting of what was to become the Sachem (named after the school district) Quality of Life Organization took place and was attended by about 125 people. In addition to the litany of complaints about the day laborers, a video of an attack on anti-immigration demonstrators in Los Angeles years earlier was shown. The implication was intended to show that this could happen in Farmingville. As the group organized, a strategy seemed to emerge to get attention and push their issue. The Sachem group attempt to "take over" the local civic association which is a legitimate government recognized entity in the community. The Sachem group would make its presence known at the meetings of several community groups, since general attendance was usually small. Twenty-five to thirty people had the power to reshape the agenda of several of these community organizations.

In January, 1999, the Suffolk County Executive convened a Task Force to look at the day laborer issue in Farmingville. The County police stated for the record, and continue to maintain, that the crime rate was not going up in Farmingville as a result of the influx of largely undocumented immigrants. The school district showed no

significant increase in enrollment owing to the influx of Latinos into the community. A hiring site in another Long Island town, with government support, was discussed. Issues such as creating laws against soliciting and loitering, as well as immigration sweeps were brought to the table for discussion.

In February, 1999, Sachem Quality of Life (SQL), as it became known, emerged. At an organizing meeting in a local home, outside organizers, from a national organization whose goal was to restrict immigration (restrictionist), painted a scenario of how undocumented immigrants would impact the community. First the men will arrive, then the women, then the children, people on welfare will increase, schools will become overcrowded, then ethnic gangs will emerge, and, finally, crime will greatly increase. An outside organizer was stationed, by the Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR), on Long Island to assist SQL in opposing the day laborers. The attendees were provided strategies to bring forward issues such as probable cause for street stops and anti-loitering laws.

The County Executive Task Force meetings continued. The INS attended and stated that there were no "resources, manpower, or time" to come out to investigate. The County Task Force eventually faded away producing no results. At the same time, three bills were introduced by the Suffolk County Legislature and defeated. The first piece of legislation was designed to stop street hiring by posting no soliciting signs on the main roads in Farmingville; next, a proposed no soliciting law was introduced; and finally, a resolution to sue the INS for not enforcing immigration law was introduced.

Somewhere in the following months, a dissident group of SQL members failed to oust the SQL president in an election and formed a splinter group Citizens for a Better Brookhaven (CBB). A two-pronged approach emerged. CBB worked closely with a more mainstream national group and came forward with calmer, more rational rhetoric, and a more vocal, "in-your-face" SQL moved forward with the backing and advice of a more fringe group. SQL initiated a mailbox leafleting campaign and weekly street corner demonstrations by one of the hiring sites. The rhetoric heated-up at an even more furious pace. In September, 2000, two white males took two Latino day laborers to an abandoned warehouse under the pretense of providing work and attempted to murder them. Both attackers had neo-Nazi tattoos on their bodies and the entire discussion is changed forever.

To avoid the disruptive tactics of anti-day laborer forces, a group of people begin to meet in April, 2000 to find alternate positive solutions to the Farmingville situation. A Consortium of 11 human service agencies, advocacy organizations, and foundations funded a "Listening Project" (Claffey, 1999) that conducted 225 structured interviews with all parties involved in the situation and was used subsequently as a reference point. The Listening Project documents that the majority of the community is concerned with the visible numbers of men on the street corners and that two-thirds of those interviewed are receptive to reasonable solutions. An initial group of about 15 people organized a platform that aimed to find reasonable, peaceful alternatives. However, the public outrage over the beatings lead to the organization of a highly visible press conference attended by virtually every local and New York City media outlet, and received national attention. Brookhaven Citizens

for Peaceful Solutions (BCPS) was born and provided a "Call for Peace" (a front page headline in Newsday, the primary daily newspaper, September 22, 2000) which offers media and political cover for those politicians who have sought realistic solutions and established a mechanism for those willing to take positive action. The momentum began to swing away from the anti-immigrant groups. A carefully crafted message by BCPS wins over the majority of the media.

In the weeks following the beatings, SQL invited the leader of a radical anti-immigrant group for a visit in October, 2000. Approximately 200 people attended the event which received moderate press attention. Two days later, over 2500 individuals showed up for a candlelight vigil calling for peace. A plan for a "Community Opportunity Center" was developed, with a shape-up component for the workers (so that they may gather safely away from the on-street hiring) and a general social services component for the entire community. The initial vote, in support of the center, received a veto proof two-thirds majority despite very vocal opposition. In the face of national attention, the resolution approving the funding was vetoed by the County Executive and an override battle takes place. Several legislators, under intense political pressure, switch their votes. The funding resolution veto fails to get overridden and gives new life to the anti-immigrant forces. A true stalemate emerges with neither side having the ability to push forward any solution.

In an effort to regroup, immigrant advocates held a strategy session on Long Island in July, 2001. This invitation-only session involved key local and national groups, such as the National Council of La Raza and the National Immigration Forum, as well as key local and national funding foundations. Two key strategies

were brought forth; first, to deliver a positive immigration message while marginalizing the opposition and, second, to organize a broad-based coalition of organizations to support immigrants in general. As a result, the Long Island Immigrant Alliance (LIIA) begins to organize with 20-25 participating organizations. Not to be outdone, SQL organizes it own "Day of Truth" conference in August, 2001. Key anti-immigrant leaders and other speakers representing different points of view of the movement are assembled and 100-125 people attend, far below the organizer's expectations. Despite the positive spin put on by SQL, it is another blow to their efforts by shifting away the momentum gained by the defeat of the center. Soon after, in a legislative hearing over a new piece of legislation aimed at contractors, a retiring County Legislator, on the public record, directs comments to the SQL president that, if it was his community, they would be out there "with baseball bats." The meeting to determine what sanctions are to be taken against the Legislator is scheduled for September 11, 2001. It is the tragedy of September 11th that sends all sides searching for a new direction and the canceling of an imminent guest worker/amnesty deal on the national level. However, September 11th doesn't end the conflict in Farmingville. In the months after September 11th, SQL splits into two factions with its newly elected leadership based in a different part of Suffolk County and the war of words continue after a brief respite.

In July, 2003, a house with a Mexican family residing in it had fireworks thrown into it, causing it to burn to the ground with the family barely escaping unhurt. Four Sachem high school students were convicted of arson and hate crimes in the incident. BCPS, in conjunction with the Workplace Project, an organization that assists day

laborers, opens a center in Farmingville to provide services to workers in August, 2002. The old SQL leadership attempts to build a new organization, as the situation in Farmingville remains basically unchanged. The core SQL leadership forms the Greater Farmingville Community Association as a new local group. In 2005, the new County government leadership begins taking action against contractors that are a potential source of employment for the day laborers. The target is unlicensed contractors. The new County Executive drags in the Town of Brookhaven (the Town where Farmingville is located), which has not acted on the issue in the past, to assist with the closing down of overcrowded housing. The sudden displacement of the workers brings a very public uproar from advocates and human service agencies. The public battle receives international attention. While Suffolk County government backs out of the house closings, the Town continues the actions against the landlords.

The house closings become a distraction in the 2005 Brookhaven Town elections from the public corruption scandals that have hit Town employees. The Republican nominee is challenged by a candidate who makes immigration the focal issue of the campaign. The primary challenge, however, is unsuccessful. The Republicans use the immigration issue heavily in the Town-wide campaign against a Democratic candidate who in the past has been supportive of immigrants and the development of a government supported hiring hall. The Democrats end up with a majority in Town government for the first time in 30 years. The anti-immigrant tactics lose to the corruption issue, although the Democrats must weigh in on continued housing code enforcement against overcrowded immigrant housing.

The focus of the local immigration debate shifts to the east end of Long Island and the struggle to attempt to develop a hiring site in one of the east-end communities. A new community-based group receives foundation funding to bring together the immigrant and non-immigrant members of the Farmingville community and ease tensions through a variety of events such as clean-ups and festivals. While the rhetoric periodically ramps up with the introduction of new legislation targeted at the day laborers and street corner hiring, it is more symbolic than effective. The situation in Farmingville then settles to an uneasy quiet. The workers are still a visible presence in the community, and the protesters have primarily shifted their attention to other areas.

Summary

The Farmingville community struggled with the presence of undocumented immigrants seeking work at informal street hiring sites. Well organized groups, in support of, and against the immigrants, received national media attention to gain support for their positions. Local legislative attempts to find solutions were unsuccessful. There were incidents of violence against immigrants that fueled the national attention.

Research has shown that immigrants will blend into communities over time. The immigrants, currently, dominate the low wage and low skilled workforce. The influx of immigrants, particularly from Mexico, has steadily increased since 1990. The flow has only recently slowed down due to a weaker economy in the United States. Attempts to stop the flow of undocumented immigrants by legislation, at both the

federal and state level, have failed. The inconsistent enforcement of current laws and a lack of reform of the immigration system have left communities to attempt to find their own solutions to immigration issues.

The methodology involved in studying the various aspects of the process of immigration, without documentation, into non-traditional United States destinations will be discussed next.

Chapter 2: Methodology

Research Questions/Problem Statement

Farmingville has served as a microcosm of the national immigration debate. The media attention received by Farmingville threw a national spotlight on unenforced immigration policies, shifting demographic trends, and conflicting values between community members. The public struggle of the Farmingville community to resolve these issues had a clear impact on the lives of the immigrants who came to Farmingville seeking a better life.

Given this background, two principal research questions guided this study:

- **Why do undocumented immigrants move to a community to find work that is at the center of the immigration debate and is rife with tension, struggle, and conflicts?**
- **How do they adapt to life within such a community?**

Funding for the Study

Outside funding was sought to assist in the research process. The target population for the study was Spanish-speaking. The investigator is not proficient in Spanish. As a result, outside interviewers that were fluent in Spanish were required to collect the data. Once the data was collected, outside assistance was necessary to translate and transcribe the interviews for analysis. The most efficient way to complete the project was to pay for the required services.

The Horace Hagedorn Foundation based in Port Washington, NY provides local grants to "creative community and public-private initiatives that work to diminish tensions between established residents and newly arrived immigrants." A proposal was submitted to the Foundation in order to provide funding for the project through Stony Brook University. As required by the Stony Brook University Institutional Review Board, the Dissertation Sponsor, Professor Harvey A. Farberman was listed as the Principal Investigator. The project was awarded a grant for $8700 to cover the costs of data collection and the production of a report to the Hagedorn Foundation on the research findings. Negotiations between the Hagedorn Foundation and Stony Brook University Research Foundation to allow the University to administer the funds failed. A local not-for-profit agency, Family Service League was enlisted as the fiscal agent to distribute the grant funds. The grant provided funding for the interviewers, the translation, and the transcription of the interviews. The subject fees provided to the respondents was paid out-of-pocket by the investigator.

Research Design: Sampling Strategy and Sample Size

A qualitative study was undertaken to gain a better understanding of the experiences of undocumented immigrants in the Farmingville area. This community has played a central role in the current immigration debate in the United States. The legal ambiguity of the status of the research subjects and their desire to remain undiscovered presented unique challenges to the research design and data collection. The true extent of the target population, given their legal status, cannot be defined. Therefore, it would not be possible to quantify the target study population and

develop a sampling strategy that would culminate in a random probability sample. The inability to obtain a random probability sample rendered quantitative approaches to the study of undocumented immigrants in Farmingville unfeasible. A viable alternative is to use a non-random, theoretical, sampling strategy in order to develop an empirically grounded conceptual model of the undocumented individual's choice of location and subsequent adaptation (Glazer and Strauss, 1967). This, a qualitative, exploratory study based on inductive logic using face-to-face, in-depth, open-ended interviews with 45 immigrants to explore the reasons that undocumented immigrants offer for locating in Farmingville was the methodology selected.

The interviews examined the influence of existing and historical conflicts on the decision to journey to Farmingville and their lives within the community. More specifically, the interviews explored the motivation to come to Farmingville, the journey to get there, the expectations in coming, the process of finding work and establishing a life within the community, the hopes for the future, and a self-evaluation of the overall experience.

Data Collection Methodology

The Interview Guide

Latinos comprise an overwhelming majority of the undocumented immigrants in the Farmingville geographic area (Associated Press, 2001; Claffey, 1999) and, as a group, have been identified closely with the issues that have brought this community into the national media spotlight. With these parameters, the study focused exclusively on undocumented Latino immigrants. The interviews were conducted in

Spanish in order to facilitate data collection with a population perceived to have limited English proficiency.

Respondents were asked probative questions to elicit detailed, concrete, and comparative responses. In order to ensure consistency in gathering data during the research process, an interview guide was developed. The process started by developing a series of questions to address the two principal research questions. The goal was to develop a guide that was comprehensive, yet could be administered in a reasonable period of time. Input in the development of the interview guide was sought from the dissertation sponsor, dissertation committee members, and from community activists involved with immigration issues. After several revisions, a 67 item interview guide was developed with additional potential follow-up inquiries included for a number of the questions (see Appendix A).

The guide was divided into six sections. The first section was entitled "Background Information" and was developed to elicit information on why the individuals came to the United States, their connection to Farmingville, the details of the journey, and information on the family that was left behind in their native country. The second section, "Getting Started and Working in the Community" gathered the following data: whether the individual was here for the first time and the reasons for returning to their native country if it was not their first trip, their early impression of the Farmingville community, how they went about securing employment, and their overall work experience. The third section, "Health and Medical Issues" was designed to collect data regarding health care and education, including information about treating work-related injuries and securing medical care. The fourth section,

"Life in the Community" was an effort to gather data about current living arrangements, experience with native community members, concerns for personal safety, fear of the immigration authorities, and how undocumented immigrants have organized and helped each other. The fifth section, "Assessment of the Present/Hope for the Future" sought ideas on solutions to the conflict in both the local community and the United States, and then tried to determine if the respondents want to remain in the United States, how their lives would be different if immigration laws changed, what they would do differently if they had to come here again, how they have integrated into the local community, and if they have gained English proficiency. The final section "Demographic Background" was designed to collect basic demographic information including sex, age, education, and family characteristics.

Based on the number of questions and the opportunity for follow up inquiries in a semi-structured interview format, the interviews were expected to take about and hour. Actual interviews varied greatly in time. Most interviews lasted between thirty and forty-five minutes.

After completing the interview guide and internal approval was granted for use by the dissertation sponsor and committee, the process to translate the interview guide into Spanish was undertaken. The interview guide was initially translated into Spanish by a Spanish-speaker with experience in developing written bilingual materials and then blindly back translated to English by a second Spanish-speaker. The two versions were reconciled by the study investigator and the person doing the original translation. What was thought to be a final Spanish version of the interview guide was prepared for use. The first interviewer for the project, who was partially

educated in a Spanish language school system in Puerto Rico, noticed several grammatical inconsistencies when the interview guide was reviewed in preparation for the interviews. As a result, the Spanish version was further reviewed by the interviewer and another native Spanish speaker who had over 20 years teaching Spanish at the high school level in a local public school system. A final Spanish language version of the interview guide emerged.

Prior to the start of the data collection, all research activities and interview guides were approved by project sponsor, dissertation committee, and the Stony Brook University's Office of Research Compliance (see Appendix B). The overall project and each of its components met all appropriate human subject research guidelines.

Recruitment of Respondents

Finding individuals to be interviewed proved to be a daunting task. Respondents were paid a $20 cash subject fee for their participation in the interview process. Despite a participation fee equivalent to two hours of work for many of the target population, interviewers needed assistance in securing the participation of the target population.

The initial strategy for recruiting subjects involved four primary sources. The use of these four sources to recruit respondents was designed to insulate and protect the interviewers from being in a situation that might require them to identify an individual's legal status. The first source was a local Roman Catholic Church in Farmingville that holds weekly Spanish masses and provides outreach services to the community and whose pastor and outreach coordinator have assisted with other

research projects. The church was asked to help identify respondents either through the weekly Spanish mass or parish outreach program, and also to provide space for interviews. For unspecified reasons, the church declined to participate either in enlisting subjects or providing interview space. However, a neighboring Roman Catholic Church that served a number of Farmingville immigrants provided access to subjects and interview space for several of the interviews.

The second source was expected to be the members of Brookhaven Citizens for Peaceful Solutions (BCPS), a community group that received funding to support offices and a worker's center to help build bridges between the established local community and the new immigrants. BCPS members teach English as a Second Language (ESL) at that particular center. They also were expected to generate participants for the study. The public activity of the primary local groups opposing the presence of the immigrants who organized protests and a campaign to enact legislation against the presence of the immigrants in the community declined significantly after the events of September 11, 2001. This resulted in a decline in BCPS activity. As a result of the decline in the public immigration struggle within the community, the center was turned over to an organization that advocated for the workers. The organization refused to participate in the research project. As the immigration issue re-emerged, other broader based coalitions took the leadership role and BCPS remained dormant.

Other sources were two community-based, immigrant-affiliated groups which also had assisted with prior research. Both groups work extensively with the target population in the community. The groups also were expected to assist in the

identification of study subjects. One of these groups oversees a center that has been established to assist the undocumented immigrants in the community and was asked to provide space to conduct the interviews. Despite participating in prior research and assisting another university effort in conducting research that involved surveying undocumented immigrants, this agency declined, again, for unspecified reasons. The Human Solidarity organization participated without reservation. The first respondents to be interviewed were identified by this organization and were interviewed at the investigator's home in the Farmingville community. During the data collection period, this organization received a grant to open a storefront office in the heart of the Farmingville community, which became the primary site in which interviews took place; the organization also assisted in soliciting undocumented immigrants to participate. In the end, the majority of the study participants were recruited via the community-based immigrant group and by a snowball sample generated by the respondents.

Prior to gaining access to an organization working with the target population and an office in which to conduct interviews, a number of other strategies were attempted in order to find respondents. Included was purchasing a disposable cell phone and developing a flyer. The flyer was written in Spanish and identified the neighboring Roman Catholic Church as the interview site. The flyer listed a phone number and the person receiving the phone call was clearly Latino by name. The phone was left on during day and early evening hours and incoming calls were monitored through the phone service's website to determine if calls were missed. The interview fee was clearly stated, as was the purpose of the research, and the affiliation with Stony Brook

University. The strategy anticipated that workers who did not have work for the day might be interested in 20 dollars as a consolation. Over 100 flyers were distributed to people waiting for work at the four primary street corner locations near the end of the prime "pick-up" time. It was hoped that even if only a few of the workers would participate, word of mouth would get additional participants.

Another strategy behind flyers was that workers might bring them home and that might lead to further outreach. In addition, flyers were posted in local Latino restaurants, delis, and the local laundromat. Flyers also were given to the local worker organization and to key community people to help with recruitment efforts. Despite extensive distribution, not a single interview was set up as a result of the flyer. It might be that the distrustful immigration climate may have inhibited participation or that potential respondents felt participation was too risky; the workers received enough attention and just wanted to be left alone; or perhaps many of the workers did not have regular access to a phone.

As difficult as it was to recruit research subject, finding qualified interviewers proved equally daunting. The original intention was to have a research team consisting of the study coordinator and two or three interviewers. The interviewers were to be Latino and fluent in Spanish to better identify and gain trust with the target population. Finding Spanish-speaking interviewers with a background compatible with the skills required to conduct field interviews was not easy. Interviewers were offered $25 for each interview that was completed, which ultimately was raised to $35. Adding to the difficulty was the necessity for each interviewer to be trained and certified in the ethics of human research subject protection and to review the Health

Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) materials required by the University.

The first interviewer was a retired Latino social worker who completed the first five interviews at the home of the study coordinator. After these subjects had been interviewed, the interviewer was unwilling and unable to recruit more subjects without someone arranging the interviews prescheduled in a fixed location. The strategy of setting up a phone number to have potential subjects call and make such arrangements proved unsuccessful. After several months without interviews, a flyer was posted in local social work schools, and Latino community leaders were solicited for assistance in finding new interviewers that were better able to aggressively seek respondents. As a result of these efforts, another interviewer was recruited. This interviewer was white and a former missionary in South America and was the interviewer and prime researcher for the Farmingville Listening Project. The Farmingville Listening Project was a comprehensive research project completed in 2000 that conducted 225 interviews with community members, immigrants, and activists in the Farmingville community on issues related to immigration. After four interviews, the commuting distance to Farmingville forced this interviewer to withdraw. He did solicit another interviewer who was Latino, with a PhD in Social Work. After seven interviews, this interviewer's work schedule forced him to withdraw. Around the same time, a Latina who was a first year Master's student in Social Welfare was recruited, but work and school demands allowed her time to complete only one interview. Finally, another first year student in Stony Brook University's Master's in Social Welfare program who was Latina, with no

employment obligations, was recruited as an interviewer, and able to complete the remaining interviews.

The interviews were collected between September, 2006 and July, 2008. The difficulty in the recruitment of the interviewers extended the data collection period. However, collecting data over almost two years ended up providing advantages. Interviews covered all seasons of work and provided insights that may have been missed in a shorter collection period. There were also several policy initiatives and events that played out during the time of the interviews which allowed the impact of these initiatives or events to be examined.

Interview Procedures

Each interviewer was trained on the goals of the research and all aspects of the interview guide. Written guidelines on the interview process, procedures to follow in collecting data, and the focus of the interviews were provided by the study coordinator (Appendix C). The study coordinator met with the interviewers to review the materials and answer questions. In addition, comprehensive interviews from the data collected were provided to demonstrate interview expectations, as well as an audio recorder and cash for the first two interviews. Interviewers were asked to complete one or two interviews, then translate and transcribe them for review. The study coordinator and the dissertation sponsor initially reviewed the completed translated transcripts. The purpose of the review was to ensure that the interviews were comprehensive, collected the appropriate data, and were consistent with the project research goals. Modifications to the interview focus were made along the way

to guide the direction of the interviewers. For example, after a review of the work experience section of the first few interviews, an emphasis was placed on collecting data on how the workers found work when they arrived and how the work experience evolved into their current work situation. Collecting information on the work transition initially may not have been clear in the interview guide. However, once the review of the initial interviews was complete and met the approval of the study coordinator, the interviewer was cleared to conduct interviews as rapidly as they could be scheduled.

All of the interviews, except for one, were recorded using an audio recorder. Digital audio files of each interview were created and could be replayed for transcription purposes on the audio recorder or downloaded onto any PC based computer to be played with commercial digital audio players such as Windows Media Player or Real Player. Prior to the interview, a CORIHS approved consent form was read to the participant (see Appendix A). The respondent received a copy, and verbal consent confirming voluntary participation was received prior to the start of the interview. A waiver of written consent for the project was granted by CORIHS as part of the research approval process. The waiver of written consent was consistent with protecting the confidentiality of the data and the identity of the respondents. To further protect the identity of the participants, names were not required for the interview; only a first name was used, if necessary, to facilitate the interview. The subjects were only known to the interviewer and could not be identified through the audio files or transcripts of the recorded data.

Once completed, the interviews were transcribed into English directly from the audio files. The original intent was to have the files transcribed into Spanish and then translated into English. Transcription proved to be an extremely expensive and unnecessary step. The interviewers, aside from being required to translate the first one or two interviews, were given the option of transcribing the interviews themselves or having a third party transcribe them. The advantage of having the interviewer translate their own interviews is greater accuracy in translation and fewer problems understanding particular terms that arose in the interviews or contextual issues during the interviews. The disadvantage is that the time required to translate might be better spent conducting interviews or doing transcriptions. Each interview was estimated to take three to five hours to translate and transcribe. All of the interviewers chose to do their own translations. In an effort to save time, the initial interviews required the interviewers only to transcribe the responses to the inquiries by question number. These interviewers transcribed the responses to the inquiries in almost a question and answer format. This resulted in written transcripts that were brief and while containing useful data, were not comprehensive. The third interviewer, who held a doctorate, transcribed a literal translation of the interviews and only then did a comprehensive story emerged. As a result, all subsequent interviews were literally transcribed. A decision was made to take the initial briefly transcribed interviews and re-do a literal translation in order to assess if data had been lost. A PhD student in the Department of Hispanic Languages and Literature at Stony Brook University, who was a native Spanish speaker, was recruited to transcribe the interviews. Nine brief interviews, were re-transcribed, and, in fact, turned out to be quite comprehensive.

They included data that was captured during the course of the interview but not revealed in the original transcription.

Plan of Analysis

Interviews were audio recorded and transcribed into English directly from the audio recordings. A full literal transcription was competed for each interview. The fact that the interviewers transcribed their own interviews ensured reliability of the translations. The only exceptions were for the first nine interviews that were translated in abbreviated format by the interviewers conducting the interviews. A literal re-transcription was done on these interviews. The original transcriptions were compared with the full transcriptions for accuracy. All interviews were transcribed into Microsoft Word files and forwarded to the project coordinator via e-mail.

A number of qualitative research analysis software packages were evaluated to assist with the analysis of the interviews. MAXQDA2007 was the software package that was chosen. The software package was evaluated for ease of use and the availability of support. Courses on using MAXQDA2007 are offered locally, if needed. The software proved easy to use with no outside support necessary. MAXQDA2007 uses files in Rich Text Format (.rtf) which can be converted from Microsoft Word files.

In consultation with the Dissertation Sponsor, a decision was made to develop the coding scheme as the interviews were reviewed using the software. The coding scheme roughly followed the categories of the interview guide. However, the MAXQDA2007 software only allows for 10 codes per category and a number of the

interview guide categories would require more than 10 codes. As a result, several of the questions were grouped into logical categories to allow for the development of a complete set of codes. In the end, 10 categories were developed with a total of 63 codes, and an eleventh separate category labeled "notable quotes" contained all interview segments that appeared interesting or significant regardless of their coded category. The categories were as follows:

- Journey –codes related to the journey to Farmingville, the connection to the community and the family that was left behind.
- Community – codes related to general life and integration into the community both for themselves and peers including the knowledge of community resources and how the workers organize as a community.
- Work Experience – codes related to finding work, the work experience, vocational skills, and payment for services.
- Medical – codes related to the need for healthcare both medical and dental, experiences with healthcare providers, and health education.
- Living arrangements – codes related to the type of living arrangements, problems with the local government and community regarding their living arrangements, and how the living arrangements can be improved.
- Experience with Residents – codes related their experiences, both positive and negative with community members, and knowledge of the problems within the community.

- Immigration – codes related to their fear of immigration authorities, precautions to avoid detection, and knowledge of their general rights if apprehended.
- Future – codes related to how their lives could be improved, desire to remain in the United States or return to their home country, goals in staying or returning, and the effect immigration reform might have on their lives.
- Different – codes related to how would their lives be different if the laws were to change and what they would do different if they had to do it all again.
- Personal information – codes related to family and education level.

After three or four interviews, the general coding scheme emerged. Minor additions were made as new items were identified or further breakdown of the categories was required. Previously coded interviews were reviewed after the addition of new codes to capture the additional coded segments that were generated. In the end, interviews ranged from 63 to 120 coded segments. A total of 4136 coded segments from the 45 interviews were obtained for analysis.

MAXQDA2007 provided a mechanism to review coded segments allowing for a comprehensive analysis. The software allows individual interviews to be broken down by category or all the coded segments across all the interviews can be printed by category. As a result of the review of the coded segments, a story emerged to better understand the issues involved and develop an empirically grounded conceptual

model to understand the motivation of the respondents and address the research questions.

Organizing the Data

Developing 4136 coded segments was a daunting task to organize. The decision to select the segments that had information the study coordinator deemed to contain key or interesting information, regardless of the predetermined research category, produced 464 coded segments. The 464 coded segments were sorted into 6 categories in a rough sequential order. “Reason for Coming/Impact on the Family” contained coded segments on the reasons behind the decision to migrate and the impact the migration had on the family in their home community. “Connection Quotes” had coded segments on the connections the migrant had to the Farmingville community such as family or friends. “Journey Quotes” were segments that described the journey from their home to Farmingville. “Work Experience” segments described the process of obtaining work, treatment by employers, and information on payment. “Life in the Community” segments described living arrangements, relationships with community members, dealing with gangs and the police, their views on immigration enforcement, and the psychological impacts of the migration process. Finally, “The Future, Solutions, and Other Thoughts” segments described the migrant’s solutions to the problems in the community and the immigration issue, their goals and future plans, their overall feelings about the migration process, and what they might do differently if they had to repeat the process. Each of the 6 primary categories were reviewed and further divided into analytical subcategories based on the content of the segment. The

categories and appropriate subcategories formed the basis of the research report writing and the development of grounded theory. When necessary, other responses in the appropriate category that were not selected as notable quotes were taken from larger groups of coded segments to supplement the analysis.

Description of the Sample

Data were collected from 45 interviews. Mexicans made up 93% of the respondents: 42 were from Mexico, one was from Columbia, one was from Honduras, and one was from Panama. The respondents were approximately two-thirds male (31) and one-third female (14). Two of the males and one of the females were not from Mexico. There were no direct questions regarding legal status. From the data collected in the interviews, it appears that only one or two of the Mexican males and none of the females were here legally.

Six basic demographic questions were asked as part of the interview process. There was a data collection sheet developed to collect the demographic data that was designed to be separate from the interviews. However, two of the interviewers asked the questions at the end of the interviews. Except for country of birth and marital status, each one of the four remaining demographic questions had a small number of missing cases.

The age range of the male respondents was between 22 and 51 (3 missing cases). The mean male age was 33.9 for the entire group and 34.2 for the Mexican males. The age range of the female respondents was between 19 and 46 (2 missing cases). The mean female age was 29.3 for the entire group and 27.7 for the Mexican women.

The education level of the respondents varied. For males, 10 only had an elementary school or less education, 1 junior high, 2 had some high school, 12 graduated high school, and 4 had some level of university education (2 missing cases). A total of 34% of the males had an elementary education or less while 55% had a high school education or higher. As for the women, 5 (42%) had an elementary school education or less, 4 junior high, 3 competed high school and one had some level of University education (31% high school education or higher).

Most of the respondents were married or cohabitating with someone, 71% of the males and 64% of the females. For the males, 22 were married, 1 was cohabitating, 3 were separated, and 5 were single. For the females, 6 were married, 3 were cohabitating, 2 were separated, and 3 were single. Most of the respondents had children in their home country, 72% of the males and 50% of the females. For the males, 21 had children in Mexico, one in Panama, 2 had children in the United States, and 6 had no children. For females, 6 had children in Mexico, 4 had children in the United States, and 2 had no children.

The small number of respondents in the study and the non-probability sampling strategy employed to identify respondents does not lend itself to the analysis of the demographics collected. The essence of the study was a qualitative analysis of the migrant's story. The next chapters chronicle the respondent's journey to Farmingville, their experience in the community, and the outlook on the future.

Chapter 3: The Decision to Migrate, the Journey, and Women's Issues

Many factors go into the decision to migrate to the United States without documentation. For some, the decision is easy, and for others, great sacrifices are required. The journey to cross the border illegally is rarely easy. Most of the migrants have stories to tell regarding their experience entering the United States. Women, at times, have special circumstances behind their decision to migrate and face increased danger during the journey.

Why Do They Come? Why Farmingville?

Undocumented immigrants have come to the Farmingville area for over 20 years, long before the issue was brought to the nation's attention in the late 1990's. Prior research (Claffey, 1999) and media reports indicate that the undocumented immigrants that have located in the Farmingville community are overwhelmingly from Mexico. This was supported by the fact that over 90 percent of the 45 interviews were with Mexicans. While there is a small body of literature on the migration from Latin America in general, further discussion will revolve around the experiences of Mexican immigrants in the Farmingville area.

The earlier analysis of demographic data indicates a tremendous growth in the number of migrants from Mexico to the United States beginning in the decade 1990 to 2000. This growth has continued until 2007. One of the research questions of interest asks; what has driven the increase in the number of migrants and what has brought many Mexican migrants to Farmingville, a largely white, middle class hamlet

located in the central part of Long Island about 50 miles east of New York City. Farmingville is geographically distant from the Mexican population centers of the American southwest and, while in close proximity to a major city, enough of a distance away to avoid its direct influence. The longstanding Latino populations on Long Island are overwhelmingly Puerto Ricans and Dominicans. Traditional new immigrants to the Long Island community are from Central America, primarily El Salvadorans. So, what was the driving force behind the Mexican migration? While we may never know exactly how the first Mexicans arrived in the Farmingville community, much can be put forth about the subsequent migration and the impact on the community and the immigrants who made the trip. This chapter will explore the motives given for migration, the attraction of the migrants to the Farmingville community, and the journey to get to the United States.

An analysis of the interviews clearly points to several distinct factors that influenced the decision to migrate. The interviews yielded three primary categories underlying the decision to take the journey to Farmingville: the poor economy in Mexico, a desire to improve the lives of their family, and, for female migrants, reuniting with their husbands. Economic conditions in rural Mexico, where many of the Farmingville immigrants originate, are poor for the average person. There is limited opportunity to work and advance, with wages that are reported by several respondents to be at subsistence levels. Regardless of the specific reason individuals provide for their emigration to the United States, the economic conditions are a key factor.

The economy in Mexico provides little opportunity for the working class person. The decision to migrate is often one of necessity. Even those with full time employment in Mexico find it difficult to do more than survive. The wages seem to be low and the opportunities to advance economically appear to be limited.

> I worked with machines in a factory. This factory made school and office supplies. I was there for about 6 years. But even working, I didn't have enough money, yes, to eat, yes, but not to have other things. I had to pay the rent; I had my wife, my daughter. It wasn't enough money. That's why I came here.
>
> – Don M, Mexican immigrant

> In Mexico the situation is bad. The situation here is also getting bad. Even there are not as many jobs as before. It's getting really hard for immigrants. One has to drive without a license; you have to look for someone that insures your car. But in Mexico is harder even though is your own country. There no job, and if you work is the minimum. You cannot even survive.
>
> – Martha, Mexican immigrant

The lack of opportunity in Mexico (and the promise of better wages through employment opportunities in the United States) often is the predominant factor in the decision to migrate. As part of the decision-making process, an elementary cost/benefit analysis is conducted to determine the relative benefits of migration versus staying in Mexico. One critical factor is the wage differential. The economic gains from migration far outweigh the potential earnings of remaining in Mexico.

> The economy in my country is very bad. To give you and example, in Mexico, in order to gain $100-150 a week maybe one has to have a permanent position. I can get more money here maybe $400-500. In my country, that's a lot of money.
>
> - Luis, Mexican immigrant

> No, in Mexico there aren't any opportunities, you don't aspire much… I don't know that is why I don't discard the possibility that my children won't come here because Mexico goes from bad to worse. I am going to be honest with you, I worked for 20 years, 25 years I worked in Mexico, I would work in the morning, in the afternoon and I could never save anything to buy a property. I came to the United States to work and on the second year I bought a property, on the third year I build the first floor and the second floor. What I couldn't do in Mexico in 25 years, I did here in seven years.
>
> - Roberto, Mexican immigrant

Another part of the migration decision process is an evaluation of the relative risks involved in coming to the United States versus the gains that can be made. These risks include leaving one's family behind, the dangers involved in crossing the border, the risk of apprehension either during the journey or at any time in the United States, and the difficulty in finding a destination and subsequent work. Once the risks are evaluated against the potential gains, a decision can be made. Sometimes the options are so limited that the decision to migrate may not be that difficult.

> It is a choice between finding work and coming here and if you don't work you don't eat. – Hugo, Mexican immigrant

> My reasons, well, the main one was due to the economic situation in my country and many things, but the main one is the economy. If the situation had been different in my country, I would have never come here. Never, never."
>
> – Joanna, Mexican immigrant

The poor conditions in Mexico and the potential for higher wages in the United States often dictate the decision to migrate. The other factors that become part of the decision-making process include the immigration experience of others in the local, home community and the prior migration of family and friends. These factors will be discussed later.

While a number of the respondents were clear that poor economic conditions in Mexico was the primary reason behind their decision to migrate, another group of respondents cited the desire to improve their lives, the lives of their families, and improve their future. While the need to look elsewhere for the opportunity to improve their lives is likely related to the economy in Mexico, a dire economic situation was not cited as the primary reason to migrate. Despite gainful employment, discontent with the economic options in Mexico led to the decision to migrate northward. As with those migrating for strictly economic reasons, the basic cost-benefit analysis regarding the feasibility of the journey is part of the process. Many of the immigrants understand that to, improve the lives of their families, sacrifices must be made. To have a better future for the families likely entails missing a good part of the present and near future familial experiences. Immigrants with spouses and children have a different set of decisions to make regarding migration. The decision to migrate directly affects others who are in a dependent role. There is a level of direct responsibility for the well-being of the people left behind. A single person who migrates has a primary concern with their situation in the United States, but immigrants with families must not only fend for themselves here, but also have dependents who have financial needs that must be met back home.

> Well, your family, you affect them from the moment you leave your house, you feel that you are coming to suffer here. Sometimes you leave everything to come here and you suffer and all, but you want to give your family a better life. More than anything that is the reason why I am here too and many friends are here suffering to have something in Mexico. -Hugo, Mexican immigrant

> I have to thank this country. We do so with a lot of sacrifices, being at the corners looking for a job, looking for money for us and for our families in Mexico. Yes, I am here to help my family, to provide my children with the opportunity to study, to obtain the necessary material for school, surgeries, and all that.
>
> -Max, Mexican immigrant

> Yes. Like everything, like every Hispanic, like every Latino. They come to this country to improve their family situation, the economy, everything. One has to come here to get some money, not much, but enough to live in good way.
>
> - Don M, Mexican immigrant

At times, the frustration is evident when there are events or situations that cannot be attended to back in Mexico owing to the distance, the cost of returning to Mexico and back, or the difficulty of the return to the United States as a result of the increased border enforcement. The personal cost of these types of sacrifices must be factored in as part of the price attached to the decision to migrate. The decision to migrate cannot be made without expecting some impact on the family. The strong level of emotional ties with the family back in Mexico is never broken.

> And maybe they tell you your kid is naughty, and that he doesn't obey. And one just wants to take the first plane and go back to Mexico, but you cannot do that because one is here to get something. I know I'm not going to spend a lot of time with my kids, I know that I'm not going to see how they walk, that I'm not going to see them in the schools. But one has to put up with that, because one is here to obtain something. The fastest one gets what he wants, the faster that they can return back…the only thing I want is to be with my kids, start a business… - Virginia, Mexican immigrant

> Yes, yes, because I miss them, because one is here alone. We talk on the phone but it's not the same as visiting them, seeing them…It's very different. But yes, one misses his family.
>
> -Rafael, Mexican immigrant

> To be with my family. It's logical for the father to be with his children and wife. If the father is not there, the children grow up, they don't obey anymore, everything is lost and not under control. It's very necessary for the father to be there, not only the mother.
>
> -Antonio, Mexican immigrant

> Yes, because one leaves her family, it's very sad because you don't know what can happen to you. It's very dangerous. You don't know if you are going to see your family again when you get back. And you come here and you wonder if your father and your mother are doing ok. Maybe they are sick and you don't know, because you are away. If something happens to them you are here and you cannot go.
>
> - Bertha, Mexican immigrant

At times, separation from one's family was mitigated by return visits to Mexico. Despite the expense or danger, the return was not permanent. While this was easier in the earlier immigration years, increased border enforcement has made the journey more difficult and dangerous. The economic need to seek employment in the United States superseded the family ties and need to be with one's family.

> I think one has to think a lot about it, because this country is like a magnet. Because you come here and then you go back home and you see the situation there, the economy. But this country keeps on telling you "come here, come here." And this has happened to many. But if I had to come back I would think about it a lot. Because coming here one suffers a lot, the family suffers a lot too.
>
> -Max, Mexican immigrant

> This was my third time. I only stayed for seven months the first time. My children were very young and I missed them and I went back. The second time I came I also missed them and I went back. This time around I have been here for two years.
>
> -Rodrigo, Mexican immigrant

Others did not have to endure having their families in Mexico. A decision was made to bring part or all of their family to the United States.

> My brother Mario was the first one that came here. Over there in Mexico, there were some people that had been here already. So they started to say that the other side was better. So my brother took my other brother. When my mother died, my sister is a widow, and she worked a lot in Mexico. She couldn't take it anymore because she had three kids at the school and she couldn't take it anymore. So she was told to come here, that the kids could study there, life was going to be better here, that they could study and work here. My sister decided to come here so she told me "how are you going to stay here alone". So we decided to come here.
>
> -Alba, Mexican immigrant

However, the decision to bring a family to the United States was not taken lightly. The journey north is often dangerous and the living arrangements in the destination community can be difficult. The crossing of the desert is dangerous enough for adults and not worth the risk for most to bring their children.

> I thought many times about bringing my wife and my kid. But due to the things I saw on TV, I didn't want to bring them anymore. I wanted to try to make things better with my wife and have my kid closer. I prefer to have them far away than to lose them forever. That stopped from bringing them here.
>
> -Toti, Mexican immigrant

The success in improving the lives of their families is justification for the journey and everything that they had to go through to make it possible.

> Yes, I think so because I have things now…I think that if I had stayed in Mexico I wouldn't have what I have now. Even though I'm away from my family…I have things now that before I hadn't. But I know it's worth it.
>
> -Rafael, Mexican immigrant

> My mother tells me that if I hadn't been here my brother would have never finished his studies. He is going to graduate this year. We also bought a house, in this way they don't have to move around, renting in different places. When they need something I help them. Yes it has helped a lot, not only to my mother but also to my brother, especially to my brother.
>
> -Lulu, Mexican immigrant

The continued success and visible improvements back in Mexico is inspiration to make the journey and may serve to inspire others. The economic benefits responsible for bringing immigrants to the United States, in general, serve as the motivating reason that has brought immigrants to the Farmingville community. There is a definite connection associated with migration, in general, and the selection of a particular destination. Forty-two of the forty-five respondents had some direct connection that brought them to Farmingville. Overwhelmingly, family was the primary connection to Farmingville with 26, or half of the immigrants having family members responsible for locating in the community.

> My brothers were already here. -Alba, Mexican immigrant
>
> I just had cousins, all male. Two cousins and cousins of my cousins.
>
> -Lulu, Mexican immigrant
>
> I came with my uncle and he told me to come here because one could make more money. -Jesus, Mexican immigrant
>
> My son-in-law was here for a while, the husband of my daughter. I talked to him because he was going back and forth all the time every year. I asked him what the possibilities were for me to come here. He explained me and helped me to come here. I came here with him.
>
> -Celso, Mexican immigrant

Another 10 had friends that migrated to Farmingville and played a role in selection of this destination.

> I came with a friend that had been here before. We came to NY. I came to that house where all these guys from my village where at. I felt almost like with my family. I didn't feel very bad, thinking that I was alone. -Don, Mexican immigrant

> Yes, some people from my village are also here. I came here with them and once here each one looks his own destiny.
> -Pedro, Mexican immigrant

> Because, first of all, I had some friends and when we crossed the border we found out more things. My intention was coming to the USA but I had no clue where. But I met some friends, and they came here so I joined them to come here.
> -Max, Mexican immigrant

While access to information about Farmingville in their home community was a strong influence on both the decision to migrate and the selection of the destination, not everyone had a direct connection. A small number came by chance.

> A Mexican that I met…I was on Roosevelt [Ave.] in Queens. There are a lot of Hispanics there and I was in a temp agency that's were I met a Mexican and he told me that in Long Island in this town you earn well and there is lots of work…and he was the one who brought me here. -Claudio, Mexican immigrant

> Because, this is the first time I come. I came here by chance; I never said I was going to go to any specific state; I came with some other people and we said, let's go there. Yes, in Florida and as I said, when I came I met some other people here and they say let's go to NY and that's why we came here. It was just by chance, or destiny.
> -Victor, Mexican immigrant

The Migration of Women

The migration of men from Mexico clearly appears to be related to economic reasons. Whether it is the lack of employment opportunities in their native communities or the desire to improve their lives, the lives of their family, or their future, the desire to improve one's economic situation is the overriding factor in the decision to migrate. The migration of women is largely a different story. For women without strong ties to their community, such as single women, not restricted by dependents, or single mothers lacking other family members in their Mexican communities, the decision to migrate may be based on economic factors. The economic reasons leading women to migrate under these circumstances is probably not all that different from the reasons that many men migrate. The women did not appear to migrate to Farmingville by chance; all seemed to have a connection, a family connection in particular, to the community, and they used these connections or networks to assist their migration process. As with the men, some of the women came to United States as a result of the poor economic conditions in Mexico.

> In Mexico the situation is bad. The situation here is also getting bad. Even [though] there are not as many jobs as before. It's getting really hard for immigrants. One has to drive without a license; you have to look for someone that insures your car. But in Mexico is harder even though is your own country. There no job, and if you work it is the minimum. You cannot even survive.
>
> - Martha, Mexican immigrant

> When I finished my studies nobody helped me to give me a job. So the money I spent on that was useless. That depressed me a lot that when I finished I couldn't have my own business, I couldn't find a good job, so I decided to come here. I just wanted to come to have my house, to get some money and start my business there.
>
> – Joanna, Mexican immigrant

> Yes, because as I told you my brother was here and he left and he told me to come here. I'm a single mother and I couldn't provide my daughter what she needed. I left her when she was very young and I had to come here to be able to provide her things at least a place to live.
>
> - Maria, Mexican immigrant

Others, as some of the men, came to improve their lives, the lives of their families, or their future.

> To help my father, to help my sisters with the school and in this way they can study and have a better future. Because I'm the oldest and we are a lot, and my father cannot do it, he doesn't earn a lot of money so I had to come here to help them. That's my goal.
>
> - Bertha, Mexican immigrant

> My sister and I had to become the heads of the family because my mother got sick and we had to take care of my younger brother and sister. It was then when I decided things had to change and come here. When my mother got well, when everything was alright, two years after, I talked to my cousins and I came here.
>
> - Lulu, Mexican immigrant

> Well, due to the job situation and also because all my family is here. My brothers came first and then my sister and I came with her and my nephews. My sister told me I was going to make more money. One works but not as much as one can make here. Here we can send money to Mexico. I saw my brothers had more things and I said to myself I could also do better. That's why I came here.
>
> - Alba, Mexican immigrant

Married women, whose husbands have previously migrated to the United States, face different challenges. A gap existed in the familial relationship. As a result, some women migrated to reunite with their husbands and/or their family.

> I came because my husband had been before, years, years before. He was very pleased, well, in some form with how people live here. He primarily wanted the girls to come now, to see that they could have a better education, and that we could be better-off here. Really, we thought about this for some years because of the risks you take in crossing, after thinking for so long, we decided to come.
>
> - Carmen, Mexican immigrant

> Yes, that's the reason why I came here. In theory, I was supposed to be here just for 2 or 3 months, but he doesn't want me to leave. My daughter's teacher doesn't want me to stay here… When I was in the desert, since the first moment I left my kids, I just thought about being with my husband. - Maritza, Mexican immigrant

> It was difficult, we were apart. Maybe I was doing well economically but he didn't have his daughter. I didn't know how he was doing. And then he came and then he had to take the risk again to come back here. So we decided I would come here… It wasn't like being together; we just talked very little on the phone. Now, I came here, and we are together, like if we were married, after ten years. I was pregnant. My baby was born there, and when he met her she was already 3 years old. And we came here when she was 6 years old.
>
> -Martha, Mexican immigrant

Many others made the journey independently without the encouragement or support of their husbands or families in Mexico. The migration was intended to either reunite with, or check on, the situations of their husbands.

> Over there, we just had the basics, we rented a house, but didn't have more, we didn't have money to buy a land, a house, and we didn't have enough money. We just had money to eat, and some clothes. So he was told to come here to be able to buy more things. So he came here. I was in Mexico and after two years and since he didn't return I told him that I was going to go there because he wasn't coming back. So, he didn't agree, but I came without him knowing. I came. I wanted to know if he was working, if he was doing ok, if he was with another woman, maybe…I don't know. I didn't know anything, and I just wanted to be with him here. So I came.
>
> -Sonia, Mexican immigrant

> I think they have to feel good in that aspect, but they know they cannot be long here because their family is in Mexico and if they stay too long here they lose his wife. Sometimes they also provoke that the woman forgets about them because they don't call. I have seen those cases. Sometimes they come here and they say they are single to get a wife I don't know if it is to get papers, or what. But they say they are single and they have his kids in Mexico without food.
>
> -Elizabeth, Mexican immigrant

With the passage of time, more undocumented Mexican women and families are visible throughout the Farmingville community.

The Journey

The journey to the United States was rarely an easy trip. It was often extremely dangerous. The migrants were forced to take routes through the desert in order to avoid detection and successfully enter the United States, illegally. Many migrants experienced personal suffering and witnessed horrible sights during the trip. What was experienced and seen during the journey goes well beyond the type of experiences an ordinary person has to deal with in their lifetime.

> When I left my home I felt happy and I felt sad. When I left, as I was walking away from my house, I kept turning back to see if somebody would tell me "not to go." -Rodrigo, Mexican immigrant

> And sometimes if I have to choose between being caught by the cholos (roving gangs of criminals) or by the migra (immigration authorities), I prefer the migra. -Juan, Mexican immigrant

The border between the United States and Mexico is viewed as the primary entry point for migrants from Mexico to enter the United States. Although this is the most common method of entry into the United States, not everyone who was interviewed

crossed the border. The two non-Mexicans immigrants that were interviewed did not cross the border; one came by plane with a visa and the other worked on a ship. Only two of the Mexican immigrants did not come across the border; one came with a tourist visa and another also came by airplane. Entering the United States with a visa was very easy.

> Yes, just the fact of entering the country by plane, it's a big advantage in comparison to others. Many of them have to cross illegally and they have to go through many things. When you come here it's the same.
>
> -Elizabeth, Mexican immigrant

Entry to the United States by airplane without a tourist visa was still a stressful experience. The fear of getting caught is always present.

> At the beginning…the plane…the airport…I was sitting in a room. I was told not to look to the other people. So I was sitting, I was trying not to look. But yes, it's very tiring. Because if you look at the other people, they realize that you are an immigrant.
>
> -Antonio, Mexican immigrant

Very few immigrants had the opportunity to avoid crossing the border. Forty-one of the forty-three Mexican immigrants had to cross the border to enter the United States. For many, it was the only option to enter the country.

> If I had known before how things were here I wouldn't have come here. I would have tried to find the way to come here in a legal way. Unfortunately I look into that but it's not possible, because you don't have money, many things. I didn't have that information and I tried and doors were closed in front of me. The only way I saw to come here was the way I did it, and that unfortunately, is the worse one.
>
> -Joanna, Mexican immigrant

There are many accounts of border crossings that have been published in various formats, in books, academic journals, and the media. The migrants that came to the Farmingville area have stories of their own journeys that are just as compelling and indicative of the experiences of many others that preceded them across the border. The following describes some of the border crossing experiences of the people interviewed for this study.

Not everyone had a difficult time getting into the United States. This was attributed more to luck than anything else. Regardless of the ease of the trip, there is knowledge of the potential dangers of attempting to cross the border illegally.

> I think that for me was a little bit easy. I think I walked two days and one night, but in comparison to other people it wasn't very bad. But I'm afraid of coming back, I know that if I'm in Mexico I'm going to come back here and I don't want to expose myself. Maybe the first time nothing happened to me but who knows this time.
>
> -Pedro, Mexican immigrant

Several of the immigrants made numerous journeys over a period of years. Changes in immigration policy changed the dynamics of crossing the border. As reported in the literature, with the increase in border enforcement activities, the journey became more difficult.

> Well, the first time I came here it was easier to cross. The first time it's just took me an hour to cross the border, without fences, nothing like that… That was the first time in 1999. I was over a year and returned in 2001 and it was a little bit more difficult. I had to walk for 12 hours. And the third time, it was three days and three nights, sleepless.
>
> -Luis, Mexican immigrant

Sometimes, the coyotes that were paid to escort the immigrants across the border into the United States employed border crossing strategies that made it an easier journey for the larger group.

> I remember this well, because that particular day there was a pregnant woman who was trying to cross. The guide told her that she wasn't going to cross. He stopped her. Then I noticed that she was going to cross with us. So I asked the guide why he had let her come with us. He replied that she was bait. They were going to go ahead of us and get caught. They (the guides) knew that was going to happen. But the guide said that they didn't tell the pregnant woman, because "why scare a pregnant woman?" Let her go home and that is it.
>
> -Manuel, Mexican, immigrant

> Yes, so I said to him, if we were caught and returned then we would all be returned together. If we are going to cross, we are all going to cross. In fact, they wanted to convince us to cross the girls through one area and us through another… Yes, they wanted the girls to go through the border crossing because since they were so young they would cross easily, as if they were legal. -Carmen, Mexican immigrant

Many of the other respondents had a more difficult time getting across the border. The migrants experienced constant stress, long tiring trips, or lack of water.

> Well, I'm from Hidalgo. I went from Hidalgo to…I don't remember the place at the border and from the Mexican border we had to walk three nights and two days. It was too much. It took us one month to get here. It was very bad. I don't want to remember that because I didn't go through good things. -Sara, Mexican immigrant

> Nerves, nerves all the time, because it's an experience that I couldn't have imagined. But, being there at the moment it is different, Fear, fear always, I thought well if they catch us, its back and no more attempts. Because, the same if they returned us, we already decided only one time. If they returned us, we would return home.
>
> -Carmen, Mexican immigrant

> We didn't have water. We found a tire with rain water. We had to put it in a glass, and using a shirt to filter it. In this way, still dirty we drank it, so we drank dirty water.
>
> -Antonio, Mexican immigrant

> The third time was a little bit harder because we had to walk during the day and we didn't have a lot of time to rest. They got a pill in order not to feel bad, I don't know what, to get energy. Since we didn't take those pills I was very tired. The third day I was exhausted. I felt I couldn't go on. We arrived there without water; we didn't have anything to drink. I couldn't stand they heat anymore, I took my clothes off, and I put earth on my body, I felt it cold. But that didn't help with thirst. I was very thirsty, I cut a cactus, I wanted to swallow that but it was so bitter that I threw it up again. So a group of 3, 4 people went to look for water. And, yes, they found it. They returned 3 or 4 hours afterwards. They walked looking for water. They brought rain water that it's for the animals. At that moment I didn't care if that was water for the animals. The water was green, it was dirty, but I didn't care. I just wanted to drink something. It was the most difficult one. Now I think a lot about coming back to Mexico because I don't want to go through the same thing.
>
> -Toti, Mexican immigrant

When the migrants start their journey, they never know how it may end. This would weigh heavy on any decision to return to Mexico and attempt to cross the border in the future.

> Yes, I came through the desert, without eating, I walked a lot, many dangers that happen to you. You cross the desert and it's your life or…It's very difficult because if you come by plane or by car you know you are going to get here, but when you walk you go through dangerous things, animals, many dangerous things that can happen to you but one knows about it.
>
> -Bertha, Mexican immigrant

If the trip itself was not a dangerous enough venture, having to cross under terrible physical and environmental conditions, there was even more danger from

others along the way. The coyotes themselves and various groups of roving criminals preyed upon the migrants, even the authorities brought more danger to the journey.

> The coyotes, the people that pass the immigrants, but you don't care about that. You just want to cross, that's your goal. It is dangerous. You see the "cholos," they are teenagers or kids or adults, and they steal, rape. And then when you walk you get a lot of thorns. Even in this part of the border. And sometimes if I have to choose between being caught by the cholos or by the migra, I prefer the migra. If you are lucky, and you get good policemen you will be treated as a human being, because the migra has also bad people, racist. And I have seen racism always with our people, with Hispanics.
>
> -Juan, Mexican immigrant

> The other one is in Phoenix, Arizona. I had been longer in this country and I knew the place, they were asking me for money and I told them I was going to go to a Western Union to get the money to pay them. I go I take the money and when I returned there were about 15, but someone forgot to lock the door and two people came, they are named "bajadores". Why? Because this people kidnap other people who are trying to cross and then they ask for money. In this case they didn't take us, but they took all the money from us. Imagine the time I had to be in Arizona to be able to get again the money and pay.
>
> -Juan, Mexican immigrant

> Yes this time we were taken in the dessert by these people who are called "cholos," with guns pointed towards our heads, they took all our money and everything. No, I never thought I would live through that.
>
> -Evelyn, Mexican immigrant

> Yes, they are like gangs. They took us to an abandoned house, and then they started looking for cell phones, money. They look even in our shoes. They looked everywhere. They took the little money we had. They started to check phones to see if we had families here. They found out that one friend had a brother here and they were asking the brother for $4,500 to release the three of us. They couldn't get anything. The friend here cancelled his number and it didn't matter how much they tried to talk to him.
>
> -Max, Mexican immigrant

It is clear that the journey across the border is difficult in many ways. Women faced even greater challenges and dangers, particularly from other along the way. Many realized the risks to their personal safety in making the journey. Others have witnessed first-hand the problems that women face.

> Yes, we were lucky that we didn't meet them. But they exist and you also come knowing that you can be raped. That's also traumatizing you don't know if you are going to be raped. That's very bad for a woman.
>
> -Bertha, Mexican immigrant

> I was with my niece and two nephews; we were praying because we didn't know how we were going to cross, how they were not going to see us. The police was there. But he told us that if we didn't pass there, the next day we had to cross through the dessert. And that was very risky because at night there were some "cholos" that if they caught us they were going to rape us and many other things. So we had to do what they told us to do. So we said yes, we would do what they told us.
>
> -Alba, Mexican immigrant

> Yes, yes, yes. For instance, they take advantage of women from El Salvador. They want them to have sexual relationships with them. They tell them they are not going to charge them as long as they are with them in the way. The women have to be with them. I told them not to do so, not to let them to take advantage of them. Many women get pregnant. They are alone, they don't have any relative. I told them not to take advantage of them. They told me to shut up because you don't know anything. And yes, normally with women from other countries, they almost rape them and one cannot do anything there… The same people that takes you to the rooms. The coyotes are other people. They arrived to the rooms and they start touching you. And what can you do?
>
> -Virginia, Mexican immigrant

The dangers of the journey are well known. As difficult as the journey appears to be on adults, some choose to bring their children across the border with them. Travelling with children is very difficult and dangerous. The motivation in bringing children illegally across the border has not been addressed in the literature.

> There was a woman who was coming with her children and a lot of men and no one wanted to help her. So I helped her to carry the little girl. We walked one day and one night taking turns carrying the little girl and my things. Thank god we got here.
>
> -Rodrigo, Mexican immigrant

The long journey, the stress and the lack of water were only part of the problem. There was also a physical toll because several respondents were injured along the way.

> Another time in the dessert, I was walking, just with my socks, because I was carrying my shoes, because since one walks so much, the feet get swollen, so in order to get some air in my feet, and to walk faster. -Antonio, Mexican immigrant

> Coming here was good, the border, the night, but I was very tired and I wasn't hungry. When I wanted to rest I just laid down on the ground. Thanks god, "los coyotes" helped me. In some areas I could walk well, I came also with a brother-in-law of my son-in-law and also a cousin. They helped me. There was a moment when I sat down and I was falling sleep and they woke me up slapping my face. We were taken to a house, I don't know where, since I don't know anything. They put us in a room like if we were cattle. We sat down there. They gave us potatoes, and soda and bread.
>
> -Celso, Mexican immigrant

> I walked with my swollen foot I could hardly walk, but I couldn't stay because if you stay they leave you. They leave you. Because you come by yourself you have to make an effort.
>
> -Hugo, Mexican immigrant

Perhaps the most difficult part of some of the journeys was something the migrants never thought they would have to deal with, death. It was not the type of death faced in everyday life such as illness or accidents. It was the almost a "survival of the fittest" type journey. People died who could not endure the rigors of the

journey. People died for unknown reasons, their bodies discovered along the way. There was no sense or logic to the deaths, only the feeling of helplessness and the fact that they could fall victim to the journey as well.

> I think that we could have helped them. They should have gone first in the train. But in that moment you cannot do anything, because they tell you "run" and you have to run and jump for your life. As a matter of fact I injured myself. But I think that we should have done something. Someone, the person that brought us, to help her, because she was pregnant, but in that moment nobody jump to help her but her husband. But we couldn't do anything. It's very painful to think about that. I saw it, when you see something like that...in my country I never saw anything like that. And you come here alone, and you are scared.
>
> -Joanna, Mexican immigrant

> And there was a place with water and we didn't have water. We thought we could get the water to have for the trip. But the water had fuel and then I tried it and realized the water wasn't good. So we had to leave everything there, without water. We went to a place, sitting, waiting to get dark. And one person said, "You see in that bush? There's a towel and a little girl. I think someone crossed and left there the kid because, but they couldn't take her anymore and they left her there. And there's nothing you can do."
>
> -Max, Mexican immigrant

> Yes, there was a 70 year old woman, a young one, another woman with her daughter, but imagine, the daughter was just one year old. My sister was taking care of the baby to avoid her dying in the way. Also the woman, but she was dying. But the coyotes take a lot of advantage of women.
>
> -Virginia, Mexican immigrant

> That is the reason why sometimes we don't want to leave because to come back you suffer too much. You see many things; people strewn on the desert already dead, people with their broken feet and you see them…So for that same reason we don't want to leave, because we know what the crossing is like… We were 15, and only 4 made it. The rest stayed in the desert because they couldn't go on. The truth, I don't know what happened to them.
>
> –Hugo, Mexican immigrant

> We knew about eight people that died, even a woman with her daughter in her arms. It's very hard to be in the border. We walked for three days; my feet were bleeding, very, very bad.
>
> -Mario, Mexican immigrant

The journey had a lasting impact on the migrants. A difficult journey will factor into decisions on returning to Mexico either to visit or return permanently, and whether or not to stay in the United States. There may be lingering effects including post traumatic stress from the experience. Crossing the border illegally is a necessity for a large number of undocumented immigrants. Hundreds of thousands experience this journey every year. If the experiences of this small sample are indicative of the journeys that many of the border crossers experience, there is much lingering stress and trauma out there among the undocumented immigrant population.

> Maybe because the stress, or the desire of coming…one forgets about being hungry, thirsty and all that. One finds the strength, and asks god for help to get here sound and safe.
>
> -Sara, Mexican immigrant

> Yes, we crossed but you think about many things, because you don't know if you are going to die there if you are ever going to see your family and only to get something more.
>
> -Sonia, Mexican immigrant

Summary

Only a few of the migrants had an easy time getting to the Farmingville community. Many had difficult journeys, running out of water or becoming injured along the way. Some witnessed horrible deaths that were beyond the normal experiences of their everyday lives. Some of the effects of the trip lingered as post-

traumatic stress. Women often had an even more difficult journey. Most of the immigrants had a connection to the community either through family or friends/villagers that assisted in the decision to migrate to Farmingville. Economics was behind almost all of the decisions to migrate. The poor economic conditions in Mexico, or a desire to improve their lives, or the lives of their family, were the primary factor in the decision-making process. Some women migrated for the same economic reasons. Others followed their husbands, either to join them in the United States, or check up on them to preserve their marriage. Once here, employment was a central part of the migrant's lives. This issue will be explored next.

Chapter Four: The Experience of Work

The primary reason for most of the immigrants making the journey to the Farmingville community was to secure gainful employment. The process of finding work was difficult. The use of open-air hiring sites known as "corners" was an important part of the male employment experience. Work frequency and conditions varied. Women had unique challenges in terms of the types of employment that were available and the conditions they had to endure in the workplace.

The Male Perspective of Work

Work is the driving force behind the migration to Farmingville. Money was the motivation for the men to make the long, often perilous journey. Money motivated many of the women as well. Even the women who came to reunite with their husbands entered the workforce at some point. The work experiences varied greatly, some experiences were good, some were bad, some of the migrants worked steadily, while others struggled to find work. The stories surrounding the work experience are compelling.

A small number of the migrants have lived in Farmingville for over a decade or have been back and forth to Mexico several times during the same time period. The first Mexican migrants arrived in 1999, before the issue of undocumented immigrants in Farmingville found its way to the public's attention. Since the time of the arrival of the first Mexican migrants, the situation has changed dramatically. Work in the earlier years was easier to find. The public attention and conflict within the community;

recent national changes in immigration-related laws, enforcement, and policies; and a more recent downturn in both national and local economic conditions rendered obtaining employment a much more difficult proposition.

> Yes, American, Portuguese, all the employers went there to look for people to work. The employers said, I need one to work. And another employer said, "no, not that one, that one is mine" why, because there was not people. 12 years ago there were about 50 people and everybody worked. -Don, Mexican immigrant

> I started to look for jobs at the corner at the 7 - 11. We waited there for people looking for workers. But I didn't get a job there. A friend of mine recommended me to his boss and I started to work there. It wasn't that hard to find a job then. Now it's a little bit more difficult because there are a lot of people, and before it wasn't like that. -Toti, Mexican immigrant

> From what I have seen so far in all this time, this is the third time I come here. This time I have been here longer, because I have noticed that it gets harder to find a job. Many things are changing, not only in this state, but in the entire country. If you are not legal, there's no job. The companies are starting to be fined if the workers don't have a legal social security. It's getting more difficult. That's why I'm here longer, to make money. -Luis, Mexican immigrant

> Well, I thought I was going to come and have a job. Before yes, there were more jobs, more bosses. Right now it is not like that. It's more difficult to find a job. One has to think about that, I'm already old. I have to think about going back to Mexico and not come back. -Antonio, Mexican immigrant

When the issue of undocumented immigrant in Farmingville came to the public's attention and became a major issue that received national attention, the most prominent image of the conflict is the one of men standing on a "corner," looking for work. The "corner" is the common term for open-air hiring sites in public locations. On any given day, there are between 100 – 250 men on a variety of "corners" around Farmingville seeking work. The image is strong, but in reality this is a significant, but

minor percentage, probably less than 25% of the male undocumented workforce and of the total number of immigrants in the Farmingville community. For most of the male migrants, the corner is almost a "rite of passage" into the work world. The corner is the starting point for many of the new arrivals to find their first employment. The corner is utilized as the fall-back point to find employment if there is no work, or between steady or semi-steady jobs. The corner becomes the option of last resort when all attempts to find employment fail. Unless someone is lucky enough to find work through a family member or friend, they experience the corner at some point in the pursuit of employment.

> When I arrived, there are places called "corners." In 2006 they will be more or less 20 years that this place is been working. Right now there are 4 corners. In the past there was only one, it was in 16 Horseblock, in a restaurant called Fax Chix, around that area. It started there 20 years ago. When I arrived I was 15 years old, I have been coming here for almost 6 years now. We go there and stop there waiting for some employer that needs our help. If we agree in the payment, and depending on the work he wants us to do, we go with him.
>
> -Mario, Mexican immigrant

> Yes, I had to stand on the corner and I think it has been like that for all of us, especially when you first get here. It is normal I think for everybody.
>
> -Martin, Mexican immigrant

> I've had several jobs, because here to keep a job it is kind of difficult. So at the beginning I found a job through my friends, some other times in the corner. The job I have right now, I got it through some friends.
>
> -Alex, Mexican immigrant

Work at the corner is transient in nature. The type of work is commonly referred to as day labor, and the workers are called day laborers. The employment can be for the day or several days, and wages are subject to the negotiation between the

employer and the worker. Despite the transient nature of the work, the money that can be made on a daily basis is more than the money that can be made in Mexico over several days or a week.

> When I came, a friend told me to go and work for a guy that he was going to pay me $100. I was like "how much?" I thought he was crazy. So I went with him. We were two the ones that went with him. I thought it would be easy, but no. I had to carry some heavy stuff to the truck. It wasn't hard but I spend a lot of time loading and uploading, and with that heat. When I finished at about 4pm, the Portuguese took me to the corner. I was very tired and I had to walk from there to my house. If you took your bicycle when you returned it wasn't there anymore, like always. But he gave me $100.
>
> -Don, Mexican immigrant

> Well, many friends told me that one could get $100 very fast. In my country, $100 is a lot of money. If you work two three days, one can buy a TV. In my country it's very difficult to acquire those things, one needs three four months, and here it's very fast.
>
> -Luis, Mexican immigrant

Life on the corner is not always simply standing and waiting for an employer to offer a person a job. There are varying complexities in what goes on. As migrants flow into Farmingville from different areas within Mexico, groups form where migrants congregate with people from the same area. If a worker's work ethic is poor, or drugs and alcohol are involved and the immigrant cannot find or maintain a steady job, the corner is the only option to seek employment. People who are focused on working and making money can be mixed with workers that can't work or keep steady jobs. There is no easy way for the prospective employers who is doing the hiring to make that distinction.

> Yes, for instance some people from the city and other people who are from the village…They don't like each other because they come from different places. I don't understand that. We are all the same and we are here for the same reasons. In some corners there are only people from the city, and when one stops there they start telling you things like "go to your corner" and so.
>
> -Jose, Mexican immigrant

> I also worked in the corner; unfortunately nowadays the corner is maybe not that good. Unfortunately not all our people come here to work or maybe they think they come here to work but they are young and they get into drugs, and vices, and that makes you forget your goals. And if you get into drugs, first of all you are not going to have a boss and your place is going to be the corner. And at the corner, when we get that kind of people it's bad for us. I saw employers, or friends of employers, and they ask me "hey Juan, where can I find someone to work?" and I say go to the corner. And they don't want to go there. That's a reality.
>
> -Juan, Mexican immigrant

Securing work at the corner is not an organized process. There are a number of men, often dozens, at a single location seeking employment. A job for the day is obtained through the worker's selection by a prospective employer who comes to the site in a vehicle. It can be a small company seeking workers for the day or a resident/homeowner with a project. There is no line in Farmingville, and there is no one to organize the workers to facilitate the transaction between the prospective employers and the workers. There is no guarantee that if the prospective employer selects another worker, there will be future employers who come along and hire more workers. There is always a chance that if the employer is a business or a contractor, there may be a chance for steady work and no longer a need to stand on the corner. This process renders the competition for work fierce. There is often a rush of potential laborers surrounding the vehicle of a prospective employer. At times, at sites

located at local convenience stores, there is a rush toward anyone who pulls into the parking lot with a pickup truck, van, or SUV.

> One runs to him to see if he gets him. We run because there are a lot of people and everybody wants to work and there is not enough for everybody. It is difficult. -Antonio, Mexican immigrant

> Here on the corner, on the corner cars arrive and people throw themselves at it. There have been arguments. Why? Because people want to work that could be the reason, but if we are all Hispanics and we kick someone off… this has happened to me. I saw that the boss asked me to go to work, but another guy pushes you aside and he gets in. -Roberto, Mexican immigrant

Sometimes workers hit the jackpot and obtain long term employment. There is no longer a need for the corner. Based on the smaller percentage of workers on the corners in Farmingville versus the number of undocumented immigrants in the community, it appears that many workers have made the transition to more permanent and steady employment.

> I looked for a job in a corner. I went on a Monday to the corner. An employer, a carpenter came over and told me he wanted someone who knew carpentry, I said I wanted but I didn't know anything about carpentry but I would like to learn. He told me to go with him if I wanted to work. I went with him. Since it was my first time I was scared. I thought he was going to do something to me, but thanks God it wasn't like that and since then he's been my employer.
> -Diego, Mexican immigrant

The employment process is little more than a random, mad dash to a vehicle in an attempt to secure employment, and an employer is surrounded by people eager and anxious to work. There probably is no method to select the required worker. Perhaps

something about a worker's appearance or a physical attribute that may benefit the type of job to be filled will help the prospective employer make a selection. There are very few strategies that can be used by the day laborers to assist them in the selection process. The only advantage for a day laborer that came to light from the respondents was the advantage in be able to speak English. This advantage was very useful, but not totally successful.

> The first time no, because employers also look for someone that speaks already some English and with some experiences in some jobs. When they just need physical strength it doesn't matter if you don't speak English. Then even though you don't speak any English they take you. -Mario, Mexican immigrant

> To try to learn English in order to find a job in faster way. That's very necessary. Sometimes I had to stay in the corner because some people who know more English got the job and I didn't.
> -Antonio, Mexican immigrant

> Yes, this helps on the corner when they speak in English asking for a worker you know, you understand.
> -Hugo, Mexican immigrant

For many of the migrants, the corners are the lifeline for many to find work. Much of the work found through the corners involves seasonal work such as landscaping, swimming pool work, and certain types of construction jobs. There are other migrant workers that work in these types of jobs on a steady basis with the same employer. Most of these seasonal jobs, even for the steady workers, cease during the winter months. In the past, workers often returned to Mexico for the winter. But the increased border enforcement efforts and a costlier, more dangerous return trip forces

many of the migrants to remain in the United States during the winter months. Finding work in the winter months can then be very challenging.

> Well in the winter we don't work. We hibernate. We come to the corner. Sometimes we work…it's not a sure thing.
>
> -Carlos, Mexican immigrant

> I came with my uncle and he told me to come here because one could make more money here, but honestly we are not doing very well now because of the snow and so. There are no jobs.
>
> -Jesus, Mexican immgrant

> I think that is very little, because the pay is like in Mexico. It's not much, but what can we do. We have to fight for it, for us and for our families. In winter we don't have enough money, we don't have even for food. Sometimes we don't eat in the entire day.
>
> -Max, Mexican immigrant

> I save money, one saves money for the rent, food and so, in case there's not work at least there's something. There are people that don't save any money and then in winter they don't have money to eat, to pay the rent…and yes, this people have a hard time.
>
> -Jose, Mexican immigrant

The male respondents reported a range of treatment by their employers. Most often employers treat the workers either well or relatively decently without exploiting the workers, but still demand hard work and long hours. Some of the respondents have found long-term, steady employment based on their work performance or the relationship they have developed with their employers.

> I haven't been here long but sometimes the bosses treat you bad. But they look at the type of job you do, because if they think about the Hispanic that comes here and know how to do these jobs...that's a benefit for them…because one time I found a job. It was working at a swimming pool. I measure the pool and started working and he liked it, and he started to treat me well. He took me soda and coffee and so

> forth and asked me if I was going to do the entire job by myself. One day a friend of his that spoke Spanish told me that he liked me. He told me the company that was one to do this job charged him $20,000 and he was going to give me $100 a day, and he was going to give me coffee lunch and everything. And I said it was ok. But he gave me $130 per day, because he liked the job and I did everything and he even thanked me. And he knows where I live and he told me that any job he knows he would call me. And that's my job, yes.
>
> -Max, Mexican immigrant

> They treat me well. At first with my boss, I have already been working with him for eight years, like seven. At first he behaved like all the others. Not, not, very discriminatory much like that. But I always showed that what was important was my work, it didn't matter where it came from, it didn't matter who he was, nor should it have matter to him who I was. What should have mattered to him was my work. So then, as the years passed he began to see that and I supposed he understood that, because since his father is Italian, his father was also an immigrant. After some time he saw that what he was doing was not good. So then he understood, and to date he treats me well. In the beginning he wouldn't even let me in his house. He would always leave me outside, I couldn't even go into the bathroom in his house. But not now, now he leaves me alone in his house. At time he even leaves me to care for his children.
>
> -Felipe, Mexican immigrant

Many of the respondents were not as successful in obtaining or maintaining long-term employment. The workers have many stories about the treatment they have received in work settings by employers. There is a philosophical attitude among the workers on what to expect from employers in work situations.

> It's varies depending on the principles of the employers. There are employers who are very aware that one has a family and you are a human being and they treat you accordingly. There are others that don't care and just see us as machines to work, and when you get sick of working, they just don't hire you anymore and look for others who are young and strong. They don't pay very well and ask you for a lot of physical work. There is moment that one gets injured in the back, because of the weight and from bent down for so many hours. It depends on the moral qualities of the employer, some are very aware,

they pay you well, they treat you well, and one is even happier and even does better at work.

-Mario, Mexican immigrant

There are differences because there are Americans and they have more rights than us, they can have breaks to smoke, to have lunch, they have privileges. And we, as immigrants don't have them, and we are paid less.

-Alma, Mexican immigrant

Your right is this paper. You go to a job and you say this is my number. In the moment the employer sees that number, he respects you. That's my number; this is my guarantee, my hands.

-Don, Mexican immigrant

Of course yes, because we suffer a lot because of our jobs. Because Americans, with the unions, they start working at 9, finish at 3, they work slowly…But we don't, the employer yell at us, we are in a hurry, we work with heavy things, sometimes even without protection, we work all day long, we start at 6/7 in the morning and we finish very late. So much work, and for who, the employer earns a lot of money. We work for the people here, for America, for this country, to improve it, somehow we deserve something.

-Evelyn, Mexican immigrant

The first experience was that it was a hard work; they see us as animals, because we are illegal, because we come here to work. The employer is telling us all the time to work, we have to be constantly working, and we cannot take a break, because you cannot express what you think because we don't have the same rights as you do. But we came work here to work. I feel they cannot see we are also human beings; we also get tired, and have feelings. It's a routine, from work to home, we are like animals. I feel it's the same. We have to work because if you don't work, you don't eat.

-Victor, Mexican immigrant

Well at first when you don't know anything they treat you badly, but with time you gain experience and you learn a bit more English and then you don't allow it (treat you badly). You learn a bit more about the laws here and all and we don't let it happen. But at first they do what they want because we don't know anything.

-Hugo, Mexican immigrant

The pay is generally good at the corners, especially in the warmer weather when jobs are plentiful. In several instances, when workers are more desperate for work, they will take less than what is generally offered to workers at the corner. The respondents did not note a systematic decline in wages as a result of the lower wages accepted by some of the workers. There appears to be a generally accepted salary range that is customarily understood by both the workers and employers.

Getting paid for the day's work is a concern of the day laborers. Day laborers receive no guarantees that when one is hired that they will receive money at the end of the day. If they work for several days and expect to be paid at the end of the job or the week, again there are no guarantees. While many of the workers knew of instances where people did not get paid, only a few of the respondents had personal experience in not getting paid for work done. Several of the respondents indicated that day laborers identified employers that did not pay and spread the word when these employers came around. Government has prosecuted several employers for non-payment of wages. Several of the organizations that work with the migrants also note companies that do not pay workers, as well as assist workers in recovering unpaid wages.

> Well now, he treats us more or less, he's paying me $16 an hour. We put in eight hours, only five, Monday to Friday. I sometimes have a chance to get work here at the corner, sometimes I'll get another a day, thanks to God.
>
> -Raul, Mexican immigrant

> From what other people say, maybe the money one gets is too low. But if you want to work…I have even worked for $70, $80. I see the way to work in order to get money. Many times the job is very hard, sometimes no, sometimes the pay is very low for the job one makes.

> But the goal is to send a little bit of money to be able to send money to the family. But overall the salary is very low.
>
> -Francisco, Mexican immigrant

> No, not me. If they say 30 and I can go, I go.
>
> -Celso, Mexican immigrant

> Yes, there are times that even though you don't want to accept a job, you have to do it due to the economic situation. For instance in the winter, I cannot work a lot due to the snow. When one gets to that point, one has to accept the job that he is offered. Now there are not as many opportunities as before. It's a little bit harder. One has to accept regardless if it's hard or bad paid.
>
> -Toti, Mexican immigrant

> No, no, there has been 2-3 times in which I wasn't paid, especially at the beginning. When I came here I didn't know the language, I didn't know how to complain. I wasn't paid for several days. But I didn't know what to do to get paid.
>
> -Mario, Mexican immigrant

> Unfortunately there's no way to make sure you are paid. You go to work and trust the employer is going to pay you, but you never know. It has happened to me before. Last year, it happened with one employer and also with some friends working in landscaping. I worked for one week and they still owe me three days. The worst is that most workers like us, day laborers, know the risk of not being paid.
>
> -Alex, Mexican immigrant

Women and Work

In the Farmingville community, finding work on the corners is reserved exclusively for men. While the men had the corners as a starting place to find work or a fall back alternative when no other work was available, the situation for women was very different. Women faced special challenges in finding work and sometimes unique employment opportunities were available. Women had different types of work available. The women reported working in three general types of employment situations, either: (1) independently cooking and cleaning in the houses of male

migrants as they worked; (2) working for businesses that don't generally ask for the documents required to work legally (commonly known as working "off the books," generally in service jobs in delis or professional cleaning); or (3) using fake papers to find regular employment. There have been recent government efforts, on the Federal and local levels, to crackdown on employers to ensure that all their employees have the proper documentation to work legally in the United States. The increased worksite enforcement and potential penalties have made working without proper documentation more difficult. The traditional "off the books" type of jobs continue, and some mainstream employers do not scrutinize the authenticity of the documents that are presented for employment.

> A woman earns less money than a man. A man gets a job faster because he can do many things a woman cannot do that.
> -Bertha, Mexican immigrant

> I work at night cleaning a school. And sometimes I go to houses and also cook. -Alma, Mexican immigrant

> When I came here my first job was at a Deli. Now I cook food to the guys and also deliver food at their homes. It is a job where you work a little bit less and earn a little bit more.
> -Sara, Mexican immigrant

> I worked at Taco Bell before. Now, due to papers they don't hire you anymore. -Sonia, Mexican immigrant

> Oh yes, because they want documentation and we don't have anything. We cannot work, if you don't know English and you don't have a social security number, you cannot work anywhere. That's why I couldn't get a job somewhere else because I don't have any documents.
> -Maria, Mexican immigrant

> In Mexico the economic situation is not good and you cannot find a job that easily. You need to be very well prepared. The funny thing is

> that they ask you for experience when you don't have it, and they don't give you the opportunity to have it. So I got the fake papers and I have been working with those since 2002.
>
> -Elizabeth, Mexican immigrant

When employers ignore documentation that is not real, there is no guarantee of success. Some employers take advantage of workers with fake documentation. They count on the workers not reporting abuses to keep their jobs and avoid detection.

> It's a little bit uncomfortable. You have to change your name or maybe your last name. Sometimes I'm afraid. For example when I go to apply somewhere or I have to take my papers maybe the police get me and they are going to realized that is not my real identity. It's a little bit hard because for example a month ago I worked at a factory with my fake name. So, there are a lot of people, who take advantage of you, they want to exploit you.
>
> **How do you think they know?**
>
> Because they check the papers and they realized they are not real. I think that they also take advantage of you. I think they think that since you are illegal, you don't have many rights to sue them or do something against them.
>
> -Elizabeth, Mexican immigrant

Women in the workplace had special issues related to employment. They were dually vulnerable to victimization, as women and as undocumented immigrants. In several instances, an employer tried to take advantage of the women due to their immigration status.

> Yes, I hope so. When I came here I start working two months afterwards. Even the bosses want you to go out with them or with the people they want you to. And you just cannot say anything, only "yes, yes, yes". All of them take advantage of women. There is no one single boss that one can say, wow, all of them take advantage of women. -Virginia, Mexican immigrant

The Work Experience is Difficult

The groups opposed to the presence of undocumented immigrants in the United States provide characterizations of the migrants as criminals, people who don't pay taxes, people seeking public benefits, not work. The migrants had their own interesting perspectives on the immigration debate and work.

> It's very sad when you hear in the news that Hispanic people don't pay taxes. I don't know if the American people are ignorant, but we pay. And for us is even worse, because Americans get money back. We never get that money back. I have worked for many years and do you know when I'm going to get those taxes back? Never. Week after week I'm taking taxes and that for years. How much money is the government taking from me? How many millions of people are in the same situation? And then you see someone and they tell you that you don't pay taxes. Maybe that wall that is been constructed in the border is made with our taxes. It's incredible. How do they dare to say that we don't pay taxes?
>
> -Juan, Mexican immigrant

> The boss told them: "You don't want me to hire an immigrant?" No, it's not good. "Okay then, send one of those people you have with you to work with me and to do what he would do." And what did they say? No. Then what do they want? If they want the work for themselves they should take the work, "I would give the work to any of you, but you also need to do the same thing he would do."
>
> -Roberto, Mexican immigrant

> Yes, because as much as the immigrant needs the American, the American needs the immigrant. The American doesn't like hard work. Things like carrying heavy things into a basement, they won't do that. I don't know if they are lazy or if they don't like to get dirty. That's why the immigrant is used. I mean is not that difficult to cut your own lawn.
>
> -Manuel, Mexican immigrant

> For instance, right now my boss is looking for people, and he cannot find anybody to work. Because Americans either don't want to do those jobs or ask for a lot of money.
>
> -Mario, Mexican immigrant

> But one always realizes that the Hispanic people get the same kind of job and we are always paid a little bit less. It happens in almost every job, it doesn't matter how good the employer is, they always pay you a little bit less. -Alex, Mexican immigrant

Winter has a special effect on the worker's lives. Many of the seasonal jobs that keep the migrants steadily employed are not available. At other times, especially with recent economic slowdowns, there has been a noticeable effect on the types of industries that use the migrant workers. At times, there can be little work available for day laborers, which has an adverse effect on their lives.

> Yes, because I have a lot of pressure from there. They want money. And I tell them that I don't have a work. When I worked I sent the money. But now I cannot. I don't even have money to pay the rent. There's no money either. Thanks to Manolete that told me to go to his house and that he would help me. And I'm living now there with them. -Jesus, Mexican immigrant

> No, I don't get enough money. My son had to stop studying because unfortunately I couldn't pay for his studies. I couldn't pay. I talked to my son, and I cried when I had to tell him that I couldn't pay. I cannot pay that debt. The truth is that I even haven't had a good job here to work everyday. That's what is going on. -Celso, Mexican immigrant

Life in general can be tough. Daily life can be a routine tied to work. Long work days and difficult, tiring jobs leave little time to do anything else.

> Good, I think I still can do it. A year you work here, is like if you use one year of your life. The work here is harder apart that you don't rest much. You don't realize that a year you work is a year you take from your life. It's always the same routine: you get up early everyday at 5 AM, you go to work, you return at 7 PM, it's the same thing, you arrive, you take a bath, you eat and then again to sleep and the next

> day the same routine. One looses his youth; you don't get to enjoy it much, because you had where to go to have fun. Here is just work and work. Over there you don't work but you know you are in your house. You can walk around freely and here you cannot do it. Sometimes ones get depressed here, just being in your room, always the same routine from home to work, from work to home.
>
> -Pedro, Mexican immigrant

Summary

Finding work can be difficult, especially in the winter, or when opponents protest at the open-air hiring sites where many workers go to find employers. Women have unique challenges in obtaining employment and have to work independently, either in jobs that traditionally don't require documentation, or by using phony papers. Some face workplace abuses due to their lack of legal status. Most men at some point have to deal with finding work at open-air hiring sites, known as "corners." Many of the workers either experienced, or knew of poor treatment or lack of pay by employers. The workplace abuses were not pervasive. The poor economy and increased number of immigrants has made finding work more difficult. Work was the primary aspect of the immigrant's lives. However, the experiences around living in a strange community, finding housing, interacting with community members, the fear of deportation, and the psychological issues of post-traumatic stress or isolation also influenced the immigrant's experience in Farmingville. These difficulties weighed on the decision to stay in the United States or return to Mexico. These issues will be reviewed in greater detail next.

Chapter Five: Living Arrangements, Life in the Community, Immigration and Deportations, and the Psychological Impact of Immigration

The migrant's primary purpose for coming to Farmingville was to find work. However, the migrants often had to live in a white, English-speaking community, while sharing the same geographic space and shopping at the same stores. The new migrant's physical appearance was different from the established community, and this, along with little or no English language skills, made their life difficult, at times. This distinction had an impact on housing and interactions with community members; there was a wariness of immigration authorities; and a psychological impact, on some, due to the lack of work, isolation/separation, post-traumatic stress from the journey or domestic violence. The influx of new immigrants into Farmingville, and the reaction by some of the local residents, turned Farmingville into the national center of the immigration debate for a number of years. These factors influenced opinions as to the benefits of immigration reform (for the migrants) and on the migrant's decision whether to stay in the United States or return permanently to Mexico.

Living Arrangements

The image of workers standing on street corners looking for work is the most visible aspect of the immigration debate in Farmingville. The responsibility to regulate immigration lies with the Federal government. One of the most controversial issues involving the presence of undocumented immigrants in the Farmingville

community is the image of overcrowded and potentially unsafe housing. The enforcement of housing codes is the responsibility of local government. It is not easy to move the United States government into action on the local level to apprehend, detain, and deport undocumented immigrants; however, local governments can be forced into action as a result of local pressure. The issue of immigrant housing has been an area of conflict in the Farmingville community.

Overcrowded and, at times, in unsafe housing was usually the way undocumented immigrants lived in Farmingville and across Long Island (Peddie and Lakin, 2006). Long Island traditionally has been among the top 10 most expensive places to rent in the nation (National Low Income Housing Coalition, 2003). The price of a rental unit often exceeds the income of many middle-class wage earners and is virtually unreachable for low-income wage earners. In addition, Long Island has one of the lowest ratios of rental housing to homeownership in the nation, 19% rental and 81% percent homeownership. In Suffolk, there are no cities and a few incorporated villages. Apartment buildings are scattered widely. In Farmingville, there is only one area that was built in the early 2000s that has apartment buildings; they are largely luxury rentals, and there is one government subsidized complex but undocumented immigrants are ineligible to rent. The rental housing available to undocumented immigrants is located in single family houses. Given the high cost of home ownership, landlords increased the number of tenants living in a rental house in order to offset the high cost of the house, which typically exceeded the capacities established in local housing codes. “We lived 20 to a house, because houses were heavily populated back then, when I came” stated Claudio, a Panamanian immigrant.

Luis, a Mexican immigrant, also noted "Before, when I came here the first time, I lived in a house with 20 or 25 people. It is very difficult to live that way, with so many people."

The public debate eventually forced the County government and the Town of Brookhaven to commence legal action in an attempt to end the overcrowding and potentially unsafe housing conditions. In June and July, 2005, County police and Town code enforcement personnel staged several highly publicized raids on 3 houses in Farmingville, each containing between 24 and 33 people. The houses were considered to be in serious violation of local housing codes (German, Jones and Ma, 2005). This action was not without controversy; the raids on the targeted houses displaced the undocumented immigrants onto the streets, and forced them to seek alternative housing. The immigrants were forced to find alternative housing on their own, since they were not eligible for government emergency housing assistance owing to their lack of legal status. The raids continued for weeks and by August, 2005, seven houses were closed, displacing 240 tenants with approximately another 150 houses, in Farmingville alone, under investigation (Jones, 2005). Eventually, a number of houses were shut down, while other landlords either voluntarily closed down their housing to avoid town legal action, or complied with town housing codes. The stated goal of the town and county to bring rental housing into compliance with local housing codes was largely achieved. The unstated goal of the anti-immigrant groups, to force the undocumented immigrants from the community, failed.

In the end, the landlords and migrants adapted to the changing political climate with regard to housing code enforcement. Housing that was once overcrowded now

had a smaller number of people, and in compliance with town codes. Landlords made up for some of the lost income, as a result of having less people living in a house, by increasing the rent.

> Right now we are 10 people. Before we were more, but right now the town asked to check houses. Before the landlords didn't care about how many people live in the house as long as they earned money. But now, there are less people living in the house but they charge more money. - Mario, Mexican immigrant

> Well, in the summer time we live, maximum, ten people in the house. Right now in the winter time since everyone goes back to Mexico well, right now there are only three people. Winter time is better because there are fewer people.
> - Carlos, Mexican immigrant

Although the number of workers living in a house was cut dramatically, the living conditions did not always improve. The Town of Brookhaven was able to obtain search warrants from the court, to enter a house; this search was based on surveillance by Town code enforcement personnel who observed a house and counted the number of people entering and exiting on a regular basis. If there were more people observed living at the house than permitted by town code, a search warrant was requested from the court. The only other way code enforcement staff could enter a house was if they were granted permission by the landlord or one of the tenants. If the number of people observed did not exceed town code, then no entry was gained into the house. Unless the tenants complained to the Town about the living conditions inside the house, no enforcement action could be initiated. If an undocumented immigrant were to complain, they risked losing their housing. However, if the town

forced people to leave because of health and safety violations, they would have few available alternate housing options.

> Yes, there are many things. The apartment is not a good place to live, because we don't have a stove to cook, we don't have a sink to wash things, to drink something. We don't have those things.
> **Did they take that?**
> Yes, because according to the owner he doesn't have a permit to rent that apartment. So the inspector came and they said he couldn't have the stove, he couldn't have the sink. He also took the laundry. Instead of getting better, the situation is getting worse there, because now he wants us to pay him more money instead of reducing the rent, because we don't have all the things we need.
> - Toti, Mexican immigrant

> … most of the people who rent here are Portuguese. They just don't care about if the bathroom works or not, the house is clean or not. They just care about getting their money.
> - Luis, Mexican immigrant

> Well, to live only two in one room, to be in good conditions, the bathroom, it could be better, there are bedbugs and at night you cannot sleep, and the owner doesn't get any fumigation.
> - Evelyn, Mexican immigrant

The quality of the housing stock varies. Regardless of the quality, most new immigrants are able to find housing within Farmingville and the neighboring communities. However, there is a group of migrants that live in the woods. This group may include newcomers, displaced renters, or those without money to pay the rent. There are several wooded locations within the Farmingville community that would be deep enough to allow people to live undetected from the roadways.

> When I came here I came and slept in the woods because I didn't… They had their "awnings" where they were living. I stayed there… An American would come to look for us and give us a place to take a

> shower. For me…I took into account what he was doing. If he was like that…I went…I never went because I didn't trust, for me that a man comes and looks for you to go take a shower…but they would go take a shower—to his house.
>
> - Claudio, Panamanian immigrant

Housing conditions and the type of housing available to new immigrants varies from area to area. Cities provide more types of housing opportunities for immigrants than suburbs or more rural areas. There is no body of literature or theory that addresses housing issues in general. Anecdotal information is the only data that is available. Anecdotal data is useful in describing and understanding housing opportunities and conditions in a particular location, but cannot be generalized. As with the selection process in finding a community to migrate to or in finding employment, securing housing is assisted by the same familial or social networks that have been established by the migrants.

Life in the Community

Farmingville had the distinction, at one point, of being labeled the "epicenter" of the immigration debate in the nation. It should be noted, that there were people in the community who assisted and welcomed the new immigrants, and there were those in the community who vehemently opposed their presence. The new immigrants were not passive actors in the national and community debate. In addition to their role as the focal point of the immigration issue, the new undocumented immigrants have their own thoughts, experiences, and interactions involving both their lives in the community and the immigration debate that has put them in the national spotlight.

The newcomers to the community have both affected and been affected by the immigration debate.

Life in Farmingville is very different from life in Mexico. Farmingville is a predominately white, middle-class community. There is a sizeable Portuguese population that has established itself within Farmingville and developed its own set of businesses and cultural activities. Prior to the influx of predominately Mexican immigrants, there was no significant Latino presence in Farmingville. This was very different from the traditional Mexican destination communities in the Southwest. Farmingville also was geographically distant from the traditional Long Island Latino communities, established in the 1950s and 1960s by Puerto Ricans that have now evolved into enclaves of newer, largely Central American immigrants.

> I was a little bit scared at the beginning, because I didn't know the language, jobs here are different. What you know how to do there, here is useless. For instance, houses here are made out of wood, in Mexico they are made out of concrete. Everything is different. It's a different life system.
>
> - Mario, Mexican immigrant

> I thought that the USA was nice, because I saw it on TV. But when I came I thought it was like my country. I was very shocked when I came and saw people talking and I couldn't understand anything. I was shocked. I didn't want to stay here. It's very difficult because you don't speak the language. The American dream doesn't exist. You see the people that come here, and make money and return to Mexico. But you never think that you need a car to get a job, you need English, and you have to pay the rent, the bills, food. You have to pay many things.
>
> - Martha, Mexican immigrant

Dispersed throughout Farmingville and the neighborhoods of surrounding communities, the new Mexican immigrants were intermixed with the established

white residents. The new immigrants travelled down the same streets, shopped in the same stores, and, if there were children, went to the same schools. The separation was by culture and language, not by spatial location. The respondents told very few stories about establishing good relations with community members. Many of the immigrants were ignored by community members and lived their separate, everyday lives. Most of the immigrants have a story, whether it was a perception or actual act, where they felt shunned by the established residents of the community.

> The situation in which we live doesn't allow you to feel like being in a community because there are a lot of obstacles to feel inside the community. You cannot go to certain places, certain stores, because they are always looking at what you do, how you move. It would take a long time to feel like in a community, I have seen people who have papers and even with that they don't feel free, but maybe is because the Americans make you be different.
>
> - Francisco, Mexican immigrant

> Yes. There is a big difference, because before you didn't hear anything bad about us, the immigrants. Now all the bad things that happen in the community, that is dirty, that there's a lot of trash, before you didn't hear that. When people know people they just know them for the bad things, and they just see that. They don't realize that we also do good things. That's the big difference. Before you didn't see that a lot, that the immigrants are dirty, that they throw a lot of trash. You didn't hear that before. Now you listen a lot to those things. Now there are more immigrants. It's bad that they just see that and not the good things.
>
> - Toti, Mexican immigrant

> Ok, I have been for 4 years taking my kids to the same place, same bus stop…everyday with the same people. Five days a week, every school year. And these are people who don't say hello to you, because of the language because they know you are not from here. And sometimes you listen to them, they turn around to look and laugh…like if they are making fun of you.
>
> - Yvette, Mexican immigrant

> This second time has been different, before people said "hi", "how are you doing?" to us. Now, they don't do that. They look at us as

> strangers, as if we are here to steal from them and we are not here to steal anything. We just come here to work because we need it and to help our families,
>
> - Diego, Mexican immigrant

One of the primary hiring areas in Farmingville is at the intersection of two of the primary large roads that run through the community. There is plenty of vehicle traffic and a convenience store that has a high volume of customers. Not only was this a highly visible hiring site, but at the height of the immigrant debate, it was also the site of Saturday and, at times, daily protests against the workers. The images of the protesters carrying signs with slogans such as "Use the military to deport illegal aliens" were shown worldwide in the media. The protesters harassed the workers and attempted to elicit reactions, in the form of horn honking, from the passing vehicles. The number of protesters was small, usually only five or six, but they were very visible and vocal. The presence of the weekly protesters was not unnoticed by the day laborers.

> There are anti immigrant people who bother people when they are looking for a job in the corners. They stop there with signs that say to deport immigrants that they don't want to have immigrants, that they pay taxes and that they are helping us with those taxes and that's not true because most of us pay taxes. There are companies who pay with a check, and the taxes are deducted. It's not true that they are helping us with those taxes. I know many friends who get a lot of money deducted. - Toti, Mexican immigrant

> Yes, well yes, the problems we have here in the corner that they don't want us to stand there. The racists that are there, they say we are delinquents, or… But we really come only to work, to work, nothing else. In addition, we only stand on the corner during certain times, only from 6AM to 9-9:30AM and we withdraw.
>
> - Martin, Mexican immigrant

> Well, discrimination, one of the situations I learned about here, is those people who are at the corners with signs. That's a very serious problem of discrimination. In my opinion, it is denigrating to walk by and see those signs.
>
> - Yvette, Mexican immigrant

After years of protest and publicity, the public tension in Farmingville simmered quietly out of the spotlight. Life went on and the undocumented immigrants continued to live and seek work in the Farmingville area. In November, 2008, a group of youths stabbed an Ecuadorean immigrant to death by in a town near Farmingville. The murder was deemed a hate crime because the victim was targeted solely for his ethnicity. The youths who committed the crime said they were "beaner hunting," looking for a Mexican to attack. The subsequent debate after the crime revolved around the police claims that violent hate crimes were rare occurrences. The group that killed this man was soon linked to other attacks (Dowdy, 2008). In fact, this led to many immigrants coming forward to report attacks on them, especially by youth. There were also questions raised regarding the police response to immigrant concerns. The respondents from Farmingville raised a number of concerns about safety in the community. One of the questions asked if the respondent was aware of gangs in the community. The question sought to discover if there may be Latino gangs that were preying on the undocumented immigrants. Only one response indicated that this was a possibility. A number of responses immediately pointed out that it was white teenagers that constituted the gangs that threatened them. White teenagers harassed and sometimes beat the undocumented immigrants in Farmingville, long before the incident involving the Ecuadorean immigrant in the neighbouring town.

> There are many youngsters that get you at night, I don't know, sometimes they beat you up, I don't know. One time a friend was walking home, it was about 11 o'clock and he was attacked. One doesn't feel very safe walking at night.
>
> -Jose, Mexican immigrant

> It is mostly young kids who do that. They sometimes throw things at us as we are walking down the road. Sometimes they fire at us with BB guns. This is the danger we run.
>
> - Rodrigo, Mexican immigrant

> The best thing to do is to put your head down and keep walking and have control. I don't want to get in trouble because most likely they will believe the teenagers, since we are Hispanic and we don't speak English fluently.
>
> - Martin, Mexican immigrant

> But you know there are these kids that congregate around the K-mart and the Stop and Shop. They are 10 or 12 years old and play with their bikes. They yell things at us, they try to offend us and try to run over us with their bikes. We can't say anything, because they are kids. In the end, we would lose more. So we try to go around them. Because when we go there they ask for money: "Give me a dollar, give me a quarter" they ask for money.
>
> - Manuel, Mexican immigrant

The police have responded to the safety needs of the immigrants. The police continue to protect the immigrants from attacks and respond to crimes against undocumented immigrants. Despite the swift arrests in a number of high profile cases against undocumented immigrants, and regular meetings with the immigrant community representatives, several respondents voiced a concern about relations with police.

> One cannot count on the police because they make fun of you. In theory they have to take care of everybody, but as soon as they realize

> you are illegal they make fun of it, or just don't take it very seriously.
> - Luis, Mexican immigrant

> Sometimes we have to use the car. It's not because we like to do it, but because we have to, because of the weather. You are going to a store to buy something to eat, and if you want to walk there it's impossible, the cold, the snow…so you have to use the car just to go to the store. You go to the street and you are scared, you see a police car and you start shaking and you haven't done anything, you haven't killed anybody, but you think they are going to stop you and ask you for your license. - Sonia, Mexican immigrant

> Yes, one goes out and so but there's always a risk that he can be caught. Because one can go driving and maybe they see the plates from South Carolina, or Virginia, from any country, and they stop you. And even though you haven't done any thing they give you 6 or 7 tickets. Just because you don't speak English well and for being immigrant and for being Hispanic they take you and give you 6 or 7 tickets. Sometimes they give you even 15 tickets. Just because they stop you and the policemen are racist. Most of the police are racists. There are just a few who are not like that.
> - Virginia, Mexican immigrant

The new immigrants in Farmingville maintain a strong presence within the community. They continue to live, work, and, at times, raise families. Despite being a part of the community for over a decade, they have not blended into the community. There is a distinct culture and network that differs from the mainstream culture. Several businesses have opened that specifically target the Spanish-speaking population. It appears that when immigrants move to non-traditional destinations, there is difficulty blending into the fabric of the community. The result is more coexistence than integration.

Immigration and Deportation

The respondents clearly were aware that immigration raids had taken place. The fairness and purpose of the raids is called into question. The question arises whether the raids truly target fugitives or if a secondary agenda exists.

> No, well you know they say here that they can take you from your home, from anywhere. Well, according to the information that we hear that people are taken from their homes in the morning hours. I mean, the truth is that here, we don't have anything.
>
> - Carlos, Mexican immigrant

> Yes, about three years ago, I don't remember. I had some friends who lived in a house nearby. They were taken and they couldn't do anything. They took them as if they had done something horrible.
>
> - Rafael, Mexican immigrant

> I see the news that they are looking for criminals but they find people who are not criminals, like family. I think that that thing that they are looking for criminals it's a lie.
>
> - Toti, Mexican immigrant

There was a clear distinction in the responses of the men and women in reaction to the questions regarding immigration authorities and the fear of deportation. Most men appeared to have an attitude that I labeled "whatever." There was no real fear of immigration enforcement. The risk of apprehension and deportation was part of the risks associated with migrating to the United States illegally. The men would accept their fate and, most likely, return to the United States again.

> No, fear…no because since we come in, well since I came in I knew that I was here illegally and that at any time the cops can catch me and I will be deported because, that is what we have to accept and the government is in its right. So, fear, no I am not afraid. I would be afraid if I had killed or robbed here, but since I don't owe anything or have killed anybody I am not afraid. With them catching me and

> sending me to my country I am happy. But it would make me angry that the things, that with so much effort I have gathered, are left to those who haven't worked for them.
>
> - Roberto, Mexican immigrant

> No. Maybe I am deported but in two or three days I can be here again. For me it is easier. I guess that people from Guatemala or other countries are afraid, because it's more difficult for them, because they have to cross their border, then another one, then Mexico…
>
> - Luis, Mexican immigrant

> Yes. We are afraid of being deported, but like I said we are here right now and they kick us out right now, more than anything we want a better life. They kick us out, and like I was telling you, and in a week we are back here again. We have the desire to better ourselves and they don't let us so we come back here. Like I was telling you, they kick 100 out and 200 come back.
>
> - Hugo, Mexican immigrant

Many of the women that were interviewed had families. The presence of children in the family increased the respondent's concern over apprehension by immigration authorities. The presence of children born in the United States and who, thus, are citizens complicates the issue further. United States citizens cannot be deported, and there is fear that children can be taken by the government while the parents are deported. One respondent went as far as making legal arrangements for their child to be returned to them in Mexico if they were deported.

> Yes, of course yes, especially since I'm already in their records, of course yes. Before I didn't care much, but now I have my daughter and my baby.
>
> - Alba, Mexican immigrant

> Well because of the reason that we are here without documents, I don't feel so safe in going out to the street, in other words, free like in my country. Above all with the things that have been happening, that they are doing raids, they have not done them here or as far as I know they have not done them but I figure it will not be long. Above all, I am fearful for my daughters, that they could be separated from us. Since

> from the beginning I did not want to be separated from them, I came to be with them, and now that they could separate us. That is my greatest fear that something like that would happen.
>
> - Maria, Mexican immigrant

> We went to the notary and we have done some papers. I say to my husband that if we get deported I don't want my baby to stay here. So we wrote a paper saying that a friend of my husband is responsible for my kid to bring us the kid back.
>
> - Joanna, Mexican immigrant

It is clear that the regular activities of life continue while overshadowed by the threat of immigration. It is a known and acceptable risk. Perhaps the situation was best summed up as follows:

> No, I'm not scared of immigration agents. I'm more scared of those people who defend the white supremacy, like the minutemen.
>
> -Mario, Mexican immigrant

The Psychological Impact of Immigration

One unexpected finding was the psychological impact of the migration experience. Traditional advocacy efforts are targeted to assist the new immigrants with work, housing, health, and recreation needs. Yet little appears to be known about, and few resources are available to deal with, the psychological issues. The psychological issues identified by the migrants fell into 5 major categories. The first category revolves around the work experience.

> You get here tired of working ready to go to sleep. You don't take care of your children. There's no time. And when there's time is in winter time, then you get sad, because you don't have money to pay the rent, you don't have a job, you don't have the Christmas present ... Here

they celebrate Christmas the 25th. Over there is almost the entire month. And all the family is together. And you look here and there is snow, cold. It's very difficult. For me it's very difficult. There are people who are more positive.

- Don, Mexican immigrant

Well, one gets more depressed, because there's no work. You are at home all the time, and one gets very depressed in winter.

- Jose, Mexican immigrant

If we had more jobs and more opportunities things would be different. Sometimes you don't feel well because you don't find a job, because you come here to work and you don't find anything and you start feeling bad and isolate yourself from people.

- Elizabeth, Mexican immigrant

Another area is the perception of feeling isolated. Isolation can be from not having family or close friends within the community. Isolation can be from feeling like a stranger in a strange land, due to language and cultural barriers.

Well, when I came here, the problem with the language, that when you come here you are not accepted. Mostly the cultural shock and the fact of not being accepted.

- Alex, Mexican immigrant

Yes, in Mexico we prefer to have beans and tortillas but be happy. Here we have also that but we miss the family, Mexico, the freedom we have there, to be able to go anywhere. You are in your house, with your family, you are with your parents, the grandparents, the uncles, brothers, with everybody. Here I live with my wife, and my daughters, but that's it, only us. You can see people but we don't know each other.

- Don, Mexican immigrant

I try to help my husband, but the first thing for me is my family. And when I leave this country the first thing I'm going to take is my family I'm not going to take with anything from here, just my family.

- Joanna, Mexican immigrant

The most common area that created problems for the Farmingville immigrants was missing their family back in Mexico. It is particularly difficult when a husband leaves his wife and children behind, or a mother leaves her children in Mexico. The migrants also suffer from missing parents or siblings. A large percentage of the respondents had children that they left behind back in Mexico.

> Wintertime is the worse time because one doesn't have a job; you are all day long at home. If you go out you know you are going to spend money, so you try not to go out in order not to spend money. Then is when you start thinking about all the things you don't have. That's the most difficult thing. When I'm with my friends I try not to think about that. Also important dates like Christmas, those are times that I prefer them not to exist. One gets very sad, and thinks a lot about the family, and it's very painful not to be able to be with them. Sometimes I wish it were a normal day, but it's impossible because one sees other people who have their families here, theirs friends, and they celebrate. Even though you are with them, you think that they are with someone that they are not alone. And I look myself into the mirror and I asked myself, who am I with? Who do I have?
>
> - Toti, Mexican immigrant

> AA (Alcoholics Anonymous). But yes I liked it, because they talked to you and if you get it good and if not, as they say, if you don't want to give it up that's up to you. But yes I liked it. I thank them because so far I feel good with my family, I talked to them, I don't called them anymore at 11 or 12 at night, because I was drinking with my friends and think about my family when I was drunk and calling them and waking them up. I don't do that anymore and I thank them for that.
>
> - Max, Mexican immigrant

> Well, for example like today, we didn't get work so I will pass some time here so as to not go back to my room and be there thinking only. Sometimes I try to distract myself, go for a walk, go to the library, and go to the store to look only. All of that to distract myself, because if you stay at home you get nostalgic and start thinking about how they might be down there (Mexico). And that is why, more than anything we go to the corner even if it is raining and we are there for the same reason.
>
> - Hugo, Mexican immigrant

> How can I tell you…it has changed a lot…it's not the same to have them close and see what they do to have them far and just listen to them…it's not the same…times goes by and they grow up. It's different. Here it is just working and that's it. I'm here but my mind is there, thinking about what they are doing. I don't feel well with myself.
>
> - Sara, Mexican immigrant

> Yes, because one leaves her family, it's very sad because you don't know what can happen to you. It's very dangerous. You don't know if you are going to see your family again when you get back. And you come here and you wonder if your father and your mother are doing ok. Maybe they are sick and you don't know, because you are away. If something happens to them you are here and you cannot go.
>
> - Bertha, Mexican immigrant

For some, a very difficult trip into the United States has left a lasting impact. The personal suffering, attacks, passing dead bodies, or losing members of their group along the way was very traumatic. Villagers in rural Mexico rarely see such sites. Many of the immigrants may suffer Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

> Yes, when I came here, I didn't eat, I was disgusted from having seen all that blood, to see all that. When I ate I felt like if I was seeing that in that moment. I wanted to talk to my brother, I explained him everything, but what could he say, he tried to help me. The first week I was here, I was very bad, I just wanted to return to my country. I didn't want to stay here. I didn't want to know anything about this country, because I wasn't doing well. I had that dream everyday, and unfortunately my brother didn't have information to get psychological help. Nothing, I had to overcome that alone. I haven't overcome that yet, because it's still there. Things I don't like to remember.
>
> - Joanna, Mexican immigrant

Finally, once again, women faced unique problems. Domestic violence may not be uncommon among married or cohabitating women. Social isolation or issues revolving around work, either treatment at work, or lack of work, can trigger

domestic violence. Social networks may mitigate some of the difficulties, but access to professional resources to assist the women may be limited.

> Actually since I met him he liked a lot drinking. I fell in love with him without knowing him. I met him and I thought he was very nice. But the problem, since I met him, was that he liked drinking and I allowed him to hit me because every time he drank he always hit me. Actually that's why we got divorced because he was hitting me too much here in the USA I said, that's enough. And we got divorced he lives in a different place, I live in another place. I am sharing now my life with another person. And that's what I do.
>
> - Sonia, Mexican immigrant

Summary

Psychological problems are experienced by the immigrants due to work experience, isolation from family and friends, missing family back in Mexico, residual trauma from the difficult journey, and, in the case of women, domestic violence. The fear of being detained and deported by immigration authorities is always present, but immigrants continue to follow normal daily routines. Women, with children, are fearful of what will happen to their children should they be detained. There are problems with harassment and violence from the white teenage youths in the community. The immigrants also were bothered by the anti-immigrant protesters that appeared at the street corner hiring sites. The immigrants have concerns with treatment by the police. Despite their living in the same neighborhoods, the immigrants felt ignored by the community-at-large. Housing conditions have improved greatly from earlier unsafe and overcrowded situations, but there still are problems with landlords.

Next, there will be an exploration of the impact of the journey, the separation from family in Mexico, and the difficult life the immigrants have in the community, on the decision either to stay in the United States or return to Mexico. The immigrant's views on the potential impact of immigration reform on their lives, as well as their ideas on how to improve the current situation in the United States, will also be examined.

Chapter Six: Reform, Solutions, and the Desire to Return to Mexico

There was a great deal of difficulty for the undocumented immigrants that migrated to Farmingville. Many experienced leaving friends and family behind in their home country. The migrants often faced a difficult journey to get to Farmingville. Trying to find work in a community that has not necessarily welcomed their presence was often difficult. Many had to deal with employers, landlords, and community members who are, at times, ready to take advantage of them. The migrants had to live with a constant fear of immediate apprehension, detention, and deportation by immigration authorities. Each one of these hardships can take a toll on an individual. Many migrants experienced more than one of the hardships.

The hardships that may be encountered in the migration process were known prior to the journey. Yet, they still came to the United States, and they came to Farmingville. Immigration is driven by economic need or the desire to improve their lives, or the lives of their families. Little is expected in making the journey, but much is hoped for, especially in finding the job that will be the means to their financial success in the United States.

The rules regulating immigration have been set by the United States government, and it is that same government that doesn't enforce the rules evenly. The laws, living arrangements, work conditions, and treatment by the Farmingville community are usually beyond the control of the immigrants. While the migrants live their everyday lives in a situation over which they have little control, they are not without ideas of

their own regarding the promise of immigration reform, how they would address the problems they face in the community, and their plans for the future.

Immigration Reform and Solutions

People on both sides of the immigration debate will tell you that the immigration system in the United States is broken. The laws on the books do not address the reality of what is happening with immigration in the United States today. Sporadic and inconsistent enforcement not only has an impact on local communities, but on the unauthorized immigrants that have come to the United States. The restrictionists who are attempting to prevent migration and wish to remove all undocumented immigrants in the United States, and the advocates who are attempting to find workable solutions that acknowledge and accept the presence of the undocumented immigrants, have their opinions on how to fix the system. The undocumented immigrants at the center of the debate also have their own thoughts on immigration reform.

The most obvious outcome sought by the undocumented immigrants is to have the ability to travel back and forth to Mexico, to have the opportunity to visit and reconnect with family. It is the opportunity to participate in family events and deal with crises back in Mexico. Lastly, it is the opportunity to deal with slow economic times or the lack of employment during the winter.

> I could go to visit my family, that's what I wish the most, to see them more often. My parents are old and I don't know how long they are going to be around and to be able to be with them, to tell them how much I love them, how important they are for me. To be here legally would help me to go there to visit them, to be close to them, to be with my kid. He is the most important thing. To be able for him to grow up

close to his father, to be able to tell him the good and the bad things, to guide him, to help him.

- Toti, Mexican immigrant

Oh, very happy, imagine, that I'm legal and quiet job, without the presence of immigration, and nothing like that. I could visit my family more often and come back here, go there, be with them, take things to my kids, to my wife. That would be very nice. That's a dream, I think.

- Marcos, Mexican immigrant

I don't know. If I could take care of papers, I would just come here to work for some periods and I would return to Mexico to be with my family.

- Sonia, Mexican immigrant

The immigrants' primary reason for coming to the United States is to work. Without the ability to work legally, employment options are limited, and workers are subject to exploitation at any given time. The men are forced to work in the type of jobs that are the least susceptible to detection such as construction and landscaping where worksites are not static and the workforce is variable, in traditional "off-the-books" type jobs, or obtain fake documents to obtain regular jobs. Even worse, they are being forced to seek day labor on the corner that can produce variable results. Women are relegated to find "off-the-books" employment or by using fake documents. The corners are not an option for the women in Farmingville. Immigration reform would provide the immigrants an opportunity to work legally. There would be more employment options, jobs might be steady and with benefits, and wages would likely rise for immigrant workers as they gain skills and experience.

The only hope is to be able to come here legally and to go out, to be able to work legally. To be able to come here legally and go out the

> same way, not to hide from immigration or not to come here to New York, the farthest from the border to avoid been deported.
>
> - Francisco, Mexican immigrant

> It would be more stable. Stable because I would be a good person. I wouldn't have to wait in the cold 5 or 6 hours and that is if you find a job. With papers you could work in a factory, open your business, you would have better job opportunities.
>
> - Manuel, Mexican immigrant

> Yes, to have papers, to have a number because here you are identified with a number, not with your name. To have a number that opens doors for you and gives you respect and you don't have to live in fear. That would be the only thing, to have papers.
>
> - Lulu, Mexican immigrant

Legal documents are the key to many things that United States citizens take for granted. A social security card is the primary document required to work in the United States legally. Undocumented immigrants are not eligible to obtain social security cards. Non-citizen immigrants who are in the United States legally can obtain a resident alien card or "green card" to obtain a social security card and work legally. Undocumented immigrants in New York are not eligible for driver's licenses or non-license identification cards. A driver's license is the key identification document required for many things such as opening bank accounts, applying for credit, and airline travel. In an effort to allow their citizens to have some official form of identification, the Mexican government has made arrangements to issue an official identification card called a "matricular consular" card to Mexican citizens in the United States. The matricular card was accepted as proper identification by a number of United States banks, opening banking services to non-legal immigrants. It can also be used as a passport for returning to Mexico (Suro, 2005). Immigration reform will

provide the opportunity to obtain legal documentation and open up a range of services and opportunities.

> Well, without no doubt it would be very different, in the sense that I could do many things I cannot do right now like have a driving license, opening a bank account, having a health insurance, that right now I cannot get. In the future, having the opportunity of starting my own business, buying a house…that would change, it would be in that sense easier. Other things would surely not change, like the rejection for being Hispanic, for having a different color. That doesn't change, people with those ideas don't know if you are legal or not. They just judge you for your color.
>
> - Alex, Mexican immigrant

> To be more united, to become legalized or to get a permit to work and for it to be revised once a year and to be able to have a driver's license for one year and have to renew it once a year. This would allow people to cross border and see their families.
>
> - Carmen, Mexican immigrant

> Because that's never an issue for the government, for the president. And they know we are here, but this is not important for them. We don't come here to steal anything. We don't exist, we don't have a social, we cannot have an account in the bank, many things.
>
> - Martha, Mexican immigrant

Respondents had no shortage of opinion for improving the lives of the undocumented immigrants in Farmingville. The most obvious solution was immigration reform that would open many doors for making life better in the community and in assisting them in the fulfillment of their goals when they decided to come to the United States. Aside from documents and the ability to work legally, the most common desire of the respondents was the desire to be accepted. They are here for a purpose and do not want to harm anyone. There is a desire to just be respected as human beings and be part of the community.

> Those who think we are not good are some Americans but they are just a few. The people to whom we are worked for, that people that know them change the way they see us when they get to know us. As a group it's hard, but when one deals with an American they see that we are not the way they thought we were. We are normal people, we have feelings, we want to do good things, we come here to work because we need it, not because other reasons.
>
> - Toti, Mexican immigrant

> I hope the government one day realizes that we are not different, that we are all the same. For god we are all brothers and sisters and I feel that there's no difference in that sense. And Americans should understand that, that because they are white they are not better than us. Nobody is better than anybody. I hope the government gives us an opportunity; maybe I'm not here anymore, but maybe for a nephew. If you had papers we would pay taxes, but if you buy a soda, you pay taxes. The only taxes we don't pay are the ones that Americans pay. Ok, we don't pay taxes but we don't have benefits. We are even in that sense. We don't pay taxes but we don't have benefits. We don't ask them but we are not taking anything from them. I think one day they could give us that. Those are dreams and Mexicans sometimes just live out of dreams. I hope the government listens to us one day.
>
> - Maritza, Mexican immigrant

> I think the best solution would be that the American community gives us a space. We are not to going to take anything, we are not to steal anything, everything is theirs. If we come here is to improve our life quality and our economy with our own families. We didn't come here to steal or to take anything away from them.
>
> - Annibal, Mexican immigrant

A more united immigrant community was a final area that would improve their lives. This could be done through organizing the immigrants through community organizations or activities, such as sports. There is also a desire for the migrants to reunite with their families. Immigration reform would allow the migrants to return home for visits and stay better connected with their families. Another alternative would be to allow families to come to the United States.

> Well I think there is more disunion than union, but we try to be a little bit unified and to make a strong organization. Right now I am part of organizing a soccer league for day laborers. People in the community like soccer a lot. And through soccer we try to make them aware, and also this talks like the IAC I told you about, we also are in touch with some church and other organizations. We try to make an organization through the soccer league, to make a community and to organize people. It is hard, but we are getting something.
>
> - Alex, Mexican immigrant

> I think to have my family here, my children, to have a good job. That's all. But it's not possible now because things are getting harder to cross the border.
>
> - Max, Mexican immigrant

Racism is one of the biggest perceived obstacles to acceptance in Farmingville. The immigrants feel that they are in the community to work and not cause trouble. They do not understand the poor treatment that they have received and why some members of the community can't accept them. The sharp rhetoric used by the groups that oppose the presence of the Mexican immigrants in the community is hurtful. It is not merely one side versus another. The undocumented immigrants are publicly called "invaders" and "criminals" in the media, and in materials distributed within the community. Politicians take positions that oppose the immigrants in campaign material and propose symbolic legislation to stir up emotions and perhaps secure votes from some segments. Despite all the rhetoric, there has been no significant piece of legislation that has been passed, or action taken, that directly affects the presence of the undocumented Latino immigrants in Farmingville. Symbolism and rhetoric have been strong, but action has been lacking. Both nationally and locally, emotions drive the immigration agenda more than anything else.

> For my daughter, for my son, for whatever it comes. I hope he or she finds a better world, a country where you don't find racism, where you are not discriminated by the color of your skin, or a number. To be really a free country, to be what they say when you come here. I hope that they find something better, and something is easy.
>
> - Lulu, Mexican immigrant

> Why? Why do they always pick on Mexicans, the people from the south? Why they never check into a Dutch, a Polish, a Greek, an Irishman? There are people that come from the North and nobody checks their immigration situation. But you come from the South, and due to the color of our skin, everybody turns racist.
>
> - Annibal, Mexican immigrant

> Maybe they feel they belong, but you have to ask that to the Americans if they belong or not, because this is their country. I have seen that many speak good English, or Hispanics, who are graduated from the university, at the end for them they are Hispanic, it doesn't matter how many degrees they have. I would like to say that I hope that in about ten, fifteen years the racism in this country is over.
>
> - Luis, Mexican immigrant

The Final Decision: Stay in the United States or Return to Mexico

Despite popular opinion about Mexicans migrating and settling permanently in the United States, almost all the respondents expressed a desire to return to Mexico. This fact contrasts with the large number of Mexican immigrants that have chosen to remain in the United States. Migrants that choose to stay appear to be settled in traditional destination states. These traditional destinations have large established Mexican communities and ethnic enclaves with Mexican-owned and oriented businesses, as well as familial and community-based support systems such as churches and human service organizations. The school systems and government infrastructure are better equipped and able to handle the needs of the Mexican population.

Undocumented immigrants that have settled in new, non-traditional communities have fewer supports and don't easily blend into largely white areas. Many new destination communities lack the infrastructure to support the new immigrants with bilingual services and organizations that can provide support. This does not appear to be the case in Farmingville. The migration to these non-traditional destination areas may be driven by available employment opportunities, the ability to earn money to meet their economic goals, and a desire to return home, rather than resettle. In the new destinations, there is more demand and less competition for the low-wage type of labor that the new immigrants usually provide (McConnell, 2008; Kandel and Parrado, 2005). In addition, most of the Mexican immigrants in Farmingville are males that are either single or have their families in Mexico, which reduce their ties to the new community and increase their desire to move back. Just as the social and family networks facilitate movement into the Farmingville, the same ties facilitate movement back to Mexico. As discussed earlier, the migration activity is circular.

> I think that if you asked 100 Mexicans I'm sure 85 would say that they want to come back to Mexico. One time, and I don't want to offend this country, I adore it just for the fact that they gave me a job. One time a friend, and Afro-American asked me why I was in this country. He asked me that because I always talk very good about my Mexico, because Mexico is very beautiful. He said "do you like my country?" And I said straight "No" "Why?" because of everything, the houses, the type of construction, because for me everything is fake, from my point of view everything is disposable. You can have the best car if you have a good credit but it's not yours. In Mexico you have a bad car, but it's yours, you don't owe anything. That's the difference, that freedom.
>
> - Juan, Mexican immigrant

> This is the first year that I have stayed here because this is probably the last…the last year I am here in June…December of this year I plan

> to go back and not return. I hope, I hope to god who knows, that I don't have the need to. I don't want to come back partly because of my age, I am 45 years old I have spent 6 years here; I don't want to come back.
>
> - Roberto, Mexican immigrant

> And I think that us as Mexicans we do not have the intention of staying here. It is rare to find somebody that says I am going to stay here for ever or that I am going to bring my family here. I personally would not like it, that I am going to have my kids here. Why because I think my life is a little difficult.
>
> - Martin, Mexican immigrant

Summary

Almost all of the Mexican immigrants interviewed expressed a desire to return to Mexico permanently, some time in the future. Immigration reform would make their lives easier in a number of ways. The immigrants would be able to return home and stay connected to their families, find employment more easily, be able to obtain driver's licenses, and be able to open bank accounts. Some of the migrants have experienced psychological issues due to their inability to find work or the daily routine involved with working, isolation within the community, separation from their families, post-traumatic stress from the journey to the United States, or domestic violence.

While the risk of deportation is always present, most migrants go on with their lives and will accept their fate if they are detained and deported. Most of the undocumented immigrants are aware of the threat of immigration authorities detaining and deporting them; however, they go on with their lives, basically ignoring the threat, and accepting whatever might happen.

There are many threats faced by undocumented immigrants in the community from police stops, to being harassed or robbed, usually by youth, and by the protesters that they face on the corners while looking for work. Interactions with members of the mainstream white community are mixed, both good and bad, but more often than not the newer immigrants are ignored by community members. The houses where the immigrants live are largely decent, although there are landlords that don't care. In the past, houses were much more crowded before government crackdowns on landlords.

Now that the immigrants have been heard from, next, the focus will turn to immigration theory and prior research.

Chapter Seven: Overview of Current Immigration Theory, Female Migration

The immigrants have told their stories regarding the decision to come to the United States, the difficulty of the journey to cross the border, and their experiences once here. Women have described additional gender-specific issues in the migration process. The study has provided a better understanding of the migration experience to a community that was not a traditional destination for Latino, or undocumented migrants. The experiences of the immigrants that came to Farmingville are likely similar to the journey of other undocumented immigrants into the United States, especially into non-traditional immigration destinations; although this requires further empirical documentation. A body of literature examines immigration theory and the immigration experience of women, in particular, from Mexico. A review of that literature will be presented to provide support for the insights that have emerged from the interview process. It should be noted that there is little theoretical literature on the illegal border crossings. The literature mostly centers on the statistics of immigration; that is the number of border crossings, apprehensions, deaths, or the costs both to the immigrant and the government. The literature emphasizes the difficulty of the journey that was described in detail in the interviews.

Current Immigration Theory

The interviews were clear that this group of immigrants came to the United States, and in particular to Farmingville, for economic reasons. The economic reasons fall into two primary sub-categories. First, the poor economy in Mexico does not

provide sufficient wages to allow an adequate standard of living, thus forcing immigrants to move in order to improve their financial situation or the quality of their lives. Second, there is a strong desire for individuals to improve their lives, the lives of their families, or secure a better financial future for their family. Since the means for reaching those goals lies beyond the capacity of the local Mexican communities to provide the necessary financial opportunities, migration offered the best opportunity. Many of the immigrants specifically selected Farmingville because they had a direct connection to the community. Most have family members either currently in the community or have been in the community in the past. Others have friends, acquaintances, or fellow Mexican villagers located in Farmingville. Very few of the respondents found their way to Farmingville by chance.

The analysis of the interviews in this study offers some understanding of the factors behind the migration of this set of Mexican immigrants to Farmingville. The validity of this empirically grounded model may be placed in the context of current immigration theory. An overview of immigration theory as it relates to Mexicans and the Farmingville community follows.

Current immigration theory falls into five major categories. Most are rooted in economic theory. Neoclassical, new economics, segmented labor market, and world systems theories use quantitative approaches to analyze the underlying reasons behind labor flows from Mexico to the United States. Social capital theories use a more sociological approach to examine migration networks and experiential knowledge as influential factors in the decision and need to migrate, as well as the selection of a destination community.

Neoclassical Economic Theory

Neoclassical economic theory takes the more traditional economic approach utilizing the concepts of supply and demand. A number of economic factors push groups of people from one place to another, providing an available supply of labor. Receiving destinations provide the demand by pulling labor to meet their needs. Howe and Jackson (2004) undertook a survey of economic practice and theory to examine migration. A review of economic literature related to migration indicates that neoclassical economic theory is inspired by observations that people move from poor countries with youthful populations who outstrip their capital, to rich countries where the opposite is true and labor opportunities exist. The decision to move is based on an individual's assessment as to whether wage differentials between the existing country and the destination community is greater than the cost of making the move.

Massey and Espinosa (1997) reviewed the economic literature on binational wage gaps and applied the theory to Mexican migration. A person in Mexico will determine the difference between what they are able to earn in Mexico and what they can potentially earn in the United States. If the difference is positive, they will migrate. The economic equation is not strictly based on straight wages. There are a number of factors related to the cost of immigration that must be evaluated such as the chances of being apprehended, the difficulty of the trip, and employer penalties. [These costs are not associated with legal migration.] The full range of factors enter into a basic cost/benefit calculation by the potential migrant (Todaro and Maruszko 1987). The relative cost/benefit will determine the decision to migrate.

The economic theory behind the neoclassical perspective views people as being traded the same way goods are traded across international boundaries (Borjas 1989). People consider the value of the various alternatives and choose the best option given the financial and legal constraints that regulate the international migration process. Immigration policies alter the number and composition of the immigration flow. Equilibrium is based on these factors. Equilibrium is arrived at when migrants move from a low wage area to a high wage area and thereby place a downward pressure on wages in destination countries and an upward pressure in wages in sending countries (Massey et al 1994). At some point, the two pressures equalize and equilibrium is attained. At the point of equilibrium, the wage gap between the sending and destination countries is the cost of immigration.

Howe and Jackson (2004) report that neoclassical theories are under attack due to unrealistic "ideal market" assumptions that cannot exist as well as disinterest in taking into account the human factors such as the role of social and cultural ties. Massey and Espinosa (1997) examined a number of variables related to immigration from Mexico. Little support was found for a truly cost/benefit explanation of migration. For example, the increased border crossing costs owing to inflation/devaluation of Mexican currency or increased U.S. policy to enforce border enforcement would increase the cost of migration and lead to a decrease in immigration flow. Yet this trend has not occurred. Instead, those variables associated with social (migrant networks) and human capital (education and migration experience) were better predictors of decisions to migrate.

New Economics Framework

Neoclassical economics theories assume that all markets are complete and well functioning. Immigrants take advantage of disequilibrium in the labor markets in sending and receiving countries. The new economics framework models assume that the key markets -- labor and futures, capital, and insurance -- are imperfect, inaccessible, or non-existent, resulting in market failure (Massey and Espinosa 1997). Market failure in sending countries limit the villager's ability to change occupations and substantially increase their wages, buy insurance, or have access to the capital needed to improve their lives within their home communities.

Using the market failure framework, migration occurs for a number of reasons. Higher earnings and the need to maximize income are an obvious cause. Remittances realize higher incomes (Howe and Jackson 2004). The higher wages then serve to diversify incomes and insure against risks. The risks in the Mexican economy (Massey and Espinosa 1994) include price inflation and currency devaluation. The wage differential in this framework appears to be a weak and secondary link to migratory behavior. Economic development alone in the sending countries would therefore do little to stop the flow of migrants, owing to the influence and lack of control of larger national economic factors.

Market failure exists as a result of access to capital to finance consumer purchases and production activities. Wages and interest rates are key factors in accessing capital. Those who own homes, land, or businesses have less need for capital, and will have lower odds of migration (Massey and Espinosa 1994). Opportunities to obtain capital are found more in urban, developed, and dynamic

countries. There is less opportunity in agrarian communities to obtain capital. The inability to gain scarce capital is a prime motivation for migration from agrarian communities. The motivation to obtain capital often exceeds the desire to increase income. Gains in capital are realized through the ability to buy a home or land. Those who return home with this new found capital become part of a process that triggers a cycle, sending newer migrants out to match the gains of others. Massey and Espinsosa indicate that home and business ownership (capital) not only lower the odds of initial migration, but also lower the odds of repeat migrations as well. Stark and Taylor (1989, 1991) use the term "relative deprivation" to describe the circulation process. A person does not have something (*x*); he sees someone else with *x* or himself with *x* in the future; he wants *x;* and then sees if it is feasible that he have *x.* The decision to migrate will depend on the person's perception of their relative deprivation within the particular reference group. The relative deprivation model controls for income gains in migration. Income gains are still a significant factor in the decision to migrate. Stark and Taylor speculate that a more equitable distribution of income in local sending communities would reduce the risk of relative deprivation and decrease migration.

Under the new economics framework, two observations have been made on the nature of the migration. Migrants do not move as a family, but rather as family subgroups that move back and forth (Taylor 1999). It is not a single decision by a family head, but rather a complex set of decisions. Family members are sent seeking to maximize income in the form of remittances and to diversify the sources of income to insure against risks. Remittances, in turn, set in motion a development dynamic by

loosening production and investment constraints in the sending country. As a result, migration activities will be self-perpetuating. Places may specialize in migration as the start and ending place of a labor workforce. Remittances often surpass official development assistance. However, there is unequal distribution of remittances across and within countries, concentrated in relatively few migrant sending areas. Taylor asserts that the influence of migration and remittances influence economies in ways overlooked by migrant research. Only recent works have begun to look at the indirect influence of remittances, or how the households receiving them are affected. From an economics point of view, environments that encourage out-migration limit the potential for remittances to stimulate development. Sending areas reduce the need to produce goods for market and the remittances are not necessarily used for local investments. Households then become agents of both migration and investment. Remittances and the resulting migration ultimately create economic uncertainties and/or restrict opportunities in the sending communities.

Stark and Taylor note that migrants generally move to areas very different from their own which ensures a level of estrangement, detachment, and social distance. This guards against becoming oriented to the host community where the secondary negative effects of changing reference groups may outweigh the primary, positive effects of improving the original reference group. This mode may help to explain more recent increased migrations to non-traditional destinations in the United States rather than established ethnic enclaves.

Massey et al (1994) undertook a meta analysis of various categories of immigration theory. They assert that neoclassical and the new economics framework

theories complement each other. Both are "correct" and either approach, by itself, would provide an incomplete explanation of international migration.

World Systems Theory

Neoclassical economic theories contend that immigrants move from the poorest parts of the world. World systems theories contend that people migrate from countries after societies are globalized and marketized with the resulting social and cultural dislocations. People move because of perceived "relative deprivation." These transformations disproportionally affect poor, traditional societies moving people into more rich, modern societies. Capitalist development is inherently disruptive, bringing about social and economic transformations that displace people from their traditional livelihoods and force them into transnational labor markets (Massey and Espinosa 1994). People migrate from communities under development rather than backward, stagnant areas. For example, agrarian societies that move from traditional farming methods to more mechanized, modern farming methods end up displacing workers. Often, there are few new labor opportunities within the developing communities, making migration more of an option. The remittances from migrants and perceived relative deprivation will create the circular migration described in the neoclassical economic theories (Howe and Jackson 2004). It is at the community level that migration in world systems theories and the new economics framework converge. World system theories have not been researched extensively, are still without systematic tests or comparisons to competing theories, and thus do not yet provide an agreed upon framework for explaining international migration (Massey et al 1994).

Segmented Labor Market Theory

Segmented labor market theories shift the driving force behind migration from the supply side perspective to the demand side perspective. Migration is not caused by local issues in sending countries such as wages, capital, and market failures. Instead it is a function of the built-in demand for labor intrinsic to advanced industrial societies. The availability of jobs in the United States leads to a surge in immigration (Massey and Espinosa 1997). From a slightly different perspective, as native workers leave jobs that are traditionally taken over by immigrants, the wages of these jobs do not fall as much as would be predicted given the influx of new immigrant workers. This, in turn, encourages more immigration. Simply put, the ethnic or cultural attributes of certain job categories discourage native job-seekers and may encourage immigrant job-seekers. These immigrants tend to locate in familiar settings or "enclave communities" (Howe and Jackson 2004). Employment choices are often determined, in part, by class solidarity and cultural familiarity.

The meta analysis by Massey et al (1994) views segmented labor market theories as complementary to neoclassical and new economic theories, but does not supplant them. The segmented labor theory is viewed as explaining one of several inducements to migrate, without being able to explain all, or, even most, migration. Massey, in later research (Massey and Espinosa 1997), states that this category of theory has little relevance for explaining migration from Mexico.

Social Capital and Migrant Networks

The most extensive body of literature involves theories of social capital and migrant networks.

Ties to current or former United States migrants represent a valuable social asset. They can be used to acquire information and assistance that reduces the cost and risk of entering the United States and raises the odds of getting a good U.S. job. Social capital theory evaluates the direct connection between migrant networks and the costs/benefits of migration. Lowering the costs and risks of migration, and raising the benefits of United States employment, will encourage people to migrate. Social capital grows as migration grows, resulting in more movement. A powerful feedback loop develops that is a dominant force in increasing migration (Massey and Espinosa, 1997). Networks may serve an important economic function in the decision to migrate. Prior experience with migration, or living in communities with extensive migration, will have a positive influence on decisions to migrate. Networks may provide assistance that can reduce the costs of migration such as food or housing in the receiving communities or improving the anticipated returns of migration such as access to jobs (Winters, DeJanvry, and Sadoulet, 2001). The network ties tend to stay within the group and are linked to specific communities in both the sending and receiving areas (Portes, 1998). Networks can control certain markets.

Social capital and migrant networks can be described through “strong ties” and “weak ties” or household versus community capital (Massey 1990, Massey and Espinosa, 1997, Winters et al, 2001). “Strong ties” networks are household networks made up of family members, which may include extended family and possibly close

friends. Household networks provide direct linkages to particular destinations such as through parents or siblings who have immigration experience or to children born in the United States. Family networks provide information and assistance that benefits only the family. “Weak ties” networks are community networks comprised more of friends, acquaintances, and fellow villagers. Community networks accumulate migration experience and solidify ties to areas that serve as destinations for the migrants through the continual movement of people between the two areas. Community networks are more general, less complete, lower value, and often second or third hand (Winter et al, 2001). The knowledge is considered “folk wisdom.”

Those with weak family networks rely on community networks. Once a community network is established, it is hard to stop. Networks establish the likelihood of where people will go. Development in the sending communities will not stop migration once a network is established. Weak ties networks are important in starting migration to newer areas (Garcia, 2005), resulting in the development of strong ties networks as migration continues. Networks are not one dimensional; various sub-networks may exist such as church or contract (work) sub-networks. They are not direct, but make the transmission of social capital easier. The contract sub-network is the weakest yet one of the most significant. It allows an unattached person to enter a community, become established, and bring more residents to the area (Garcia, 2005). The various migration networks continue to build and enhance each other and may be grasped by a concept called “cumulative causation.” Cumulative causation migration networks serve to propel migration independent of the originating push/pull forces (Garcia, 2005).

Having a social tie to someone with migrant experience greatly increases the likelihood of labor migration (Massey, 1990). The accessibility of migrant networks makes labor migration attractive while reducing risks. Remittances are a cultural convention and an expectation from migrants. Remittances inflate income distribution in home communities and increases incentives for those at the bottom to migrate. The effect is particularly evident in rural communities. Low skill workers likely rely on rural social networks for assistance in migrating to the United States in an effort to seek upward mobility (Roberts, Frank, Lozano, and Ascencio, 1999). Migration-related social capital within family relationships is a powerful positive factor on U.S. migration in rural communities. The traditional migration stream is comprised mainly of young men who have few skills and employment opportunities in Mexico.

A corollary to social capital is human capital. Human capital is the acquisition of resources in order to reap the maximum benefits from labor markets (Saenz and Cready, 2004). Education, experience, language acquisition, etc. is a proxy for human capital. Saenz and Cready (2004) state that the literature indicates that there is a positive association between human capital resources and a person's migration propensity. People with lower education levels are more likely to rely on social networks. Formal education is not the only education involved in the acquisition of human capital. Where a first trip to the United States by a migrant may rely primarily on social ties and social capital, the second, and subsequent trips, will rely more on experience and human capital (Singer and Massey, 1998). In this scenario, social capital is traded for human capital in migration.

Human capital also has been used to explain migration of Mexicans out of the southwestern part of the United States. Using a network saturation approach (Light and von Scheven, 2008) suggests that, when networks have maximized the use of available housing and employment in a certain receiving area, dispersion will result. As noted earlier, the cumulative causation of many independent networks feeding one particular area at first expands economic opportunity. This expansion has its limits. At some point, wages will be driven down, and rents will rise with the limited availability of housing stock. Using the resources gained through migration, and time spent in the receiving community accumulating education, language skills, and job seeking experience (human capital), migrants will likely seek out new areas for employment. Human capital will be the means to obtain higher returns in non-traditional communities. Those with more human capital will search for more urban opportunities (Roberts et al, 1999), and more diverse opportunities. Once established, the social network processes begin again.

Social capital and migrant networks are discussed extensively with rural communities. Urban migration is a different phenomenon. Urban migrants are more heterogeneous and rely more on human capital (Roberts et al, 1999). Urban migration tends to rely more on weak ties to acquaintances and workmates (Fussell and Massey, 2004). The exchange of community-level social capital is constrained in urban settings. Mass migration is inhibited by the greater size, social complexity, and economic heterogeneity of cities. Migration feedback is more difficult, owing to the complex community structure. The motivation to migrate is reduced because of diversified labor and increased employment opportunities, thus mitigating the

necessity to move. People who decide to migrate will rely on their old pre-urban rural networks; they will be more likely to rely on themselves, not networks.

In a dissenting viewpoint, Krissman (2005) criticizes social network theory in the context of economic theories. Networks are viewed in the literature as vague organizational structures and nothing more than patterns of largely idealized social behavior. Krissman contends that the focus on social networks leaves out other significant players such as employers, labor smugglers, money lenders, landlords, and government officials. These players constitute factors independent of the sending and receiving areas. Employers and government officials play a role in the development of migratory flows via recruitment of labor by employers as well as the development and enforcement of regulations by government officials. There is a process that these outside actors follow in the development and use of networks. Employers that use the labor provided by networks are more likely to use the labor again. Employers are more likely to use the labor of networks if other employers use the labor. As socioeconomic barriers to using immigrant workers rise, there is an increasing dependence on labor intermediaries. Employers seeking to maintain substandard labor conditions are more likely to prefer immigrant workers. Employers in industries and/or regions where immigrant labor is common also are more likely to use such workers. Networks can be controlled. On the supply side controls include development in the sending nations and increasing policing which makes illegal entry more costly and risky. On the demand side, controlling employers can reduce demand through worksite enforcement and making employers bear the cost and burden of regularizing the labor force.

Social capital theory appears to be strong and consistent in confirming the powerful role of networks in structuring individual household's decisions to migrate. Networks can predict settlement patterns, while connections increase the odds of migrating. Over time, a "culture of migration" emerges. The role of networks is hard to quantify and objectively assess. Field reports and qualitative research lend credibility to the concept. More research is needed (Massey et al, 1994). As a result of a qualitative study Garcia (2005), supports this assessment on the strength of social networks in understanding migration. While this is a powerful concept, more research is needed on the development of social networks.

Female Migration from Mexico

Demographers have indicated that there has been a rapid growth in the number of foreign-born Hispanic women in the United States. Fifty-seven percent of immigrant Hispanic adult women have entered the U.S. since 1990; 60% of these women are from Mexico. The new immigrant women are more likely to be married and less likely to be in the labor force (Gonzales, 2008). Despite the changing demographics, immigration researchers have largely overlooked the subject of female migration, in general, and especially from Mexico to the United States (Cerruti and Massey, 2001; Baker, 2004; Parrado and Flippen, 2005). Classic economic theories depict women as passive reactors to migratory decisions; gender does not figure prominently in these theoretical models (Cerruti and Massey, 2001). Under neoclassical theories that use cost/benefit calculations to determine the positive returns of migration, women again are portrayed as passive actors. The decision to migrate is made by the male head of

the household based on what he calculates is best for the family (Todaro and Maruszko, 1987, Borjas, 1989). This contradicts the new economic framework theories that are based on market failure. The goals of migration are designed to reduce risks by diversification and the accumulation of cash via remittances (Taylor, 1999). According to this type of economic theoretical framework, the decision to migrate is seen as a unitary household strategy.

Cerruti and Massey (2001) point out the misconceptions within the economic theories that view women as passive reactors to migratory decisions. The primary mechanism that contradicts the assumptions of economic theory are findings from ethnographic research. Cerruti and Massey's review of the literature indicates that women may well influence migration decisions. The woman's bargaining power varies by age, household position, and parity. The number of children in a family in Mexico reduces the odds of first migration. The effect of marriage on migration decisions was not deemed to be a consistent factor. Education and social capital were positive factors for women's involvement in migration decisions. Using quantitative data, Cerruti and Massey (2001) concluded that women begin to make migration decisions for family reasons. Economic or household strategy models may well provide insight into the forces that drive the decision to migrate. Family indicators are a strong influence on migration decisions; the indicators reflect the presence of sons, daughters, or siblings in the United States. Job factors appear to be more relevant after the migration has occurred, but may still be a motivation in the decision-making process. Unmarried daughters migrated more to find work opportunities, relying more on social and human capital to assist the migration process. Two avenues of migration

for married women were noted, either general family-related reasons or through following their spouse. Family motivation was found to be the primary factor behind the wives decisions to migrate, while a labor market strategy led to the daughters' decisions to migrate.

Much of the research on female migration examines the role of gender. There is general agreement among the researchers regarding the disparate power relationship between Mexican males and females. Male domination and authoritarianism are the norms in rural Mexico, and women conform to this notion (Baker, 2004). Patriarchal gender relations deny women the authority and resources to migrate independently (Handagneu-Sotelo, 1992). Men are expected to be the providers and women must accept their husband's migration decisions, care for children, and maintain the household. The dynamics of female migration has been shown to differ from traditional male migration. Aside from family dynamics, the demand for women's immigrant labor in the United States has increased (Handagneu-Sotelo, 2002). As U.S. women move to higher and better paying positions in the workforce, the need for domestic labor such as nannies and house cleaners has increased. There is also a feminization of a number of low-wage jobs in the services industry and manufacturing that provide new job opportunities in the United States (Wilson, 2006). At the same time, women are affected by the economic crisis in Mexico through currency devaluation, inflation, and government cutbacks. The migration of families, or the desire to reunite the family, and the migration of single women, largely for economic reasons, have created two distinct sets of migration dynamics.

Social networks are an important factor in female migration. Curran and Rivera-Fuentes (2003) examined gender differences in the use of social networks. The odds of migration increase if family members have already migrated. The costs, risks, and benefits of migration differ by gender. Women face greater risk. Men have different sources of support in the origin and destination communities. Men receive the assistance of their family and are encouraged to migrate, so their motivation is primarily economic.

There are two types of networks that are available to females, and their usage depends on the type of migration. For single women, moving primarily for economic reasons, the use of family networks is dominant. Migration is more accepted. Married women attempting to reunite with their husbands rely more on the use of what Curran and Rivera-Fuentes call "women's networks." The access to "women's networks" is important in two ways: networks married women who wish to join their husbands overcome barriers, and help provide access to very different labor markets in the United States. This type of gender network is essential in helping women overcome the differential barriers that they face including greater risks. Hagan (1998) describes the networks used by women as less mature and less resourceful than men's networks. For instance, jobs are found through social contacts but the jobs are likely to be more isolated. The networks used by women tend to be strong ties networks, and therefore more direct. As a result, women lose the advantages of the weak ties networks within communities, which offer better and more diverse opportunities.

There is general agreement among researchers that the migratory process, and life in the United States, transforms gender relationships and the power structure. The male domination that is part of the culture in Mexico does not translate the same way in the United States. Parrado and Flippen (2005) examined changing gender roles extensively. Some of the studies pointed to migration as a liberating and empowering experience that provides better opportunities and exposure to more egalitarian gender norms. In particular, the earlier migration studies reported that female migrants benefited from greater personal autonomy and independence, employment, control of the family budget, decision-making, and leverage. The legal environment in the United States provides women with awareness of their rights and protection against domestic violence which reduces the capacity to be controlled. The result is more movement toward an equal division of labor and authority. Other studies show that there are inequalities that manifest in the form of race, social class, ethnicity, and the lack of legal status. There is a degree of isolation associated with the aforementioned factors. The availability of social networks can, in some instances, mitigate, and, in others, reinforce gender inequality. Female employment situations may leave men threatened, resulting in a loss of support for the women. Traditional male jobs in construction, labor, and the service industry provide men with extensive and varied contact with other men. The traditional female jobs which involve domestic work and small-scale service jobs are more isolated and offer few opportunities for advancement. Women have fewer opportunities for interaction outside of work and are often relegated to dealing with men -- in particular, their husbands. It should be

noted, however, that the research is fragmented, not always compatible, and often inferred or derived from indirect data.

The research undertaken by Parrado and Flippen (2005) found highly variable results regarding gender roles, with gains in some realms and losses in others. It appears that Mexican migrants selectively incorporate some aspects of the receiving society while simultaneously reinforcing cultural traits and patterns of behavior brought with them. It is a form of adaptation without assimilation. Adaptation insulates the migrants from destabilizing forces in the foreign environment. Adaptation may serve to exacerbate gender imbalances. Increased employment opportunities for men may reinforce women's dependence on men. A woman's participation in the low-wage workforce often results in more economic vulnerability than liberation. Marginalization at work and poor working conditions may lead women to tolerate more inequalities. Social support is critical in enabling women to challenge traditional gender practices. Migration is disruptive of social bonds and networks. With the positive effects of the influence of social networks diminished, there will be an increased dependence of husbands and wives on each other, altering traditional engendered roles.

Brown and Bean (2006) examined assimilation models and support the incomplete assimilation concept. Assimilation is delayed or blocked because of the human capital brought by the migrants and the social and economic structure in the new destination. Assimilation is not fluid, occurring faster in some areas. Adaptation in more culturally engrained areas may take longer or be more resistant to change.

Support for a changing gender concept was found by Hondagnue-Sotelo (1992). Alterations in patriarchal behaviors are not a result of feminist ideology, "modern" values, or women's enhanced financial contribution, but by the arrangements induced by the migration process itself. Gender relations are less patriarchal because of American cultural influences. The results are heterogeneous owing to the influences of native culture in ethnic enclaves and the resulting cultural segregation. The act of migration often forces gender role changes. As a result, men take on traditional female functions such as cooking and cleaning and the women, left behind in their home country, learn to make independent decisions. Hondagnue-Sotelo (1992) contends that these changes are not discarded when the wife migrates. There is a more egalitarian division of labor and shared decision-making. Women still have less power, but do move toward equality. Hondagnue-Sotelo concludes that the shift in gender relations lead women to want to remain in the United States in order to keep equality gains, while men want to return in order to regain any loss in status. The desire to remain in the United States to maintain economic gains and more profound changes in gender relations was also a conclusion reached by Zahniser (1999) in a quantitative study using data from the Mexican Migration Project.

Baker (2004) conducted a qualitative study using three focus groups with undocumented Mexican women that migrated to Iowa. The goals of the focus groups were to increase the understanding of the behavior and ideology of Mexican women in their everyday lives in Iowa and to illustrate their particular circumstances. The results bore a striking similarity to what was revealed by the women interviewed in Farmingville. Many of the women came to Iowa to reunite with their families. Most

of the women did not want to work, but worked to improve the lives of their children even if it meant leaving their homes, living in a hostile environment, and working outside the home. The women maintained a continued dedication to their extended families by sending remittances home. There was discussion of the loneliness faced in the community and concerns about changing values in their children and family members. The women did not talk about careers or independence. The risky border crossings were outside the boundaries of traditional female behavior. Their illegal status has lead to fear, a sense of danger in public, and the need to function in a hostile environment which took them beyond their traditional female roles. Many of the women have never worked outside the home in the past and now work in the secondary labor market which is dangerous and discriminatory. There is an internal contradiction when the women fight to hold on to their old lives while material conditions push them into new roles.

The Journey

Unlike the relatively small, yet comprehensive, body of literature analyzing why people migrate and how they may select their destination in the United States, there is no theoretical base to understand the act of crossing the border illegally in order to enter the United States. The existing research revolves around facts, figures, and anecdotal information. There is general agreement that more research is needed to better understand the elements involved in crossing the border illegally (McConnell, 2008; Donato, Wagner, and Patterson, 2008; GAO, 2006; Cornelius, 2005; Kandel

and Parrado, 2005; Bauer, Epstein, and Gang, 2005; Zahinser, 1999; Eschbach, Hagan, Rodriguez, Hernandez-Leon, Bailey, 1999).

What is the current state of knowledge regarding the United States – Mexico border? Crossing the border is dangerous. The General Accounting Office of the United States Government (2006) conducted an extensive examination of the deaths of people attempting to cross the border illegally from Mexico. Early efforts at border enforcement were generally lax, resulting in a decline in border deaths from the late 1980s through the early 1990s. As border enforcement increased, as a result of a number of government initiatives in the late 1990s, the number of deaths by migrants attempting to cross the border illegally nearly doubled, from 241 in 1999 to 472 in 2005. Three-quarters of the rise in border deaths were attributed to the Tuscon Sector where desert crossing was the predominant method for gaining entry into the United States. The number of deaths rose from 11 in 1998 to 216 in 2005. The increase in the number of deaths in this sector was attributed to a shift from urban crossings, formerly in the San Diego and El Paso areas, to the desert, where new border enforcement strategies were initiated starting in 1994. The GAO further reported that the border deaths were mostly male, but the number of female deaths more than doubled in the period 1998 – 2005. These statistics were based on records that were kept on the number of bodies that were found. The data is incomplete and cannot be fully understood because better records need to be kept and because many bodies are never recovered.

In examining border deaths in earlier research, Eschbach et al (1999) reported that finding the precise number of deaths that have taken place during Mexican

border crossings is elusive owing to the lack of systematic record. Databases contain partial data, there are no common standards on recording and reporting deaths, and most of the information is from the United States side. Eschbach et al noted the dangers faced by unauthorized immigrants that contributed to the difficulty of the journey including river crossings, sealed/poorly ventilated modes of transportation, hikes through the desert, scaling barriers, using "coyotes" (paid guides), and facing criminals along the way. Cornelius (2001) agrees that there is a severe underestimation of deaths as a result of counting only recovered bodies and the fact that border crossing has been pushed to more remote and dangerous areas where bodies are less likely to be recovered. Most of the recent border deaths result from environmental causes such as hypothermia (during mountain crossings where temperatures can go below freezing levels from mid-October through mid-April), dehydration or heat stroke (during desert summers when temperatures average 112 degrees), or drowning, in certain areas, during attempts to avoid the previous two methods of crossing.

Cornelius (2001, 2005) analyzed the illegal border crossing issue from a policy point of view. The cost to enforce the integrity of the United States border increased only in the last 15 years. From the 1960s to the early 1990s, the cost of border enforcement was modest, peaking at $750 million per year in Fiscal Year 1993. From Fiscal Year 1993 to 2004, the price to enforce the border jumped to $3.8 billion per year, and the Border Patrol tripled in size. Increased enforcement efforts led to repeated border crossing attempts by the same people as a result of a "catch and release" policy by the Border Patrol or because other migrants chose to extend their

stay in the United States before returning home. The number of reported border apprehensions increased from 979,000 in FY'94 to 1.64 million in FY2000. Data indicated that in 1992, 20% of migrants returned home after 6 months in the United States, a number which fell to 15% in 1997, and 7% by 2000. At the same time, the cost of using "coyotes" to assist immigrants with crossing the border went from $143 in the early 1990s to $490 in 1995 at the start of increased enforcement, to $1700 by 2004. Fewer migrants returning home combined with an increase in the number of border apprehensions would indicate that the number of migrants attempting to cross the border was increasing. Cornelius (2005) admits that attempting to confirm that these trends are continuing is speculative, especially without recent data available for analysis.

From a policy perspective, Cornelius (2001) reviewed the impact of the border strategy under the Clinton administration. Under Clinton, the border patrol doubled in size. Enforcement efforts were concentrated along small segments of the border, the areas that were most heavily used. A "prevention through deterrence" approach was employed. During this period, the number of apprehensions dramatically increased. Nevertheless, apprehensions are a poor indicator of border enforcement activity. Apprehensions don't count people, only events. Therefore, it is not possible to determine if the actual number of people trying to enter the United States is increasing.

It was clear that the change in border strategy by the United States government resulted in increased costs to migrate as well as increased risks by forcing migrants to take more dangerous routes. The flow of immigrants was rechanneled along the

southern border and more unauthorized immigrants stayed longer or settled permanently in the United States. Two indications that this border policy was ineffective were that there was no resulting shortage of migrant labor in the United States and no increase in wages due to migrant labor shortages, indicating that there were plenty of workers available to meet the demand in the United States.

Statistics reported in the literature support the notion that unauthorized border crossing is a dangerous endeavor. The quantitative research that has been conducted is supported by a number of anecdotal accounts of the experiences of immigrants crossing the United States – Mexico border. These stories are a testament to human endurance.

Little is known about the social process of clandestine border crossings (Singer and Massey, 1998). It is not understood how the social processes operate. Singer and Massey (1998) consider border crossings a well-defined social process that draws upon various sources of human and social capital to overcome the barriers erected by United States authorities. Apprehensions serve to socialize immigrants to the rules of undocumented border crossing. Enforcement policies are ineffective owing to the wealth of personal and social resources at the disposal of those seeking to cross. In reviewing the literature on border crossings including qualitative research and oral histories, Singer and Massey reached three general conclusions. First-time immigrants experience the border as threatening, dangerous, and hostile place. The journey is filled with much suffering and victimization. Travelers get lost, nearly die of thirst, get robbed, beaten, or raped by criminals; extorted by Mexican police; go through hazardous terrain; or are possibly mistreated by the Border Patrol. Second,

friends and relatives mitigate the hazards involved in crossing. Those with previous entry experience navigate hazards, select proper smugglers, negotiate the price of crossing, and know what to do if they get caught. Third, personal experience is powerful in overcoming barriers, real or psychological. As the number of trips across the border increases, the trips can be "routine." They become easier, cheaper, and less risky.

Donato, Wagner, and Patterson (2008) agree with Singer and Massey (1998) on two conclusions. The process of clandestine border crossing is still not well understood. The process is difficult to observe and measure. The other area of agreement is that border crossings are related to a range of demographic, social, and human capital variables. Social capital is offered by parents and siblings with U.S. immigration experience. Human capital is obtained through the migrations process and the understanding of federal enforcement activity.

Donato et al (2008) examined a number of variables to describe the border crossing process. Crossings strategies varied by gender after 1986. Women were more likely than men to use a paid smuggler. Men were more likely to cross the border alone. Women were more likely to be apprehended on their first trip and because of the increased enforcement policies in the 1990s, more likely to be apprehended in general. More experienced migrants had a lower chance of being detected in their efforts to cross. Since 1986, men and women appeared to be closer in demographic, social, and human capital variables. When tied to social network theories, Donato et al report that migration was initially motivated by economic reasons and soon become an institutionalized way of life in the originating

communities. There is a cumulative causation effect, with the chances of migration increasing as more people migrate. It is also reported that migration networks differ for men and women. Zahinser (1999) supports the cumulative causation effect by reporting that once the male or female head of the household migrates, migration becomes a persistent behavior. Migrants that spend part of the year in the United States are 26.8 times more likely to return to the United States in the following year than people who remain in Mexico. McKenzie and Rapoport (2006) add that large networks make it easier for low-income people to migrate, reducing inequality within the sending communities.

There were several unintended consequences of increased border enforcement and changing U.S. immigration policy. The first unintended consequence was the increase in the length of stays in the United States. As noted earlier, Cornelius (2005) reported that 20% of Mexican migrants returned home after 6 months in 1992, 15% in 1997, and just 7% by 2000. Reyes (2004) found similar trends in population databases from Mexico. In the population survey and data from 1987 to 1992, 54% of Mexican migrants returned to Mexico; this number fell to 25% in the period between 1995 and 2000. Of those returning to Mexico, the average stay in the United States was 10 months in the period between 1987 and 1992. The length of time in the United States increased to 16 months in the late 1990s. The changes in length of stay may not be solely attributable to increased border enforcement. Other factors that may increase the length of time in the United States include more female migration, more migrants entering from non-traditional areas that require longer and more costly trips, and more skilled or educated migrants able to find better jobs. The United States

destination and the employment opportunities that are available may be other factors in determining the length of stay; for example, agricultural workers, by the nature of their work, tend to have shorter stays (Reyes and Mameesh, 2002). Marriage and the number of dependents in Mexico also influence the length of time in the United States and the return to Mexico (Zahinser, 1999). Despite the relative influence of all these factors, enhanced border enforcement resulting in a longer, costlier, and more dangerous trip, tends to increase the length of stay in the United States irrespective of whether immigrants return home to either visit or stay.

A second consequence of increased border enforcement was assisting in redirecting migrants to new destinations within the United States, primarily to non-traditional destinations. There are two immigration policy aspects that have influenced the redirection of migrants. The Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (IRCA) legalized 2.3 million previously unauthorized immigrants. As a result, the newly legal immigrants now had the geographic mobility to explore new labor markets. In addition, H2A/H2B work visas, allowing immigrants to enter the United States specifically to work in designated jobs such as agriculture, led to the corporate recruitment of immigrants to non-traditional areas. Other influences fueled this dispersal, such as the desire to escape from the expensive and overcrowded housing, saturated labor markets, poor schools, gangs, and violence found in Mexican communities in traditional destinations. The resettlement of newly legal immigrants in new, non-traditional areas led to development of new migrant networks. IRCA also supplemented the dispersal of newly legalized immigrants as a result of changes in border enforcement strategies. These new border strategies continued in various

formats into the 2000s. The strategy was simple: concentrate border enforcement on the traditional heavily crossed areas and along routes leading to major locations where Mexicans were densely settled. As a result, border entry points were pushed farther east, allowing easier access to the new destinations in the Midwest and Northeast. The increased cost and difficulty, as well as increased distance from the border, also led to longer stays and the development of new networks (Kandel and Parrado, 2005). In the past, unauthorized immigrants were more likely to choose large traditional "Mexican" areas to avoid detection. More recent migrants prefer alternatives, away from the border as opposed to cities. The recent migrants are pushed away from the traditional cities because of increased immigration enforcement, a negative social and political climate, and increased labor competition. The pull factors in the new destination include expanded employment opportunities, more affordable housing, and a growing influx of new Latino populations (McConnell, 2008). The changes in border strategies facilitated the redistribution of new migrants across the United States.

A final consequence of increased enforcement was the strengthening of networks and an increase in human capital. Migrants relied more on social networks to cross the border. Social networks mitigate the hazards, help select the proper smugglers, and provide information on what to do if apprehended (Singer and Massey, 1998; Donato et al, 2008). Networks were important in the settlement of newer, non-traditional areas (Reyes, 2004; Orrenius, 2001; Kandel and Parrado, 2005). The immigrants that left the traditional immigrant cities, or became legalized by immigration policies and chose to settle in new destinations, formed new migration

networks that assisted subsequent immigrants in settling in the United States. The choice to migrate to these new destinations is a further attempt to evade detection (McConnell, 2008). The newer, more dangerous crossing points required more reliance on people with prior experience or the use of coyotes to assist in border crossings (Cornelius, 2001 and 2005; Orrenius, 2001; Singer and Massey, 1998).This was evidenced by data reporting both the increase in the use of coyotes and an increase in the cost. However, increased border enforcement proved to be a poor deterrent despite increased costs and dangers.

Summary

In an attempt to stop the illegal border crossings, the United States increased border enforcement efforts. Several unintended consequences resulted, such as increased lengths of stay in the United States prior to returning home, the redirection of immigrants to new destination communities, and the strengthening of migrant networks with an increase in human capital. The increased border enforcement efforts were costly and ineffective in decreasing the number of migrants entering the United States illegally. As a result of the increased enforcement efforts, the migrants faced more costly and dangerous border crossings.

The migration of women has been largely overlooked by researchers. Single women tend to migrate for the same reason as their male counterparts. Married women generally migrate to reunite with, or check on their husbands in the United States. Living in the United States often influences and changes the traditional gender relationships and familial power structures.

There were five categories of immigration theory in the literature. Neoclassical, new economics, segmented labor market, and world system theories use quantitative approaches to analyze and understand immigration. Social capital theories are based on the use of networks and prior experience to assist migration. There is no definitive theory that explains the migration of Mexicans to the United States. More research is needed to provide empirical evidence to support the various theoretical frameworks.

Next, the literature on employment, immigration law enforcement, mental health, alcohol abuse, and the decision to remain in the United States will be reviewed.

Chapter Eight: Why Farmingville, Why Now – An Empirically Grounded Conceptual Model

Analysis of the data from the interviews and a review of the literature on Mexican migration to the United States gives us a model that helps understand why Farmingville and why now. Farmingville, as a non-traditional migrant destination for Mexicans, emerged in the late 1990s. This emergence coincided with a period of increased border enforcement that pushed migrants to new border crossing points distant from traditional Mexican migrant destinations. While a few of the respondents had easy journeys, many more experienced difficult trips across hazardous terrain to enter the United States. There was much personal suffering, including injury and encounters with roving groups of criminals, and there were many sights that were witnessed beyond what normal people ordinarily witness including death. Women faced extra dangers including the fear of being raped.

Once new immigrants began to settle in the Farmingville community and began to develop employment and housing opportunities, more immigrants followed. The migrants that followed overwhelmingly had connections to the community. Most had a family member that preceded them into Farmingville, while many of the others had friends or fellow villagers in the community. The connections and networks were a powerful force in the decision to migrate. The economic success of the family and community members served as a motivation to migrate. The existence and success of the networks and connections facilitated the decision to migrate. Poor economic conditions in Mexico -- with few opportunities to improve these conditions by

remaining in Mexico, or a desire to improve their lives or the lives of the families -- were the primary motivations for migration.

Now that there is a better understanding of motivation of immigrants to migrate to the United States illegally and the difficult journey that they endure in crossing the border, the next step will be to examine more closely the experiences of the migrants in the Farmingville community. The literature related to being a stranger in a strange land, a minority visibly different from the existing community; issues revolving around work and life in the community; and the impact of it all on the migrants will be reviewed.

Employment and Wages

Knowledge regarding the work experience of undocumented immigrants is derived mainly from several local and nationwide quantitative surveys of day laborers. The largest of the surveys was the Survey of Mexican Migrants which was based on 4836 surveys conducted by the Pew Hispanic Center (2005) covered a number of issues.

Kochar (2005) examined the Survey of Mexican migrants and focused on employment related data. Unauthorized Mexicans comprised 85% of the migrants from Mexico and 20% of the Hispanic labor force in the United States. Most workers left Mexico owing mainly to underemployment, not unemployment, and their primary background was in agriculture (39%). Newer immigrants had more experience in construction (13%), manufacturing (14%), and commerce/sales. There was a shift over time in immigration from the traditional central Mexican states to new southern

Mexican states. The unemployment rate of new migrants is typically high during their first six months in the United States and then it improves dramatically. Traditional barriers to work, such as low education levels (72%), the failure to attend or complete high school, weak English skills (82%), and a lack of government identification (83%) did not limit the unauthorized immigrant's ability to find work. The work transition to the United States is eased by family and social networks in the same United States town, with newer workers finding similar jobs in agriculture, construction, and manufacturing. Unemployment periods are common with (38%) of men and (48%) of females reporting one month or more of unemployment in the last year. Female wages, in general, were well below male wages; 38% of men earned less than $300 per week contrasted with 74% of the women.

Several authors examined the effect of immigration reform on the employment of unauthorized workers, in particular IRCA (Donato, Wakabayashi, Hakimzadeh, and Armenta, 2008; Phillips and Massey, 1999; Donato and Massey, 1993). Some of the conclusions suggest that IRCA had little impact on reducing the flow of migrants into the United States and their subsequent employment. Migrants seeking work rely more on family and social networks to find jobs. Jobs opportunities after IRCA were shifted to the informal sector of the economy. IRCA also increased the migration of women and increased their participation in the workforce. The amnesty earned primarily by men through IRCA brought many of the wives of the married men to the United States to reunite with their husbands, arriving primarily without documentation. The most noticeable impact of IRCA was a downward pressure on wages and more discrimination in the workplace.

The most common image of undocumented immigrants is men standing in open-air hiring sites on street corners or near certain business sites looking for work. Most of the male migrants in Farmingville have dealt directly with an open-air hiring site referred to as the "corner." It is, or has been, an integral part of their work experience.

Valenzuela, Jr. (2001) categorized hiring sites into three types. Connected sites are located around businesses such as nurseries and home improvement locations and tend to be the largest sites. Unconnected sites are in locations with high volumes of foot or vehicle traffic, areas with police cooperation so that laborers are not bothered, or in historical street hiring locations that tend to be the smallest. Regulated sites are formal, organized locations run by government or not-for-profit organizations with the best conditions and standards. Valenzuela, Jr. examined day laborers as entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurship was seen as an upward mobility mechanism to different economic groups. In taking a non-elitist approach, he argues that self-employment and the role of day laborers in the informal economy fit into the traits and theoretical arguments that define traditional entrepreneurship.

Valenzuela (2001) surveyed 481 day laborers at 87 locations. He conducted 46 semi-structured, open ended, in-depth interviews with workers, and 29 interviews with employers, in order to develop a portrait of day laborers. Workers became day laborers for several reasons. For many, there were no other options, for others, day labor provided flexibility, wage options, or diversification of their labor. More than 50% of the day laborers surveyed had less than a sixth grade education, 52% were in the country five years or less, 29% were here less than a year, 98.7% were foreign born, 84% were here without authorization, and 77.5% were from Mexico. In his

study of Los Angeles day labor markets, Valenzuela found that day laborers filled a specific demand niche as instant hires to replace sick workers or to supplement the workforce. Day labor provides a pliable labor force at low costs.

Valenzuela, Jr., Theodore, Melendez, and Gonzales (2006) conducted the most comprehensive study of the phenomena of day labor. The study developed a research instrument known as the National Day Labor Survey which included a quantitative and qualitative component. There were 2660 respondents from 221 informal and 43 formal hiring sites across 139 U.S. cities. According to the authors, on any given day, approximately 117,600 people are either looking for day labor jobs or working as day laborers in the United States. The day labor markets are either open-air, informal hiring sites or formal organized sites run by a government or not for profit agency. The day labor market is a spot market where workers and employers meet to negotiate terms of employment, including job tasks, and the length of the work day. The day laborers meet an ongoing demand for contingent workers that are largely in construction-related or landscaping areas. Although the largest concentration of hiring sites is found in traditional migrant destination states in the Western United States, there is growth of hiring sites in the non-traditional, unauthorized, migrant destinations. This growth is in response to changing immigration flows that send migrants to new small cities and suburban areas that have low-wage employment opportunities and limited formal work opportunities. The hiring sites serve to organize an immigrant labor supply that is available for construction and other segments of the economy.

Employer demand at the site determines work opportunities at the sites are driven by employer demand. Workers can work by day, by job, or enter into long-term employment situations. Most sites operate year-round with the largest average number of workers seeking employment at a job site in the Eastern United States. The top day labor job types found at hiring sites are construction at 90% of the sites, mover (83%), landscaper (83%), painter (80%), roofer (66%), and house cleaner (64%). The top day laborer employers are "private individuals" (49%), contractors (43%), and companies (5%). The survey indicated that 69% of the day laborers are hired repeatedly by the same employer. Eighty-three percent of surveyed workers indicated that day labor was their sole source of income, with 70% seeking work 5 or more days per week at the hiring sites. The median wage was reported at $10 per hour, with 22% earning between $7 and $9.99 per hour and 46% earning between $10 and $11.99 per hour. The work is not consistent; there are periods of high and low levels of employment. Full time day laborers had median monthly earnings of $700 per month, with 25% earning less than $400 per month, although a small percentage were high wage earners (7%) earning more than $1600 per month.

Day labor is not without risks. Twenty percent of day laborers suffered work-related injuries, and three-quarters of the workers found the work dangerous, either as a result of exposure to hazardous materials, faulty equipment, or the lack of protective gear and safety equipment. The data presented by Valenzuela et al are a summary of the entire national survey, and the data varied by region. Forty-nine percent of day laborers were not being paid at least once in the last two months, and 48% said they were underpaid. At work, 44% were denied food or breaks, 32% worked more hours

than negotiated, 28% were insulted or threatened by employers, and 27% were abandoned at worksites. Police, security guards, and local merchants also abused of the job seekers at the hiring sites.

The day laborers originated primarily from Mexico (59%), followed by 28% from Central America, and 7% from the United States. Most of the day laborers were recent arrivals. Nineteen percent migrated within the last year, 40% migrated between 1 and 5 years ago, 29% between 6 and 20 years ago, and 11% over 20 years ago. Day labor, as reported by the survey, was not a magnet, although 46% came to a particular community because they heard that jobs existed, and 76% learned about day labor sites after migrating. For 60% of the workers, day labor was the first entry point into the U.S. labor market. Demographically, 43% of the laborers were married or with a partner, 63% had children, with 29% having children in the United States. Fifty-eight (58%) of the laborers had a ninth grade education or less.

Valenzuela and Melendez (2002) used the National Day Labor Survey to collect data on the hiring sites around the New York City area, including Long Island. The study estimated that between 5,831 and 8,283 day laborers seek work at one of the 57 sites identified in the New York City area, which is likely an underestimate. A total of 29 sites, including 6 on Long Island, were chosen for the research project and 290 surveys were administered. The day laborers were overwhelmingly Latino with approximately one-third being Mexican. Other characteristics of the day laborers included 3% who were U.S. born, 5% who were women (primarily engaged in janitorial, housekeeping, and factory work), and 31% who were homeless. Most of the day laborers were relative newcomers, with 71% in the United States less than

five years, 34% here between one and two years, and 17.8% here less than a year. Demographically, the age range was between 18 and 64 (mean age = 32): 46% were never married, 46% were married or cohabitating, half had a sixth grade education or less, and 30% had more than a tenth grade education. The reservation wage (lowest wage a day laborer is willing to accept in order to work) was $9.37, except during low wage periods where the reservation wage fell to $7.61. Seventy-seven percent of the workers earned $10 an hour or less. In May, the month prior to the survey, the mean monthly wage was $855, with $1,471 the mean wage of those workers reporting having a good month and $504 for those workers reporting having a bad month. A good week was considered to be working three to five days and a bad week was considered to be working one or two days. Most workers (74.5%) sought day labor opportunities seven days a week, while 21% sought work only Monday through Friday, and 83% reported that day labor was their only job.

The primary jobs found by day laborers were construction (83%), painting (71%), gardening (60%), carpentry (41%), plumbing (24%), and other miscellaneous types of work (33%). The barriers to the formal job market that were reported include lack of documents (31%), lack of English proficiency (35%), low pay (12%), and few jobs available (19%). Employers of day laborers include contractors (56%), private individuals (41%), private companies (21%), factories (7%), restaurants (7%), and other day laborers (12%).

The day laborers were abused, but the abuse was not reported to be pervasive. Most (82%) reported some form of abuse one to five times during their tenure as day laborers, with 14% reporting that they were never abused. In examining categorical

abuse, 14% reported receiving bad checks, 16% reported experiencing violence, 19% reported receiving threats, 39% reported being abandoned at a work site. In the pay categories, 50% reported that they went unpaid; 45% reporting not being paid one to five times; and 60% reported being paid less than what was agreed to by the employer; and 49% reporting being paid less between one and five times. The category that reported the highest level of abuse was working with no food or water. Only 62% reported working without food and water, while 43% reported working without food or water one to five times.

Maney, Campisis, Molina, and Canales (2006) studied day laborers specifically on Long Island, which included Farmingville as one of the survey sites. The Long Island Day Labor Survey collected data from 146 workers in 8 municipalities; 3 locations had regulated hiring sites. The survey focused on human rights abuses and not necessarily on an understanding of day labor markets. They found that approximately 50% of day laborers reported one or more instances of wage theft, 57% worked at least one full day without a break with 21% reporting 6 or more occurrences, and 34% reporting one or more instance of being abandoned at a worksite. The day labor jobs could be dangerous: 27% reported being injured on the job, 13% needed medical attention, and 39% were pressured to keep working with the injury. Personal attacks were not uncommon: 43% were targeted with one negative verbal comment based on their nationality, 26% were threatened with physical abuse while looking for work or on a job, and about 25% were physically assaulted while looking for work or on a worksite, and 8% were robbed while looking for work or returning from work. Maney et al (2006) ranked nine day labor hiring sites according

to the occurrence of various human rights abuse categories. The Farmingville sites was ranked second in overall abuses and ranked first in violence, intimidation, and harassment. The Farmingville sites were in the middle of the rankings in health/safety violations and exploitation by contractors.

Immigration and Deportation

The Migration Policy Institute has examined apprehensions and detentions by the Department of Homeland Security and its predecessors. The numbers remained relatively static in the period from 1996 – 2006. In the years following September 11,2001, the number of apprehensions owing to investigations (primarily internal enforcement activities) remained stable between 102,000 and 115,000 per year. In fact, the number remained unchanged, at 102,000 in 2005 and 2006, down from 104,000 in 2004 (Migration Information Source, 2008). During the same three-year period, Border Patrol apprehensions remained static as well. This indicates that there was no real increase in internal immigration enforcement in the last several years. The United States Department of Homeland Security (2008) reports a decline in the number of investigation apprehensions in 2007, attributable to a change in reporting practices. The data indicate that internal enforcement actions by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) have been fairly consistent.

Contrary to the data, in 2007 and 2008, several large and very public enforcement actions against corporate employers of undocumented immigrants took place in Massachusetts, Iowa, and Mississippi. This was an attempt to highlight stronger internal enforcement efforts by the United States government to apprehend

and deport undocumented immigrants working illegally in the United States. The effort was largely designed to discourage mainstream employers from hiring undocumented immigrants and accepting of fake documentation to comply with work eligibility requirements. It was also an attempt to force undocumented immigrants in the United States, through fear, to return to their home countries or face increased detection activities.

Immigration raids in and around Farmingville, although infrequent, are a fact of life for the undocumented immigrant population. The first highly public raid targeted "fugitives" in Farmingville in November, 2005. Fourteen immigrants were detained (Jones, 2005). While fugitive raids target specifically named individuals, any "collateral" undocumented immigrant at the address of the raid was apprehended as well. The threat of enforcement actions by ICE had a chilling effect on the undocumented Latino community on Long Island (Jones, 2006a). Rumors were rampant including scenarios of ICE agents posing as landscapers and contractors to apprehend unauthorized workers. Strong enforcement efforts did not materialize, but sporadic house raids continued, which contributed to increasing anxiety within the Latino community (Jones, 2006b). In 2007, immigrant advocates filed a lawsuit in U.S. District Court to stop the raids; the suit claimed that ICE agents forced their way into homes and did not have proper search warrants (Lam, 2007). As a result of the outcry, the raids quieted down. Once again, in 2008, fear rose in the Latino community based on rumors that started with the introduction of new county legislation aimed at preventing the hiring of undocumented workers (Jones, 2008).

Immigrants who are in the United States without authorization are subject to apprehension and deportation at any time. Apprehension can occur anywhere, at work, at home, or on the street; it is a fact of life for undocumented immigrants. In traditional immigrant destination communities, with large Latino populations, detection and apprehension is far more difficult. In the largely white, new destination communities, however, Latinos are highly visible and easier targets for immigration authorities. The large border enforcement effort, and the small number of ICE agents assigned to internal enforcement and apprehension activities. This deployment strategy reduces most enforcement efforts, in places such as Farmingville, to primarily fugitive apprehensions and sporadic raids. The undocumented workers associated with Farmingville do not have a large corporate employer that can be targeted for highly public enforcement action. Attempts to take enforcement action against the small businesses that generally employ workers from Farmingville are very labor intensive but produce insignificant results.

Mental Health

The public perceives regarding a high incidence of alcohol and substance abuse among Mexican immigrants. Much of the perception is anecdotal (Garcia and Gondolf, 2004). At the same time, the mental health consequences of migration have been debated since the 19th Century as immigration shifted from English and Central European countries to the more culturally diverse Southern and Eastern European countries with their lower education strata. The Social Darwinistic view in psychiatry where the new immigrants were genetically and culturally inferior to the predominant

culture yielded to concepts dealing with aspects of "acculturation" or "Americanization" (Escobar, Nervi, and Gara, 2000). There is consensus among researchers that not nearly enough investigation has been conducted to address the impact of immigration on the mental health and use of alcohol and illegal substances. More specifically, there is little research that has studied Mexican immigrants. Most of what has been analyzed are a few variables within larger studies, small subsets of larger study populations, or "difficult" to study groups that are in the United States illegally and do not lend themselves to research participation and longitudinal examination. Most of the researchers concede that their studies target specific subgroups or geographic areas and are not generalizable. In addition, many of the major studies were conducted prior to IRCA, in 1986, and the border tightening actions in the late 1990s which made the trip into the United States more difficult and decreased return visits to Mexico. Pre-IRCA immigration and its impact on migrants at the time, was very different from current immigration and its consequences.

A theoretical perspective places newer Mexican immigrants at a disadvantage in income, education, and access to health care (Escobar et al, 2000). There is thought to be a degree of frustration with unemployment, feelings of alienation, disorientation in a new environment, and the pull of the traditional values of the new culture (Hovey, 2000). Migration has stressor events associated with each of the three phases: the departure phase that separates a person from familiar surroundings and support systems; the transit phase where a migrant can encounter personal dangers and difficulties in travelling to the new destination; and the resettlement phase where the migrant must build a new life and identity in a new culture. Multiple losses are

experienced such as familiarity with the traditional physical, social, and cultural environments; language, social support, identity, and belief systems. These losses may produce feelings of helplessness, insecurity, emptiness, and meaningless. Migration may produce a sense of lowered self-esteem, confusion, disorientation, frustration, anger, anomic depression, and familial discord (Berger and Weiss, 2006). The presence of migration-related stressors theoretically showed increased incidence of mental health issues, depression, suicide, alcoholism, and substance abuse.

There were three articles that undertook a meta-analysis of studies conducted regarding mental health and alcohol/substance abuse issues for Mexicans and Mexican-Americans. Escobar et al (2000) examined studies published in peer-reviewed journals on the subject of Mexican-descent mental health between 1980 and 1999. The major studies were reviewed on their designs, methodologies, and conclusions, criticizing their strengths and limitations. Garcia and Gandolf (2004) reviewed all published articles that included the Mexican-descent population on alcoholism between 1980 and 2000 to examine their methodologies "in order to propose procedures essential to accessing and studying a mobile, often hidden, and difficult-to-study population." Worby and Organista (2007) reviewed 200 articles and 30 studies on alcohol use by people of Mexican-descent. A review of these and later studies, not included in the three reviews, present an interesting picture of mental health and alcohol use among newer Mexican immigrants.

The interesting finding that appears to be consistent in the mental health literature is that acculturation appears to have a negative effect on the mental health of persons from Mexico (Escobar et al, 2000). Acculturative stress is linked to a

higher association with depression, suicide, and suicide ideations (Hovey, 2000) in addition to substance abuse, anxiety, and PTSD (Beckerman and Corbett, 2008). Assimilation forces an individual to marginalize or reject both cultures, separate, or keep their own culture, or integrate both cultures (Beckerman and Corbett, 2008). Acculturation is not a linear process: rather, it is multidimensional (Beckerman and Corbett, 2008), and acculturation is an ambiguous concept that is difficult to operationalize (Escobar et al, 2000). The conceptualization of what constitutes adaptation is perceived to be an individual matter and not easy to categorize. Individuals will appraise stress differently; two immigrants with the same stressors may not exhibit the same levels of acculturative stress (Hovey and Magana, 2002).

Most research indicates that foreign-born Mexicans have fewer mental health issues than U.S.-born Mexicans (Grant, Stinson, Hasin, Dawson, Chou, and Anderson, 2008; Wadsworth and Kurbin, 2007; Frazini and Fernandez-Esquer, 2004; Escobar et al, 2000; Hovey, 2000). Newer immigrants may benefit from the protective or buffering effect of their traditional culture. Newer Mexican immigrants are more attached to close-knit extended families that provide a great deal of support (Escobar et al, 2000) including financial support and honor (Wadsworth and Kurbin, 2007). Families of new Mexican immigrants tend to be two parent households, with lower divorce and separation rates (Escobar et al, 2000). Immigrants may choose destinations based on family ties or opportunities. Social networks also may play a role in providing support by reducing alienation and easing depression (Wadsworth and Kurbin, 2007; Hovey and Magana, 2002; Hovey, 2000). Since foreign-born Mexicans may also have lower expectations when migrating to the United States,

they don't become demoralized as easily if certain targets are not met. Migrants may come better prepared for the experience, more ready and prepared to migrate which serves to reduce mental health problems. The lower prevalence of mental health issues in foreign-born Mexican immigrants has not been shown to be experienced by other foreign-born immigrant groups (Grant et al, 2008; Escobar et al, 2000). In revisiting the responses of the respondents, most of the migrants that reported mental health issues were singles removed from their families, who lacked the benefit of familial and social supports, lending credence to the importance of networks in adjusting to the new destination.

Alcohol Use

The studies on alcohol use are a different matter. The studies reviewed in the meta-analyses conducted by Worby and Organista (2007) and Garcia and Gondolf, (2004) agreed that there is little comprehensive research on recent immigrants largely because of their desire to remain hidden and too mobile to be followed longitudinally. Both analyses chose to examine farmworkers, a population of Mexican immigrants that is removed from the traditional population centers of Mexicans in the United States. There is also a separation from many of the familial networks that support new immigrants. Consuming alcohol including heavy drinking, on an occasional basis, is a pattern typical in the Mexican communities of origin. Drinking begins at an early age and moderate daily drinking is not uncommon. Cultural traditions view heavy drinking as acceptable, especially during celebrations, also known as "fiesta"

drinking. There is “proper” drinking behavior that includes no violence or verbal abuse.

Social norms and families control or deter social drinking. This attitude toward drinking is brought with the migrant into the United States. Farmworkers are similar to many of the day laborers in the non-traditional United States destinations who become removed from their family supports and community norms. Increased border security may further isolate migrants from their families back home. A large solo male population may encourage drinking as a diversion, for relaxation and a convivial atmosphere in response to a stressful work environment. Drinking becomes a problem when the drinker misses work, doesn’t pay room and board, or stops sending remittances back to Mexico. Excess alcohol consumption may lead to occupational injuries, motor vehicle accidents, and health-related problems as a result of acute alcohol intoxication. Alcohol consumption may be part of the behavior of the new immigrants to the Farmingville area.

A study of undocumented immigrants and health care was conducted in Farmingville using a self-completed questionnaire through a non-random sample (Hernandez, 2005). A total of 129 questionnaires were collected. Of the 96 respondents to the alcohol use questions, 60% reported not drinking at all during the month prior to completing the survey, and 12% reported drinking 5 or more drinks at least twice during the month prior to the survey. Although no conclusions can be generalized because of the sampling strategy, it appears that drinking occurs in the new immigrant population in Farmingville, but is not a persistent problem.

The Final Decision: Stay in the United States or Return to Mexico

Two national studies addressed the issue of migrants returning to Mexico. Waldinger (2007) used the 2006 National Survey of Latinos to examine the connection of foreign-born Latino groups and their home countries. The National Survey of Latinos is a random sample of 2000 Hispanic adults which included 1429 foreign-born Latinos. Only one of the questions directly asked about the intentions of foreign-born Mexicans to remain in the United States. Foreign-born included all immigrants, both those here legally and those that are undocumented. When asked about their return to Mexico, 69% of non-citizens and 81% of citizens answered that they intended to remain in the United States. This indicates a strong desire to resettle in the United States by Mexican migrants, in contrast to what was observed by the Farmingville respondents.

A larger study by Suro (2005) utilized the Survey of Mexican Migrants to examine the intention of Mexican migrants to remain in the United States. The Survey of Mexican Migrants was a twelve page questionnaire administered to Mexican migrants applying for Matricular Consular cards in seven cities across the United States. There were 4836 valid responses. The Matricular Consular card is the primary identification document that is used by Mexican citizens when other forms of United States issued identification are not available. Therefore, most of the people surveyed by the Survey of Mexican Migrants are likely here without documentation. The data collection process was a purposive sample that did not use a probability sampling methodology, and the results may not be representative of the general

population of Matricular Consular seekers. The survey was designed to obtain the maximum number of observations.

There were two categories of returning to Mexico that were explored, short-term returns, that is travelling back and forth through a guest worker type of program, and those who intend to remain in the United States. The cities where the data were collected primarily fell into two categories: Los Angeles and Fresno were traditional Mexican destinations, while Chicago has a large Mexican population, but did not always show results consistent with the other traditional destinations. Dallas, Raleigh, Atlanta, and New York were newer migrant destinations. When asked about whether the immigrant would participate in a temporary program where they could go back and forth whenever they wanted, eventually returning home, 71% of the total respondents indicated they would participate (7% no answer), 76% of those seeking the Matricular Consular cards (6% no answer), and 79% of those with no U.S. identification (5% no answer) indicated they would participate. Factoring in the no answer percentage, an overwhelming number of Mexican migrants favored a temporary worker program with an eventual return to Mexico.

In examining city by city data, 69% of Los Angeles and Chicago respondents indicated that they would participate, as did 52% of the Fresno respondents. In the newer destination category, the percentage of respondents favoring a temporary worker type of program was 82% for Dallas, 76% for Raleigh, 77% for Atlanta, and 79% for New York. The new destination states migrants were substantially more willing to participate in a temporary worker program. This was more evident when the migrants were asked if they had friends or family in Mexico that might be

interested in a temporary worker program. The respondents indicated that 79% of the total, 81% of those seeking Matricular cards, and 82% of those with no U.S. identification felt that friends and family in Mexico would be interested in a temporary worker program. The traditional destination cities of Los Angeles (78%), Chicago (75%), and Fresno (68%) had lower percentages which indicated that friends and relatives would be interested in a temporary worker status, than the newer destination cities of Dallas (82%), Raleigh (82%), Atlanta (87%), and New York (81%).

The survey also asked about the migrant's intent to remain in the United States. Those who indicated they intended to remain in the U.S. "all their lives" were 17% of the total, 13% of those seeking Matricular cards, and 10% without any U.S. identification. The traditional destination cities of Los Angeles (29%) and Fresno (29%) had much higher percentages of the totals than the percentages of the new destination cities of Dallas (12%), Raleigh (7%), Atlanta (11%), and New York (5%); with Chicago (15%) had about the same as the new destination city totals. Those indicating that they would like to remain in the United States "as long as I can" had a more even distribution at 42% of the total, including 44% of those seeking Matricular cards, and 41% with no U.S. identification.

The breakdown by city was fairly consistent: Los Angeles at 43%, Chicago at 40%, Fresno at 44%, Dallas at 44%, Raleigh at 36%, Atlanta at 38%, and New York at 45%. Migrants indicating that they intended to remain in the United States less than five years were 27% of the total, including 30% of those seeking Matricular cards, and 36% of those with no U.S. identification. Two of the three traditional destinations

showed dramatically lower percentages of migrants that intended to stay less than five years: Los Angeles (17%) and Fresno (18%). Chicago (31%) fell in line with the newer destination cities of Dallas (31%), Raleigh (42%), Atlanta (33%), and New York (35%).

Age was a key factor in determining a migrant's intention to stay in the United States. Only 14% of the 18 to 29 year olds intend to stay in the United States "all their lives," while 34% intend to stay less than five years. As the age of the respondents became older, the percentage intending to stay in the United States "all their lives" increased and the shorter term stay responses decreased. This also maybe due to the increased amount of time spent in the United States that may be a result found in older people. The respondents in Farmingville appear more in line with the new destination for cities for Mexican migrants, with most indicating that they would return to Mexico to stay at some point and showed some interest in participating in a temporary worker type program.

Summary

Mexicans that migrate to non-traditional immigrant destinations have a stronger desire to return home than those that migrate to traditional destinations. There is alcohol use among Mexican immigrants, but social norms generally keep abuse low. While mental health issues have arisen, there appears to be fewer negative impacts for new immigrants. A protective or buffering effect may result from closer ties to the traditional culture and the presence of familial networks for support.

Immigration enforcement has been a public activity, but yield limited results. Statistics do not confirm a change in the number of border apprehensions over the last few years or dramatic increase in workplace enforcement activities. Farmingville experienced a series of highly public housing raids, but they were few in number and did not continue.

A number of studies examined day labor and the hiring sites associated with the laborers. Most day laborers work in low skill jobs, usually earning above minimum wage when working. Small employers or private individuals were the primary employers. Many day laborers faced work related dangers and mistreatment from employers during employment. Immigration enforcement had little impact on immigration flow in the United State and subsequent employment.

The implications of the study and conclusions are next.

Chapter Nine: Implications and Conclusions

The story of undocumented immigrants in Farmingville is a complex tale. The experience of the Farmingville migrants, who are overwhelmingly Mexican, may not be very different from the experience of other Mexicans that have migrated to communities in the United States that are far from the traditional destinations of prior migrations. Yet very few of the new communities settled by Mexican migrants have been thrust into the national spotlight. Traditional immigrant destinations have large ethnic populations and enclaves where those here legally blend in with newer undocumented immigrants. The new communities offer little ability to blend into the fabric of the community. When such communities find their way into the national spotlight, remaining hidden and low profile are no longer options. The results of the 45 interviews conducted in this study appear to share many commonalities with immigrants settling in new destinations. The incidents that have pushed Farmingville into the national spotlight, and subsequent years of struggle where the national immigration debate played out on the streets of the community, have provided unique challenges for the migrants. This study has revealed many findings that are consistent with the available literature as well as a few that are unanticipated.

Major Findings

Although it was not covered as part of the interview process, a review of the literature pointed to the possible origin of the type of community-based immigration controversy found in Farmingville. Kandel and Parrado (2005) presented a scenario

where new immigration laws and increased border enforcement efforts along key migration routes have redirected migrants to new destination communities. The Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) of 1986 legalized 2.3 million previously unauthorized immigrants. The legalization process allowed immigrants to move from immigrant congested enclaves in traditional destination areas to new destination communities where more employment opportunities, with less competition, might be available. Once settled in these non-traditional destinations, new networks emerged to facilitate further migration. At the same time, enhanced border enforcement activities, along high traffic points of entry and along routes to traditional destinations within the United States, forced immigrants to different destinations to avoid detection. Border crossing points were moved farther east and new routes away from the border and the traditional destinations were established. McConnell (2008) added that migrants also began seeking destinations far away from border communities. The new destinations would be far away from border enforcement activities and in areas with expanded employment opportunities and reasonable housing. Ironically, Farmingville was likely one of the destinations created by the type of enforcement that is advocated by the people who oppose the immigration of undocumented individuals.

Settlement in Non-Traditional Destination Communities Has Challenges

Regardless of the reason that people choose to migrant from Mexico to the United States, the destination plays a major role in their experience. The migrant's journey was reported to be very difficult and getting more difficult as border

enforcement efforts increased. At times the journey was extremely dangerous, and even deadly. If a person would get caught either along the way, or in the United States, the result would be detention, a return to Mexico, and the prospects of a more dangerous return trip if they chose to return, with the potential of greater consequences if caught a second time. In making a decision to migrate, a person must consider if the journey will be successful, not only in arriving safely, but in finding work and reaching the goals set forth at the beginning of the trip.

It was very clear that the decision to migrate to Farmingville was not random. Almost all of the migrants who made their way to Farmingville had a connection to the community. Most of the Mexican migrants had family members, either siblings or extended family that were already living in Farmingville. The remainder with connections had friends or fellow villagers that made their way to the community. The success stories of early migrants in finding employment opportunities filtered back to the sending communities in Mexico and encouraged further migration to Farmingville. The migration movement to Farmingville, and the return information flow back to the sending Mexican villages have been best described by the social capital theories of international migration. The fact that most of the migrant are from Hildago, a rural Mexican community, and a smaller more recent flow from Mexico City, is consistent with Portes' (1998) research which suggests that network ties stay within the group and are connected to certain communities. Social capital was described as having "strong ties" and "weak ties" (Massey, 1990; Massey and Espinosa, 1997; and Winters et al, 2001). "Strong ties" networks are made up of family members, which may be extended family, or possibly close friends. "Weak

ties" networks are community networks comprised more of friends, acquaintances, and fellow villagers. The migrants in Farmingville indicated that "strong ties" networks were the primary source of information and assistance and "weak ties" networks were a key secondary source of information and assistance. Roberts et al (1999) emphasized the reliance of low-skilled individuals from rural communities who seek upward mobility on using social networks for assistance in migrating to the United States. The data from the interviews clearly showed familial and social connections to the Farmingville community. Social capital theory appears to be a strong and consistent basis to confirm the powerful role of networks in assisting the decision to migrate, selecting the destination community, and increasing the odds of migration.

Life in the community presents a unique set of challenges. Since the population of Farmingville is 86% white, brown-skinned Mexicans and other Latinos do not easily blend in to the fabric of the community. They can't go unnoticed. The Latino migrant population is dispersed throughout the neighborhoods; they travel down the same streets, shop at the same stores, and, if there are children, attend the same schools. The respondents had very few stories about establishing good relations with community members. Community members largely ignore the Latino immigrants. Whether it was perceptual, or an actual act, most of the immigrants had a story where community members shunned them. The Latino immigrants and the general community, at large, essentially live separate lives, co-located in the same geographic area.

Most of the migrants reported family connections to Farmingville; some have immediate family members such as wives, brothers, and sisters; others have extended family members, primarily cousins. A number of the men are connected by friends and villagers. Despite reported connections to the community, a number of the immigrants reported feeling isolated. There are many single men who have wives and children back in Mexico; there are also husbands and wives with only each other, or their young children in the community. The isolation can contribute to stress and personal problems, which will be discussed later.

Farmingville has received national attention. The factors leading up to the placement of Farmingville in the national spotlight and the consequences of that attention brought additional challenges to the Latino immigrants within the community. At the height of the controversy, and for several years following, the workers were faced with weekly and often daily protests at one of the primary hiring sites. Faced with harassment and people carrying signs with slogans "Illegal aliens = Criminals" or "Use the military to deport illegal aliens," the immigrants felt intimidated. The protest against the presence of the workers was carried further by the actions of several community groups that publicly opposed the presence of the undocumented immigrants. For years, a very public struggle reflecting the national immigration debate played out on the streets of Farmingville. The immigrants were largely unwilling participants in this debate. Many of those seeking work could not understand why they were being targeted when their intention was only to come here and earn money to improve their lives. Few unauthorized migrants across the country faced the daily pressure that was endured by the migrants who chose Farmingville.

The result of the national attention was not without consequences. The negative portrayal of the immigrants led to the white community's harassment and violence. Portraying the migrants as criminals who had no legal status in the community opened the workers to acts of verbal and physical attacks, often by youth. The migrants were robbed commuting to, and returning from, walking or bicycling to, the street hiring locations. The lack of legal status made reporting crimes more difficult. There was no sense of safety in the immigrant community. Although the police helped with swift arrests in the high profile cases, there was a general concern among the migrants about trusting the police.

In other action, the local governments cracked down on the landlords that rented to the workers. There were numerous complaints about the conditions within the houses that immigrants lived in by the groups opposing the immigrant's presence. Addresses were gathered and forwarded to the Town and County government. Elected officials were actively pressed to take action against the houses. Negative stories about the impact of immigrant housing on the established community were highly publicized. Many became temporarily homeless as a result of code enforcement actions. The situation has since largely resolved itself, with landlords now renting to a smaller number of migrants per house, in conformance with Town codes, but still under government scrutiny.

Although there is no evidence of enhanced immigration enforcement activities, there is a constant fear of immigration raids in the community. The national attention has led to periodic enforcement raids of local housing, but no sustained or concerted effort has taken place. The immigrants have a general attitude that the raids are unfair,

detaining innocent people who are only here to work as collaterals to the intended targets of the raid. Most of the immigrants will accept their fate if detained and deported by immigration authorities. It is a fact of daily life. There is even a sense of defiance among some of the immigrants, where if they are deported, they will return to the United States in a short period.

Settlement in non-traditional immigrant destinations presents unique challenges. Farmingville is no exception. The national attention that Farmingville has received, has perhaps magnified the local reaction and response to the new immigrants that has made their live just a little more difficult.

The Desire to Return to Mexico

The desire to return to Mexico is overwhelming for the respondents. There is no "American Dream" for these Mexican migrants. There is no desire to migrate and make it big in the United States. There is only a "Mexican Dream" for the Mexican migrants that came to Farmingville. The dream is to come here to make money, in order to build a better life in Mexico. This may be a consequence of migration to a non-traditional destination, or the purpose for migrating to a non-traditional destination.

The traditional United States destinations for immigrants have ethnic enclaves where new immigrants can blend in. There are ethnic businesses and community structures where immigrants can receive support and a place for families to grow and develop. New communities lack this infrastructure. Despite a growing number of businesses that cater to the Latino, primarily Mexican, community within

Farmingville, they are very distinct and highly visible. The migrants are dispersed throughout the community without a designated area where they may live or congregate. In addition, the Mexican immigrants appear to be largely single or unaccompanied males, many with wives and children back in Mexico. There is little desire to establish a life in Farmingville. The respondents were very clear about their eventual permanent return to Mexico. Only one or two expressed any desire to remain in the community. These findings were consistent and even stronger than the data Suro (2005) reported from the Survey of Mexican Migrants. The survey used a purposive sample rather than a probability sample and may not be truly representative of the Mexican migrant community. However, the data indicated that less than 17% of the total Mexican migrants surveyed wanted to remain in the United States "all of their lives." The non-traditional destination cities participating in the survey had 12% or less of the Mexican migrants reporting they would like to stay in the United States "all of their lives." The New York City respondents had the lowest percentage (5%) of immigrants likely to stay in the United States, which appears to be consistent with the attitudes that were captured in the Farmingville interviews.

The lack of family networks, or the smaller nature of the existing family networks, in Farmingville, reduce the ties the migrants have to the community. The rejection by the community, either through overt acts of violence or racism, or lack of acceptance by community members, reduces the desire of the migrants to permanently settle in Farmingville. The goals that were set prior to making the journey to the United States, and the personal improvements within the home community gained by family and friends who previously returned such as the

acquisition of houses, land, or businesses, provide the motivation for a targeted, short-term migration with a permanent return to Mexico.

Migration to non-traditional communities is supported by the new economics framework models of immigration. The new economics framework places a significant role on remittances. The research by Taylor (1999) views remittances and development in the immigrant's home area as encouragement for out-migration. Migrants may select areas very different from their own to ensure estrangement, detachment, and social distance in order to focus on their original goals for migration (Stark and Taylor, 1989, 1991). More research is needed to examine these factors.

The Journey to the United States is Difficult

With the increase in border security as a result of policy changes directed at a more enforcement-oriented political climate, there is no expectation of an easy trip when migrating illegally to the United States. If a person is not aware of the type of trip that awaits them, and does not factor the potential danger of the journey into the migration decision-making process, they are open to even more danger. For some, the possible gains are worth the risk; for others, owing to economic circumstances, there is no real decision to be made regarding the necessity of making the journey.

Forty of the forty-two Mexican immigrants that were interviewed had to cross the border illegally to enter the United States. The doubling of the size of the border patrol has led to a dramatic increase in the number of apprehensions of people attempting to cross the border illegally. The change in policy from a "catch and release" program to identifying the migrants that were intercepted while crossing the

border for further prosecution if they were caught again, increased the consequences of capture along the journey. The increased enforcement efforts along the traditional border crossing routes forced migrants to select more dangerous routes and increased the cost of escorted border crossings (Cornelius, 2001, 2005). As a result of the increased border enforcement efforts, most of the migrants that came to Farmingville were forced to come through the desert. The desert temperatures average 112 degrees in the summer and the temperatures go to freezing at night in the winter. Even without incident, most of the border crossings were difficult with many migrants running out of drinking water along the way, or having the need to make several attempts to cross to evade authorities on both sides of the border. Several of the respondents were injured, while others witnessed death along the route. There were roving gangs that preyed on the migrants through robberies, beatings, and worse. Women had more difficulty in crossing the border. The fear of rape, not only by the gangs, but by the coyotes that brought them across the border, added an additional level of fear and stress among the women. The journey had a lasting impression on the respondents based on what they experienced or what they witnessed. Sometimes post traumatic stress followed them into their lives in the community.

The increased border security and difficulty of the trip led to longer stays in the United States, with a smaller number of migrants returning home in the winter and less migration by wives and children in Mexico to reunite their family. However, the increased border enforcement and difficulty of the journey had little influence on the decision of some of the married women to migrate, either because they missed their husbands or did not trust their husbands to remain alone in the United States. This

concept was supported by several of the women interviewed as well as the research conducted by Curran and Rivera-Fuentes (2003).

The respondents provided dramatic testimony on the difficulty of the trip and the experiences along the way. The debate that takes place on the presence of the undocumented migrants in the community holds no appreciation for the difficult process to migrate to Farmingville. It is not a casual migration; rather, it is a purposeful migration with specific goals in mind.

The Migration Experience of Women is Very Different From Men

The migration of women from Mexico to the United States is a very different experience as compared to the migration of men. Single women may migrate for many of the same reasons that were given by men, such as the lack of economic opportunities in their home villages in Mexico, or to improve their lives or the lives of their families. These women are usually assisted by family networks in crossing the border and establishing themselves in communities within the United States. The single women that were interviewed supported this notion. Several of the married women that were interviewed made the journey to reunite with their husbands with the support of their husband or family. Others followed their husbands, because they didn't want to be alone in Mexico or wished to check up on husbands in the United States whose migration was not supported by family networks. The difficult journey was especially dangerous for women. In addition to the general dangers, there was the added danger of rape. None of the respondents reported being raped; however, there

were instances reported of sexual abuse and of hearing stories about others who had been raped. Women had more variables to consider in making the decision to migrate.

Once in Farmingville, work opportunities were very different. There are no corners for women to find employment. Many of the women work either providing domestic services to the various houses of immigrants by cooking or cleaning; or work in traditional "off-the-books" jobs as domestics, cleaners, or deli work. Recent federal legislation put an end to the legitimate jobs that women had found as a result of increasing the potential consequences to the employers of hiring workers without proper documentation. As a result, some of the women obtained false documents to secure employment in legitimate, "on the books" type jobs. At times, the lack of validity of the employment-related documents was known by the employer, creating a more difficult work situation for the woman. There were instances of workplace abuse and sexual abuse or harassment by supervisors or bosses.

Single women who migrated often had extended families within the community. A small number of the married women had only their husbands in Farmingville, which resulted in isolation or the need for women to create their own social networks within the community. The social isolation at times had psychological impacts on the women or subjected them to domestic violence without the benefits of outside supports or services to overcome their circumstances. Women with children had special concerns. If the children were left in Mexico, there were concerns about how they were being raised without their parents. If they had children in the United States, there were concerns about what would happen to their children if they were

apprehended, detained, and deported by immigration authorities. These concerns were additional stressors on the everyday lives of the women.

The unique migration challenges facing women is not fully appreciated. This study was fortunate that one-third of the respondents were women and thus provided an adequate female perspective on the issues surrounding the migration to Farmingville. There is agreement among researchers (Cerruti and Massey, 2001; Baker, 2004; Parrado and Flippen, 2005) that, despite the increasing numbers of females migrating from Mexico to the United States, the subject of female migration has been largely overlooked or neglected by immigration researchers.

The Psychological Impact of Migration

The psychological impact that various aspects of the migration process had on the migrants was one of the unanticipated findings of this study. Little appears to be known, and few resources are directed to, the psychological impact of the migration experience. The psychological impacts fell into 5 primary categories. The first one revolved around work and the lack of work. In winter, when the availability of work is the lowest, many of the day laborers have feelings of sadness or depression. The migrants have no money and are forced to stay at home more often and feel isolated as a result. Isolation is the second area that has an impact on the migrants. There is isolation from the lack of family or close friends in the community. There is the isolation that comes from being a stranger in a strange land and being cut off by language and cultural barriers. The most common area of the impact of isolation was in missing family that was back in Mexico. Circumstances were especially difficult

when husbands left their wives and children, or mothers left their children behind. Migrants also suffered from missing their parents or siblings. The trip presented difficulties resulting in Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). The personal suffering, attacks, passing dead bodies, or losing members of their group along the way are rare experiences for rural villagers from Mexico. Finally, women faced unique issues. Domestic violence from husbands or co-habitants, social isolation, or issues revolving around treatment at work can lead to psychological problems.

Little research has been conducted on the psychological impact of migration. Most of the data available has been gathered using a small number of variables in larger studies, small subsets of study populations, or non-longitudinal data from "difficult" to study groups such as undocumented immigrants. Some authors are able to highlight a number of potential stressors that may lead to psychological and substance abuse problems, but see the strong influence of family and social networks and lower expectations in migration as mitigating factors in actually lowering the incidence of mental health and substance abuse among newly migrating populations. While a number of potential stressors exist for the Farmingville residents, it appears that most of the respondents reporting psychological problems do not have access to family and social networks to help mitigate their problems (Grant et al, 2008; Wadsworth and Kurbin, 2007; Frazini and Fernandez-Esquer, 2004; Escobar et all 2000; Hovey and Magana, 2002, Hovey, 2000). More research is necessary to understand the extent of the psychological impact of immigration and more resources may be necessary to treat migrants that may be negatively impacted by the migration experience.

Other findings

Mexicans migrate to the United States primarily for economic reasons. The poor economy in Mexico provides few opportunities for workers to improve their economic situation. Respondents reported having barely enough money to meet their basic needs in Mexico. Other workers migrated to the United States to improve their lives or the lives of their families. Employment in the United States would provide opportunities to fund their children's education, build houses or buy property, or accumulate capital either to open businesses or set up a comfortable retirement.

Almost all the male migrants to Farmingville experience finding work on the corner. A number of the migrants have found long-term employment through opportunities provided by the corner. Many of the migrants know workers that have not been paid by employers, but only a few haven't been paid themselves. Treatment by employers is generally good. However, many have experienced poor treatment at some point by their employers. The poor economy and increased enforcement activity placing more restrictions on employers has led the workers on the corners to accept lower wages. Finally, winter is very hard on the workers because of limited employment opportunities and the end of much of the seasonal work such as landscaping, pool work, and construction.

The fear of immigration authorities is always present, but most undocumented immigrants will accept their fate if they are apprehended and detained. Most of the immigrants feel that they are in the United States to work and pose no problem to the community. If they are apprehended, it will be due to chance, not any activity they are

involved in. Apprehensions can take place anytime or anywhere, in the home or on the street. Some migrants take precautions to reduce the possibility of getting caught while others go on with their lives. The migrants feel the immigration raids in the Farmingville area are unfair. Many who are apprehended collaterally along with the actual target of the raids are innocent victims. The migrants feel that they are not criminals even though they may be detained and deported. Despite several very publicized and highly visible immigration raids throughout the country, enforcement actions by Immigrations and Customs Enforcement have been fairly static over the last two years (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2008). The highly public raids have served mainly as additional deterrents for employers who hire undocumented immigrants.

Policy Implications and Directions for the Future

Policy Recommendation 1: Develop a viable and functional immigration policy that recognizes current immigration realities.

There are clear economic forces that drive Mexicans to migrate to the United States. These conditions have existed for years and show no signs of abating. Migration statistics show the numbers of Mexican migrants decreasing, yet they still enter the United States in the hundreds of thousands. Increased border enforcement has done little to stem the flow of immigrants across the border. The net result is making the trip more dangerous and is redirecting migrants to cross the border illegally to non-traditional destinations.

There is little research on migration to non-traditional destinations. However, there are several studies, as well as the current study, that strongly suggest that immigrants in non-traditional destinations, as a group, desire to return to Mexico permanently, at some point in their lives. Other studies show support for temporary worker type programs that will allow immigrants to cross the border for shorter periods to work and return home to their families especially in the winter time in the north. Many of the immigrants that were interviewed for this study reported that they migrated here to work.

The development of a guest or temporary worker type program to allow the Mexican migrants an opportunity to work and return home periodically would appear to be a logical solution. Workers could come to the United States seasonally and return home when the availability of work diminishes. This would reduce the dangers of the journey and the cost to the migrants. Workers could find jobs legally, pay taxes, and have access to documents that would allow them to open bank accounts or drive legally. Border enforcement efforts could focus on illegal activities at the border instead of tracking down migrants attempting to cross the border illegally. The migrants entering would be registered and screened, and there would be no reason to be in the United States illegally. Interior enforcement efforts might focus on immigrants who do not belong here instead of pursing undocumented workers and their employers. This program should be tied to employment, not specific employers. This would avoid potential exploitation by employers who could threaten workers with removal should they not be compliant. An added component of the program

would offer earned legalization and a path to citizenship for migrants who choose to remain in the United States.

Policy Recommendation 2: Develop a variety of support services for women.

Women face unique challenges in all aspects of the migration process. The journey has more danger; work opportunities, especially in non-traditional migrant destinations are harder to find; there is more isolation due to the nature of the work women engage in, and fewer social opportunities in the community. Informal social networks should be encouraged. Support services to address social isolation and specific women's issues such as domestic violence prevention and prenatal education should be developed.

Policy Recommendation 3: Develop mental health and substance abuse services directed at migrants.

A number of migrants suffer from psychological problems. Many of the migrants do not have family or social networks in the community to mitigate a number of problems faced by undocumented immigrants. Lingering post traumatic stress from the journey, the isolation that results from the work routine or lack of work, and separation from their families can cause problems when there are no proper outlets to address them. Migrants may not be aware of the services that might be available, or in fact, there are no services available to provide mental health and substance abuse assistance. The lack of health insurance by most of the undocumented immigrants,

and the general unavailability of bilingual services make establishment of the types of services that are needed difficult, at best.

Policy Recommendation 4: Develop a community dialogue and education programs to better understand the new immigrants and the dynamics of immigration.

The new immigrants in the Farmingville area are largely ignored by white community members. Many immigrants feel that they have been shunned and live separately from the white members of the same community. There have been numerous acts of violence committed against the new immigrants. Much of the violence has been committed by youth. Images of men standing on street corners looking for work and overcrowded houses, often define the presence of the immigrants.

The heated rhetoric that was a product of a media fueled immigration debate within Farmingville has left community members with a distorted image of the issues surrounding the migration of Mexicans. Aside from the need to work and housing problems, little is really known about the experiences of the migrants. The findings within this study; such as the desire of most of the immigrants to return home, the psychological problems experienced by many immigrants, and the special obstacles faced by immigrant women, are not commonly understood issues. At the same time, as new residents, the immigrants may not fully understand the concerns of the community. An open dialogue within the community and education, especially for the youth, would be an opportunity for the white and immigrant community to share their

experiences and concerns. The results of these activities should have a positive effect on life in the community, for everyone.

Limitations

This study was designed to be an exploratory investigation of issues surrounding undocumented migrants in a non-traditional United States destination. Farmingville is a unique community because of the national attention that it received as a result of the presence of the undocumented immigrants. Yet, Farmingville is probably typical of many of the non-traditional communities where newer migrants from Mexico and other Latin American countries have settled. It is clear that more research is needed to examine the lives of the undocumented immigrants that have made their way from the traditional enclaves to new destination that have little or no experience with Latino culture and language. The movement of migrants to these non-traditional communities may be functional strategy to ensure a return to Mexico. The economic opportunity provided in these areas may far outweigh the social disaster experienced while living in these communities. There is a dearth of research on the subject despite the strong presence of the issue in the media.

The study was designed as a qualitative, exploratory study. There were a number of issues that were raised by the respondents. The data was gathered through a semi-structured interview guide. There was no quantitative data collected other than basic demographics. The grounded theory developed requires further research to validate the conclusions. More research is needed on other non-traditional migrant destinations in order to assess whether the conclusions from the Farmingville study

will apply to other communities or are unique to Farmingville's population of undocumented immigrants.

Final Thoughts

This study provided some insight into a little studied population that has been the center of national attention. The subject of illegal immigration is still a major issue in the United States today. Telling the story of the people at the center of the debate will hopefully shed some light on why people decide to migrate, the difficult journey involved in getting to Farmingville, the life faced by those who are different in a strange land, the goals of the migrants, and the personal impact of the entire migration process. The human side of the story is often ignored in an emotionally charged policy debate. Understanding the human side of the debate may not change the opinions of the most radical in the immigration debate, but putting a human face on the subject can only lead to less objectifying of the people involved. If this study can be a tool in developing policy to change the broken immigration system and improve the lives of all those involved, it was well worth the effort involved.

The following words best sum up the experience from the immigrant's point of view:

> I would probably have to do it again, but it's a dangerous journey, an ugly experience.
>
> - Maria, Mexican immigrant

> Someone said to my husband that he prefers to be a poor Mexican than a poor American and I say that I prefer to be a poor Mexican.
>
> - Joanna, Mexican immigrant

That was one of the ideas that I had, to come here 3 or 4 years to make money, to start a business in Mexico and continue studying. But things are not that easy as I thought. The idea that I had there it's not the same as the reality. The reality is something else.

- Toti, Mexican immigrant

No, one returns to Mexico. The end is in Mexico, not here, regardless if you are a resident or illegal. Dead or alive, the end is Mexico.

- Don, Mexican immigrant

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Appendix A:

Approved Committee

On

Research Involving

Human Subjects

(CORIHS)

Study Interview Guide

English and Spanish Versions

Project Interview Guide

Background Information

1) Why did you come to the United States?
2) Why did you select this community?
3) Did you know anything about this community before you came?
4) Did you have friends in this community before you came here? Elsewhere in the United States before you came here? (If so, where?)
5) Did you have relatives in this community before you came here? Elsewhere in the United States before you came here? (If so, where?)
6) Did you leave family behind in your native country when you came here?
7) Has the relationship with your family back home changed since you have been here? (Could you tell me how the change has impacted your family back home?)
8) How has being separated from your family impacted you life here? (Your relationship with others?)
9) How did you get here from your home country? (Did anyone assist you? If yes, how?)
10) Did you come with anybody?

Getting Started in the Community and Working

11) Is this your first time in the United States?
12) If not, why did you go back home?
13) Why did you return?
14) What were your impressions when you first arrived in this community?
15) How did you go about finding work?
16) Do you work steady? (If yes, how did you get the job?) (If no, how often do you work?)
17) What kind of work do you do now?
18) What kind of work would you like to do?
19) What kind of work are you trained to do?
20) How do you feel about the working conditions in the jobs that you have had?
21) How do you feel about treatment by employers in the jobs that you have had?
22) How do you feel about the pay in the jobs that you have had?
23) Are you always paid for the work that you perform?
24) How do you make sure you get paid for the work that you do?

Health and Medical Issues

25) Have you received medical care since you have been here? (How did you go about getting medical care?) (Where did you receive it?)
26) Have you received dental care since you have been here? (How did you go about getting dental care?) (Where did you receive it?)
27) Has being injured ever prevented you from working?
28) Are you able to get medical care when you need it? (If no, why? What did you do?)
29) Have you gotten information about good health? (How? Where?)
30) Have you gotten information about STDs/AIDS? (How? Where?)

31) Have you gotten information about Drugs/alcohol? (How? Where?)

Life in the Community

32) What kind of place do you live in? (House, apartment, room, cot, shared space) (How many people live with you?)
33) What is it like living in that kind of setting? (How could it be better?)
34) Are you aware of the problems in the past between the immigrants and some of the community members? (If yes, what have you heard?)
35) Did you know about the problems before you arrived? (If yes, why did you still come?)
36) What have your experiences been in the neighborhood with the native people in the community?
37) What are experiences of your friends/relatives in the neighborhood with the native people in the community?
38) Are you aware of any gangs or groups that prey on the workers? (Are they in the neighborhood?)
39) Do you feel safe in the community? (Why or why not?)
40) Are you afraid of immigration authorities, in general? (If yes, are you most afraid when you are working, at home, or in the neighborhood.?)
41) Are you afraid of being deported? (Do you think it can happen in this community?) (How do you deal with the threat?) (What precautions do you take?)
42) Do you know what rights you have?
43) Are the workers united in any way?
44) Are the workers isolated?
45) What would make things better between the workers and the community?
46) If you need to find out something, who would you ask?
47) Who do you trust in the community to help you?
48) What kind of help have you received since you have been here? (From whom?)

Assessment of the Present/Hope for the Future

49) What are your hopes for the future?
50) Do you want to stay in this community?
51) Do you want to stay in the United States?
52) Would you like to eventually return to your home country to stay? (Why?)
53) What could be done to make your life better in the United States?
54) What could be done to make the lives of your friends/relatives better in the United States?
55) If the laws changed and you were allowed to work here legally, how would your life be different?
56) Do you speak English? (How well?) (If no, do you want to learn?) (What have you done to help you deal with the English speaking community?)
57) Do you think the immigrants have established a sense of community in this community?
58) How do you feel your overall experience in this community has been?
59) If you had to do it all over again, would you? (Why or why not?)
60) What would you do differently?

61) Is there anything else you would like to add?

Demographic Background

62) Male/Female?

63) What is your age at your last birthday?

64) What is your current marital status? (If married, is your spouse with you?)

a. ____Single
b. ____Married
c. ____Separated
d. ____Divorced
e. ____Widowed
f. ____ Living Together

65) Do you have children? How many? Do they live with you? What are their ages?

66) What is your country of birth?

67) What is the highest level of school that you have completed?

a. ____Elementary School
b. ____Junior High School
c. ____High School
d. ____Vocational/Trade School
e. ____College
f. ____Never went to school but I know how to read and write
g. ____Never went to school, I don't know how to read and write

PROJECT INTERVIEW GUIDE – Spanish Version

Información de Fondo

1) ¿Por qué vino usted a los Estados Unidos?
2) ¿Por qué escogió usted esta comunidad?
3) ¿Sabía usted algo de esta comunidad antes de vinir aquí?
4) ¿Tenía amigos en esta comunidad antes de que usted venir aquí? ¿y otra parte de los Estados Unidos antes veniear aquí? Si es asi, ¿dónde?
5) ¿Tenía parientes en esta comunidad antes venir aquí? ¿En otras partes de los Estados Unidos? Sí eso es asi, ¿dónde?
6) ¿Dejó usted su familia en su país cuando usted vino aquí?
7) ¿Ha cambiado la relación con su familia en su país natal desde que usted ha estado aquí? ¿Me podría decir usted cómo ha afectado el cambio su a familia en su pais?
8) ¿Cómo le ha afectado su vida la separacion de su familia aquí? y ¿Su relación con los démas?
9) Describa su viaje aquí de su patria ¿Quien Le ayudó? ¿cómo?
10) ¿Vino usted con alguien? ¿con quién?

Empezando en la Comunidad y el Trabajao

11) ¿Es su primera vez en los Estados Unidos?
12) Si no, ¿ por qué regresó a su páis?
13) ¿Por qué regresó usted?
14) ¿Cuales fuero sus impresiones cuando llegó por primera vez a esta comunidad?
15) ¿Que le parecia su empleo?
16) ¿Trabaja usted continuamente? ¿ cómo obtuvo usted el empleo? Si no, ¿cuántas veces a la semana trabaja?
17) ¿Qué clase de empleo hace usted ahora?
18) ¿Qué clase de empleo quisiera usted hacer?
19) ¿Qué clase de empleo está entrenado hacer?
20) ¿Cómo se siente usted acerca de las condiciones de trabajo en los empleos que usted ha tenido?
21) ¿Cómo se siente usted acerca del tratamiento del patrón en los empleos que usted ha tenido?
22) ¿Que le parece del sueldo que ha recibido?
23) ¿Le pagan siempre por el trabajo que usted realiza?
24) ¿Cómo se asegura usted que le paguen por el empleo?

Salud y Asuntos Médicos

25) ¿Ha recibido tratameinto médico desde que usted ha estado aquí? ¿Cómo obtuvo el servicio médico? ¿Dónde lo recibió?
26) ¿Ha recibido cuido dental desde que usted ha estado aquí? ¿ Cómo lo obtuvo? ¿ Dónde lo consiquío?
27) ¿Le ha prevenido trabajar alguna herida?
28) ¿Puede conseguir ayuda médica cuando la necesite? Si no,¿ por qué no? ¿Qué hizo usted para obtener el tratameinto medico?

29) ¿Ha obtenido usted información de como mejorar su salud? ¿Cómo lo ha recibido? ¿Dónde lo ha recibido?
30) ¿Ha obtenido usted información de ETS/SIDA? ¿Cómo? ¿Dónde?
31) ¿Ha obtenido usted información de drogas/alcohol? ¿ Cómo? ¿Dónde?

La vida en la Comunidad

32) ¿En gué clase de lugar vive usted? ¿ casa, apartamento, un cuarto, cuarto compartido con otros? ¿Cuántas personas viven con usted?
33) ¿Cómo es su vivienda en ese lugar? ¿ Cómo podría ser mejor?
34) ¿Se ha enterado de los problemas en el pasado entre los inmigrantes y algunos de los miembros de la comunidad? ¿ Qué ha oído usted?
35) ¿Supo de los problemas antes de venir a su comunidad actual? Entonces, ¿Por qué aun vino?
36) ¿Qué han sido sus experiencias con las personas del vecindario?
37) ¿Cuales han sido las experiencias de sus amigos/parientes con personas locales del vecindario?
38) ¿Se ha enterado de cualquier pandilla o de grupos que hayan atacado los trabajadores? ¿ Viven ellos en su vecindario?
39) ¿Se siente usted seguro en la comunidad? ¿Por qué si o por qué no?
40) ¿Tiene miedo a de los agentes de inmigración? ¿Dónde tiene usted mas miedo: cuando usted trabaja, en su casa, o en el vecindario?
41) ¿Tiene usted miedo de ser deportado? ¿Que cree usted que puede suceder en esta comunidad? ¿Cómo se enfrenta a la amenaza? ¿ Cuales precauciones toma?
42) ¿Conoce sus derechos?
43) ¿Estan los trabajadores unidos en alguna manera?
44) ¿Estan los trabajadores aislados?
45) ¿Qué haría la situacion mejor entre los trabajadores y la comunidad?
46) ¿Si necesitara averiquar algo a quién se lo preguntaría?
47) ¿En quien confiaria que le ayudara?
48) ¿Qué clase de ayuda ha recibido desde de usted ha estado aquí? ¿De quién?

La evaluación de la Presente/Esperanza para el Futuro

49) ¿Qué esperanzas tiene para su futuro?
50) ¿Quiere quedarse en esta comunidad?
51) ¿Quiere quedarse en los Estados Unidos?
52) ¿Quisiera volver finalmente a su patria para quedarse? ¿Por qué?
53)¿Qué se podría hacer para mejorar su vida?
54) ¿Qué se podría hacer para hacer la vida de sus amigos/parientes mejor en los Estados Unidos?
55) Si las leyes cambiaran y usted fuera capaz de vivir y trabajar aquí legalmente, ¿cómo sería su vida diferente?
56) ¿Habla inglés? ¿Bien? ¿Si no, quiere aprender?
57) ¿Piensa que los inmigrantes han establecido un sentido de pertenecer en esta comunidad?
58) ¿Que le parece de su experiencia en general en la comunidad?
59) En general ¿cual ha sido su experiencia en su nueva comunidad?

60) Si pudiera tener esta experiencia de nuevo ¿Que haría diferente?
61) ¿Qué más quisiera agregar?

Fondo Demográfico

62) ¿Hembra/Varon?
63) ¿Cuantos años tiene?
64) ¿Cual es su estado civil ? ¿(Si es casado, está su pareja con usted?)
   a. ____Soltero
   b. ____ Casado
   c. ____ Separado
   d. ____ Divorciado
   e. ____ Enviudado
   f. ____ Viviendo Juntos

65) ¿Tiene usted hijos? ¿Cuántos? ¿Viven con usted? ¿Qué edad tienen ellos?

66) ¿En que pais nació?

¿67) Qué es el nivel más alto de la escuela que usted completó? La Escuela:
A. ____ Primaria (1-6 grado)
B. ____Secundaria (7-8 grado)
C.____ Escuela Superior (9-12 grados
D.____ Universidad (1 a 4 años)
E.____ Vocacional
F. ____Nunca fui a la escuela pero sé leer y escribir
G. ____Nunca fui a la escuela, no se leer ni escribir

Appendix B:

Approved Committee

On Research Involving

Human Subjects

(CORIHS)

Consent Forms

English and Spanish Versions

Stony Brook University
Health Sciences Center

School of Social Welfare

Dear Subject,

You are being asked to volunteer in a research study, "An Exploratory Study of Undocumented Immigrants in a Suburban Northeast Community."

The purpose of the study is to better understand the experiences of undocumented immigrants that are part of this community.

If you agree to participate, your part will be to answer a number of questions. It should take no more than 75 minutes of your time. There are no risks or benefits to you for participating in this study. You will be paid $20 for your participation.

The following procedures will be followed in an effort to keep your personal information confidential: you do not have to give your real name and the data collected will remain anonymous. To ensure that this research activity is being conducted properly, Stony Brook University's Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects and/or applicable officials of SBU, OHRP (Office for Human Research Protections), and the sponsor of the study, the Hagedorn Foundation, have the right to review study records, but confidentiality will be maintained as allowed by law.

There are no costs to you for participating in this study. Your participation is completely voluntary. You do not have to participate if you don't want to.

If you have any questions about the study, you may contact me at (631)278-0041 or by e-mail edhern2002@yahoo.com.

If you have any questions about your rights as a research subject, you may contact Ms. Judy Matuk, Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects, 631-632-9036.

If you answer these questions, it means that you have read (or have had read to you) the information contained in this letter, and would like to be a volunteer in this research study.

Thank you,

Edward Hernandez
Study Coordinator

Stony Brook, NY 11794-8231
Tel: (631) 444-2138

STONY BROOK
STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

Stony Brook University
Health Sciences Center

School of Social Welfare

Estimado Participante,

Le estamos pidiendo su participación en un estudio de investigación, "Un Estudio Exploratorio de Inmigrante sin documentos en una Comunidad del Noreste Suburbano."

El propósito del estudio es para entender mejor las experiencias de inmigrantes sin documentación que forman parte de esta comunidad.

Si usted concuerda en participar, su parte será de contestar varias preguntas. Debe tomar no más de 75 minutos de su tiempo. No hay los riesgos ni los beneficios a usted para tomar parte en este estudio. Usted será pagado $20 para su participación.

Los procedimientos siguientes se seguirán en un esfuerzo de mantener su información personal confidencial: usted no tiene que dar su nombre verdadero y los datos completos se quedarán anónimo. Para asegurar que esta actividad de investigación se realice apropiadamente, Stony Brook University's Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects and/or applicable officials of SBU, OHRP (Office for Human Research Protections), y el patrocinador del estudio, el Hagedorn Foundation, tiene el derecho de revisar los registros del estudio, pero la confidencialidad se mantendrá como permitido por la ley.

No hay los costos a usted para tomar parte en este estudio. Su participación es completamente voluntaria. Usted no tiene que participar si usted no quiere.

Si usted tiene cualquiera pregunta acerca del estudio, usted me puede contactar en (631)278-0041 o por correo electrónico edhern2002@yahoo.com.

Si usted tiene cualquiera pregunta acerca de sus derechos como un sujeto de investigación, usted puede contactar Sra. Judy Matuk, Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects, el 631-632-9036.

Si usted contesta estas preguntas, significan que usted ha leído (o se lo han leido a usted) la información contenida en esta carta, y querría ser un voluntario en este estudio de investigación.

Gracias,

Eduardo Hernández
Coordinador de Estudio

Stony Brook, NY 11794-8231
Tel: (631) 444-2138

STONY BROOK
STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

Appendix C:

Statements/Vitae of Translators

and

Written Instuctions

for the

Interviewers

Smart Medicine
STONY BROOK
UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL
Expert Care

Department of Community Relations

June 22, 2006

Ms. Judy Matuk
Stony Brook University's Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects
W5530 Library, Frank Melville Jr Memorial
Stony Brook, NY 11794-3368

Dear Judy:

I am sending this letter as an attestation that I am fluent in written and oral Spanish. I have translated numerous documents for the hospital and I have served as an oral translator. Based on my abilities, I further attest that this is a true translation.

Sincerely,

Bessie Ortega

Bessie Ortega,

Associate Director

14 Technology Drive Suite 2 ◆ E. Setauket, NY 11733 ◆ 631-444-5250 Fax: 631-444-5255

June 23, 2006

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter to assert that I am fluent in both written and verbal Spanish and English. I have completed the translation of the attached document to the best of my ability.

Sincerely,

Martha I. Leon

Martha I. Leon

A. B. Fernández González

EDUCATION

2006-Present	**Ph.D. in Spanish Literature** Department of Hispanic Languages and Literature Stony Brook University, NY
2007	**Diploma in EELE** (Teaching Spanish as a Second Language,32 credit program) University Antonio Nebrija, Madrid, Spain
2003	**M.A. in Secondary Education** West Virginia University, WV **M.A. in Foreign Languages** (Major: Spanish/ TESOL) West Virginia University, WV
2000	**B.A. English Philology** University of Valladolid, Spain.
1998 - 2000	**English Studies** ERASMUS-SOCRATES (Student Exchange Program) University of Saarlandes, Germany.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

August 2006-Present	**Spanish Graduate Teaching Assistant** Department of Hispanic Languages and Literature Stony Brook University, NY
December 2004-August 2006	**Spanish Lecturer** Department of Languages. Clemson University, SC
October 2005-Present	**Spanish Examiner** IBO (International Baccalaureate Organization) Geneva, Switzerland
July 2005-July 2006	**Spanish online tutor** Ufi (University for Industry)/Learndirect United Kingdom
August 2003-June 2004	**Spanish Teacher** Lucille M. Brown Middle School. Richmond, VA
August 2002-May 2003	**Spanish Tutor** for Student Athletes

	School of Physical Education. West Virginia University, WV
August 2000-May 2003	**Spanish Graduate Teaching Assistant** (serving one year as assistant to the Coordinator of the Spanish Program) Department of Foreign Languages. West Virginia University, WV
September 1999-June 2000	**Spanish Teacher and Translator** Lernstudio Campus, Academia, and Berlitz (Language Centers) Germany
1994-present	**Spanish and English Private Teacher** (face to face and online) Spain, Germany and USA

ADDITIONAL PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

2005	**English>Spanish Translator** Translation of information and registration forms for the Texas Bureau of Reclamation C.A.S.T. for Kids event Austin, TX
2004	**Spanish TOPT (Texas Oral Proficiency Test) Rater** March and June sessions National Evaluation Systems, Inc. Austin, TX
2003	**Library Assistant** (summer) Dubbing and digital remastering of sound archives Reprographics Unit West Virginia & Regional History Collection, West Virginia University Libraries, WV **Reviewer** of "Dos Mundos" 5th Ed. for feedback for the 6th Ed, McGraw-Hill **Spanish>English Translator** Real estate and insurance documents translations. Gianola, Barnum&Wigal, L.C. Attorneys at Law Morgantown, WV
2002	**Library Assistant** (summer) Dubbing and digital remastering of sound archives Scanning and digital processing of paintings and drawings West Virginia & Regional History Collection West Virginia University Libraries, WV
Summer 2001	**Assistant.** Deutsche Post by Siemens. Munich, Germany
1996	**English>Spanish Translator** Machinery's instruction manuals Internship in FASA-Renault

Valladolid, Spain.

COURSES AND CERTIFICATES

2005	**ETS (Educational Technology Services) Faculty Online Workshop** Development of online courses for distance learning or distributed learning environment (24 hr. course) Clemson University, SC
	Spanish for Specific Purposes: Spanish for Business 65-hr online course Instituto Cervantes/Universidad de la Rioja. Spain
	DE Online Technology Conference 2005: "Technologies, Training, and Support Structures for Distributed and Distance Education" Clemson University, SC
	HELLO (Helping E-Learners to Learn Online, 30-hr online Course) and **SLLO** (Supporting Learndirect Learners Online, 15-hr online Course) Ufi (University for Industry)/Learndirect United Kingdom
2004	**Teaching Certification** in Spanish, Prepk-12 Virginia Department of Education
2003	**New Teacher Institute** (6 hr-training) Richmond, VA
	Teaching Certification in Spanish, 5-Adult West Virginia Department of Education
2001	**Teachers' Formation Seminar** 6 hr-workshop "Correct the correction. Analysis and Therapy of Errors" Instituto Cervantes, Munich, Germany
	Teaching Certification in English CAP (Certificado de Adaptación Pedagógica) University of Valladolid, Spain.
1999	**Berlitz Methology Training (**50 hr-training) Berlitz Language Center, Saarbruecken, Germany
1996-1998	**Literary Creation Workshop**

Selection and publication of several works. Editing and proofreading process of books.
¡Cuéntame un cuento que no te sepas! Vol.IV and
¡Cuéntame un cuento que no te sepas! Vol.V.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

2005/2006 **Latin American/Spanish Film Festival**
Organization, Clemson University, SC

2002 **CHISPA: Spanish Language and Culture Immersion Retreat.**
Organization, West Virginia University, WV

LANGUAGE SKILLS

Spanish: Native speaker
English: Superior
German: Advance
Italian: Intermediate

Interview Guide

It is a guide. Make sure all questions are asked, however, in the course of conversation they do not have to be in the order that they are written.

There is an opportunity to probe with follow up questions. Suggested follow up questions are in parentheses. Especially in the early interviews, there will be questions that may not work well or have been missed. That is why there will be a review after the first two or three interviews. The interview guide can be modified based on the preliminary work.

Don't go too far off the subject.

Try to keep the interview as close to an hour as possible even though it will likely go over an hour due to the number of questions.

Subjects

Try to get a variety such as the day laborers standing on the corners, workers that have been working steady for years, and women.

See if it possible to get into one of the houses and interview everyone at a single address, the results could be very interesting.

Let me know if you find subjects that speak English proficiently so I can do a few interviews.

Procedures

The interviewees do not have to give their names, but a name (which could be a pseudonym) must be used to reference the interviews later.

All interviews should be numbered with the date the interview was conducted.

The target group is undocumented individuals

The consent form must be given to each subject and read to them if they cannot read. Verbal consent should be recorded prior to the start of the interview.

A record of payments must be kept, but the method to do it is still to be determined.

I would like to leave the door open for follow up, say 5 years down the line once the issues are hopefully resolved. Suggest that there may be an opportunity for another paid interview if they contact my e-mail address that is listed on the form in 5 years.

Download all interviews to a computer and/or swap recorders with me so that I can download the interviews. I get paranoid about losing data.