

# == Chapter 1 ==

## Introduction: Immigration's Nuances and Complexities

**T**HE DESTRUCTION of the twin towers of New York's World Trade Center on September 11, 2001—carried out by persons who were neither citizens nor legal permanent residents—cast into bold relief the importance and contradictions of U.S. immigration policy. Those responsible for the suicide missions were able either to enter the country fraudulently or to remain here illegally after visas for legal entry had expired (Gorman 2001; Jenks 2001). A dramatic slow-down in international travel after the attacks took place, together with an apparent acceleration of a downturn in the U.S. economy that had begun well before the incidents occurred, illustrated that economic vitality in an increasingly interdependent global economy involves substantial flows of tourists, students, temporary workers, and permanent immigrants into the country (Maggs and Baumann 2001). The dilemmas for U.S. immigration policy became crystal clear (Meissner 2001). Should worries that further terrorist attacks might occur tilt admissions policies strongly in favor of restrictionism? Could the United States and other advanced postindustrial countries develop immigration policies that would provide security and facilitate ease of movement at the same time? Could both universalism and particularism be balanced in sensible and effective policies?

Since September 11, such immigration-related concerns have taken on unusual intensity and urgency. As important as these have been and as crucial as it is to deal with them, their frequent articulation also serves to remind us that preoccupations with immigration issues are anything but new. Debates about U.S. immigration policy have often commanded center stage among both the members of the general public and policy makers for the past quarter century. For example, during this period two national commissions, the Select Commission on Immigration and Refugee Policy (1981) and the U.S. Commission

on Immigration Reform (1997), released major reports recommending reforms in immigration law. Also, on three occasions substantial immigration reform legislation has been passed by Congress and signed into law. First, in 1986 Congress passed the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) in an effort to reduce unauthorized migration by legalizing migrants already living and working in the country and adopting employer sanctions in an attempt to make it harder for future migrants to find jobs (Bean, Vernez, and Keely 1989). Second, in 1990 Congress passed the National Immigration Act, which set a cap on annual legal immigration while providing increased numbers of visas for highly skilled workers (Bean and Fix 1992). Third, in 1996 Congress passed welfare reform and immigration legislation in part as an attempt to limit unauthorized migration by tightening access to public benefits for noncitizens (Espenshade, Baraka, and Huber 1997; Van Hook and Bean 1998b).

In 1965, with passage of the amendments to the Immigration and Nationality Act, the United States abolished national origin quotas as a basis for granting immigrant visas, and since the mid-1970s legislative initiatives have mostly involved efforts to limit immigration. By the end of August 2001, however, recommendations to increase immigration were being voiced frequently, demonstrating that U.S. immigration policy was on the verge of coming full circle from its previously largely restrictive emphases. For example, on September 5, just before the New York tragedy, President Vicente Fox of Mexico visited President Bush in Washington to publicize and lobby for recommendations on changing U.S. policy regarding Mexican migration (Sullivan and Jordan 2001). These included "regularizing" unauthorized Mexican migrants already in the United States and establishing a new "guest-worker" program for low-skilled laborers from Mexico, ideas motivated largely by the labor shortages stemming from the unusually strong economy of the late 1990s (Meissner 2001; Mexico-U.S. Migration Panel 2001). In short, in early September 2001 it seemed likely that a sharp turnaround in U.S. policy might take place away from the general thrust of a quarter century's emphasis. However, external events set the policy debates on a new course (Gorman 2002). Such dramatic twists and turns suggest the experience of the United States with the "new" immigration since 1965—the substantial increases in the numbers of persons coming from Asia and Latin America—and with the various issues underlying the policy reforms considered and adopted during the ensuing years warrants careful examination. This book undertakes such an examination. Its purpose is twofold: to conduct a review of social science research relevant to

these issues and to introduce new research that focuses on the major issues that have driven the immigration-policy debates.

The results of our review and research have led us to conclude that on balance, the new immigration of the past four decades has had more positive than negative consequences for the United States. We also argue that it is often difficult to discern the positive aspects of immigration because several circumstances create the impression that unprecedented problems with the new immigration have emerged. One of these aspects is recent increases in unauthorized Mexican migration, a phenomenon that often causes consternation in part because it frequently is confused with legal kinds of immigration. Another aspect derives from changes in the nature of immigrant integration that both strengthen ethnic identities and increase the likelihood of their expression among many immigrants. This contributes to the impression that ethnic disharmonies rather than harmonies are on the rise, although we argue that the reverse is actually the reality. A third aspect is related to the fact that immigration's effects are not all positive, although the weight of the evidence indicates that the negative consequences are often exaggerated by observers and are more than offset by other positive consequences. More generally, and on the positive side of the ledger, one of the most significant developments is that immigration generates increased racial and ethnic diversity in many parts of the country, a change producing signs that the racial and ethnic boundaries that have long divided Americans are starting to break down. In the chapters that follow we present both a review of the empirical and theoretical research literature and our own new theories and research findings that provide the bases for these conclusions.

## **Why Are Immigration Issues Growing More Important?**

Paying close attention to the results of policy-relevant social science research on immigration is important for several reasons. First, at the beginning of the twenty-first century, the United States finds itself occupying a new and historically unprecedented position—it is both the world's sole superpower and the most important locus of the new technologically driven information economy (Nye 2002). Immigration has been related to these developments in complex ways—sometimes operating as cause and sometimes as consequence of U.S. global military and economic power. Many envision immigration and globalization as essential to the future well-being of the country; others worry

that these phenomena are threats to the vitality and security of the United States (Sassen 2000; Meissner 2001; Meissner and Martin 2001). Which of these views is more accurate and eventually comes to predominate will have important implications for the directions public policies are likely to take in the country over the next few decades. Formulating these policies requires taking stock of the social, demographic, and economic effects of immigration in the recent past. The United States is not likely to be able to mold the various dimensions of immigration into phenomena that reinforce rather than contradict its major policy goals for the future if it does not better understand the nature and consequences of immigration in the recent past.

Second, the new immigration and the policy proposals and reforms of the past thirty-five years have generated widespread ambivalence and, frequently, social tension among Americans (Rumbaut 1995). Indeed, as we will argue, immigration is a phenomenon that inherently generates ambivalence and contradictory responses. Policy reforms that reflect *laissez-faire* or single-factor approaches are not likely to be responsive to immigration realities or to stand much chance of gaining widespread public acceptance. Immigration is "messy," both as a phenomenon and in terms of the politics of public policy. As a result, it is not likely to be fruitfully addressed in the abstract or in its entirety, but rather will likely be reformed piecemeal and one aspect at a time. Under such circumstances, the results of social science research about the various immigration issues driving policy debates assume even greater relevance to the policy assessment and formulation process. In short, absent the viability of an overarching vision providing the rationale for modifying immigration policy, the results of social science research will loom particularly large in policy debates about reforms.

Third, immigration is increasing throughout the world. In the latter part of the twentieth century, the number of international migrants—by which we mean all kinds of international movers, not just those granted legal residency status—more than doubled (Martin and Widgren 2002). The United Nations Population Division estimates an increase from 75 million to 150 million international migrants between 1965 and 2000. The annual rate of increase was more than 2.5 percent per year over the last 15 years compared to an annual rate of increase in population growth of about 1.5 percent (International Organization for Migration 2001). And this growth is concentrated in a few countries, although it is spreading. Some countries, like the United States, have always been known as immigration countries (that is, as countries whose policies allow for substantial immigration). Others have not been known as immigration countries—Japan and Mexico, for

example. Still others have not, at least until recently, either seen themselves or been known as immigration countries, even though they in fact have become countries of immigration. Germany is a good case in point. Almost all the developed countries in the world now receive migrants—either legal or illegal—from elsewhere, in one form or another. In this sense, most of the industrial countries of the world are now experiencing immigration, even if they have yet to view themselves as immigration countries.

Fourth, immigration is also increasing in significance because of economic globalization, the forces of which increasingly draw the countries of the world closer together (Friedman 1999; Gilpin 2000). Driven by technology and by the ascendance of the idea that freer international trade offers the prospect of more rapid economic growth, globalization has accelerated communications, capital flows, tourism, and trade among countries in many parts of the world. It has also exacerbated contradictions—antithetical themes and emphases that do not appear to fit well together, such as those encapsulated in the dichotomies “cosmopolitan-local,” universalism-particularism,” “McDonaldization-jihad” and “globalism-tribalism.” Globalization also exposes contradictions between immigration and the public policies that are both causes and consequences of international migration. The major contradiction that many observers see emerging from this new international context is that many countries appear to support increased openness in flows of goods, capital, information, and technology, but not increasingly free flows of people (Massey, Durand, and Malone 2002). Globalization thus sets the context within which changes in migration and public policy must be interpreted.

Fifth, immigration is increasingly of great demographic importance to the United States. By the end of the twentieth century, immigration had become the major component of population change in the United States (McDonald and Kippen 2001), especially when the fact that almost 20 percent of all births in the United States now occur to foreign-born mothers (Ventura et al. 2000, table 13) is taken into account. Fertility rates peaked in the late fifties and early sixties and have since declined substantially. Soon after fertility peaked, immigration to the United States began to increase. As a result, immigration directly (through the arrival of new residents) and indirectly (through the childbearing of immigrants) now accounts for almost 60 percent of annual population growth in the country, making it the major component of population change (Bean, Swicegood, and Berg 2000). Simply from the perspective of sheer numbers, then, immigration has become an increasingly important phenomenon. This population growth has been accompanied by greater racial-ethnic and cultural diversity

within the U.S. population, thus complicating in the minds of some observers the question of national identity, a subject to which we return.

## Why Immigration Is So Complicated

Both immigration and its consequences, including the ways people respond to it, defy simple classification. A couple of concrete examples help to illustrate this point. Let's start with the business cycle. Over the five-year period 1996 to 2000, the United States generated about 14.3 million new jobs, or about 2.9 million new jobs every year (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics 2002). The unusual magnitude of this increase becomes clear if we examine it relative to population growth. Over the same five years, the United States population increased by a little less than 1 percent per year, or by about 12.3 million persons, or almost 2.5 million persons per year (U.S. Bureau of the Census 2001b). Note that this figure includes an estimate for new immigrants, both legal and unauthorized. Approximately how many new jobs would it have taken to accommodate this population growth? A useful rule of thumb is that about 150,000 new jobs are required every month in the United States to keep pace with the entrance of new workers into the labor market (Gosselin 2002a, 2002b). Applying this rule, the United States would have needed about 1.8 million new jobs per year during the latter half of the 1990s to accommodate new workers resulting from population growth, including immigration. In short, the country generated almost 1.1 million *more* jobs per year (2.9 million minus 1.8 million) than it would have needed to accommodate population growth at existing levels of employment during this time.

Where did the people come from who filled all these jobs? The answer is: from many places—from the ranks of the unemployed; from the previously retired; from increases in the numbers of persons holding more than one job; from persons who had stopped working or had become discouraged in looking for work because they thought they couldn't find jobs, including teenagers and racial and ethnic minorities. And also from unmeasured immigrants—that is, unauthorized migrants living in the country in greater numbers than expert observers thought were here. But the “excess” number of jobs was so large that hardly a voice was raised arguing that immigrants were taking the jobs of natives. In fact, most outcries were in exactly the opposite direction—claiming, as we note in chapter 9, that labor shortages, particularly of high-tech workers and low-skilled workers, more than justified new legislation mandating increases in the num-

bers of visas issued for highly skilled workers and new appeals for special guest-worker programs for low-skilled workers.

Now contrast this situation with the one that existed at the beginning of the 1990s. From the end of fiscal year 1989 to the end of fiscal year 1992, job growth in the United States was almost stagnant, increasing by only about 600,000 jobs for the entire period. The annual rate of population growth, however, was approximately the same over this period as it was in the latter half of the decade, meaning that the country added about 2.6 million persons per year to its population. Applying the rule of thumb noted above, roughly 1.8 million new jobs per year were needed to maintain existing levels of employment. But only about 200,000 jobs per year became available, a deficit of about 600,000 per year. Although such numbers are only ballpark figures, they provide useful indications of economic and population trends that dramatically illustrate the sharp changes in conditions that occurred in the country during the 1990s. These circumstances confronted both the immigrants arriving in the United States and the natives who reacted to their arrival. It is thus perhaps hardly surprising that both anti-immigration and anti-immigrant voices on the part of organizations calling for policy reforms were loud and strident in the first two or three years of the 1990s, but fell virtually silent during the latter half of the decade.

Now let's consider how such trends relate to actual responses on the part of the general public to immigration. One might expect the intensity of unfavorable views toward immigration to fluctuate with changes in the business cycle. To some extent, they have. In 1986, 49 percent of the respondents in a Gallup poll said they thought that in the United States "immigration should be decreased" (Gallup 2001). In 1994, shortly after the economic recession of the early 1990s, this figure rose to 65 percent. But by 2000 it had dropped to 38 percent. So attitudes about immigration do appear to be affected somewhat by the business cycle. But it is also interesting to note that, over the past thirty-five years, the period during which Gallup has been asking the same questions about immigration, there is also evidence of both continuity and ambiguity in Americans' minds about immigration issues. On the positive side, the percentage of respondents who say that "immigration should be kept at its present level or increased" has remained fairly high, varying from 46 percent in 1965 to 54 percent in 2000. Only in the period immediately after the stagnant job market of the early 1990s did the figure change much, dropping to 33 percent before going back up in the late 1990s. On the negative side, the data also show a substantial minority of respondents who said they thought immigration to the country should be "decreased," ranging

from 33 percent in 1965 to 38 percent in 2000 (Gallup 2000). Over the past thirty-five years, then, a sizable group of Americans (about half) has been in favor of increasing or *not changing* immigration, whereas another group (about a third) has been in favor of decreasing immigration. As we note in the next chapter, immigration has nearly tripled over this period, from a total of 3.3 million entrants in the 1960s to about 10.0 million during the 1990s.

It is thus striking that the attitudes of Americans toward immigration are far from uniform. Immigration is undoubtedly not the most controversial public-policy issue the United States has faced in recent years. Certainly it is not the issue that has generated the most heated debate or intensity of feeling (in this regard, abortion rights and welfare come to mind, to note just two examples). But it clearly is a public-policy issue that is multifaceted and not easily categorized along a simple left-right or liberal-conservative political spectrum. And this complexity also makes it an issue that lends itself to contradictory groups of constituents supporting immigration legislation, which in turn generates contradictory legislative compromises. Such manifestations of contradiction underscore the need for an assessment of immigration and its effects.

## **Ambivalence and Major Immigration Issues**

Why do many Americans apparently worry about immigration but not really want to decrease it from its present levels? A partial answer is that many Americans are simultaneously *both* nostalgic and troubled about immigration. On the nostalgic side of the ledger, positive sentiments toward immigration undoubtedly derive in part from the fact that many persons are the descendants of persons who themselves were immigrants in the not-too-distant past. Others are the descendants of more distant immigrants, some even of colonial settlers. Some observers, like the historian Oscar Handlin (1951), have even gone so far as to interpret this legacy as meaning that the history of the United States can largely be written as the history of immigration. But Americans also manifest confusion and ambivalence about immigration, emotions that are even built into the two major issues that lie at the root of concerns about immigration: the implications of immigration for sociocultural identity and the implications of immigration for the economy. By sociocultural identity we mean the ways people view and think of themselves in terms of language, social relationships, and racial or ethnic identification. By the economy we mean levels of aggregate economic growth and individual instances of eco-

conomic well-being. In each of these domains occur processes that inherently generate ambivalent responses to immigration, and the two in combination can cause conflicting feelings about immigration within one person. And of course, responses to each issue are inevitably mixed across individuals. Some people will see identity changes in positive terms and others in negative terms; by the same token, some will gain economically from immigration, and others will lose. In addition, some who gain economically will see themselves as losing socioculturally, and vice versa.

Consider first the case of identity. Immigration inevitably involves social change because newcomers bring cultural differences with them. This leads to ambivalence because immigration contributes to anxiety about identity. There are a number of factors involved in such ambivalence, but one is simply that immigration by its very nature engenders mixed feelings. Immigration consists of persons moving from one part of the world to another, and destination societies cannot help but be changed by such movements, although perhaps in small ways. Included in the changes are new relationships between natives and newcomers, which means that at least some of the members of the host society come to see themselves in new ways. Immigration thus necessarily contributes in ways small and large to the emergence of new perceptions of social identity. Some persons will be fearful of such identity changes simply because they involve newness. Others will see these identity changes in positive terms because their relationships to the newcomers place them in newly defined social relationships that they think enhance their status and influence. Altogether, the identity changes accompanying immigration generate individual ambivalence and potential social tension between those whose status is enhanced and those whose status is not.

The second major way immigration affects the destination society is more instrumental, involving economic effects. The economic well-being of people already living in the society will either rise, fall, or stay the same on account of immigration—in other words, tangible costs and benefits are associated with immigration. Inevitably some people will gain and others will lose; furthermore, the economic benefits connected with immigration are unevenly distributed throughout the society. As we noted, there are many people who benefit economically from immigration during times of strong economic growth but are harmed by it when the overall economy is in decline. Thus, the economic implications of immigration can also generate individual ambivalence and social tension.

Most of the contemporary policy debates about immigration focus on economic issues (for example, Borjas 1999). This is partly because

the sense of threat perceived to arise from immigration attaches to anxieties about sociocultural change that appear difficult to alleviate, so people take refuge in arguments emphasizing tangible economic costs. People often worry privately about matters of identity but talk publicly about economic impacts. But society cannot obtain the tangible economic benefits deriving from immigration without also experiencing its intangible sociocultural effects. Indeed, societies frequently seek what are at least perceived to be the economic benefits of immigration, only to be surprised to discover that immigration has other consequences. Note, for example, the oft-noted remark of a West German government official who, in response to a question about the nature of Germany's experience with guest workers, is reputed to have said, "Well, in the beginning we thought we were getting workers, but in the end we realized we were getting people."

### **Immigration, Complexity and Ambivalence, and Policy Approaches**

What is the policy significance of this complexity and ambivalence? What approaches to immigration policy have been set forth in recent years? What are the features of current approaches that distinguish them from earlier endeavors? To answer these questions, we must first consider what the term "immigration" means and what the essential features of immigration are. First, it is important to remember that the term "immigrant" has a legal connotation: an immigrant is someone who has been granted a visa by a national government allowing that person to establish residence (and often to work) in the country. "International migrants" are a different category: all people who move from one country to another, some without having been granted such a visa. Thus, from a legal point of view, tourists, temporary students, and persons who illegally cross the border to live in the United States are not immigrants; they are international migrants. But what about people who have lived in the United States for two or three decades even though they entered illegally? Are such persons immigrants in a social science sense of the term even though in a legal sense they are not? In this book, the answer to that question is yes. That is, we consider settlement in the country as a criterion for use of the term "immigrant," in addition to the strictly legal criterion. Thus, we will define immigrants as legal immigrant entrants or persons who have established long-term residence in the United States, whether or not this has been done on a legal basis.

Our consideration of immigrants thus focuses on a behavioral basis for residence. We consider an immigrant to be someone who has set-

tled in this country, either legally or illegally. We will have more to say about this later, particularly about what the term “illegal” means. But for the moment we want to emphasize that immigration is a phenomenon that by its definition comes about at least partly as a result of state policy (Zolberg 1999; Joppke 1999). Countries adopt rules about how many and what kinds of persons can enter for the purpose of establishing long-term residence. But even the numbers and kinds of persons who do this are affected by public policy because nations often implement border control practices that affect the ease or difficulty with which unauthorized border crossers can obtain entry (Andreas 2000; Bean et al. 1994). Thus, the implementation of border policies influences the numbers and kinds of persons who end up being considered illegal.

It is clear that public policy shapes various aspects of immigration processes, but other forces affect immigration as well. This may seem to be an obvious point, but it often is lost in debates about immigration. Some observers speak of immigration as if it is primarily affected by policy, as if the rules set up to permit some kinds of people to come to the United States can be largely separated from other sources of influence, such as family, personal, or political factors. Conversely, other observers speak as if the social and economic forces driving immigration operate to the exclusion of the influence of rules about what kinds of people can obtain visas or whether borders may be crossed. While it is always difficult to ascertain the relative influence of policy and other forces on immigration flows and patterns, it is crucial to recognize the fundamental importance of both kinds of effects.

In a very rough way, these two orientations constitute the beginning assumptions behind certain prominent recent efforts to justify modifying U.S. immigration policy. For example, proponents of one effort (see, for example, Borjas 1999) work on the assumption that policy can be molded largely to accomplish a single purpose. They argue that economic considerations should drive policy, that an effort should be made to develop a “rational” basis for immigration reforms, and that the basis for such rationality should be what is best for the country economically. The idea is that the current mishmash of policies should be replaced by policies encouraging the entry of immigrants with high skills because such people are most likely to generate economic gain for the country. This approach sees the results of social science research into specific immigration topics as somewhat irrelevant to current debates about immigration policy because such inquiries frequently fail to define a single highest-priority objective for policy.

Proponents of another type of recent effort tend to assume that economic and social forces overwhelm the influence of policy. These observers argue that current policy is largely ineffective because state policies often don't appear to affect migrant flows very much, or don't affect them in the manner intended, because policymakers often fail to understand the forces driving migration (see, for example, Massey, Durand, and Malone 2002). This perspective implies that social science research about the effects of policies is frequently beside the point because state policies are viewed as having either unintended effects or few effects because other factors trump policy factors. Ironically, analysts embracing such assumptions frequently still set forth policy recommendations, as exemplified in the set of thoughtful and far-sighted proposals recently offered by Douglas S. Massey, Jorge Durand, and Nolan Malone (2002) to address Mexican migration.

Neither of these assumptions about policy envisions that an assessment of what we know about the determinants and consequences of immigration—in particular of what we know about the consequences of particular immigration policies—is critical to the formulation of policy reforms. This is true in the former case because these analysts seek to superimpose a single overarching economic criterion on immigration policy and in the latter case because the policy makers despair of policy's having much impact anyway. The one view tends to see immigration policy as overly deterministic; the other sees immigration policy as underdeterministic. A preferable and more realistic alternative falls somewhere in between. Immigration and immigration policy in the United States, as well as their effects, are both complex and multifaceted, reflecting the often uneasy political compromises that have been reached among disparate and irreconcilable factions with contradictory agendas concerning immigration issues. They also reflect the ambivalence many Americans feel about immigration and indicate that immigration itself has multifaceted impacts, which reinforces personal and political ambivalence. Thus, neither purely rational nor relatively status quo approaches are likely to be satisfactory from the standpoint of generating viable immigration policies, the former because they ignore political complexity and the latter because they neglect compelling political needs to seek policy solutions. As Rumbaut has noted: "Politics and policy-making, like life itself, are . . . tangled, messy, uncertain, and contradictory. Condemned to try to control a future they cannot predict by reacting to a past that will not be repeated, policymakers are nonetheless faced with an imperative need to act that cannot be ignored as a practical or political matter" (1995, 311).

## The Questions Addressed by This Book

In short, precisely because immigration engenders so much ambivalence, social tension, and contradictory responses, it is particularly important to understand its implications for American society. An effort to take stock of immigration needs to take place at two levels. One is at the concrete level of the issues that have driven the policy debates about immigration over the past three decades. Here we are basically concerned with three broad questions whose answers have had and will continue to have important implications for policy reform: First, how many and what kinds of persons migrate to the United States? Basically the broad policy issue here is the degree to which the numbers and types of persons coming are consistent with policies governing entry and with the social and economic policies and contexts within which arrivals occur. This requires understanding the reasons for migration, as well as the patterns of migration viewed in relation to changing contextual factors such as the strength of the economy. Chapter 2 examines these kinds of considerations. Because unauthorized migration from Mexico is such an important component of recent U.S. immigration and is viewed by many as the major glaring failure of U.S. immigration policy, we devote a separate chapter to this subject (chapter 3). Also, because welfare receipt is often viewed as another indication that U.S. immigration policies admit persons substantially different from those intended, we assess whether immigrants are more disposed to seek welfare than the native-born in chapter 4.

Second, what happens to immigrants after they arrive? For example, if they come to the United States with economic disadvantages, do these disadvantages disappear in time? This question is essentially the issue of immigrant incorporation, which we elaborate below. The policy issue is that if disadvantaged immigrants are being granted entry but cannot (or are not allowed to) join the economic mainstream, then doubts may be raised about the entry policies that permit such persons to come to the country. We examine this broad theme with respect to theoretical (chapter 5), economic (chapter 6) and sociocultural issues (chapters 7 and 8), focusing in the latter instance on linguistic incorporation and intermarriage.

Third, what effects do immigrants have on persons already living in the United States (including previously arriving immigrants)? The policy issue here is similar: If a given set of admissions criteria are bringing more or less the numbers and kinds of immigrants intended, if those immigrants are able to move into the economic mainstream within a reasonable period of time, but those entrants have negative

effects on persons already here, then doubts may be raised about the entry policies allowing their admission. Here again we examine this theme with respect both to economic factors (chapter 9), where we focus on general economic and fiscal consequences of immigration, and sociocultural factors (chapter 10), where we focus on the implications of immigration for racial and ethnic composition.

A second level at which we inquire into the implications of immigration for the United States is more general. Thus, in addition to reviewing the research findings relevant to answering these questions, there is a need to ask, "What are the overarching implications of immigration for the United States?" This is a more abstract question: whether immigration in broad and general terms is contributing something positive or negative to the United States. Has the immigration of the past thirty years made us a richer or poorer society, a better or a worse society? And in what ways? What are the reasons for this? Among the many factors that affect the direction of debates about the significance of immigration, one that is particularly important is how immigration affects the color line in the United States. How does it influence the way Americans view themselves in racial and ethnic terms? How do the answers to such questions affect overall assessments of the significance of immigration for American society? These themes are taken up in chapters 10 and 11.

We do not attempt to deal here with all of the important topics relevant to immigration and immigration policy that might be examined. Naturalization, voting, and other forms of political behavior, along with transnational migration and ties, are examples of phenomena to which we devote little attention. The first three of these all fall within the purview of political incorporation, a subject of considerable importance but one whose relationship to sociocultural and economic incorporation remains ambiguous, particularly from the standpoint of what is cause and what is effect. Does political incorporation facilitate economic and socioeconomic incorporation, or is it the other way around? We do not think either the research literature or our own theoretical perspectives on this subject resolve these issues, which must be clarified before the policy significance of political incorporation can be assessed. Hence, we leave their examination for another time. Similarly, we do not spend much time on transnational migration, largely because the phenomenon has not been well defined and adequately distinguished from other kinds of migration. For example, how does it differ from circular migration, involving period spells of temporary migration? Moreover, a convincing case has yet to be made that the scale and significance of transnational migration for

other phenomena are important enough to warrant extensive examination.

What makes immigration an especially fascinating subject in the U.S. context is that it is a phenomenon that reflects and elicits both the best and the worst features of the American experience. The national myth that the country is a nation of immigrants who have successfully pursued the American dream exemplifies the hope and optimism that many observers have noted is characteristic of American culture (Jaynes 2000; Bean et al. 1996). The nativist response that immigrants have often provoked reflects a strain in American culture and character that is more pessimistic, one that emphasizes the limits rather than the possibilities of American life. Both immigration and globalization increase cosmopolitanism and diversity in American life. Can the country's sense of national identity keep pace with these changes? Can it incorporate new elements to a sufficient degree to overcome worries about "newness" and "newcomers"? Will demographic and social and economic changes raise anxiety so much that old national identities become rigidified and lead to conflict? Answers to such important questions require objective social scientific assessment of what immigration has meant to the United States over the past half decade or so.