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Labor Migration and the Deepwater Oil Industry

MMS U.S. Department of the Interior
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Below is an executive summary of the key findings from this project. These findings point to differences in how local residents respond to the presence of immigrants, in the ways in which migrants supply their labor and employers demand it, and in how migrants socially and economically incorporate into their receiving communities.

Community Public Opinion. Using data from CATI surveys of 200 households in each communities, we found that decisions by employers to import foreign-born labor had far-reaching implications for both immigrant workers and the communities hosting them. Most residents in the four port communities reported strong positive links between their local community and the oil industry. While consistent positive opinion was more likely among respondents from Houma and Lafourche than among those in New Iberia and Morgan City, on the whole, residents in all four communities reported some degree of positive sentiment toward the oil industry. Below we outline key findings:

- Ties to the oil and gas industry were strong. On average, most households contained some person who worked in the oil and gas industry, and approximately 43 percent of respondents actually did so.
- In general, respondents across all communities reported that the local economy was strongly linked to the oil industry.
- Respondents typically reported that the oil industry had increased the number of local jobs over the past 10 years (55.7 percent reported an increase). However, just under one-third of all respondents reported a decline in jobs over the past 10 years as a result of the industry.
- Most respondents agreed that the oil industry has generally increased the number of new businesses in the last 10 years.
- Over one-half of respondents also reported improvements in their communities as a result of the oil industry presence.
- Many residents believed the industry attracts people to their community which in turn places upward pressure on demand for housing.
- The majority of our respondents reported that presence of the oil industry increased both population growth and housing demand in their communities. In addition, approximately half of all respondents reported increased demand for medical and social services, although 25 percent reported that they had not seen any shift in demand over the last decade. With respect to crime rates, most residents did not link changes in crime rates with the presence of the oil industry.
- Most residents noted some increase in foreign-born hiring over the last decade.

We also explored residents' attitudes about the effect of immigration on their local communities. On the whole, sentiment about immigrants in communities ranged from neutral to moderately negative. While residents across communities may feel a threat to community solidarity and employment, they were fairly neutral with respect to the number of foreign born entering and they linked immigrant workers with good work. Only in Lafourche Parish did residents' sentiment about immigrants tend towards more anti-immigrant views. New Iberia, on

the other hand, reported more positive sentiments about migrants suggesting a more welcoming reception area for migrants. Below we report key findings.

- Residents were about equally as likely to link higher economic growth with increased immigrant presence as they were not to make this link.
- Two thirds of all residents linked increased immigrant presence with higher unemployment.
- Half of all respondents believe that the increase in immigrant presence would result in a decline in local unity.
- Most respondents believed that increased immigrant presence would produce additional strain in the school system, housing market, health system, and crime.

Employer's Needs. Our interviews with onshore oil and gas industry employers revealed an overall discontent with the state of the local labor force. Employers almost universally reported labor shortages in part because of an increasing trend toward completion of a college education. With fewer potential employees growing up in the communities, employer's most salient concern was how to obtain qualified workers for the jobs they had. As a result, many began seeking out immigrant labor to meet the demand.

Not only did foreign labor become a vitally important labor source for employers in our study areas, employers were generally very pleased with the quality of the foreign born labor pool. Employers reported that their foreign born workers, whether Latino workers in Houma and Morgan City or Laotian workers in New Iberia, were hard-working, loyal, and skilled in their trades. With respect to recently arrived Latino workers, employers liked their flexibility. Given the cyclical nature of the oil industry, flexibility made foreign-born workers even more attractive to employers. In this way, employers viewed immigrant labor as a good business strategy.

- The majority of employers we interviewed agreed that hiring immigrant labor to meet labor demands was a good business strategy. Given that most employers reported a depleted local skilled labor pool, it is not surprising that they would look to some other sources to meet this demand. Many who hired immigrants spoke very positively of their workforce. They noted that the strategy was cheaper than hiring U.S. born workers, and that Latinos workers would perform jobs no one else wanted.
- Of the minority who reported that using immigrant labor was not a good strategy, most felt immigrants had a negative effect on the local labor force. These employers believed companies should hire only locally.
- Even among those relying on immigrant labor, some prefaced their positive support by stating that hiring immigrants is probably not good for the local labor force. However, they still pursued this strategy because of their strong demand for labor.
- Employers were divided in their impressions about whether and how immigrants had affected the local community. About half felt that immigrants did affect the local community, while the other half reported no visible effects to the community.

- Of those reporting no impact on the community, they reasoned that immigrants had little local influence because most were housed either on jobsites or in some other isolated fashion away from the community. Therefore, established residents did not notice their increased presence.
- Of those reporting effects due to immigration, the majority acknowledged economic influences, of which most were positive for the local economy. For example, many discussed increases in new businesses that catered to specific immigrant populations and this was seen as positive economic growth.
- A substantial number of employers noted the link between immigrants and the local housing market. Housing became a hotly contested issue in one community because a large employer housed immigrant workers on his commercial property. Because of community outrage, this employer moved the mobile homes to a non-job site located outside the city.
- Finally, some respondents noted negative public opinion that views immigrant labor as a threat and harmful to local labor, and that immigrants increased undesirable and criminal behavior.

Immigrant Incorporation. From conversations with community leaders, residents, and immigrant workers, we assessed the impacts of immigrants on local communities. Although new immigrants to Louisiana shared similar background characteristics, the incorporation process varied significantly by community. Immigrant experience with employers, government policies, and co-ethnic networks explains most of the differences observed across these communities.

In Houma, a formal system of contract labor used by employers was the dominant force shaping the economic and social incorporation of immigrant workers. Employers recruited migrants in their national origins, and brought them to the United States with legal documents as temporary workers. As the main caretakers, employers controlled where these migrants lived, what they ate, and when they worked. Without the formal and informal protection and support offered by co-ethnic networks, Latino workers were left to fend for themselves. The result was a group of disenfranchised workers suffering mistreatment at the hands of employers, with few opportunities to socially and economically incorporate into their new receiving community. In particular, the key findings for Houma are as follows:

- The methods employers used to attract Latino workers to Houma directly influenced the incorporation outcomes of the newcomers. Employers tended to attract Hispanic workers by relying on an established system of recruitment and labor contracting that occurred outside of the firm. The use of contract labor agencies to find immigrant workers was also an important contextual factor that shaped the way Latino workers were incorporated into the community and had far-reaching implications for the working conditions of these immigrants.
- An important correlate of this system of hiring foreign-born workers was that immigrant housing was directly linked to employers. The mandatory housing arrangement meant that employers had a large degree of control over their Latino work force.
- Other conditions of contract employment affected the social and economic incorporation of workers. First, workers signed contracts that bound them to a specific employer for a given amount of time, making them legally obliged to

remain with their employer even if workers did not make the money they were promised. Second, these workers were required to work without breaks, whereas locals were given at least two 15 minutes breaks during the work day. Third, they were often allocated to the dirtiest, least desirable jobs, but not always offered overtime hours.

- In many ways, the contract labor system became a source of entrapment and isolation for the workers, operating against any true social or community incorporation or chances for upward mobility of the newly arriving immigrants.
- In short, the contract labor system had a direct effect on immigrant workers' economic autonomy and well-being. Compared to their counterparts in Morgan City, immigrant workers in Houma were much less satisfied with their housing or employment conditions and had considerably less autonomy to affect change in their current conditions.

In Morgan City, however, there was no one dominant force that shaped the early assimilation experiences of immigrants. All three forces — employers, community reception, and co-ethnic networks — facilitated the incorporation of newcomers. The result was high levels of immigrant satisfaction, despite an initial public controversy over an employer's attempt to house immigrants on his work cite. Immigrants in Morgan City reported being satisfied with their current housing and employment, happy to live in the community, saying it was a peaceful and pleasant place to live. Significant findings in Morgan City follow.

- The methods used by employers to recruit immigrant workers in Morgan City were significantly different from those in Houma. In contrast to Houma, where employers relied on a formal system of contract labor to attract immigrants, Morgan City employers used a loosely structured system of recruitment. Employers first contacted migrant workers by relying on co-ethnic network ties, either by providing incentives to workers already employed or by contacting an immigrant activist who had made her reputation by solving migrant problems in the community, including finding employment.
- Newly arrived immigrants in Morgan City did not live in housing provided by employers. With housing away from the job site and segregated outside of most established neighborhoods, employers did not control workers (the way they did in Houma), and they were not very visible to Morgan City residents. One result was that immigrants (often with the help of their co-ethnic network ties) were able to change jobs freely, searching for better wages and opportunity.
- Although immigrant workers in Morgan City were certainly isolated in a particular geographic space rather than living dispersed within the community, they were considerably less isolated than their counterparts in Houma. As a result, they were more aware of the surrounding community and what it had to offer. Unlike in Houma, workers in Morgan City knew about and attended English language courses taught at a local school, they often attended church services and events, and they regularly gathered to play soccer at a public gym.
- Existing co-ethnic networks provided an additional layer of protection for newcomers in Morgan City. Some Mexican workers we interviewed came to Morgan City because they had family and friends living in the community and

were told of promising job opportunities in the oil industry. Others, once arrived, relied on co-ethnic networks to provide job, housing, and other information.

- In effect, the community (its members and institutions) provided a buffer to protect the newly arrived Mexican workers in Morgan City. Rather than depend solely on employers as did immigrants in Houma, those in Morgan City relied on existing co-ethnic networks to provide information and assistance with housing, transportation, employment, and other services. With employers unable to control migrant newcomers, workers had alternatives and some autonomy over their lives.

Finally, the incorporation experience of Laotians in New Iberia was different from Latino newcomers in Houma and Morgan City. Laotians were able to successfully and smoothly incorporate into the community as a result of all three contextual factors. Critically important was their status as refugees, which offered them a full range of federal services through a community-based resettlement program. As a result, they accumulated enough economic and social capital to become upwardly mobile and develop a middle-class lifestyle by purchasing homes and sending their children to private schools. Unlike the new Latinos in Houma and Morgan City, Laotians were permanent members of their community just ten years or so after their first arrival.

Salient findings are presented below.

- Existing federal refugee policy was an important contextual factor that helped positively shape the way Laotians were incorporated into the community and had important implications for the development of a multidimensional co-ethnic community.
- Laotians differed from their Hispanic counterparts elsewhere in that they were less transient and had a vested interest in establishing roots in Louisiana. Because of their refugee status, they were unable to maintain strong ties to their families in Laos through frequent contact and visits home. Out of necessity, they made New Iberia their permanent home.
- Laotian refugees were arriving with their entire families, both extended and immediate. These strong friend and family networks enabled incoming Laotians to pool resources and funds to create a strong co-ethnic neighborhood. One way they did this was by securing a large amount of land and building an impressive traditional Laotian temple, which has become the center of the Laotian community.
- Another important contextual dimension that positively shaped Laotians incorporation experiences was the social acceptance offered by the New Iberia community. Because many Laotians could speak French, they shared linguistic similarity with the largely Cajun population living in New Iberia.

The community differences suggest variation in the immigrant incorporation experience. Unlike immigrants in the past, the newly arrived in the 1990s settle in nontraditional communities, where their experiences are linked to employment in a wider variety of local economic sectors than immigrants faced in the past. Our findings highlight the importance of understanding the unique contextual factors greeting immigrants in their communities of entry, especially in destination areas that have not attracted many migrants in the past and where

economic opportunities derive from the gas and oil industry. This point is increasingly important as immigrants become more geographically dispersed throughout the United States.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Recent studies of immigrant settlement in the United States suggest that a process of geographic deconcentration is underway. During the 1990s, immigrant settlements have emerged in a variety of U.S. places, including smaller nonmetropolitan towns. These include the nonmetropolitan towns of Dalton, northwest Georgia, an area well known for its carpet production (Hernández-León and Zúñiga 2000), and Garden City, Kansas, where meat-packing employers have sought low-wage workers (Stull et al. 1992). Immigrants have also established sizable settlements in metropolitan areas that did not attract members of their groups in earlier years. For example, Mexicans have established substantial communities in New York City and Atlanta in recent years (Sassen and Smith 1992; Smith 1996; Durand and Massey 2003). One consequence of immigrant movement to new locations is that approximately 24 percent of all U.S. counties gained at least 1,000 Hispanics or Asians between 1990 and 1996 (Frey 1998). Certainly a gain of that magnitude, especially in small nonmetropolitan counties, is likely to have profound social and economic consequences. Both the immigrants themselves and the places that receive them face new kinds of opportunities and challenges.

The principal objective of this project was to assess the impact of international immigration on port communities in the state of Louisiana, where deep-sea offshore drilling has rapidly increased labor demand since the late 1980s. The increase in activity was in part due to technological advances in oil extraction in shallow and deep water (Abernathy 1996) and a decline in the economic risks associated with offshore oil production. Although Louisiana has not been a common destination area for U.S. immigrants in the past, many Spanish-speaking migrants reportedly worked in ship and fabrication yards in port cities by 1995. Their growing presence was consistent with nationwide changes in settlement patterns of the U.S. foreign born population (Taylor et al. 1997; Massey et al. 2000; Fussell and Donato 2003; Singer 2003; Zúñiga and Hernández-León 2003) and a growing number of studies addressing the consequences of immigration in new receiving areas throughout the United States (Dameron and Murphy 1997; Rees and Nettles 2000; Donato et al. 2001; Hernández-León and Zúñiga 2000; Gouveia and Carranza 2002; McConnell 2002; Burke 2003; Edmonston and Lee 2003; Zúñiga and Hernández-León 2003).

The present study adds to this literature by examining the major issues that nontraditional receiving communities face when they attract immigrants to fill onshore jobs in the oil and gas industry in southern Louisiana. It focuses on the early social and economic incorporation of immigrants in four small areas in southern Louisiana in the late 1990s. Relying on data collected from employers, community leaders, foreign born workers, and other residents to describe how new immigrants first incorporate in these communities, the analysis examines variations in the early economic incorporation of immigrants by community of residence. By doing so, I argue that emerging foreign born populations in nontraditional U.S. destinations offer a new venue in which to observe the assimilation process, beginning at its earliest point.

We begin by describing patterns and trends in immigrant settlement in the United States as a whole and in the state of Louisiana in the 20th century. We first summarize recent changes in the volume of U.S. immigration and corresponding shifts in the origins, destinations, and characteristics of these immigrants. We then examine patterns and trends in immigration in Louisiana, and contrast these with those nationwide.

International Migration to the United States

At the turn of the twentieth century, U.S. immigration was at an all time high (see Figure 1.0). The foreign born population rose from two to more than 30 million between 1850 and 1920, representing approximately 12 percent of the population by1930 (Gibson and Lennon 1999). Thereafter, the foreign born population declined to just six percent of the total by 1950, and to a record low of 4.7 percent by 1970.

Since that time, however, the foreign born population has surged. In 1980, the 14 million foreign born represented 6.2 percent of the population; by 1990, the foreign born rose to approximately 20 million (or 7.9 percent**).** Data from the 2000 decennial Census reveal that the upsurge continued throughout the 1990s. In 2000, the foreign born grew to approximately 31 million, or 11.1 percent of the total U.S. population. Although the proportion did not reach that reported 100 years ago, in absolute terms the foreign born population in 2000 was three times as large as it was in 1900. Furthermore, much of this increase occurred recently; the size of the foreign born population more than doubled between 1980 to 2000.

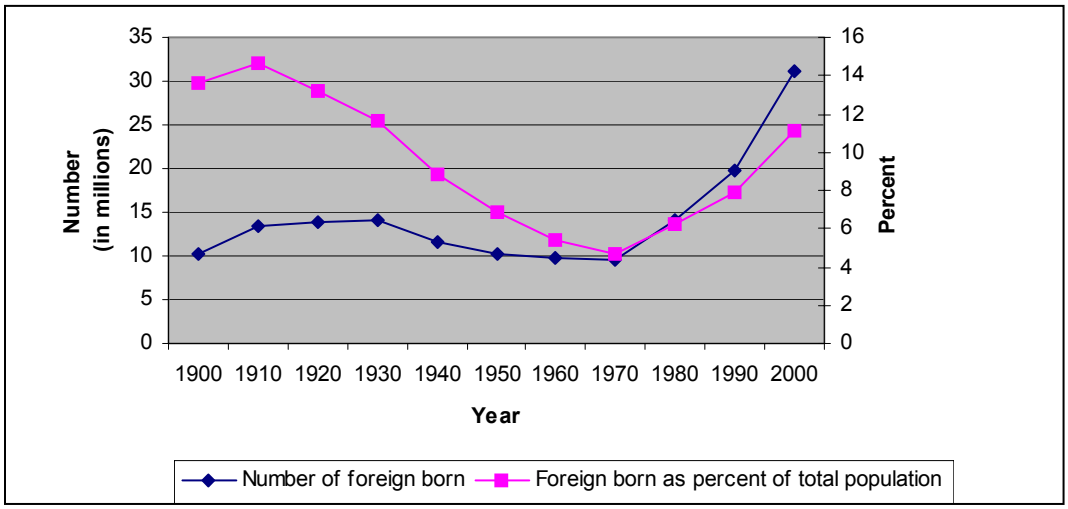

Figure 1.0. Foreign Born Population: 1900-2000. (Gibson and Lennon 1999).

Underlying the recent dramatic growth were shifts in the origins, destinations, and attributes of U.S. immigrants. Figure 1.1 shows remarkable change in the national origin composition of the foreign born. Early in the century, the clear majority (86 percent) of U.S. migrants were of European descent. After 1910, the European share of the foreign born began a steady decline reaching an all time low in 2000. In that year, less than one quarter of all U.S. immigrants arrived from Europe.

Immigrants from Latin America and Asia have filled the gap left by declines in European immigration. Although the proportion of migrants from Latin America rose slowly during early and mid 20th century, since 1970 it has skyrocketed. By 2000, migrants from Latin America comprised slightly more than half (51 percent) of all U.S. immigrants. Immigration from Asia followed a similar pattern, increasing their share from five percent in 1960 to approximately 25 percent in 2000. In short, the foreign born arriving in the last 30 years did so from a set of national origins much more diverse than 100 years ago.

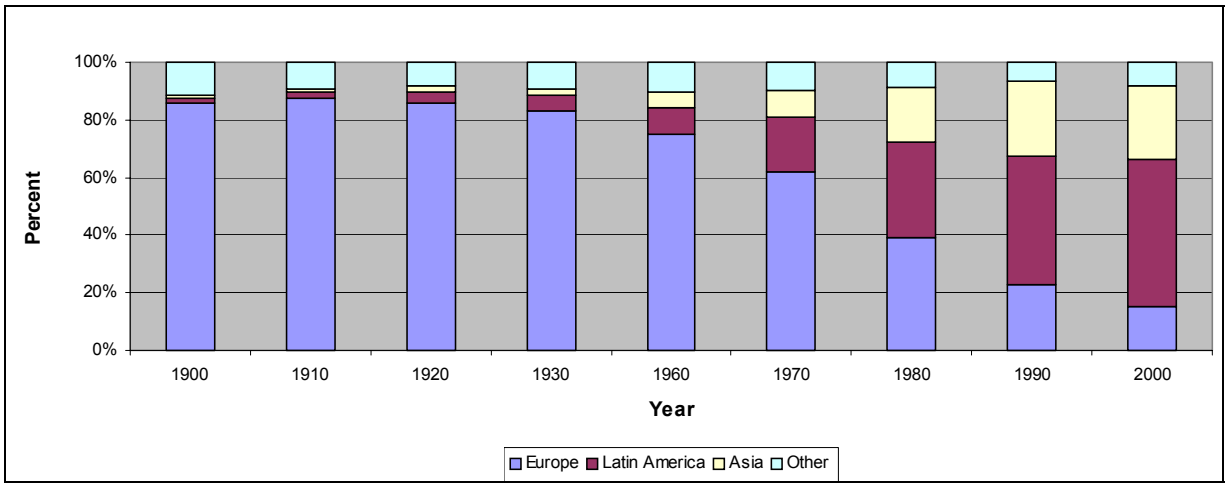

Figure 1.1. Region of Birth of Foreign Born Populations: 1900-1930 and 1960-2000. (Gibson and Lennon 1999).

Table 1.0 illustrates that temporal shifts also occurred in immigrant destinations. For example, although central cities contained the largest proportion of foreign born residents at the beginning and end of the century, only some remained popular over the 100-year span (e.g., New York, Chicago, San Francisco, Philadelphia, and Boston) (Singer 2003). Others emerged as new metropolitan destinations in the southern United States (e.g., Houston, Dallas, Phoenix, Miami, and El Paso). One consequence is that just one-third of the top 15 central city gateways in 1900 appeared again in 2000.

In an effort to understand changes in foreign born settlement during the 1990s, Table 1.1 presents nativity tabulations by year, metropolitan/nonmetropolitan status, and state. Using monthly data files from the Current Population Survey (CPS), we tabulated monthly counts of the U.S. population by nativity and month, then by state and metropolitan/nonmetropolitan areas from January 1996 through December 2000.[1] We began with states that had at least 4,000 (unweighted) foreign born persons during this period, a restriction that guaranteed us 500 independent observations of foreign born persons in each state during the period.[2] Table 1.1 lists 29 states plus the District of Columbia that met this criterion, in ascending order of percent foreign born.

These states show considerable diversity in foreign born composition by metropolitan and nonmetropolitan areas. In some states, a compelling share of the foreign born population lived in metropolitan areas. These included many of the traditional immigrant receiving states, such as California, New York, New Jersey, Florida, and Illinois, as well as Massachusetts,

[1]Because of disputes about the foreign born estimates from the 1994 and 1995 CPS, we use the nativity series starting in January 1996 when the quality of these estimates were no longer disputed. In addition, we do not include data before 1994 because nativity was not included as a variable on the monthly data files before 1994.

[2]We divided 4000 by 8 because most respondents appear in the CPS eight months out of every 16-month period.

Table 1.0

Central City Immigrant Gateways, 1900 and 1990

PANEL A: 1900				
	City	Total Population	Foreign Born Population	% Foreign Born
1	New York	3,437,202	1,270,080	37.0
2	Chicago	1,698,575	587,112	34.6
3	Philadelphia	1,293,697	295,340	22.8
4	Boston	560,892	197,129	35.1
5	Cleveland	381,768	124,631	32.6
6	San Francisco	342,782	116,885	34.1
7	St. Louis	575,238	111,356	19.4
8	Buffalo	352,387	104,252	29.6
9	Detroit	285,704	96,503	33.8
10	Milwaukee	285,315	88,991	31.2
11	Pittsburgh	321,616	84,878	26.4
12	Newark	246,070	71,363	29.0
13	Baltimore	508,957	68,600	13.5
14	Minneapolis	202,718	61,021	30.1
15	Jersey City	206,433	58,424	28.3
PANEL B: 2000				
	City	Total Population	Foreign Born Population	% Foreign Born
1	New York	8,008,278	2,871,032	35.9
2	Los Angeles	3,694,820	1,512,720	40.9
3	Chicago	2,896,016	628,903	21.7
4	Houston	1,953,631	516,105	26.4
5	San Jose	894,943	329,757	36.8
6	San Diego	1,223,400	314,227	25.7
7	Dallas	1,188,580	290,436	24.4
8	San Francisco	776,733	285,541	36.8
9	Phoenix	1,321,045	257,325	19.5
10	Miami	362,470	215,739	59.5
11	Santa Ana	337,977	179,933	53.2
12	Hialeah	226,419	163,256	72.1
13	Boston	589,141	151,836	25.8
14	El Paso	563,662	147,505	26.2
15	Philadelphia	1,517,550	137,205	9.0

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division, 1900 and 1990.

Table 1.1

Foreign Born Composition of U.S. States, by Metropolitan/NonMetropolitan Areas, January 1996 - December 2000*

	All Areas		Metropolitan Areas		NonMetropolitan Areas	
States	**%FB**	**N**	**%FB**	**N**	**%FB**	**N**
Ohio	2.7	278,317	2.9	250,005	1.3	28,312
Georgia	3.7	124,085	4.5	86,618	1.9	37,467
Pennsylvania	3.8	309,323	4.2	278,677	1.2	30,646
North Carolina	4.1	186,518	4.4	136,116	3.4	50,402
Kansas	4.3	98,251	5.5	57,919	2.6	40,332
Minnesota	4.6	107,151	5.9	73,569	1.4	33,582
Arkansas	4.7	90,761	5.7	39,927	4.0	50,834
Delaware	4.9	74,896	5.3	61,223	2.9	13,673
Michigan	4.9	254,228	5.4	233,026	1.0	25,202
Idaho	5.3	113,080	8.4	35,859	3.8	77,221
Utah	5.6	109,344	6.1	89,010	3.4	20,334
New Mexico	6.4	105,734	8.8	59,663	3.3	46,071
Virginia	6.4	112,549	7.9	86,445	1.5	26,104
Colorado	7.1	105,638	6.4	90,215	11.3	15,423
Washington	7.7	96,186	8.2	74,632	5.9	21,554
Oregon	8.1	90,617	9.0	64,534	5.6	26,083
Maryland	9.0	81,928	9.7	72,900	1.7	9,028
Connecticut	9.0	75,707	6.4	72,101	7.2	3,606
Washington DC	9.5	65,850	9.5	65,850		
Illinois	9.5	304,310	11.1	273,777	1.1	30,533
Rhode Island	10.4	74,658	11.0	66,360	5.7	8,298
Massachusetts	10.7	171,450	11.1	163,947	2.5	7,503
Texas	11.9	366,682	12.9	302,011	7.0	64,671
Nevada	13.4	94,289	14.9	79,956	4.3	14,333
Arizona	13.7	114,452	13.3	97,157	16.4	17,385
New Jersey	15.0	218,906	15.0	218,906		
Florida	16.4	341,549	17.0	324,730	5.1	16,819
Hawaii	16.7	74,871	18.6	56,580	11.2	18,291
New York	19.2	463,915	20.9	421,052	3.0	42,863
California	24.6	621,085	24.9	613,467	4.1	7,618

*%FB – Percentage Foreign Born, Percentages are weighted; N – Total number, N's are unweighted.

Nevada, District of Columbia, Maryland, Virginia, Michigan, Minnesota, and Pennsylvania. In 16 other states, a large presence of the foreign born resided in nonmetropolitan areas. These states included new, nontraditional receiving areas such as Georgia, North Carolina, Kansas, Arkansas, Delaware, Idaho, Utah, Colorado, Washington, Oregon, Connecticut, Rhode Island, and Hawaii, as well as three states long recognized to contain sizeable foreign born populations in the past, New Mexico, Texas, and Arizona. Among nontraditional receiving states, Arkansas and Georgia had foreign born populations that increased at approximately 10 percent per year during 1996-2000 and both contained total populations that grew little, if at all, during the period (data not shown).

International Migration to Louisiana: Past and Present

From its earliest point, Louisiana has had a colorful cultural history. The state has come under the rule of ten different flags starting with the Spanish in the mid 1500s and later Great Britain, France, and the United States, among others. One of the most notable groups of settlers, the French Cajuns, arrived from the French province of Acadia in the mid to late 1700s. Banished from their own home country for their Roman Catholic faith, the Acadiana French found a warm welcome on the southern coasts of Louisiana.

Despite the heavy traffic of foreigners who settled in the state during the 1800s, when activity in the New Orleans port was at its highest levels, by the 1900s immigration into Louisiana slowed dramatically. For much of the century, Louisiana did not attract significant numbers of migrants. The tide turned in the 1970s, when Louisiana became one of the top ten placement states for the resettlement of refugees from Vietnam and other southeast Asian countries. In 1978 Louisiana housed over 4 percent of the Vietnamese Americans in the United States. During the next decade, the Vietnamese population in the state grew by 62 percent (Zhou and Bankston 1998). At the same time, the state also began to attract refugees from Laos and Cambodia.

On the whole, southeast Asian refugees resettled in the southern part of the state where the Acadian French population had become famous for its food and music. Although the new refugees were culturally worlds apart from their Cajun neighbors, their resettlement and incorporation was facilitated by their receipt of government support. Over the next decade, as the second generation of Vietnamese, Laotians, and Cambodians were born, most families spoke English at home and contained at least one full-time employee. Although clustered in particular geographic areas, their presence produced little negative sentiment from the larger communities in which they resided. The affordability of housing and the availability of jobs during this period certainly helped offset anti-immigrant sentiment, while at the same time, attracted many immigrants to settle and produce their second generation offspring.

Louisiana's Foreign Born Population

As a consequence, Vietnam represents the top-ranking national origin of the state's foreign born population, representing 14.5 percent of the foreign born in 2000 (see Table 1.2). Immigrants from Spanish-speaking national origins ranked second and third. Approximately 10 percent of Louisiana's foreign born originated from Honduras and another eight percent from Mexico. This contrasts sharply with the national origin composition of the U.S. foreign born population, for which Mexico represents the top-ranking country of birth (29.5 percent), followed by the Philippines and India (4.4 and 3.3 percent, respectively). That Mexico was not a top-ranking origin for Louisiana's foreign born population in 2000 is a key reason why it

represents an excellent place to study the early incorporation of Spanish-speaking immigrants — before strong social networks develop and facilitate further migration.

Table 1.2

National Origin Characteristics of the Louisiana Foreign Born Population, 2000

PANEL A: Top Three Countries of Birth		
Louisiana		
% Vietnam	14.5	
% Honduras	9.7	
% Mexico	8.0	
United States		
% Mexico	29.5	
% Philippines	4.4	
% India	3.3	
PANEL B: Region of Origin		
	Louisiana	United States
% Latin America	40.2	51.7
% Asia	37.5	26.4
% Europe	15.6	15.8
% Other	6.7	6.1

Source: Migration Policy Institute, 2002.
http://www.migrationinformation.org/USFocus/statemap.cfm#

Another reason is that the absolute and relative size of the foreign born population in the state was small relative to other states (see Table 1.3). In 2000, Louisiana's foreign born ranked 33 out of 51 states in absolute share, and 43 out of 51 with respect to relative size. Having less foreign born than other states, and relatively fewer Mexicans, suggests that the southern Louisiana communities that have attracted immigrants in the 1990s have done so largely in response to employer demand rather than as a result of strong ties between immigrant residents and their compadres in Mexican origins.

Finally, although the share of the foreign born in the state is relatively small, since 1990 the population has increased. The 115,885 foreign born in Louisiana in 2000 comprised almost three percent of the state's total population, reflecting an increase of 33 percent — a moderated pace than the 57 percent rise in the U.S. foreign born population. Together these patterns and trends suggest that Louisiana has only begun to attract immigrants, especially Mexicans, since 1990. One consequence is that its receiving communities are in the earliest stages of immigrant incorporation.

Table 1.3

Characteristics of the Louisiana Foreign Born Population, 2000

	Louisiana	United States
Size and Percent Growth		
Relative Size		
Rankings Among U.S. States		
Population size, 2000	33 of 51	
% Foreign Born, 2000	43 of 51	
Absolute Size		
Number of Foreign Born	115,885	
% Foreign Born	2.6	
% Change, 1990-2000	32.6	57.4
Hispanic Origin		
% Hispanic	35.2	45.5
English Language Ability		
% speaking language other than English	80.5	83.0
% speaking English very well	50.6	38.5
% speaking English not at all	5.1	12.2
Entry		
% entering U.S. in last decade	37.0	42.4
Citizenship		
% who are citizens	48.4	40.3

Source: Migration Policy Institute, 2002.
http://www.migrationinformation.org/USFocus/statemap.cfm#

Table 1.3 also illustrates other differences in the foreign born population between Louisiana and the nation as a whole. In Louisiana, one third of the foreign born was of Hispanic origin compared to 45 percent of the U.S. population. Although the majority (between 80 and 83 percent) of both groups reported speaking a language other than English, one-half of those doing so spoke English very well and only five percent did not speak it at all (compared to 38 and 12 percent, respectively, for the U.S. population). Furthermore, the Louisiana foreign born were more likely than the U.S. population to be naturalized citizens, in part reflecting the state's prevalence of older refugees from southeast Asia. To sum, there are substantial differences in the foreign born populations in Louisiana and the United States. In the former, the foreign born population grew but at a slower pace, originated mostly from Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia, was more likely to speak English well and to be naturalized citizens, than the U.S. foreign born as a whole. These differences make Louisiana an ideal place in which to study the impact of recently arrived immigrants attracted to the plethora of on-shore employment opportunities that emerged from recent development in deep-water oil production.

The New French Connection: Immigrants in Southern Louisiana at the End of the 20th Century

This research project examines the early economic incorporation of immigrants in four Louisiana communities situated along the Gulf of Mexico — Morgan City, Houma, New Iberia and Port Fourchon. Our key objective is to gain an in-depth understanding of the major issues that communities face when they attract many foreign laborers to meet a strong demand for labor. As Chapter 2 illustrates, understanding the impact of immigrant settlement in new receiving communities in southern Louisiana contributes to an emerging literature that suggests diverse outcomes that depend on a complex set of factors related to immigrants and their destinations. In southeastern California, for example, new agricultural markets that emerged due to changes in irrigation technology and water distribution attracted many Mexican migrants. Their increased presence created a housing crisis that produced an impressive community response leading to the acquisition of millions of federal dollars to build new, low-cost housing in areas where none existed just five years ago. In Iowa, as the meatpacking industry restructured in the early 1980s, it increasingly relied on ethnic labor—first Vietnamese and other Southeast Asian refugees, and then, one decade later, Mexicans. Unlike Coachilla Valley in California, small Iowan communities had enough reasonably-priced housing to meet the needs of new immigrants. Its key challenge for immigrant incorporation was overcoming the language barrier, and having enough educational resources to teach English to both Spanish-speaking children and adults.

Although the face of rural America has become increasingly foreign because rapid growth in certain industries created a shortage of qualified workers for many jobs (see Taylor et al. 1997), few studies have examined their early adaptation using a comparative case study design. This is not surprising, given that immigration to many rural areas has occurred only since 1990, and that U.S. immigrants were concentrated in just a handful of states and localities before then (U.S. Department of Justice 1997). Therefore, this study explored differences in early immigrant incorporation and its impacts in four communities whose economies were strongly linked to surges in domestic oil production and extraction in the 1990s. It involved data collection by using guided conversations and computer assisted telephone technology to collect data from employers, community officials, and immigrants, and data analysis to identify the ways in which immigrants integrated and accommodated to new localities, the roles that employers, residents, and community leaders played in facilitating integration, and what effects this early incorporation had on local communities.

In the remainder of this chapter we summarize the data and methods used in the project, and then describe key findings in an executive summary divided into three sections: employers' needs, community public opinion, and immigrant incorporation. In subsequent chapters, we present detailed findings about how employers and residents viewed immigration in their communities, its impacts, and the incorporation experience of the new immigrants in southern Louisiana. In Chapter 2, we continue by describing the factors that motivate international migration decisions, in general, and the particular conditions that led to immigrant workers moving to nontraditional destinations in southern Louisiana. Drawing from prior studies on the segmented assimilation of U.S. immigrants, this chapter offers a framework for understanding the early stages of economic incorporation of immigrants in these communities. Chapter 3 follows with a description of the four Louisiana communities in which we conducted our research. As we will see, these areas shared many similarities in the 1990s. Demographic profiles of each place were remarkably similar, with the oil industry representing the key

economic activity. Public opinion too was comparable across the communities, with residents perceiving a tight link between their community and the oil industry. Furthermore, public sentiment about immigrant presence in communities did not suggest strong, consistent anti-immigrant views. Despite the similarities, however, Chapter 4 offers an examination of the factors pulling migrants to Southern Louisiana, and in particular the employers hiring them. Chapter 5 presents evidence documenting how early immigrant incorporation differed dramatically across localities. From in-depth conversations with employers, we learn that communities differed in terms of how migrants supplied their labor and employers demanded it, and how local residence responded to the presence of immigrants. Finally, Chapter 6 identifies impacts that recent immigrants have had in these four communities. On the whole, our key findings suggest that Mexican immigrants initially incorporate in different ways, and at different rates, into local economies. The observed heterogeneity in labor market and employment conditions signal considerable segmentation in the early process of the economic incorporation of Mexican immigrants.

Data and Methods

For this project we rely on data collected from four communities: Morgan City, New Iberia, Houma, and Port Fourchon. The project gathered data in two ways. First, we engaged in guided conversations with employers, community leaders (such as the mayor, school board president, medical expert, editor of the local newspaper), and immigrant workers to provide the basis for assessing the impacts of immigration (Lofland and Lofland 1995). This type of field research is an effective means of data collection to capture the social processes underlying social science research (Feagin et al. 1991; Tolbert et al. 1997).

Our goal was to speak with approximately 20 employers, 10 community leaders, and 30 immigrants, in each setting. Table 1.4 presents the number of guided conversations actually realized by the project. On the whole, these numerical goals were achieved. With respect to targets for employer conversations, we spoke to 17 employers in both Morgan City and Port Fourchon, and in Houma, we spoke to 26. Only in New Iberia were we unable to come close to our numerical target. In this community, employers were especially reluctant to agree to a guided conversation, a situation related to several highly publicized Immigration and Naturalization Service workplace raids that occurred just before we began data collection in the summer of 1998. In contrast, targets for conversations with community leaders were met for all four communities. The biggest difficulty was conversations with immigrants. The generally hostile environment in New Iberia led to high levels of mistrust among immigrant workers, making these conversations impossible. In Port Fourchon, field workers were unable to locate immigrants. As a result, we spoke with only 30 immigrants in two communities, rather than 30 in each community as originally planned.

The project also conducted a telephone survey of randomly selected households in each community.[3] Using Computer Assisted Telephone Information (CATI) technology in the Louisiana Data Population Center, its Survey Lab implemented and supervised a household survey to 200 randomly selected households. This survey was approximately 40 minutes in

[3]We preferred this method of interviewing community residents because it was efficient and cost-effective, yielding replicable results in the future. We secured OMB approval to implement it the survey in April 2001, and fielded the survey immediately thereafter.

length, and it included a wide variety of questions that tapped a wide variety of project issues. Many questions derived from prior surveys used in prior research, and others (like questions on race and ethnicity, and Hispanic origin) were taken from the 2000 Census. A copy of the survey is found in Appendix 1.0.

Table 1.4

Guided Conversations by Community

Community	Employer	Community Leader	Immigrant Worker	Total
New Iberia	9	10	----	19
Morgan City	17	14	19	50
Houma	26	7	11	44
Port Fourchon	17	7	----	24
Total	69	38	30	137

Collection of new data was critical to the integrity of this project for two reasons. First, because the presence of immigrants is a very new phenomenon in these communities, 1990 data from the U.S. Census failed to capture the immigrants settling in these areas in the 1990s. Second, although data from the 2000 Census will be useful to understanding immigrant settlement, detailed public use data (5% sample) do not become available until 2004. Even more important than the wait for the project was the fact that 2000 Census data may miss the earliest community impacts as immigrants began working and living these nontraditional receiving communities by the mid-1990s.

Our guided conversations began in the summer of 1998. We implemented the guided conservation methodology with people expected would contribute best to our understanding of how communities responded to newly arrived immigrants. These included community officials involved in civic organizations and local government, and stakeholders such as employers and immigrant workers, of whom both were directly affected by recent oil and gas development activities (Grambling 1996). With permission from all respondents, I recorded these conversations to avoid the normal interruptions from taking notes (either on a computer or by hand).[4] Appendix 1.2, 1.3, and 1.4 present the broad questions that guided the conversations with employers, community leaders and immigrant workers.

Note that conversations with employers provided a critical part of the story, and one that is typically difficult to obtain in social science research because employers may be reticent about participating. In our effort to choose employers, we begin first by identifying all employers in these communities from lists available from the chambers of commerce, internet, and informal car drives through each community. We created a master list, and from it, we chose companies that varied on a variety of dimensions: size, industry activity, and location. Although we

[4]We obtained consent forms from respondents in all guided conversations. A copy of the form — in English and Spanish — is presented in Appendix 1.1.

experienced some difficulty securing participation from employers in the New Iberia, we experienced little known, or obvious, reticence from employers thereafter. Some, in fact, were quite enthusiastic about participating.

We made first contact with employers and community leaders through a letter that we sent via regular mail and fax (see Appendix 1.5). Thereafter, a project assistant called and set up an appointment with either the owner of the company or its chief operating officer. Conversation facilitators, who were trained as part of the project, were then given the appointment date and time, and met with the employer or community leader. In contrast, immigrant workers were obtained for conversations using a snowball sampling method. The first immigrants we met in the community and agreed to speak to us then referred others to our project. Again, conversation facilitators who were bilingual (speaking English and Spanish) were sent to meet with immigrants. Note that all taped conversations were transcribed, and if necessary, translated from Spanish to English.[5]

[5] Photographs were also taken within the community settings. These are provided in Appendix 1.7.

CHAPTER 2

Four Communities in Southern Louisiana: Similarities and Differences

As a first step toward understanding differences in the process of incorporation of immigrants in southern Louisiana, we begin this chapter by profiling the four communities in our sample. Although Louisiana has not been a common destination area for U.S. immigrants in the past, field and news reports suggested that many Spanish-speaking migrants were working in shipbuilding and fabrication yards in the southern coastal areas of the state by the mid 1990s. In this section we focus our discussion on the four study areas: Morgan City and its surrounding area in St. Mary's Parish, and Houma and its surrounding area in Terrebonne Parish, Port Fourchon and its surrounding are in Lafourche Parish, and New Iberia and Iberia Parish. All four locales have been unusually tied to oil production and refining during the twentieth century. They house many fabrication and shipbuilding companies, and operate ports and canals to service offshore oil industry. Below we offer demographic profiles of these communities and then summarize public opinions on a variety of topics.

Demographic Profiles

On the whole, these communities share similar demographic profiles. For example, they all witnessed dramatic growth in the oil and gas industry during the first half of the twentieth century. Given that wetlands cover much of the geographic area, growth in the development of support construction services in these communities was spurred on by the development of submersible drilling barges in shallow water in the 1930s (Gramling 1996: 34). As a result, many people migrated to the area, lured by economic opportunities and new federal investments in highways. They settled on land next to the natural levees found in the marshlands, also known as "string town" settlements (Kniffen 1968).

More able-bodied workers led to the construction of new canal networks. Critical to Houma was the Houma Navigational Canal, completed in 1961 as a 30-mile connection between Terrebonne Bay and the Gulf of Mexico. In Morgan City, the port has operated since the mid 1950s to service a wide variety of vessels in the Gulf of Mexico. Port Fourchon's multi-use port was established in 1960 and was heralded as the "port of the future". Today, it houses over 124 companies and is the most significant port in the sate for deep-water drilling (Keithly, 2001). The Port of Iberia opened in 1938 and is currently the Gulf Coast's largest shallow draft port. More than 90 industries housed at the port employ over 4000 workers, which makes it the largest employer in the parish (www.iberiaparishgovernment.com).

In addition to the development of canal networks, new technology permitted drilling for oil offshore. In 1947, Morgan City became nationally known when its waters housed the first offshore oil well. This set in motion debates about land ownership, which once settled, led to the implementation of newly refined offshore technology that permitted drilling and processing in up to thousands of feet of water and in places located hundreds of miles offshore (Grambling 1996). The new technology includes seismic imaging, deepwater production and processing, and remotely operated vehicles. All together, these and other developments fueled growth in offshore oil production and onshore support services through much of the century, including the 1990s.

One consequence is that these communities rely heavily on the oil industry for employment. For example, of the major private industry employers in each of these areas in

1998, almost half were in oil and related services (http://leap.ulm.edu). Moreover, among all employees in the major private companies, almost half were employed in oil and related industries.[6]

The demographic attributes of our four communities share similarities and differences (see http://leap.ulm.edu or www.census.gov). Data from the 2000 decennial census show that the population of St. Mary's Parish was about half the size of Terrebonne (52,833 vs. 105,123, respectively). Lafourche and Iberia Parish fell in between those two (90,273 and 73,530, respectively). Although these figures represent a population decline at a rate of 7.9 percent for St. Mary's Parish, for Terrebonne and Iberia they represent an increase at approximately the same rate. Lafourche Parish population also increased, but at a slower rate of 4.8 percent.

Census data also suggest considerable shifts in the foreign born composition of the four study areas in the 1990s. Table 2.0 shows the size and percent change of Louisiana's foreign born, Hispanic, and Mexican origin populations in our study areas. While Louisiana has increased its foreign born population by about one-third, our study areas significantly varied in the pace of this growth (see Panel A). Houma stood out with dramatic growth, a full 214 increase in its foreign born population. Lafourche parish also witnessed an increase, where the foreign born declined in New Iberia and increased only slightly in Morgan City.

Because many of the industry employers we spoke with were turning to Hispanic laborers to meet their needs, we were particularly interested in the growth of the Hispanic population. Panel B presents the percent change in Hispanic origin population over the last decade. Interestingly, both New Iberia and Morgan City reported declines in their Hispanic population, and Lafourche only a slight rise. Houma, on the other hand, had a 30 percent increase in its Hispanic origin population, well above the state's rate of growth (16 percent). Because of these differences, we also examined change in the Mexican origin population because early field reports in the early 1990s suggested many immigrants had recently arrived from Mexico.

During the 1990s, dramatic growth in the Mexican origin population occurred in three of the four study areas. Panel C shows that all places had significant increases in the Mexican origin population with the exception of New Iberia, where no growth occurred. In Houma and Lafourche Parish, the Mexican population grew to twice its 1990 size, and in Morgan City, it increased by 40 percent.

To sum, the oil industry represented the key economic activity in all four study areas in the 1990s and demographic profiles suggest that these communities have more similarities than differences. For example, although population size varied widely, three of the four areas saw gains in population over the last decade. Furthermore, while the four communities experienced varied growth in their foreign born population over the decade, three of the four witnessed significant gains in their Mexican origin population. Therefore, most communities grew with respect to both foreign born and Mexican born populations. Similarities in the economic and demographic attributes of the communities led us to expect that residents would share similar sentiments with respect to the oil industry, and to the migrants living in their communities, a point we investigate below.

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[6] The exception is in Iberia Parish where the economy is more diversified. However, one-third of the major private employers in the parish were located in oil field services. Furthermore, the Port of Iberia, a public employer, reported to be the single greatest employer in the parish.

Table 2.0

Size and Change in the Louisiana Foreign Born and Hispanic Origin Population, 1990-2000

PANEL A: FOREIGN BORN POPULATION			
	2000	1990	% change
Louisiana	115,885	87,407	32.6
New Iberia	757	764	-0.9
Houma	754	240	214.2
Morgan City	269	255	5.4
Lafourche Parish	1,336	644	68.0
PANEL B: HISPANIC ORIGIN POPULATION			
	2000	1990	% change
Louisiana	107,738	93,044	15.8
New Iberia	487	725	-32.8
Houma	571	430	32.8
Morgan City	428	475	-9.9
Lafourche Parish	1,284	1,249	2.8
PANEL C: MEXICAN ORIGIN POPULATION			
	2000	1990	% change
Louisiana	32,267	23,452	37.6
New Iberia	174	174	0.0
Houma	301	150	100.7
Morgan City	150	107	40.2
Lafourche Parish	696	357	95.0

Public Opinion

To investigate public sentiment about the impact of the oil and gas industry on port communities in Louisiana, especially as it relates to immigration, and examine differences by community, we conducted Computer Assisted Telephone Interviews (CATI) with persons who resided in 200 randomly selected households in each community. The CATI survey was pretested in December 2000, and then implemented in April and May 2001, by the Survey Research Lab at the Louisiana Population Data Center, Louisiana State University, under the supervision of its director, Jeanne Hurlbert.[7] (Note that the survey appears in Appendix 1.0 of this report.)

In this section, we report findings from this survey. We begin by presenting the demographic characteristics of our sample, and then describe the extent to which respondents perceive that conditions in their communities are linked to the oil and gas industry. We present residents' views about how the industry affects particular conditions in their communities, such as local economy, politics, education, housing, and crime. In the final section of the chapter, we report residents' attitudes about the effect of immigration on their communities. Throughout this description, we assess the extent to which public opinion differs by community.

Demographic Attributes

Table 2.1 describes demographic attributes of the respondents in our sample by community of residence.[8] Of the 808 men and women in the total sample, slightly more than half were women (55 percent). Only in Houma did the sex composition of respondents shift to being slightly more male than female. Two-thirds of the overall sample reported being currently married, with significantly less in Morgan City but more in Lafourche Parish. Moreover, across the board, on average most respondents were middle-aged (46 years).

Following the precedent set by Census 2000 in the measurement of race (see www.census.gov), our question permits respondents to self identify one or more races. In contrast to the approximately 98 percent of the U.S. population who reported only one race (http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/2001/cb01cn61.html), 94 percent of our respondents self identified only one race. The greater representation of those reporting multiple races in our sample may reflect limits in our knowledge about how Cajuns self-identify their race. For example, although we do not yet know the extent to which Cajuns reported more than one race in Census 2000, new estimates of the size of the population released by the Census Bureau suggest approximately 42,000 Cajuns in Louisiana in 2000. This is dramatically different from the 500,000 to 700,000 estimated by Cajun experts in the past (Martel 2001).

Among those reporting one race, 80 percent were white, 14 percent Black or African American, three percent American Indian or Alaska Native, less than one percent were Asian or Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander, and almost three percent identified as some other race. In both Morgan City and New Iberia, respondents were more likely than the total sample to be black (19 vs. 24 percent, respectively) and less likely to be white (76 vs. 70 percent, respectively). In Houma and especially Lafourche Parish, the racial breakdown was the reverse.

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[7]Before its implementation, the survey was approved by the Minerals Management Service and the Office of Management and Budget.

[8]Because there are no unique 3-digit phone exchanges for Port Fourchan, our sample of 200 households for this community reflects the entire Lafourche Parish.

Table 2.1

Demographic Attributes by Community of Residence

	All Communities	Morgan City	New Iberia	Houma	Lafourche Parish
Individual Attributes					
% Female	55.3	58.4	59.5	47.6**	56.0
% Currently married	67.5	61.9**	63.3	71.2	73.5**
Mean Age	45.8	44.8	46.4	46.3	46.0
% Reporting one race	94.4	92.4	96.0	93.6	95.5
White	80.2	75.8*	69.6**	82.6**	92.7**
Black, African American, or Negro	13.7	18.7**	23.6**	12.1**	0.5**
American Indian or Alaska Native	2.6	1.6	1.6**	3.7	3.7
Asian	0.5	0.6	0.5	1.1	0.0
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0.1	0.0	0.5	0.0	0.0
Some other race	2.9	3.3	4.7	0.5	3.1
% Reporting two or more races	5.6	7.6	4.0	6.4	4.5
% Hispanic origin					
Mexican, Mexican American, Chicano	2.4	2.5	3.5	2.9	0.5**
Puerto Rican or Cuban	0.1	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0
Other Spanish/Hispanic/Latino	3.0	2.5	4.5	2.9	2.0
% Foreign-born	1.0	1.5	0.5	1.9	0.0*
% Foreign-born, spouse	2.0	3.2	4.0*	0.0**	1.0
% Education					
Less than HS	16.1	13.4	13.0	18.0	20.0*
HS graduate	36.9	34.2	35.0	37.4	41.0
Some college	24.5	28.2	26.0	22.3	21.5
College graduate	15.2	17.3	19.0*	14.6	10.0**
MA, law degree, PhD, or MD	7.3	6.9	7.0	7.8	7.5
Household Attributes					
Mean number of children	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.1	1.0
% Income					
Less than $30,000	33.3	31.2	35.5	31.1	35.4
$30,000-50,000	28.8	27.8	25.7	29.5	32.0
$50,000-70,000	19.6	21.6	18.0	18.6	20.2
$70,000 +	18.3	19.3	20.8	20.8	12.4**
Number of Respondents	808	202	200	206	200

Note: Asterisks denote significant differences between the community of interest and average characteristics of the remaining three communities (*p<0.10, **p<0.05).

Respondents in these communities were more likely than the sample as a whole to be white (83 and 93 percent, respectively) and less likely to be black (12 and 1 percent, respectively). The only other significant community difference refers to the representation of American Indians. Whereas they comprised approximately three percent of the total sample, respondents in New Iberia and Morgan City were significantly less likely to identify as this racial group.

With respect to Hispanic origin, approximately five percent reported some type of Hispanic origin. Between two and three percent identified as Mexican in all communities except Lafourche Parish, where less than one percent reported to be Mexican. The remainder reported themselves as other Spanish or Latino. Interestingly, one percent of respondents were foreign-born in the total sample and in particular communities, with Lafourche respondents as the exception with disproportionately fewer foreign born. Foreign birth of spouses also varied by community. Although two percent of respondents reported having a foreign born spouse, in New Iberia four percent did so and in Houma essentially no one did so.

The educational distribution shows that most respondents had completed 12 or more years of schooling. For the sample as a whole, approximately one-third had a high school diploma, one-quarter had at least some college, 15 percent graduated from college, and another seven percent had obtained a Masters, PhD, law, or medical degree. Despite substantial homogeneity in the education levels of respondents in these communities, those living in Lafourche Parish were the least skilled with significantly more having less than a high school degree and significantly less having a college degree. One effect of this low level of credentialing is lower household income. In Lafourche Parish, fewer respondents reported incomes of $70,000 or more compared to the total sample (12 vs. 18 percent, respectively). Overall, one third of the households in our sample earned less than $30,000, with another third earning between $30,000-$50,000, 20 percent reported income between $50,000-$70,000, and 18 percent earned above $70,000.

Table 2.2 describes the employment attributes of respondents in our sample. Approximately 63 percent of respondents were employed, 4.4 percent were unemployed, and 32.7 percent were not in the labor force. Among employed persons, 85 percent worked full-time averaging 48 hours per week, and approximately 20 percent were self-employed. Consistent with our expectations, many respondents had direct or indirect ties to the oil and gas industry. Approximately 44 percent of the total sample was employed in the oil and gas industry, and 30 percent of households contained at least one other person working in the industry.

Looking across the columns in Table 2.2 reveals interesting variations by community. For example, Panel B shows that substantially more respondents in Morgan City were employed in the oil industry than in the sample as a whole (55 vs. 44 percent, respectively), whereas those in New Iberia were considerably more likely to be employed in industries other than oil (31 percent). This suggests more economic diversity in New Iberia than in Morgan City, where dependence on the oil and gas industry remains strong. Lafourche Parish respondents were more likely to be out of the labor force, and less likely to be employed, than the sample as a whole.

Public Opinion and Effects of the Oil and Gas Industry on Communities

Table 2.3 reveals whether and how people believe that the oil and gas industry affects local conditions in their communities. For example, the majority of residents in all communities agreed that the local economy was strongly linked to the oil industry. While there was some variation across communities, the majority of respondents reported strong ties to the oil industry.

Table 2.2

Employment Attributes by Community of Residence

	All Communities	Morgan City	New Iberia	Houma	Lafourche Parish
PANEL A: Employment Status					
% Employed	62.9	64.4	66.7	66.7	54.0**
% Unemployed	4.4	5.0	5.1	2.0**	5.5
% Not in labor force	32.7	30.6	28.2	31.3	40.5**
% households containing a member working in the oil industry (other than respondent)	29.0	31.7	26.0	26.2	32.0
PANEL B: Employed Persons					
% Full-time work	85.2	83.8	66.5**	55.9	45.0**
Mean work hours	47.6	48.5	46.1	48.6	47.3
% Self-employed	19.8	21.5	17.4	13.2**	28.7**
% Employed in oil industry	43.5	55.4**	31.1**	41.2	47.2
Number of Respondents	808	202	200	206	200

Note: Asterisks denote significant differences between the community of interest and average characteristics of the remaining three communities (*p<0.10, **p<0.05).

On the whole, respondents reported positive attitudes toward the oil industry and its effects on social and economic conditions in their communities. Looking down the first column in Table 2.3, at least half of the respondents in our sample reported that, during the last 10 years, the industry helped to increase the number of available jobs (56 percent), increase new businesses (59 percent), improve the local community (65 percent), increase the presence of new residents moving to the community (57 percent), raise demand for new housing (64 percent), and increase demand for medical/social services (50 percent). The industry was also linked to increased hiring of foreign born workers (58 percent).

Looking across the columns of Table 2.3 reveals significant community variations in these attitudes. For example, residents of Houma and Lafourche Parish were significantly more likely to positively link the oil and gas industry to local job growth than the overall sample, whereas residents in Morgan City were less likely to link job growth to the industry's presence. In fact, approximately half of Morgan City respondents felt that the industry reduced job growth in their community.

The community variations in other effects of the oil industry mirror those reported above. Houma and Lafourche Parish residents were significantly more likely than the entire sample to link new business development and improvements in the local community to the oil industry. Morgan City residents, on the other hand, were more likely to report declines in the number of new business and the local community than the entire sample (46 vs. 22 percent, and 41 vs. 17 percent, respectively).

Table 2.3

Effects of the Oil and Gas Industry in Louisiana Port Communities

	All Communities (%)	Morgan City (%)	New Iberia (%)	Houma (%)	Lafourche Parish (%)
Extent to which the local economy is linked to oil industry					
Very strongly linked	81.6	81.7	74.9**	82.5	87.4**
Somewhat linked	14.0	15.8	19.6**	12.6	8.1**
Not at all linked	1.0	0.5	2.0*	1.5	0.0*
Don't Know	3.4	2.0	3.5	3.4	4.5
How has the oil industry affected.... in last 10 years?					
1. Number of jobs					
Increased	55.7	33.7**	51.3	63.4**	74.2**
No change	8.1	9.5	12.6**	6.8	3.5**
Decreased	27.7	50.3**	25.1	21.5**	14.1**
Don't Know	8.5	6.5	11.1	8.3	8.1
2. Number of new businesses					
Increased	58.9	32.2**	60.5	68.1**	74.9**
No change	12.3	15.8*	11.5	10.3	11.6
Decreased	21.7	46.1**	20.0	12.8**	8.0**
Don't Know	7.1	5.9	8.0	8.8	5.5
3. Local community					
Improved	64.6	40.8**	63.1	73.8**	80.4**
No change	14.0	14.9	19.7**	12.1	9.6**
Declined	17.4	40.8**	13.1**	9.2**	6.5**
Don't Know	4.0	3.5	4.0	4.9	3.5
4. Number of people moving into your community					
Increased	57.1	31.5**	53.3	71.2**	72.2**
No change	16.7	18.0	22.6**	11.7**	14.6
Decreased	20.7	46.0**	19.6	10.2**	7.1**
Don't Know	5.5	4.5	4.5	6.8	6.1

Table 2.3 (continued)

Presence and Effects of the Oil and Gas Industry in Louisiana Port Communities

	All Communities (%)	Morgan City (%)	New Iberia (%)	Houma (%)	Lafourche Parish (%)
5. Demand for new housing					
Increased	64.5	40.3**	57.6**	79.5**	80.4**
No change	16.1	21.9**	22.2**	8.8**	11.6**
Decreased	13.3	33.3**	12.6	5.4**	2.0**
Don't Know	6.1	4.5	7.6	6.3	6.0
6. Demand for medical and/or social services					
Increased	49.8	30.2**	54.6	60.7**	53.8
No change	25.0	32.2**	24.2	20.9	22.6
Decreased	11.0	25.2**	9.6	3.9**	5.5**
Don't Know	14.2	12.4	11.6	14.6	18.1*
7. Community crime rates					
Better	23.6	35.5**	22.8	20.9	15.1**
No change	40.5	33.5*	41.6	41.7	45.0
Worse	24.2	22.5	24.9	19.9*	29.8**
Don't Know	11.7	8.5*	10.7	17.5**	10.1
8. Hiring of foreign born workers					
Increased	57.9	49.8**	53.3	55.3	73.2**
No change	19.9	24.4*	23.4	20.9	11.1**
Decreased	6.2	12.4**	6.1	3.9*	2.5**
Don't Know	16.0	13.4	17.3	20.0*	13.1
Number of Respondents	808	202	200	206	200

Note: Asterisks denote significant differences between the community of interest and average characteristics of the remaining three communities (*p<0.10, **p<0.05).

Community differences also reveal that the positive link between population size and the oil industry was reported more often by residents in Houma and La Lafourche Parish than those in Morgan City and New Iberia (71 and 72 percent, compared to 31 and 53 percent, respectively). In fact, residents of Morgan City were more likely to associate declines in the population with the oil industry than increases (46 percent compared to 31.5 percent, respectively). Residents of Houma and Lafourche Parish also credit the industry for increasing the demand for new housing. Approximately 80 percent reported that the oil industry increased the demand for new housing (compared to 64 percent for the sample as a whole).

Given that the majority of our respondents linked an increase in both population growth and housing demand in their community to the oil industry, we were interested in whether residents also believed that the oil industry had created upward pressure on the demand for medical and social services and local crime rates. Here our findings suggest at least some positive attitudes about the oil industry held by Morgan City residents. Compared to the sample as a whole, large proportions of Morgan City respondents reported that the industry had either no effect, or decreased, the demand for medical/social services. In addition, these respondents were mixed with respect to the industry's effect on crime rates. Approximately 36 percent thought the industry improved crime rates (compared to 24 percent for all respondents), yet another 33 percent thought the industry had no effect on crime rates. Only in Lafourche Parish did more respondents report that the industry worsened crime compared to the total sample (30 vs. 24 percent).

Finally, we asked residents if they noticed an increase in the hiring of foreign-born workers as a result of the oil industry. On average, 58 percent of our respondents noted some increase in foreign-born hiring over the last decade. Yet despite the majority overall, residents in Lafourche Parish were more likely than other communities to report large increases. Approximately 73 percent noted an increase in the hiring of foreign born workers. Residents in Morgan City were less likely to report an increasing tendency toward the hiring of foreign-born workers, with 24 percent reporting no change and another 12 percent reporting a decline.

To summarize, most residents in the four port communities reported strong positive links between their local community and the oil industry. While consistent positive opinion was more likely among respondents from Houma and Lafourche than among those in New Iberia and Morgan City, on the whole, residents in all four communities reported some degree of positive sentiment toward the oil industry. Given these similarities among communities, we expected to find similar attitudes about receiving foreign born workers.

Morgan City was the exception with respect to most conditions of communities about which we asked our respondents. Morgan City residents held a more negative view of the oil industry and its effects on the social and economic conditions in their community than residents in the other three port communities, yet they did not link the industry to the hiring of foreign born workers. Because Morgan City reported less positive links with the oil industry, it is possible that its residents would feel more threatened by foreign born presence and thus have more prevalent anti-immigrant sentiment. In the next section, we explore public opinion about immigrant workers.

Public Opinion about Immigrants

Community sentiment may have strong effects on the reception and assimilation of incoming migrants. If migrants enter a community with positive feelings and support they are much more likely to successfully assimilate and integrate into the community. In this section, we gauge residents' attitudes about the affect of immigrants in their communities to explore the context of reception incoming migrants faced across communities (see Table 2.4). Similar to findings described earlier, important regional variations emerged in opinions about immigrants.

Interestingly, Table 2.4 shows that most respondents believed that there should be no change in the number of foreign born immigrants residing in their communities (44 percent). Although many were neutral about the issue, almost one-third (30 percent) reported that fewer foreign born should be permitted in their communities. Neutral and anti-immigrant sentiment varied little across the four communities, suggesting uniformity in their tolerance of outsiders.

Table 2.4

Attitudes about Foreign Born Workers in Louisiana Port Communities

	All Communities (%)	Morgan City (%)	New Iberia (%)	Houma (%)	Lafourche Parish (%)
The number of immigrants from foreign counties permitted to come to your community should...					
Increase	19.4	19.9	20.7	17.2	19.9
No change	43.9	45.9	48.2	38.4*	43.4
Decrease	29.9	31.1	26.9	32.8	28.6
Don't Know	6.8	3.1*	4.2*	11.6**	8.2
Will ... occur as a result of more immigrants coming into your community?					
1. Higher economic growth					
Likely	38.7	38.1	43.4	40.8	32.3**
Unlikely	37.3	48.7	41.8**	50.7	54.8*
Don't Know	12.3	13.2	14.8	8.5**	12.8
2. Higher unemployment					
Likely	64.2	62.3	63.3	61.8	69.7*
Unlikely	29.8	31.2	30.6	32.8	24.3**
Don't Know	5.9	6.4	6.0	5.3	6.0
3. Harder to keep community together					
Likely	49.4	45.2	50.8	45.1	57.1**
Unlikely	42.3	47.2	44.6	42.2	35.4**
Don't Know	8.2	7.5	4.7**	12.7**	7.5
4. Presence of good loyal workers will increase					
Likely	48.8	46.9	53.8*	51.3	42.9*
Unlikely	38.7	38.4	35.4	37.7	43.4
Don't Know	12.5	14.6	10.8	11.1	13.6
5. Strain local school system					
Likely	60.9	55.7*	57.1	65.8*	64.8
Unlikely	34.4	39.8*	38.4	28.7**	30.7
Don't Know	4.7	4.5	4.5	5.5	4.5

Table 2.4 (continued)

Attitudes about Foreign Born Workers in Louisiana Port Communities

	All Communities (%)	Morgan City (%)	New Iberia (%)	Houma (%)	Lafourche Parish (%)
6. Increase demand for housing					
Likely	79.7	69.3	85.4**	76.8	87.4**
Unlikely	17.5	25.7	13.6*	20.7	10.1**
Don't Know	2.7	4.9*	1.0*	2.5	2.5
7. Increase demand for medical and/or social services					
Likely	84.2	79.5**	87.8*	82.0	87.4
Unlikely	11.1	18.0**	7.6*	11.5	7.6*
Don't Know	4.7	2.5*	4.6	6.5	5.0
8. Increase local crime rates					
Likely	62.6	63.5	61.9	55.4**	70.0**
Unlikely	29.2	29.5	27.4	35.6**	23.9*
Don't Know	8.2	7.0	10.7	8.9	6.1
9. Increase number of undocumented workers					
Likely	71.7	71.9	70.7	70.4	74.1
Unlikely	16.6	19.1	20.2	15.8	13.2
Don't Know	11.7	11.1	9.1	13.8	12.7
10. Attitudes about bilingual education					
Favor	74.5	76.4	74.6	73.3	73.7
Oppose	21.5	20.1	21.8	24.3	19.7
Don't Know	4.0	3.5	3.5	2.4	6.6*
Number of Respondents	808	202	200	206	200

Note: Asterisks denote significant differences between the community of interest and average characteristics of the remaining three communities (*p<0.10, **p<0.05).

Further results described below shed light on the ways in which residents linked immigrants to the social and economic conditions in their communities.

For example, on average respondents in the total sample were about equally as likely to link higher economic growth with increased immigrant presence as they were not to make this link. However, Table 2.4 also reveals notable variations by community. Two points stand out. First, within all communities with the exception of New Iberia, more residents suggested immigrant presence was unlikely (rather than likely) to promote economic growth. The more positive sentiment in New Iberia could be related to its successful experience with the foreign

born Laotian residents. Secondly, compared to respondents in other communities, Lafourche Parish residents were more likely to report that economic growth is unlikely to occur with increasing levels of immigration (55 vs. 37 percent, respectively).

Given this fairly negative sentiment about immigrants with respect to economic growth, it is not surprising that the majority of residents linked increased immigrant presence with higher unemployment. Two-thirds of the sample believed this to be the case, but among Lafourche Parish residents, 70 percent believed that more immigrants would increase unemployment. Furthermore, although half of all respondents believed that an immigration increase would result in a decline in community solidarity, significantly more (57 percent) living in Lafourche reported this belief. Despite some anti-immigrant sentiments, almost half of the respondents in our sample believed that increasing the number of immigrants would result in an increase in the presence of good loyal workers. However, consistent with above patterns, Lafourche residents were significantly less likely to report this positive association (43 percent), and New Iberia residents were significantly more likely (54 percent).

With respect to the educational system, housing market, medical/social services, and crime, the majority of respondents believed that increased immigrant presence produces additional strain on local communities. Approximately 61 percent reported that immigrants strain educational services, 80 percent linked immigrant to a greater demand for housing, and another 84 percent reported increases in medical and social services. Again, however, this sentiment varied by place. For example, Morgan City residents were less likely to believe that a strain on the school system and medical/social services occurs as a result of more immigrants moving into the community. Houma residents, on the other hand, were more likely to believe that immigrants strain the local school system, but they were less likely to link immigrants to increased crime. New Iberia residents were more likely to link immigration to strains on housing and medical/social services. Finally, Lafourche Parish residents were more likely to view immigration as the reason for upward pressure on housing demand and rising crime rates.

Conclusions

To sum, demographic profiles of respondents in these four communities reveal several important findings. First, although the proportion was slightly lower than that reported elsewhere for the U.S. population as a whole (see www.census.gov), the overwhelming majority of our population reported identifying with only one racial group. The majority of respondents reported being white, but more – especially in Morgan City and New Iberia – reported being black than in the total sample. Second, despite the fact that no more than five percent of the population in these communities reported Hispanic Origin, approximately half identified as Mexican with the remainder other Latino. Respondents from Lafourche Parish identified least with being Hispanic and being foreign born, and New Iberia respondents reported the highest proportion of foreign born spouses.

Third, many respondents had direct or indirect ties to the oil and gas industry and in some communities, like Morgan City, slightly more than half reported working in the industry. As a result, respondents perceived a tight link between their community and the oil industry, and many reported positive effects of the industry on job growth, new business development, and housing. Morgan City residents were the exception, reporting more negative community impacts associated with the oil industry compared to residents in the other three communities.

Sentiment about immigrants in communities ranged from neutral to moderately negative. Nothing in our data suggested strong, consistent anti-immigrant sentiment. Although residents in

some communities may feel that immigrants threaten community solidarity and employment, they were fairly neutral with respect to how many foreign born should be permitted to enter the United States and their communities, entering and they linked immigrant workers with good work. Only in Lafourche Parish were residents' sentiments anti-immigrant. New Iberia, on the other hand, reported more positive sentiments about migrants suggesting their more positive experience with southeast Asian immigrants since the mid 1970s.

CHAPTER 3

Employers in Four Louisiana Communities

In this chapter, we use data from guided conversations to describe the employers in our sample and the attributes of their companies. Describing employers' views about the employment and economic conditions in these communities helps us to understand the conditions that were pulling migrants to South Louisiana, and the conditions migrant workers faced upon arrival (an important point to which we return in a later chapter). We begin below by providing a detailed look at the employers and economic conditions pulling migrants to South Louisiana and then we discuss why migrants choose to come to the area.

Characteristics of Companies in Southern Louisiana

Table 3.0 describes characteristics of the 68 companies we interviewed in the four communities in southern Louisiana. The clear majority of our companies were located in the oil and gas sector of the economy (78 percent). Another 12 percent were shipbuilding companies that receive contracts from oil and gas companies to construct off-shore platforms, their parts, and the ships that service them.

The corporations represented both established companies and newcomers created after 1980. Approximately half of those in our sample were created before the 1980s. The other half were created later on, either later in the 1980s or in the 1990s, in part because of the corporate restructuring (through mergers and acquisitions) begun as a result of the oil bust of the early 1980s.

Interestingly, approximately 58 percent of the companies we interviewed were locally owned or regionally based establishments. Another 19 percent were national, and 24 percent were multinational businesses. In addition to being largely locally owned, half of the sample employed less than 100 workers. Larger employers (with between 100 and 500 workers) comprised another 26 percent of our sample, those reporting between 500 to 1,000 workers were 24 percent, and those with more than 1,000 workers comprised just six percent of our sample of employers.

Table 3.1 documents considerable diversity in the primary activity reported by companies in our sample. Approximately 30 percent sold, rented, or serviced equipment to oil and gas industry, 26 percent fabricated offshore pipes and platforms, and 11 percent reported shipbuilding as their primary activity. In addition, eight percent reported providing contract labor services, six percent reported ship repair and cleaning services, another six percent reported platform repair and cleaning services, and a final six percent reported offshore drilling.

In the 1990s, many companies in the industry relied on the use of contract labor, i.e., hiring workers recruited by labor contractors. This permits employers to hire workers on an as-needed basis that corresponds with the ebbs and flows of the industry's business cycle. It also permits them to do so without incurring the liabilities, such as financial burdens from the provision of job benefits and from fines incurred if immigrants are found working without legal documents). These advantages explain why contract labor has become an attractive tool for employers. In fact, two-thirds of employers in our sample reported some use of contract workers, with 16 percent always using contract workers and another 11 percent often using these workers. On average, employers reported having approximately 61 contract laborers on the job at the time of our interview.

Table 3.0

Demographic Attributes of Employers in Four Louisiana Communities

% Companies Located in Each Area	
Morgan City	25.0
New Iberia	13.2
Houma	36.8
Port Fourchon	25.0
Number of Respondents	68
Primary Industry	
Oil and Gas	78.5
Shipbuilding	12.3
Other	9.2
Number of Respondents	65
Year of Creation	
1940-50s	16.7
1960s	11.1
1970s	18.5
1980s	38.9
1990s	14.8
Number of Respondents	54
Company Type	
Local	42.4
Regional	15.3
National	18.6
Multinational	23.7
Number of Respondents	59
Company Size (% employing)	
< 100 workers	54.4
100-499 workers	26.5
500-999 workers	13.2
1000 plus workers	5.9
Number of Respondents	68
Average Company Size	268.3

Source: This study.

Table 3.1

Primary Activity and Contract Labor Use of Employers in Four Louisiana Communities

Primary Activity (%)	
Oil field supply, rental, service	30.3
Fabrication, offshore pipes, and platforms	25.8
Shipbuilding	10.6
Contract labor company	7.6
Ship repair and cleaning	6.1
Repair and cleaning, offshore pipes, and platforms	6.1
Offshore drilling	6.1
Other	4.5
Disposal of Oil-field waste	3.0
Number of Respondents	66
Use of Contract Labor (%)	
Never	37.5
Rarely	12.5
Sometimes	23.2
Often	10.7
Always	16.1
Number of Respondents	56
Avg. Number of Current Contract Workers (of employers using contract labor)	61.0
Level of Company Turnover (%)	
Low	54.9
High	45.1
Number of Respondents	51

Source: This study.

Characteristics of the Labor Force

Table 3.2 presents employers' descriptions of their current labor force. We begin below by discussing the demographic attributes and employment status of workers employed in these companies. Next, we describe their typical skill level, occupation, and wage rates.

With respect to the racial and ethnic composition of the workforce in our companies, most respondents reported having a majority white workforce (85 percent had more than 50 percent white workforce). However, half of our employers reported hiring at least some Hispanic origin workers. Approximately 19 percent of companies employed at least 25 Hispanic workers and 12 percent employed between 25 and 100. Other employers were vague when questioned about their Hispanic workforce, 14 percent employed 'some' Hispanic workers and four percent employed 'many' Hispanic workers. Furthermore, although most employers

Table 3.2

Characteristics of Labor Force Reported by Employers
in Four Louisiana Communities

Racial Composition of Workforce	
< 50% white	15.2
50-74% white	30.4
>=75% white	54.3
Number of Respondents	46
Hispanic Origin	
% employing no Hispanic workers	50.9
% employing 1-25 Hispanic workers	19.3
% employing 26-100 Hispanic workers	12.3
% employing some Hispanic workers, unspecified amount	14.0
% employing many Hispanic workers, unspecified amount	3.5
Number of Respondents	57
% of Workers with High School Degree or GED	
0-50%	19.4
>50%	80.6
Number of Respondents	36

Source: This study.

reported that the majority of their employees completed high school or its equivalency, almost 20 percent reported that half or less of their workforce had less than high school.

Table 3.3 presents other attributes of this labor force. Most employers reported hiring mostly full-time workers who were not part of a union. On this last point, our conversations with employers were illuminating. One summed up the industry's position this way. "Oil fields uh..there are very few unions in the oil field. Now in your refineries you have them. As for as the drilling aspect, production aspect you have got a couple of helicopter companies uh...like company 10 has a union and oil companies don't like to deal with unions so...they tend to shy away from people who have unions. Right now...you have got truckers and boats where people are trying to organize unions for the oil field...[but] they have been doing it for about 10 years. I don't think it is going to go over. It is just like I said...if you become unionized well they won't use you" (04101). Another employer emphatically stated, "Oh, God no, [not unions...the company president] would have a heart attack! There have been a couple of attempts to bring in a union over the past few years, but [the company president] fought it. Don't misunderstand me. Me, I'm not anti-union at all. Sometimes they're needed. But our guys are making more than any union. There's no need for it here" (01102).

Table 3.3

Attributes of Jobs Reported by Employers in Four Louisiana Communities

Employment Status	
% reporting that >95% of their workers are full-time	83.0
Number of Respondents	59
Worker Unionization	
% Unionized	0.0
Number of Respondents	55
Skill, Occupation, Wage Rates	
% of companies where more than half of the labor force is unskilled	9.1
Number of Respondents	44
% of companies where more than half of the labor force is skilled or semi-skilled	75.6
Number of Respondents	45
Most Common Occupation	
Other	32.3
Helper / Apprentice	21.0
Tacker (i.e., welder's helper)	12.9
Welder	14.5
Roustabout	14.5
Rigger	4.8
Operator / Machinist	0.0
Number of Respondents	62
Starting Wage	
<$6	5.8
$6-9	88.5
$9-12	3.8
$12 and up	1.9
Number of Respondents	52
Highest Wage	
$6-9	44.9
$10-14	30.6
$15 and up	24.5
Number of Respondents	49
% of companies where all of the labor force is paid minimum wage or above	94.4
Number of Respondents	56

Source: This study.

In terms of the skill level of workers, 75 percent of the companies sampled reported a workforce where the majority of workers are either skilled or semi-skilled. Within these companies, the most common occupation reported by employers ranged in skill level. Table 3.3 shows that the most common occupation employers reported was welding (at a variety of skill levels). Approximately 27 percent of companies reported this as their most common occupation. Companies also employed a relatively large number of unskilled helpers and roustabouts, 21 and 14 percent respectively.

While starting wages for the occupations varied, most companies reported paying well over minimum wage for entry level work. In fact, 89 percent of companies paid between six and nine dollars as the starting wage. However, with respect to the highest wage paid in each occupation, companies reported more variability. Almost 45 percent report that the highest wage falls between six and nine dollars, an additional 31 percent reported 10-14 dollars, and another 24 percent reported paying 15 dollars or more to their highest paid workers. To sum, the prevalence of full-time employment, high wages and skilled labor suggest competitive employment opportunities for workers in onshore companies that are part of the oil industry in southern Louisiana. In the next section, we discuss the particular characteristics of the companies and work conditions that drew migrant workers to these uncommon destinations.

The Pull to Southern Louisiana: Why Migrate?

Although Louisiana has not been a common destination for the foreign born during most of the twentieth century, it has become a destination for immigrants from Mexico since 1990. Propelled into movement by shifting supply conditions in Mexico, migrants primarily went to coastal communities in southern Louisiana searching for work. Here jobs in the oil industry were plentiful and offered reasonable wages because employers faced a serious shortage of skilled labor. Mexican workers were recruited to the area in formal and informal ways. Employers formally recruited workers by traveling to Mexico and arranging their transportation, housing, and legal documents while they lived and worked in the United States. After the first Mexican immigrants arrived, however, employers also offered these workers cash to recruit their friends and family members. New workers then arrived because they heard about well-paying, skilled and semi-skilled jobs in the fabrication centers and shipbuilding companies that supply and service off-shore drilling platforms. Therefore, consistent with studies by Krissman (2000) and others, employer demand for labor provided jobs that were subsequently filled by a supply of immigrants employers actively recruited.

Southern Louisiana employers were attracted to Mexican workers for a number of reasons. Motivated by a shortage of skilled workers in the local labor market, many employers saw Mexican workers as the answer: they had the skills for the jobs employers needed to fill and they had a strong work ethic. Employers also sought out Mexican workers because they were profitable; they comprised an inexpensive workforce that was expendable. This is a necessary attribute for fabrication workers in southern Louisiana. During periods of high productivity, employers seek to hire as many workers as possible, but as the local economy loosens, employers must quickly scale back their workforce either by reducing hours or employees. Employers often targeted Mexican workers as their expendables to avoid affecting local workers

and the community at large.[9] Finally, our interviews revealed that Mexican workers were paid less than their local counterparts. In some cases, this meant lower wages but in others, inequality took the form of contract workers hired without benefits. Therefore, because Mexican workers were seen as expendable, temporary, and cheaper, employers in southern Louisiana increasingly hired them, sometimes placing them at the very top of the hiring queue. Below, we describe employer opinions about their current workforce and highlight the reasons why employers began turning to migrant labor.

Our interviews with employers revealed a general discontent with the quality of the current labor force and the pool of available skilled workers. One recurring theme in our conversations was chronic worker retention problems. For example, almost half (45 percent) of the employers in our sample reported high turnover rates. In part, these high turnover rates were due to the cyclical nature of the oil industry and its strong reliance upon contract labor. The employer/employee contract (both written and unwritten) is very tenuous in this industry. Therefore, neither workers nor their employers feel attached, or a sense of commitment to one another. From our interviews, employers often spoke about a lack of loyalty and commitment on the part of workers. One employer lamented, "It seems like many of our workers now just aren't as serious. It's hard to find people who want to make a commitment" (01104). Another reflected, "They never come to work on time, if they leave for lunch they don't come back, don't call you, don't let you know anything. If you didn't watch them close they would steal you blind" (01106). Finally, one employer believed, "There are plenty of people uh.. they just don't want to work. America is lazy."

Coupled with the problem of worker retention, was the dissatisfaction employers expressed about the work ethic of their newly hired workers. Employers reported that their biggest problems with the workforce included absenteeism (28 percent), lack of work ethic (25 percent), and drug use (18 percent). They discussed these problems openly in our interviews. "They [workers] don't work as hard, they don't care about their work. But the big problem is the drugs. You have to really watch out for the drugs among the young ones" (01103). "The majority of the time they come in and start missing a day a week or half a day a week and they got to go see a lawyer, go see their girlfriend to the doctor, this and that, and it deteriorates to the point to where in the 90 days they are no longer here....That doesn't necessarily have to be a young man that is 18 yrs old, it can be a 60 year old man that doesn't have the experience here specifically or in shipyards specifically that don't know what it is all about" (01107).

Compounding the problems employers faced with their current workers, most employers in our sample agreed that while their demand for workers had increased, the available pool of skilled workers in the local area had declined. Whether this view reflected a real absence of skilled workers in the community or a smaller number of workers willing to put up with the ups and downs of the industry is unclear. What is clear is that employers felt they did not have enough local skilled workers to meet their increasing needs. Table 3.4 shows that most

[9]One employer admitted to initiating a raid by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) to reduce his workforce by approximately one third just before the holiday season, when business is typically very slow and many fabrication yards close down for several weeks. By having the INS raid his workplace, the employer got the INS to do what he did not: to layoff workers. INS intervention insured that the employer would not lose credibility with migrant workers, and as a result, when his company reopened that January, he had more than enough new applicants.

companies (59 percent) reported that their workforce has increased over the last five years. Faced with an increased demand for labor, most employers also reported that it had become more difficult to find qualified workers than in the past. One employer illustrated. "As far as the quality of help when we have to go looking for help...it is difficult to find good people. When we go to the service companies...the quality of their help is very poor" (03120). Another complained, "...there's a labor problem, definitely. There's a labor problem as for as quality people. There's your bottom line....You can get anybody, you get a body, if that's all you want, but for them to be a craftsman or to be concerned about doing a good job...the work ethic...[well] there's the problem. I don't know if that can be solved" (02102). Finally, another employer commented on finding skilled workers. "It varies so much, there have been so many people that have left the industry because of the ups and downs that a lot of the quote-unquote skilled craftsmen are not in the business anymore. Probably overall, the quality of the people [our workers] is down..." (01101).

Table 3.4

Shifts in Labor Force: Employers Opinions
in Four Louisiana Communities

Has Size of Work Force Increased Over Time?	(%)
No	32.2
Yes	59.3
Unsure	8.5
Number of Respondents	59
Timeframe of Change	
<= 5 years	56.2
6-9 years	0.0
10 plus years	1.7
N/A (did not experience increase)	42.1
Number of Respondents	57
% reporting it is more difficult to find qualified workers than in the past	59.0
Number of Respondents	53

Source: This study.

Given the disappointment employers expressed about their current workforce and the local labor pool, it is not surprising that some saw recruiting immigrants workers as the possible answer to their labor problems. However, we see below that not all employers agreed that hiring non-local workers was the solution to their problem. Below we describe employers' attitudes about immigrant employment.

Employer Attitudes about Immigrant Employment

Table 3.5 summarizes employers' attitudes about immigrant labor and its impact on communities. Although qualitative data analysis presented in the next chapter offers a richer discussion of this topic, we scratch the surface here by describing employers' views of

immigrant labor as a good business strategy and their impressions about the community impact of the immigrant presence. Interestingly, we found some employers were very open about discussing their views on immigration, but others were much more cautious about their responses to our questions.

Table 3.5

Employer Opinions about Immigrant Employment in Four Louisiana Communities

% of employers reporting that immigrant labor is a good strategy	
Yes	57.1
No	42.9
Number of Respondents	49
% of employers reporting that immigrant presence has an impact on community	
Yes	48.9
No	51.1
Number of Respondents	45
% of employers reporting specific type of impact (of all employers reporting and impact N=22)	
Economy	50.0
Housing	40.9
Schools	4.5
Other	45.4

Source: This study.

The majority of employers we interviewed agreed that hiring immigrants to meet labor demands was a good business strategy. Table 3.5 shows that slightly more than half of employers viewed using immigrant labor as a good strategy. Given that most employers reported facing a depleted local skilled labor pool, it is not surprising that they would look to some other sources to meet this demand. Many employers who did implement this strategy spoke of their immigrant workforce in very positive terms. They noted that this strategy was cheaper and that Hispanic workers would complete the jobs no one else wanted.

The following comments by employers illustrate their favorable views toward Hispanic workers. "I went ahead and brought in 70 Hispanics...Boy I tell you, it changed like night and day because it is a little more competitive for jobs you know...these guys have a little work ethic, they are hard workers..it really helped the local labor force out because...it just illustrated what other people could do. We saw a reduced turn over, ...we saw lower worker's compensation, [and] we saw a much quicker return to work and less loss time" (01118). They (Hispanic workers) have a better work ethic. A better work ethic and I guess they come from disadvantaged places and they just like to do more...for a lesser wage" (02104).

Employers viewed Mexican workers as particularly favorable to meet labor demand. “We find that the Mexicans hold up real good under those (hot) conditions. It is amazing. I don't know if they have a high tolerance for pain or what...The only problem we have is a lot of them do not speak English” (02121). “We provided strictly labor from Mexico. Yes, it was cheaper. You know it is kind of shame and I am going to go by...what was said to me from supervisors. We found [that] the majority of the time, a worker from Mexico on the boat worked harder and [was] more appreciative. Because of the cost of living down there and the money that could be made up here, they enjoyed it. They loved it” (03131). “The Mexicans that were brought over...they don't take morning breaks or afternoon breaks...they just eat a little for lunch and they almost work all day long. They work circles around the people here. They were happy to get a job and they weren't going to get run off. It took forever to get green cards to get them to work over here. These jobs uh...they say we are taking it out of the people's hands here...but American labor, whether union or other wise, it was not there. It was not there. I saw it with my own eyes” (03111). “We have a lot of industry in South Texas and across the border. [Those people] have very little, so they come over here, and they’ll give you twelve hours in an 8 hour day.” This employer further comments on the quality of the workforce. “They are more efficient, we know what they can do...we know their quality of work. Therefore we get more production, better service, the quality is there and all the way around it’s just excellence of work when you do it that way” (02102).

Despite the strong positive views most employers held about immigrant labor, a significant minority reported negative sentiment. Among those who reported that using immigrant labor was not a good strategy (43 percent), they described the negative effect it had on the U.S. born labor force. For example, one employer stated, “If you are in this [business], you got your local people. Without your local people here and if you don't take care of your local people...you shouldn't have them on the payroll anyways. Why give up a good labor force that you have trained and worked with for so long and...you know how they do it. Why would you bring in someone you don't even know? [If you did] then you [would] cut this person out of a job”(01106). Another agreed. “To me it (hiring Mexican and other Hispanic workers to meet employment needs) seems like a sad strategy...that they have to result to that, that they could not fill those positions with, you know, citizens” (02114). Another reflected on why he did not employ immigrant labor. “We did not hire immigrants. We didn't feel like that they would be a company person as well as someone that was a company person. We felt like the quality would drop off” (01107). Finally, one employer reflects. “Why keep using these foreign laborers if you can train your own American people? You have American people out of work because they don't have this knowledge and skill...why not get them in school? Teach them...[instead of] throwing the damn money away...” (03127).

In between these two positions were some who reported that immigrant labor was a good business strategy but felt it would not be good for the local labor force. One employer noted: “Its good and its not good. Its good in the aspect that you need the workers, you need people to do the work, and the foreign workers are excellent workers. They come here to work, the only problem with them is getting them to stop and take breaks...[But] it is not good because its not local people who are at work” (02110).

This ambivalence about immigrant workers is reflected in employers’ impressions about whether and how immigrants affected the local community. About half of our employers reported that immigrants did affect the local community, while the other half reported no visible consequences to the community. Many reporting no impact on the community reasoned that

because immigrant workers were housed either on job sites or away from the center of communities, locals did not notice them and they had little local influence. Of those reporting some type of community impact as a result of the immigrant presence, the majority acknowledged economic positive effects. For example, many discussed a rise in small businesses that catered to specific immigrant populations.

A substantial number of employers noted an influence on the housing market. Housing became a hotly contested issue in one community because employers were housing immigrant workers on their commercial property. This elicited strong community reaction. One employer recalls, "Yeah, the community was having problems with all the Mexicans coming in and living in this shipyards. You know, [they were living] just in trailers...maybe 20 in a trailer" (02106).

Finally, respondents mentioned other impacts from immigration in their communities. Many of these responses described negative impacts. For example, some employers expressed concern about how immigrant labor would threaten and harm local labor. Others simply stated that the increase in immigrants in their community brought about an increase in visibly undesirable behavior like "walking the streets" and crime. One employer noted..."We are having more problems on the street with them [immigrants]...alcohol, drugs, and what have you" (02103). Another points out the tensions resulting from presence of foreigners. "The biggest problem...we see is the people don't work 24 hours around the day. They have time off and the lack things to do and places to go. Their lack of communication skills...does create a lot of problems in the community...tensions and spitefulness. Some local people think the foreigners coming in and taking American jobs" (02110).

In sum, most employers reported offering well-paying jobs with generous benefit packages. They also spoke of the increased demand for labor and the short-supply of local workers. Moreover, many were unhappy with the morale and work ethic of their current labor force. As a result, many employers sought out immigrants to meet their labor needs. But despite the fact that local communities had little experience incorporating immigrants, few residents expressed strong objections to migrants. In the next chapter, we discuss in more detail how these newcomers were received into the different communities.

CHAPTER 4

The Economic Incorporation of Immigrants in Southern Louisiana

Introduction

In this chapter, we analyze data collected from employers, community leaders, foreign born workers, and other residents in the late 1990s to describe how new immigrants first incorporate in these communities. Our analysis examines variations in the economic incorporation of immigrants by community of residence, and it portrays these differences as the different faces that incorporation takes early on in a receiving community's history of migration. By doing so, we argue that emerging foreign born populations in nontraditional U.S. destinations offer us a new venue in which to observe the assimilation process, beginning at its earliest point.

In many ways, the communities were similar in the late 1990s. The oil industry represented the key economic activity in all communities, and as a result, they shared a similar profile with respect to labor supply and demand. The communities also shared similar demographic profiles. Despite the similarities, however, immigrant incorporation differs dramatically across the local economies. Drawing from prior studies on the segmented assimilation of U.S. immigrants, we offer a framework for understanding how immigrants incorporate in these communities, and use it as a guide to our discussion about the early stages of economic incorporation of immigrants in the communities.

Our key findings suggest that immigrants initially incorporate in different ways, and at different rates, into local economies, and that observed heterogeneity in labor market and employment conditions vary by destination community. Together, the findings illustrate considerable segmentation in the early process of the economic incorporation of immigrants, adding to a newly emerging social science literature on the topic. Unlike prior studies, however, this chapter compares the initial migrant experience in new destinations, and by doing so, it highlights the complicated, contradictory, and at times, paradoxical, paths that immigrant incorporation takes. We begin below by describing the process of economic integration of these migrants and how it differed by community of reception. Consistent with ideas developed by Portes and Rumbaut (2001), we show how contextual factors explain observed differences in the economic assimilation of immigrants in these southern Louisiana communities.

Different Forms of Immigrant Economic Incorporation

As many researchers have shown, the process of immigrant incorporation varies widely and largely depends on the characteristics of the arriving immigrant group and the context within which the immigrant group is received. In one part of their new book, Portes and Rumbaut (2001) describe how immigrant assimilation may be dramatically different for the same group of immigrants entering different social environments. In contrast to the idea that assimilation is a linear process where immigrant groups become more incorporated into the American mainstream as time progresses, the assimilation process of immigrants is segmented, not linear, and varies with the human capital brought by the group of newcomers and with the context of the receiving community.

Portes and Rumbaut (2001) describe three contextual factors that shape the process by which immigrants are incorporated into a particular community: government policies, societal reception of newcomers, and existing ethnic communities. Governmental policies in place at the time of migration shape the newcomers experience and affect the ability to use human capital

and skills. According to Portes and Rumbaut (2001), governmental policies may exclude, passively accept, or actively encourage immigration. If immigrant groups are not allowed to legally enter the United States, then they will not be offered any form of protection or assistance by the government and may be forced into an underground economy. In contrast, policies emphasizing passive acceptance may legally admit immigrants but do nothing to assist newcomers with incorporation. A final governmental policy, active encouragement, not only legally admits immigrants, but actively encourages migration of a particular group and provides a variety of adaptation resources. This occurs when the receiving country has a shortage of professional workers or when a particular group of immigrants are classified as refugees and participate in a government resettlement program. In both cases, the group is given special consideration and assistance that facilitates adaptation and possible upward mobility.

A second contextual factor affecting the economic and social incorporation of immigrant groups is the host community and its reception of newcomers. This refers to the extent to which newcomers are accepted by community members and employers. It affects the amount and quality of interaction between residents and newcomers and the willingness of the local community to provide valuable incorporation assistance (e.g., social services such as assistance with housing, transportation, language, employment, etc.). Portes and Rumbaut (2001) point out that newcomers who are most similar to the community members are most likely to be favorably received, whereas those differing in appearance based on race/ethnicity, class, or some other attribute face greater barriers.

Finally, the extent to which a co-ethnic community has been previously established in the host community affects the newcomer's experience. Immigrants entering a community with well-established co-ethnic networks benefit by receiving invaluable assistance in finding jobs, housing, transportation, food and other immediate needs. Without a number of compatriots residing in the host community, migrants must often tackle their foreign community alone and often have more difficulty incorporating into the community.

All three modes of incorporation play a role in shaping the immigrant experiences in Houma, Morgan City, and New Iberia[10]. We utilize the framework provided by Portes and Rumbaut (2001) to describe how these three factors led to differences in the economic and social assimilation despite striking similarities in the economic development and human capital of newly arrived immigrants in the three communities. Table 4.0 places our southern Louisiana communities into Portes and Rumbaut's framework by describing the modes of incorporation of immigrant groups in each of the communities. We refer to this table to help us describe the economic and social incorporation of the Hispanic newcomers in Houma, Morgan City, and New Iberia.

Immigrant Attributes

In the following section, we rely on data from conversations with employers, community leaders, and Hispanic workers to explain how varying contextual factors shaped immigrant incorporation. Employers, community reception, and co-ethnic networks all played key roles in the incorporation of the newcomers to southern Louisiana. Below we describe the characteristics of the immigrants themselves and then we examine the varying community contexts.

[10]Our interviews with employers in Port Fourchon suggested little or no hiring of immigrant workers. Therefore, we do not discuss immigrant assimilation in the community. See Appendix 1.6 for a full description of the Port and its activities.

Table 4.0

Modes of Immigrant Incorporation in Two Communities in Southern Louisiana, 1999

Community	Mode of Incorporation		
	Government	Societal	Co-Ethnic
Morgan City	Neutral	Prejudicial	Working class; Concentrated
Houma	Favorable-neutral	Neutral-prejudicial	Working class; Concentrated
New Iberia	Favorable	Favorable	Working class; Concentrated

Source: Portes and Rumbaut (2001).

Human Capital. Given similarities in the economic makeup of the communities – their heavy reliance on the oil industry and demand for blue collar labor – we expected to observe similarity in the economic incorporation of immigrants. Consistent with this idea was the expectation that immigrant workers in the communities would not differ in their stock of human capital. In fact, from our immigrant interviews, we learned that most immigrant workers in Houma and Morgan City were born in Mexico. Unlike recent studies suggesting that Mexican workers are settling in new U.S. destinations because they are searching for areas where their entire family may live, the substantial majority of our sample were men who migrated without their families. However, most men had families (wives, children, and parents) living in Mexico. They reported maintaining strong connections to their origins – emotionally, financially, and socially. Most sent money home to their families and returned frequently to visit. Many expressed a strong desire to return permanently to Mexico once they had improved their financial well-being. In short, workers in both communities maintained their social and economic attachments to Mexico through remittances, frequent return trips, and other forms of communication. Laotian immigrants in New Iberia, on the other hand, were likely to have come to Louisiana with their families intact. In fact, many had extended families as well.

With respect to educational and work experience, most workers across communities had only a few years of formal schooling. Some reported experience with welding and other jobs found in the oil industry before arriving in southern Louisiana. Although this job experience was acquired in Mexico or Texas in the past, on the whole most workers did not have papers certifying their welding or other work experience. The result was that they were hired as assistants to welders or as other semi-skilled laborers. Immigrants without any prior experience in welding or oil-related jobs typically began as helpers. Below, we discuss our findings regarding English language ability and its effect on early immigrant incorporation.

English Language Ability. Despite studies that demonstrate that English language ability is critical to immigrant upward mobility and successful assimilation, few have considered the role that English language ability plays in the early incorporation process. Of importance is

whether language ability (or lack thereof) impedes initial employment outcomes in new destination areas, and once employed, how language may affect performance evaluations and promotions. In theory, language should be less important early in the process of incorporation, especially if immigrants arrive seeking work where the demand for labor is especially strong.

In our guided conversations, immigrants described how language matters for their early success in obtaining employment. These findings suggest that English language ability is important, but it is not critical for obtaining initial employment. Three key factors reduced the value of having English for immigrant workers. First, immigrant worker entered at a time when employers in Southern Louisiana were facing a severe labor shortage. Simply put, employers were desperate to fill their vacant positions so they could meet demand. Second, Mexican workers were skilled in the occupational positions employers were seeking to fill, and for employers, having skilled immigrant workers was important compensated for their limited competency in English. Furthermore, local employers believed that these workers were dedicated, hardworking people, and because of these beliefs, they found ways to compensate for language deficits.

One worker describes this point vividly, "...most Latinos put more salsa to their tacos, what I mean is that sometimes, they work even harder than Americans. Americans want to be paid well, they want their breaks, and if they don't get them they complain. Blacks have learned from the Americans and do the same. He spends his time talking and expects to be paid. If they tell the Latino what needs to be done and in what amount of time it has to be done, we will finish it even if we cannot eat lunch or take a break. Our work is our credential in this country, and since we want to be accepted by this society, we are going to work as many hours as necessary. This is the reason why we are sometimes exploited, we are not paid the same wages as Americans" (02306). Another worker explains, "[the Americans in the company]... do not speak Spanish at all but I understand them. I know how to do the job, what tools I need, and that is what they care about. I worked at Company 1 for 14 years in Mexico and I know how to do the job" (02317).

Another reason English language ability became less essential once workers were employed was because they found innovative ways to compensate for language deficits. Some employers provided translators, although others told us they were not often available. Therefore, many of the bilingual workers would step in as impromptu translators.

Many workers shared stories about how they became a translator or how other friends did so, " If we receive a paper in English and we don't understand it, you go to one of our friends who speak English and he helps us" (02309). When asked if it was necessary to speak English on the job, one worker responded, "No. As I told you before, some of us came from Texas and spoke English, but it was not required. We understood each other well. If there was a problem, they called and I would help...my foremen and my bosses did not speak Spanish. I told them what the Mexicans were saying. I worked as interpreter when we had a meeting, and I was very glad that I could help" (02315). As one worker demonstrates, another way bilingual workers served as translators was by helping fellow Spanish speakers complete the application and testing process, "...I had to go everywhere to translate...when they were going to hire a new worker I had to go with him when he was going to take the welding test, and then I had to go with him to orientation" (03305).

Using signs to convey important messages was another innovative way Spanish speaking workers communicated. One worker demonstrates, "We all usually joke around, and although I do not speak English, I try to join in using signs" (02317). Another workers speaks of using

signs to communicate at work, "After a year I had already learned how to speak English. At the beginning they would ask me for a hammer and I would give them a piece of wood because I could not understand them. I learned how to drive some of the machines but I could not understand the foreman, we used signs" (02315).

Finally, our interviews suggested that American workers actually taught Hispanic workers English and these workers would, in turn, teach American workers Spanish. While this was a method workers used for communication it inadvertently promoted ties and friendships among fellow workers. When asked if Americans and Mexicans got along well at work, one immigrant worker responded, "Yes, some Americans are racists but others are not. The ones who are not racists try to learn a little Spanish. If an American works with a Latino, the American tries to help him to speak a little English and he teaches him the names of the tools he needs to use a t work. If the American is a racist, he goes to the foreman and asks him to give him another worker because he does not want to bother with him. They bring another person who is not a racist and he teaches us some English and we teach him some Spanish" Later in the interview the same respondent spoke of learning the English language at work, "I know only about a 30% of English and I learned it at work, working side by side with Americans. They don't speak Spanish so we have to learn some English" (03303).

While workers were able to secure employment without English, and once employed were able to find effective means of communication, our interviews suggested that English language ability did impede the upward progress of immigrant workers. Most workers reported the impossibility of promotion without command of the English language. When asked if he thought he could be promoted one worker responded, "No, because some of the people who came with me and are still working there haven't moved up, they are doing the same job. Now I am working only with Americans, I understand a little English, so they tell me what to do in English. My friends don't understand English at all, so they are in the same position that they were when they first came here" (03304). Another revealed, "There are some good positions available sometimes, but you have to speak English" (03310).

Furthermore, not having good English skills left workers vulnerable to exploitation, more so in some communities versus others. For example, in one community Spanish speaking workers experienced difficulty negotiating worker compensation, pay, housing and general living conditions. We return to this point later in the report.

To sum, it was surprisingly easy for immigrants arriving in these new destinations to secure employment without English. Furthermore, they compensated on the job in various innovative ways: using sign, learning the few words they need to learn, having a bilingual supervisor or co-worker, learning English from native workers. Therefore, at least in the early assimilation process language is not so much of a barrier that immigrants cannot find employment. However, not having English limits upward mobility and impedes upon freedoms that we take for granted, both of which would affect later assimilation.

On the whole, our interview data suggest no community differences in the human capital immigrant workers presented to their employers. Despite these similar profiles with respect to immigrant characteristics, we found significant community differences in the economic experiences of migrants across community. Differences in communities' contexts of reception, we argue, ultimately led to different incorporation profiles for the groups of immigrants. Below, we outline these important community differences.

Community Context

Houma: Employers as the Dominant Force. The methods employers used to attract Hispanic workers to Houma directly influenced the incorporation outcomes of the newcomers. Employers tended to attract Hispanic workers by relying on an established system of recruitment and labor contracting that occurred outside of the firm. For example, one shipbuilding company relied exclusively on a separate contracting agency to provide labor, requesting only Hispanic workers. From another company making offshore platforms, the president told us that the year before he had employed "forty [Hispanic] workers and they were all contract workers" (03107). An official at a third company described the local Hispanic population as "mainly Mexicans in the contract labor force" (03103).

The use of contract labor agencies to find immigrant workers was an important contextual factor that shaped the way Latino workers were incorporated into the community and had far-reaching implications for the working conditions of these immigrants. In Houma, labor contractors recruited Hispanic workers by traveling to Mexico, gathering workers, completing all legal paperwork for H2B visas, and returning to Houma with the workers. As one worker that we interviewed told us, "Some contractors ... placed an ad in the newspaper in Tampico, they interviewed me, and I came here with them" (03304). Hispanic workers reported that recruiters promised them a certain number of work hours, a set pay scale, and room and board.

To some extent, immigrant workers reported receiving these benefits. One reported, "You need to make enough money to invest in Mexico and then you can live very comfortable without having to come back here to work. It is worth the sacrifice of coming here to work and get that money" (03306). Benefits were even greater, however, for employers. "We tried all kinds of different systems looking for workers and we found that they had ...pretty much the skills we wanted. The only problem that we had was a language barrier which we worked out pretty well but...and we spent 27 months trying to see how we could get them into the country to help us because we lost probably about 20 million dollars worth of revenue by not having them (03121).[11]

An important correlate of this system of hiring foreign-born workers was that immigrant housing was directly linked to the employer. As part of their agreement with employers, Mexican workers were required to live in company trailers on the job site. Payments for room and board were excessive and usually extracted from workers paychecks each week.[12] Each trailer contained bedrooms and bathrooms, but never a kitchen. "Sixteen persons to a trailer, that has four rooms...there are four persons to a room and...two bathrooms. Eight of us have to use one bathroom and that is not enough bathrooms for eight persons" (03310b). Workers were also charged for food they reported to be inadequate, often forcing workers not only to pay for on-site food but then to purchase supplemental meals elsewhere. "We have very little food, sometimes

[11]Immediately before collecting data for this project, the state of Louisiana petitioned the U.S. government for H2B visas on behalf of several Houma employers. This request was part of a growing demand for H2B visas in the 1990s. By 1999, there were 35,815 H2B visas, up from 17,754 which was the total in 1990 (www.ins.gov).

[12]Immigrant workers reported that employers charged $350 a month per person, a figure that seems particularly high given their housing conditions. With 16 people in one trailer, employer could garner as much as $5,600 per month.

you are still hungry after you eat. Sometimes the chicken is not well cooked and smells rotten" (03310a). The mandatory housing arrangement meant that employers had a large degree of control over their Hispanic work force. "We are at their mercy, we cannot ask for anything or say anything because they consider it an act of rebellion" (03310b).

Other conditions of contract employment affected the social and economic incorporation of workers. First, because workers signed contracts that bound them to a specific employer for a given amount of time, they were legally obliged to remain with their employer even if they did not make the money they were promised. Second, as a special work force, these workers were required to work without breaks, whereas locals were given at least two 15 minutes breaks through the work day. Third, they were often allocated to the dirtiest, least desirable jobs, but not always offered overtime hours. "I can see that there is discrimination because the Mexicans get the dirtiest and hardest jobs, but we came here to work. It doesn't bother me because I was used to even tougher jobs, but it really bothers me that when it comes to working overtime, they give Americans those hours first, and we only get them if there are some left" (03309). Finally, Mexican workers reported that the contract company held their passports and would not return them on request. This practice made it difficult, if not impossible, for workers to move freely away from the work sites, and many resented it. "I don't know why they do that. The passport is personal," were words that echoed the feelings of many (03310a).

One consequence was that the contract labor system became a source of entrapment and isolation for the workers, operating against any true social or community incorporation or chances for upward mobility of the newly arriving immigrants. Because housing was physically, legally, and geographically attached to the employer, workers were segregated from the existing community. They also had very limited autonomy, while employer control over workers was maximized. They were unable to seek out alternative employment or housing, and as a consequence, they were relatively invisible to most community residents. As the company president we cited above told us, "they [immigrants] were not out buying clothing, entertainment dollars and uh..eating out so ...[their impact on the local economy was] minimal" (03107).

In short, the contract labor system had a direct effect on immigrant workers' economic autonomy and well-being. As we will see, compared to their counterparts in Morgan City, immigrant workers in Houma were much less satisfied with their housing or employment conditions and had considerably less autonomy to affect change in their current conditions. As a result, Hispanic workers in Houma reported a number of grievances. Having been rented out to secondary employers who were insulated from responsibility for labor conditions, immigrant workers had a number of complaints. These included "Company Z makes the decisions about feeding us poorly, having us crowded in those trailers but they won't take the responsibility. Most of the bosses are Americans, they don't want to be involved in a racism problem, so they have this man (a Mexican foreman) as liaison between them and the workers" (03304).

The systemic barriers between workers and those who used their labor and between workers and the local community lent itself to some interesting local misreadings of the immigrant experience. While the workers felt that they were enduring hardship for the sake of their families in Mexico and for the sake of their futures, employers and local residents tended to view immigrants as basking in good fortune. A newspaper editor in the area said of the immigrant workers, "I mean they were loving it cause hell they were ... making $3 or $4 an hour at home and they come over here and make $16 an hour plus over time. They are sending back money...they are getting rich" (03215). In contrast to the grievances many workers voiced to our interviewers, an employer presented a sunny view of migrants. "They are happy with it [their

living situation]. They are away from their family and all they want to do is work...They want to work, want to work all the time" (03121).

Because Mexican workers spent most of their time on the job, and lived separate from the rest of the community, few residents reported feeling threatened in any way as a result of the newcomers. Most reported that levels of crime in the area were low and that these had not increased noticeably with the arrival of immigrant workers. When asked whether increased immigration had affected crime rates in the area, a law enforcement official replied, "I haven't noticed anything ... The crime uh...our crime rate is pretty much stabilized. Our violent crime is pretty much down to a small, small percent" (03225). The newspaper editor gave similar views: "it wasn't like there was a big increase in crime because they started importing all these blue collar workers ... It wasn't anything like that. And actually a lot of the employers you talked to said these guys are working their buts off. I wish I had 100% of my work force like this, you know" (03215).

The positive views of immigrants held by local residents contrasted sharply with the negative experiences reported by the immigrants themselves. If residents in the region negatively viewed the immigrant labor system, they were suspicious that immigrants were providing cheap labor and, as a result, drive down the wages of (or take jobs away from) U.S. born residents in the region. But there appeared to be an element of self-contradiction in these fears. On the one hand, many we spoke with agreed with the chamber of commerce official who told us that Mexicans had been brought in because "There was no more work force. We were down to under three percent unemployment. That was because the oil industry had perked up" (03206). On the other hand, however, every fact that Mexicans were perceived as such hard, eager workers led many locals to believe that immigrants threatened the job opportunities of the U.S. born. A white collar professional and community leader complained that "I think it is ludicrous that we deny our workers the benefits of the free enterprise system..., bring in foreign labor and so forth and they have done this on [numerous] occasions...foreign labor [keeps] local wages down" (03222).

Therefore, we describe Houma as a neutral-to-prejudicial immigrant receiving context (see Table 4.0). Other than stereotyped opinions of Mexicans as people who love to work and would do so for low wages, Houma residents had few strong opinions about Mexican workers. The contract labor system, segregated housing, and few pre-existing immigration problems in the community meant little active engagement with the new arrivals, either in the form of strong opposition or support. And although community-based services targeted toward newcomers may help ease transition (e.g., English language classes, referrals with housing and transportation, church services), the community offered few such services. Neither migrants nor employers reported knowledge of Spanish-speaking church services, English language classes, or stores in the area that assisted immigrants. No doubt, the separation and isolation of these workers from the local community explains part of the limited knowledge. But without these services, or knowledge of them, immigrants had no mechanism through which they could be introduced to the community and they were left to fend for themselves.

In theory, existing co-ethnic networks provide some of the same incorporation benefits that community groups provide. If there is an established network of compatriots in the receiving community, newcomers may benefit because members of the network provide food, housing, information, jobs, or other forms of assistance that facilitate successful incorporation. A strong co-ethnic community may therefore provide a buffer and a sense of protection for the arriving newcomers. However, with the system of contract labor in place, co-ethnic networks

were limited. Most migrants did not know anyone in Houma until after they arrived, and newcomers could not easily contact existing co-ethnic network ties in the community.

In sum, the system of contract labor was the dominant force shaping the economic and social incorporation of immigrant workers in Houma. Without the protection provided by a co-ethnic community or local community service agencies, Hispanic workers were left to fend for themselves. The result was a group of disenfranchised workers suffering mistreatment at the hands of employers, with no real opportunities to socially and economically incorporate into their new receiving community.

Morgan City: How Community Reception and Co-Ethnic Networks Mediate. The methods employers used to recruit and employ Mexican workers directly affects immigrant incorporation. Our conversations revealed that the methods used by employers in Morgan City were significantly different from those in other communities. They used a loosely structured system of recruitment, relying on co-ethnic network ties either by providing incentives to workers already employed or by contacting an immigrant activist who had made her reputation by solving migrant problems in the community. Moreover, newly arrived immigrants in Morgan City did not live in housing provided by employers. These experiences emerged in large part because of the city's past history of recruiting foreign laborers, a point we begin with below.

Despite the proximity of Houma to Morgan City, and the former's success in formally recruiting many legal immigrants, Morgan City employers did not follow this same recruitment path in the 1990s. Not one employer reportedly sought H2B visas to obtain immigrant laborers. However, many told us about one employer's experience when he announced to the community he would provide housing for immigrant workers on the job site. His public declaration of the labor shortage problem and plan to hire and house migrant workers on his commercial property produced forceful objections by community members, who remembered the transient labor camps in Morgan City set up in the 1970s and early 1980s, when many U.S. born workers from distant states were recruited to meet the industry's demand for labor. One employer described how, in those days, offshore work in the oil industry was a magnet for those seeking invisibility: "These guys could come in here...get on a boat, offshore, and stay out there for three or four months, come into town and go get drunk, get in a fight or something and get put in jail, then they [would] check their history and they were wanted all over." Therefore, "at one time, per capita, Morgan City had more arrests than any city in the United States (02121)." A city official explained that "back in the 1970s when the labor camps were common here...we had one fellow wanted for murder who was arrested here, he had...been to the soup kitchens and...around people who recognized him. Once he got arrested, people said, "wait a minute, this guy was walking amongst us." Then, he explained, "there was a real brutal murder in one of the camps where a guy was beat with a concrete brick to death and set on fire," and another "guy...who had lived in the labor camp here, had abducted three kids on different occasions and...none of the three of them has ever been found" (02222).

Because of the murders and abductions that took place during this earlier period, community members developed deep suspicions of outsiders and tended to associate them with criminal activity. As a consequence, in the late 1980s the community passed a zoning ordinance that stated labor camps may not be located within city limits. The issue of non-local labor temporarily receded into the background during this period because of the domestic oil industry bust by the mid 1980s. In addition, as the volatility of the oil economy became more apparent, jobs in this field became less attractive to many Louisianans. With respect to jobs tied to oil

production, one employer in a shipbuilding business in Morgan City observed that "you can make a great deal of money doing this for a few months, but then you are likely to find yourself out of a job all of a sudden" (02117). Workers and employers alike agreed that many onshore blue collar occupations involving ship repair and the building of offshore platforms were physically difficult, dirty, and dangerous. Since these occupations also required technical skills, there were relatively few local workers prepared to enter them as labor demand increased once again in the early 1990s.

As a result, in the mid-1990s employers in Morgan City faced a severe labor shortage. Made public by the employer who wanted to house immigrant laborers after an unsuccessful search for skilled labor in the United States, the strong demand for labor was described by many we interviewed. One Louisiana government representative said of this employer: "his [the employer's] problem was that he was getting contracts that he just couldn't fill. It wasn't because he couldn't get the material or didn't have the space in the yard. It was because he couldn't get the skilled workers to perform the tasks necessary to fulfill his contracts. In desperation, he went and recruited and he found a source in South Texas" (02219). Having brought foreign workers to the area, he needed to house them. One immigrant worker remembered how the "company bought us [to live in] trailers and we stayed there," but "there was a problem and the owner moved us to _____, where we live now" (02315).[13]

The controversy over immigrant housing lasted several months, giving other residents time to articulate xenophobic attitudes. Some associated the newcomers with the criminal activity of earlier waves of transient labor. One local political figure told us about a local group that usually opposes changes in the community because "its fear, at least it is what they reported to me, was that we were going to put all these people in close proximity to the general population of Morgan City...I mean, I had one lady who was extremely vocal in this group tell me that she would not let her children play outside because of these people [the Mexican immigrants]. They were going to come and rape and kill her children is what she told me. I thought it was horrible that she made that judgment about these people" (02219).

The workers we interviewed described the prejudice held by Morgan City residents. Asked about the relationship between Americans and Latinos, one worker observed, "I guess they get along okay, although the Americans don't like the Latinos ... For example, my next door neighbor turns her back to me when she sees me" (02319). Prejudicial attitudes also appeared as residents articulated their opposition against the housing proposal. A local informant described the situation this way. "He [the employer of the immigrants] was not too far from a residential area..., in fact, right across the railroad track. That is the _____ area and most of the opposition came from that community. They didn't want that element living at their back door" (02121).

Although those favoring housing workers on the job site suggested that the ordinance be rewritten to allow trailers to remain but add certain protections for the workers, in the end community members rejected this amendment, unable to disassociate their previously established fears of outsiders from employer's current demand for labor. After this, the employer was forced to remove his trailers from the job site to a small community on the outskirts of Morgan City and community members were appeased.

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[13]The first author witnessed the company's removal of the mobile homes from its job site, several days after the community's declared the company was in violation of the zoning ordinance.

Since that time, they have not publicly expressed concerns about immigrant workers. More and more immigrants established residence in a small barrio outside the city limits, as the demand for blue collar labor continued and employers' preferences for immigrants grew. Many employers believed that Mexican workers were highly skilled, motivated, and comparatively inexpensive laborers. Increasingly, these employers began to look to the Texas-Mexican border to find workers. As one of the employers explained, "... the demand in the industry is so high that we haven't found local people. We couldn't get the black and white locals to do the work and like most other people around here we had to concentrate heavier on foreigners." Those foreigners, he went on, were chiefly recruited in El Paso, on the Texas-Mexico border (02113). Furthermore, the existence of a Mexican settlement outside of Morgan City meant that potential immigrants learned of these employment opportunities through relatives and friends already working in this small city of Louisiana. One worker gave a fairly typical explanation of how he found work in Morgan City. "I was in Houston and I knew about this job in Louisiana, but I did not know anybody here. This friend brought me over here and now I have a job that pays me very well" (02305).

As in Houma, the Mexican residential settlement was first and foremost a labor settlement. "All we do is work, eat, and sleep," sighed one worker, "there is nothing to do for entertainment" (02317). Still, growth of a residential area separate from the workplace made the emergence of a multi-dimensional immigrant community possible in Morgan City. Although the majority of Latino immigrants were single men, some families moved to Morgan City. One resident of a trailer park in the small Mexican neighborhood explained that she and her four children had followed her husband to Louisiana. "My husband came first, he was here for a month, a month and a half. He started working and when he saw that he was doing all right he brought us. He called me and told me to get ready to come here" (02314).

Placing housing away from the job site affected immigrant incorporation in Morgan City in another important way. It reduced employer's control over workers, and with their autonomy, immigrants (often with the help of their co-ethnic network ties) moved from one employer to another. One part-owner and manager of a labor contracting company with a predominately Mexican work force boasted to us. "I have taken over 100 people from [another local company]...because they were making $8.50 per hour and over here they make $15-$18 per hour" (02116). Moreover, the housing controversy ironically publicized the use of immigrant workers to those employers that had not yet hired them. As one person explained, "I think there were some [employers] that were sensitive to...being accused of being anti-Mexican and then made an outreach to the Mexican community to make sure that there was no continuing allegation of that" (022222).

Although immigrant workers in Morgan City were certainly isolated in a particular geographic space rather than living dispersed within the community, they were considerably less isolated than their counterparts in Houma. As a result, they were more aware of the surrounding community and what it had to offer. Unlike in Houma, workers in Morgan City knew about and attended English language courses taught at a local school, they often attended church services and events, and they regularly gathered to play soccer at a public gym.

One church, in particular, began to cater to the needs of the immigrant population because of the efforts of one long-time Morgan City resident (we will call her Mary), who was a loyal church member and fluent in Spanish. She made it her mission to reach out and assist newly arrived immigrants, and therefore played a vital role in facilitating the economic and social incorporation of the newcomers. She did this in several ways. First, she translated

religious services into Spanish for the immigrant population. Together with the church, she provided a weekly meal and gathering place for the Spanish speaking population as well as other types of assistance. She helped newcomers find housing, food, and transportation. She assisted with grocery shopping, laundry services, and would even accompany sick workers to their doctor whenever necessary.

Over time, when local employers heard that Mary had contacts with large numbers of immigrants in the community, they began to contact her to recruit workers. Therefore, in addition to facilitating their social incorporation, she began a critical link between the Latino community and local employers in the incorporation process. She would help place workers in jobs, accompany them to the workplace to fill out paperwork, and periodically stop by to check on "her boys."

In effect, the community (its members and institutions) insured the successful incorporation of newly arrived Mexican workers. By insuring that employers did not control migrant newcomers, workers had alternatives and autonomy over their lives. If they were not happy with their current conditions, they could rely on existing community support to seek out alternatives.

Established co-ethnic networks also provided another layer of protection for the newcomers. Many Mexican workers we interviewed came to Morgan City because they had family and friends living in the community and were told of promising job opportunities in the oil industry. Some had arranged for the employment of their family and friends before they arrived. Rather than depend on employers, workers in Morgan City relied on their networks to provide information and assistance with housing, transportation, employment, food, and other necessities. In fact, many newcomers initially shared housing with previously established friends or family.

Therefore, in Morgan City, there was no one dominant force shaping the economic incorporation outcomes of immigrants. All three factors – employers, community reception, and co-ethnic networks – interacted to facilitate the incorporation of newcomers. Because immigrant workers relied on both community and co-ethnic networks for support, they were not bound to employers. Nor were immigrant workers bound to live in on-site company housing. All of these factors increased worker autonomy and feelings of well-being. Workers in Morgan City reported that they were satisfied with their current housing and employment situation. They were happy to live in the community, saying it was a peaceful and pleasant place to live. Overall, Morgan City workers were much happier and more content than their counterparts in Houma, although the two sets of workers were providing similar services to their employers.

New Iberia: Refugee Resettlement. New Iberia employers were distinct from those in Morgan City and Houma in that they were much less likely to seek out Hispanic workers to meet their labor demands. In fact, New Iberia did not face the severe labor shortages described by Houma and Morgan City employers. One reason for fewer complaints about adequate labor supply was that employers in New Iberia already had an existing pool of foreign born labor, i.e. Laotians. Below, we describe in more detail the structure of the oil industry in New Iberia, employer's labor needs, and their use of foreign born labor.

New Iberia has a unique history with foreign born populations. Unlike the other three study areas, its predominant foreign born group is composed mainly of Laotians. For many reasons, this group experienced vastly different assimilation processes and outcomes than did Hispanic workers in Houma and Morgan City. Below we describe the emergence of the Laotian

community in New Iberia and how differing community contexts of reception shaped the process of incorporation.

Laotian refugees began arriving in Louisiana in the early 1980s and resettlement workers decided to place them in New Iberia for a number of reasons. First, New Iberia was located close to the resettlement program office. This close proximity, they reasoned, would facilitate successful incorporation by enabling resettlement workers and incoming Laotians to maintain daily contact. Second, at the time when Laotians first arrived, the oil industry was booming and employers were seeking out workers. The director of migration services described the events in this way. "Laotians were being lured here by...what used to be called the comprehensive employment training act...the old SETA training program. Under this comprehensive employment training act...the oil industry decided that they...did not have enough trained welders and fitters for that particular industry. So...company 1 started. It began...[with] this government money to train people as welders...most of the Laotians that were coming at that time were ex-military people. They had never really held a job. All they were trained to do...was [to be] soldiers. So they felt this was like a major opportunity for them to learn...to learn a skill. They began moving here to take advantage of this training and at one point the influx was so great that company 1 was even having to rent houses and stack people in them, and because we were a refugee resettlement agency and they were still newly arrived into the country, we had to serve these people. We kind of got together with company 1 and our office was actually in the training program for a while. We had an office in New Iberia as well. We helped get these people...settled so that they could concentrate on the training. As they were trained they went right to work and then they sent for their families...it just kind of snowballed from there" (01216).

Once Laotians were trained they were immediately offered employment. By the time the oil industry fell apart in the early 1980s, a significant Laotian community had been established in New Iberia. In fact, New Iberia had become a "major site in the country for Laotian refugees..." (01216). Fortunately, Laotian workers who were displaced by the oil industry's downfall found employment in the textiles industry. More recently, Laotians have continued to diversify. One community leader observes, "Most of them...[have] their own business too...[they work in] the crabbing industry and shrimping industry...they open their own businesses ..." (01217).

All three contextual dimensions – government policies, a co-ethnic community, and societal acceptance – influenced the incorporation of Laotian immigrants in New Iberia, and but their experience differed dramatically from their foreign-born counterparts in Morgan City and Houma. Unlike those workers, government policies played a large role in shaping the experiences of Laotian immigrants to New Iberia. As refugees, Laotians were offered a full range of resettlement services from the federal government. The director of migration services described the incorporation assistance they provided to Laotian refugees. "We prepare for their arrival; we pick them up at the airport. They come with little more than the clothes on their back. We...provide initial housing set up for the first month and...from there we do anything anyone who is moving into a new community would have to do...enroll the children in school and in that case they have to get social security cards...find employment for the adults...assist the adults in acquiring...English should they not have that language capability. [We also]...assist them in learning how to...shop and budget their money once they do become employed. Basically it is focused on early self sufficiency and employment for the adults. Anything that would facilitate the adults going to work we would assist them with..." (01216).

This government assistance, therefore, actively encouraged Laotians to successfully resettle in New Iberia. As a result, government refugee policy was an important contextual factor that helped facilitate Laotians to successful incorporate into their new community. However, it also had important implications for the development of a multidimensional co-ethnic community.

In contrast to their Latino counterparts in Morgan City and Houma, Laotians were able to build a strong co-ethnic community early in their incorporation process in New Iberia. With assistance from the federal resettlement program, Laotians rapidly built a strong ethnic community that developed a vested interest in establishing roots in New Iberia. Many arrived with their entire families, or were reunited with their relatives soon after their arrival. These strong friend and family networks enabled incoming Laotians to pool resources to create a strong co-ethnic neighborhood. With these resources, the community purchased a large amount of land outside New Iberia's city limits. In its center they built an impressive traditional Laotian temple, which has become the center of the Laotian community in the United States. Around the temple are housing tracts that families have purchased to build their own homes. One resettlement worker recalled, "We wanted something permanent here for the people. So we got together and decided that we would build a traditional Laotian village centered around the temple...just like back home. They had very little for Laotians to do other than work around New Iberia. They had been having fund raising...[with] dances, renting a huge...old night clubs or a KC hall or something, and everyone had somewhere to go on the weekends. The money was for...the building of a Buddhist temple...a non profit corporation."

A second nonprofit that played an important role was the Acadiana Laos Association which had many volunteers to help resettle more newcomers. The resettlement program created these two non profit corporations, and they raised money through fees and fund raisers. Once they had accumulated enough funds, they purchased 18 and a half acres of farm land. They then hired an engineer to help them put in the roads, sewage lines, electricity, and water. Approximately 50 families committed to purchasing housing lots.

The building of the neighborhood and temple helped Laotians maintain a strong connection to their cultural heritage that then could be passed down to the next generation. One interviewee stated, "that is why the temple is so important because that is where these children learn their culture. They understand why they are here and the sacrifices that the adults made. This legacy that they built ...that they are trying...to leave behind for future generations." Another way Laotians carried on their heritage was by having a traditional New Year's celebration every year which is attended by people from all over the nation. Ultimately, the New Iberia Laotian community became "one of the top 25 places in the country for southeast Asians to live and a report to congress" (01216).

Another important dimension that positively shaped Laotians incorporation experiences was the social acceptance offered by the New Iberia community. In many ways, the residents of New Iberia came to appreciate and respect their new Laotian neighbors. Community members and employers recognized them as hard working and gentle people. One community member stated, "The older people are very hard working, very conscientious business people and I have also found that they treat people very fairly" (01208). Another community leader observed, "they are very hard workers and they are fairly honest people. I mean...they are very trustworthy and they don't miss a lot of work and ...they are not likely to take their job lightly. They are very competent, hard working people and I have heard employers tell me that. I have gotten calls from employers when some of them have gotten hurt ...saying try to get him better because he is

one of my best employees. They are really just very good employees" (01212). The director of migration services stated, "employers call our office ...I mean you know we are really a refugee employment agency so...[employers says that] they are loyal and ...hard working people and that is hard to find, [so] can you hook me up" (01216).

Another local community leader characterized the Laotians as being a vital part of the community. "They are very [much] contributing...I consider them just as much Louisiana people as anybody else." (01208). When asked about how Laotian residents were affecting the community, one employer commented, "Very positive. They always buy the best of everything. Most of their wives work at the mill. They have money to spend and everybody benefits by having them here. They open small business and buy things for their businesses. Everybody's happy to have them here" (01103).

Moreover, many Laotians speak French and thus shared a common language with some of the residents of New Iberia. "Laotians are very tolerant...non aggressive. There is not...a major protest against these people...they...speak French...and if you address a Laotian adult in French they will try to respond to you. So they did interact a little in French with the local community." Another employer commented on how language issues were resolved with the shared French connection. "Some of the Laotians don't speak English very well, but that isn't much of a problem. We have three Laotian foremen who can translate if there's ever a problem. Plus a lot of the Laotians speak French and quite a few of our local guys can speak French too" (01103).

New Iberia residents also celebrate with their Laotian neighbors. "They work side by side with the average person. If you go to a Laos New Year's celebration, you are going to have all their supervisors..American supervisors..going to be there. Now they have been here long enough and have enough training and some of them have advanced to where they are leader man now...in these companies. You will see all supervisors will be there. The Chief of Police is always there. The sheriff, the state representative, all these people...respect what they have done and how they have contributed." Another community member spoke proudly about this celebration, "They had their new year celebration not too long ago and someone...actually videotaped it and put it on our public access channel. It was a beautiful ceremony" (01213).

At the same time Laotians are maintaining their cultural heritage, they also show signs of integrating into the mainstream and a desire to interact with other New Iberia residents, "The Laotians want friends. They want American friends. They want to be a part of the community" (01216). The director of migration services points to another example of integration, "We had a special project for females ...mothers, wives...that is one thing that was driving them crazy...their kids wanted them to cook hamburgers and...macaroni and cheese and like no one could do that" (01216).

In sum, as a result of all three contextual factors Laotian newcomers were able to successfully and incorporate into the New Iberia community. They accumulated enough economic and social capital to become upwardly mobile and maintain a middle-class lifestyle. One community leader observed, "the most recent generation is starting to go to university. At Institution 2 there are some young Laotians students who are going to the university. I think this is the first generation of Laotians students...there is going to be a more educated class coming up fairly soon" (01212). In short, they rooted in New Iberia, Louisiana and are becoming more educated and economically secure. Unlike immigrants in Houma and Morgan City, Laotians are viewed as permanent and contributing members of their community.

Conclusions

Our examination of immigrant workers in three small cities in Louisiana reveals how U.S. immigrants in the late 1990s have started to penetrate new destinations. Unlike immigrants in the past, many of the newest arrivals no longer follow the old residence patterns and live only in the largest urban centers of the United States. Also unlike their earlier counterparts, newly arrived immigrants in the 1990s are filling new labor niches in the U.S. economy. Neither unskilled day laborers nor migrant agricultural workers, immigrants in Morgan City and Houma are semi- and high-skilled blue collar workers. As the United States and Mexico become increasingly integrated, job seekers from Mexico are able to quickly respond to new sources of labor demand by employers in their northern neighbor.

Our examination also illustrates considerable heterogeneity in the early assimilation experience of immigrants. As migrants settle in more places throughout the United States and do more varied types of jobs, the geographical and historical backgrounds of local communities become critical in influencing both the societal reception of newcomers and the growth of ethnic communities. Ironically, the somewhat hostile initial reception of Morgan City seemed to promote a stronger and more supportive ethnic community than the rather neutral reception of Houma.

As Table 4.0 illustrates, the dissimilarities between the modes of immigrant incorporation in the three localities would, on the face of it, lead us to believe that immigrant workers would find a more favorable environment for settlement in New Iberia and Houma than in Morgan City. In theory, the visas received by Houma employers provided more support for the arrival and placement of Mexican workers. Although the community in Houma did have vaguely prejudicial attitudes toward the new arrivals, this region did not have Morgan City's historical experience of problems with transient labor. As a result, bringing in immigrants in Houma did not produce the intense controversy and opposition seen in Morgan City. Immigrants in New Iberia, on the other hand, received a warm reception and found strong support in the refugee resettlement program.

Without controversy, the predominant characteristic of societal incorporation in Houma was employer control. This control was heightened by reliance on formal, governmental avenues of immigration. In Morgan City, on the other hand, community opposition weakened employer control. Together with less government involvement in Morgan City (in the form of providing H2B visas), co-ethnic networks played a greater part in bringing immigrants to this location than they did in Houma. The role of these co-ethnic networks was heightened when the controversy in Morgan City caused settlements to be moved off of work sites. Furthermore, to some extent, community opposition created a reaction to itself, leading to more ties between local people and immigrants. In New Iberia, all three contextual dimensions influenced immigrant incorporation. However, favorable governmental policies and the strong co-ethnic community played the key role in creating a healthy, cohesive immigrant community.

On the whole, our case study suggests three questions for future research to address. The first refers to the need to carefully examine the extent to which the three modes of incorporation affect each other. Our findings suggest considerable interrelationships among the three in one community, but independence in the second community. The second question must consider how power and control are distributed across the three dimensions. To what extent are immigrants arriving and leaving because of their co-ethnic network ties, and to what extent are they arriving under the direction of host country organizational actors? To what extent do we

find conflict between communities and employers over immigrant issues and to what extent are employers left to do as they see fit with "their" workers? Finally, we need to consider how the attitudes and behavior of migrants changes over time, especially in potentially hostile surroundings such as Houma. Are migrants there attempting to establish co-ethnic support systems as a response? Ultimately, answers to these questions will help us fully understand differences in the early assimilation experiences of immigrant workers in the United States.

CHAPTER 5

Conclusion

Recent studies of immigrant settlement in the United States suggest that a process of geographic deconcentration is underway. During the 1990s, immigrant settlements have emerged in a variety of U.S. places, including smaller nonmetropolitan towns. One consequence of immigrant movement to new locations is that approximately 24 percent of all U.S. counties gained at least 1,000 Hispanics or Asians between 1990 and 1996 (Frey 1998). Certainly a gain of that magnitude, especially in small nonmetropolitan counties, is likely to have profound social and economic consequences. Both the immigrants themselves and the places that receive them face new kinds of opportunities and challenges.

The principal objective of this project was to assess the impact of international immigration on port communities in the state of Louisiana, where deep-sea offshore drilling has rapidly increased labor demand since 1995. The increase in activity is in part due to technological advances in oil extraction in shallow and deep water (Abernathy 1996), and a decline in the economic risks associated with offshore oil production. Although Louisiana has not been a common destination area for U.S. immigrants in the past, many Mexican migrants reportedly are working in ship and fabrication yards in LA port cities. Their growing presence is consistent with nationwide changes in the economic and social mobility of immigrants. Several studies emphasize the consequences of immigration in new receiving areas throughout the United States (Massey and Durand 1997; Murphy and Dameron 1997; Rees and Nettles 2000; Taylor et al. 1997).

Our research project examined consequences of the new immigrant presence in four LA port communities situated along the Gulf of Mexico — Morgan City, Houma, New Iberia and Port Fourchon. Through the study we were able to gain an in-depth understanding of the major issues that communities face when they import many foreign laborers to meet a strong demand for labor. Below, we summarize our key findings.

Employers' Needs

Our interviews with employers revealed that oil industry employers across communities expressed an overall discontent with the state of the local labor force. They almost universally reported labor shortages. Whether respondents referred to a lack of skilled workers in the labor pool or to fewer committed, loyal workers willing to work, they all echoed the need for more qualified workers. As a result, many began seeking out foreign labor to meet their demand.

Not only did foreign labor turn out to be a vitally important labor source for employers in our study areas, employers were generally very pleased with the quality of the foreign-born labor pool. Employers reported that their foreign-born workers, both Hispanic workers in Houma and Morgan City and Laotian workers in New Iberia, were hard-working, loyal, and skilled in their trades. Another important trait cited by employers was that they were "flexible" — a term we found to be equivalent to expendable. Given the cyclical nature of the oil industry, this flexibility made foreign-born workers even more attractive to employers.

Immigrant Incorporation

Decisions by employers to import foreign-born labor had far-reaching implications for the immigrant workers and the communities hosting them. We interviewed community leaders,

community residents, and foreign-born workers to gauge the impact of immigrant arrival on the community and the newcomers. We found significant variations in community reception, community resources, and immigrant outcomes in our study areas.

While the new immigrants to Louisiana shared similar background characteristics, entry into their respective communities varied for a number of reasons. Each group was met with a unique set of community attributes affecting incorporation. Most particularly, immigrant experiences with employers, government policies, community reception, and co-ethnic networks — all vital for incorporation — varied by the community they entered. We found that the outcomes for immigrant workers were largely dependent upon the characteristics of the particular community.

In Houma, we found that the formal system of contract labor affected the incorporation of immigrant workers. Without the protection provided by a co-ethnic community or local community service agencies, these workers were left to fend for themselves. The result was a group of disenfranchised workers vulnerable to their employers, with no real opportunities to socially and economically incorporate into their new receiving community.

On the other hand, in Morgan City, there was not one dominant force shaping the early assimilation experiences of immigrants. All three forces — employers, community reception, and co-ethnic networks — interacted to facilitate the incorporation of newcomers. The result was high levels of immigrant satisfaction, despite an initial public controversy over an employer's attempt to house immigrants on his work cite. Immigrants in Morgan City reported being satisfied with their current housing and employment, happy to live in the community, saying it was a peaceful and pleasant place to live.

In contrast to the recently arrived immigrants in Morgan City and Houma, Laotian immigrants have been able to successfully incorporate in New Iberia since the late 1970s. Because they were classified as refugees, immediately after they arrived Laotians received resettlement services that included job training, housing subsidies, and English language classes. Therefore after their first decade in New Iberia, they had accumulated enough economic and social capital to insure job mobility and a middle-class lifestyle. Unlike the more temporary Hispanic residents in Houma and Morgan City, in by the mid-1990s Laotians were viewed as permanent and contributing members of their community.

Our results highlight the importance of understanding the unique contextual factors that affect immigrants in their communities of entry. Like Portes and Rumbaut (2001), we find that to understand how new immigrants to the United States fare requires careful examination of their communities of residence. Variations across communities imply vastly different early incorporation outcomes that ranged from disenfranchisement in Houma to cohesion in Morgan City to upward mobility in New Iberia. This point—that early assimilation experiences are strongly linked to conditions in local communities—is increasingly important as immigrants become more geographically dispersed throughout the United States and local governments face the challenge of incorporating foreigners into economic and social life.

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APPENDIX 1.0

LOUISIANA MIGRATION PROJECT
COMMUNITY CATI SURVEY
September 20, 2000

Introduction

Hello, my name is_____. I am a student at Louisiana State University. We are studying the impact of offshore drilling industry on your community. This study is sponsored by Minerals Management Service, which is part of the U.S. Department of the Interior in Washington, DC. To obtain information for our study, we are interviewing community members like you in _____.

May we begin?

SCREENER QUESTIONS

OVER18
First, I just need to make sure you are over age 18. Are you?

1 No — END SURVEY
2 Yes — GO TO RESID

88 Don't Know — END SURVEY
99 No Response — END SURVEY

RESID
And are you a resident of ...?

1 No — END SURVEY
2 Yes — GO TO EMPLOYED

88 Don't Know — GO TO EMPLOYED
99 No Response — GO TO EMPLOYED

Now, we have a few questions about your working arrangements.

EMPLOYED
First, are you currently employed?

IF YES, ASK: IS THAT PART-TIME OR FULL-TIME?

1 Yes, part-time — GO TO WKHRS
2 Yes, full-time — GO TO WKHRS

IF NO, ASK: ARE YOU UNEMPLOYED AND LOOKING FOR WORK, UNEMPLOYED BUT NO LONGER LOOKING FOR WORK, RETIRED, KEEPING HOUSE, DISABLED, OR A STUDENT WHO IS NOT EMPLOYED?

3 No, Unemployed, looking for work — GO TO INDUSTRY
4 No, Unemployed, not looking for work — GO TO INDUSTRY
5 No, Retired — GO TO INDUSTRY
6 No, Keeping house — GO TO INDUSTRY
7 No, Disabled — GO TO INDUSTRY
8 No, Student — GO TO INDUSTRY
9 No, Other — GO TO INDUSTRY

88 Don't Know — GO TO INDUSTRY
99 No Response — GO TO INDUSTRY

INTERVIEWER NOTE: PART-TIME IS ANYTHING UNDER 40 HOURS PER WEEK

WKHRS
How many hours do you usually work per week at your main job?

Enter # of Hours — GO TO SELFEMP

88 Don't Know — GO TO SELFEMP
99 No Response — GO TO SELFEMP

SELFEMP
Are you self-employed or do you work for someone else?

1 Self-employed
2 Work for someone else

88 Don't know
99 No response

ANY RESPONSE GO TO OCC

OCC
What is your main current occupation? What sort of work do you do?

[Specify]

88 Don't Know
99 No Response

ANY RESPONSE GO TO INDUSTRY
INDUSTRY
Do you usually work in activities related to the oil and gas industry?
1 No — GO TO INDHOLD1
2 Yes — GO TO OILJOB1

88 Don't know — GO TO INDHOLD1
99 No response — GO TO INDHOLD1

OILJOB1
What is your job title?

[SPECIFY JOB TITLE]

88 Don't know
99 No response

ANY RESPONSE GO TO INDHOLD1

INDHOLD1
Does anyone in your household work in activities related to the oil and gas industry?

1 No — GO TO OILECON
2 Yes — GO TO OILJOBH1

88 Don't know — GO TO OILECON
99 No response — GO TO OILECON

OILJOBH1
What is their current job title of the first person who works in the oil and gas industry?

SPECIFY JOB TITLE

88 Don't Know
99 No Response

ANY RESPONSE GO TO GO TO OILHOLD1

OILHOLD1
What is their relationship to you?

1. Spouse
2. Child
3. Sibling

4. Other relative [SPECIFY]
5. Other [SPECIFY]

88 Don't know
99 No response

ANY RESPONSE GO TO INDHOLD2

INDHOLD2
Does anyone else in your household work in activities related to the oil and gas industry?

1 No — GO TO OILECON
2 Yes — GO TO OILJOBH2

88 Don't know — GO TO OILECON
99 No response — GO TO OILECON

OILJOBH2
What is their current job title of the second person who works in the oil and gas industry?

SPECIFY JOB TITLE

88 Don't Know
99 No Response

ANY RESPONSE GO TO GO TO OILHOLD2

OILHHOLD2
What is their relationship to you?

1. Spouse
2. Child
3. Sibling
4. Other relative [SPECIFY]
5. Other [SPECIFY]

88 Don't know
99 No response

ANY RESPONSE GO TO INDHOLD3

INDHOLD3
Does anyone else in your household work in activities related to the oil and gas

industry?

1 No — GO TO OILECON
2 Yes — GO TO OILJOBH3

88 Don't know — GO TO OILECON
99 No response — GO TO OILECON

OILJOBH3
What is their current job title of the third person who works in the oil and gas industry?

SPECIFY JOB TITLE

88 Don't Know
99 No Response

ANY RESPONSE GO TO GO TO OILHOLD3

OILHOLD3
What is their relationship to you?

1. Spouse
2. Child
3. Sibling
4. Other relative [SPECIFY]
5. Other [SPECIFY]

88 Don't know
99 No response

ANY RESPONSE GO TO OILECON

COMMUNITY QUESTIONS

OILECON
How much of your community's economy would you say is linked to the oil industry? Would you say they are ...

1. Very strongly linked
2. Somewhat linked
3. Not linked at all

88 Don't know
99 No response

ANY RESPONSE GO TO INTROCHG
INTROCHG
Many people think activities in the oil and gas industry affect their local community in different ways. *I'm going to ask you about a number of ways the oil industry may have affected your community. Please tell me if you have seen each of these changes in your community in the LAST 10 YEARS.*

OILJOB
First, how has the oil industry affected the number of jobs in the community in the last 10 years? Have the number of jobs increased a lot, increased a little, had no change, decreased a lot, or decreased a little as a result of the oil industry?

1 Increased a lot
2 Increased a little
3 No change
4 Decreased a lot
5 Decreased a little

88 Don't know
99 No response

ANY RESPONSE GO TO OILBUS

OILBUS
How has the oil industry affected the number of new businesses in the community in the last 10 years? Have the number of businesses increased a lot, increased a little, had no change, decreased a lot, or decreased a little as a result of the oil industry?

1 Increased a lot
2 Increased a little
3 No change
4 Decreased a lot
5 Decreased a little

88 Don't know
99 No response

ANY RESPONSE GO TO OILCOMM

OILCOMM
How has the oil industry affected the local community in the last 10 years? Has the local community improved a lot, improved a little, had no change, declined a lot, or declined a little as a result of the oil industry?

1 improved a lot
2 Improved a little
3 Declined a lot
4 Declined a little

88 Don't know
99 No response

ANY RESPONSE GO TO OILPOP

OILPOP
How has the oil industry affected the number of people moving into your community in the last 10 years? Have the number of people moving into your community increased a lot, increased a little, had no change, decreased a lot, or decreased a little as a result of the oil industry?

1 Increased a lot
2 Increased a little
3 No change
4 Decreased a lot
5 Decreased a little

88 Don't know
99 No response

ANY RESPONSE GO TO OILHOUSE

OILHOUSE
How has the oil industry affected the demand for new housing in your community in the last 10 years? Has the demand for housing increased a lot, increased a little, had no change, decreased a lot, or decreased a little as a result of the oil industry?

1 Increased a lot
2 Increased a little
3 No change
4 Decreased a lot
5 Decreased a little

88 Don't know
99 No response

ANY RESPONSE GO TO OILMED

OILMED
How has the oil industry affected the demand for medical and/or social services in your

community in the last 10 years? Has the demand for medical and/or social services increased a lot, increased a little, had no change, decreased a lot, or decreased a little as a result of the oil industry?

1 Increased a lot
2 Increased a little
3 No change
4 Decreased a lot
5 Decreased a little

88 Don't know
99 No response

ANY RESPONSE GO TO OILCRIME

OILCRIME
How has the oil industry affected community crime rates in the last 10 years? Has the local crime rate gotten much better, somewhat better, had no change, gotten somewhat worse, or much worse as a result of the oil industry?

1 Much better
2 Somewhat better
3 No change
4 Somewhat worse
5 Much worse

88 Don't know
99 No response

ANY RESPONSE GO TO OILFOR

OILFOR
How has the oil industry affected the hiring of foreign born workers in the last 10 years? Has the hiring of foreign born workers increased a lot, increased a little, had no change, decreased a lot, or decreased a little as a result of the oil industry?

1 Increased a lot
2 Increased a little
3 No change
4 Decreased a lot
5 Decreased a little

88 Don't know
99 No response

ANY RESPONSE GO TO INTRCHG2

IMMIGRATION QUESTIONS

INTRCHG2
Now, we have a few questions about the presence of foreign born immigrants in your community.

IMMNO
First, do you think the number of immigrants from foreign countries who are permitted to come to your community to live should be increased a lot, increased a little, left the same as it is now, decreased a little, or decreased a lot?

1 increased a lot
2 increased a little
3 left the same as it is now
4 decreased a little
5 decreased a lot

88 Don't know
99 No response

ANY RESPONSE GO TO INTRCHG3

INTRCHG3
What do you think will happen if more immigrants come to your community? Is each of the following very likely, somewhat likely, not too likely, or not at all likely?

GO TO IMMECON

IMMECON
What about higher economic growth? Do you think it is very likely, somewhat likely, somewhat unlikely, or very unlikely that higher economic growth will occur as a result of more immigrants coming into your community?

1 Very likely
2 Somewhat likely
3 Somewhat unlikely
4 Very unlikely

88 Don't know
99 No response

ANY RESPONSE GO TO IMMUNEMP

IMMUNEMP
What about higher unemployment? Do you think it is very likely, somewhat likely, somewhat unlikely, or very unlikely that higher unemployment will occur as a result of more immigrants coming into your community?

1 Very likely
2 Somewhat likely
3 Somewhat unlikely
4 Very unlikely

88 Don't know
99 No response

ANY RESPONSE GO TO IMMUNIFY

IMMUNIFY
Do you think it is very likely, somewhat likely, somewhat unlikely, or very unlikely that more immigrants coming into your community will make it harder to keep the community together?

1 Very likely
2 Somewhat likely
3 Somewhat unlikely
4 Very unlikely

88 Don't know
99 No response

ANY RESPONSE GO TO IMMWORK

IMMWORK
What about the presence of good, loyal workers? Do you think it is very likely, somewhat likely, somewhat unlikely, or very unlikely that more immigrants coming into your community will result in an increase in the number of good, loyal workers in the area?

1 Very likely
2 Somewhat likely
3 Somewhat unlikely
4 Very unlikely

88 Don't know
99 No response

ANY RESPONSE GO TO IMMSCHL

IMMSCHL
What about local schools? Do you think it is very likely, somewhat likely, somewhat unlikely, or very unlikely that more immigrants coming into your community will result in a strain on the local school system?

1 Very likely
2 Somewhat likely
3 Somewhat unlikely
4 Very unlikely

88 Don't know
99 No response

ANY RESPONSE GO TO IMMHOUSE

IMMHOUSE
What about the demand for housing? Do you think it is very likely, somewhat likely, somewhat unlikely, or very unlikely that more immigrants coming into your community will result in an increase in the demand for housing in the area?

1 Very likely
2 Somewhat likely
3 Somewhat unlikely
4 Very unlikely

88 Don't know
99 No response

ANY RESPONSE GO TO IMMMED

IMMMED
What about the demand for medical and/or social services? Do you think it is very likely, somewhat likely, somewhat unlikely, or very unlikely that more immigrants coming into your community will result in an increase in the demand for medical and/or social services in the area?

1 Very likely
2 Somewhat likely
3 Somewhat unlikely
4 Very unlikely

88 Don't know
99 No response

ANY RESPONSE GO TO IMMCRIME

IMMCRIME
What about local crime rates? Do you think it is very likely, somewhat likely, somewhat unlikely, or very unlikely that more immigrants coming into your community will result in an increase in the local crime rates?

1 Very likely
2 Somewhat likely
3 Somewhat unlikely
4 Very unlikely

88 Don't know
99 No response

ANY RESPONSE GO TO IMMLEGAL

IMMLEGAL
What about the number of migrants without legal papers that live and work in your community? Do you think it is very likely, somewhat likely, somewhat unlikely, or very unlikely that more immigrants coming into your community will result in an increase in number of migrants without legal papers that live and work in your community?

1 Very likely
2 Somewhat likely
3 Somewhat unlikely
4 Very unlikely

88 Don't know
99 No response

ANY RESPONSE GO TO OTHIMP

OTHIMP
Do you think immigrants have affected your community in other ways that we have not already talked about?

Open Ended Response

88 Don't know
99 No response

ANY RESPONSE GO TO BLINGED

BLINGED
How do you feel about bilingual education? Are you strongly in favor of it, somewhat in favor of it, somewhat opposed to it, or strongly opposed to it?

1 Strongly in favor of it
2 Somewhat in favor of it
3 Somewhat opposed to it
4 Strongly opposed to it

88 Don’t know
99 No response

ANY RESPONSE GO TO BLINGED2

BLINGED2
There are several different ideas about how to teach children who don't speak English when they enter our public schools. Please tell me which statement best describes how you feel:

1 All classes should be conducted only in English so that children have to learn English right from the start

2 Children who don't know English should have classes in their native language just for a year or two until they learn English

3 Students who want to keep up with their native languages and cultures should be able to take many of their classes in Spanish or other languages all the way through high school

88 Don’t know
99 No response

ANY RESPONSE GO TO WORKCOMP

WORKCOMP
Are the people who you work with all U.S. citizens, mostly U.S. citizens, about half U.S. citizens and half foreign born, mostly foreign born, or all foreign born immigrants?

1 All U.S. citizens
2 Mostly U.S. citizens
3 About half U.S. citizens and half foreign born
4 Mostly foreign born
5 All foreign born immigrants

88 Don’t know
99 No response

ANY RESPONSE GO TO INTRCHG4

BACKGROUND QUESTIONS

INTRCHG4
Now, we just have a few questions about your household and your background. I want to remind you that your answers are important and will be kept strictly confidential. No individual will be identified in any way. After this, we'll be finished.

HISPAN
Are you Spanish/ Hispanic/ Latino?

INTERVIEWER PROMPT: IF YES, THEN ASK: WOULD THAT BE MEXICAN, PUERTO RICAN, CUBAN, OR SOMETHING ELSE?

1 No
2 Yes, Mexican, Mexican American, Chicano
3 Yes, Puerto Rican
4 Yes, Cuban
5 Yes, other Spanish/Hispanic/Latino —SPECIFY

88 Don't know
99 No response

ANY RESPONSE GO TO RACE

RACE
What is your race? You may select one or more of the following:

INTERVIEWER NOTE: READ CATEGORIES ALOUD AND SELECT AS MANY AS RESPONDENT SPECIFIES

1 White
2 Black, African American, or Negro
3 American Indian or Alaska Native -- Specify name of enrolled or principal tribe
4 Asian Indian
5 Chinese
6 Filipino
7 Japanese
8 Korean
9 Vietnamese
10 Other Asian -- Specify race.

Or, are you some other race not already mentioned?

INTERVIEWER PROMPT, IF YES, THEN SAY: ARE YOU NATIVE HAWAIIAN, GUAMANIAN OR CHAMORRO, SAMOAN, OTHER PACIFIC ISLANDER, OR SOME

OTHER RACE?

11 Native Hawaiian
12 Guamanian or Chamorro
13 Samoan
14 Other Pacific Islander -- Specify Race
15 Some Other Race -- Specify Race

ANY RESPONSE GO TO EDUC

EDUC
What is the HIGHEST grade of school or college that you have completed?

[RECORD HIGHEST GRADE

If less than high school grad, enter highest grade;
H.S. School grad =12
Some College=14
College Grad=16
MA or Law Degree=18
PhD or MD=22

If less than one year, enter 0; If no answer, enter 29]

ANY RESPONSE GO TO MARSTAT

MARSTAT
Are you currently married, separated, divorced, widowed or have you never been married?

1 Currently Married -- GO TO SPOUSEFB
2 Separated — GO TO YEARBORN
3 Divorced — GO TO YEARBORN
4 Widowed — GO TO YEARBORN
5 Never married — GO TO YEARBORN

88 Don’t know — GO TO YEARBORN
99 No response — GO TO YEARBORN

SPOUSEFB
Was your spouse born in the United States?

INTERVIEWER NOTE: THIS INCLUDES US TERRITORIES

1 Yes -- GO TO SPOUSEST
2 No -- GO TO USYRSS

88 Don't know — GO TO SPOUSEYR
99 No response — GO TO SPOUSEYR

USYRSS
When did your spouse come to live in the United States?

1 Between 1995 and 2000
2 Between 1986 and 1994, or
3 Before 1986

88 Don't know
99 No response

ANY RESPONSE GO TO SPOUSECO

SPOUSEST
In what state was your spouse born?

1 Louisiana
2 Other — Specify

88 Don't know
99 No response

ANY RESPONSE GO TO SPOUSEYR

SPOUSECO
In what country was your spouse born?

[RECORD COUNTRY -- GO TO DOCSSA]

DOCSSA
Is your spouse a citizen of the United States?

1 No — GO TO DOCSSB
2 Yes — GO TO SPOUSEYR

88 Don't know — GO TO SPOUSEYR
99 No response — GO TO SPOUSEYR

DOCSSB
Is your spouse....

1 A permanent resident of the United States
2 A green card holder, or
3 Something else? SPECIFY

88 Don't know
99 No response

ANY RESPONSE GO TO SPOUSEYR

SPOUSEYR
In what year was your spouse born?

ENTER YEAR e.g., 1950

88 Don't know
99 No response

ANY RESPONSE GO YEARBORN

YEARBORN
In what year were you born?

ENTER YEAR e.g., 1950

88 Don't know
99 No response

ANY RESPONSE GO NUMKIDS

NUMKIDS
How many children UNDER 18 years of age live in your household?

RECORD EXACT NUMBER

88 Don't know
99 No response

ANY RESPONSE GO TO USBORN

USBORN
Were you born in the United States?

0. No — GO TO USYRS
1. Yes — GO TO STATE

USYRS
When did you come to live in the United States?

1 Between 1995 and 2000
2 Between 1986 and 1994, or
3 Before 1986

88 Don't know
99 No response

ANY RESPONSE GO TO COUNTRY

STATE
In what state were you born?

RECORD STATE

88 Don't know
99 No response

ANY RESPONSE GO TO SEX

COUNTRY
In what country were you born?

[RECORD COUNTRY -- GO TO DOCSA]

DOCSA
Are you a citizen of the United States?

1 No — GO TO DOCSB
2 Yes — GO TO SEX

88 Don't know — GO TO SEX
99 No response — GO TO SEX

DOCSB
Are you ....

1 A permanent resident of the United States
2 A green card holder, or
3 Something else? SPECIFY

88 Don't know
99 No response

ANY RESPONSE GO TO SEX

SEX
[INTERVIEWER: RECORD RESPONDENT'S SEX; IF UNSURE OF SEX, THEN ASK:]
Are you male or female?

0 Male
1 Female

88 Don't know
99 No response

ANY RESPONSE GO TO INCOME

COMPLETED INTERVIEW IF RESPONDENT REACHES THIS POINT

INCOME
I'm going to read a series of income categories. Please stop me when I get to the category that includes the total income that you and all other members of you household earned during 1999. Be sure to include each member's wages and salaries, as well as net income from any business, pensions, dividends, interest, tips, or other income.

1 Under $10,000
2 $10,000-20,000
3 $20,000-30,000
4 $30,000-40,000
5 $40,000-50,000
6 $50,000-60,000
7 $60,000-70,000
8 $70,000 and over

88 Don't know
99 No response

ANY RESPONSE GO TO CONCL

CONCL
This completes the survey. We want to thank you for your time and cooperation. We have one final question. Would you be willing to speak with us again in the future in a second conversation about some of these issues affecting your community?

FNAME
If so, who should we ask for when calling?

ENTER **FIRST** NAME ONLY OF INTERVIEWEE

ANY RESPONSE GO TO IDINTV

IDINTV
ENTER YOUR INTERVIEWER ID NUMBER

ANY RESPONSE GO TO EVAL1

EVAL1
WAS THE RESPONDENT COOPERATIVE?

1 No
2 Yes

ANY RESPONSE GO TO EVAL2

EVAL2
DID THE RESPONDENT SEEM TO UNDERSTAND THE QUESTIONS?

1 No
2 Yes

ANY RESPONSE GO TO EVAL3

EVAL3
DID THE RESPONDENT SEEM TO BE IMPAIRED IN ANY WAY?

1 No
2 Yes

ANY RESPONSE GO TO EVAL4

EVAL4
ENTER ANY EXTRA COMMENTS IF NECESSARY

APPENDIX 1.1

CONSENT FORM

Performance Sites:	Morgan City, New Iberia, Houma, Lafourche Parish
Investigators:	Katharine M. Donato Department of Sociology, LSU (225) 388-5357
Purpose of Study:	To understand the community impacts of the new immigrants
Description:	We are interested in understanding the effects of the new immigrants living in your community. We are particularly interested in the critical factors that are pushing and pulling immigrants to LA port cities, and what determines whether they integrate successfully in local economies.
Benefits:	This study will not benefit individual respondents directly, but may benefit residents in the community in general by generating solutions to some of the problems communities face.
Risks:	There are no known risks to respondents.
Alternatives:	None
Removal:	Not applicable
Right to Refuse:	Respondents may choose not to participate or withdraw from the study at any time with no penalty.
Privacy:	The results of the study may be published. The privacy of respondents will be protected and their identity not revealed.
Release of Information:	The records for respondents in this study will never identify their names.
Financial Information:	There is no cost to respondents.
Signatures:	The study has been discussed with me and all my questions have been answered. I understand that additional questions regarding the study should be directed to the investigator listed above. I understand that if I have any questions about subject rights, or other concerns, I can contact Charles E. Graham, Chairman, Institutional Review Board, at (225) 388-1492. I agree with the terms above and acknowledge that I have been given a copy of the consent form.

Signature of the Respondent Date

Investigator Date

The respondent has indicated to me that he/she is unable to read. I certify that I have read this consent form to the respondent and explained that by completing the signature line above he/she has agreed to participate.

Signature of Reader Date

FORMULARIO DE CONSENTIMIENTO

Sitios de cumplimiento:	Nombres de tres comunidades en Luisiana
Investigadores:	Katharine M. Donato Departamiento de Sociología, Louisiana State University (225) 388-5357
Propósito del Estudio:	Entender los impactos comunitarios de nuevos imigrantes
Descripción:	Nos interesa entender los efectos de los nuevos imigrantes viviendo en su comunidad. En particular, nos interesan los factores críticos cuales están empujando y jalando a imigrantes hasta puertos en Luisiana, y lo que determina su éxito en integrar en la economía local.
Beneficios:	Individuos no pueden sacar provecho del estudio directamente, pero residentes en la comunidad en general podrían beneficiar por la generación de soluciones para algunos de los problemas que encuentran estas comunidades.
Riesgos:	No tenemos conocimiento de ningún riesgo para los sujetos.
Alternativas:	Ninguna.
Remoción:	No se aplica.
Derecho a Rehusar:	Sujetos pueden optar por no participar o retirarse del estudio cuando quieran, sín pena.
Privacidad:	Puede ser que los resultados de este estudio sean publicados. La vida privada de los sujetos será protegida y su identidad no será desplegada.
Divulgación de Información:	Los expedientes de los sujetos en este estudio núnca identificarán sus nombres.
Información Financiaria:	No hay ningún costo para los sujetos.
Firmas:	El estudio ha sido discutido conmigo y todas mís preguntas han sido contastadas. Entiendo que más preguntas a propósito del estudio tienen que ser dirigidas a la investigadora nombrada arriba. Entiendo que si tengo preguntas sobre los derechos de los sujetos, ú otras preocupaciones, puedo contactar a Charles E. Graham, Presidente, Consejo Institucional de Evaluación, al número siguiente: (225) 388-1492. Estoy de acuerdo con los términos arriba y reconozco que he recibido un ejemplar del formulario de consentimiento.

Firma del Sujeto Fecha

Investigador Fecha

El sujeto me informó que no puede leer. Atestiguo que le leí este formulario de consentimiento y le expliqué que su firma en la línea arriba indica que acepta participar en el estudio.

Firma del lector Fecha

APPENDIX 1.2

QUESTIONS FOR GUIDED CONVERSATIONS WITH EMPLOYERS
June 11, 1998

INTRODUCTORY TEXT:

We are interested in understanding your labor needs as an employer, how to better meet them, and what happens when they are not met. This interest stems from the fact that the economy has developed a lot recently in South Louisiana. Our focus is on the oil industry in port cities in Louisiana.

Please note that while we appreciate your participation in this project, you may choose not to participate or withdraw from the study at any time with no penalty. At all times, however, we will protect the privacy of respondents.

Section 1: Introduction

1) What is your job title and what kind of work does your company do?

PROBE FOR:
job title and his/her main responsibilities
whether they own the business, what it does--what products does it produce and for whom
what industry the business is part of
how long has the company existed and he/she been in the business--year founded
is this company part of a multinational firm?
Prior to working in this company, what kind of job did he/she do, and where?

2) Are you involved in the hiring process and if so, how?

With respect to the company at this specific location:

3) What is the size and characteristics of the workforce?

PROBE FOR:
how many employees at this location--not including contract laborers, and how many employees 5 years ago
do they contract out for labor and how many contract laborers do they have now, what types of laborers do they contract out for, has use of contract labor increased/decreased/remained about the same during last 5 years
how many employees are full time--and has this changed in the last 5 years
how has the quality of your workforce changed in the last 5 years
has there been any change in the work ethic of employees in the last 5 years
are employees covered by a union contract or collective bargaining agreement and if so, which groups of workers are covered
how many (%) of employees are paid around minimum wage
how many of your part-time and full-time workers fall in each of the broad job categories (see card)
how many of these employees are male, female, black, Hispanic, other foreign-born
of those foreign-born, what national origins are most common
how has this race/ethnic/gender composition changed in the last 5 years

Section 2: Hiring Process and Procedures

1) Please describe for us the most typical entry-level position as (STATE JOB CATEGORY) at this place of work. What do people in this job do? How has this job changed over time? What are the typical characteristics of workers in this job?

PROBE FOR:
job title and job duties (a.k.a. SAMPLE JOB)
how many workers are currently employed in this sample job
how many workers were employed in this job two years ago
if there has been a change in the number of workers in this job, ask about how many were hired from inside/outside the firm, were promoted, discharged or induced to quit, voluntarily resigned, or are currently on lay off
(From this, figure out the resulting number of sample jobs currently employed)
how many are employed full time
how many of these workers live within a mile of work, and how many live farther away
how many have a high school degree or GED certificate
how many are 25 years of age or younger
how many speak a language other than English (specify) and is necessary for the job
how many are female, white, black, foreign-born (ask for specific national origins)
how long it takes for new employees with no experience to learn the job (hours, days, etc)
how long it takes for new employee with prior experience to learn the job (...)
what job would a worker be promoted into (ask for title and job duties) -- NOTE THIS IS TYPICAL PROMOTION POSITION
number of promotion positions in the firm
do they train workers for promotions (if so how)
how are decisions made regarding promoting a worker from the sample job

Section 3: Employee Benefits

1) What formal benefits do workers in this sample job receive?

PROBE FOR:
what is starting wage for sample job (how much paid and pay period)
what is highest wage for sample job (how much paid and pay period)
does worker in sample job receive tips, commissions, or bonuses, and if so, how much is their wage increased by receipt of these
is there a health plan and when do new workers receive coverage (upon hiring or later in their employment?) At what point and under what conditions is health plan
received by worker in sample job, and what proportion of health plan is paid by employer, does plan cover worker's dependents
is there life insurance coverage
does the company make provisions for child care, or is it considering doing this in the future

2) Are there other benefits (formal or informal) that your company offers its employees?
does firm make transportation provisions for workers in sample job, and if so, what (if not, is it considering this for the future)
is the job covered by union contract/collective bargaining agreement--if so, for how long
do you help workers find housing, make provisions for child care and educational needs of worker's families
do you offer cafeteria or other food benefits? Who prepares the food?
do you know of any ways in which workers help each other
are there other perks that your company offers to its employees
when did you last hire a worker for the sample job, how many openings did you fill, how many people applied for the positions, is there a probationary period for new
workers in this job and how long is it
what percent of all new workers in the job stay on thru probationary period
is there such a thing as short service workers, on what criteria is it based (technical skills, safety or language problems,...)
is there any watching-over in place? What kind? (Formal report, meetings, several supervisors taking notes...)
is there high turnover among workers in this job--why or why not?

Section 3: Employee Benefits
continued...

3) How do you recruit applicants for the sample job?

PROBE FOR:
use of different types of methods such as: ask current workers to recommend friends and others, use school/college placement services, public employment agencies, private employment agencies and/or recruiters in the United States or in other countries, other employers in the area (SUCH AS??), community groups newspaper, TV or radio ads, take applications from walk-ins, take referrals from union, display help wanted sign, go thru files of previous applicants, other??--or don't solicit applicants because they have enough unsolicited applicants
are workers compensated for referrals
which two of the above methods have been most important for finding persons hired for the sample job
description of hiring process (what steps must an applicant take to be hired in the job--written application on file, mandatory interview, etc.--keep in mind that there may not be a routinized procedure)
for an applicant to be considered for the sample job, do you require that he/she has some minimum set of qualifications such as a certain level of education--if so, what; certification process--if so, what type (results of a skills test, physical exam, etc. and whether company pays for this); bilingual language ability
have you ever had problems with undocumented migrants slipping through your recruitment procedures?

Section 4: Employer Opinions

1) How do you evaluate whether workers are performing well in the sample job? What attributes are most important?

PROBE FOR:
when evaluating applicants for the sample job, how important (very, somewhat, not) is past job turnover, recommendations from prior employers, referrals from current employees, referrals from others you know, reputation of school applicant attended, how far away applicant lives, type of neighborhood applicant lives in, experience in this type of job, a criminal record, applicant's speaking and language ability in English, applicant's speaking and language ability in another language, applicant's age, applicant's general appearance, a long spell of unemployment, applicant's national origin
what are examples of the most important qualities you look for in a persons seeking this job--what do these qualities indicate to you
if you couldn't get workers with these two qualities, who would you hire
what are main reasons for discharging workers in this job
what are main reasons workers in this job give for resigning from their positions

2) Has it become more/less difficult to find workers for this job in the last five years--or since the boom in the local economy began--and when was that)? If it has become more/less difficult, why? If it hasn't have you noticed changes in labor supply/demand during a different time period?

PROBE FOR:
whether other employers have/don't have the same problems, and why
whether they have spoken to others about the problems, and if so, who exactly
have there been any meetings discussing these issues at the Industrial Development Foundation

Section 5: Community Impacts

1) As you know, a lot of companies have been doing well in southern Louisiana recently. In your opinion, why has this happened? And what are some of the consequences of this change?

PROBE FOR:
problems as a result of eco growth such as labor shortages (if so, for what type of work), changes in the quality of their workforce, or other problems facing businesses in this eco climate (such as losing their best workers to other opportunities)
find out which they experienced, and how they deal with the problems

2) As you may know, many employers have begun to hire workers with a foreign-born background to meet their demand for labor. What do you think of this strategy? What do employers like about hiring these types of workers, and what don't they like?

PROBE FOR:
whether they have spoken with other specific employers (or companies) about this? If yes, who?

3) What methods have employers used to attract immigrants to work in this area? Do you know of other methods used by other companies/employers? How have you recruited these workers (from foreign countries, other places in the U.S., thru the use of formal or informal activities--describe).

If they have hired foreign-born workers in the last 12 months, ask employers:

PROBE FOR:
a description of the quality of this workforce and work ethic differences between foreign-born and native-U.S. born workers
impact this has had on the community (ask about effects on demand for housing, schools, social services, bilingual services, etc.), on their own efforts to recruit and retain workers, on local politics, on the number of kids born in the community, and cohesiveness in the community. (Do immigrants and their children get along with members of other groups in the community?)
Where do the immigrants workers stay while in the community (name of hotels)

Section 5: Community Impacts
continued...

4) How much revenue would be lost in your company if you did not have access to an immigrant labor force?

PROBE FOR:
who they would hire if they could not/did not hire immigrants
without an immigrant labor supply, would they would lose business contracts and/or would the quality of their products decline
are there important differences between an immigrant labor pool and other types (such as African American)

5) How do you think the new immigrants are integrating into the community?

PROBE FOR:
Effects on the well-being of the community in general--with respect to housing, crime and perception of crime, women's fertility, etc.
Effects on local economy, such as investments/openings of small businesses by immigrants
Effects on the demand for affordable housing, education system (schools and bilingual services), social services (welfare--if mentioned, what type?), medical services (in hospitals and/or clinics)
Effects on local politics, on religious life, sports associations, community activities

We would like to end this conversation by asking whether you know anyone that we should speak to about these issues. If so, who are they and how can we get in touch with them?

Finally, would you mind if we contacted you in the future, should there be any need to do so?

Thanks for participating in our study.

APPENDIX 1.3

QUESTIONS FOR GUIDED CONVERSATIONS WITH COMMUNITY LEADERS
June 11, 1998

INTRODUCTORY TEXT:

We are interested in understanding the effects of the new immigrants living in your community. We are particularly interested in the critical factors that are pushing and pulling immigrants to LA port cities, and what determines whether they integrate successfully in local economies. In the future, our results may be published.

Please note that while we appreciate your participation in this project, you may choose not to participate or withdraw from the study at any time with no penalty. At all times, however, we will protect the privacy of respondents and never reveal their identity.

Section 1: Introduction

1) What are your responsibilities at the community level?

PROBE FOR:
job title, description, and place of work
how long he/she has been involved in this job/activity/type of work
how long he/she has been a resident in the community
do this work involve other community leaders, and if so, who

2) How would you describe this community? Cover the following topics: principal economic activity, educational and religious institutions, law enforcement activities (police, judges, etc.), social services, political tendencies, sports associations

PROBE FOR:
size, average family income, age composition, race/ethnic composition of population
is crime a problem in the community? What type(s) of crime? Why?
are there any specific ongoing/longstanding conflicts or problems that this community faces? Where do they originate? Why haven't they been solved?

3) What are the characteristics of the economic activities in your community ?

PROBE FOR:
types of industries, and names of largest employers
whether they speak with specific employers about community issues, and if so, who
types of jobs people have (professional, skilled blue collar, others)
attributes of people who live in community (% college graduate, % high school graduate, % full-time/part-time, % unionized)
Level of unemployment, who is most affected (women, young people, blacks...)

Section 2: General changes in the community

1) Have you noticed any changes in your community during the last 5 years?

PROBE FOR:
changes in population, in/out migration, fertility rates
changes in economic activity: jobs, types of industries and jobs such as tourism
changes in political context, crime, neighborhoods
changes in other institutions, associations, such as ...

2) What do you think caused these changes?

Section 3: Opinions and Community impact

1) As you know, a lot of companies have been doing well in southern Louisiana recently. In your opinion, why has this happened? And what are some of the consequences of this change?

PROBE FOR:
problems as a result of eco growth such as labor shortages (if so, for what type of work),
changes in the quality of their workforce, or other problems facing businesses
in this eco climate (such as losing their best workers to other opportunities)
find out which they experienced, and how they deal with the problems

2) As you may know, many employers have begun to hire workers with a foreign-born background to meet their demand for labor. What do you think of this strategy? What do employers like about hiring these types of workers, and what don't they like?

PROBE FOR:
whether they have spoken with other community leaders or employers (or companies) about this? If yes, who? When?
whether they think hiring immigrants is a good way to solve the demand for labor?

3) What methods have employers used to attract immigrants to work in this area? Do you know of other methods used by other companies/employers? How have you recruited these workers (from foreign countries, other places in the U.S., thru the use of formal or informal activities--describe).

If they know that foreign-born workers have been hired in the last 12 months in their community, ask community leaders:

PROBE FOR:
a description of the quality of this workforce and work ethic differences between foreign-born and native-U.S. born workers
impact this has had on the community (ask about effects on demand for housing, schools, social services, bilingual services, etc.), on their own efforts to recruit and retain workers, on local politics, on the number of kids born in the community, and cohesiveness in the community. (Do immigrants and their children get along with members of other groups in the community?)

Section 3: Opinions and Community Impacts
continued...

4) How much revenue would be lost if employers in the area did not have access to an immigrant labor force?

PROBE FOR:
who employers would hire if they could not/did not hire immigrants
without an immigrant labor supply, would employers would lose business contracts and/or would the quality of their products decline
are there important differences between an immigrant labor pool and other types (such as African American)

5) How do you think the new immigrants are integrating into the community?

PROBE FOR:
Effects on the well-being of the community in general--with respect to housing, crime and perception of crime, women's fertility, etc.
Effects on local economy, such as investing and opening small businesses by immigrants
Effects on the demand for affordable housing, education system (schools and bilingual services), social services (welfare--if mentioned, what type?), medical services (in hospitals and/or clinics)
Effects on local politics, on religious life, sports associations, community activities

We would like to end this conversation by asking whether you know anyone that we should speak to about these issues. If so, who are they and how can we get in touch with them?

Finally, would you mind if we contacted you in the future, should there be any need to do so?

Thanks for participating in our study.

APPENDIX 1.4

QUESTIONS FOR GUIDED CONVERSTIONS WITH IMMIGRANT WORKERS
June 11, 1998

Nos interesa entender los efectos de la industría del petróleo sobre Ud y otra gente quién vive en esta comunidad. Nos interesa especialmente los factores que jalan y empujan a imigrantes en puertos de Luisiana.

Apreciamos mucho su participación an este proyecto. Pero acuérdese que a cualquier tiempo, puede elegir no participar o no contestar algunas preguntas, sín penalidad. A todo tiempo, sín embargo, haremos lo máximo para proteger la vida privada de nuestros interlocutores.

Introducción

1) Datos demográficos del interlocutor
En qué año nació?
Cuantos años tiene?
Donde nació?
Cuantos años de educación tiene en Mejico?
Qué tipo (lenguaje, educación profesional or general, etc.)?
Que diploma tiene?
Recibió educación en los Estados Unidos?
Qué tipo (lenguaje, educación profesional or general, etc.)?
Donde (escuela o empresa)?
Para cuanto tiempo?
Está casado/a? Divorciado/a? Soltero/a? Viudo/a?
Si casado/a, donde vive su esposo/a?
Tiene hijos?
Cuantos años tienen?
Donde viven?
Cuantos años de experiencia profesional tenía antes de ir a Estados Unidos?

2) Su familia de origén
Cuantos años tienen sus padres?
Donde viven?
Donde fueron educados?
Cuantos hermanos/as tiene?
Tiene familia en Estados Unidos ahora? Quién?
Si sí, donde vive?

1ra parte: Cambios generales en la comunidad

1) Cuando llegó en esta comunidad?

2) Cuanto tiempo lleva viviendo en esta comunidad?
Donde vivía antes de llegar aquí?
Viaja a Mejico cada año? Cuantas veces en un año? (Piensa que vive Ud en dos comunidades al mismo tiempo?)
3) Porqué se queda en Morgan City?
4) Ha notado cambios en esta comunidad en los últimos cinco años (desde su llegada si ha llegado recién)?
Ha notado cambios en la población (migración, fertilidad de las mujeres, etc.)?
Ha notado cambios en la actividad económica? En empleo? En tipos de industrías o cargos/puestos, etc.?
Ha notado cambios en el contexto político? En crimenes? En barrios, etc.?
Ha notado cambios en otras instituciones, asociaciones, etc.?

5) Qué piensa causó estos cambios?

<u>2nda parte: Experiencia laboral</u>

1) Qué es el título de su cargo ahora?
Qué son sus características?
Cuando empezó con este cargo?
Donde trabaja (nombre de compañía y dirección)?
Cuantas horas trabaja por semana?
Qué tipo de competencias se necesitan para este cargo? Es preciso hablar inglés? Tener experiencia con este tipo de trabajo? Tener un certificado de competencias? Etc.
Trabaja horas extras? Le pagan por estas?
Cuanto le pagan (salario de base y para horas extras)?
Puede tener promociones? De qué tipo?

2) Tiene un segundo cargo ahora?
Si sí:
Cual es el título de su cargo ahora?
Cuales son sus características?
Cuando empezó con este cargo?
Donde trabaja (nombre de compañía y dirección)?
Cuantas horas trabaja por semana?
Qué tipo de competencias se necesitan para este cargo? Es preciso hablar inglés? Tener experiencia con este tipo de trabajo? Tener un certificado de competencias? Etc.
Trabaja horas extras? Le pagan por estas?
Cuanto le pagan (salario de base y para horas extras)?
Puede tener promociones? De qué tipo?

3) Hay otros trabajadores estrangeros en la empresa donde trabaja ahora?
Qué proporción representan?
En qué país nacieron?
Les ve y habla con ellos cada día?
Qué proporción son negros? Asiáticos?
Les ve y habla con ellos cada día?

4) Cómo puede describir su patrono/empleador?
Le paga bién?
Le da otro tipo de compensiciones o vantajas: transportación, alojamiento, traductores, seguridad social, primas (si sí, en qué se basan: seguridad, productividad,...), etc.?
Tiene flexibilidad en horarios de trabajo?
Le da bastante trabajo? De buena calidad?
Trata bién a imigrantes en su empresa? Porqué?

5) Puede describir el proceso que encontró para obtener este cargo? (formularios, documentos de imigración, examen de competencia o de otro tipo, etc.)

6) Qué era el título de la cargo que tenía antes de este?
Qué eran sus características?
Cuando empezó con este cargo?
Donde trabajaba (nombre de compañía y dirección)?
Cuantas horas trabajaba por semana?
Qué tipo de competencias se necesitaban para este cargo? Era preciso hablar inglés? Tener experiencia con este tipo de trabajo? Tener un certificado de competencias? Etc.
Trabajaba horas extras? Le pagaban por estas?
Cuanto le pagaban (salario de base y para horas extras)?
Podía tener promociones? De qué tipo?

7) Había otros trabajadores estrangeros en la empresa?
Qué proporción representaban?
En qué país nacieron?
Les veía y hablaba con ellos cada día?
Qué proporción eran negros? Asiáticos?
Les veía y hablaba con ellos cada día?

8) Cómo puede describir su patrono/empleador?
Le pagaba bién?
Le daba otro tipo de compensiciones o vantajas: transportación, alojamiento, traductores, seguridad social, primas (si sí, en qué se basaban: seguridad, productividad,...), etc.?
Tenía flexibilidad en horarios de trabajo?
Le daba bastante trabajo? De buena calidad?
Trataba bién a imigrantes en su empresa? Porqué?

9) Puede describir el proceso que encontró para obtener este cargo? (formularios, documentos de imigración, examen de competencia o de otro tipo, etc.)

10) Porqué no se quedó en esta empresa? (Le despedieron, encontró un mejor puesto, volvió a Mejico para un rato, y sí, porqué, etc.)

11) Qué era el título de su primer cargo en Estados Unidos?
Qué eran sus características?
Cuando empezó con este cargo?
Donde trabajaba (nombre de compañía y dirección)?
Cuantas horas trabajaba por semana?
Qué tipo de competencias se necesitaban para este cargo? Era preciso hablar inglés? Tener experiencia con este tipo de trabajo? Tener un certificado de competencias? Etc.
Trabajaba horas extras? Le pagaban por estas?
Cuanto le pagaban (salario de base y para horas extras)?
Podía tener promociones? De qué tipo?

12) Había otros trabajadores estrangeros en la empresa?
Qué proporción representaban?
En qué país nacieron?
Les veía y hablaba con ellos cada día?
Qué proporción eran negros? Asiáticos?
Les veía y hablaba con ellos cada día?

13) Cómo puede describir su patrono/empleador?
Le pagaba bién?
Le daba otro tipo de compensiciones o vantajas: transportación, alojamiento, traductores, seguridad social, primas (si sí, en qué se basaban: seguridad, productividad,...), etc.?
Tenía flexibilidad en horarios de trabajo?
Le daba bastante trabajo? De buena calidad?
Trataba bién a imigrantes en su empresa? Porqué?

14) Puede describir el proceso que encontró para obtener este cargo? (formularios, documentos de imigración, examen de competencia o de otro tipo, etc.)

15) Porqué no se quedó en esta empresa? (Le despedieron, encontró un mejor puesto, volvió a Mejico para un rato, y sí, porqué, etc.)

16) Era su primer trabajo en Estados Unidos el primer trabajo de su vida? Si no:
Qué era el título de su primer cargo?
Qué eran sus características?
Cuando empezó con este cargo?
Donde trabajaba (nombre de compañía y dirección)?

Cuantas horas trabajaba por semana?
Qué tipo de competencias se necesitaban para este cargo? Era preciso hablar inglés? Tener experiencia con este tipo de trabajo? Tener un certificado de competencias? Etc.
Trabajaba horas extras? Le pagaban por estas?
Cuanto le pagaban (salario de base y para horas extras)?
Podía tener promociones? De qué tipo?

17) Puede describir el proceso que encontró para obtener este cargo? (formularios, documentos de imigración, examen de competencia o de otro tipo, etc.)

18) Porqué no se quedó en esta empresa? (Le despedieron, encontró un mejor puesto, quería ir a Extados Unidos, y sí, porqué, etc.)

<u>3ra parte: Opiniones e impacto en la comunidad</u>

1) Sabe que muchas companías han prosperado en el sur de Luisiana en los últimos cinco años. En su opinión, porqué occurió?
Cuales son las consecuancias de este cambio?
Hay problemas a causa de eso?
Se van trabajadores a otras companías donde tienen mejores oprotunidades?
Falta mano de obra?
Para qué tipo de trabajo?
Cambió la cualidad de los trabajadores?
Ud se enfrentó a estes problemas?
Como respondió?

2) Ud a lo mejor sabe que muchos patronos empezaron emplear a Mejicanos y otros trabajadores quienes hablan Español para tener bastante obreros. Qué piensa Ud de esta estrategia?
Qué es lo que les gusta a patronos en el uso de este tipo de trabajadores?
Qué es lo que nos les gusta?
Habló Ud de esto con personas importantes, o patronos, u otra gente, en esta comunidad? Quién? Cuando?
Piensan estas personas que emplear a imigrantes va a resolver el problema de la escasez de mano de obra?

3) Qué métodos usan patronos para atraer Mejicanos y/u otros imigrantes a esta región?
Conoce otros métodos usados por otros empleadores?
Como fue Ud reclutado para su presente cargo (desde su país de origen, desde otro lugar en Estados Unidos, etc.)?

If they know that foreign-born workers have been hired in the last 12 months in their community, ask:

Puede describir la cualidad de la mano de obra en general?

Hay diferencias entre Americanos y estranjeros en la cualidad de mano de obra?
Hay un impacto en la comunidad (demanda para alojamiento, escuelas, servicios sociales, servicios bilingües, educación bilingüe, servicios médicos)?
Hay un impacto sobre sus esfuerzos personales para encontrar trabajo?
Hay un impacto en los esfuerzos de su compañía para reclutar y conservar trabajadores?
Hay un impacto en la política local, en el número de niños que nacen en la comunidad, en la coesión de la comunidad?
Imigrantes y sus familias tienen buenas relaciones con otros grupos en Morgan City?

IF THEY HAVEN'T TOLD YOU YET: Como encontro Ud el cargo que tiene ahora?

4) Cuanta renta sería perdida si empleadores en esta región no pudieran emplear a imigrantes?
Quién emplearían?
Sín la mano de obra imigrante, perderían contratos locales?
Sín la mano de obra imigrante, sufriría la cualidad de la mano de obra?
Hay diferencias importantes entre la mano de obra imigrante y otro tipo?

5) Como piensa que los imigrantes se integran en esta comunidad?
Hay un efecto sobre el bienestar general, respecto a alojamiento, criminalidad, percepción de la criminalidad, fertilidad de las mujeres, etc.?
Hay un efecto sobre la economía local, como inversiones o apertura de tiendas por imigrantes y/u otra gente?
Hay un efecto sobre la demanda de alojamiento barato, sistema de educación (escuelas y servicios bilingües), servicios sociales, servicios médicos (hospitales, etc.)?
Hay un efectto en la vida política local?
Hay un efecto en la vida religiosa, en asociaciones deportivas, actividades comunitarias?
Ud y sus hijos tiene buenas relaciones con miembres de otros grupos en la comunidad?

6) Hay gente aquí quien hace cosas para que los imigrantes se sienten más a sus anchas en esta comunidad?
Hay gente quien les da servicios en su vida cotidiana (comida, limpieza de la ropa, cancha de futbol, servicios religiosos en español, etc.)?
Cuando empezaron estos servicios? Quién les proporciona?

<u>4rta parte: Imigrantes en esta comunidad</u>

Donde vive?
Hay otros imigrantes en su hogar?
Hay otros imigrantes en su barrio? Cuantos?
Qué proporción son ilegales, residentes o ciudadanos de Estados Unidos (recibieron la amnistia en los últimos diez años?)?
Vive con su familia? Quién?
Qué estatuto tienen?
Qué actividades tienen en esta comunidad?

Envia dinero a Mejico? Cuanto cada mes? Trae regalos cuando viaja a Mejico? Qué tipo? Con qué frecuencia?
Viaja frecuentemente a su lugar de origen en Mejico? Porqué (visitar a familia o amigos, cuidar una finca o otro tipo de empresa, para festivales, etc.)?
Piensa que va a quedarse en esta comunidad definitivamente?
Piensa que va a volver a Mejicodefinitivamente? Cuando?

APPENDIX 1.5

EMPLOYER SOLICITATION LETTER

LABOR MIGRATION IN LOUISIANA

June 11, 1998

Dear:

We are studying the impact of the offshore drilling industry on the labor force in port communities in Louisiana. In the past few years, offshore drilling has rapidly intensified labor demands. As a result, many immigrants are now reportedly working in Louisiana port cities, even though the state has not traditionally been a common destination area for immigrants in the past. We want to understand how this new immigrant presence affects local communities.

To obtain information for our study, we are meeting with community leaders like you in several port cities in Louisiana. We believe it is essential to hear directly from you about how well immigrants integrate in the local workforce and in the community and about the overall impact of immigration on your community. You are part of a group of people chosen to represent New Iberia.

The project is conducted by a team of researchers from Louisiana State University and the University of Southwestern Louisiana. A member of the team will soon contact you and ask to speak with you briefly about these issues.

Your cooperation is extremely important. It is only with your help that we will be able to understand the impact of the offshore drilling industry on the workforce in local communities. We ask that you please participate in our study. At all times we will protect the privacy of participants and not reveal their identities, unless legally compelled.

We thank you in advance for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Katharine M. Donato, PhD
Principal Investigator
Department of Sociology
Louisiana State University
(504) 388-5357

Carl Leon Bankston III, PhD
Senior Investigator
Department of Sociology
University of Southwestern Louisiana
(318) 482-5377

LABOR MIGRATION IN LOUISIANA

June 11, 1998

Dear:

We are studying the impact of the offshore drilling industry on the labor force in port communities in Louisiana. In the past few years, offshore drilling has rapidly intensified labor demands. As a result, many immigrants are now reportedly working in Louisiana port cities, even though the state has not traditionally been a common destination area for immigrants in the past. We want to understand this new demand for labor and how it affects employers and local communities.

To obtain information for our study, we are meeting with employers like you in several port cities in Louisiana. We believe it is essential to hear directly from you about how your labor needs have changed. Your company is one of those chosen to represent Morgan City.

The project is conducted by a team of researchers from Louisiana State University and the University of Southwestern Louisiana. A member of the team will soon contact you and ask to speak with you briefly about these issues.

Your cooperation is extremely important. It is only with your help that we will be able to understand the impact of the offshore drilling industry on the workforce in local communities. We ask that you please participate in our study. At all times we will protect the privacy of participants and not reveal their identities, unless legally compelled.

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APPENDIX 1.6

PORT FOURCHON DESCRIPTION

Port Fourchon

Port Fourchon, located at the mouth of Bayou Lafourche and adjacent to the Gulf of Mexico, is a multi-use port that primarily serves the oil industry but may also serve commercial shipping, fishing, and seafood industries. In fact, Port Fourchon is "...the most significant port in the state for deepwater drilling." It is strategically located within a forty mile radius of more than 600 offshore oil platforms, making it a key cite for servicing the ships and rigs (http://www.portfourchonla.com/).

Although other nearby ports service the oil industry, Port Fourchon has a number of assets that make it attractive to the offshore drilling industry. First, Port Fourchon boasts a central location. The U.S. Army Corp of Engineers found that over the next thirty years almost 60 percent of Louisiana offshore drilling will be within the service area of the port (http://www.portfourchonla.com/). Furthermore, Port Fourchon is large and has considerable depth – two attributes that are necessary to service large incoming ships, and make it "the hottest thing to the Gulf of Mexico" (04206). Another community leader describes Port Fourchon as vital to the oil industry and the nation as a whole. "The Gulf of Mexico and its deep water discoveries is becoming the dominant player in our domestic energy...and Port Fourchon is tied in to close to 75% of all of that resource...[therefore is has become a] strategic place on this earth for supplying the United States with oil and gas"(04207).

One key asset of Port Fourchon is that it houses C-Port, a facility that services off-shore vessels with one-stop service. The design allows vessels to dock and load fuel and other important supplies in one dock rather than having to stop at several docks. One report estimates that it cuts turnaround time by more than 50 percent (Keithly 2001). C-Port is the only facility of its kind in the United States, and it has proven to be efficient for the oil industry. One Port Fourchon employer describes the benefits of C-Port this way. "Like I said it is a one-of-a-kind facility. One of the big things about the oil field is...its turn around. You pay so much for a day for a boat [so]...turning the boat around is real important because the longer it takes you to turn around, the more money and time you are spending and losing. In this facility here, you can take on water, fuel, chemicals, and liquid mud ...normally you have to go to different docks and...it takes an hour...to go to another dock. If they are open fine, and if they are not then you have to wait your turn and that really slows down your turn around...time. This C-Port gives us a chance to turn the boat around as fast as possible. It is cost effective." (04101)

Another employee describes C-Port's efficiency, "This place here is...the one stop shop. It is unique, it is the first of its kind. We have different companies here who have come in to...offer services as the boats come in....It is...really going strong...we have vessels that come in and can do a turn around ratio of...instead of 4 or 5 days, they can come in and be in and out, loaded and off loaded...in about 12 to 24 hours. It is saving the oil companies...a ton of money by being able to have the boat back out there with the equipment faster"(04105).

Because of the aforementioned assets along with the rise in deepwater drilling over the years, Port Fourchon has rapidly expanded to meet the needs of the growing industry. By 1999 the port hosted 124 companies compared to only two in 1978 (Keithly 2001). Not only has the

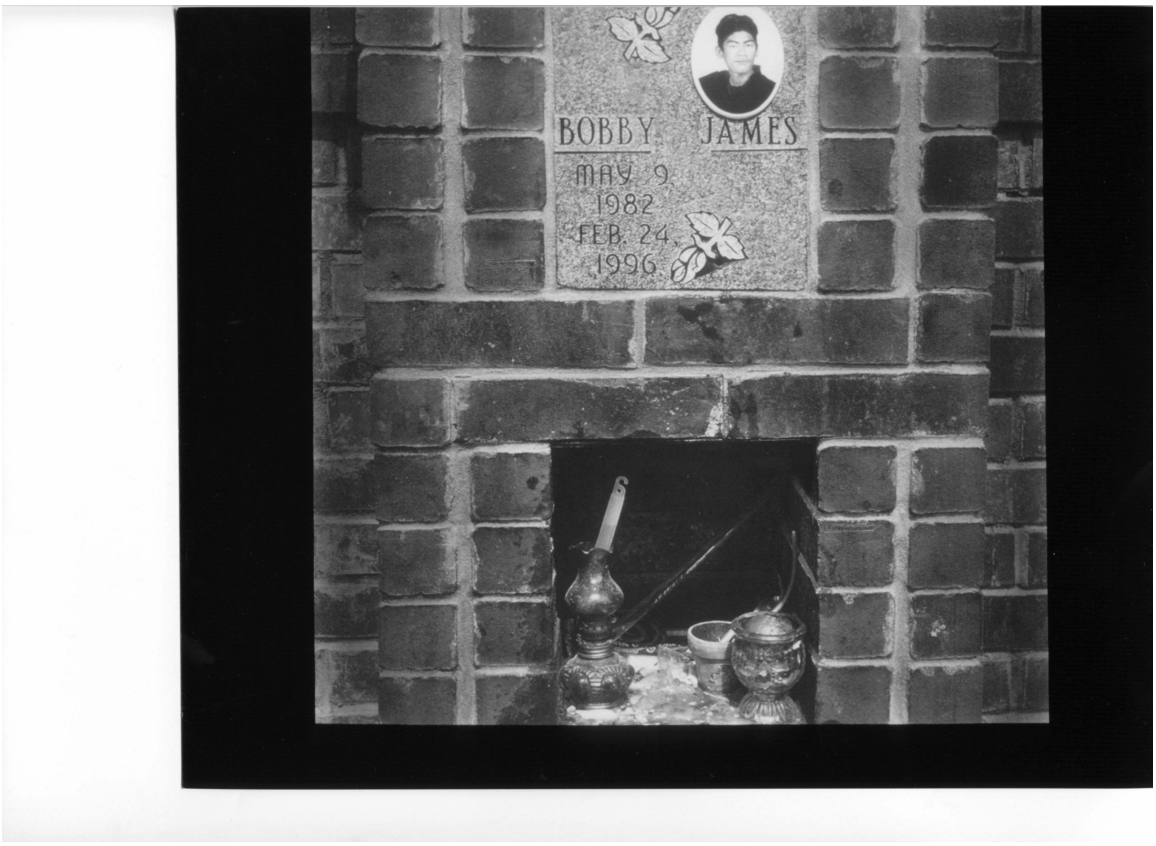
port grown in the number of leases, but it has also grown in the amount of developed usable waterfront property. Keithly (2001) reported that acreage increased from fewer than 5,000 feet in 1980 compared to approximately 25,000 feet today. The executive director of the Port of Fourchon, Ted Falgout, expects this growth to continue and for Port Fourchon to become the premier port servicing oil and gas companies in the Gulf.

Recently, the Greater Lafourche Port Commission took over the sponsorship of an airport just north of Port Fourchan and purchased 1,200 acres of land surrounding it. The commission hopes to develop an industrial park around the airport to support the oil and gas activities already going on at the Port. Together, Port Fourchan, the industrial park, and airport will permit more people to travel to and work in the area. Moreover, the Commission continues to build new land by elevating low lands and dredging open water. To date, approximately 700 acres have been developed and another 1,500 more are being planned (http://www.portfourchonla.com/).

Therefore, port development in Port Fourchan and the new acquisition of surrounding territory is relatively new. As a result, our interviews with employers in Port Fourchon suggested no routine hiring of foreign-born workers who were residents in the local community. Some employers did report hiring out-of-state workers who generally work offshore for several days and then return home for the next seven days. These commuters are a stable part of the off-shore labor force. However, because they have little, if any, interaction with Port Fourchan residents, we do not examine their local impact on the community.

APPENDIX 1.7

PHOTOGRAPHS


BOBBY JAMES
MAY 9
1982
FEB. 24,
1996


WAT THAMMARATTANARAM


NU VUONG HOA BINH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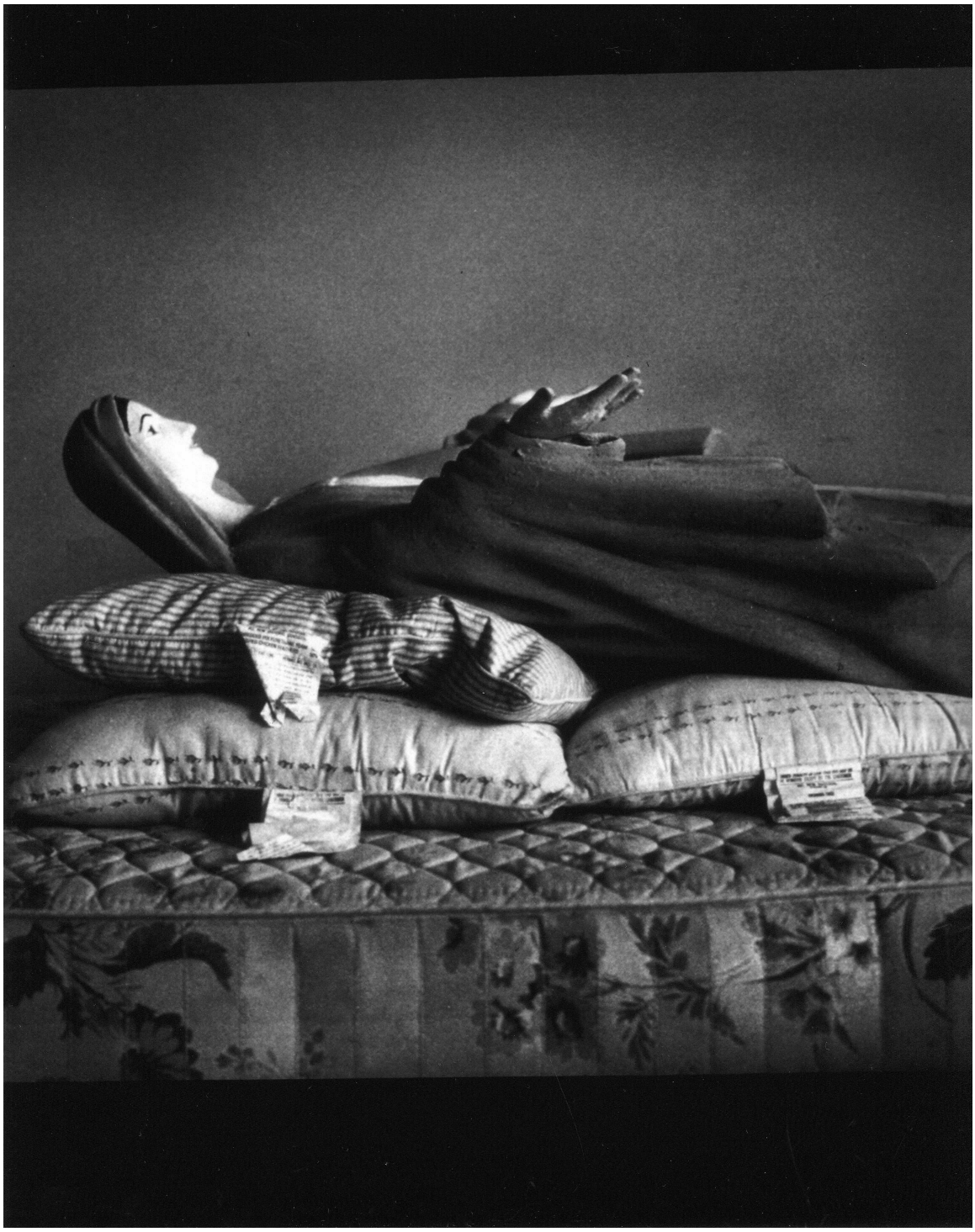
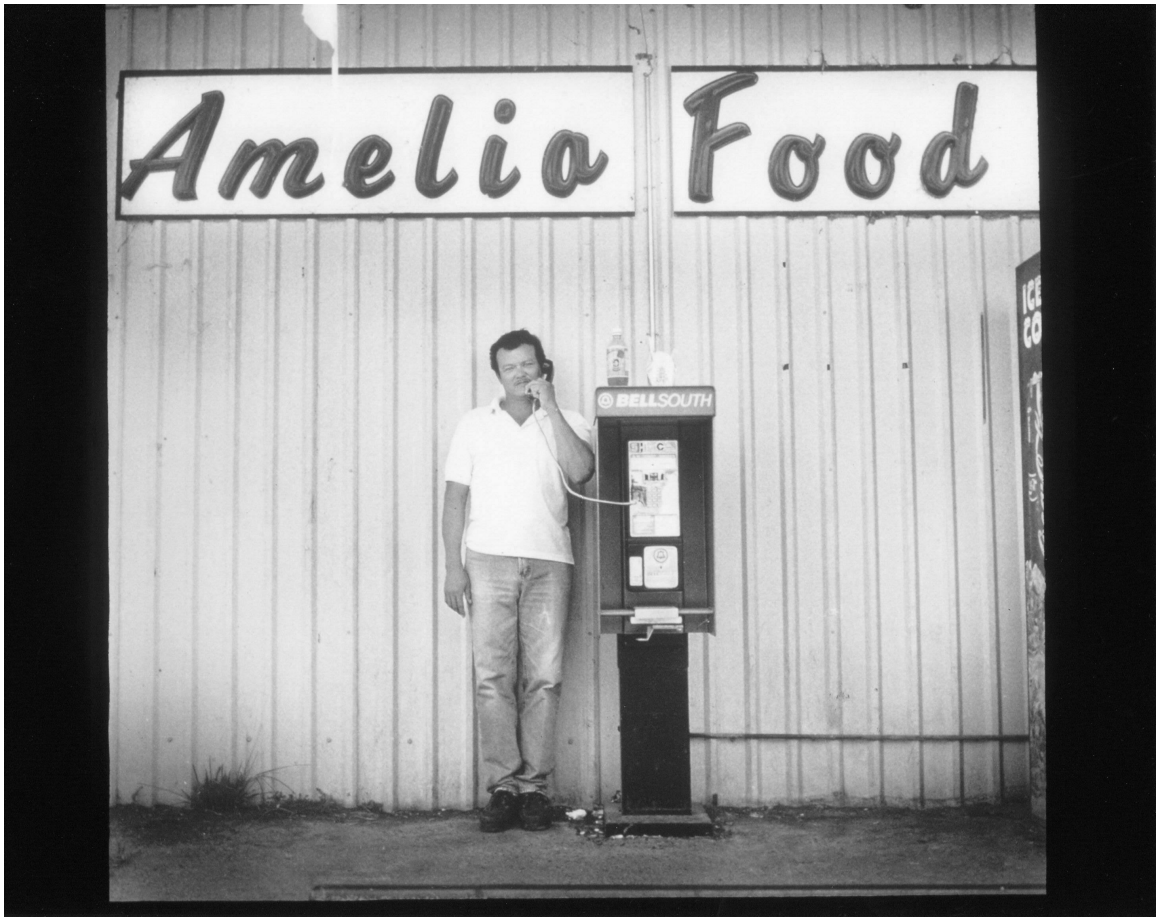



LA IGLESIA DE
LA VIDA DE DIOS
AND
CALVARY BAPTIST
MISSION
MEAL & MESSAGE
START AT 7:30 PM
EVERY SATURDAY
384-5034


Amelia Food
BELLSOUTH


LAUNDRY $.60 LB.
8 LB. MIN. CHARGE
$5.00
7
8


#03

The Department of the Interior Mission

As the Nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has responsibility for most of our nationally owned public lands and natural resources. This includes fostering sound use of our land and water resources; protecting our fish, wildlife, and biological diversity; preserving the environmental and cultural values of our national parks and historical places; and providing for the enjoyment of life through outdoor recreation. The Department assesses our energy and mineral resources and works to ensure that their development is in the best interests of all our people by encouraging stewardship and citizen participation in their care. The Department also has a major responsibility for American Indian reservation communities and for people who live in island territories under U.S. administration.

The Minerals Management Service Mission

As a bureau of the Department of the Interior, the Minerals Management Service's (MMS) primary responsibilities are to manage the mineral resources located on the Nation's Outer Continental Shelf (OCS), collect revenue from the Federal OCS and onshore Federal and Indian lands, and distribute those revenues.

Moreover, in working to meet its responsibilities, the **Offshore Minerals Management Program** administers the OCS competitive leasing program and oversees the safe and environmentally sound exploration and production of our Nation's offshore natural gas, oil and other mineral resources. The MMS **Minerals Revenue Management** meets its responsibilities by ensuring the efficient, timely and accurate collection and disbursement of revenue from mineral leasing and production due to Indian tribes and allottees, States and the U.S. Treasury.

The MMS strives to fulfill its responsibilities through the general guiding principles of: (1) being responsive to the public's concerns and interests by maintaining a dialogue with all potentially affected parties and (2) carrying out its programs with an emphasis on working to enhance the quality of life for all Americans by lending MMS assistance and expertise to economic development and environmental protection.