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Immigration Policy, Source Countries and Immigrant Skills: Australia, Canada and the United States

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**IMMIGRATION POLICY, SOURCE COUNTRIES AND IMMIGRANT SKILLS:
AUSTRALIA, CANADA AND THE UNITED STATES**

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Abstract

IMMIGRATION POLICY, SOURCE COUNTRIES AND IMMIGRANT SKILLS:
AUSTRALIA, CANADA AND THE UNITED STATES

Barry R. Chiswick

This paper is concerned with the changes over the past four decades in the source countries and skills of immigrants. The changing mix of source countries and the skills of immigrants are shown to be determined, in part, by the receiving country's immigration policies. The paper analyzes whether the more recent major source countries and more recent immigrant cohorts from individual countries have a lower skill level (as measured by schooling and earnings) than more traditional source countries and earlier immigrant cohorts.

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IMMIGRATION POLICY, SOURCE COUNTRIES AND IMMIGRANT SKILLS:
AUSTRALIA, CANADA AND THE UNITED STATES

Barry R. Chiswick

During the past few decades the major English-speaking immigrant-receiving countries, Australia, Canada and the United States, have experienced dramatic shifts in the source countries of their immigrants. The absolute number and share of immigrants from the "traditional" areas, the British Isles and, more recently, the continent of Europe, have declined. The number and share of immigrants from nontraditional sources, particularly the less developed countries (LDCs), has increased. Immigration to the United States is now predominantly from the LDCs in Asia and Latin America. Although Canada and Australia have not experienced large-scale immigration from Latin America, immigration from South and East Asia has increased sharply.

These shifts in the source countries of immigrants have arisen in large part because of changes in the criteria for rationing immigration visas. They have also arisen from exogenous factors, including wars and political upheavals that generate refugees and the declining real cost of transportation and communication. These developments have major implications for the skill level of immigrants. Changes in the skills of immigrants alter the impact of immigration on the level of income of the native population and on the distribution of this income among groups defined by skill level and the ownership of factors of production. As a result, changes in immigration flows are likely to have implications for

various aspects of immigration policy, including the maximum number of legal immigrants, the criteria for rationing the limited number of immigration visas among the vastly larger number of potential applicants, and the resources and policies devoted to enforcing immigration law.

The three major English-speaking immigrant-receiving countries differ in institutional arrangements regarding immigration. In particular, Australia and Canada use a "point system" that permits combining various characteristics; they place a relatively heavy weight on the likely productivity of the immigrants in the destination. In contrast, the United States uses a "preference system" that provides no scope for combining characteristics to raise one's place in the queue and relies nearly exclusively on kinship characteristics for rationing nonrefugee visas.

The countries also differ in exogenous factors, including geography. The cost of migration to the United States from some less developed countries, whether legally or illegally, is reduced by the proximity of Mexico and the Caribbean island countries. The United States and Mexico, two countries whose real wages differ by more than those of any other two contiguous countries, share a rugged 2,000 mile long border. Under these circumstances it may be nearly impossible to "control" the border without a massive increase in paramilitary border patrol activities, without developing an internal passport (national identity card), or without severe penalties on apprehended illegal aliens, all of which are anathema to Americans. Border patrol activities for Australia and Canada are eased by geography. Australia is an island and Canada's only immediate neighbor is the United States, which has been described as a 1,500-mile-wide cordon sanitaire.

Far more important, however, for the purposes of legal immigration may be the similarities among the countries. They are all high-income democracies that welcome and protect immigrants. Their immigration policies all give at least some scope to family reunification and they have all accepted relatively large numbers of refugees.

This paper focuses on the interrelations among immigration policy, source countries, and immigrant skills. Section I documents the changing source countries of immigrants to the U.S., Australia and Canada. Reasons for changes in the skill level or "quality" of immigrants since World War II are discussed in Section II. The earnings and schooling levels of immigrants are analyzed in Section III to determine whether immigration has shifted in favor of countries whose migrants have lower levels of earnings and schooling. The recent controversy as to whether there has been a decline in the "unmeasured" dimensions of the skills of immigrants is examined in Section IV. The paper closes with a synthesis of the findings and a discussion of the implications for immigration policy.

I. Source Countries of Immigrants

A. United States

According to the administrative records of the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), as recently as the 1950s 70 percent of the legal immigrants arriving in the United States were from Europe and Canada (Table 1). Mexico contributed about 13 percent, other parts of the Western Hemisphere 10 percent, and Asia only 6 percent. By the first half of the 1980s Europe and Canada contributed only 14 percent, and the absolute number declined in spite of the increase in the total number of immigrants. The share of legal immigrants from Mexico showed little change. The proportion

Table 1
 IMMIGRANTS TO THE UNITED STATES
 BY COUNTRY OF BIRTH AND PERIOD OF IMMIGRATION, 1951-85
 (Percent)

<u>Country</u>	<u>1981-85</u>	<u>1971-80</u>	<u>1961-70</u>	<u>1951-60</u>
United Kingdom and Eire	2.7	3.0	8.2	10.9
Other Europe	8.9	14.8	29.1	48.4
Canada	2.2	2.6	8.6	10.9
Mexico	11.7	14.2	13.3	12.7
Cuba	1.8	6.2	7.7	3.1
Other America	21.9	19.9	18.0	6.7
Asia	39.8	36.4	13.4	6.2
Africa	8.0	2.0	1.2	0.7
Australia and New Zealand	2.6	0.4	0.4	0.2
Other	0.4	0.4	0.2	0.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Annual Number	572,881	449,330	332,170	251,500
No. as Percent of Population ^a	0.25	0.21	0.17	0.15

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1985 (105th Ed.), Washington, D.C.: U.S.G.P.O., 1984, Table 7, p. 9, and Table 125, p. 86; and U.S. Department of Justice, Statistical Yearbook of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, 1985, Washington, D.C.: U.S.G.P.O., 1986, Table IMM1.2.

a. Annual number as percent of total population at midpoint of interval.

from other parts of the Western Hemisphere (particularly the Caribbean and Central America) grew sharply to 24 percent. Asian immigration increased fifteenfold and accounted for an impressive 40 percent of all immigrants in the early 1980s.

The changes in the source countries of immigration (flows) gradually change the distribution by country of origin of the foreign-born population (stock). It is the stock data that are most relevant for understanding the relation between immigrant skill and the labor market. There is no simple mapping of data on past flows of immigrants from the INS administrative records to date on the stock of the foreign-born from Census Bureau surveys and censuses. Differences by country of origin in mortality and especially in re-emigration rates, and in the extent to which illegal aliens are included in census or survey data, serve as wedges between the flow and stock data (Warren and Peck, 1980; Passel and Woodrow, 1984; Jasso and Rosenzweig, 1982). Furthermore, the date an alien becomes an immigrant (permanent resident alien) may differ from the date when the person first came to the U.S. to stay, the typical census or survey question.

Table 2 shows the stock of foreign-born adult men (age 25 to 64) in the U.S. labor market by country of birth and duration of residence, as reported in the 1980 Census. European and Canadian immigrants are clearly a smaller proportion of the recent immigrant cohorts, while the proportion of Asian immigrants has increased. The larger share of Mexican immigrants in the census stock data than in the INS flow data may reflect the enumeration in the 1980 Census of about two million illegal aliens of whom about one-half are Mexican nationals (Passel and Woodrow, 1984).

Table 2

DISTRIBUTION OF FOREIGN-BORN ADULT MEN BY COUNTRY OF BIRTH
AND SELECTED PERIODS OF IMMIGRATION, UNITED STATES, 1980^a
(Percent)

<u>Country of Birth</u>	<u>Period of Immigration</u>				
	<u>1975-80^b</u>	<u>1965-69</u>	<u>1950-59</u>	<u>Before 1950</u>	<u>All Years</u>
Europe/Canada	21.8	30.4	62.5	68.9	38.7
English speaking ^c	6.8	7.3	12.8	21.4	9.7
Other	15.0	23.1	49.7	47.5	29.0
America ^d	33.8	43.8	23.1	15.3	34.7
Mexico	19.1	18.0	13.6	10.0	17.4
Cuba	1.0	9.0	3.6	1.2	5.1
British West Indies	2.7	3.7	1.2	1.3	2.5
Other	11.0	13.1	4.7	2.8	9.7
Asia	32.1	16.9	6.8	5.9	16.9
China	5.5	4.5	2.1	3.3	4.0
Philippines	5.0	4.7	1.6	1.8	3.7
South Asia	7.6	4.5	0.9	0.2	4.0
Southeast Asia	7.1	1.1	0.7	0.1	2.2
Other	6.9	2.1	1.5	0.5	3.0
Africa	3.8	2.1	0.8	0.6	2.1
Middle East	3.6	2.4	1.9	1.1	2.5
Country not reported	5.2	4.4	4.8	8.2	5.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<u>No. of observations</u>	<u>6,224</u>	<u>5,250</u>	<u>6,406</u>	<u>4,062</u>	<u>32,073</u>

Table 2 continued:

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1980 Census of Population, Public Use Sample, C File, 1/100.

- a. One-in-a-hundred sample of foreign-born men aged 25-64 in 1980 who worked and had nonzero earnings in 1979.
- b. Includes only the first three months of 1980.
- c. English-speaking developed countries, including Australia, Canada, Ireland, New Zealand, and United Kingdom.
- d. Excludes Canada.

B. Australia

Historically, three factors have influenced Australia's control over the number and the source countries of its immigrants. These are the system for rationing immigrant visas, the financial assistance provided directly to immigrants, and the absence of land borders that can be penetrated by individuals denied immigrant visas. Variations over time in the first two factors have influenced the timing and sources of immigrants.

For most of its history Australia relied primarily on a "British only" policy. Prior to World War II nearly all immigrants to Australia were of British origin, coming from Britain, Ireland and New Zealand. Over the past four decades, however, there has been a dramatic broadening in the source regions (Table 3). The first major change in policy came in the early years after World War II (1947-51) with the acceptance of Displaced Persons from Central and Eastern Europe. Immigration then increased from other parts of Europe, especially Southern Europe (Italy and Greece) during the 1950s and 1960s (Table 3). By the early 1960s about half of the immigrants came from the European continent and less than two-fifths from the British Isles.

During the 1960s the sources of immigration moved eastward to the Middle East (Turkey and Lebanon) and Asia. The Asian immigrants were coming primarily from the current and former Commonwealth countries -- India, Sri Lanka, Malaysia and Singapore. Although immigration from East Asia increased, the numbers remained relatively small. Immigration from a non-Commonwealth part of Asia increased sharply, however, with the admission of Southeast Asian refugees starting in the late 1970s.

Australia's immigration experience differs from that of the U.S. in other important respects. There are very few illegal aliens in Australia. It has been estimated that in 1980 there were 60,000 illegal aliens in

Table 3
 IMMIGRANTS TO AUSTRALIA BY COUNTRY OF CITIZENSHIP
 AND YEAR OF IMMIGRATION, SELECTED YEARS, 1951 TO 1978
 (Percent)

<u>Country</u>	<u>1985^a</u>	<u>1978</u>	<u>1971</u>	<u>1961</u>	<u>1951</u>
United Kingdom and Eire	16.6	24.5	38.1	38.7	55.5 ^c
Other Europe	12.7	13.7	32.7	47.5	43.0
United States and Canada	3.9	3.0	6.5	1.3	0.1 ^c
Other America	4.4	3.6	3.3	2.5	NR
Asia	38.0 ^d	31.8	11.8	4.5	0.4 ^e
Africa	5.7	6.0	3.7	3.7	NR
New Zealand	16.4	15.2	3.3	1.5	NR
Other ^b	2.3	2.2	0.7	0.3	1.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number	92,330	68,419	155,525	95,407	132,542
No. as Percent of Population	0.59	0.47	1.18	0.90	1.57

Source: Year Book, Australia, Canberra: Australia Bureau of Statistics, various years and Review '86, Canberra: Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, 1986.

- a. Country of last residence.
 - b. Includes Oceania, other areas, and "stateless."
 - c. Canada included in U.K. data for 1951.
 - d. Includes non-Asian parts of the Middle East.
 - e. Includes only Chinese.
- NR = Not reported separately.

Australia compared with 3 to 6 million in the U.S. (Storer, 1982, and Siegel et al., 1981). The ratio of immigrants to the total population is much greater in Australia; it has varied from double to four times the U.S. ratio. In addition, Australian immigration has much greater year-to-year variability than immigration into the U.S.. This arises in part because of explicit Australian government policy to tailor the number of immigrants to the state of the economy and to budgetary considerations (Kelley and Schmidt, 1978, and Perlez, 1987). It may also arise from the greater relative instability inherent in the smaller absolute number of immigrants. In addition, Australia has a relatively smaller "queue" or backlog of immigrants which for the U.S. serves as a means of smoothing the stream of immigrants.

C. Canada

The historical pattern of immigration flows into Canada was not as exclusively British as for Australia, nor as broadly distributed as for the United States. The diversity in source countries increased sharply after World War II, following patterns similar to those seen for the U.S. and Australia.

The share of immigrants from the European continent, particularly from southern Europe (Italy) and Eastern Europe (Poland, Baltic States) increased sharply in the period immediately after World War II, partly because Canada accepted a large number of Displaced Persons (Table 4). In 1951, three-quarters of the nearly 200,000 immigrants were from the continent of Europe, and fewer than one in five were from the British Isles or the U.S.

The absolute number of immigrants declined during the 1950s, reaching a nadir of only 72,000 in 1961. The sharpest decline was among those of

Table 4
 IMMIGRANTS TO CANADA BY COUNTRY OF BIRTH
 AND YEAR OF IMMIGRATION, SELECTED YEARS, 1951 TO 1981
 (Percent)

<u>Country</u>	<u>1981</u>	<u>1971</u>	<u>1961</u>	<u>1951</u>
United Kingdom and Eire	15.3	17.4 ^b	16.4	15.8
Other Europe	19.4	29.0	58.3	76.5
United States	6.8	19.0	13.7	3.4
Other America	12.8 ^c	11.7 ^c	1.0	0.5
Asia	39.5	17.6	3.8	2.1
Africa	4.6	1.3	1.4	0.2
Australia and New Zealand	0.8	2.0	1.9	0.3
Other ^a	0.8	1.9	2.6	0.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number	128,618	121,900	71,689	194,391
No. as Percent of Population	0.53	0.57	0.39	1.39

Source: Immigration Statistics Canada, Employment and Immigration, Canada; and Canada Yearbook, Statistics Canada, various years.

- a. Includes Oceania, Commonwealth countries not identified by region, and stateless.
- b. Includes British colonies.
- c. Predominantly from British West Indies, Guyana, Argentina, and Chile.

European origin. Immigration increased during the 1960s with the U.S., the English-speaking West Indies, and especially Asia (China and South Asia) showing the largest increases. These changes in immigration flows were related to the increased anti-Vietnam War activity in the U.S., more severe restrictions on West Indian entry into Britain, and the removal of barriers to the immigration of East Asians and South Asians. The increase in Asian immigration has continued: China, India, Lebanon, the Philippines, Pakistan and Vietnam have been the major source countries over the past decade.

By 1981 the traditional source regions provided only a minority of Canada's immigrants (Table 4). Only 15 percent were from the U.K. and Eire, 7 percent from the U.S. and 20 percent from other parts of Europe. An impressive 40 percent were from Asia, with each of the major sub-regions playing an important role. The contribution of other parts of the Western Hemisphere increased to 13 percent, with the majority coming from the English-speaking West Indian and Caribbean countries.

II. Changing Circumstances and Immigrant Skills

Immigrant skills can be analyzed within the context of a model of the "supply" of immigrants to a destination and the destination's "demand" for immigrants. Economic factors, such as relative earnings across countries and the cost of migration, and noneconomic push factors, such as revolutions and wars that create refugees, may be viewed as determining immigrant supply. Demand factors for immigrants are reflected in immigration law, which determines the number of and the criteria for rationing visas for legal migrants, and the degree of enforcement (deterrence), which determines the extent of illegal immigration.

It is shown that divergent trends may have been affecting the "quality" of immigrants to Australia, Canada and the United States, with some forces increasing and others decreasing immigrant quality. The relative strengths of these forces may also vary systematically among the source countries and among the countries of destination with the extent of immigration based on skills, kinship, and illegal migration. The opening of skill-based immigration opportunities, particularly for Asians in all three destination countries in the late 1960s, undoubtedly tended to raise immigrant quality. However, the decline in the cost of transportation and communication relative to wages, the increase in the importance of kinship migration from Asia and the increase in refugee immigration may have had opposite effects. In addition, for the United States the large increase in the illegal alien population would also tend to diminish the average skill level of immigrants.

A. Trends in Supply

Trends in immigration supply can be related to the economic incentives for migration and the noneconomic forces that create refugees.

Immigration Incentives and Costs. One hypothesis advanced for a change in immigrant quality over time relates to the differential incentive for migration on the basis of ability. In general, there is a greater incentive for migration for the more able. This can be shown in the framework of a simple human capital investment model: Let W_{ij} be earnings, where $i = o$ in the origin, $i = d$ in the destination, $j = h$ for high-skilled workers, and $j = u$ for low-skilled (unskilled) workers. The equation $C_j = pW_{oj} + D$ represents the total cost of migration, where p is the proportion of the year devoted to migration and D is the out-of-pocket cost. If high-ability

workers earn 100k% more than low-ability workers in both the origin and the destination, and if wage differentials are constant over a long work-life, then

$$r_l = \frac{W_{du} - W_{ou}}{pW_{ou} + D},$$

and

$$r_h = \frac{W_{dh} - W_{oh}}{pW_{oh} + D} = \frac{(1+k)(W_{du} - W_{ou})}{(1+k)pW_{ou} + D} = \frac{W_{du} - W_{ou}}{pW_{ou} + D/(1+k)},$$

where r_u and r_h are the rates of return to migration for low-ability and high-ability workers respectively. Under the conditions specified, the rate of return to the investment in migration is greater for those with greater ability ($r_h > r_u$) as long as there are out-of-pocket costs ($D > 0$). The difference in rates of return is smaller the lower are the out-of-pocket costs (D) relative to foregone earnings (W_{ou} and p).

The simple model implies that migrants are favorably self-selected as long as there are out-of-pocket costs. It also implies that the favorable self-selection is more intense the greater the ratio of out-of-pocket (direct) costs to time costs (units of time and value of time). Furthermore the degree of favorable self-selection is intensified if the rather realistic assumption is made that those with greater ability in the labor market are also more efficient in migration, that is, they require less time (p) or out-of-pocket expenditures (D) than the less able. This would certainly follow if decision-making skills are an important component of human capital (Schultz, 1975). If the more able are 100e percent more efficient in the migration decision where "e" is the efficiency parameter for migration, the rate of return from migration for high ability workers is

$r_h^* = \frac{r_h}{1-e}$. This intensifies the favorable self-selectivity of economic migrants.

Numerous empirical tests for the U.S. and other countries, studying internal and international migration, lend support to the favorable self-selection hypothesis.¹ It has been possible, however, to develop alternative models that under some circumstances imply negative or adverse migration selectivity. These models have, for example, been based on asymmetric information (Katz and Stark, 1984) or country differences in relative skill differentials (Borjas, 1986). The alternatives are either not tested or when tested not found to be consistent with the data. Indeed, favorable self-selection in migration seems to be one of those few findings in economics that are truly robust across time, space and circumstances.

If the supply of immigrants increases because of an increase in economic rewards from migration, the model implies that the most able would have a greater incentive for migration and would tend to do so sooner, while the less able would migrate later if at all. This factor may be of some importance in temporarily raising immigrant quality when new sources of immigrants are tapped. However, the potential supply of high-ability immigrants from most countries is replenished each year by younger cohorts. In addition, the number of immigrants admitted to most destination countries from most source countries is small relative even to the number of high-ability additions to their labor force.

The difference in the incentive for migration by skill level is related to the ratio of the out-of-pocket costs of migration (D) to the forgone earnings cost (W_0 and p). The smaller the out-of-pocket costs relative to the value of the time costs, the smaller is the differential incentive for

migration. With the growth in productivity during the period after World War II, transportation and communication costs have fallen relative to wages. It is to be expected that self-selection of immigrants would now be less intense than in the past.

Refugees. People who leave their home country out of fear for the safety of their lives and property are likely to have fewer of the characteristics associated with high labor market performance than are those who migrate primarily for better job opportunities (see Chiswick, 1978a, 1979). Because economic factors are not the primary determinant of migration for refugees, refugees are less likely to be self-selected on the basis of expected high economic success in the destination, and, particularly if the migration was not anticipated, they are less likely to have transferable skills. Refugees have been found to have a more difficult adjustment to the destination labor market than economic migrants.

Revolutions, civil wars, and conventional wars between countries typically create refugees. The United States has accepted a large number of refugees in the past four decades, from the Displaced Persons in Europe (in the aftermath of World War II), the Chinese Revolution (since 1949), the Hungarian and Polish uprisings (1956), Cuba (since 1959), and Indochina (since 1975), among other places. Australia and Canada have also accepted relatively large numbers of refugees, particularly from Europe and Indochina. Thus while refugee flows are episodic and vary more in magnitude from year to year than the flows of economic migrants, they have been a continuous feature of the migration experience of the past four decades. However, the magnitude of refugee migration has been growing over time.

B. Trends in Demand

Trends in the demand for immigrants can be related to the criteria for rationing immigrant visas and the effectiveness with which immigration law is enforced. This section will first discuss the rationing of non-refugee visas in the United States, Australia and Canada. It will then consider illegal immigration. Although illegal aliens exist in all immigrant-receiving countries, the relative number and impact of illegal aliens in the United States is much greater than in Australia or Canada.

Occupational and Kinship Visas. A country can control the size, timing, and sources of legal immigration through the mechanisms it uses to ration immigration visas.

United States. From the 1920s until the 1965 Amendments to the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952, immigration to the U.S. was determined largely by the "national origins" quota system. Under this system immigration from the independent countries in Asia was either barred or severely restricted by extremely low country quotas (about 100 per year), in contrast to the large and often unfilled quotas for Northwestern Europe.² During the 1950s most Asian immigrants were refugees or war brides, and they were few in number.

Under the 1965 Amendments, kinship with a U.S. citizen or resident alien is the primary criterion used to ration non-refugee visas for immigrants from the Eastern Hemisphere. A large immigration from Asia was not expected under the kinship criterion. It had been many decades since the large Chinese and Japanese migrations of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and few Asian-Americans had immediate relatives in Asia. After 1965, however, the availability of occupational preference visas (for professionals and skilled workers), and for several years

"surplus" visas for nonpreference immigrants, provided a migration opportunity for Asians with skills or capital to invest in the United States.³

As they became established in the United States, the Asian immigrants could sponsor under the kinship preferences the immigration of their relatives who could not qualify for an occupational visa or who would be near the end of the queue for such a visa. With the growth in worldwide immigration based on kinship, "surplus" visas for nonpreference immigrants disappeared. As a result of both factors, there has been a decline in the relative number of Asian immigrants admitted on the basis of their own skills. Of the Asian immigrants subject to numerical limitation, the proportion who were occupational preference principals (i.e., recipients of labor certifications) declined from 18.2 percent in 1970, to 11.9 percent in 1975, to 8.1 percent in 1981, with an increase to 9.1 percent in 1985.⁴ During this period, there was also a decline in the absolute number of Asian immigrants who were occupational preference principals, from nearly 12,000 in 1970 to less than 9,000 in 1981, but with an increase to nearly 11,000 in 1985.⁵ Thus the increased skill levels that might be expected from the introduction of the rationing of some visas explicitly on the basis of skill or investor status appear to have been mitigated after a fairly short period by the lower skill level of the relatives of the holder of an occupational visa.⁶

Australia. In the immediate post-World-War-II period Australia expanded its previous "British only" immigration policy to include a much larger number of Eastern and Southern Europeans. The majority of the immigrants came under "assisted passage" programs through which the

Australian government provided financial and other assistance for both migration and resettlement.

In 1966 there was a relaxation of Australia's restrictive entry policy toward persons not of European ancestry. The new policy allowed the entry of non-Europeans with skills or professional qualifications that were in high demand. A further relaxation occurred in 1973 with the abolition of discrimination in immigration on the basis of race, color or nationality. With the decrease in immigration quotas in this period, because of the sluggish economy, there was a sharp decline in occupationally-based immigration. Migration from Asia remained small. As immigration quotas have expanded in recent years, particularly in the occupationally based point system, an increasing proportion of immigrants are Asians with high levels of skill. With a larger Asian community settled in Australia, an increasing number of Asians are now entering as the immediate relatives of Asian-origin Australians or under the point system with some of the points obtained as relatives of Australian residents.

Canada. In the post-war period, until 1962, the primary criteria for immigration into Canada were the person's nationality, country of birth and kinship with a Canadian citizen or permanent resident. Citizens of the white English-speaking countries and France experienced little difficulty entering Canada. Immigration from other European countries by persons without a Canadian relative to serve as a sponsor was generally tied to the business cycle; more visas were issued in periods of economic expansion and fewer in recessions. By special agreements with the newly independent South Asian and later West Indian countries that were former British colonies, a small number of persons of non-European origin could enter without kinship sponsors if they had skills or professional qualifications that were in

short supply in Canada. There were also racial differences in the extent to which Canadian citizens and permanent residents could sponsor the immigration of close relatives.

Canadian immigration policy changed sharply in the 1960s. Legislation in 1962 and 1967 ended the emphasis on country of origin and the racial discrimination in the "sponsored immigrant" (close relative) requirements. For persons other than sponsored immigrants a set of selection criteria was established, based primarily on the applicant's personal characteristics. The criteria were weighted toward the applicant's skills and likely success in adjusting to Canada (e.g., fluency in English or French). Those scoring above the threshold number of points were granted a visa. A small number of points could be awarded, as in Australia, if the applicant had relatives in Canada. The adoption of the occupationally based point system apparently increased the skill level of immigrants, as well as the number and share of immigrants from Asia.

All three countries ended their European-based immigration policies during the 1960s. They all adopted policies based on kinship and skill for rationing non-refugee visas. Yet the policies differ. The U.S. places the least reliance on skill and, unlike Australia and Canada, does not allow combining skill and kinship characteristics to raise one's place in the queue.

Illegal Immigration. A growing stock of the foreign-born population who are (or who had been) illegal aliens may lower immigrant quality. For a number of reasons there has undoubtedly been an increase in the flow of illegal aliens to the United States, and this increased the proportion of low-skilled workers among the foreign born.

An increase in the incentive for migration has arisen in part because of the decline in the costs of transportation and communication relative to wages in the last four decades and in part because of an increasing real wage gap for workers of the same skill level between the United States and some less developed countries. United States immigration law acts as a barrier to the legal entry of many persons interested in migrating. There has, therefore, been an increase in the incentive for illegal migration. The decline in the resources (financial and otherwise) for the enforcement of immigration law relative to the extent of the violations has resulted in an increase in the resident illegal alien population.⁷ For low-skilled workers in neighboring low-income countries (e.g., Mexico) the economic incentives for illegal migration are very large.

Illegal aliens tend to be lower-skilled workers, and this does not arise by chance (Chiswick, 1984a and 1985). If there is a nontrivial probability of apprehension and deportation, investments in country-specific skills may be lost involuntarily. Other things the same, workers with internationally transferable skills or with very few skills will suffer the smallest loss if deported. Hence, among the pool of unsuccessful visa applicants, workers with few skills or with internationally transferable skills have a greater incentive to become illegal aliens.⁸ Since the absolute value of country-specific skills is likely to increase with a worker's overall skill level, illegal aliens would tend to be workers with few or no skills.

In addition, jobs for more highly skilled workers tend to require credentials, such as certifications, licenses, union membership, or university degrees. The credential requirement may make it more difficult for illegal aliens to mask their status. Finally, since illegal aliens

either could not qualify for or were lower in the queue for an occupational preference visa, it would be expected that they are, on average, less skilled than legal immigrants, some of whom were occupational preference principals.

This discussion of illegal aliens is a modification of the usual argument that migrants tend to be self-selected for high skill and ability. Several studies do show lower skill levels, as measured by years of schooling, years of labor market experience and occupational status, for illegal aliens. The lower wages observed for illegal aliens appear to be related primarily to their lower level of skill, including the shorter period of labor market experience with employers in the destination labor market (see, for example, Massey, 1986). The studies suggest that exploitation, defined as the payment of lower wages for workers with the same level of skill, does not appear to be a general characteristic of the illegal alien labor market.

III. The Schooling and Earnings of Immigrants

The analysis developed in the previous section provides a framework for interpreting the patterns of schooling attainment and earnings of immigrants. The discussion first considers the United States and then discusses Australia and Canada.

A. United States

The United States experience demonstrates some dramatic patterns. In spite of the rise in educational attainment worldwide and in the U.S. over the past few decades, there has been little change in the average schooling level of immigrants by period of immigration.⁹

According to the 1980 Census, the schooling level of adult foreign-born men has been about 12 years for each of the post-World War II immigrant cohorts (Table 5). This relative constancy masks dramatic changes in the components. The average educational attainment of adult male Mexican immigrants has declined nearly continuously from 8.6 years for the 1950-59 cohort to 6.8 years for the 1975-80 cohort. The educational attainment of immigrants from the British West Indies and from Latin America other than Mexico and Cuba also declined throughout the period, except for a reversal (either a rise or no decline) for the 1975-80 cohort. It should be noted that the preference system for rationing visas was not applied to the Western Hemisphere until the 1977 Amendment.

In contrast, the educational attainment of the rapidly growing Asian immigrant population generally increased, reaching a peak around 1965-69 and declining for more recent cohorts. The South Asian experience is typical; education levels for adult men increased from 16.8 years for the 1950-59 cohort to 18.5 years for the 1965-69 cohort and then fell to 16.1 years for the 1975-80 cohort.

The effects of the 1965 Amendments on the skills of Eastern Hemispheric immigrants are most dramatic for the Asians. The Amendments open immigration opportunities for Asians, but primarily for those with high levels of skill. With the passage of time and more Asian-origin resident aliens and citizens in the U.S., opportunities for kinship based migration became available. As a result, average schooling levels declined.

The declining relative education attainment of immigrants from the new major source regions is not likely to be reversed. It is also not likely that Asian immigration will continue to expand fast enough to prevent the average schooling level from falling. These considerations suggest that the

Table 5

Years of Schooling of Foreign-born Adult Men by Country of Birth and Period of Immigration, 1980* (Means)

Country of Birth	Period of Immigration						All Years
	1975-80	1970-74	1965-69	1960-64	1950-59	Before 1950	
Europe/Canada:							
English speaking ^b	15.3	14.6	14.1	13.4	13.4	12.8	13.7
Other	13.2	10.5	10.8	11.9	12.2	12.7	12.0
America: ^c							
Mexico	6.8	7.0	7.3	7.8	8.6	8.1	7.4
Cuba	11.1	9.9	10.7	13.3	12.1	11.7	11.7
British West Indies	11.8	11.3	12.0	12.3	12.8	11.7	11.8
Other	11.6	11.6	12.1	12.9	13.5	13.6	12.2
Asia:							
China	13.4	13.9	15.1	15.6	15.2	12.3	14.1
Philippines	14.3	15.3	14.7	13.9	14.0	10.8	14.4
South Asia	16.1	17.5	18.5	18.1	16.8	•	17.1
South East Asia	12.6	15.6	16.9	14.8	15.7	•	13.8
Other Asia	14.5	15.1	16.3	15.6	15.6	•	15.0
Middle East	13.0	13.3	13.4	14.7	15.3	13.7	13.7
Africa	15.8	15.8	16.3	15.7	15.4	•	15.7
Not reported	11.9	11.5	11.0	12.1	12.3	11.4	11.7
Total	12.3	11.5	11.7	12.2	12.2	12.1	12.0
Number of observations	6,224	6,180	5,250	3,951	6,406	4,062	32,073

SOURCE.—U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1980 Census of Population, Public Use Sample, C File, 1/100 Sample.

* One-in-a-hundred sample of foreign-born men aged 25-64 in 1980 who worked and had nonzero earnings in 1979.

^b English-speaking developed countries, including Australia, Canada, Ireland, New Zealand, and United Kingdom.

^c Excludes Canada.

• Fewer than 30 observations in the cell.

schooling level of immigrants to the U.S. relative to that of the native population can be expected to decline in the foreseeable future.

The Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 is likely to put additional downward pressure on the relative educational attainment of immigrants. The Act grants amnesty (legal status) to illegal aliens who have lived in the U.S. "continuously" since January 1, 1982 or who have worked in U.S. seasonal agriculture for at least 90 days for the year ending May 1, 1986. The legalized aliens are predominantly very low-skilled (low educational level) workers. Amnesty will increase their permanent attachment to the U.S. labor market. Furthermore, the status of most of the legalized aliens changes after 18 months from "temporary resident alien" to "permanent resident alien" and can be changed again after five years to that of naturalized citizen. With each of these changes in status the legalized aliens have improved rights to serve as immigration sponsors for their relatives in the country of origin. Their relatives are likely to have low levels of educational attainment. These effects are not likely to be trivial. It is anticipated that about three million illegal aliens will qualify for legalization. The number of immigrants whom they sponsor over the next decade can be expected to substantially exceed that magnitude.

An analysis of the earnings of adult foreign-born men using 1970 and 1980 Census data provides interesting insights as to the labor market consequences of changes in the source countries of immigrants in the period after World War II. Earnings are measured by income from wages, salary, and self-employment. The analysis is done for simple differences in earnings by country of origin and when other variables are held constant. These other variables include human capital and demographic variables, including duration in the U.S.

When other variables are held constant, three clusters emerge (Chiswick, 1986a). Immigrants from the United Kingdom and Canada have very similar earnings. Immigrants from Europe, the Middle East, and South Asia have earnings 11 percent to 17 percent lower than U.K. immigrants. Immigrants from other parts of Asia (China, Philippines and Vietnam), Africa, Mexico, other parts of Latin America, and the Caribbean receive earnings 24 percent to 32 percent less than those of U.K. immigrants.

During the decade of the 1950s most immigrants came from countries whose migrants had high earnings in the U.S. That is, there was a statistically significant positive correlation between the relative earnings in 1980 of immigrants from a country and the share of immigrants from that country. The relation disappeared for the immigrant cohort entering in the 1960s. For the cohort entering in the 1970s, on the other hand, relatively more immigrants came from countries whose migrants earn less in the U.S., and the negative correlation is statistically significant.¹⁰

These findings indicate that over the past three or four decades immigration to the U.S. has changed from drawing immigrants primarily from countries whose nationals have high relative earnings in the U.S. to drawing immigrants primarily from countries whose nationals do less well. As discussed above, the change in source countries is in part a consequence of the increasing de facto reliance on kinship in the rationing of immigration visas.

B. Australia

Table 6 presents selected characteristics for the adult foreign-born men in the Australian labor force in 1980. Immigrants from the oldest major source countries, the British Isles and Europe, have about 11 years of

Table 6
 SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS OF OVERSEAS-BORN ADULT MEN
 BY COUNTRY OF BIRTH, AUSTRALIA, 1981^a

<u>Country</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Income^b (A\$)</u>	<u>Education (Years)</u>	<u>Resi- dence (Years)</u>	<u>Differences in Logarithm in Income from U.K.</u>	
					<u>Overall</u>	<u>Other Variables Held Constant^c</u>
U.K. and Eire	37.2	15,766	11.04	17.86	XX	XX
Southern Europe	24.9	11,963	9.43	20.50	-0.25	-0.18
Northern Europe	1.0	15,812	11.04	16.28	-0.02	+0.02
Western Europe	10.6	15,048	11.13	23.86	-0.04	-0.09
Eastern Europe	5.6	14,557	11.35	25.06	-0.08	-0.12
Middle East	4.6	13,192	10.85	15.40	-0.16	-0.16
Asia ^d	6.7	16,205	12.98	12.43	+0.03	-0.08
U.S.A. & Canada	1.6	19,518	14.12	12.42	+0.16	+0.02
Other American	0.9	13,507	11.82	9.56	-0.16	-0.19
New Zealand	4.8	16,503	11.70	9.44	+0.04	+0.04
Rest of World ^e	2.1	16,084	12.44	12.91	+0.02	-0.07
 Total	 100.0	 14,663	 10.90	 18.40		

Source: 1981 Australian Census of Population and Housing (one percent sample).

- a. Men age 25 to 64 years who worked and reported positive usual weekly income.
- b. Usual weekly income annualized by multiplying by 52 weeks.
- c. Variables held constant include education (years of schooling and qualifications), labor market experience, marital status, size of place of residence, and duration of residence in Australia.
- d. Excludes the Middle East.
- e. Includes Africa and Oceania not identified above.

schooling, except for the Southern Europeans who have only 9.4 years. Immigrants from other English-speaking countries of overseas settlement have higher levels of schooling, 14.1 years for those from the U.S. and Canada, and 11.7 years for the New Zealanders. Those from the major new source region, South Asia and East Asia, have 13.0 years of schooling, second only to the North Americans. However, the most recent waves of South-East Asian refugees have considerably lower levels of education.

The increasing number of more highly educated immigrants from New Zealand and Asia over the past two decades has raised the overall skill levels of immigrant arrivals. Withers (1987) shows that the occupational skill level of new immigrants exceeds that of native Australians and that the gap has widened since the 1960s. Among adult men in the 1981 Census there is virtually no difference in educational attainment between the foreign born (10.9 years) and those born in Australia (11.0 years) (Chiswick and Miller, 1985).

An examination of average income, both overall and when other variables are held constant, by country of origin suggests several clusters. Immigrants from the U.S. and Canada have the highest average income, although their income does not differ from British immigrants once other variables (primarily years of schooling) are held constant. The second cluster includes immigrants from the British Isles, Northern Europe and New Zealand, among whom there are only small differences in income, both overall and when other variables are the same. Those from Western and Eastern Europe have about the same income as immigrants from the British Isles overall, but when other variables are held constant they are at a larger income disadvantage (9 to 12 percentage points).

The Asian pattern is similar to that of the Western and Eastern Europeans. The position of Asian immigrants relative to the British changes, when other variables are held constant, from a statistically insignificant 3 percent earnings advantage to a statistically significant 8 percent disadvantage. Much of this 11 percentage point change can be attributed to the effects of the additional two years of schooling of the Asians. Immigrants from Southern Europe and the Middle East and the small group from other parts of the Americas have the lowest income level. When other variables are held constant, they are at about a 17 percentage point earnings disadvantage compared to British immigrants.

A statistical test of whether the newest immigrants have less schooling and less income than those from the more established sources can be performed. The correlation between mean duration of residence of a group and its average educational attainment is not statistically significant. However, the correlations between duration and the two measures of average income (either overall or when other variables are held constant) are negative and statistically significant.¹¹ That is, more recent immigrant groups have higher incomes in Australia than the older groups, even when duration of residence is held constant. However, this arises in part from the relatively short duration of the high income New Zealanders and the relatively long duration of the low income Southern Europeans. The most important new immigrants, the Asians, seem to fall midway in the income range. Although immigrants of Latin American origin are also new to Australia and have very low incomes, they are few in number and not likely to constitute a new major source group unless migration opportunities from South America to the U.S. and Canada become even more limited.

C. Canada

Data on adult foreign-born men by country of origin are reported in Table 7 for Canada. On average the adult male immigrants from the older source countries -- the British Isles, Europe, and the U.S. -- have had 20 to 26 years residence, compared to only 11 years for Asian immigrants. Immigrants from the British Isles, Western Europe, and the U.S. have very high levels of schooling: 13.8 years, 12.9 years, and 14.3 years respectively. In contrast, the Southern and Eastern European immigrants are less well schooled (8.8 years and 11.6 years respectively). The Asian immigrants have 13.9 years of schooling, comparable to the level of British immigrants. Adult men born in Canada had 11.6 years of schooling on average.

In contrast to Australia, immigrants from the British Isles have much higher earnings than other immigrants in Canada. The gap narrows substantially when other variables, particularly educational attainment and duration of residence, are held constant. Yet even after adjusting for their short duration of residence in Canada, Asian immigrants have substantially lower earnings than any of the other source regions. Other variables the same, the Asian earnings disadvantage of about 18 percentage points exceeds the 12 percentage point disadvantage of the Eastern Europeans, who are primarily refugees.

When average duration of residence is correlated with educational attainment or either measure of relative earnings, the correlation coefficients are small and not statistically significant. That is, there is no relation between the "newness" of an immigrant group as measured by mean duration of residence and its relative schooling or earnings. However, immigrants from the relatively new major source region, Asia, appear to do

Table 7

SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS OF OVERSEAS-BORN ADULT MEN
BY COUNTRY OF BIRTH, CANADA, 1981^a

<u>Country^b</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Income^c (Can\$)</u>	<u>Education (Years)</u>	<u>Resi- dence (Years)</u>	<u>Differences in Logarithm in Income from U.K.</u>	
					<u>Overall</u>	<u>Other Variables Held Constant^d</u>
U.K. and Eire	20.6	24,495	13.76	20.92	xx	xx
Southern Europe	23.3	17,568	8.82	19.62	-0.34	-0.04
Western Europe	13.8	22,335	12.89	24.56	-0.11	-0.10
Eastern Europe	9.3	20,546	11.60	26.24	-0.21	-0.12
U.S.A.	5.5	23,060	14.29	19.47	-0.15	-0.07
Asia	13.3	18,705	13.92	11.00	-0.36	-0.18
Rest of World	<u>14.2</u>	<u>19,530</u>	<u>13.21</u>	<u>13.92</u>	-0.28	-0.12
Total	100.0	20,662	12.26	19.22		

Source: 1981 Census of Canada, microdata file, one percent sample.

- a. Men age 25 to 64 years who worked and had non-zero income in 1980.
- b. Western Europe includes Belgium, Luxembourg, France, Germany, The Netherlands, and Austria. Southern Europe comprises Greece, Italy, Portugal, and Yugoslavia. Eastern Europe includes Hungary, Poland, U.S.S.R. and Czechoslovakia. Asia includes South and East Asia. Rest of World is the category if the country or region was not separately identified and includes other Europeans, Africans, and Central and South Americans.
- c. Income includes wages, salary, and self-employment income.
- d. Variables held constant include years of schooling, labor market experience, marital status, weeks worked, size of place of residence, province, and duration of residence in Canada.

less well in the Canadian labor market even after adjusting for their shorter duration of residence.

D. Summary

In each of the three countries studied, Asia is a major new source of immigrants. The Asian immigrants have very high levels of educational attainment. Only the U.S. has experienced new major immigration flows from non-Asian LDCs. The Latin American immigrants in the U.S. generally have low educational attainments and low earnings, even when other variables are the same.

The new sources of immigration present mixed patterns for the three countries under study. For the U.S. the highly educated Asians counter-balance the low education Hispanic immigrants. However, the U.S. is now drawing a larger share of its immigrants from countries whose nationals do less well in the labor market. For Australia and Canada the skills in the labor force are being augmented by the highly educated Asians, but the relative earnings of Asians seem to be higher in Australia than in Canada.

IV. Immigrant Earnings Relative to Natives

An important policy question regarding immigrants is their performance in the labor market relative to the native population. In particular, there is interest in whether more recent cohorts of immigrants are doing less well now than in the past. Much of the discussion has focused on the relative earnings of immigrants when other variables, such as schooling and labor market experience, are held constant. Several factors with offsetting implications may have influenced the relative earnings of immigrants over time.

A. Factors Influencing the Relative Earnings of Immigrants

Each of the countries under study has experienced an increase in the proportion of immigrants in the labor force in the past three decades. This arises from the dearth of immigration during the 1930s and early 1940s followed by generally increasing levels of immigration relative to the size of the population since the end of World War II.

Immigrants and natives are not perfect substitutes in production. Immigrants tend to be intensive in allocative decision-making skills and in internationally transferable skills, as well as being self-selected for ambition, motivation, and broadly defined entrepreneurship. Natives, on the other hand, are relatively more intensive in country-specific skills including language. Natives have acquired many of the country-specific nuances of skill formation and the labor market that enhance earnings but may escape newcomers. To the extent that immigrants and natives are less than perfect substitutes in a country's aggregate production function, the rise in the share of immigrants in the labor force would depress their relative earnings. The effect would be most pronounced for the most recent immigrant group, thereby tending to steepen the profile relating immigrant earnings to duration in the destination.

Recent research suggests that when conventional measures of skill are held constant, the elasticity of substitution between immigrant and native labor is high but less than infinity (Chiswick, Chiswick and Miller, 1985). It seems unlikely, however, that the relatively modest rise in the share of immigrants in each of the receiving countries combined with the high substitution elasticity could materially depress the relative earnings of new immigrants.

The relative earnings of immigrants may also decline if there is a relative fall in the earnings of low experience workers. Immigrants have less country-specific experience and may also have less firm-specific and occupation-specific experience than natives of the same age and level of schooling. Analyses of earnings by experience for the U.S. indicate that the rise in the proportion of young adult workers in the labor force, as a delayed consequence of the baby boom following World War II, has depressed the relative earnings of young workers (Welch, 1979, and Berger, 1982). The rapid increase in the labor force attachment of women with little labor market experience would intensify this effect. This steepening of experience-earnings profiles for natives would also steepen the profile relating immigrant earnings to duration of residence. That is, it would depress the relative earnings of the immigrant workers with the least training relevant for the U.S. labor market (Chiswick, 1986a, and Topel, 1986). The post-war baby booms in Australia and Canada would be expected to have similar effects.

Immigrant earnings may also fall if there is a decline in the favorable selectivity of immigrants. As discussed above, this may result from a fall in the out-of-pocket costs of migration relative to the time cost or from a rise in illegal immigration. It may also occur if the system for rationing visas among potential applicants is less selective on the basis of skill. Using Asian immigration to the U.S. as an example, the expansion of "skill-tested" immigration, through the occupational preferences and investor status under the 1965 Amendments, increased the number and share of more able immigrants. The subsequent greater reliance on kinship for rationing visas for Asians undoubtedly had the opposite effect.

Immigrant earnings profiles may appear to be lower for more recent cohorts if the less successful immigrants in earlier cohorts re-migrate or emigrate from the destination back to their country of origin or to some third country. The reverse would occur if the emigration of the foreign-born were selective in favor of the more successful. All immigrant-receiving countries experience at least some re-emigration of the foreign-born. Return migration is more frequent for economic migrants than for refugees and the closer the country of origin is to the destination (i.e., the lower the cost of return migration). It is higher for new immigrants and increases during recessions. Historically, rates of emigration of the foreign-born from the U.S., for example, are substantial for Mexican and Canadian immigrants, lower for Western European economic migrants, and negligible for Cuban and Eastern European refugees (Axelrod, 1972; Hansen, 1940; Jasso and Rosenzweig, 1982; Warren and Peck, 1980). Among the newest sources of immigration, rates of emigration would be expected to be the least for the Southeast Asian refugees and greater for the economic migrants from other parts of Asia.

What is less well established is the degree of self-selection of the foreign-born emigrants. Most studies have been limited to internal return migrants because of the scarcity of appropriate international migration data. Vankerkamp's (1972) study of short-term interprovincial return migrants in Canada suggest that they were the least successful migrants. Hansen's (1940) study of a century of migration back and forth across the U.S.-Canadian border suggests that the more able and ambitious dominated in both the initial and return migrations. Long and Hansen's (1977) analysis for U.S. blacks who returned from the northern to the southern states indicates that both the original migration and the return migration were

selective in favor of those with more schooling. DaVanzo (1976) also finds that return internal migrants in the U.S. respond to many of the same economic incentives as the original migrants. Chiswick (1986b) reports that the emigration from the U.S. of the foreign-born does not appear to vary systematically by education. An exception is the apparently high rate of return migration for Mexican nationals with five or fewer years of schooling. This group may include a disproportionate number of illegal aliens. Two studies of emigration of the foreign-born from Australia, by Appleyard (1962) and Beggs and Chapman (1986), find no evidence of either net favorable or unfavorable selectivity. Rogers (1982) cites data indicating a variety of motives for return migration, including that the original migration was intended to be only temporary. She concludes that it is not obvious that return migration reflects negative self-selection.

A demand side factor may be associated with an increase in relative immigrant earnings. The increase in the supply of immigrants may itself be a consequence of the rise in the rate of return from migration. This could arise if rapid economic change increases the returns to the allocative skills in which immigrants are particularly intensive or because of the increasing internationalization of the world economy.

It is not possible in a single-equation framework to separate the various supply and demand effects. Nor is it possible using data from a single cross-section to determine whether immigrant earnings have fallen or risen relative to those of natives. It is possible to obtain additional insights on this issue by using data from two or more cross-sectional samples for the same destination country. Although this cannot be done for Australia, the results of such an analysis for the U.S. and Canada may be relevant for Australia.

B. United States

The U.S. 1970 and 1980 Censuses of Population can be used to test whether the relative earnings of immigrants by country of origin has risen or fallen over the decade. The most dramatic improvement is found for Asian immigrants. Relative to Asian Americans born in the U.S., the earnings of Asian immigrants increased over the decade. Asian immigrants in the U.S. in 1970 received about 19 percent lower earnings at 10 years of residence and 4 percent lower earnings at 20 years; by 1980 the disadvantage was 13 percent at 10 years, but Asians in the U.S. 20 years had 4 percent higher earnings. This improvement is also found in separate analyses for each of the three major Asian immigrant groups -- the Chinese, Japanese and Filipinos. Even when the Asian immigrants are compared with non-Hispanic white immigrants, their relative earnings increased over the decade.

A mixed picture emerges for Mexican immigrants. Relative to U.S.-born Mexican Americans their earnings profile dropped 5 or 6 percentage points. Relative to white non-Hispanic immigrants they experienced a 5 percentage point improvement in earnings, the coefficient on the Mexican immigrant dichotomous variable declined significantly from -0.27 to -0.22. Part of the explanation for the seemingly conflicting patterns is the unexplained improvement in the earnings of U.S.-born Mexican Americans, whose unexplained earnings disadvantage declined by 5 percentage points over the decade. This implies little or no change in the earnings of Mexican immigrants relative to U.S.-born non-Hispanic whites. It seems the most reasonable interpretation is that, other things the same, the relative earnings of Mexican immigrants did not change over the decade.

Among white non-Hispanic immigrants the relative earnings profile declined by about 4 percentage points at 10 years in the U.S. (declining

from -0.03 in 1970 to -0.07 in 1980), but there was a trivial change at 20 years (declining from +0.06 in 1970 to +0.05 in 1980). There was a general steepening in experience earnings profiles over the decade, including the profile relating earnings to duration in the U.S. for white immigrants. This is consistent with the interpretation that it is the decline in the relative wage of low-experience workers rather than the decline in the quality of newer cohorts of immigrant workers that accounts for the appearance of a fall in new immigrant earnings.¹² This interpretation is consistent with the similar partial effect of U.S. residence on earnings found in the cross-sectional census data and the sample on foreign-born men in the National Longitudinal Survey (Chiswick, 1986b).¹³

When Cuban immigrants are compared with native-born white men, interesting patterns emerge. Cuban immigrants in the U.S. 10 years in 1970 had 16 percent lower earnings, other things the same, and those in the U.S. 20 years in 1980 had 10 percent lower earnings. Immigrant earnings improved over the decade.¹⁴ In comparison with U.S.-born white men the Cuban immigrants in the U.S. for 10 years in 1980 had earnings lower by 4 percentage points than those in the U.S. the same 10 years in 1970. This decline is identical to the one observed among white immigrants, and there was no change over the decade in the earnings differential between Cuban and non-Hispanic white immigrants. Thus, the lower relative earnings of the more recent Cuban immigrants in 1980 may merely reflect the relative decline in earnings for low-experience workers.

The "puzzle" in the Cuban data is the very high earnings of the very small number of pre-revolution immigrants. Cubans in the U.S. 20 years in 1970 (i.e., 1950 cohort of immigrants) had earnings 3 percent higher than native-born white men. This may reflect the greater self-selection for

economic success in the U.S. and the greater skill transferability of the pre-revolution economic immigrants. The post-revolution refugees would be less favorably self-selected and have fewer transferable skills, and hence would have lower earnings.

In summary, there appear to be two distinct changes in the "unmeasured" dimensions of immigrant quality in the past few decades. The increased reliance on skill level and investor status for Asian immigrants introduced by the 1965 Amendments raised the U.S. earnings of Asian immigrants, other things the same. The change of Cuban immigrants from economic migrants to refugees after the revolution may have lowered their U.S. earnings potential, other variables being the same. Otherwise, there seems to have been no net change in the past few decades in the unmeasured dimensions of the skills of immigrants to the U.S.

C. Canada

The 1971 and 1981 Censuses of Canada can be used to examine changes in immigrant earnings over the decade. Relative to earnings of native-born Canadians, immigrant earnings declined by 8 percentage points, when other variables are held constant (Chiswick and Miller, in press).¹⁵ A decline is found for all of the major source regions. It ranges from a small decline (0 to 4 percentage points) for immigrants from the British Isles and Southern Europe, to a large decline for those from the U.S. and Asia (about 30 percentage points).

Several factors may account for these changes. Part of the decline is undoubtedly due to the changing English-French relations in Canada. Canadian government efforts during the 1970s to promote English-French

bilingualism and to improve the political and economic conditions of French-Canadians have had their impact on the labor market. Compared with other native-born Canadians, those who were monolingual English (i.e., who spoke English but not French) experienced a relative decline in their earnings by several percentage points. Non-French-speaking immigrants would have experienced a similar decline.

As was the case in the U.S., experience-earnings profiles steepened in Canada, presumably also in response to the large influx into the labor market of low-experience workers (baby boomers, women, and immigrants).¹⁶ Since immigrants have less experience specific to Canadian firms and occupations than natives of the same age and schooling, their relative earnings would fall, with the decline greatest for those who entered most recently.

The large relative declines in earnings for U.S. and Asian immigrants are more difficult to explain, although several hypotheses are possible. During the Vietnam War era, particularly during the later phases of direct U.S. military involvement, many American war resisters migrated legally and illegally to Canada. Whether one calls them refugees or ideological migrants, they would be expected to be less intensely selected for labor market success in Canada and would have less readily transferable skills. If they were relatively more numerous in the 1981 Census than in the 1971 Census, their presence would tend to depress the relative earnings of U.S. immigrants in Canada.

With the increase in Asian immigration to North America during the 1970s there may have emerged selectivity differences between those who went to the U.S. and those who went to Canada.¹⁷ The opening of U.S. immigration opportunities for Asian professionals may have drawn away from Canada the

most able of the Asian immigrants. This gap may narrow if the supply of Asian immigrants to North America continues to grow and opportunities for skilled Asian immigrants to enter the U.S. under the occupational preferences remain stagnant. It may persist, however, if kinship and refugee status are relatively more important in Canada's selection criteria.

V. Summary and Conclusions

This paper has been concerned with the changes over the past four decades in the source countries of immigrants and the skills of these immigrants to the three major English-speaking immigrant-receiving countries, Australia, Canada and the United States. It has focused on whether the newer sources of immigrants, defined in terms of both the more recent major source countries and more recent cohorts from individual countries, now provide immigrants less skilled than earlier ones.

Each of the three countries has experienced dramatic shifts in the sources of immigration. The major changes are the large relative declines in immigration from the British Isles (U.K. and Eire) and the European continent. Each of the three receiving countries has experienced a very large increase in immigration from Asia -- from very small numbers in the 1950s to about 40 percent in the mid-1980s. Asian immigrants to the U.S. and Canada are coming in large numbers from all parts of Asia, whereas for Australia they are predominantly from South and South-East Asia. In addition, the U.S. and Canada have experienced a large increase in immigration from the LDCs in the Western Hemisphere. For the U.S. these immigrants are predominantly Spanish-speaking, primarily from Mexico and the Caribbean area, and for Canada they are predominantly from the English-speaking West Indies.

These changing immigration flows have been a consequence of changing immigration policies. Until the post-World War II period each of these countries placed heavy, if not prohibitive, restrictions against Asian immigration, and each favored European immigration, especially from the British Isles. Australia was the most intense in these policies, the U.S. the least intense. Changing domestic attitudes and international relations altered immigration policy and all three countries abolished their racist anti-Asian quotas.

In rationing immigration visas, the three countries differ in the relative weight given to kinship ties with a resident alien or citizen as distinct from the applicant's skills. The U.S. and Australia again appear to be polar cases, with the U.S. placing heaviest emphasis on kinship through its family-based preference system and Australia placing the heaviest emphasis on the applicant's skills through its point system. In addition to economic migrants from Asia, since 1975 all three countries have accepted relatively large numbers of Southeast Asian refugees.

Unlike Canada and Australia, the U.S. shares a long border with a country in which real wages are very low. This has led to a unique experience, a very large-scale violation of immigration law and a large number (perhaps 3 to 6 million) of illegal aliens.

Several factors, with offsetting effects, may have influenced the skills of immigrants. The decline in the cost of transportation and communication relative to wages, the increase in the late 1970s in the number of refugees, and the growth of kinship-based migration would tend to decrease the skill level of immigrants. The growing illegal alien population in the U.S. would have an effect in the same direction. Perhaps the most important factor in the opposite direction was the opening of the

doors to Asian immigrants, initially primarily on the basis of the individual's skill and subsequently more so on the basis of kinship.

The new Asian immigrants in each of the three destination countries have a very high level of schooling. This may be tapering off as kinship becomes increasingly common as the mechanism for allocating visas among Asian applicants. The new Hispanic immigrants to the U.S., particularly from Mexico, generally have low levels of schooling.

Other things the same, immigrants from the new Asian source countries have lower earnings than those from Britain. This gap is smallest for Australia and greatest for Canada. The Hispanic immigrants in the U.S. also tend to have low earnings. Indeed, U.S. immigration flows have changed from accepting in the 1950s a larger fraction of immigrants from countries whose nationals have high earnings in the U.S. to accepting in the 1970s a larger fraction from countries whose nationals do far less well.

Analyses for the U.S. and Canada for the decade of the 1970s provide insights on whether newer immigrant cohorts have relatively lower earnings than older cohorts from the same country of origin, where other variables are the same. In general, there do not seem to be notable changes, although there are two exceptions for each country. There appears to have been a relative decline in earnings for the more recent cohorts of Cubans in the U.S. and immigrants from the U.S. in Canada. Both developments may be the result of a "refugee" experience -- the less favorable self-selectivity and weaker skill transferability of the post-revolution Cuban and the Vietnam War-resister American migrants.

Asian immigrants appear to have experienced an improvement in relative earnings in the U.S. but a decline in Canada, other things the same. The opening of skill-based opportunities for Asian immigration to the U.S. with

the 1965 Amendments appears to have had favorable effects on the skills of those receiving a visa at the expense of an alternative destination, Canada.

In conclusion, it appears that for the three destination countries broadening the source regions of immigrants to include Asia increased the average schooling of immigrants. For the U.S. this effect was offset by the low schooling level of the increasing number of Hispanic immigrants. Immigrants from the newer sources generally do less well in the labor market than immigrants from the more traditional sources, other things the same. Immigrant schooling and earnings can be enhanced through the rationing of visas based on the applicant's skills rather than the applicant's relatives in the destination. There is competition for immigrants among the destination countries. This is to be expected in a world in which transportation and information costs are relatively low. As a consequence immigration policy, including methods for allocating visas and policies for assisted migration, can alter the patterns of international migration flows among the three destinations.

Footnotes

1. See, for example, Blau (1980), Chiswick (1978, 1979, 1984a), Chiswick and Miller (1985), DaVanzo (1976), Goldfarb (1982), Kwok and Leland (1982), Masters (1972), O'Grada (1986), Schwartz (1976), Sjaastad (1962), and Tidwick (1976).
2. The restrictions on Asian immigration began in the 1870s against the Chinese, became general when the Asiatic Barred Zone was created in 1917, and was incorporated into the national origins quota system enacted in the 1920s. A quota of about 100 for China, a wartime ally, was introduced during World War II. Japan and other independent countries in Asia were given small quotas (about 100 per country) when the immigration law was recodified in 1952.
3. To obtain an occupational preference visa, a U.S. employer must successfully petition the Department of Labor for a labor certificate certifying that no American workers are available for the professional or skilled job at prevailing wages and that the alien is qualified. The petition is more likely to be approved if the occupation has already classified as having a "shortage" of workers. The list of occupations varies over time but has included scientists, engineers, physicians, nurses, chefs, occupational therapists, dieticians, etc. Applicants for non-preference visas also need either a labor certificate or to invest in a U.S. business that will create jobs. "Surplus" (non-preference) visas arise only if the occupational and kinship preferences do not reach the hemispheric (now worldwide) ceiling on visas subject to numerical limit. The ceiling has changed over time and is now 270,000 visas per year. This ceiling is not applicable to the immediate

relatives of U.S. citizens or to refugees. In recent years, total legal immigration to the U.S. has averaged about 570,000 persons per year.

4. The data are computed from U.S. Department of Justice (1970, table 7a; 1975, table 7a; 1984, table 5; and 1986, table IMM2.1).
5. Among European immigrants subject to numerical limitation, the absolute number of occupational preference principals also declined over the period (from 6,100 in 1970 to 4,400 in 1985), although their relative proportion in European immigration remained about the same. The preference system was extended to the Western Hemisphere under 1977 Amendments, replacing the first-come, first-served system under the 1965 Amendments. If the Asian experience is a guide, any increase in the skill level of Western Hemisphere immigration created by extending the provisions of the preference system may be temporary.
6. Even when other variables are the same, immigrants who enter the United States as relatives of U.S. citizens or resident aliens earn less than those who enter with an occupational or nonpreference (investor) visa (see North, 1978; Chiswick, 1980, ch. 9).
7. The decline in migration costs relative to wages may be more important for stimulating illegal rather than legal migration because illegal migrants are more likely to require more than one attempted entry into the United States. Similarly, the smaller the transportation costs from a country to the United States, the greater the extent of illegal migration, other things the same. For data on the low level and relative decline in enforcement resources, see North (1980) and Harwood (1983).

8. Included in the pool of unsuccessful visa applicants are "discouraged applicants," those who wish to migrate but did not apply because they know they cannot qualify for a visa.
9. The average level of schooling of adult native-born white men in the U.S. increased from 11.9 years in 1970 to 13.1 years in 1980 (Chiswick, 1986a).
10. The pattern of a positive correlation for the 1950s cohort, zero effect for the 1960s cohort, and a negative correlation for the 1970s is very robust. It emerges whether earnings are measured overall or when other variables are held constant, and for 1970 Census or 1980 Census data on earnings (Chiswick, 1986a). Using 1980 Census data on earnings, the correlation between relative earnings and the distribution of immigrants by country of origin (16 categories) is:

<u>Period</u>	<u>Annual Earnings</u>	<u>Annual Earnings Controlling for Other Variables</u>
1951-60	0.28	0.36
1961-70	0.13	0.16
1971-80	-0.26	-0.22

(Source: Chiswick, 1986, Table 4)

11. Correlation coefficients between average duration of residence and:

<u>Variable</u>	<u>Correlation Coefficient</u>
Education	+0.10
Income	-0.56*
Income, other variables held constant	-0.54*

(Data are from Table 5. * designates correlation coefficient is statistically significant at 10 percent level, two-tailed test.)

12. Borjas (1985) incorrectly concludes that a decline in the relative earnings of immigrants is due to a decline in quality. His statistical methodology precluded observing the steepening of experience earnings profiles over the decade. For a discussion of this point see Chiswick (1986a) and Topel (1986).

13. The 8 percentage point cohort improvement in earnings over the decade (from -0.03 in 1970 to +0.05 in 1980) for foreign-born white men relative to the native-born in the census is similar to the 9 percentage point improvement during the 8 years 1965 to 1973 found in the longitudinal data for adult white men in the National Longitudinal Survey (Chiswick, 1986a and 1986b).

14. The improvement in earnings is biased downward because years of schooling are held constant and Cuban immigrants receive more post-migration education than other immigrant groups. This is a characteristic of refugee adjustment. See Hashmi, 1987.

15. Ratio of the earnings of foreign-born adult men to those of Canadian-born at 10 and 20 years of residence in Canada, other variables the same:

	<u>1971</u>		<u>1981</u>	
	<u>10 Years</u>	<u>20 Years</u>	<u>10 Years</u>	<u>20 Years</u>
U.S.	1.36	1.26	0.89	0.98
U.K. and Eire	1.04	1.08	1.01	1.05
Western Europe	0.96	1.06	0.90	0.95
Southern Europe	0.82	0.94	0.82	0.90
Eastern Europe	0.91	1.00	0.79	0.93
Asia	1.09	1.30	0.83	0.98
Remainder	1.00	1.11	0.86	0.99
All foreign born	0.95	1.04	0.86	0.97

Earnings differences at 10 and 20 years predicted from an earnings function with a quadratic duration of residence variable.

Source: 1971 Census of Canada and 1981 Census of Canada, microdata files.

16. Partial effect on earnings of schooling and labor market experience in Canada (percent):

<u>1981 Census</u>	<u>Experience in Origin</u>	<u>Duration in Canada</u>
Canadian Born	2.30	--
Immigrant:	1.48	1.54
U.S., U.K., Eire	2.24	0.60
Other	1.14	2.00
<u>1971 Census</u>		
Canadian born	2.02	--
Immigrant:	1.42	1.39
U.S., U.K., Eire	2.06	0.30
Other	1.04	1.82

Source: Chiswick and Miller (in press).

17. A parallel may be found in West Indian migration to the U.S. and Britain over the past three decades. Among the emigrants from the English-speaking West Indies those who went to the U.S. had higher levels of schooling and appear to have had a more successful labor market adjustment. See Palmer, 1974, and Tobias, 1976.

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