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The New Americans

A Guide to Immigration Since 1965

EDITED BY

Mary C. Waters & Reed Ueda

with Helen B. Marrow

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THE NEW AMERICANS

Russian American community will experience an unprecedented level of growth and vitality as well as ongoing transformation.

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South America

Ecuador, Peru, Brazil, Argentina, Venezuela

Helen B. Marrow

While South Americans have migrated to the United States for many decades—nearly ten times as many South Americans as Central Americans entered before 1900, and over 4,000 entered annually between 1910 and 1930—before the mid-20th century, most South American migration occurred within a single country or spilled over only into neighboring countries. According to INS statistics, just 132,103 South Americans entered the U.S. legally between 1891 and 1950, and according to U.S. Census statistics, only 33,623 South Americans lived in the country before 1930 (87,705 before 1965). Since the mid-20th century, however, South American immigration has increased dramatically.

Why? Major changes in politico-economic developments throughout South America increased the pressures for emigration, as many countries' dreams of successful modernization and industrialization ran aground by the 1970s, sometimes as early as the 1950s. South American immigration also rose because of rapidly expanding economic opportunities in the U.S., 1965 changes in U.S. immigration law (which began granting entry based on employment and family preferences rather than restrictive quotas), and the proliferation of American technology and capital flows, the English language, and American cultural and consumption models throughout the Western Hemisphere.

Historically, there have been fewer South Americans than other Latin Americans in the U.S. Sheer distance makes travel from South America more difficult than from elsewhere in Latin America and the Caribbean. But more importantly, the historical and structural roots of migration flows help explain this difference. Labor migration flows react to historic patterns of penetration, moving along them in the opposite direction—for example, from colonized countries toward their former colonial powers, or from countries affected by direct labor-recruiting practices or indirect economic and cultural influences toward the countries where these influences

Table 1 South American immigrants by selected class of admission and country of birth, 2002

Country of birth	Number of immigrants	Percentage admitted by selected class of admission				
		Family-sponsored preferences	Employment-based preferences	Immediate relatives of U.S. citizens	Refugee and asylee adjustments	Diversity programs
All countries	1,063,732	17.6	16.4	45.7	11.9	4.0
All South America	74,506	19.4	14.7	62.1	1.6	1.8
Colombia	18,845	13.0	8.6	75.9	2.0	—
Ecuador	10,602	17.2	11.8	68.1	0.4	2.1
Peru	11,999	16.8	9.1	64.0	3.4	6.1
Brazil	9,474	2.9	36.3	58.6	0.4	1.3
Guyana	9,962	66.8	2.7	30.2	0.1	0.1
Argentina	3,685	6.8	26.6	62.3	1.6	2.3
Venezuela	5,259	6.6	22.8	63.7	4.8	1.8
Chile	1,858	14.0	17.8	66.0	0.9	0.6
Bolivia	1,670	13.8	26.5	57.0	0.8	1.1
Uruguay	539	8.9	22.8	65.9	0.9	1.1
Paraguay	359	12.8	27.9	57.9	0.6	0.8
Suriname	248	21.0	31.0	46.4	0.8	0.4

Source: U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service, *Statistical Yearbook,* 2002, Table 3 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice).

Table 2 Foreign-born South Americans, by country of birth, 1970–2000

Country of birth	Population (percentage of total U.S. foreign-born population)			
	1970[a]	1980	1990	2000
Colombia	84,921	151,100 (1.0)	303,093 (1.4)	525,881 (1.6)
Ecuador	49,491	89,960 (0.6)	143,006 (0.7)	299,106 (0.9)
Peru	35,450	60,440 (0.4)	151,837 (0.7)	282,264 (0.9)
Brazil	46,758	44,940 (0.3)	94,407 (0.4)	222,836 (0.7)
Guyana	N/A	51,740 (0.3)	121,567 (0.6)	216,172 (0.7)
Argentina	67,364	70,680 (0.5)	99,523 (0.5)	131,055 (0.4)
Venezuela	17,321	38,120 (0.3)	50,823 (0.2)	116,867 (0.4)
Chile	25,125	38,640 (0.3)	62,036 (0.3)	84,242 (0.3)
Bolivia	10,187	14,620 (0.1)	32,194 (0.1)	52,913 (0.2)
Uruguay	7,041	14,240 (0.1)	23,012 (0.1)	25,031 (0.1)
Paraguay	N/A	3,440 (0.0)	7,092 (0.0)	13,542 (0.0)
Suriname[b]	N/A	1,440 (0.0)	3,041 (0.0)	6,073 (0.0)

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 1980, 1990, and 2000 Censuses, 5% Public Use Microdata Samples, weighted data.

a. 1970 Census figures from S. Thernstrom, ed., *The Harvard Encyclopedia of Ethnic Groups* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1980), p. 210, based on figures from U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Census of the Population, 1970,* vol. 1, *Characteristics of the Population,* pt. 1, *U.S. Summary* (Washington, D.C., 1973), I, p. 598, Table 192.

b. 2000 Suriname figures available only from U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census, 1% Public Use Microdata Sample, weighted data.

originated. By this reasoning, fewer South Americans than other Latin Americans have migrated to the U.S. because American involvement and intervention in South America has paled in comparison to U.S. colonialist and neocolonialist activities in Central America and the Caribbean (Puerto Rico, Cuba, Mexico, Haiti, El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Guatemala).

In pointing this out, however, we do not forget that many South American professionals and technicians have immigrated under formal U.S. employment prefer-

ences and not as traditional labor migrants (in 2002, 36 percent of Brazilians, 28 percent of Paraguayans, and 27 percent of Argentines and Bolivians admitted fell into this category; see Table 1), nor that many specific international linkages and American activities in South America have helped create and maintain less-skilled labor migration flows. For example, the banana and Panama hat industries helped tie small villages in southern Ecuador to New York City, North American textile interests helped tie Peruvian towns and cities to northern New Jersey, and American mining and industrial efforts helped tie Governador Valadares, Brazil, to Framingham, Massachusetts. Similarly, America's current roles in the Colombian drug war, Argentina's financial crisis, and Venezuela's political troubles are helping to attract migrants from those countries.

Overall, South American immigration took its strongest hold in the 1980s and 1990s. According to INS statistics, 349,568 South Americans entered the U.S. legally between 1951 and 1970, followed by 295,741 between 1971 and 1980, 461,847 between 1981 and 1990, and 681,335 between 1991 and 2002. Aggregate U.S. Census statistics show similar strides: as shown in Table 2, approximately 2 million South Americans (both documented and undocumented) were living in the U.S. in 2000, and these figures are widely criticized as undercounts.

Leaving South America

When analyzing South American emigration trends, we need to consider important political "push" factors such as military repression in Chile, guerrilla and counter-guerrilla warfare in Peru, political instability in Venezuela, and the drug war in Colombia. But even more important are the massive social transformations generated by globalization and neoliberal economic development policies over the past few decades. Recent South American emigration has grown out of economic and political *aperturas* (openings), with their privatization of state-owned businesses, deregulation of markets, and cuts in public spending meant to integrate South American countries more competitively in a global world economy. South American countries have now experienced debt crises (1980s), trade deficits (early 1990s), new financial crises (late 1990s/early 2000s), and a host of aggravated social inequalities and increasing economic uncertainties affecting their middle classes.

Therefore, South Americans have "chosen" to emigrate based on declining economic standing relative to rising educational, political, social, and cultural expectations. They are considered to be voluntary economic migrants rather than forced political refugees (at least, they are treated this way by the U.S. government; as shown in Table 1, only 2 percent of South Americans were admitted in 2002 as refugees or asylum-seekers, with proportions reaching no higher than 5 percent among Venezuelans and 3 percent among Peruvians). As Marcelo Suárez-Orozco and Mariela Páez write in *Latinos: Remaking America,* "Globalization and economic

restructuring have intensified inequality in Latin America, generating unemployment and underemployment—and hence new migratory waves." Substantial economic transformations in the past few decades have turned most South American countries into exporters of people and importers of capital—a stark contrast to what they were in decades and centuries past.

While these descriptions do not hold perfectly, a brief look at recent events illustrates the connection between emigration and struggling development policies in countries where average educational attainments have been rising and familiarity with American-style consumption practices have been expanding. In between periods of economic growth and democratization, periods of recession and decline have hindered progress and increased pressures to emigrate. In 2002 figures from the Economic Commission on Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) showed a deterioration in economic activity in the South American Common Market (MERCOSUR) since 1998–1999, completing "half a lost decade for the region as a whole" between 1997 and 2002. Declining regional economic conditions worsened social ones; increases in poverty and joblessness were most severe in Argentina, Venezuela, Paraguay, and Uruguay, but even in Colombia and Ecuador, poverty levels were higher in 2000 than they were in 1990. In such situations, workers from professional, middle-class, and even manual-labor backgrounds have turned to international migration as their native countries' credit infrastructures and job markets have ceased to satisfy their personal expectations.

Ecuador. In 2000, Ecuadorians passed Peruvians in immigrant population size, making them the second largest South American group in the U.S., behind Colombians (see Table 2). There have been roughly three main phases of Ecuadorian immigration. In the first phase (late 1950s to 1970s), "pioneer" men from rural communities in the south-central highland provinces of Cañar and Azuay began migrating to New York and Chicago. To explain why Ecuadorians head overwhelmingly to New York, researchers point to the industrial influence of banana companies in coastal Guayaquil and to connections and business routes already established between New York and rural southern Ecuador's *paja toquilla* (Panama hat) economy earlier in the 20th century.

In the second phase (1980s to early 1990s), Ecuador's once-successful petroleum, agriculture, and *paja toquilla* economies suffered severe setbacks. Real income and foreign exchange declined while debt increased, oil prices plunged, and strict austerity measures and currency devaluations failed to overcome rising unemployment and inflation. These worsening economic conditions provoked substantial emigration, as more men (and increasingly women and children) began leaving the country. During this period, Ecuadorian immigrants to the U.S. remained disproportionately undocumented and from rural, poor, peasant backgrounds, while south-central Ecuador consolidated itself as the regional hub of emigration. By the early 1990s, the three largest Ecuadorian cities were unofficially considered to be

Guayaquil, Quito, and New York City (instead of Cuenca), and in southern Ecuador, New York City became known as "La YANY" (*Yo amo a Nueva York,* or "I love New York").

Never having recovered from the "lost decade" of the 1980s, Ecuador then suffered an even more acute economic crisis in the mid- to late 1990s (the third phase). During this period the country's GDP fell while poverty and unemployment rates increased. In 1995 a short border war with Peru hurt Ecuador's economy, and in 1997–1998 El Niño devastated crops and transportation infrastructure. In 1999 the International Monetary Fund froze dollar bank accounts, and Ecuador was recognized as having the highest inflation rate in Latin America. Finally, in 2000, President Jamil Mahuad dollarized the Ecuadorian currency amid large-scale social protests (especially from impoverished indigenous populations). The effects of these changes on recent international emigration flows have been enormous. In 1999 and 2000 more than 267,000 Ecuadorians left the country, and remittances to Ecuador increased from $643 million in 1997 to $1.7 billion in 2003. Building on the original peasant bases from Azuay and Cañar, newer U.S.-bound Ecuadorians continue to head primarily to New York, although other migrants increasingly originate from more diverse occupational and regional backgrounds and head to different countries (especially Spain).

Peru. There have been five broad phases of Peruvian immigration in the U.S. Peruvian laborers migrated to California during the Gold Rush, and then others were recruited to work in textile mills near Paterson, New Jersey, after World War II. In the third phase (late 1960s through 1980s), Peruvian immigration increased and diversified. Highly skilled professionals and technicians began migrating in response to the 1965 changes in U.S. immigration law and new employment-based economic policies. By the early 1980s, Peruvian immigrants exhibited great socioeconomic diversity. Most had migrated because economic and social mobility were becoming increasingly harder to attain in Peru.

The fourth phase (1980s to 1992) was both economic and political. Economically, Peruvian industrial, export agriculture, and *estancamiento* policies uprooted more manual workers, who had fewer skills and were more likely to come from mountainous regions in the Andes than their professional predecessors. During the "lost decade" of the 1980s, urban poverty in Peru was exacerbated by an acute economic crisis, rising unemployment and underemployment, and the overcrowding of cities because of continued internal migration. Politically, Peru witnessed a substantial increase in violence and human rights abuses, starting with the appearance of the Shining Path and Túpac Amaru revolutionary movements and then matched by the rise of a state-sponsored governmental opposition force. This guerrilla and counterguerrilla warfare terrorized the Andean highlands and urban Lima, resulting in thousands of deaths, huge rural displacements, and declines in ordinary Peruvians' confidence in their government. What Jorge Durand calls

the "shock" of combined economic crisis and political chaos spurred "explosive" Peruvian emigration in the 1980s. Collected estimates stand somewhere between 200,000 and 600,000, mostly self-identified *andinos* (indigenous people of rural, lower-class origins). Most of these migrants headed to the U.S., including 40 percent of the 112,687 Peruvians who left between 1985 and early 1988.

The Peruvian military's capture of Shining Path's leader in 1992 ushered in a new period of hope and stability for Peruvians abroad, and many returned home. However, data from the Latin American Migration Project (LAMP) show emigration continuing through the 1990s (the fifth phase), largely in sync with the economic adjustments and crises of that decade. In the 1990s currency devaluations led to a 30 percent decrease in income levels, and 60 percent of Peruvians fell into poverty, squeezed into unemployment and underemployment by structural adjustments and privatizations. Peruvians never fully recovered from the "lost decade," known even in the indigenous language Quechua as *década de chaqwa* (decade of chaos). Peruvian and Ecuadorian emigration rates hit new highs in 1998, 1999, and 2000. In 2000 alone, 183,000 Peruvians left their home country, a figure more than double that of previous years.

Brazil. Historically, Brazil is best known as an immigrant-receiving country. The Portuguese colonized it in the 1500s, about 4 million African slaves were imported over the next three centuries, and during the 19th and early 20th centuries, Portuguese, Italian, Spanish, German, Japanese, and various other immigrant groups made Brazil their home. However, three broad phases of Brazilian emigration have dominated recent decades. During the first phase (World War II to the 1970s), Brazilian intellectuals, artists, and politicians migrated to the U.S. while labor migrants came to fill industrial demands. Emigration during this phase was primarily economic or cultural; only a small number of political refugees left during a military government.

In the 1980s (the second phase), extreme crises transformed Brazilian emigration into an exodus of "economic refugees." Hyperinflation (almost 3,000 percent in 1993), failed macroeconomic packages like the Cruzado Plan in 1986 and the Collor Plan in 1991, and falling real income and declining standards of living gave middle-class Brazilians greater incentives to look for mobility elsewhere. For the first time in Brazil's history, Brazilians began leaving en masse—primarily for the U.S., but also for Paraguay, Japan, Europe (mostly Portugal and Italy), Canada, Australia, and other South American countries. One estimate by Teresa Sales shows the number of Brazilians living outside Brazil increasing by approximately 20 percent each year in the 1980s. It was also during this phase that large-scale emigration from the states of Governador Valadares and Minas Gerais began to attract greater attention. Widely cited as a "pioneer" immigrant flow, the 1980s *valadarense* and *mineiro* migrants were building on the social networks of previous immigrants from the region (which had developed during World War II in conjunction with Ameri-

can military and business activity in Minas Gerais), as Ana Cristina Braga Martes points out.

The third phase of Brazilian immigration (mid-1990s to the present) began when then finance minister Fernando Henrique Cardoso released his Real Plan in 1994. The Real Plan reduced inflation and stabilized much of Brazil's economic crisis. Emigration levels also stabilized, operating more according to the internal dynamics of migrants' social networks than to economic "push" factors. However, starting in 1999, with the devaluation of the Real Plan following the Asian financial crisis, frustration over (President) Cardoso's economic policies, and uncertainty leading up to the election of Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva in October 2002, emigration increased again. The number of Brazilian immigrants admitted to the U.S. in 2000 rose 78 percent, to 6,959, up from 3,902 in 1999—the largest annual increase since 1990–1991. And although economic conditions in Brazil stabilized by 2005, social networks continue to sustain further migration; reports of undocumented Brazilians apprehended while trying to cross the Mexico-U.S. border have increased dramatically since 2000. As with Ecuadorian and Peruvian immigrants, U.S. immigration figures are not recent enough to document the new movement. Collected "extra-official" estimates put the Brazilian population in the U.S. somewhere between 800,000 and 1.2 million in 2004.

Argentina. Like Brazil, Argentina is best known as an immigrant-receiving country. Most of its past immigrants came from Spain and Italy, more recent ones from Bolivia and Paraguay. But beginning in the 1950s, Argentines began leaving their country in three major phases. The first (1950s–1970s) was primarily economic, when professionals left because of dissatisfaction with their working conditions, income levels, and standards of living after Argentine industrialization ran into its first major hurdles. The second phase was primarily political but also economic. A repressive military government during Argentina's "Dirty War" (1976–1983) and hyperinflation and economic deterioration during the 1980s provided all classes of Argentines greater motive to emigrate. While these emigration flows were composed primarily of manual laborers, their high proportion of professionals earned them a reputation as brain drains.

The third and current phase is primarily economic. In the early 2000s, Argentines began responding to a severe economic crisis and Argentina's default on over $100 billion in debt (December 2001) by leaving in rapidly expanding numbers and heading to Spain, Italy, the U.S., Canada, Australia, and Israel. The magnitude of the crisis reversed a century of economic stability in Argentina and made a middle-class lifestyle harder to protect. Whereas Argentina was one of the ten richest countries in the world in 1900, in 2001–2002 its GDP fell rapidly, joblessness stood at over 20 percent, and an estimated half of its population of 37 million had fallen into poverty. Although the economic situation improved by 2004, Argentina's National Migration Directorate cites an exodus of 255,000 Argentines between

2001 and mid-2003 (roughly six times the number of emigrants who left between 1993 and 2000), and a 2002 survey found that a third of the country's residents would emigrate if they could.

U.S. immigration figures are not recent enough to document the new movement among Argentines. Collected "extra-official" estimates showed somewhere between 40,000 and 180,000 Argentines in Florida in 2002, and various sources documented an increase in the number of visa requests made at the American embassy in Buenos Aires. In February 2002 the INS removed Argentina and Uruguay from its visa-waiver program in response to swelling numbers of Argentine and Uruguayan nationals overstaying their visas. The Argentine embassy also delivered a request to the American government to grant temporary protected status (TPS) to Argentines who had fled the economic crisis and were living in the U.S. illegally—although it was not granted.

Venezuela. Before the 1980s, Venezuela was a stable country with a center-left democratic system, a functioning upper-middle-class economy, and a petroleum industry that linked it successfully to first-world development plans. It was also primarily an immigrant-receiving country, having welcomed its own 20th-century immigrants from neighboring Colombia, Europe, the Caribbean, other South American countries, Asia, and the Middle East. Only recently has Venezuelan emigration received attention.

The shift occurred because various debt, banking, and currency crises and rising inflation and unemployment plagued Venezuela during the 1980s and 1990s, increasing the incentives for emigration. During the 1980s, Venezuela witnessed economic stagnation and political discontent as its petroleum industry—alongside Ecuador's—began to decline. On February 18, 1983, "Black Tuesday" marked the beginning of a long line of currency devaluations that culminated in riots in February 1989. During the 1990s, Venezuela witnessed two coups (1992), a presidential impeachment (1993), a major financial crisis (1994), and the gradual collapse of its traditional party system and election of the populist Hugo Chávez Frías as president (1998). Javier Corrales shows that real wages in Venezuela decreased almost 70 percent over two decades, the probability of being poor increased from 2.4 percent to 18.5 percent over one decade, and over two thirds of the population now lives below the poverty line. Politico-economic unrest has worsened in recent years, especially following an attempted coup against Chávez on April 11, 2002, continued declines in petroleum values, and labor strikes and protests.

As elsewhere in South America, these crises have made a middle-class lifestyle harder to attain and protect. As Venezuela painfully worked its way through not one but two "lost decades," emigration increased dramatically; a 2002 survey found that over half of Venezuelans under the age of 24 wished to leave the country. As with other South American immigrants, U.S. figures are not recent enough to document the new movement. Specific to post-1989 Venezuelan emigration are rising

incentives for Venezuelan elites, entrepreneurs, and upper-level bureaucrats to emigrate in order to protect their personal property and capital investments, especially as Chávez and his populist policies have begun challenging them more seriously since 1998. In this respect, early analyses have likened Venezuelan emigration under Chávez's presidency to Cuban emigration under Fidel Castro.

In brief, international emigration from South America is tied to neoliberal development—policies based on privatization and deregulation. Growth in immigration flows from the region has built on the earliest immigrants' experiences and expanded through social networks both within and outside the framework of U.S. immigration policy. Chile sends fewer migrants to the U.S. than most South American countries today, primarily because its successful transition to free-market capitalism and greater economic stability encourage more residents to stay put. (In the early 2000s, Chile is struggling with immigration of its own, mostly from Argentina, Bolivia, Peru, and Ecuador.) Bolivia, Paraguay, and Uruguay send fewer migrants to the U.S. as well, although recent events in each of these countries suggest that neoliberal development will not occur independent of international migration.

Economic and Human Capital Characteristics

South Americans in the U.S. resemble Cubans more closely than they do other Latin American groups. On average, South Americans tend to be older and demonstrate more equal male-to-female ratios than these groups (see Table 3). U.S. Census data analyzed by John Logan show that on average, South American immigrants are better educated, earn higher incomes, have lower poverty rates and levels of unemployment, and are less likely to receive public assistance than Cuban immigrants (who in general fare better on such indicators than other Latin American immigrant groups, but not necessarily better than *all* U.S. immigrant groups).

Table 4 shows that on average, South Americans display higher educational attainments than most other Latin American immigrant groups. They also tend to be more heavily concentrated in white-collar managerial and technical occupations, to be less concentrated in service and blue-collar production/operation occupations, and to exhibit somewhat lower poverty rates and higher incomes. Together, these data confirm South American immigrants' different modes of economic incorporation and experiences in the U.S. labor market compared with other Latin American immigrant groups (although again, not necessarily with all U.S. immigrant groups).

Yet aggregate data hide important variation among South American groups by region and national origin, class, and legal status. On average, the Andean groups from Colombia, Peru, and Ecuador have lower educational attainments and less favorable occupations than their counterparts from the Southern Cone (defined as containing Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, and Paraguay), Brazil, and Venezuela (Boliv-

Table 3 Age, sex, citizenship status, and decade of entry of foreign-born South Americans, by country of birth, 2000

National origin	Median age	Percent male	Percent noncitizen	Percentage arriving by decade				
				1990–2000	1980–1989	1970–1979	1960–1969	Before 1960
All foreign-born	37.0	49.8	56.3	41.7	26.7	15.3	8.6	7.7
Colombia	38.0	45.1	58.5	45.1	27.9	14.5	10.2	2.2
Ecuador	36.0	52.1	64.2	46.8	25.5	15.2	10.4	2.2
Peru	38.0	48.2	60.8	46.4	31.8	12.5	7.0	2.4
Brazil	33.0	45.9	73.7	63.3	21.0	6.5	6.4	2.9
Guyana	39.0	41.0	39.7	34.6	41.8	17.0	5.4	1.2
Argentina	42.0	49.6	51.3	36.8	20.7	17.0	18.6	6.9
Venezuela	32.0	47.3	68.8	60.7	19.7	9.7	6.5	3.4
Chile	39.0	49.5	55.3	36.9	26.0	21.7	10.3	5.1
Bolivia	36.0	48.5	60.4	44.9	30.6	13.1	8.6	2.8
Uruguay	42.0	50.9	48.4	28.5	31.8	23.8	13.6	2.4
Paraguay	32.0	44.7	47.1	50.3	27.9	10.7	9.0	2.1
Suriname[a]	36.0	41.6	49.1	57.6	21.8	8.2	6.8	5.6

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census, 5% Public Use Microdata Sample, weighted data.
a. 2000 Suriname figures available only from U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census, 1% Public Use Microdata Sample, weighted data.

Table 4 Selected labor market characteristics among foreign-born groups from the Western hemisphere, by country of birth, 2000 (percentages)

National origin	Bachelor's degree or higher	Managerial and professional occupations	Service occupations	Median wage/salary income, 1999	Living below the poverty line, 1999
All foreign-born	26.0	29.7	16.3	$21,000	10.9
Canada	41.3	51.3	7.0	$34,000	3.5
Central America					
Mexico	4.5	9.2	22.8	$15,000	19.9
El Salvador	5.1	10.3	30.7	$15,600	14.7
Guatemala	6.3	11.8	27.9	$15,100	16.2
Honduras	8.3	13.6	24.7	$14,400	19.0
Nicaragua	14.6	18.7	20.0	$18,000	10.7
Panama	28.2	36.6	13.4	$26,000	5.8
Costa Rica	19.9	27.7	21.8	$20,800	11.7
Belize	13.8	28.7	17.1	$22,800	8.6
Caribbean					
Cuba	21.0	28.6	12.8	$22,000	8.5
Dominican Republic	10.1	18.7	21.4	$15,900	17.5
Jamaica	19.1	38.0	13.4	$26,000	7.0
Haiti	14.3	29.6	23.1	$19,000	13.6
Trinidad and Tobago	19.0	34.6	14.8	$26,000	8.3
South America					
Colombia	23.2	25.5	21.3	$18,200	12.5
Ecuador	13.7	17.6	19.4	$18,000	11.6
Peru	24.9	25.4	19.7	$20,000	8.3
Brazil	34.1	30.1	25.8	$20,000	11.7
Guyana	17.3	33.1	12.6	$25,000	6.9
Argentina	36.7	42.7	12.0	$26,700	7.5
Venezuela	46.4	41.7	11.2	$25,000	8.6
Chile	31.8	35.9	16.2	$24,000	7.2
Bolivia	25.8	30.3	21.0	$22,400	8.1
Uruguay	22.5	27.4	14.0	$25,000	5.8
Paraguay	26.1	29.2	26.0	$21,600	9.2
Suriname[a]	27.3	24.2	3.4	$10,400	7.0

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census, 5% Public Use Microdata Sample, weighted data. Economic categories reflect percentages among persons aged 25–64 in the labor force; education reflects percentage of persons aged 25–64.

a. 2000 Suriname figures available only from U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census, 1% Public Use Microdata Sample, weighted data.

ians are the exception, although their educational attainments have declined since 1980 to resemble those of other Andean groups more closely). For example, in 2000, 46 percent of Venezuelans and 37 percent of Argentines but only 14 percent of Ecuadorians aged 25 to 64 held a bachelor's degree or higher. Important class divisions also create variation between well-to-do, educated, and professional mi-

grants and their less-educated, lower-status compatriots. Finally, undocumented immigration status is a crucial factor shaping the lives of many South American immigrants, whether they are upper-middle-class migrants who experience difficulty securing a visa or transferring a professional degree to the U.S. or migrants who started out lower on the social totem pole at home.

For example, even though the Argentine and Brazilian streams include high proportions of documented, educated, and professional migrants, each also includes a substantial number of undocumented, less-educated, and manual-laborer migrants. An August 2002 *Los Angeles Times* article cited Brazilians second only to Mexicans in the number of undocumented persons captured by the Border Patrol in San Diego County, and in 1988, Adriana Marshall showed that most Argentine migrants were manual laborers rather than professionals or technicians. In 2000, Colombians, Ecuadorians, Brazilians, and Peruvians ranked among the top 15 estimated undocumented immigrant populations in the U.S. (with estimates at 141,000, 108,000, 77,000, and 61,000, respectively). Illustrating the bifurcated and complex nature of many South American migration streams, Teófilo Altamirano estimates that nearly one out of three Peruvians and Ecuadorians in the U.S. is undocumented at the same time that highly skilled human capital emigration is becoming a serious problem in both sending countries. Thus, many South Americans do very well in the U.S., but others, especially the undocumented, fare less well. They can often be found in lower-level service and production occupations that are more isolated from mainstream Americans and that garner lower economic and social returns. They also confront various linguistic, psychological, and political hurdles that many of their compatriots do not.

Residential Patterns

For the most part, South Americans head for the major U.S. immigrant-receiving states and cities. In the 2000 Census, Colombians were concentrated in Florida (31 percent), New York (21 percent), and New Jersey (13 percent) and Peruvians in California (20 percent), Florida (19 percent), and New York and New Jersey (16 percent each). Ecuadorians were concentrated overwhelmingly in New York (46 percent) but also in New Jersey (18 percent) and Florida (10 percent), while Venezuelans were concentrated overwhelmingly in Florida (41 percent) but also in California (10 percent) and Texas (8 percent). Brazilians were concentrated in Florida (21 percent), Massachusetts (16 percent), California (11 percent), and New Jersey (10 percent), and Argentines in California and Florida (23 percent each) and New York (14 percent). Finally, Chileans were concentrated in Florida (20 percent), California (18 percent), and New York (16 percent) and Bolivians in Virginia (29 percent), California (15 percent), Florida (11 percent), and New York (10 percent).

Within these states South Americans are concentrated heavily in metropolitan areas; around half reside in the New York and Miami metropoli-

And within these cities, South Americans settle in or near other Latin American communities. Many Colombians, Ecuadorians, and Peruvians reside near Mexicans, Cubans, and Dominicans in Queens, New York. Argentines, Brazilians, Colombians, and Venezuelans have settled throughout the greater Miami/Ft. Lauderdale area alongside other Latin Americans, while Bolivians and Peruvians rank among the principal Latino groups in the greater Washington, D.C., area, settling near Salvadorans and Mexicans. (Brazilians have also settled near established Portuguese-speaking communities in New England.) But on average, South Americans are more geographically dispersed than other Latin American groups. Several Central American and Caribbean immigrant groups are heavily concentrated in just one or two U.S. states, but only Ecuadorians and Venezuelans exhibit such concentrations at the state level. Their smaller numbers and greater geographic dispersal means that many South Americans settle outside established Latino communities, in suburban areas or alongside people who have similar class or educational but different national backgrounds. It also means that the South American communities that do exist are smaller as well as more closely linked to mainstream American society than those of other Latin American groups.

For example, it is not uncommon to hear South American names attached to settlements boasting high proportions of immigrants from a particular country or region—such as Little Colombia in Jackson Heights, Queens, Little Peru in Paterson, New Jersey, Little Brazil in Framingham, Massachusetts, Little Buenos Aires in upper Miami Beach, or Huancayo Chico, Callao City, and Quitolándia in heavily Andean settlements. However, the areas that these names describe are different from Little Havana in Miami and Dominican Heights in New York. Census data analyzed by John Logan show that on average, even though South Americans tend to live in neighborhoods where Hispanics outnumber non-Hispanic whites, "they often live in areas whose Hispanic flavor comes less from themselves than from the mélange of people from different parts of the Hispanic world." On average, South Americans are also less segregated from non-Hispanic whites and more segregated from African Americans than other Hispanic groups (with the exception of Cubans).

Social Characteristics

South American immigrants display a range of other characteristics. They come from Andean countries in central and western South America, coastal and plains areas in the north, all parts of Brazil, and countries making up the Southern Cone. They also come from distinct nation-states and are differentiated by regional origin and local ethnic affiliation within them. For example, Brazilian immigrants express local affiliations depending on their home state or town (i.e., *cariocas,* who hail from Rio de Janeiro, or *paulistas,* who hail from São Paulo). Peruvians come both

from the Andean highlands and metropolitan Lima, and Ecuadorians come primarily from the southern states of Azuay and Cañar but also from coastal Guayaquil and the northern region surrounding Quito.

South American immigrants also differ by religion, language, and political affiliation. Although most are Catholic, many are traditional Protestant, evangelical, or Jewish. And although most speak Spanish, many enter the U.S. with a relatively good command of English. Furthermore, important regional and national differences exist among Spanish-speakers' dialects and vocabularies, and Brazilians speak Portuguese. Still other immigrants speak indigenous languages instead of or in addition to Spanish, such as Quechua or Aymara, which Ulises Juan Zevallos Aguilar argues is broadening traditional ethnolinguistic ideas of the "Andean archipelago" in South America. Finally, distinct political histories based on varying ethnic, racial, linguistic, and class struggles as well as distinct inter-American relations mean that South American immigrants exhibit no clear or unified political stance. To date there are few data on South American immigrants' political participation beyond naturalization rates (but see Michael Jones-Correa, 1998).

South American immigrants are also racially and ethnically diverse. Table 5

Table 5 Racial identification of foreign-born South Americans, by country of birth, 2000 (percentages)

National origin	White	Black/ Negro	American and Latin American Indian	Asian/ Pacific Islander	Other race	Two or more races[a]
Colombia	62.9	1.3	0.4	0.2	27.6	7.6
Ecuador	49.1	0.9	0.6	0.3	40.4	8.6
Peru	48.5	0.6	1.1	1.4	41.1	7.2
Brazil	69.7	1.9	0.1	1.3	15.4	11.6
Guyana	2.3	44.7	1.6	21.4	14.4	15.7
Argentina	84.4	0.4	0.1	1.0	9.1	5.0
Venezuela	70.4	2.1	0.3	1.4	19.1	6.7
Chile	73.6	0.4	0.3	0.3	19.5	6.0
Bolivia	60.9	0.7	1.0	0.3	29.1	8.0
Uruguay	80.5	0.2	0.0	0.5	11.3	7.4
Paraguay	65.8	1.1	1.5	3.6	21.0	6.9
Suriname[b]	12.2	41.3	0.0	18.1	22.7	5.7

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census, 5% Public Use Microdata Sample, 2000, weighted data.

a. The 2000 Census allowed all respondents to specify more than one major U.S. racial category for the first time; details on the specific racial categories marked by respondents who marked more than one are not provided here. In 2000 the U.S. Census's race question remained separate from its Hispanic origin/ethnicity question.

b. 2000 Suriname figures available only from U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census, 1% Public Use Microdata Sample, weighted data.

shows that most consider themselves white and trace their ancestry to European populations (Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, German, Polish, Ukrainian, etc.). A few (mostly from Guyana and Suriname, but also from Brazil, Venezuela, and Colombia) consider themselves black and trace their ancestry to African slaves brought to South America long ago. Still others consider themselves a mix of European, Amerindian, and/or African heritages, or trace their ancestry to Middle Eastern and Asian immigrants who migrated to South America in the 20th century (e.g., Brazilian and Peruvian migrants of Japanese heritage, Venezuelan and Paraguayan migrants of Lebanese or Korean heritage). As South Americans enter the U.S., their racial identifications often come into conflict with prevailing American ideas of race, which tend to force racial identifications into bounded categories, emphasize African and indigenous over European features, and impose a new racialized ethnic category (Hispanic/Latino) on all immigrants from Latin America. Many South American immigrants, especially Brazilians, are confused by their inclusion within this group, which they see as a derogatory label directed at poor and uneducated Mexican, Caribbean, and Central American minority groups rather than an accurate reflection of their own social, historical, political, and racial backgrounds. Many draw on their regional, national, and linguistic identities, as well as their relatively higher economic and political standing vis-à-vis other Latin American groups in the U.S., to distinguish themselves in a more positive manner. At the same time, the question of whether South Americans will "become" Hispanics/Latinos over time and generations is a topic that warrants more research.

Cultural Adaptations and Influences

In the U.S., South Americans' sense of identity and community frequently revolve around social and religious networks—sports and social clubs, church groups, music and dance festivals, and the like. These associations provide valuable social support to new immigrants, helping them maintain country-of-origin values, manage migration and adaptation pressures, collect money to remit home, and even organize politically. For example, Peruvians now have over 450 voluntary associations in the U.S., based on local and regional affiliations in Peru as well as socioeconomic and cultural concerns in this country, and since 1984 annual national conventions have brought these associations together. Other South American immigrant groups are less organized at the national level, but soccer leagues (Arlington Bolivian Soccer League in northern Virginia), restaurants (Cónfitería Buenos Aires Bakery/Café in Miami), immigrant advocacy groups (Brazilian Immigrant Center in Boston), cultural associations (Uruguayan Cultural Association in West Palm Beach), nonprofit organizations (Venezuelan American Brotherhood Foundation), music festivals and groups (Ecuadorian *sanjuanistas* and Argentine tango societies), immigrant newspapers (*The Brasilians* in New York), professional organizations (Peruvian American Medical Society), and even political organizations (American Colombian Democratic Organization) provide institutional space for new immigrants to fraternize and organize along various lines.

Hemispheric Transformation

The U.S. has been South Americans' preferred destination for several decades. In 2002 almost half of Peruvian emigrants resided in the U.S., as did most Brazilian emigrants in 2000. In fact, according to recent research by David Kyle, recent Ecuadorian migrants in Spain still express a desire to end up in New York City, where they can earn their livings directly in American/Ecuadorian dollars. However, South Americans are increasingly heading to other countries, notably Spain and Japan. Using 2005 data from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the geographer Marie Price calculates that while over 60 percent of Peruvian, Bolivian, Colombian, and Guyanese immigrants going to OECD countries choose the U.S., only 40 to 60 percent of Venezuelan and Ecuadorian immigrants do so (and the percentage among Ecuadorians is decreasing), and less than 40 percent of Chileans, Argentines, and Brazilians do so.

The United States' role in South Americans' migration schemas plays out in several ways. An important one is that immigrant remittances are increasing, and by extension exerting more weight on South American countries' future economic and social development plans. The Multilateral Investment Fund at the Inter-American Development Bank reports that in 2003 remittances totaled $5.2 billion for Brazil, $3.1 billion for Colombia, $1.7 billion for Ecuador, $1.3 billion for Peru, $340 million for Bolivia, $247 million for Venezuela, $225 million for Argentina, $137 million for Guyana, and $42 million for Uruguay (figures are not available for Chile and Paraguay). Many remittances come from migrants in the U.S., although South American figures are distinguished from Mexican and Central American ones precisely because a higher proportion come from migrants outside the U.S.

At the dawn of the 21st century, South America faces a range of major economic, political, and social concerns. What merits theoretical attention about current South American emigrants, no matter where they go, is the fact that many of them come from countries once known for economic stability and immigration, not emigration. Today the U.S. is the only country in the Western Hemisphere that has not yet witnessed a major exodus of its own people.

Furthermore, demand-side changes in receiving countries are producing new incentives for emigration. To fill labor demands, employers in the U.S., Canada, and Europe are looking to Central and South America as sources of educated workers frustrated with their existing opportunities. Future trade agreements may help South American countries respond to current economic and social realities in the

long run through major neoliberal adjustments. But there is little doubt that they will also encourage migration in the short run, by virtue of being "penetrative forces." Thus, given the relative recency of South American immigration in the U.S. and current instabilities throughout South America, the most important research on South American immigrants will be produced in years to come.

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