Preface

Eleven-year-old Jorge heard the shot, ran into the corner bar and found his father, Miguel Velez, on the floor, dead. Miguel had just killed himself. Jorge, the youngest of five children, was in shock. His mother had died from an illness just two years before. Now, his father had left him and his brothers and sisters all alone. Why?

Miguel had always worked. He had a job in a manufacturing plant in Chicago that made equipment for the tool and dye industry. Then, early in the summer of 1985, he was laid off. For a full year he tried to find a similar job but could not. He was the sole support for his family, and the longer he went without work, the more he worried about how he could meet the needs of his children. He went into a deep depression and finally convinced himself that they would be better off without him. One Saturday night he gave each of his children a piece of jewelry that had belonged to their mother or to him, and then, with no warning, he walked to the corner bar and shot himself.

Luis Aviles was forty years old. He sat on the stoop of his Bronx apartment building with a beer in his hand trying to make sense of what had happened to his life.

Luis's parents had come to New York City before World War II. His family did not always have a lot, but his parents had always worked—they were never on welfare. Shortly

after he and his wife Benita were married, they had a son, José, and life looked good. He was supporting his family from his job in the garment district and had even received a promotion to manager of a warehouse.

In the late 1970s, after two years in his new position, Luis was told that business was getting slow, and he was laid off. He tried to find new employment, but all he could find were jobs that paid way too little to support his family. He had been brought up knowing that he was responsible for meeting his family's needs, but now he could not. He was frustrated, and the tension was hurting his family. He and his wife were having conflicts, and family life was deteriorating.

His wife eventually was able to find a job as a teacher aide in the public school system. This helped take care of some of the basic needs in the home but also caused further damage to Luis's self-image. After all, he, not his wife, was supposed to support his family. The arguments and tension increased until divorce was inevitable. Luis felt hopeless and lethargic and began to drink heavily. Now he was alone and so psychologically paralyzed that he was unable to even interview for a job. Why was all this happening?

How do we understand these stories? Were Miguel and Luis at fault for not finding new jobs or possibly even for losing their old jobs? Both these men were Puerto Ricans who had made their homes in major U.S. mainland cities—Chicago and New York. Are they exceptions within the Puerto Rican community? No, not at all.

According to the 1990 census, the official unemployment rate for all non-Hispanics across the United States was 6.0 percent. For all Hispanics taken together, it was 10.4 percent. But when we look at only Puerto Ricans, the rate goes up to 12.4 percent, and this does not include those "discouraged workers" who are no longer even a part of the labor force. A logical question might be: If things are so bad here, why don't they go back to Puerto Rico? Well, also in 1990, the official unemployment rate on the island was 20.4 percent, and the unofficial unemployment rate was close to 40 percent! Census estimates in March 2000 (before the decennial census was taken) indicate some improvement across the board. Unemployment for non-Hispanics was 4.1 percent; for all Hispanics taken together, it was 6.8 percent; and for Puerto Ricans it was 8.1 percent (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2001a).

The reflective question *Why*? requires us to investigate what is going

on, but where do we start? And how does unemployment affect the general well-being of Puerto Ricans in the United States, especially in regard to the issue of poverty? We could start by looking at the individuals who are unemployed and try to determine whether they are lazy, whether they lack job skills, or whether they are uneducated or undereducated. We could start by looking at Puerto Rican culture to see how it affects Puerto Rican work ethics, how it views education, or how Puerto Rican family structure affects their well-being. Or we could start by looking at U.S. society to determine how economics and politics affect local job markets, how labor needs can affect educational outcomes, or how an ethnic group can be manipulated and relegated to second-class status.

Although this book touches on all these areas, we will use the societal or structural area as our starting point. As C. Wright Mills said:

> When, in a city of 100,000, only one man is unemployed, that is his personal trouble, and for its relief we properly look to the character of the man, his skills, and his immediate opportunities. But when in a nation of 50 million employees, 15 million men are unemployed, that is an issue, and we may not hope to find its solution within the range of opportunities open to any one individual. The very structure of opportunities has collapsed. Both the correct statement of the problem and the range of possible solutions require us to consider the economic and political institutions of the society, and not merely the personal situation and character of a scatter of individuals. (1959, 9)

The Puerto Rican situation definitely falls into what Mills calls a societal "issue."

Troublesome Trends

In doing any type of sociological study, we need to look at how the area of interest has been studied in the past. Major historical methods for studying an issue can guide us as we approach mounds of data. However, they can also trap us into thinking a particular way and thus blind us to alternative explanations. I believe that three particular trends have hindered researchers from understanding the nature of Puerto Rican poverty. The first trend is that all Hispanics often are lumped together for research. This means that the experiences of immigrants/migrants from as many as twenty-three different countries, including Mexicans, Cubans, Puerto Ricans, Ecuadorians, Peruvians, Dominicans, and even

Spaniards, are all averaged together. Their different histories and backgrounds are overlooked. Many researchers (e.g., Bean and Tienda 1987; Portes and Truelove [1987]1991; Aponte 1991; Aponte 1993) have been challenging others to recognize the importance of looking at each national group apart from the mix, and I agree with this approach.

The second trend is that the studies that have been done on Puerto Ricans usually either combine all U.S. Puerto Ricans, regardless of where they live in the United States, or they single out New York City as a case study. A few studies have looked at Puerto Ricans in other cities, but there has been a real lack of research that compares the experiences of Puerto Ricans in different areas of the United States.

The third trend is that theories regarding adaptation of immigrants/migrants and poverty have primarily been designed to explain the experiences of either white European ethnic groups at the turn of the century or African Americans. Other nonwhite groups are "forced" to fit into one mold or the other. This was explicitly stated by Douglas Massey (1979) when he published his first national study on Hispanic residential segregation. We believe that studying Puerto Ricans (or any other group that is neither white European nor African American) using models that were not designed for their experiences results in inaccurate conclusions.

My Approach

This book is laid out in three major parts, each one corresponding roughly to one of the three troublesome trends. The first part responds to the first trend. By reviewing the historical experiences of the major U.S. Hispanic national groups—Mexicans, Cubans, and Puerto Ricans—and then comparing their situations in 1990 and 2000 wherever possible, we document the importance of separating Hispanics by national group for study and also address how Puerto Ricans fare compared with the other Hispanic groups.

The second part responds to the second trend. We show the importance of separating the experiences of Puerto Ricans by regions, and even by metropolitan areas within regions, by drawing comparisons that clearly show that not all areas of the country provide the same opportunities (or lack thereof) for Puerto Ricans. We also look at the possi-

bility of Puerto Ricans moving to a new area as a strategy for trying to locate better opportunities. We then look at two significant pieces to Puerto Rican economic attainment: residential segregation and special issues dealing with Puerto Rican women.

The third part responds to the third trend by attempting to develop a truly Puerto Rican explanation for what is happening. Our approach in this section is to describe the effects of changing labor market dynamics using case studies of various areas of the country.

After these three major parts, we provide a concluding chapter that synthesizes the results of the three parts and introduces possible policy ramifications.

Underlying Themes

Throughout this book references are made to certain underlying themes. The first of these themes is the importance of New York City. Not only is New York important as the historical location of choice for Puerto Ricans coming from the island (and it still contains, by far, the largest Puerto Rican community on the mainland), but also its changing structure has perpetuated moves within the United States that affect the development of Puerto Rican communities across the country. The vast majority of U.S. Puerto Ricans trace their roots through New York City.

A second underlying theme is that although the situation is different in Puerto Rico from what is in mainland cities, the experiences of the two areas are intertwined. This book is concerned with the circumstances of Puerto Ricans on the mainland, but it is impossible to understand their situation adequately without drawing connections to the development of the island.

A third underlying theme is that although Puerto Ricans, even on the island, are U.S. citizens by birth, their citizenship has not been an asset when confronting U.S. labor markets. Labor structures in many U.S. cities are leaning more toward incorporating cheap new Hispanic and Asian immigrant labor, rather than finding room for another politicized "native minority." Throughout this book the framework is laid for recognizing the second-class status of Puerto Rican citizenship.

The final underlying theme requires recognition of the special cir-

cumstances of Puerto Rican females. Whether reviewing the rise of female-headed families, looking at the effects of welfare, or trying to understand the high percentage of females who are not in the labor force, we must acknowledge the importance of understanding the economic role of Puerto Rican women.

Keeping in mind the three major research trends we want to confront as well as the underlying themes just mentioned, we are ready to begin our journey of discovery into the Puerto Rican experience on the U.S. mainland.

In the mid-1960s my husband and I moved into the Puerto Rican barrio of Humboldt Park, Chicago. For twenty-one years we lived, worked, and raised our four children there. During those years we were struck by the paradoxes we found. On the one side, we learned to appreciate a gracious and gentle people who took the words *mi casa es su casa* (my house is your house) to heart. Never did we enter the home of a Puerto Rican family where we did not feel welcomed. Usually we were invited to share in whatever was cooking in the big pots on the kitchen stove. Hospitality was natural to them, as was caring for each other. When a family was going through a tough time and needed assistance, a brother, sister, cousin, or *padrino* (godparent) was always there to help. The extended family went beyond bloodlines to include others in the community as well. Family, community, hospitality—all these combined with an enjoyment of the beautiful things in life. We often sat on our stoop while neighbors with guitars and other instruments played the old songs from the island. However, this serene, somewhat idyllic image was only one side of the picture.

The other side of the community was a rough one. More than forty street gangs caused the deaths of so many teenagers that one year the community earned the unenviable label of being "the most violent community in the U.S." Welfare was becoming a way of life. The effective dropout rate at the main high school servicing the community was close to 75 percent. Drugs and alcoholism were commonplace.

How could such a caring, community-oriented people get caught up in violence and other behaviors that could cause only destruction and pain to their families and community? How do we reconcile this para-

dox? The easiest approach is to blame the people: They should be staying in school, learning a trade, and getting a job. But I found this to be too simple an explanation.

Being a part of the community allowed us to experience the structural discrimination and indifference Puerto Ricans on the mainland must face. Shopping in the same local supermarket, we had to carefully sort through the graying meat and the wilted and browning lettuce. Supermarket chains sent the "good" meats and produce to stores in other areas of the city—areas that were not inhabited by people of color, brown or black. Raising our children to play on the same streets meant warning them to stay clear of policemen, who would beat up teenagers in front of their mothers or take gang members to an opposing gang's "turf" and let them out of the squad car to see if they could make their way home safely on foot. Sending our children to community schools as well as being an advocate for many of the community children opened our eyes to a system that explicitly or implicitly made it clear that Puerto Rican children came from an inferior culture and were not worth the effort needed to properly teach any child. Attempting to find jobs for people who were out of work gave me a glimpse of a job market that primarily offered part-time jobs at minimum wage and with no fringe benefits, yet with hefty deductions for union dues.

This immersion into the everyday life and culture of a Puerto Rican community provided the impetus for me to more systematically research what was actually at the root of the frustrations and anger I saw each day. My experiences convinced me that Puerto Rican culture was not the problem. To adequately understand the causes of the distress in Humboldt Park, I had to look at how the city embraced or did not embrace different people groups. I witnessed discrimination on many institutional levels, from the city council's manipulation of ward maps to eliminate, or at least minimize, Puerto Rican representation, to the school board's requirements that Puerto Ricans take an English test to be certified to teach, even when they had been born and raised solely on the mainland. This test was so difficult that many of the Anglo teachers would not have been able to pass it (but of course they were not required to take it). Some changes have taken place, for example, in the mid-1980s the federal government forced the city to redraw its ward boundaries to allow for more representation from minority areas.

The underlying current of discrimination, however, has not changed—it has only taken different forms.

When our family moved to Philadelphia in the late 1980s, we again gravitated to the Puerto Rican community. We began learning about it and spending time there with the people. In comparing the barrios of Humboldt Park in Chicago and North Philadelphia, we found many similarities, but we also found many significant differences. Attempting to understand why these differences existed led me to view those communities within the dynamics of their host cities, especially in terms of the interactions between the barrios and the institutions of those cities.

This book is the culmination of the lessons I learned and the experiences I have gone through since those early days in Chicago. It is an attempt to look at the plight of the Puerto Rican people in the United States, primarily in our urban centers. Its focus is to try to disentangle the many dynamics affecting the status of Puerto Rican Americans to determine what is behind their high poverty and low employment rates. Guided by my discoveries of the importance of local contexts, this research has a dual focus. First, I will attempt to share my understanding of the Puerto Rican mainland population as a whole in terms of relationships between the United States and Puerto Rico. Second, I will review how Puerto Rican socioeconomic conditions have developed within local (metropolitan area) contexts. I recognize that this work may result in more questions than answers, but my hope is that it will point the way toward a uniquely Puerto Rican explanation of poverty.

In my journey toward discovery, I have been fortunate to receive guidance and support from several people. Dr. Manuel Ortiz, my friend and colleague of twenty-eight years, encouraged me to do the research found in this book, and he reviewed and critiqued all my findings. Dr. David Bartelt and Dr. William Yancey, both of Temple University, taught me the skills to make this research possible and guided my analysis as I faced piles of data. Doris Braendel, Janet Francendese, and Peter Wissoker of the Temple University Press editorial staff gave me invaluable assistance in how to approach the organization and writing of this book. My gratitude goes out to each of them. Finally, my deep appreciation goes to my husband, Randy, who had to deal with my long hours of work and mood swings as I alternately became excited about findings and then worried about seeming barriers to completing this work.

1

Hispanics in the United States

When we think of Hispanics in the United States, our minds often turn to a particular national group, depending on our backgrounds. For example, people living in the Southwest might immediately think of Mexicans; those from southern Florida might think of Cubans; and those from major cities in the Northeast would probably turn their attention to Puerto Ricans. If people from each of these areas were to provide a general description of Hispanics, they would give us very different pictures. Those from the Southwest might describe Hispanics by bringing up issues of "illegal aliens" (more properly referred to as "undocumented immigrants") and the low level of wages maintained for menial positions because Mexicans are willing to work for so little. Those from Florida might bring up the business acumen of Cubans and then complain about how they are "taking over" Miami and indeed all of Dade County. Meanwhile, those from the Northeast might complain about the large numbers of Hispanics on the welfare rolls.

Yes, all these descriptions are stereotypes, yet they clearly show us that the groups listed under the Hispanic umbrella are not homogeneous. Each group faces different issues. Sure, there are commonalities among the groups—they all use the Spanish language, have a religious orientation with roots in Spanish Catholicism, and were subjected to Spanish

colonialism (with the exception of those from Spain itself), to name a few. However, the groups are different from each other in more ways than they are alike. How, then, did they get lumped together as a "minority" under a Hispanic (or Latino) label?

The Hispanic Label

The Hispanic label, as with most labels, was not created by the national groups encompassed by it. Lucas warns us about the label's use: "This lumping together of national groups into a 'minority' is an artificial convenience" (1978, 2) for those in positions of power. He calls the label an "administrative convenience" (1981, 6). Portes and Truelove explain that "[*Hispanic*, until recently,] was essentially a term of convenience for administrative agencies and scholarly researchers. . . . The emergence of a Hispanic 'minority' has so far depended more on actions of government and the collective perceptions of Anglo-American society than on the initiative of the individuals so designated" ([1987]1991, 402).

Although sometimes the Hispanic or Latino label is used by a combination of national groups to provide solidarity on common issues (e.g., bilingual education) (Padilla 1985, 3), the people overwhelmingly prefer to call themselves and be referred to by their national origin, such as Mexican, Cuban, or Puerto Rican (Institute for Puerto Rican Policy 1993, 2).

Hispanic National Groups

We have been referring to the Hispanic national groups, but who are these groups and how large are they? Close to 22.5 million Hispanics were counted in the 1990 census (not including the more than 3.5 million residents of Puerto Rico). By 2000 that number rose to over 35 million (again, not including the 3.8 million residents of Puerto Rico). According to Aponte, "Hispanics are the nation's fastest growing minority in absolute terms. Indeed, the best available evidence indicates that Hispanics (Latinos) will almost certainly surpass African Americans in numeric strength by 2020, if not sooner" (1993, 527). The 2000 census figures show that 12.5 percent of the population was Hispanic and 12.9

percent was black (or black and another race) (U.S. Bureau of the Census 2001b, 1). Considering that many Hispanics identify their race as black, the two minorities are very close in size at this time, and the number of Hispanics may surpass that of blacks by the next census in 2010.

The three largest Hispanic national groups are Mexican, Puerto Rican, and Cuban (see Figure 1–1). Although the "Other Hispanic" group is actually the second largest group, it is a mixed group that includes (1) highly skilled Latin American immigrants; (2) refugees of the professional class; (3) Central American economic refugees (e.g., from Nicaragua, Guatemala, and El Salvador); (4) part-Hispanics, comprising those who have one Hispanic parent and one non-Hispanic parent; (5) mixed-Hispanics, which includes those whose parents are both Hispanic but are each from different national origin groups; and (6) Hispanos, who are descendants of the European-Spanish stock primarily found in New Mexico who never intermarried with indigenous Indians or with Anglos (Hispanic Almanac 1984, 49). Also included in this group are an increasing number of low-skilled Caribbean Hispanics, especially those from the Dominican Republic.

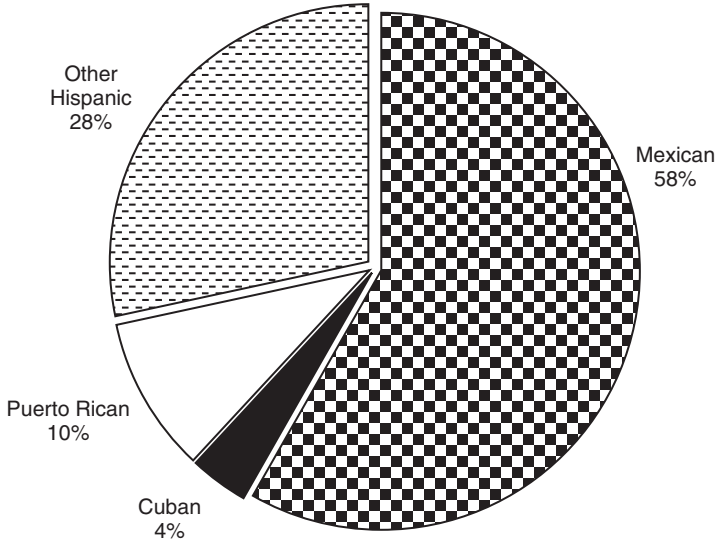

Figure 1-1: U.S. Hispanics, 2000

The "Other Hispanic" group increased from being 23 percent of all Hispanics in the United States in 1990 to 28.9 percent in 2000. This proportion indicates the importance of current immigration policies, which are discussed later in this chapter.

To understand just how diverse the Hispanic population can be, let's review the national origins of Hispanics in our two largest cities, New York and Los Angeles. Selecting those national groups that had a metropolitan population of at least 20,000 in 1990, we find eleven distinct Hispanic national groups in New York and ten in Los Angeles. In New York, where not too long ago *Hispanic* was almost synonymous with *Puerto Rican*, the close to one million Puerto Ricans make up only half the Hispanic population. More than 330,000 Dominicans, for example, were living in New York at the time of the 1990 census.

Small numbers of many Hispanic groups have lived in the United States for some time. If we look at the timing of entry for national groups, however, we find that most of the groups are relatively new. Mexicans are the major exception; large numbers of Mexicans have resided in what is now the United States since before the Southwest was annexed by the United States. Puerto Ricans have technically been part of the United States since the island was "won" in 1898 at the end of the Spanish American War, but their major influx to the mainland began just after World War II. Cubans were a relatively small group until Castro's takeover in 1959, which caused huge waves of refugees into the United States. The other Hispanic national groups, for the most part, did not gain prominence until the 1970s and 1980s. To understand why, we need to review the history of immigration legislation in the United States.

Immigration Policy and Hispanics

Initially, immigrants from a number of countries, including Spain, France, and England, settled in the United States. Individuals came to escape religious or political persecution; they came as prisoners or indentured servants; and they came to seek adventure and a new chance in life economically. Apart from the Immigration Act of 1882 (which barred immigration of criminals, mentally incompetent individuals, those who were seriously ill, and Chinese) and the "gentlemen's" agreement of 1907 between the United States and Japan to stop the flow of Japanese into this country (McCoy 1987; Reischauer 1989), im-

migration was "virtually unrestricted" (Reimers 1981, 2) until the National Origins Act of 1924. From 1882 to 1924, Caribbean Hispanics (including Mexicans) generally were treated positively. In fact, "in 1904, the U.S. Congress exempted immigrants from Cuba and Mexico from paying the 'head tax,' legislated the year before" (Pastor 1987, 243).

The National Origins Act of 1924 was based on discriminatory principles aimed not only at the Chinese and Japanese targeted by earlier policies but also at Southern and Eastern Europeans. The "avowed purpose of the law was to maintain the 'racial preponderance [of] the basic strain of our people' " (Pastor 1987, 245). This act established annual immigration quotas for each country based on the number of persons from that country already residing in the United States in 1890. Because the Southern and Eastern European immigrants were relative latecomers, their numbers were small in 1890, so their quotas were small too.

This act had an interesting effect on Hispanic immigration. All Caribbean colonies had to be counted as part of the quota of their "mother country" before entering the United States. This process was difficult and time-consuming, so little immigration activity took place. Puerto Rico, of course, was not affected because it was already a part of the United States. Mexico and other Caribbean countries that were not colonies were exempt from quotas and were allowed unlimited immigration based on "political considerations" (McCoy 1987, 228). These regulations affected the U.S. Hispanic population in a way that promoted the predominance of Mexicans and Puerto Ricans. No other subgroup had any numerical significance.

Although there was subsequent legislation, no major changes were made in the direction of U.S. immigration policy until the Immigration Act of 1965. This act was a thorough overhaul of immigration policy. It did away with the old quota system and set up qualitative standards based on occupation (to limit the number of low-skill workers entering the country) and family reunification. However, these two standards at times worked against each other. Family reunification allowed for the immigration of parents, spouses, and children of both U.S. citizens and immigrants with permanent residence status. This policy actually encouraged further immigration of low-skill workers. The 1965 immigration law also stipulated immigration limits for both the Eastern and Western hemispheres. This law, in effect, opened the door for a stream of immigrants from numerous Hispanic nations.

The final important piece of immigration legislation was the Refugee Act of 1980. Before that legislation was enacted, the U.S. refugee policy was a product of the Cold War and was primarily designed to assist individuals fleeing communism. The 1980 act brought U.S. guidelines more in line with United Nations protocol, which was much more inclusive.

To better understand this concept, we should recall the large numbers of refugees fleeing from oppressive governments in El Salvador and Nicaragua before this act became law. These people were regarded as undocumented immigrants and were not accorded refugee status because the government from which they were fleeing was not communistic. Therefore, they were subject to deportation if caught. Private "sanctuary" movements tried to assist these people, who often lived inside U.S. churches on arrival in the United States. Under the new guidelines, if these same people were to flee to the United States today, they could be considered refugees and could legally obtain the work and assistance they would need.

Although this act included a method by which the president could determine the number of refugees to be admitted annually (with the advice of Congress), the reality has been that many more refugees have entered the United States than were technically allowed. In terms of the U.S. Hispanic population, the large numbers involved in the 1980 Mariel boatlift from Cuba presented an immediate and almost insurmountable problem because of this legislation. The number of refugees was too large for U.S. structures to easily handle. Also, because many individuals entering with this group were criminals or had mental problems, the United States faced special needs with which it was ill-equipped to cope.

Although reviewing immigration policy might be an interesting undertaking, the next question should be: What difference does immigration-migration history make in terms of how national groups thrive or falter once they are in the United States?

Importance of Immigration Histories

Immigration histories include several factors that affect a group's well-being in the United States. Here we briefly review the reasons for migration, timing of migration, regional choice of settlement in the

United States, the attitude of the U.S. general public (hosts), and the importance of these issues for a group's overall incorporation into U.S. economic structures.

Reasons for Migration

We alluded earlier to a number of reasons that people immigrate, including low-skill laborers looking for work, professionals seeking better opportunities, family members of earlier immigrants who want to be reunited as a family, students, refugees fleeing oppressive governments, and economic refugees fleeing a catastrophe in their homeland (e.g., Irish immigrants escaping the devastation of the potato famine). These reasons can affect a group's adaptation in at least two major ways—their ability to enter U.S. labor markets and the capital (material and human) they brought with them.

Low-skill laborers have traditionally entered U.S. labor markets through the agrarian sector as farmhands, the industrial sector as factory workers, or as domestics. Farmworkers who wanted to advance usually left the farm to move to the nearest urban area and join the industrial low-skill labor pool. The industrial sector not only provided jobs but also offered avenues for advancement through on-the-job training. A worker could go from a low-skill assembly line position to a skilled position and then advance to foreman, supervisor, manager, and maybe even an owner. The service sector has become increasingly important as a supplier of low-skill positions. However, advancement is limited at best. At the risk of giving an absurd example, a hospital janitor has no built-in avenue of advancement to neurosurgeon. Low-skill service jobs tend to be dead-end.

Another issue involved in low-skill labor immigration is that the immigrants bring very little capital with them. If they had been able to accumulate material capital, they probably would have acquired skills that would remove them from the low-skill classification. Having low-level skills is a hindrance because it limits options available to the immigrants. Low skills generally indicate low educational levels as well. It could be that a strong desire to work (and work hard) may be the only human capital these immigrants bring with them.

Professional-level immigrants present a different story. They may have to enter the labor market at a lower level than they occupied in their home country (primarily because of language and professional

certification constraints), but their education, professionalism, and perhaps material/financial capital are assets that can open doors for earlier advancement. In time they could exceed the opportunities offered in their homeland, and certainly their children could benefit.

Refugees can be suffering from poverty or be among the elite (as were the initial immigrant waves from Cuba and Vietnam). They would enter the labor market in the same manner as economic immigrants but do present some differences. First, they have suffered a trauma from the situation that caused them to flee their homeland. These people would not necessarily want to live in the United States—they were just forced to leave oppressive situations. Second, even if they had wealth in their homeland, they may have had to leave it all behind when they fled, as happened to Cuban immigrants after the Bay of Pigs fiasco. Third, the Refugee Act provides certain types of relocation assistance to them that is not available to regular immigrants. In summary, refugees have additional burdens but also additional assistance.

Timing of Immigration

Timing refers not only to when a group first entered the United States but also to the number of years the major immigration flow spanned. The European immigration of the late nineteenth century usually marks the starting point for U.S. immigration studies. At the turn of the century, the United States was in the throes of industrialization, and it attracted large numbers of immigrants from European nations to fill the need for a growing pool of industrial laborers. However, the major European immigration spanned only forty years (1880–1920), and then it slowed to a trickle, allowing the immigrants to settle into an assimilation pattern.

Hispanic migration (apart from the annexation of large numbers of Mexicans through war and the purchase of land as well as the acquisition of Puerto Rico and its inhabitants at the end of the Spanish-American War) began in the early twentieth century with Mexicans. It increased after 1942, both in numbers and diversity, and has remained relatively strong ever since and probably will continue to do so. This steady immigration level has affected the well-being of the Hispanic groups in a couple of ways. First, with the exception of the early waves of Mexicans, most Hispanic groups entered the United States at a time when its economic structure was moving from an industrial to a service-oriented base.

Most Hispanics, therefore, did not enter a labor market with the same opportunities afforded Europeans. Second, because Hispanic immigration has not stopped, there is still a growing first-generation population, which tends to reinforce the ethnic identification of national groups and slow down the assimilation process.

Regional Choice of Settlement

As mentioned earlier, the three major U.S. Hispanic groups have chosen different regions in which to settle. Reasons for selecting a particular region vary among the groups, and each region presented a different opportunity structure to its newcomers.

Mexicans were living in the Southwest long before the United States acquired that area. It was natural for them to stay there. Also, because of the Mexican-United States border, the Southwest was closest to home and therefore more attractive to the many laborers who planned to return to Mexico. These workers were incorporated into the agricultural economy and were also experienced in work on the railroads. Those desiring to try their hand in the industrial sector made their way to more northern cities, especially Chicago. The majority, however, stayed in the Southwest.

Puerto Ricans were drawn to the industrial complex of the Northeast, especially New York City, through purposeful recruitment, an original pre–Spanish-American War base, and low airfares. Unfortunately, industry was already declining, so they entered a labor market that did not provide them with security, let alone advancement.

Cubans came to Miami primarily because of its proximity to Cuba. Many fled Cuba when Castro came to power, but few believed that he could maintain control for very long. They did not want to go too far from Miami so they could easily return to Cuba when Castro's regime was overthrown. Miami was not industrial, but many of the early Cuban refugees were professionals and were not looking to industry for their livelihood. They were able to utilize their skills and abilities along with their large numbers to develop an ethnic enclave within the greater economy.

Attitude of Hosts

We do not often think about it, but doors can be opened or closed depending on how the hosts look at newcomers. Because Cubans were po-

litical refugees fleeing communism and represented the elite of the island, not only were they widely accepted but also they were aided through U.S. refugee policies. This treatment was in stark contrast to that afforded Mexicans and Puerto Ricans, both groups that generally were looked down on and viewed as exploitable, cheap labor to be used and then let go according to the needs of the greater economy.

Attitudes of the hosts cannot be discussed without touching on the topic of race. Race is a complex issue and is even more complicated as it relates to Hispanics, so we next review Hispanic racial classification in more detail.

Hispanic Race

When the U.S. census divides the population according to race, no classification exists for *Hispanic*. This situation is difficult for many people to understand. The problem in Hispanic racial classification is a byproduct of the historical development of Hispanic peoples. Hispanics are a mixture of indigenous Amerinds, Europeans, Africans (who had been imported into Hispanic countries as slaves), and Asians. This mixture has not produced a uniform new race (although some Hispanic groups speak of a *nueva raza*, or "new race"). Instead, we find individuals with skin tones ranging from extremely white to very dark and with facial and other features that betray one or another of the source groups. Because of these variations, the U.S. Bureau of the Census has determined that Hispanics must choose a racial identification from among white, black, American Indian and Aleut, Asian and Pacific Islander, or other.

This confusing categorization makes doing Hispanic research difficult, although the census does ask other questions regarding Hispanic origin and then provides census data in tables that represent only Hispanics. The real problem arises when trying to make comparisons. As an example, let's say we want to compare the experiences of Hispanics and blacks. There is no way to tell from the printed tables which blacks are Hispanic and which are not. The problem is obvious: Hispanic blacks would be represented in both comparison groups. They would be in the black tables as blacks and in the Hispanic tables as Hispanic. However, they would be only a part of the groups listed in both tables,

because the black tables would also include African Americans, immigrants from Africa, and blacks from non-Hispanic West Indies areas and the Hispanic tables would include not only black Hispanics but also Hispanics who identified themselves as white, American Indian and Aleut, Asian and Pacific Islander, or other. Yes, this system is confusing, and it is precisely the problem that has made Hispanic research such a difficult task.

Where Do We Go Next?

This book's introduction stated that Part I should be viewed as a response to our concern that so much Hispanic research has been done using all the Hispanic national groups clumped into one group. This chapter has laid out some differences between the various national groups in very general terms. Chapters 2 and 3 review the immigration histories of the three major U.S. Hispanic groups in greater detail to provide a more in-depth understanding of their different experiences.

A second goal of Part I is to determine how Puerto Ricans fare when compared with the other two major groups. Therefore, Chapter 4 draws comparisons of several indicators, with the goal of leading the reader to an understanding of social and economic mobility patterns among these groups.