



# Immigration and Opportunity: Race, Ethnicity, and Employment in the United States

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The American dream of equal opportunity and social mobility still holds a powerful appeal for the many immigrants who arrive in this country each year. but if immigrant success stories symbolize the fulfillment of the American dream, the persistent inequality suffered by native-born African Americans demonstrates the dream's limits. Although the experience of blacks and immigrants in the United States are not directly comparable, their fates are connected in ways that are seldom recognized. *Immigration and Opportunity* brings together leading sociologists and demographers to present a systematic account of the many ways in which immigration affects the labor market experiences of native-born African Americans.

With the arrival of large numbers of nonwhite immigrants in recent decades, blacks now represent less than 50 percent of the U.S. minority population. *Immigration and Opportunity* reveals how immigration has transformed relations between minority populations in the United States, creating new forms of labor market competition between native and immigrant minorities. Recent immigrants have concentrated in a handful of port-of-entry cities, breaking up established patterns of residential segregation, and, in some cases, contributing to the migration of native blacks out of these cities. Immigrants have secured many of the occupational niches once dominated by blacks and now pass these jobs on through ethnic hiring networks that exclude natives. At the same time, many native-born blacks find jobs in the public sector, which is closed to those immigrants who lack U.S. citizenship.

While recent immigrants have unquestionably brought economic and cultural benefits to U.S. society, this volume makes it clear that the costs of increased immigration falls particularly heavily upon those native-born groups who are already disadvantaged. Even as large-scale immigration transforms the racial and ethnic make-up of U.S. society—forcing us to think about race and ethnicity in new ways—it demands that we pay renewed attention to the entrenched problems of racial disadvantage that still beset native-born African Americans.

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