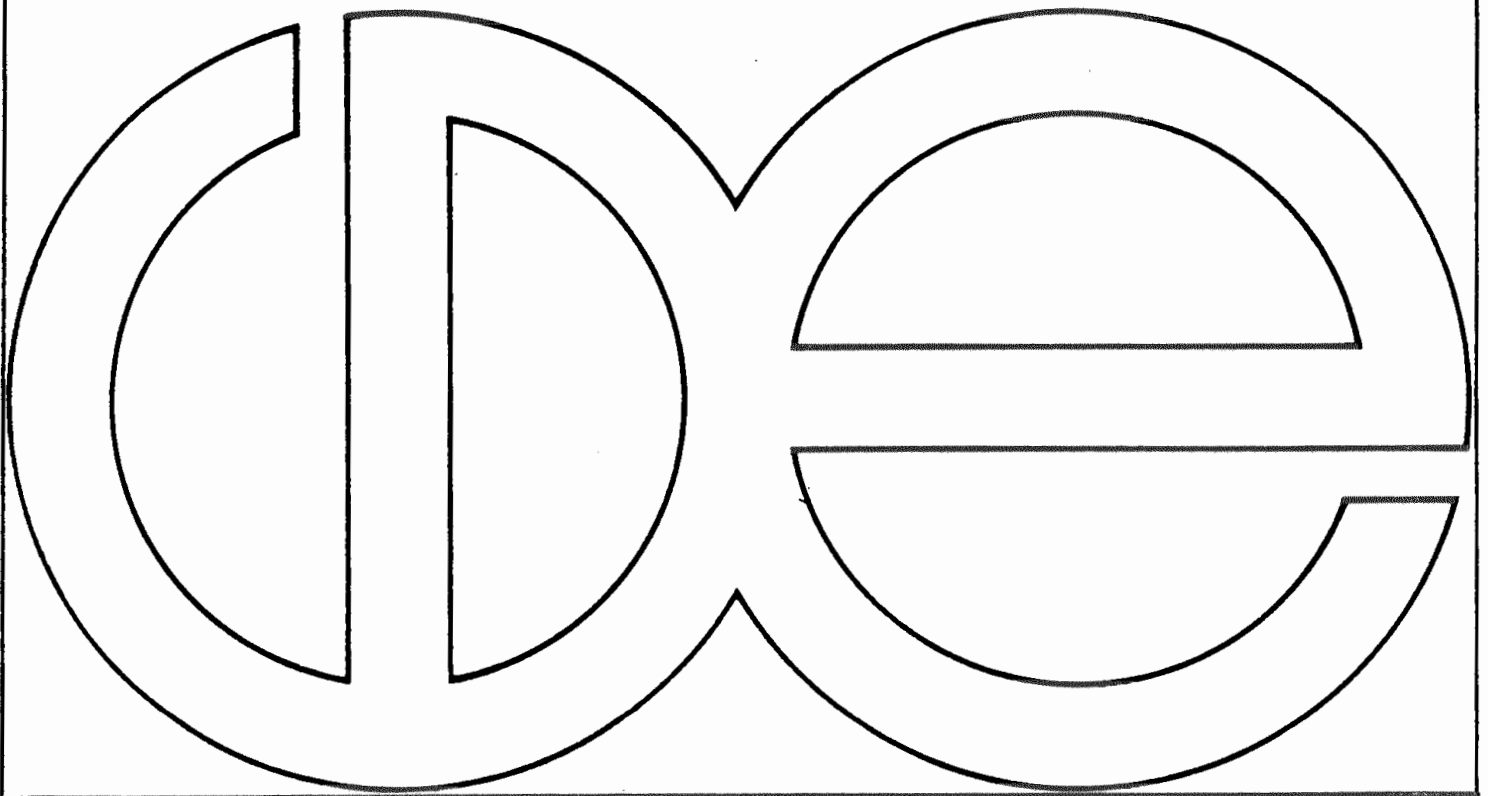


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THE UNITED STATES; 1960 - 1980

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Poverty and Immigration to
the United States: 1960 - 1980¹

by

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Introduction and Background

Since the mid-1960s, the United States has experienced another great wave of immigration. In large part, the cause of this new immigration can be traced to the 1965 Amendments to the Immigration and Nationality Act. For reasons to be discussed below, this legislation not only increased the absolute volume of immigration, but also engendered greater flows from less developed countries and increased the proportion entering to be reunited with kin. This raised concerns that the United States was admitting too many individuals destined for the bottom of the socioeconomic hierarchy -- immigrants who tend to be chronically poor and dependent on social services. While some research has investigated immigrant use of social services (Simon, 1980; Blau, 1984; Tienda and Jensen, 1986a; Jensen, 1988), none has explored recent trends in poverty among immigrants. Accordingly, using descriptive and multivariate methods to analyze repeated cross-sectional data, in this chapter I document the level and trends in poverty among immigrants to the United States over the period 1960 to 1980.

The 1965 immigration legislation increased the volume of immigration to the United States and changed the country of origin composition of immigrants in a number of ways. First and foremost, it dismantled a quota system in place since 1924, which gave highest priority to immigrants from Northern and Western Europe. The 1965 legislation established a more equitable worldwide distribution of visas, which allowed for a surge in immigration from the Third World. The new legislation also contributed to the increase in total immigration by placing greater priority on those seeking to rejoin family over

those with needed labor market skills.² These family reunification provisions increased the flow of immigration and will continue to do so, although not in alarming proportions (Jasso and Rosenzweig, 1986).

The dramatic shift in the absolute flow and region of origin composition of immigrants to the United States is reported in Table 1. This table shows a steady drop in the absolute and relative number of arrivals from Europe and a corresponding increase in immigration from Latin America and Asia. While only 28% of all immigrants were from Asia and Latin America during the 1950's, during the early 1980's, over 80% were from these regions. In absolute terms, the number of new arrivals was 2.5, 3.3 and 4.5 million during the 1950s, 60s and 70s respectively. The 2.3 million from 1981-84 translates to a decimal flow of 5.8 million. Still, this influx of new immigrants pales in comparison to the nearly 9 million who entered between 1901 and 1910 -- a time when the population base was much smaller.

Both because the United States was accepting proportionately more people from the Third World and because family reunification took precedence over employability in determining who could immigrate, U.S. immigration policy began to be criticized for admitting too many poor and dependent persons.

The assertions that immigrants tend to be poor and dependent on income transfer programs (e.g. welfare) have frequently been voiced in policy circles to support a more restrictive immigration policy. Such assertions have also had an effect on U.S. public opinion. A recent CBS News/New York Times poll (The New York Times/CBS News, 1986) revealed that for many, the words "poor" and "welfare" are the first to come to mind in response to the word "immigrant." Their data also show that a surprising 47% of Americans felt that most immigrants wind up on welfare. It is little wonder that a plurality favored an overall reduction in immigration.

As pervasive as these assumptions are, they have received surprisingly little attention in the research literature. This lack of empirical support has forced a reliance on anecdotal evidence. Some research has focussed on the question of social service utilization among immigrants (Simon, 1980; Blau, 1984; Tienda and Jensen, 1986a; Jensen, 1988). These studies document that recent immigrants are not disproportionate users of welfare. Moreover, Simon maintains that immigrants contribute more to public coffers (via taxes and economic expansion) than they take from them (via use of social services).³ However, virtually no evidence exists to document the time trend in poverty levels among immigrants during this critical period in U.S. immigration history. Accordingly, this chapter addresses the following questions: Has there been an increase in the level of poverty among new immigrants since the 1965 immigration reform? How are these trends patterned across categories of race and ethnicity? To what degree can immigrant-native differences in poverty be accounted for by individual, family and contextual variables?

Theoretically, there is reason to expect greater poverty among recent immigrants than all other immigrants or natives. Assimilation theory (Gordon, 1964) posits a period of social and economic adjustment during which new immigrants are apt to be dislocated from the economy. In time, the acquisition of the host country's language and culture enhances immigrants' ability to obtain adequate employment. Thus, while initial periods of poverty might be anticipated, the percent of immigrants who are poor should decline in time. To the extent that immigrants are an economically select group, possessing if nothing else the daring and entrepreneurial spirit required to immigrate (Chiswick, 1979), their poverty experiences may be more temporary

than chronic, as suggested by Segalman and Basu (1981). A key question addressed in this chapter is whether there is evidence of an increase over time in the level of poverty among immigrants in general, and recent immigrants in particular.

Data and Methods

This study of poverty among immigrants from 1960 to 1980 uses a repeated cross-sectional design. To ensure an adequate number of cases and to maximize comparability of measurements over time, I analyze the 1960, 1970 and 1980 Public Use Samples (PUS) of the U.S. Census. From the microdata files, stratified subsamples were drawn to provide an adequate representation of race/ethnic and nativity groups. In each year, as many family households as possible, but not exceeding 10,000, were sought for each of the following groups: foreign Asian, foreign Hispanic, foreign black, other foreign, native Asian, native Hispanic, native black and other native. These files contain data on the household head, the head's spouse (if present) and a wide variety of household level items. That latter were either in the PUS household record, or were computed from the household specific individual records.

Family households compose the units of analysis in this chapter. The family is defined as persons residing in the same household who are related by blood, marriage or adoption. Non-family households (persons living alone or households in which the head is unrelated to all other individuals) and persons living in group quarters are excluded. In all I analyze 38,161, 41,905 and 45,822 families in 1960, 1970 and 1980 respectively.⁴ These data are weighted in the descriptive tabulations. However, to ensure reliable tests of statistical significance, I use unweighted data in the multivariate analyses.

Special precautions were taken to maximize the comparability of measures across time. For example, rather than using the absolute poverty cutoffs supplied in the 1970 and 1980 censuses (which differ slightly from each other and from those used in 1960), I employed poverty thresholds calculated for 1959, and intended for use with the 1960 census (Orshansky, 1965). These cutoffs were inflated via the Consumer Price Index to form the poverty thresholds in 1969 and 1979.⁵

In the ensuing analyses, families are defined as immigrant or native based on the immigrant status of the household head. An immigrant family's years since immigration is likewise determined by the head. In 1960, and for Puerto Ricans in all three years,⁶ a lack of data on detailed years since immigration forced a reliance on the variable, residence five years ago. Immigrants who lived abroad five years before the census were defined as recent immigrants, while immigrants who lived in the United States five years prior were defined as prior immigrants.

The morphology of the data analysis is as follows. I first present descriptive tables to establish baseline information for the multivariate models to follow. These tables present, for 1959, 1969 and 1979, poverty rates for all families and families of key nativity groups (Table 2). Because of their importance to the questions at hand, poverty rates for recent immigrant families are then examined more closely (Table 3).

Models based on logistic regression permit an assessment of several correlates of poverty, and the possibility of changes in these relationships over time. The first set of equations (Table 4) predict poverty from year of observation, race/ethnicity, and immigrant status. These equations offer a more rigorous test of the assertion, first addressed in the descriptive tables, that the new immigrants have become increasingly poverty prone.

Another series of logit models establish the role of immigrant status as one among many variables determining poverty. The predictor variables include both individual level (e.g. education) and family level (e.g. headship configuration) variables. These models, both pooled and disaggregated by race/ethnicity, ask: Are families headed by immigrants more or less likely than those headed by natives to be poor, net of other determinants of poverty and are recent immigrant families particularly likely to be poor and has this changed since the 1965 legislative reforms?

Baseline Trends in Absolute Poverty

Table 2 documents basic trends in poverty for the period 1959 to 1979. This table provides absolute poverty rates for native and immigrant families, and disaggregates the latter into years since immigration categories. The first row of this table shows a downward trend in poverty rates among all families. Most of this decline took place between 1959 and 1969, when poverty rates fell from 18.5 to 10.6%. The progress against poverty during the 1960s has been attributed to a number of factors, particularly the expansion of cash assistance programs (Blumberg, 1980)⁷ and a relatively strong economy (O'hare, 1985). Poverty rates continued to improve slowly during the 1970s, as evidenced by the decline to 9.3% by 1979.

The next two rows of Table 2 contain poverty rates for native and immigrant families separately. First, native families exhibit the same monotonic decline observed for all families. In 1959, 1969 and 1979 the poverty rates for natives were, respectively, 18.2, 10.4 and 8.9%. Immigrant families show a decline in poverty between 1959 (15.6%) and 1969 (12.9%), but a slight increase by 1979 (14.0%). Overall, immigrant families did not share in the progress against poverty nearly to the extent that native families did.

Within-year differences between immigrants and natives show that poverty among immigrant families was below that of natives in 1959 only (15.6 versus 18.2%). Sometime during the 1960s, this differential reversed itself. The poverty rate for immigrant families exceeded that of natives by 24% (2.5 percentage points) in 1969, and 57% (5.1 percentage points) in 1979.

Thus far I have established that the decline in poverty among immigrant families during the 1960s was considerably slower than that for natives. While poverty among the latter continued to decline by 1979, immigrant poverty increased. Some insight into these observations can be obtained by comparing various years since immigration categories (the last six rows of Table 2). The steady and dramatic increase in absolute poverty among recent immigrant families (those with heads who arrived five or fewer years before the census) is noteworthy. Their poverty rates increased from 16.8 to 17.1 to 27.7% over the period. The sudden increase in poverty among recent arrivals between 1969 and 1979 is particularly striking in that it occurred during a period when poverty rates for all families declined. This increase in poverty among recent immigrants is an important cause of the overall rise in poverty among immigrant families 1969 and 1979. However, the most recent immigrants are not solely responsible. Two other duration groups -- those who immigrated 6-10 and 11-20 years before the census -- had higher poverty rates in 1979 compared to 1969. The striking rise in poverty among recent immigrants, requires closer scrutiny.

Table 3 presents poverty rates for recent immigrants by race/ethnicity and year. Four basic racial/ethnic groups are identified -- non-Hispanic whites, blacks and Asians, and Hispanics -- based on the characteristics of heads. Table 3 also includes the relative racial/ethnic composition of recent immigrants under the column headed, "Percent of Recent Immigrants." This

table establishes the effect of the changing racial/ethnic composition of recent immigrants on the overall increase of poverty among them. The tabulations reveal a number of reasons why poverty increased continuously between 1959 and 1979 for families with recent immigrant heads. First, despite the fact that they represent a decreasing proportion of all recent immigrants, the poverty rate for recent white immigrants increased monotonically over time. This outcome supports Keely's (1975) assertion of a gradual decline in the economic viability of white immigrants. Since white families comprised a sizable proportion of all recent immigrant families as late as 1980 (31%), their increase had a strong positive impact on the poverty rate for all recent immigrants.

That the increase in poverty among recent white immigrant families was an important contributor to the increase among all recent immigrant families, is reaffirmed by the following exercise. Replacing the 1979 white poverty rate (23.7%) with their rate in 1959 (7.6%) yields a weighted average for all recent immigrants in 1979 of only 22.5%, which compares to the actual value of 27.7%. In other words, regardless of the shift in the racial/ethnic composition of immigrants, had poverty among recent white immigrants not increased, the poverty among all recent immigrants in 1979 would have been almost 20% lower than actually observed.

It appears that the effects of the sudden increase in poverty among recent white immigrants was offset by their declining representation among all recent arrivals. Applying the 1979 poverty rates to the 1959 racial/ethnic distribution of recent immigrants yields an overall rate of 26.4% -- not appreciably different from the actual 1979 rate of 27.7%. In other words, despite concern over the shift toward Third World countries of origin, had the origin composition not changed since 1959, poverty rates among recent

immigrants would still have increased to the levels they eventually did. Again, this is largely due to the sudden increase in poverty among all recent immigrants -- whites included.

A second reason why poverty increased among recent immigrants between 1959 and 1979 is compositional. Despite the fact that poverty decreased between 1959 and 1969 for Hispanic and Asian families, these groups (especially Hispanics) had comparatively high poverty rates and comprised twice the share of all recent immigrants in 1969 than in 1959. Finally, poverty increased between 1969 and 1979 among all four racial/ethnic groups of recent immigrants.

To summarize, these descriptive tables firmly document that poverty among immigrants did increase, and that much of this rise was due to the higher rate among recent arrivals. The disaggregation of these tables by race/ethnicity was performed to capture part of the effect of the changing race/ethnic composition of immigrants after the 1965 immigration reforms. Of course, there are several other factors that could account for this increase. These include individual factors, such as age and education; family characteristics, such as headship configuration and economic dependency; and locational factors such as rural versus urban residence. I consider the relative importance of each of these factors in the next section using a multivariate framework.

Multivariate Models of Poverty Among Families

In this section I use multivariate logistic regression analysis⁸ to pursue two broad goals. The first is to verify the conclusions drawn from the descriptive tabulations. The second is to explore the unique effect of immigrant status as one among a number of individual, family and contextual correlates of poverty.

First, I discuss the conceptual framework for these multivariate models of family poverty. I then briefly introduce the independent variables, and state

their hypothesized effects on poverty. In the subsequent section, I present the estimates. The first models are simple and control only for race/ethnicity, period and nativity. These establish whether poverty among recent U.S. immigrants is higher than that for earlier arrivals, and most importantly, whether poverty among recent immigrants increased as the new immigration swelled. Additional correlates of poverty are then added to this model in hierarchical fashion. Full models are presented both pooled by race/ethnicity, and separately for white, black, Hispanic and Asian families separately.

Conceptual Background

My models of family poverty draw on the status attainment (Blau and Duncan, 1967) and human capital (Becker, 1975; Mincer, 1974) perspectives of socioeconomic attainment. I assume that employment is the primary source of family income, and that there is a market for labor in which people are remunerated in direct proportion to their productivity. This value is determined by peoples' skill, education and other so-called human capital characteristics. In the context of poverty, I assume that, *ceteris paribus*, families with heads who are lacking in human capital will be more likely than others to be in poverty.⁹

In addition, my models include other family characteristics. Departing from the premise that families are income sharing units, family poverty partly hinges on its ability to commit additional workers to the labor force, and its economic commitment to dependent members. In order to account for the macroeconomic context, I have also included two variables that describe the place of residence.

Individual Level Variables. A number of individual characteristics of the family head are used to estimate the probability that a family will be poor.¹⁰ Age of head is simply a continuous variable indicating age in completed years.¹¹ Earnings and total income tend to increase with age (Ehrenberg and Smith, 1982). Older workers frequently have greater experience and skill than younger workers making them more valuable in the labor market. Their pay rises in accordance with the increase in human capital. Net of other factors, age of head should lower poverty among families.¹² In addition to the head's earnings effect, older families are less apt to be poor because, often with reduced child care demand and more likely to have working age children, they may be able to commit multiple workers to the labor market. It is especially important to control for age in the context of this research, so as to differentiate between aging and assimilation effects.

The typical age-earnings profile is not linear, but parabolic downward. While income generally increases with age, it tends to decline among the aged for well-documented reasons (Atchley, 1978). Retirement, whether mandatory or voluntary, brings a reliance on public and private pensions that are frequently inadequate. Widowhood usually means the loss of a breadwinner and frequently presages below poverty income (Lopata, 1973; Smith, 1986). I expect that poverty will, conversely, increase among the aged compared to their prime-aged counterparts. The square of the head's age captures this non-linear effect.¹³ The expected positive effect would indicate that poverty is greater among families with age head when compared to families with prime-aged heads.¹⁴ Other things equal, households with aged heads have lower poverty thresholds than those headed by the non-aged. That is, while income may decline with old-age, so do poverty thresholds. Nonetheless, I anticipate a positive and significant effect of age-squared on poverty.

Formal education has a strong and positive impact on status and earnings attainment (Blau and Duncan, 1967; Sewell, Haller and Ohlendorf, 1970; Sewell and Hauser, 1975). Education increases individual knowledge and skill, thus improving the wage bargaining position in the labor market. Net of what people learn in the classroom, individuals with high school or college degrees are regarded by employers as being more diligent and organized, just for having graduated (Schiller, 1980). Conflict theorists question whether employers are truly concerned about the content of education, or whether they use the diploma as a convenient way to exclude lower class job applicants (Kerob, 1983). The ill-educated also suffer from higher rates of unemployment and layoffs (Schiller, 1980). For these reasons I expect education to significantly lower poverty risks so that families with better educated heads are less likely to be poor, *ceteris paribus*. It is important to control for education in this analysis because part of the argument as to why immigrants have become more likely to be poor rests on their lower skill backgrounds. As such, the increases in poverty would merely reflect changes in composition toward lower skills at a time when the skill requirements of jobs seemed to be increasing.

Race/ethnicity is defined differently in those multivariate models than it was in the descriptive tables. Specifically, Hispanics and Asians are decomposed into three ethnic groups each. Hispanics are subdivided into Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, and Other Hispanics, and Asians into Japanese, Chinese and Other Asian. Thus the eight category version of race/ethnicity identifies whites (the reference category), blacks, and the three Hispanic and Asian groups. Two more race/ethnic variables are used only in estimations based on separate subsamples of Hispanics and Asians. The first identifies

Other Hispanics (the reference category), Mexicans and Puerto Ricans. The second defines Other Asians (the reference category), Japanese and Chinese.

Due to discrimination in education and employment (Schiller, 1980), I expect the effects for Hispanic and black families to be negative and significant, even after controlling for other human capital and family characteristics. Looking within the Hispanic and Asian categories, I expect that, compared to Other Hispanics (who include Cubans, Central and South Americans and any residual group not clearly identified as Mexican or Puerto Rican), Puerto Rican families will be significantly more likely to be poor. While Mexican-Americans are known to have higher than average poverty rates (Tienda and Jensen, 1986b), there is no reason, a priori, to expect them to be more deprived than Other Hispanics.¹⁵ Compared to families headed by Other Asians, Japanese should exhibit far lower poverty rates, as this group has prospered the most compared to other Asian groups (Gardner, et al., 1985).

The final individual level independent variable is head's nativity which is used to define the nativity of the entire family. Immigrant status is defined somewhat differently here than in Table 2. Because of the lack of detail on years since the immigration in the 1960 census, a three-category nativity variable is employed. The reference group is all families with native heads. To them I compare immigrant families with heads who arrived more than five years before the census (prior immigrants) and those who arrived five or fewer years before (recent immigrants).

Family Characteristics. Aside from these individual level variables, several family characteristics directly influence their economic well-being. Three of the most important are headship configuration, extended family structure and economic dependency. Tying these indicators together is the fundamental

assumption that employment, the ability and tendency for families to commit workers to the labor force, is of overwhelming importance in determining families' poverty risks (Gans, 1982).

Headship configuration is singularly important among the family variables that define poverty risks. For a variety of reasons, families headed by married couples are far less apt to be poor than those headed by a single parent (Schiller, 1980). This fact has become all the more obvious with the trend toward one-parent families (O'hare, 1985; Ross, et al., 1985). Often burdened with child care responsibilities, single parents have much greater difficulty committing workers to the labor force. Moreover, since most single parent families are headed by women, they are doubly jeopardized due to gender discrimination in the market which lowers their own earning prospects, and in the hardship associated with only one income while meeting domestic responsibilities (Schiller, 1980). Such discrimination can bar single female heads from more lucrative jobs that could bring family income above the poverty line. Therefore, spouse-absent families should experience higher poverty rates, *ceteris paribus*, than intact families.

Extended families, those in which there are adult relatives of the head present (other than spouse or children), have greater flexibility in allocating labor resources (Tienda and Angel, 1982; Angel and Tienda, 1982). Such families have an enhanced ability to commit workers to the labor force, if necessary. Thus, I predict a negative effect of extended family status on poverty.

Families will be poor in direct proportion to their economic dependency, that is, to the degree that a large number of family members depend on the income produced by a small number of workers. Accordingly, the dependency

rate, defined as the number of non-workers as a percent of total family size, should have a negative direct effect on family poverty.

Other Independent Variables

In addition to these head and family characteristics, these models include three contextual variables. The first indicates whether the family resided in a Southern state.¹⁶ Compared to the other three census regions (Northeast, Midwest and West), the South has had a higher overall poverty rate. Reasons for this include (1) its rurality; (2) a comparative lack of economic and social infrastructure development; (3) less human capital among residents; and (4) a higher concentration of blacks (Ornati, 1966; Ghelfi, 1986; Schiller, 1980). Net of other correlates of poverty, Southern residence should have a net positive effect on poverty among families.

A second contextual variable is non-metropolitan (non-metro) residence. For a variety of reasons, poverty is greater in rural than urban America (Morrissey, 1985). These reasons include (1) a lack of employment opportunities due to urban bias in economic development initiatives; (2) agricultural labor displacement due to the rationalization of agriculture; (3) a lack of rural economic development owing to the move to preserve natural resources; (4) the loss to urban areas of better educated youngsters; (5) greater age dependency; and (6) a lack of knowledge about or reluctance to apply for cash assistance and in-kind transfer programs (Carlson, Lassey and Lassey, 1981). Therefore, I hypothesize that non-metro families will experience higher poverty risks.¹⁷

Empirical Results

To test whether immigrant poverty increased significantly over time, net of changes in cohort composition, the following analyses are pooled across year of observation. That is, data from the 1960, 1970 and 1980 family files were concentrated to form a single data file. Year of observation is then included in these models as a predictor with the year 1960 serving as the reference category. The desired test for temporal changes in immigrant poverty inheres in the interaction terms between year of observation and immigrant status.

Table 4 presents a progression of four hierarchical models of poverty among families pooled across racial/ethnic groups. In model 1, the negative estimates for year of observation confirm that families were less likely to be poor in 1969 and 1979, than they were in 1959.¹⁸ The relative magnitude of these estimates reflect the rapid decline in poverty during the 1960s, and abated decline during the 1970s. An example will illustrate the interpretation of the transformed logit coefficients under column "p." The probability that a family was poor in 1969 was .054 less than in 1959, after controlling for immigrant status.

Model 1 also shows that, controlling for the overall decline in poverty over the 1960 to 1980 period, recent immigrants were significantly more likely, and all other immigrants were significantly less likely than native to be in poverty. This squares with the image of immigrants starting from humble origins, but enjoying upward socioeconomic mobility with time for adjustment to the U.S. economy.

Throughout I have speculated about the reasons for the higher poverty among recent arrivals. Alternative explanations include the shift in the

racial/ethnic composition of recent immigrants, their youth, their relative lack of formal education or their concentration in secondary labor market occupations.

To account for these possibilities, Model 2 includes race/ethnicity, education, secondary occupation, age and age-squared. The effects for the eight-category race/ethnicity variable, conform with expectation. Compared to families with white heads (the reference group), blacks, Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, Other Hispanics and Other Asians were significantly more likely to be poor. This effect is especially pronounced among blacks and Puerto Ricans. As expected, among Hispanics, Puerto Ricans have comparatively high poverty rates. No groups were significantly less likely than whites to be poor (the negative terms for Japanese and Chinese families failed to reach significance).

The effects for the other independent variables also generally conform to expectation. Families with heads who were older and better educated were less likely to be poor, other things equal. Moreover, the positive and significant effect for age-squared supports the hypothesis that, while the probability of poverty generally decreases with age, it increases among the aged. Head's secondary labor market occupation had no significant effect on poverty. The most important result of Model 2, however, is that the inclusion of race/ethnicity, education and age do not fully explain the effect for recent immigrants. While the effect for recent immigrant is attenuated somewhat, it is still positive and significant.¹⁹ Along with the negative term for prior immigrants, Model 2 continues to show that recent immigrants were more likely, and all other immigrants less likely, than their native counterparts to be poor. This result is consistent with assimilation theory, which posits an initial period of economic adjustment, during which immigrants are more prone to poverty.

Model 3 in Table 4 introduces the family and contextual variables discussed in the previous section. These include the family's dependency rate, headship configuration (whether the spouse is absent) and extension. It also includes the two contextual variables; whether the place of residence is in a non-metro area, and whether it is in the South.

The effects of these variables on family poverty likewise conform to expectation. Families with greater economic dependency -- with a greater percent of non-workers -- were significantly more likely to be poor. In terms of family structure, families with the spouse of head absent were more likely and extended families were less likely to be in poverty. The former effect is particularly strong. Other things equal, the probability that a family was poor increased by .236 if it was not headed by a married couple.

Finally, the two contextual terms also behave as expected. Families living in the South, and those in non-metro areas were significantly more likely to be poor, *ceteris paribus*. Both these effects are of similar magnitude, increasing the probability of poverty by about .10.

Model 3 reveals a suppression of the effect for recent immigrants. Adding the family and contextual terms to the equation, produces a sizable increase in the positive effect of recent immigrant status on poverty. This result is explained by the means for recent immigrants on the five family and contextual variables. (Table available from author upon request.) In comparison to natives, recent immigrants had lower economic dependency, were more likely to be in extended families, and were less likely to live in the South and in non-metro areas. The suppression effect means that if recent immigrants did not differ from natives in their lower dependency, and their greater propensity to be extended, to live in the South and in non-metro areas, recent immigrant poverty would be that much higher. Controlling for these variables

increases the main effect of recent immigrant and status on poverty. Auxiliary analyses (not shown) revealed that dependency and extension were the two variables largely responsible for the suppression. This implies that the extended family structures, and the greater proportionate labor force commitment that typify recent immigrants, is important for keeping many of them out of poverty. Were it not for these family structures and residence preferences, recent immigrant poverty would be considerably greater.

A similar story obtains for previous immigrants as well (those who arrived over 5 years prior to the census). The main effect for prior immigrants in Model 2 is negative and significant, suggesting that previous immigrants were less likely to be in poverty than natives, after controlling for the individual characteristics of the family head. When the five family and contextual terms are entered (Model 3), the main effect for prior immigrants, attenuates to zero. Measures of central tendency that these immigrant families were somewhat more likely than natives to be in extended families, and were far less apt to live in the South and in non-metro areas (they did not differ with respect to dependency or headship). Again, because these characteristics tend to reduce poverty risks, they help explain the lower poverty among previous immigrants compared to natives revealed in Model 2.

The final model in Table 4 introduces the interaction between nativity status and year of observation. This model determines whether recent immigrants in the most recent period are particularly likely to be poor, net of the other variables in the equation. These variables include several human capital, family and contextual characteristics that could account for the higher incidence of poverty in the later period. However, the interaction term for recent immigrant, 1980, is positive and significant. Compared to recent immigrants in 1960 or 1970, those in 1980 were particularly likely to

be poor. This result indicates that neither a deterioration in immigrant "quality" nor an increase in the percent of non-whites, accounts for the disproportionately high poverty rates among recent immigrants in 1980.

Table 5 examines the question of changes in immigrant poverty over time separately for the four basic racial/ethnic groups. Among white families, Table 5 upholds previous findings that poverty among recent immigrants increased substantially over time. The terms for recent immigrants in both 1970 and 1980 are positive and significant; other things equal, recent white immigrants in 1969 and 1979 were more likely to be in poverty than their statistical counterparts in 1959.

A similar conclusion applies to black families. The strong and positive Recent Immigrant, 1970 and Recent Immigrant, 1980 interactions suggest recent black immigrant families have become increasingly likely to be poor, controlling for many factors affecting poverty. Here, however, poverty among prior black immigrants likewise increased over time. This secular increase is not explained by a deterioration in the background characteristics of black immigrants, since they have been purged of the influence of education and secondary labor market occupation.

Table 3 documented that Hispanic immigrant families were not largely responsible for the steady increase in poverty among recent immigrants over the past twenty years. This finding is important, since Hispanics have been identified as disproportionately responsible for "the immigrant problem" (Cafferty, et. al., 1983). Results from the logit model of poverty among Hispanic families (Table 5) confirm this conclusion. Recent Hispanic immigrants were significantly more likely than their native counterparts to be poor (experienced by the main effect for recent immigrants). However, none of the interaction terms between immigrant status and year of observation reached

significance. Unlike white and black families, recent Hispanic immigrant families did not experience a steady increase in poverty, other things equal. This model also reveals that compared to Mexicans and Other Hispanics, Puerto Ricans were significantly more likely to be in poverty.

The model for Asian families in Table 5 shows that in general, Asian immigrant families, particularly recent arrivals, were more likely to be poor than Asian natives. This result is manifest in the positive and significant main effects for immigrant status. Other things equal, the probability that a recent Asian immigrant family was in poverty exceeded that among natives by .242. The interaction terms in this model suggest that, after controlling for numerous determinants of poverty, there was no intertemporal increase in the propensity of recent Asian immigrant families to be poor. Previous Asian immigrants, however, were less likely to be poor in 1969 and 1979 compared to 1959. Coefficients associated with year by immigrant, not recent interactions are negative and significant. This improvement was first documented in the baseline findings of the previous chapter.

The other variables in these models behaved as expected. For example, for all four racial/ethnic groups, families with better educated and older heads were less likely, and those with heads engaged in secondary occupations were more likely, to be in poverty. Parameter estimates for family economic dependency, headship configuration, extended structure and non-metro and Southern residence likewise conformed to my expectations.

To summarize, Tables 4 and 5 presented multivariate models of poverty among families. The intent was to document the net propensity of immigrant families to be poor, and to determine whether a secular increase in poverty could be confirmed in this multivariate context. I also established how these findings differed across the four race/ethnic groups. These models showed

that, other things equal, (1) families with heads who were better educated and older (but not aged) were less likely to be poor; (2) families with heads who had a secondary occupation or who were black, Mexican, Puerto Rican and Other Asian (compared to white) were more likely to be poor; (3) families with single heads, nuclear (versus extended) structures, Southern and non-metropolitan residence, or with greater economic dependency ratio were more likely to be poor; (4) recent immigrants had higher poverty rates than natives; (5) poverty among recent immigrants would be even higher were it not for their lower dependency rates, greater prevalence of extended structure, and residence outside Southern and non-metropolitan areas compared to natives; (6) immigrant, not recent families were less likely than natives to be poor, but this was likewise accounted for by their family structure and residential preference; (7) recent immigrants in 1979 were particularly likely to be poor, and; (8) this increase over time in the net propensity of recent immigrant families to be poor obtained for white and black.

Discussion and Conclusions

Since the mid-1960s, the United States has experienced a new immigration. A fundamental cause of this wave was the 1965 legislation which replaced a discriminatory quota system of immigration with a more equitable worldwide distribution of visas. This legislation also re-prioritized the criteria under which immigrants were admitted, by giving preference to those wishing to rejoin kin over those entering on the merits of their occupational skills. Thus, this new immigration has been characterized by (1) an increase in the flow of immigration; (2) an increase (decrease) in the percent of immigrants entering under the family reunification provisions (entering with needed occupational skills); (3) an increase in the percent arriving from less

developed countries (especially from Asia and Latin America), and; (4) an increase in the percent of immigrants who are non-white.

Echoing the past, these changes engendered popular concern that the country was admitting, to an increasing degree, too many immigrants destined for the bottom of the stratification system. To establish the validity of this concern, the goal of this chapter has been to document trends in the level of poverty among immigrant and native families during the 1960 to 1980 period. I used both descriptive and multivariate methods in analyzing Public Use Sample data from the U.S. Census to document whether poverty among immigrants increased as the new immigration proceeded.

Descriptive analyses revealed that absolute poverty among U.S. families declined precipitously during the 1960s, but this decline was far less impressive among immigrant families. Poverty among all families continued to decline between 1969 and 1979, but increased slightly among immigrant headed families during this time span. While poverty roughly halved among native families between 1959 and 1979, it declined by only 10% among immigrant headed families.

Poverty increased among immigrant families between 1969 and 1979. Results for specific years since immigration categories revealed that recent immigrants -- those who arrived five or fewer years before the census -- had by far the sharpest rise in poverty. While poverty among those who had been in the United States from 6-10 and 11-20 years before the census also increased somewhat, I conclude that the post-1965 immigrants were primarily responsible for the rise in immigrant poverty between 1969 and 1979. Poverty among immigrants did increase as the new immigration proceeded.

That poverty among the most recent arrivals increased considerably between 1969 and 1979 was consistent across all four racial/ethnic groups:

non-Hispanic whites, blacks and Asians, and Hispanics. Some assert that part of the deterioration in the economic status of succeeding waves of immigrants was due to the changing racial/ethnic composition of immigrants -- the hallmark of the new immigration. My results reveal, however, that recent white immigrant families were a prime contributor to the overall rise in poverty among recent arrivals. Thus, the increase in poverty among recent immigrants was not entirely compositional. Aggregate poverty rates increased among all groups of recent immigrants, even whites, which supports the idea that the de-emphasis on job skills was a contributing factor.

Multivariate analyses confirmed that poverty among recent immigrants increased. That is, after controlling for year of observation and race/ethnicity, recent immigrants in 1979 were significantly more likely to be poor than their counterparts in 1969 or 1959. Furthermore, this surge was not explained by a shift in the racial/ethnic composition of immigrants.

A justification for the more comprehensive models of absolute poverty was to determine whether the rise in recent immigrant poverty could be explained by household head, family and residence characteristics. The pooled models revealed that recent immigrants in 1979 were more likely to be poor than their counterparts in 1969 and 1959. Disaggregating by race/ethnicity, a significant increase in absolute poverty was indicated for white and black recent immigrant families. While much of the clamor over the new immigration has been in reaction to a flood of Hispanic and Asian immigrants, white and black recent immigrant families had the sharpest increase in poverty. This is a robust finding as it obtained in both the descriptive and multivariate analyses.

There is strong evidence that poverty among immigrants increased as the new immigration unfolded. Historically, the United States has been less

concerned with poverty, per se, among immigrants, than with its presumed concomitant, utilization of public assistance programs (Jensen, 1987). The rise in poverty suggests an associated increase in the number of immigrants in need of cash assistance. However, other work (Tienda and Jensen, 1986a) has shown that recent immigrants are less likely than otherwise comparable natives to use public assistance -- especially in 1980 (Jensen, 1988). So while the potential demand for welfare income among recent immigrants increased over the past twenty years, this has been offset, to some degree, by an increased reluctance on their part to receive welfare income. Despite the increase in poverty, their aggregate use of welfare income remains an empirical question.

Notes

² Some have pointed out that this served to maintain the existing ethnic composition of the United States (Glazer, 1985).

³ Macmillan (1982) concluded the same regarding recent immigration to Europe.

⁴ Calculations on my data reveal that non-family households comprise less than one-quarter (23%) of all households. Moreover, there is little difference between natives, recent immigrants and all other immigrants in the prevalence of non-family households.

⁵ The operational definitions of all variables used throughout this analysis can be found in Table 5.

⁶ Because the United States exercises a degree of sovereignty and jurisdiction over The Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, those born on this island are legally regarded as native U.S. citizens (Nelson and Tienda, 1985). However, in many respects island-born Puerto Ricans resemble immigrants. Puerto Ricans on the island are physically and often culturally distant from mainstream U.S. society, and the causes and consequences of their migration to the mainland resemble those of other immigrant streams. Some writers have chosen to regard island-born Puerto Ricans as natives, not immigrants (Cafferty, et al., 1983). Still others have faced this dilemma by ignoring Puerto Ricans altogether (Simon, 1984; Blau, 1984). However, since Puerto Ricans have been shown to have high levels of poverty and welfare receipt (Tienda and Angel, 1982; Tienda, 1984; Bean and Tienda, 1987), they are critical to the focus of this research and their omission could distort the findings. Moreover, because they so resemble other immigrant streams, I have chosen to define Puerto Ricans who were born outside the United States, as immigrants, with the understanding that this is technically imprecise. The empirical results on Puerto Ricans provided below should be interpreted in this light. Finally, because Puerto Ricans are considered U.S. citizens, those born on the island were not asked year of immigration in the census. Still, I was able to define recent Puerto Rican "immigrants" as those who did not reside in the United States 5 years prior to the census.

⁷ At first blush, one might speculate that part of the rapidity of this decline may be accounted for by the strong economy and very low unemployment rate in 1969. Unemployment in 1969 was only 3.5% (Ehrenberg and Smith, 1982). However, the 1959 and 1979 unemployment rates were likewise rather low (5.5 and 5.8%, respectively). Unfortunately, I do not have nativity-specific poverty rates for the intercensal periods and thus can not determine the linearity of the decline in poverty over the 1960s.

⁸ Because the dependent variable is a dichotomy -- a family either is or is not in poverty -- logistic regression analysis is used. Unlike ordinary least squares regression, logistic regression provides unbiased and efficient estimates for equations with dichotomous dependent variables (Hanushek and Jackson, 1977). The parameter estimates of logit models reflect the effect of a unit change in the independent variable on the log of the odds of being in poverty. To provide more intuitively meaningful results, these logit coefficients are transformed to reflect the effect of a unit change in the independent variable on the probability of being poor (Petersen, 1985).

Maximum likelihood estimates of logit parameters were computed using the GLIM system (Baker and Nelder, 1978).

9 By stressing the importance of human capital attributes, I am not dismissing structural explanations for poverty. Rather, my empirical formulations acknowledge the structural barriers that can prevent individuals from attaining the human capital needed to lift them out of poverty. To deny the importance of human capital for earnings determination would err in the opposite direction. Such characteristics, therefore, warrant inclusion in models of poverty. In the analyses below, I restrict my consideration to the individual characteristics of the head of the family.

10 The operational definitions for these and all other variables can be found in the appendix table.

11 Those who are under 18 are excluded from this analysis, and any heads who are 100 or more years of age are recorded to 99.

12 Note that many of the hypothesized effects in this section are based on previous research on status and income attainment research. Since income is negatively related to poverty, I hypothesize that most of the significant predictors of income will likewise be significant for poverty, but of opposite signs.

13 In order to bring the mean for this variable in line with those of the other independent variables employed, head's age-squared is divided by 1,000.

14 A reduced need for income among the aged has been factored into the absolute poverty lines used here (Orshansky, 1965).

15 Cuban Americans have been quite economically successful (Portes and Bach, 1985). If the Other Hispanic category were comprised primarily of these groups, I would expect them to have lower poverty rates than Mexicans. However, only about 19% of this group was Cuban in 1980. The balance were from other Central and South American countries (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1983: Fig. 13).

16 Southern states include Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia and West Virginia.

17 An area is considered metropolitan if it lies within the confines of a Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area (SMSA). The definition of the SMSA is rather complex (Shryock, Siegel and Associates, 1976) and need not be detailed here. In essence, it is a county with central city (a city of 50,000 or more people) plus surrounding counties that are metropolitan in character and tied economically and socially to the central city county. This definition changed little between the censuses used in this analysis. Most of the growth of existing SMSAs and most of the increase in the number of SMSAs between 1950 and 1980, has been the result of metropolitanization (U.S. Bureau of the

Census, 1982). For my purposes, non-metropolitan areas lie outside of SMSAs; the reference group are families within SMSAs. I hypothesize that non-metro families will experience higher risks. Due to data suppression to protect the anonymity of the respondents to the 1960 and 1970 censuses, certain states had areas in which the metro/non-metro variable was missing. Where possible, I assigned the non-metro code to those living in rural areas and the metro code to those living in urban areas. Urban areas are those incorporated cities, boroughs, etc., with 2,500 or more inhabitants; densely settled areas outside of urbanized areas; and other large or densely populated areas. In states where both the urban/rural and metro/non-metro variables were suppressed, I assigned all residents of that state to either the metro or non-metro groups. These included Rhode Island and Delaware (metro), and Hawaii, Nevada, North Dakota and Utah (non-metro). In 1980, there was no suppression on the metro/non-metro variable. This operationalization maximized comparability under the existing data constraints.

18 I remind the reader that, while the years of observation were 1960, 1970 and 1980, because poverty status is based on family income in the previous year, families would have been poor in 1959, 1969 and 1979, respectively.

19 An intermediate model (not shown), that included only the period, nativity and race/ethnicity terms revealed that race/ethnicity did not attenuate the positive and significant effect for recent immigrants. This solidifies the conclusion that the changing racial/ethnic composition of recent immigrants played no part in their rise in poverty.

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Table 1

FLOW AND REGION OF ORIGIN COMPOSITION OF IMMIGRANTS TO THE
UNITED STATES: 1951 TO 1984

Region of Origin	Year of Arrival											
	1951-1960		1961-1970		1971-1980		1981-1984		1971-1980		1981-1984	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Europe	1,326	53.0	1,123	33.8	800	17.9	263	11.5				
Asia	153	6.1	428	12.9	1,588	35.5	1,103	48.2				
Latin America	619	24.7	1,303	39.3	1,813	40.5	803	35.1				
Africa	14	0.6	29	0.9	81	1.8	58	2.5				
Other ^b	391	15.6	435	13.1	195	4.4	60	2.6				
Total Specified	2,503	100.0	3,318	100.0	4,477	100.1	2,287	99.9				
Total Not Specified	12		4		16		7					
Total	2,515		3,322		4,493		2,294					

Source: 1984 Statistical Yearbook of the Immigration and Naturalization Service. U.S. Department of Justice.

^aIn thousands

^bIncludes Canada

^cDoes not sum to 100 due to rounding error

Table 2

ABSOLUTE POVERTY RATE FOR FAMILIES BY
IMMIGRATION COHORT AND YEAR

Head's Nativity and Years Since Immigration	1959	1969	1979
All Families ^a	18.0	10.6	9.3
All Natives ^a	18.2	10.4	8.9
All Immigrants ^a	15.6	12.9	14.0
0-5 Years ^a	16.8	17.1	27.7
Over 5 Years ^a	15.6	12.4	11.7
0-5 Years		15.9	26.7
6-10 Years		11.1	15.0
11-20 Years		8.2	11.8
Over 20 Years		11.5	7.0

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census. 1960, 1970 and 1980 Public Use Samples.

^aincludes Puerto Ricans.

Table 3

ABSOLUTE POVERTY RATE FOR FAMILIES WITH RECENT IMMIGRANT HEADS^a

	1959		1969		1979	
	Percent in Poverty	Percent of Recent Immigrants	Percent in Poverty	Percent of Recent Immigrants	Percent in Poverty	Percent of Recent Immigrants
White	7.6	66.3	10.7	46.4	23.7	31.5
Black	12.5	1.2	13.5	4.9	27.2	5.6
Hispanic	35.6	29.1	24.8	39.9	32.5	34.5
Asian	<u>35.7</u>	<u>3.4</u>	<u>17.7</u>	<u>8.7</u>	<u>26.1</u>	<u>28.4</u>
Overall/Total	16.7	100.0	17.1	99.9 ^b	27.7	100.0

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census. 1960, 1970 and 1980 Public Use Samples.

^aIncludes Puerto Ricans.

^bDoes not sum to 100 due to rounding error.

Table 4

LOGISTIC REGRESSION OF ABSOLUTE POVERTY ON
INDIVIDUAL AND FAMILY CHARACTERISTICS: POOLED BY RACE/ETHNICITY

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
	L	P	L	P	L	P	L	P
Intercept	-1.01 (.04)		2.08 (.22)		-2.51 (.30)		-2.52 (.28)	
1970	-.57 (.05)	-.053	-.51 (.06)	-.048	-.72 (.06)	-.063	-.74 (.08)	-.064
1980	-.80 (.05)	-.068	-.51 (.06)	-.048	-.69 (.07)	-.061	-.70 (.08)	-.062
<u>Family Head Variables</u>								
Prior Immigrant	-.15 (.05)	-.016	-.35 (.06)	-.035	-.00* (.07)	-.000	.02* (.12)	.002
Recent Immigrant	.53 (.09)	.073	.31 (.10)	.040	1.04 (.12)	.169	.54* (.29)	.075
Black			1.20 (.06)	.204	1.01 (.08)	.163	1.02 (.08)	.165
Mexican			.73 (.08)	.108	.64 (.09)	.092	.64 (.09)	.092
Puerto Rican			1.01 (.12)	.163	1.03 (.14)	.167	1.05 (.14)	.171
Other Hispanic			.54 (.09)	.075	.40 (.10)	.053	.42 (.10)	.056
Japanese			-.17* (.20)	-.018	-.00* (.22)	.000	-.00* (.22)	-.000
Chinese			-.01* (.20)	-.001	.21* (.22)	.026	.19* (.22)	.023
Other Asian			.65 (.15)	.094	.64 (.16)	.092	.57 (.17)	.080
Education			-.15 (.01)	-.016	-.12 (.01)	-.013	-.12 (.01)	-.013
Secondary Occupation			.02* (.06)	.002	.32 (.06)	.041	.32 (.06)	.041
Age			-.09 (.01)	-.010	-.04 (.01)	-.005	-.04 (.01)	-.005
Age ²			.82 (.08)	.125	.23 (.10)	.029	.23 (.10)	.029

Table 4 (Continued)

LOGISTIC REGRESSION OF ABSOLUTE POVERTY ON
INDIVIDUAL AND FAMILY CHARACTERISTICS: POOLED BY RACE/ETHNICITY

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
	L	P	L	P	L	P	L	P
<u>Family and Contextual Variables</u>								
Dependency Rate					.04 (.00)	.005	.04 (.00)	.005
Spouse Absent					1.34 (.06)	.236	1.34 (.06)	.236
Extended Family					-.68 (.08)	-.061	-.69 (.08)	-.061
Southern Residence					.69 (.06)	.101	.69 (.06)	.101
Non-metropolitan Residence					.73 (.06)	.108	.73 (.06)	.108
<u>Interaction Terms</u>								
Prior Immigrant, 1970					.07*	.008		(.15)
Recent Immigrant, 1970						.35*	.046	(.34)
Prior Immigrant, 1980						-.13*	-.014	(.16)
Recent Immigrant, 1980						.74	.110	(.32)
-2 log (like- lihood ratio)	13210		11590		9338		9329	
Degrees of Freedom	13985		13974		13969		13965	

Note: L = Logit Coefficient (standard errors in parentheses); P = Probability Change (reflects the change in the probability of being in poverty resulting from a unit change in the independent variable) computed at P' = .1323 (see Petersen, 1985).

*Parameter estimate not significant at .05.

Table 5

LOGISTIC REGRESSION OF ABSOLUTE POVERTY ON INDIVIDUAL AND FAMILY CHARACTERISTICS: WHITE, BLACK, HISPANIC AND ASIAN FAMILIES

	Whites		Blacks		Hispanics		Asians	
	L	P	L	P	L	P	L	P
Intercept	-2.28 (.43)		-1.49 (.31)		-2.17 (.27)		-1.45 (.40)	
1970	-.71 (.11)	-.050	-.92 (.08)	-.169	-.69 (.09)	-.101	-.29 (.17)	-.023
1980	-.70 (.12)	-.049	-1.08 (.08)	-.190	-.52 (.10)	-.080	-.17 (.17)	-.014
<u>Family Head Variables</u>								
Prior Immigrant	-.00* (.20)	-.000	-.86 (.32)	-.160	.13* (.10)	.024	.74 (.17)	.089
Recent Immigrant	-1.19* (1.05)	-.070	-4.93 (2.40)	-.335	.59 (.19)	.121	1.54 (.33)	.242
Mexican					.06 (.06)	.011		
Puerto Rican					.43 (.09)	.086		
Japanese							-.36 (.10)	-.028
Chinese							.05* (.09)	.005
Education	-.14 (.01)	-.012	-.13 (.01)	-.028	-.14 (.01)	-.024	-.11 (.01)	-.010
Secondary Occupation	.57 (.12)	.066	.38 (.07)	.089	.42 (.06)	.083	.44 (.09)	.047
Age	-.04 (.01)	-.004	-.04 (.01)	-.009	-.04 (.01)	-.007	-.09 (.01)	-.008
Age ²	.26* (.14)	.027	.23 (.11)	.053	.19* (.10)	.036	.68 (.14)	.080
<u>Family and Contextual Variables</u>								
Dependency Rate	.04 (.00)	.004	.04 (.00)	.009	.04 (.00)	.007	.04 (.00)	.004
Spouse Absent	1.47 (.11)	.231	1.37 (.06)	.330	1.33 (.06)	.302	1.04 (.09)	.140
Extended Family	-.83 (.14)	-.056	-.55 (.08)	-.110	-.46 (.07)	-.072	-.50 (.10)	-.037
Southern Residence	.33 (.09)	.035	.69 (.07)	.166	.80 (.06)	.171	.36 (.11)	.038
Non-metropolitan Residence	.77 (.08)	.096	.87 (.08)	.211	.60 (.07)	.124	.09* (.10)	.008

Table 5 (continued)

LOGISTIC REGRESSION OF ABSOLUTE POVERTY ON INDIVIDUAL AND FAMILY CHARACTERISTICS: WHITE, BLACK, HISPANIC AND ASIAN FAMILIES

	Whites		Blacks		Hispanics		Asians	
	L	P	L	P	L	P	L	P
<u>Interaction Terms</u>								
Prior Immigrant	.06* (.25)	.006	.94 (.41)	.229	-.05* (.13)	-.009	-.50 (.23)	-.037
Recent Immigrant, 1970	2.48 (1.12)	.477	5.62 (2.43)	.655	.16* (.24)	.030	-.29* (.39)	-.023
Prior Immigrant	-.39* (.28)	-.031	1.19 (.35)	.289	-.03* (.14)	-.005	-.87 (.21)	-.056
Recent Immigrant, 1980	2.84 (1.12)	.561	5.83 (2.41)	.656	.09* (.25)	.017	-.10* (.35)	-.009
-2 log (likelihood ratio)	4251		7148		9854		5794	
Degrees of Freedom	8849		8268		11939		11945	

Note: L = Logit Coefficient (standard errors in parentheses); P = Probability Change (reflects the change in the probability of being in poverty resulting from a unit change in the independent variable) computed at P' = .1038 for whites; .3382 for blacks; .2344 for Hispanics; and .1006 for Asians (see Petersen, 1985).

*Parameter estimate not significant at .05.

Appendix Table

DEFINITIONS OF VARIABLES USED IN MULTIVARIATE
ANALYSES OF POVERTY

Variable	Definition
<u>Family Head Characteristics</u>	
Age	Age of head in years, 18-99
Age Squared	Head's age squared, divided by 1000
Education	Grades of schooling completed by head
Secondary Occupation	Head has secondary labor market occupation ^a coded 2; 1 otherwise
Race/Ethnicity (4 categories)	1 = Head is Non-Hispanic White 2 = Head is Non-Hispanic Black 3 = Head is Hispanic 4 = Head is Non-Hispanic Asian
Race/Ethnicity (8 categories)	1 = Head is Non-Hispanic White 2 = Head is Non-Hispanic Black 3 = Head is Mexican 4 = Head is Puerto Rican 5 = Head is Other Hispanic 6 = Head is Japanese 7 = Head is Chinese 8 = Head is Other Asian
Hispanic Ethnicity	1 = Head is Other Hispanic 2 = Head is Mexican 3 = Head is Puerto Rican
Asian Ethnicity	1 = Head is Other Asian 2 = Head is Japanese 3 = Head is Chinese
Nativity	1 = Head is Native 2 = Head is Prior Immigrant (immigrated over five years before) 3 = Head is Recent Immigrant (immigrated up to 5 years before)
<u>Family Characteristics</u>	
Headship Configuration	1 = Family, both spouses present 2 = Spouse absent family
Extended Family	Adult Relative of Head (except spouse or child) present coded 2; 1 otherwise
Dependency Rate	Number of non-working family members as a percent of total family members
<u>Other Independent Variables</u>	
Southern Residence	Family resides in Southern state coded 2; 1 otherwise (where Southern states are AL, AR, DE, DC, FL, GA, KY, LA, MD, MS, NC, OK, SC, TN, TX, VA and WV)
Non-metropolitan Residence	Family resides in a non-metropolitan area coded 2; 1 otherwise
Year of Observation	1 = 1960 2 = 1970 3 = 1980
<u>Dependent Variables</u>	
Absolute Poverty	Total family income less than poverty threshold coded 1, 0 otherwise

^aBased on Osterman's (1975) definition of secondary labor market occupation.

^bThis variable is used only in analyses which are restricted to families who would be poor without the earnings of family members other than the head.

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