Psychological Perspectives on Immigration

Victoria M. Esses*
University of Western Ontario

Kay Deaux
CUNY Graduate Center and New York University

Richard N. Lalonde
York University

Rupert Brown
University of Sussex

We introduce this issue by describing recent trends in migration and immigration policy, and the challenges faced by immigrants and by immigrant-receiving nations around the world. We then discuss the many contributions that psychology can make to understanding and optimizing the benefits of migration from the perspective of both immigrants and members of host societies. The article concludes by providing an overview of the rationale, organization, and content of the issue, including a brief description of each article.

It is no exaggeration to assert that migration and issues surrounding immigration are defining features of the 21st century. More people live outside their country of birth than in any other period of human history, and estimates of worldwide migration indicate that approximately 3% of the world's population—more than 200 million people—can be defined as migrants (BBC News, 2009; International Organization for Migration, 2009). These levels are expected to continue to rise in the future, with an estimate of 230 million people living outside their country

of birth by the year 2050 (BBC News, 2009). This migration is driven by demographic trends, economic disparities between developing and developed countries, civil and international conflicts, communication and transportation networks linking all regions of the world, trade liberalization promoting a more mobile work force, and increasing transnationalism (International Organization for Migration, 2009). In recognition of the growing importance of human migration, in 2006 the UN General Assembly held its first-ever plenary session on migration issues, *The High-Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development*, to discuss means of maximizing the benefits of international migration and minimizing its negative impacts (United Nations, 2006).

As stated by the International Organization for Migration (2009), "the question is no longer whether to have migration, but rather how to manage migration effectively so as to enhance its positive and reduce its negative impacts." The conclusion reached is that migration mismanagement has dominated for the last quarter century, to some extent because destination countries often have not had well-articulated immigration policies and programs in place that benefited both members of destination countries and those who chose to travel to these countries to seek a new life (International Organization for Migration, 2009). The divergence in immigration policies in place in popular destination countries is indeed remarkable. These range from the relatively long-standing, well-articulated policies of immigrant-receiving countries such as Canada to the more recent, somewhat reactive policies of countries such as Germany (Esses, Wagner, Wolf, Preiser, & Wilbur, 2006).

Worldwide migration is changing not only in terms of its scope, but also in terms of its goals, and the immigration and integration strategies required in destination countries. Historically, migration tended to favor low-skilled, relatively uneducated workers who sought to improve their life circumstances in a new country; these newcomers were primarily employed in farm work, manufacturing, and construction. During the last few decades, however, there has been a marked shift in immigration recruitment to a focus on attracting highly skilled labor to fill positions in advanced economies (Martinez-Herrera, 2008; Shachar, 2006). Highly skilled workers are a valuable asset for developed countries in that they provide a competitive advantage in the knowledge-based global economy (Shachar, 2006). This newfound "race for talent"—competition among nations for skilled labor—means that most industrialized countries have now almost uniformly built into or added to their immigration policies a provision for attracting skilled workers (Martinez-Herrera, 2008; Shachar, 2006). Whereas Canada, followed shortly after by Australia, were leaders in having a point-based immigrant selection system that favors skilled workers, countries such as the United Kingdom, Germany, and the Netherlands have more recently introduced procedures for facilitating the entry of highly skilled professionals (Doomernik, Koslowski, & Thränhardt, 2009; Shachar, 2006).

As a prime example of the current emphasis on attracting skilled workers, the European Union (EU) "Blue Card" directive, adopted by the EU in May 2009, is specifically designed to attract highly skilled immigrants from other countries to the EU, based on the claim that the EU will require over 20 million skilled workers over the next two decades (BBC News, 2007; Council of the European Union, 2009). To be put into effect by 2011, the Blue Card will allow highly skilled immigrants to fill positions within EU economic sectors that are suffering from skill shortages, allow them mobility within the EU, and make it easier for these workers to bring their families and acquire long-term resident status. This system will not supplant existing immigration policies in member states but instead will provide an additional channel for attracting skilled immigrants to the EU (Doomernik et al., 2009; European Parliament, 2008). Thus, it is clear that skilled immigrants are now considered a valuable commodity by developed nations.

At the same time that Western nations are seeking to attract skilled workers, they are also attempting to prevent the inflow of "undocumented," "unauthorized," or "illegal" immigrants. These individuals may seek entry into Western nations in pursuit of economic opportunities and to improve their families' quality of life and life prospects (Hanson, 2007). They may also be asylum seekers who are attempting to escape war or political oppression and are labeled illegal by host nations (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2006). Concerns about illegal immigrants are increasingly expressed not only in countries such as the United States, which has an estimated population of over 11 million illegal immigrants (Passel & Cohn, 2008), but also throughout Europe and in countries such as Australia and Canada. The perceived problem of undocumented immigration is compounded by evidence that people generally overestimate the proportion of immigrants who are illegal (Lapinski, Peltola, Shaw, & Yang, 1997). These "illegal immigrants" are seen as threatening the jobs and wages of unskilled members of the host population, as potential threats to national security, and as a drain on social services, health care, and the education system (e.g., Bank, 2009; Federation for American Immigration Reform, 2004; Webb, 2010). As a result, host nations have developed a variety of procedures for preventing illegal immigrants from arriving or remaining in the country (Buschschluter, 2009; Homeland Security, 2006).

Destination countries face challenges not only in terms of the large number of migrants seeking entry and the countries' desire to specifically attract and admit skilled workers, but also in terms of the ethnic, cultural, and religious diversity of potential immigrants. Factors such as the growing ease of world communication and travel, the variety of source countries of skilled labor toward whom developed countries can no longer afford to be biased, and the removal of discriminatory clauses in the immigration policies of many countries have ensured that immigrants to Western countries now represent the world's diversity. In addition, attitudes toward immigrants and immigration in host countries are not uniformly positive,

and are influenced by economic, political, and social conditions (e.g., Esses et al., 2006; McLaren, 2003; Quillian, 1995). In turn, negative attitudes may lead to discrimination, both at the level of admittance to a country, and in terms of treatment of those allowed to enter. As a result of these dynamics, immigrant-receiving countries must not only develop workable immigration policies, but must also strive to accommodate the needs and demands of both members of the host population and of potential immigrants to optimize the consequences of migration for nations, communities, and individuals.

Psychological Contributions to Understanding and Optimizing the Benefits of Migration

In this context, the current issue on "Immigrants and Hosts: Perceptions, Interactions, and Transformations" focuses on the contribution of psychological theory and research to facilitating successful immigration and integration. Psychologists have important contributions to make in this domain in terms of their expertise in areas such as determinants of policy support, intergroup relations, discrimination, multiculturalism, migration motivations, adaptation and acculturation, and ethnic and national identity. They address key issues of both responses of members of host societies and the experiences of immigrants and add an important dimension to the multidisciplinary analysis of immigration.

Despite the potential contributions of psychologists, however, they have been slow to enter this field of enquiry. Historically, research on immigration tended to be within the purview of other social scientists such as demographers, economists, political scientists, anthropologists, and historians. With a few notable exceptions, psychological research in this area was limited. This may be attributable to the historical dominance of American psychology, which tended to examine Black–White relations in the United States to the exclusion of other intergroup relations, and emphasized laboratory research addressing individual cognitive processes rather than group-level outcomes. The last few decades have seen a shift, however, with the internationalization of psychology and the recognition that not only do psychologists have much to contribute to the study of immigrants and immigration, but also this work offers important benefits to the field of psychology (Dovidio & Esses, 2001). As a result, psychological research on immigration has expanded rapidly. Indeed, a PsycINFO search for the keywords *immigrant* or *immigration* produced 1088 hits for the period 1980–1989, 2330 hits for the period 1990–1999, and 5909 hits for the period 2000–2009.

As stated by Deaux (2006, p. 3), "different paradigms and different intellectual traditions bring to an area of investigation their unique lenses, which shape both the questions and the answers that emerge." Psychology adds to the multidisciplinary study of immigration the unique focus on the person in context, examining characteristics of the individual, the context in which the individual

is operating (both the local and the larger social structural), and their potential interaction. This "meso" level of analysis—linking the individual to the social system—is perhaps where psychologists can make their greatest contributions, examining mediators between "macro" factors, such as policies and social representations, and "micro" factors, such as individual attitudes and identities (Deaux, 2006; Pettigrew, 1997). By focusing on this mesolevel of analysis, psychologists can seek to understand how macrostructures and events in a society influence individual attitudes and identities, and similarly how individuals' attitudes and identities may impact societal structures and phenomena.

In addition to examining relations among variables—an important pursuit in its own right—psychologists often take advantage of experimental methods to determine causal relations among variables. This is important in isolating the key factors that are driving an effect, which is often obscured by the myriad of factors at play in the real world. For example, despite the fact that the Canadian immigration selection system uses a point system to promote the entry of highly skilled workers into Canada, there is evidence that these same skills are often discounted in the Canadian labor market, particularly for racial minority immigrants (e.g., Alboim, Finnie, & Meng, 2005; Reitz, 2005). An important question to ask is whether the skills of these racial minority immigrants are being discounted because of the lower quality of education in countries in which these skills were obtained, because of these immigrants' lower proficiency in English or French, because of a lack of knowledge of Canadian norms and employment practices, because of racial prejudice, or perhaps because of other unknown factors. An understanding of what is driving these effects should aid in alleviating what is considered to be a significant issue of growing concern in Canada and provide a point of entry for policy intervention. Although a variety of claims have been made in this regard (e.g., Alboim et al., 2005; Reitz, 2005; Sweetman, 2004), it has been assumed that the role of prejudice cannot be definitively determined. Using experimental procedures, however, psychologists have been able to systematically isolate the factors driving these effects and have concluded that racial prejudice does indeed play an important role (e.g., Dietz, Esses, Joshi, & Bennett-AbuAyyash, 2009; Esses, Dietz, Bennett-AbuAyyash, & Joshi, 2007). This suggests that strategies aimed at reducing prejudice would go far to ensuring that the human capital of skilled immigrants is not wasted.

The Current Issue

This issue of the *Journal of Social Issues* on "Immigrants and Hosts: Perceptions, Interactions, and Transformations" focuses on the recent contributions of psychological theory and research to understanding the perceptions, interactions, and ultimately the transformations that take place on the part of immigrants and members of host societies who come into contact. Through this focus, we seek to

emphasize that the perspectives of both members of host societies and immigrants must be considered, and that neither operate in isolation. Both have direct relevance to the success, or lack of success, of immigration policy, and both have a role to play in attempting to "enhance its positive and reduce its negative impacts" (International Organization for Migration, 2009). Thus, the issue has three major sections, one that focuses on the host perspective, a second that focuses on the immigrant perspective, and a third that focuses on models that combine these perspectives. A concluding section addresses the significance of the work for policy and practice.

The origin of this issue is a conference, jointly sponsored by the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues (SPSSI) and the European Association of Experimental Social Psychology (EAESP), "Immigrants and Hosts: Perceptions, Interactions, and Transformations," that took place in Toronto, Canada, on May 31 to June 2, 2007. The interest in participating in the conference was extremely high, as indicated by the 62 submissions that we received. From this number our organizing committee selected 24 articles to be presented at the conference. This *JSI* issue represents a further distillation of that number, offering a set of 10 articles plus this introductory piece by the editors.

Consistent with the scope of the conference, the work presented here ranges across a variety of countries from four continents, including Australia, Canada, Chile, France, Germany, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and the United States. These countries differ in their history of immigration and their immigration policies, as well as in the predominant source countries of immigrants. Some—such as Australia, Canada, and the United States—have historically defined themselves as nations of immigrants, whereas others—such as Germany and France—have only recently acknowledged and sought to benefit from the fact that that they are immigrant-receiving nations. In addition, the dominant models of immigration proposed by social scientists in these countries have differed markedly. In the United States, for example, assimilation theory (Alba & Nee, 2003; Portes & Rumbaut, 1996) has predominated, whereas in Canada, models of alternative forms of acculturation, including integration, have been the focus (Berry, 2001; Bourhis, Moise, Perreault, & Senecal, 1997). Nonetheless, as will become apparent when reading the articles in this issue, there are a number of commonalities in the psychological analyses presented, pointing to important common psychological processes operating.

A variety of different methods are also represented in this issue, illustrating not only the versatility of the authors, but also, in combination, the value of multiple methods to triangulate phenomena. These methods include questionnaires and surveys, both large and small (e.g., Bourhis, Montaruli, El-Geledi, Harvey, & Barrette, this issue; Louis, Duck, Terry, & Lalonde, this issue; Noels, Clément, & Leavitt, this issue; Pehrson & Green, this issue), interviews (e.g., Hagelskamp, Suarez-Orozco, & Hughes, this issue; Phalet, Baysu, & Verkuyten, this issue),

longitudinal analyses (Hagelskamp et al., this issue), and meta-analytic techniques (Cohrs & Stelzl, this issue). Numerous outcome measures are represented as well, as would seem appropriate for a topic as broad as immigration. Outcomes considered by the authors include intergroup attitudes (Cohrs & Stelzl, this issue; González, Sirlopú, & Kessler, this issue), acculturation preferences (Bourhis et al., this issue), perceptions of discrimination (Noels et al., this issue), intentions to engage in political action (Louis et al., this issue; Phalet et al., this issue), and student grade point averages (Hagelskamp et al., this issue).

Of importance, we have included both junior and senior researchers as authors on the articles in this volume, highlighting both the established work in this area and new directions that are being pursued. In several instances we also asked presenters who focused on similar themes to combine their work into one article. These collaborations have proven extremely fruitful, promoting integrative analyses of issues, and they will hopefully lay the groundwork for future cross-national collaborations. Finally, to achieve our goal of drawing out the policy implications of the work, a senior policy analyst from Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Marc Wills, agreed to write the concluding article in the issue, in which he focuses on the policy relevance of psychological research in this area.

One important feature of this volume is its dedication to the late Kenneth Dion. Ken, who was active in both SPSSI and EAESP, was one of the early pioneers in social psychological research on immigration, particularly from the perspective of immigrants themselves. The conference on which this volume is based was dedicated to Ken Dion and we would like to dedicate the volume to him as well. Consistent with that recognition, we asked Karen Dion to write a short piece for the volume that describes some of Ken's immigration-related work. In "Understanding Immigrants' Experiences: Reflections on Ken Dion's Research Contributions" (this issue), Karen highlights some of Ken's many contributions, focusing on his recent work on the housing discrimination faced by immigrants, and on a test of his well-known psychosocial stress model of perceived discrimination among groups with different immigrant histories in Canada. Her piece reminds us of Ken's theoretical and empirical contributions to the area, and his dedication to exploring the immigrant experience.

Overview

The body of this volume contains eight research-based articles organized into three sections. The first three research-based articles constituting the section on "The Host Perspective" share a focus on the attitudes and identity of members of receiving societies. Of interest is the fact that they all emphasize the role of perceived threats, at the level of either individuals or nations as a whole, in driving attitudes and behavior toward immigrants and immigration, including perceived threats to national identity and economic, cultural, and physical well-being. This fits well with recent interest in intergroup threat and competition

that has demonstrated the importance of threat perceptions in intergroup relations in general, and in responses to immigrant and immigration in particular (e.g., Duckitt, Wagner, du Plessis, & Birum, 2002; Esses, Hodson, & Dovidio, 2003; Stephan & Stephan, 2000).

The article by Louis et al. (this issue), "Speaking Out on Immigration Policy in Australia: Identity Threat and the Interplay of Own Opinion and Public Opinion," investigates current immigration attitudes in Australia and the processes underlying willingness to speak out on Asian immigration to Australia. It begins with a brief history of Australian immigration and migration research. It then describes a study investigating the role of right-wing political parties and normative climate in enabling conservatives to speak out against Asian immigration, and the resistance expressed by those who feel that their positive views toward Asian immigration are losing ground. The results suggest that perceived threat to group identity and the belief that the tide is turning in their favor may motivate conservatives to speak out on their opposition to immigration, while liberals express their dissent to turn back this tide.

The next article in this section, "How Ideological Attitudes Predict Host Society Members' Attitudes Toward Immigrants: Exploring Cross-National Differences," by Cohrs and Stelzl (this issue), focuses on the role of social dominance orientation and right-wing authoritarianism in predicting attitudes toward immigrants cross-nationally. The authors describe their own research conducted in Canada and Germany on these relations and then present a meta-analysis examining these relations across 17 countries. In so doing, they also attempt to examine country-level variables that may determine the size of these relations, including socioeconomic indices and cultural worldviews. Their results suggest that social dominance orientation and right-wing authoritarianism do systematically differ in their relation to anti-immigrant sentiment in different countries, and that these effects may be at least partly accounted for by the socioeconomic indices and cultural worldviews examined.

In "Who We Are and Who Can Join Us: National Identity Content and Entry Criteria for New Immigrants," by Pehrson and Green (this issue), the focus is on how attitudes toward immigrants and immigration are influenced by the ways in which national group boundaries are demarcated. The first set of studies address this issue by examining the role of ethnic versus civic national identity in determining attitudes toward immigrants in England and internationally. The second set of studies focuses on how perceived individual and national threat affect support for entry criteria, and also expulsion criteria, for immigrants to European nations, including both ascribed and acquired criteria. Of additional interest is their analysis of the role of national-level factors, such as immigration history and wealth, in these demarcations of national boundaries.

The second section of this issue, "The Immigrant Perspective," comprises three articles that focus on different aspects of the process of migration, including motivations that drive people to migrate, changes in identity that may result, and

finally political mobilization that may be initiated to promote particular goals. Irrespective of the stage of the migration experience that is examined, however, all three articles deal with the complex relations between countries of origin and destination, and the changes that immigrants undergo as they attempt to adapt to life in a new country.

In "Migrating to Opportunities: How Family Migration Motivations Shape Academic Trajectories Among Newcomer Immigrant Youth," Hagelskamp et al. (this issue) examine family migration motivations, particularly work and education, among an ethnically diverse sample of immigrants in the United States. In addition to discussing differences in the salience of work versus education-based motivations for migration as a function of country of origin, they focus on how parental migration motivations affect the academic trajectories of their adolescent offspring. Of note is the longitudinal nature of their analyses, in which they examine changes in Grade Point Average (GPA) over a 5-year period as a function of initial migration motivations.

The Noels et al. (this issue) article, "'To See Ourselves as Others See Us': On the Implications of Reflected Appraisals for Ethnic Identity and Discrimination" examines ethnic identity as situationally influenced in first- and second-generation Chinese Canadians. The situated identities examined include perceiving the self in the community, in school, with friends, and with family members. In addition to examining the extent to which these individuals perceive themselves to be Chinese and Canadian in each of these four situations, Noels et al. also examine the extent to which these individuals perceive that others with whom they interact in these situations view them as Chinese and Canadian. Both discrepancies between self appraisals and reflected appraisals, and the relation between reflected appraisals and perceptions of discrimination are discussed.

The final article in this section, "Political Mobilization of Dutch Muslims: Religious Identity Salience, Goal Framing and Normative Constraints," by Phalet et al. (this issue), is concerned with Moroccan and Turkish Muslims in the Netherlands. The research seeks to determine the factors that influence the likelihood of political mobilization by group members, and the likelihood that they will take normative (legal) and nonnormative (illegal) political action. The factors examined include the salience of religious (Muslim) identity, goal framing ("to defend Islam, to defend homeland, or to protect human rights"), and group position in society (Moroccan Muslims have lower status in Dutch society than do Turkish Muslims). The findings are of importance not only in the Dutch context, but for understanding the role of religious identity in the political domain.

The third section, "Combining Perspectives," contains two articles that take a somewhat broader view of the relations between immigrants and members of host societies, examining a variety of factors that may influence mutual attitudes and acculturation preferences. Both are based on the models of acculturation developed by Berry (1997) and Bourhis et al. (1997) to describe the possible

outcomes that may arise when immigrants and members of host cultures come into contact, though interestingly, in the current issue, Bourhis et al. (this issue) utilize acculturation attitudes as an outcome variable, whereas González et al. (this issue) utilize it as a predictor of mutual intergroup attitudes.

Bourhis et al.'s (this issue) article, "Acculturation in Multiple Host Community Settings" uses the interactive acculturation model (Bourhis et al., 1997) to examine acculturation preferences in societies in which there is more than one "host community" with which to potentially integrate. The interactive acculturation model considers the acculturation preferences of both immigrants and host community members, the role of state immigration and integration policies, and their interactive effects on intergroup relations. Focusing specifically on Montreal and Los Angeles, the research looks at how diverse immigrant groups (e.g., from France, Britain, Haiti, and India) and multiple host communities (e.g., Anglophones and Francophones in Montreal) negotiate mutual acculturation preferences, and individual predictors of these preferences.

The other article in this section, "Prejudice among Peruvians and Chileans as a Function of Identity, Intergroup Contact, Acculturation Preferences and Intergroup Emotions," by González et al. (this issue), examines migration within Latin America and focuses on relations between Chileans and Peruvian immigrants to their country. Among the factors that they examine as predictors of mutual intergroup attitudes are identity, contact, perceived threat, anxiety, and acculturation preferences. Their findings are of particular importance in the context of a country just beginning to establish itself as an immigrant-receiving nation and putting into place specific immigration policies. The role of intergroup contact and identity in driving relations among immigrants and nonimmigrants is highlighted.

The final section in this issue, "Reflections on Policy," takes the perspective of policy makers and considers the implications of the research described in this issue, as well as psychological research more generally, for immigration policy and practice. Wills' (this issue) article, "Psychological Research and Immigration Policy," begins by discussing current trends in immigration and integration policy, particularly the arguments favoring and opposing immigration, and the notion of the "worthy" skilled immigrant. Considering the central issues facing policy makers and practitioners, Wills then describes the key research agendas that psychologists could profitably undertake to contribute to the policy debate and discusses the policy relevance of each article in this issue. From this article, it is evident that psychologists are not only beginning to conduct research with important policy implications, but also that there is still much needed psychological work to do in this arena. Thus, it is our hope that this issue will not only introduce readers to some of the new and exciting work that is being done in immigration studies, but also that it will also encourage some of those readers to contribute to the next wave of research in this increasingly important domain.

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VICTORIA ESSES (PhD, University of Toronto) is Professor of Psychology and Director of the Centre for Research on Migration and Ethnic Relations at the University of Western Ontario. Her research examines prejudice, discrimination, and intergroup relations, with a particular interest in issues surrounding immigration and cultural diversity. Her work has covered such topics as the role of perceived competition and threat in determining attitudes toward immigrants and immigration, the dehumanization of refugees, the framing of national identity and public attitudes toward immigration and cultural diversity, and the role of ethnic and religious prejudice in immigrant skills discounting. Dr Esses is currently heading up a community–university research alliance designed to develop best practices for promoting the inclusion of immigrants and minorities in small and medium-sized Ontario cities. She is co-editor of SPSSI's newest journal, *Social Issues and Policy Review.*

KAY DEAUX is a Distinguished Professor Emerita at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York and a Research Affiliate in the Department of Psychology at New York University. She served as President of SPSSI in 2004–2005 and received the Kurt Lewin award from SPSSI in 2007. Her most recent book, *To Be An Immigrant* (Russell Sage, 2006), offers a broad-gauged social psychological perspective on the immigrant experience. Her research addresses issues of ethnic and bicultural identity, stereotypes and discrimination, and the relationship of these processes to outcomes such as academic performance and collective action.

RICHARD N. LALONDE (PhD, University of Western Ontario) is a Professor in the Department of Psychology of York University. His research interests lie at the intersection of identity, culture, and intergroup relations in multicultural societies.

RUPERT BROWN is Professor of Psychology at the University of Sussex. His interests are broadly in group processes and intergroup relations, with a particular focus on social identity processes, intergroup emotions, and factors that promote more favorable intergroup attitudes.