

The Employment and Wage Effects of Immigration:

Trade and Labour Economics Perspectives

Noel Gaston

School of Business
Bond University
Gold Coast
Queensland 4229
AUSTRALIA

&

Doug Nelson

Murphy Institute of Political Economy
Tulane University
New Orleans, LA

Centre for Research on Globalisation
and Labour Markets
School of Economics
University of Nottingham

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We may not be living in *the* age of mass migration, but we are surely living in *an* age of mass migration.¹ From 1965 through 1990 a fairly constant 2.2% of the world population have been migrants.² However, this has involved an increasing rate of change to keep pace with the growing world population: the stock of migrants grew at 1.2% from 1965-1975; 2.2% from 1975-1985; and 2.6% from 1985-1990. More importantly, for the purposes of this paper, relative to regional population, the share of migrants in the US and Canada rose from 6% in 1965 to 8.6% in 1990 (with the greatest growth in the 1980s and 1990s); while the share in Western Europe rose 3.6% to 6.1% over the same period. This period has also seen a substantial shift toward developing countries as source countries for this migration: in the United States this share rose from 42% in 1960-1964 to over 80% in the 1980s and 1990s; in Canada this share rose from 12% to over 70%; while this share in Australia rose from 7% to over 70%. In the 1990s, Germany and Austria experienced very large flows from Eastern Europe as well.

As is well known, this period of rising immigration of unskilled workers coincides with a period of strong deterioration of the relative (and possibly the real) return to native unskilled

¹Carter and Sutch (1998), Hatton and Williamson (1998), and Sassen (1999) emphasize that large scale migration is not a new phenomenon, and was arguably quantitatively more significant in earlier periods. However, as Sassen (1999) points out, the development of democracy, nationalism, and welfare states have made immigration a politically more difficult, and potentially more explosive, issue in contemporary times than in earlier times.

²The statistics in this paragraph are drawn from Zlotnik (1999).

labour in nearly all industrial countries (Levy and Murnane, 1992; Davis, 1992; Blackburn and Bloom, 1995). While much of the research on the causes of this phenomenon has focused on demand-side factors, with special emphasis on international trade and skill-biased technical change, unskilled immigration has received a considerable amount of attention as a possibly relevant supply shock. However, unlike the case of the relationship between international trade and labour market outcomes, where there is considerable disagreement on the facts, the overwhelming majority of empirical studies agree that there is essentially no statistically significant effect of immigration on labour market outcomes, with the possible exception of the least skilled domestic workers (i.e. that small share of the work force that are high school dropouts).

The apparent occurrence of a large-ish supply shock with minimal economic effect has produced a sizable literature, primarily among labour economists, attempting to either account for the measured smallness or to generate larger numbers. Because the overwhelming majority of empirical research on the labour market effects of immigration has been done by labour economists in the context of a relatively common framework, we will develop this framework and then survey the main results from this literature. While there is fairly widespread agreement on the smallness of measurable effects of immigration, the interpretation of this fact is a matter of some considerable dispute. We will first consider accounts that attempt to retain the main structure of the labour theoretic framework involving primarily issues of internal migratory response to international migration or the labour market microstructure issues like the possible presence of segmented labour markets. Where the inability to consistently identify significant effects from immigration was seen as something of a crisis for labour economists (something like the Leontief paradox for trade economists), trade economists have been quick to suggest that this finding is, at least *prima facie*,

consistent with standard trade theoretic models. We will discuss the small body of research that seeks to empirically implement a trade theoretic approach to migration, but we will also emphasize that the essential difference has to do with the interpretation of a generally agreed phenomenon—small measured effects from a sizable shock.

Our analysis will be presented as follows: the next section presents a brief sketch of the fundamental differences between the labour and trade theoretic approaches to the analysis of immigration; section II reviews research based on the standard labour theoretic model; section III turns to attempts by economists using a trade theoretic approach to rationalize or extend the empirical findings discussed in section II; and section IV concludes with a discussion of the implications for policy evaluation.

I. Evaluating Labour Market Effects of Immigration: Two Simple Frameworks

Like most economists, when confronted with a macro phenomenon, like the immigration-wage or immigration-unemployment nexus, labour and trade economists are likely to reach first for fairly highly aggregated, perfectly competitive models. Thus, in this section and for most of the rest of the paper, the theoretical frameworks we will be considering are characterized by complete and perfectly competitive markets, and constant returns to scale production functions. Before being a bit more explicit, we comment briefly on three dimensions that discussions often seem to suggest divide the labour and trade economists: the absence or presence of commodity trade; the exogeneity or endogeneity of international labour flows; and the dimensionality of the model. We will ultimately conclude that, from the point of view of motivating or evaluating empirical work, only the last is of genuine importance.

Let us start with dimensionality. In either case, we characterize production via a standard neoclassical production function:

$$y_j = f^j(\mathbf{z}_j), \quad (1)$$

where j denotes a sector, and we drop it in the one sector case, \mathbf{z}_j is a vector of inputs, and $f^j(\cdot)$ is a linear homogeneous, strictly quasi-concave function.³ A convenient representation in either case is the unit-value isoquant—the locus of all input combinations that yield \$1 worth of output (i.e., letting price be P_j , this is the $1/P_j$ isoquant).

–Figure 1 about here–

In figure 1 we suppose that $\mathbf{z}' = \{S, L\}$, skilled and unskilled labour, denotes the economy's endowment, and the slope of the ray from the origin through \mathbf{z}' identifies $s = S/L$ the equilibrium input ratio. From cost minimization and competitive markets we know that, in equilibrium, the slope of the isoquant will be equal to $\omega = -w_u/w_s$. Thus, an increase in the relative endowment of unskilled labour (from \mathbf{z}' to \mathbf{z}''), a fall in s , straightforwardly leads to a fall in ω .⁴ Furthermore, if we suppose that the price of the final good is fixed, this translates to a real increase in the wage of S and a real decrease in the wage of L .⁵ The entire adjustment

³Where we need a general representation we will denote the set of all factors as I and its dimensionality as m , while the set of all goods is J with dimensionality n , i will index members of I and j will index members of J .

⁴An alternative representation of this is that the value marginal product curve for unskilled labour is a downward sloping function of $1/s$. In the two factor case, with S and P (the price of final output) fixed, this is just the demand curve for unskilled labour.

⁵This follows from the standard weighted-average property of price changes (Jones, 1965): $\hat{P} = \theta_L \hat{w}_L + \theta_S \hat{w}_S$, where the θ_i 's are distributive shares and the hats denote proportional changes. Thus, in Figure 1, $\hat{w}_S > \hat{P} = 0 > \hat{w}_L$. It is also straightforward to show that the gain to domestic skilled labour exceeds the loss to domestic unskilled labour. With appropriate redistributive policy, citizens must gain. However, without such a policy it is easy to see that households deriving most of their income from unskilled labour would lose

has occurred through a change in relative factor prices. This is the basis of the standard labour theoretic approach to determining the effect of immigration on a host economy.⁶ As we shall see in the next section, this setup provides a set of identifying assumptions that permits a very straightforward econometric analysis of the price (or, *mutatis mutandis*, employment) effects of increased immigration.

–Figure 2 about here–

Now suppose that we make only one change in the model, we add one more good and assume that good 1 is always *S*-intensive relative to good 2. Figure 2 labels denote the good from figure 1 “good 1” and the new good “good 2”. Since both of the isoquants are unit-value isoquants, they must be tangent to a common \$1 isocost line. As with the one good case, the tangent gives ω , common to both industries as a result of free inter-sectoral factor mobility, and identifies s_j (the technology in use in each sector).⁷ By the small country assumption, the relative commodity price ($p = P_2 / P_1$) is fixed, which fixes the unit-value isoquants, and thus fixes the common isocost, whose slope gives ω . The cone defined by the rays s_1 and s_2 is called the *cone of diversification* because any endowment in the interior of the cone involves production of both final goods at the given price, with the equilibrium technology in use. Thus, two economies, sharing the same technology sets and facing the same final good prices, but endowed with different proportions of *S* and *L*, will choose the same technologies (i.e. s_1 and s_2) and have the same ω . This is the Lerner (1952)-Samuelson (1948) *factor-price equalization theorem*. If we focus on a single country, this is easily seen as a very simple comparative static representation of immigration, with z' the initial

while skilled labour owning households would gain.

⁶We develop this framework in more detail in the next section.

⁷Our assumption of no factor-intensity reversals guarantees that $s_1 > s_2$ for all ω .

endowment and z'' the endowment after an immigration shock consisting purely of unskilled labour.⁸ It is this version of the theorem that Leamer (1995) calls the *factor-price insensitivity theorem*. The mechanism that brings this factor-price insensitivity about is the subject of the Rybczynski (1955) theorem. That is, with two goods, if commodity prices (and technology) are unchanged the location of the unit value isoquants cannot change, the equilibrium isocost cannot change, which means that the ω ratio cannot change unless the economy specializes. Thus, the only way this economy can respond to a change in endowment, from z' to z'' (an increase in L with S fixed), is to change output mix, increasing output in the sector using L intensively (by proportionally more than the increase in L) and decreasing output in the other sector, as illustrated by the arrows. The essential point here is not that factor-price insensitivity actually obtains, but that, in a world with more than one output, some of the adjustment to an endowment shock will occur via a change in the output mix, reducing the actual, and measured, costs to the competing factor (i.e. domestic unskilled labour). In the Heckscher-Ohlin-Samuelson (HOS) model illustrated here, as long as both goods are produced, the only way to generate a change in relative factor-prices is to change the relative commodity prices. As we shall see, in section III, increasing the dimensionality further leads to a variety of complexities, but the potential for adjustment via the output mix will remain, and so, generally, will the expectation that forcing all adjustment through the wage will produce overestimates of the long-run labour market effects of immigration.

One might expect that, and some discussions seem to suggest that, the fundamental difference between the labour theoretic and trade theoretic approaches to framing empirical

⁸Interestingly, Samuelson concludes his original article of FPE with a discussion of its implications for immigration policy. Though the policy in question was that of encouraging emigration from England to Australia.

research relates to the explicit incorporation of international trade flows. This, however, is not the case. As we have just seen, both the labour and trade theoretic approaches tend to hold the prices of final commodities exogenously fixed. As Altonji and Card (1991) point out, one way to motivate this in the one good case is to suppose the domestically produced good is consumed and exported in exchange for an international good which is consumed, but not produced locally. Furthermore, the standard labour theoretic approach is to adopt a small country assumption that fixes the relative price of the exportable and the importable goods.⁹ Trade economists are fond of the small, open economy model for the same reason: analysis of the supply side of the model can be abstracted from demand considerations.

When labour economists say that their model is a “closed economy” model, what they mean is that it is closed to immigration. That is, immigration will occur as a comparative static change in the endowment.¹⁰ While a substantial trade theoretic literature has treated factor flows endogenously, there is no shortage of comparative static analysis.¹¹ Our illustration in figure 2 does precisely that, and one might reasonably argue that a small country, comparative static framework is the natural framework for empirical analysis on this question.¹² In any event, endogeneity of factor flows certainly does not distinguish between

⁹Altonji and Card, however, adopt a version of the large country assumption in their own framework.

¹⁰It should be noted that a sizable literature in labour economics is explicitly concerned with formally and econometrically modeling the migration decision, on the whole this literature is not particularly concerned with aggregate equilibria. Borjas (1994) and Lalonde and Topel (1997) survey much of this literature. For a survey that covers literature on migration decision-making in fields well beyond economics, as well as those in economics, see Massey, *et al.* (1998).

¹¹Ruffin (1984) provides a very clear presentation of the trade theoretic literature on international factor mobility.

¹²As we shall see in section III, once we depart from the 1 sector labour theoretic framework or the 2×2 framework of the HOS model, trade and immigration may be related

the labour and trade theoretic approaches.

In this section we have argued that the fundamental difference between the way in which labour and trade economists have approached the issue of the labour market effects of immigration lies in the dimensionality of the theoretical frameworks in common use. Labour economists tend to use a one sector model that straightforwardly yields a convenient framework for econometric applications, while trade economists tend to use a multi- (usually 2) good framework that yields much less clear empirical application, but offers a very different perspective on the labour market effects of immigration. We now turn to a more systematic development of the labour theoretic framework and the results generated within that framework.

II. How Labour Economists Have Evaluated the Effects of Immigration

In this section of the paper we discuss some of the major findings about immigration and labour markets that have been uncovered in recent research by labour economists. As with our earlier discussion of the impact of international trade on the labour market (Gaston and Nelson, 2000), our primary focus here is on the contribution of immigration to the growing inequality experienced in many OECD countries during the 1980s, and the implications of that experience for future policy. In this section we consider in some detail empirical research by labour economists on the link between immigration and labour market outcomes (primarily wages). Contemporary empirical research on the labour market effects of immigration has grown quite large since its development in the early 1980s. We will divide this research into 2 broad categories: production function based studies; and cross-sectional

in a variety of ways which need to be considered in evaluating empirical results.

wage/unemployment. As we noted in the introduction, the most striking result from that research is how small are the measurable effects of what is a fairly sizable labour market shock.

Before proceeding with this discussion we comment briefly on what may be the best known gross distinction used to characterize this literature: area studies *versus* factor content studies (Borjas, Freeman, and Katz, 1997). The problem is that the label is misleading. We have already noted, in our discussion of figure 1, that virtually all labour theoretic frameworks apply a factor content based approach—i.e. it is change in relative supply that generates the change in labour market outcomes. The issue is actually about *level of analysis*. That is: how large must the geographic unit (i.e. area) be such that observations on supplies and prices of various classes of labour are independent? As we shall see, there are good reasons for believing that geographic units like standard metropolitan statistical areas (SMSAs) or states are linked in ways that are inconsistent with cross-sectional observations being independent draws from some distribution, but it is not at all clear that the statistically optimal level of analysis is the nation. There is considerable evidence that national borders have economic effects, but, by the same token, there is also considerable evidence that quite local labour markets take significant periods of time to fully adjust to macro shocks.¹³ On balance, it is not clear to us that there is a clear reason to prefer one level of analysis to another. Level of analysis is always an important research decision, but this does not strike us as an essential distinguishing aspect in this body of research.

¹³See Helliwell (1998) for a useful overview and extension of research on the economic effects of national borders. On local labour markets see Topel (1986), Blanchard and Katz (1992); and Bound and Holzer (2000). White and Mueser (1988) provide a very interesting discussion of the implications of level of analysis for studies of domestic migration.

A. Production Function Based Methods

The most direct implementation of the framework considered in the previous section, and the first to be developed in the current wave of research on the labour market effects of immigration, involves selecting a specific functional form for the production function given in equation (1), estimating that function on cross-sectional data, and testing hypotheses on the degree of substitutability or complementarity between inputs.¹⁴ In addition, elasticities of derived demand can then be used to carry out policy experiments. Recalling that our aggregate production function is $y = f(z)$, $z = \{z_1, \dots, z_m\}$, we seek to calculate the Hicksian partial elasticities of complementarity between any two of the inputs i and k as:

$$\zeta_{ik} = \frac{f}{f_i} \frac{f_{ik}}{f_k}, \quad \forall i, k \in I, \quad (2)$$

where we have used subscripts to denote partial derivatives. Following Hicks (1970), i and k are called *q-complements* if $\zeta_{ik} > 0$ and *q-substitutes* if $\zeta_{ik} < 0$.¹⁵ Because it is easier to interpret the quantity elasticities of inverse input demand,

$$\eta_{ik} = \frac{\partial \ln w_i}{\partial \ln z_k}, \quad (3)$$

these are usually calculated using the relationship:

$$\eta_{ik} = \zeta_{ik} \theta_k, \quad (4)$$

¹⁴Production functions can also be estimated using time series data, but in that case one must be concerned with technological change, certainly a concern in the apparently technologically dynamic 1980s. The equivalent assumption, that all regions within the same country have access to the same technology set seems considerably less demanding.

¹⁵A pair of inputs (z_i, z_k) are *q-complements* if an increase in the endowment of k causes an increase in the wage of i ; they are *q-substitutes* if the increase in z_k produces a fall in w_i . Hamermesh (1993) provides a clear discussion of these concepts.

where, again, θ_k is the distributive share of input k .

In carrying out work of this sort, investigators must select a functional form that does not prejudice the conclusion from the start. In particular, we would like the data to determine the values of the elasticities defined in (2) and (4). Thus, the commonly used Cobb-Douglas and CES forms will be inappropriate for any input vector with more than two arguments. As a result, investigators have generally used one or another of the flexible functional forms.¹⁶ In addition to selecting a specific functional form, the other major choice in this body of research involves the definition of the input vector. Broadly speaking, there are two approaches here: one defines the input vector in terms of observable characteristics (e.g. gender, age, immigrant status, etc.); while the other seeks to identify production relevant characteristics (e.g. quantity of human capital).

In the first paper using this approach, Jean Baldwin Grossman (1982) used cross-sectional data for 1970 to estimate a translog function of native workers, first generation

¹⁶A functional form is *flexible* if it can approximate any arbitrary, twice continuously differentiable function in the sense that its parameters can be chosen such that its value, gradient, and Hessian equal the corresponding magnitudes for the arbitrary function at a given point. Lau (1986) provides an excellent discussion of the issues that arise in choosing functional forms for empirical analysis. Chambers (1988, Chapter 5) is a somewhat more elementary discussion, with a strong emphasis on application.

immigrants, second generation immigrants, and capital.¹⁷ She finds that both first and second generation immigrants substitute for native labour, but that second generation immigrants are much closer substitutes for natives, and that new immigrants are closer substitutes for second generation immigrants than for natives. In addition, Grossman finds that capital is complementary with each type of labour, but that this complementarity is strongest with first-generation immigrants and weakest with natives. Grossman's analysis concludes with a policy simulation using the relationship in equation (4) to calculate own- and cross- elasticities to study the effect of a 10% increase in the number of legal immigrants in the labour force on a short-run equilibrium in which native wages are fixed (and thus adjustment occurs on the employment margin) and a long-run in which all wages are flexible. In the short-run, native employment falls by 0.8%, second generation wages fall by 0.06%, first-generation wages fall

¹⁷The translog function is:

$$\ln y = \ln f(z) = \beta_0 + \sum_{i \in I} \beta_i \ln z_i + \frac{1}{2} \sum_{i \in I} \sum_{k \in I} \beta_{ik} \ln z_i \ln z_k.$$

Our assumptions on the technology yield restrictions: $\beta_{ik} = \beta_{ki}$ (Young's theorem); and $\sum_{i \in I} \beta_i = 1$ and $\sum_{i \in I} \beta_{ik} = \sum_{k \in I} \beta_{ik} = 0$ (constant returns to scale). This yields a set of distributive share equations:

$$\theta_i = \frac{\partial y}{\partial z_i} = \beta_i + \sum_{k \in I} \beta_{ik} \ln z_k + v_i, \quad \forall i \in I,$$

that can be estimated using Zellner's seemingly unrelated regression technique, to take the correlation among the v_i into account, to generate values for the function's parameters. From these, one can calculate the Hicksian elasticities of complementarity, equation (15), as:

$$\zeta_{ii} = \frac{(\beta_{ii} + \theta_i^2 - \theta_i)}{\theta_i} \quad \text{and} \quad \zeta_{ik} = \frac{(\beta_{ik} + \theta_i \theta_k)}{\theta_i \theta_k}.$$

by 2.2%, and the return to capital rises by 0.2%. In the long-run, wages are flexible, so all markets clear: native wages fall by 1%, second generation immigrant wages fall by 0.8%, first-generation immigrant wages fall by 2.3%, and the return to capital rises by 4.2%.¹⁸

In an important series of papers, Borjas (1983, 1986a, 1986b, 1987) uses a number of data sets from the 1980s to study different disaggregations of labour in the context of a generalized Leontief production function.¹⁹ Depending on the particular breakdown of labour (e.g. by gender, race, and immigration status), immigrants tend to be complements to some native labour and substitutes to others, though in all cases these effects are small—except for

¹⁸In related studies, Bürgenmeier, Butare, and Favarger (1991) estimate a translog function of immigrant labour, native labour, and capital using Swiss time series data from 1950-1986, while Akbari and DeVoretz (1992) estimate a translog function on an industrial cross-section based on Canadian data for 1980. In addition to finding qualitatively similar results on the pattern of complementarity between factors, the Swiss study finds evidence of a positive relationship between immigration and capital accumulation. At the economy-wide level, the Canadian study finds no significant effect of immigrants—i.e. all Hicksian elasticities of complementarity between immigrants and natives are insignificantly different from zero. However, when the sample is restricted to labour intensive industries only, the Canadian study does find evidence of labour displacement as a result of immigration.

¹⁹The generalized Leontief production function is defined as:

$$y = f(\mathbf{z}) = \sum_{i \in I} \sum_{k \in I} \gamma_{ik} (z_i z_k)^{\frac{1}{2}},$$

where, as with the translog function, Young's theorem requires $\gamma_{ik} = \gamma_{ki}$, while concavity requires $\gamma_{ik} \geq 0$ for $i \neq k$. As Borjas points out, the generalized Leontief production function leads to linear-in-parameters wage equations, rather than the linear share equations derived from the translog production function. Thus, Borjas estimates

$$w_i = \sum_{k \in I} \gamma_{ik} \left(\frac{z_k}{z_i} \right)^{\frac{1}{2}},$$

on individual level data, sorted by SMSA, usually with a variety of controls. Borjas estimates these labour demands using both OLS and a two-stage least squares procedure to control for endogeneity of labour supply, though the latter generally has little impact on the results.

the effects of immigrants on other immigrants of the same type, for whom the effects can be sizeable and negative. Given Borjas' more recent position as a leading opponent of immigration and searcher for large effects, it may be worthwhile to quote his own summary of this, and other, work circa 1990:

the methodological arsenal of modern econometrics cannot detect a single shred of evidence that immigrants have a sizable adverse impact on the earnings and employment opportunities of natives in the United States. (Borjas, 1990, pg. 81).

In particular, Borjas fairly consistently finds that, while immigrants may be substitutes for white native born men, and thus increased immigration may have had a small negative effect on their labour market outcomes, immigrants are found to be complements to black native born men who, thus, may have gained from increased immigration.

This approach is also used to examine the effects of legal Mexican immigration on labour market outcomes of Hispanic natives (King, Lowell, and Bean, 1986) and illegal Mexican immigration on a wide variety of labour groups (Bean, Lowell, and Taylor, 1988) with essentially the same results: the first study finds evidence of complementarity, suggesting that Mexican immigration may have a positive effect on the wages of native born Hispanics; and the second study finds effects of legal immigration like those in Borjas, and finds that illegal immigration may have a small negative effect on white, non-Hispanic workers, but essentially no effect on native Hispanic workers.

The research that we have considered to this point focused on immigration status, among other things, as a production-relevant fact. Rivera-Batiz, Sechzer, and Gang (Rivera-Batiz and Sechzer, 1991; Gang and Rivera-Batiz, 1994), however, argue that there is no particular reason to believe that immigrant status, or race or gender, is directly production relevant. They prefer, instead, to assume that individuals with identical bundles of production relevant traits will receive the same wage. As a result their strategy involves estimating a

translog production function of education, experience, and unskilled labour to derive the relevant Hicksian elasticities, and then using data on the skill composition of immigrants versus natives to derive distributional effects. Like Borjas and Bean *et al.*, they use individual data sorted into local market areas to estimate, like Grossman, a translog production function, and then use equation (2) to get the Hicksian elasticities of complementarity, and (4) to get the relevant factor demand elasticities. In the first stage they find, for both US and European data, that own supply elasticities are negative, as expected, and that the cross-elasticities imply that unskilled labour, education, and skill are all complements for one another (i.e. $\zeta_{ik} > 0$ for $i \neq k$). In addition, own elasticities are all estimated to be considerably larger than cross-elasticities. The authors then construct skill inventories of immigrant and native groups and use those, along with the estimated elasticities, to compute composite elasticities of complementarity that summarize this information. As with other work that we have reported, there are a variety of sign patterns, but “the impact of *all* the immigrant groups on *all* the native-born groups are small in absolute magnitude” (Rivera-Batiz and Sechzer, pg. 106). The largest effect is that of Mexican immigrants on Mexican-Americans, where an increase in Mexican immigration of 10% will result in slightly less than a 1% fall in wages of Mexican-Americans (with a similar effect on native black labour). Similarly small results are found for the European case in Gang and Rivera-Batiz.

The production function approach receives its most sophisticated treatment to date in a series of papers by Michael Greenwood and Gary Hunt with a variety of colleagues. In Greenwood and Hunt (1995), the authors are interested in examining a variety of adjustment channels beyond change in wage. For input demands, they estimate a translog cost function on SMSA level data for 1970, and find immigrant labour to be a substitute for domestic

labour.²⁰ In addition, they estimate labour supply functions and aggregated output demand functions for the local markets. With these results they construct a large number of simulations permitting adjustment via flexibility in native labour supply (via both variable participation rates and internal migration) and changes in demand for final output, as well as adjustment along a given isoquant as in the previous studies. As with the previous studies, the wage, and now labour force participation, effects of immigration are uniformly small and, perhaps not surprisingly the magnitude of effects generally fall with the opening of additional channels of adjustment. The final output demand channel in particular seems to have a consistent effect of reducing the wage effects of immigration (or even making the effects on natives positive). These results can be seen to be closely related to our claim that, with multiple sectors the existence of adjustment at the output mix margin will generally lead to smaller effects.

By the mid- and late-1980s, researchers working in applied production analysis had begun to recognize that standard flexible functional forms (including both the translog and generalized Leontief forms) could fail to satisfy concavity, but that flexibility may be destroyed if concavity is imposed globally (Diewert and Wales, 1987). Greenwood, Hunt, and Kohli

²⁰The translog cost function is:

$$\ln C(\mathbf{w}; y) = \sum_{i \in I} \beta_{i0} \ln w_i + \sum_{i \in I} \sum_{k \in I} \beta_{ik} \ln w_i \ln w_k + \ln y,$$

with $\beta_{ik} = \beta_{ki}$, and the share equations are, from Shephard's lemma,

$$\theta_i = \beta_{i0} + \sum_{k \in I} \beta_{ik} \ln w_k + v_i, \quad i \in I.$$

The elements of the \mathbf{z} vector are domestic labour, immigrant labour, immigrant labour and capital.

(1996) begin their analysis by pointing out that virtually all of the studies we have reviewed to this point present results indicating the presence of failures of concavity, in addition they estimate CES, translog, and generalized Leontief cost functions on a common data set to illustrate violations. As a result, they conduct their analysis using the symmetric normalized quadratic form, developed by Diewert and Wales (1987), that permits curvature conditions to be imposed globally without endangering flexibility.²¹ The authors calculate the Hicksian elasticities of complementarity and find that native labour and immigrants are q -substitutes, while all other input pairs are q -complements. Thus, an increase in immigrants would lower the wage of native workers, and raise the wage of non-recent immigrants and capital, but these effects are quite small. For example, a 10% increase in the supply of recent immigrants would reduce the wage of native-born labour by 0.96%. The effect of this change on other recent immigrants, however, is quite large.

Finally, Greenwood, Hunt, and Kohli (1997) mix the approaches of Grossman and Borjas with that of Rivera-Batiz by disaggregating native and immigrant labour into four skill categories each (based on earnings), as well as capital, and estimating a symmetric normalized

²¹The symmetric normalized quadratic functional form of the unit cost function is:

$$c(\mathbf{w}) = \frac{\frac{1}{2} \sum_{i \in I} \sum_{k \in I} \beta_{ik} w_i w_k}{\sum_{i \in I} \beta_i w_i} + \sum_{i \in I} b_i w_i,$$

where $\beta_{ik} = \beta_{ki}$, and $\sum_{k \in I} \beta_{ik} = 0$, $\beta_i \geq 0$ and $\sum_{i \in I} \beta_i = 1$. Diewert and Wales (1987) provide a method for imposing global concavity and show that it does not undermine flexibility. The elements of the z vector in Greenwood, Hunt, and Kohli (1996) are native labour, recent immigrant labour, non-recent immigrant labour, and capital.

quadratic cost function on a cross-section of SMSAs.²² Not surprisingly, given the number of factors, there is quite a variety of q -substitutability and -complementarity, but unskilled immigrants appear to be strong q -substitutes for low- and medium-skilled native labour, and q -complements for unskilled native labour. Once again, however, the authors are unable to find any evidence that unskilled immigration leads to large changes in the income distribution or in employment opportunities, with the exception of the effect on other unskilled immigrants.

Overall, econometric research which explicitly exploits production theoretic structure, tends to find strong substitutability between immigrants and other immigrants of the same vintage and national origin and, otherwise, widely varying patterns of complementarity and substitutability between immigrants and natives (as measured by the Hicksian elasticity of complementarity). More importantly, the elasticities between immigrant and native labour are consistently small, and are smaller yet when other channels of adjustment than the wage are explicitly permitted in the analysis.

B. The Regression Approach to Estimating the Wage Effects of Immigration²³

While the production-theoretic framework directly implements the theory that forms

²²In a study of the impact of low-skilled migration from Mexico, Davies, Greenwood, Hunt, Kohli, and Tienda (1998) estimate a symmetric normalized quadratic production function in which the arguments are: low-skilled natives divided by gender and ethnicity (Mexican, non-Mexican); native high-skilled males and females (one category); foreign born, low-skilled Mexicans; foreign born, low-skilled non-Mexicans; and capital. As in the previous studies, the authors find that in both 1980 and 1990 immigrants has negative effects on the native born, but that these effects were small. The effects on other immigrants were found to be large. Furthermore, whatever might be the effects of trade and factor mobility within the US, the effects are larger in areas of high immigrant concentration.

²³There is a parallel literature applying regression analysis to unemployment. We focus on the wage results primarily because of the close link to the theory. We simply note here that the primary conclusions of this section—i.e. small to no effects, except on migrants of similar origin and vintage, and the least skilled native workers—holds as well for unemployment.

the basis for much of the labour-theoretic research on the labour market effects of immigration, its requirements are demanding. To be set against the advantage of directly estimating cross elasticities of substitution are the reliance on functional form assumptions to identify the parameters of interest. As mentioned in the previous section, structural estimation of this sort invariably needs to trade-off the requirements of functional form flexibility, or ease of estimation, and strict adherence to the restrictions implied by the theory. In addition, while human capital variables can relatively easily be accommodated in the production-theoretic framework, the incorporation of a wide range of standard control variables does not fit easily within this framework (though Borjas does, in fact, include such controls in his analysis). Thus, as a result of the relative ease of application, greater similarity to existing techniques in labour econometrics and the desirability of including a richer set of controls, the majority of the research on the labour market effects of immigration has taken place within a regression framework.

The labour economists' standard approach to wage inequality and income distribution is firmly rooted to an analysis of "SDI" or "supply, demand and institutions" (Freeman, 1993, pp. 44-49). To evaluate the labour market effects of immigration, identifying how the immigration of workers with differing skills affects the relative supply of labour can be viewed as necessary first step. In turn, the skill group characteristics of new immigrants are affected by the returns to skill as well as the distribution of earnings in both the source and host countries. Finally, labour market institutions are important because they affect the degree of wage inequality, the structure of wages and the labour market response to shocks. We place some of the latter considerations on the back burner for now and start by outlining a template

competitive labour market model.²⁴

As above, we assume two types of labour, skilled (S) and unskilled (L) for simplicity.²⁵ Within each skill class, domestic and immigrant labour is assumed to be equally productive. Other factors of production, such as physical capital, land and so on are left in the background by assuming a fixed price and applying a separability assumption. Following Altonji and Card (1991), we suppose that the economy produces one good according the production function $Y = f(S, L)$.²⁶ This good is consumed and is exchanged at fixed world prices for another consumption good.²⁷ We will find it convenient to work with the total cost function:

$$C(w_S, w_L; Y) = Yc(w_S, w_L), \quad (5)$$

where $c(\cdot)$ is the unit cost function.

We suppose that there are L unskilled workers and S skilled workers in the economy and define total labour force as $\Lambda \equiv L + S$. We define the per capita labour supply functions of skilled and unskilled workers, respectively, as: $l_s(w_s)$ and $l_L(w_L)$. Because, by Shephard's lemma, the unit labour demand functions are $c_i(\mathbf{w}) = \frac{\partial c(\mathbf{w})}{\partial w_i}$, we can write the conditions for a local labour market equilibrium as:

²⁴Other, more detailed presentations of the material presented in this section can be found in Altonji and Card (1991), Borjas (1999a), Chiswick, Chiswick and Karas (1989) and Johnson (1980, 1998). With reference to general labour economics, Bronfenbrenner (1971, chapter 6) presents the underlying theory in a relatively elementary way, while Hamermesh (1993) provides a state of the art overview of theoretical and empirical work.

²⁵It should, however, be noted that this is not without loss of generality (Hamermesh, 1993, pp. 33-42).

²⁶As above, we take $f(\cdot)$ to be twice differentiable, linear homogeneous, and strictly quasi-concave.

²⁷As a result of the small country assumption, the foreign good will not enter our analysis explicitly, so we do not introduce any notation for it. The foreign good will be our *numeraire*.

$$Sl_S(w_S) = Yc_S(w) \quad \text{and} \quad Ll_L(w_L) = Yc_L(w). \quad (6)$$

To focus on the impact of unskilled immigration, we will represent migration as an influx of unskilled workers into the economy. Let $\lambda_L := L/\Lambda$, the proportion of unskilled workers in the labour force. Totally differentiating (6), suppressing arguments, and using obvious notation, we have:

$$\begin{aligned} (1 - \lambda_L)l_{SS} dw_S - l_S d\lambda_L &= \frac{Y}{\Lambda} (c_{SS} dw_S + c_{SL} dw_L) \\ \lambda_L l_{LL} dw_L + l_L d\lambda_L &= \frac{Y}{\Lambda} (c_{LS} dw_S + c_{LL} dw_L). \end{aligned} \quad (7)$$

Defining ε_i as the elasticity of the labour supply and η_{ik} as the elasticity of labour demand for skill group i with respect to wage k , the equations (7) may be rewritten as:

$$\begin{aligned} (1 - \lambda_L)\varepsilon_S \frac{l_S}{w_S} dw_S - l_S d\lambda_L &= \frac{Y}{\Lambda} \left(\eta_{SS} \frac{c_S}{w_S} dw_S + \eta_{SL} \frac{c_S}{w_L} dw_L \right) \\ \lambda_L \varepsilon_S \frac{l_L}{w_L} dw_L + l_L d\lambda_L &= \frac{Y}{\Lambda} \left(\eta_{LS} \frac{c_L}{w_S} dw_S + \eta_{LL} \frac{c_L}{w_L} dw_L \right). \end{aligned} \quad (8)$$

Letting hats (i.e. $\hat{x} = dx/x$) denote proportional changes, and using equation (6) to simplify, we have:

$$\begin{aligned} (1 - \lambda_L)\varepsilon_S \hat{w}_S - d\lambda_L &= \eta_{SS} \hat{w}_S + \eta_{SL} \hat{w}_L \\ \lambda_L \varepsilon_S \hat{w}_L + d\lambda_L &= \eta_{LS} \hat{w}_S + \eta_{LL} \hat{w}_L \end{aligned} \quad (9)$$

The labour demand elasticities are governed by the usual Hicksian formula, i.e., for given wage changes

$$\eta_{ik} = \theta_k (\sigma_{ik} - \xi), \quad (10)$$

where θ_k is the distributive share of labour type k , σ_{ik} is the partial elasticity of substitution between labour types i and k , and ξ is the elasticity of final output demand with respect to its relative price p .²⁸

Comparative statics on equations (9) are straightforward. For instance, when the demand for skilled labour is independent of the wage paid to unskilled labour (i.e. $\eta_{SL} = 0$), we have

$$\hat{w}_S = \frac{1}{(1 - \lambda_L) \epsilon_S - \eta_{SS}} d\lambda_L > 0. \quad (11)$$

Similarly, when the demand for unskilled labour is independent of the wage paid to skilled labour (i.e. $\eta_{LS} = 0$), we have

$$\hat{w}_L = - \frac{1}{\lambda_L \epsilon_L - \eta_{SS}} d\lambda_L < 0. \quad (12)$$

Equations (11) and (12) are immediately instructive. As suggested in the extensive literature on the LeChatelier-Samuelson principle, the long-run impact on wages is likely to be far smaller than the short-run impacts. Similarly, it is easy to see that if factor-price equalization causes these elasticities to approach infinity, there will be no wage effect.²⁹

Equations (11) and (12) can be used directly to derive implications for the correlation between wages and shares of immigrants in a local labour market (see, e.g., Altonji and Card, 1991). An alternative approach to evaluating the empirical relationship between skilled and

²⁸Recall that we have taken the importable as our numeraire, so $p = P/P^*$, where the star denotes a foreign magnitude.

²⁹This conclusion is insensitive to the assumption that $\eta_{SL} = \eta_{LS} = 0$.

unskilled wages is to assume an explicit functional form for the technology and use equation (6) to develop an estimating equation. For illustrative purposes, suppose that Y is produced from skilled and unskilled labour according the following CES function:

$$Y = A \left[\tau_S z_S^\rho + \tau_L z_L^\rho \right]^{\frac{1}{\rho}}, \quad (13)$$

where $\sigma_{SL} = (1 - \rho)^{-1} \geq 0$. The parameter A indexes factor-neutral total factor productivity; and the τ_i index biased technical change that increases the “effective” quantity of the relevant input. The cost function associated with this production function is (Varian, 1992, pg. 56):

$$C(w_S, w_L; Y) = \frac{Y}{A} \left[\left(\frac{w_S}{\tau_S} \right)^{\frac{\rho}{\rho-1}} + \left(\frac{w_L}{\tau_L} \right)^{\frac{\rho}{\rho-1}} \right]^{\frac{\rho-1}{\rho}}. \quad (14)$$

Using Shephard’s lemma and taking the ratio of the unit labour demand functions, we obtain the relative demand for labour within a sector or location as:

$$\frac{c_L(w_S, w_L)}{c_S(w_S, w_L)} = \left(\frac{\tau_S}{\tau_L} \right)^{\frac{\rho}{\rho-1}} \left(\frac{w_L}{w_S} \right)^{\frac{1}{\rho-1}}. \quad (15)$$

Local labour market equilibrium requires that

$$\frac{\lambda_L l_L(w_S, w_L)}{(1 - \lambda_L) l_S(w_S, w_L)} = \left(\frac{\tau_S}{\tau_L} \right)^{\frac{\rho}{\rho-1}} \left(\frac{w_L}{w_S} \right)^{\frac{1}{\rho-1}}, \quad (16)$$

where the left hand side is the ratio of the supplies of unskilled to skilled labour. Solving for relative wages and taking natural logarithms gives a regression specification:

$$\ln \left(\frac{w_L}{w_S} \right) = \rho \ln \left(\frac{\tau_L}{\tau_S} \right) + (\rho - 1) \ln \frac{\lambda_L l_L(w_S, w_L)}{(1 - \lambda_L) l_S(w_S, w_L)}. \quad (17)$$

Equation (17) provides a general framework for understanding the determinants of relative wages. It should be kept in mind that the relative wage changes for different skill groups are for within local or regional labour markets. The link to outside markets comes from specifying how they respond to changing wages (i.e. the ϵ_j). Equation (17) can then be used to examine the determinants of relative wages across different (and fully separate) labour markets. (A qualitatively similar approach is used to derive estimating equations for wages.

There were many studies using this regression framework that focussed on the contribution of the large increase in the relative supply of workers during the 1970s to the increasing wage inequality that occurred throughout the later 1980s and early 1990s. Welch (1979), Berger (1985), Murphy, Plant and Welch (1988) and Murphy and Welch (1991) are among the better known U.S. studies here. The general finding of these studies is that changes in cohort size associated with the Baby Boom generation did not have a significant impact on cohort earnings. Overall, supply-side changes in the United States were very quickly discounted as a candidate explanation for the increased dispersion in the income distribution in the United States during the 1980s.

Notwithstanding, the preceding findings on the effects of domestic labour supply shocks do not necessarily imply that supply-side “shocks” are unimportant. In the current context, some authors claim that immigration may have been responsible for the decline in the earnings of unskilled native workers that occurred during the 1980s. Freeman (1998, p.110) argues that immigration may have had substantially larger effects on native unskilled workers than increased international trade with low-income countries, for instance. During the 1980s, a period during which wage inequality rapidly increased in the United States, immigration raised the supply of high school dropouts by approximately 25 percent, which far exceeds the increase in the “implicit labour supply” of such workers attributable to trade. Borjas, Freeman

and Katz (1992, 1997) conclude that the large increase in the number of unskilled immigrants explains about one third of the decline in the relative wage of high school *dropouts* during the 1980s. For the United States, wage inequality increased most in the West where the largest inflow of less-skilled immigrants was experienced (Topel, 1994a; 1994b).

In principle, changes in cohort quality can be analysed in the same way as changes in cohort size. Borjas (1994) considers the declining cohort quality of recent waves of immigrants to the United States to have been the result of the shift in U.S. immigration policy, specifically the passage of the 1965 Immigration Act. However, his findings of decreasing cohort quality have recently been questioned by Butcher and DiNardo (1998) who focus on changes in the wage distribution through time. Using the methodology developed by DiNardo *et al.* (1996), they investigate the counterfactual of what the wage distribution would have looked like for new immigrants if they had faced the wage distributions from different eras. They find that earlier immigrants would have had wages much more similar to today's new arrivals, if they had faced the present day prices for their skills.³⁰ Race and ethnicity, and not the changing education levels of the new immigrants, explain much of the change in comparative economic fortunes of recent immigrants once wage structure changes have been held constant. The point, as also stressed by LaLonde and Topel (1991), is that recent cohorts of immigrants will look as if they do worse, even if they have the same set of characteristics as earlier cohorts of immigrants, if the distribution of wages has become more dispersed and if the new immigrants lie near the lower tail of the income distribution.

³⁰With similar implications, albeit from a different perspective, Friedberg and Hunt (1995) note that "composition problems" make it difficult to ascertain the impact of immigration on wage inequality. For example, they argue that including the newly-arrived waves of less-skilled migrants in inequality calculations is likely to bias the conclusion towards finding greater inequality in the United States.

Of course, attempting to uncover the wage effects of immigration by simply regressing immigrant shares and other controls on relative wages is a faulty procedure unless the labour supply functions are independent of wages. The problem is reminiscent of the difficulties faced by the labour economists who attempted to uncover the effects of trade liberalisation on relative wages (see Gaston and Nelson, 2000). Simple economic intuition suggests that the immigrant labour force share is endogenous.

To make the endogeneity issue transparent, consider a simple 2-equation model:

$w_j = \gamma_\lambda \lambda_j + \beta_X X_j + v_j$ and $\lambda_j = \gamma_w w_j + \beta_R R_j + v_j$, where X and R are (exogenous) scalars and all variables are expressed in deviations from their means. As before, j indexes a local labour market. The sign of the OLS bias is given by:

$$\text{plim } \gamma_\lambda^{OLS} - \gamma_\lambda = \left[\frac{\sigma_X^2}{\sigma_X^2 \sigma_w^2 - \sigma_{X\lambda}^2} \right] \cdot \left[\frac{\gamma_w \sigma_v^2 + \sigma_{vv}}{1 - \gamma_w \gamma_\lambda} \right]. \quad (18)$$

It is not possible to argue a priori that the sign of the bias is either positive or negative. For illustration, suppose $\sigma_{X\lambda}^2 = \sigma_{vv}^2 = 0$ and that $\gamma_w > 0$ (i.e. higher relative wages are associated with higher relative supply). If the “true” effect of a higher migrant share of unskilled workers is to depress unskilled wages, i.e. $\gamma_\lambda < 0$, then the bias is positive. That is, a failure to account for endogeneity will bias upward (i.e. toward zero) estimates of the impact of immigrants on wages.

However, note that if we are estimating some variant of equation (17) that, strictly speaking, our focus is on wage inequality. Furthermore, in many of the early studies in this literature, λ is simply taken to be the share of migrant labour in market j . Under this interpretation, it is no longer obvious that $\gamma_w > 0$. Models of immigrant worker self-selection, based on the pioneering work of Roy (1951), are extremely illuminating here.

Workers with high earnings potential are likely to migrate from a country with an egalitarian wage structure (where they cannot easily make high earnings), while workers with low earnings potential are especially likely to migrate from a country with great wage inequality. In terms of source country characteristics, equality of the income distribution encourages what is termed “positive selection bias”.³¹ Negative selection bias results when source countries have unequal income distributions and therefore migrants are likely to be the least skilled.³² Recent waves to the United States tend to have been increasingly drawn from the latter group (Borjas, 1994). Immigrants are mobile, but they have tended to cluster in cities where their fellow countrymen reside. The clustering effects tend to dominate such economic incentives as differences in unemployment rates or welfare benefits across areas (Bartel, 1989; Bartel and Koch, 1991). The effects of clustering are borne by the gateway cities, while the geographic concentration tends to reduce economic progress and the rate of assimilation. Of importance for the present discussion is that, given that the primary adverse wage impact of new immigrants is upon previous generations of migrants, the clustering effect may imply $\gamma_w < 0$. If the effect of clustering is sufficiently strong, then it is possible that OLS estimates are biased downwards, and not upwards.³³ Friedberg’s (1997) findings are

³¹In fact, a point often overlooked is that host country labour market conditions are absolutely central to the migration decision. For example, Hanson and Spilimbergo (1999a) found that attempted illegal immigration from Mexico is *extremely* sensitive to changes in real wages in Mexico.

³²Interestingly, increasingly negative self selection produces labour market outcomes in both the source and host countries similar to the picture of the effects of outsourcing on wage inequality painted by Feenstra and Hanson (1996a, 1996b). That is, if workers emigrating from Mexico are relatively high skilled from Mexico’s viewpoint and unskilled from the United States’ viewpoint, then wage inequality tends to rise in both countries.

³³Friedberg and Hunt (1995) make a related criticism of Goldin’s (1994) findings. Using data for 1890 to 1923, Goldin found a significant negative correlation between the percentage of foreign-born residents and wages in U.S. cities. However, this may be a ‘composition’ effect, i.e., if immigrants earn lower wages than natives, then even if immigrants

consistent with this line of argument. She studies the impact of Russian migration on occupational wages in Israel and finds that IV estimates are higher than OLS estimates. That is, rather than immigrants choosing occupations based on them offering higher wages, she finds evidence of occupational immobility (so that $\gamma_w < 0$). That is, immigrants, irrespective of their skill levels are confined, initially at least, to low-paying occupations. Hence, OLS estimates overstate the impact of immigrants on wages.

Handling the endogeneity problem is the motivation for the use of the instrumental variables (IV) approach (e.g., Altonji and Card, 1991 and Friedberg, 1997) and the quasi-experimental approach in the labour literature (e.g., Card, 1990 and Hunt, 1992). Altonji and Card (1991) investigate the impact of immigrants on low-skilled native workers. They relate changes in the earnings and employment of low-skilled natives across cities to changes in the migrant population. As discussed, the problem is that the immigrant flows are likely to be correlated with current labour market conditions. Hence, Altonji and Card instrument the change in immigrants with the size of the immigrant enclave in an earlier period. They argue that the size of the immigrant enclave in the past is likely to affect immigrant flows but is not necessarily correlated with current demand shocks. In other words, the IV approach attempts to use only the variation in immigrant flows associated with variation in enclave “pull” and not that associated with current demand shocks. Interestingly, Altonji and Card’s estimate of γ_λ is one of the most negative. Notwithstanding, they conclude that immigrants and natives face little competition from one another. They find that there is some industry displacement from low-wage immigrant intensive industries -- but still, the implied elasticities are small.³⁴ Despite

have *no* effect on native wages, they tend to be clustered into cities with lower average wages.

³⁴Friedberg and Hunt (1995) note that Altonji and Card’s “large and negative” estimates imply that a 10 percent increase in the percentage of foreign-born in a local labour

these mobility effects, the effects on employment and unemployment rates are virtually zero.

Due to the substantial difficulties associated with choosing “good” instruments (e.g., see Nelson and Startz, 1990; Bound, Jaeger and Baker, 1995), considerably more weight in this branch of the literature has been attached to the results of the quasi- or natural experiments. Natural experiments occur when exogenous variation in independent (explanatory) variables (that determine “treatment assignment”) is created by either abrupt exogenous shocks to labour markets (Meyer 1995). Natural experiments are most useful in situations in which estimates are ordinarily biased because of endogenous variables due to omitted variables or to sample selection.

Shocks can arise due to institutional quirks (e.g., Vietnam-era draft lotteries) or due to exogenous policy changes that affect some groups but not other groups (e.g., changes in policies in some states but not others). In the latter case, Hanson and Spilimbergo (1999b) examine how enforcement of the U.S.-Mexico border is affected by changes in illegal immigration. They find that the equilibrium level of border enforcement varies inversely with relative demand shocks (and consequently, demand for undocumented labour). In other words, the authorities relax border enforcement when the demand for undocumented workers is high.

At the very heart of the quasi-experimental approach to the immigration and labour market literature, however, are the non-policy and non-institutional shocks that can be considered truly exogenous to existing labour market conditions in the destination country (e.g., Baby Boom, Black Death, Mariel boatlift). Without doubt, the most cited papers are by Card (1990) who examines the Mariel boatlift on Miami’s labour market and Hunt (1992) who

market implies a minuscule 0.86 percent reduction in wages.

examines the impact on wage differentials in France in 1968 of the influx of *pied noirs* from Algeria during the early 1960s. In both cases, there were indiscernible effects on the wages of native workers.³⁵

Although subject to varying interpretations, the finding of small local labour market effects has been remarkably robust. LaLonde and Topel (1991) estimate the elasticities of complementarity between immigrants and natives and between new immigrants and older cohorts of immigrants and find both to be very small. Taken in conjunction with their analysis of wages and earnings changes in local labour markets, they conclude that the wage effects of immigration are “quantitatively unimportant”. Based on studies currently in print at the time that we write this paper, it appears to us, that such a conclusion is inescapable.

One would expect that in the face of such a huge mountain of evidence that this would be the end of the story. Of course, casual observation reveals that the debate is far from having run its course. The attention of those keen on identifying large native labour market impacts of immigration have turned to explaining what the small statistical effect “really means”. One explanation has highlighted the possibility that immigrants locate to areas where jobs are expanding anyway.³⁶ Another is that the internal migration by natives offsets the increased supply of immigrants (Filer, 1992; Borjas, 1994; Borjas *et al* 1997). The insignificant wage effects may simply be the result of factor price equalisation across U.S. regions (see the next section). In the case of the “outwards native migration” argument, the

³⁵Carrington and deLima (1995) study the return of Portuguese colonialists from Africa and fail to find significant adverse wage effects across the provinces of Portugal.

³⁶Once again, the issue is the econometric one of handling the possibility of endogeneity. If immigrants choose their destination locations or occupations based on wage growth and the growth of job opportunities, rather on wage levels, then controlling for the endogeneity problem appropriately would require the use of panel data.

punch-line is that the small local labour market effects conceal, and may considerably understate, the negative impact of migrants on native workers. In the latter case, at least, this is now thought not to be the case. Card (2000) finds that the inter-city migration decisions of natives and older immigrants are largely unaffected by inflows of new immigrants. Moreover, Card and DiNardo (2000) find no evidence of selective out-migration by natives in response to immigrant inflows at particular locations.

Another possible reason for the insignificant cross-sectional impacts of immigration on wages relates to our discussion of dimensionality and margins of adjustment. Recall from figure 2 that the industrial composition of output may change without factor price effects. Hanson and Slaughter (1999) document the rapid growth in apparel, textiles, food products and other labour-intensive industries in California after the arrival of Mexican migrants. They focus on state-specific endowment shocks and state-specific wage responses. They show that the state output-mix changes broadly match state endowment changes and that variation in state unit factor requirements is consistent with factor price equalisation across states. States absorb regional endowment shocks through mechanisms other than changes in regional relative factor price changes. This is consistent with the findings of Blanchard and Katz (1991) which indicate that wages and income per capita converge for American states. However, Blanchard and Katz also find that employment performance diverges, i.e., shocks to employment grow and persist.³⁷ Overall, this is consistent with the view that small local labour market effects may be consistent with somewhat larger aggregate labour market effects.

³⁷Decressin and Fatás (1995) have similar findings for the regions of Europe. However, they show that changes in labour force participation rates bear proportionately more of the burden of adjustment in response to labour market disturbances.

The broad conclusion from the first large NBER project on immigration and trade was that immigration had a relatively smaller area impact than increased import penetration on native labour. Overall, the labour market was thought to easily adjust to migrant inflows, absorbing immigrants with little redistributive losses to natives (see Abowd and Freeman, 1991). This conclusion was largely, and somewhat surprisingly, reversed by the second NBER project (Borjas and Freeman, 1992). While the wage and employment effects for natives in local labour markets are small, it does seem clear that certain groups of workers have been adversely affected by immigration. The augmented factor supplies of less-skilled workers, due to either the effect of trade with low-income countries or from the immigration of workers from developing countries, were thought to have contributed to the poor outcomes of less-educated American workers during the 1980s and early 1990s.

Such a conclusion seems an overly confident one to reach. Given the sheer size of the U.S. labour market and the quantity of unskilled labour, more broadly defined, it is unlikely that immigration (or trade) would have contributed to the overall increase in wage inequality observed in the United States during that particular period. On the other hand, as Rodrik (1998) notes, there may have been a fundamental change in the underlying demand for unskilled labour that is attributable to the increased availability of unskilled, migrant labour. As argued by Gaston and Nelson (2000), it may be the case that trade and immigration engender institutional responses that do leave some types of unskilled labour more vulnerable to economic shocks than others. We explore this theme below.

III. How Trade Economists Have Evaluated the Effects of Immigration³⁸

We have already noted, in section I, that the essential difference between the labour theoretic model and the trade theoretic model, as frameworks for evaluating results like those reported in section II, lies in dimensionality. The one final-output sector model preferred by labour economists for the strong identifying restrictions that it generates for empirical work drives all adjustment to increased supply of factors through factor-price, while the multiple final-output sector model preferred by trade economists embodies output mix adjustment, as well as factor-price adjustment. In the extreme case of the HOS model, all adjustment occurs on the output-mix margin. The essential purpose of the HOS model, for our purposes here, is precisely that it throws the output-mix adducement mechanism into high relief. In this section we discuss the way the relationship between immigration and factor-market outcomes of natives and immigrants are affected by the structure of the model used to evaluate that change. We will consider: undistorted neoclassical models under various assumptions about dimensionality (a.k.a. dimensional generalizations of the HOS model); specific assumptions about product-market microstructure (non-traded goods and intermediate goods); specific assumptions about labour-market microstructure (specific factors, minimum wages, insiders and outsiders, efficiency wage); and increasing returns to scale/geography models. However, before turning to these various interpretive frameworks, we briefly review the small body of empirical work that has sought to explicitly incorporate international trade in goods along with international

³⁸Useful general surveys of the relationship between trade and immigration can be found in Ethier (1986, 1996), Wong (1995), Razin and Sadka (1997), and Venables (1999). In our focus on labour market effects in OECD countries we will be ignoring two important bodies of research that focus on immigration and trade in developing countries: the literatures focusing on emigration in the context of homogeneous labour (e.g. Kenen, 1971; Rivera-Batiz, 1982a; Djajic, 1986) and heterogeneous labour (e.g. Bhagwati and Rodriguez, 1975; Bhagwati and Wilson, 1989; Miyagiwa, 1991; Wong, 1997).

migration.

A. The Empirical Link between Trade and Immigration, and Its Implications

The simplest approach to examining the effects of trade and immigration takes an agnostic position on the nature of the relationship between trade and immigration, and simply includes variables measuring both in a wage equation.³⁹ Freeman and Katz (1991) estimate regressions of both hourly wage and annual hours on measures of change domestic demand, foreign demand, imports, and immigration (both stock and change), as well as a number of controls, on a cross-industry data set.⁴⁰ Changes in imports and immigration are negatively related to hourly wages and positively related to annual hours. However, the authors suggest that these regressions generate suspiciously large effects of immigration, leading to an argument that they are picking up the tendency of immigrants to move into low- and declining- wage industries (pg.246).⁴¹ This explanation is consistent with the standard trade theoretic model, due to Mundell (1957), in which trade and factor mobility are substitutes. That is, sectors facing increasing competition from low wage (unskilled intensive) countries can slow the rate at which they decline by importing low wage labour directly.⁴²

³⁹Borjas, Freeman and Katz (1992, 1997) simulate a partial equilibrium labour market model in which an inelastic labour supply is shifted by a direct immigration shock and an indirect labour import shock calculated via the factor contents of commodity trade. Even in this framework, which is adopted to maximize the labour market effects of globalisation, the authors conclude (BFK, 1997, pg. 66): “The bottom line from our simulations is that the economic impact of immigration is mainly redistributive and primarily affects a small group of the least educated U.S. native workers”.

⁴⁰These changes are calculated for 1958-1984. As a control, the authors also estimate these models on CPS data, with essentially the same result.

⁴¹This tendency is observed directly in a wide variety of research.

⁴²By the logic of the Rybczynski theorem, as illustrated in figure 2, the import of unskilled labour results in an increase in the output of the unskilled labour-intensive sector and

Similar methodologies have been applied in the cases of Germany and Austria. For the German case, Haisken-DeNew and Zimmermann (1999) use the German Socioeconomic Panel data (SOEP) data to estimate wage regressions on a variety of individual variables and region/sector specific trade deficit and foreigner share variables, in a random effects panel model for 1984-1992. In addition to carrying out the analysis on the sample of all workers, they also segment the sample by skill (under both job title and years experience definitions), by blue v. white collar. In all cases, they find that trade is negatively related to wage, and immigration (in all cases but one) positively related to wage.⁴³ The first finding parallels that of Freeman and Katz, while the second is directly contradictory. Because the immigration results are generally larger, and more precisely estimated for high-skilled workers, the authors conclude that this is suggestive of complementarity between immigrants and high skilled workers. Consistent with Freeman and Katz' suggestion of a substitutive relationship between trade and immigration, however, is Haisken-DeNew and Zimmermann's finding that import-competing sectors employ a larger share of immigrant workers. Winter-Ebmer and Zweimuller (1999a) examine trade and immigration in a cross-section of Austrian workers, finding that immigration increases unemployment duration by a small amount, but has no statistically significant effect of probability of unemployment. In addition, they find no effect of trade on probability of unemployment or unemployment duration. In a related study of young workers, Winter-Ebmer and Zweimuller (1999b) find exports negatively related to

a fall in the output of the skilled labour-intensive sector. Even if the relative endowment of skilled labour is rising as a result of domestic human capital accumulation, possibly driven by increased international competition, an increasingly unskilled labour-abundant immigration will slow down the rate of decline of the unskilled labour-intensive sector.

⁴³The one exception is a statistically significant negative relationship between number of immigrants in a region/industry and the wages of low-skilled, white collar workers, where skill is defined by level of experience.

unemployment (though exports to the CEEC are positively related), imports having no significant effect (though those from the CEEC have a negative effect), regional stock of immigrants makes unemployment more likely, but immigrants in the sector make it less likely. Again, these effects are generally small. Finally, Winter-Ebmer and Zimmermann (1999) present results, for both Austria and Germany, for changes in overall employment growth, native employment growth, and wage growth, as a function of changes in exports (to CEEC and rest of world), imports, and foreign share. In the Austrian case, immigration has essentially no effect on overall employment growth, and only small negative effects on native employment growth and wage growth. Imports also generally have a negative relationship to employment growth, with imports from the CEEC having a generally larger negative effect. For the German case there is evidence that overall immigration has a small negative effect on native employment growth and a small positive effect on wage growth, while immigration from Eastern Europe has a rather strong effect on native employment growth and a sizable positive effect on wage growth. The effects of growth in imports and exports are uniformly small, mostly insignificant, and perversely signed. Overall, these results are consistent with results reported above that immigration effects are small, even taking into account interactions with international trade.

The results reported to this point take an essentially ad hoc approach to evaluating the effects of globalisation on labour market outcomes. An alternative approach extends the production theoretic approach to the simultaneous existence of trade in goods and factors. Following original work by Burgess (1974), empirical trade economists have exploited duality theory to estimate comparative static effects of trade by treating trade as a direct argument in

a GNP function.⁴⁴ The marriage of this approach to trade modeling to the production theoretic modeling of immigration seems obvious, but has only rarely been done. Wong (1988) works with an indirect trade utility function which is, itself, a function of the GNP function.⁴⁵ This function is estimated, in translog form, on prices for home produced durable goods, home produced nondurable goods and services, and imported goods and services, and endowments of capital, land, and labour, for a number of years between 1948 and 1983. Foreign capital and labour are taken to be perfect substitutes for the domestic factors, so the comparative statics on the indirect utility function can be used to generate the relevant elasticities. These elasticities are all small. At least as interesting, Wong finds that trade and immigration are complements, unlike the results we have discussed to this point which suggest that they are substitutes. Kohli (1993, 1999) develops this sort of analysis in considerably greater detail. Specifically, using annual Swiss data from 1950-1986, Kohli (1999) estimates the translog cost function associated with the primal GNP function and a z vector containing capital, home labour, immigrant labour, and imports.⁴⁶ Thus, where Wong treats home and

⁴⁴The underlying idea is to treat trade as an input to final GNP under the argument that virtually all goods in trade must be processed further for final sale. See Kohli (1991) for an excellent development of the theory, econometrics, and results from this research.

⁴⁵Letting p , z , and b be the parametric price vector, endowment vector, and trade balance, the indirect trade utility function is defined as:

$$H(p, z, b) := \max_y \left\{ u(y) \mid p \cdot y \leq G(p, z) - b \right\} \equiv V(p; G(p, z) - b),$$

where $G(\cdot)$ is a standard GNP function and $V(\cdot)$ is the indirect utility function of the representative consumer.

⁴⁶Kohli (1993) directly estimates a symmetric normalized quadratic GNP function on the same Swiss data. The results are broadly the same, increased immigration reduces home wage, but only weakly; and trade and immigration are found to be complements.

immigrant labour as perfect substitutes, Kohli is able to test this relationship. In fact, Kohli finds that home and immigrant labour are both Allen-Uzawa and Hicks q - substitutes, though not perfect substitutes. Commodity imports and immigrant labour are found to be both Allen-Uzawa and Hicks q - complements.⁴⁷ Once again, the magnitude of the estimated effect of immigration on native wages is negative, but quite small. However, Kohli simulates a short-run model in which the wage is downward inflexible, and finds the effect on home labour displacement to be large.

The final body of work that seeks to evaluate the effect of immigration in a context that incorporates trade in an explicitly Heckscher-Ohlin framework. An early contribution by Horiba and Kirkpatrick (1983) examined direct and indirect (i.e. trade embodied) flows of labour between the North and South United States in 1965-1970, finding that endowment convergence was relatively small, though in the right direction (i.e. labour and labour-intensive products are Southern exports), while the indirect labour flows were considerably larger and seemed to be doing most of the work in equalizing factor prices between regions. More recently, Horiba (2000) finds essentially the same results for 1975-1980. In particular, this work again finds that, migration and trade flows are consistent with the underlying trade model, the migration channel involves relatively small adjustment while the indirect trade in factors is considerably larger. These results are closely related to a growing body of trade research whose results suggest that the HO model, under various plausible extensions of the model (e.g. the presence of trading costs or Hicks neutral international differences in technology) and generalization of the Rybczynski theorem, does a reasonably good job of accounting for production patterns, and research on growth which fails to find a link between

⁴⁷Interestingly, imports and capital are Allen-Uzawa substitutes, but Hicks q -complements.

migration and convergence.⁴⁸

Related to this work is a pair of important papers by Hanson and Slaughter (2000) and Gandal, Hanson, and Slaughter (2000), the first dealing with the US the second with Israel. These papers are based on a clever accounting decomposition that seeks to identify the contributions of output-mix change and technological change in adjusting to endowment shocks. In the US case, Hanson and Slaughter (2000) present results consistent with productivity-adjusted factor-price equalization across states and, further, present evidence suggesting that states have absorbed changes in labour endowments primarily via skill-biased technological change which is common across all states and, secondarily, via changes in output mix. That there should be evidence of output-mix adjustment in a period of rapid and substantial technological change strikes us as important, especially considering Horiba's findings for a technologically less dynamic period. However, such evidence does not exist in the Israel case, where Gandal, Hanson, and Slaughter (2000) find that global changes in technology were (more than) sufficient to absorb the huge, relatively skilled influx of immigrants from Russia. In addition to the finding that output-mix adjustment was playing a role, there are two important implications of this work for the discussion to follow. First, there is some suggestion that, at least among relatively developed economies, the assumption of a common technology across countries may be less of a distortion than assuming a common technology across a finite period of time (at least during a technologically dynamic period). Second, while appropriately constructed comparative static analysis will identify important

⁴⁸On the subject of the endowment-output link, and the ways results vary in moving from inter-regional to international environments, see: Davis, Weinstein, Bradford, and Shimo (1997); Davis and Weinstein (1997); Bernstein and Weinstein (1998); and Kim (1999). For the lack of a relationship between migration and convergence, see Barro and Sala-i-Martin (1991) and related work by Kim (1998) suggesting an important role for industrial structure, as well as technological change, in accounting for convergence.

forces operating at the level of the economy as a whole, dynamic forces that are not incorporated in the analysis might well overwhelm the static forces.⁴⁹ On the other hand, since these forces are both less well understood and less controllable, their relevance for policy analysis is very unclear.

Before turning to a discussion of theoretical models that might be used to evaluate the various econometric results we have discussed to this point, we briefly note a number of papers that have focused primarily on the issue of whether trade and immigration are substitutes or complements. This is an issue of some importance in evaluating theoretical frameworks, and we have already seen that there is some evidence on both sides, though the systematic evidence to this point seems to favour a complementary relationship, though here we must be careful about our meaning of “complement”.⁵⁰ In Kohli’s (1993, 1999) work, cited above, he used the standard production theoretic definitions and found trade and immigration to be complements under both the Allen-Uzawa and Hicks definitions. On the other hand, Horiba’s work suggests a substitutive relationship defined by movements that have the same effect on factor prices—direct and indirect mobility of the sort identified move two economies toward factor-price equalization. This is essentially Mundell’s (1957) definition of substitutes for the trade/ factor-mobility relationship. The primary tool used in this literature has been the gravity model, which has a long history of application in the study of both trade and migration separately, and has recently been used to study the relationship between the two. Thus, Molle and van Mourik (1988) estimate a gravity model, on country pairs, in which

⁴⁹In addition to technological change, we would also consider factor accumulation to be a dynamic force of considerable significance. It should probably be noted, as Hanson and Slaughter do, that capital accumulation may be playing a large role as well.

⁵⁰Wong (1986, appendix A) provides a useful survey the various notions of substitutability/complementarity between factor mobility and trade.

the dependent variable is migration and, in addition to the standard regressors in gravity equations, various measures of trade intensity were included, and find a statistically significant, positive effect of trade on immigration. Similarly, a number of studies have examined the effect of immigration on trade in a gravity framework, uniformly finding the relationship to be positive (Gould, 1994; Head and Ries, 1998; Head, Ries, and Wagner, 1998; Helliwell, 1997; Dunlevy and Hutchinson, 1999). While these results may suggest a complementary relationship, the bilateral data used in these analyses do not really get at the same question as that posed at the beginning of the paragraph.⁵¹ A recent paper by Collins, O'Rourke, and Williamson (1999) directly tests for a relationship between trade and migration using data on individual countries and in a panel for 1870-1936. They find no evidence of substitution and find evidence of complementarity in a number of cases.

As with the research in the labour econometric tradition, we consistently find evidence that immigration has had no significant labour market effects in industrial countries, except on other immigrants of similar vintage and origin, and on the very least skilled of native workers. We have also found mixed evidence suggesting that trade and immigration are complements in the production theoretic sense, though possibly substitutes in the Mundellian factor-price equalization sense. We now turn to a brief overview of trade theoretic models that might be used to interpret these results.

⁵¹In fairness, with the exception of Molle and van Mourik (1988), this work is primarily trying to identify the presence of network factors in shaping patterns of trade. Thus, the presence of a positive relationship in these regressions is taken as evidence of such network factors. This work is more closely related to the work of Rauch (1999) than to standard models of trade and migration.

B. Trade Theory as a Guide to Interpreting Empirical Results

We have already noted that the HOS interpretation of the general finding of very small measurable effects of immigration on labour market outcomes rests delicately on the HOS assumption structure. In particular, as Jones and Scheinkman (1977) argue, the 2×2 structure of the HOS model is special for at least two reasons: 2 is a small number; and the number of factors ($m = 2$) is the same as the number of goods ($n = 2$). In the next section we briefly reprise the analysis of Jones and Scheinkman with a focus on the factor-price insensitivity theorem that is the key to the basic comparative static analysis of immigration. We then turn to product market issues that are relevant to evaluating the empirical work—the presence of nontraded goods and intermediate goods. Next we consider a topic of considerable importance in building a link between labour and trade research—labour market microstructure. Finally, we briefly discuss current research on increasing returns and agglomeration. In all of this research, the only essential difference between labour mobility and capital mobility is that labour consumes in the country where it produces and capital does not.⁵² The differences become considerably greater when we introduce policy distortions, but these carry us beyond the limits of this paper.⁵³

⁵²In the small comparative static literature on temporary migration, even this difference disappears.

⁵³The two policy distortions that have received the most attention in the general equilibrium analysis of immigration are enforcement activities related to illegal immigration and various aspects of immigration in the context of government transfer policies. The former literature was initiated by Ethier (1986b; also see Bond and Chen, 1987), while the latter is a mainstay of public economics research (e.g. Wildasin, 1991, 1994; Myers and Papageorgiou, 2000; and Bruckner, 2000). Both of these have also been used as the basis of political economy models, which are also outside the scope of this paper.

1. Immigration in the Open, Neoclassical Model: Dimensionality

For the general case of m factors used to produce n final goods, according to production functions which are linear homogeneous, strictly quasi-concave, and twice differentiable, we can represent the technology with the $m \times n$ matrix $A = [a_{ij}]$ and the equilibrium by the system of full-employment and zero-profit conditions:⁵⁴

$$\begin{aligned} Ay &= z \\ A'w &= p. \end{aligned} \tag{19}$$

Differentiating this system yields:

$$\begin{aligned} \sum_{k \in I} s_{ik} dw_k + \sum_{j \in J} a_{ij} dy_j &= dz_i, \forall i \in I; \\ \sum_{i \in I} a_{ij} dw_i &= dp_j, \forall j \in J, \end{aligned} \tag{20}$$

where we have used the fact that $da_{ij} = \sum_{k \in I} \frac{\partial a_{ij}(\mathbf{w})}{\partial w_k} dw_k$, and $s_{ik} := \sum_{j \in J} y_j \frac{\partial a_{ij}(\mathbf{w})}{\partial w_k}$, to substitute for $\sum_{j \in J} y_j da_{ij}$ in the first equation; and $\sum_{i \in I} w_i da_{ij} = 0$, by cost minimization, in the second.⁵⁵ In matrix form (20) is:

$$\begin{bmatrix} S & A \\ A' & 0 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} d\mathbf{w} \\ d\mathbf{y} \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} dz \\ dp \end{bmatrix}. \tag{21}$$

Now, if we denote the first partitioned matrix $B := \begin{bmatrix} S & A \\ A' & 0 \end{bmatrix}$, and its inverse $B^{-1} := \begin{bmatrix} K & G \\ G' & L \end{bmatrix}$, the comparative static in which we are primarily interested is contained in

⁵⁴The j 'th column of the A matrix gives the technology in use in the j 'th sector. Recall that the a_{ij} are derived from cost minimization and are, unique, homogeneous of degree zero, functions of \mathbf{w} : $a_{ij}(\mathbf{w})$. The analysis sketched in this paragraph is drawn directly from the appendix to Jones and Scheinkman (1977).

⁵⁵Note that s_{ik} shows how economy-wide demand for factor i changes in response to an increase in w_k . In proportional changes this is the economywide elasticity $\sigma_{ik} = \frac{(w_k s_{ik})}{z_i}$.

$$\begin{bmatrix} dw \\ dy \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} K & G \\ G' & L \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} dz \\ dp \end{bmatrix}. \quad (22)$$

The submatrix K gives us the effect of a change in the endowment vector on the wage vector.

The initial result of interest can be had by considering:

$$BB' = \begin{bmatrix} S & A \\ A' & 0 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} K & G \\ G' & L \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} I & 0 \\ 0 & I \end{bmatrix}. \quad (23)$$

Note that $A'K = KA = 0$. Thus, all vectors of endowment changes which are linear combinations of the columns of A leave factor prices unchanged (Jones and Scheinkman, 1977, pg. 927). Recall that the j 'th column of A gives the technique in use in sector j . Together, the optimal input vectors described by the columns define a cone in input space. When each of these vectors is unique, A has rank $m = n$, and the cone is non-degenerate. As long as the new endowment remains in the interior of that cone, i.e. $m = n$ before and after a change in the endowment vector, such an endowment change will have no effect on factor prices as changes in output-mix will suffice to absorb the change.⁵⁶ This generalizes both the result and the economic logic of the factor-price insensitivity theorem sketched in section I.⁵⁷

When there are more goods than factors, $m < n$, factor-price insensitivity continues to be the expected outcome. In this case, m of the n technologies will define a non-degenerate

⁵⁶The notion of technology in uses requires that each of the n sectors applies a distinct technique. Thus, another way of saying this is that the rank of K is $m - n$, so when $m = n$, K is the zero matrix.

⁵⁷There is a sizable literature relating to Mundell's (1957) analysis of the extent to which factor mobility can substitute for commodity mobility, the reverse of Samuelson's factor-price equalization question (Markusen, 1983; Wong, 1986; Ethier and Svensson, 1986). Ethier (1996) provides a nice overview. While these results are an important addition to the literature on factor-price equalization, their relationship to factor-price insensitivity (the single-country result) is weak. As a result, we do not pursue these results here.

cone in m -dimensional factor-space. As in the $m = n$ case, the endowment cannot change so much that the new endowment falls outside the initial cone of diversification, implying that some commodities cease production. Subject to that caveat, however, factor-price insensitivity continues to hold in the $m < n$ case.

When there are more factors than goods, $m > n$, the situation is very different. There are now insufficient distinct technologies in use to create a non-degenerate cone in the m -dimensional input-space. It is still possible to find changes in the endowment vector that fall within the cone, and thus satisfy factor-price insensitivity, but they are in the nature of very special changes. This is easily illustrated in figure 1, where there is a 2-factor \times 1-good economy. The (degenerate) cone is the ray through the initial endowment point and any change in endowment that falls on this line will satisfy factor-price insensitivity, but any other pattern of change will result in a change in ω . Thus, when $m > n$ a change in the endowment will generally produce a change in the endowment vector.

Perhaps not surprisingly, since there is really nothing to say in the perfectly competitive, $m \leq n$ case, there has been some analysis of the labour market effects of immigration in the $m > n$ case. A particularly popular model in this regard has been the 3-factor \times 2-good model. Ruffin (1981) extends the “friends and enemies” language of Jones and Scheinkman (1977), to include: factors i and k are friends if $\frac{\partial w_i}{\partial z_k} > 0$ and enemies if $\frac{\partial w_i}{\partial z_k} < 0$. For the general $m > n$ case, Ruffin uses Samuelson’s reciprocity relationship, to show that friendship is reciprocal (i.e. if i is a friend to k , the k is a friend to i); and that every factor has a friend. For the 3-factor \times 2-good case, Ruffin then shows that, without loss of generality, there is always an assignment of labels to factors such that, for $I = \{1,2,3\}$ and $J = \{1,2\}$:

$$\frac{a_{11}}{a_{12}} \geq \frac{a_{21}}{a_{22}} \geq \frac{a_{31}}{a_{32}}, \quad (24)$$

and the weak inequalities can be replaced by strict inequalities if no two factors are used in the same proportions across sectors. In the case of strict inequalities, Ruffin refers to factors 1 and 3 as *extreme* factors, and 2 as the *middle* factor—as a result, in the case of strict inequalities, Ruffin refers to (24) as the factor extremity condition. Under this condition, Ruffin proves:

Theorem: If there are three factors and two goods produced in a competitive, small open economy operating under constant returns to scale, an increase in the supply of an extreme factor will benefit the middle factor and hurt the other extreme factor.

Thus, under the labeling convention of the factor extremity condition, factors 1 and 3 are enemies to each other and friends to 2, while factor 2 is a friend to both 1 and 3. One of the attractive features of this model is that the result depends only on factor-intensity ranking, and not at all on details of the substitution elasticities.⁵⁸

Thompson and Clark (1983) apply this framework to US data, with $y = \{\text{agriculture, manufacturing}\}$ and $z = \{\text{skilled labour, unskilled labour, capital}\}$, finding capital and skilled labour to be extreme factors, while unskilled labour is the middle factor. Thus, if current immigration in the US raises the endowment of unskilled labour, Ruffin's theorem implies that the wage of unskilled labour should fall and that of skilled labour rise, producing a change in the wage premium of the sort that was observed in the 1980s. Thompson and Clark (1990) extend this analysis to a 4×3 model— $y = \{\text{agriculture, services, manufacturing}\}$ and $z =$

⁵⁸Of course, the substitution elasticities affect the magnitudes. Jones and Easton (1983) is an exceptionally useful development and exposition of this model, with a particular emphasis on the role of economywide elasticities and their conceptualization. Thompson (1983 a,b) and Davies and Wooton (1990) develop the application of this model to migration in some detail. Clark and Thompson (1990) and Davies and Wooton also consider the effect of migration on the source country in this model.

{unskilled labour, semiskilled labour, skilled labour, and capital}—finding unskilled labour a friend to capital and skilled labour, and an enemy to semi-skilled labour. The magnitudes, in both cases, are such as to suggest that the only sizable effects will be that of unskilled labour on itself. These results seem loosely consistent with those reported in both the labour and trade research frameworks we have reported already.⁵⁹

It should be noted that all of the implementations of the $m > n$ model we have mentioned were of the form $m = n + 1$. One might reasonably wonder whether the results applied in this work are sensitive to this particular dimensional assumption. Jones (1985) shows that the answer is yes. Specifically, Jones notes that when $m = n + 2$ (or more) it is no longer possible to identify the qualitative effect of endowment change on factor wage from factor intensity. It is now necessary to have specific knowledge of factor substitutability as well.⁶⁰

We have spent considerable time on factor-price insensitivity in the standard HO environment because there seems to be quite a bit of misinterpretation. We start by recalling that the sole relevant difference between the basic frameworks in use by labour and trade economists is dimensionality. First, dimensionality is not nearly so damaging of factor-price insensitivity as it is of factor-price equalization. The former is a one-economy comparative static result, while the second seeks to make a multi-country comparison, requiring both

⁵⁹Clark and Thompson (1986) carry out a similar analysis on Canadian data, but use 5 job categories and capital for a 6×5 model. In that case, all but highest skill category ($L1$: professional, technical, managerial, and administrative) bear the same relationship to capital and $L1$, and to each other: enemies to each other and friend to capital and skilled labour (i.e. $L1$).

⁶⁰Jones then offers a useful result which rules out certain patterns of response of the wage vector to changes in the endowment vector, and which generalizes Ruffin's theorem, given above.

strong assumptions about internationally common technology and global univalence to make the comparisons. While Hanson and Slaughter's work suggests that technological change within a country may interfere with inference in periods of large-scale technological change, the multi-good framework seems quite appropriate as the basis of but-for analyses of immigration shock. Second, contrary to some of the assertions by both trade and labour economists, it does not seem to us that the choice between $m \leq n$ and $m > n$, as interpretive frameworks, should rest on whether or not the framework generates income distribution effects from immigration.⁶¹ Given the very weak evidence in favor such income distribution effects, this seems doubtful in any event. But it seems that, on any but fairly short-term interpretations of the concepts of commodity and factor, there are massively more commodities than factors, and in this case the *logic* of factor-price insensitivity holds quite straightforwardly.⁶² Note that we are not arguing that factor-price insensitivity actually obtains, but that, within the parameters that are commonly agreed in the basic labour and trade theoretic traditions, $m \leq n$ seems a more plausible assumption, from which factor-price insensitivity follows. We should generally expect adjustment at the output-mix margin to play a considerable role in responding to factor immigration. If the mechanism breaks down, it must be as a result of deviations from those elements of the basic model that are shared between trade and labour economists, and not on dimensionality. Thus, we now turn to several plausible sources of such deviation.

⁶¹Trade economists like Thompson and Wooton seem to make this argument as the entering wedge of a political economy argument, while labour economists make the argument to shore up the foundations of their estimating framework.

⁶²See Bernstein and Weinstein (1998) for a recent development of the dimensionality argument, and its implications for tests of directions of trade predictions.

2. *Immigration in Economies with Nontraded and Intermediate Goods*

The most obvious place to start looking for deviations from the model developed in the previous section is nontraded goods. It is at least arguable that a substantial portion of any economy, and any OECD economy in particular, is nontraded.⁶³ We begin, as in the previous section with a brief discussion of the effect of nontraded goods on factor-price insensitivity in general, and then consider several specific versions that have been applied to the analysis of immigration. In generalizing the analysis of factor-price insensitivity to the case of nontraded goods, there are at least two important considerations, both related to dimensionality. In the pure generalization of the comparative static analysis, we retain the assumption that factors are not immobile internationally and treat immigration as a comparative static increase in the endowment of some factor. In that case, we want to know whether the dimensionality of the model affects conclusions with respect to the sign of $\frac{\partial w_i}{\partial z_k}$. However, when we turn to nontraded goods, it would seem to be incumbent upon us to be more explicit about factor mobility as well as good mobility. Here we will want to note some results that treat the appropriate generalization in terms of numbers of things (goods and factors) that are traded versus number of things that are not.

Suppose that there are n^T traded goods and n^N nontraded goods, so $n = n^T + n^N$. We start by noting that as long as $m \leq n^T$ the analysis of the previous section is essentially unchanged (Woodland, 1982; section 8.2.6.). That is, as long as there are at least as many traded goods as factors, factor-price insensitivity will continue to obtain, under the same

⁶³It has been suggested, for example, that the following sectors be considered nontraded: government services; retail trade; wholesale trade; personal household services; restaurant services; health services; and construction. While government services should probably be netted out of any empirical analysis as a non-market sector, the remainder would be a sizable share of any economy.

restrictions, and for the same reason, as for the case without nontraded goods.⁶⁴ Note the implication that, from factor-price insensitivity and cost minimization by nontraded good producers, nontraded commodity prices are determined by supply condition alone.⁶⁵ As above, if $m > n^T$ endowment shocks will generally have an effect on wages, but this is not so much a consequence of nontraded goods as it is of the dimensionality of the model. Now suppose, instead, that there are m^T traded factors and m^N nontraded factors, so that $m = m^T + m^N$. Ethier and Svensson (1986, pg. 28) give as a condition for factor-price insensitivity that $n + m^T \geq m$.⁶⁶ That is, the total number of international markets (for goods and internationally mobile factors) must be at least as great as the number of factors. Even reducing this condition to $n^T + m^T \geq m$, it seems to us that this condition is likely to hold, but it also strikes us that this is a considerably more uncertain proposition than that $n \geq m$. Thus, it is probably not surprising that a number of studies emphasize the role of non-traded goods. Before turning to a brief consideration of these, we again note that the essential thing here is not nontraded-ness, but dimensionality.

--figure 3 about here--

⁶⁴Deardorff and Courant (1990) raise the question of the effect of nontraded goods on the size of the cone of diversification, concluding that nontraded goods tend to reduce the size (though, of course, not the dimensionality) of the cone. In the context of factor-price insensitivity, this suggests that nontraded goods narrow the range of endowment shocks that are consistent with factor-price insensitivity, but does not undermine the basic logic. That is, as long as the same traded commodities are produced before and after the endowment shock, the $\partial w_i / \partial z_k$ will be zero. Factor-price insensitivity will hold.

⁶⁵This follows from $P_j = c_j \equiv \sum_{i \in I} a_{ij} w_i$, $\forall j \in J$, including the nontraded goods.

Since the a_{ij} are functions of w , which is unchanged, c_j is unchanged, and, thus, prices of nontraded goods are fixed.

⁶⁶Note that this condition can also be stated as $n \geq m - m^T = m^N$, or when $n^T < n$ to $n^T \geq m^N$. That is, the number of traded goods must be at least as large as the number of nontraded factors, which is the essential condition we have been noting throughout this section.

One approach to generating wage effects from endowment changes is to assume that $m = n$, but $n^N \neq 0$, ensuring that $m > n^T$. Rivera-Batiz (1982b) develops a 2-factor \times 2-good model with one traded good and one nontraded good. The traded good price is locked in by the small country assumption, but the nontraded good price is determined by the interaction of supply and demand conditions in that market. Consider a setup like that in figure 2, with good 1 skilled-labour intensive and good-2 unskilled labour intensive, but now suppose that only good 1 is internationally traded. Once again, we suppose that there is an increase in unskilled labour. Following the logic of the Rybczynski theorem, as illustrated in figure 3, at fixed commodity prices, output of the traded good (1) will fall and output of the nontraded good will expand. Now, however, while the price of the traded good is fixed, the excess supply of the nontraded good at initial prices leads to a fall in its price. This will cause the unit value isoquant for good 2 to shift outward and a new factor-market equilibrium will be established at a lower w_L and a higher w_S . This dependence of factor-return on endowment makes this model a popular framework for the analysis of migration.⁶⁷ It is useful to note, however, that if the world actually looks like figure 3, treating it like figure 1 for simulation purposes will produce an overestimate of the labour market effect because it will not be taking into account the adjustments in both demand and production that go into the determination of the final equilibrium here.⁶⁸

⁶⁷Bond (1993a) presents an alternative approach, emphasizing cone conditions; Kondoh (1999) extends the Rivera-Batiz analysis to consider demand effects based on duration of migrant stay; while Hatzipanayotou (1994) studies the interaction between various types of policy and immigration. This model has been used, in particular, to study welfare effects of migration in a two-country system, with a sending and a receiving country, e.g.: Krauss (1976); Rivera-Batiz (1983); and Rubel (1994). Interesting generalizations to higher dimensions can be found in Neary (1989) and Bond (1993b).

⁶⁸The magnitudes of the new factor wages will depend on both production and demand conditions, but the direction of the changes can be signed unambiguously. For example, in

Kuhn and Wooton (1991) develop an extension of this model to the 3-factor \times 3-good case, with one non-traded good. Let good 1 be the exportable, good 3 the importable, and good 2 the nontraded good. Furthermore, we number factors so that, relative to the two traded good prices, good 1 uses factor 1 intensively, good 2 uses factor 2 intensively, and factor 3 is a middle factor. That is, we have the relationship given in (24). The analysis generates results that are very much like those of Ruffin (1981), referred to above: an increase in the endowment of any factor reduces the return to that factor; the middle factor is a friend to both extreme factors; and both extreme factors are enemies to each other.⁶⁹ The authors then use US data for 1960, 1970, 1980, and 1984 to construct the vectors $z = \{L, S, K\}$ and $y = \{\text{exports, imports, nontraded}\}$, concluding that in nearly every case: skilled labour is the extreme factor in exports; unskilled labour is the extreme factor in imports; and capital is the middle factor (and used intensively in nontraded goods). Thus, given the model structure, the implication is that an increase in the endowment of unskilled labour, via immigration, will tend to reduce the wages of both types of labour and raise the return to capital. The fact that, at this level of aggregation, there is very little evidence of this pattern of effects, might suggest

Jones' θ - λ notation, Rivera-Batiz gives the effect on the return to L as:

$$\hat{w}_L = - \frac{\theta_{ST} \hat{L}}{|\lambda| |\theta| (\sigma_D + \sigma_S)} \quad \text{and} \quad \hat{w}_L - \hat{P}_N = - \frac{\theta_{SN} \hat{L}}{|\lambda| |\theta| (\sigma_D + \sigma_S)},$$

where the θ_{ij} denote factor distributive shares and the λ_{ij} are shares of the endowment of factor i in use in sector j ; the hats denote proportional changes, σ_S is the elasticity of substitution between goods 1 and 2 along the transformation curve, and σ_D is the elasticity of substitution in consumption between good 1 and 2. Since, σ_S and σ_D are both positive, and the determinants $|\lambda|$ and $|\theta|$ have the same sign, and the traded good price is unchanged, these imply a fall in the real wage of L . The equivalent expressions for w_S show a real increase.

⁶⁹This result relies on a pair of “normality” conditions—one a restriction on demand and the other on supply.

that the dimensionality assumption ensuring such effects are not a part of the world we observe.

In closing this section we briefly note that neither the existence of intermediate goods nor of joint production undermines the general logic of factor-price insensitivity. This has been known since the pioneering analysis of McKenzie (1955).⁷⁰ Thus, factor-price insensitivity is a surprisingly robust property of neoclassical/competitive trade models under a variety of assumptions about the production side of the model. If we are looking for plausible deviations, we will probably need to consider labour market microstructure.

3. Immigration and Labour Market Microstructure

4. Increasing Returns, Agglomeration, and Immigration

IV. Conclusions

As we have stressed throughout this paper, the primary division in the literature on the labour market effects of immigration is not empirical. Unlike the related literature on the labour market effects of trade, where there are substantial differences over matters of fact, the impression one gets from the immigration literature is that there is a widely held, and fairly

⁷⁰See Woodland (1982; chapter 5) for an exceptionally clear development of these issues. Chang, Ethier, and Kemp (1980) is also very useful on the issue of joint production. Recently, there has been some discussion of the effect of joint production on the likelihood of factor-price equalization paralleling that discussed in note 65. See, in particular: Samuelson (1992); Jones (1992); and Albert and Kohler (1995).

tight, prior on essentially zero labour market impact.⁷¹ It is also widely agreed that there are sizable negative effects on migrants of the same origin and vintage, and, perhaps not quite so widely held, agreement that the small, and shrinking, group of native high school dropouts experience economically, and statistically, significant negative consequences from contemporary immigration.

To the extent that there is a dispute in the immigration case, it revolves around the framework to be used for evaluating the results of the empirical work, and here the division is very much between labour and trade economists.⁷² We have argued that the sole substantive difference between labour and trade economists relates to the dimensionality of the model used to evaluate the results—with labour economists preferring an m -factor \times 1-final good model and trade economists preferring an $m \times n$ good model (with a modal preference for the 2×2 model). As long as $m \geq 2$ and $n \geq 2$, output-mix adjustment will play a role in adjusting to an immigration shock, and the failure to account for that role will produce overestimates of the wage (or unemployment) effects of any given shock. Furthermore, we have also argued for the fundamental plausibility of the m -factor $\leq n$ -good (or, perhaps even more accurately, the $m^N \leq n^T$) model on essentially *a priori* grounds. If this argument is accepted, there is some presumption that output-mix adjustment fully absorbs the immigration shock. That is, if we are going to use a perfectly competitive baseline for policy evaluation, as revealed preferred by

⁷¹People often talk about a loosely construed “average” opinion on the labour market effects of trade, but this represents a collective prior with very fat tails. The tails in the immigration case (e.g. Borjas, Briggs, Huddle) are visible and aggressive in asserting their opinion, but seem to have very small impact on the aggregate professional opinion.

⁷²It is, in fact, quite striking in the trade and labour markets case, the extent to which heated disputes about interpretation take place between people who share a common model. As one example, see the papers by Leamer, Krugman, Deardorff, and Panagariya in the *Journal of International Economics* symposium (V.50-#1, pp. 17-116).

both labour and trade economists, our presumption should be that, immigration short of that necessary to generate a fundamental shift in production structure has no effect on long-run labour market conditions. Factor-price insensitivity holds.

As a presumption, from which to begin an evaluation of proposed immigration policy, or an evaluation of past immigration policies, this strikes us as the right presumption. And the fact that its key implication, essentially no labour market effect of immigration, is borne out by most empirical work, should strengthen our commitment to this presumption. But it is only a presumption—a point from which we should be willing to be shifted if faced with sufficient evidence in a given case. We have argued that factor-price insensitivity is surprisingly robust to plausible variations on the basic model, but the model is, itself, very simple. There are obviously many relevant facts of economic and social life that are not part of the model, but might well affect our ultimate evaluation of immigration policy. Perhaps the most significant of these relates to short-run adjustment cost. It is now well established that the economic short-run can be chronologically rather a long time, and that these adjustment costs can be substantial.⁷³ We only make two points here. First, these considerations are essentially orthogonal to immigration *per se*. That is, if we are concerned about adjustment costs borne by citizens, whether as a result of trade, immigration, technological change, or anything else, we have tools for dealing with them, and there is no particularly good reason for worrying about the source of worker dislocation. Second, this does not distinguish the labour and trade approaches. Within either framework, using immigration policy as an instrument for dealing

⁷³That adjustment to a local labour shock may take a long time is one of the points that we take from the research on local labour markets that we have already mentioned, e.g.: Blanchard and Katz (1992); Decressin and Fatás (1995); and Topel (1986; 1994 a & b). On the economic effects of worker displacement, see: Topel (1990), Ruhm (1991), Kletzer (1991, 1996), and Jacobson, Lalonde, and Sullivan (1993).

with redistributive concerns is an exercise in (at least) second best.

This leads us to the most difficult question: if immigration is *really* not relevant to the long-run economic life of citizens, why does it occasionally become such a large political issue? In answering this question, it is useful to keep several gross facts about the politics of immigration in mind. First, anti-immigrant sentiment is not a historical constant. For much of human history, relatively large movements of people occurred without particular comment, and often were welcomed by the political authorities (Sassen, 1999).⁷⁴ Nationalism, especially as linked to race, is a relatively recent phenomenon (Gellner, 1983; Hobsbawm, 1993; Jacobson, 1998). However, second, there was quite active anti-immigrant politics in the late-19th and early-20th centuries, in the absence of a large, redistributive state (Higham, 1955). Third, although there is considerable evidence that the contemporary median voter prefers less, or at least no growth in, migration, voters do not generally condition their voting behavior on immigration (Gimpel and Edwards, 1999; chapter 2). What does seem to be true, however, is that general politicization of immigration seems to be associated with economic hard times (Higham, 1955; M.A. Jones, 1992). Finally, by comparison to the politics of international trade, the politics of immigration is primarily public politics. Like immigration, trade occasionally becomes a public issue, but trade is also characterized by very active purely professional politics.⁷⁵ Furthermore, with the exception of California (in the late-19th century and in current times), the public politics of trade have dominated the public politics of

⁷⁴We abstract, of course, from migrations such as those associated with Attila the Hun, William the Conqueror; and the early American colonists.

⁷⁵The equivalent to professional politics of trade, is essentially lobbying on behalf of specific immigrants. That is, the activities of the trade bar and the immigration bar are quite different.

immigration.⁷⁶

In an effort to organize our thoughts about these facts, we begin with a distinction, due to Schattschneider (1960), between democratic politics and group politics. For Schattschneider, *democratic politics* refers to the public politics through which a democratic civil society constitutes itself and through which it is linked to the policy making apparatus. While elections are the final defense of democratic politics, as well as the key stimulus to public discourse, as stressed by theorists of deliberative democracy, the core of democratic politics is the public discourse itself.⁷⁷ Furthermore, the terms of this discourse emphasize public interest and downplay private/individual interest. There is considerable evidence that the public discourse, and its emphasis on some notion of public interest, affects both attitude formation and voting behaviour.⁷⁸ By contrast with democratic politics, *group politics* is explicitly about private interests. Furthermore, where democratic politics are public politics, group politics happen behind closed doors. Where democratic politics are inclusive, group politics is a game played by insiders. Because group politics are solidly rooted in relatively stable interests, they are predictable and they change in predictable ways in response to the, generally marginal, changes in the environment embedding those interests. Democratic politics are not tied down in the same way. While the location of individuals within the terms

⁷⁶Thus, the era of high immigration politics, i.e. the late 19th and early 20th centuries, was both shorter lived and of less overall significance to public politics than international trade. We need only recall that the era of classic tariff politics ran from the end of the Civil War until the onset of the New Deal, during which period the tariff was literally the single most important continuing issue in American politics (see, e.g., Hall, Kao, and Nelson, 1998).

⁷⁷On deliberative democracy, see: Rawls (1993); Habermas (1996; esp. chptrs. 7 and 8); Elster (1998); and Bohman and Rehg (1998). The first two are substantial statements of their authors' distinctive positions, while the latter two are useful collections of essays.

⁷⁸Donald Kinder has been one of the leading scholars of such "sociotropic" politics. For an overview of the issues and evidence, see Kinder and Mebane (1983). Also useful are Markus (1988), Mutz (1992), and Mutz and Mundak (1997).

of the public discourse is certainly not independent of individual interest, not only do the terms of that discourse change, more quickly and on a much greater scale than the terms of group politics change, but individual locations within that discourse (i.e. preferences) change as well.⁷⁹

Before turning to the political economy of immigration, we introduce one further element, also essentially from Schattschneider (1960): organization of the public discourse in terms of a relatively stable issue on which parties are seen to differ.⁸⁰ Consistent with Downs (1957) analysis of rational ignorance, the presence of such an issue serves to reduce the information costs of participation in democratic politics by providing a frame for the public discourse. When new issues emerge in the public discourse, unless they displace the dominant issue, they are evaluated to some extent in terms of that dominant issue. However, the mapping between the dominant issue and the details of the new issue will always be unclear and people will hold their policy evaluations weakly. This leads to what Nelson (1998) has called footloose policy preferences—individual and aggregate preferences subject to radical

⁷⁹One of the central points of the literature on deliberative politics is that the public discourse is transformative—peoples’ opinions change as a result of taking part in democratic politics. This is the basis of the rejection of results like Arrow’s theorem, which characterizes the relevant community in terms of a fixed profile, from within the deliberative politics framework.

⁸⁰This is an essential element of the theory of party systems developed in Schattschneider (1960, chapters 4 and 5). For a more detailed development of the theory of party systems and critical elections, see Burnham (1970). Interestingly, this issue may be in the nature of what Stokes (1963) calls a valence issue, an issue on which essentially the entire electorate agrees, which has the effect of making the party most closely identified with the issue the dominant party. Even if the issue is Downsian, what Stokes calls a choice issue, one party will generally be more closely associated with the median voters most preferred point on that issue, and thus will dominate electoral politics. It is this fact that drives the entrepreneurial search for a new defining issue, reflected in the constant attempt to find and exploit new issues. As Schattschneider explains, this is one of the engines of democratization in a democratic system. It is what renders the public discourse relevant and democracy much more than a figleaf for the system of group politics.

change, possibly without a change in fundamentals. This means that an issue, like immigration, that appears as a major public issue only occasionally, may have very different political meaning at different points in time. On the other hand, when an issue is the subject of long-standing, stable group politics, the terms and alignments of those politics will serve to anchor the public politics in a way that occasional issues cannot be anchored.

So what does all of this have to do with the politics of immigration, and its relationship to the politics of international trade? First, to start with the last of our stylized facts, where trade is the archetypal group issue, immigration is an occasional issue.⁸¹ At least since the end of the Civil War, trade has never been off the group politics agenda in the United States, though it was off the public politics agenda from about 1934 until very recently. As a result, much of the detail of tariff, and then trade more generally, policy has been determined by relatively stable and predictable forces that are quite well captured in standard political economy models. Because trade was a core alignment issue during the era of classic tariff politics, the public politics of trade during that period were also quite stable, much as the public politics of macroeconomic policy were quite stable in the New Deal era.⁸² The reemergence of trade in an era without an ongoing public discourse on trade has already revealed the risks to existing trade policy-making institutions as linkages to environmental and labour issues suggest, and the events in Seattle so vividly illustrate. Even the unruly public politics of international trade, however, remain essentially rooted in the definitions of trade policy and general expectations about gainers and losers that have been held at least since the

⁸¹This is not to say that there is no ongoing group politics on the migration issue, but that this is a very small part of the politics of migration. The great majority of business on immigration has to do with individual cases, not classes of case.

⁸²The transition from the era of classic tariff politics to the modern trade policy system was, of course, a special event and needs to be seen as such (Hall, Kao, and Nelson, 1998).

end of the Second World War. In particular, the alignments of most participants are relatively straightforwardly predictable.

The politics of immigration are dramatically different. Following the establishment of the national origin quotas in the Johnson-Reed Act (1924), immigration essentially disappears as a political issue (democratic or group) for forty years. Interestingly, the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965, which ended the quota system, reflected neither the emergence of new public pressure nor the operation of group politics, but rather derived from its attachment to civil rights issues and, to some extent, to a liberal framing of US international obligations (Gimpel and Edwards, 1999).⁸³ Even the landmark Immigration Reform and Control Act (1986), appears as much as a triumph of a small, intensely interested group (organized primarily around environmental groups) over general disinterest, rather than over other organized interests.⁸⁴ By 1990, however, immigration appeared briefly as if it might be a successful entrepreneurial issue, possibly even part of a realignment.

While the end of the New Deal electoral system has not produced a clear aligning issue, the Republicans have been most successful in attracting significant parts of the New Deal coalition by attacking policies related to race and taxes.⁸⁵ In this regard, immigration, and illegal Mexican immigration in particular, offered a fairly natural extension of an effective

⁸³Note that there certainly was lobbying on the issue. Our point is simply that the driving force for the change in immigration policy was a changed understanding of domestic and international obligations on the part of Congress. The group politics surrounding the 1965 Act were not particularly active and the public politics were minimal.

⁸⁴On the role of environmental groups, see Gimpel and Edwards (1999, chapter 5) and Reimers (1998, chapter 3). The best treatment of the politics of this period is Schuck (1992).

⁸⁵These were essential elements of Richard Nixon's southern strategy and the core of Ronald Reagan's appeal to the "Reagan Democrats". Particularly useful accounts of the general politics of race and taxes can be found in Edsall and Edsall (1991) and Plotkin and Scheuerman (1994).

Republican strategy. As we suggest above, the public is generally not sufficiently interested in immigration to condition its voting behaviour on the issue, but in economic hard times the possibility opens. Thus, in a period of fiscal difficulty in California, Pete Wilson was able to revive a flagging gubernatorial campaign through the aggressive use of a racially charged immigration issue.⁸⁶ Ultimately, however, while there was a brief period of interest in the issue, the race/fiscal policy mix proved unsuccessful even in other states of high migration (Texas and Florida), and today there seems to be little general interest in the issue. At least as telling, is the small impact of supposedly draconian policy changes contained in the post-1986 legislation (Schuck, 1998). Had there been a substantial change in the foundation, or oranzizational basis, of the interests involved in immigrtion policy, we would expect to see substantial change in policy, but the fundamental basis of policy is essentially unchanged from that of 1965.

Thus, the politics of immigration seem to be minimally (at most) about income distribution. Instead, immigration as a public issue appears to be parasitical on broader understandings of the key issues facing the nation. The comparison to the late-19th century is telling in this regard. Immigration was publicly more prominent, stayed on the public agenda longer, and ultimately resulted in considerably more restrictive legislation at a time when there were virtually no fiscal effects of immigration. The politics of the time again had a large component of racial concern (though the races involved were different), but in this case they were tied more to issues of the connection between race and the possibility of democratic governance and/or economic performance (Higham, 1955; Jacobson, 1998).

To conclude, and running directly contrary to the claim running throughout Borjas

⁸⁶On the role of taxes and race in the politics of immigration in the 1990s, see Calavita (1996) and Huber and Espenshade (1997).

(1999b), immigration policy is *not* about distribution. First, there is virtually no evidence of such effects; and second, the actual politics of immigration seem to be only minimally related to income distribution. Perhaps the best evidence of this is that it is exceptionally hard to predict anyone's position on the immigration issue based on the usual predictive dimensions: economic liberals are on both sides of the issue (Bhagwati v. Borjas); social conservatives are on both sides of the issue (Fukuyama v. Buchanan); social liberals are on both sides of the issue (Habermas v. Rawls). None of this suggests that the politics of immigration in the future is likely to be benign. Immigration proportionally on the order of that in the late 19th and early 20th centuries raises difficult questions about the meaning of nation and the possibility of precisely the sort of liberal discourse considered central to democracy by scholars like Schattschneider, Rawls, Walzer, and Habermas.⁸⁷ However, we fail as scholars and as citizens if we seek to force these difficult issues into the box of the politics of material interest, when they manifestly do not belong there.

⁸⁷These are the magnitudes currently being experienced in Europe, or that are expected to be experienced under regimes more open to the east. Thus, it is probably not surprising that immigration politics in Europe are already considerably more heated than in North America. Relative to the political argument developed above, it is also important that several European countries have a long history of defining citizenship in terms of race (*Jus Sanguinis*), thus creating the sort of basis for large-scale, ongoing politicization of immigration that is not, at present, a part of the North American political scene.

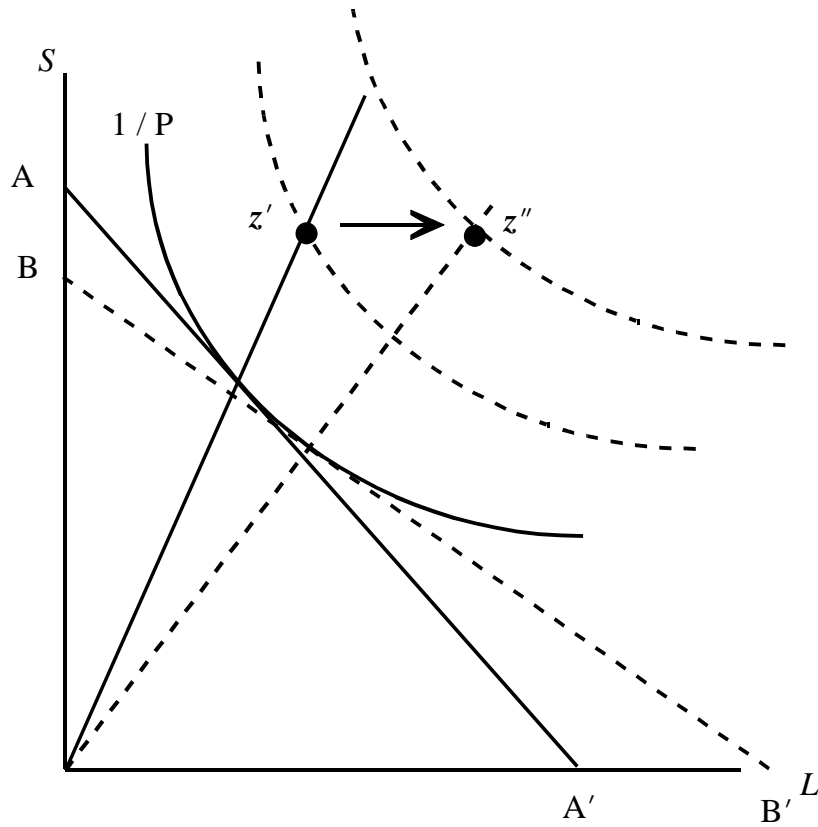


Figure 1: Endowment change and factor-price change in the one-sector model. The isocost line tangent to the unit isoquant has the equation $\$1 = w_S S + w_L L$. Thus, the S intercept shows $1/w_S$ and the L intercept shows $1/w_L$. At the initial endowment (z') the isocost is AA' and at the new endowment (z'') it is BB' . It is easy to see that, if P is unchanged, w_S has risen and w_L has fallen.

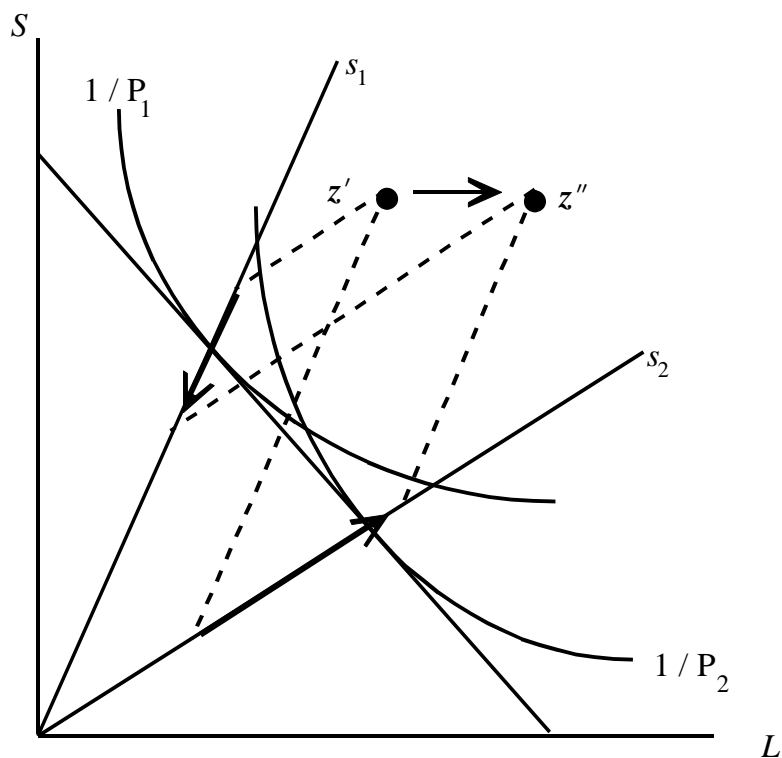


Figure 2: Endowment change and factor-price insensitivity in the two-sector model. In this case, with two goods, if commodity prices (and technology) are unchanged the location of the isoquants cannot change, the equilibrium isocost cannot change, which means that the w_L/w_S ratio cannot change unless the economy specializes. Thus, the only way this economy can respond to a change in endowment, from z' to z'' (an increase in L with S fixed), is to change output mix, increasing output in the sector using L intensively and decreasing output in the other sector, as illustrated by the arrows.

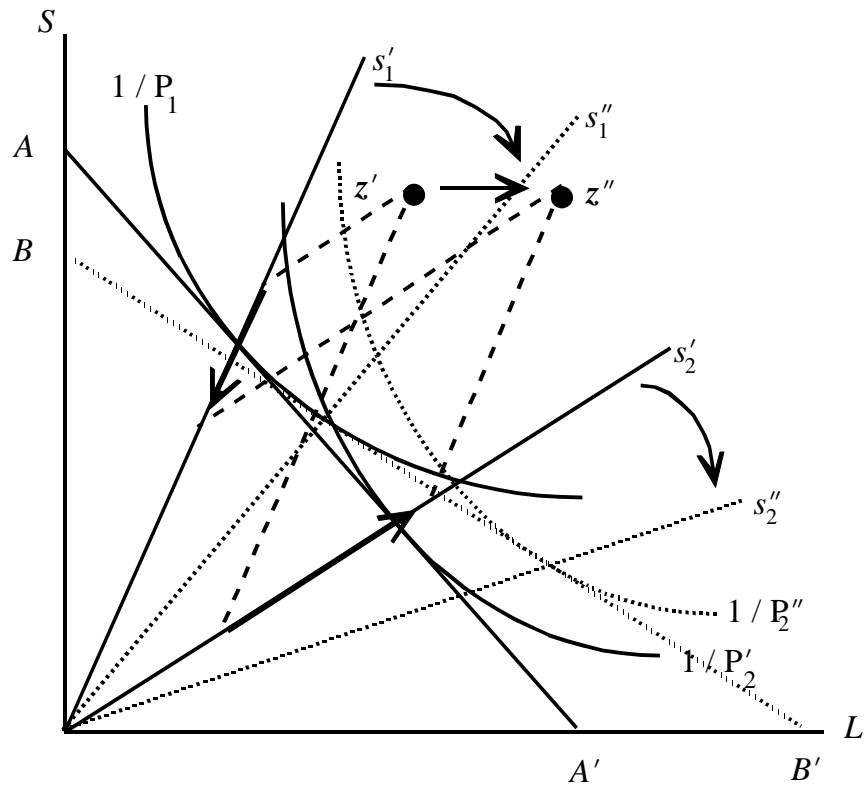


Figure 3: Endowment change and factor-price change in the two-sector model with nontraded goods. With commodity 1 traded and commodity 2 nontraded, an increase in the endowment of L causes an excess supply of good 2, a fall in its price, and an outward shift in the unit value isoquant. To reestablish factor-market equilibrium, illustrated by a tangent isocost, the relative wage of unskilled labour must fall.

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