

TITLE: *Immigrant assimilation in new U.S. destinations: The prevalence, function, and networks of informal work*

Emily J. Wornell

Abstract

A substantial amount of research has been conducted in the United States regarding immigration to “new destinations,” immigrant assimilation, immigrant and non-immigrant informal work activities, and the importance and use of social networks. Taken by themselves these topics are not particularly new. However, this research breaks new ground by answering questions at the nexus of all four sociological phenomena. Using a mixed-methods approach, this research examines the assimilation of immigrants in new, rural, U.S. destinations by looking at their informal economic participation and the development and use of co- and inter-ethnic social networks used to facilitate and sustain this work. It has implications for how assimilation is conceptualized and understood in new destinations, and for the potential need of policy changes to support immigrants and, ultimately, the assimilation process in these communities.