

# Latino Concentration in Rural California: The Conditions of Ethnic and Economic Patchwork

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Occasional Paper No. 30

December 1997

## ABSTRACT

In this report, we examine the processes affecting the rates of concentration, or “Latinization,” of rural communities in California. These processes include the changing demographics of both Latinos and non-Latino Whites, between and within communities. We also examine the extent to which Latino concentration and White exodus correlate with declining socio-economic conditions. Our analysis is based on data collected on over 280 California communities, covering the demographic and economic changes that have occurred in each community between 1980 and 1990. We also apply regression analysis to determine how changes in ethnic composition affect socio-economic conditions. In addition, we incorporate more recent information from a qualitative study of four communities in Fresno and Tulare Counties. This information comes from focus groups and interviews with local leaders in our selected communities from which we derive a “qualitative sense” of why people move and what people consider to be the changing socio-economic conditions of their respective communities. Altogether, we combine information from both the quantitative “macro” perspective with the qualitative “micro” perspectives, to understand the determinants of Latino concentration, White exodus, and the notions people have about community conditions. The article concludes by discussing policy implications of this research, as well as implications for future research.