

**THE RISE OF ANTI-IMMIGRANT RHETORIC AND
THE SUCCESS OF POLITICAL NATIVISM IN THE
UNITED STATES**

By

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements of the
University Honors Program
University of South Florida, St. Petersburg

May 2, 2018

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Honors Thesis

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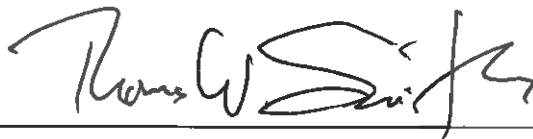


Table of Contents

Abstract – Page 3

Introduction – Page 4

Changing Public Opinion – Page 6

Literature Review – Page 9

Structural Factors – Page 13

The Economy – Page 15

Terrorism – Page 18

Population – Page 20

How Nativism has been successfully mobilized – Page 23

Conclusion - Page 28

Works Cited - Page 3

Abstract

Why has anti-immigrant rhetoric risen in the United States and how has political nativism been used as a successful electoral strategy? This paper seeks to understand how American politicians have successfully used anti-immigrant rhetoric as a winning electoral strategy in the United States. The paper analyzes the structural factors around immigration; with the political and demographic factors combining those streams of data allows us to draw a conclusion on the success of this rhetoric. This paper will serve as a case study within in the US, highlighting how the Republican Party has been a victim of its own political gerrymandering, forcing Republicans them to cater to the most conservative members of the party and giving rise to elected officials with nativist views.

Introduction

Nativism is defined as the political policy of promoting the interests of native inhabitants against those of immigrants. The term has a much storied past in American politics, dating back to the Know-Nothing Party in the 1850s which was against the immigration of Catholics to the United States. As a country that has been built by waves of migrant populations, the concept of nativism and the fight against it is nothing new (Friedman, 2017). Over the past 25 years the United States has experienced a number of serious and long lasting events that have over time brought to light shifting changes in both the demographics of the United States as well as its perception of the world around them. In this time anti-immigrant rhetoric has significantly risen in tone and, in some cases, frequency. Mudde describes nativism “as an ideology that wants congruence of state and nation—the political and the cultural unit. It wants one state for every nation and one nation for every state. It perceives all non-natives ... as threatening.” (Friedman, 2017) Donald Trump announced his candidacy for President, with a speech that included the now famous quote

“When Mexico sends its people, they’re not sending their best. They’re not sending you. They’re not sending you. They’re sending people that have lots of problems, and they’re bringing those problems with us. They’re bringing drugs. They’re bringing crime. They’re rapists. And some, I assume, are good people” (Trump, "Presidential Candidacy Announcement", 2015)

For many people it represented a broad inaccuracy at best and crass racism at its worst. Almost three years later that kind of rhetoric has become for some public figures a normal part of speech. Candidates from Alabama, to Virginia, and Illinois, have all used in some variation this kind of language. At the same time, members from the opposite side of the political spectrum

have worked intensely in a fight to save DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) an important, symbolic representation of the belief that immigrants improve the country.

This paper will assess the electoral success of anti-immigrant rhetoric and whether it is a result of a change in the structural factors in the United States or simply a change in the political tactics. To gather the data necessary for this research I conducted a meta-analysis of scholarly articles pertaining to the subjects of political nativism, terrorism, the economy, and demography was conducted. This paper includes a study of public opinion data specifically pertaining to American views towards immigrants as a whole with a focus on Latin American immigrants. While conducting this research I was able to identify the shift that Republican Party has made over the past 40 years when it comes to matters of immigration, and how that correlates with changes within their electoral demographics.

Changing Public Opinion

The 2016 presidential election was a flashpoint for domestic tensions regarding both race and class, but it also deal with how Americans feel about other regions of the world, particularly immigrants and those from Latin America. While tensions may have boiled over in this election, PEW Research studies have shown that America has long been polarized about how it views immigrants. When the question was asked in 1994 Americans were divided 2 to 1 on the overall impact of immigrants, 63% of respondents said that they felt that immigrants were a burden compared to 31% who felt that the immigrants would over a longtime strengthen the United States. When the question was asked again in 2015 just over half (51%) of respondents felt that immigrants would strengthen the country compared to 41% who felt that they would represent a long-term burden. Though these numbers represent a decline from their peak a few years prior this data does represent a 20% positive swing (those with a favorable view of immigrants) in respondent opinion over the course of 20 years (Pew Research Center, 2015).

The overall view of immigrants is positive; however public opinion changes greatly when the groups are broken down by region of the world. 39% of respondents felt that the impact of Middle Eastern immigrants was mostly negative at 39% with Latin American Immigrants just behind with 37%. Additionally, only 26% of respondents felt that Latin American Immigrants have a mostly positive impact on American society. These numbers are vastly different than those of European and Asian backgrounds where Europeans have a 44/9 and Asians have a 47/11 mostly positive/mostly negative view of their impact on American society (Pew Research, 2015).

The partisan breakdown as it pertains to public opinion is quite significant and will bear relevance later on as we discuss the successfulness of anti-immigrant rhetoric. The data shows that nearly 60% Republicans believe that Latin American immigrants have a mostly negative

impact on the country while just 13% feel that they have had a mostly positive impact on the country. Conversely 36% of Democrats have mostly positive views and just 23% feel that Latin American immigrants have a negative impact on society. The difference in opinion here is important, not just because of the general nature of partisanship but because of the varying intensity on their opinions. The Pew data shows that nearly 80% of Republicans have a strong opinion on this subject, while only 55% of Democrats have a strong opinion on this subject (Pew Research Center, 2015). The disparity in the strength of the opinions held is an area of note. Politicians tend to listen to the most vocal groups when deciding policy, and while the overall view towards immigrants is positive, the data suggests that not enough advocates for immigration or immigration reform care enough about the issues to force politicians to change their views.

As the data has shown, the negative views toward immigrants are not a national trend, and Democrats have an overall positive view of immigrants. In 2016 Pew Research asked respondents if they felt that immigrants strengthen our country because of their hard work and talents, or ,whether they are a burden on our country because they take our jobs, housing and health care. The partisan divide to this question is drastic, just 35% of Republicans said that they believe immigrants strengthen our country compared to 78% of Democrats who said that they did. This suggests that the anti-immigrant sentiment within the United States comes largely from the Republican Party. Even within the Republican Party we find that the views are not uniform. Nearly six in ten (58%) conservative Republicans believe that newcomers present a threat to traditional customs, while moderate and liberal Republicans are divided. Close to half (45%) of moderate Republicans say immigrants are a threat, compared to 40% who say they offer a positive contribution to American society (Public Religion Research Institute, 2016). Another

interesting factor is that age plays a significant role when identifying where the anti-immigrant sentiment in this country is rooted. “More than two-thirds (68%) of young adults (age 18 to 29) say that immigrants coming to the U.S. strengthen the country, while fewer than one in five (19%) say that immigrants threaten traditional American customs and values. In contrast, only 36% of seniors (age 65 and older) believe that newcomers strengthen American society, while close to half (44%) of seniors believe that immigrants coming to the U.S. are a threat (Public Religion Research Institute, 2016). The data here strongly suggests that the root of the anti-immigrant rhetoric is found in the beliefs of older, conservative, Republican voters. This demographic information proves useful when identifying why political nativism has been a successful electoral strategy for members of the Republican Party in the United States.

Literature Review

Political scientists who study the rise of political nativism both in the United States and across the globe for many decades, have come to a number of different conclusions on the root causes of this phenomenon. I will be assessing a number of scholarly articles to identify the strongest arguments for a rise in political nativism. While conducting this review I will also be working to identify the ways that political nativism has become a successful political strategy

The economy is often one of the biggest factors that voters have in mind when they make electoral decisions. As such, if a candidate can successfully tie ones concerns about the root of the economic uncertainty to immigrants a persons' political beliefs could be swayed. In "Importing Political Polarization", Autor, Dorn, Hanson, and Majlesi explored the question, "Has rising import competition contributed to the polarization of U.S. Politics?" The authors utilize election data from 2000 – 2016, combining congressional and presidential results to identify ideological realignments happening throughout the United States. Based on their research, the authors found that ideological separation in American politics is at its highest point since the DW-Nominate tracking scale went into effect in 1879. The ideological shift from the center has not been balanced however; Republicans have shifted further to the right than Democrats have to the left, a point of interest for later in the paper. Research from Pews' Ideology Score Index show that the on a scale of -10 to +10, (-10 being most liberal and +10 being most conservative) the mean score of respondents shifted from -0.91 to -0.62 from 2004 to 2015, again indicating an overall polarization towards the right (Autor, Dorn, Hanson, & Majlesi, 2016). In seeking to explain this phenomenon, the authors based their discussion around whether the exposure of local labor markets to increased foreign competition and to other economic shocks has contributed to rising political polarization in the U.S.

Ultimately the authors found that the effect of trade on the political climate was mixed. Noting that “the connection between economic and political polarization may thus arise not from overarching secular changes in the U.S. economy that affect skill demands nationally, but rather from shocks whose disruptive force falls heavily on an identifiable set of voters who in turn respond with concentrated vehemence at the polls.” (Autor, Dorn, Hanson, & Majlesi, 2016) Such is the state of the American political system. The economy has grown for many people across the country and new opportunities have presented themselves. However, in specific areas across the country, the jobs and socio-economic status lost in the recession do not look to be returning soon. This perceived failure that occurred while the Democratic party was in power could be a contributing factor to the electoral successes of the Republican Party in recent years.

In “The Politics of Expulsion: A Short History of Alabama’s Anti-Immigrant Law, HB 56”, Mohl explores the history of HB 56 and its nativist roots. HB 56 was a law passed in the state of Alabama in 2011 that allowed for the expulsion of undocumented immigrants from the state. Mohl writes that the law was part of a broader set of policies designed to make life so difficult for these immigrants that they would ultimately self-deport. There were a number of root factors that led to this situation Alabama, but Mohl points to demographics as being one of the key factors in Alabama. Between 2000 and 2010 the Latino population increased by 145 percent in that period. Granted, the raw numbers of the state are much lower, but proportionately it represented one of the largest changes in the country. The authors notes three specific towns in Alabama where in 2010 Latino’s made up more than 30% of the population. It is these demographic shifts in Alabama that led to the growth of racial tensions in the state, racial tensions that right wing politicians were able to use a planks in a their platforms and to justify passing legislation like HB 56. All of these occurred in the face of the fact that Latinos only

made 3.9% of the population in the state, and the degree to which they were a burden to the state and required social welfare programs was greatly exaggerated. (Mohl, 2016) This again ties to one of the earlier points made in this paper, the voters who are being targeted using this anti-immigrant sentiment often have no real proof that immigrants are the cause of their economic woes. However, the fact that authority figures that they trust are making the connection is all most people need to identify with such a philosophy.

In “The Anti-Immigrant Fervor in Georgia: Return of the Nativist or Just Politics as Usual?” we find that a similar situation regarding the effect that population has on immigrant sentiments. Sabia writes that the state of Georgia had a 300% growth in its Latino population over the last 20 years. 2006 represented one of the more the strongest years for anti-immigrant sentiment in the state. The situation in Georgia was confounded by a number of variables including increased cooperation with federal officials, will from the political elite, and backlash from other minorities. One of the unique cases that came from the case study of Georgia was the tensions between the African-American and Latino communities. In some cases, African Americans were being recruited to work at the deportation centers that were being operated in the South-Eastern portion of the state. In other regions tensions deteriorated into outright violence between the groups (Sabia, 2010).

In regards to the will of the political elite, the author cites another study that found that in the cases of “Arizona, Texas, Tennessee, and Georgia, restrictionist legislation was exclusively sponsored by legislators whose districts had experienced significant increases in Hispanic settlement.” (Pearson-Merkowitz, 2009) This proved to be the case of the sponsor of SB 529 which “denies undocumented immigrants access to public benefits and employment, and allows local police officers to enforce federal immigration statutes.” (Rogers, 2006) State Senator Chip

Rogers, the bill sponsor, hailed from a predominately white suburban county where many Latino immigrants were moving to.

In “Effects of Terrorism on Attitudes and Ideological Orientation” Echebarria-Echabe and Fernández-Guede conducted an experimental study on how terrorism plays a role in our behavior. The study, done in Spain, tracked the attitudes of Spanish nationals on a variety of issues, including general political ideology as well as specific views towards Arabs and other immigrant groups. The study was designed to track views over a long time, with the expectation that another terrorist attack would occur. The authors built this kind of study because they found that data that simulated an attack incorrectly altered the data and could not provide conclusive results. Building on previous research that had been conducted on the topic; the authors’ first predicted an increase of conservatism independently of subjects’ previous ideological positions (stronger authoritarianism, conservatism and racial prejudices in all the ideological groups) as a result of terrorist attacks. Their second hypothesis predicted an interaction between the attacks and political positioning; the left-wing participants reinforcing their liberal values while the right-wing participants increasing their conservatism, authoritarianism and racial prejudices. The authors began collecting data in February of 2004, which just so happened to be a month before the March 2004 bombing in Madrid. Just as the authors predicted, after the attacks participants showed an increasing Anti-Arab and Anti-Jew prejudice, authoritarianism, and adherence to conservative values (Echebarria-Echabe & Fernández-Guede, 2006).

Structural Factors

In studying this topic I worked to identify three factors upon which the effectiveness of anti-immigrant sentiment within the United States can be framed. From the scholarly articles I reviewed, the economy, terrorism, and population shifts have risen to the top as major areas that can and have been tied to people's reactions towards immigrants. On their own each of these areas are vital to the political process and can be used by politicians to help amplify or form a campaign message or platform.

When discussing the state of the economy it is vital that we look at how it has developed over the past 25 years, specifically since the implementation of NAFTA and the reduction of trade barriers with Canada and Mexico. And while the North American Free Trade Agreement has included both Mexico and Canada, trade with Mexico has grown dramatically from roughly \$290 billion in 1993 to more than \$1.1 trillion in 2016 (Wharton, 2016). This has led to blame being inaccurately placed on Mexico and Latin America as a whole for job loss, and a lack of economic prosperity. Deeper in the paper we will identify those groups most affected by changes in the trade structure and assess how their voting patterns may have shifted over time. Such sentiment can be reinforced when an analysis of voting patterns in the 2016 election. At an extremely consistent level, states with a median household income above the national average voted for Hillary Clinton, and states below the national average voted for Donald Trump.

Another of the structural factors upon which an anti-immigrant sentiment might be most effectively capitalized on are concerns surrounding terrorism. Objectively there has been an increase in the incidences of terrorism in the United States combined with the increased awareness of said terrorism. In the past 25 years six of the deadliest terror attacks on this country took place, as opposed to 6 from the 75 years dating from 1927-1992. Terrorist acts are often

portrayed as being carried out by the “other”, whether they be Latin American or Middle Eastern. Oftentimes public figures capitalize on the idea that terrorists are sneaking in through the Mexican Border, even if no attacks have materialized as of yet (Gillin, 2016). With increasing political rhetoric, and a lack of clarity about terrorists entering the country through the Southern Border it would be no surprise that people are open to nativist ideas.

The third structural factor underlying the effectiveness of anti-immigrant sentiment could simply be the fact that there has been a significant increase in immigrants in the country since 1992. In that time period the number of immigrants in the country has doubled from 19.8 million immigrants to 42.4 million immigrants in 2014. This is compounded when you take into consideration the fact that majority of immigrants are coming from Latin America. Those who choose to channel anti-immigrant sentiment may find it easiest to target their rhetoric towards people or groups that can visibly see changes to the area in which they live. These changing demographics may give reason for people to believe that their culture and that their “American way of living” might be under threat because of said increase. Similar to the voting trends with the economy, states with the highest level of Latino population growth consistently voted for Donald Trump, in the top 10, only two voted for Clinton.

Moving forward this paper will dive into each of the potential structural factors and assess how each of these issues has tracked over recent years (focusing on the last 25) before seeking to tie them to changes in the political landscape.

The Economy

When assessing the underlying factors that drive anti-immigrant sentiments, or really any significant global policy, one should always address is how this is intertwined with the economic stability in relation to the key players in the conversation.

The North American Free Trade Act was a set of legislation passed and enacted by President Bill Clinton in 1994. NAFTA, as it would commonly be referred to, would represent first and foremost a shift in global economic policy on the behalf of the United States, but additionally a change in domestic policy when it came to unions and the workforce. Statistically there are a few important numbers that we should keep aware of. The Economic Policy Institute and the AFL-CIO estimate that somewhere between 700,000 and 800,000 jobs were lost a result of NAFTA, though most estimates including Politifact, have a more conservative view of the number of jobs lost (Faux, 2013) (Amadeo, 2018). Even when using the most liberal figures, an estimated 116,000 of those jobs were lost as a result of the Great Recession that occurred in 2007 & 2008 with lasting effects that were felt up until 2010, and not directly from the effects of increased trade with NAFTA and specifically Mexico (Scott, 2011). These studies also indicate that the job losses as a result of NAFTA are largely confined to a few select industries, namely the auto industry, manufacturing industry, and those dealing largely with low skilled or factory work. The areas that are credited with giving President Trump his victory in 2016 (Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Michigan) are part of what is known as the Rust Belt. The term refers to a group of states who were largely dominated by heavy industry and manufacturing, that have largely seen a decline or urban decay over the past few decades. Another key figure in discussions of NAFTA is the trade deficit, in particular between the United States and Mexico, estimates from the US Census and the Trade Representative of the EOP estimate that deficit in goods imported vs. exported lies at

about 58 billion to 60 billion dollars in 2015 (United States Trade Representative, 2017) (Walters & Trevelyan, 2011).

The Wharton School of Business offers some interesting insights into why it may seem that NAFTA had such a negative effect when in reality the consequences were relatively minimal or only slightly increased the rate of current trends. Using data collected from Peterson Institute for International Economics (PIIE) they estimate that the direct positive impact of NAFTA was an approximately \$400 increase per person in the United States coming in the form of cheaper items like electronics or clothing. While the negatives from NAFTA are very much pronounced in the form of job losses, many of them concentrated in a specific industry and region of the United States. (Wharton, 2016) Such a distinct correlation between the regions that voted for a champion of anti-immigrant sentiment and those that likely faced the brunt of an export of jobs, bears further study when we address targeted demographics.

In the chart below, we are able to track both the unemployment rate and GDP growth rate since the beginning of NAFTA. For the years immediately following NAFTA we see a decline in the unemployment rate and some of the highest GDP growth rates for the entire period that was tracked. We don't see a decline in GDP growth or an increase in unemployment until the Great Recession hits. The data here shows that despite what some political pundits' believe there aren't any macro level indicators that NAFTA has harmed the economy as a

Below is a chart tracking the unemployment rate and the GDP Growth Rate from 1990 to the present.

Year	Unemployment Rate %	GDP Growth Rate %
1990	5.6	.65
1991	6.8	1.22
1992	7.3	3.5
1993	7.3	2.7
1994	6.6	4.03
1995	5.36	2.7
1996	5.6	3.79
1997	5.3	4.48
1998	4.6	4.44
1999	4.3	4.68
2000	4	4.09
2001	4.2	0.97
2002	5.7	1.78
2003	5.8	2.8
2004	5.7	3.78
2005	5.3	3.34
2006	4.7	2.66
2007	4.6	1.77
2008	5	-0.29
2009	7.8	-2.77
2010	9.8	2.53
2011	9.1	1.6
2012	8.3	2.22
2013	8	1.48
2014	6.6	2.42
2015	5.7	2.42
2016	4.9	2.9

Terrorism

Terrorism by its very definition is designed to inflict terror into the hearts and minds of the targeted group. An increase in the rise of terrorism should also be assessed as major cause in a rise in nativist views within the United States. When analyzing both the number and the severity of terrorist attacks within the United States you can see a clear increase in the trends tracking those figures. Of the terrorist attacks viewed as the deadliest 50% of those (6 of the top twelve have occurred since 1992, from 1992 prior, you must go back 75 years before you get the remaining six within the top twelve. Just as the deadliest attacks on the US have occurred the within the last 25 years, even attacks with relatively lower fatalities have been increasing during this time.

Public opinion data however does not seem to find this to be a very convincing argument as the only times terrorism has truly concerned the American public was immediately after the terrorist attacks of 2001, the European train bombings in 2004 and 2005, the failed underwear bomber attack in 2010, and the Charlie Hebdo and San Bernardino attacks in the winter of 2015-2016.

While concerns about terrorism may not have been the biggest long term factor in the rise of nativism in the United States it may give a bit of an insight into the short-term mindsets of those who voted for Donald Trump. Exit poll data compiled by the New York Times finds that of those who find terrorism to be the most important issue facing the United States today, those voters voted overwhelmingly (57% to 39%) in favor of Donald Trump. (Huang, Jacoby, Strickland, & Rebecca, 2016)The data shown by Gallup indicates that while the last recorded spike was towards the end of 2015 it would be more than reasonable to assume that a similar

spike in public concern occurred after the Orlando Night Club Shooting in June of 2016 or the New York and New Jersey bombings in September of the same year.

Discussing terrorism as a factor is not only a public opinion question but also a public policy question, how are our legislators interpreting this activity? After 9/11, the immigration system changed in a number of impactful ways both for those living in the United States and those seeking to enter it. The year after the September 11th attacks President George W. Bush in coordination with the Congress created the Department of Homeland Security to oversee the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), and U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CPB). (Hesson, 2012) From there huge funding increases were required to fund this massive endeavor, resulting in an additional 589 Billion from 2001 - 2011. The responsibility of protecting the border expanded as well as local police officers were required to coordinate their law enforcement efforts with ICE.

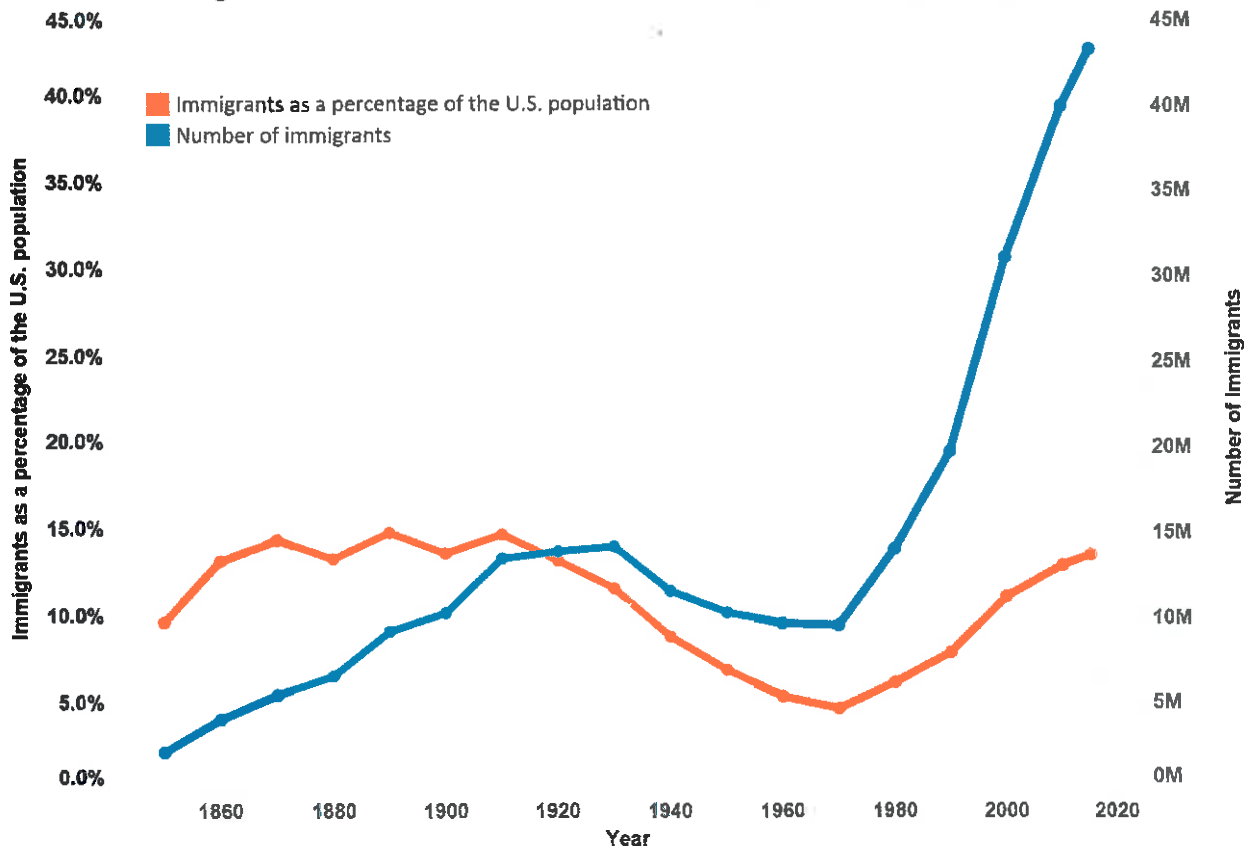
Terrorism has varied in the public consciousness as a priority when it comes to voting. In the 2016 election, 80% of voters indicated that terrorism was “very important” to them second only to the economy in that election, and ahead of perennial issues like gun policy and social security. (Pew Research, 2016) (Fingerhut, 2017) The high level of concern about terrorism opens the door to not only attach economic plights to immigrants but also our concerns about national security. Donald Trump himself made this connection saying ““I watched when the World Trade Center came tumbling down and I watched in Jersey City, N.J., where thousands and thousands of people were cheering as that building was coming down. Thousands of people were cheering.” (Trump, "Trump Campaign Rally", 2015) That being said, there is absolutely no evidence that what he said was true and in the face of media scrutiny, he double downed on his allegations.

Population

Changing demography is one of the most visible triggers public figures can use to reinforce statements that are largely anti-immigrant. While people have tendency to listen to people they view as authority figures, nothing is more important than what you can see with your eyes. And in this case, one's eyes do not deceive them; there really are more immigrants than there were 10 years ago. Growth in the number of immigrants within the country has increased greatly over the past 25 years. Since 1990 the percentage of immigrants¹ as portion of the people within the United States has nearly doubled from 7.9% to just under 15%. Similarly, in terms of raw numbers the number of immigrants within the country has more than doubled from more just under 20 million to over 40 million (Kafchinski, 2009) These numbers are even more pronounced on micro demographic level when you asses the changing demographics of some of the largest cities within the United States. Asthana wrote that in the coming years, 35 of the 50 largest cities within the United States would become majority minority cities, meaning that the white population within these cities would dip under 50%. (Asthana, 2006) Her analysis of the US Census data would ultimately prove correctly as a number of cities would become majority-minority in 2010 including; Phoenix, Los Angeles, San Diego, San Francisco, San Jose, Washington D.C., Chicago, Baltimore, Boston, Detroit, St. Louis, Buffalo, New York City, Tampa, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Philadelphia, Milwaukee, New Orleans, Charlotte, Memphis, Dallas, El Paso, Houston, and San Antonio.

¹ The term "immigrants" (also known as the foreign born) refers to people residing in the United States who were not U.S. citizens at birth. This population includes naturalized citizens, lawful permanent residents (LPRs), certain legal nonimmigrants (e.g., persons on student or work visas), those admitted under refugee or asylum status, and persons illegally residing in the United States.

Number of Immigrants and Their Share of the Total U.S. Population, 1850-2015



Migration Policy Institute (MPI) Data Hub
<http://migrationpolicy.org/programs/data-hub>

The number of immigrants has increased in the United States as both a matter of numbers and the percentage, immigrants from Latin America have represented a greater portion of the number of immigrants coming into the United States. Since the census data began recording the nationality of immigrants, Latino immigrants have gone from representing approximately 18% of the immigrant population to 2015 to representing slightly more than half (51%).

Year	Latino Immigrants (Millions)	Total Immigrants (Millions)	Percentage (Latino Immigrants of Total Immigrants)
1970	1.8	9.6	18.8%
1980	4.3	14	30.7%
1990	8.4	19.7	42.6%
2000	16	31.1	51.4%
2010	21.2	39.9	53.1%
2015	22.1	43.2	51.1%

Years	Native Born Latinos (Millions)	Foreign Born Latinos (Millions)	Total Latinos (Millions)
1990	14	7.8	21.8
2000	21.1	14.1	35.2
2001			37
2002			38.6
2003			40
2004			41.5
2005			43
2006	26.6	17.7	44.6
2007	27.3	18	46.2
2008	29	17.8	47.8
2009	30.3	18.1	39.3
2010	31.9	18.8	50.4
2011	33.1	18.8	51.9
2012	34.1	18.8	52.9
2013	35	19	54
2014	35.9	19.3	55.2
2015			56.6

How Nativism has been successfully mobilized

Nativism as a political strategy is not a new concept, in the United States or in the rest of the world. Prominent instances of nativism in American Politics most notably include the red scare. In “The Impact of Radical Right-Wing Parties on the Positions of Mainstream Parties Regarding Multiculturalism” Han offers a plausible explanation on how for how political nativism has been mobilized as an effective political strategy. In his paper Han notes that as far right candidates are elected in the most conservative areas, main stream politicians tend to become drawn closer to the these fringe actors. While in Europe this comes as a result of the ability of right wing parties to become elected in certain areas, American political candidates face this sort of scrutiny during the primary process. As far as congressional seats are concerned most seats are solidly in the hands of one party or the other, meaning most seats do not change because the other party has managed to flip the seat but because an incumbent lost in a primary, or in the case of an open seat the further right candidate was more successful. In Europe Han concluded that he “MP positions on multiculturalism, immigration, and race move toward those of RRP [Radical Right-Wing Parties] as the rise of the parties pushes the overall distribution of voters in a direction advocated by the radical parties”. (Han, 2014) He goes on further to say that “RRPs, or niche parties in general that have extremist positions on an issue such as multiculturalism and ecology, can benefit from their own electoral success by dragging MPs towards their own positions”. This is not without consequence however, Han notes that RRP voters move their support (back) to MPs after the latter promote or implement policies that reflect a more restrictive position on multiculturalism. If so, current RRP electoral success may help further their nativist agenda, while at the same time sowing the seeds of their party’s future organizational decline.” (Han 2014)

While the study done was focused on the European Political Process, in America, the rise and fall and the Tea Party Wing mirrors the saga documented. While the Tea Party operates what can be considered a failed caucus within the United States House without a chairman it did manage to garner significant attention to itself during its heyday from 2009 to 2013. The group managed to “primary out” two highly respected and powerful members of the Republican Party, Utah Senator Bob Bennett in 2010, and Republican House Majority Leader Eric Cantor in 2012. While the Tea Party was not often able to do more than obstruct legislation, the primary defeats of Bob Bennett and Eric Cantor sent a very clear message to the rest of the Republican Leadership, get to the right or get out of the way.

For those wanted to make nativism the modus operandi of foreign policy within the United States the path for political success became very clear. Challenge more moderate republicans in the primaries where the voting block is more conservative, then rely on the fact that the district is comfortably in control of one party and that regardless of how moderate voters feel they would be unlikely to break their partisan alliance. By replicating this strategy, not just at the federal level but particularly in local races, you can see how a small group of activists who may not actually represent the population as a whole can effectively swing the political realities of the nation.

The demographics of the voter base also lend to why this primary strategy has been so successful for Republicans. As was mentioned earlier in the paper the group that has the strongest views against immigration are older conservative Republicans. Voter data from the Census Bureau indicates that voters ages 60+ average between 60%-75% turnout depending on whether it is a mid-term election or presidential election. Voters 18-29, who had the most favorable views towards immigrants rarely, reach a 50% turnout rate. An analysis of 2016

election showed that voters over the age of 50 made up 49% of the electorate, whereas 18-24 year olds made up less than a quarter. While elected officials are technically tasked with representing the views of every person in their district, in reality they represent the views of those who vote in their elections. As such it only makes sense for Republican legislators to reflect the views of those who most consistently participate in elections.

While primary targeting has proved effective in communicating a message from a vocal group to legislators, a similar practice is being done by candidates to the voters. In “Importing Political Polarization” the authors found that while trade was not responsible for national voting trends, they did find that identifying specific areas where such a concept rung true, particularly those who live in areas where manufacturing used to be particularly prevalent, did become a productive electoral strategy (Autor, Dorn, Hanson, & Majlesi, 2016) . Multiple studies have shown that the overall prevalence of manufacturing in the United States has remained strong, though three states have largely lost out. (Houseman, 2018) Those being Michigan, Wisconsin, and Pennsylvania. Those three states are also credited with giving Donald Trump his victory in the Electoral College and ultimately the presidency. Here we see an example where a candidate who supports nativist ideologies uses the circumstances of a region to gain votes for himself.

When discussing political nativism as an electoral strategy, it is also important to know that the intense focus on immigration and its usage in the political arena has not been the normal methodology for Republican in the late 20th and early 21st centuries. In 1980, Ronald Reagan is quoted as saying "Rather than talking about putting up a fence, why don't we work out some recognition of our mutual problems?" (Reagan, Republican Primary Debate, 1980) Later on in that debate future president George H. W. Bush echoed a similar sentiment. Don Goyena of NPR writes “He [Bush] was asked by an audience member if children in the country illegally should

be allowed to attend U.S. public schools. Bush did not hesitate, saying he does not want to see 6- or 8-year-olds being uneducated or "made to feel that they're living outside the law." (Bush, Republican Primary Debate, 1980) Bush's sentiments proved to be much more than that when in 2004; he proposed changes to U.S. immigration law that would have made it easier for people to cross back and forth over the border to work legally in the United States.

During the time in which Barack Obama was president of the United States, a shift occurred in the Republican Party. Former Bush press secretary Ari Fleischer provides some important points about the transition from Bush to Trump. In describing the electoral success of Donald Trump he notes, "Donald Trump talks about immigration in a way that's very different from how George Bush talks about it, or Mitt Romney talks about it, or John McCain talked about it, but it's also true that Donald Trump won the election." (Gonyea, 2018) While we lack strong evidence that Donald Trump's campaign strategy was based solely around doing things that Mitt Romney and John McCain failed to do, we do know that many voters in the Republican Party felt unheard when it came to issues of immigration, and his successful candidacy for the Republican nomination is definitive evidence of this connection. Mark Krikorian of the Center for Immigration Studies largely conveyed similar sentiments. In an interview with NPR, he said he did not think attitudes toward immigration have changed much at all among Republican voters, but rather a case of past leaders simply being out of touch with where the party rank and file was on the issue. "Ordinary Republican voters were just much more hawkish on immigration than Republican politicians and advisers and fixers and donors and the whole political class." (Gonyea, 2018) Looking at it from a separate perspective, Fleischer believed the cause of the success of this strategy was due to the economy saying, "Frankly, I think the biggest change was the economy weakened, people in America were worried about their jobs and their livelihood,

and they did worry about a surge of people coming through illegally, a lower-priced labor force that would squeeze Americans." (Gonyea, 2018) Regardless of who might be correct on this issue the clear outcome, was the election of Donald Trump, who successfully campaigned on a wave of nativist sentiments.

Conclusion

After conducting the research for this paper, the data shows that there are a number of potential social and structural reasons as to why political nativism has succeeded as a political strategy in the United States and why we have seen a rise in anti-immigrant rhetoric as of late. In this conclusion, I intend to propose a linear argument that documents how political nativism became a successful political strategy and why it became a part of society, and why anti-immigrant rhetoric, specifically towards Latin America has become a seemingly normalized part of society.

The first conclusion that I would draw is that this rise and level of success cannot come without the structural factors being put into place. Without a changing economy, a rapidly diversifying country, and the consistent threat of terrorism in the United States none of the political behaviors that connect to this have roots. Beginning after the September 11 attacks, Americans began to become more wary of the “other” which public opinion data suggests is still a priority today. In “Effects of Terrorism on Attitudes and Ideological Orientation”, the authors found that their results seemed to be in accordance with the effects of the September 11th terrorist acts (USA) on the presidential re-election of Bush. In the United States, shortly after 9/11 Americans as a whole became more conservative ideologically, and began look towards outside groups to hold responsible for the tragedy that had just occurred. Where they believed terrorism induced a wave of conservatism that contributed to the re-election of President Bush. Public opinion data shows that terrorism was a major issue for many people, constantly playing in the background of the minds of Americans and making fertile ground for politicians like Donald Trump to make to successfully make extremely false claims on this issue . This fear also feeds into the ideology of those that have argued that Latin American immigrants pose a significant

threat to the economy. With the Great Recession and the discussion over NAFTA and other free trade agreements such a part of the public consciousness, it is extremely easy for individuals to tie the two together, especially when their minds are already primed to withdraw from the “other”. These tendencies are further compounded by the rapid growth of the Latin American population in the United States. As I developed my theory on the role that structural factors play in how people view Latin Americans, I decided to look for correlations in actual elections. Assuming that the fear of terrorism was a nationally felt phenomenon I focused on economic and demographic indicators. I found that Hillary Clinton won sixteen of the twenty states that had a median household income over the national average, while Donald Trump won twenty-eight of the thirty states with a median household income below the national average. Similarly Donald Trump managed to win eight of the ten states with the highest growth in Latino population since 2000. Here the data suggests that in fact, the economy and changes in demographics appear to have some correlation with how people vote.

Now that the structural factors that laid the ground work for a successful political strategy are clear, the next thing to focus on is how this became a part of the Republican campaign strategy. In conducting this research, there is strong evidence to suggest that this movement was not led by the elites and elected officials of the party but rather came as a consequence of the action by the Republican Party has made. Over the last 30 years, both parties but especially the Republican Party, has done an excellent job at gerrymandering the districts in which they run in, essentially guaranteeing that any true competition would happen in the primary and leave the seat in the hands of a Republican. As we learned earlier in the paper the most reliable voters also happen to be the most conservative voters who vote in these primary elections. Representatives now have to adjust their political strategy to appease the voters who actually turnout, even if that

can be different from what they may personally believe or what the majority of voters in their district think. By pushing themselves in more and more conservative districts Republicans in the House of Representatives have forced themselves to essentially hold tougher positions on issues than would be necessary in a competitive district. This is compounded by the fact that the Republican electorate has generally become more conservative, particularly between 2004 and 2014. I would propose that among the factors that led to the political losses of George W. Bush, and the electoral losses of John McCain and Mitt Romney, was the fact that they were closer to the center than their party may have been at the time. NPR notes that conservative voters were strong enough to prevent passage of immigration legislation pushed by President George W. Bush, whose support among Hispanics reached 40 percent in the 2004 election, a high for the GOP (LatinoUSA, 2017). Then in 2013, conservatives in the House blocked an immigration bill that had passed overwhelmingly in the Senate. Which came as the Republican Party was looking for ways to appeal to Hispanic voters following Mitt Romney's loss as the GOP presidential nominee in 2012. The biggest difference that we see in the candidacy of Donald Trump, is that he was actually speaking to views that enough of the Republican Party identified to get him elected in the primary. Additionally he was successful in using the strength of the Electoral College system to get himself elected. It is clear that Hillary Clinton won the popular vote, but that was largely done by driving up totals in some of the more liberal states in the U.S. Donald Trump was able to win small victories in Michigan, Ohio, and Pennsylvania, but under the winner take all rules of the electoral college, small margins were all that he needed. Again these three states are all below the national average when it comes to the median household income, and have been disproportionately affected by trade.

The success of political nativism owes itself to the fact that structural factors in the United States have encouraged people in certain areas of the country to be more hostile towards immigrants, combined with the fact that the Republican Party has managed to concentrate these same voters into their districts as opposed to spreading across districts and reducing their voting power.

The ability of political nativism to continue as a political strategy is unclear. Demographic shifts in the United States suggest that, soon those who hold these anti-immigrant views will no longer represent the bulk of voters. And while public opinion is constantly evolving, the data suggests that anti-immigrant rhetoric and political nativism may not a sustainable political strategy in the future. Trends in demographics show that by 2040 the United States will be a majority-minority country. Additionally as Millennials and Generation Z take up a larger percentage of the voting population, the reliable, older, more conservative voters will eventually diminish as a voting bloc. Representatives will have to cater to the changing views of their population. Special elections across the United States also suggest that not every candidate can successfully pull off the strategy, though the 2018 midterm elections will provide some clarity. However, for the next few years at least, and while Donald Trump is still President we can assume that both anti-immigrant rhetoric will continue to be a part of our mainstream culture, and that Republican candidates will attempt to make political nativism a successful electoral strategy for themselves.

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