White Backlash:

Immigration, Race, and American Politics

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Introduction

Immigration is unquestionably one of the most important forces shaping America. Since 2000 the United States has absorbed almost 14 million immigrants bringing the total of all documented and undocumented immigrants currently in the nation to over 40 million (Urban Institute 2011). Immigrants and their children now represent fully one in four Americans.

These raw numbers are impressive. Yet they tell only part of the story. The current wave of immigration has also wrought dramatic changes in the social and economic spheres. Large scale immigration has produced a sea change in the racial and ethnic composition of the nation. The phenomenal growth of the Latino population has allowed Latinos to displace African Americans as the nation's largest racial and ethnic group. Asian Americans, once a negligible share of the national population are now the fastest growing racial and ethnic group. All of that means that white numerical dominance is very much on the decline. By the mid-point of the 21st Century, whites are, in fact, expected to no longer be the majority. The arrival of so many new Americans who herald from different shores has also brought cheap labor, new languages, and different cultural perspectives. There are large-scale industries flourishing on low-wage migrant labor, massive Spanish language media empires, and countless communities that have been altered almost beyond recognition. There is little doubt that American society has been transformed in myriad, deep, and perhaps permanent ways.

But what of the political sphere? What are the political consequences of such a dramatic demographic, racial, economic, social, and cultural makeover? In spite of the obvious and dramatic changes wrought by immigration, immigration's impact on the political world is much less clear. On one level the impact of immigration on politics is obvious and already well

documented. Countless studies have demonstrated the growing strength of the minority vote, particularly of the Latino electorate, who are the largest immigrant group in the nation (de la Garza et al 1992, DeSipio 1996, Alvarez and Garcia Bedolla 2003, Abrajano and Alvarez 2010). Many others have demonstrated the increasing attachment of immigrants and their offspring to the Democratic Party (Wong et al 2011, Alvarez and Garcia Bedolla 2003, Hajnal and Lee 2011). These are certainly important developments in the course of American political history.

A Broad Political Impact for Immigration?

But we contend that these changes represent only a small fraction of immigration's potential impact on American politics. Immigrants may be arriving in historically high numbers but they account for only a relatively small fraction of the nation's population. Native-born whites still represent 63 percent of the population and, perhaps more importantly, some 75 percent of its voters. Thus, how non-immigrant white Americans respond to this growing immigrant and Latino population is critical not only to the welfare of current immigrants and the future of immigration policy in the United States but also to relations between different racial and ethnic groups within the United States. Acceptance is likely to bring assimilation and rising economic status among immigrants. Fear and resentment is likely to bring increased efforts at border enforcement, more migrant deaths, and strained relations between the nation's white (and primarily native born) population and its racial and ethnic minority groups. Even more importantly, if immigration leads to a backlash that not only shapes views on immigration but also alters the basic political orientation of large number of Americans then the entire direction of American politics hangs in the balance. A broad backlash could lead to increasingly strict and conservative policy making, it could shift the balance of power between Democrats and

Republicans, and it could advantage rightward leaning candidates throughout the country. In short, in order to fully understand how broadly immigration is transforming American politics we need to examine the attitudes and actions of the white population.

That is the subject of this book. We hope to delineate the different ways in which the partisan patterns, the electoral decisions, and the policy preferences of native white Americans are changing in response to immigration's imprint. Are whites responding with a broad backlash that results in more restrictive immigration policy, more punitive criminal justice policies, less generous public spending, and a large shift to the right politically that results in more support for the Republican Party and the candidates that is puts forward? Or are whites embracing the benefits of immigration to such a degree that they seek to expand government and the services it offers to less advantaged segments of the population? Alternatively, is immigration –despite its very visible effects – not deeply felt by the American public and thus not consequential for basic political decisions like policy, party, and the vote?

On these questions, political scientists have had surprisingly little to say. Although widespread attention has been paid to the *causes* of our attitudes about Latinos and immigration, little research has focused on the *consequences* of immigrant-related views (on causes see Schildkraut 2011, Hainmueller and Hiscox 2010, Kinder and Kam 2009, Brader et al 2008, Pettigrew et al 2007, Scheve and Slaughter 2001, Quillian 1995, Citrin et al 1997). We know, for example, that cultural and racial considerations often seem to shape attitudes toward immigration more than personal economic interests to (Brader et al 2008, Hainmueller and Hiscox 2010 but see Hanson 2005).

But we know very little about how views of immigrants in turn shape core political affiliations and basic voting decisions. To date there is almost no direct evidence that the basic

policy positions, partisan affiliations, or voting decisions of individual white Americans strongly reflect their views on immigration or the Latino population.[1] Studies of the white population tend to fall into one of two categories. Either they ignore immigration and race altogether (McCarthy et al 2006, Miller and Shanks 1996, Alvarez and Nagler 1995, 1998), or if they focus on race, they limit that focus to the impact of America's old black-white divide (Lewis-Beck et al 2010, Valentino and Sears 2005, Abramowitz 1994, Carmines and Stimson 1989). No study that we know of has demonstrated a connection between immigration and the white vote in national contests or revealed a link between immigration and white partisanship.[2] Despite the tremendous impact immigration has had on the demographics of the nation and the large scale social, economic, and racial change that has ensued, there is little direct evidence of that immigration has had an enduring impact on the basic political decisions of the white majority.

Moreover, many would be skeptical that immigration could have a profound impact on the basic political choices of white Americans. The near complete assimilation of American immigrants and their children (Alba and Nee 2005), the rapid growth of inter-racial marriage (Bean and Stevens 2003), the increasing willingness of white Americans to support minority candidates (Hajnal 2006, Highton 2004), the inexorable – if uneven – waning of white racial intolerance (Sniderman and Carmines 1997, Schuman et al 1997), and the arrival of potentially more pressing issues like America's economic crisis, its two wars, and terrorist security threats, all imply that immigrant-related considerations should not weigh heavily on the political calculus of white Americans.

[1] Scholars have, however, found clear evidence that immigration fundamentally shapes the views of Latinos (Nicholson and Segura 2005 but see Abrajano et al 2008, Alvarez and Garcia Bedolla 2003).
[2] One important exception is work on California which alternately shows that Proposition 187 led to growing white support of the Democratic Party (Bowler et al 2006) or that the episode had no impact on white partisanship (Dyck et al 2012).

Finally, this kind of white backlash would not be unprecedented. Indeed, mobilization of large segments of the white population against an increasingly powerful minority coalition has occurred at several times in the past – often with dangerous consequences (Klinker and Smith 1999). The massive and violent backlash that marked the Southern white response to Reconstruction and black political empowerment in the 18th Century marked the first large scale white mobilization against black political empowerment (Foner 1984). But it was not the last. More recently, the equally swift and often violent actions of white Southerners in response to the Civil Rights movement and federally imposed civil rights legislation demonstrated remarkably little change in the nature of the white response to black empowerment (Parker 1990, Kousser 1999). The current backlash rarely incorporates the violent or explicitly racist elements of previous racial conflicts but other parallels are harder to dismiss.

Immigration's Impact on Partisan Politics: A Theory

Nevertheless, we believe that immigration and the Latino population do impact whites' core political calculus. We offer a theory of how large scale immigration can result in real partisan shifts in the white population. First, the sheer size of the racial and demographic change that has occurred and that continues to occur is impossible for white Americans to miss. All of this demographic change is accompanied by the extensive presence of Latinos, Asians, and other immigrants in the media and almost daily interactions with non-native speakers in the nation's streets, workplaces, and neighborhoods. It would be surprising if such a massive change in the makeup of the nation did not result in immigration playing a more central role in the minds of white Americans.

Second, irrespective of the actual fiscal consequences of immigration, there is an on-going and oft repeated threat narrative that links America's immigrant and Latino populations to a host of pernicious fiscal, social, and cultural consequences (Perez forthcoming, Chavez 2008, Hopkins 2010, Brader et al 2008, Santa Ana 2004). This narrative emphasizes cultural decline, immigrants' use of welfare, health, and educational services, their propensity to turn to crime, and their tendency to displace native citizens from jobs (Huntington 2005, Borjas 2001, Gimpel and Skerry 2008). Each of these concerns has been spelled out repeatedly and in great detail in the media, in the political sphere, and in scholarly outlets (Perez forthcoming, Brader et al 2012, Chavez 2008, Santa Ana 2004).

Moreover, although many inside and outside of the political arena dispute the threat narrative, it appears that the narrative has been absorbed by a significant segment of the white population. Across the white population attitudes on Latinos and immigration are diverse, but there is little doubt that many white Americans express real concerns about immigration and hold negative attitudes toward Latinos. Recent polls suggest that well over half of white Americans feel that immigrants are a burden on the nation, a slight majority think they add to the crime problem, and about half believe they take jobs away from Americans (CNN 2010). For many, the changes that are occurring in America represent a real threat.

Third, and critically for our account, this threat narrative has recently taken on increasingly clear *partisan* implications. Although there is still considerable variation within each party's leadership on the issue of immigration, empirical studies demonstrate growing partisan divergence on immigration between leaders of the two parties (Jeong et al 2011, Miller and Schofield 2008). As we will see, these divergent stances on immigration are borne out by interest group ratings, voting patterns in state legislatures, elite partisan rhetoric, and the

perceptions of the public. When Republican and Democratic leaders take divergent stances on immigration and other issues of special relevance to the Latino community and when Republicans stand more strongly against immigration, the two parties present individual white Americans with a stark choice. For those who are concerned about the Latino population and the growth of immigration, this may be reason enough to support the Republican Party.

In short, many white Americans will see that America is changing, will believe that immigration is driving many of the negative changes they see, and will know that the two parties represent two different responses – one largely on the side of immigrants and one largely in opposition to immigration. For many white Americans, this may be a powerful motivation to defect to the Republican Party.

Skeptics may ask at this point whether immigration can really lead to substantial changes in party identification when party identification is considered to be one of the most stable and immovable identities in American politics (Green et al 2002, Campbell et al 1960). For many, partisan identity is the 'unmoved mover' that colors a wide array of political perceptions and that remains largely unaltered by the politics of the day (Goren 2005). That may be true – although some dispute that characterization – but even those who write forcefully about the immovability and durability of party identification note that major shifts in partisanship do occur under one circumstance. When the social groups associated with each party change, mass shifts in partisanship can occur and have occurred (Green et al 2002, Goren 2005).

Immigration is unique in that it has changed the social group imagery of the parties. The growth of the Latino population and the increasing support of Latinos and other immigrants of the Democratic Party means that a party that as late as 1980 was still 80 percent white is now more than 40 percent non-white. A party that was supported by lower class white interests

increasingly became a party that was supported by the black community and since the 1980s has increasingly become a party that is supported by Latinos and other immigrants. In other words, what it means to be a Democrat as changed. This means that even for inattentive Americans who may have little knowledge of the issues of the day and who may have strong attachments to a political party, immigration could still change their partisanship.

Testing Our Theory

Since our argument contends that immigration is fundamentally re-shaping American politics, our data must be weighty and wide-ranging. The evidence should not be limited to one election, one survey, or one year. Instead it should span across a considerable range of contests, a comprehensive set of surveys, and meaningful period of time. The evidence should also not be subtle. We should see substantial movement – on the order of magnitude that could sway elections and alter the balance of power in American politics.

Demonstrating this kind of robust change is not a simple task. Thus, the bulk of this book is designed to offer a clear and systematic assessment of how just how far reaching immigration's impact is on the basic political choices and identities of the white American public. We begin this process by looking at the big picture – overall patterns in aggregate white partisanship over the last 50 years. If immigration has had a major impact on American politics and has caused the defection of substantial numbers of white Americans from the Democratic Party to the Republican Party then there should be signs of a marked change in aggregate white partisanship.

Demonstrating a large partisan shift is important but this kind of aggregate analysis is at most suggestive. Even if we can uncover a major shift in white partisan attachments that

coincides with the growth of the immigrant population, the origins of the shift will still by no means be certain. Immigration could be a fundamental driving force in the defection of so many white Americans to the Republican Party. But there are a wide range of alternative accounts for this large scale movement to the right. Some contend that African Americans – and not Latinos or other immigrants – have driven whites to the Republican Party (Hood et al 2012, Black and Black 2002, Carmines and Stimson 1989, Edsall and Edsall 1991, Valentino and Sears 1995) Scholars and political observers also point to other cultural and social factors like gay marriage, abortion rights, or the war on crime as primary determinants of white Republicanism (Adams 1997, Layman and Carmines 1997). Similarly, some have claimed that Republican gains are driven by an advantage on foreign affairs and the greater willingness of Republican leaders to confront our enemies. Finally, there are perhaps even more fundamental issues like taxes, the scope of government, and the economy that are undoubtedly a central consideration for most Americans when they choose to take partisan sides (Shafer and Johnston 2005, Lublin 2004, Abramowtiz 1994).

In order to tie this partisan shift to immigration we need to undertake more fine grained analysis that can rule out these other factors. To demonstrate this causal connection, we compile several large national public opinion surveys and develop a series of models of individual partisan choice that not only incorporate attitudes on immigration but that also take into account each of the alternative explanations known to shape partisanship. An even more decisive test is to look at changes in individual party identification over time. If we can predict when and if a particular individual will change her partisan affiliation from Democrat to Republican based on their pre-existing attitudes on immigrants, then we can be more certain that immigration is driving partisanship rather than the reverse. This kind of panel data, while not perfect, represent

close to the gold standard in identifying causal connections. In addition, we assess the causal ties between immigration and partisanship at the aggregate level. Specifically, we look to see if the public's views on immigration at one point in time predict changes in aggregate white partisanship in future time periods – a test that gets us even closer to causality.

Although party identification is generally considered to be the principal driving force in American politics, it is by no means the only measure we might care about. At its heart, democracy is about votes and elections. Who wins office and who doesn't? If immigration is having a fundamental impact on the political arena, we should also see it in the vote. Thus, we will move on to consider the role that immigrant-related attitudes play in a series of national elections. Once again using an array of public opinion surveys we will do our best to distinguish between the effects of immigration and any number of other factors purported to shape the vote. Our focus will primarily be on the 2008 contest between Barack Obama and John McCain but to make a more general statement about the link between immigration and American politics, we realize that we need to assess the influence of immigrant-related views on a wide set of elections and years. Thus, we repeat our analysis of the vote going as far back as 1976 and as recently as 2012 and we gauge the role of immigration not just in presidential contests but also in elections for Congress, the Senate, Governor, and beyond.

Finally, for individual citizens policies, rather than parties or politicians might be the true measure by which to judge a democracy. It is not who is elected but what they do once in office that ultimately matters. As such it is important to evaluate links between immigration and policy views. It would hardly be surprising to find that those Americans who hold more negative feelings toward different segments of the immigrant population favor more restrictivist policies that curb the number of immigrants, that reduce the benefits and services that immigrants can

receive, and that in different ways make life difficult for immigrants – legal or illegal. This is, in fact, a central focus of much of the immigration literature (eg Ha 2009, Hood and Morris 1998, Stein et al 2000, Green et al 1998).

But we suspect that effects of immigration will extend much more broadly into a range of related policy arenas. We suspect these broad ranging policy effects for two reasons. First, policy debates on a range of issues that are ostensibly not about immigration are increasingly being infused with references to both legal and illegal immigrants, the broader Latino population, and other aspects of the immigration process. Take health care, for example. After much of the recent debate on health care reform focused on whether or not the Democratic reform package would cover undocumented immigrants, a recent PEW poll found that 66 percent of those opposed to the plan reported that they were opposed because the plan might cover illegal immigrants. Welfare reform since the 1990s has similarly been permeated with discussions of Latinos and illegal immigrants. California's Proposition 187, which sought to restrict public services to undocumented immigrants, is only the most prominent example. The fact that just under 70 percent of whites view Latinos as particularly prone to be on welfare suggests that the connection between Latinos and welfare is now firmly in place (Bobo 2001). Latinos and crime is another readily available script throughout the nation (Bobo 2001). Crime, terrorism, and illegal immigration account for fully 66 percent of network news coverage of Latinos (NAHJ 2005). Concerns about immigration should therefore be linked to attitudes on crime, welfare, education and the like.

Second, evidence of race impacting core policy views would not be new. Research has already shown that non-racial policy can be racially coded (Mendelberg 2001). In particular, there is evidence that individual policy preferences on welfare, education, crime, and a host of

other core issue arenas have, at least at some points in the past, been shaped by attitudes toward blacks (Gilens 1999, Kinder and Sanders 1996).

Given the importance of race in the past and given the increasingly central role played by immigration and Latinos in the political debates of today, there is every reason to expect broad ranging policy effects. Thus, we offer a broader study of the effects of immigration on a range of policy areas that includes health, welfare, crime, and education.

All of these empirical tests offer an opportunity to establish a link between immigration and American politics. But none tells us how individual Americans make that connection. How do individual Americans learn about immigration and its consequences? What is the source of their concerns and political motivations? In other words, what is the mechanism that translates demographic change into political consequences?

In the second third of the book we explore these mechanisms. Our goal here is to get at the actual mechanisms through which demographic changes leads to political consequences. In our theory, we outline two such mechanisms – demographic change and the media. One is the direct recognition of racial change by individual residents and the sense of racial threat that that demographic change can produce. We believe that reactions to larger immigrant populations are analogous to past white reactions to larger black populations. As researcher from Key (1949) to Olzak (1992) and Giles and Buckner (1993) have so aptly demonstrated, many individual white Americans appear to be threatened by larger black populations and as a result have reacted in negative ways as black populations have grown or become more empowered.

We test the racial threat model with an innovative research design that incorporates both the size of the local Latino population and the size of the state-level Latino population. The idea is to see if whites who live in close proximity to larger Latino or immigration populations tend to

feel more negative views of immigrants, favor more punitive policies, align more regularly with the Republican Party and more consistently support Republican candidates.

Although we believe there is a direct link between demographic change and white views, we also contend that whites learn about immigration from other sources as well. Namely, we maintain that the media is a critical source of information on immigration. How whites view immigration, whether they think it is a widespread problem, and ultimately whether they buy into an immigrant threat narrative are all, in our opinion, likely to be shaped by what they see, hear, and learn from various media outlets. Thus, to try and further understand the underlying mechanism driving immigration's transformation of American politics, we conduct a series of tests of media coverage and its relationship to white partisanship. Specifically, using a comprehensive data set of New York Times coverage of immigration over the last three decades, we assess the tone, content, and salience of immigration coverage over time. Then we look to see if attention to negative aspects of immigration by the media leads to large-scale changes in aggregate white partisanship. In essence, when the media repeats the immigrant threat narrative, does an increasing portion of the white public identify as Republican?

Finally, we turn to an examination of the consequences of this move to the right for policymaking across the states. If the majority white public has, in fact, moved to the right in response to a growing immigrant population, we should see a robust relationship between the size of the immigrant population and policy direction. Given that states have become increasingly active in advancing immigrant-related policy and are, outside of the federal government, the principal policy maker, we focus our examination on state level policy. In our tests, we look to see if states with large and growing Latino populations are more likely to enact policies that could negatively impact the local immigrant population. Specifically, do states

respond to larger Latino populations by increasing criminal punishment, reducing educational funding, decreasing welfare support, and cutting health care spending?

The Transformation of White American Politics

The results that we will present over the ensuing pages will demonstrate the wide-ranging impact of immigration on the politics of white America. Our analysis shows a massive, yet largely overlooked, shift in aggregate white partisanship. In 1980, white Democrats dominated white Republicans numerically. Today the reverse is true. As immigration's impact on America has grown, whites have fled to the Republican Party in every larger numbers. The end result is that the principal partisan choice of white America has been totally reversed.

At the aggregate level, we show that when media coverage of immigration uses the Latino threat narrative, the likelihood of whites identifying with the Democratic Party decreases, and the probability of favoring Republicans increases. At the individual level, we will demonstrate that how we think about immigration tells us a lot about our policy preferences, our partisan ties, and our voting decisions. Whites who are fearful of immigration tend to respond to that anxiety with a measurable shift to the political right. Similarly, where we live and in particular whether we live in states with large numbers or few Latinos greatly influences those same political choices. As immigration encroaches more and more on different neighborhoods, whites who live in those areas are more and more apt to want to disinvest in public spending and less and likely to offer support to less advantaged segments of the population. In short, who we are politically is driven in no small part by immigration.

One direct result of all of this is the passage of a conservative policy agenda in the areas most affected by immigration. Our analysis shows a close connection between the size and

growth of the state Latino population and state policy making. In states with larger and faster growing Latino population all areas where immigrants and Latinos could benefit from public support – whites have been exceptionally successful at reducing educational funding, decreasing welfare support, and cutting health care spending.

Implications

What we learn about immigration and its impact on American politics will have wide ranging implications for our understanding of how race does or does not work in America, for our grasp of the emerging place of Latinos in the hearts and minds of white Americans, and perhaps most obviously for predictions about the future balance of power between Democrats and Republicans in the tug-of-war that is American politics.

What is striking about the empirical patterns we will present in the ensuing pages is not that immigration matters. What is striking is just how broad the effects are. We already know that many white Americans have felt threatened by different minority groups across American history (Tichenor 2002, Olzak 1992). What is impressive is just how wide ranging those effects remain today and how the presence of different minority groups can heighten or diminish those effects. In a political era, in which many claim that the significance of race has faded, we find that Latino or immigrant related views impact the political orientation of many members of the white population. Party identification – the most influential variable in American politics – is at least in part a function of the way individual white Americans see Latinos and immigrants. So too is the vote in national contests for President and Congress. In short, who we are politically at our core is shaped substantially by deeply felt concerns about immigration and racial change.

What is also clear from this pattern of results is that the Latino population has become a more central factor in American race relations. In American history, the issue of race has traditionally been viewed through the lens of a black-white dichotomy. That is no longer true today. The increasing visibility of immigration and its widespread impact on the nation's economic, social, cultural, and political spheres appear to have brought forth a real change in the racial dynamics of our politics.

There are also implications for the future balance of power in American politics. The pattern of results presented here suggests that at least over the short to near term, determining which party will dominate American electoral politics is very much an open question. The conventional view of pundits and prognosticators and maybe even most social scientists is that the dramatic growth of the minority population and its strong ties to the Democratic Party portend the demise of the Republican Party. That may be true in the long term. But that prediction ignores the white population and the possibility of a widespread white backlash in the short term. Given that whites still makeup about three-quarters of the voters in the nation and will likely be the clear majority for decades to come, there is every reason to believe that whites will have a real say in who governs. Indeed, the white population's rapidly growing allegiance to the Republican Party points toward a very different short term future - one that might more likely be highlighted by Republican victory than by Democratic dominance.

Finally and perhaps most importantly, the dramatic surge in white support for the Republican Party has disquieting implications for the future of race relations in this nation. While many have hoped for the end of large-scale racial tensions and some have even acclaimed the election of Barack Obama as the first sign of a post-racial America, the political impact of

immigration seems to be leading America in the opposite direction. The rightward shift of many white Americans on one hand and the leftward drift of much of the racial and ethnic minority population on the other is exacerbating already large racial divides (King and Smith 2011). The last presidential election, for example, was by some calculations the most racially divided presidential contest in American history. Immigration and other factors appear increasingly to be pitting the declining white majority against the growing non-white minority. Division is a normal and health part of democracy but when the core dividing line in a nation becomes closely aligned with racial and ethnic demography, larger concerns about inequality, conflict, and discrimination emerge. In short, when race becomes the primary determinant of political decision making, the nation's population is in danger of being driven apart.

Hanging in the balance is the fate of America's immigrants, its racial and ethnic minorities, and other less advantaged segments of the population. To this point, our results suggest that the white backlash has in many ways been successful. Our analysis of policy outcomes across the states indicates that whites have been especially effective in disinvesting in public goods in the states where immigration is most deeply felt. Precisely where the number of immigrants is largest and where the need is the greatest, these public funds have become less and less available. All of this has distressing implications for the welfare of these different groups. Unless the partisan politics of immigration shift dramatically, more newcomers will simply mean more of a white backlash and greater disinvestment. Immigrants and minorities themselves will have more and more of a say as they increase in size but they are a long way off from becoming a majority of the voting public. That means, unfortunately, that things may get worse before they get better.

Race, Immigration, or Undocumented Immigration?

Up to this point, we have been deliberately imprecise about defining exactly which immigrants or which aspect of immigration threatens white Americans. Are white Americans most opposed to some specific aspect of immigration policy (e.g. the number of immigrants, the education levels of immigrants, or border security issues) or are they more concerned about the immigrants themselves? And if immigrants are at the heart of the response, is it all immigrants or a subset of immigrants like illegal immigrants or Mexican immigrants? Another possibility is that restrictive policy is directed more at a racial group that is most closely associated with the negative side of immigration (e.g. Latinos).

Our imprecision stems largely from the fact that we believe these different categories tend to be muddled together in the minds of individual white Americans. In theory, categories like illegal or undocumented immigrant, legal immigrant, and Latino are all distinct from each other. But in the practice of American politics, these concepts often blur together. Media coverage and the rhetoric of the two major parties and other political elites often conflate these different groups. It is, therefore, likely that for most individual Americans, immigration is not a precise threat but rather more of a general concern generated by the changes that immigration is bringing to America. In light of these muddled categories, we will undertake tests that in different ways measure attitudes towards Latinos, Asian Americans and other immigrant-related groups to try to get a clearer sense of just who or what it is that white Americans are reacting to.

What will be clear is that the core of this threat does not appear to be linked to the growing Asian American population. Asian Americans, as we shall see, are viewed quite differently from these other groups and white reactions to proximity to large numbers of Asians are radically different from white reactions to large influxes of Latinos. There are all sorts of

reasons why whites might make this distinction. Asian Americans are much less apt than Latinos to be in America illegally, they tend to fall much closer to whites than to Latinos on the socioeconomic scale and sometimes even surpass Whites on these indicators. Asian Americans, at least until very recently, were also much less clearly aligned with the Democratic Party than Latinos or African Americans have been (Hajnal and Lee 2011). Perhaps most critically, whites tend to have very different stereotypes of Asian Americans than they do of Latinos or the broader immigrant category. Whereas Asian Americans are often viewed as a model minority that is intelligent, hard-working, law abiding, and successful, Latinos are more regularly thought of as less intelligent, welfare prone, illegal, and poor (Bobo 2001, Lee 2001). As a model minority Asian Americans may be viewed as more of a potential partner. By contrast, Latinos may be viewed as an economic, social, and cultural threat.

Chapter Outline

PART 1: THEORY

Chapter One: A Theory of Immigration Backlash Politics In this chapter, we offer an explanation of how immigration could lead to a broad white backlash that transforms the basic political leaning of much of white America. Specifically, we contend that the rapid and steady growth of the immigrant population with the immigrant threat narrative that dominates media coverage of immigrants work together to lead to widespread concerns about immigration. When Republican elites offer a distinctly anti-immigrant platform and Democrats counter with little support for these policies, the many Americans who are anxious about immigration are drawn to the Republican Party and its candidates.

PART II: VIEWS ON IMMIGRATION AND DEFECTION TO THE REPUBLICAN PARTY

Chapter Two: Attitudes towards Immigrants and White Party ID

This chapter moves from an aggregate to an individual level assessment of whites' partisan preferences. Using data from the American National Election Survey and a series of other national public opinion surveys we show white Americans who harbor anti-immigrant sentiments are much more likely than others to identify as Republican. This is true regardless of what other potentially relevant political factors we take into account, how we measure partisanship, or which survey we focus on. Importantly, we find using panel data that changes in individual attitudes toward immigrants precede shifts in partisanship. Similarly, we demonstrate using aggregate data that the public's views on immigration predict shifts in macropartisanship. Immigration really is driving individual defections from the Democratic to the Republican Party.

Chapter Three: Attitudes towards Immigrants and Vote Choice

In this chapter we assess whether the effects of immigration extend to the electoral arena. Are concerns about immigration leading to greater support for Republican candidates across a range

of elections from the Presidency to Gubernatorial contests? The findings reveal a strong and robust relationship between immigration attitudes and White vote choice. Whites who hold more negative views of immigrants have a greater tendency to support Republican candidates at the presidential, congressional and gubernatorial levels even after controlling for party identification and other major factors purported to drive the vote. The result has been a slow but steady shift of white support from Democratic to Republican candidates over the past thirty years.

PART III: SHIFTING PARTISAN POWER AND THE ROLE OF LATINO POPULATION GROWTH AND THE MASS MEDIA

Chapter Four: The Geography of the Immigration Backlash

In this chapter, we examine one of two causal mechanisms that help to explain White anxiety over immigration. Specifically, we find a strong and consistent link between the size and growth of the state Latino population and white attitudes on a range of immigrant-related policies and white partisan choices. All else equal, whites who live in states with more Latinos are more punitive, less supportive of welfare and other public services, and generally more conservative than whites in other states**.** Whites in those same states are also significantly more likely to support the Republican.

Chapter Five: Media Coverage of Immigration and White Macropartisanship

This chapter focuses on the second factor responsible for driving White fears over immigration--the mass media. Specifically, we assess the relationship between media coverage of immigration and aggregate shifts in white party identification. We begin by outlining the media's profit driven incentives to frame immigration in a negative manner. Our content analysis of immigration-related articles from *The New York Times* from 1980-2010 clearly demonstrates that

when the issue of immigration is brought to the attention of the public, it is generally with an emphasis on the negative consequences of immigration. We then show that this negative coverage leads to important effects on white partisanship. Across this thirty-year period, we find that the reliance on the "Latino threat narrative" by the media is correlated with significant defection away from the Democratic Party and increases in the proportion of the public that identifies as Republicans and Independents.

PART IV: THE CONSEQUENCES

Chapter Six: Latino Population Size and State Policies

The final empirical chapter examines the implications of this backlash on the policy decisions of state legislatures. Our analysis from the data from the National Association of State Budget Officers (NASBO) as well as a range of other sources reveals the impact that Latino population size has on policies tied to immigrants and Latinos. We find that in states with larger Latino populations, public goods provision drop significantly and funds for welfare, health, and education all decline. However, once the Latino population passes a threshold, policy outcomes become more pro-Latino.

Conclusion: Implications for a Deeply Divided America

In the final chapter, we summarize the main findings of the book and engage in a discussion of the book's contributions to the areas of race, immigration, and American politics. Our results, we think, confirm the important role that immigration plays in American politics and also highlight the enduring but shifting role of race in American politics. Where African Americans once dominated the political calculus of white Americans, Latinos appear more likely to do so

today. The movement of so many white Americans to the right has broad ranging implications both for the future balance of partisan power and for the likely trajectory of American race relations. With a clear majority of the white population now on the Republican side and a clear majority of the minority population now on the Democratic side, politically conflict in America is increasingly likely to be synonymous with racial conflict – a pattern that threatens ever greater racial tension.

Chapter One. A Theory of Immigration Backlash Politics

America has a checkered history with race. At times racial discrimination has been a core element of the country's social and institutional fabric. The ownership of millions of African American slaves represents just the darkest stain on the nation's historical record. There are certainly many others. The annexation of the American west from Mexico, the maltreatment of tens of thousands Chinese laborers in the late 19th Century, the internment of thousands of Japanese during World War II, and the strict color lines enforced and encoded in the Jim Crow south all demonstrate the ability of Americans to accept and actively engage in grossly unequal practices. Too many times in the past, the United States has demonstrated a woeful indifference to the rights and interests of those it views as different or somehow less deserving (Smith 1999)

At the same time, America and the American public seem firmly committed to the ideals of equality for all (de Tocqeuville 1966, Hartz 1955). From the Founders onward Americans have expressed strong support for the inalienable rights of man. When questioned, the vast majority of Americans clearly and emphatically advocate for basic and universal human rights (Hochschild 1981). It is, therefore, not surprising that the United States has at times been at the forefront of movements to expand the definition and practice of equal rights.

Although these two traditions – one of 'racial hierarchy' and another of 'inalienable rights' – have clearly collided throughout American history, most would agree that the balance of power has slowly but inexorably shifted over time toward greater equality (Klinker and Smith 1999). The path toward more expansive human rights has been anything but even and there have been notable periods of regression but across the long arc of the nation's history, the United

States has moved toward greater adherence to universal rights in both rhetoric and practice (Klinker and Smith 1999).

For many, the current wave of immigration represents an opportunity to move even further on the path toward equality (Hochschild 2012). From this perspective, the large scale arrival of a motivated, energetic, and racially diverse population should serve to demonstrate the folly of racial ascription and institutional inequality. And at least at first glance, there are compelling signs of immigration's positive impact on America and American race relations in particular. With large scale immigration has come rapidly rising rates of inter-racial marriage and newer, more complex, and much less rigid racial categories.[3] From the relative simplicity and rigidity of the 'one-drop' rule that governed the black-white divide for much of America's history, we have progressed to an era where the Census records almost any conceivable mix of racial identities and where the fastest growing group of Americans may well be those who identify with more than one racial group.

Paralleling all of this is an impressive record of assimilation for today's immigrants. Despite starting on a weaker economic and educational footing than previous waves of immigrants, today's immigrants have by and large been able to make substantial intergenerational strides on almost every conceivable measure of economic and social incorporation (Alba and Nee 2005). By the third generation in America, America's newcomers have come close to matching or even exceeding the average American on English language ability, educational attainment, patriotism, and other core American values (Alba and Nee 2005, Bean and Stevens 2003, Citrin et al 2007, de la Garza et al 1996). The rapid incorporation of these diverse newcomers is a strong sign of an increasingly open society and may even be an

[3] Today, 15 percent of all new marriages are inter-racial or inter-ethnic, a figure that seems well-nigh impossible given the sharp dividing lines that only recently governed the American south (PEW 2010).

indication that America has reached a point where racial considerations are largely immaterial. Many have begun to ask if we are, in fact, approaching a post-racial America (King and Smith 2011, Steele 2008).

In this chapter, we argue that far from the nation moving away from the use of race as dividing line, immigration is actually leading to greater divisions and greater tensions – at least in the political sphere. As the immigrant population has grown, more and more Americans have become aware of the demographic, economic, and cultural changes that are occurring. For many that awareness has spurred real anxiety. The fear is driven in part by the size of the immigrant population itself but more substantially by an immigrant threat narrative that is perpetuated by the media and politicians alike. As the number of immigrants coming to this country has grown over the past half century, so too has attention to this narrative. Images of immigrants clandestinely crossing the US-Mexico border, committing crimes, and demanding ever more from the nation serve to heighten anxiety among those who may already be concerned about the direction the nation is taking. Once aroused that anxiety seeks a political home. When the two major parties chart divergent courses on the question of immigration, with one often bemoaning the social, cultural, and economic costs associated with immigrants and the often willing to admit the benefits that immigration can provide, the political choice for Americans becomes clear. For those who fear the changes wrought by immigration, the Republican Party provides a natural home.

The end result, we contend, is a rightward shift for a large segment of white America. As anxiety about immigration has grown, white partisanship and politics has become increasingly affected by this issue, with more and more white Americans espousing a less generous, more

indignant politics that seeks to punish immigrants that violate American norms and strives to cut off services and other public goods that could benefit immigrants.

In what follows we outline our theory of immigration politics and detail how immigration could be reshaping the politics of white America.

Why Immigration Matters in American Politics

Immigration is undoubtedly one of the most important forces shaping the nation today. But what role does immigration play in the political life of this nation? Few clear answers to this question have emerged. We know much about the actions and allegiances of immigrants themselves (Wong et al 2011, Hajnal and Lee 2011, Abrajano and Alvarez 2010, Alvarez and Garcia Bedolla 2003). The 40 million foreign-born residents of the United States have undoubtedly become an important player in electoral contests across the nation (Abrajano and Alvarez 2010). The immigrant voice in American politics is no longer a hope. It is very much a reality. But that immigrant vote still represents a small fraction of the nation's active electorate. Fewer than five percent of the voters in this country are foreign born.[4] If immigration is going to have a deeper impact on the politics of the nation, it will be with the larger, native born population.

And what of the broader American public? Is the existence of large-scale immigration changing it in any remarkable way? Is the nation's dramatic demographic transformation accompanied by an equally consequential political transformation of those who are already here? Or put more specifically, is it impacting the core political decisions of individual Americans and affecting the winners and losers in American democracy?

[4] Analysis of the Cooperative Congressional Election Survey indicates that only 3.6 percent of the votes cast in the 2010 general election were by the foreign born.

On these latter kinds of questions, we have remarkably few answers. As we will see, political scientists and other observers of American politics have done a great deal to try to assess how we feel about immigrants and immigration (Hopkins and Hainmueller 2012, Cohen-Marks et al 2012, Schildkraut 2011). They have in various ways explored the determinants of immigration attitudes (Wright and Citrin 2011, Hainmeuller and Hiscox 2010, Brader et al 2008, Schildkraut 2005, Scheve and Slaughter 2001, Citrin et al 1997, Quillian 1995). But somewhat surprisingly, we have done much less to look systematically at the consequences of our attitudes about immigration. Do our feelings about immigration ultimately influence how we feel about policies, parties and candidates? Does immigration affect who we are politically?

Remarkable Demographic Change

We contend that it does. Americans are limited political animals in many ways. They tend not to follow the minute details of the day's political debates. And they often show little interests in the candidates and campaigns that are waged for their benefit. Their knowledge of basic political facts is often sorely inadequate (Delli Carpini and Keeter 1996). But immigration is no ephemeral phenomenon. Unlike many of the other political developments that American politicians debate, immigration is massive, it is local, and it is long term. We believe that one of the reasons immigration is so central in the politics of individual white Americans is its almost overwhelming magnitude. Every year for over five decades upwards of a million immigrants has arrived on the shores of this nation. Immigrants and their children now represent one in four Americans (U.S. Census 2005). The vast demographic change that has occurred and that continues to occur is impossible for white Americans to miss.

What makes the change more remarkable and for some more menacing is its diversity. Immigrants are distinct racially and ethnically from the native population. Immigration has moved us from a primarily black-white world in which whites dominated numerically, economically, politically, and in almost every other sphere to a much more racially complex world. Latinos now significantly outnumber African Americans. Asian Americans are by some measures the faster growing pan-ethnic group. And perhaps most importantly whites are not far from losing their majority status.

All of this demographic and racial change is, of course, accompanied by the extensive presence of Latinos, Asians, and other immigrants in the mass media. There are also the frequent interactions with non-native speakers in the nation's streets, workplaces, and neighborhoods as well as marked and visible changes in the types of businesses springing up in towns and cities across the nation. Individual whites Americans may not be aware of many important developments around the world but they are surely aware of the immense change that immigration is exacting on the nation. It would be surprising if immigration were not playing a more central role in the minds of white Americans

The Immigrant Threat Narrative

The second key element of our account is an immigrant threat narrative that we believe fuels individual fears and insecurities about Latinos and immigrants. This wide ranging and oft-repeated narrative casts immigrants and especially Latinos in a negative light and highlights a host of pernicious fiscal, social, and cultural consequences to immigration (Chavez 2008, Santa Anna 2003). Within the economic sphere, there are claims that immigrants, particularly those who are in the country without legal status, are overly reliant on welfare, that they use

considerable public resources in areas like health and education, and that they fail to pay their share of taxes (Borjas 2001). The overall fiscal story, according to the narrative, is one of substantial economic loss for the tax payers of the nation (Borjas 2001). Other versions of the narrative are more focused on the possibility that immigration will bring with it crime and disorder (Gimpel and Skerry 2008). The narrative often also underscores the cultural dissimilarity of the immigrant population and the likelihood that continued immigration will lead to the demise of the traditional American way of life (Huntington 2005). Huntington is perhaps the most well-known critic of Latino immigrants' assimilation process but many others have lamented everything from the growing use of Spanish in America's schools and public spaces to a declining national identity (Brimelow 1995, Schildkraut 2005)

This threat narrative is also fed by talk of the sleeping Latino giant. Observers are quick to point out dramatic growth in the size of the Latino electorate - it grew by 64 percent between 2000 and 2008 - and equally striking increases in the number of Latino elected officials - from almost none to over 5,000 nationwide in the past 40 years (NALEO 2008). Large-scale immigrants' rights protests add fuel to suspicions about an increasingly strident immigrant population. All of these add a distinctly political dimension to the threat.

There is, of course, a vigorous debate about validity of the overall narrative. Many dispute each of the narrative's empirical claims. Nevertheless, there is little doubt that that this threat narrative has been absorbed by a large cross section of white Americans many of whom now express significant concerns about the costs of immigration. Extensive polling data reveal a depth of concern about immigrants and the immigrant population among a substantial share of white America.[5] In a range of different surveys almost half of all Americans believe that immigrants are a "burden" or feel that immigrants "hurt the country" (Pew 2013, Fox News

[5] All polling figures are compiled from Polling Report (2013) unless otherwise indicated.

2013). A third to a half of the nation wants current levels of immigration to be decreased (Pew 2013). And anywhere from a third to a half thinks "immigration is a bad thing for this country" (Gallup 2012).

Moreover, there are large segments of the population that have bought into each of the different elements of the threat narrative. Some 61 percent of Americans are concerned that undocumented immigrants are "putting an unfair burden on U.S. schools, hospital, and government services" (USA Today 2010). Another 87 percent are concerned or very concerned that immigrants "making low wages might make U.S. employers less willing to pay American workers a decent wage" (USA Today 2010). Fully 58 percent feel that immigrants do not learn English quickly enough (Pew 2006). And about a third of Americans believe that Latino immigrants significantly increase crime (Pew 2006).

Attitudes toward undocumented immigrants are even more severe. When given the choice between "primarily moving in the direction of integrating illegal immigrants into American society or in the direction of stricter enforcement against illegal immigration" almost 70 percent choose stricter enforcement (Quinnipiac Poll 2010). Two-thirds say that undocumented immigrants should not be eligible for social services (Pew 2006). Polls also show that well over 60 percent of Americans approve of Arizona controversial SB 1070 law. A clear majority would like to see a similar law that requires police to verify legal status in their state (Polling Report 2012). And a similarly large majority supports "building a fence along 700 miles of the border with Mexico" (Fox News 2011). Some 35 percent of Americans would go so far as to revise the Constitution to ensure that the children of undocumented immigrants who are born in the United States are not given automatic citizenship (Time Poll 2011). What makes these attitudes about undocumented immigration all the more alarming is that a majority of

Americans (61 percent) believe that most current immigrants are here 'illegally'.[6] In short, immigration has *not* gone unnoticed. And for many Americans, its consequences are anything but positive.[7]

Critically, for those with concerns about immigrants, immigration is not just a minor nuisance. It is often viewed as a major problem. Few view immigration as the nation's single most important problem. Gallup polls over the years reveal that less than 10 percent of Americans typically rate immigration as the most important problem facing the country. But that does not mean that immigration is a tertiary concern. In almost every survey that has asked about 'illegal immigration" in the last decade, an overwhelming majority of Americans – anywhere from 80 to 95 percent – view it as a "very serious" or "somewhat serious" problem (CBS News Poll 2010-2005). Put simply, there is a real depth to Americans' anxiety about immigration.

None of this is to say that America or even white America is not divided on immigration. Perhaps the fairest assessment of views on immigration is that the public is decidedly split. Many hold positive views of immigrants and are supportive of policies that would increase immigration and expand the rights and interests of immigrants.[8] Depending on the nature of the question and the exact wording used, surveys can suggest reasonably widespread support for different aspects of immigration. Roughly as many Americans think, "immigrants strengthen the US with their hard work and talents" as view immigrants as harming the nation (Pew 2006). A

[6] The best estimates indicate that only about a quarter of immigrants are undocumented (Pew 2006).
[7] It is worth noting that all of these figures understate white fears and concerns about immigration. National polling data, of course, include large numbers of Latino and Asian American respondents who are decidedly more pro-immigrant on every one of the questions that we highlight here. Typically, white views are 5-10 percent more anti-immigrant than these national figurers suggests.
[8] Another almost equally large segment of the American public appears to be ambivalent about immigration. For example, roughly one quarter of the population say they are unsure whether immigrants hurt or help the country (Fox 2010). A third think we should "welcome some" immigrants but not all (New York Times 2010). Likewise 42 percent of Americans feel that we should pursue both increased border security and a pathway to citizenship equally vigorously (PEW 2012). In short, for this segment of the population there appears to be real mix of admiration and concern.

similar proportion view immigrants on balance as an "economic benefit" as those who view it as an "economic burden" (PEW 2008). Americans appear to be especially supportive of earned legalization. In most surveys, a clear majority favors measures that would allow undocumented immigrants to remain in the country as temporary workers or eventually as citizens (Polling Report 2012). Over all, about a third of Americans say they are "sympathetic" to the plight of undocumented immigrants. An equal number feel that, "America should always welcome immigrants" (New York Times Poll 2010).[9]

All of these data suggest that immigration could represent an important dividing line in American politics. If feelings on immigration – both those that are negative and those that are positive – are strong enough, immigration could be propelling many of the core political choices that Americans make.

Views on Immigrants and Immigration Policy

We already know that attitudes toward immigrants strongly shape preferences on immigration policy itself. A wide range of studies has shown that whether individual Americans favor more or less immigration is closely linked to how they think about immigrants and in particular how positively or negatively they view the Latino community. Experimental work, by Brader et al (2008) clearly demonstrates that Latino images trigger opposition to immigration. And several others have shown that feelings toward Hispanics and undocumented immigrants are one of the most important determinants of immigration policy positions (Hainmeuller and Hiscox 2010). Finally, a number of different studies has shown that proximity to larger immigrant populations and in particular to larger Latino (documented or undocumented) leads to heightened opposition toward immigration (Newman 2013, Dunaway et al 2010, Ayers et al 2008, Hero and

[9] In addition, the most recent polls have shown a substantial up-tick in support for immigration.

Preus 2006, Stein et al 2000, Burns and Gimpel 2000, Hood and Morris 1998 but see Scheve and Slaughter 2001, Tolbert and Hero 2001). [10]

The Infusion of Immigration into American politics

But do attitudes about immigrants and/or the Latino population affect views across a wider array of policy questions? Can anxiety about immigration help drive broader political outcomes? Scholars have not yet made this kind of connection but we believe that views on immigration are likely to influence a broad range of policies.

The third critical development in our theory of immigration politics is the coupling of immigration with a range of policy debates and policy prescriptions. We contend that immigration has broad consequences for policy because concerns about immigrants are being increasingly infused into a broad array of ostensibly "non-racial" or "non-immigration" related policy areas.

We maintain that this spillover of immigration into a variety of policy areas is driven in part by demographic change itself. As the immigrant population grows, immigrants almost naturally become an increasingly central focus of policy considerations. But we also believe that the media and political elites play a large role; both sets of actors have increasingly put immigration at the center of a range of different policy debates. Images of Latinos and visuals of undocumented Hispanic immigrants are regularly inserted into articles and discussions about anything from health care to terrorism. When Americans now talk about welfare, crime,

[10] The same negative relationship between the size of the immigrant population and opposition to immigration has been found repeatedly at the cross-national level (Citrin and Sides 2004, Lahav 2004, McLaren 2003, Quillian 1995). Similarly, when Americans vote directly on immigration policy through the initiative process, greater racial diversity is often associated with support for measures that target minorities (Campbell et al 2006, Tolbert et al 1999 but see Hood and Morris 2000, Citrin et al 1990).

education, and a number of other important policy arenas, they often also talk about immigrants or some aspect of immigration.

Welfare is perhaps the most obvious case of a policy area that has been colored by immigration and in particular by the images and presumed actions of Latinos and undocumented migrants. Welfare reform since the mid-1990s has been permeated with images of Hispanics (Chavez 2008, Fox 2004). California's Proposition 187, which sought to restrict public services to undocumented immigrants, is one of the most prominent examples but it is certainly not the only one. Shortly after in 1996, Congress, with the strong backing of President Clinton, passed the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA), which limited federal public services to legal immigrants. Since 2005 most other states have sought to reduce immigrants' access to welfare (Rivera 2013).

Moreover, just under 70 percent of whites view Latinos as particularly prone to be on welfare (Bobo 2001). Work by (Gilens 2001) found no clear link between attitudes toward Hispanic and policy views on welfare in the 1990s but more recent work by Fox (2004, 2012) and Hero and Preuhs (2006) suggests a tightening relationship. Given that more Americans believe that immigrants come "primarily to use government services and welfare benefits" than believe that immigrants come "primarily for jobs", it would not be surprising to find that attitudes on immigration are now shaping white's preferred welfare policy prescriptions (Reason-Rupe Poll 2013).

Latinos, immigrants, and crime are another readily apparent script. When Latinos are in the news, criminality is a common theme. Fully 66 percent of network news coverage of Latinos incorporates crime, terrorism, or unauthorized immigration (NAHJ 2005). Likewise, as we will show in chapter 5, when the news media focuses specifically on the topic of immigration, much

of the coverage is negative in its tone and it also tends to focus on crime more than other issues.[11] The end result is a clear link between crime and immigration among the public. Despite the fact that only about a quarter of the foreign born population are undocumented, most Americans believe that the majority of immigrants are here without legal status (Kaiser 2006). These patterns spill over into stereotypes of Latinos. A majority of white Americans view Latinos as being particularly prone to violence (Bobo and Johnson 2000). Implicit attitude tests also now show a clear association between Latinos and being undocumented within members of the white population (Perez n.d.).

More recently, concerns over undocumented immigration have also spilled over into the issue of healthcare. Recall the events that transpired during President Obama's September 2009 speech to Congress regarding his proposed health care plan. When President Obama stated that the Democratic plans would not include coverage for undocumented immigrants, Representative Joe Wilson of South Carolina interrupted the President's speech and shouted, "You lie!". This outburst and the overall focus on undocumented immigrants have made Latinos one of the main "target" groups of this policy. After much of the debate on the plan focused on whether or not the Democratic reform package would cover undocumented immigrants, a PEW poll found that 66 percent of those opposed to the plan reported that they were opposed because the plan might cover undocumented immigrants (Pew 2009).

Deliberations about the merits of different educational reforms as well as access to public education itself have also become more and more focused on Latinos. Prop 187 began efforts to limit access immigrants' access to education. Other states like Alabama which passed the Beason-Hammon Taxpayer and Citizen Protection Act in 2011 in an effort to restrict

[11] Not only has the crime issue risen to the forefront of the national immigration debate, but it has also made its way to the sub-national level via a range of state and local initiatives such as those in Arizona and other ordinances targeting unauthorized immigrants.

undocumented immigrants from attending public schools.[12] The debate continues today in a different form with arguments for and against the Dream Act.

Similarly, images of the immigrant population also at least occasionally undergird debates about broader issues like jobs and taxes (Tichenor 2002, Newton 2008). High rates of unemployment and low wages can and often are linked to the flow of low-skilled, undocumented immigrants coming across the border (Borjas 2001). Given that large segments of the American population believe that immigrants are hurting wages and job prospects, it seems logical that many proposed solutions in this area would be influenced by considerations about immigration. The story on taxes is analogous (Borjas 2001). Concerns about unauthorized immigrants not paying taxes and the long term negative fiscal consequences of America's large immigrant population may already be shaping the willingness of white Americans to tax themselves to provide basic services (Hopkins 2009).

For those concerned about immigration and the growing Latino population, there are clear policy implications in each of these areas. Anti-immigrant sentiment in every case should lead directly to more conservative policy preferences. Concerns about immigrants' disproportionate use of public welfare and the sense that immigrants make up a larger and larger share of the welfare receiving population provide a strong motivation for retrenchment. The story on crime is similar. If immigrants are prone to crime and a growing subset of the criminal population is immigrant-based, then the solution is more punitive measures. More broadly, if immigrants are using services without paying taxes, then the services that we offer should be less

[12] While the law does not prohibit undocumented youth from enrolling in school, immediately after its passage, the percentage of Latino students enrolled in Alabama schools dropped by five percent. The courts have at least temporarily blocked this provision. http://www.nytimes.com/2011/10/04/us/after-ruling-hispanics-flee-an-alabama-town.html?pagewanted=1&_r=2&sq=alabama&st=cse&scp=3&

generous and the taxes we pay less onerous. This logic may go so far as to lead to disinvestment in core areas like education and healthcare. The overall story is that anxiety and resentment generated by the immigrant population should lead to less generous and more punitive policy choices.

If attitudes on immigration were tied to this range of policy debates, it would not be the first time. Research has, in the past, demonstrated a strong link between attitudes toward minority groups and non-racial policy. In particular, there is evidence that individual policy preferences on welfare have been shaped by attitudes toward blacks (Gilens 1999, Kinder and Sanders 1996). The racialization of welfare was no accident. For almost a half a century, political rhetoric and media coverage of welfare often highlighted this racial connection. Content analysis of media coverage has confirmed the relationship (Gilens 1999; Gilliam 1999; Zucchino 1997).[13] Clearly, these racialized images have had an impact. In experimental research by Gilliam (1999), whites' views towards blacks became more negative and their opposition to welfare increased when they were exposed to a news story featuring a black welfare recipient, as opposed to a White welfare recipient. The end result is that attitudes toward blacks have been found to be a primary factor driving support or opposition to welfare reform (Gilens 1999, Hurwitz and Peffley 1998).

The connection between crime and the African American population is just as clear with news coverage disproportionately featuring African Americans and white resentment toward blacks driving criminal policy preferences (Hurwitz and Peffley 1999, 1997, Gilliam et al 1996,

[13] Fully, 62 percent of major news magazine poverty stories between 1960 and 1992 featured blacks, and nearly 100 percent of the "underclass" in these news stories was black (Gilens 1999). Network television news was similarly skewed with 65 percent of the welfare stories referencing blacks. Fully, 62 percent of major news magazine poverty stories between 1960 and 1992 featured blacks, and nearly 100 percent of the "underclass" in these news stories was black (Gilens 1999). Network television news was similarly skewed with 65 percent of the welfare stories referencing blacks.

Kinder and Sanders 1994, Entman 1992, 1990). Here again, experimental studies demonstrate a clear link between media coverage, racial attitudes, and policy preferences (Gilliam and Iyengar 2000). More limited research has also shown a link between attitudes toward blacks and tax policy and a host of other ostensibly non-racial policy areas (Kinder and Sanders 1994, Sears and Citrin 1982). In short, a range of policies in America has often been and may continue to be racially coded.

Given the growing prominence of immigrants and Latinos in the news and in many of these different policy debates, it would be surprising not to find an increasingly close connection between attitudes on immigrants on one side and white Americans' policy preferences on the other. The implication of all of this is that if we want to understand the full extent of the impact of immigration on American politics, we need to consider the effects of immigration not just on how individuals think about immigration policy itself but also on how they think about the broader array of policies that are at times implicitly linked to the issue of immigration.[14]

None of this is to say that immigration is the primary motivation whenever white Americans consider these different policy areas. Immigration is unlikely to be the main driving force in any of the policy arenas. However, the coupling of immigration with each of these different policy debates should have consequences. For many individual Americans, concerns about immigration may be strong enough to lead to a small but recognizable impact in their policy views. If these different assertions are correct, existing studies are far too narrow and have greatly underestimated the impact of immigration on American politics.

[14] It is also possible that the link between immigration and political views extends even more broadly and even more deeply. Indeed, if immigration is pushing Americans to the right across this range of policy questions, then it may ultimately lead to movement across the core liberal-conservative ideological line that often delineates who we are politically.

Immigration in American partisan politics

The last critical development for our immigration backlash theory is the coupling of the immigrant threat with increasingly clear *partisan* choices. Driving this development is the growing policy gap between Democratic and Republican leaders on the issue of immigration. Although elites in both parties express a variety of views on immigration, the political entrepreneurs who have been most vocal about the immigrant threat narrative have generally come from the Republican side. [15] Republican leaders like Mike Huckabee and Tom Tancredo and conservative commentators like Bill O'Reilly, Ann Coulter, and Rush Limbaugh have repeatedly highlighted the ills of undocumented immigration and have pushed for a range of reforms to push current immigrants out of the country and to limit new immigration.[16] Even candidates like Mitt Romney who represent the more moderate faction of the party have at times taken to elements of the anti-immigrant platform like self-deportation and opposition to the Dream Act. Some have gone so far as to say that the only thing Republicans have offered Latino and Asian voters are "fear and hostility".[17] On the other side most Democratic leaders have either expressed support for a limited range of immigrants' rights or have avoided the issue altogether.

These increasingly divergent policy stances are borne out by votes in Congress. As Miller and Schofield (2008) have demonstrated there was reasonable strong Republican support for immigrant's rights during the Reagan era and little noticeable partisan division on immigration-related legislation as late as 1990. But since that time, it is clear that "the parties

[15] Many Democratic leaders are reluctant to publicly support immigrants' rights issues while many Republicans recognize the benefits of cheap labor to business.
[16] Business interests within the Republican Party who are beholden to cheap immigrant labor clearly favor less regressive immigration reforms but their views have been less and less likely to be vocalized by party leadership.
[17] http://www.nytimes.com/2013/07/08/opinion/immigration-in-the-house.html?hp&_r=0

have switched their positions on immigration" (Miller and Schofield 2008). Votes in Congress reveal an increasingly stark contrast with Republican legislators repeatedly supporting tougher laws against immigrants and Democrats favoring more admission and greater immigrants' rights (Jeong et al 2011, Miller and Schofield 2008). Wong (2012) finds that across all bills and amendments that Congress voted on between 2006 and 2012, Republican House and Senate members favored restrictive policies 98.4 percent of the time while Democrats supported those measures only 66.4 percent of the time. On any number of different immigration related issues including erecting a border fence, English as the official language, amnesty, government workers reporting undocumented immigrants, and anchor babies, current Republican leadership has largely aligned itself on the opposite side as the Democratic Party.

The same pattern of partisan divergence is evident at the state level. All of the infamous anti-immigrant state measures have been initiated and/or endorsed by state Republican leaders and largely opposed by Democrats. In Arizona, for example, no Democrat in the legislature supported the controversial immigrant enforcement bill, SB 1070, while all but one Republican voted for it (Archibold 2010). Battle lines in California over Proposition 187 were similarly partisan in their nature with Republican governor Pete Wilson one of the primary advocates of the "Save Our State" initiative and Democratic governor Gray Davis challenging the measure in court. There is also compelling evidence that Democratic and Republican leaders at the local level are just as sharply divided on immigration (Ramakrishnan N.D).

These divergent party stances on immigration are borne out by interest group ratings. Interest groups universally rate Democratic members of Congress as distinctly liberal on immigration and Republican members as strongly conservative. The Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR), for example, rates current Democratic House members on average

as a 10 out of 100 on their immigration legislation scale, with 100 denoting the most restrictive position on immigration. By contrast, Republican House members average 99. [18] A similarly anti-immigrant group, NumbersUSA, gave president Obama a failing grade on immigration while offering passing grades for all of the 2012 Republican presidential hopefuls. The National Latino Congreso, sees the same large partisan gap but as a decidedly pro-immigrant group it gave Democrats high grades – an average score of 81 percent while labeling Republican legislators as extraordinarily poor on immigration- an average rating of seven percent.

We contend that the increasing distance between Democratic and Republican leaders on matters of immigration could have very real consequences for individual partisan identities. When Republican leaders criticize immigrants, condemn their actions, and bemoan the costs to America, and Democratic leaders either ignore immigration or offer lukewarm support for the plight of immigrants, they present individual white Americans with a compelling partisan logic. For those who are concerned about immigration and the growing Latino population, there is a powerful motivation to choose the Republican Party.

Party leaders are not, however, the only actors involved in this process. We believe that immigrants and Latinos are also contributing to the sorting of white Americans into pro- and anti-immigrant parties. The pro-Democratic tendencies of the growing Latino population have dramatically altered the racial group imagery of the Democratic Party. Latinos, the largest and most visible immigrant group and the one most often associated with the immigrant threat narrative, have overwhelmingly chosen to favor the Democratic camp. Latino Democratic identifiers outnumber Latino Republican identifiers by more than two to one (Hajnal and Lee 2011). When Latinos vote in Congressional elections, the Democrat to Republican ratio is

[18] FAIR's ratings show little partisan divide on immigration as late as 1996 when Democrats averaged a score of 44 on immigration and Republicans received an average score of 52. But by the early 2000, FAIR's ratings by party sharply diverge.

almost four to one. And in 2008 and 2012, over two-thirds of Latinos supported President Barack Obama. The end result is a dramatic reconfiguration of the racial group imagery associated with each party. As late as the early 1960s neither party was closely aligned with a racial minority group. Both parties received at least 90 percent of their votes from white voters. But since that time the share of Democratic support coming from racial and ethnic minorities has risen dramatically, while the share of Republican support from whites has held steady. Today, according to a recent Pew survey, almost half of Democratic identifiers (45 percent) are racial and ethnic minorities – and almost half of those minority supporters are Latinos. By contrast, 92 percent of Republican identifiers today are non-Hispanic whites. It would be hard not to notice that the Democratic Party gains a great deal of its support from racial/ethnic minorities while the Republican Party do not.

Latino elected officials have helped to reinforce this change in the racial group imagery associated with each party. Today, well over two-thirds of the Latinos in Congress are on the Democratic side. Some 84 percent of Latino state legislators are Democrats.[19] Overall about 90 percent of Latino elected officials in partisan office across the nation are Democrats (NALEO 2008). [20] The end result is that the leadership of the two parties looks very different. Fully one third of the Democratic members of the House of Representatives are non-white, while less than four percent of Republican House members are non-white. If these newcomers are a threat, they are a threat that generally sides with the Democrats.

In short, many white Americans will see that America is changing, will believe that immigration is driving many of the negative changes they see, and will know that the two parties represent two different responses – one largely on the side of immigrants and one largely in

[19] By contrast 97.9 percent of Republicans serving in state houses are white (Bowler and Segura 2012).
[20] Latino elected officials were not always so likely to come out of the Democratic Party numbers but over time the partisan imbalance has grown dramatically.

opposition to immigration. For many white Americans, this may be a powerful motivation to defect to the Republican Party. If these motivations are compelling enough, we should see ever increasing numbers of white Americans beginning to support Republican candidates and self-identifying as Republicans.

Immigration and the Intractability of Party Identification

But can immigration really influence partisan preferences? Party identification is, after all, one of the most stable and most enduring political attachments (Campbell et al 1960, Green et al 2002). For many of us, partisan psychological attachments begin in childhood and persist for all of our lives (Niemi and Jennings 1991).

There are, however reasons to suspect that feelings on immigration could affect partisan views. First, although party identification is often durable, it can and does shift (MacKuen et al 1989). Aggregate shifts in partisanship are well known and well documented (Erikson et al 2002). Long-term panel data also demonstrate widespread and unambiguous individual-level changes in partisan attachments (Niemi and Jennings 1991). Indeed, a range of scholars contends that for many Americans party identification is a standing decision that incorporates issue positions and other factors (Fiorina 1981, Erikson et al 2002). This Downsian perspective has garnered increasing support over time and is one of the two main theoretical accounts of individual partisanship (Downs 1957).

Second, if any issue can provoke change in partisan attachment, it may well be immigration. Scholars of this Downsian perspective do not contend that all issues are equally likely to sway partisanship. Rather they suggest that partisanship is more likely to change when

the issue is relatively simple or symbolic and when the issue stirs deep feelings (Carsey and Layman 2006, Carmines and Stimson 1980). On both counts immigration conforms.

Immigration is by most accounts a relatively easy or symbolic issue. Studies suggest that attitudes toward immigrants are at their base linked to deep, enduring attitudes like ethnocentrism and prejudice (Kinder and Kam 2009, Citrin et al 1997). How we think about Latinos, for example, says a lot about our policy views on immigration (Brader et al 2008). In this sense, immigration may be similar to racial issues. Attitudes toward immigrants and immigration may be deeply held and stable enough to sway partisan considerations.[21]

The salience of immigration certainly ebbs and flows but it seems clear that substantial segments of the American population view it as an important issue. Polls over the last decade indicate that close to 90 percent of Americans view undocumented immigration as a serious problem with roughly 60 percent calling it a "very serious" problem. What's more when asked explicitly if positions on immigration would sway their partisan choices, most Americans say that immigration will win out. Fully 70 percent of Americans say they would likely vote against a political party or candidate that "took a position on immigration that you disagreed with… even if you agreed with that party or candidate on most other issues" (Fox News Poll 2010).

But what if party identification is not really driven by issue positions and is instead a more deep-seated psychological attachment? Could partisanship still change in the face of large-scale immigration? We contend that even in this case, there is reason to expect substantial shifts in partisanship. Even those who consider party identification to be a stable and enduring political attachment, admit that it can be altered under particular circumstances. One of those

[21] Another feature of the immigration issue that may make it more likely than other issues to lead to shifts in partisanship is its cross-cutting nature. At least until recent decades, Americans who expressed more anti-immigrant views were found in large numbers in both political parties (Newton 2005).

circumstances is a change in the group images associated with each party. Even Green et al (2002) who write forcefully about the immovability and durability of party identification note that major shifts in partisanship have occurred over time as the group images associated with each party have changed. Indeed, part of the seeming permanence of partisan attachments stems from the fact that those group images rarely change. But with immigration and growing Latino support of the Democratic Party, there is little doubt that party images have changed in recent decades. A party that once served and was supported by lower class white interests increasingly became a party that was supported by the black community and since the 1990s has increasingly become a party supported by Latinos and other immigrant groups. In other words what is means to be a Democrat has changed. This is precisely the kind of change that could alter enduring partisan attachments.

Again, there is a precedent in American racial politics. Large scale, racially motivated shifts in partisanship have occurred in the past. That defection of Whites from the Democratic Party is from another time and revolves around a different group – African Americans. Nevertheless, it is analogous to the situation today. Several studies assert the movement of whites to the Republican Party in the 1970s and 1980s was a direct response to the Civil Rights Movement, the increased political participation of African Americans, and growing black support of the Democratic Party (Hood et al 2012, Black and Black 2002, Carmines and Stimson 1989, Huckfledt and Kohfeld 1989, Giles and Evans 1994). As blacks joined the Democratic Party in large numbers and as the Democratic and Republican Parties diverged on the main racial policy questions of the day, white identification with the Democratic Party – especially in the

South – sharply declined.[22] According to this view, whites' sentiments about blacks helped Republicans dominate national elections (Valentino and Sears 2005, Edsall and Edsall 1991).[23]

If the growing strength and increasing demands of one racial minority group has triggered broad political reactions and a widespread white backlash in the past, there is at least a possibility that the growing immigrant population could spark a similar reaction today. Given that Latinos have replaced blacks as the largest ethnic/racial minority population, it is at least plausible that Latinos and other immigrant groups have become more central in the political thinking and partisan choices of white America.

Immigration and the Vote

Although party identification is generally considered to be the principal driving force in American politics, democracy at its heart is about votes and elections. Who wins office and who loses? If immigration is having a fundamental impact on the political arena, we should also see evidence of it in the vote. For all of the same reasons that we believe immigration is impacting partisan identity, we expect attitudes on immigration to shape the partisan vote. As rates of immigration increase, anxiety about immigration expands, and the Democratic and Republican brands increasingly differ on immigration, it makes more sense for individual voters to use immigration to help shape their electoral choices. Strong concerns about immigration and two starkly different choices on immigration will, we contend, convince many white voters to favor Republican candidates.

[22] Many contend that attitudes toward blacks continue to strongly shape the white vote and in particular had a substantial impact on Barack Obama's presidential bid (Lewis-Beck et al 2010, Bobo and Dawson 2009, Tesler and Sears 2010.

[23] At the same time, it is important to note that there are several authors who dispute just how much of this partisan shift was due to attitudes about African Americans (Shafer and Johnston 2005, Lublin 2004, Abramowitz 1994). According to this alternate view, other factors like economic considerations and social issues helped drive white defection to the Republican Party.

Mechanisms-How Does Immigration Impact Individual Americans?

We have suggested why large-scale immigration should shift white policy preferences and partisan affinities towards the right. But we have not yet described how that process might work. How do individual Americans see and experience immigration and how do they learn about the Democratic and Republican Parties' divergent stances on immigration? We have presented a broad theory but we have not yet detailed a causal mechanism.

What then is the mechanism through which the phenomenon of immigration seeps into the political consciousness of individual Americans? Different individuals are likely to 'experience' immigration in varying ways but we believe that two mechanisms are especially critical in shaping individual experiences and reactions. One is direct and geographically based. That is, living in areas where immigration is more pronounced and the visible effects of immigration are more widespread should lead to diverse experiences and spark stronger reactions than residing in areas with little to no immigration. The other mechanism is indirect, based on what sorts of information individuals are exposed to. Namely, the media in many cases functions as the main purveyor of information for the American public (Iyengar and Kinder 1987; Prior 2005). What they see and learn from the news media is likely to significantly shape their opinions about immigration and their political reactions to America's newcomers.

These two mechanisms are far from the only ways in which immigration could impact the public. Partisan elites, as we have already mentioned, can play a crucial role driving this process. Likewise interest groups and in particular organizations that are strongly in favor or strongly opposed to immigration in America can through a range of activities influence individual Americans. But we believe that geographic context and media coverage of

immigration represent two of the more critical mechanisms helping to shift the political preferences of many white Americans to the right.

The Geography of Immigration

Individual Americans' experiences with immigration are decidedly uneven. Some live in contexts that have been overwhelmingly transformed by large numbers of newcomers, while others live in areas that have been largely untouched by the shifting demographics of immigration. We believe variation in immigrant settlement patterns has real consequences for how white Americans think about immigration and how they react politically.

Our story is essentially one of racial threat. We contend that proximity to sizable and growing immigrant populations raises the stakes of immigration. With larger numbers comes the potential for more competition for scarce resources like housing, education, welfare, jobs, and any number of other public services. Greater visibility of the immigrant population can also, in and of itself, spark stereotypes and concerns. The underlying idea is that a larger out-group increases feelings of threat – either because that threat is real or simply because that threat is perceived.

There is, in fact, growing evidence to suggest that this kind of racial threat mechanism is in place. A range of contextual studies has shown that concerns about immigrants and opposition to immigration both increase as the size of the local immigrant population grows (Ha and Oliver 2010, Ayers et al 2008, Campbell et al 2006, Hood and Morris 1998, Citrin et al 1997). However, more research needs to be conducted before we can firmly connect an immigrant contextual threat to white political behavior. For one, the results, to this point, are not always consistent. Some studies have found no relationship between immigrant context and

views (Fennelly and Federico 2008, Dixon 2006, Taylor 1998, Burns and Gimpel 2000). Others have even found a positive relationship (Ha 2010, Hood and Morris 1998, 2000, Fox 2004). For another, existing studies of immigrant or Latino context are too narrow. None of these contextual studies has looked at the impact of immigrant context on partisanship and other core political decisions. [24]

If it turns out that we find a broad political reaction to immigrant context, it will mirror past white reactions to the black population. As researchers from Key (1949) to Olzak (1992) and Giles and Buckner (1993) have so aptly demonstrated, many individual white Americans appear to be threatened by larger black populations and as a result have reacted in negative ways as black populations have grown or become more empowered. Larger black populations have been associated with more resentment of blacks (Taylor 1998, Fosset and Kiecolt 1989 but see Oliver and Wong 2003), violence against blacks (Corzine et al 1992, Olzak 1992), support for racist candidates (Giles and Buckner 1993, Black and Black 1973), greater opposition to policies that might benefit blacks (Soss et al 2008, Keiser et al 2004, Fellowes and Rowe 2004) and increased support for the white candidates and the Republican Party (Giles and Evans 1994, Huckfeldt and Kohfeldt 1989). If current reactions to immigrants mirror these racialized patterns of the past, whites' political behavior should be directly shaped by the immigrant context in which they live.

The News Media and its Framing of Immigration

Although we believe there is a direct link between demographic change and white political views, we also contend that whites learn about immigration from other sources as well.

[24] One important exception is an article by Hero and Preus (2006) that reveals a relationship between the size of the state immigrant population and welfare policy at the state level.

Namely, we maintain that the news media is a critical source of information on immigration. How whites view immigration, whether they think it is a widespread problem, and ultimately whether they buy into an immigrant threat narrative are all, in our opinion, likely to be shaped by what they see, hear, and learn from various news media outlets.

We contend that the "Latino threat" narrative (Chavez 2008) has come to dominate media coverage of immigration, largely because of profit-based incentives (Hamilton 2004). The overreliance on this particular frame generates new fears about the presence of immigrants or activates and heightens existing concerns. Ultimately, by informing individuals about the largely negative attributes of immigration and by exposing the public to a biased perspective on this highly complex and multifaceted issue, the news media may be able to raise concerns about immigration enough to alter core partisan attachments.

In testing these two mechanisms, we have two main goals. First and foremost, we simply want to learn more about the mechanism through which immigration works to affect American politics. How do larger national trends reach and influence individuals with respect to immigration? In addition, these tests will also help us to confirm the causal link between immigration and white political behavior. If we can demonstrate a link between proximity to immigrants and media coverage on the one hand and white views and political choices on the other, we have yet more evidence that immigration matters in the American political arena.

The Underlying Causes of White Anxiety about Immigration

One question we have not answered is why so many white Americans feel threatened by immigration in the first place. The anxiety surrounding immigration is surprising given that most empirical studies suggest that native-born Americans should not feel any great sense of

threat. The best social science data suggest that the net impact of immigration is generally a positive one for most Americans (Bean and Stevens 2003). With few exceptions, the documented costs of immigration are relatively small and hardly warrant severe reactions.[25] Given the overall empirical reality of immigration, few Americans should feel threatened.

Why then do so many Americans appear to have real concerns about immigration? One can claim – as we do – that negative media portrayals spur anxiety, that politicians and other political entrepreneurs can add to the combustible mix by maligning immigrants, and that interest groups can further stoke fears among the public. But that still begs the question of why so many white Americans are susceptible to the message. If all or almost all of the empirical evidence is to the contrary, why does the immigrant threat narrative resonate so broadly?

This is not a question that we directly address in this book. It is, however, a subject that has dominated much of the political science literature on immigration. It is also an area of research that has attracted widespread debate. Most contend that cultural and racial considerations are behind the Whites' responses. Views on immigration have been linked to ethnocentrism (Kinder and Kam (2009), social dominance and authoritarian personality (Pettigrew et al 2007), nationalism (Citrin et al 1990), and racial prejudice (Perez forthcoming, Schildkraut 2011, Brader et al 2008, Burns and Gimpel 2000). Indeed, there is absolutely no doubt that attitudes about immigrants are correlated with a range of different measures of cultural

[25] Very few white Americans are in direct competition with immigrants for jobs and wages have not been impacted for all but the lowest skilled Americans (Borjas 2001, Bean and Stevens 2003). Legal immigrants do tend to use more social services than native-born Whites (Borjas 2001). And most undocumented immigrants do not pay income tax. And while it is the case that most undocumented immigrants do not pay income tax, they do contribute to the tax base through consumption taxes. But the overall fiscal consequences are at worst slightly negative over the short term and probably positive over the long term (Bean and Stevens 2003, Borjas 2001, Smith and Edmonston 1997). On the cultural side, there is also little sign that immigrants are a real threat. Immigrants and their offspring learn English at impressive rates (Bean and Stevens 2003), are as patriotic as the native population (Citrin et al 2007), and hold similar values to the rest of the population (de la Garza et al 1996).

and racial views as well as with various personality types. Whether there is a causal connection between each of these measures and attitudes on immigration is not as clear.

There is also no shortage of other hypotheses about what drives opinions about immigrants. Many other scholars point in particular to economic considerations. In one variation, those who are most directly in economic competition for immigrants are supposed to be the most opposed to immigration (Malhotra et al 2011). In another version, unease about immigration should reach its highest levels during trying economic times. These economic models have at times garnered significant empirical support. At the aggregate level, studies have linked economic conditions to immigration attitudes (Scheve and Slaughter 2001, Quillian 1995). Others have shown that opinions about immigration are intricately connected to personal economic considerations. Unskilled, native born Americans whose jobs and wages are most in jeopardy, tend to be the most strongly opposed to immigration (Hanson 2005). Likewise, taxes and public spending considerations can play a role. Hostility to immigration is especially pronounced among Americans whose taxes are most likely to be affected by immigration – high income earners who live in states with relatively expansive social welfare benefits and large numbers of immigrants are especially hostile to immigration (Hanson 2005). At the same time, other empirical studies raise some doubt about these kinds of economic arguments (Citrin et al 1997). More recent experimental studies strongly suggest that economic considerations play little role in structuring attitudes on immigration (Hainmueller and Hiscox 2010).

In the end we are largely agnostic about what it is that drives attitudes about immigrants. Each of these different theories about the underlying causes is likely to be at least partly true for some Americans. Fortunately, the story that we are presenting in this book is consistent with any

of the economic, racial or cultural threat mechanisms. If white Americans feel threatened by immigration – regardless of why they feel threatened - it could have political consequences.

It is important to note that our story is not simply a retelling of these earlier accounts. Even after controlling for the various factors we discussed above, we find that attitudes about immigrants have a robust, direct effect on a range of political choices. Thus, there is something important about immigration itself that matters to white Americans when they make basic political decisions.

Who is the Threat?

Another question we have yet to address is exactly who or what Whites are threatened by? Are their concerns focused on the undocumented or do their fears extend to the entire immigration population? Is fear concentrated on a single nation-origin group like Mexican Americans who represent a large share of immigrants and hail from a neighboring country with a large, porous border? Or alternatively, are concerns much broader? Do the children of immigrants and even those who appear to be immigrants spur similar anxiety? On a related point, are concerns most fixed on the growing Latino population or does the discontent that Americans feel about immigration also stem from the rapidly expanding Asian American population?

In theory, white Americans could make important distinctions between each of these different immigrant groups. In reality, we think they tend to make only one real distinction – between Latinos and Asian Americans. We argue that Latinos and Asian Americans should be examined separately because the two groups hold very different structural locations in American society and are viewed in distinct ways by white Americans. In terms of status, Asian

Americans tend to fall near the top of the racial hierarchy while Latinos are disproportionately likely to fall near the bottom. Latinos are two or three times more likely than Asian Americans to be classified as living at or below the poverty line. Median Latino household income is only about half of median Asian American household income –the figures were roughly $60,000 and $30,000 in 2005. Differences in educational outcomes are just as stark. While only about 20 percent of Latinos currently graduate from college, almost 60 percent of Asian Americans do (United States Department of Education 2008).

Stereotypes of the two pan-ethnic groups are also radically different. As Bobo (2001), has documented, almost seventy percent of whites rate Latinos as especially welfare prone and almost half see them as less intelligent than whites on average. By contrast, less than 15 percent of whites hold the same negative stereotypes of Asian Americans. Instead, when whites stereotype Asian Americans, it is often for being successful. Almost half of all whites believe that Asian Americans are especially hardworking. Only five percent of whites feel the same way about Latinos (Bobo 2001, Lee 2000).[26] These distinct stereotypes are also consistent with survey findings on inter-group attitudes. Most whites say they feel closer to Asian Americans than they do to Latinos (NCCJ 2005). In the same poll, 92 percent of whites said they get along with Asians while only 67 percent felt the same way about Latinos.

It is not immediately clear what these two patterns imply in terms of a threat to the white community. However, it is unlikely that Whites will react to the two immigrant groups in a similar fashion. If concerns about welfare, redistribution, and criminality dominate white views,

[26] More recent survey data concur. A PEW survey from 2006 reports that whites were roughly twice as likely to believe that Latinos were prone to end up on welfare, to increase crime, and to do poorly in school than they were to have similar sentiments about Asian Americans (PEW 2006).

then reactions to the Latino population could be much tougher.[27] By contrast, Asian Americans, as a kind of model minority could represent less of a threat and more of a potential partner.[28] Which of the two panethnic groups represents more a threat will have to await more direct testing. But given the distinct structural locations of the two groups, both in terms of socioeconomics as well as the structure of racial hierarchy in the US, we believe that it is critical to examine the impact of Latinos and Asian Americans separately.

At the same time, we believe that most white Americans who are concerned about immigration tend not to make important distinctions between different segments of the Latino population. Although in theory categories like undocumented immigrant, immigrant, Mexican American, and Latino are all distinct, in the practice and rhetoric of American politics these concepts often blur together. In surveys, Americans tend to reserve their most negative sentiments for 'illegal immigrants' but when asked about 'immigrants' as a whole, Mexican Americans, or even Latinos, answers tend not to differ all that much. And as we will see, attitudes towards these different categories of immigrants tend to be highly correlated. What we think about undocumented immigrants seems intricately interconnected with what we think about immigrants and the broader Latino population. Critically, in the analysis that follows, it will typically not matter which of these categories we use. We expect to find that whether we employ a question on 'illegal' immigrants, one on immigrants, or another that assesses views of the Latino population, our results will be strikingly similar. When Americans talk about

[27] Experimental research indicates that whites report much higher levels of anxiety about the costs of immigration when the images are of Latinos (Brader et al 2008).
[28] One other possibility is that the higher socioeconomic status of Asian Americans represents *more* of a threat to members of the white community.

undocumented immigrants, Latinos, or immigrants in general, the images in their heads are likely to be the same.[29]

At this point, however, our expectations are based only on our beliefs and not on data. Before we can conclude that white Americans tend to make few distinctions between different aspects of immigration, we will have to undertake a series of tests of these different versions of the immigrant threat narrative. In light of these potentially muddled categories, we will empirically test several measures of Latino and immigrant views to try to get a clearer sense of just whom it is that white Americans are reacting to.

Alternative Theories

We have presented one theory of immigrant politics – one that we hope is compelling. But there are certainly alternative ways of conceptualizing immigration's impact on American politics. Many astute observers of American life and politics might suspect that immigration has a very different effect on the attitudes of individual Americans.

One real possibility is that growth in the immigrant population could lead to more and more positive views of immigrants and a greater willingness to support policies and political parties that might serve the interests of immigrants. After all, as we have already noted almost all of the empirical studies show that immigrants as a whole are successfully integrating into American society. Over time and across the generations, immigrants and their children tend to climb up the economic ladder, attain higher educational outcomes, and generally come closer and closer to catching up to the average American (Alba and Nee 2005, Bean and Stevens 2003).

If immigrants and their children are working hard, succeeding, and otherwise following the basic tenets of the American creed, then logically one might expect that increased contact

[29] Whites' estimates of the size of the legal and undocumented populations are strikingly similar (Enos 2012).

with immigrants would effectively teach individual Americans that they have little to fear from immigration. Greater immigration could ultimately demonstrate to individual Americans that immigration could be a vital resource for the nation. This kind of contact hypothesis has been put forward for relations with African Americans and has received at least some empirical validation (Allport 1954, Jackman and Crane 1986, Pettigrew 1997, Dixon and Rosenbaum 2004).[30] Systematic testing of learning from direct contact with immigrants is rare (but see Lay 2012). But there are at least tangential signs that many Americans could be learning positive lessons from immigration. As we have already highlighted, surveys show that large segments of the native population recognize the benefits of immigration and appreciate many of the qualities that immigrants bring to this country. These Americans may be eager to support policies that would open the border or help immigrants succeed and assimilate in American society.

In this vein, any Republican strategy of targeting immigrants might backfire and could actually enhance the willingness of individual white Americans to support more liberal, more-Democratic and more pro-immigrant policies. If the bulk of the population is sympathetic to immigrants and see the positions of the Republican Party as an unfair attack on immigrants, then we might see a growing segment of the white population defecting to the Democratic Party. Indeed, there is evidence that just a shift occurred on a small scale in California in response to the Republican Party's support of Proposition 187 (Bowler et al 2008 but see Dyck et al 2012).

[30] Studies that assess contact with African Americans generally find that it does have positive effects. White Americans who have close ties to racial and ethnic minorities either through work, social activities, or friendship tend to have more favorable views of these groups (McClain et al 2006, Dixon and Rosenbaum 2004, Pettigrew 1997). But one real concern with many studies of self-reported contact is that it is usually unclear whether contact breeds understanding or whether individuals with more favorable views of the out-group tend to spend more time with members of the out-group. Other studies that assess geographic context and proximity to minorities or immigrants are much more likely to find that proximity is associated with more negative views of the outgroup (Newman 2013, Dunaway et al 2010, Ayers et al 2008, Hero and Preus 2006 but see Scheve and Slaughter 2001, Tolbert and Hero 2001).

Still others might contend that immigration is simply not important enough in the minds of individual Americans to generate the kinds of broad political consequences that we have envisioned in our theory of immigrant politics. Two classes of data might support this latter view. First, the American public has rarely viewed immigration as the nation's most important problem. Rarely have more than 10 percent of Americans cited immigration as the most pressing problem facing the nation (Gallup 1990-2013). Moreover, over the last few decades the nation has faced any number of other issues that have captured the lion's share of the public's attention. Many scholars would argue that war, economic woes, emerging social issues and a number of other concerns have dominated recent political debates and have therefore likely dominated the decision making calculus of individual Americans (Adams 1997, Layman and Carmines 1997, Miller and Shanks 1996). Finally, some scholars would contend that even if immigration were on par with these other issues, it still would have little impact on core partisan decisions. Regardless of how compelling our theoretical account may or may not have been, there are those that believe that party identification is largely impervious to change (Campbell et al 1960, Green et al 2002). Concerns about immigration, however widespread, will simply not be enough to substantially alter deep seated psychological attachments to a political party that are formed early in life. If anything, attitudes on immigration will fall in line with pre-existing partisan attachments (Green et al 2002).

Immigration and a New Democratic Defection: What Do We Know?

We have outlined what we think is a compelling story of immigration and its impact on the politics of white America. But as we have just noted, our story is not the only possible version of reality and could be wrong. Which of these different accounts is accurate? One

obvious place to look for answers is the existing literature. What do scholars have to say about the broad consequences of immigration for American politics?

The answer is precious little. Although we believe that there are valid reasons to suspect that immigration has wide ranging consequences for the politics of white America, we have to admit that few of these effects have been documented. Almost all of the literature on immigration and American political behavior focuses on one of two subjects. Either scholars focus on immigrants themselves and their political choices or they seek to understand underlying attitudes about immigration. They rarely seek to understand the implications of our views on immigration.

In the first case, there is ample evidence that immigrants themselves have had an impact on American politics. Numerous studies have illustrated the growing strength of the minority vote and the ability of Latinos, the largest immigrant group in the nation, to sway electoral outcomes (de la Garza et al 1992, DeSipio 1996, Alvarez and Garcia Bedolla 2003, Abrajano and Alvarez 2010). Other research has highlighted different partisan patterns among the immigrant population and in particular the increasing attachment of immigrants and their offspring to the Democratic Party (Wong et al 2011, Alvarez and Bedolla 2003, Hajnal and Lee 2011). These are certainly important developments in the course of American political history. But as we have noted, immigrants are only a small fraction of the population.

What about research on whites and immigration? Here the overwhelming focus has been on understanding and explaining what drives our attitudes toward immigrants and what motivates our preferences on a range of polices related to immigration (Schildkraut 2011, Hainmueller and Hiscox 2010, Ha 2010, Kinder and Kam 2009, Brader et al 2008, Pettigrew et al 2007, Campbell et al 2006, Scheve and Slaughter 2001, Quillian 1995, Citrin et al 1997).

Why is it is that we do or do not like immigrants? What leads us to favor or to oppose policies that would open or close the border?

These various studies can be incredibly helpful but the end result is an important gap in our understanding of immigration and its impact on American politics. Although widespread attention has been paid to the *causes* of our attitudes about Latinos and immigration, little research has focused on the broader *consequences* of immigrant-related views.[31] We know very little about how views of immigrants shape core political affiliations and basic voting decisions. To date, there is scant evidence that the partisan affiliations or voting decisions of individual white Americans strongly reflect their views on immigration or the Latino population.[32]

Research that focuses on patterns of partisanship and the vote tends to fall into one of two categories. Either it ignores immigration and race altogether (McCarthy et al 2006, Miller and Shanks 1996, Alvarez and Nagler 1995, 1998), or if it does focus on race, it limits that focus to the impact of America's old black-white divide (Lewis-Beck et al 2010, Valentino and Sears 2005, Abramowitz 1994, Carmines and Stimson 1989). No study that we know of has demonstrated a connection between immigration and the white vote in national contests or revealed a link between immigration and white partisanship across the nation. Despite immigration's tremendous impact on the demographics of the nation and the large scale social, economic, and racial change that has ensued, there is little direct evidence that immigration has had an enduring impact on the basic political decisions of the white majority.
Comparative studies in Europe have identified clear links between the size of the national immigrant population and support for right-wing parties (Arzheimer 2009, Lubbers et al 2002).

[31] Scholars have, however, found clear evidence that immigration fundamentally shapes the views and votes of Latinos (Nicholson and Segura 2005 but see Abrajano et al 2008, Alvarez and Garcia Bedolla 2003).
[32] For exceptions see Fox (2004) and Hero and Preuhs (2006) who examine the link between immigration and welfare as well as Bowler et al (2006) who look at the relationship between immigration politics and white partisanship in California.

But the same has not been done in the United States. Ultimately, what is missing is compelling evidence that immigration is a core element of American politics.

This all means that more research needs to be done. There is, we would argue, every reason to expect that immigration will have a broad partisan impact on the politics of white America. Yet there is little to no available study of that impact. In the pages that follow, we seek to provide systematic, empirical evidence that assesses the broader political consequences of immigration.

Chapter Two:

Immigration, Latinos, and the Transformation of White Partisanship

with Michael Rivera

"The people who are coming across the border — as far as I'm concerned, they are common criminals"

-Bill Storey, 68, a retired civil engineer from Greenville, SC[33]

"What we need to do is put them [unauthorized immigrants] on a bus"

-Ken Sowell, 63, a lawyer from Greenville, SC

Bill Storey and Ken Sowell are far from alone in expressing concerns about immigration. As we have already seen more systematic public opinion surveys suggests that large segments of the American public express deep reservations about a range of different aspects of immigration. Up to two-thirds of all Americans think immigration is a 'serious problem" and a little over half feel that illegal immigrants are "mostly a drain on American society" (Univision 2010). In response, eighty percent of Americans favor more border enforcement agents, sixty percent of Americans would allow "police to question anyone who they think may be in the country illegally," half favor building a fence along the entire 700 length of the Mexican border to limit immigration, and a little over a third would revise the Constitution to prevent children of illegal immigrants from becoming automatic citizens (CNN 2012). Moreover, among white Americans, opposition to almost every aspect of immigration is higher than these nationwide figures suggest.

[33] Both of these quotes are from Michael D. Shear, "Bipartisan Plan Faces Resistance in GOP*" The New York Times*, January, 28, 2013.

In short, it is clear that immigration looms large in the minds of many white Americans. For these individuals, there is a real fear and anxiety there about what immigration and immigrants are doing to America. And at least for some there is a clear way out – the Republican Party and policies of exclusion, punishment, and retrenchment.

But do sentiments about immigration really drive the politics of large numbers of white Americans? Are concerns about immigration sharp enough, widespread enough, and politically relevant enough to shift appreciable segments of the white public to the right on the most profound political decisions they make – their party affiliation and their votes?

Although we contend that immigration is central to the politics of white Americans, we readily admit that there are reasons to suspect otherwise. First, as we have already documented, many segments of the white population hold positive or at worst ambiguous views of the immigrant population. For example, CNN reports that some 33 percent of Americans report being 'somewhat' or 'very sympathetic' to illegal immigrants and their families and the New Times poll found that a third of Americans believe that "America should always welcome all immigrants" (CNN 2011, NYT 2010). Second, despite relatively widespread concern about immigration, it usually does not generally rank as the most important problem facing the nation. Figures vary but generally less than 10 percent of white Americans place immigration as the single, most important issue facing the country. Finally, and most importantly, even when immigration does generate intense feelings, it may still not be enough to lead to substantial shifts in partisan attachments. For many in political science, party identification is the 'unmoved mover' – a remarkably durable and impressively potent element in American politics (Campbell et al 1960, Green et al 2002). From this perspective, Democrat and Republican are defining identities in the political realm that shape everything else from one's issue positions to candidate

preferences. From this perspective, the party that we are socialized into as children or young adults is the party that we are likely to remain attached to for the rest of our life. Can immigration really affect large-scale change on this near permanent substructure of American politics?

Tying Immigration to Partisanship- A First Step

Demonstrating the role that immigration plays in shaping partisanship and other political orientations will be a multi-step process. We begin, however, with the simplest, most direct, and at least for some the most convincing test. We show that how we think about immigrants is correlated with how we think about the parties.

That task begins by considering how we should measure our attitudes about immigration. Defining and operationalizing attitudes toward immigration is not straightforward. It is complicated by the fact that we do not yet really know who or what it is that white Americans are reacting to. Are they most concerned about undocumented immigrants or do their fears extend to the entire immigrant population? Likewise, are anxieties more focused on the growing Latino population or does the disquiet that Americans feel about immigration also stem from the growing number of Asian Americans? Alternatively, the alarm may be linked to a specific national origin group such as Mexican Americans.

In theory, categories like undocumented, legal, Latino, and Mexican American are all distinct. But as we noted earlier, in the practice and rhetoric of American politics, these categories largely overlap with one another. When politicians talk about immigrants, it is often synonymous with undocumented migrants and each is often accompanied with images of Latinos and Mexican Americans (Perez 2009; Chavez 2008). Likewise, when members of the American

public think about immigration they are very likely to have a picture of a Latino or of a Mexican American, and an impression that they are in this country without legal documentation (Perez 2009). In the minds of many white Americans these different categories simply blur together.

In light of these muddled categories, we will incorporate a series of different measures of immigrant views to try to get a clearer sense of which group most troubles white Americans. But since public opinion surveys are clear on one point – Americans express the most negative sentiments to undocumented immigrants – we begin by focusing on attitudes toward them.

We turn once again to the standard tool of American survey research – the American National Election Study and we begin with 2008 both because it is more recent and more critically because it contains a fine array of questions on undocumented immigrants – a stipulation that rules out most other years of the ANES. Specifically, the survey asks white Americans four questions that explicitly address this segment of the immigration population. The four questions are: 1) a standard feeling thermometer that asks how you feel about "illegal immigrants" and ranges from 0 (meaning extremely cold or negative feelings) to 100 (for extremely warm or positive feelings), 2) "Should controlling and reducing illegal immigration be a very important…not an important foreign policy goal?" 3) "Do you favor/oppose the U.S. government making it possible for illegal immigrants to become U.S. citizens?" and 4) "Do you favor, oppose, or neither favor nor oppose allowing illegal immigrants to work in the United States for up to three years after which they would have to go back to their home country?"

To reduce error in measurement and to get an overall measure of attitudes toward undocumented immigration, we combine the four questions and create an Alpha factor score for each respondent. The scale ranges from -2.8 to 1.7 with higher values representing more positive views of immigration. The four items cohere well with a scale reliability of .70 and an average

inter-item correlation of .36. In practice, it matters little how we combine these questions or whether we focus on a subset of these questions or on just one of these questions. A simple additive scale performs similarly in the analysis that follows. Also, in alternate tests when we substitute each single question or combinations of two or three of these questions, the pattern of results is similar.

Our main measure of partisanship is the standard 7-point party identification scale. Respondents place themselves on a scale that ranges from strongly Democratic (1) to strongly Republican (7). To assess the robustness of our results, in alternate tests, we also direct our attention to party feeling thermometers, dummy variables isolating Democratic identifiers and Republican identifiers, and unordered party identification models (utilizing multinomial logistic regressions).

Figure 2.1a -2.2b graphs a simple bivariate relationship between feelings, or affect, toward undocumented immigrants and four different measures of partisan attachments: 1) the proportion of Democratic Party identifiers, 2) the proportion of Republican identifiers.[34] The idea is to see whether a plausible connection exists between views of undocumented immigrants and partisan attachments.

[Figures 2.1a-2.1b go here]

As the patterns from these figures illustrate, how Whites think about undocumented immigrants is linked to how they think about the Democratic and Republican Parties. Each of the smaller boxes in the figure reveals a robust correlation between attitudes toward undocumented immigrants and white partisanship. What is impressive is not that there is a correlation but rather the magnitude of that correlation. Fully 45 percent of whites that have

[34] For the figure, we divide respondents into 10 evenly split groups based on their views on the illegal immigration scale.

more negative views towards undocumented immigrants identify themselves as Republicans. In contrast, only 13 percent of whites that feel more warmth to undocumented immigrants choose to align with the Republican Party. Similarly, as white attitudes shift from less from more negative to more positive views of undocumented immigrants, the likelihood of identifying as a Democrat increases from 17 percent to 40 percent. The relationship between views on immigration and partisanship is also pronounced if we focus on Democratic and Republican Party feeling thermometers.[35]

The figures above suggest a close connection between attitudes on immigration and partisanship.[36] But before we make stronger causal claims about that relationship, we need to consider two possibilities. First, it is possible that the correlation between views on immigration and partisanship is spurious. It may be that attitudes on immigration are correlated with party identification only because attitudes on immigration are correlated with some other factor that is itself driving our partisan attachments. On this point, there are several possibilities. The culprit could be liberal-conservative ideology or more specific issue positions on anything from preferences for government's role in the economy to social morality and race. The way to deal with this concern is to incorporate and control for all of the other main factors that have been known to shape partisanship.

[35] As affect toward undocumented immigrants go from cold to warm, the average level of affect towards the Democratic Party increases by more than 20 points on the 0-100 scale. Feelings about undocumented immigrants, however, do not have as substantial of an effect on White Americans' affect towards the Republicans. Going from the most positive to the most negative feelings towards immigrants shifts feelings about the Republican party by approximately 10 points on the 0-100 scale.

[36] PEW data reveal similarly strong connection between immigration and partisanship (Pew 2012). Their 2012 poll shows that immigration is now one of the issues that most distinguishes Democrats from Republicans. Six in ten Republicans feel that "newcomers threaten traditional American custom and values" compared to just 39 percent of Democrats. Likewise most Republicans (55%) say "It bothers me when I come in contact with immigrants who speak little or no English" while the majority of Democrats say it doesn't bother them (69%).

Second, we must also consider the possibility that the reason party identification and immigration-related views are correlated is because our partisan attachments are driving our attitudes on immigration rather than the other way around. Individual Americans could be taking cues from partisan leaders and adjusting their views on immigration to match those of a party that they know, trust, and believe in. If party identification is the "unmoved mover" that many claim, individual views on immigration could easily be swayed by elite partisan influences (Campbell et al 1960).

To help address this second concern, we perform a series of different tests. In this chapter we offer two direct tests of the causal story. First we will employ individual level panel data to determine if individual positions on immigration at one point in time help to shape future changes in individual partisanship. Second, we examine aggregate level to see if the public's views of immigration at one point in time predict subsequent changes in aggregate partisanship.

Then in the next chapter, we move on to focus on the vote. Assessments of the vote are critical because we can assess the impact of immigration views *after* controlling for party identification. In other words we can see if attitudes toward immigrants have a relationship with the vote that goes beyond partisanship. In related tests, we also assess the effects of immigrant-related views on the vote separately for Democrats, Independents, and Republicans and we examine the role of views on immigration in party primaries. The goal once again is to try to demonstrate that immigration matters when party does not. We now turn to this range of tests.

A More Comprehensive Model of Partisanship

Before we can offer confident conclusions about the importance of immigrant-related views on American politics, our analysis needs to incorporate a range of other factors that have

been shown to influence core decisions like party identification and the vote. Thus, in Table 2.1, we display a series of regressions that control for numerous factors from socio-demographics characteristics to issue positions, ideological views, and racial attitudes – all purportedly central to partisan choice in America. Each model is an ordinary least squares (OLS) regression with the standard seven point party identification scale as the dependent variable.[37]

[Table 2.1 goes here]

We start with a basic model (Model 1) that includes a traditional set of socioeconomic characteristics and other demographic variables. Given claims about class and religious based support for each party, we include basic markers of class (education, income, employment status, union membership), and a series of dummy variables measuring religious affiliation (McCarthy et al 2007, Adams 1997, Layman and Carmines 1997).

Model 1 suggests that many of these measures are important for partisanship but more importantly, it shows that net basic demographic controls, attitudes toward undocumented immigration are closely linked to partisan attachments. The estimates indicate that all else equal, non-Hispanic whites who have more negative feelings toward undocumented immigrants are just over one point more Republican on the seven point party identification scale than are whites with less negative views. [38] Given that a one point shift equals the difference between a strong Democrat and a weak Democrat, immigrant views could be greatly re-shaping American politics.[39]

[37] Ordered logit regressions lead to the same conclusions.

[38] These figures are based on a one standard deviation shift in views on immigration – a practice we follow throughout the rest of the book for estimating the magnitude of effects.

[39] We attempted to assess variation in the effects of immigration across different kinds of individuals. One might expect immigration to be especially threatening for the less well educated, those who are racially intolerant, or those who face more direct economic competition with low-skilled immigrants. Our tests revealed few clear and consistent interaction effects between immigration views and any of these different individual characteristics. We did, however, find significant variation in the effects of immigration across different geographic contexts. As we

Political choices in America are obviously about much more than immigration. In recent years, the two parties have squared off over America's ongoing economic recession, wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and the enduring terrorist threat facing the nation (Abramson et al 2007). Also, few would contest the relevance of moral values issues like gay rights and abortion to explain the partisan divide (Adams 1997, Layman and Carmines 1997). In addition the core ideological dimension – liberalism vs conservatism –undoubtedly helps to shape partisan choice. Lastly, research on American partisanship regularly highlights the role of retrospective evaluations of the president and the economy (Fiorina 1978, MacKuen et al 1989). As such, if we want to show that the relationship we see between immigration and party identification is not spurious, we have to incorporate these other factors.

In model Two, we do exactly that. Specifically, we include measures for: 1) basic ideology – the standard seven point liberal-conservative self-placement scale (from "extremely liberal" to "extremely conservative"); 2) war, terrorism, and security – "Do you approve/disapprove of the way the U.S. federal government has handled the war in Afghanistan?" "Do you approve/disapprove of the way the U.S. federal government has handled the war in Iraq?" and "Should federal spending on the war on terrorism be increased, decreased, or kept about the same?"; 3) the economy and retrospective evaluations –"Do you approve/disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling his job as president?" and "Would you say that over the past year the nation's economy has gotten better, stayed about the same, or gotten worse?"; 4) redistribution – "People who make more money should pay a larger percent of their income in taxes to the government than people who make less money," and "Should federal spending on the welfare be increased, decreased, or kept about the same?"; 5) morality

will detail in Chapters 4 and 6, the level of immigration you face greatly shapes how individuals react to immigration.

and religion - "Do you strongly favor… strongly oppose laws to protect homosexuals against job discrimination" and "Is religion an important part of your life?"

What we find confirms much of what we know about American politics. Most of these issues, the basic ideological orientation, and retrospective evaluations greatly influence which party individual Americans choose to support. What is striking, however, is that the inclusion of all of these different elements of American politics does not eliminate the impact of immigration. Views of undocumented immigrants still significantly shape white partisanship after controlling for a range of measures of issues, ideology, and retrospective evaluations.

Moreover, alternate tests indicate that it matters little which issues we include or how we measure issues, ideology, and retrospective evaluations. When policy questions on health care, crime, foreign aid, schools, women's rights, the environment, and science are added to the model, the impact of immigrant-related views on partisan attachments is largely unaffected.[40] Further, immigrant-related views remain significant when we substitute in alternate measures of economic policy preferences or retrospective evaluations. Regardless of one's opinions on the economy, the war, abortion, and other factors, views of undocumented immigrants are strongly associated with being a Republican.

Immigrants/Latinos or Blacks and Ethnocentrism?

One element of American politics that we have largely ignored to this point is the black-white divide. When race has mattered in American national elections, the main issue has usually been the rights and interests of African Americans (Klinker and Smith 1999, Carmines and Stimson 1989, Key 1949). Especially in 2008, with Barack Obama, the nation's first black presidential nominee on the ballot and evidence that racial resentment played a role in the white

[40] These "other issues" are not included in the main model because they are only asked of half of the respondents.

vote, these kinds of racial attitudes need to be integrated into the analysis (Lewis-Beck et al 2010, Bobo and Dawson 2009, Tesler and Sears 2010 but see Ansolabehere and Stewart 2009). Thus, in Model Three, we add four different questions from the racial resentment scale that have been developed by Kinder and Sanders (1996) and are included in most bi-annual editions of the ANES. All four measures explicitly ask about attitudes toward African Americans and combined the four measures have been shown to play a critical role in white public opinion (Kinder and Sanders 1996).[41]

The results in Model 3 indicate that the black-white divide remains significant in shaping white partisanship. Whites who are more racially resentful of blacks are, all else equal, 1.1 points more Republican on the party identification scale than are whites who are less resentful of blacks. But the results also suggest that immigration represents a distinct dimension that helps to shape white partisan ties. Even after considering the effects of racial resentment toward blacks, those who have more negative views of undocumented immigrants continue to be significantly more apt to identify as Republican.[42] Attitudes on immigration are not merely proxies for racial attitudes.[43] Immigration appears to be a highly relevant dimension of American politics.

[41] The four standard racial resentment questions are: (i) "It's really a matter of some people not trying hard enough; if blacks would only try harder they could be just as well off as whites." (ii) "Irish, Italian, Jewish and many other minorities overcame prejudice and worked their way up. Blacks should do the same without special favors." (iii) "Over the past few years, blacks have gotten less than they deserve." (iv) "Generations of slavery and discrimination have created conditions that make it difficult for blacks to work their way out of the lower class." In each case, respondents were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with the statement and how strongly. According to Kinder and Sanders (1996) these four questions all focus on the central element of American race relations: the extent to which blacks face barriers in American society.

[42] Given the historical significance of Barack Obama's candidacy in 2008, in alternate tests we also controlled for feelings about African American candidates. Specifically, we included the following three measures: 1) does the idea of black person being president make you feel uncomfortable, 2) do you think most white candidates who run for political office are better suited to be an elected official than most black candidates, and 3) do you think most white candidates are better suited in terms of their intelligence than most black candidates. Being uncomfortable with a black person as president was closely tied to partisanship but the inclusion of these measures did not affect the impact of immigration on white partisanship.

[43] When we replaced the four different racial resentment questions with an additive racial resentment scale or with a racial resentment alpha factor scale, the basic pattern of results did not change.

In our final regression analysis, captured by Model 4 , we further investigate the role of race and the possibility that immigrant-related views stand in for some deeper aspect of America's racial dynamics like racial prejudice or ethnocentrism (Kinder and Tam 2009, Brader et al 2008, Burns and Gimpel 2000). Specifically, we incorporate whites' views of African Americans, their views of white Americans, and their views of Asian Americans.[44] Specifically, we use a basic feeling thermometer toward each group.[45] Despite the inclusion of feelings toward the three different racial groups in the model, we still find that immigrant-related views are important for white partisanship. Whites with the most negative views of undocumented immigrants are one third of a point higher on the seven-point party identification scale than are whites with the most positive views of undocumented immigrants. The impact of immigration on American politics cannot be wholly reduced by incorporating traditional measures of stereotypes and ethnocentrism.

One other interesting result emerges when we incorporate attitudes toward other racial and ethnic groups. There is some suggestion that whites react differently to Asian Americans than they do to undocumented immigrants. In contrast to what we see with attitudes toward immigrants, whites who hold more positive views of Asian Americans are more likely to identify as a Republican. The estimated difference between those with positive views of Asian Americans and those with negative views is roughly half a point on the party identification scale.

There are a range of reasons why white Americans make distinctions between Asian Americans and Latinos. There are fewer Asian Americans in the U.S. without legal status, relative to Latinos. Socioeconomically, Asian Americans tend to fall much closer to whites than

[44] Since we believe that attitudes toward immigrants and Latinos are closely linked, we do not include a Latino feeling thermometer in the basic model.
[45] The feeling thermometer ranges from 0-100. The endpoints are labeled with 0 indicating "cool" feelings towards the group in question and 100 indicating "warmth" for the group.

to Latinos; they have also been less clearly aligned with the Democratic Party than Latinos (Hajnal and Lee 2011). Stereotypes of the two groups also differ dramatically. Almost half of all whites view Latinos as "less intelligent" and "more welfare prone" but only about 10 percent of whites feel the same way about Asian Americans (Bobo 2001). By contrast, whites tend to view Asian Americans as particularly intelligent and especially hardworking (Lee 2001, Bobo et al 2000). It may be that the stereotype of successful, hardworking Asian Americans resonates with the individualism that runs at the core of the Republican philosophy. Thus, those who feel warmly toward Asian Americans may also tend to identify with the Republican Party. Whatever the reason, Asian Americans do not evoke the same kinds of partisan reactions as undocumented immigrants do.

While these divergent effects for Asian Americans may be surprising to some, our results parallel what others have found in the literature on contextual effects. Proximity to Asian Americans has often had the opposite effect as proximity to Latinos or blacks (Ha 2010, Hood and Morris 1997, Hero and Preuhs 2006). Although firm conclusions about the root of this divergent reaction require further investigation, it seems clear that Asian Americans hold a unique place within the dynamics of American racial politics. In short, race and partisanship are tied together in complex and important ways.

Robustness Checks

To help ensure that the results in Table 2.1 measure the underlying relationships between immigration related views and white partisan choices, we performed a serious of additional tests. First, we repeated the tests in Table 3.1 with a range of different measures of immigrants and Latinos. Specifically, when we replaced our main measure of immigrant attitudes with a

measure of feelings toward Latinos (a Hispanic feeling thermometer), a measure of feelings toward legal immigration (should immigration levels be increased or decreased), and a simpler measure of feelings toward undocumented immigrants (an undocumented immigrant feeling thermometer), all were significant in most of the regression models. Regardless of how we measure attitudes toward immigrants or Latinos, these attitudes are closely connected to party identification.

Second, we also assessed different party-based dependent variables. That is, instead of relying on the standard seven-point party identification scale, we used feeling thermometers toward each party, a dummy variable for Republican identity, a dummy variable for Democratic identity, and an unordered three point party identification scale[46]. In each case, views toward undocumented immigrants remained statistically significant and the effects were generally substantial. For example, all else equal, those with more positive views of immigrants moved by 6 points to the right on the Democratic Party feeling thermometer. This rightward shift indicates greater warmth for the Democrats amongst individuals with a favorable disposition towards immigrants. These alternative specifications suggest that regardless of how partisanship is measured, it appears to be closely linked to views on immigration.

We realize, however, that if we want to make a more general statement about American politics, we need to assess the role of immigration related views across a wider range of data sets, years, and contexts. To do this we repeated as much of the analysis as possible with a number of different data sets. That process began with the 2010 ANES. The 2010 ANES closely mirrored the results we present here. After controlling for a similar set of electoral factors, whites who felt that "immigration was a burden" were significantly and substantially

[46] For the latter variable, we estimate the model using multinomial logit analysis, given the unordered nature of the variable.

more apt to identify as Republican, as opposed to Democrat. Using the 2000 and 2004 National Annenberg Election Surveys (NAES) we examined the link between party identification and immigrant related views (should the federal government do more to restrict immigration and is immigration a serious problem) in 2000 and 2004. Once again, attitudes on immigration proved to be a robust and significant factor predicting white party identification. We then repeated the analysis with the 2010 and 2012 Cooperative Congressional Election Survey (CCES).[47] Results from these large, internet-based surveys demonstrate that there is an ongoing robust relationship between views on immigration and white partisanship. The General Social Survey (GSS) cumulative file provided us yet another opportunity to re-examine the link between immigration and partisan choice. The GSS only includes views on immigration and partisan choice in a select number of years. Moreover, in any given year it has a much more limited set of political covariates. Nevertheless, in 2004, 2000, and 1996 we were able to assess the impact of immigration on partisanship and in each case we found a significant relationship. Whites who felt that immigration is a "cost to Americans" (2004), those who felt "bilingual education should be abolished" (2000), and those who believe it is " important to be born in America" (1996) were significantly associated with a Republican party identification[48].

The fact that views on Latinos and immigration mattered across different data sets, different elections, different measures of immigration-related views, different methods of measuring partisanship, and different sets of control variables greatly increases our confidence in the role that Latinos and immigration play in white partisan politics.[49]

[47] The CCES has three immigration related questions. The analysis is robust to using an alpha factor score of the three questions or simply inserting a question about increasing border patrols.
[48] See online appendix for results.
[49] We also performed a series of tests in which we added a range of different individual characteristics into our model. Specifically, we delved deeper into religious attachments (frequency of church attendance and whether the respondent identified as born again), class ties (self-identified class position), and mobility (years in current

Addressing Causality

One concern with the analysis that we have presented to this point is the possibility of reverse causation. It is possible that party identification may impact rather than be impacted by immigrant related views. Indeed, much of the literature in American politics suggests that party identification stands near the beginning of a funnel of causality that drives factors like issue positions and the vote (Campbell et al 1960, Layman and Carsey 2002, Bartels 2002, Miller and Shanks 1996). From this perspective party identification is a "durable attachment not readily disturbed by passing events and personalities" (Campbell et al 1960:51). We do not dispute that contention. There is little doubt that party identification is among the most stable elements of American politics (Green et al 2002).

But none of this rules out the possibility of issue-based change in party loyalties. There is, in fact, little doubt that partisanship can and does shift (Erikson et al 2002, Niemi and Jennings 1991). Although few dispute the deep childhood, origins of partisanship, there is a second well-supported account of partisanship that sees partisanship at least in part as a product of issue positions and experiences (Downs 1957, Fiorina 1981, Achen 2002). Indeed, there is irrefutable evidence that partisanship changes and slowly aligns with issue positions over the course of one's lifetime (Niemi and Jennings 1991). There are also signs that in recent decades policy preferences have become more consequential in shaping partisanship (Highton and Kam 2011, Carmines and Stimson 1989, Nie et al 1979). Ultimately, few would dispute the notion that issue positions and partisanship can and do influence each other under certain circumstances

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residence). As well, given that region and race have at times been intricately linked at different points in American history, we included controls for region. These additional controls did little to affect the results.

(Carsey and Layman 2006, Dancey and Goren 2010, Fiorina 1981, Page and Jones 1979, Markus and Converse 1979).

Along with others, we believe that race and by extension immigration is one of those cases where issue attitudes can be consequential. Race and immigration are not like other issues. They are relatively simple, symbolic, and emotional issues (Carmines and Stimson 1980). Moreover, both are closely linked to core psychological predispositions like ethnocentrism and authoritarianism (Kinder and Kam 2012, Schildkraut 2005). As such, attitudes on immigration and race are likely to be particularly stable and particularly influential for the American public. Ultimately, we suggest that deep-seated attitudes on immigration and race can shift the partisan leaning of some members of the population.[50]

Assertions and logic aside, we have to stake our case on hard empirical evidence. For our first causality test we focus on the most recent ANES panel. The basic idea is to determine if past views on immigration predict current partisanship net the effects of past partisanship. In other words, do past views on immigration help predict future changes in party identification? As the estimates presented in Table 2.2 illustrate, there is a clear, temporal link between immigrant views and partisanship. Views on immigration (measured by a question about whether illegal immigrants should be given a chance to become citizens) in 2008 have a significant effect on party identification measured in 2009 after controlling for party identification measured in 2008. In other words, individuals with anti-immigrants views in 2008 were more likely than individuals with pro-immigrant views to move their party identification towards the Republican Party. The

[50] Indeed, attitudes on race have been shown to affect partisanship in various ways (Carmines and Stimson 1989 but see Abramowitz 1994).

causal link between immigrant-related views on partisanship even persists when we control for a range of other major issues typically linked to partisanship.[51]

The size of the effects, although not dramatic, is large enough to play some part in the aggregate shift of white Americans to the Republican Party. After controlling for past partisanship, a one standard deviation shift in views of illegal immigrants is tied to about a one quarter point shift on the 7 point party identification scale. Attitudes on immigration are not leading to a wholesale shift from strong Democrat to strong Republican over the course of a year but feelings about immigrants do appear to be leading to some very real changes in partisanship.[52] Just as Carmines and Stimson (1989) have argued about resentment towards blacks as well as Adams (1997) on the issue of abortion, we suggest that these small shifts could accumulate over time to help account for the large-scale partisan changes that we see in recent decades. Small changes at the micro level can be associated with considerable shifts in the aggregate as Erikson et al (2002) have shown.

Importantly, our findings about the causal relationship between views of immigration and party identification persist when we look at other panel data. Immigration continues to shape partisanship if we instead perform the Granger causality test on the other two recent ANES panels from 2000-2004 and 1992-1993.[53]

The Transformation of White Partisanship over Time

Time is an important element underlining our story about immigration. Each of the different factors tying immigration to partisanship is increasing over time. The number of

[51] Estimates available in the appendix.
[52] At the same time it is important to note that by the same test party identification does cause changes in immigrant related views. The relationship between party identification and immigrant-related views is reciprocal.
[53] Estimates available in the online appendix.

immigrants, the salience of immigration, the divide between Democratic and Republican elites on the issue of immigration, and the association of the Democratic Party with Latino voters are all increasing over time. If all of this represents a threat that is pushing White Americans to the right politically, then we should see a slow but reasonably steady shift in white party identification over time. That is exactly what we see in Figure 3.1, which presents White partisan ties from 1950 to 2008. Importantly, we focus only on non-Hispanic whites, a restriction that greatly impacts the image that emerges. The data are from the American National Election Study cumulative data file and report the proportion of all non-Hispanic white respondents that identify as Democrats and as Republicans over time.[54]

[Figure 2.2 goes here]

Between 1952 and 2008, there is a slow, steady, and ultimately massive shift in White partisan attachments. In the 1950s, Democrats dominated the White population. Almost half of all white Americans identified as Democrats compared to a little less than 30 percent who identified as Republicans. But that margin declines slowly over time to the point where in the new century, White Republicans substantially outnumber white Democrats. This is, by any estimation, a remarkable and important change in the core contours of American political identity.

Much has been made of the defection of whites from the Democratic Party to the Republican Party in the 1960s and 1970s in response to the Civil Rights Movement, the Republican Southern Strategy, and the growing participation of blacks in the Democratic Party (Carmines and Stimson 1989, Hood et al 2012, Black and Black 2002 but see Abramowitz 1994, Shafer and Johnston 2005, Lublin 2004). Whether or not one believes that racial resentment

[54] In Figure 3.1, leaners are not included with partisans. The same trend is evident if we drop leaners.

toward blacks was responsible for the white exodus from the Democratic Party during this early time period, that period of change has been well documented.

What is new here is that the shift in white partisanship continues to occur well after the waning of the civil rights movement.[55] Even after 1980 there is a sharp turn to the Republican Party.[56] In 1980, according to the ANES, white Democratic identifiers dominated white Republican identifiers (39 percent versus 28 percent). But over the ensuing 30 years that Democratic advantage has been totally reversed. By 2010, white Republicans greatly outnumbered white Democrats (36 percent versus 29 percent) – a remarkably large and largely overlooked shift.[57] And while Obama's candidacy seemed to stem that tide for a period of time, in recent years the Republican advantage among whites appears to be growing. Pew Research reports that by 2012 the Republican advantage among whites had grown to 13 percentage points.[58]

This kind of massive partisan shift is important but does it have anything to do with immigration? Given a limited number of years and an almost endless array of events and issues that could be responsible for shifts in white partisanship over time, a comprehensive test of immigration's role is close to impossible. However, we can offer a preliminary test that gets a little more closely at the causal link between attitudes on immigration and shifts in aggregate

[55] Not surprisingly, given the magnitude of the change, we find the same pattern when we analyze the General Social Survey cumulative file or the Gallup Poll series. In all three time series, after 1980 there is a dramatic defection of whites from the Democratic Party to the Republican Party.

[56] It is difficult to imagine that attitudes toward blacks are driving the more recent changes in white partisanship. By 1980, black voter registration and participation in the Democratic Party had peaked and by most accounts, the centrality of African Americans and debates over pro-black policies in the politics of America was declining (Abramowitz 1994). Until an African American ran on the ballot in 2008, most thought that whites' attitudes toward blacks had become largely irrelevant (Abramowitz 1994, Miller and Shanks 1996, Sniderman and Carmines 1997 but see Valentino and Sears 2005).

[57] The same reversal occurs over the same period for the white vote. In the 1980s, Democratic Congressional candidates dominated the white vote but by 2010 Republicans won 56 percent of the white vote.

[58] This ongoing shift in white partisanship is generally overlooked because racial and ethnic minorities have grown in number and have tended to align with the Democratic Party. If we look at everyone in the nation, Democrats are not losing to Republicans. In fact, when non-whites are included in the trend analysis, the Democratic advantage has only partially been eroded since 1980.

white partisanship. Specifically, we look to see if aggregate views on immigration at one point in time predict changes in white macropartisanship in subsequent periods.

To do that we combine data from the two different data sets that most regularly ask about attitudes on immigration (The Gallup Poll) and partisanship (The CBS/NY Times Poll). To measure views on immigration, we use the question: "Should immigration be kept at its present level, increased, or decreased?" Gallup has asked this question 21 times between 1993 and 2011. To get aggregate opinion, we subtract the portion that favors an increase from the portion that favors a decrease. Thus, higher values represent more support for immigration. We utilize the CBS/NY Times standard 5 point party identification scale with higher values equal to Republican identity to measure white macropartisanship. In line with Mackeun et al (1989) and others who study macropartisanship, we average the party identification score for all respondents in a given survey and then average across surveys in a given quarter of a given year.[59] Thus, the unit of analysis is the quarter.

As illustrated in Table 2.3, aggregate attitudes on immigration significantly predict future shifts in white macropartisanship. After controlling for past macropartisanship, we find that greater opposition to increased immigration nationwide is significantly linked to increases in Republican Party identity. The size of the effect is far from massive but it is meaningful. A shift from the minimum level of support for immigration to the maximum level is associated with a little over a tenth of a point shift on the 5 point macropartisanship scale. Immigration is certainly not the only factor driving changes in white party identification but it appears to be an important contributing factor.

[Table 2.3 goes here]

[59] 169 CBS/NY Times polls are included. Average sample size per quarter is 3729. Due to space limitations, we describe other details of the Gallup and CBS/NY Times time series in the online appendix.

Over-time analysis serves a second purpose in that it can help us establish the direction of the causal relationship between immigration attitudes and partisanship. When we reverse the test, we find that macropartisanship does not significantly predict changes in attitudes on immigration. Thus, we can conclude that views on immigration affect macropartisanship.[60]

It is also worth noting that we see the same pattern if we focus separately on the proportion of whites who identify as Republicans and the proportion who identify as Independents. More negative attitudes on immigration significantly predict increased Republican identity and increased Independence. All of these relationships persist if we control for presidential approval and unemployment – the two factors viewed as most important in shaping macropartisanship (Mackuen et al 1989).[61] Finally, since we were concerned about the limited number of data points, we re-ran the analysis after incorporating data from every question in the Roper Center Archives that asks about the preferred level of immigration. Combining all of the different survey houses doubles the number of quarters for which we have immigration attitudes (42 quarters) but it also introduces considerable error as each survey house uses different question wording and different samples. The results for this larger data set roughly mirror the results we see here.[62]

Obviously, much is going on in American politics over this time and there is little doubt that many factors are contributing to the shift. But one can make a plausible case that the ongoing transformation of the U.S. by immigrants and Latinos helps to explain the partisan transformation of white America. And if that conjecture is true, one of the most significant

[60] See online appendix for results.
[61] Alternative Prais and Vector Auto Regressive models lead to similar results. Table Five has a one quarter lag. Longer lags were insignificant.
[62] See online appendix for results.

developments in the last half century of American politics can be linked to the demographic and political changes that immigration has wrought in America.

More Over Time Analysis

Given the growing importance of immigration, we also examined the predictive power of immigration over time at the individual level. In short, do attitudes on immigration predict partisanship more today than they did in the past? That effort was hampered by relatively severe data limitations. No public opinion exists with questions about immigration and other potentially relevant issues that are consistently repeated for more than a decade. The next best thing is the ANES which has asked respondents intermittently since 1980 for their overall feelings toward "Hispanics." Many years are missing in that sequence and the question itself is not ideal but when we did analyze different years of the survey, we found a pattern that at least marginally reflected our hypothesis about the increasing importance of immigration.

For many of the recent versions of the ANES surveys, our results mirror the 2008 ANES results that we have already presented. However, in the years prior to 2000, the impact of feelings toward Hispanic often fades away. The Hispanic feeling thermometer is sometimes significantly correlated with partisan identification but the impact that feelings toward Hispanics has on party identification generally disappears when we include a feeling thermometer for blacks. This may suggest that although immigration has been important in recent years, it has not always been the case. For much of American history and indeed until relatively recently,

whites' racial sentiments were dominated by feelings towards African Americans and not immigrants. This appears to be changing.[63]

Discussion

Party identification is, by almost all accounts, the most important driving force in American politics. Few would disagree that "the psychological attachment to one or the other of the major parties… reveals more about political attitudes and behaviors than any other single opinion" (Keefe and Hetherington 2003:169). Party identification is also by many accounts a durable attachment that is extremely difficult to sway. Thus, what is noteworthy about this chapter is that we find major shifts in white partisanship. Whites' partisan ties were closely aligned with the Democratic Party – even as late as the mid-1980s. But that is no longer the case. White Republicans now far outnumber white Democrats. Given the centrality of party identification in almost every explanation of American political behavior, that is vital shift in the contours of American politics.

What is perhaps even more noteworthy is that the increasing attachments of so many white Americans to the Republican Party appear to be in no small part a consequence of immigration. How White Americans feel about immigration and immigrants is, by all of our tests, closely linked to how they feel about the two major parties. The more refined tests indicate that changes in our partisan attachments often follow from their attitudes on immigration. This rightward shift in the face of racial diversity is, of course, not new. It harkens back to earlier periods in American history when whites mobilized against different forms of black empowerment (Klinker

[63] Other data from PEW also suggest that immigration is becoming increasingly central in shaping partisan choice. Although party polarization has grown on almost every issue in the past decade, according to the PEW data it has grown much faster on immigration than on any other issue except the environment. (Pew 2012).

and Smith 1999, Foner 1984, Parker 1990). It also very much parallels the more recent defection of so many whites from the Democratic Party in the face of demands from the Civil Rights Movement and the Republican's Southern Strategy (Carmines and Stimson 1989, Edsall and Edsall 1991). Yet, whether this kind of racial reaction is new or not, the movement of so many whites away from the party that is generating more and more minority support is a real concern because it means that just when America is become more racially diverse, it is becoming more racially divided.

These patterns have wide ranging implications for our understanding of American politics and in particular for our understanding of how race does or does not work in American politics. Our analyses highlight both the enduring nature of race and the changing impact of race on American politics. Race clearly endures. What we see here is that race still very much matters for Whites' core political decisions. Party identification – the most influential variable in American politics – is at least in part a function of the way individual white Americans view Latinos and undocumented immigrants.

Our findings also underscore the changing nature of race in America. Race -- throughout the 20th Century -- was primarily understood through the divide between Blacks and Whites.. In the aftermath of slavery and institutionalized segregation, Blacks demanded greater rights and resources and whites either relented or resisted. For individual white Americans racial considerations in the political arena were generally dominated by their attitudes toward blacks. What was once a black-white dichotomy is, however, no longer so. The increasingly visible nature of immigration and the enormous social, economic, and cultural transformations that immigrant has wrought on America appear to have also brought forth real change in the racial dynamics of American politics. How white Americans think about African Americans still very

much matters – as many of our results suggest – but so does attitudes toward Latinos, Asian Americans and immigrants in general. There should be little doubt that the growing Latino population has become more central in the minds and thoughts of white Americans. The negative thoughts associated with Latinos in decisions about partisanship attests to the growing role that Latinos and immigrants play in the story lines of American politics. The patterns we see here also posit a role for Asian Americans – although a very different one. Asian Americans may represent less of a threat and more of a "model minority" for conservative whites to herald and work with. Those on the right of American politics have generally positive feelings toward Asian Americans. Put simply, concerns and hopes about these emerging groups now provoke strong reactions and help sway core political identities.

Still much remains to be uncovered and explained. Decisions about partisan attachments are certainly a primary element of American politics but they are, in essence, an interim stage in the electoral calculus of individual Americans. Ultimately what we care about is the outcome of the vote. If immigration really has an impact on American politics, we should see its imprint on the vote as well. Thus, in the next chapter, we move on to an examination of a range of national electoral contests. We will see whether attitudes about immigrants and Latinos also influence the decisions Whites make in the voting booth.

Chapter Three:

How Immigration Shapes the Vote

Americans are presented with two very different narratives on immigration. On one side are a range of anti-immigrant voices who underscore the immigrant threat narrative and who regularly oppose initiatives to try to aid immigrants or expand immigration. That narrative is epitomized by the sentiments of these two presidential candidates.

> "We all know Hillary Clinton and the Democrats have it wrong on illegal immigration. Our party should not make that mistake. As Governor, I authorized the State Police to enforce immigration laws. I opposed driver's licenses & in-state tuition for illegal aliens." As president, I'll oppose amnesty, cut funding for sanctuary cities and secure our borders. *Mitt Romney, 2012 Republican Presidential Candidate*[64]

> "We're not just talking about the number of jobs that we may be losing, or the number of kids that are in our schools and impacting our school system, or the number of people that are abusing our hospital system and taking advantage of the welfare system in this country – we're not just talking about that. We're talking about something that goes to the very heart of this nation—whether or not we will actually survive as a nation… What we're doing here in this immigration battle is testing our willingness to actually hold together as a nation or split apart into a lot of Balkanized pieces" *Tom Tancredo, 2008 Republican Presidential Candidate*

The other side of the immigration debate can be equally fervent. On this side stands a series of pro-immigrant voices who highlight the benefits of immigration and who often favor policies that help secure immigrants a better and more normalized life. Again, the words of two presidential candidates typify this more positive perspective.

> "America can only prosper when all Americans prosper--brown, black, white, Asian, and Native American. That's the idea that lies at the heart of my campaign, and that's the idea that will lie at the heart of my presidency. Because we are all Americans. Todos somos Americanos [we are all Americans]. And in this country, we rise and fall together." *Barack Obama, 2008 Democratic Presidential Candidate* [65]

[64] FactCheck.org: AdWatch of 2007 campaign ad, "Immigration" , Nov 9, 2007

[65] Obama & McCain back-to-back speeches at NALEO , Jun 28, 2008

> "I am proud to work with Senator Menendez on trying to make sure that in the process of doing immigration reform, we don't separate families, we try to have family unification as one of the goals. So in addition to giving people a path to legalization, we want to make sure their families can come along with them….Finally, we have to educate the American people about why immigration is as important today as it was when my family came through into Ellis Island." -*Hillary Clinton, 2008 Democratic Presidential Candidate*[66]

What makes this debate potentially relevant to the vote is that the voices on each side have a distinctly partisan hue. Most of the voices calling for more punitive measures come from candidates on the Republican side of the aisle. By contrast, most of the voices offering a softer stance on immigration emerge out of the Democratic camp.[67] We do not claim that the elites within either party are fully unified on the issue of immigration. Indeed there are they are not. There are prominent Republicans like George W. Bush and Marco Rubio who have tried various tactics on immigration to try to garner greater support from Latino voters. Even Mitt Romney, after winning the Republican nomination in 2012, shifted noticeably to the middle on immigration during the general campaign. And as we write this book, Republican leaders appear to be engaged in an internal debate about the proper course for their party on immigration. Likewise, many Democrats offer at best lukewarm support for immigrants and many couple the defense of more accommodating policies like amnesty with even more vigorous support for more border security and other more punitive measures. But there seems little doubt that, on average,

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[66] 2007 Democratic primary debate on Univision in Spanish , Sep 9, 2007

[67] A look at campaigns, public statements, and policy platforms on immigration at lower levels of politics would likely reveal a similar divide between Democrats and Republicans. Merely as an example, you have on one hand, Republican state representative John Kavanagh who asserts: "If a burglar breaks into your home, do you serve him dinner? That is pretty much what they do there with illegals" (Archibold 2010). On the other hand, Democratic Representative Luis Guttierez contends that "We need … a generous and rigorous legalization program to get immigrants already living here on the books and in the system." (Daily Mail 2013).

the two major parties present Americans with two different alternatives on immigration.[68] There are obvious partisan choices for voters with real hopes or deep fears on immigration.

But do these distinct choices actually matter for the vote? Are they clear and compelling enough to influence the choices that individual white Americans make in the ballot box? And in particular are those who are concerned about immigration – an increasingly large share of the public – sufficiently motivated to choose Republican over Democratic candidates in substantial numbers? We have already seen in the previous chapter that views on immigration can shape the partisan choices of white Americans. This chapter presents the next logical test – an analysis of the link between immigration attitudes and the vote.

This analysis is an important test of just how far immigration is altering the dynamics of the American electoral arena. Elections are the ultimate arbiter in American democracy. They not only determine who wins office, they also help to shape the direction of policy in the ensuing years. Thus, whether and to what extent immigration influences the vote of the white majority can have real consequences.

Our analyses of the vote will hopefully offer a discerning test of the influence of immigration. In what follows, we will look not only to see if there is a link between attitudes on immigration and the vote but also if there is a link that goes beyond party identification and the other mainstream factors that we traditionally think structure the vote. We will assess that link not just in one or two electoral contests but in an array of elections that span different years and different electoral offices. The idea is to see if immigration has a broad influence on the candidates we choose in American politics.

[68] These quotes are not meant to be fully representative of Democratic and Republican elite views on immigration but as we noted in Chapter 1, research clearly shows that Democratic and Republican elites support increasingly divergent positions on immigration (Wong 2013, Jeong et al 2011, Miller and Schofield 2008).

The Aggregate Picture – A Republican Shift over Time

We proceed by simply looking at trends over time. If the ever increasing influence of immigration is affecting the white vote, we should see as we saw last chapter a noticeable shift to the Republican Party over time. That is exactly what we see in Figure 3.1. The figure shows the white vote between 1974 and 2008 using data from the previously introduced American National Election Studies cumulative file. We begin by focusing on the Congressional vote because it enables us to look more frequently at the white vote than we could with Presidential contests; moreover, aggregating numerous Congressional contests each year partially offsets the vagaries of incumbency and candidate quality that play a prominent a role in Presidential elections.

[Figure 3.1 goes here]

Figure 3.1 shows very clearly that white voters have become increasingly attracted to Republican candidates. Through the 1970s and 1980s white Americans were largely Democratic supporters. Roughly 45 percent of the non-Hispanic white electorate supported Republican Congressional candidates during that time period. But after 1990 white support for Republicans grows quickly. The majority of white Americans are now clearly on the Republican side with roughly 55 percent of white voters favoring Republicans. In 2010 – data which is not reflected in the cumulative file - that figure rose even further. Fully 60 percent of white Americans voted for Republicans in Congressional elections in 2010 – a number that is unprecedented in the post-World War II era. White Congressional voters have shifted in large numbers to the Republican Party.

And it is not just the Congressional vote. The same pattern is evident at the Senatorial, and Gubernatorial levels. Electoral outcomes for these two types of contests are much more variable from year for a variety of reasons but decade-by-decade analysis reveals a stark increase in the Republican vote amongst Whites for the US Senate.[69] White support for Republican Senatorial candidates grows from an average of 47.2 percent in the 1970s, to 50.8 percent in the 1980s, 51.9 percent in the 1990s, and 53.7 in the 2000s. In 2008, a whopping 59.3 percent of non-Hispanic whites voted Republican for the Senate. Gubernatorial contests show a similar but more muted trend.[70] For some reason, large numbers of white Americans have shifted from the Democratic Party to the Republican Party in the last four decades.

The Presidency is more complicated. Since 1990 a similar trend appears.[71] The share of the white electorate favoring the Republican candidate has grown in every election but one. As a result, average white support for Republican presidential candidates has also increased over the last two decades. In the 1990s, white Republican support in Presidential contests averaged 48.3 percent. That figure rose substantially in the 2000s to 55 percent. But of course, many other factors shaped the white vote so it is difficult to determine whether this trend is real or just a function of other election specific factors. It may be that white support for Republican presidential candidates will continue to grow in the next few elections as it has in the last few

[69] The high variability in Senate and Gubernatorial offices is due in large part to the fact that only a handful of these office are contested in any given election year. That means that peculiarities of the states involved, qualities of the candidates, and other non-random factors can shift the vote considerably. With only two candidates vying for office every four years, the problem is even more severe at the Presidential level.

[70] NES data on gubernatorial elections are more limited. Most problematically, there are no data on gubernatorial contests after 1998. Nevertheless, the data that are available reveal that there is a clear uptick in Republican voting in gubernatorial contests as well. White support for Republican gubernatorial candidates averaged 48 and 47 percent in the 1970s and 1980s respectively but jumped to 56 percent in the 1990s.

[71] If, however, we go back further in time and examine a wider swath of presidential contests, the data reveal no obvious trend in the white vote. Instead, there are relatively wide fluctuations in the white vote from election year to election year. We surmise that the limited number of elections and the powerful effects of incumbency, the economy, candidate characteristics, and other factors unique to Presidential contests drown out much of any longer time trend that might underlie the results.

races but it is equally possible that the current trend is just an artifact of the candidates in the five most recent contests.

Ultimately, whether the Presidency is included or not, an important shift in the vote is clearly occurring. That change is important for our theory and for our case. If we see no large scale shift in white partisan choices over time, then the impact of immigration cannot be that extensive. If few white voters are shifting from the candidates of one party to the candidates of the other party, then the role that immigration plays is likely to be a meager one. Instead, by showing that white support for the Republican Party has increased substantially we have shown that the pattern of partisan change fits the immigration story that we are telling. Immigration *could* be having widespread electoral consequences.

Having made the claim that our story is feasible, it is now important to note that nothing in Figure 3.1 tells us that immigration was the main driving force behind the growing allegiance of whites to the Republicans. We have yet to make a direct connection between immigration and the vote. Moreover, as was the case with party identification, there are a myriad factors that affect vote choice. Immigration is only one of many different potential influences.[72]

Linking Immigration to the Vote: Preliminary Steps

In order to assess the impact of immigration and immigration-related views on the vote, we turn once again to a standard tool of American public opinion survey research – the American National Election Study (ANES). We choose the ANES because it includes a long list of questions that get at each of the many different factors known to affect the vote. This is critical,

[72] Moreover attitudes on immigration are assuredly correlated with many of the other issues that could be driving partisan choice and the shift from Democratic to Republican candidates.

since we cannot conclude that immigration matters, unless we can control for all of the core aspects of American elections.

We begin with an analysis of the 2008 ANES for two reasons. First, it contains questions on immigration – a requirement that rules out most years of the ANES survey and many other national surveys. Second, 2008 was ostensibly not about immigration. Barack Obama, the first African American nominee for President was on the ballot, McCain and Obama outlined similar plans on immigration, the nation was in the midst of two wars, and an unprecedented fiscal crisis dominated the election. Immigration was supposedly not a critical issue in the campaign. If anything, 2008 was going to be about whites' acceptance of blacks and their concerns about the economy, war, and terrorism. As such, 2008 represents a relatively exacting test of our immigration hypothesis.

We realize, however, that if we want to make a more general statement about American politics, we need to assess the influence of immigration attitudes across a wider range of data sets, years, elections and contexts. To do this we repeat our analysis using the ANES cumulative file, the 2010 and 2001 Cooperative Congressional Election Study (CCES), the 2000 and 2004 National Annenberg Surveys (NAES), the cumulative file of the General Social Survey (GSS), and the 2010 ANES. This allows us to test the immigration hypothesis across different years (contests from 1970-2010), different types of elections (President, House, Senate, Gubernatorial), various survey instruments (including a wide variety of questions that vary the wording of the key independent variable – immigration related feelings – and the key dependent variables – partisanship and vote choice), and distinct survey methodologies and samples. If all

of these different data points lead to the same story, we can be reasonably confident of that story.[73]

We begin again with the simplest and often the most telling test – an assessment of the simple correlation between attitudes toward undocumented immigrants and vote choice. Figures 3.2a-3.2b illustrate the relationship between vote choice in Presidential, Congressional, and Senatorial elections and attitudes toward illegal immigration. Our measure of views on immigration was developed in the previous chapter and is derived from the four questions in the 2008 ANES that explicitly assess views on illegal immigrants.[74] If anything the relationship between immigration and partisan choice is even more pronounced for the vote, than it was for party identification. As attitudes toward illegal immigrants become more positive, the proportion of white voters who support Republican candidates drops 33 points in the Presidential election, 38 points in Congressional contests, and a whopping 44 points in Senate elections.[75] It matters little how we measure views on immigration. Whether we combine the questions on immigration to create a factor score, use a simpler additive scale, or look at each question separately, the pattern of results is similar. The partisan world of white America seems, at least at first glance, to be fundamentally shaped by perceptions of undocumented immigrants.

[73] Because our theory focuses on the reaction of white Americans to America's changing racial demographics, we include only those individuals who identify themselves as white and as non-Hispanic.

[74] Specifically, we create an alpha factor score from these four questions: 1) a standard feeling thermometer that asks how you feel about "illegal immigrants" and ranges from 0 (meaning extremely cold or negative feelings) to 100 (for extremely warm or positive feelings), 2) "Should controlling and reducing illegal immigration be a very important…. not an important foreign policy goal?" 3) "Do you favor/oppose the U.S. government making it possible for illegal immigrants to become U.S. citizens?" and 4) "Do you favor, oppose, or neither favor nor oppose allowing illegal immigrants to work in the United States for up to three years after which they would have to go back to their home country?"

[75] All of these correlations are highly significant ($p<.001$).

[Figures 3.2a –3.2c go here]

But are these relationships spurious – a byproduct of a correlation with a third factor that is actually driving vote choice? As in the last chapter, one of the most difficult aspects of this empirical endeavor is ensuring that we include controls for all of the different factors that could drive white's electoral decisions and be correlated with white views on immigration (see Miller and Shanks 1996 for an overview of the partisan choice literature). In short, our empirical models need to incorporate key elements of American politics. With that in mind, we include measures for: 1) basic ideology – the standard seven point liberal-conservative self-placement scale; 2) military action – support for wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and views on expanding the war on terrorism; 3) retrospective evaluations –presidential approval and assessments of the economy; 4) redistribution – higher taxes for the rich and welfare spending; 5) morality and religion - views on homosexuality and the importance of religion ; 6) other racial attitudes/ethnocentrism – standard feeling thermometers for "Blacks," "Asian Americans," and "whites" [76]; and 7) in alternate tests other issues like universal health care, women's rights, the environment, abortion, crime, schools, science and technology (see previous chapter for question wording).[77]

Also, since electoral choices have been linked to class, religion, and other individual demographic characteristics we control for education (number of years of school completed), household income (divided into 25 categories), gender, age in years, whether the respondent is unemployed or not, whether anyone in the household is a union member or not, marital status (married or not), and religious denomination (Jewish, Catholic, Protestant, or Other). In alternate

[76] Since we believe that attitudes toward immigrants and Latinos are closely linked, we do not include a Latino feeling thermometer in the basic model. If, however, we do add a Latino feeling thermometer to Table X, feelings toward illegal immigrants remain significant while the Latino feeling thermometer is marginally significant.
[77] These "other issues" are not included in the main model because they are only asked of half of the respondents.

tests, we also account for self-identified class status, church attendance, whether the respondent is born-again, and years living in the community. All told, we have controls for basic ideology, retrospective evaluations, a range of core issues, racial attitudes, and individual social characteristics – many if not all of the factors that are presumed to dominate the vote.[78]

Immigration and the 2008 Presidential Vote

Is immigration important in presidential contests? More specifically, are concerns about immigration associated with a Republican vote? In Table 3.1, we begin to answer this question. Table 3.1 presents results for a series of logit analyses that analyze vote choice in the 2008 presidential election. The dependent variable in each case is a dummy variable indicating support for the Republican candidate - McCain (1) or support for the Democratic candidate - Obama (0).[79]

[Table 3.1 goes here]

In the second column we focus on the reported vote of respondents queried after the election. The results in column three presented estimates for intended vote choice for those surveyed prior to Election Day. Later we discuss columns four and five where we include a slightly different, more exogenous measure of party identification. By including party identification in our vote models, we can conclude with some confidence that views on immigration have an independent effect that is not wholly driven by party identification. In

[78] There are surely other influences on the vote. Evaluations of candidate qualities and question that ask about the likely future success of candidates (prospective evaluations) are two of the most likely contenders. These factors are, however, often viewed as endogenous to the vote. In essence, whoever we vote for, we like. Given their endogeneity and the fact that we are primarily interested in identifying enduring, core elements of American electoral politics, these other factors are omitted from our analysis.

[79] Dropping or including voters who favor third party or Independent candidates makes little difference to the results.

subsequent tests where we examine the vote within partisan primaries we hope to gain further traction on the independent role of immigration.

The results in column two of Table 3.1 indicate that how we think about immigrants is strongly related to the vote. As we saw before, whites with more negative attitudes toward undocumented immigrants are significantly more likely to opt for Republican options. Moreover, as Figure 3.3 illustrates, the marginal effects are substantial. All else equal, more negative views of undocumented immigrants are associated with a 23.7 percent increase in the probability of voting for John McCain, the Republican presidential candidate.[80]

[Figure 3.3 goes here]

The effect for intended vote choice – the results in column three - is almost identical – a 22.9 percent increase in the probability of voting for McCain. Impressively, in an election that occurred in the midst of one of the nation's sharpest recessions in history, that coincided with two wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, and that included the nation's first black presidential nominee, views on immigrants still mattered.

Alternate Tests of the 2008 Presidential Vote

To help convince readers that the relationship between immigration and the vote is real we proceeded to undertake a range of alternate tests that use different measures of views on immigration, assessed different dependent variables, incorporated different alternate explanations for the vote, and consider the endogeneity of party identification.

We first determine whether our results are robust to different ways of measuring attitudes toward immigration. As we noted earlier, attitudes toward undocumented immigration, legal

[80] For this and all other predicted probabilities reported in the book, estimates are calculated using the Clarify package in STATA holding all other independent variables at their mean or modal value and varying the independent variable of interest plus or minus one standard deviation.

immigration, and Latinos are highly inter-correlated, making it difficult to know exactly what aspect of immigration white Americans are responding to. As was the case with party identification, if we substitute questions about legal immigration or general feelings toward Hispanics into the analysis, we tend to get very similar results as those presented in Table 3.1. Attitudes toward undocumented immigration, preferences about legal immigration, and feelings toward Latinos all significantly predict vote choice. In our opinion, white Americans are not making sharp distinctions between these three groups when they think about immigration. Rather, in the minds of many white Americans these three groups are melded together. Race and immigration (regardless of legal status) are closely intertwined.

Our next step was to incorporate alternative measures of candidate preferences. These analyses suggest that it does not much matter how we measure electoral preferences. If we focus on feelings toward Obama and McCain-- the Democratic and Republican candidates -- rather than on the vote itself, we once again find that more negative views of undocumented immigrants are associated with stronger, more positive feelings for the Republican side and less positive views of the Democratic option. Similarly, if we include third party voters and analyze presidential vote choice with a multinomial logit model we arrive at exactly the same conclusion about the centrality of immigrant-related views.

We then moved on to consider a range of other issues that we have not yet discussed but that were, nevertheless, present to one degree or another in the 2008 campaign. Debates about universal health care, women's rights, the environment, abortion, crime, schools, science, and technology were not central facets of the campaign but could still have impacted the vote. Fortunately, the ANES survey queried subsets of respondents on each of these issues areas.

Thus, in alternate tests, we were able to add questions in each area to our model in Table 3.1. [81] The inclusion of these questions did not appreciably alter the pattern of results.

Given the historic nature of the 2008 presidential election, we also considered different aspects of whites' racial sentiments. First, we incorporated the four standard racial resentment questions (i) "It's really a matter of some people not trying hard enough; if blacks would only try harder they could be just as well off as whites." (ii) "Irish, Italian, Jewish and many other minorities overcame prejudice and worked their way up. Blacks should do the same without special favors." (iii) "Over the past few years, blacks have gotten less than they deserve." (iv) "Generations of slavery and discrimination have created conditions that make it difficult for blacks to work their way out of the lower class."[82] According to Kinder and Sanders (1996) and others these four questions all focus on the central element of American race relations: the extent to which blacks face barriers in American society. Our results suggest that racial resentment like many of the other factors highlighted in Table 3.1 did play a significant role in the contest. But the inclusion of these variables did little to affect our conclusions about the centrality of immigrant-related views.

With Barack Obama as the first African American major party candidate on the ballot, we also incorporated three other variables that specifically asked about black candidates and their abilities. We used the following three measures in alternative tests: 1) does the idea of a Black person being president make you feel uncomfortable, 2) do you think most white candidates who run for political office are better suited to be an elected official than most black candidates, and 3) do you think most white candidates are better suited in terms of their intelligence than most black candidates. Being uncomfortable with a black person as president

[81] See Chapter Two for question wording for universal health care, women's rights, the environment, abortion, crime, schools, science, and technology.
[82] In each case, respondents were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with the statement and how strongly.

and viewing black candidates less favorably was closely associated with the presidential vote in 2008 but the inclusion of these measures did not affect the impact of immigration on vote choice. That White political orientations are still shaped by attitudes about blacks in their vote preference in 2008 contest is certainly no exception to the racialized pattern of American politics. Nevertheless, Presidential vote choice is also at least in part about immigration and its effects on the nation. In the end, the effect of immigration on the vote remained robust to the inclusion of other aspects of whites' racial sentiments.

Lastly, we estimated a series of alternate specifications where we added a range of different individual characteristics into our logistic analysis. Specifically, we delved deeper into religious attachments (frequency of church attendance and whether the respondent identified as born again), class ties (self-identified class position), and mobility (years in current residence). As well, given that region and race have at times been intricately intertwined at different points in American history, we included controls for region. These additional controls did little to affect the results.

Considering the Endogeniety of Party Identification

We also endeavored to think more closely about the relationship between immigrant-related views and partisanship in our models. In some ways, the results presented in the second and third columns of Table 3.1 understate the role that attitudes about immigration play in shaping the vote. Since we have shown in the previous chapter that party identification is at least in part a function of views on immigration, including party identification in our regression model may minimize the role of immigration. Specifically, including party identification as an independent variable eliminates any immigration-related effect that works through changes in

party identification. In order to address this concern, we developed and incorporated a measure of party identification that is exogenous to views on immigration. Specifically, we estimate the residuals from the party identification model presented in the previous chapter and use it in our regression analyses presented in columns 4 and 5 of Table 3.1.[83] By using these residuals, we have a variable that incorporates aspects of party identification that are not directly explained by immigrant-related views.

When we include this exogenous measure of party identification, the substantive impact of immigration views on vote choice is even larger. The model indicates that all else equal a two standard deviation shift toward more negative views on undocumented immigrants is associated with a 39 percent increase in the probability of having voted for McCain and a 38 percent increase in the probability of intending to vote for McCain.

The Effect of Immigration within Each Party

Another way to get at the interrelationships between immigration, party identification, and vote choice is to look at vote choice *within* members of each party. By focusing separately on Democrat and Republic identifiers, we gain another perspective at how attitudes toward immigration matter beyond partisanship. [84]

Our results indicate that even among those who claim ties to the Democratic Party, views of undocumented immigrants are moderately related to vote choice. The vast majority of Democrats vote for Obama but those who have more negative views of undocumented immigrants are 6.5 percent less likely to support him when compared to those with more positive

[83] In practice, the two measures of party identification are nearly identical. The normal party identification scale is correlated with exogenous party identification at .93.
[84] For this test, we ran separate regressions for each of the three partisan groups (Democrats, Independents, and Republicans). Estimates available upon request from authors.

views of undocumented immigrants. This is a small sign that immigration is pushing whites Democrats away from their party. By contrast, our analyses suggest that views toward immigrants matter less for Republicans. This is exactly what we would expect to find if immigration is largely pushing whites in one direction—toward the Republican Party. Also as one might expect, views toward immigrants and Latinos have the largest impact on non-partisans. White Independents with more negative views of immigrants are 67.7 percent more likely to vote for McCain than are white Independents with more positive views of immigrants. Immigration attitudes very clearly have a distinct, substantively large effect on vote choice that goes well beyond partisan ties.

The Role of Immigration in Other Elections

To make a general statement about the impact of immigration in American politics, we have to look more broadly at a number of different presidential elections as well as across a range of different types of electoral contests. This is exactly what we do in Table 3.2. Specifically, we turn to the ANES cumulative file to assess the impact of immigration views on Presidential, Congressional, Gubernatorial, and Senate contests. Since the ANES does not generally ask about views on undocumented immigrants, we utilize a different measure for attitudes towards immigrants and Latinos. The key independent variable here is the standard feeling thermometer toward Hispanics, given that feelings towards Hispanics and attitudes towards undocumented immigrants have become synonymous (Perez 2009).[85] Also, since policy questions vary from ANES year to year, we include a modified set of policy control variables.[86]

[85] A question that asks about whether legal immigration should be increased, decreased, or kept at the same rate performs similarly but is not used because it is available for fewer years.
[86] See online appendix for policy questions.

[Table 3.2 goes here]

Our results suggest, once again, white Americans' feelings towards Latinos can be a central component in their electoral calculations. Starting with the second and third column that display the multinomial logit estimates with presidential vote choice – Democrat, Independent, Republican – as the dependent variable, we see that those who exude greater warmth towards Hispanics are significantly less apt to choose Republican candidates for president. The fourth column, which displays the results for intended presidential vote choice (with a Republican vote as the dummy dependent variable) reconfirms the results. Again, more positive views of Latinos are significantly tied to Republican vote choice net party identification and a range of other controls. Moreover, the magnitude of the relationship is substantial. A two standard deviation negative shift in view of Hispanics is associated with a 9.8 percent increase in the probability of Republican vote choice in the multinomial model. For intended vote choice, the comparable figure is a 10.9 percent increase in the likelihood of voting for the Republican candidate. And for recalled vote from the last election (analysis not shown), we find an 8.9 percent gain in Republican vote probability. Across a range of presidential elections – and regardless of how vote choice is measured – we see that attitudes toward Latinos are very much a part of vote choice.

Importantly, the relationship is not isolated to presidential vote choice. As the remaining estimates on vote choice demonstrate, white feelings towards Latinos are significantly linked to gubernatorial vote choice and almost significantly tied to the Congressional vote. Moreover, in gubernatorial contests, the magnitude of the relationship is large. All else equal, those who hold more negative views of Latinos are 35 percent more likely to favor Republican gubernatorial

candidates. The one case where there is no apparent relationship is in Senatorial contests.[87] In the next section we begin to think about why immigration matters in some contests and not in others but for now it should be clear that immigration attitudes plays a broad role in the choices that Americans make on Election Day.

Other Elections in Other Surveys

To increase confidence in our findings and to further assess the role that immigration plays in American politics, we turned to a number of other data sources including the 2010 and 2012 CCES, the 2000 and 2004 NAES, the GSS, and the 2010 American National Election Studies. In all cases, these other surveys confirm the important part played by immigration in American politics.

Turning to a range of different surveys not only allows us to assess a wider range of elections but perhaps equally importantly it allows us to test our immigration backlash theory across diverse survey conditions. These different surveys vary not only in their timing, but how they are administered (telephone with the NAES vs face-to-face with the GSS and internet with the CCES), who they are administered to (adults citizens in the ANES vs English speaking adults in the GSS), the size of the sample (from 98,000 in the NAES to 1,000 in the GSS), the geographic variation of the sample (40 primary sampling units in the ANES to over 12,000 zip codes in the NAES), and critically the specific questions they ask about immigration. All of this helps us to test the robustness of our immigrant threat theory and to make a general statement about the impact of immigration in American politics.

[87] We endeavored to see if there was any pattern over time or across space in the effects of immigration on partisanship and the vote. We could not find a clear and consistent pattern but speculate that the lack of clear results is due to data limitations (see online appendix).

First, with 2010 and 2012 CCES, we were able to assess the impact of immigration attitudes using a multi-step question that asked whether respondents favor a) citizenship for those with good employment records, b) increasing border patrols, and c) allowing police to question anyone suspected of being undocumented. We found that attitudes on immigration were significantly correlated with vote choice in the 2012 presidential election and all but one case in the 2010 and 2012 Senatorial, Gubernatorial, and House elections. Effect magnitudes in the CCES are similar to those in the main ANES analysis. A one standard deviation increase in views on immigration in 2010 is, for example, associated with a 12 to 19 percent increase in the probability of voting Republican across the different contests. All of this confirms the important and ongoing role that views on immigration play in American politics.[88]

Using the 2000 and 2004 National Annenberg Election Surveys (NAES) we were able to examine the link between immigrant related views (Should the federal government do more to restrict immigration? Is immigration a serious problem?) and vote choice in the 2000 and 2004 presidential elections, and intended vote choice in presidential (2000 and 2004), Senatorial (2000), and House elections (2000). Once again, immigration matters for the vote. In every case except for Senate elections, after controlling for a range of factors that were purported to drive electoral behavior in that year, views on immigration remained robust. In every election more negative views of immigration led to substantially greater support for Republicans.[89]

The General Social Survey (GSS) cumulative file offers us another opportunity to re-examine the link between immigration and partisan choice. The GSS only includes views on immigration and partisan choice in a select number of years. Moreover, in any given year it has a much more limited set of political covariates. Nevertheless, in 2004, 2000, and 1996 we were

[88] Analysis of the 2010 CCES also indicates that immigration influenced the vote for state House, state Senate, Attorney General, and Secretary of State but the findings do not persist in 2012.
[89] See the online appendix for more details.

able to assess the impact of immigration on partisanship and presidential vote choice and in each case we found a statistically significant relationship. Whites who feel the government spends too much for immigrants (2004), those who feel that "bilingual education should be abolished" (2000), and those who believe it is "important to be born in America" (1996) were more likely to favor Republican presidential candidates.[90]

The 2010 ANES panel survey conducted enables us to examine vote choice in 2010 in the Gubernatorial, Congressional, and Senatorial elections. In both the Congressional and Senate contests, after controlling for a similar set of electoral factors, whites who felt "immigration was a burden" were significantly and substantially more apt to support the Republican candidate (see Table A1 in the Appendix). Views on immigration did, however, have no clear impact on the Gubernatorial vote that year.

Finally, we also sought to determine the role that immigration played in partisan primaries. However, since few surveys ask about primary vote choice and fewer respondents actually vote in those contests, our options were limited. Fortunately, the NAES asked a sufficient sample about the primary vote in the 2000 presidential election. In that election, we found that (after controlling for a range of factors that were purported to drive electoral behavior in that year, immigrant related views were significantly related to vote choice in the Republican primary. All else equal, those who saw immigration as the nation's most important problem were 7.3 percent more likely to support George W. Bush over John McCain – a pattern that fits Bush's relatively tough stance on immigration in that contest. Immigration did not appear to be

[90] These relationships reached statistical significance at conventional levels.

a significant issue in the Democratic Primary contest between Al Gore and Bill Bradley who both offered relatively limited proposals on immigration.[91]

Overall, the effects of immigration are robust.[92] Across an array of elections and data sets, restrictive views on immigration led to substantially greater support for Republicans. The fact that views on Latinos and immigration mattered in this vote decision across different data sets, different elections, and different sets of control variables greatly increases our confidence in the role that Latinos and immigration play in the political choices of the majority of Americans. Equally important, across the public opinion surveys that we examine, questions on immigration vary substantially. The CCES queries respondents about "increasing border security." NAES focuses on whether "the federal government should do more to restrict immigration." The GSS asks about the "government spending on immigration," "abolishing bilingual education", and the importance of "being born in America." Finally, in earlier and later versions of the ANES, questions address whether "immigration is a burden" and assess general feelings toward "Hispanics." Despite the substantial variation in the content of these questions, the findings remain consistent. All of this points to the fact that immigration can be an essential component of white American's electoral calculations.

[91] We also looked to see if the within party effects that we demonstrated earlier with the 2008 ANES presidential vote persisted across elections and data sources. Across each of the data sets and every type of election, views on immigration were always much more consequential for Independents than they were for Democrats or Republicans. Immigration also mattered for the vote choices of Democrats but the size and statistical significance of the interaction effect varied substantially across elections.

[92] Given claims that much of the instability in party identification comes from measurement error (Green, Palmquist, and Schickler 2002, Green and Palmquist 1990, Goren 2005), we looked to see if immigration still predicted partisanship and vote choice after taking into account measurement error in party identification. To do so, we returned to our main 2008 ANES data set as well as the 2010 and 2012 CCES. With the 2008 ANES we corrected for measurement error by creating a latent party identification alpha factor score that incorporated the same three different indicators employed by Goren (2005) –a standard party identification scale, a feeling thermometer toward the Democratic Party, and a feeling thermometer toward the Republican Party. Inserting this latent measure of party identification into the 2008 analysis did almost nothing to alter the results. Immigration still significantly predicted partisanship and vote choice net other factors. Likewise, when we turned to the 2010 and 2012 CCES and utilized a measure of latent party identification that was based on two standard party identification questions that were spaced several months apart (pre- and post-election), we found that all of the statistically significant immigration-related results from the 2010 and 2012 CCES remained robust (see results in online appendix).

Where and When Does Immigration Matter?

The results to this point lead to two conclusions. First, attitudes about immigration and the Latino population appear to play a prominent role in a range of American elections. Immigration is often central. Second, the effects of immigration do vary to a certain extent from one election to another. Immigration is not always central. We endeavored to see if there was a pattern to this variation. Does immigration matter more where and when we should expect it to matter more? To do so we examine each individual election for each year in the NES cumulative file as well as at the results for each of the other elections in the other surveys (2000 NAES, 2004 NAES, GSS Cumulative File, 2008 ANES, 2010 ANES).

In all honesty, looking across elections and years, we could not discern a clear pattern. There is some suggestion that immigration mattered more often for statewide contests than it did for House elections. That might suggest that state-level dynamics are an important element of the immigration debate – a point we will return to later in Chapters 3 and 6. And there is real variation in the impact of immigration on presidential contests. We found strong effects for all three presidential contests in the 21st Century and more inconsistent effects in the 1990s and 1980s. This might hint at a growing role for immigration in American electoral politics. In the one set of presidential primaries that we examined, there was a greater effect in the Republican primary where the two candidates actively engaged and significantly diverged on immigration than there was in the Democratic primary where immigration was largely ignored. That could suggest either that the salience of immigration in the campaign or the policy divergence of the two candidates is consequential.

But none of these differences are all that dramatic. Immigration-related views were relevant in some specific Congressional elections (e.g. 2010 and 2000) and irrelevant in some statewide contests (e.g. Gubernatorial contests in 2010 and 1976 and Senatorial elections in 2008, 1988, and 1984). Presidential contests in the most recent decade were always at least in part shaped by immigration but outcomes in presidential elections in 1976, 1984, and 1988 can also be linked to feelings toward Latinos.

Unfortunately, the available data are not particularly well suited for this sort of time-series analysis. All of the advantages of having different surveys with varying population samples and distinct questions on immigration that were so critical in trying to demonstrate robust effects now become a liability in trying to assess variation over time and across space. Is the smaller or null effect in one particular election really because immigrant attitudes were less relevant for that election, or is it because a different set of covariates are available, because the specific question on immigration is less effective at measuring attitudes, or because of some issue with the sample? We generally cannot exactly say why differences emerge from survey to survey, year to year, or contest to contest.

All we can say on this point is that immigration may be increasing in significance over time but before we can say that with any certainty much more empirical work needs to be done. It will be hard to generate more data on past contests but we will certainly have more comparable data for 2012 and future races. Only then will we know if the role of immigration is increasing in a systematic and measurable way.

Discussion

In the last two chapters we have attempted to demonstrate the power immigration exerts in American politics. As immigration has affected almost every corner of American society and

life, it has also impacted the political sphere. With growing immigration comes a dramatic reversal in white partisan attachments. A group that was once dominated by Democrats has become overwhelmingly Republican. This pattern began in the 1960s but even since the 1980s, white Americans have become more attached to the Republican Party and more supportive of Republican candidates at almost every level of office. We fully admit that a range of different factors is driving this massive white Democratic defection in the last three decades. But our results indicate that immigration plays an important role in this shift.

We have tried in a range of ways to tie views on immigration to partisanship and the vote. Those empirical tests have been as rigorous as we could make them. They show – we think decisively – that immigration attitudes plays a real role in shaping the partisan identities and votes of many white Americans. Large numbers of white Americans are tied to the Republican Party and their candidates because they have concerns about immigration. The immigrant threat narrative is now very much a central player in American politics. When white Americans choose to align with one of the two major parties, when they decide which candidate to support in Presidential contests, and when they vote in a range of other elections, attitudes about immigration and Latinos help shape the outcome.

Much remains to be explained, however. We have shown that immigration influences the politics of white America. But we have not clearly demonstrated how. Exactly how and in what ways do changes in the demographics of this country translate to fluctuations in electoral behavior? Do white Americans simply respond directly to the growing immigrant and Latino populations that they witness, is the tone of media coverage covering immigration becoming more critical, or is something else driving these sharp political reactions? In the next chapters,

we address these questions to try to better understand how and why immigration has come to so deeply impact American electoral politics.

Chapter Four. The Geography of the Immigration Backlash

Immigration impacts all of America but it does so unevenly. In California, the state with the largest Latino population immigration is felt almost everywhere. With 14 million Latino residents, representing almost 40 percent of the state's population it is hard to move around the state without encountering some evidence of a changing America. Immigrants dominate employment in restaurants, landscaping, housekeeping, and numerous other fields. Immigrants walk the streets. Signs and stores advertise to immigrants. Given California's long term and large scale experience with immigration, it is not surprising that California was one of the first states to actively target undocumented immigrants. With Proposition 187, the "Save Our State" initiative of 1994, the voters of California overwhelmingly passed a measure that sought to exclude undocumented immigrants from access to range of public services. Many other states followed suit. But California was the first.

In Vermont, the state with the smallest Latino population, the demographic, social and political story is very different. Overt evidence of immigration is rare. With only 5,284 Latinos in the entire state, there are no jobs where immigrants eclipse natives and no neighborhoods with Latino majorities.[93] Days, months, or even years are likely to pass before a typical citizen in the state will encounter an undocumented immigrant. Given the limited impact immigration has had on the state it may not be surprising to learn that Vermont has been extraordinarily inactive on the legislative front. In the past five years the state has adopted only one state law addressing immigration – a bill that urged Congress to authorize more visas for agricultural workers (NCSL 2013).

[93]As of 2012, The total population in Vermont is 626,011.

Finally, in South Carolina, the state with the fastest growing immigrant population, politicians and pundits regularly debate the merits and pitfalls of immigration in the state. With Latinos representing only five percent of the population, daily signs of immigration in the streets are rare. But discussions in the media and elsewhere often return to the subject of the state's rapidly growing immigrant population. That debate stirred widespread concern about the state's immigrant population and eventually led to the passage of an omnibus Illegal Immigration Reform Act. That 2008 Act increased penalties for businesses that hire undocumented immigrants, forced employers to check the immigration status of their workers, denied public assistance and attendance at public colleges to undocumented immigrants, and in variety of other ways tried to make the state inhospitable for these immigrants.

These three states highlight one of the most inescapable features of America's immigrant transformation: its geographically uneven nature. Some Americans live in areas where there is almost no evidence of large scale immigration while others live in neighborhoods, cities, and states, that have been dramatically transformed. Still others are experiencing rapid change for the first time. We believe that this demographic variation matters. These starkly different geographic contexts propel individual white Americans in different directions. We contend that those Americans who are more exposed to the changes wrought by immigration, will be among those most likely to feel threatened by immigration, and among those most likely to become more politically opposed to policies or parties that might support immigrants. In this chapter we test this assertion. In short, are whites reacting to large, growing concentrations of immigrants with a backlash and a shift to the right politically?

In assessing context we have two goals in mind. The first is to once again demonstrate the broad impact of immigration on American politics. We want to know if the

most important political decisions Americans make - issue preferences, party affiliation, and vote choice – can be tied to the context of immigration. The second goal is to try to better understand how the large scale phenomenon of immigration seeps into the consciousness of individual Americans. What is the mechanism through which this national trend reaches and influences individuals? Or to put it more plainly, what is it that white Americans are reacting to?

In Chapter Two we outlined two different kinds of mechanisms. One local and direct – living in proximity to large numbers of immigrants - and one national and indirect – seeing, reading, and hearing about the negative consequences of immigration in the media. In this chapter, we assess the first mechanism. Is living near heavy concentrations of immigrants and Latinos threatening enough to produce a reaction by members of the white population? In short, is context driving at least part of white America's response to immigration?

How Context Might Work – The Racial Threat Perspective

Why would living near or among a large out-group population lead to any sort of negative reaction? Following a long line of scholars from Key (1949) to Blalock (1967) and beyond, we suggest that larger out-groups can represent a threat to members of the in-group. The idea here is that an influx of out-group members can lead to greater competition for available jobs, a struggle for local political offices, reductions in housing prices, white flight and clashes over any number of public services. From this racial group threat perspective proximity tends to enhance real or perceived competition for scarce resources. The result is that individuals in contexts with larger minority populations should feel more threatened, express greater animosity, and be especially supportive of a host of policies aimed at maintaining the in-group's social, political and economic privileges.

This racial group perspective has traditionally been applied to black-white relations in the American case but for a range of reasons we have highlighted throughout the book we suspect that it could also be applied to Latino-white or immigrant-white relations. A pervasive immigrant threat narrative in the media and politics, the widespread concerns of immigrants and immigration expressed by individual Americans in surveys, and the negative stereotypes of Latinos that are held by many Americans all suggest that the immigrant population does represent a real threat to many white Americans – a threat that is likely to be sharper in contexts where the immigrant population is larger or growing more rapidly.

Existing Evidence on Immigrant Context

We are, by no means, the first to examine immigrant or Latino context. In fact, a wide range of studies has attempted to assess the link between immigrant context and white attitudes. The bulk of these studies have, in fact, found that more immigrants can represent a threat and drive a white backlash. Analysis in the United States has demonstrated a robust relationship between the size and growth of the local immigrant population and more hostile views of immigrants (Newmn 2013, Hawley 2011, Ha and Oliver 2010, Ayers et al 2008, Campbell et al 2006, Hood and Morris 1998, Citrin et al 1997). Similarly, a range of comparative research has found that larger immigrant populations at the national level are associated with more negative views of immigrants and more support for restrictionist immigration policy (Quillian 1995, McLaren 2003, Dustman and Preston 2001).

Although the bulk of the research points to an immigrant backlash, there are at least a few studies that reach different conclusions about immigrant context. Some researchers have found that immigrant or Latino context has few significant implications (Fennelly and Federico 2008,

Dixon 2006, Taylor 1998, Burns and Gimpel 2000). And still others have revealed a positive relationship between immigrant context and white views – especially when the out-group is question is primarily Asian Americans (Ha 2010, Hood and Morris 1998, 2000, Fox 2004). Finally, several more recent studies have suggested that the impact of ethnic or immigrant context is contingent on either the socioeconomic status of the neighborhood, the skill level of the immigrants, or the national political debate (Hopkins 2010, Scheve and Slaughter 2001, Oliver and Mendelberg 2000, Branton and Jones 2005).

The Limits of the Existing Literature

One read of these mixed findings is that immigrant context has a real but limited and contingent impact on white political behavior. There are, however, reasons to hesitate before concluding that immigrant context is not a central feature in the minds of white Americans. We contend that there is one very important omission in the existent literature that helps to mask the central role played by immigrant context.

The biggest concern with these existing studies is their relatively narrow focus. The vast array of scholarship on immigrant or Latino context in the United States has been narrowly focused on how context affects attitudes about, behavior towards, and policy on the immigrant or minority group itself (but see Hopkins 2009, Hero and Preuhs 2007). In the case of immigration, we either study how context affects attitudes toward immigrants (Scheve and Slaughter 2001) or how it affects policies that explicitly deal with immigrants (Hood and Morris 1998, 2000, Stein et al 2000, Burns and Gimpel 2000, Branton and Jones 2005 but see Fox 2006 and Hero and Preuhs 2007).

Broader Effects?

The growing reach of immigration in the lives of individual citizens as well as in the political debates of the day suggests that this focus may be too narrow. As we have already noted, there are reasons to believe that the effects of immigration and in particular immigrant context could extend much more broadly. Given the increasingly central role that concerns over immigrants and Latinos play in a range of present day policy debates, it is certainly possible that the threat associated with higher concentrations of Latinos or immigrants could influence basic policy preferences on everything from education to crime. As well, given the divergent images that the Democratic and Republican Party present when talking about immigration, context could even shape our partisan attachments and vote choices. It is, in our view, crucial that we expand the scope of existing research.

Exactly where should we see these effects? If as we contend, the debate over immigration has been coupled with a range of other policy debates, the first place to look for effects is in the realm of *policy preferences*. And within the arena of policy, the most obvious set of policies to assess relate directly and explicitly to immigration itself. Indeed, existing studies have already demonstrated that demographic context impacts our policy views on immigration (Ha and Oliver 2010, Ayers et al 2008, Campbell et al 2006, Burns and Gimpel 2000, Stein et al 2000). Generally speaking, higher concentrations of immigrants or Latinos are associated with support for more security at the border, greater restrictions on immigrants once they are in the country, and increased efforts to repatriate immigrants to their home countries (but see Scheve and Slaughter 2001, Tolbert and Hero 2001).

Immigration is not, we argue, the only policy arena to be connected to immigration and in particular to the immigrant threat narrative. Historically, the question of whether Mexican

immigrants are "deserving" of social services has long been a subject of debate and continues to be a source of debate today (Chavez 2008, Fox 2012). Moreover, Latinos now make up almost 30 percent of the population receiving TANF benefits (Office of Family Assistance 2012). And perhaps most importantly, the immigrant threat narrative has repeatedly highlighted the heavy reliance of immigrants on public assistance and the costs that all of this raises for the American taxpayer.

An equally plausible connection could be made between crime and immigration. As we will show in the following chapter, a common frame that the media uses in their immigration news stories is one where immigrants are perpetrators of crime. And as with welfare, a disproportionate number of Latinos have been caught up in the criminal justice system. Latinos now, unfortunately, make up a little over one fifth of all those incarcerated in the United States (Bureau of Justice 2009). The fact that 19 percent of all immigrants related bills introduced by state legislatures address criminal justice suggests that the connection between crime and immigration is firmly entrenched (NCLS 2012). It would be surprising if white Americans were not at least partly thinking about the immigrant or Latino populations when they consider criminal justice policy.

There is plenty lots of evidence linking immigration and health care policy. The immigrant threat narrative frequently highlights the costs of immigrants' use of public health services. Anti-immigrant groups like the Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR) proclaim that undocumented immigrants cost federal and state governments $10.7 billion a year in health care spending. State legislatures have responded by introducing hundreds of bills related to immigrant health care over the past decade (NCLS 2012). The end result is widespread public concern. Fully 85 percent of Americans believe that providing services like school and health care to undocumented immigrants costs taxpayers too much (NPR/Kaiser 2004).

In all of these cases, the likely direction of effects is clear. Concerns about immigrants' disproportionate use of public services and the sense that immigrants and their offspring represent a larger and larger share of the 'receiving' population provide a strong motivation for retrenchment. Concerns about the criminality of these groups similarly might shift the balance toward more punitive measures. To the extent that individual Americans think immigrants and other minorities are using services without paying taxes, then there is a compelling logic to be less generous, reduce services, and pay fewer taxes. If true, all of these connections should lead to a conservative shift among members of the white population. Moreover, if immigration is pushing white Americans to the right on this array of issues, then there is a possibility that immigration is influencing whites' overall ideological identities and increasing the likelihood of identifying as a conservative.

Beyond policy, there are, as we have already contended, in our immigration backlash theory clear partisan implications for all of this. White Americans who fear and resent immigration's impact on the nation will likely be aware of the growing Latino and Asian American population's overwhelming support for the Democratic Party and the Republican Party's strong stance against benefits for immigrants and its efforts to limit immigration in the future. In short, if immigrants are becoming more central to the thinking of white Americans and if immigrants can and do pose a threat as many previous studies suggest, then there is reason to believe that Latino context could have broader *political* implications. We need to consider the effects of minority context not just on how Americans think about immigrants and minorities but on how they think about the broader array of policies that are at different times at least implicitly linked to immigration. Only through a broader study can we begin to understand the extent of immigration's impact on American politics.

Broad Ranging Effects Are Not New

Although existing studies of immigration have generally been limited to a focus on how immigrants affect attitudes toward immigration itself, studies of black-white relations have examined a wider array of outcomes. Moreover, these tests suggest that a broad ranged white backlash has occurred at several points in the past.[94] Proximity to blacks has been linked to greater racial antagonism by whites in a variety of forms including more negative views of blacks themselves (Dixon 2006, Taylor 1998, Quillian 1996 but see Oliver and Wong 2003, Kinder and Mendelberg 1995) violence against blacks including riots and lynching (Corzine et al 1983), support for racist candidates (Black and Black 1973 but see Voss 1996), and greater opposition to policies designed to aid blacks (Giles and Evans 1986, Fosset and Kiecolt 1989, Key 1949).

Critically, the confirmed effects of black context are even broader. Larger black populations have also been linked to more conservative views on a range of implicitly racial policies (Hero and Preuhs 2006, Fellowes and Rowe 2004, Keiser et al 2004, Soss et al 2001, Johnson 2001, Albritton 1990) and to large scale defection from the Democratic Party (Huckfeldt and Kohfeld 1989).[95] While several more recent studies have found that the effects of black context are contingent on socioeconomic status (Oliver and Mendelberg 2000, Branton and Jones 2005), there seems little doubt that black racial context has often been an important force shaping

[94] Often, the nation has experienced periods of white backlash when the African American population has been particularly vocal or active at trying to secure greater rights (Klinker and Smith 1999). During Reconstruction the expansion of black political representation was countered with massive resistance as white Southerners instituted a program of unprecedented violence, poll taxes, new residency and registration requirements, and at-large elections (Kousser 1999). Over a century later, the Civil Rights Movement was met with a similarly broad array of defensive white actions (Parker 1990).

[95] A different line of research has shown a robust relationship between racial diversity and the provision of public goods. In contexts with greater diversity, Americans appear to be less willing to pay for and provide public services (Alesina, Hopkins 2009 Hero Soss et al 2001, Hero and Preus 2006, Fellowes and Rowe 2004, Keiser et al 2004).

white political choices and actions.[96] We believe that a similar process is at work when large numbers of Latinos and immigrants enter into a particular locale.

Measuring Context

In our examination of context one of the first tasks we have to undertake is to determine exactly how we measure context. The real question here is: exactly who are white Americans reacting to? Are their concerns focused on all immigrants or are particular subsets of the population viewed as especially problematic and threatening? Likewise is white unease concentrated solely on the foreign-born or are the two pan-ethnic groups associated with immigration today viewed with equal suspicion? Typically, studies of immigrant context focus on some measure of the overall foreign-born population. We suspect, however, that white Americans do make one important distinction when it comes to outsiders. We argue that Latinos and Asian Americans should be examined separately because the two groups are likely to spark different kinds of reactions from white Americans. Reactions should differ, we maintain, because Asian Americans and Latinos hold very different places in American society and in the American psyche.

First, members of the two pan-ethnic groups tend to end up on opposite ends of socioeconomic spectrum. Asian Americans tend to fall near whites on the top end of the socioeconomic hierarchy, while Latinos are on average considerably less well-off and fall closer to African Americans on the bottom end of the scale. The median household income of Asian Americans, for example, was almost $75,000 in 2009, roughly $10,000 more than the figure for

[96] Other work focusing on individual attitudes towards minorities rather than on geographic context has been equally persuasive about how broadly attitudes toward blacks can impact core policy views. These studies have shown that a range of non-racial policies can and have become racially coded. In particular, there is strong evidence that individual policy preferences on welfare, education, crime, and a host of other core issue arenas have, at least at some points in the past, been shaped by attitudes toward blacks (Gilens 1999, Kinder and Sanders 1996, Kinder and Kam 2012).

whites. At the opposite end of the range, median Latino households only earned about $39,000 (Census 2010). Asian Americans are also much less likely than Latinos to be unemployed, substantially less likely to be poor, and on average hold much more wealth than Latinos (Census 2010). Second, stereotypes of the two groups tend to differ dramatically (Bobo 2001, Lee 2000). Whereas large numbers of white Americans tend to view Latinos as less intelligent, more prone to welfare, and not especially hard working, the bulk of white Americans tend to view Asian Americans in roughly the opposite fashion (Bobo 2001).

Third, the immigrant experience of the two groups is often radically different. Far fewer Asian immigrants enter the United States without documentation when compared to Latinos. The Department of Homeland Security estimates that 75 percent of undocumented immigrants in 2011 hail from Latin or Central America, whereas only ten percent come from Asia..[97] Moreover, although the clear majority of Latino immigrants in the United States are here legally, most white Americans believe that 'illegals' are the majority of Latino immigrant population (Massey and Sanchez 2010). If an immigrant's legal standing matters in the minds of white Americans – as many polls suggest is the case – then Latinos are likely to hold a different place than Asian Americans in the psyche of individual Americans.

Survey data on inter-group relations are not extensive but the available evidence does seem to suggest that white Americans tend to be more concerned about Latinos than Asian Americans. For example, in a poll asking whites how well they generally get along with other racial groups, 92 percent say they get along with Asians, while only 67 percent felt the same way about Latinos (NCCJ 2005).[98] In this light it is also interesting to note that while fully 48 percent

[97] http://www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/statistics/publications/ois_ill_pe_2011.pdf

[98] Moreover, a larger percentage of whites responded that they felt closer to Asians, relative to Blacks and Latinos. Source: 2005 Intergroup Relations Survey, sponsored by the National Conference for Community and Justice (NCCJ).

of Americans believe there are too many immigrants from Latin American countries, only 31 percent say there are too many immigrants from Asian countries (Gallup 2008).[99]

Exactly what all of these patterns imply in terms of a threat to the white community is not absolutely clear. Given these differences in socioeconomic standings and stereotypes, it is certainly possible that Latinos will represent more of threat than the Asian American population. At least if concerns about welfare, redistribution, and criminality dominate white views, then reactions to the Latino population could mirror backlashes against the black population. By contrast, Asian Americans, depicted as the "model minority" by the media and politicians (Wu 2002), could represent less of a threat and more of a potential partner.[100] Whatever the exact response is for each pan-ethnic group, it seems unlikely that whites will react to members of the two groups in the same way.

Individual Americans could also make important distinctions between different groups within the Latino population – undocumented, documented, foreign born, and/or native born. Though, as we have argued throughout this book, we suspect that most of these categories are muddled together in the minds of many white Americans – especially since the majority of white Americans thinks that the most Latinos are undocumented. As we have already noted white attitudes toward undocumented immigrants are highly correlated with their views toward legal immigrants and their views toward Latinos. In our earlier analysis of partisanship and the vote in Chapters Two and Three, measures of these three groups were largely interchangeable and led to similar results. Thus, it is possible that regardless of nativity, all Latinos will be lumped together

[99] Experimental research also indicates that whites report much higher levels of anxiety about the costs of immigration when the images are of Latinos (Brader et al 2008).

[100] One other possibility is that the higher socioeconomic status of Asian Americans represents *more* of a threat to members of the white community. There have obviously been major periods of anti-Asian discrimination in American history (Kim 1999). The internment of Japanese Americans during the second world war is perhaps the most famous but controversy surrounding Asian American financing of political campaigns and concerns about the loyalty of an Asian American scientists in the Wen Ho Lee case suggest that concerns about the Asian American population are likely to be ongoing.

in the eyes of white Americans.[101] For this reason, we focus on the percentage of Latinos in a state as our primary measures of context. Since it is not at all clear in advance who white Americans are reacting and thus what the best measure of context is, we repeat our analysis with each of these different measures. Specifically, we assess context by looking first at racial or pan-ethnic groups but then also considering the undocumented population, the total foreign born population, and the foreign born Latino population.

Alternative Accounts of How Context Works

We believe that heavier concentrations of immigrants and in particular larger Latino populations will heighten white perceptions of threat and will spark a wide-ranging political backlash. But a racial threat view is far from the only possible understanding of how immigrant context should work in the American case. An alternative view contends that proximity should more often than not lead to greater understanding and acceptance (Allport 1954, Jackman and Crane 1986, Pettigrew 1997, Dixon and Rosenbaum 2004). This *contact hypothesis* argues that out-group animosity is more often the result of inaccurate perceptions about the out-group than it is about real competition over resources. From this perspective, personal interaction with out-groups exposes majority group members to new, more accurate information about out-group members that should disconfirm negative stereotypes and allow for the development of more favorable views. In many versions of this contact hypothesis, the nature of the contact is critical and positive understanding is only likely to grow when individuals of similar status interact in a cooperative setting (Allport 1954, Jackman and Crane 1986).

[101] Patterns in racial hate crimes and patterns in past discriminatory actions by the government also suggest that foreign nativity can be irrelevant to white actions (Almageur 1994).

It is important to note, that in the analysis that follows, we do not directly test the contact hypotheses. Our primary measure of context – state racial demographics - is probably correlated with contact but only weakly. It is entirely possible for whites living in extremely diverse states to engage in few personal interactions with members of minority out-groups, especially given the high rates of residential segregation in the nation (Massey 2001). In part to address this concern, we will incorporate neighborhood level demographics in alternate analyses. But even there, we will not be measuring interaction or contact with immigrants. These zip code level data do not tell us directly about the amount or the nature of contact that members of different groups have at the individual level. Thus, our findings will say little about the potential of specific forms of inter-racial contact to foster cooperation or goodwill. If we were able to measure actual and meaningful contact with members of the Latino population or with different types of immigrants, our story – or at least certain aspects of our story – might be very different.

Finally, a third possibility is that context has no independent effect on inter-group attitudes or policy views. Either because group views are predicated on a rigid type of prejudice that is impervious to change or because other individual characteristics like education or economic status are the primary factors shaping group and policy views, geographic context may be largely irrelevant for understanding inter-group conflict and cooperation. If true, attitudes toward immigrants and policies that might benefit immigrants should be unrelated to geographic context once we control for individual characteristics.

Why State Context?

We exploit the uneven nature of America's racial transformation by specifically looking at the relationship between *state* racial context and white policy preferences and partisan

proclivities. We focus on state context for several reasons. The first is theoretical. States are one of the primary actors in the race and immigration debate. In 2011 state legislatures put forward 1607 measures on immigration alone (NCSL 2012). Also, we believe that the presence and political power of Latinos is keenly felt at the state level. In states with sizable Latino populations, the political debate has often focused on issues related to race and ethnicity. The debate over Prop 187 in California in the 1990s and the tumult over the recent immigration bill in Arizona, SB 1070, are just two of the most dramatic examples of this phenomenon. Moreover, Latino representation, where it exists, can be especially pronounced at the state level (Casellas 2011). Latinos, for example, hold 24 percent of the Assembly seats in California.

Second, existing research suggests that state context does have important political effects. We believe that a focus on the state is appropriate given that past research has demonstrated a link between state level context (both racial and cultural) and state level policy outcomes (Hero 1998, Hero and Preuhs 2007) as well as between state context and state macropartisanship (Erikson, Wright, and McIver 1993). Similar mechanisms could certainly be at work at the neighborhood, city, or metropolitan level but it is clear that when it comes to race and immigration, much is happening at the state level. Third, there is evidence that individual Americans have a reasonable sense of the demographics of their states. An ever-present concern with contextual analysis is that individual residents do not actually know much about the demographic profile of their area (Wong 2007). However, this problem may actually be less severe at the state level. Survey data indicate that Americans do tend to overestimate the absolute number of immigrants and minorities in their state (Enos 2010). However, the same data show that Americans tend to know the size of the state immigrant/minority population

relative to other states. There is, in fact, a reasonably close correlation between individual perceptions and actual state rankings (Enos 2010). [102]

The final and perhaps most important reason to focus on state context is a practical one. A principal challenge of studying the effects of racial context on public opinion is selection bias. Individuals with a particular set of political views may decide to move to or away from a particular locale. There is, for example, clear evidence of wide scale white flight from neighborhoods and cities with large black populations (Massey and Hajnal 1995). If past patterns are being repeated today, we may be seeing similar movement away from predominantly Latino or Asian American locales. If this kind of selection is occurring then any simple correlation between immigrant context and white views would likely understate the role of racial threat and might even produce a spurious positive relationship between immigrant context and white views. Most studies recognize this problem but few are able to deal with it effectively (but see Oliver and Wong 2003).

Fortunately, we can considerably reduce concerns about selection and endogeneity by focusing on the larger geographic unit of the state. Selective migration across states is much less common than selective migration across neighborhoods and municipal boundaries. Just as we know that one's neighborhood choice can be significantly impacted by one's racial views (Bobo and Zubrinsky 1996, Clark 1992, Oliver and Wong 2003), we also have fairly strong evidence indicating that state of residence is largely unrelated to racial views. The first piece of evidence is that very few people move across states. According to the Census less than one percent of all Americans move across state borders in any given five-year period (Census Bureau 2003). If few people move from state to state, there cannot be a significant amount of selection occurring

[102] To the extent that Americans do not know the racial makeup of their states, our results should be biased downward. This "noise" in our contextual measure should only serve to reduce significance levels.

at the state level. Amongst white Americans who do decide to move, the vast majority either move within the same county or to a different county within a state (U.S. Census Bureau 2008).

Second, studies of inter-state migration – unlike studies of neighborhoods or municipalities – have not found that race plays a significant role in migration decisions (Greenwood 2000). Mobility across states is relatively costly and is thus driven almost exclusively by employment and family (Gimpel 1999). Concerns about the race and ethnicity of one's neighbors may be enough to move one out of the neighborhood or even to the next municipality, but they are seldom strong enough to move one out of the state. As such, state context represents a relatively exogenous context. In secondary analysis we will consider neighborhood effects but our primary focus will be on state context.

Data and Empirical Strategy

To assess the effects of state and neighborhood context on white views we turn to the 2000 and 2004 National Annenberg Election Surveys (NAES). The NAES is an ideal source because it contains a large sample (over 50,000 respondents per survey) and extensive geographic variation (large samples in all mainland states and respondents from over 14,000 different zip codes).[103] In addition, the surveys contain questions on a range of policy issues, basic ideology, party identification, and vote choice. In subsequent analyses we present results from the 2000 NAES – largely because it has a much wider array of policy questions – but analysis of the 2004 NAES leads to a similar set of conclusions.

Our analysis consists of a series of hierarchical linear models (HLM) that simultaneously incorporate immigrant/racial context, individual characteristics, and socio-economic context to

[103] By contrast, the main data set that we have been using to this point, the American National Election Survey, only samples from 40 Primary Sampling Units and is thus inappropriate for either state or neighborhood level analysis.

try to explain the individual political orientations of white Americans. This method can take into account the different units of analysis that we will consider (individual, neighborhood, and state) and minimizes the correlation in error terms amongst respondents in the same geographic unit. [104] The dependent variables in our models focus on policy areas that have been most clearly and regularly linked to immigrants and the issue of immigration. Specifically, we examine views on immigration (How serious of a problem is immigration into the United States?), social welfare (How serious of a problem is poverty? Should the federal government try to reduce income differences between rich and poor Americans? Should the federal government spend more or less money on health care for the poor?), three different health-care related questions,[105] two different questions on criminal justice,[106] and one question each on education and tax policy.[107]

To determine if racial context has influenced more fundamental political identities, we also analyze ideology, party identification, and vote choice. Liberal-conservative ideology is measured with a standard self-identified question (Generally speaking, do you consider your political views very conservative…very liberal?). Party identification is measured with a standard self-identified question (Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a Republican, a Democrat, an Independent or something else?).[108] We examine the vote in the 2000 and 2004 presidential and Congressional elections. The analysis is restricted to major party voters.

[104] Likelihood ratio tests indicate that the HLM models presented below are significantly different from standard linear regression models. In other words, we have to take into account the hierarchical nature of the data. The model also takes into account both fixed and random effects.

[105] The questions on health care policy are: 1) Do you favor or oppose using government funds to make sure that every child in the US is covered by health insurance? 2) Should the federal government spend more or less money on health care for the elderly? And 3) Should the federal government spend more or less money for health care to cover the uninsured?

[106] The questions on criminal justice are: 1) Do you favor or oppose the death penalty? 2) How serious a problem is the number of criminals who are not punished enough?

[107] The education question is: should the federal government provide more financial assistance to public elementary and secondary schools? For tax policy the question is: should the federal government increase taxes on the wealthy?

[108] We employ a three point party identification scale (Democrat-Independent-Republican) in the analysis presented here but alternate tests with 5 and 7 point scales or with logistic regressions isolating Democratic or Republican identifiers lead to the same set of conclusions.

As we discussed in the previous section, we measure context by focusing on state level demographics. Specifically, the percentage of Latinos and the percentage of Asian Americans in a state serve as our primary measures of context.[109] Given that several existing studies suggest that changes in the size of the immigrant population are more consequential than the absolute size of the out-group, in alternate tests we also consider growth in the immigrant population (Hopkins 2009, Newman 2012).

Along with state demographics, we also include state level controls for socioeconomic status (as captured by median household income and the percentage with a college degree) and for current economic conditions (measured by the percent unemployed). As additional controls, we distinguish between respondents who live in urban areas, suburban areas, and rural areas. Our sample is restricted to those respondents who self-identify as non-Hispanic White.

To help ensure that the relationships we see between context and white views are not spurious, we include key individual characteristics that have also been tied to political views. In terms of individual demographic characteristics, we control for education (the last grade of school completed sorted into nine categories), household income (divided into nine categories), gender, age in years, employment status, union membership, and whether or not there are any children in the household. Also, since policy views are often driven by political ideology and party identification, we include both measures in our models of policy choice.

Context and White Political Views

Does context matter? Do those living near larger Latino populations have distinct political views on political issues related to immigration? In answering these questions, we

[109] Given uncertainty about which group or groups white Americans are reacting to, we perform a series of alternate specifications that we describe in the robustness checks section below.

follow a logical pattern. We begin by looking at immigration policy attitudes, since it is the one issue that is most explicitly tied to immigration. We then we slowly branch out to consider other issues that are associated with immigration – welfare, crime, and health services. Our test of context continues by looking at other broader political orientations-- ideology, party identification and the vote. For all of these tests, we are interested in knowing if white Americans react to significant numbers of Latinos in their states with a backlash and a shift to the right politically.

Immigration

If heavy concentrations of Latinos represent a threat, the clearest indication of that would be finding that whites in states with larger Latino population are more concerned about immigration. This is exactly what we find. Looking at the first row of the first model in Table 4.1 we see that white Americans who live in states with larger Latino populations are significantly more likely to view immigration as a serious problem. The magnitude of the effect is, however, relatively small. All else equal, a two standard deviation shift in the size of the Latino population is associated with a seven percent increase in the likelihood of viewing immigration as a 'serious problem.'[110] There are no other questions on immigration in the 2000 NAES but the 2004 NAES asked respondents to identify the "most important problem" facing the nation. Here we found that whites who lived in states with larger Latino populations were significantly more likely to believe that immigration was the country's biggest problem.

[TABLE 4.1 HERE]

[110] Assessing substantive effects is not straightforward with an HLM model. To provide a simplistic estimate of effect size, we use the package developed by Tomze et al (2000), known as Clarify, on an identical linear regression model (or when appropriate a probit or ordered probit model). All predicted probabilities are calculated by varying the quantity of interest from the 10th to the 90th percentile while holding all other independent variables constant at their mean or modal value.

As we expected, Asian American context does not have the same effect. Whites who live in states with high concentrations of Asian Americans are no more or less likely to view immigration as a serious problem. The divergent effects for Asian Americans mirror the divergent views that white Americans have of this pan-ethnic group.[111]

Social Welfare

In the rest of Table 4.1, we focus on social welfare policy, the other policy area that has been most closely tied to immigration. The results in columns 2 to 4 of the table indicate that the impact of minority context does, in fact, extend beyond the confines of immigration policy.[112] On all three questions related to welfare, there are signs that living in a state with a higher proportion of Hispanics is tied to greater concern about welfare. Whether respondents think poverty is a serious problem, how much they think government should do to try to reduce income differences between rich and poor Americans, and to what extent they believe the government spend money on health care for the poor are all negatively and significantly or nearly significantly related to the size of the state's Latino population. In other words, in states with higher concentrations of Latinos, whites are less likely to see poverty as an issue, less likely to want to redistribute income to the poor, and less likely to want to spend money on medical care for the poor. The magnitude of the effects, once again, are not dramatic but they are meaningful. Living in a state with a relatively high share of Latinos is linked to a ten percent decline in White willingness to reduce income inequality.

[111] The estimates presented in column one also begins to inform us about the role of African American context in American politics. The results, as one would expect, indicate that whites living with larger concentrations of African Americans are no more or less concerned about immigration.

[112] At this point, it is also worth noting that the individual control variables that are included in the model generally perform as expected. Self-identified conservatives and Republicans are, for example, more anti-immigration and significantly more conservative on the host of policy questions we assess.

Across the three welfare questions, we see again that Asian American context has a different and largely negligible relationship with white views. In two of the three cases, living in a state with a higher concentration of Asian Americans is unrelated to white policy preferences. The only exception is with respect to white attitudes towards poverty. And in this case, Asian American context is associated with more *liberal* rather than more conservative views. One reading of the divergent contextual effects for Latinos and Asian Americans is that whites are threatened by Latinos and sympathetic to Asian Americans. One could also interpret the results as saying that if the poor or those in need are disproportionately Latino, then individual white Americans are less likely to think help is necessary and less likely to want to help. But if the disadvantaged are more likely to come from the Asian American population, then more whites think support is warranted.

To this point, the results essentially reaffirm existing research on Latino and Asian American context (Ha and Oliver 2010, Ayers et al 2008, Hero and Preuhs 2007, Stein et al 2000 but see Hood and Morris 2000, Fox 2004). We now turn to policy areas that scholars of immigrant context have largely ignored.

Health Care and Criminal Justice

The estimates from Table 4.2 further the same themes by illustrating a range of links between context and a series of other policy issues that are connected – but perhaps not quite as closely – to the debate on immigration. We begin with health care; across all three health care questions, a larger in-state Latino population is associated with less support for health care benefits. Whites living in states with large Latino populations are significantly more likely to oppose spending money to insure the uninsured, significantly less apt to want to spend on

Medicare, and significantly less eager to expand resources to ensure that all children are covered by health care.

In columns 5-6 of Table 4.2, we present results for the effects of Latino context on Whites' views towards criminal justice policies. The results are not as consistent or as robust as they are for health care but at least in terms of the death penalty, whites' preferences for punishment become more severe as the size of the Latino population increases. All else equal, whites living in states with larger Latino populations are 10 percent more likely to favor the death penalty than whites living in states with few Latinos. There is, however, no apparent Latino contextual effect on the degree to which white respondents feel that "criminals not being punished enough".[113]

As before, we also see a different effect for Asian American context in Table 4.2. Proximity to Asian Americans is either unrelated to white views or is associated with greater leniency with respect to the death penalty on the part of white respondents. The contrast between the punitive nature of the response to Latino context and the forgiving nature of the response to Asian American context suggests that white perceptions vary widely about how threatening or deserving the two pan-ethnic groups are (Brader et al 2008).

The other interesting conclusion that emerges from the results presented in Tables 4.1 and 4.2 concerns the relevance of black context. Although the effects are uneven, we see some, we signs of the relevance of black context. Echoing past research, Whites appear to react negatively to large black populations. Whites who live in states with a large state black population are especially apt to favor harsher punishments for criminals (Gilliam and Iyengar 2000).

Other Policy Areas

[113] There were also no significant effects for Latino context on two questions that asked about gun control laws.

The NAES also asks about education and tax policy – two areas that are less directly tied to immigration, but where the rhetoric over immigrants' use of public services could be relevant. In these two policy areas ties between Latino context and policy views are much more tenuous but cannot be ruled out. In terms of tax policy, there are fewer reasons to suspect a link with immigration. The public debate on tax policy is generally not focused on immigrants. Nevertheless, on occasion critics of undocumented immigration will highlight the fact that many of these of immigrants do not pay income taxes. Educational reform is likewise an issue that is not always associated with immigrants but there are times when immigrant access to educational funding does get widespread attention, as in the case of Alabama's latest anti-immigrant law or with the Supreme Court ruling in *Plyler v Doe*.[114]

Our pattern of results on tax and education policy matches these irregular relationships. Answers to most of the questions included in either the 2000 or the 2004 NAES related to taxes were unconnected to Latino context but in one case – a question on tax redistribution from the wealthy to the poor – Whites living in states with larger Latino population shares were substantially but and statistically significantly less likely to favor redistribution from the wealthy to the poor.[115] Similarly on the one question in the 2000 NAES that asked respondents about funding for education, there was no apparent connection to Latino context. But on one question in the 2004 NAES that addressed school vouchers, whites living in states with Larger Latino populations were almost significantly more likely to support school choice. The overall pattern suggests that the effects of Latino context fade as we move away from polices that are closely associated with the Latino or immigrant population to policies and debates that have less direct ties to either population.

[114] A more in-depth discussion of the link between education policy and immigrants can be found in Chapter 6.
[115] The tax policy measures unrelated to Latino context were a question about a flat tax (2000) and a question about reducing taxes (2004).

Beyond Policy

Does context have even broader effects? Are whites living in states with more Latinos more apt to identify as conservative, to identify as Republican, and to favor Republican candidates? In Table 4.3 we look at each of these links All of the dependent variables in our model are coded so that higher values are more conservative or Republican and lower values more liberal or Democratic. The broader goal is to see how far-ranging the effects of America's newcomers have become.

Latino Context and Ideology

An important test of how far Latino context is re-shaping white views is to determine whether or not proximity to Latinos affects how Americans identify ideologically. Are the rightward shifts that we see on immigration, health, welfare, and criminal justice accompanied by a broader shift to the right on the core liberal-conservative ideology scale that underlies much of the politics of this nation? In the first column of Table 4.3, we attempt to answer this question. Self-described ideology is coded with the standard five point scale with higher values representing a more conservative identity.

The results are striking. Minority context does play a role in the core political identities of white Americans. The effects mirror the patterns we have already seen. Larger Latino populations push white Americans to the right politically. The effects are once again small but statistically significant. Whites living in states with many Latinos are, all else equal, approximately five percent more likely to identify as conservative or strongly conservative than whites in states with few Latinos.

Latino Context and Partisanship

The public's views on policy and ideology are an integral part of American democracy but nothing in American politics is more central than party identification. If Latino context can influence this core political identity, than it is clear that immigration's impact on American politics is being broadly felt. In second column of table 4.3, we test this connection. The results are telling. State racial context and partisanship are clearly intertwined with one another. Similar to the pattern that we saw for policies and ideology, proximity to larger numbers of Latinos appears to push white Americans away from the Democratic Party and closer to the Republican Party. All else equal white Americans who live in states with a sizable Latino population are five percent more likely to identify as Republican than those residing in states with few Latinos.

To test the robustness of the relationship between Latino context and partisanship, we repeated the analysis with the 2004 NAES data. The results were nearly identical. Living in state with a higher proportion of Latinos was linked to a six percent higher likelihood of identifying as Republican.[116] The effects are by no means massive but any affect on party identification is important. How White Americans identify themselves politically is at least in part connected to where they live and the size of the Latino population. Immigration is leading to small but very visible alterations in the foundations of American politics.

It is also worth noting that the effects of Latino context on white party identification are evident after controlling for a range of individual and state-level characteristics. Not only are we controlling for the normal range of individual socio-economic characteristics but we are also

[116] We also obtained similar results in both years if we used a dichotomous measures of partisanship (Democratic identifier, Independent identifier, Republican identifier) rather than a scaled measure of party identification. In 2004, for example, all else equal, whites in states with larger Latino populations were six percent less likely to identify as Democratic and eight percent more likely to identify as Republican.

accounting for political ideology. In essence, whites in states with larger Latino populations are identifying as more Republican than their conservative ideology, age, gender, and class status would imply. In the analysis, we also control for current economic conditions and the overall socioeconomic status of the state so it is hard to imagine that features of these states that are not included in the analysis are driving our results. It cannot be that whites in states with more Latinos are more Republican because those states are somehow distinct economically or educationally.

Alternate specifications also indicate that controlling for region or the political culture of each state does little to alter the effects we see here. These racial context effects are also robust to the inclusion of the mean ideology of state residents as measured by state public opinion by (Erikson et al 1989) or as measured by average state public opinion on specific issues including racial policy, tolerance, the death penalty, and welfare (Lax and Philips 2009). As such, whites in states with more Latinos are not more Republican simply because the residents of those states are more conservative. The connection between Latino context and partisanship is a robust one.

Latino Context and the Vote

In the end democracy rests on the vote. No candidate is elected and no policy enacted without this fundamental act. Thus, we present one last critical test of Latino context. Do we see the same sort of rightward backlash in the vote that we have seen for policy, ideology, and partisanship? In the last two columns of Table 5.3 we assess the effects of Latino context on the Presidential and Congressional vote in 2000. The results indicate that the impact of Latino context does, in fact, extend to the vote. As we saw before, whites living in states with more Latinos were, all else equal, significantly more likely to opt for the political right. In this case,

that means substantially greater support for the Republican candidate in Presidential and Congressional contests. The effects are relatively small in the Presidential contest and relatively large for Congressional elections. Controlling for a range of other factors, living in states with a large share of Latinos is associated with a seven percent increase in the probability of voting for George Bush, the Republican presidential candidate. In Congressional contests, moving from a high to low Latino population is linked to a 32 percent increase in the likelihood of a Republican vote.

Moreover, when we repeat the analysis on the 2004 elections in the NAES, we see an identical pattern of results. In 2004, whites who lived in states with larger shares of Latinos were once again more likely to favor Republican candidates in both types of contests. And at least in Congressional elections, the Latino population had the power to shift partisan preferences in a dramatic fashion. In Congressional contests in 2004 the white Republican vote was, all else equal, 20 points higher in states with large Latino populations than in states with small Latino populations. When white Americans decide whom to support in the key national contests, one of the factors that impacts that decision is the racial context that they live in.[117]

Finally, if we assess white's opinions of the candidates rather than the vote, we arrive at a similar pattern. Whites who live in states with a higher concentration of Latinos are significantly more apt to view George Bush favorably in terms of honesty, knowledge, and other character traits and less apt to view Al Gore and John Kerry favorably on these dimensions. These effects all reach statistical significance at conventional levels. Again this is after controlling for ideology and party identification. Whites are not voting Republican simply because they are conservative-leaning or consider themselves Republican identifiers. Beyond these two factors,

[117] If we focus on intended vote choice for respondents interviewed prior to the elections in 2000 and 2004, we find the same effects for the size of the Latino population.

Latino context plays an important role. These results are also not caused by state economic conditions, mean state ideology, or region – all factors that we control for in the models in Table 4.3 or in alternate analyses. [118]

There are also signs of the ongoing importance of black context in the partisan choices of whites. As past studies have found, proximity to a large African American population is generally associated with a shift to the right politically. Looking across Table 4.3, we see that in every case black context was positively related to the conservative or Republican option. In two cases – ideology and the presidential vote – that relationship reached statistical significance. Moreover, when we repeated the analysis with the 2004 NAES, black context was positively and significantly related to white views and behavior across all four measures. Once again, the effects were not large. Living in a state with a higher concentration of African Americans was associated with a five to ten percent increase in the likelihood of identifying as conservative, aligning with the Republican Party, and voting Republican.

If we couple this with our earlier results on policy, there is a clear, albeit not always significant, relationship between black context and white politics. All of this echoes existing accounts which suggests that some white Americans do view the black community with antagonism, are threatened when the black population is large enough, and mobilize to support the Republican Party and more conservative policies to try to counteract that threat (Carmines and Stimson 1989, Edsall and Edsall 1991, Gilens 2001).

The other important finding in Table 4.3 concerns Asian American context. If we look across the different regressions in the Table 4.3, we see that Asian American context is relevant for all three political choices – ideology, party identification, and the vote. And in each case, the

[118] It is also worth noting that the results we see in Table 4.3 could be understating the influence of Latino context. By controlling for both ideology and party identification, two factors that we have already demonstrated are linked to Latino context, we are essentially controlling away the indirect effects of Latino context on the vote.

results are statistically significant and in the opposite direction as those for Latino context. Proximity to Asian Americans has a liberalizing effect on white politics. Whites who live in states with higher concentrations of Asian Americans are more likely to identify as liberal, more likely to feel attached to the Democratic Party, and more likely to favor Democratic candidates – at least as assessed in the 2000 NAES. In each the magnitude of the effects is similar to what we see with Latino context – a five to ten percent shift on ideology, partisanship, and the presidential vote and a slightly larger effect for the Congressional vote.

However, if we shift to the 2004 data we find that the effects of Asian American context are not as robust. On all three measures – ideology, party identification, and the vote – there is no discernible link between Asian American context and white preferences in 2004. Why Asian American context is not as robust is not immediately clear. Perhaps the link between Asian Americans and the left-right divide in American politics is less ingrained and thus more dependent on the context of the campaign and the particular election.

Nevertheless, it is clear that how white Americans react to Asian Americans differs from how they react to Latinos. Although likely surprising to most readers, the liberalizing effects of the Asian American population have been echoed in past research. In a number of existing studies, there is at least a hint that the impact of the Asian American population is different from the effect of the Black and Latino population. Hood and Morris (2000, 1998), Hero and Preuhs (2006), and Tolbert et al (1999) in different ways all find that proximity to larger Asian Americans communities breeds more positive views about Asian Americans or policies related to Asian Americans. Hood and Morris (2000), for example, note that whites living in counties with larger Asian American populations were less willing to support Proposition 187– the California measure design to cut a range of public services to undocumented immigrants. Whether the

effect of the Asian American population is negligible (as it is in half of our tests) or liberalizing, the contrast between Asian American context on one hand and black and Latino context on the other suggests that the Asian American community represent very different threats and possibilities to members of the white population.

Robustness Checks

To help ensure that the results in Tables 4.1 to 4.3 measure underlying relationships between context and white political views, we performed a serious of additional tests and alternate specifications. First, we sought to verify our explanation by examining Latino contextual effects in areas where we should not find them - on views of groups that are orthogonal to discussions of Latinos and Latino immigration. Accordingly, we found no significant ties between Latino context and attitudes towards feminist groups, gay and lesbian groups, and Muslims. [119] As such, we are not seeing effects for Latino context merely because Latinos move into areas where whites are especially intolerant or conservative. Instead, Latino context tends only to be associated with white views on those issues where the policy debate often centers on immigrants or Latinos. We also found no effects of Latino context on a wide variety of measures of political interest and political participation – everything from discussing politics to contributing to campaigns. Whites who live in states with more Latinos appear to be different in only one sense from Whites residing in sparsely populated Latino states – they are, on average, more opposed to pro-Latino policies and outcomes.

Second, as we have already alluded to, we repeated as much of the analysis as possible on the 2004 NAES. The 2004 survey has fewer policy questions but does have the same large

[119] Views of Muslims were, however, tied to black context. Whites who lived in areas with larger black populations had significantly less favorable views of Muslims.

sample and wide geographic sampling and includes questions on the same set of individual characteristics that we incorporated into the regression models in the tables in this chapter. Thus, for at least a few of the policy areas as well as for the liberal-conservative ideology question we can replicate our earlier tests. This replication largely corroborates the results from the 2000 survey. In 2004, as in 2000, proximity to large concentrations of Latinos is associated with some significant shifts to the political right. The effects in 2004 were not as consistent as the effects in 2000 but in 2004 whites living near large numbers of Latinos were once again more conservative on some aspects of social welfare and crime and they tended to be more likely to self-identify as Republican and vote Republican. The effects of Asian American context were as we see here either insignificant or led in some cases to more left-leaning policy choices. Black context once again had an uneven but at least partially conservative impact.

Third, we sought to update some of our results using the 2012 Cooperative Congressional Election Study (CCES). The CCES has fewer policy questions but we did find similar patterns on questions that we could examine. Specifically, all else equal living in states with heaver concentrations of Latinos was associated with more restrictive or conservative views on immigration and spending, a higher chance of identifying as Republican, and greater support for Republican candidates at the Presidential, Congressional, Senatorial, and Gubernatorial levels.[120]

One potential issue is multicollinearity between the key contextual variables. Fortunately, at the state level, the proportions of residents who are Latino, Asian American, and African American are not closely correlated with each other (r<. 15). Nevertheless, to help ensure that correlation between different contexts was not affecting our results, we repeated the

[120] Analysis available from the authors upon request.

analysis while including only one of the three racial contexts and dropped the other two. This did nothing to alter the basic conclusions that we present. [121]

It may also be the case that our results are driven by a particular state. To be sure that one state did not account for the pattern of results, we repeated the analysis dropping each large state one-by-one. Basic conclusions about the impact of Latino, Asian American, and African American context remained the same whether states like California, Texas, or New York are included or dropped. Also, to help ensure that our analysis is not picking up regional effects or the distinct political cultures of a state, in alternate analyses we include dummy variables for region as well as updated measures of Elazar's state political culture (Sharansky and Hofferbert 1969). The regional variables were occasionally significant (the South was often more conservative) but their inclusion did little to alter the basic pattern of results.

In addition, we also performed a series of tests in which we added a range of different individual characteristics into our model. Specifically, we accounted for one's religious denomination (Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, Muslim), a measure for whether the respondent was born again or not, another for households with a member in the armed forces, and a variable that gauged occupational status.). As well, to help discount the role of whites selecting into and out of areas with more or fewer minorities, we controlled for mobility by adding a variable that measures the number of years the respondent has lived in their current address. Again, these additional controls did little to affect our main results.

Despite our earlier references to a process of immigrant transformation, the analysis to this point in the chapter has implied a somewhat static process. Rather than looking at changes in the racial makeup of different states over time, we have simply compared states with higher

[121] Another possibility is that the relationship between immigrant context and white views is not linear as we have assumed in our models. Additional analyses, however, reveal no clear sign of non-linearity in the white response. Given that there are no states with Latino or Asian American majorities, this is a preliminary conclusion at best.

and lower proportions of minorities. It may well be that size is, in fact, the critical variable and that white Americans are most affected by the share of the state population that is Latino. But there is at least some evidence that reactions to the Latino population are dynamic and that whites are concerned more than anything else by rapid expansion of the Latino population (Newman 2013, Hopkins 2009). To test this possibility, we added various measures of Latino population growth to the models in Tables 4.1 to 4.3.[122] The results are far from consistent but there are weak signs that growth in the immigrant population does matter. In particular, recent growth in the proportion of a state that is foreign born appeared to play some role in shaping white views. Whites in states with faster immigrant growth were significantly more apt to want to spend less on health care, and significantly more punitive on some criminal policy decisions.[123] On most of the other political views we examined – including the vote – we could find no link between any measure of population change and white political behavior. Overall, at least one of our different measures of population growth was significantly linked with rightward leaning in politics in about a third of the outcomes we examined.

When we repeated the analysis with the 2004 NAES similar patterns emerged. Change, especially when it was measured by change in the proportion of the state that is foreign born, mattered but it did so inconsistently. More rapid growth in 2004 was associated with a desire to restrict immigration, less interest in reducing inequality, and more conservative positions on crime. The one real difference between 2000 and 2004 was that immigrant growth was also associated with a Republican vote in the 2004 presidential election. Overall the results on immigrant growth are not impressive but they are suggestive. The pattern of findings does

[122] We captured growth by controlling for change in the total number and proportion of Latinos in the state, change in the number and proportion of foreign born in the state, and percent growth in the Latino and foreign born populations either measured as five year or ten year change.

[123] On views that immigration is a problem and the propensity of identifying as a Republican, the effect of Latino context was not statistically significant at conventional levels.

suggest that white Americans can and do react to rapid changes in the immigrant population. Importantly, when we add these new population growth measures, the original effect for the Latino population proportion remains robust. White Americans may be somewhat responsive to the growth of the immigrant population but they are clearly influenced by the overall size of the Latino population.

As we discussed earlier in this chapter, one other important consideration is the question of exactly which group white Americans are reacting to. Our analysis to this point suggests that white Americans are more threatened by the Latino population and less concerned by the Asian American population. But there are a range of other ways white Americans could makes distinctions between different elements of America's immigrant population. Perhaps, white Americans are not all that concerned about the Latino population as a whole but instead are more troubled by particular subsets of the immigrant population. Surveys and some existing research seem to indicate that white Americans are particularly anxious about undocumented immigration (Hood and Morris 1998). Likewise, the immigrant threat narrative seems especially focused on Mexican immigration and less concerned about other Latino national origin groups like Puerto Ricans or Cubans (Huntington 2005).

Empirically, it is often difficult to distinguish between these different groups. At least at the state level, measures gauging the size of many of the different groups are highly correlated. The percentage of Latinos in a state is, for example, correlated at r=.91 with the size of the Mexican population as well as at r=.89 with the percentage of undocumented immigrants. We did, however, perform a series of additional tests to try to see if we could determine exactly who white Americans are reacting to. Specifically, we repeated our analysis with a range of different measures of immigrant context at the state level: the percentage of foreign born, percentage of

undocumented immigrants, percentage of Mexicans, percentage of Cubans, and percentage of Puerto Ricans.[124]

We find that the percentage of foreign born residents statewide was rarely related to white American political behavior. We believe that the relative insignificance of percent foreign born follows directly and logically from the divergent reactions whites have to Latinos and Asian Americans. Since white Americans tend to react to Latinos (or immigrants from Latin America) by shifting to the right politically and to Asian Americans (or immigrants from Asia) either not at all or by shifting to the left politically, the two effects tend to offset each other which reduces the significance of any findings. The null findings suggest that we cannot accurately assess the white backlash by looking at the immigrant population as a whole. If scholars want to uncover how immigrant context is shaping white views, they need to consider and incorporate the contrasting effects of the Asian American and Latino populations in their analysis.

Are white Americans, as much of the political rhetoric implies, really only concerned about the undocumented? Or about immigrants from Mexico? Here our tests are much more inconclusive. When we substituted in the state undocumented population or the state Mexican origin population into our regression models, both measures were generally significant and in both cases the size and direction of effects was similar to what we saw with our measure of the Latino population. A large percentage of undocumented/Mexican immigrants is associated with more conservative policy views, greater identification with the Republican Party, and increased support for Republican candidates. [125] All of this helps to demonstrate the robustness of our

[124] All of these measures are from the Census except estimates of the undocumented population that are derived from Passell and Cohn (2009). We recognize that the controls for the various Latino subgroups are less relevant for some states .

[125] Interestingly, the size of the Puerto Rican population and the size of the Cuban population were generally not significantly related to white policy preferences or partisan choices. This could be because white Americans are not threatened by either of these groups. But we believe that it is more likely that there is not enough variation in the size of these two groups at the state level. Cuban Americans represent more than one percent of the population in only one state and Puerto Ricans represent more than two percent of the population in only five states. We just cannot accurately assess effects for groups that are this small.

story but given the high degree of correlation between each of these different measures of the immigrant population, it unfortunately does not help to tell us which group white Americans see as most problematic.

We also looked to see if the socioeconomic standing of the local Latino population affected white reactions. Perhaps Americans aren't concerned about change in general but are instead worried about the influx of poor, unskilled, and uneducated immigrants? However, when we re-ran the analyses adding a measure for the state Latino poverty rate and an interaction between the Latino poverty rate and Latino population size, we uncovered no new significant results. White Americans tended to be more regressive when they live in states with large Latino populations whether the Latino population was largely poor or not. The overall picture at this point appears to be one of a less than discerning white public. As far as we can tell, white Americans tend to react negatively regardless of who comprises the Latino population.

Neighborhood Context

A reasonable concern with the analysis to this point is that we may be focusing on the wrong geographic context. One could argue that individual white Americans are more apt to be focused on their neighborhoods where they live, work, and interact with minorities than they are to be focused on their states where interaction is likely to be much more limited and where contact with minorities is more likely to be filtered through the media. Moreover, the fact that state racial context tends to be correlated with neighborhood racial context means that the state level effects we see could actually be picking up neighborhood dynamics.[126] We therefore estimated several models where we included neighborhood context in our models in Tables 4.1

[126] For the NAES respondents, the three state racial contexts that we examine - percent Latino, percent Asian American, and percent African American - are correlated between .43 and .59 with the same variables at the zip code level.

to 4.3. Specifically, we added percent black, percent Latino, and percent Asian American at the zip code level.[127] Thus, each HLM regression incorporated three distinct contextual levels-- the state, the neighborhood, and the individual.

Two points about this analysis are worth highlighting. First, the inclusion of neighborhood level context failed to alter our results for state racial context. Even after controlling for neighborhood racial context, whites who lived in states with higher concentrations of Latinos were more likely to favor conservative and punitive policies, to identify with the Republican Party, and to support Republican candidates. These additional tests alleviate concerns that state racial context is picking up the effects of zip code, or neighborhood, context.

Second, the effects of zip code racial context on policy views and partisanship generally failed to reach statistical significance. In the few cases where local context was significant, the direction of the effects was highly inconsistent. Residing in areas with a sizable Latino community was linked to more liberal views on one health care question but more conservative views on one question related to crime. Given the problem of whites moving into or out of different neighborhoods with different concentrations of minorities, it is hard to offer any firm conclusions about neighborhood effects. We doubt that state context is the only level at which racial context operates in a meaningful way. But any further conclusions about neighborhood context will have to await more rigorous testing that can incorporate selection issues at lower levels of aggregation.

[127] Since zip codes are relatively small, there is more likely to be a correspondence between the demographics of the zip code and the experiences of any given respondent in that zip code. Although zip codes are the smallest available geographic level, we readily admit that they represent an imperfect measure of local context in that they are not always drawn around well-defined neighborhoods in which individuals from the neighborhood regularly interact. It is also not clear how aware individual whites are about the racial makeup of their neighborhoods (Wong 2007).

Finally, our analysis has assumed that all white Americans react to minority context in the same way. There is, however, little reason to expect a uniform reaction across the entire white population. Logically, how white Americans react to immigration and the racial transformation that has accompanied it should depend critically on how they feel about minorities in the first place. In two key studies by Branton and Jones (2005) and Oliver and Mendelberg (2000) reactions to minority context were did vary across the white population. We, unfortunately, do not have a measure of white racial tolerance in either the 2000 or 2004 NAES. We do, however, have a measure of education – a variable that is frequently correlated with racial tolerance . Given that those with lower levels of education tend to be more resentful of minorities and more racially intolerant, we might expect less educated Americans to react more viscerally to large Latino populations (Hurwitz and Peffley 1998, McCloskey and Brill 1983 but see Federico and Sidanius 2002).

We consider the mediating role of education by adding an interaction term between education and state Latino context to each of the HLM models in Tables 4.1 to 4.3. The analysis suggests that reactions to Latino context do depend on white education levels. The results are not consistent across all of the policy and partisanship measures but in half of the cases, the interaction is statistically significant and indicates that as education increases the effects of Latino context decreases substantially. The marginal effect of context is about three times greater for less educated whites. For example, among the less well educated the probability of supporting government efforts to reduce income inequality drops by 13 percent in states with large Latino populations. For the well-educated, the probability of supporting efforts to reduce inequality increases by only four percent as one shifts from a state with a small proportion of Latinos to one with a large share of Latinos. The same is true for the presidential vote. Among

the less educated, changes in Latino context account for a twelve percent increase in the probability of supporting George W. Bush, yet amongst the well-educated, the marginal impact is only three percent.[128]

Although we view these interactions with education as telling, we also believe that this is far from the last word on how white reactions differ across the population. There are numerous factors that could influence how one responds to minority context. Scheve and Slaughter (2001), for example, have predicted that the consequences of immigrant context will be more severe when natives and immigrants possess similar skills levels and are in direct economic competition.[129] Others might contend that minorities and immigrants are more likely to be scapegoated when there are tough economic times (Fetzer 2000). Still others maintain that white responses will be more negative when there are large numbers of immigrants and a highly permissive welfare system (Hanson et al 2004). Some scholars also point to the interaction of local minority context and the national framing of immigration (Hopkins 2010). Our tests on education are merely an initial foray into this line of inquiry. It is clear that more work needs to be done before the full contours of white reactions are known.

Discussion

[128] A slightly different way of testing this same hypothesis is to see if reactions to minority context are more pronounced among conservatives. Given that conservatives tend to be less racially tolerant than liberals, one could expect conservatives to react more harshly to the new Latino population (Sniderman and Carmines 1997, Kinder and Sanders 1996). This is exactly what we find. Although the effects are not entirely consistent, on most of the questions we look at in Tables 4.1 to 4.3, we find that the reaction to Latino context is significantly heightened among conservatives.[128] We err on the side of caution and have more confidence in our education interactions because education is clearly exogenous to Latino context while conservatism is not. But the general story in both cases is that those who have more negative views of minorities in the first place tend to react more severely to proximity to large Latino populations.

[129] In light of Scheve and Slaughter's predictions, in alternate tests we included interactions between Latino context and the size of the educational and income gap between the state Latino population and the state white population. Neither set of interactions revealed a clear relationship with white policy views or partisan preferences.

The patterns illustrated in this chapter suggest that the nation's increasingly diverse population is having a profound impact on the politics of white America. This may not be particularly astonishing to many observers. Indeed numerous individuals have suspected this sort of effect. Few have, however, been able to clearly demonstrate it. Many have also suggested that racial context and racial threat are important elements in American politics.

What is novel here is the wide ranging consequences of Latino context. It is not simply that larger concentrations of Latinos do or do not cause fear and concern. In a political era, in which many claim that the significance of race has faded, we find that larger concentrations of Latinos appear to be leading to a fundamentally distinct political orientation among many White Americans. On several of the major policy debates that we face and on the core liberal-conservative ideological line that delineates much of American politics, Latino context is a key contributor. Party identification – the most influential variable in American politics – is at least in part a function of the racial context that white Americans live in. So too is the vote in national contests for President, the Senate, and the House of Representatives. The degree to which white Americans live in areas with large numbers of Latinos seems to shape who they are politically.

Our findings also suggest that all minorities are not equal in the minds of white Americans. Whites react very differently to Latino context than they do to Asian American context. Asian Americans, it appears, may be more of a model minority and an ally whereas Latinos appear to be a real threat that whites counter with more restrictive and more punitive policy making.

All of this is an important step in understanding the dynamic role that immigration plays in American politics. It is, of course, not the last step. As with most contextual analysis, the results we have presented here are somewhat of a black box. We can demonstrate that different

sets of demographic numbers translate into distinct sets of views we have not come close to showing how proximity actually 'works' to change individual white views and actions. Any number of different factors could undergird this relationship. Are whites responding to personal interactions with Latinos, to immigrant political activism in the state, to political campaigns, to portrayals of immigrants in media outlets, or to something else altogether? We are doubtful that individual interactions play a big role – partly because state context is such a poor proxy for interracial contact. We are also doubtful that personal interactions drive negative white reactions to Latinos because studies that are able to measure and test the effects of personal interactions find that they generally lead to more rather than less tolerant views (Dixon and Rosenbaum 2004).

The other explanations do, however, seem more plausible. A higher concentration of Latinos often means that Latinos are more visible in the local political sphere and therefore more of a potential threat to white power and resources. We know, for example, that the election of Latinos to statewide and congressional office is closely correlated with Latino population size (Casellas 2011, Hajnal 2010). Similarly, in places where Latinos live in larger numbers, political campaigns appear to be more apt to focus on immigrant related issues. We know that the degree to which state and local governments raise and deal with immigration and other Latino related issues is correlated with the size of the Latino population (Riviera n.d., Ramakrishnan and Wong 2010, Varsanyi 2010). Studies have also shown that a larger Latino population means greater attention to Latino related issues in the local media (Branton and Dunaway 2009).

Our goal at this point is not to rule out any of these different mechanisms. We are, however, especially attentive to the role that the media could play in shaping white reactions to America's immigrant transformation. To that end, our next chapter examines the way the news

media has framed and portrayed the issue of immigration over the past three decades. We contend that news organizations have a tendency to frame immigrants through the prism of the Latino threat narrative. That narrative, we argue, intensifies existing fears about immigration – a development that helps to explain the dramatic movement of so many whites into the Republican Party. Chapter Five presents a detailed content analysis of immigrations news stories from 1980-2010 and then assesses the impact of those stories on aggregate trends in partisanship during the same time period.

Chapter Five:

Media Coverage of Immigration and White Partisanship

with Hans Hassell

"Guerilla War on Immigration"
-NYT Editorial Headline, August 27, 1982

"T-Shirt Company Is Charged In Plot to Smuggle Mexicans"
--NYT Headline, December 23, 1997

"Deportations From U.S. Hit a Record High"
-NYT Headline, October 7, 2010

These headlines from the *New York Times* are suggestive of the ways in which immigrants and the issue of immigration are discussed by the news media. The first headline uses the metaphor of a "war" to describe the state of immigration in the US, whereas the latter two focus on some of the unlawful activities associated with immigration – human smuggling and the deportation of individuals who are in the country without legal documentation. All three represent negative frames that have the potential to spur anxiety about immigrants and immigration.

These headlines are not fully representative of media portrayals of immigration. The media can and does present immigration in a more positive light. But we contend that these headlines are emblematic of much of the overall discourse in the media's coverage of immigration. The news media, we argue, has tended to adopt a particular narrative that focuses on Latinos and other negative aspects of immigration. By more regularly adopting this immigrant threat narrative rather than alternate frames with more positive messages, we maintain that the news media is helping to generate fear and anxiety amongst the public regarding the presence of immigrants, and specifically Latinos, in society.

There are, we believe, clear partisan implications to all of this. By focusing on immigration and highlighting its negative aspects, the media not only generates fears and concerns, it also increases the motivation for many Americans to side with the Republican Party. For those whose fears are sparked or amplified by the media, the Republican Party's increasingly tough stance on the immigration becomes ever more attractive. One of the main goals in this chapter will then be to demonstrate that the media is one of the main mechanisms helping to shape partisan identities.

The notion of the media influencing political attitudes is, of course, not new. However, there is real debate about the extent of this influence. Are media effects ephemeral and fleeting, subject to rapid decay and counter-frames (Druckman 2004, Druckman and Nelson 2003)? Or are media effects deeply felt and enduring (Lecheler and de Vreese 2011, Mendelberg 1997, Bartels 1988)? We add to this literature two ways. First, we assess media effects on a core political predisposition. When studies assess framing or agenda setting, they tend to focus on relatively unstable issue opinions. For these largely top-of-the-head issue responses it may be fairly easy to sway respondents one way or another. But party identification is another story altogether. As one of the most stable identities in American politics, it represents a particularly tough test of media effects. Second, we assess the impact of the media not in the quiet confines of the lab but in the real world where multiple frames and multiple voices are always present and where individual Americans can choose to listen to or tune out these messages. If we see framing and agenda setting effects here, we will have gone a long way to demonstrating the full potential of the media.

In order to assess the role of the media in framing immigration, we first have to determine what the media actually reports on news stories that focus on immigration. Are the

frames that are used to discuss immigration indeed disproportionately negative? Are they overwhelmingly centered on Latinos? And are they focused on more problematic policy issues like crime and terrorism than on more positive topics like families and assimilation? While anecdotal evidence suggests this is the case, there has been relatively little systematic study of media content of immigration (on metaphors and media message see Chavez 2008, Santa Ana 2003, Brader et al 2012; for a more systematic approach see Valentino et al 2012, Perez n.d.). To fill this gap in the existing research, we rely on a national newspaper with one of the largest circulations, *The New York Times (NYT)*, to determine the content of news stories that mention the issue of immigration from 1980-2011. Specifically, we analyzed the issue frames used in the articles (e.g. the specific policy linked to immigration), the types of group-centric frames used (e.g. Latino or Asian immigrant), as well as the overall tone (negative, positive, or neutral) of each article.

The findings from our content analysis indicate that news coverage is largely negative, largely focused on Latinos, and largely attentive to the negative policy issues associated with immigration. Such patterns in the content and frames used in immigration news articles validate our claim regarding the predominance of the "immigrant threat" narrative. We then go on to show how the immigrant threat narrative effects the partisan beliefs of the American public. Using macropartisanship data from the CBS/NYT poll series, we find that the framing of media coverage predicts subsequent shifts in macropartinaship. Indeed the immigrant threat narrative is just as predictive of aggregate shifts in partisanship as standard measures such as presidential approval and the state of the economy (MacKuen et al 1989). In particular, when the coverage is framed to emphasize one particular immigrant group, Latinos, it negatively impacts the

percentage of Democratic identifiers and results in greater Independence and more support for the Republican Party.

These findings help to establish the importance of the mass media as a primary mechanism driving the public's reaction to immigration. It also greatly expands our sense of the strength of framing by showing that media coverage can lead to measureable shifts on one of the most immovable political identities. Finally, it reinforces our larger goal in this book by again demonstrating the centrality of immigration in shaping American politics.

How the Media Influences Public Opinion: Agenda Setting and Issue Framing

Accessibility, many argue, is at the heart of much of the media's effects (Zaller 1992).[130] Because we are cognitively limited, we organize concepts thematically, and we can only retain a finite number of important considerations in the forefront of our minds. When queried about issues or opinions, it is from these immediate sets of considerations that one's response is generated. Thus, the media or other actors can influence our opinions by privileging some considerations over others. We focus on two mechanisms, agenda setting and framing, that can affect these considerations and that the existing research has identified as having an effect on public opinion.

Agenda setting, the process in which news organizations focus on certain issues more than others, can affect what issues individuals think about and how much weight they place on those issues (Baumgartner and Jones 1995, Zaller 1992, Mutz 1995). Iyengar and Kinder (1991) find that problems that receive prominent attention on the national news become the problems that the public also views to be important. A little extra coverage of a military conflict, for example, can in an experimental setting lead the public to consider that conflict as more

[130] Persuasion is another potentially important means of influence (Nelson and Oxley 1999).

important in evaluating the president. Therefore, even when an issue is not of daily or immediate concern to us, regular media attention to that issue raises our awareness of the issue and our weight of the issue by making it more accessible in our mind and increasing the importance we attach to the issue (Nelson, Clawson, and Oxley 1997; Lau and Redlawsk 2001).

How issues are framed and presented in a news story can also influence voters' evaluations of political leaders and issues (Iyengar and Kinder 1987, Iyengar 1991). Chong and Druckman (2007) define framing as "the process by which people develop a particular conceptualization of an issue or reorient their thinking about an issue". The literature has demonstrated framing effects across a wide range of issues and contexts. We highlight three different types of framing here. First, framing can alter the way we see an issue by privileging one aspect of a problem over another (Nelson and Kinder 1996). By bringing forward different aspects of a problem, the media can forefront different considerations that ultimately alter our conclusions about that issue. For example, experimental studies have shown that our support for welfare can change depending on whether coverage highlights work requirements or need (Shen and Edwards 2005).

Second, media frames can alter the group imagery associated with an issue. By focusing repeatedly on a particular group, news coverage can lead to evaluations of an issue that are based on attitudes towards the group in question rather than on the issue at hand (Nelson and Kinder 1996; Gilens 1999). If that particular group has negative associations or stereotypes – as is often the case with racial and ethnic minorities – news coverage can lead to more limited public support for certain policies (Gilliam 1996, Gilliam and Iyengar 2000). Disproportionate coverage of African Americans in welfare stories has, many believe, led to welfare being closely associated with blacks which has in turn reduced public support for welfare (Gilliam 1996,

Gilens 1999). Most relevant to our study, there is strong evidence that priming respondents with images of Latinos can elicit more negative assessments of immigration (Brader et al 2012).

The third category of framing is more direct. The media can affect our evaluation of an issue simply by altering the tone of coverage (Hester and Gibson 2003). Coverage that is more negative in tone and that highlights undesirable features of a phenomenon rather than positive attributes can sway our opinions and limit support for that phenomenon.

The Minimal Effects View

There are, however, those who question the impact of agenda setting and framing (Druckman 2004). Most of our understanding about the influence of framing has emanated from research conducted in experimental settings where individuals receive only a single frame in a single exposure. Critics have highlighted several problems with this format. First, subjects typically do not receive a counter frame as they would in most political debates. If only one side speaks, it is likely to be powerful and effective. Critically, recent experimental studies that present a counter-frame show little to no overall effects (Chong and Druckman 2013, Druckman 2004). Second, in the laboratory subjects tend to receive very limited stimuli, all of the 'noise' of daily life is blocked out, and there is little to focus on other than the frame. Studies indicate, however, that more information reduces the impact of any one piece of information (Druckman and Nelson 2003). Relatedly, subjects in these experiments have no control over which frames or which media outlets they are exposed to. Studies suggest that framing effects in the real world are more limited because citizens selectively screen out certain frames (Druckman 2001) and ignore frames or sources they do not trust (Lupia and McCubins 1998).

Another real concern is that the effects of framing tend to be ephemeral or fleeting. When tested immediately after being exposed to a particular frame, subjects display distinct views. But the effects of framing tend to erode quickly over time. When the subjects are queried a day, a week, or a month later, few significant results emerge (Chong and Druckman 2007 but see Lecheler and de Vreese 2011).

When studies of framing switch to natural world settings, evidence of framing becomes more limited in their impact and scope (Sides and Vavreck 2013, Hill et al 2012, Gerber et al 2011, Druckman 2004, Druckman and Nelson 2003). Broader studies have found few clear instances of framing altering the outcomes of prominent political battles or of frames changing the overall balance of power in an election of partisan battle (Gelman and King 1993; Sides and Vavreck 2013, Lazersfeld et al 1948 but Mendelberg 2001, Stoker 1997, Bartels 1988). It is uncertain just how much framing matters in the real world.

Lastly, and most importantly, research about framing effects has focused almost exclusively on the opinions individuals have about specific issues. However, as many scholars have demonstrated, individual positions on most issues are not well thought out and are often highly volatile (Converse, 1964). If issue positions are not deeply held and change regularly over time, it may be easy for framing or agenda setting to have an effect. In this sense issue positions represent an easy case for media effects. To this point, researchers have not been able to demonstrate media effects for more core political predispositions like party identification. Party identification is one of the most stable political identities and is for many the 'unmoved mover' that alters a range of other political considerations and is rarely altered by these other factors (Goren 2005, Green et al 2002, Campbell et al 1960). If we find media effects here, we will have greatly expanded our sense of what the media can do to shape politics. In short by

addressing some of the limitations of the literature, we hope to provide evidence of a much broader impact of framing than scholars have previously demonstrated.

The Immigrant Threat Narrative

How does all of this apply to the issue of immigration? How might media coverage of immigration sway opinions and partisanship? As we have discussed throughout the book, the issue of immigration is a highly complex and multi-faceted one. News outlets, therefore, have a wide array of immigration frames to choose from. When covering immigration, the news media can opt to cover anything from the economic and social benefits of hard-working immigrants to criminal activity at the border. They can draw our attention to more successful members of the Asian American immigration population or they can highlight the difficulties faced by members of the undocumented Latino immigrant population.

We expect, however, that the media is likely to put greater emphasis on an immigrant threat narrative that highlights the costs and disadvantages of immigration and that frequently frames the issue around Latino immigrants. The reason for this emphasis can be attributed to the profit based incentives of the news media. As Hamilton (2004) contends, the news is an information commodity fueled by market forces (Hamilton 2004). As such, the content of the news needs to be crafted in such a way that is appealing to a sizable audience (McManus 1994; Hamilton 2004). Stories and headlines focusing on the negative aspects of immigration have all the components that make it compelling to the public—they are emotional and attention-getting and in turn, such stories have the power to activate fears and anxieties about immigration. Given the Republican Party's strong stand against immigration, these frames should ultimately lead to movement toward the Republican Party.

We focus on four different elements of this narrative that previous research suggests could be effective in spurring anxiety and ultimately in generating a political response. Perhaps the easiest way for news stories to do this is to employ 'negative' group imagery (Nelson and Kinder 1996, Gilliam 1996, Gilliam and Iyengar 2000). In the US immigration case that means a focus on Latino immigrants. Stories that focus on Latino immigration rather than Asian or white immigration should, according to the existing literature, cause individuals to think about immigration policy in terms of their attitudes and opinions towards Latinos. This would shift the emphasis away from evaluating the policy proposal itself and transfer it to their opinions on Latinos. Since whites tend to hold negative stereotypes of Latinos, viewing them as particularly prone to welfare, particularly violent, and less intelligent than whites on average, this group imagery should lead to less favorable views of immigration (Bobo 2001).[131] Indeed, existing research by Perez (n.d.) and Brader et al (2012) suggests that fear of immigrations may really be a fear of a specific group of immigrants—Latinos.

Another alternative is for the media to focus on immigration related policy issues that may be especially problematic in the minds of Americans. Crime is perhaps the most likely case here. Crime stories have been effective in associating African Americans with crime (Gilliam 1996). Also, there is already somewhat of an association between immigrants and crime (Cisneros 2008; Lakoff and Ferguson 2006; Chavez 2008). Most Americans think the majority of immigrants are here illegally (Enos 2010, Kaiser 2006). Polling data also indicate that illegal immigrants spark the strongest, most negative reactions among the public. Whether it is in the form of clandestine border crossings, deportations, immigration raids/busts, or immigrants as perpetrators of crime, almost all crime frames portray immigrants in a very unfavorable light.

[131] Also, since most whites believe that the vast majority of Latino immigrants are here illegally, this group imagery should almost automatically bring up concerns about their legal status (Enos 2012, Kaiser 2006).

Even the brief use of terms such as “illegal alien”, “illegal,” and “illegal immigrant” could ignite readily available criminal scenarios that in turn increase opposition to immigration.

But crime is not the only policy issue that could frame immigration in a negative light. Stories that focus on economics and highlight the costs of immigrants to the US as well as those that focus on the security and terrorism issues surrounding immigration could also spur anxiety.

In the end, the most effective way to generate fear may be the most direct – to offer negative appraisals of immigration. The more that news stories offer pessimistic or downbeat conclusions about immigration and the more that these stories present immigration in a negative light, the more Americans are likely to oppose immigration and potentially support a party that opposes immigration.

News outlets also have another important choice. They can opt to cover immigration or ignore it. This kind of agenda setting may also have consequences. In our particular case, heightened coverage could cause immigration to be more salient to the public. It is, however, not immediately clear how increased salience should impact partisanship choices. For those who harbor negative views of immigration, the increased salience of immigration could well play into the Republican Party’s anti-immigration stance. But for others who have more sympathetic views of immigration, increased salience might favor the Democrats. Given that the public holds an array of different views on immigration, a greater volume of media coverage may or may not lead to a pronounced partisan shift in one direction or the other.

In our empirical analysis, we investigate these two mechanisms, framing and agenda setting, by looking at the volume of immigration news coverage as well as their specific content.

Analyzing the Frames Used in Immigration News Coverage

To assess the effects of news media coverage on immigration, we analyzed the volume and content of all articles from *The New York Times* (NYT) that mentioned the issue of immigration –almost 7000 in total.[132] We selected the NYT for two reasons. First, we were interested in an outlet that would provide national coverage and readership. The NYT has the second largest circulation in the US, at approximately1.86 million and reaches a nationwide audience.[133] Second, as a more liberal news outlet, the NYT makes for an especially difficult test of our immigrant threat hypothesis. The NYT is one of the news outlets that would be least likely to propagate the immigrant threat narrative.

Our choice to focus on newspaper articles, as opposed to television news programs, was motivated by the amount of information that can be gained from newspapers as opposed to televisions news. A typical story about immigration may be, at best, 20-30 seconds in length.[134] As our theory and hypotheses focus specifically on the frames used by the media, newspapers offer much more content to assess these frames than does broadcast news. It is, however worth noting that our results are not likely to differ dramatically from analysis of television news coverage. Studies indicate that the volume and content of national political news coverage on television is remarkably similar to coverage in the *New York Times* (Hassell 2011, Durr et al 1997). We focus on the time frame from 1980-2011 since this is roughly the period where immigration has been on the nation's agenda.

To test agenda setting, we measured the volume of coverage on immigration by simply tabulating the total number of articles that mentioned immigration for each time period.

[132] Coders were instructed to use the following search terms: include immigration, immigrant, immigrants, migration etc. Search terms were limited to the newspaper headline or lead. News stories were restricted to those focusing on the U.S.

[133]Had we conducted our analysis on the newspaper with the greatest circulation, *The Wall Street Journal*, we would have run into a selection bias since the WSJ primarily covers stories dealing with the US economy and international business.

[134] A recent report from the Pew Research Center for Excellence in Journalism finds that length of local or network television news has become shorter in recent years http://stateofthemedia.org/print-chapter/?print_id=14484

Following a long line of research in the area of framing effects, we also assessed various aspects of the content of these articles (e.g Gamson and Modigiliani 1987; Chong and Druckman 2007; Dimitrova et al 2005; Nisbot et al 2003). Specifically, we coded stories across three dimensions of framing: 1) tone, 2) issue content, and 3) immigrant group mentioned.

The most subjective of these frames is the tone of the news story. Was it a positive, negative, or neutral account of immigration? Our coders judged an article to be negative if the primary focus of the article is the problems associated with immigration; so for example, an article about an arrested immigrant is coded as negative. Likewise an article focusing on the benefits of labor migrants to the national economy would be coded as positive. Negative and positive tone was also derived from the overall conclusions presented in the article. If, for example, the article appeared to be critical of politicians or organizations that supported immigrants' rights, it was coded as negative. The coders identified neutral tone when no preference was given for either side of a policy or there existed an absence of positive or negative tone in the article.

Issue content coding was more straightforward. In terms of the specific frames that were coded for, we examined whether the newspaper article focused on crime, economic issues, homeland security, and/or immigration policy. We expect the crime, economy, and security to frame immigration in a negative light and immigration policy to frame it in a neutral or positive light. For this particular coding, a news story could be coded to contain up to three types of frames. Finally, we coded for the particular immigrant group featured in the article. We noted stories that mentioned Latinos, Hispanics, or immigrants from Latin America on one hand and stories that referred to Asian Americans or Asia on the other.

We then aggregate these various frames by month and quarter, or year depending on the analysis. Thus, as an example, we would assess the proportion of articles over a given time period that mention Latinos. For tone, we take the proportion of articles that are negative versus those that are positive in nature.

Due to concerns about the subjective nature of some of this coding, we performed the coding using two distinct methods. Newspaper articles were coded both by research assistants as well as using a machine coding procedure. The automated content analysis used machine learning techniques and the text classification package, Rtexttools (Jurka et al. 2012), and incorporated information from the hand-coded articles classification for the articles before 2000. Several tests of intercoder reliability between the automated dataset and the hand-coded dataset reveal a high degree of agreement. Moreover, the results of the following analysis are largely consistent across the two different coding methods. How we code the articles makes little difference. Details on each method and a comparison of the two are included in the Appendix.

This data collection effort significantly improves upon existing studies that focus on media coverage of immigration (see Dunaway et al 2010; Hopkins 2010; Chavez 2001; Chavez 2008; Simon and Alexander 1993) since it offers comprehensive yet detailed information about the content and frames used in the stories. Existing work has detailed a range of powerful images and frames (Chavez 2008, Santa Anna 2003, Brader et al 2008) but has been largely anecdotal in nature. Notable exceptions are Valentino et al (2012) who assess the group imagery in immigration coverage and Perez (n.d.) who notes whether coverage of immigration focuses on legal or undocumented immigrants. Our dataset is the first that we are aware of, that examines the content of immigrations news articles for such an extended period of time. This sort of detailed information makes it possible to determine how exactly the immigrant threat narrative,

as well as other frames, have been depicted over the last three decades, as well as to assess the mechanisms of agenda-setting and framing.

Is Immigration on the Agenda?

Does the *New York Times* devote time and space to immigration? The short answer is yes. Altogether, we identified 6,778 articles that discussed the issue of immigration for the time period of interest (1980-2011). That is roughly 227 articles per year. Moreover, as Figure 5.1 shows, there is considerable variation in the volume of immigration news coverage across this thirty-one year time span.

[Figure 5.1 goes here]

The most obvious pattern is the increasing attention that immigration has garnered over time.[135] If the volume of coverage matters, that pattern of expanding reporting could help to explain the shift of so many white Americans from the Democratic Party to the Republican Party. Critically, for our purposes there is also considerable fluctuation from year to year and quarter to quarter making it possible to rigorously assess the effects of salience on white macropartisanship.

How is Immigration Framed?

We now turn to our analysis of the various frames used by the media to cover the issue of immigration. Again, we expect that news coverage will generally follow the immigrant threat narrative and that most of the frames that are used to describe immigrants will be negative ones.

[135135] There is also a clear spike in coverage in 2006. That increased volume is likely to related to the introduction of the Sensenbrenner Bill (HR 4437) which increased penalties for being an undocumented immigrant and which sparked protests from millions of immigrants' rights supporters across more than 140 cities and 39 states.

This is generally what we find. Judging by the overall tone of stories, there are, in fact, four times as many negative news stories on immigration as there are positive news stories. All told, 48.9 percent of immigration news articles adopt a negative tone. By contrast, only 12.1 percent of immigration news stories frame immigrants in a positive manner. The remaining new stories, 39 percent, take on a neutral tone.[136]

What makes these patterns all the more telling is the fact that we are focusing on stories in the *New York Times.* If a mainstream, liberal news outlet has fallen prey to using the "immigrant threat" narrative, then it is likely that other media outlets, especially those with a conservative bent, would see a much larger share of their immigration-news stories adopting this narrative.

When the public reads stories that deal with the immigration, a scant few do so in such a way that portrays them in a positive light. The immigrant threat narrative, as previous accounts have argued, is indeed prevalent (Valentino et al 2012, Chavez 2008, Santa Ana 2003). This skewed coverage makes it difficult for the majority of Americans to consider the full spectrum of immigrants' contributions to society, particularly with respect to the positive contributions that they can impart. This predominantly negative coverage certainly has the potential to fuel fears amongst the public –fears that could well shift the white public toward the Republican Party.

The immigrant group depicted in news coverage of immigration is equally lopsided. Figure 5.2, which provides a breakdown of the immigrant group featured by country of origin, indicates that a clear majority of all coverage focuses on immigrants from Latin America. Fully

[136] Looking over our 31 year time span, we find that the tone of immigration news articles fluctuates from quarter to quarter but it generally fluctuates between neutral and negative, with very few time periods where the tone of immigration news articles is positive in nature.

65.5 of all articles mention immigrants from Latin American.[137] By contrast, only 26.3 percent of stories reference immigrants from Asian countries and fewer still focus on immigrants hailing from Europe, Russia and Eastern Europe, or the Middle East. All of this is consistent with the composition of the immigrant population in the United States but it, nevertheless, highlights just how prevalent the Latino immigrant frame is in these news stories.[138] If, as we suspect, images of Latinos spur negative associations among the bulk of the public, this coverage could have real consequences for partisan ties.[139]

[Figure 5.2 goes here]

We now move on to examine the issue content of these immigration articles. Among all of the different issues that could be associated with immigration, the *New York Times* most frequently used the issue frame of the economy. Approximately 25 percent of all immigration news articles adopted this frame. The next most commonly used frame discussed immigration in the context of some aspect of immigration policy. About 20 percent of the news stories featured these frames. Crime was associated with only 9 percent of all immigration news stories; this percentage is perhaps less than the immigrant threat narrative would suggest. Finally, national security frames were used very rarely, only about 1.84 percent of the time.[140] Given the predominantly negative view of immigrants' contributions to the economy, crime, and national

[137] To get at our contention that news articles about Latinos have a tendency to rely on the "immigrant threat narrative", we examined the tone of the articles that mentioned a nation from Latin America. We found that 34 percent of the articles featuring immigrants from Latin America were covered in a negative manner, whereas only 11.4 percent were framed in a positive way. While clearly disproportionately negative, this ratio of negative to positive is not all that different for articles on other regions. Regardless of region, immigration coverage tends to take on a negative tone.

[138] These results closely mirror those of Valentino et al (2012).

[139] We see a great deal of variation in the use of Latino frames from quarter to quarter and more importantly, a gradual increase in the proportion of coverage focusing on Latinos over the 31 year time period. Again, if a focus on Latinos drives negative views of immigration and shifts whites to the political right, this increase in coverage over time could account for some of the movement of whites to the Republican Party.

[140] Somewhat surprisingly welfare was mentioned in only 1.1 percent of all stories. Other issues that got limited attention were health (0.7 percent), and family reunification (0.4 percent). A national culture or the social fabric of the nation frame was, however, present in 3.8 percent of news stories.

security, we expect these three frames to have negative consequences, while focusing on policy solutions might be neutral or even have positive effects.[141]

How Immigration Frames Affect White Macropartisanship

The patterns presented so far highlight the prevalence of the immigrant threat narrative and hint at the role that media coverage could have played in the widespread movement of white Americans to the Republican Party. But they by no means prove the causal link. In this next section, we directly assess the link between media coverage of immigration and white macropartisanship.

Such an analysis requires us to collect data on partisan preferences from the same period of time as our media data (1980-2011). For our party identification data, we turn to the CBS/NYT poll series.[142] This poll series is unique in that contains a considerable amount of data over regular intervals of time. Altogether, 488 surveys contain the party identification variable during our period of interest. On average there are 934 non-Hispanic white respondents in each survey.[143] The breadth of this data allows us to assess white partisanship accurately and to perform a rigorous test of the effects of immigration coverage on partisanship. Importantly, the CBS/NYT series asks the standard party identification in which respondents are asked: "Generally speaking do you usually consider yourself a Democrat, Republican, or what?"[144]

[141] There is no increase in the volume of coverage on crime over time but there is a slight buildup in attention to the economy and immigration policy over time.
[142]Our data is from the *iPoll* databank housed at the Roper Center's Public Opinion archives. http://www.ropercenter.uconn.edu/data_access/ipoll/ipoll.html
[143] The average number of surveys per year is 18. White samples range from a minimum of 405 to a maximum of 3,909 respondents.
[144] The only other series that we could have used – the Gallup poll series– asks respondents to indicate their partisanship "as of today." That small difference in wording can, according to some research, artificially inflate changes in partisanship in the Gallup Poll (Green et al 2002). We, therefore, opt for the more conservative measure.

In our main analysis we focus on the percentage of white respondents who identify as Democrat, the percentage who identify as Republican, and the percentage who identify as Independent or other in response to the first party identification prompt. Alternate tests also incorporate the proportion of respondents who "strongly favor" the Democratic/Republican Party and those who lean toward either party. Mirroring Mackuen et al (1989) and their work on macropartisanship, we calculate the mean responses from each survey and aggregate them by quarter/year. Given that the time period we focus on contains 31 years, we have a total of 124 data points.

Figure 5.3 which plots mean support for the Democrats spanning from 1980-2011 makes it clear that White support for the Democratic Party has been declining dramatically. White attachment to the Democratic Party falls from a high of 43 percent in 1980 all the way down to about 28 percent in 2010.[145] These gains accrue both to Independents and the Republican Party. The other important trend to note in Figure 5.3 is that despite the widespread view that party identification is stable, there is actually quite a bit of variation in white macropartisanship from quarter to quarter. As Mackuen et al (1989) and Erickson et al (2002) have shown, substantial shifts in aggregate partisanship can and do occur regularly.

[Figure 5.3 goes here]

But does immigration and the framing of immigration in the media have anything to do with all of this? Can the "immigrant threat" narrative help explain movement in white partisanship? To test that connection we estimate a model of macropartisanship that assesses four different aspects of media coverage of immigration. Specifically, in terms of framing we evaluate the tone of the coverage (as measured by the ratio of negative to positive news stories), the immigrant group featured in the story (as measured by the frequency with which Latin

[145] If we add Democratic leaners to Figure 4.3, we see the same sharp decline.

American immigrants are mentioned), and the proportion of stories that use the crime and economy issue frame. To gauge the impact of agenda setting, we also account for the total number of stories on immigration. In addition, our model also controls for the state of the economy, as measured by national unemployment rates, as well as the political climate of the time (operationalized via presidential approval ratings) –the two factors that have been found to exert a strong influence on macropartisanship (Mackuen et al 1989, Green et al 2002).[146] Based on a series of test diagnostics, we estimate our time-series data using the Prais-Winsten AR(1) regression. As such, each of the independent variables is lagged by one quarter, which means that we are Looking to see if immigration coverage at one point in time predicts future aggregate partisanship after controlling for other factors.[147] The estimates are presented in Table 5.1.

[Table 5.1 goes here]

As expected, the immigrant threat narrative can and does influence white macropartisanship. The more that stories focus on Latino immigrants, the more likely Whites are to subsequently shift away from the Democratic Party and the more likely they are to favor Independence or the Republican Party. Latino immigrant frames exert its strongest impact on the tendency to identify as Republican. The model predicts a 7 percentage point increase in white Republican identity in the quarter after NYT coverage focuses exclusively on Latino immigration as compared to the quarter after coverage focuses on non-Latino immigration. Similarly, the Latino frames reduces the proportion of whites identifying as Democratic in the next quarter by about 3 percent. In fact, the marginal impact of this specific frame is greater than

[146] Presidential approval is coded as the percentage in support for the president in office, and has been rescaled in accordance with the party of the president in office so that higher values indicate support for Republicans in office.
[147] To determine whether serial correlation exists in our data, we calculated the Durbon-Watson test statistic. We were unable to reject the null of no serial correlation. As such, we estimate our time-series data using the Prais-Winsten AR(1) regression, which assumes that the errors follow a first-order autoregressive process.

standard predictors of macropartisanship such as presidential performance and the state of the economy.[148]

These findings suggest two conclusions. First, framing effects may be more powerful than many have suggested. Real shifts in party identification – the unmoved mover of American politics – appear to be linked to how the media covers immigration. If the framing of news stories can affect the national balance of power between Democrats and Republicans, it must be as a formidable shaper of political behavior. Second, the immigrant threat narrative is a potent one. These results suggest that stories that highlight Latino immigrants can activate the fears of the large segments of the public and can generate enough anxiety to sway long held partisan attachments.

However, the remaining estimates presented in Table 5.1 also indicates that not everything that the media puts forward resonates with the public enough to alter partisan identities in a measurable way. Existing research on the media framing of African Americans suggests that the crime frame can be an extraordinary effective tool in shaping white views (Gilliam 1986, Gilliam and Iyengar 2000). It is, not, however, statistically significant here. The proportion of immigration-related stories that are framed from a crime perspective is unrelated to subsequent white partisanship. Moreover, when we controlled for other issue frames in the model, the main results remain largely unchanged. More coverage that featured border security or terrorism had no appreciable effect on aggregate white partisanship. Likewise, greater media attention to the impact of immigration on the economy did not push white partisanship one way or the other. There were signs, albeit weak ones, that when the *New York Times* focused

[148] More fine grained analysis of each of the different 7 point party identification categories indicate that the bulk of the movement caused by immigration coverage is from stronger to weaker identification with the Democratic Party, from weak Democratic identifiers to Independents who lean Democratic, and from pure Independents to those who lean Republican.

specifically on immigration policy frames, White Democratic identity increased. But we could find no link between immigration policy coverage and Republican Party attachment or Independence.[149] All told issue specific frames seemed to matter little.

There was also no evidence on the effects of agenda setting on aggregate partisanship. An increase in the number of immigration-related news stories may increase the perceived salience of this issue to the public but as Table 4.1 reveals, there is no sign that it leads to systematic shifts to one party or another. Alternate tests that assessed the proportion of NYT immigration stories on immigration (rather than the total volume), that assessed volume without other controls, or that interacted volume with the tone and/or group images of coverage, all suggested that the volume of news coverage does not matter. In many circumstances, agenda setting is one of the most powerful tools in a democracy but it was relatively unimportant for this study of partisanship.

We also considered the possibility that news frames which focus on the second largest immigrant group in the nation, Asians, may provoke the same reaction amongst White Americans. Our analysis, however, indicates that Asian immigrant frames do not have the same effect on macropartisanship as Latinos immigrant frames do.[150] As the existing research suggests, Asian immigrants do not elicit the same the kinds of anxiety and fears that Latino immigrants generate, either due to the way Latinos are covered by the media (Chavez 2008, 2001) or to the differential stereotypes that are associated with each group (Lee 2001, Bobo 2000).

Three Concerns

[149] For these results, see the appendix.
[150] That is, the coefficient capturing Asian immigrant frames fails to achieve statistical significance at conventional levels. These estimates are available upon request from the authors.

One legitimate concern that skeptics might raise is whether immigration coverage by the *New York Times* can in and of itself really have this sort of impact on partisanship. After all, the vast majority of Americans never even read the newspaper (Delli Carpini and Keeter 1996). We, in fact, have no doubt that the *New York Times* cannot do all of this alone. But we have reason to believe expect that its coverage over this period will mirror that of other news outlets.[151] There is already persuasive if somewhat anecdotal evidence that the media generally chooses an immigrant threat narrative when it covers immigration (Chavez 2008, Santa Anna 2003). There is also compelling evidence that the *New York Times* coverage tends to closely match the coverage not only of other print outlets but also of television coverage (Hassell 2011, Durr et al 1997). Thus, we believe that the effects on macropartisanship that are evident here are the cumulated effects of the entire range of media coverage at different points in time. The *New York Times* may not be powerful enough to influence the partisan balance of power on its own but the media as a whole appears to be capable of doing just that.

One could question a different aspect of the causal story. Cynics about media framing might argue that the media is simply reporting real world events and it is the events rather than the media itself that is driving changes in white partisanship. We offer two rejoinders. First, we know that all media outlets have some sort of bias in the news making process (Graber 1996), and therefore no coverage of news is ever purely objective. Second, the media coverage of immigration is overwhelmingly negative yet academic studies of immigration tend to show that immigrants today are assimilating just as rapidly as immigrants in the past and that the actual economic consequences of immigration are either positive or inconsequential for the vast majority of Americans (Alba and Nee 2005, Bean and Stevens 2003). The media, as we have

[151] Our analyis of TIME magazine and US News and World Report Magazine reveal similar patterns from our findings.

repeatedly noted, has the choice of covering a complex, multi-faceted issue like immigration in any number of different ways. If the underlying story is a relatively positive one, why is the coverage so regularly negative? As we discussed earlier, because the news media outlets are primarily driven by profit (Hamilton 2000), they are apt to favor stories that feature border violence and clandestine border crossings because they are attention getting and emotionally riveting; such stories drive up readership and in turn increase profit. Thus, even though the vast majority of Americans do not see or experience these events first-hand, the media plays a critical role in deciding what the public is exposed to. By choosing what to cover or not cover and then by choosing how to cover it, the media can sway opinions and can be consequential.

Finally, other skeptics might ask why we see such powerful media effects here when any number of recent studies have shown that framing has relatively little, long-term impact in the real world (Druckman 2004). We think the answer is that immigration may in some senses be a unique issue in American politics (Tichenor 2002). For most issues there are vocal champions in the media on both sides of the issue. But as we have seen here, positive stories on immigration are relatively rare. Even in the liberal bastion of the *New York Times*, negative stories on immigration outnumber positive stories by three to one. More than likely that ratio of negative to positive is even more severe elsewhere. If the public is only exposed to one dominant frame and no counter-frame, the research tells us that that this frame can be powerful. If, on the other hand, the respondent is exposed to a counter-frame, then the effects generally wash out. Immigration coverage may have real, widespread effects because it is so one-sided and immigration may be shifting white America to the right because that one-sided coverage is so negative.

Conclusion

The primary goal of this chapter was to explore one of the main mechanisms that we believe helps to shape attitudes towards immigration and subsequently impacts the core political identities of White Americans. Our detailed content analysis spanning three decades of a prominent national newspaper reveals that much of the news coverage does, in fact, put forward what amounts to a Latino threat narrative. Coverage of immigration in the *New York Times* is lopsided – with an emphasis on the negative consequences of immigration and a heavy reliance on Latino images in its coverage. All of this appears to fuel fears about immigration and leads to real shifts in the core partisan attachments of white America. After White Americans read about Latino immigrants, it responds with more and more support for the Republican Party.

These patterns have important implications for our understanding of framing and media effects. They suggest that the media and framing may be much more powerful than recent minimalist critics have argued (Druckman 2004). Our test of the link between media framing and individual views differs fundamentally from existing studies in several compelling ways that, we believe, make it highly informative. In our analysis, we have left the isolated world of the lab to examine media and framing effects in the real world where individuals are exposed to a plethora of different messages across various formats – messages that they can choose to hear or ignore. We have conducted time series analyses that assess the effect of news coverage at one point in time on white partisanship at a future point in time. And we have controlled for other factors that could influence white views. After conducting these tests, the connection between news coverage and party identification seems both clear and pronounced.

Our analysis differs profoundly from existing studies of framing effects in two other important ways. First, unlike previous studies that look for relatively short-term individual level

shifts on specific issue positions, we focus on party identification, one of the most stable, most deep-seated psychological attachments in the realm of politics. Partisan attachments are not fleeting, oft-altered top-of-the-head responses. Party identification is, for many Americans, something that arrives in early adulthood and rarely if ever changes. The fact that the group frames presented by the media predict changes in white partisanship is evidence of the powerful, wide-ranging effects that framing can have. Moreover, the fact that these framing effects work at the aggregate level to lead to real shifts in the balance of national partisan power only serves to reinforce the notion that media framing can change politics at its core.

Chapter Six: The Policy Backlash

The results thus far suggest just that immigration has wide ranging effects on how white Americans think and act politically. But to what extent do these opinions actually affect what government does? The ultimate test of this backlash is to determine whether it leads to the adoption of policies that would result in an unfavorable environment for immigrants. Does this backlash ultimately hurt immigrants and other disadvantaged segments of the American population? In this chapter, we provide an answer to that question. Specifically, we look to see if states with large or rapidly increasing Latino populations enact more punitive and restrictive policies.

There are already growing signs that this kind of policy backlash is occurring at the state level. A number of contextual studies have shown that proximity to larger Latino populations is associated with the passage of more anti-immigrant measures (Rivera n.d., Campbell et al 2006, Hood and Morris 1998, Citrin et al 1997). Moreover, this kind of anti-immigrant policy pattern is not limited to policies that explicitly deal with immigrants. Hero and Preuhs (2007) and others have shown that the backlash extends at least to the arena of welfare policy (Soss et a 2001, Fellowes and Rowe 2004).[152]

Our main goal in this chapter is to look at a broader set of policies to see if the influence of immigration and the impact of the Latino population threat extend to other policy areas that are implicitly tied to immigration. In the previous chapters we suggested that three other policy areas - health, criminal justice, and education – as well as larger taxing and spending decisions

[152] Greater racial/ethnic diversity has also in different contexts been found to exert a negative effect on the overall provision of public goods (Alesina et al 1999, Habyarima et al 2007, Miguel et al 2005). Most relevant to our analysis here, Hopkins (2009) finds that American municipalities tend to respond to rapid increases in the immigrant population with a reduced tax effort.

had all become intertwined with the immigrant debate and the immigrant threat narrative. In this chapter, we attempt to see if state policies in each of these areas can be directly linked to immigration and immigrant context in particular. Does the Latino population represent a threat that pushes the white majority to the right and leads to a policy backlash and the passage of more punitive and regressive policies?

This immigration backlash story is, however, only part of the policy story that we seek to tell. Our second goal in this chapter is to incorporate the role that *Latinos* themselves play in this process. Up to this point in the book, the only role that Latinos have played is in sparking a white reaction. Our immigration threat theory details how the presence of Latinos changes the attitudes and actions of white America. That is an important part of the story – especially considering that white Americans make up the vast majority of the voting population. But it is far from the entire story. In the rest of the book, we begin to consider the other side of the equation – the role that racial and ethnic minorities play in American politics and how that role differs dramatically from that of whites.

The implication of our argument so far is that Latinos have little agency and can do little on their own to affect change. In this chapter, we want to begin to dispel the notion that Latinos are powerless. While we admit and have argued that the immigrant backlash is a powerful force, we believe that given sufficient numbers Latinos and others can begin to overwhelm that force. Once the size of the Latino population passes a certain threshold, Latinos should be able to mobilize to influence policy outcomes, and policy should begin to shift back to the left. Thus, the relationship between the Latino population and policy should be curvilinear.

Finally, our analysis seeks to disentangle exactly what whites are reacting to – is it the overall size of the Latino population as a range of contextual studies have suggested (Campbell

et al 2006, Hood and Morris 1998, Citrin et al 1997)? Or is rapid growth of the Latino population that most threatens and mobilizes the white population as other studies have implied (Hopkins 2009)?

Theorizing Latino Context: White Threat and Latino Counter-Mobilization

We have already detailed our immigration backlash theory and therefore will not go into great detail here. The logic is fairly straightforward. To the extent that whites are threatened by Latinos and concerned about immigration, they will be opposed to policies that might benefit these newcomers. Critically, as we saw in Chapter Four, that threat tends to be more pronounced as the Latino population grows in size. Indeed, we saw across a range of issues, that white attitudes hardened when the Latino population grew larger. Given that whites form the overwhelming majority of voters in most states, changes in white views should fairly directly translate into policy outcomes.[153] The end result is that larger Latino populations should be associated with more punitive and regressive policy.

But as we have just noted, we believe that Latinos do have some agency in the policy process. It is already abundantly clear that large numbers of the Latino community can and do mobilize to try to influence policy. The protests in 2006 that drew millions of Americans together to fight for immigrants' rights are just one of the more prominent examples (Barreto et al 2009). Scholars also point to the decisive role that Latino votes have had in electoral contests (Abrajano and Alvarez 2010). The growing influence of the 'Latino giant' is also evident in the

[153] Our story largely ignores the intermediate role that state legislators in this process. We simply assume that lawmakers will abide by the preferences of their constituents and will pass policies that mirror those public views. There is, of course, a long-standing literature demonstrating responsiveness to public opinion at the state level (Lax and Phillips 2010, Burnstein 2003, and Erikson, Wright and Mclver 1993). But at the same time, there is also evidence of important distortions (Gilens 2012, Bartels 2008, Griffin and Newman 2008, Leighley and Nagler 2013). To the extent we are wrong and state legislators are not responsive to public opinion, then our tests should reveal few significant relationships between Latino population size and policy.

halls of American democracy. In states like California and Texas, Latinos now make up about a fifth of the legislature. With Latinos representing almost 40 percent of the population in those two states and sizeable shares in many others, it would be surprising for state legislators to totally ignore their concerns and preferences.

Thus, we believe that the pattern of immigration backlash should only hold until the Latino population becomes large enough to mobilize to effect policy change on its own. Once Latinos pass this threshold, a larger Latino population should be associated with more pro-Latino outcomes. The end result, we argue, is that the relationship between Latino context and policy should be a curvilinear one. [154]

We do, however, readily admit that there are real questions as to just how much influence the Latino population has in American politics. A range of factors limit Latino participation in the electoral arena to the point where Latinos often participate at half the rate of whites (Verba et al 1995, Hajnal 2010). Latinos are also hampered by more limited economic resources. If money is a factor in American politics, Latinos simply have less of it to give (Verba et al 1995). The end result is that politicians may simply be less receptive to Latinos. Indeed Griffin and Newman (2009) find that legislators are less responsive to the views of Latino constituents than they are to white constituents.

As such, it is critical that we do more to assess and understand the role that Latinos play in the policy arena. Existing studies of racial threat have largely ignored the potential influence and agency of the Latino population and have simply assumed that the relationship between minority context and outcomes is linear. More minorities typically meant more anti-minority

[154] The actual relationship is likely to be an even more complicated one that will also depend on the size and interests of other minority groups as well as the liberal white population. We cannot, unfortunately, effectively model a demographic process that is that complex and thus choose to model a simpler curvilinear relationship that puts aside the role of these other groups. In our analysis, we do, however, control for the size of the Black and Asian American populations and we incorporate the political leaning of the entire state population.

policy (but see Cameron et al 1996). If we can show that a more complex relationship exists and that Latinos can – if their numbers are large enough – sway policy in a more pro-Latino direction, then our expectations about the future change radically. The backlash will persist to a certain point but over the long term as the immigrant population grows ever larger, a coalition of Latinos, other ethnic/racial minorities, and liberal whites may win out.

Why Health, Education, Criminal Justice, and Taxes?

There are, as we have already detailed several reasons to expect a link between immigration and the policy areas of education, health, criminal justice, and taxation. All four policy areas are linked to the immigrant threat narrative. According to that narrative, immigrants' use of public services like education and health care create a substantial fiscal drain on the nation. The narrative also regularly highlights the supposed criminality of the immigrant population as well as the idea that the undocumented do not pay taxes. Importantly, immigration has also begun to permeate larger public policy debates. Discussions over reforms in education, health, and criminal justice and disputes over taxes have all become at times closely intertwined with debates about immigration. When white Americans think about these policies, we believe that they often have images of immigrants and/or Latinos in their heads. Finally, and most critically as Chapter Four illustrated, white policy views in each area are tied to the size of the immigrant population. In each case, a larger Latino population was associated with more regressive or punitive policy preferences. All of this suggests that state policy in these areas should be a function of immigrant context.

These are, however, only logical deductions. We do not yet know if state policy in any of these areas really is a function of immigrant context. No study that we know of has even tried to

make this empirical connection.[155] Hopkins' (2009) study of local tax policy is the closest. He finds that municipalities with rapidly expanding immigrant populations tend to tax themselves less. Others have similarly illustrated a negative relationship between ethnic diversity and overall public goods provision at the local level in the United States and elsewhere (Alesina et al 1999). These studies are important and they are certainly suggestive but if we want to know if immigrant context influences state policy across these three broader arenas of policy, we have to offer a direct test.

Why States?

We focus on the state level largely because states have become the primary actor legislating on the welfare of immigrants in this nation. The inability of the federal government to enact significant legislation on immigration has in recent decades encouraged states to act. Over the last 8 years states passed over 1,700 bills that explicitly deal with immigration or immigrants (Rivera n.d.). These new laws have done everything from expanding welfare eligibility to preventing undocumented immigrants from access to public schools. There is little doubt that what states do or do not do can have a dramatic impact on the well-being of the immigrant population living within their borders.[156]

There is also, as we have already demonstrated an important state level dimension to white policy preferences. Given that whites' views on policy are closely linked to their state's

[155] As we have noted, Hero and Preuhs (2007), Fellowes and Rowe (2004) and Soss et al (2001) have all demonstrated ties between ethnic diversity and state welfare policy.

[156] Likewise the immigrant population has real fiscal consequences for the states. Take the state of Minnesota, for example; between 2000 and 2004, the population of unauthorized immigrant students nearly doubled from approximately 9,000 to more than 16,000. Minnesota's state and local governments estimate spending somewhere between $79 and $118 million in order to educate these students in 2000. The twofold increase in the undocumented student population from 2000 to 2004 means that the cost of educating these students has doubled as well (CBO 2007). For states with larger immigrant student populations, such as California, Texas or Florida, the fiscal implications are obviously that much more dramatic.

immigrant context, there is every reason to believe that state policy will be intimately tied to state immigrant context as well.

Measuring State Spending and Latino Context

We now turn to a discussion of our empirical strategy. To make the connection between immigrant threat, Latino agency, and each of these different policy areas, we need measures of both policy outcomes and Latino population size. Although there are a variety of different ways of measuring policy, we choose to focus on one of the most basic – the amount of money that states devote to each these different policy areas.[157] The extent to which a government does or does not invest significant resources into a particular policy area is arguably one of the most revealing measures of a government's priorities. More money for education, for example, suggests that the state cares about education and are willing to invest its limited resources to try to improve educational outcomes.

We focus on the proportion of the state budget that goes to each of the three policy areas of health, education, and corrections. By focusing on the proportion we get a measure of the government's priorities *relative* to other functions and we avoid some of the variation caused by the fact that some states are richer than others and are thus able to spend more money. However, in a series of robustness tests we also look at per capita funding in each area.

Information on budget expenditures for all fifty states is available from annual reports provided by the National Association of State Budget Officers (NASBO). A nice feature of this data is its availability for more than a decade, spanning from 1995-2011. For education, we only include K-12 education and exclude higher education spending since post-secondary education

[157] Alternatives might include tests that assess specific, concrete policies in each area. For example, we could have looked at sentencing for drug violations or for violent crimes in each state. It is, however, difficult to come up with a single policy that accurately encompasses the state's overall policy record in any given area.

tends to be much less clearly associated with the immigrant or Latino population. On average, 20.5 percent of state expenditures go to K-12 education but that figure varies widely from a high of 32.2 percent to a low of 3.8 percent. Our corrections funding measure incorporates spending to build and operate prison systems.[158] Corrections expenditures are considerably lower, comprising only 4.1 percent of state spending on average. Our measure of health care spending is admittedly less encompassing and may therefore be a less accurate portrayal of state efforts. Specifically, we look at the proportion of all state funds that go to Medicaid - a means-tested program that provides medical care for low-income individuals. Overall about 2.5 percent of all state funds go to Medicaid.

How governments spend their money is only half of the fiscal story. State governments also have to make weighty decisions about how they raise their revenues. Here taxes come into play. States can choose to raise revenue through more progressive tax measures like property taxes or through more regressive means like sales taxes. Thus, we also examine the proportion of all taxes generated through each method (sales vs. property tax).

To assess the Latino threat hypothesis we need to measure Latino context in a state. As we discussed previously, it is not clear whether it is the *size* or the *growth* of the Latino population that is driving overall state spending and public service spending. The public and their policymakers may be responding to rapid and sudden surges in the Latino population, particularly in areas that were once largely ethnically/racially homogenous, but they could also be responding to their overall size and increased visibility of this group. The existing research on this subject matter is mixed; it has found effects both with respect to changes in the Latino population (Hopkins 2010) as well as its overall size (Hero 2001; Hero and Preuhs 2007; Soss et

[158] A minority of states also report funding on juvenile and/or drug rehabilitation but this represents a small fraction of corrections spending.

al 2001). In order to determine more precisely what sort of Latino context is driving state policy decisions, our analysis will consider both. Latino growth is measured as the change in the percentage of the Latino population each year while the size of the Latino population is measured as the percentage of Latinos.

Lawmakers may not only be responding to Latino context. That the racial/ethnic composition in a state has exerted such a pronounced effect in previous studies of state policymaking makes it necessary to also control for both the percentage of Asian Americans and Blacks in a state. Along with a state's racial/ethnic context, socioeconomic and political conditions, as well as regional variations across states could certainly affect policy decisions. Our socioeconomic indicators include a measure for the unemployment rate, as well as the average individual income and education levels for a given state. [159] Higher levels of unemployment could be associated with a decrease in public goods spending, particularly those that could benefit immigrants.[160] Our other socioeconomic indicator, education, is measured as the percentage of individuals in a state with bachelor's degree. Educational attainment tends to have a liberalizing influence on overall attitudes (Erikson and Tedin 2007). As such, more educated individuals may be supportive of state spending on public services.

The political climate could also play an important role in determining the amount of spending allocated to public goods—particularly since distinct partisan differences exists over the role of government in society (Erikson et al 1993). Thus, we incorporate a measure that captures the partisan composition of the state legislature, with the expectation that Republicans

[159] Unemployment data is from the Bureau of Labor Statistics http://www.bls.gov/lau/home.htm. Average individual income is from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Employment and Wages Online Annual Averages, 2009," <http://www.bls.gov/cew/cewbultn09.htm>.

[160] Extant research demonstrates the way in which economic self-interest influences individual attitudes towards immigrants and immigration policy (Espenshade and Calhoun 1993; Espenshade and Hempstead 1996; Fetzer 2000; Starr and Roberts 1982; Stein et al. 2000).

will be less favorable to increase in public goods spending, relative to Democrats.[161] We also include a measure developed by Squire (2007) that assesses a legislature's level of professionalization, since the research on state politics has firmly established variations in legislator behavior based on this institutional set-up (Squire 2007; Kousser 2005). Another political indicator that could be relevant in determining the level of public goods spending is the ideological leanings of a state's citizenry. Our measure of state ideology is drawn from Erickson et al (1994) who use public opinion survey data to estimate the percentage of a state population that is liberal, conservative, or moderate.[162]

Finally, in alternate tests we build on the research by Hero and Preuhs (2007) by controlling for regional variations across states that might affect their support for public goods spending on immigrants. Specifically, they argue that states along the US-Mexico border as well as those with an international port may affect policies have distinct policy regimes and may be especially sensitive to the amount of state funds allocated to immigrants.[163]

To account for the non-independent nature of the measure within states as well as the time-varying nature of our data, our model of state spending on immigrant eligible public services is estimated using a cross-sectional time-series regression model.[164] Each of the time varying independent variables is lagged by one year in order to address potential concerns about the direction of causality.

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[161]State legislature partisanship data is from the US Statistical Abstract (1990-2011),

[162] State ideology data can be accessed at: http://php.indiana.edu/~wright1/cbs7603_pct.zip Berry et al (1998) also have a measure of citizen ideology based on interest group ratings of members of Congress; however due to limited scope of their data (2002-2008), we opted to use the Erickson et al measure. Also see Erickson et al (2007) for how their measure compares to that of Barry.

[163] We employ the same coding scheme as Hero and Preuhs (2007) in defining which states are along the US-Mexico border and those states with an international port. We generate a dummy variable that is coded as "1" if a state shares a border with Mexico, "0" otherwise. The same coding scheme is used to denote those states with an international port.

[164] Specifically, we use the xtreg command in Stata, which is a random effects model, to account for variation across years.

The Impact of Latino Context on State Spending

Does Latino context play a role in shaping state policy? Is there a white backlash? And finally, can Latinos begin to assert themselves when they grow sufficiently large in number? In Table 6.1 we attempt to answer these questions. The Table presents the results of three time-series cross-sections regressions that focus in turn on education, corrections, and health.

[Table 6.1 goes here]

The results show that policy is strongly linked to the Latino population size. At least in two of the three policy areas, our expectations are confirmed. States with larger Latino populations are significantly less likely to spend money on education and significantly more likely to devote money to prisons and criminal justice. This pattern fits closely with other work assessing the impact of Latino population size on immigrant-specific policies (Rivera n.d., Campbell et al 2006, Hood and Morris 1998, Citrin et al 1997). It also strongly suggests that America's increasingly diverse population is generating a real and wide ranging backlash. As the Latino population grows, whites become less willing to invest in public services like education that might benefit immigrants and they are more eager to punish criminals – a group that is tied to the immigrant population.

At the same time, the results in Table 6.1 also show that the Latino population serves as more than just a threat to the white community. Latinos, themselves, appear to have an impact on policy. As evidence by the significant coefficients for percent Latino squared, there is robust curvilinear effect to Latino population size. Once Latinos pass a threshold, Latino population

growth begins to be associated with increasingly liberal policy outcomes for education and corrections.[165]

To examine this curvilinear effect in greater depth, Figures 6.1 and 6.2 graphically demonstrate the relationship between Latino context and state spending. These graphs highlight how the effect of Latino statewide growth differs based on the specific type of expenditure. As demonstrated in Figure 6.1, a larger percentage of Latinos is associated with a steady increase in education spending.[166] And in the case of corrections spending, presented in Figure 6.2, an initial growth in the Latino population first leads to a rise in the proportion of state funds that go to corrections, but as Latinos become a larger and larger share of the state, the amount of corrections spending declines substantially.[167] These figures also suggest that the size of the Latino population plays a more influential role in affecting the amount of the state budget directed towards corrections as opposed to education.

[Figures 6.1 and 6.2 go here]

California's history with immigration and its policy response aptly illustrate this complex relationship. As one of the first states to face large scale Latino immigration, California was one of the first to try to actively impose restrictions on services to undocumented immigrants. The infamous Prop 18 comes to mind. Over time, whites in the state became more conservative, whites shifted more and more to the Republican Party, and policy on immigration, education, and corrections shifted decidedly to the right. California fell from among the top half of all states in per pupil education funding in 1980 when whites represented the overwhelming majority of

[165] The importance of the Latino population in shifting policy outcomes in a more pro-Latino direction somewhat contradicts the work of Griffin and Newman (2009), Bartels (2008), and Gilens (2012) which suggests that ethnic/racial minorities and the poor have limited influence over government policy.

[166] The effect of Latino context on education spending is no longer statistically significant at larger values. One reason we are not observing a curvilinear effect on education spending could be due to our sample, which is from 1995-2010. The example we cite below on per pupil funding would require us to collect state budget data for a longer period of time, which is not currently available from NASBO.

[167] Though the effect of Latino context on corrections spending is no longer statistically significant at larger values

school children to near the bottom (44th place) in 2009 when Latinos were the single largest racial/ethnic group among school age children (CBP 2010). Likewise corrections funding more than tripled as a proportion of the budget from only about 2.9 percent of the budget in 1980 to well over 10 percent in 2005 (CBP 2012). Driving this growth in prison spending was a series of stricter sentencing laws like California's famous 1994 'Three Strikes Law" which imposed mandatory life sentences for all three-time felons.

But as the Latino population has grown and amassed enough influence to be an important part of the state's current Democratic majority, policy has once again shifted back to the left. With the active support of Latinos who now account for 38 percent of the population and with the strong backing of Latino legislators who now hold 19 percent of the seats in the state legislature, a series of pro-immigrant measures has passed the legislature (Medina 2013). This includes measures offering undocumented immigrants in-state tuition, drivers' licenses, and the opportunity to practice law. Education and corrections funding are also now slowly following suit. In the last few years, state education funding has already seen a slight but noticeable uptick. With voters passing Prop 30, a tax measure which is predicted to raise billions for K-12 education, the state is likely to see even more growth in education spending. On the other end of the spectrum, corrections funding has dropped markedly and the state has initiated a number of steps to gain early release of prisoners. As well it has shifted efforts from imprisonment toward greater rehabilitation. A range of different factors has contributed to these policy changes in California but Latino context and the immigrant threat narrative appear to be an important part of the story.

The reach of Latino context does not, however, extend to all three of the policy areas we focus on in Table 6.1. We could find no significant link between the size of the Latino or

immigrant populations and the proportion of the budget devoted to health care spending. It is quite possible that immigration and the Latino population are less closely associated with health care than they are with the other two policy areas. But it is also possible that our measure of health care – the proportion of all spending that goes to Medicaid is a poor proxy for health care efforts. Federal mandates could, more than anything, else be driving funding in this area.

State Taxation

All our efforts to this point have been concentrated on understanding state spending decisions. But states face equally important decisions about how they raise their money as well. And the most important element of that state fundraising equation is taxation. Do states choose to raise revenue through more regressive taxes that might place an exceptional burden on Latinos and other disadvantaged groups or do they favor more progressive taxes that rely more heavily on whites and the wealthy? Our results which are displayed in Table 6.2 suggest that the backlash extends to revenue raising decisions as well. In the table we assess links between Latino context and one regressive tax (sales tax) as well as one progressive tax (property tax). Each is measured as a percent of total tax effort for the state.[168] Our control variables remain the same as the ones used in our main model.

[Table 6.2 Here]

The results very much mirror our earlier findings on spending. We once again see an important curvilinear effect between Latino context and policy. States with larger Latino populations are significantly more likely to favor regressive measures like sales tax to raise revenue and significantly less likely to increase more progressive tax structures like property taxes. All of this fits all too neatly with a group conflict model where whites, as the majority, are

[168] Sales tax accounts for 31 percent of total state tax revenue on average while property tax amounts to 2.6 percent. The remainder is largely income tax which can range from regressive to progressive and is thus hard to characterize overall.

increasingly likely to shift the costs of government onto less advantaged segments of the population as those less advantaged segments are increasingly comprised of Latinos. This effect is, however, attenuated after the Latino population reaches a certain threshold. Once that threshold is reached and Latinos are large enough to influence policy on their own, larger Latino populations are associated with more progressive tax policy.[169]

Finally, in alternate tests, we sought to confirm and expand upon existing work on the connection between welfare policy and immigration. Hero and Preuhs (2007) and Soss et (2001) have demonstrated important ties between state immigrant context on one hand and welfare benefit levels and state efforts to devolve control of welfare from the federal government on the other. In both cases, the relationship was linear. A larger Latino population meant less state welfare effort. Do those effects extend to overall state welfare spending? Is the relationship between Latino context and policy as simple as existing accounts suggests or is there a more complex, curvilinear effect on welfare spending as well? Our results, which are displayed in the appendix, are mixed. In line with the two existing studies, we find that states with larger Latino populations spend significantly less on welfare. At the same time, we find no evidence of curvilinear effects for the percentage of Latinos in a state. For whatever reason, the positive influence of Latino voters does not yet appear to have extended to the arena of welfare policy.

The findings regarding Black and Asian American context, as both Table 6.1 and 6.2 demonstrate, are far less clear and consistent. With one exception, the black population plays no evident role. However, that exception is an important and well documented one. States with

[169] The marginal effect of Latino context on property taxes are initially slightly decreasing, but once the squared value of the Latino population is 1500, the revenues gained from property tax begins to increase. However, the estimates are no longer statistically significant when the percent Latinos squared approaches the maximum value. The marginal effect of percent Latino squared is initially increasing until the percent Latino squared reaches 1000. After this point, percent Latinos squared decreases and is statistically significant up until the Latino population squared reaches 1500.

larger African American population devote significantly smaller portions of their budgets to welfare. This parallel's Soss et al's (2001) findings about the central role that the black population plays in driving welfare devolution and follows from Gilens (1999) research which finds that white attitudes toward welfare are in large part shaped by their stereotypes of blacks. The Asian American population is also generally insignificant in our models. When it is significant, the pattern largely matches our early results on state context and white views. Here we find that a larger Asian American population is associated with more support for welfare and less regressive taxes. As we noted earlier, one interpretation is that white Americans are more generous when Asian Americans make up a larger share of the population and less generous when Latinos or blacks are present in large numbers. This pattern for Asian Americans also seems to confirm earlier work that has at least on occasion found that proximity to large Asian American communities is associated with more positive views about Asian Americans or policies related to Asian Americans (Hood and Morris 2000, Hero and Preuhs 2006, Tolbert et al 1999).[170]

Assessing Latino Population Growth

All of the analysis to this point ignores a potentially critical aspect of Latino context – the rate at which the Latino population is growing. Looking across the nation some of the toughest anti-immigrant omnibus bills have been passed in states like Alabama and South Carolina which

[170] In terms of the other controls that we include in our models of state spending, we find that the socioeconomic characteristics of the state exert a more consistent impact than do political indicators. For socioeconomic status, the story appears to be one of funding going to areas where it is most needed. So, for example, states with lower socioeconomic status tend to spend more on corrections, Medicaid, and welfare. As for our political controls, the results are somewhat inconsistent when we focus on the proportion of the budget going to each policy area. However, if we shift to a focus on per capita spending – as we do in alternate tests - we see somewhat more of a conventional political story. For example, Republican and conservative states spend significantly less on education.

have relatively small but also rapidly expanding immigrant populations. Perhaps it is growth rather than the overall population size that most affects policy outcomes.

To test this possibility, we added a series of different measures of Latino population grown to our models in Tables 6.1 and 6.2. Since it is not clear exactly which aspect of growth over which time period most stirs white reactions, we introduced a range of different measure that assessed growth over the past year, the past two years, or over the past five years. We also assessed growth two ways. One simply counted the number of newcomers and the other focused on the percentage increase in the Latino population.

In the end, most of these measures of population growth were insignificant and did not add to our model.[171] Moreover in the couple of cases where we did see a significant relationship, the effects were mixed and thus the story of growth an unclear one. Our overall conclusion is that recent changes in the size of the state Latino population do not appear to trigger a sharp policy reaction. Conflict can and does occur in new immigrant destinations but it may be more prevalent in states with more longstanding immigrant population. In the end, politicians and the public appear to be responding more to the overall size of the Latino population than to its growth.

Race vs Immigration and Race vs Citizenship Status

Are the views of Americans and the policies they pass really a function of the racial environment and the size of the Latino population as we have suggested here? Or could the reaction be more closely related to immigration specific population changes? Our immigrant backlash theory is after all ostensibly focused on immigration and not race. Moreover, there are reasons to suspect that the policy backlash we see is less a response to the Latino population and

[171] Adding these different measures of growth did little to affect our main results on Latino population size.

more a reaction to the undocumented population. Recall that unauthorized immigrants were the ones specifically targeted in Proposition 187 back in the 1990s in California and in more recent laws in Arizona, Georgia and South Carolina. Recall also that when Americans are asked about immigration in surveys, they reserve their most negative assessments for the undocumented population. Given that so much of the immigration debate over the last three decades has focused on the undocumented population, it is important that we focus on this specific group. To assess this possibility, we substituted a measure of the state's undocumented population into the models in Tables 6.1 and 6.2. No official records exist for the actual size of the unauthorized population by state so we rely on the estimates provided from Passel and Cohn (2011) of the Pew Hispanic Center.

We could find no clear link between the size of the undocumented population and policy at the state level. The proportion of a state that is undocumented is signed in the expected direction in almost every case but the relationship is usually not quite significant. These results suggest that policy changes are driven more by the larger Latino population than they are by the smaller undocumented population.

Likewise we could find no robust relationship between the foreign-born population of a state and its policies. Given that whites tend to react differently to Asian Americans and Latinos – the two main immigrant groups – this is perhaps not surprisingly. But it does reinforce the view that the overall patterns are driven more by race than by nativity. Immigration is changing America but those changes appear often to be noticed and filtered through the lens of race. In the end the group that is targeted more than any other seems to be Latinos.

Robustness Checks

To help increase confidence in our findings, we repeated our basic tests while varying the model in a number of important ways. First, rather than look at the proportion of government spending in each policy area, we shifted the focus to per capita spending. Employing this new set of dependent variables, the story remained largely the same. Although significance levels did drop marginally in a couple of cases, the size of the Latino population continued to be a robust factor shaping a broad set of state policies.

Second, to see if our results might be driven by one or two exceptional states with particularly large or particularly small Latino populations, we re-ran our analysis dropping each state one at a time.[172] The overall findings remained robust and only one difference emerged.[173]

Finally, to further test the robustness of our results we also incorporated a range of different measures of politics (dummy variables for which party controls the Senate, the House, and Governor's office) and geography (controls for border states and various regional dummies). None of these alterations affected the basic results.

Discussion

All told, these findings indicate just how far reaching the effects of immigration are. The presence of Latinos in a state impacts a wide range of policies. Unfortunately, that relationship is often a negative one. States with more Latinos generally spend and raise money in a way that produces an unfavorable environment for members of the group – decreased funds to education that could potentially be of great use to this community, a larger criminal justice apparatus, and

[172] Including a large number of states with a negligible Latino population could also be skewing our results. We therefore excluded from our analysis those states where Latinos comprise less than three percent of the total population; these states include Maine, New Hampshire, North and South Dakota, Vermont, West Virginia and Mississippi. Even when these seven states are dropped from our sample, it leads to no substantive change in our main findings.

[173] Dropping Texas reduces the significance of our results for corrections spending suggesting that that state is an influential outlier and that the greater corrections spending in high density Latino states is in large part a function of Texas' heavy corrections spending.

more regressive taxation. All of this could have very real and very negative consequences. Latinos already lag far behind Whites and Asian Americans in nearly every indicator of educational performance (graduate rates, standardized test scores, etc) and are already greatly overrepresented in the criminal justice system, so the decision to reduce education funding and increase corrections funding in states with a growing Latino community may exacerbate the problem even further.

The story is not, however, a purely negative one. Latinos, despite all of the barriers they face, also have some agency and are able to shift policy in a pro-Latino direction if their numbers are large enough. If the Census' population projections are correct and if whites lose their majority status in a few decades, then this emerging pattern bodes well for Latinos over the long term future. Their influence should only grow more pronounced and policy should become more aligned with Latino preferences. Given that at least some studies show that Latinos are often ignored by policy makers, this potentially represents a major step forward (Griffin and Newman 2009).

All of this further underscores the increasingly central role that immigration and Latinos play in modern day American politics. While our results indicate that Blacks continue to represent a threat to some white Americans and their presence does affect state welfare spending, we find that Latinos are becoming much more central in the policy making process. Thus the black-white paradigm that has guided most of the work on racial politics in the U.S. must now also take into account the nation's largest ethnic/racial group. When states make a range of policy decisions, many of those decisions are affected in important and complex ways by the Latino population.

THE CONCLUSION: A BRIEF OUTLINE

Before we write our conclusion, we hoped that we might benefit from the advice of external reviewers. Thus, we have chosen to present a brief outline of one potential version of the concluding chapter. We are, however, very amenable to shifts in the focus of the chapter. There are many different directions that we could take at this point.

SECTION ONE: REVIEW

1. We will begin with a brief review of the core findings
2. We will then reflect on a series of key implications of these findings
    a. Immigration now plays a central role in American politics. Immigration is a primary factor shaping who white Americans vote for, which political party they support, and which policies they favor. In short, immigration impacts the three most important decisions that the electorate makes.
    b. Race has an enduring but shifting impact on American politics. Race still matters but Latinos rather than blacks are driving much of the new racial dynamics in American politics
    c. The media and its ability to frame immigration play a critical role in driving the immigrant threat narrative and the political reaction to immigration.

SECTION TWO: A RACIALLY DIVIDED POLITICS

Our plan is then to go into greater detail about how immigration is helping to divide American politics along racial lines. We will start by shifting the focus to the political choices of racial and ethnic minorities. Here we will present data that demonstrate the increasing attachment of minorities to the Democratic Party and the increasing support of non-whites to Democratic candidates. The net effect of trends in both white and non-white politics is a dramatic increase in the racial divide in American politics. We will show that race more than class, religion, or any other demographic characteristic shapes patterns in partisanship and the vote. The bottom line is that American elections are increasingly (and now fairly consistently)

pitting the overwhelming majority of racial and ethnic minorities on one side of the vote against the clear majority of whites on the other side of the vote.

This 'racial chasm' in American politics raises real concerns both about conflict across racial lines as well as the responsiveness of American politics to whichever side loses this electoral battle.

SECTION THREE: THE FUTURE OF AMERICAN POLITICS

Many political observers have argued that the future trajectory of American politics is a clear one. With Republicans appealing increasingly to whites who represent a shrinking segment of the electorate and Democrats attracting ever higher shares of the growing racial and ethnic minority population, the balance of power should shift dramatically to the Democratic Party and to the more liberal policies it advances. That is a story that can also fit well with the patterns that we have illustrated in this book.

However, in this final section, we seek to add nuance and some uncertainty to America's electoral future. We note two underlying features of the American polity that suggest the possibility of an alternative future path.

First, white Americans are far from universally fearful of immigration and as such there is room to attract considerable white support and to be immigrant friendly at the same time. Here we will present survey data showing that while many white Americans are clearly anxious about immigration, the plurality of whites actually hold ambivalent views on immigration. On one hand they admire immigrants and recognize some of the benefits that immigrants provide the nation. On the other, those same individuals are deeply concerned about certain aspects of immigration and are frightened at the rate at which America is changing. We think this deep ambivalence offers both political parties real opportunities and real challenges.

Second, if we dig deeper, it is clear that the partisan proclivities of America's new immigrant population are far from set in stone. Here we will present data that demonstrate that despite the growing attachment of Latinos and Asian Americans to the Democratic Party, Democrats have a tenuous hold on this population. Analysis of national survey data indicate that the majority of both the Asian American and Latino populations express no real ties to the Democratic Party. In fact, we will show that the lion's share of the Latino and Asian American populations are "non-identifiers" – those who refuse altogether to answer a question about party identification. Combined, non-identifiers and those who expressly state that they are Independent make up 56 percent of Latinos and 57 percent of Asian Americans. All of this suggests that both pan-ethnic groups are still very much up for grabs politically. Once again, this uncertainty presents the Republican and Democratic Parties with real opportunities and real challenges.

Ultimately, we will argue that the Republican Party holds the key to determining whether we continue to go down a path of increasingly racialized politics or whether we shift to an alternate path that incorporates more compromise on immigration and less racial division. As the party with the clearest position on immigration and the party with the bleakest future, Republicans have an incredibly consequential choice to make. They can continue to use immigration to appeal to the white majority or they can moderate their tactics on immigration to try to appeal to a more diverse audience. It is clear that the Republican Party is already engaging in this debate. A number of Republican Senators have already signaled a desire to move to the center on immigration but the conservative wing of the Party remains adamantly opposed to those moves. We do not yet know what the outcome of this intra-party battle will be but we do

know that it will have enormous implications not only for the long term balance of power in American partisan politics but also for the state of race relations in the nation.

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