American Nationalism in the Early Twenty-first Century:
A Discursive Analysis of the Politics of Immigration and National Security

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ABSTRACT

This thesis uses Benedict Anderson's theoretical contributions on the topic of national identity and Michel Foucault's contributions toward discourse analysis to perform a discursive analysis of Donald Trump's campaign speeches in which he exploits pre-existing anti-immigration sentiments among certain voters to gain political power. The research question addressed herein is: How has Donald Trump invoked the issue of national security to single out groups of immigrants as threats to U.S. national security, and what conditions exists so that he is able to do so in a way that enlists the support of a sizeable portion of the American public?

First, this thesis works to put into context what drove post-World War II immigration in the U.S. to provide insight into what conditions lead to certain groups being encouraged or discouraged from immigrating. Second, I contrast Anderson's concept of nationalism with that of Samuel Huntington, whose idea of nationalism more closely aligns with Trump's nativist sense of national identity. Third, having put the history of U.S. immigration and the concept of national identity into context, I perform a discursive analysis of three of Trump's campaign speeches and tweets that focus on immigration and make problematic his racist, far-right ideology and its purpose toward the de-politicization and de-historicization of immigration as a national security and economic issue. I conclude by reminding the reader that allowing anti-immigrant discourse to become normalized without the burden of proof can lead to curbed freedoms under an authoritarian regime, a direction toward which Trump appears ready and willing to lead the American electorate.

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GENERAL AUDIENCE ABSTRACT

This thesis poses the question: How has Donald Trump invoked the issue of national security to single out groups of immigrants as threats to U.S. national security, and what conditions exists so that he is able to do so in a way that enlists the support of a sizeable portion of the American public? This question is answered through a discursive analysis of Trump's campaign speeches, a discussion of how national identity is derived, and a brief consideration of a few policies that have impacted immigration to the U.S. and its political landscape.

Ultimately, this thesis identifies a discursive apparatus that has been leveraged by Donald Trump and his supporters in order to gain political favor. If left unchecked, this discourse could have a damaging effect on the U.S. and its citizens by making it acceptable to cast certain groups as un-American.

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Introduction

Immigration has been a key concern for United States national security since at least the mid-twentieth century. In recent years many politicians, most notably Donald Trump, have expressed the intention to limit immigration to the U.S., an intention that many observers claim is based largely on fears that immigrants will enter the country with the intent to carry out terrorist attacks. Prior to 2001 the main ideological concerns about immigration seems to have been the effect it would have on employment, crime levels, and the presumed cultural integrity of the U.S. in areas where immigrants settle.[1] Recent remarks in 2016 from then president-elect Donald Trump were aimed specifically at Mexican immigration and securing the U.S.-Mexican border.[2] Syrian refugees/immigrants trying to escape the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), many of whom are presently displaced persons in refugee camps awaiting a new home in Europe or North America, have also been cited as threats.[3] The supposed threats posed by each group have arguably been greatly exaggerated to rally support around a common cause of national security in order for politicians to win offices from state and local levels to the presidency in a time of rising fear associated with bombings and violent acts in Orlando, Paris, Los Angeles, Barcelona, and throughout Turkey. The way in which American politicians exaggerate these threats through louder and more frequent calls for immigration reform after a terror incident is a compelling reason to carry out an analysis on how politicians are able to construct the idea that immigrants pose a threat to national security successfully. The question I investigate in this thesis is: How has Donald Trump invoked the issue of national security to

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[1] John L Hammond, "Immigration Control as a (False) Security Measure," Critical Sociology, 2011, 37 (6): 739-61.
[2] "Donald Trump's attack on Mexico that prompted NBC to drop Miss USA and Miss Universe pageants – video," *The Guardian*, June 29, 2015, Accessed April 24, 2016, http://www.theguardian.com/us-news/video/2015/jun/30/donald-trump-mexico-comments-nbc-universal-video.
[3] "Syrian Refugees: A Snapshot of the Crisis – In the Middle East and Europe," European Union, http://syrianrefugees.eu/.

single out groups of immigrants as threats to U.S. national security, and what societal conditions

exists so that he is able to do so in a way that enlists the support of a sizeable chunk of the

American public?

The singling out of specific groups of immigrants appears to have had some success

based on Trump's victory in the 2016 presidential race, as he engaged in countless incitements

that exploited some of the public's existing fear of immigrants. In the post-election period the

U.S. has also seen an uptick in high-profile cases of anti-immigrant sentiments, including the

Washington State and Kansas shootings in March 2017 of men of Indian origin who were

mistaken for Muslims, as well as incidents that resulted in defacement of property.[4] Violent

actions are reinforced by discourses from politicians such as Trump who tend to view

immigrants a danger to American society.[5]

This thesis is meant to provide a clearer picture of what drives post-9/11 U.S.

immigration discourse, and to better understand the context behind aspects of national security

that are at the forefront of public discussions regarding so-called threats to the U.S. in the form

of a rather diverse array of immigrant communities. Given the discourses that have stabilized and

proliferated during the 2016 presidential election, the two groups that Trump seemed to focus on

are immigrants from South America/Mexico and immigration from the Middle East, with special

attention given to Syrian refugees. These two groups have been presented in the past few years

as having the potential to pose an especially serious threat to U.S. national security due to

Mexico's proximity, which allows a large number of undocumented, non-European, immigrants

from Mexico and Central America into the country, and the immediate matter of relocating

hundreds of thousands of Syrian refugees who are fleeing a protracted and brutal civil war. It is

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[4] Daniel Burke, "Anti-Muslim Hate Crimes: Ignorance in Action?" *CNN*, January 30, 2017, Accessed March 12, 2017, http://www.cnn.com/2017/01/30/us/islamerica-excerpt-hate-crimes/.
[5] Ibid.

important to examine why and how Trump was able to successfully cast immigrant groups as threatening outsiders and still gain significant support and even successfully win the presidential election because such discourse could have long term effects on who is cast as an "other" domestically, and to what extent the U.S. is willing to curtail human rights in the name of national security through immigration law.

Analyzing the speeches of Trump and examining how he goes about casting certain groups as outsiders is one way to understand what national security concerns are most prevalent at any given time, whether these concerns are well-founded or not. This is due to the fact that politicians in the U.S. need the support of voters in order to stay in or gain office, so they are the most likely group of people to benefit from playing on public fears. That is not to say that national security concerns are determined by the public. Clearly there are intelligence officers and diplomats who are more informed about national security threats that exist both within and outside the U.S. than the average citizen. But the fact that national security discourses are used to incite politicians and the public appears to create a kind of feedback loop whereby politicians both say what they *believe* the public is already thinking, or is disposed to think, and then introduce fears that the wider public has not yet landed upon, but is inclined to do so given disputes as to whether the racial/cultural makeup of the nation is a source of danger.

Constructing fears is something of a political practice that appears to have been an effective way to gain the support of voters because a politician who understands the supposed issues is more likely to be forthcoming with solutions. For instance, Trump's claim that Mexico does not send its "best" people to the U.S., therefore it would make sense to "build a wall" gives voters who are already disposed to fear immigrants a sense that Trump has an answer to this so-called "problem." Trump possibly summed up U.S. anxiety best by comparing the Syrian refugee

crisis to one of the most well-known subterfuge techniques of all time when he said "…we can't have another problem and this could be one of the great Trojan Horses."[6] This comment suggests that posing as a refugee to gain entrance to the U.S. is an effective tool for potential terrorists, despite the arduous vetting process with which refugees already have to contend. It further creates more public anxiety by invoking one of the most well-known stories of threat hiding in plain sight. In her paper on the competing narratives of immigration reform, Julie Stewart analyzed the narratives that surrounded the passage of the Utah HB 36 Driver Identification Law that allowed undocumented immigrants a route to obtain a legal drivers license, as well as narratives in opposition to efforts to make functioning as an undocumented immigrant in Utah easier.[7] Stewart found that opponents to undocumented immigration took on a more "apocalyptic narrative" that served to create a sense of crisis and framed immigrants as "criminals and terrorists" utilizing strong metaphors and synecdoches, or referring to a part as representative of the whole, to make their point.[8] She contrasts this apocalyptic narrative to that of proponents of immigration, whom she found were more like to rely on facts and pragmatism in their more pro-immigration arguments.[9] Quantitative studies also find that the idea of immigrants as a national security threat tends to be exaggerated. A 2016 study by the CATO Institute looked at how many instances of terrorism in the U.S. were carried out by immigrants between the years 1975 and the attack in San Bernardino, California in 2015, and found that on average during that time an American had a 1 in 3,609,709 chance of being killed in an attack by an immigrant whereas the

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[6] "More than half the nation's governors say Syrian refugees not welcome," *CNN*, November 19, 2019, Accessed April 12, 2016, http://www.cnn.com/2015/11/16/world/paris-attacks-syrian-refugees-backlash/.
[7] Julie Stewart, "Fiction over Facts: How Competing Narrative Forms Explain Policy in a New Immigration Destination," *Sociological Forum*, (2012), 27 (3): 591-616.
[8] Ibid., 595.
[9] Ibid., 596.

chances of being killed by someone who was not foreign-born was 252.9 times greater.[10] The

CATO Institute study concluded by advising against an extreme moratorium on immigration to

the U.S. because the costs vastly outweighed the benefits.[11]

Along with the analysis of national security discourse by Trump, this thesis provides

historical context to the alleged threat these groups have been said to pose. It is worthwhile to

note that there is a much longer, more complex history of Mexican and Central American

immigration to the U.S. than that of people relocating from Syria, but political leaders on the

right have pointed to both situations as risks to U.S. national security due to the potential for

terrorists to enter the country under the guise of being a refugee or cross the U.S./Mexico border.

This thesis asks why and how political leaders frame immigrants as a threat to national security,

and discourse analysis offers a window into what type of thinking goes into the formation of

these frames – immigrants as potential terrorists, violent criminals, drug smugglers, etc.

History of Mexican Immigrants as Cheap Labor

To better understand the relationship Mexican immigrants have to the U.S. one first

needs to examine how and why such large numbers migrated to the U.S. in the first place. An

exhaustive treatment is far from possible here, but some key historical markers are instructive.

Regardless of the economic and criminal threat that some politicians at times paint Mexican

immigrants to be, to put too many restrictions on this group would cause problems for U.S.

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[10] Alex Nowrasteh, "Terrorism and Immigration: A Risk Analysis," *CATO Institute*, September 13, 2016, Accessed March 26, 2017, https://www.cato.org/publications/policy-analysis/terrorism-immigration-risk-analysis.
[11] Ibid.

employers that have grown dependent on their labor.[12] This dependency has been fostered by years of immigration policy in the U.S. that had been particularly accepting toward Mexicans.[13]

From the time of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 and negotiations between the U.S. and Japan to halt the migration of Japanese workers in 1907, Mexicans became the obvious choice to fill the agriculture and labor jobs left by these groups.[14] By the 1920s an anti-immigration attitude had grown in the U.S., especially toward immigrants from certain parts of the world, particularly Western Europeans, and the quota system was born. Mexican immigrants were exempt from this new quota system because of the support offered by employers who now saw their labor as invaluable.[15] In 1942 an agreement was signed by the U.S. and Mexico that is known as the Bracero agreement, through which 4.6 million contracts were granted to Mexican laborers in agriculture and for the construction of railroads and maintenance.[16]

In 1952, even more pronounced immigration developments arose when spouses and children of Mexican immigrants who had obtained U.S. citizenship were given non-quota status, making it easier than ever for the families of Mexican immigrants to reunite.[17] This would cause many Mexican households to house families of mixed immigration status wherein some members had acquired citizenship and others did not. While some immigrant workers may have intended to return home after a certain amount of time, the end of the Bracero program made employers more anxious to legalize their workers, making permanent relocation to the U.S. of workers and their families more attractive.[18] Nonetheless, there was still a large number of

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[12] Audrey Singer, "Immigrant Workers in the U.S. Labor Force," *Brookings Institute*, March 15, 2012, Accessed March 12, 2017.
[13] Rafael Alarcon, "U.S. Immigration Policy and the Mobility of Mexicans (1882-2005)," *Migraciones Internacionales*, (2011) 6 (1): 185-218.
[14] Ibid., 186.
[15] Ibid., 192.
[16] Ibid., 195.
[17] Ibid., 198.
[18] Ibid., 200.

undocumented immigrants from Mexico who continued to find employment in agriculture and labor.

This continued flow of undocumented workers has historically caused anxiety among groups concerned with the effects immigrants have had on the workforce, culture, and crime rates. The government answered these concerns in 1986 with the Immigration Reform and Control Act, which granted amnesty to undocumented workers, placed sanctions on employers that intentionally hired such workers, and increased border control.[19] According to Rafael Alarcon: "While amnesty was generously applied in accordance with the proposal, the sanctions against employers have never been more than symbolic, and true reinforcement of border surveillance did not begin until late 1993 when the Clinton administration decided to adopt this policy."[20] Immigration "reform" efforts appear to exist to appease those who would want the government to drastically restrict the flow of Mexican immigrants and deport those who live in the country undocumented, but the reality of the government's actions appear to support the employers that would suffer if such restrictions were to be enforced. As Hammond puts it, "Symbolic enforcement assuages the panic while practical laxity secures the labor supply."[21] It is possible that those who support the drastic restriction of immigration have not considered the impact that such a change would have on the U.S. economy. But this support for tighter restrictions on immigration can be conveniently exploited by politicians, especially on the far-right, who have much to gain by acknowledging that this will exists and throwing support behind efforts to curb immigration.

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[19] Ibid., 202.
[20] Ibid.
[21] Hammond, "Immigration Control."

With the end of the Bracero program came a steady rise in Mexican immigration. When Bracero ended in 1970 there were 760,000 Mexicans in the U.S.,[22] and by 2014 the number had grown to approximately 11.7 million, comprising about 28 percent of all immigrants in the U.S.[23] Since the U.S. fell into a recession in 2007, there has been a steady decrease in the number of Mexicans emigrating to the U.S.[24]

The Level of Threat

Syrian immigration enjoys nowhere near the same long relationship to the U.S. as Mexican immigration. It is also a far more complex issue. Polls taken by the Pew Research Center show that the American public perceives both groups as posing a threat to the safety, culture, and economic wellbeing of the country, but to different degrees.[25] Mexican immigrants have been entering the country for many generations, and while plenty of citizens may claim resentment because of lack of employment opportunities, or crime rates escalating, this group of immigrants is not perceived as being made up of potential terrorists. People coming from Syria, on the other hand, look enough like the terrorists who attacked the U.S. on September 11, 2001 and those who make up much of ISIL that there is escalated nervousness at the thought of a large number of these immigrants resettling here, lest there should be one or more violent actors in the mix.

This type of nervousness toward Syrians gives good reason for the argument made in a study by Galla Lahav and Marie Courtmanche that the public is more likely to agree on stricter

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[22] Ibid., 205.

[23] Jie Zong and Jeanne Batalova, "Frequently Requested Statistics on Immigrants and Immigration in the United States," *Migration Policy Institute*, April 14, 2016, Accessed April 26, 2016, http://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/frequently-requested-statistics-immigrants-and-immigration-united-states#Mexican Immigrants.

[24] Ibid.

[25] "On views of immigrants, Americans largely split along party lines," *Pew Research Center*, September 30, 2015, Accessed March 8, 2017, http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2015/09/30/on-views-of-immigrants-americans-largely-split-along-party-lines/.

immigration laws and possibly give up civil liberties when it appears their physical safety is at risk than when it seems non-material things such as cultural identity are at risk.[26] These scholars' findings, using a group of volunteer students, appear to support the idea that conservatives and liberals are more likely to agree on these issues when physical security is threatened, but opinions are more varied when the threat is non-physical in nature. This leads to the conclusion that framing immigrants as a potentially violent physical threat to Americans may be a more effective way to persuade U.S. citizens that more restrictions on who may enter this country ought to be in place. Discourse analysis can help probe these frames by taking a closer look at what type of rhetoric political leaders choose to utilize, thus helping us to understand how they choose to discuss certain issues, in this case immigration.

John Hammond's paper regarding the moral panic surrounding these two groups of immigrants may express the public's anxiety about Mexican immigration best. Hammond writes, "They are presumed to take jobs from Americans, to be a drain on social service budgets, to bring alien elements into an otherwise homogeneous American culture, and to commit crimes against citizens."[27] When it comes to Muslim immigrants, a category under which some of the Syrian refugees would fall, Hammond argues that such condemnation is used by the U.S. government to justify the continuing wars in the Middle East.[28] These perceptions that immigrants pose threats to Americans on a cultural, economic, and physical level that are perpetuated by the government in turn allow the government to work toward increasing immigration restrictions, deportations, and to justify often the infringements of civil liberties regardless of the actual level of threat.

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[26] Gallya Lahav and Marie Courtemanche, "The Ideological Effects of Framing Threat on Immigration and Civil Liberties," *Political Behavior*, (2012), 34 (3): 477-505.
[27] "Immigration Control as a (False) Security Measure," 746.
[28] Ibid., 756.

The United States and Nationalism

The national identity of the United States has been forming and changing since the first European settlers arrived. As time has passed, this identity has changed with the country's people. But there remains much disagreement on what the identity of the U.S. is and what qualities one would expect to find in those who call themselves "American." The constant need to structure this identity goes hand in hand with who is classified as an "other," or at the very least what is counted as "un-American." In order to identify what it is to "be American," it follows that there will be an effort to separate out that which is "not American," that which falls outside of an accepted identity becomes an "other." In order to study a country's identity, it certainly helps to understand its history – in the case of the U.S. a group of settlers seeking, among other things, religious freedom – as well as challenges that have served to help redefine its identity over time. Another way to understand the construction of a nation's identity is to look at how messages of its relation to those who are being presented as "others" or that which "foreign" are created and disseminated. Both understanding the history of a nation's own flavor of nationalism and how the nationalistic messages are constructed a spread are useful tools in understanding how a nation attempts to form its identity.

When we consider the opaque origins of U.S. nationalism, it is helpful to start analysis with the works of nation theorist Benedict Anderson, especially his books *Imagined Communities* and *The Spectre of Comparisons.* Anderson argues that we cannot understand a nation or its nationalism without first examining how national identity came to emerge and how it has changed over time as a cultural construct in the minds of those who make up the imagined community of a nation.[29] The nation, Anderson argues, is a socio-cultural construct as most

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[29] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities,* (New York: Verso, 1983), 4-5.

people within these "imagined communities" will never meet each other. And yet they form strong attachments to symbols of their nation.[30] A nation's identity is never fully formed and varies greatly in the minds of those who make up the imagined community. According to Anderson, the nation's identity owes its 'origin' to a series of comparisons – most specifically, comparisons made by state officials as well as ordinary citizens between nations.[31]

Anderson's theory of how nations and nationalism are given legitimacy, an important issue to any nation's government, is instructive for understanding the ways in which various accounts of national identity are issued, get stabilized, and proliferate in public and private discourse. As Samuel Huntington states in *Who Are We? The Challenges to America's National Identity*, "National interests derive from national identity. We have to know who we are before we know what our interests are."[32] Huntington begins his account of U.S. nationalism in the late eighteenth century, noting that the people who made up the U.S. at the time of independence shared a common culture in that they were largely white Protestants.[33] He refers to the U.S. transition to a multicultural society in the Twentieth Century as a "fragmentation of identity."[34] Huntington appears to accept Anderson's assessment of the nation as an imagined community in that he agrees that identities are social constructs, but unlike Anderson, Huntington asserts that a nation *requires* a shared memory of its history. Huntington also argues that the American Creed stems from the nation's Protestant origins thus making the U.S. a Protestant nation.[35] This stands in contrast to Anderson's position that a nation is never a fixed idea. Huntington's take on American nationalism appears to rely much too heavily on a limited view and of the history of a

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[30] Ibid., 7.
[31] Margaret Scott, "Ulil's icon," *The Times Literary Supplement*: March 26, 1999.
[32] Samuel P. Huntington, *Who Are We?: The Challenges to America's National Identity*, (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2004), 10.
[33] Ibid., 11.
[34] Ibid., 13.
[35] Ibid,. 105-115.

nation, whereas Anderson's allows for the fact that a nation's identity is never very stable or

secure, as even while establishing itself as a nation through the Declaration of Independence,

Anderson points out that the reasons given to justify independence made no mention of America

as a nation or its history prior to that point – America thus became "new."[36] The makeup of a

nation changes and its interests vary as members of the community become aware of issues and

partake in discourses that over time result in the re-imaging of the community.

In order to understand the emergence of nationalism in historical context it is helpful to

pay close attention to the messages perpetuated by a nation's government in the form of policy

and political discourse. David Campbell argues in *Writing Security: United States Foreign*

Policy and the Politics of Identity that the practice of *"foreign policy"* is in large part devoted to

excluding that which is different.[37] By defining who is to be treated as "foreign" or as an "other"

through means of exclusion allows a nation not only to define its identity, but also to define what

its identity is *not*. As political theorist William Connolly states in his text *Identity\Difference*

"Identity requires difference in order to be, and it converts difference into otherness in order to

secure its own self-certainty."[38] The sentiment that there exist characteristics that make groups of

people "foreign" or "un-American" allows for what Campbell refers to as a society of security, in

which the nation targets a group or groups that are seen as compromising American security and

values.[39] In order for a group to become of sufficient concern to the people within a nation, their

very existence must be framed as a problem and the message must be constructed in such a way

that it convinces the people that this problem requires action. As Murray Edelman points out in

Constructing the Political Spectacle, this dynamic can have the effect of intensifying the

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[36] Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 193.
[37] David Campbell, *Writing Security: United States Foreign Policy and the Politics of Identity,* (University of Minnesota Press: Minneapolis, 1992), 68.
[38] William E. Connolly, *Identity\Difference,* (University of Minnesota Press: Minneapolis, 1991), 64.
[39] Campbell, *Writing Security*, 148.

conditions from which the problem stems in the first place.[40] In the case of the U.S., the

perpetuation of the idea of immigrants as threats to national security can have the effect of

radicalizing those who already reside within the U.S., as this message of self/other becomes

more prevalent through social alienation and stereotyping.

Of course, it is helpful to have at least some understanding of a nation's history in

reference to immigration to give context to disagreements about the public's perceptions about

these groups. With the knowledge of what the nation's stance on immigration has been, we can

more easily pick out transitions in the perceptions of immigrants and national identity over time.

Theorists of the nation help to provide a sort of critical-analytical roadmap to understanding U.S.

nationalism and the themes one can expect to find in current political discourse in terms of

self/other, identity, national security, and contestations over history. Most importantly,

Anderson's theory of the *un*fixed nature of nationalism seems to support the notion that the

nation's government and political institutions do have a measure of control over the nationalizing

message of self/other as has been seen in the past with "official nationalisms" such as

Germanization and Russification efforts that occurred by early rulers of these nations as an effort

to unify citizens under specific norms.[41] If national institutions do have control over this

nationalized message, then there appears to be little support for Huntington's idea that U.S.

identity is inseparable from its origins, or the American Creed. The basic argument here is that

nationalism is forever subject to change, as are the concepts of self/other and American/foreign

that are critically at play in immigration discourses in America today.

Methods

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[40] Murray Edelman, *Constructing the Political Spectacle,* (University of Chicago Press: Chicago, 1988), 25.
[41] Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 85-88.

To better understand how people immigrating to the U.S. are framed as a threat, specifically during the 2016 presidential race, I perform a discursive analysis to examine how Trump as a presidential candidate constructs the message that immigrants are a threat to U.S. national security with specific attention to how groups such as Mexican and Syrian immigrants have been recently singled out in the creation of this message. The three speeches used for this analysis include his presidential campaign announcement in Trump Tower in June 2016, a campaign speech given at Youngstown State University in August 2016, and a campaign rally in Phoenix, Arizona held in October 2016.

In order to provide a better understanding of what references are most salient in immigration discourse I also perform a secondary source analysis of materials that discuss U.S. immigration from after World War II as well as sources that discuss nationalism and the formation of national identity. In my analysis of Trump's campaign discourse on immigration as a threat to U.S. national security, I look for repetition, calls to action, and key words that work to define the self/other. For instance, Trump's campaign speeches frequently refer to immigrants, particularly illegal immigrants, as criminals. For example, in his speech in Arizona Trump stated:"We will end illegal immigration, deport every last criminal alien, and save American lives, and we'll do it quickly."[42] In this speech in Phoenix, Arizona on October 29, 2016, Trump fixates on people who have been killed by "illegal immigrants" and "criminal aliens." In one case Trump refers to a person as an "immigrant killer" which in this case is meant to refer an immigrant who according to Trump had a "tremendously horrible criminal record" and who killed a convenience store clerk in Mesa, Arizona.[43] Trump's repeated remarks framing undocumented immigrants as criminals and with references to specific instances of Americans

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[42] "Presidential Candidate Donald Trump Rally in Phoenix, Arizona," *C-SPAN*, Accessed March 19, 2017, https://www.c-span.org/video/?417682-1/donald-trump-campaigns-phoenix-arizona
[43] Ibid.

dying as a result of these immigrants being in the U.S. are just as notable for what they not say. In this speech, Trump does not talk about immigrants, undocumented or documented, who are otherwise law-abiding and non-violent job creators, tax payers, or students. By excluding any possibility that these immigrants might be harmless, he leaves listeners with only the conclusion that they must be dangerous.

In his presidency Trump has expanded his definition of what counts as un-American to American citizens of any race, though typically black, who exercise their right to peacefully protest by sitting or kneeling during the national anthem before sports games. This movement was brought to the attention of the American public and media outlets in 2016 through the actions of former San Francisco 49ers quarterback Colin Kaepernick who refused to stand for the anthem in protest of the many instances of police brutality and murder of black people that have gone largely unpunished. In 2017, with Kaepernick being a free agent and absent from pro football, many more athletes in the NFL and a few in other organizations chose to kneel and/or lock arms during the national anthem, spurring a flurry of angry tweets from Trump who called their actions disrespectful to the American flag and troops. Trump further said that any athlete who will not stand for the flag should be fired.[44] Trump's discourse against these athletes, many of whom are black, provides evidence of how any group of people, whether citizens or not, can be framed as un-American, un-patriotic, and in some way undesirable.

The analysis is grounded in discourse analysis methods as outlined in Kevin Dunn and Iver Neumann's text *Undertaking Discourse Analysis for Social Research*.[45] It is also indebted to

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[44] Aric Jenkins, "Donald Trump Called for NFL Players to Be Fired for National Anthem Kneeling — And They Responded," *Fortune,* September 23, 2017, Accessed October 15, 2017, http://fortune.com/2017/09/23/donald-trump-nfl-players-anthem-response/.

[45] Kevin C. Dunn and Iver B. Neumann, *Undertaking Discourse Analysis for Social Research,* (University of Michigan Press, 2016), Kindle.

Michel Foucault's *The Archaeology of Knowledge*,[46] and its appendix "The Discourse on Language"[47] by accepting that discourse is the filter through which understanding becomes possible. Dunn and Neumann possibly put it best when they describe Foucault's belief in how we use discourse to understand the world: "…it is not that nothing exists outside of discourse, but that in order to exist *for us*, phenomena have to be grasped *through* discourse."[48] This thesis operates under the assumption that we understand the world through discourse. And through an analysis of Trump's speeches, we can arrive at an understanding of how groups of immigrants can be cast as threats regardless of whether any evidence exists to reinforce such claims.

Stakes

This thesis provides a timely analysis of how the search for American national identity is largely driving the discourse of immigration as a response to a presumed threat to national security. It highlights how this discourse contributes to an ongoing message about what or who is and is not considered "American," as well as what groups are considered dangerous and why. This thesis is intended to examine how immigrants are being categorized as threats and how the categories and their deployment in certain settings (e.g., political rallies in arena-sized venues) rely upon the quest for an organic, uncorrupted core of national identity. This search for such a national identity stems from fear – largely the fear that allowing the identity to fragment or become redefined will lead to a reversal in the self/other relationship in which the values, societal norms, and the domination of white Euro-Americans would no longer be considered indicative of what counts as "American" by the American public. Such a fear is strong at this time in the U.S. due to the wide distribution of information about violent acts abroad and

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[46] Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, Vol. 1901, (New York: Harper & Row, 1972).
[47] Michel Foucault, "The Discourse on Language," in *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, 215-237, Vol. 1901, (New York: Harper & Row, 1972).
[48] Dunn and Neumann, *Undertaking Discourse Analysis*.

occasionally on American soil as well as through a prevailing distrust among many Americans toward races of non-European origin. Information about violent acts by immigrants is often spread with racist undertones by political leaders who see immigration as a national security "problem" for which they can provide a solution that will garner the support of voters. This fear of the other allows political forces such as Trump's to use the concept of immigrants as a threat to national security as a platform from which to promise politically drastic actions – actions that would bring the U.S. back to the identity his supporters perceive has been neglected, forgotten, or somehow placed in jeopardy

Chapter One

U.S. Immigration Policy: Preference and Protections

The United States has experienced several waves of immigration, often providing a glimmer of hope to newcomers looking to achieve the "American Dream." From its inception the U.S. has been made up of people from many backgrounds and countries of origin, some arriving willingly, while others arrived as slaves. Over time the free flow of newcomers was met with restrictions based on what groups were thought more "desirable," a trend that increased particularly during the Cold War, and persists to this day. For example, during and after the Cold War, western Europeans were increasingly seen as a better "class" of immigrant than people from elsewhere, and the passage of certain pieces of legislation such as the Immigration Reform and Control Act worked to intensify American anxiety surrounding the presence of less "desirable" immigrants in the U.S. The aim of this chapter is to give some historical context to the discomfort many Americans feel regarding immigrants from South America and the Middle East by providing an overview of key pieces of legislation that impacted the immigration status of these groups, and in turn impacted how Americans view and treat these groups today.[49]

A high-level overview of U.S. immigration legislation and policy since World War II reveals patterns of preference toward certain groups of immigrants such as western Europeans, and it discloses protections for certain refugees trying to escape political and religious persecution.[50] While preferences remain in place for educated, skilled immigrants, with the rise of Donald Trump we have seen the intensification of a rather unusual political rhetoric focused on not allowing refugees into the country, lest there be a terrorist hiding among the innocent. In

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[49] [49] D'vera Cohn, "How U.S. Immigration Laws and Rules Have Changed Through History," Pew Research Center, September 30, 2015, Accessed July 6, 2017, http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2015/09/30/how-u-s-immigration-laws-and-rules-have-changed-through-history/.
[50] Ibid.

addition there has been an uptick in anti-Mexican/South American immigration sentiments of late, as people from this region have been in the past presented as an economic liability and more recently the porous border a national security risk in a time of rapid globalization. Anxiety is easily tapped in light of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 that still weigh heavily on the country.

It is helpful to consider a few immigration policies from the Cold War and into the twenty-first century that have set the stage for the Trump administration's proposed wall at the U.S./Mexican border and restrictions on people entering the country from the Middle East. It is also worth noting that immigrants/refugees from the Middle East were not given as much attention until the twenty-first century, especially not to the same extent as immigrants from Central and South America. This chapter focuses on The Bracero Program, Immigration Reform and Control Act, The U.S. Patriot Act, in order to highlight the history that Trump and his supporters would rather not acknowledge – that Latin American immigrants have historically been invited to the U.S. to perform unskilled labor and that the recent national security discourse aimed at both Latin American and Middle Eastern immigrants is racially charged, and not objectively working to make America safer. In denying this history, it makes Trump's campaign promises to build a wall along the U.S. southern border and to instate travel bans more palatable to white, middle-class voters who feel threatened by these groups of immigrants. These policies were chosen specifically to illustrate the shifting focus of U.S. immigration concerns from the economic realm to that of national security, and to highlight how the U.S. developed conceptions of certain groups of immigrants as being more or less desirable than others as a way to justify these concerns – conceptions that Trump exploited throughout his presidential campaign.

The Bracero Program

The labor shortages created by World War II made migrants a more attractive option for seasonal workers than in previous years, as many of the country's able-bodied citizens were needed to serve in the military. The Bracero Program was begun in order to ensure adequate manpower in the agricultural sector and ran for 22 years, far outlasting the Second World War. This policy laid much of the groundwork for the dependence on foreign labor in certain sectors today through a joint effort of the U.S. and Mexico in estimating labor needs and providing laborers to be placed temporarily with employers through the Department of Labor.[51] Because the Bracero Program invited guest workers into the U.S. where they could reliably make more money than if they remained in Mexico, it opened up to some extent attractive employment opportunities that remained desirable even after the program was ended in 1964.[52] Today 26% of farm workers and 15% of construction workers are undocumented immigrants.[53]

On its face the Bracero Program appeared to be a good temporary solution to a temporary problem – Mexico would send workers for limited periods of time to meet labor demands that could not be met with the available national workforce. These workers would be paid the same wages and only be employed in areas where they would not adversely affect local labor markets.[54] Attempts to protect U.S. jobs were complicated when employers began to try to circumvent the agreements made by the government within the Bracero Program.[55] Efforts by

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[51] Shannon Leigh Vivian, "Be our Guest: A Review of the Legal and Regulatory History of U.S. Immigration Policy Toward Mexico and Recommendations for Combating Employer Exploitation of Nonimmigrant and Undocumented Workers," Seton Hall Legislative Journal 30, no. 1 (2005): 189, 191.
[52] Jeffrey S. Passel and D'vera Cohn, "Size of U.S. Unauthorized Immigrant Workforce Stable After the Great Recession," Pew Research Center, November 3, 2016, Accessed September 23, 2017. http://www.pewhispanic.org/2016/11/03/size-of-u-s-unauthorized-immigrant-workforce-stable-after-the-great-recession/
[53] Ibid.
[54] Andrew J. Hazleton, "Farmworker Advocacy through Guestworker Policy: Secretary of Labor James P. Mitchell and the Bracero Program," Journal of Policy History: JPH 29, no. 3 (2017): 431-461, 433.
[55] Ibid.

employers to unilaterally hire Mexican laborers were especially problematic in El Paso, Texas, where farmers appealed directly to the Immigration Service to relax the program's rules.[56] The El Paso farmers were successful and Mexican workers were supplied with cards at the border that would allow them to enter the U.S. and work for one year. Farmers rushed to the border in order to recruit as many workers as possible.[57] According to a paper by Otey Scruggs, this kind of incident, along with rampant racism and mistreatment, caused Mexico to blacklist the state of Texas, disallowing the U.S. from placing Braceros there legally.[58] This left the only option for farmers who needed to harvest their crops on time not much choice other than to hire more expensive citizens to work the fields, or illegally hire migrant workers.

Critics of the Bracero Program were skeptical of the supposed labor shortage and the effects the Program would have on the American workforce. Much like in El Paso, over time employers were emboldened to forego contracting workers through the program altogether and resorted to hiring undocumented immigrants who were not constrained by a contract to return home.[59] According to Hazleton, this ultimately harmed the domestic laborers who still needed work: "Domestic farmworkers were displaced; their wages stagnated in the face of grower control over both formal and undocumented guest workers."[60] Having two cheaper avenues through which to procure labor made the hiring of domestic laborers considerably less attractive. The measure put in place by the Bracero Program to encourage laborers to return to Mexico required employers to withhold 10 percent of each laborer's earnings and transfer the money to

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[56] Otey M. Scruggs, "Texas and the Bracero Program, 1942-1947," Pacific Historical Review 32, no. 3 (1963): 253.
[57] Ibid.
[58] Ibid.
[59] Ibid.
[60] Ibid.

banks in Mexico to be held until their return; in many cases employers chose to pocket the funds, leaving workers who did return home short changed.[61]

The Mexican government was also hesitant to accept the idea that the U.S. was experiencing a labor shortage of a magnitude that required outside help. According to a paper by Shannon Vivian, the Mexican government was right to question the labor shortage, as the time following the start of the Bracero Program was marked by large unemployment numbers and lower wages in the U.S.[62] Initially, the influx of undocumented workers was simply processed by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) and admitted into the country as Bracero workers, regardless of the legality of their entry.[63]

The buildup of tension in 1953 after Mexico's president, Adolfo Ruiz Cortines, seemed willing to walk away from the bargaining table over the issue of workers' wages eventually boiled over and resulted in what is known as "Operation Wetback."[64] The Eisenhower administration decided to attempt unilateral recruitment of Mexican workers, which resulted in many Mexicans rushing the border, and in turn calls for stronger border enforcement.[65] Operation Wetback was put into effect in order to round up undocumented immigrants from Mexico and send them back home, and also resulted in the deportation of many legal laborers.[66]

Even with a decrease in agricultural jobs in the U.S. with the lowering of wages in sectors that hire large numbers of immigrants has promoted a sentiment among many in the U.S., most notably white people, that Latin American immigrants take jobs in already limited job markets.[67]

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[61] Vivian, "Be Our Guest," 200.
[62] Ibid., 198.
[63] Hazleton, "Farmworker Advocacy," 434.
[64] Ibid.
[65] Ibid., 434-435.
[66] Vivian, "Be Our Guest," 200.
[67] "Modern Immigration Wave Brings 59 Million to U.S., Driving Population Growth and Change Through 2065," Pew Research Center, September 28, 2015, Accessed September 23, 2017.

This sentiment stems from the U.S. government's failure to enforce the pay and standard of living requirements mandated by the program and the lack of control over Braceros who chose to stay after their allotted time to work was up. Once the Bracero Program ended, attempts to enforce the border made it more difficult for laborers to return home, so the simplest option was to relocate workers and their families to the U.S. permanently.[68] This became a trend over much of the second half of the twentieth century that has proved difficult, if impossible, to reverse in a time when goods are expected to be mass produced and inexpensive.

Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA)

In 1986, President Ronald Reagan signed the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) into law as a measure to curb illegal immigration by making it unlawful for employers to knowingly hire undocumented workers. This was an attempt to curb the effects of the Bracero Program.[69] This law's focus on employers meant that there was little to no concern for the welfare of undocumented workers who did manage to make their way onto the payrolls of U.S. employers.[70] Employer sanctions were enough to prevent employers from seeking out cheap, undocumented workers, and low wages did not deter undocumented immigrants from entering the country as the prospect of getting a paying job was so important. While there was a decline in attempts to cross the U.S./Mexico border initially, undocumented immigration patterns soon returned to previous levels.[71] IRCA's failure to curb illegal immigration and its failure to prevent

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http://www.pewhispanic.org/2015/09/28/modern-immigration-wave-brings-59-million-to-u-s-driving-population-growth-and-change-through-2065/.

[68] Vivian, "Be Our Guest," 198.

[69] Cohn, "U.S. Laws and Rules."

[70] Vivian, "Be Our Guest," 206.

[71] Pia M. Orrenius and Madeline Zavodny, "Do Amnesty Programs Reduce Undocumented Immigration? Evidence from IRCA," Demography 40, No. 3 (2003): 437-450, 437.

wages from shrinking in unskilled occupations contributed to a growing discontent regarding

migrant workers from south of the border.[72]

IRCA's sanctions on employers did little to prevent the hiring of undocumented workers,

as the financial gains of hiring inexpensive labor far outweighed the risks of being fined.[73]

Historically American politicians have generally accepted the agriculture sector's wish for

immigrant labor and have often held competing interests on this subject – wishing to appease

agriculture employers but still preventing undocumented immigrants from entering the country.[74]

There was much debate between farmers and legislators during the years leading up to the

passage of IRCA in which farmers, especially in California, wanted a more flexible program

through which to hire workers due to the difficulty of foreseeing the size of the year's harvest

and not wanting undue searches without warrants on their properties.[75] Even though the

agricultural sector got several provisions that it asked for, the program eventually went awry by

the late 1980's when it became evident that there had been an increase in undocumented

laborers. According to a paper written by Phillip Martin: "IRCA may well be remembered as a

stimulus to illegal immigration for spreading work authorization documents and knowledge

about them to very poor and unsophisticated rural Mexicans and Central Americans, encouraging

first-time entrants from these areas."[76] Farm wages also declined following the IRCA.[77]

As an amnesty program, the IRCA also fell short. At the time of its passage, the IRCA

granted amnesty to 2.7 million immigrants, roughly 2 million of them being Mexican.[78] A paper

by Pia Orrenius and Madeline Zavodny suggests that setting the precedent of granting amnesty in

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[72] Vivian, "Be Our Guest," 205.
[73] Ibid., 208.
[74] Philip L. Martin, "Good Intentions Gone Awry: IRCA and U. S. Agriculture," The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science 534, (1994): 44-57, 45.
[75] Ibid., 49.
[76] Ibid., 52.
[77] Ibid.
[78] Orrenius and Zavodny, "Amnesty Programs," 437.

the first place made illegal entry into the U.S. more attractive, because it became possible for

entrants to eventually be granted legal status without having to actively pursue it.[79] While there

may have been an initial decrease in illegal border crossings in the short-term, the study by

Orrenius and Zavodny suggests that the IRCA had little or no success in limiting illegal entries

into the U.S. This study also claims that the focus on data recorded in the time immediately after

the passage of IRCA failed to show that the law did not impact the number of immigrants

coming from South America in the long term.[80] The IRCA's failure to prevent large numbers of

immigrants from crossing the southern border was perhaps caused by another facet of the law

that increased the INS budget, making it more difficult for migrants to cross the border without

documentation. This had the long-term effect of redirecting the previously circular migration

patterns from Mexico to the U.S. and back, to migrants choosing to remain in the U.S. because

crossing the border was becoming increasingly risky.[81]

  While the passage of the IRCA shows the U.S. government's concern with both allowing

a legal avenue for laborers to enter the country and providing an inexpensive workforce for the

agricultural sector, it is also evidence of shortsightedness in regard to the long-term effects such

a program would have on the willingness of employers to go along with these legal avenues. As

employers were able to pay workers lower wages, the risks associated with hiring undocumented

workers became less painful for business when compared to not having these workers.

Additionally, laborers were deterred from returning home due to a strengthened border patrol,

making it a far simpler option to remain in the U.S. permanently and increasing anxiety about

immigrants from Mexico and South America as unskilled labor wages remained at unacceptable

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[79] Ibid.
[80] Ibid.
[81] Ana Raquel Minian, "An Unintended Side Effect of Trump's Border Wall," *The Atlantic,* February 12, 2017, Accessed September 24, 2017.

levels and the number of unauthorized immigrants rose from 3.2 million when IRCA was

enacted, to 5 million a decade later, and 11 million by 2006.[82]

The U.S. Patriot Act

Throughout the twentieth century immigration policy focused mostly on labor issues, the

quota system that determined how many immigrants of certain national origins were to be

accepted into the country, and humanitarian issues such as religious persecution and

displacement by war that meant accepting refugees into the country. The post-September 11,

2001 era saw a much different approach to immigration as well as internal affairs. A heightened

level of national security and anxiety about the ability of terrorists to enter the U.S. and carry out

another attack on U.S. soil meant the American people were more willing to relinquish certain

rights that had previously been widely enjoyed, namely ease of travel and privacy.[83]

In the post-9/11 era, terrorism displaced the undocumented South American and Mexican

workforce as the top immigration concern. Most specifically a nervousness arose surrounding

Muslim immigrants regardless of their country of origin, and including those who already

resided in the U.S.[84] The Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools

Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism Act, usually referred to as the U.S.A. Patriot Act,

was not overtly an immigration policy, but included provisions that applied to immigrants and

threatened their civil liberties as well as the liberties of citizens. An important liberty that was

circumvented by this legislation is the Fourth Amendment's protection from unreasonable search

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[82] Minian, "An Unintended Side Effect of Trump's Border Wall."
[83] Cassady Pitt, "U.S. Patriot Act and Racial Profiling: Are there Consequences of Discrimination?," Michigan Sociological Review 25, (2011): 53-69, 54.
[84] Ibid.

and seizure.[85] The Fourth Amendment's protections were not only threatened in the traditional

meaning of search and seizure, but also in the surveillance and wiretapping allowances made by

the Patriot Act.[86] The reason behind this infringement had to be suspicion of terrorist activity, or

activity in support of terrorism, but was disproportionately carried out against Muslims.[87] For

example, attorney Brandon Mayfield from Portland, Oregon filed a lawsuit against the federal

government in 2004 when he was wrongfully accused of being linked to the Madrid train

bombings that occurred that year.[88] Mayfield believed that the U.S. government targeted him and

secretly searched his residence and offices because he is Muslim.[89] It is important to note that

much like the issue of unlawful search and seizure, the practices of surveillance and wiretapping

impacts citizens and immigrants alike, proving that national security legislation should not be

taken at face value, there are more racially charged motivations at play that will ultimately

impact citizens. Such profiling, as Cassady Pitt argues regarding the consequences of the Patriot

Act, can have the effect of engendering support for terrorism based on anger that grows from the

strain of being the target of discrimination.[90] The Patriot Act also added pressures placed on

Muslims because those suspected of ties to terrorism could be detained indefinitely without

charges.[91]

      Whitehead and Aden argue that the Patriot Act is also not in line with the First

Amendment, in that it limits the speech rights of immigrants.

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[85] John W. Whitehead and Steven H. Aden, "Forfeiting "Enduring Freedom" for "Homeland Security: A Constitutional Analysis of the USA Patriot Act and the Justice Department's Anti-Terrorism Initiatives," American University Law Review 51, no. 6 (2002): 1081, 1101.

[86] Ibid., 1105.

[87] Pitt, "U.S. Patriot Act and Racial Profiling," 54.

[88] "Judge Rules Part of Patriot Act Unconstitutional," *Associated Press*, September 27, 2007, Accessed September 24, 2017. http://www.nbcnews.com/id/20999950/ns/us_news-security/t/judge-rules-part-patriot-act-unconstitutional/#.Wcg8lMiGPIU.

[89] Ibid.

[90] Ibid., 64.

[91] Mark P. Popiel, Jitesh Malik, and Hema Juneja, "Tightening the United States Immigration Laws in the 21st Century," *Chinese Journal of International Law,* 4, No. 1 (2005): 271-284, 282.

"Section 411 of the Patriot Act amends the Immigration and Nationality Act to prohibit the entry into the United States of any non-citizen who represents a "foreign terrorist organization," is a member of "a political, social, or other similar group whose public endorsement of acts undermines United States efforts to reduce or eliminate terrorist activities," or supports or encourages others to support such organizations. In addition, spouses and children of such non-citizens also are prohibited from entry."[92]

Section 411 of the Patriot Act states that if an immigrant even unknowingly makes a donation to a group that has been deemed by the government to be a terrorist organization, or hold an unpopular opinion, they can be deported.[93] Whitehead and Aden rightfully note that this practice is akin to McCarthyism, and seriously damages the rights of Muslims within the U.S.[94] It is important to note that, much like the issue of surveillance and wiretapping, this practice impacts citizens and immigrants alike, proving that national security legislation should not be taken at face value; there are usually more racially charged motivations at play that will ultimately impact citizens.

Additionally, there was an increased interest in securing the U.S. borders after 9/11 due to anxiety that terrorists could easily make their way into the country undetected. A less often discussed aspect of the Patriot Act is its requirement that the Attorney General look into the possibility of biometric screening processes at borders and other modes of entry into the U.S.[95] Biometric screening would be extended for use in the issuance of visas and would require a significant database of information on individuals. Since the passage of the Patriot Act, a biometric screening process has been instated that requires the collection of ten fingerprints from

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[92] Whitehead and Aden, "Forfeiting "Enduring Freedom" for "Homeland Security,"" 1098.
[93] Ibid., 1099.
[94] Ibid.
[95] Whitehead and Aden, "Forfeiting "Enduring Freedom" for "Homeland Security,"" 1132.

each person applying to enter the U.S. through an embassy or consulate.[96] The idea is that

citizens and foreigners wishing to enter the country would be entered into this database, which

could make it easier for law enforcement agencies to detain unwanted visitors. The

implementation of such stringent security measures works to reinforce the idea that the U.S. is

insecure, and therefore has the effect of increasing anxiety about who enters the country and

from where. As Campbell put it, the objects of a nation's concern change over time, but the

techniques of articulating presumed dangers persist.[97]

The Patriot Act signaled the beginning of a new era of national insecurity. U.S. citizens

are now more willing than ever to allow the government to curtail certain liberties if it means

avoiding attacks like those experienced on 9/11. The image of the World Trade Center towers

falling is so etched in the memories of Americans that it seems "unpatriotic" to express

opposition to the security measures that were handed down by the nation's capital. If there was

something that unified citizens, it was a shared fear of the spectre of terrorism and a general

willingness to do whatever it took to avoid a repeat of 9/11.[98] The passage of the Patriot Act is

indicative of how much this anxiety fueled the decision making of legislators, and the type of

sacrifices to freedom the public would be willing to tolerate in an increasingly globalized

society. If the U.S. government could not control who entered the country, it would keep track on

anyone deemed suspicious.

Trump's Vision of Immigration Reform

Today, 16 years after 9/11, the country still seems to find itself in a state of national

insecurity with a large number of people lacking trust in individuals who come from certain parts

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[96] "Safety & Security of U.S. Borders: Biometrics," U.S. Department of State – Bureau of Consular Affairs, Accessed July 20, 2017, https://travel.state.gov/content/visas/en/general/border-biometrics.html.

[97] Campbell, *Writing Security*, 13.

[98] Lahav and Courtmanche, "Ideological Effects," 478.

of the world. Understanding and taking advantage of this, Donald Trump made several campaign promises regarding the restriction of immigration. These restrictions notably included building a wall along the U.S.-Mexico border and making Mexico pay for it, and halting the acceptance of any more refugees from war-torn Syria, and to stop Muslims in general from immigrating to the U.S.[99] Trump's campaign promises on immigration and refugee practices signal his belief that the anxiety created by the attacks on 9/11 and smaller events in the following years have kept American anxiety about foreign terrorists alive and well.

The U.S.-Mexico border wall has been a major fixation of Trump and his supporters since the campaign because of its appearance as a solution to a perceived problem, particularly those who believe that Mexican and South American immigrants spell trouble for the U.S. economy and criminal system. On the other hand, a wall spanning all, or even just roughly half, of the U.S.-Mexico border would cost billions of dollars, and regardless of Trump's promises to make Mexico pay for the wall by threatening to impose new regulations making it impossible for people to wire money into Mexico if they refuse to cooperate, Mexican President Enrique Peña Nieto quickly voiced his refusal the entertain the idea.[100]

Shortly after a Muslim husband and wife, Syed Rizwan Farook and Tashfeen Malik, in San Bernardino, California killed 14 people and injured 22 others at a work Christmas party, Trump said the U.S. should not continue to allow Muslim individuals into the country.[101] Trump expressed the same level of distrust specifically of Syrian refugees, stating that he might support "extreme vetting" processes to ensure no one came through as a refugee who would execute an

[99] Miriam Valverde, "Suspend Immigration from Terror-Prone Places," PolitiFact. January 16, 2017, Accessed July 20, 2017, http://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/promises/trumpometer/promise/1402/suspend-immigration-terror-prone-places/.
[100] Mirian Valverde, "Build a Wall, and Make Mexico Pay for it," PolitiFact, January 16, 2017, Accessed July 20, 2017, http://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/promises/trumpometer/promise/1397/build-wall-and-make-mexico-pay-it/.
[101] Valverde, "Suspend Immigration."

attack on the U.S.[102] These statements are troubling in that the perpetrators of the San Bernardino attack, as well as other high-profile attacks that have occurred on American soil were U.S. citizens or legal residents. A ban on Muslims would have made no difference in these cases because the people involved had already lived in the U.S. and in some cases developed anti-American sentiments after coming to this country.

The direction Trump's proposed immigration reforms would take the U.S. in fails to recognize the potential damage that could be done to communities within the country if he were to be successful in their implementation. Building an expensive wall along the U.S.-Mexico border will ultimately come out of U.S. citizen's pockets, and the demonization of these specific groups will likely put strain on the individuals within the Mexican/South American and Muslim communities within the U.S., in a similar vein to Pitt's argument, which could have the opposite of Trump's intended effect. Based on what has been seen since the turn of the century, it is likely that immigration policy will continue to become more restrictive, rather than less so. In the first year of his presidency, Trump has already made an effort to make immigration more restrictive by rescinding the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program that allowed some individuals who came into the country as children to remain in the U.S. with the ability to obtain a work permit and to defer deportation.[103]

While this thesis is more focused on the effect Trump's immigration discourse will have domestically it is worth noting that his rhetoric can also be taken as an attempt to assert dominance over other nations as a form of statecraft. As Campbell writes, "The construction of

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[102] Ibid.

[103] Michael D. Shear and Julie Hirschfield Davis, "Trump Moves to End DACA and Calls on Congress to Act," *New York Times*, September 5, 2017, Accessed December 10, 2017, https://www.nytimes.com/2017/09/05/us/politics/trump-daca-dreamers-immigration.html.

the 'foreign' is made possible by practices that also constitute the 'domestic.'"[104] Therefore, it

follows that issues within the domestic and foreign policy realms work together in order to

impose boundaries and define the "self" and "other" in terms of the domestic state and foreign

state.[105] In particular, Trump displays a tendency, much like previous Republican presidents such

as Ronald Reagan and George W. Bush, to define Americans against the people of other nations,

which is addressed in more detail later in this thesis, and through his immigration discourse he

attempts to prove that he has a measure of control over who can come into the U.S. and how –

even claiming to have the ability to make Mexico pay for a border wall that does not benefit

them in any particular way. Attempts to manage the affairs of the U.S. in such a public way not

only reinforces xenophobic feelings within America, but makes the U.S. appear insecure in the

context of the world stage.

Conclusion

A brief history of some of the U.S.'s immigration policies most relevant to the groups

Trump has singled out in his campaign promises demonstrates that the post-World War II, and

pre-9/11 eras show patterns of acceptance of immigration as a political and societal inevitability.

The post-9/11 era shows rejection of immigrant groups who are publicly labeled as dangerous or

troublesome and a push for tighter restrictions on who can enter the country and how. A switch

was flipped on 9/11 that changed the way the U.S. government and many inhabitants look at

immigration and its risks – what was once primarily driven by economics is now considered to

be a matter of national security that has gripped Washington for years. It is more convenient for

Trump's agenda if American voters forget that immigrants were previously welcomed to the

U.S. in order to provide labor and as a refuge for those trying to escape religious and political

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[104] Campbell, *Writing Security*, 62.
[105] Ibid.

persecution. If voters are able to forget or outright dismiss this history, the idea that the U.S. is being invaded seems more plausible.

Chapter Two

Defining American Nationalism and the 'Other'

Immigration is frequently cited not only as a threat to national security, but as a threat to national identity.[106] This supposed danger is often conflated to be taken as a threat *to the self*, which must be protected at all costs, by limiting the flow of people into the nation, and by use of new laws, or even walls along the borders. In the case of the 2016 election cycle, the United States as a nation found itself suffering from an identity crisis, pitting "us" as Americans against "them," which most often meant people from Central/South America and Syria that would seek to take refuge on American soil. The nation was consistently faced with messages that it must vote to "Make America Great Again" by now-President Trump with the notion that there is some past point in time to which a return is possible, or even desired. The question was heard louder than ever – who are we and what does this identity mean for our future?

National identity is a difficult concept to define, but a theorization of it is important to consider in understanding the construction of messages about the nation and its interests. In the case of the U.S. during the 2016 presidential election, there were two conflicting messages about the presumed identity of the nation: there was the message about the "American Melting Pot" and one about a more exclusive club in which only certain types of similarly exceptional people could belong. Conflicting discourses about what America is and who can be considered American is an issue best described through scholars of nationalist theory, most notably Benedict Anderson. The purpose of this chapter is to explore the nature of nation identity according to Anderson's quite dynamic take on this phenomenon as opposed to the exclusive conception of nationalism supported by Samuel Huntington and promoted by Donald Trump and groups such as the Tea Party that rose to prominence in light of discontent with President Barack Obama.

[106] Huntington, *Who Are We?*

Through this analysis I intend to make clear that national identity need not be fixed in time according to the words of a select group of founders, nor must it rely heavily on clear-cut definition as to who can and cannot properly belong to a nation's identity structure.

What is the Nation?

In his book *Imagined Communities* Anderson lays out a theory of what the admittedly difficult-to-define concept of "the nation" is.[107] As made clear by the title of this text, Anderson considers the nation to be a limited, sovereign "imagined community" of individuals, each of whom will never meet all other members of this community, but who nonetheless form strong attachments to symbols of their collective identity and are even willing to die for the idea of the nation.[108] This intangible connection enjoyed by individuals within a nation is to a large degree the basis on which they define who they are in relation to members of other nations. It is through perceived differences from people outside the nation, the 'self' versus the 'other,' that national identity is constructed.

The "national consciousness" that is required for this shared feeling of community came about rather late from an historical perspective seeing more impact early on in the Americas than in Europe, and according to Anderson was enabled by the birth of widely-disseminated print media made available by the rise of capitalism.[109] The ability to access printed books and newspapers that were released in the vernacular of a community rather than in Latin made for a more literate, educated society that was able to share common experiences that would result in a shared consciousness.[110] Through the communication power of language, and primarily newspapers, people within even very large communities were able to share some of the same

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[107] Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 3.
[108] Ibid., 7,
[109] Ibid., 38.
[110] Ibid., 44.

experiences and stay apprised of current affairs in a way that was more meaningful than the communications that might come from the motherland several weeks or months after the fact. Over time a desire for national identity arose thanks in large part to the growing number of differences between the community and its parent nation. The question here is through what *practices* does the nation derive its identity?

In *Writing Security: United States Foreign Policy and the Politics of Identity,* David Campbell's writing on American identity compliments Anderson's conception on nationalism. Campbell writes: "Defined … more by absence than presence, America is particularly dependent on *representational practices* for its being. Arguably more than any other state, the imprecise process of imagination is what constitutes American identity."[111] Campbell also posits that the difficulty in defining what is 'American' leads to the discomfort and sense of threat by anything that is seen as 'unAmerican.'[112] This discomfort leads Americans to make statements of blatant distinctions between 'us' and 'them' regardless of whether there is any real distinction to be made. Over time many groups in America have been absorbed into the 'us' including the Irish, German, Jewish, and in a different manner African Americans. All were considered at one point to be 'others' who did not share the interests or experiences of Americans, but such sentiments, for the most part, faded over time. Anderson uses as an example Mark Twain's telling of black and white people as 'brothers' instead of the black man as a slave. This practice denies the severity of the historical mistreatment of African Americans by characterizing the strife between whites and blacks as familial.[113] In imaging and re-imaging identity, the memories of a nation tend to soften and at times omit some of its darker realities. Such collective forgetfulness allows for entire groups within and outside of a nation to fill the role of the 'other,' and can result in an

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[111] Campbell, *Writing Security,* 91.
[112] Ibid.
[113] Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 203.

ever-changing cast of others that depends on the national interests and concerns of the time. For instance, Trump's exploitation of the general state of anxiety surrounding national security in the U.S. through his insistence that Syrian refugees and Latin American immigrants must be stopped from settling here in order to prevent future acts of terror on U.S. soil. Through such scapegoating techniques of choosing specific groups to take the blame for the nation's perceived problems and singling them out as particularly un-American, Trump uses the 'otherness' of these groups for political gain while making the issue seem rather non-political, because security concerns are accepted by many voters as prior to politics itself, perhaps, uncomfortable yet in urgent need of being addressed. Additionally, Trump himself can be seen as being apolitical, as he did not begin his presidential bid with the political career U.S. voters are accustomed to from candidates seeking higher offices.

At this juncture the group or groups in question, whether they be South/Central American, Middle Eastern, Asian or any other group, must be framed as presenting a *problem* or a threat to some aspect of the American nation. Murray Edelman's *Constructing the Political Spectacle* is instructive on how framing groups as threats is possible. Edelman identifies the first feature of a social *problem* as focusing "upon a name for an undesirable condition or a threat to well-being."[114] He further defines the construction of a problem as including "ambiguous" actions by the government that can be inconsistent based on competing group interests and claims that at times make the perceived problem worse.[115] The constructions of social and political problems by no means happens overnight – it is a slow process that is subject to continual change based on dominant ideologies of the time.[116]

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[114] Edelman, *Constructing the Political Spectacle*, 16.
[115] Ibid.
[116] Ibid., 17.

One voice in particular that seeks to define nationalism, namely American nationalism, seems most representative of the problematic nature of "Make America Great Again" sentiments peddled by candidate Trump during his campaign. Samuel Huntington's text *Who are We? The Challenges to America's National Identity* is quite troubling in that it attempts to peg a "crisis of national identity" that must be addressed in order for America to understand its basic national interests.[117] Huntington spends a great deal of time promoting the idea of an "American Creed" of individuality, equality and freedom that he posits has been eroded over time by the "ideologies of multiculturism and diversity."[118] This creed, the "cultural core," and Huntington's insistence on labeling the first Europeans to stay in America as settlers as opposed to mere immigrants reflects a glorification of a past that he sees as somehow better than the present. Huntington's concept of American identity, as well as Trump's campaign slogan, leave little room for a re-imaging of the community or the ever-changing nature of nationalism. The unwillingness or inability to accept even modest changes to national identity in an increasingly globalized world can lead to a kind of *othering* of groups within the community, and can further lead to an accepted racism that Anderson sees as less of a result of nationalism than of classism.[119] On the other hand, change in the direction of a more globalized mindset can lead to rising anxiety among groups that feel *left behind*, such as people who reside in rural areas, perform industrial jobs, and/or who believe themselves under threat of being replaced.

The goal of this inquiry into national identity is not limited to defining what it *is*, but to make problematic the argument for clinging to an imagined past identity structure that was questionable in its own time and incompatible with the present and future. This is particularly the case with regards to the issue of immigration with a focus on the groups Trump most frequently

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[117] Huntington, *Who Are We?*, 9.
[118] Ibid., 18.
[119] Anderson, *Imagined Communities,* 149.

cited as threats – South/Central Americans and Syrian refugees. To problematize the framing of immigrants as threats in reference to a past identity structure requires a breakdown of some of the core parts of Huntington's argument concerning the makeup of American identity – language, religion, values, and territory. Such Huntington-esque sentiments are largely supported by Trump's backers, many of whom come to some extent from a relatively recent addition to the American political landscape, the Tea Party Patriots.

Language

The dissemination of information and ideas written in a vernacular is a major part of how national identity emerged and brought about national consciousness through which members of the "imagined community" shared allegedly common experiences and stories.[120] Nations began to emerge from a time when official languages such as Latin, Hebrew, or Greek were known by the few scholars for administrative purposes only, not for the wider spread of knowledge.[121] Anderson notes: "What, in a positive sense, made the new communities imaginable was half-fortuitous, but explosive, interaction between a system of production and productive relations (capitalism), a technology of communications (print), and the fatality of human linguistic diversity."[122] While this emergence and privileging of some vernacular languages over others was an important part of the shaping of national identities according to Anderson, it would be a mistake to assume that vernaculars represented a clean break in languages across borders. The borders each nation imagines around itself are not *real* and in an objective, genetic sense, nations cannot prevent the spread of language and culture. While language is an important component of

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[120]Ibid., 30.
[121] Ibid., 42.
[122] Ibid,. 42-43.

identity nationalist groups and nativists tend to put entirely too much emphasis on its importance

to national identity; it is merely one component among many.

Huntington states that Hispanic advocates would have America be bicultural and

bilingual, minus what he deems the "core Anglo-Protestant culture plus the ethnic

subcultures."[123] He equates the large number of Mexican immigrants who enter the U.S. each

year to an invasion that Americans have been unwilling to acknowledge.

> "By avoiding, at least until 2004, the issue of Mexican immigration and
> treating the overall relationship with their neighbor as if it did not differ from that
> with other countries, they also avoided the issue of whether America will continue
> to be a country with a single national language and a common Anglo-Protestant
> mainstream culture."[124]

It is necessary to note that while English is the most commonly spoken language in the U.S., it is

not the one, nor is it the only *official* or national language. English is by no means the 'original'

language of America – several states publish official documents in indigenous languages as well

as those of the largest immigrant populations. English is widely spoken as a second language in

countries outside of the U.S. and shows no sign of going away. Painting the rise of Spanish-

speaking cultures within the U.S. as a threat to national identity is in the least misguided. In the

worst sense is represents underlying xenophobia in American culture.

Anderson's focus on language and his historical account of the emergence of printed

vernaculars utilizes an attitude of unification, not divisiveness. The account he provides of the

transition from a few privileged administrative languages understood by the few to several

vernaculars understood by the many is not presented so much as a mode of exclusion in

Imagined Communities, but a potentially positive bonding agent with regards to how nations

were able to develop an internally shared consciousness. However, this is not to say that a shared

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[123] Huntington, *Who are We?,* 316.
[124] Ibid., 318.

vernacular and borders alone make a nation, as many nations located near and far from each other also share a common language such as Portugal and Brazil, France and parts of Canada, and many Middle Eastern and north African countries. Anderson focuses on the eventual desire for the Creoles of the Spanish territories such as Venezuela, Mexico, and Peru to pursue national independence from Spain and adopt their own nationalities, as their shared language and economic contributions to Spain would never result in equal treatment.[125] For all creoles were subject to the same fate: "Even if he was born within one week of his father's migration, the accident of his birth in the Americas consigned him to subordination – even though in terms of language, religion, ancestry, or manners he was largely indistinguishable from the Spain-born Spaniard."[126] The Spanish empire held for generations despite the otherness of the Spanish-American. It was the rise of mass print media that allowed the spread of news and information and a feeling of connectedness, according to Anderson.[127] As he put it: "Print language is what invents nationalism, not *a* particular language per se."[128]

If the plight of the creoles tells us anything it is that sharing a common language is often not sufficient to maintaining an identity. The Spanish settlers and their kin had more than language in common with the empire from which they originated. But ultimately *similarities* are not enough – there must be a measure of *shared experiences* in everyday life and *interests* in maintaining the community that make sharing an identity a tolerable means to survival. In shaping this identity, language can be a common factor shared by many, but it is not a requirement to be shared by all. While Huntington recognizes that a shared language is not a

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[125] Anderson, *Imagined Communities,* 50.
[126] Ibid., 58.
[127] Ibid., 63.
[128] Ibid., 134.

requirement of national identity, he does warn against the emphasis on teaching Spanish in the

U.S. due to its immigrant population as being a force that could result in a bifurcated America.[129]

Religion

Along a similar vein with the power of language, religion is a major factor of identity on

which Huntington puts an overwhelming amount of emphasis. A theme throughout *Who are We?*

is that the American creed, and by extension American values, are based on the Protestant

mindset. This Protestantism, to Huntington, is inextricably connected to a sense of patriotism in a

way that happens to marry "God and country."[130] This is not to say that Huntington believes one

cannot practice a non-Protestant, non-Christian faith in the U.S. However, he seems to believe

that "It is not compatible, however, with being atheist, for it is a religion, invoking a

transcendental Being apart from the terrestrial human world."[131] This would be a problem

relative to Anderson's conception of nationalism in that the nation itself is conceived through

imagination and therefore exists within the minds of individuals within the community.

Imagined community or not, there are many in the U.S. today who would agree with

Huntington's assessment of the nation as some civil religion. For instance, many within the

conservative Tea Party Movement have even gone beyond Huntington's claim and insisted upon

calling the U.S. a Christian nation despite the increasingly secular landscape of modern U.S.

politics. A notable public figure who has supported the Tea Party's agenda is former Governor of

Alaska and Vice Presidential candidate Sarah Palin. In Jill Lapore's book *The Whites of Their*

Eyes: The Tea Party's Revolution and the Battle over American History, the Harvard historian

describes a guest spot by Palin on Bill O'Reilly's show on Fox News in which Palin states that

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[129] Huntington, *Who are We?*, 317-318.
[130] Ibid., 103.
[131] Ibid.

the founding fathers intended that the U.S. base its laws on "… the God of the Bible and the Ten Commandments."[132] Palin claimed that any other version of U.S. history that denies this fact was simply revisionist. Of course, such thinking is not only divisive to those outside of the U.S. who are already seen as an "other," but it is alienating to the many individuals and groups within the nation that do not fit into the category of that which is "Christian."

Despite having a less absolutist message of Christianity than Palin, Huntington does single out immigrants as groups that would throw the supposed Protestant status of the U.S. into question. He states that the Protestant nature of Americans automatically leads to tolerance for religions such as Jews, Catholics, and Muslims, although these groups are not necessary afforded equal treatment.[133] A group that Huntington sees as most lagging in assimilation are Mexicans, most of whom are Catholic. It is not so much the fact that many Mexican immigrants are Catholic that troubles Huntington, but that this group is slower to assimilate because high levels of immigration from Mexico and South America "… sustains and reinforces among Mexican-Americans that Mexican values which are the primary source of their lagging educational and economic progress…"[134] This line of thinking may be derived from Max Weber's *The Protestant Ethic and the "Spirit" of Capitalism.* In this sense Mexican-Americans are seen as "traditionalists" who do not necessarily strive to make more money than is needed to live, and therefore do not see the necessity in increasing productivity.[135] This sentiment is also a large part of what Huntington means when he writes about American values being Protestant in nature. It is such values that are seen as allowing capitalism to thrive, a system to which Americans are naturally strongly attached. Such claims of productive superiority set Protestantism on a pedestal

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[132] Jill Lepore, *The Whites of their Eyes: The Tea Party's Revolution and the Battle over American History,* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2010), 157.
[133] Huntington, *Who are We?,* 102.
[134] Ibid., 254.
[135] Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism,* (New York: Penguin, 2002), 16.

to which other religious groups can only hope to aspire, but will always be considered deficient

or inferior in relation to.

Another group that Huntington calls out as being particularly slow to assimilate the

American culture are Muslim immigrants. Once again, Huntington chalks this slowness up to the

group's faith. He writes: "In some circumstances the desire of Muslims to maintain the purity of

their faith and the practices of their religion may lead to conflicts with non-Muslims."[136] He

points in particular to the idea that necessarily *secular* parts of American society, such as public

schools, cause some observers of Islam to eschew anything that is deemed not Islamic based on a

discomfort with the possibility that future generations may become more secularized.[137] This

amounts to a refusal to assimilate in order to maintain an identity conceived somewhere else, and

therefore to Huntington innately un-American. In an important sense, he projects his Western

style of thought onto American Muslims, many of whom wish to stay connected to their Islamic

faith, by casting them aside as something other than American, as if their status as Muslims

automatically exclude them from American values and ways of thinking. Along the same lines

that Edward Said writes about in *Orientalism*, Huntington is creating a representation of Muslim-

Americans that excludes them from the dominant narrative.[138] Huntington gives a passing

reference to unrest in Dearborn, Michigan between Muslims and Christians, but goes no further

in explaining why this particular place is a relevant case study aside from its relatively large

Muslim population.[139] In creating this representation of the American Muslim, he gives little

convincing proof that there is a basic issue of assimilation at hand, and even less about how their

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[136] Huntington, *Who are We?,* 189.
[137] Ibid.
[138] Edward Said, *Orientalism,* (New York: Vintage, 1979), 54.
[139] Huntington, *Who are We?,* 189.

values differ from Americans in general, other than in a quote from one observer who is made to represent Islam as a whole.

Anderson's version of nationalism and the formation of national identity tell a very different story about the role of religion in the construction of American identity. In the *Imagined Communities* telling, the nation dethrones religion as the central factor of group identity in favor of a secular public existence with religion becoming a more personal matter.[140]People became less connected by religion than by a set of shared interests and experiences that were gradually able to be communicated in the vernacular languages with which they were familiar, rather than Latin or other such religious languages that were known by only a few scholars.[141] Contrary to Huntington's conception of certain basic values that are rooted in Protestant thought, it is more likely that changing literacy rates due to the prevalence of vernacular languages and less focus on religious languages and texts helped lead to the formation of national identity. If this is the case, then the ebb and flow of Protestantism in the U.S. due to immigration is not a major factor in America's national identity.

History

In the communication of American values and history, which according to many are inextricable from each other, there tends to be a great deal of revisionism. Nationalist groups within the U.S. generally have a strong attachment to the past because it seems as if all great thinkers and events are a part of history, and this often results in speaking for the dead, especially in the case of the Founding Fathers of the United States. Members of the Tea Party in particular have had a lot to say about what the founders of the U.S. would think, do, or say about certain

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[140] Anderson, *Imagined Communities,* 12.
[141] Ibid., 63.

issues, particularly taxation.[142] This results in a sense of *nostalgia* for the days when America

rose up against its colonial ruler. Despite the largely economic focus of the Tea Party, issues

such as taxation and the economic effects of immigration, illegal or otherwise, are tightly bound

to who should get which benefits, and by extension who can be identified as a legitimate

American. Appeals to history to answer these questions attempt to overlay quite different

realities and often lead to whitewashing and revision of who would have benefitted during the

earliest days of the U.S. as a nation.[143]

In addition to a preference that certain versions of history be presented over others, Tea

Party members, as is common with nativist and nationalist groups, tend to claim special

knowledge of the intent and inclinations of the Founding Fathers of the nation, at times claiming

that the handling of present-day issues would cause the founders to "roll over in their graves."[144]

Meanwhile, members of the Tea Party regularly stress the importance of upholding the

Constitution and its meaning while interpreting it selectively and supporting certain sections over

others and supporting amendments.[145] "Tea Partiers have argued for measures such as

restrictions on birthright and citizenship, abridgements of freedom or religion for Muslim-

Americans, and suspension of protections in the Bill of Rights for suspected terrorists."[146] This

tendency to support originalism while still agitating for certain types of change through desired

restrictions on 'others' is indicative of a group that is uncomfortable with the direction in which

the nation is progressing, and wishes to "go back" to practices that can be made to seem to

appear to be more in line with what the founders might have envisioned.[147] Some evangelical

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[142] Lepore, *The Whites of their Eyes,* 7.
[143] Ibid.
[144] Theda Skocpol and Vanessa Williamson, *The Tea Party and the Remaking of Republican of Republican Conservatism,* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 45.
[145] Ibid., 50.
[146] Ibid.
[147] Lepore, *The Whites of their Eyes,* 119.

Christian Tea Party supporters such as Jerry Falwell and Tim LaHaye, according to Lepore, go

so far as to pick and choose who "counts" as a Founding Father in order to further their own

message of the U.S. as a Christian nation.[148] Such cherry picking of the nation's history and

Constitution represents not merely misunderstanding: It is an attempt to reimagine the nation in

the Tea Party's own image and reconcile the parts of history that are disagreeable with their own

beliefs of Christian, Euro-American superiority.

Revision of American history happens both inside and outside of the classroom. As

Lepore writes, there have been several attempts at the state and school district level to determine

which history curriculum is appropriate to shape the minds of American children, and this has

even led to phasing out certain parts of the established curriculum altogether. For instance, in one

case Arizona prohibited ethnic studies courses, and in another case in 2011 the Texas School

Board ignored the urging of the Organization of American Historians to drop its proposed

amendments to the social studies curriculum.[149] The amendments in question would effectively

treat the slave trade as an economic enterprise, defend McCarthyism, and significantly overhaul

what great thinkers would be taught as having influenced the founding of the United States in

favor of those who fit the conservative image the School Board wished to support.[150] Such

changes to curriculum revise history and exclude most of the groups that make up America who

are not white and male. These curricular alterations were widely backed by Tea Party groups and

ridiculed by progressives.

Huntington writes of the teaching of multiculturalism as something that is inherently anti-

Western, that it teaches the idea that the many cultures and races that make up America are being

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148 Ibid., 120.
149 Ibid., 13 and 158.
150 Ibid.

suppressed by a dominant "white Anglo elite."[151] He argues that the American school system is

what "Americanized" many of the immigrants and children of immigrants of yesterday, but that

multiculturalists sought to give emphasis to diversity instead of commonalities.[152] This stance

would indicate that there is some common American identity that was swept under the rug in the

mid-twentieth century in favor of the idea of America as a mosaic of different cultures that do

not constitute a *shared* culture.[153] With this new stance inevitably came the changing of

textbooks and curricula to include more historical diversity with less focus on patriotism – a

change seen as problematic due to the classroom's function of societal integration. "From 31 to

73 percent of all the selections dealing with America dealt with ethnic and racial groups, and in

90 percent of these selections with ethnic content the groups referred to were blacks, Asian-

Americans, American Indians, and Hispanic-Americans."[154] Huntington's problem with

multiculturalism as somehow causing the disappearance of American culture is similar to that of

the revisionist attitudes of the Tea Party – that is, in insisting that America's history curriculum

go back to a steady diet of patriotism and focus on specific historical figures such as the

Founding Fathers, entire chunks of history are effectively silenced. By excising black, Hispanic,

and women's histories, among others, from the equation, these groups appear not to have a voice

or a place in history itself. The "return to" a heavily whitewashed, patriarchal teaching of history

in itself is a type of revisionism that cloaks itself in truth.

Anderson has much to say about such revisionism, as our collective memories of

injustices tend to soften over time even while many still live with the fallout from years of

subjugation. One example is the change in the way we speak of the American Civil War as an

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[151] Huntington, *Who are We?,* 171.
[152] Ibid., 173.
[153] Ibid., 174.
[154] Ibid., 175.

epic struggle between brothers as opposed to two sovereign entities.[155] This sort of reimagining

of history works to erode the memory of the nation's sordid past, its reliance on slavery, as well

as the willingness to fight each other in defense of the practice of slavery. To reduce the Civil

War to an issue of mere economic practice undermines the reality of human loss and the change

the U.S. had to undergo in order to attempt to overcome its own past. To focus solely on the

clash between southern and northern "brothers" ignores the plight of the black slaves who were

forced to fight in their masters' place, and the women who dressed as men and put their own

lives on the line to fight. The American Civil War thus becomes romanticized as a familial strife

rather than as a clash between two different societies that held varying interests and beliefs and

whose actions affected people who were not necessarily white and male.

Values

A major point of contention between nationalist groups and those in favor of embracing

globalization is that immigrants may not share many of the nation's core values. This argument

is suspect in many ways. But in the U.S. it begs the question of what values are considered

"American" and what values are not. An attempt to define American values, much like identity,

unavoidably leads to the exclusion of others. Similar to language and religion, Huntington's

version of American values rests in the Anglo-Protestant view of hard work and support only for

those who have significantly contributed to society.[156] Huntington cites the challenge that

immigrants faced in adjusting to the amount of work expected of them upon coming to America

as a difference in values that must be overcome in order to achieve the American dream. [157] This

ties in to the earlier reference to Weber's *Protestant Ethic* and the traditionalist who works for

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[155] Anderson, *Imagined Communities,* 201.
[156] Huntington, *Who are We?,* 75.
[157] Ibid., 74-75.

what he needs versus the Protestant who works longer hours to bring home more than is required to live.[158] This difference in work ethic is still cited today by those who are uncomfortable with the flow of immigration to the U.S. and it is a major faction in the arguments over who is considered a part of "us."

Once again the Tea Party provides a good example of how the idea of the "Protestant ethic" is still today accepted by many as a basic, established fact of American identity. Many Tea Party members were drawn to the group because of economic concerns, and many have indicated a general distaste for "freeloaders" and "moochers" and are generally against efforts to redistribute wealth.[159] These sentiments are geared disproportionately toward the less-privileged, young, and racially diverse members of American society as many Tea Party members are middle-to upper-class.[160] "In a survey conducted in seven states by scholars at the University of Washington, Tea Party supporters tended to rate blacks and Latinos as less hardworking, less intelligent, and less trustworthy than did other respondents."[161] Similarly, Tea Partiers have expressed fear and dislike of Islam because they profess to believe Muslims come to the U.S. in order to "take over."[162] These Tea Party sentiments were readily taken up by Trump in his presidential campaign and utilized to gain support. The groundwork had already been laid by voters who were uneasy during Obama's tenure as president, Trump simply took advantage of this discomfort when it came time for the U.S. to choose its next president.

The evident dislike of non-white working-class people by the largely white Tea Party members naturally extends to immigrant populations. Immigrants tend to be seen as utilizing welfare more often than other groups, making them an easy target for nationalist ire, despite the

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[158] Weber, *The Protestant Ethic,* 16.
[159] Skocpol and Williamson, *The Tea Party and the Remaking of Republican Conservatism,* 66.
[160] Ibid., 68.
[161] Ibid., 69.
[162] Ibid.

fact that immigrants, and even most "illegal immigrants" pay taxes.[163] The misconception that

immigrants constitute the majority of welfare recipients possibly stems from biased media

consumption patterns and the discomfort people face in separating facts from values.[164] In the

case of welfare use in the U.S. the facts are more complicated, with important divisions along

race, gender, and political ideology with white and black people (disproportionately women)

constituting the majority of recipients.[165] Nonetheless, immigrants are frequently scapegoated by

nationalist groups that use financial concern as a justification for the perpetuation of harmful

stereotypes.

 The racism that stems from the assignation of different values to different groups of

people within the nation is less of a nationalist issue according to Anderson than an issue of

classism.[166] It is true that such stereotyping usually works toward internal repression of groups of

people, but there is something to be said for the effect it has on the nation prioritizing the

admission of certain groups of immigrants over others. The wish to quell immigration from

Mexico and South America is argued to be firstly an economic issue and secondly a security

issue due to the porous nature of the border. In the case of people from the Middle East, notably

Syrian refugees, the issue is squarely said to be that of national security because this region is

thought to be where terrorists originate. There would not be so much anxiety about these

particular groups of immigrants if there were not an idea that they hold differing values from that

of the U.S., values that could somehow be damaged, intentionally or not.

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[163] Ibid., 70.
[164] Edelman, *Constructing the Political Spectacle.* 5.
[165] Rich Moran, Paul Taylor, and Eileen Patton, "A Bipartisan Nation of Beneficiaries," Pew Research Center, December 18, 2012, Accessed June 18, 2017. http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2012/12/18/a-bipartisan-nation-of-beneficiaries/.
[166] Anderson, *Imagined Communities,* 150.

Territory

A major concern of the 2016 presidential race that was quickly accepted by many as an unmitigated problem in need of a solution became the fortification of the U.S.-Mexico border when then-candidate Donald Trump vociferously called for the building of a wall to keep immigrants out. It has since been a main theme in U.S. national security conversations, along with questions regarding its usefulness as a means of security and its economic viability. An interesting quality behind this call for a wall has been its popularity among people who do not live in communities immediately along the border. Huntington likens the entry of immigrants across the U.S.-Mexico border to that of an invasion that was widely accepted until the events of September 11, 2001 brought national security to the forefront.[167] The idea of immigration in large numbers constituting an "invasion" has a rather militaristic tone that can stoke fear. Taking this comparison even further, Huntington focuses on the "cultural bifurcation" of having heavy concentrations of the same groups of immigrants, where speaking two languages becomes a matter of necessity rather than a personal choice.[168]

The problem with securing borders is that if we are to accept the premise that the nation is an "imagined community" that is created in the *minds* of its people, then by extension borders and territory are also fluid concepts that are equally resistant to definition.[169] Along a similar vein Edward Said writes that oftentimes borders between what is "ours" and "theirs" are completely arbitrary.[170] Said defends his use of the word arbitrary on the basis that the "… imagined geography of the 'our land-barbarian land' variety does not require that the barbarians

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[167] Huntington, *Who are We?,* 317-318.
[168] Ibid., 321-324.
[169] Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 172.
[170] Said, *Orientalism,* 54.

acknowledge the distinction."[171] Not only has the distinction between American borders been

historically fuzzy, but efforts to control these borders have created problems of their own.

Attempts to establish and control the U.S.-Mexico border have largely been unpopular with those

who reside in border towns due to the vigilantism that occurs in both attempts from those who

wish to enforce the border and those who wish to help immigrants cross over.[172] One interesting

dimension about the recent support for a border wall is that it comes from many people who do

not live near the border and who do not have to deal with its consequences personally. Problems

such as home-grown illegal activity and the loss of human life to the harsh deserts that surround

the border tend to stay on the cultural and political back burner.

      Anderson does not deny the existence of borders so much as he acknowledges their

elasticity.[173] Just as national identity is subject to change, borders too have always and will

continue to change. The trouble in trying to plant a solid representation of these borders is that,

according to Wendy Brown, muscular shows of strength such as building walls do not keep

danger away but actually help to create danger discursively.[174] By building a wall at the U.S.-

Mexico border, the government announces that it cannot handle the perceived threat posed by

immigration, and that all other reasonable avenues of resolution have been exhausted.

Ultimately, Brown states that such a display demonstrates that the nation's sovereignty is

waning, making it less a show of strength than a display of surrender to problems that it does not

know how to solve.[175]

Conclusion

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[171] Ibid.
[172] Wendy Brown, *Walled States, Waning Sovereignty,* (New York: Zone Books, 2014), 84.
[173] Anderson, *Imagined Communities,* 7.
[174] Brown, *Walled States,* 125.
[175] Ibid.

There are two major conceptions of American national identity that are fighting for general acceptance in today's political landscape of national *in*security: that of a nation that is accepting of immigrants from many backgrounds and situations; and that of a nation under siege that must limit entry to those considered too far removed from American values and practices to successfully assimilate. One sentiment stems from a wish to uphold the United States' as a refuge for those seeking to escape persecution and poor life conditions. The other stems from a feeling of anxiety that the U.S. could cease to exist as it may be known by some today, either by the threat of a violent extremist enemy or systemic changes brought on by an influx of our neighbors from the south.

Politicians such as Donald Trump are looking to win support in the short term by using the supposed threat of immigration, and they make promises to stem the flow of new arrivals through legislation or the building of a border wall as a way to look like they provide national security solutions. While such changes admittedly give the impression of real change, for the most part these efforts work to create new divisions domestically between those who can be made to fit a certain stereotypical "American" image, and those who cannot. Nationalist groups, and in recent years the Tea Party, tend to promote these stereotypes as a way to take a stand against what they see as an elitist, progressive agenda.[176]

The reliance on groups such as the Tea Party and politicians such as Donald Trump on racial stereotypes, historical revisionism, and pleas to "go back" to a better time, or "Make America Great Again," show a nationalistic tendency to want clear definitions for who is a part of "us" and, by extension, who is one of "them." It is thereby a way of treating national identity as something that must remain fixed, because change would mean the end of that identity and in turn the polity itself. However, in Anderson's conception of nationalism, this is an unnecessary,

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[176] Skocpol and Williamson, *The Tea Party and the Remaking of Republican Conservatism,* 79.

fatal pursuit, as nationalism is produced both by and against the cultural systems that preceded it.[177] Huntington's style of thinking about nationalism also stands in contrast to classical conservatives such as Niccolo Machiavelli, who believed that in order for a republic to continue to experience good fortune the republic and its leaders must be able to change with the times.[178] But the systems that preceded the founding of the U.S. have since been overtaken by other cultural systems that have also become a part of its history. So the continued reliance on the words of the Founding Fathers and constitutional originalism are hardly appropriate in the definition of today's national identity. As Lepore writes, "It's possible to cherish the stability of the law and the durability of the Constitution, as amended over two and a half centuries of change and one civil war, and tested in the courts, without dragging the Founding Fathers from their graves."[179] It is also possible to appreciate the founding of a nation while not discounting the rest of its history and its present circumstances.

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[177] Anderson, *Imagined Communities,* 12.
[178] Niccolo Machiavelli, *Discourses on Livy,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 281.
[179] Lepore, *The Whites of their Eyes,* 124.

<center>**Chapter Three**</center>

<center>**Discursive Practices of Donald Trump**</center>

It is helpful to closely consider the discursive practices of Donald Trump as a presidential candidate in order to better understand his use of nationalistic rhetoric in his pursuit of power. Working to define immigrants and the larger issue of immigration as a threat to national security, Trump framed certain groups of people as undesirable, different, and essentially un-American, namely South Americans and Mexicans, and Middle Easterners. By singling out specific groups of immigrants as constituting threats, Trump also seeks to define the U.S. and its citizens by making sweeping statements about who and what is *not* American. Trump's brand of immigration discourse effectively makes it more acceptable for political leaders and everyday citizens to scapegoat groups of immigrants for violent acts for which there can be little or no proof of their involvement.

Through the use of repeated claims that the U.S. is under attack by groups of immigrants and his calls to action, Trump frames immigrants and the laws regarding their entry into the U.S. as urgent problems that must be addressed in order to avoid the possibility of a future of violence and terrorism such as what the nation experienced on September 11, 2001. Such statements, while misrepresentative of immigrants and often logically unsound, can work to stoke the anxiety that has festered in the U.S. since 9/11 and can have the effect of determining what can be said about immigrants and national security. Trump's blunt way of presenting questionable information creates the illusion of a candidate that has knowledge that other presidential candidates do not. Such apparent straightforwardness gives Trump an air of authority that can be convincing to voters who already hold anti-immigrant sentiments. His appropriation of old racist views make some voters *more* inclined to believe his claims that the U.S. can only protect itself

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with a border wall and sweeping travel bans, particularly those that revolve around defining who can be trusted and how to best defend the nation, while his uncomplicated vocabulary makes him easily understood by people with event the lowest level of education.

In order to better understand how the discourse Trump engages regarding immigration encourages a negative type of nationalism this chapter will focus on a discursive analysis of three specific speeches Trump gave throughout the course of his candidacy. This analysis will be grounded by the discourse analysis methods outlined in Dunn and Neumann's text *Undertaking Discourse Analysis for Social Research*[180] and Foucault's *The Archaeology of Knowledge* and its appendix "The Discourse on Language."[181] Through the method of discourse analysis I accept that discourse is the primary filter through which political understandings become possible.

If discourse is the filter through which we understand the political, then discourse can be used to construct how we understand the political realm. Edelman explains that discourse is used to construct political enemies or adversaries. There is no inherent quality that makes a person or group an enemy. Political enemies are constructed to serve an interest, for instance, the portrayal of Japanese and Japanese Americans in the wake of Pearl Harbor had nothing to do with actual danger posed by these groups, but served to unite "racists and nationalists" who would benefit from the forced removal of these people from their homes.[182] Framing the Japanese, or any other group of people, as a threat has little do to with actual danger and is more a justification for hostility, whether conscious or not.[183]

When groups are framed as enemies or threats, it is generally the result of meanings being attached to these groups, such as the Japanese in the aforementioned example, and the

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[180] Dunn and Neumann, *Undertaking Discourse Analysis.*
[181] Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*.
[182] 182 Edelman, *Constructing the Political Spectacle,* 68-69.
[183] Ibid.

resulting conclusions that allow for some possibilities to exist in the realm of 'truth' while other possibilities are left behind.[184] Therefore, discourse tells us what can be considered, and what can be said about any given subject in a way that seems completely natural despite the social construction that goes into the formation of assumptions. Assumptions allow us to take for granted that certain 'facts' are true without consideration of the political origin of beliefs such as whether a group of people is dangerous and whether a nation's identity can be defined against other nations.

The analysis to be undertaken in this chapter is meant to provide a better understanding of not only how Trump's rhetoric helps promote the *already existing* idea that immigrants from Latin America and the Middle East pose a threat to the U.S., but also how he works to produce interpretations of immigrants in a way that limits what can be said about them.[185] This analysis will focus on references to the self/other distinction that are prevalent in Trump's messages along with how this ties into a nationalistic mindset that is more Huntington-esque in nature than nationalism need be, and in which Latin American and Muslim immigrants in particular are cast as not merely an economic or cultural threat, but a threat to the nation's security. By using national security as an excuse for 'othering' entire groups of immigrants, Trump normalizes the idea that they are nothing but dangerous and should not be allowed into the country by presenting this idea as a simple, established fact.

The point of this analysis is not to show that Trump and his ilk have all the power in defining who and what can be considered American. The Foucauldian view used here is that power exists in all relationships from all entities; therefore the American people play an important role in this power relationship by supporting or rebuking acts of government and the

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[184] Dunn and Neumann, *Undertaking Discourse Analysis,* Location 280-85.
[185] Ibid., Location 282-87.

officials therein.[186] The point in undertaking this analysis is to show how, in a society as diverse as the U.S., politicians and voters are able to leverage the idea that certain groups of immigrants pose a threat to Americans without the burden of presenting proof and by utilizing the problematic self/other dichotomy. The self/other rhetoric that Trump uses is hardly new, per se, but is more unrestrained in comparison to what the U.S. has come to expect from recent presidents. Trump's lack of restraint was a boon for his campaign in that it helped to give the illusion that he spoke the truth, but in reality his words recklessly singled out entire groups of immigrants and their families in a way that could, and has in the past, to hysteria, such as that seen during the Red Scare, particularly McCarthyism.[187]

June 2015, Presidential Campaign Announcement Speech

Trump's presidential campaign began on June 16, 2015 in Trump Tower in New York City with a speech that would be indicative of the direct, almost conversational style he would become known for throughout the remainder of the campaign and into his presidency. What stood out early on in Trump's choppy prose is the sense that he sees the U.S. as part of a global competition in which the nation has not "beat" its competitors in quite some time.[188] He invokes a comparison of the economic success of China and Japan against the U.S. only to claim that Mexico is also "beating" the U.S. at the border, "laughing at us at our stupidity," and also beating the U.S. economically.[189] The next part of Trump's campaign announcement speech would be heavily scrutinized for weeks in the media as the most memorable, and highly problematic part of his campaign platform:

[186] Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, Vintage Books ed. (New York: Vintage Books, 1990), 92-93.
[187] Peter Beinart, "The New McCarthyism of Donald Trump," *The Atlantic*. July 21, 2015, Accessed October 23, 2017, https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2015/07/donald-trump-joseph-mccarthy/399056/.
[188] "Donald Trump Presidential Campaign Announcement," *C-SPAN*, Filmed June 16, 2015 at Trump Tower, New York, NY, 9:58, https://www.c-span.org/video/?326473-1/donald-trump-presidential-campaign-announcement.
[189] Ibid., 10:29.

"When Mexico sends its people, they're not sending their best. They're not sending you. They're not sending you. They're sending people that have lots of problems, and they're bringing those problems with us. They're bringing drugs. They're bringing crime. They're rapists. And some, I assume, are good people."[190]

Trump further states that these "not the right people" are coming from other parts of Latin America as well as the Middle East, who, he reminds the audience, he is in direct competition with as a businessman.[191] Later on in his speech, Trump repeatedly states that the enemies of the U.S. are getting "stronger and stronger" while the U.S. gets weaker, citing an aging nuclear arsenal as proof.[192]

Trump's campaign announcement speech appears to have been tailored to play on the insecurities of his spective supporters. His insistence that other major powers are winning some undefined economic competition while the U.S. now lags far behind would seem to appeal to those who believe a decline in manufacturing work is indicative of a general national weakness. The imagery of Mexico "laughing at us at our stupidity" when it comes to the inability to control the border further adds to the insecurity some have experienced over the ability of the U.S. to protect its sovereignty and creates a sense that the U.S. should be ashamed that people are able to immigrate in this fashion at all.[193] This sense of what may amount to humiliation speaks to those who believe that a country is defined by strict borders and the ability to enforce them.

This perceived threat is compounded by the idea that Trump so bluntly expresses that the people who the U.S. is unable to prevent from crossing its border are largely criminals. Trump's statement of his assumption that "some" Mexicans/South Americans are good people leaves no room for the possibility that most of these immigrants are actually law-abiding, hardworking, "good people." He says nothing about what circumstances might compel immigrants to cross the

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[190] Ibid., 10:58.
[191] Ibid., 12:05.
[192] Ibid., 15:47.
[193] Brown, *Walled States, Waning Sovereignty*, 51.

southern border without documentation, whether it be the promise of employment from American-based corporations looking for inexpensive labor or the desire to provide for family who cannot find work back home. Another possibility Trump chooses to omit is that the U.S. might still be doing well enough in comparison to other nations that it is actually a quite desirable destination for job success and education.

By framing immigrants from Mexico and South America and the Middle East as "not the right people" who are being "sent" to the U.S., Trump insinuated that U.S. citizens are somehow inherently better than "these people" who are now not only being considered by Trump to be economic liabilities, but security liabilities as well. His earlier statement about Mexico "not sending their best" people allowed Trump to create a mental image of Mexico in an apparent act of neighborly sabotage, encouraging certain types of Mexicans to relocate in order to unload large numbers of undesirable individuals onto the U.S. He gives no evidence of this phenomenon, just as he provides no evidence as to why an aging warhead arsenal would mean the U.S. is comparatively weak on a global level. Those who are already inclined to accept Trump's assertions likely do not require proof as they already hold anti-immigrant assumptions in regards to the sort of people who move to the U.S. from South America and the Middle East. This stems largely from the circumstances through which Americans becomes aware of people from these regions – be it through the loss of jobs to immigrants willing to accept a smaller wage, or news coverage of the War on Drugs, crime in low income areas, or acts of terror. Media coverage of these issues has a tendency to focus on certain immigrant groups and therefore can have the effect of associating certain groups of immigrants with certain issues, such as people from the Middle East with acts of terror and Latin Americans with low-wage jobs and the drug trade.

August 2016, Speech in Youngstown, Ohio

On August 15, 2016 Trump gave a national security speech in Youngstown, Ohio that garnered significant media coverage. In this speech he repeatedly used the phrase "Islamic terrorism" which he said relies on a "hateful ideology" that is a "breeding ground" for terrorism.[194] His insistence in referring to terrorism as Islamic is made very clear. He is also sure to say that ISIS recruits people upon entrance into the U.S., it seems, in order to highlight the fact that terrorists could very well live among us, much like the sort of rhetoric that was prevalent in George W. Bush's speeches in the years immediately following 9/11.[195] Further along in this speech he states that the U.S. should only admit those who share "our values," and he references the U.S. using an ideological screening test during the Cold War. This became known in the media as the infamous "extreme vetting" speech. Another section of this speech garnered less attention, however. In it, Trump said that one of his first acts as president would be to create a radical Islamic terrorism commission:

> "The goal of the commission will be to identify and explain to the American public the core convictions and beliefs of radical Islam, to identify the warning signs of radicalization, and to expose the networks in our society that support radicalization."[196]

What Trump does *not* say was how these warning signs of "radical Islam" would be identified and how these "networks" of support for radicalization would be exposed. Given that he states that the commission is meant to identify and explain these aspects to the American people, it follows that what he really means is that the American public must *surveil itself*, citizens should keep track of who is doing what in their vicinity, lest there should be a preventable terrorism plot

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[194] "Donald Trump Foreign Policy Speech in Youngstown," *C-SPAN*, Filmed August 15, 2016 at Youngstown State University in Youngstown, OH, 23:24, https://www.c-span.org/video/?413977-1/donald-trump-delivers-foreign-policy-address.

[195] Ibid., 49:00.

[196] Ibid., 58:49.

in the works. This sentiment is reminiscent of the Red Scare that struck the U.S. during the Cold War, in which the government targeted individuals that it would claim were communists and were plotting against the U.S.[197]

In order to make the idea of surveillance, as well as "extreme vetting" more palatable, Trump repeatedly reminds listeners that not only is the ideology in question Islamic, but that it is also devoted to breeding violence and terror, a departure from the Obama-era aversion from labeling terrorism as Islamic in nature. That there are signs of such an ideology that the U.S. citizenry should become aware of would lead listeners to believe that the supposed threat is not strictly limited to the Middle East, but as it abounds in the U.S. itself. This speaks to the xenophobic anxiety that holds that Islam itself is at odds with the American way of life and that "radical Islam" can be prevented by screening and watching people from the Middle East more closely than other immigrant groups. This sentiment does *not* acknowledge the possibility that singling groups out as threats can create motives for violent acts.

By focusing so much on terrorism and the supposed need to vet people coming from the Middle East, specifically Syrian Refugees, Trump chooses not to acknowledge the dire situation these particular immigrants are trying to leave behind. His insistence on the need to stop the "spread" of terrorism completely displaces a very real problem in which men, women, and children are dying en masse and in most cases are unable to relocate to a safer place without the help of nations that are willing to accept them.[198] He also chooses not to acknowledge the arduous vetting to which refugees are already subject, and the damage that would likely occur if

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[197] Chris Massie and Andrew Kaczynski, "Steve Bannon in 2013: Joseph McCarthy was Right in Crusade against Communist Infiltration," *CNN*. March 6, 2017, Accessed August 20, 2017. http://www.cnn.com/2017/03/06/politics/kfile-bannon-mccarthy/index.html.
[198] "Syria Emergency," *The UN Refugee Agency*, Accessed, August 20, 2017, http://www.unhcr.org/en-us/syria-emergency.html.

this process were to be drawn out any further.[199] To disregard the aforementioned points about Syrian refugees is also to deny the importance of the role the U.S. has played for many years in accepting immigrants from war-torn parts of the world, as well as those wishing to flee oppression. Trump's invocation of "extreme vetting" and attempts to convince the public that there is an Islamic basis for terrorism works to reestablish a Cold War mindset in which U.S. citizens, immigrants, and foreign individuals alike were considered to be suspect.[200]

October 2016, Rally in Phoenix, Arizona

Trump's campaign speeches frequently refer to immigrants, particularly illegal immigrants, as criminals. "We will end illegal immigration, deport every last criminal alien, and save American lives, and we'll do it quickly."[201] In his speech in Phoenix, Arizona on October 29, 2016, Trump fixated again on people who have been killed by "illegal immigrants" and "criminal aliens." Once again, Trump singled out immigrants who are usually associated with economic issues and instead spoke about them in the context of national security. In one case Trump referred to a person as an "immigrant killer" in an attempt to refer to an immigrant who, according to Trump, had a "tremendously horrible criminal record," who killed a convenience store clerk in Mesa, Arizona.[202] Trump also touched on two other instances where individuals were killed by undocumented immigrants, being sure to remind the audience that the "amazing" Americans were killed by "illegal immigrants" with criminal records and in reference to one

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[199] Haeyoun Park and Larry Buchanan, "Refugees Entering the U.S. Already Face a Rigorous Vetting Process," *New York Times*, January 29, 2017, Accessed August 20, 2017, https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2017/01/29/us/refugee-vetting-process.html?mcubz=1.

[200] Massie and Kaczynski, "Communist Infiltration."

[201] "Presidential Candidate Donald Trump Rally in Phoenix, Arizona," *C-SPAN*, Filmed October 29, 2016 at Phoenix Convention Center in Phoenix, AZ, 1:40:51, Accessed March 19, 2017, https://www.c-span.org/video/?417682-1/donald-trump-campaigns-phoenix-arizona.

[202] Ibid. 1:39:01.

immigrant "People begged that he'd be deported."[203] While these instances had regrettably tragic

ends, Trump's charged language painted Americans as being better than immigrants based on a

handful of deaths and he side-stepped the fact a few that isolated incidents do not define an entire

people.

  Trump's repeated remarks that frame undocumented immigrants as being criminals and

references to specific instances of Americans dying as a result of these immigrants residing in

the U.S. are just as notable for what he does *not* say. In this speech, he does not talk about

immigrants, undocumented or documented, who are otherwise law-abiding and non-violent. By

excluding any possibility that these immigrants might be harmless, he leaves listeners with only

the conclusion that they *must* be dangerous. Trump's omission of the possibility that most

immigrants from Latin America mean no harm, and his insistence on cherry picking instances of

violent acts perpetrated by certain individuals brings into effect a "truth" that has special

significance among those who are already willing to believe that an entire group poses a threat to

American lives in the first place. He does not frame these crimes in the context of all the violent

crimes in the U.S., or even just in Arizona. There is little context given to the examples Trump

chooses to utilize at all, aside from the fact that the perpetrators were undocumented immigrants

from Latin America. This lack of context enables Trump to blow crimes committed by

immigrants from South America and Mexico out of proportion and promote the idea that

immigrants from these places are dangerous and that he is the person who knows how to deal

with this supposed problem.

  What is also clear about this particular speech is that Trump's words are chosen to appeal

primarily to people who live in a state that borders Mexico and lower class individuals who must

contend with job insecurity. It stands to reason that because Arizona is a border state, the voters

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[203] Ibid. 1:37:40.

who live there have a vested interest in the number and type of people who cross its border to enter the U.S., some of them illegally. Border state voters in particular would seem to have the most at stake, because with an increase in border crossings they could easily find themselves "outnumbered," or somehow in danger, the logic goes. This simple 'fact' alone makes some Arizona voters an attractive group with whom to invoke the perceived perils of a so-called relaxed immigration policy. That is, *if* everyone involved is willing to ignore the fact that it was once historically part of Mexico and that Mexican heritage is its largest ancestry group, with Spanish being the second most-spoken language, only through this denial of history might it make sense to play on an anxiety of relaxed borders.[204] To ignore Arizona's history and population characteristics makes it much easier to argue that there is some ideal that the state and its people can return to, if only they would agree that a wall is necessary in order to prevent immigrants from crossing the border.

Trump's Twitter Platform

Much of Trump's communication strategy before, during, and after his campaign revolved around his constant use of the social media platform Twitter. While it is now commonplace for politicians to maintain a social media presence today, it is somewhat unusual for the politician himself to write and send messages on these platforms. Such work is usually relegated to staffers. Trump's strategy is different in that his staff often learns of his communications at the same time as the general population, after he tweets. Much like his campaign speeches, Trump's tweets tend to lack the coherence and polished feel of what we have come to expect from career politicians, making him seem more like a run of the mill social media user.

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[204] United States Census Bureau, American FactFinder, Accessed August 19, 2017, https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=bkmk.

Trump's tweets, much like his campaign speeches, make clear that he believes the state of immigration in the U.S. is unacceptable in its current state, but they also tend to lack context. For instance, on March 6, 2016 Trump tweeted: "It is amazing how often I am right, only to be criticized by the media. Illegal immigration, take the oil, build the wall, Muslims, NATO!"[205] The aforementioned tweet garnered over 7,000 retweets and over 21,000 likes.[206] The takeaway here is that the substance of Trump's rhetoric, whether it be in the form of a speech or a tweet, is understood by his supporters and detractors alike as being anti-immigrant, frequently citing the need for a wall across the U.S./Mexico border and calling undocumented immigrants criminals.[207]

It is also important to note that in his tweets Trump often does not acknowledge that not all Muslim people are terrorists, and not all terrorists are Muslim. In the above tweet, he merely needed to use the word Muslim and many understood that he meant to keep this group of immigrants out of the U.S. due to its juxtaposition to "illegal immigration" and his known call for a Muslim ban. Another telling tweet by Trump from March 22, 2016 stated "Incompetent Hillary, despite the horrible attack in Brussels today, wants borders to be weak and open-and let the Muslims flow in. No way!"[208] In this tweet Trump points to three suicide bombings that occurred in Brussels, Belgium for which ISIL claimed responsibility. Trump's tweet in the aftermath of the Brussels attack shows that he conflates terrorism with Muslims and that he sees the U.S. border issue as being related to stopping Muslim immigration as well as Latin American immigration.

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[205] Brenna Williams, "Trump's immigration policy (or what we know about it) in 13 illuminating tweets," August 26, 2016, Accessed August 19, 2017, http://www.cnn.com/2016/08/26/politics/donald-trump-immigration-tweets/index.html.

[206] "It is amazing how often I am right, only to be criticized by the media. Illegal immigration, take the oil, build the wall, Muslims, NATO!" https://twitter.com/realDonaldTrump/status/713012045214531584.

[207] Donald Trump Presidential Campaign Announcement," 10:58.

[208] "Incompetent Hillary, despite the horrible attack in Brussels today, wants borders to be weak and open-and let the Muslims flow in. No way!" https://twitter.com/realDonaldTrump/status/712473816614772736.

Much like his campaign speeches, Trump's tweets are filled with reflections of American anxiety in the face of an increasingly globalized world, one in which national security, economy in the form of jobs, and identity are all tangled together in an often incoherent mass and perceived to be at risk by those who fear the fall of U.S. hegemony on the world stage. Not only does Trump play on the fear that American identity can be replaced, but that groups of immigrants are choosing to come to the U.S. in order to take up this vacancy.

Discursive Threads

Without discourse analysis we would not recognize the handful of discursive threads that Trump employs in order to attract and maintain his supporters. These threads include his frequent disregard for the context of his claims against immigrants, his apparent belief that the idea of immigrants as a threat is a fact that can be assumed, and working to limit what can be said about immigrants by only highlighting negative incidents involving immigrants. Through Trump's chosen discourse of framing immigrants as posing a threat to the U.S. and his supporters' acceptance of his employment of this discourse, there is a circular power relationship. This power relationship creates a feedback loop where Trump's speech acts reflect what he believes his supporters want to hear, and in doing this he introduces anxiety that shapes what his supporters are willing to say about immigration as a threat to the nation, and in identifying these anxieties he gains stronger support. While this tactic is not particularly new, Trump's discourse does appear to be indicative of a significant shift in what voters are willing to accept from their presidential candidates in regards to brash delivery and a disinterest in factual evidence.

Trump's speeches, as demonstrated above, tend to rely little on factual evidence and context. It is clear by Trump's disregard for putting into context the issues surrounding

immigration that doing so would be inconvenient to his idea of what constitutes the U.S.'s

national identity. As Foucault said regarding truth, "Thus, only one truth appears before our

eyes: wealth, fertility, and sweet strength in all its insidious universality. In contrast, we are

unaware of the prodigious machinery of the will to truth, with its vocation for exclusion."[209] As

noted earlier in this thesis, Trump sees fit to characterize the flow of immigrants into the U.S. as

an invasion upon its people and territory, through discourse analysis it becomes evident that this

can only be achieved through acts of exclusion – namely ignoring the historical context in which

the U.S. welcomed immigrants from Latin America and in turn created an economy of cheap

labor and seasonal work that catered rather specifically to this group. Additionally, Trump

chooses not to recognize the role the U.S. played in historically accepting immigrants attempting

to flee persecution and war. To someone lacking this historical understanding of the U.S., it

would appear that immigrants have few valid places in American society.

By excluding the context of immigration to the U.S., Trump makes it simpler to say

negative things about immigrants without much pushback from his supporters. Trump speaks as

if it is indisputable that terrorism is Islamic in nature, that immigrants are criminals, that U.S.

citizens should want something to be done in order to stop such people from entering the

country. He is able to do this because, regardless of the presence, or lack thereof, of truth behind

his claims, his commentary drudges up feelings that are pre-existing in American society.

Foucault notes that while commentary allows for more open discussion, its only true function is

to *finally* say what has already been said internally.[210] Trump's discourse on immigration is

nothing new, but it is also not what has come to be expected by someone seeking office,

particularly in today's increasingly globalized society. However, it is perhaps because

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[209] Foucault, *The Discourse on Language*, 220.
[210] Ibid., 221.

globalization continues to advance that the political landscape has become prepared for Trump and his supporters.

An important aspect of what discourse analysis tells us is that discourse limits what can be said on a given subject. Trump's rhetoric works to limit what can be said about immigrants, particularly Latin Americans and people from the Middle East, to the realm of what can be considered violent, unlawful, and unwelcome in the U.S. As Foucault states, we are not free to speak about everything.[211] Just as we know there are limits to what we can say, there are certain people who retain the privilege to speak on certain subjects.[212] It is often the case that voters are willing to accept the premise that politicians have insight into political matters that regular civilians do not. Whether it is true or not, politicians are frequently given the privilege to participate in discourses regarding immigration, national security, economy, and national identity regardless of their educational backgrounds. Despite his lack of a political career prior to his presidential run, Trump appears to have been given the same sort of discursive privilege afforded to his predecessors.

Through these discursive threads, Trump is able to convince, shock, and awe his supporters into simultaneously leveraging, and allowing his to continue to leverage, anti-immigration discourse in the public sphere. By applying discourse analysis, it becomes clear that Trump is not performing a great feat in accomplishing this, but it also perhaps becomes even more concerning that he is able to garner support through such simple discursive tactics. It is also made apparent that the power in this relationship does not flow from Trump to his supporters, but in a circular motion in which Trump enables his supporters, who in turn enable him to speak on subjects for which neither party necessarily has valuable insight.

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[211] Ibid., 216.
[212] Ibid.

Conclusion

Trump's practice of never providing proof or context of his claims that Mexican/South American and Middle Eastern people are threats to U.S. national security is a strategy he deploys to de-politicize the issue of immigration reform so that the American electorate will take for granted that immigration is a security issue. Furthermore, by not acknowledging the conditions under which immigrants come to America, Trump removes the context of history – the history in which the U.S. sought out unskilled labor and also readily took in immigrants looking for religious and economic freedom. By removing immigration issues from this context it would appear that the U.S. is under attack, but through discourse analysis and the re-politicizing of immigration discourse we reveal that Trump uses the idea of American national identity in order to easily frame groups of 'others' as threats by calling these groups un-American without having to specify what *is* American. Because Americans are a broad and diverse people, Trump uses this to his advantage by singling out certain groups, such as South American and Middle Eastern immigrants, without necessarily alienating remaining groups.

<center>**Thesis Conclusion**</center>

This thesis has attempted to show that President Donald Trump's discursive practices during his presidential campaign and throughout his presidency thus far have worked to frame immigrants, specifically those from Latin America and the Middle East, as threats to U.S. national security. His repeated claims that these groups are dangerous by nature is a powerful frame that depoliticizes and de-historicizes these immigrant groups. That is, this framing works to deny the possibility that all immigrants have histories, and that immigration policy also enjoys a history that reflects changing dynamics of the US economy and policy relative to the economy. Trump has relied heavily on the post-9/11 anxiety that terrorists are looking for any possible avenue to enter the U.S., presumably in order to wage war on innocent Americans, and that there is no way to stop them without stemming the practically "unmanageable" tide of immigrants who are perceived by a great many to have intruded on American soil.

Based on my analysis of immigration legislation since World War II, it appears that prior to the attacks of 9/11, anti-immigrant sentiments were usually expressed in response to the economic ramifications of cheap labor. But after 9/11 the anti-immigration message took on a more sinister, and racist, tone, namely that there are simply "bad people" outside the U.S. who want to indiscriminately murder Americans and that they should be stopped at all costs. Knowing that the idea of terrorists infiltrating the U.S. has become to many voters a commonsense response for immigration reform in the post-9/11 due to concerns that another large-scale attack could happen again in an increasingly globalized society, Trump has not felt compelled to cite any evidence to substantiate his claims that immigrants from Latin America and the Middle East are dangerous and therefore should be kept out of the U.S. with a border wall and severe immigration restrictions. Trump's discourse on immigration relies on American

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voters taking for granted that immigrants have carried out violent acts in the U.S., and that

dramatic measures such as travel bans and a border wall should be taken to curb this problem.

His immigration discourse also depends on voters' disregard, or disinterest, with respect to the

real reasons immigrants choose to immigrate to the U.S., such as the wish to provide for their

family, obtain a better education, or escape religious or political persecution, not to bring

destruction to the society in which they have decided to reside.

Politicizing Trump's immigration discourse in this thesis, as I have sought to do, means

acknowledging the inherent political nature of anti-immigrant discourse that appears to be

commonsense to some American voters, such as the idea that immigrants are more likely to

commit crimes than non-immigrants. I gave historical context to explain the how and why

behind many immigration trends from Latin America came to the U.S. through the Bracero

Program and remained here after the IRCA was passed in 1986. I also provided context to the

changes in immigration concerns held by the public that resulted in the passage of the Patriot

Act, a quite reactive piece of legislation aimed specifically at preventing terrorism that allowed

the government to largely side-step the Fourth Amendment in many situations.[213] By putting the

presence of immigrants in the U.S. into political and historical context it becomes apparent that

there is no commonsense answer to immigration reform – the U.S. historically encouraged

immigrants to come and work, and now relies heavily on their labor in agriculture and other

unskilled jobs. However, historical context is inconvenient to a right-wing Euro-American

ideology that requires immigration to be seen as a problem in order to make the case for the

American Creed as seen in Huntington's work, as he believes this creed necessarily developed

from British Protestantism, and that without this particular Protestant ethic America would not

have the same form of government and individual rights that it enjoys today. Non-European

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[213] Whitehead and Aden, "Forfeiting "Enduring Freedom" for "Homeland Security,"" 1098.

immigrants are seen to stand in contrast to America's brand of Protestantism. This right-wing ideology relies on a whitewashed version of history that labels American European colonizers as settlers, and disregards the many other groups who lived in America before that point and those who arrived against their will after that point. No accurate portrayal of American history can ignore the impact made by indigenous people and African American slaves on the development of the U.S.

Trump has similarly exploited the idea of a type of nationalism that leads to nativism through scapegoating groups that can simply be cast as "others" without much thought or objection from the American electorate. This nativist ideology is brought about through Trump de-historicizing immigration to the U.S. and making it appear to be an attack on America itself. What separates Trump's strategy and circumstances from his predecessors is that he is appealing to a group of voters who feel left behind in a globalized society where jobs are uncertain and national identity is called into question, as well as in a U.S. society post-President Obama, who as the nation's first black president can be seen as a symbol of change in favor of minorities. As this thesis has shown, it is relatively easy for nationalism to devolve into "othering," but othering is not itself a requirement of national identity. A shared national consciousness does not require racial or cultural homogeneity within the "imagined" community, because members who make up the community can participate in the formation of an identity through shared practices that are based on the makeup of the community as a whole, not simply parts of the community that are more privileged than others.

It is to be expected that the nation will define itself in relation to other nations – that each imagined community is somehow different from the others. It can be argued that Trump uses the "othering" of immigrants to reassert the idea of U.S. dominance as a world power over other

countries of origin based on perceived differences. By being seen to exert control over who is deemed acceptable to enter the U.S. and through what means, Trump sends a message to the rest of the world that America is an exclusive club that only allows the *best* people, and that people from Latin America and the Middle East do not fall into that category. In this case, the U.S. is not only being compared against other nations, but also portrayed as inherently superior to these other nations and their people.

While this thesis sheds light on how Trump uses immigration discourse for political gain, it is possibly best suited as guidance toward areas of political inquiry that deserve further exploration. Based on Trump's leveraging of pre-existing anti-immigration feelings within the U.S. electorate, it is quite apparent that the rise of neo-fascism in the U.S. is one such line of inquiry that would now be appropriate. The aforementioned rhetoric against immigrants, against peaceful protest, as well as a lack of concern regarding the rise of the alt-right and re-emergence of neo-Nazis in the public realm all point to a neo-fascist mindset that has become normalized in the during a time when few people are willing to re-politicize these discourses. As Edelman points out in his text: "When a claim that a group is a threat is politically divisive, the claim is likely to depend less upon observation than upon assumptions that cannot persuasively be tested."[214] Without further scrutiny into the inflammatory, divisive discursive practices of political leaders, the U.S. electorate runs the risk of giving tacit approval through inaction based on a widespread lack of critical understanding regarding the implications of what such political leaders truly mean when they cast certain groups as "others" in order to shore up what can be made to count as the natural, the acceptable, the culturally appropriate, and so forth. Both fascism and neo-fascism are known to use nationalism in order to mobilize groups within a

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[214] Edelman, *Constructing the Political Spectacle*, 66.

nation toward the acceptance of racist, anti-immigration policies based on the perceived

importance of a shared ancestry and an authoritarian government.

It is important to remind ourselves of Anderson's point that nationalism does not produce

racism per se. Racism is instead a product of class consciousness. Racism stems more from the

differentiation of the aristocracy from the common people, and manifests primarily within

national boundaries rather than across them.[215] Trump has exploited the fact that there are many

Americans who are anxious about jobs and the economy, and who see immigrants as a threat to

their ability to find and maintain work, and national security is a convenient issue to exploit

toward promoting seemingly simple solutions toward keeping immigrants out of the U.S. White,

middle-class Americans in some areas fear being replaced, and are looking for a leader who

appears to be willing to act on their behalf. National security is an issue that appears to allow for

more urgent, decisive action than that of economic issues. Additionally, Trump has framed the

immigration "problem" as a national security risk – an argument that is much more readily

accepted by Americans as something that must be addressed decisively and with force and which

is related to economic insecurity in that a strong economy is commonly seen as necessary in

order for a nation to secure itself. By playing on fears that American laborers run the risk of

being replaced and that Americans in general are in danger from many enemies, Trump is using

classist right-wing ideology to promote a nationalist agenda in light of shrinking labor markets

that require unskilled labor, such as in agriculture. In promoting this ideology, Trump makes it

seem quite normal to distrust immigrants and anyone who seems plausibly "un-American," and

he uses that sense of normalcy to argue for tighter controls on who should be allowed to enter the

U.S. If we take Anderson's differentiation of classism and racism a step further, it appears that

when classist ideology takes hold in a society, nationalism can become a useful tool to promote

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[215] Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 149-150.

nativist interests that are by default anti-immigrant, rather than the interests of the community as a whole. In this case, the economy and national security are not objectively problems that must be addressed, but ways to justify the exclusion of entire groups of people, and immigrants in particular, in the name of preserving the nation and "our" *natural* ways of life.

Through awareness of the racist nature of the discursive practices employed by Trump to gain political favor, Americans can better understand that ideals such as an easily definable, exceedingly narrow conception of national identity are not a matter of so-called commonsense, nor is the practice of deciding who is desirable enough to claim residency or citizenship in America, particularly in an already diverse society. Further work should be done to discuss the implications of other efforts by political leaders in the U.S. to drive the country toward a more anxious, less welcoming attitude, such as an analysis on Trump's attempted travel bans and the expansion of efforts to deport undocumented immigrants. If an anxiety toward immigrants is allowed to take hold in the long run, American citizens will be more willing to curtail the rights of those deemed "others" and in turn might be more amenable to sacrificing their own rights for the sake of "national security." As we have already seen with the enactment of the Patriot Act after 9/11, a heightened state of anxiety can lead to government-sanctioned surveillance as well as unreasonable searches and seizures that impact visitors and citizens alike.

It is imperative that we take seriously the ramifications of having a government, and a broad ideology, that promotes an anti-immigration agenda while showing indifference to a rising tide of white nationalism and racism. Not only might the U.S. appear to be less welcoming to the people of other nations, but it could also drive away its own citizens and damage its position as a global power politically and economically if it lacks the needed skilled and unskilled workforce made up of people who are as diverse as the nation itself. It is therefore quite dangerous to

discount the importance of maintaining America's diversity on both a domestic and global level. Furthermore, it is problematic to use issues such as the economy and national security as tools to argue for the exclusion of entire groups of people from living and working in America. To continually use these issues toward the interests of one group of Americans over others works to normalize racist practices that limit where people can live, what jobs they can get, and even what type of education they can acquire.

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