

Exploring the American Anti-Immigration Discourse in Scholarship, Politics, and Activism  
through Michel Foucault and Edward Said

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ABSTRACT

Using Michel Foucault and Edward Said's theoretical contributions regarding discursive formations, this thesis performs a critical discourse analysis of the anti-immigration discourse in America; a flawed rhetoric that uses the power of language to create its own truth. The ultimate research question of this thesis asks what can be learned about the discursive formations of the anti-immigration rhetoric from Foucault and Said's contributions.

To begin, varying aspects of discourse are discussed, such as non-critical and critical discourse analysis. The concept of discourse, as will be used in this thesis, is heavily indebted to the scholarly work of Michel Foucault. As such, a review of Foucault's contributions showing how discourse allows some to gain power over others and then to create a self-sustaining truth will be used as a base from which all argument shall be built. Next, this thesis explores Said's discourse theory, which extends Foucault's concept of discourse to claim that those in power often assert a knowledge of others that is not accurate, but serves the purpose of maintaining a dominating status over them. This is followed by a critical discourse analysis of texts produced by key authors in the American anti-immigration discourse such as Samuel Huntington, Tom Tancredo, and Pat Buchanan in order to provide insight into their anti-immigration rhetoric. In conclusion, by unpacking the anti-immigration discourse, the reader will discover a discursive method that clearly parallels that which is so heavily critiqued by Foucault and Said, namely the construction of knowledge through inaccurate and flawed discourses.

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## Introduction

Edward Said's work *Orientalism* offers a complex set of arguments against the West's conception of Near Eastern peoples and cultures. The West's construction of "the Orient" in juxtaposition to "the Occident" developed from a distinct sense of us (those in the West) and them (Muslims, Arabs, and near eastern peoples), and places onto the Orientals the characteristic of "otherness." Said's in-depth knowledge of concerning the West's perception and misconception of the Arab allows him to make profound arguments against this concept that involves making glaring generalities, while also making obsolete our human commonalities.

Said's points bring to light what he regards as the Western world's habit of creating peoples and cultures it does not understand into "others." Currently, the US is facing challenges from high rates of immigration from Mexico and other "Third World" nations, as many of the authors analyzed in this thesis refer to them. That immigration is a challenge is not of dispute, but that it is a challenge because those immigrating here pose a significant threat to our "American-ness" or our "us-ness" is quite another matter. Such arguments proliferate in the writings of Samuel Huntington, Tom Tancredo, Patrick Buchanan, and Peter Brimelow, along with arguments that immigrants threaten to capsize our infrastructure, decrease our national security, and remake America into an unrecognizable nation. The rhetoric of the anti-immigration discourse is full of egregious statements that clearly rely on maintaining the differences between Americans and immigrants such as, "There is no Americano dream. There is only the American dream created by an Anglo-Protestant society. Mexican Americans will share in that dream and in that society only if they dream in English" (Huntington 2004a, 45). Such rhetoric should be critiqued for its inaccuracies and examined as knowledge-production. Both tasks are tackled in this thesis.

This thesis will analyze the anti-immigration discourse in America in the speeches given by and writings of the aforementioned authors as they are considered key participants/representatives of the anti-immigration discourse. By looking at various texts from these leading scholars, politicians, and activists of the anti-immigration rhetoric, this assessment will provide an overview of current debates about immigration in order to critically analyze the discourse. The rhetoric of this group will be analyzed in light of Michel Foucault and Edward Said's contributions, providing a framework to understand why these participants in this highly-charged political discourse choose the narrative and rhetorical terms that they do, how their particularly neo-nativist discursive formations came to be, and what implications the arguments coming from this faction of thinkers has on policy debates surrounding immigration. The ultimate research question this thesis asks is whether we can we learn about the anti-immigration discourse from Foucault and Said's contributions regarding the power of discourse and their critique of flawed discursive formations.

In the first chapter, I explore the concept of discourse and the different types of methodologies used when studying it. This chapter will provide the reader with a general understanding of the concept of discourse in order to more fully comprehend the arguments of Michel Foucault and Edward Said. Next, because the works of Michel Foucault and Edward Said provide the conceptual framework of this thesis, the second chapter is dedicated to an analysis of their backgrounds and contributions. Foucault's description of discourse, knowledge, and power will underpin the entire discussion running throughout the thesis. Foucault argues that discourse enables those in dominating positions to assume power over their subjects through discourse's ability to create truth and decide what constitutes knowledge. Said uses Foucault's conceptual framework to show how the West employed a discourse that asserted its power over Near

Eastern peoples by proclaiming the West's understanding of such people as knowledge or truth, rather than learning about these people directly from them. Said's theories and his warnings against conceptualizing the "other" will be used in critical discourse analysis of the anti-immigration rhetoric performed by this thesis.

The next chapters are dedicated to the three ideal-types of voices echoing in this debate: the scholar, the politician and political activist organizations, and the author/activist. The chapters present a summary on their thoughts on the problems posed by immigration and how our nation must go about correcting such issues. More importantly a critical discourse analysis of each of these authors is performed, using Foucault's and Said's conceptual frameworks that dissect and critique discourses that allow people to assume and perpetuate dominating positions by creating truths and by controlling what is considered knowledge.

In the final chapter, arguments made by immigration activists and scholars that refute or challenge the negative aspects of immigration as discussed by Buchanan, Brimelow, Tancredo, and Huntington are presented. In addition, chapter 6 will analyze the American anti-immigration discourse as a whole, providing a more in-depth critique. The purpose of this final chapter is to provide a more complete view of the anti-immigration rhetoric that will have been explored in previous sections. More importantly it will highlight the incredible flaws that have developed within the discourse and remind the reader of how such discourses arise and perpetuate.

The conclusions that are presented suggest that Edward Said's theories, as indebted to Michel Foucault, and his criticisms of discursive formations that produce "others," can indeed be used to analyze and understand the argument of the American anti-immigration discourse. A new political discourse around citizenship, immigration, and national identity must be formulated in light of these troubling inaccuracies. This new discourse, and its suggested

changes for how we view, accept, and aid immigrants, is what is ultimately at stake. Americans would do well to realize the importance that power can play in the formulation of discourses that then go on to become potent, lasting entities themselves. These flawed discourses create an atmosphere for increased hostility and misunderstanding, impact policy decisions, and even have an impact on the most basic immigrant rights. Knowing the power of discourse, we must challenge our discursive formations and hold them to the highest scrutiny.



## **Chapter 1: Discourse**

This chapter will provide a general overview of discourse, as an understanding of the concept is crucial to following the works of Michel Foucault. In addition, this chapter will allow the reader a chance to formulate an understanding of discourse as something that influences social reality by creating truth and meaning. Such an understanding will aid the reader in following Said's arguments of how certain discourses can create a situation of real or perceived dominance over others. Discursive formations such as these are the basis of the anti-immigration rhetoric.

First, the structural and organizational aspects of the concept of "discourse" in general are discussed. This is followed by discourse's practical and social aspects. While much of discourse analysis has focused on how dialogue and conversations are organized, one will still find analysts who are concerned with a certain amount of social interpretation that must take place as well. Along the same lines, as one discusses such things as critical discourse analysis and discourse theory, it will be just as important to scholars in those fields to understand structure as it is to explore such things as social inequalities that arise from certain discourses. It is these social inequalities and power disparities that will be of interest to Foucault and Said. However, before we discuss these aspects of discourse let us first look at discourse as a term.

### **Discourse as a Concept**

The term discourse has become ubiquitous in the social sciences and, as a phrase that will be ever-present in this thesis, it deserves to be thoroughly discussed. By all accounts, discourse is difficult to define because there are so many overlapping usages depending on the theory or discipline from which one is approaching it. Combined below are some definitions that will help create a concept of discourse that will be useful in regards to this thesis. Shapiro defines the

study of discourse as the study of language in use, and as such “the concept of discourse implies a concern with the meaning- and value-producing practices in language rather than simply the relationship between utterance and their referents” (Shapiro 1989, 320). Meaning making of texts such as policy documents, books, or transcripts of conversations or speeches are all a part of understanding the “production of meaning in social life” (Wetherell, Taylor, and Yates 2001, 3). Mills gives further depth to the term by writing, “a discourse is not a disembodied collection of statements, but a grouping of utterances or sentences, statements which are enacted within a social context, which are determined by that social context and which contribute to the way that social context continues its existence” (Mills 2004, 10). Discourse, as will be used in this thesis, relies heavily on these descriptions. A discourse is more than just language being shared or words exchanged, it is the meanings associated with the words and how that meaning goes on to shape social reality, while still limited by the context in which the discourse occurs.

Researchers in the social sciences should not underestimate the study of discourse as “in very basic ways, to ‘do’ social life is to ‘do’ discourse” (Wetherell, Taylor, and Yates 2001, 4). Discourse builds objects, worlds, minds, and social relations because discourse is the way in which written or spoken words are given meaning and therefore can simultaneously describe and create our understanding of the world around us (our social reality). This point is central to this thesis. The reader will find throughout this thesis that the authors analyzed create their own version of social reality through what they write or say about it. While they are describing their own points of view concerning immigration, they are simultaneously creating a reality in which those views hold truth.

Teun van Dijk argues that action, context, power, and ideology are the four links between discourse and society. The anti-immigration authors under analysis in this thesis are performing

a higher level “action” (as they are doing something with intention and purpose) by writing and speaking on immigration issues (these are known as communicative acts). Again, to “do” discourse is to “do” social life. When speaking of how context links discourse and society, van Dijk notes that we are actually discussing how the discourse is “situated;” the social situation where it is taking place or being accomplished. Controlling others’ actions and minds, dominating the discourse through various structures and controlling access to discourse are all ways to exert power through discourse. (van Dijk 2007a, 7-34). This exertion of power through the use of discourse is present in the writings and speeches of our anti-immigration authors and is of utmost importance in understanding how and why we must challenge their flawed rhetoric.

Ideologies serve a social function in that they “manage the problem of coordination of the acts or practices of individual social members of a group. Once shared, ideologies make sure that members of a group will generally act in similar ways in similar situations, are able to cooperate in joint tasks, and will thus contribute to group cohesion, solidarity, and the successful reproduction of the group” (van Dijk, 2007a; 26). Ideologies of a group are similar to the “knowledge” they share. In sum, ideology links discourse to society in that discourse allows for group cohesion and continuity and possible realization of social goals. Thus we will see a shared ideology concerning immigrants, their impact on our “American-ness,” and the harm they pose our nation as the anti-immigration discourse is analyzed. As such, let us move forward in discussing the different areas studied in discourse, beginning with discourse analysis.

### **Discourse Analysis**

There are several different approaches to discourse analysis that can be taken, the largest distinction existing between those that are “critical” versus those that are considered “non-critical.”

The “non-critical” discourse analysis, according to Norman Fairclough, is divided into three groupings based on three different kinds of champions/authors who argue on their behalf (Fairclough 1992, 12-25). Authors Sinclair and Coulthard represent the first of these groupings. They looked at such things as the dialogue between pupils and an instructor and developed a system for organizing the exchange. This organization and structure make the exchange easier to analyze. For example, they can describe who is initiating the discourse, and what the response and feedback are. “The strength of the Sinclair and Coulthard framework is in the pioneering way in which it draws attention to systematic organizational properties of dialogue and provides ways of describing them” (Fairclough 1992, 15). However, critics of this framework indicate that it is too heavy on structure, does not do enough for interpreting what is being said, and lacks a connection to the social aspect of discourse.

Secondly, Fairclough looks at the contributions made by ethnomethodologists to conversation analysis. They are concerned with how conversations begin, how topics are chosen and how turn-taking influences conversation. Fairclough believes this approach also falls short as it looks only at one aspect of discourse. For example, conversation analysis assumes an equality between speakers that is rarely present. An imbalance of power between two people in a conversation affects turn-taking and conversation progression. When one realizes the imbalance between speakers to interrupt, hold the floor, or change the subject, it becomes evident “that producing discourse is part of wider processes of producing social life, social relationships, and social identities” (Fairclough 1992, 19). Confirming Fairclough’s argument, it is not conversation analysis, but rather these power disparity and production capability aspects of discourse that figure prominently in Foucault’s work.

The final approach to non-critical discourse analysis discussed by Fairclough belongs to authors such as Wetherell, Taylor, and Yates (2001). “Discourse analysis is a way of finding out how consequential bits of social life are done and this knowledge is relevant to the process of building knowledge and theory in the social science” (Wetherell, Taylor, Yates 2001, 2). Since discourse is the language and meaning making process that allows for the creation of social reality, it can be analyzed in order to show how one’s discursive orientation is formed and what implications that has for what people “know.” What topics are discussed decides what topics are not, just as what is said concerning those topics excludes other discourses on the topic from taking place. According to Shapiro “while much of political thinking is exhausted by concern with the distribution of things thought to be meaningful and valuable, our attention is drawn to another aspect of political processes, that aspect in which the boundaries for constituting meaning and value are constructed. Political processes are, among other things, contests over the alternative understandings” (Shapiro 1989, 319). The authors analyzed in this thesis have constructed their boundaries for understanding immigration from Mexico and Latin America, and thus their ideology. Their political goals reflect their understanding of the threats posed by these immigrants, and their discourse is aimed at passing this understanding onto more Americans while trying to discredit any others.

Although, Fairclough finds that Wetherell puts too much emphasis on what discourse constructs rather than what constrains discourse, I find that this critique is too strong. Fairclough tries to point out that Wetherell’s approach, like the authors above, is lacking in social orientation to discourse due to the idea that the person is creating their social reality (Fairclough wants an even emphasis put on what is created through discourse and also the context that exists already that constrains it). Thus discourse influences that which is social but is also subject to it.

Ultimately, whether Fairclough misunderstands Wetherell or not, both authors are trying to emphasize the connection between social life and discourse. It is this aspect of how discourse affects social reality with which we in the social sciences are most interested in.

Teun van Dijk argues that in the past, we in the social sciences have split our focus: we either observe and record what people *do* or “infer from observations and introspections what people *think* and *believe* and how they organize their knowledge of the world and of their society” (van Dijk 2007b, 36). The movement behind discourse analysis resists this splintered focus and tries to find a bigger picture that relies on both elements. (For example, observation of what goes on within a dialogue and inference into how this builds our understanding of social reality). In addition, he argues that social scientists, linguists, and psychologists are often interested in more than just analyzing discourse for the sake of analyzing discourse. “Besides giving systematic descriptions, we may expect discourse studies to formulate theories that explain such relationships between language use, beliefs, and interaction” (van Dijk 2007b, 2). There are several social scientists who have organized their observations and inferences in discourse analysis and formed coherent theories regarding discourse. For example, Edward Said, whose work will be discussed in the following chapter, is considered a pioneer of colonial discourse theory. It was his critical analysis of colonial discourse that allowed Said’s concept of “othering” to develop and offered him a venue in which to critique discourses where “othering” is present. Critical discourse analysis is discussed below.

### **Critical Discourse Analysis**

Mills notes scholars such as Pecheux argue that discourse has an underlying the conflictual nature because there will always be another position with which it is in conflict. “He stresses the fact that ideological struggle is at the heart of discourse” (Mills 2004, 12). Exploring the

struggle between discourses is captured in critical discourse analysis. Van Dijk describes critical discourse analysis as presupposing “a study of the relations between discourse, power, dominance, social inequality and the position of the discourse analyst in social relationships” (van Dijk 1993, 300). Inherent to critical discourse analysis is the study of the role of discourse in dominance that has led to social inequality. While Foucault stresses the role of power in discourse, critical discourse analysis focuses more on the abuse of power that creates social inequality, thus van Dijk chooses the term dominance.

Critical discourse analysts are looking for an answer to the question: how does discourse enable dominance and thus social inequality? One such answer for van Dijk lies in the fact that power and control often necessitate changing the minds of others to fit one’s interests. “Managing the minds of others is essentially a function of text and talk” (van Dijk 1993, 302). (It is important to note that the dominance most important to our discussion here isn’t just that of an individual over others but rather dominance that is institutionalized in that it is condoned or reinforced by law makers, courts, educators, media, and law enforcement.) If discourse plays a key role in managing minds, what are the structures that allow for it to do so?

The first resource that the dominant have is “preferential access to discourse.” Often the meeting time, place, date, and location are chosen by the powerful leaving less access for those with competing discourses. For example, if a patient is trying to change the discourse concerning a certain illness, they have to wait for the doctor to grant them access in order for the dialogue to take place. Total exclusion is also a possibility through limiting membership or participation in certain groups. A final way of structuring discourse to the advantage of those in power is manipulation of what can be said and when. Controlling the agenda and allowing some to speak and not others are just a few methods that those in power can use to dominate the

discourse. “Illegitimate control of the course of discourse, therefore, is a direct and immediate enactment of dominance, while limiting the ‘discourse rights’ of other participants” (van Dijk 1993, 304).

Although it will not be covered in this thesis, it is important to note that critical discourse analysis does not just look at discourse structures, but also relies on social cognition to complete its analysis. “What models and social representations link social group dominance with the choice of specific discourse forms” (van Dijk 1993, 305)? In other words, social cognition would explain, for example, why author Peter Brimelow believes it is fine to disregard the plight of the Mexican immigrant and but not hesitate to endorse the emigration of British persons to America. What does he understand (or not understand) about the British versus Latinos that would make his position acceptable discourse? In this case it is that he is a British immigrant, not an immigrant from the Third World. His social cognition plays a role in the formation of his discourse.

We have visited key points concerning discourse in order to give to it meaning as will be applied throughout this thesis: discourse as a term, discourse analysis, and critical discourse analysis. However, the concept of discourse and the ways in which it is analyzed will develop more clearly as we look at the work of our first scholar, Michel Foucault. By the end of the section on Foucault, it will be clear how the discursive formations of the anti-immigration authors are possible. Foucault shows how those in positions of “authority” are able to abuse discourse’s productive capabilities to create a social reality that is imbalanced and dominating. They control the substance of those discourses to determine what is accepted as knowledge and truth. They then are able to exploit discourse’s productive capabilities to perpetuate the false notion that their discourse constitutes knowledge. This ensures that they will continue to be seen



as someone with authority on the subject, which then reinforces their discourse and constructed knowledge.

These theories will provide a basis for understanding the thoughts and arguments of Edward Said. Foucault's theories on discourse enabled Said's to develop. It is Said who provides this thesis with the theories of "othering," which enable the analysis and critique of those authors who prefer a discourse of anti-immigration. As such, an understanding of discourse as proposed by Foucault will act as the foundation running through the analysis of all authors discussed in this thesis. The next chapter turns its attention to Said and the man to whom he and many other contemporary political theorists are greatly indebted, Michel Foucault.

## **Chapter 2: Michel Foucault and Edward Said**

### **Michel Foucault**

Foucault presents such unique and ultimately profound arguments that his works are referenced ubiquitously with regards to understanding discourse and power. To better understand Said (who will be contrasted to those who participate in the anti-immigration discourse in later sections) let us look at Foucault and how his works enabled Said's theories to develop. First we will look at analytical strategies employed by Foucault as well as some of his earlier works. Secondly, this thesis will explore the knowledge/power matrix described by Foucault. Finally, the change in focus by those in power from denying life to ordering it will be shown to have a lasting effect on the concept of the "other" as proposed by Said. The anti-immigration discourse relies heavily on this flawed concept of "othering," and it is essentially Foucault who allows one to understand how their discursive formations are possible. Before this thesis explores Foucault's theories, a discussion of Foucault's key concepts and works is presented.

Shumway maintains that there are four strategies employed by Foucault that should be mentioned in any detailed discussion of Foucault's work. Firstly, Foucault tended to use reversal in order to challenge commonly accepted principles. "When tradition gives us a particular interpretation of an event or an historical development, Foucault's strategy is to work out the implications of the reverse or opposite interpretation" (Shumway 1989, 15). Discontinuity represents the second strategy. Foucault believed that there is a discontinuity in history, ideas, beliefs, etc. that arrive from the shifts and interruptions that have marked human history. This is not the same as saying there is no continuity in history. Foucault describes the way discourse is constrained by its context and then in turn has an impact on what discourse can follow, but he

also notes that certain discourses can only be true in a certain place and time in history. For example, immigration worries concerning Italians and Irish coming to America were constrained by the social context in which dialogue was taking place because of what was considered true or accepted as knowledge at the time. Each following discourse was then impacted by said dialogue. However, any truth that the discourse on Irish and Italian immigration held at that time would not be applicable in today's social reality because of what is now accepted as knowledge. This idea is discussed further in the section on episteme.

The strategy of specificity deals with Foucault's understanding of discourse's role in how we understand things. Rather than the world having its own inherent meaning, Foucault argues that we assign meaning to it through our discourses. For example, there can be multiple discourses concerning something like madness, each one creating its own social reality for those involved in the different discourse. However, there is not an understanding of madness outside of the discourses (Shumway 1989, 21). Some critique Foucault as they find the author does not believe there is a world outside of discourse, however Mills points out that this is an unfair argument. She argues that Foucault never indicates that he does not believe things do not exist outside of the discourse on them, but challenges our ability to understand the world without discourse (Mills 2004, 49).

Finally, Foucault believed in the exteriority of discourse. Foucault is not interested in such things as the underlying desire of those who are participating in a discourse to influence it in a certain manner, but rather what takes place on the exterior of the discourse, namely things such as why certain discourses become dominant, why institutions support one discourse over another, and how certain people determine what is allowable to be discussed. "What makes discourse a 'chance series of events' is that both the structural limits and the social conditions of discourse

combine to produce statements such that the goals of motives of individual speakers become irrelevant to Foucault's analysis" (Shumway 1989, 24).

Foucault challenges our perception of history over and over throughout his writings. *Madness and Civilization* and *The Birth of the Clinic* both "derive their power from the reversal of earlier narratives that had come to be accepted as the truth about the origins of modern psychiatry and modern medicine" (Shumway 1989, 53). In *Madness and Civilization*, Foucault argues against the commonly held pre-history of psychiatry by showing how the mad were treated throughout different ages. For example, he explains how the places of quarantine that were once used for lepers became a natural place to confine those who were deemed mad. This is only because the leper, separated from society, became a lasting image in those societies that dealt with leprosy, and they believed it appropriate to begin to confine and marginalize other groups of people deemed harmful.

This development of how one viewed the mad is even more unique when, far from being thought of as sick, they were thought to be able to withstand severe conditions. They were humans who had lost their soul and reason, thus were treated like animals (for example, being left in severe cold or put on display). Some would argue that psychiatry broke from the original treatment of the insane based on moral or religious understandings to the treatments of them based on medical science. However, Foucault argues that regardless of this break, psychiatry continued to confine and silence the mad instead of choosing to end this practice. Society's acceptance of marginalizing and confining certain "threats" continued on.

*The Birth of the Clinic* challenges the commonly held history of medicine, but more importantly begins the task of describing a concept that will be more fully realized in the *History of Sexuality*, and is of utmost importance to understanding the nexus between power, knowledge,

and the subject. This concept is referred to as “the gaze” and has to do with the idea that we never truly “see” anything objectively, rather our observations are influenced by “the bias or distortion of mere thought.” Sartre gave this an even more negative connotation by suggesting that observation allows the observer to objectify the subject, allowing the subject to feel dominated by the observer. The medical examiner, for example, holds significant power over his patient.

*The Archeology of Knowledge* underscores what Foucault had been trying to prove through the more specific examples of his earlier works, namely that progress is never unambiguous. We are not always making things better through science and medicine, and history is marked by ruptures and discontinuity. Foucault, through the archeology of documents, “refuses to take the history of ideas as a satisfactory way of explaining these events, and substitutes instead a history of practices, discourses, and structures” (Shumway 1989, 53-43).

In *The Order of Things*, Foucault structures his arguments with the help of the concept of episteme, and breaks up eras based on the differences in their episteme. An episteme is the ground of thought on which we understand some statements and not others to constitute knowledge during a particular period. A given episteme is made up of discursive structures, or all the discourses that are deemed acceptable at any given time and the ways in which society is able to think about certain things during that same time. Mills gives the example of the way in which Victorians used lists and categories to organize their thoughts about such things as different races. In another episteme, these categories would hardly make sense let alone constitute knowledge. It is this idea (that the episteme of different eras can be compared and contrasted to each other) that led Foucault to believe that discourse and the history of knowledge are marked by ruptures rather than continuity (Mills 2004, 50-53).

One of the objectives of the author that many find most unique is that Foucault is never looking to provide his reader with the ultimate truth, but rather his goal is to challenge what we accept to be true. Power and truth are inseparable for Foucault, in that those in power and the institutions which society relies on to determine what constitutes knowledge determine what society finds truth in. Foucault argues,

Truth isn't outside power, or lacking power...[it] is a thing of this world: it is produced only by virtue of multiple forms of constraint. And it induces regular effects of power. Each society has its regime of truth, its "general politics" of truth: that is, the types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true; the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true and false statements, the means by which each is sanctioned; the techniques and procedures accorded value in the acquisition of truth; the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true (Rainbow, 73).

Power then is maintained by dominating discourse so as to control what is considered knowledge or what is true. Shumway notes, "The will to knowledge, or the will to truth, is 'a norm by which power seeks to protect itself by mystifying its control over knowledge'" (Shumway 1989, 113).

Genealogy, as used by Foucault (some find it contradicts his earlier use of archeology, some believe it to be an extension), is meant to show how knowledge and that which has value to us arose through a dispersed pattern due to small changes, complete reversals, and "faulty calculations." Foucault writes, "The development of humanity is a series of interpretations. The role of genealogy is to record its history" (Shumway 1998, 112). By interpretations, Foucault is referencing the version of truth held and imposed by a dominating group. Thus genealogy will come to play a large role in the text most vital to this thesis, *The History of Sexuality*.

In the aforementioned work, Foucault further develops his arguments as to how knowledge, power, discourse, and our bodies are inextricably linked. First, while trying to grasp how sexuality has come to be viewed, understood, and censored, Michel Foucault uncovered a matrix that pertains to many more subjects than just sexuality. The author describes the ways in which sexuality and everything that comes along under its umbrella: fantasies, pleasure, deviance, etc. were subjected to intense trial. Foucault finds that it was in this pulling of knowledge from all sources of sexuality that allowed for power to transfer from those who had the sexual experience to those who were in charge of controlling it.

Foucault uses the example of the confession to expand on this point.

The confession is a ritual of discourse in which the speaking subject is also the subject of the statement; it is also a ritual that unfolds within a power relationship, for one does not confess without the presence (or virtual presence) of a partner who is not simply the interlocutor but the authority who requires the confession, prescribes and appreciates it, and intervenes in order to judge, punish, forgive, console, and reconcile...this discourse of truth finally takes effect, not in the one who receives it, but in the one from whom it is wrested (Foucault 1978, 61-62).

It is knowledge of a subject that allows one to have power over it. This knowledge-power matrix is applicable beyond sexuality. As we will see, Said will show how the West's construction of the Near East and our constructed "knowledge" of their lives, culture, and religion allowed us to perceive ourselves as having power over the Orient and Orientals. Similarly, many of our anti-immigration authors speak out of turn when it comes to their arguments of how the Hispanic culture within America threatens our country because they lack a strong grasp on said culture and its people. As discussed in the chapter on discourse, these arguments help construct the anti-immigration discourse, perpetuating an alternate knowledge or truth about Latinos in America.

Secondly, what Foucault found throughout the sexual repressive Victorian era, is that far from repressing sexuality, the discourses concerning how to talk about sex and how to contain it created an atmosphere where sexual discourse flourished. Those in power and those in charge of the institutions where sexuality was to be repressed oversaw a growing discourse on sex rather than the opposite. This led Foucault to develop a theory of power that is concerned not just with a narrow, negative concept of power, for example containment or prohibition. Rather Foucault realized power's positive side—one that creates and expands. It is in this light that Foucault argues, "If power were never anything but repressive, if it never did anything but to say no, do you really think one would be brought to obey it? What makes power hold good, what makes it accepted, is simply the fact that it traverses and produces things, it induces pleasure, forms knowledge, produces discourse" (Rainbow 1984, 61). This means that power has the ability to use discourse to create what is accepted as knowledge and ensure continued control. The anti-immigration authors are indebted to power's productive capability as it allows them to create a truth that vilifies and distorts the immigrant, while allowing them to remain in positions of perceived dominance or authority.

Thirdly and, in the opinion of this author, most importantly, Foucault influences Said's conception of how we began to think about different races. Our first task in this thesis is to give background to this development of racism just as Foucault does in his work. Understanding how racism developed will allow one to spot certain flaws in the anti-immigration discourse just as it allowed Said to spot flaws in the study of the Orient.

Foucault begins his discussion by noting a sovereign's right to put a subject to death should that subject dare to rise up against him. "Viewed in this way, the power of life and death was not an absolute privilege: it was conditioned by the defense of the sovereign, and his own survival"



(Foucault 1978, 135). Along these lines, rather than power over life and death power is more about whether to let live or to take away one's life. Power is only shown through deduction, meaning the ability to take away, or in the ability to kill.

Large transformations took place over time concerning power. A government became one that was more concerned with “generating forces, making them grow, and ordering them, rather than one dedicated to impending them, making them submit, or destroying them” (Foucault 1978, 136). What one sees as they look at this transformation is a movement towards administering and ordering life. Those in power control a populace by encouraging life and then overseeing every aspect of it (no doubt this change influenced Foucault's thoughts on power's productive capabilities rather than just its ability to deny). The use of the death penalty then declines, and those who are put to death are done so because of the threat they pose to the rest of the populace, not necessarily for the crime committed. It is the rest of the populace and its continued existence that began to matter more and more, as it is the biological existence over which the powerful exert their influence. Life and ever-growing life is where power now lies.

Foucault rightly argues that this focus on the biological existence may decrease the option of putting subjects to death by the powerful, but it allows for mass violence “waged on behalf of everyone.” Again, those in control are now concerned with their populace as a whole and thus make decisions based on protecting that base of their bio-power. The author sums up his point aptly. “If genocide is indeed the dream of modern powers, this is not because of a recent return of the ancient right to kill; it is because power is situated and exercised at the level of life, the species, the race, and the large-scale phenomena of population” (Foucault 1978, 137). Foucault continues on to describe the ways in which our investment in bio-power or the power of the

biological existence helped create capitalism, social hierarchy, and the ways in which political existence and biological existence became intertwined as never before seen in history.

This new bio-power became more and more concerned with the body and sex, as it became increasingly dependent on population and the populace. Not only was it an issue of ensuring lives, the very thing over which it would exert power and control, but it also became an issue of protecting the race itself through purity of blood and legitimacy. Foucault uses the examples of the Nazis to emphasize how desires for a pureblood race turned into the largest genocide in memory. “This concern [of pureblooded populations] produced eugenics, the attempt to eliminate inferior traits through selective breeding, and a racism that would describe whole races as sources of inferior heredity” (Shumway 1989, 151). The transformation of power from that which controlled death to that which controlled life means a fixation on population arises. The focus becomes the protection, administration, oversight, and encouragement of the biology of the subjects and thus, the reader becomes more aware of how ideas of “others” and “us-ness” begin to proliferate.

Bio-power is an important concept that should be held at the ready throughout the discussion of the anti-immigration authors. Foucault’s increased concern with bio-power over time is often overlooked. However, as nationalist sentiments are on the rise throughout the world (Russia, North Korea, China, Venezuela to name a few), the ideas behind bio-power become even more evident and should be realized for the dangers they pose. When government and institutions combine their goals of controlling their population on both a mass and individual level with such nationalist sentiments, differences between those belonging to one country and those belonging to another proliferate. The distinction between us and them becomes more noticeable. Integration becomes less palpable, even reprehensible, and peaceful borders are

replaced with lines of friction, heightened by each country's disdain for the possibility of losing its purity, and thus superiority, to the "other." One has to ask if our fence-- no matter how incomplete-- along the US/Mexican border is there to maintain the safety of our country or the status of our population? This question will be further developed in the critique of the anti-immigration discourse.

The concept of bio-power was and is reinforced by economics due to the role individual bodies play in the financial and administrative success of the state. For example, the state that was based on social production and social service realized that in order to flourish it must concern itself with the ability of individual bodies to produce service to the state. The bodies of these individuals must be subjected to discipline in order to produce the kind of workers the state desired. At the same time, Foucault notes that the state must deal with whole populations in order to organize, control, and direct the "accumulation of men (the economic system that promotes the accumulation of capital and the system of power that ordains the accumulation of men are, from the seventeenth century on, correlated and inseparable phenomena)... the political significance of the problem of sex is due to the fact that sex is located at the point of intersection of the discipline of the body and the control of the population" (Rainbow 1984, 67).

Foucault's works, concepts, and theories have been shown to have the utmost importance for contemporary political theory. Through dominating discourse, one can manipulate truth and control what is considered to be knowledge, even our concept of history. The repression of certain sexual behaviors caused a flourishing of the discourse on the topic, thus presenting the side of power that creates and causes to thrive rather than strictly denies. In addition, the focus of those in power changed from that which controlled death to that which administered and ordered life. This focus on administering to one's population, or bio-power, led to a desire for

pureblooded population and thus racism. The notion of deriving power from gaining knowledge over something, the development of racial distinctions, and the emphasis on imposing hierarchy onto one's worldview are of ultimate concern to Edward Said.

### **Edward Said**

Edward Said indicates that his theories would not have been possible to develop without the theories offered by Michel Foucault. Foucault's writings demonstrate the power of language in use and the creative capabilities of discourse. In addition, his theories illustrate how the pre-occupation with controlling populations gave rise to racism. Foucault's theories also provide an understanding for how flawed discursive formations are possible. Said takes these theories provided by Michel Foucault further, showing how such distorted discursive formations are common in the West's view of other peoples. He argues against the degrading and racist nature of such views he deems "othering." Edward Said challenges the West to form discourses of others based on knowledge we gain from them and their cultures, rather than those that come from a constructed knowledge that is steeped in a perception of dominance. The rhetoric of the anti-immigration discourse relies on such flawed discourses and constructed knowledge, thus a firm understanding of Said will allow for a more thorough analysis and critique of it. Edward Said and his contributions are examined below in order to provide more information as to how these discourses of "othering" are possible and how to avoid their inaccuracies.

Edward Said's background as an exile created fertile ground within his worldview for his arguments against "othering" to develop. This background both allowed him to and mandated that he enter into the discussion on the question of Palestine. His birth in Jerusalem in 1935 to a Palestinian family meant he would intimately experience exile along with his family and countrymen when Israel became a state. Said did not consciously turn towards understanding the

effects this exile had on his worldview until he wrote *Beginnings*. However, others argue that even his works on Conrad early in his studies show he was drawn towards the concept.

Although it was Said's experience of dispossession that allowed him to explore such issues as justice, humanitarianism, power and authority, it was the war of 1967 that forced him into political activism whether through endless columns or participation in pro-Palestinian organizations. Most importantly, Said began "The Arab Portrayed" which outlined the ways in which the Westerner perceived the Arab. The Arab was only a sheik or a terrorist, a negative value, "a surmountable obstacle to Israel's creation" (Bayoumi and Rubin 2000, xxii). The Palestinians were denied as a people with any cultural permanence due to our understanding of them as wandering desert nomads. Said would eventually revisit "The Arab Portrayed," and complete a work that was both controversial and far-reaching, *Orientalism*.

The political awakening Said experienced during the war, did more than transform him into a voice for Palestine-- he became a voice for humanism. Said claimed that even one who had never been in exile or who had never been an immigrant can think as such and try to see the world as she must, despite one never having left a world of comfort. Challenging our perceptions of the world and our interpretations of "others," Said calls on his readers to reshape our many paradigms that are skewed with bias. "For Said, his life has been a commitment to two things: an incorruptible, unassailable belief in the dignity of all people and human justice for everyone, and a lifelong pursuit in the rigors of scholarship to excavate, uncover, review, and interpret all facets of human experience, particularly those that are overlooked by any structure of authority. With these commitments, Said's oppositional stance becomes not merely a radical posture but a manner of living" (Bayoumi and Rubin, 2000; xiv).

It is in this manner that Said's theories can reinforce the arguments made by critics of the anti-immigration discourse. Asking that each individual throw out perceptions of the immigrant as useless, unskilled invaders, these critics seek to explore the challenges and benefits of immigration through a discourse that places an emphasis on humanitarianism. This does not mean facts are replaced with emotion, but rather that each evaluator approaches the situation with an understanding of life, opportunity, and struggle as the immigrant sees it. Said would seek a broadened and deepened understanding *of* the immigrant, rather than knowledge *over* her. Such a concept will be more fully developed in the following section on what many would agree is Said's most important work, *Orientalism*, not in the least because so many "found in the work the possibility of "writing back," of giving voice to their experiences silenced by cultural hegemony of the West. Native Americans, Africans, Asians, Latin Americans, and other colonized peoples and oppressed groups located in *Orientalism* a method to challenge a chronic tendency of the West to deny, suppress, and distort their cultures and histories" (Said 1979, 67).

Said's *Orientalism* reveals a long-standing paradigm of how the West views the "Orient," a topic that was not only unique when written about, but has been and continues to be of lasting value. Those in the West created a truth regarding the Near East through discourse, one that Said's theories show to be defective. Below is a reconstruction of those theories, as they will be used by this thesis to show the flawed nature of the anti-immigration discourses.

Said begins his work with insights into the role that knowledge played in the Occident's creation of the Orient, and draws a similar conclusion to that of Foucault. "To have such knowledge of such a thing is to dominate it, to have authority over it. And authority here means for "us" to deny autonomy to "it"—the Oriental country—since we know it and it exists, in a sense, *as we know it*" (Said 1979, 32). The Near Eastern peoples had nothing to offer the West

in terms of the West's understanding of them. In this sense, the Occident created the Orient and decided what would be accepted as knowledge regarding it.

Foucault and Said would agree that knowledge allowed for the power of the "superior" over the "inferior." For Said, Orientalism cannot be looked at without analyzing the relationship of power that takes place between the Orient and the Occident. As Foucault indicates, there is an unequal power relationship between the examiner and he who is being examined. The very virtue of the West's examination of the Orient added to its assumed power over it. Cultural strength also played a major role in creating the "dominating framework" within which Europe created the Orient. Said uses the example here of the sheer expanse of the earth that Britain and France commanded.

What one finds here then, is not a Western understanding *of* the Orient as shared with us by the Oriental, but rather an understanding *over* it, or an understanding that developed from a sense of superiority and dominance. Rather than learning from Near Eastern peoples about their culture, peoples, and habits from them, Westerners created their knowledge about the Orient from observations, informed only by perceptions of the Orientals' inferiority and differences. Said argues that there cannot be true representation of other peoples from the outside. Only the scholar who submerges himself into the other culture, learning from those within it, can then purport to have gained insight and pass it back to the outside world.

Said expands on Foucault's theories regarding the concern of those in control for the longevity and purity of the population from which they derive their power to show how and why the West's discourse on the Orient formed in the manner it did. The West's desire to understand itself as a group of people with similar features and characteristics, or rather the West's desire to retain its racial and cultural purity, became its inability to understand peoples of different races

on a multitude of levels. Their physical, cultural, religious, and geographical differences allowed those in the Occident to view the Orientals as threats to our populace and our way of life. One begins to see sweeping generalities (discussed below) that are derived from viewing people as simply “not one of us and therefore a threat to us.” These generalities are uninformed, but suit the purpose of power’s desire to retain a superior and pure population over which to rule.

This discourse of generalities plays a key role in creating the “other,” which is a dehumanizing description in and of itself, as describing the other means finding differences instead of the similarities. Said repeatedly comments on the terms used to describe an Oriental in juxtaposition to a Westerner, such as immoral, irrational, and fallen versus moral, rational, and virtuous. The Occident created an abundance of ways to think and talk about the Orient to reinforce their role of Superior. This manner of thinking about, studying, and describing the Orient, not as an Oriental experienced it but as the White Man did, became Orientalism. “Orientalism can be regarded as a manner of regularized (or Orientalized) writing, vision, and study, dominated by imperatives, perspectives, and ideological biases ostensibly suited to the Orient” (Said 1979, 202).

Said’s concept of “othering,” or the creation of the “other,” recognizes that highlighting the differences between two peoples and then allowing for those differences to become the basis for our discourses only reinforces divides. Said argues for taking an approach that looks to maximize human commonalities through seeking an understanding of others that is informed by them. Such an approach would allow for things such as more effective foreign policy because our knowledge would be more accurate than what we can construct while viewing them as “others.”



Creation of the “other” has been discussed by other discourse theorists as well, especially those who see it as a necessity of meaning-making. Saussure argued that it is only because of difference that we can give meaning to things at all. For example, the only reason why white has meaning is because we can contrast it to black. It is not either word that holds meaning, but rather the difference between them that holds significance (Hall 1997, 329). For Bakhtin, the “other” is the only way one understands difference because words partly belong to those to who speak them (Hall 1997, 329).

Some argue that one understands difference because one must be able to categorize things. “The marking of ‘difference’ is thus the basis of that symbolic order which we call culture...stable cultures require things to stay in their appointed place” (Hall 1997, 330). Michel Foucault argues that those in power are often concerned with ordering and administering that which they oversee, making sure things stay in their “appointed place.” Sometimes this can even include a state’s desire to maintain racial purity within their population out of concern for controlling their population. Those in power might ask, “if we allow things out of their place, such as allowing races to mix, then how can we control the purity of our populations?” The anti-immigration discourse exhibits a form of this argument. How are we to stay what we are if we allow things to move out of their space and into ours? This plays into the theory of how difference underlies this type of discursive orientation. It underscores the necessity of the “other” to understand the “self.” To create a sense of ourselves as subjects, as children we form “unconscious relations...with a significant ‘other’ which is outside—i.e. different from—itself” (Hall 1997, 331).

The West’s notions of “others” constantly and consistently affect government actions. Said examines the effects of Orientalism on how the West sees the Middle East, Muslims, and Arabs

with regards to foreign policy, etc. He describes these Western perceptions with the following thoughts: “Lurking behind all of these images is the menace of jihad. Consequence: a fear that the Muslims (or Arabs) will take over the world” (Said 1979, 287). “There are good Arabs (the ones who do as they are told) and bad Arabs (who do not, and are therefore terrorists)” (Said 1979, 306). US foreign policy is in effect “orientalist stereotypes dressed up in policy jargon” (Said 1979, 321). In order for policy makers to make informed decisions, what we consider knowledge must be based on that which is derived from an accurate understanding of others. They cannot rely on the flawed discourses Orientalists use to describe Near Eastern peoples, as Foucault shows that those flawed discourses stem from drives to control populations and retain power through language’s productive capabilities.

Said imparts the view that Orientalism is an “ideological straightjacket,” developed through generalizations of the “other,” which both the scholar and policy maker can break free from when a more human, non-dogmatic approach is taken. In essence, Said would have discourses informed by knowledge gained by respecting those belonging to a different group rather than one informed by assumptions or formed from a position of superiority.

Taking this more human approach, or humanism, is referenced frequently by Said.

Humanism is centered upon the agency of human individuality and subjective intuition, rather than on received ideas and approved authority...humanism is the only, and I would go so far to say, the final resistance we have against the inhumane practices and injustices that disfigure human history (Said 1979, xxix).

If the West is to turn against the discourse of the past, bio-power’s influence, and the disruptive and fallible policies that they encourage, Said argues that there must be a new focus on human commonalities. These human commonalities are not apparent, nor relevant, to authors such as Bernard Lewis.

Bernard Lewis disagrees with Said's understanding of Orientalism. In his article, "The Question of Orientalism," Lewis derides Said's arguments that indicate those on the outside cannot study other cultures. Lewis does not believe that if someone studying the Orient, and is not from the Near East that s/he automatically means ill will. He compares those who study Hellenism, or the ancient Greeks, to those who study Orientalism, trying to show that many other cultures have been studied by outsiders with successful results. While Lewis does well to note that hostility is not one and the same with studying a culture beyond one's own, he goes too far in noting, "Mr. Said expresses a contempt for modern Arab scholarly achievement worse than anything he attributes to his demonic Orientalists" (Lewis 1982).

It can be argued that Lewis completely misses the underlying argument of Said. Orientalism approaches the Orient from a position of superiority. Intellectual gains based from such vantage points are not gains at all, in fact they reduce our true understanding of the Near Eastern cultures. Cemil Aydin agrees when critiquing Lewis' book, writing that there is little to be gained from Lewis' lack of concreteness in *What Went Wrong?* due to his analysis that things "went wrong" in an "ambiguously defined Islamic 'world'" whereas in the West things "went right." The work "lends itself to the current penchant for 'imperial hubris'" (Aydin 2004, 91). Lewis seems to be unable to grasp the value that would come from a dialogue with Islamic intellectuals and a viewpoint that comes from within the community being studied.

Foucault and Said argue that discourses such as Lewis' are possible because of the productive capabilities of language. Said wants his readers to understand how flawed discourses become an acceptable way of thinking because of the positions of superiority behind them, and then use this understanding to challenge its status as natural or acceptable. Lewis and other Orientalists use their assumed position of superiority to create a way of understanding and

thinking about Near Eastern peoples. Their rhetoric is given credence due to their position of authority, and it becomes what is acknowledged as truth. Just as Foucault challenges his readers to question what they have accepted as knowledge, truth, and even history, Said challenges his readers to question the constructed knowledge of Orientalists such as Lewis.

Said argues against the constructed knowledge of Orientalism because that knowledge is informed by generalizations that then go on to become commonly used stereotypes. Said argues that Orientalism created a veritable plethora of dogmatic and stereotypical language concerning the Middle East and Islam. It is this lazy and lacking intellectualism, or “seductive degradation of knowledge,” that Said warns against. As described above, this knowledge led Westerners to believe they had authority over the Orient and the Oriental. When understanding comes from a single-vantage point, it is going to be distorted, which is one of Said’s many descriptions of Orientalism’s flaws.

Orientalism’s lasting influence on the Occident’s picture of the Middle East has resulted in “critical thinking and individual wrestling with the problems of the modern world simply [dropping] out of sight. Orthodoxy and dogma rule instead” (Said 1979, xxviii). Said is administering a critique with these statements that goes beyond the scope of Orientalism. He argues that the West has a habit of creating “others” and constructing social realities that derive from vantage points of superiority. As such, Said was correct in his notion that “Orientalism is—and does not simply represent—a considerable dimension of modern political-intellectual culture, and as such has less to do with the Orient than it does with ‘our world’” (Said 1979, 12). This critique of “our world” is reinforced by the American anti-immigration discourse’s rhetoric regarding third-world immigrants.

The discursive formation of the anti-immigration rhetoric is possible due to the same functions of discourse that allowed for the creation of the Orient. Authors such as Huntington and Buchanan assume positions of authority in the discussion on immigration and go on to create their own social reality to fit their motivations of preserving their concept of what America is, should be, and always has been. The anti-immigration discourse is devoted to making and perpetuating generalizations about Latino immigrants, in particularly Mexicans. The use of stereotypes, generalizations, and “othering” show that what the anti-immigration discourse offers is in fact an orientalizing of the immigrant.

In addition, this thesis explores the disdain held by the authors of the anti-immigration discourse for the thought of losing American purity to increasing numbers of immigrants and the policies that they would like to see implemented in order to prevent further disruption to the white, Anglo-Saxon US population. These are the drives behind their discursive formation that Said and Foucault argue must be looked for when analyzing discourse. This thesis argues that after a critique and analysis of the anti-immigration discourse, the reader should readily challenge the discourse’s construction and drives.

Said argued that the West’s generalized and demeaning views of Orientals is applicable to how the West views other peoples as well. This buttresses the argument that this habit of “othering” is a problem stemming from those who believe in highlighting or creating divisions between cultures. Few scholars have done more significant work to point out and reinforce the division of humanity along cultural lines than Samuel Huntington.

## **Chapter 3: The Scholar**

### **Samuel Huntington**

This chapter will offer a critical analysis of the anti-immigration discourse of leading scholar Samuel Huntington. First, this chapter will offer a background to his discourse by exploring his most pertinent works. Secondly, his earlier works will be shown to have heavily influenced the construction of his arguments against the immigration of Hispanics to America. In the final paragraphs, his discourse will be critiqued with the use of Foucault and Said's theories, and will be shown to mirror Said's arguments of "otherness."

Samuel Huntington's works add significantly to the anti-immigration discourse. "For those individuals devoted to waging culture struggles, science wars or religious debates in the United States, the culture crises discussed by Huntington as a clash of civilizations often have proven to be rich rhetorical resources for such culture warriors over the past decade" (Luke 2009, 4). However, in contrast to the other anti-immigration authors, Huntington has always argued for cultural humility (Luke 2009). Huntington did not think it was right to impose our cultural values on the peoples of other nations, as he believed our nation was unique to have our culture--not every civilization was meant to share in our values. The cultures of the different civilizations are non-universal, reinforcing to Huntington that civilizations have no chance to avoid his professed clash, discussed below. "Huntington saw civilization as a clash inasmuch as civilizations are truly unique, exclusive, and particular rather than being inevitably general inclusive, and universal" (Luke 2009, 11). In addition, it is exactly this uniqueness of culture that leads Huntington to argue for such fierce protection of American values. As will be discussed later in this chapter, he argued that we must safeguard American values by preventing immigrants who fail to assimilate and thus changing the US rather than the US changing them.

Those immigrating to America must be willing to leave behind what they had known in their previous home, embrace U.S. values, and transform themselves into the type of citizen needed to carry on America's unique and non-universal culture.

Huntington's most famous work deals with these incompatible cultural values found in different civilizations and espouses the fault lines of the future. Huntington put forth his claims in an article titled "The Clash of Civilizations?" in *Foreign Affairs* (1993) that would later be made into a book. He argues that the fault lines of conflict that are emerging as the most prominent are those among different civilizations. In the past, we have seen great wars waged on behalf of kings and emperors, nation states, and political ideologies. The author theorized that the twenty-first century would see seven or eight civilizations standing apart from one another and being the major source of world and local conflicts. This will occur, he alleged, on both a micro (nations along the fault lines fight for territory and resources) and a macro level (nations belonging to different civilizations struggle against one another for power).

The author argues that the civilization is the highest, largest, or most incorporating level of identity. "It is defined both by common objective elements, such as language, history, religion, customs, institutions, and by the subjective self-identification of people" (Huntington 1993, 24). Huntington's arguments rest completely on his understanding that the differences between civilizations are too basic, too entrenched, and too overwhelming for them to be ignored. The author views the civilizational divide in such a manner that the differences between "us" vs. "them" as experienced by people in separate civilizations are inherent and unavoidable. What Huntington fails to explain are commonalities such as religion, which surpass cultural lines he has drawn. For example, Western civilization still boasts a strong Catholic population, as does the Latin American civilization.

However, Huntington's article makes some profound observations and seems to give great insight into the struggles of our modern globe. He notes the ways in which Turkey is struggling to belong to the Western versus the Arab civilizations, Russia's repeating struggle to define itself in Western or Slavic-Orthodox terms (Putin and Medvedev have made clear it is the latter, but it remains to be seen if this cycle will continue), and how regional trade is being put on a pedestal. Also, fundamentalism has indeed filled in a gap created by the rise of secularism.

There are three issues that need to be critiqued with regard to Huntington's arguments. First, some of the bloodiest situations taking place in the world today are happening within countries or between groups that belong to the same race and same civilization, although with slight religious differences. Huntington allows for these types of situations within a civilization during periods of their initial growth and development; hence, they would not be considered clashes of civilizations. Secondly, there is no reason to believe that all people will react in a similar manner as they are exposed more and more to new cultures. The author argues that when people encounter a new civilization they realize how different they are from the rest of the world, and this realization reinforces their concept of "otherness." I find this to be just the opposite. As one experiences more and more cultures, there is a prevailing sense of a great human commonality present. Globalization, which has increased the interaction between peoples of different culture and civilizations, is shrinking the world and reinforcing the notion that we do indeed have common interests.

Along these same lines lies my third objection to Huntington's argument. He writes, "a civilization is the highest cultural grouping of people and the broadest level of cultural identity people have short of that which distinguishes humans from other species" (Huntington 1993, 24). Recalling Said, it is exactly this type of thinking that allows for distinction and difference. This



position ignores our ability to simply be humans, and, in turn, this can create large conflicts. Said's focus on humanism allowed him to argue against entrapping one's understanding of different peoples in generalizations and using misinformed discourses to speak of them. Huntington's belief that there is no higher unit of analysis than civilizations to hold a group of people together, enables him to ignore the similarities all peoples share by virtue of being human, as well as the differences that exist within civilizations. Ignoring this fact allows Huntington to remain confident that different peoples and civilizations inevitably must come into deep conflict.

A critical analysis of Huntington's discourse, regarding the clash of civilizations, is possible with the use of Foucault and Said's theories. Michel Foucault shows the ways in which discourse enables one to create realities. Foucault also argues that those in positions of power use discourse to create knowledge to reinforce their dominance. In turn, they are concerned with emphasizing divisions between populations to remain in control of their own. Huntington's beliefs allow him to give credibility to his discourse, and those assumptions create a reality in which it can be considered true. In addition, Edward Said discussed the ways in which discourse allows for the creation of misinformed bodies of knowledge regarding others and identifies how certain discursive formations can reinforce perceptions of "us" versus "them." Huntington's theories regarding civilizational clash is a textbook construction of viewing the world in terms of "us" versus "them," emphasizing all that differs between these civilizations and ignoring any commonalities. His discursive formation is based on particular knowledge constructs about these civilizations. This knowledge, Foucault and Said would argue, is not necessarily based on truth. Huntington's views of these civilizations and their peoples/cultural values comes from a view that looks from "the outside in" rather than being based on information gained looking

from “the inside out.” Foucault and Said’s theories show the flaws inherent in Huntington’s discursive formations. Huntington thinks out loud how those in power might delineate between those who belong in civilizations and those who do not. Any policy prescriptions offered by Huntington should be evaluated in light of these flaws. Huntington’s anti-immigration discourse is constructed in the same manner and with the same errors as his discourse regarding civilizational clashes.

“The Clash of Civilizations?” has not been mentioned simply to summarize and critique Huntington. His *Foreign Affairs* article performs two vital functions regarding this thesis. First, it shows the way in which ideas examined by Foucault and Said are applicable to modern theories. Huntington’s arguments are a superb example of how seeing the world in terms of differences influences our suggestions for action. Secondly, this article lays the groundwork for understanding Huntington’s approach to immigration from Latin America to the US.

In two other essays, Samuel Huntington makes clear his opinions on what makes America great, as well as what threatens to tear our country apart by losing the values Americans cherish as a nation, namely, the influx of Mexican immigrants. The first is titled “The Special Case of Mexican Immigration,” and the second, which builds off ideas espoused in the first, is titled “The Hispanic Challenge.” To begin, Huntington describes the settlers who created America as white Protestants. It would be these settlers that would go on to define the creed upon which the United States stands. “Most Americans see the creed as the crucial element of their national identity. The creed, however, was the product of the distinct Anglo-Protestant culture of the founding settlers. Key elements of that culture include the English language;...English concepts of the rule of law...Protestant values of individualism, the work ethic, and the belief that humans

have the ability and the duty to try to create heaven on earth, a ‘city on a hill’” (Huntington 2004a, 31-32).

As more people came from Europe, we became a nation of Christians rather than just Protestants and as time progressed, ethnicity and race would no longer define who was American and who was not. Huntington believes that all persons arriving in the United States understood and embraced our national creed. In fact, our dedication to the rule of law, the rights of the individual, and self-determination all played a role in why they immigrated here. It did not matter where the immigrant came from so long as he embraced the Anglo-Protestant creed that America is built upon.

However, Huntington finds that immigrants from Central and South America are not similar to the immigrants described above. First, the immigrants coming to America from such nations as Ireland, Scandinavia, Poland, Germany, and Italy were (are) interested in melding their cultures with our own. Hispanics, in the author’s opinion, do not wish to lose their cultural values by integrating them with ours; rather they are intent on keeping their heritage distinct. They can do so because of the overwhelming numbers of Hispanic immigrants compared to those of other cultures. For example, their large numbers and high concentration mean they do not always need to learn English and that they will assimilate at a much slower rate. Also the border shared by the US and Mexico, “enables Mexican immigrants to remain in intimate contact with their families, friends, and home localities in Mexico as no other immigrants have been able to do” (Huntington 2004a, 33).

Huntington’s claim regarding the distinction between the desires of Mexican immigrants and immigrants from Europe is not accurate. First, German immigrants from 1880 to 1893 numbered close to 1.8 million when the US population was only around 50 million. This huge

influx can be seen as the reason that over 43 million Americans in the 2000 census claimed German heritage, roughly the same number as those claiming African-American or Mexican roots *combined* (Kulich 2008). Secondly, European immigrants were not as eager to leave behind their language and cultural values as Huntington would have his readers believe. “The same debates that take place today over Latino immigrants and the Spanish language once centered around the German communities, which had their own newspapers, schools, and theatres” (Kulich 2008).

The author poses other distinctions between Mexican immigrants and those coming from other nations. The fertility rate among Hispanics is almost twice as high as the rate of non-Hispanics meaning their presence in the population will soar even without the continued presence of heavy immigration. Huntington also argues, “illegal entry into the United States is overwhelmingly a post-1965 and Mexican phenomenon” (Huntington 2004a, 34). In addition, Huntington fears that, unlike any other immigrating group, Mexicans can assert historical claims to US territory.

Many Hispanics and non-Hispanics desire a more bilingual approach to such things as education and business. Huntington does not equivocate on the dangers of bilingualism. For him, bilingualism means biculturalism, and another culture on American soil can only mean destruction of our way of life and the principles upon which America is built. In an almost desperate tone, he ends his second article with “There is no Americano dream. There is only the American dream created by an Anglo-Protestant society. Mexican Americans will share in that dream and in that society only if they dream in English” (Huntington 2004a, 45). However, as stated above, many immigrants from Europe such as the Germans insisted on holding on to their

language and culture, but with time, they and have come to be seen by Huntington and others, who participate in the anti-immigration rhetoric as integral elements of American culture.

Alan Wolfe reviews Huntington's *Who Are We?*, a book based on the two articles summarized above, in "Native Son: Huntington Defends the Homeland." His critique brings to light many weaknesses in Huntington's arguments. First, Wolfe addresses Huntington's argument that America is built on an Anglo-Protestant tradition. He points out that "there really is no such thing as the Protestant religion; there are many Protestant sects whose ideas on everything from scriptural authority to the role of the liturgy are in conflict. If religion shapes identity, the United States has had many identities because it has had so many religions" (Wolfe 2004, 121). Wolfe also argues that Huntington's point that Mexicans and Mexican Americans make claims over US territory has little to no basis in fact. With regard to Huntington's problems with the lack of or slow assimilation of Mexicans, this author notes that many of these immigrants are willing to fight on behalf of the US, which is the ultimate patriotic gesture.

The most important statement made by Wolfe, however, regards Huntington's tone. Ever the realist, Huntington was expected to have brought forth the issues, both good and bad, of Mexican immigration. However, "he eschews realistic treatment of American History in favor of romantic nostalgia for Anglo-Protestant culture" (Wolfe 2004, 121). Huntington replies to Wolfe's critique in "Getting Me Wrong" that such a comment reflects a misunderstanding of the author's writings. Huntington states that "so long as Americans, whatever their race, religion, or ethnicity, continue to embrace America's founding Anglo-Protestant culture," then our nation will continue to be the country we all love (Huntington 2004b, 156). Unfortunately, this attempt to play up his acceptance of all races, religions, and ethnicities still leaves Huntington with the

severe distinctions he makes between those who accept our culture, or real Americans, and those who do not, or the “others.”

Huntington approaches the debate over immigration from Central and South America by creating a discourse of “us” versus “them,” which is the same discourse he uses in “The Clash of Civilizations?” and the same discourse admonished by Said. This interpretation allows him to state, “the invasion of over 1 million Mexican civilians is a comparable threat to American societal security, and Americans should react against it with comparable vigor” (Huntington 2000, 22). This is the same discourse that allows Bernard Lewis to ponder, “Dealing with the outsider who remains outside is a comparatively simple matter. Far more difficult is the case of the outsider who becomes part of our community, whether by conquest or by immigration, and yet wishes to retain his “otherness.” How do we deal with...the alien who accepts citizenship but does not fully share our identity?” (Lewis 1998, 19). And it is the discourse that allows Huntington to answer that, for the sake of our own identity, we should approach such immigrants as a threat to our society.

What one gathers from Huntington’s works is his preference for discourses that describe world conflict as being rooted in the differences between identities rather than differences between ideologies. His focus is on the question of “who are we” rather than on “what do we believe.” Huntington’s anti-immigration discourse relies on pronouncing the differences between who immigrants are and who real Americans are. These differences between real Americans who embrace the Anglo-Protestant creed and immigrants are based on Huntington’s personal assumptions and generalizations, not on an ultimate, scientifically proven truth about the threat that Latino immigration poses.

Said and Foucault's theories show how discourses such as Huntington's develop, and they both have critiqued such discursive formations. Huntington is concerned for America's threatened majority, as he would fall into that demographic. The population of which he is a part is developing into something he only recognizes as different. Huntington's view of the differences between Latino and white America arises from the distinctions of "us" versus "them" in "othering" as described by Said. While Said argues that it is physical distance between peoples that allows for us to develop our sense of "us" and "them", it is obvious in this case that distance is secondary to the mind-set of "there" versus "here." Huntington repeatedly draws lines between those who belong and those who do not, whether those lines demark civilizations, national borders, or cultural differences. Huntington is ultimately concerned with controlling the immigration problem to protect our national identity because his worldview underscores how demography creates our differences with everyone else. His Orientalist approach mischaracterizes Mexican immigrants, makes unsubstantiated generalizations, and creates an atmosphere of fear for our culture and creed.

Huntington's discourse constructs a reality that reflects his limited knowledge with regards to Latino immigrants, one that is not based on an accurate understanding of immigrants. His knowledge is formed through a position of assumed superiority. This position of superiority allows Huntington to mischaracterize the "other," in this case, Latinos. As Foucault and Said argued long before Huntington took up the question of immigration, highlighting the differences between peoples is a tool used by those in power to control their populations. It is clear that Huntington believes that Latinos will be unable to preserve America's unique cultural values unless they discard their identity and embrace that of the Anglo-Protestants who founded the country.

The anti-immigration discourse that disseminates such mischaracterizations, over-generalizations, and fears in our country is not just limited to those who work in academia. It also extends to elected officials and activists, among others. These two intertwined groups are the focus of the next chapter where the arguments of former Representative Tom Tancredo and various PACs and political activist organizations will be analyzed.



## **Chapter 4: The Politician, PACs, and Political Activist Organizations**

Former Representative Tom Tancredo expounds upon many of the threats allegedly facing our nation in his book titled *In Mortal Danger*. His concerns can be organized into two categories: first, the physical security for our nation due to our porous borders, and second, the fabric of American culture. This chapter will look at both of these concerns in depth and then provide a critique of Tancredo's discourse of otherness. In addition, it will look at the discourses and involvement of such groups as the Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR), Team America PAC, and the Center for Immigration Studies.

### **Former Representative Tom Tancredo**

There is nothing more important to the success of a nation than protecting its identity: that is, what it stands for, its history, and its culture. For Tom Tancredo, America is caught in a serious identity crisis. As a former civics teacher, Tancredo is appalled by the lack of pride in America he sees in high school students today. For example, when he asks a group of students if they believe they live in the greatest nation on earth, often only a few hands go up. Tancredo laments, "I know what happened was not unique to this suburban school in my district. I could have asked that question in any high school in America, and the response would have been similar: tepid, sheepish support, with most people saying, I don't know, I don't care, and what difference does it make?...This is a 'conditional response,' meaning it is a response these kids have been taught" (Tancredo 2006, 39-42). Although Tancredo agrees that all nations and their governments make mistakes, the idea that America is not the greatest nation earth is preposterous to him. He blames the narratives in school textbooks and liberal professors who only teach young adults about the things our nation has done wrong, rather than all those it has done right. Although he provides no evidence, Tancredo laments how instead of feeling overwhelming

sadness and pride on 9-11, students across America blamed our nation for the terrorists' actions that day. "Instead of the shock, horror, and outrage expressed by most other Americans, the attacks seemed to evoke a perverse sense of gratification in many colleges and universities" (Tancredo 2006, 43). Without a sense of pride in our history and government, the fabric of American culture will be torn apart.

Tancredo believes examples of how our students are being taught a distorted version of our nation's history are abundant. One such example he mentions with particular fervor (as does Buchanan who is featured later in this thesis) has to do with Christopher Columbus. Columbus Day celebrations are being cancelled in many localities in order to accommodate Native American festivals. In addition, certain textbooks Tancredo has examined have the same amount of space dedicated to teaching young children about who discovered our country as is given to Cesar Chavez. Tancredo argues that Native American culture and history deserves to be taught and celebrated, but not at the expense of Columbus. In that same vein, he finds Chavez's fight admirable, but not deserving of the same amount of class time as the man who discovered the new world. In his view, these are just examples of how our nation's history is being underplayed in order for schools to be considered politically correct. All of this change comes at the expense of our nation's solidarity in Tancredo's opinion.

This lack of understanding when it comes to accomplishments that have shaped the world extends beyond America to Western civilization. The former Congressman from Colorado is stunned to find that many of the students he meets all over the nation do not comprehend how Western civilization changed the world. Tancredo's comment of "When they open the gates all over the world, people run in one direction: to Western civilization and to its epitome, the United States" (Tancredo 2006, 39) shows how much significance the author ascribes to the West and its

values. Thus Tancredo laments that many colleges and universities no longer require courses on Western civilization to be taken in order to appease multiculturalists. Without a firm belief in what America and Western civilization brings to the world, how will these students know why its values must be defended as it comes under attack?

Tancredo argues that we are already under attack. Indeed, he is a firm believer in Huntington's theory regarding the clash of civilizations. After 9-11, Tancredo re-read *Clash of Civilizations* by Samuel Huntington and found it to be "profound and prophetic" (Tancredo 2006, 65). America, the epicenter of Western civilization, had become an object of hatred for an extreme sect of Islam and a target of terrorism. This indicates to Tancredo that our civilizations are indeed at war. However, rather than using anything of substance from Huntington's theory, Tancredo merely uses the idea of civilizational clashes in order to make the argument that the Islamic world wishes to destroy the West. While Tancredo maintains throughout this section of the book that we are at war with what he calls "Islamofascism," he easily expands from this argument into those that would purport Western civilization is clashing with all Muslims and all Islamic nations by writing such things as "the basic tenets and characteristics of Islam are a cause for concern" (Tancredo 2006, 67). He quotes Winston Churchill, "Far from being moribund, Mahommedanism is a militant and proselytizing faith...raising fearless warriors at every step..." (Tancredo 2006, 66).

This war being fought between "the West and the rest" would return Western civilization to the dark ages should we loose as this war is being fought by the portion of Islamic religion "that has been married to a political philosophy that says all nonbelievers must be annihilated, abolished, eliminated" (Tancredo 2006, 66). To avoid this, we must "see the 'coalition of the

willing' form to fight the battle of civilizations in which I believe we are engaged. If only we all understood that it is a fight to the death" (Tancredo, 2006; 69).

Besides the war that is being waged against America by terrorists, there is also an "all-out war the intolerant (under the guise of toleration) are waging on Western civilization itself" (Tancredo 2006, 25). Tancredo believes that the reason behind the lack of knowledge of our country's and Western civilization's accomplishments among young people today is "the cult of multiculturalism."

For several years there has been a rise in the influence of a self-destructive belief and behavior system I call the 'cult' of multiculturalism—a subtle but potent shift in the attitudes espoused by many Americans. It is so pervasive it now permeates every segment of our society...This cult has been transformed...to one that degrades and debases our uniquely American culture as well as Western civilization in general (Tancredo 2006, 37).

Tancredo argues that the worst part in trying to fight the "cult of multiculturalism" is that its "members" have "shamed their critics into silence" and "their biggest worshipers have obviously infested institutions that most influence the direction of our educational institutions" (Tancredo 2006, 48). According to the former congressman, this cult is made up of all the teachers, professors, librarians, politicians, and leaders who choose not just to impart knowledge of diversity, but who wish to see multiculturalism replace American culture. Tancredo does not deny the advantages of having a diverse society where everyday life is enriched with such things as different art, music, and food from other parts of the world. Nor does he think it unreasonable that immigrants would want to pass on their native tongue by having it spoken in their home. What he is concerned with is the "current politically motivated drive to enshrine diversity as a goal that requires and demands a change in the fundamental American values that govern *our* civic institutions" (Tancredo 2006, 34).

In bemoaning current historical content taught in colleges and high-school by those Tancredo argues belong to the “cult of multiculturalism,” he works at constructing a reality where his arguments can be considered truth. This reality is one where a lack of pride in the young men and women of America is causing our country to suffer from an identity crisis, which is leading our country down a dangerous path. Tancredo’s discourse assumes that there is little to no benefit to be gained by a multicultural approach to life and learning simply because of the allegedly superior stature of the American culture to the cultures of “others.” It is clear that Tancredo wishes to construct a knowledge regarding the danger posed to American culture and civic institutions by multiculturalism. Unfortunately, the legitimacy of Tancredo’s opinions and their acceptance as knowledge is only enhanced by his presumed position of authority on the subject as a former member of Congress.

In addition, Tancredo’s discourse relies on creating a certain awareness of the differences between the Islamic world and the United States. His discourse uses generalizations to paint a picture of Muslims as the “other.” In addition, Tancredo’s discursive approaches use intensely negative values associated with terrorism and war to increase the importance of his claims. For him, Americans must regain their sense of identity or face destruction at the hands of multiculturalists and Islamic fundamentalists. His discourse is one that deepens his construction of these two groups as the “others.”

Tancredo also argues against the “cult of multiculturalism” as “cult practitioners do things to deemphasize our society’s uniqueness, such as working against any effort to officially adopt a common language” (Tancredo 2006, 27). This battle over language is one of the most important to the former congressman because he firmly believes that bilingualism will bring ruin to our nation. Tancredo recites John Stuart Mill, underscoring that Mill did not believe that a

representative government could exist in a country where the residents read and spoke different languages because they would not have a common sympathy.

What is most illogical to Tancredo in regards to those who support bilingualism is the fact that many Hispanics speak both English and Spanish. The idea that states impose the requirement upon schools and public institutions to print documents in multiple languages and hire only those who are bilingual is unnecessarily complicated and causes undue costs. He claims that those really in need of having everything translated are illegal aliens, and there is no reason for our country to be spending tax dollars to accommodate those who are in our country by means of breaking our laws. For example, those in charge of the Denver Public Libraries are replacing sections of their current selections, which are in English, to expand the number of Spanish language selections. Tancredo finds this an outrage inasmuch as we are encouraging bilingualism among those who would most benefit from learning English, i.e. our new-comers. Describing Denver Public Libraries plan to become more bilingual, Tancredo writes, “a naïve observer might assume that a ‘bilingual library’ is one designed to help Spanish-speaking immigrants become *bilingual* – that is, to learn English...The simple truth is that each step taken...diminishes the incentives to learn English, a skill all immigrants need in order to advance economically in our country and to become full participants in civil life” (Tancredo 2006, 58-59). In addition, Tancredo argues that this change of selections purposefully minimizes the libraries’ ability to serve its English-speaking and taxpaying residents. Americans should not be encouraging bilingualism because it affects our nation’s cohesiveness. Tancredo argues, “This ‘disuniting’ phenomenon is growing rapidly in our country. You can see it in the way we balkanize and divide ourselves into cultural and ethnic subgroups of hyphenated Americans” (Tancredo 2006, 29).

Tancredo's rhetoric regarding bilingualism is replete with misinformation. As noted in the previous chapter, Spanish speaking immigrants from Latin America are not the first immigrants that have come to America wishing to hold on to their native tongue. For example, German immigrants went to great lengths to preserve the use of their language from schools to newspapers (Kulish, 2008). These types of misinformed arguments regarding the consequences of bilingualism have been seen time and again in America, and are simply tools used by those in power to deepen their constructs of "otherness" and retain their position of superiority. Tancredo, an English-speaker, certainly holds no influence over those Spanish-speakers who understand nothing of what he says. The discourses of those in power cannot manage the minds of those who speak another language and who cannot attach the same meanings or values as those in power would like. These anxieties underscore why the "threat" of bilingualism resurfaces again and again in the writings of the anti-immigration authors with such fervor.

As mentioned above, Tancredo argues that Americans are in an identity crisis. Americans must know what our values are, what we believe in, and be passionate about the principles we embody. If we do not know who we are, Americans will lose to the terrorists who know exactly what they are fighting for. Consequently, Americans must teach those who are new to our country and our children all about our country's history and principles so they will know America should be valued. If this is not the case, Tancredo argues, we will certainly meet our nation's end. One of the central ways to avoid this end would be to close our borders. This policy would prevent terrorists from finding their way into our country, stop those who reject American laws from entering illegally, and quell the influx of those who refuse to assimilate. Controlling America's weak borders, along with other immigration problems facing America, are discussed in the second portion of Tancredo's book. Here Tancredo's discursive approaches

use “othering” to create questionable positions concerning the threats immigrants pose to Americans and our values.

When considering other threats from immigration, Tancredo argues that what really is keeping America’s borders porous is a lack of backbone on behalf of our elected officials. Democrats do nothing about immigration because “their ambiguities turn into votes,” and Republicans do nothing because they believe businesses and consumers benefit from cheap labor. Tancredo insists that he never saw many political donations from American businesses because they need illegal immigrants for cheap labor. By the same token, he speaks out against this practice, because it denies jobs to American citizens. If politicians decided to put America’s security before interest groups, Tancredo has no doubts that we could secure our borders.

We have the necessary technology, combined with human resources, to secure our borders tomorrow. It is a canard for politicians to say it’s impossible and that we must figure out a different way to defend America rather than defending our borders. What they are really saying is: I choose not to defend and secure our borders because there are political ramifications that I fear. It is those fears that put the life of every American citizen in mortal danger (Tancredo 2006, 110).

This is another example of Tancredo assigning life and death values to immigration issues in an effort to ensure his readers take his arguments seriously and accept it as knowledge.

It has already been discussed that the former representative believes that our country is facing a grave threat from terrorism, which is aided by our relatively open borders. However, Tancredo goes on to expound further about the security issues we face along our border with Mexico. Criminal activity, gangs, drugs and human trafficking are all out of control in his opinion. The Mexican government hardly seems as though it is a true partner in maintaining border security when multiple Mexican military incursions cross over our borders in breach of



our laws (indicating a lack of respect for our border on a governmental level), as well as when Congress has been presented with proof of government-issued maps and information as to how successfully navigate treacherous areas on our side of the border. Tancredo argues that the lack of help from our southern neighbor only increases the number of illegal immigrants coming to the US each year.

The author faults amnesty as another reason illegal immigration numbers continue to increase. The immigration amnesty provided in 1986 worsened our illegal immigration problems as it rewarded illegal behavior. Any proposed “guest worker” program would have the same result. Giving someone the ability to live and work in America after they broke our laws will only weaken respect for those laws and increase illegal behavior. In addition, illegal immigrants should have the same rights as citizens, because that shared status then renders citizenship meaningless. Tancredo does not dismiss the culpability of American employers, and does not believe they should not have the benefit of immigrant labor after making jobs so readily available for those who have illegally entered our country.

Tancredo holds that illegal immigration does not just pose a threat to our national security, it also has a serious impact on our economy and environment. He argues that because many immigrants are uneducated and come from poverty, they use a disproportionate amount of government aid. Often health insurance is beyond their reach, meaning that the cost of health care for these individuals is an extremely large burden on American taxpayers. Because the US must make public education accessible to illegal immigrants of school age, many states have been unable to keep up with funding needs (everything from classrooms, to teachers, to textbooks). This decreases the quality of education to all children involved. In addition, taxpayers also pay to incarcerate illegal immigrants who lead a criminal lifestyle.

As many of the authors discussed in this thesis will mention, cheap labor has an economic downside for our economy. “Economists have repeatedly asserted that increased illegal immigration continues to have a massive wage-depreciating effect on US labor markets, leading to poorer pay and fewer benefits overall for American workers” (Tancredo 2006, 159). Often those most effected by this trend, are working-class U.S. citizens who already struggle economically. The overall cost of illegal immigration is too great for some to condone. “When all taxes are paid and all costs are considered, illegal households created a net fiscal deficit of ten billion dollars in 2002” (Tancredo 2006, 161).

In the above paragraphs, Tancredo makes arguments against immigration by portraying immigrants as uneducated, poor, costly, law-breaking miscreants, who are harming our country’s infrastructure, while endangering our population by allowing terrorists a route into America. This portrayal does not fully inform the reader as Tancredo leaves out information regarding how immigrants in the past were viewed and any benefits today’s immigrants bring to the U.S.A. These issues are more fully discussed in this thesis’ last chapter, however, it is important to note the ways in which Tancredo’s discourse employs these stereotypes of immigrants to further his arguments. Said admonished the use of generalizations and stereotypes that come from faulty knowledge acquired from a position of superiority.

Tancredo tries to further his readers’ readiness for action against immigration by calling out those who would consider immigration a significant enough benefit to do away with what border security our nation does have. Considering the costs of illegal immigration to both security and our economy, according to Tancredo, the attitude that someday our nation’s borders should cease to exist puts advocates of strong borders at odds with leaders such as President Bush and Mexican President Vincente Fox. Tancredo quotes Fox as announcing a “second phase of

NAFTA where in five to ten years that border will be open to the free flow of people, workers, transiting the border between our two countries, same as we're doing with products and merchandise" (Tancredo 2006, 143). Tancredo also argues against President Bush's efforts to take NAFTA to a new level. "He is going to do what he can to create a place where the idea of America is just that—it's an idea. It's not an actual place defined by borders" (Kovacs 2006, under "Bush Doesn't Think America Should Be An Actual Place"). The former congressman from Colorado would have his readers believe that any success on behalf of the movement to decrease the status of our national borders would lead to catastrophic security issues and additional unbearable burdens on our country.

Again, Tancredo's rhetoric is meant to delineate the threat immigrants and those who support them pose to our nation, in this case our national sovereignty. Each example the author uses plays a role in Tancredo's efforts to paint immigrants as the "other" and create a world in which his arguments constitute knowledge on the subject of immigration. These serve the purpose of maintaining a power structure in which Tancredo holds sway.

In review, Former Representative Tom Tancredo argues for a nation that is bound together by a common identity and for an America that protects itself from threats of terrorism, drugs, and severe economic burdens through border security. These are rational and admirable goals for any nation. However, a critical discourse analysis of Tancredo must point out weaknesses in his arguments as well as explore the underlying issues the former congressman would do well to hide to make more factual contributions to the immigration debate.

First, Tancredo must decide whether he is only against illegal immigration or immigration as a whole. It seems as though Tancredo often endorses the latter. "The problem is that strong words without strong action will not keep America safe from outside threats. And it won't keep

America safe from the internal threats building from so much immigration” (Tancredo 2006, 199). He claims, “This newer, post-modern wave of immigrants isn’t assimilating into our culture because, unlike their predecessors, they have adopted a kind of parasitic approach to the United States. They simply want to attach themselves to their American host and feed off it while maintaining their native identities and cultures...which means they aren’t interested in contributing to society, either” (Tancredo 2006, 203). Tancredo need not employ a rhetoric that creates such a negative picture of the immigrant if he were only against illegal immigration.

In addition, during his bid to become the Republican presidential nominee, Tancredo highlighted his immigration reform background to set himself apart from others seeking the nomination, like Senator John McCain. However, while doing so, Tancredo would often speak to the problems immigration poses to our national identity, not just to the dangers or security concerns of illegal immigration. For example, during the Republican Presidential Debate on CNN, Tancredo argued that the effects of immigration are:

Incredible, and they are disastrous. We're not just talking about the number of jobs that we may be losing or the number of kids that are in our schools and impacting our school system or the number of people that are abusing our hospital system and taking advantage of the welfare system in this country. We're not just talking about that. We're talking about something that goes to the very heart of this nation: whether or not we will actually survive as a nation....What we're doing here in this immigration battle is testing our willingness to actually hold together as a nation or split apart into a lot of balkanized pieces (Cable News Network, 2007).

Comments that deal with identity and specifically “who Americans are” versus “who immigrants are” do not focus on the factual issues of immigration. Rather they are flawed constructions that Foucault and Said warn against.

Tancredo's tirades against multiculturalism do nothing to support his arguments. "To be successful, we have to shun the language and thinking of the true anti-American racists and bigots who pose as patriots: the multiculturalists" (Tancredo 2006, 205). Such rhetoric takes respectability out of his work. In addition, the author refuses to acknowledge the benefits multiculturalism can have by trying to rewrite the American history he claims to so dearly love. He argues, "The stated purpose of this cultist movement [the cult of multiculturalism]—that it is necessary to foster "tolerance"—has nothing to do with accepting other cultures. Americans have always done that and will continue to do it" (Tancredo 2006, 46). Anyone remotely aware of US history cannot claim that tolerance for such groups as Native Americans, African-Americans, and homosexuals has always been (or is now) a reality. Tancredo's efforts to rewrite history are examples of how he is using discourse to construct a new reality where his opinions and arguments are respected as knowledge.

The author makes other glaring missteps throughout his writings including those concerning the Islamic religion. A comment such as "Muslims believe they must spread the word by mouth and sword" (Tancredo 2006, 65), is a terribly incorrect generalization that put America at odds with a great many countries, including allies. Tancredo angers over the fact that "in today's world, by contrast, Americans traveling abroad are encouraged to conceal their citizenship. They are concerned about becoming the targets of attacks while visiting foreign countries" (Tancredo 2006, 193). He should be aware that rhetorical assertions such as his are often the problem. This includes arguments favoring the fact that our nation has such a small percentage of the world's population, but consumes such a large percentage of the world's resources. For Tancredo, this is not a bad thing—rather, it means that we are successful (Tancredo 2006, 38). Such generalizations are heavily critiqued by Said. Just as those from the

Occident mischaracterized and lumped all Near Eastern peoples into the category of Orientals, Tancredo and other anti-immigration authors employ stereotypes of Latino immigrants. This significantly overstates the immigrants' role in creating an unsafe atmosphere in our country from Islamic terrorists, who are characterized in much too general strokes by Tancredo.

Tom Tancredo's arguments would be strengthened if he could avoid the underlying disgust he has for immigrants belonging to this new wave versus the one that brought his Italian ancestors to America. Immigration, especially illegal immigration, can be a burden on our local, state, and federal governments. A porous border should not be acceptable due to the security risks it poses to our nation in the form of such things as drug and human trafficking. Making these arguments does not require pointing out all the differences between immigrants and US citizens. Nor does it require the assertion that their presence is Balkanizing our country or creating Third World cities in America. Those positions, which are clearly meant to delineate between "us" and "them," are claims in which Tancredo seems to relish. Enhancing the constructs of the "other" is employed time and again by Tancredo throughout his work.

Tom Tancredo is prepared to fight a political battle against anyone, Republican or Democrat, to make sure the individuals elected to Congress understand these differences in the ways he does and what is at stake for our country. To do so, he has created a Political Action Committee that will be discussed below along with other organizations who subscribe to the anti-immigration discourse. The discussion below will also highlight the ties that exist between the leaders of the anti-immigration discourse and these organizations. Whether it is Pat Buchanan's sister running Tancredo's PAC, or the posting of Brimelow or Huntington's writings as "must reads," these groups are heavily intertwined. In addition to their other functions, these

organizations serve as a vehicle for the dissemination of the authors' anti-immigration rhetoric to the public.

### **PACs and Political Activist Organizations**

There are many groups designed to organize activists who believe mass immigration is detrimental to the US. Such groups look toward growing membership numbers and polling in order to influence the voting habits of elected officials, as well as their discourse on the topic. Often they do their own research on the issue and can boast of frequent testimony in front of the US Congress. Many of these PACs and activist organizations rely on the same flawed discourses as the authors analyzed in this thesis. The rhetoric of these groups is misinformed and exhibits a lack of understanding concerning immigrants and the consequences surrounding high immigration. Such rhetoric deepens the sense of “us” versus “them”, or rather Americans versus immigrants, among the organizations' members and anyone else the groups are able to influence. Their discourses require knowledge-constructs in order to create a reality in which their statements can be considered truthful.

FAIR, or Federation for American Immigration Reform is one such group. FAIR speaks regularly in front of Congress regarding the immigration issue, and their publications are also used in preparing new legislation and they frequently participate in national media stories/reporting. FAIR is the nation's largest immigration reform organization. Like many of these groups, they are non-partisan and consider themselves a grassroots network for people of all political ideologies to voice their concerns about the negative impact mass immigration is having on issues such as education, the environment, crime, and health care (Federation for American Immigration Reform, under “About FAIR”).

Information from FAIR refers to the high numbers of polled Americans who wish to see “true comprehensive immigration reform,” which is code talk for those who follow the anti-immigration rhetoric. They contrast their principles of immigration reform with those that are deceptively peddled by the immigration lobby (i.e. mass guest worker programs or amnesty). In order to showcase the difference between what most Americans believe is “pro-reform” versus that which many politicians and special interest groups have tried to wrap in reform language, FAIR delineates their seven principles for immigration reform on their website (Federation for American Immigration Reform, under “7 Principles of True Comprehensive Immigration Reform”).

First, any comprehensive immigration reform would cut the numbers of immigrants. Illegal immigration must be at zero and legal immigration should be drastically cut. Any effort to provide amnesty or a mass guest-worker program should be cast aside according to their second principle. Illegal immigration increased after the amnesty provided in 1986 because it weakened respect for our immigration laws. “Guest-worker” programs are amnesty by another name. Thirdly, immigration policy should reflect the need of the US to protect its citizens that are already struggling. The entrance of unskilled immigrants into the labor pool undermines and prevents such citizens from being able to improve their wages and working conditions.

The fourth principle of FAIR’s comprehensive immigration reform calls for tougher penalties for employers who knowingly hire illegal workers. Employers need to be cut off from the low-wage labor market provided by immigrants so that they have to raise wages to reach a standard that would bring back US employees. If employers raise wages and still see a labor shortage, FAIR would then consider a short-term worker program to meet their needs. Next, FAIR advocates for a return to, what in the organization’s opinion is, the rightful meaning



behind the terms “refugee” and “asylum” in order to stop current abuses of our system. Cutting legal immigration numbers to 300,000 after a significant time of absolutely no-immigrants is the sixth principle. Our country, its infrastructure and its public institutions need a chance to balance out the mass immigration they have dealt with in the past. After the immigration time-out, we should never again allow immigration to pose such a threat to our country’s viability.

Finally, FAIR recognizes the need for there to be a completely blind immigration policy, meaning that there should be no preference or bias towards any person based on race, color, creed, or nationality. FAIR seems to live up to its acronym in regards to its policies. Each principle of reform is based on the conclusions of the research they have conducted. However, this last principle of a color-blind immigration policy raises a concern. Is the actual goal of the principle to endorse an open immigration policy regarding race, country, and creed or is the goal a way to say there should be less Mexican immigrants? Only those belonging to the group can answer that question, however, if it were the latter, FAIR would not be the first organization concerned with the impact the number of Mexican immigrants arriving in the US is having on the identity of our people. Such questions are supported by information such as FAIR having received over 1.5 million dollars from the Pioneer Fund, a non-profit scientific organization, which focuses on eugenics and the differences in humanity based on such things as race (Pioneer Fund, under “Controversies”).

FAIR’s website does not provide links to locations or citations of where the organization has gathered their supporting evidence for their seven principles of reform. This points to the organization’s reliance on knowledge-constructs. Just as the authors analyzed in this thesis often use their discourse to create knowledge regarding the immigration issue, so too do the activist organizations such as the Team America PAC.

Team America PAC founder Tom Tancredo underscores that there is one reason and one reason only for his political action committee. To recruit, give money to, and help elect people running for office “who are committed to enforcing our laws and securing our borders” and who oppose amnesty for illegal aliens. At times this even means recruiting a candidate to run against an incumbent Republican (Tancredo is a lifelong member of the party). Bay Buchanan, sister of Patrick Buchanan, runs the PAC along with Tancredo. Bay writes, “We must take this battle [of securing our borders] to the ballot box and defeat those who are selling out our country” (Team America PAC, under “About Us”). Bay Buchanan’s rhetoric is meant to assign negative values to any politician who takes a different stance on immigration than the one endorsed by those who participate in the anti-immigration discourse such as Tancredo. She would have voters consider it to be knowledge that any politician who does not fully oppose the immigration of Latinos to the US via our southern border is “selling out our country.”

On their website, Team America PAC references other sites to visit including ALIPAC, Center for Immigration Studies, FAIR, and VDARE. ALIPAC, or Americans for Legal Immigration, is “dedicated to supporting candidates who make illegal immigration reduction a top priority” (Americans for Legal Immigration, under “Mission Statement”). ALIPAC also seeks to educate lawmakers, the public, and the media on the negative impact of illegal immigration.

The Center for Immigration Studies is another non-partisan, non-profit research organization that exclusively explored the impacts of immigration on the US. “It is the Center’s mission to expand the base of public knowledge and understanding of the need for an immigration policy that gives first concern to the broad national interest. The Center is animated by a pro-immigrant, low-immigration vision which seeks fewer immigrants but a warmer

welcome for those admitted” (Center for Immigration Studies, under “About Us”). CIS holds think tanks in order to discuss immigration issues such as immigration and the labor market. In one such event, co-hosted by the Center for Public Policy and Contemporary Issues, Virginia Abernathy was a participant (Center for Immigration Studies 1994). This is only notable as she is a self-proclaimed white “separatist.”

Self-proclaimed white “separatists” such as Dr. Abernathy are welcomed speakers at the Council of Conservative Citizens, a group that is described in further detail below. However, it should come as quite a shock that Wayne Lutton, a well-known and respected figure to mainstream participants of the discourse, would attend such a group’s event let alone speak along side Dr. Abernathy (Southern Poverty Law Center 2004). In addition, one would not expect such a happenstance as Lutton is the editor of the journal published by foremost anti-immigration think tank, *The Social Contract*. However, Leonard Zeskind delved into Lutton’s background and found that he is a “trustee of the New Century Foundation, the corporate shell holding a think tank known as American Renaissance, an advocate of both scientific racism and white nationalism” (Zenskind 2005, A15).

Sam Francis was a member of the Council of Conservative Citizens National Board of Directors before he passed away in 2005. Shortly before his death he authored a statement of principles that was unanimously adopted by the National Board (Council of Conservative Citizens, under “Statement of Principles”). These “fundamental principles of American civilization, liberty, justice, and national safety” include many fundamentally racist views. For example, “We believe the United States is a European country and Americans are part of the European people.” They oppose the mass immigration of non-Europeans and will fight any attempt to transform our population from our European composition and character. The Council

of Conservative Citizens also opposes the mixing of any races, hate crime laws, and multicultural education. While these principles are not standard among the mainstream anti-immigration discourse, why did Patrick Buchanan, a heavily followed voice in the immigration debate, agree to write the forward to Sam Francis' book, *Shots Fired?* It seems as though any person desiring the debate on immigration to be based in fact and lack any racist undertones would never condone the Council of Conservative Citizens or Sam Francis.

Foucault's discussion of bio-power is remarkably relevant to the likes of Abernathy and Sam Francis, and their various affiliations. Even in the case of these seemingly mainstream organizations there are underlying ties to people or ideas that endorse the superior nature of the white population. Foucault argues that the desire of those in power to organize and maintain their population because it is the base of their power can become extremely dangerous when it develops into ethnic cleansing or genocide. Those who advocate the superior nature of the white race or for white separatism head down a very disturbing and, what could ultimately be, a very dangerous path of thinking.

Organizations such as the Alliance for a Sustainable USA and local groups such as the Colorado Alliance for Immigration Reform, are concerned with the effects population growth is having on America's resources. AS-USA promotes replacement level fertility (an average of 2 children per couple) and replacement level immigration (200,000 immigrants per year) (Alliance for a Sustainable USA, under "Mission Statement and Platform"). CAIR calls for a limit on legal immigration of 100,000 per year, and believes that "humanity has been migrating for 10,000 years. All countries are nations of immigrants. At approximately 300 million people, America is now full, and it makes no sense to double US population once again [as predicted in this century]" (Colorado Alliance for Immigration Reform, under "About CAIR").

As is evidenced by their own statements, these organizations ascribe to a discourse that sees the immigrant as a threat. Whether it is a threat to our national security, economy, resources, race, or culture, they exist to fight for a solution to the problem of immigration. The leading organization, FAIR, suggests several books for further reading by authors who will highlight and reinforce the threats that immigrants pose. The works of two such authors, Peter Brimelow and Patrick Buchanan, are discussed in the following chapter. Before moving on to these authors, however, this thesis must underscore the intermixing of politicians such as Tancredo, anti-immigration organizations described above, and mainstream anti-immigration discourse participants with white nativists. The anti-immigration discourse would gain significantly from separating themselves from proponents of nativism not just in statements, but also in deed.

More than 400 anti-immigration activists gathered in Las Vegas over Memorial Day weekend to bemoan President Bush's failure to close the borders...As evidenced by events in Las Vegas, a single—but not seamless—web connects ideological white supremacists, armed vigilantes, nativist think tanks, political actions committees, and Republican Party officeholders in an anti-immigrant movement of growing significance. Formal policy deliberations may include debates on the fiscal cost of providing social services to undocumented workers, the supposed downward pressure immigrant labor exerts on the marketplace, the net costs and benefits of immigration, and the national-security problems evinced by holes in our borders. But at gatherings like these, raw issues are race and national identity. Differences between legal and illegal immigrants fade into a generalized belief that a brown-skinned, Spanish-speaking tidal wave is about to swamp the white-skinned population of the United States. The attempt to stop undocumented workers at the borders morphs into a campaign to end immigration altogether, to save our supposedly white nation from demographic ruin (Zeskind 2005, A15).

Such examples highlight the anti-immigration discourse's truest concern—the “other.”

## Chapter 5: The Author/Activists

### Peter Brimelow

Our first author/activist is Peter Brimelow. His discourse in regards to the American immigration problem can be looked at as two fold. He has serious pragmatic concerns, but there is also a layer of “othering” that intermingles throughout his book, *Alien Nation*. First let us look at his unique background and then proceed to examine his arguments against immigration, as they are knowledge-constructs with significant value implications.

Brimelow’s discursive orientation towards immigration differs from others discussed so far in that he too is an immigrant. Originally from England, he became a resident alien in the US. His wife then legally emigrated from Canada and their son, who was born in the US, is an American citizen. Although Brimelow indicates that no person can ignore what is occurring in the US due to the eventual consequences that it will have on their country or life, the fervor with which the author speaks about America’s immigration troubles can be traced to the negative outcome he believes awaits his son. While it is certainly commendable for a father to be concerned with providing the best future possible for his son, some readers will no doubt view some of Brimelow’s solutions to America’s immigration problems sourly as they smack of hypocrisy. He advocates a constitutional amendment so that only those children born to American citizens can be considered such rather than all children born on American soil. He also advocates a change away from family reunification-focused policy in immigration law, a focus without which his wife most likely would have had to remain in Canada. While the author notes that should the laws have been different he would just be writing about Canadian immigration policy instead, it is quite unsettling to read about how the author believes there is no reason for immigration to continue. It is a luxury that America can do without, according to

Peter Brimelow. In that regard, if immigration were so bad for our country, why would the author be so presumptuous as to stay?

The answer to this question has to do with Brimelow's understanding of what makes America the nation that it is. He argues that because the founders of our country were white, English speaking, and Protestant, we must keep that demographic in the majority to ensure the survival of our nation. As an immigrant from England, a nation that supplied our country with many of its fore fathers, Brimelow feels as though the stock he is made of fits right in with keeping America American. His statement that many immigrants of English origin hesitate to even go through the naturalization process because they hardly feel foreign to begin with underscores this point. Brimelow makes the same arguments as Huntington with regards to the backgrounds of the founders of America. When making such assertions, the authors ignore other populations such as the French and Spanish that resided here. Both authors aim to construct knowledge that purports diversity in the US population moves the nation further away from its roots, as well as away from the traits and characteristics needed to uphold American values. These knowledge-constructs are seen time and again within the anti-immigration discourse. Before we proceed further in discussing the author's discourses on cultural, demographics, and race, let us first turn to arguments he makes based on economic and historical trends.

Peter Brimelow's soundest arguments against current immigration levels are those that are couched in economic terms. Brimelow argues that our economy would be just as successful without immigrant labor because a majority of immigrants lack the skills to increase output in the areas that add the greatest to our GNP, i.e. those in technology and innovation. For example, Japan, whose immigration rate is negligible, has seen economic success because of the



innovation coming out of the country. In addition, unskilled immigrants drive down our national average income, an indicator of economic success the author believes is quite important.

Brimelow blames the Immigration Act of 1965 for putting the emphasis on family reunification instead of matching potential immigrants with job markets (Brimelow 1995, 142). He argues, “current policy should be reversed: skilled immigration must be favored before family reunification. To put it another way, the United States could do without that portion of the current influx that is below the average American’s educational achievement” (Brimelow 1995, 261). In addition, the author notes that immigrants put an extremely heavy burden on taxpayers as their relative use of government assistance programs is much higher than those who are native-born (Brimelow 1995, 146). The author is also concerned for the plight of black Americans whose cause does not benefit from an ever-increasing minority group with different issues and who can be seen as competition for jobs.

Many of these arguments also fall into the knowledge-construct category. Brimelow assumes that the most important jobs in our country are those that cannot be performed by immigrants. He also assumes that there is little to no benefit for our country from family reunification. In addition, Brimelow does not present any information that would back up his claims of African-American disenfranchisement due to a presence of Latino immigrants. The author makes many assertions that he does not provide evidence for. Rather, Brimelow relies on the power of discourse to create and “wills to truth” his claims.

Brimelow goes on to argue that we must not think of our nation as having always had an open door policy. In fact, there have been several periods of time where the US discriminated based on skill and national origin or even significantly reduced the number of immigrants allowed in order for our country to adapt. In addition, Brimelow also thinks it is only fair that

countries with high amounts of immigration to America should act reciprocally. Nations such as China and India indicate that they do not accept immigrants from any country because their populations are big enough. The author is dismayed at the idea that the US should have to bear what others are not willing to.

In that vein, the image of a lifeboat is used repeatedly throughout *Alien Nation*. The lifeboat can only take on so many people before it capsizes and then does no one any good: not to those on board, nor to those who would have benefited from waiting for the lifeboat to return with more room. This image depicts our country's infrastructure and government under the burden of heavy immigration. Should immigration continue at its current rate, there would be nothing left for native citizens to enjoy or immigrants to benefit from. Brimelow repeatedly relies on rhetoric that portrays immigrants as destroying or "capsizing" our nation. This type of rhetoric uses fear to take the focus off Brimelow's lack of supporting evidence. The use of such rhetoric to instill in his readers a fear of immigration from the Third World once again deepens the construct of "us" versus "them." In addition, there are several statements made by Peter Brimelow throughout his book that show that there is a discursive orientation founded in the differences between races and cultures that underpin his dissatisfaction with current immigration policy that will be discussed throughout this chapter.

Brimelow argues that family reunification-focused policy is not just responsible for allowing unskilled workers to immigrate to America before those with viable job opportunities. (Brimelow puts "Family reunification" in quotation marks throughout his book "because, after all, the immigrant would achieve the truest reunification with his family if he returned home" (Brimelow 1995, 80)). It is also responsible for the skewed number of immigrants that are allowed into the country from certain places of origin. For example, we allow a significantly

higher population of Latinos into our country than peoples from Eastern European countries. For the author, this is a great tragedy since many of those Eastern European emigrants would return to their countries with a deepened sense of democratic ideals and skills that can aid in stabilization. This is one of the more unfounded assertions made by Brimelow as there is little evidence he could provide to prove that this statement has any validity.

Brimelow holds that because of family re-unification, the US ends up with a huge population of immigrants who decline to assimilate to American ways. These immigrants are changing America in racial and cultural and ethnic ways that have never been experienced before in any county at this speed (Brimelow 1995, 129). Due to the sheer number of Hispanic immigrants and their high reproduction rates, current projections put whites as a minority by 2050. Brimelow indicates that there is no proof of any nation sustaining such changes so quickly, or at all. The author discusses several countries where bi-culturalism leads to violence and strife (Brimelow 1995, 124-127), and notes that places with less diversity are actually safer. Because he argues that there is no way to know whether America will end in a shipwreck, he suggests we avoid the situation completely by reversing current immigration trends to ensure a lasting white, English speaking, Protestant majority. For Brimelow, America cannot exist without this white majority. Clearly, the author wishes to maintain this white majority to which he belongs. The drives behind his discourse are the same as those that are critiqued by Foucault, namely those in power wish to remain there, and they do so by preserving and ordering their populations. Brimelow and the other authors analyzed in this thesis have no qualms about discussing all the threats immigrants pose in order accomplish this task.

Perhaps the most questionable argument made by the author is the following: even if everything works out, what was wrong with America before the 1965 Act? This statement

shows that even if his concern for a bi-cultural, unsafe, overpopulated, economically stressed, and shipwrecked America never comes to fruition, he would still desire the United States as it was in 1965, i.e. without the immigrants that have come to our country since that time who are overwhelmingly Latino. Thus, although Brimelow goes to great lengths to speak of any one who would call him racist as not only wrong, but also as exhibiting some sort of Dr. Strangelove condition, there is an orientalizing distinction that the author makes over and over through his book. Hispanic immigrants are the “others” and unless we prevent them from overtaking the majority in our country, the result will be dissolution. Each time Brimelow tries to show that he does not discriminate towards Latino immigrants by arguing that they actually pose a pragmatic problem, he always returns to the argument of the necessity of the white majority.

While the author explains his sentiment for the plight of Mexicans crossing the border at night, holding on to their children as they try to escape to a better life (as he recalls from one of his research adventures), he still states that “In fact, there is no solution to the problem of human pain. It is an infinite sea. And to the extent that we might alleviate pain in one area, by admitting some immigrants, we can exacerbate it in another, by excluding other immigrants or by threatening the communities of the native-born” (Brimelow 1995, 248). Consequently, he suggests “the critics of immigration adopt a name that has a long and honorable role in American history. They should call themselves—‘Patriots’” (Brimelow 1995, 254). This statement is a clear example of Brimelow’s efforts to construct a reality where it is common knowledge that immigration poses such a threat to our nation, only those who fail the patriotism test would believe any differently. By suggesting that critics of immigration are protecting the country from the perils of immigration, while also stating that changes to our white, English speaking, Protestant majority should be avoided even if nothing bad comes to our nation because of

immigration, the author is making it clear that he is anti-illegal immigration and anti-immigration, but even more so anti-Hispanic immigration.

### **Patrick Buchanan**

Of these author/activists, none enjoys such notoriety as Patrick Buchanan. He served as an advisor to three presidents, was the Reform Party presidential candidate in 2000, and also was a candidate for the Republican nomination twice. His participation in political commentary shows on major networks, his many books, and his syndicated column reinforce his national prominence. As his body of work is both larger and more influential, this thesis will look more extensively at Patrick Buchanan, as a notable representative of the author/activist category. First, let us analyze the author's arguments in *The Death of the West: How Dying Populations and Immigrant Invasions Imperil Our Country and Civilization*.

As the title suggests, Buchanan aims to increase the awareness of his readers to two perilous trends taking place across Western civilization: declining birth rates and the remaking of our civilization due to immigration. The author identifies a multitude of reasons behind our population decline. While women putting career before family (and thus country), birth control, abortions, assisted suicide, and the sexual revolution all play a part in the reason why populations in Europe and among white Americans are declining, the real reason is the cultural revolution of the 1960's. "In *The Death of the West* I hope to describe the revolution—what it stands for, where it came from, how it went about dethroning out God, vandalizing our temples, altering our beliefs, and capturing the youth, and what its triumphs portend" (Buchanan 2002, 8). Such statements indicate that Buchanan intends to use trumped-up rhetoric and knowledge-constructs to make his case.

First, let us analyze Buchanan's opinions as to where the ideas of this revolution began. The leaders of the Cultural Revolution looked towards Marxists such as Gramsci in order to accomplish their goals. What Gramsci had learned from the Communist Revolution is that the destruction of all roots to the prior culture must take place before a real revolution can take hold. For Patrick Buchanan, this destruction has occurred on every front Traditionalists hold dear: God, country, and family. Buchanan argues there are several reasons why the cultural revolution took hold without many knowing it was coming from Marxists such as those of the Frankfurt School. The young generation of the 1960's was enjoying prosperity unknown at any other time in our country. With the confluence of TV, Hollywood and music icons, boredom, drugs, and a revolution promising a life of leisure, sexual promiscuity, lack of responsibility, and no authority, our nation's young people were bound to be caught up in this emerging cultural movement.

Buchanan notes that this new culture could not have flourished without first taking down those three pillars of our past culture mentioned above, namely our faith, our country, and our families. To begin, Buchanan argues that God and church have been desecrated through "art," but worst of all through our courts. The sanctity of life, prayer in school, the sanctity of marriage, and even the use of religious symbols in public buildings and parks have been undermined by judges and justices. Abortion and gay marriage exist contrary to God's law, and are just as readily having an impact on the family as they are on our religion. Buchanan holds that history is rewritten to show that Christianity has provided nothing of value to the world, less and less people attend church and the faith of our country is systematically being erased.

Without providing any evidence, Buchanan argues that our country's history and the history of Western civilization have been rewritten in order to show that we are "the cancer of

humanity” rather than nations deserving of one’s patriotism. Through an education lacking in the rigorous standards of the past, we are allowing our children to become empty voids, easily filled with this rewritten history. Our children’s education destroys many old heroes of the past such as Columbus and Jefferson. He believes that the great leaders of the Confederacy have been completely erased and expeditions that spread our nation westward are now seen as missions of genocide where we wiped out remaining Native American peoples. With each passing generation we are teaching our children that there is no reason to put our country before themselves, no reason to fight or die for Western civilizations continuation, and certainly no reason to be worried that our civilization will voluntarily die due to lack of population growth.

Buchanan argues that because more women are choosing career over family, our population in the West is not sustaining itself. “In short the rise of feminism spells the death of the nation and the end of the West” (Buchanan 2002, 42). Again, this can be traced back to the use of contraception, the prevalence of abortions, and an economy/culture that tells women they are needed in the workplace more than at home. Buchanan also argues that many couples have decided to put their leisure above their country by only having one or two children. Coupled with assisted suicide in Europe, the historic peoples of Western civilization are dying off. Buchanan’s argument regarding the dying Western population is similar to arguments made by our previous authors that are meant to instill fear. Each author has claimed that something his readers should hold dear is in dire straits—whether that something is the U.S.A., American culture, Western civilization, America’s white majority, or the entire population of the Western world.

Buchanan points out that while Westerners are not being replaced with children of their own, populations in places such as America are still growing due to immigrants and their

children who are filling the population hole we are leaving behind. For Buchanan, this still spells the death of the West because they do not share a common culture with the populations they are replacing: not Muslim immigrants in France and not Mexican immigrants in America. Europe will cease to exist, portions of Russia will no doubt be invaded by an exploding Chinese population, and Israel will be unable to protect itself against quickly-growing Muslim populations.

The author laments that revolutionaries take up the cause of immigrants because immigrants fall into the categories of (or can be used along with) feminists, black militants, minorities, the economically oppressed, and the “victims” of colonialization. Their right to move to America and use the country’s resources (for example, natural and educational), all the while refusing to assimilate away from their own culture, is celebrated in the revolution because it is one more way to create havoc for the existing way of life. Buchanan asserts that biculturalism entices a quicker decay of our country.

As the author sets out to describe the disastrous effects of dying populations and immigration will have on Western civilization and more specifically, the United States, one should not be surprised that Buchanan devotes a significant portion of this book to the threat Mexico poses to our nation. However, these threats are more fully described by the author in *State of Emergency*. An analysis of this book provides a more comprehensive understanding of Buchanan’s anti-immigration discourse.

*State of Emergency* begins by arguing that the emergency is not just confined to the Southwest, rather those invading our country affect every American, because “millions bring no allegiance to America and remain loyal to the lands of their birth” (Buchanan 2006, 13). Such



invaders will cause our country to become a multicultural, multilingual, Balkanized land rather than a cohesive nation.

Buchanan believes that those in the federal government whose duty it is to protect our nation have broken under pressure from interest groups. Unfortunately, these supposed-leaders do not just put our nation at risk of Balkanization, they also undermine our safety. Buchanan makes no reference as to why he believes that large populations of immigrants from one nation would cause this “Balkanization,” but he clearly ignores historical evidence pointing to large German or French communities in the US that have just as much been a part of Buchanan’s “real” America as any white community. Buchanan goes on to argue that there is no way to know who is crossing our border—whether they are hard-working men and women, or whether they are criminals or terrorists. He believes that the number of gang members has increased due to immigration, especially deadly gangs such as MS-13. In fact, Hispanics are nineteen times more likely to join a gang and criminal aliens represent the fastest growing prison population. Here again, Buchanan’s use of rhetoric meant to instill fear.

Similar to our other authors, Buchanan is quick to note the economic downside to immigration. “The added cost of schooling, health care, welfare, Social Security, and prisons—perhaps \$400 billion a year—plus the additional pressure on land, water, and power resources exceeded the taxes immigrants contribute” (Buchanan 2006, 35). In addition, immigrants drive down wages and compete for the jobs that our most vulnerable citizens need. “Is it any wonder African-Americans, millions of who are forced to compete with immigrants for jobs, are the most forceful in demanding that the government get control of the border and halt the invasion?” (Buchanan 2006, 35). More troubling to Buchanan, is the idea that the impoverished immigrant

no longer has the same chances to make it to the middle class as the manufacturing jobs that once led there are being exported.

This argument must be considered a knowledge-construct as many immigrants were finding employment in the US until recently-- the simultaneous drop in immigrant numbers in America and the recent economic downturn that led to an enormous shedding of jobs shows that employment and immigration are indeed linked. In addition, the anti-immigration rhetoric would have one believe that immigrants are taking American jobs while at the same time believe that immigrants are unemployed, government burdens. These arguments are examples of this discourse's efforts to create a reality where its arguments are true, as well as one that paints the immigrant in any manner so long as they can more easily be perceived as the "other."

As a candidate for the Republican presidential nominee twice, Buchanan has strong ties to the GOP. He warns that if the Republican Party does not do something to halt the invasion of immigrants into the country, they will cease to be a majority party. Because immigrants benefit from larger government, the Democrats are basically importing votes. "Like African Americans, Hispanics benefit from and believe in government, and they vote their interests" (Buchanan 2006, 61). What Republicans and Democrats must understand is that once the Southwest has become completely Hispanicized, there will never again be an opportunity to seal the borders due to the combined electoral votes of California, Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas. In making this point, Buchanan ignores the notion that many Hispanics who have been in the US for generations are against further Latino immigration. The participants of the anti-immigration discourse ignores important points like this often in their knowledge construction.

Buchanan maintains that continuing to let Mexicans cross our border illegally at the current rate certainly puts our nation in a state of emergency, as they have no common culture with us.

“When more than half the people of so vast a country do not speak English at home, do not listen to the same radio and TV programs as the rest of us, do not read the same newspapers, magazines, or books, do not share the same heroes, history, or holidays, how can we say we are still one nation and one people?” (Buchanan 2006, 47). The answer for Buchanan is that we cannot. Unlike many who believe that our nation is based on ideals, which can be held and cherished by anyone, of any race, coming from any country, Buchanan contends that ideals are not what make up a nation. A nation is constituted of one people with a shared culture. The author notes the Americans are an identifiable people and “whatever or wherever our ancestral roots—are a people separate and apart from all others of the earth, with far more in common than political beliefs” (Buchanan 2006, 155). It is this identifiable people and our unique country that is imperiled by Mexican immigration.

*State of Emergency* suggests that Mexican immigrants pose another threat to our nation as their homeland has a historic grievance with our nation over lost territory. The Americans who pledged allegiance to Mexico and promised to convert to Catholicism in order to settle in Texas eventually grew in such number as to create serious problems for the fledgling country of Mexico. The events that transpired would eventually lead to Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo “whereby Mexico ceded Texas, the entire Southwest, and California to the United States...South of the Rio Grande, what is to us the Mexican War is known as the War of the Northern Invasion” (Buchanan 2006, 99-100). The author warns that Americans should be wary of such an incredible numbers of immigrants who come from a nation that indoctrinates its children that Americans stole much of their nation’s land and Mexico has a historic claim to U.S. territory. Buchanan points to many Hispanic organizations and leaders who argue that they are taking back

their land through demographics alone, helped by the increase in immigration numbers (both legal and illegal) and the greater number of babies being born to Mexicans than to Americans.

Buchanan's use of the Mexican-American War as an example for why Americans should fear Mexican immigrants is all rhetoric and no substance. The author provides little evidence that immigrants from Mexico arrive in the US with the goal to win back territory. In addition, Buchanan's warning of their booming population deals more with bio-power than with historical claims over land. What the author is actually warning his readers of is the Hispanic population's impending take over of the white population as the majority demographic in America.

Buchanan argues against the loss of national sovereignty to international organizations throughout his books. He wishes our country to remain unique and have all the rights we deserve and are entitled to us as an independent nation. If you couple the desires of some to create a North American Union, similar to the European Union with this idea of Mexicans taking back their land, you have what Buchanan calls the Aztlán Plot or Strategy:

The "strategy: Endless migration from Mexico north, the Hispanicization of the American Southwest, and dual citizenship for all Mexican-Americans. The goals: Erase the border. Grow the influence, through Mexican-Americans, over how America disposes of the wealth and power. Gradually circumscribe the sovereignty of the United States. Lastly, economic and political merger of the nations in a binational union. And in the nuptial agreement, a commitment to share the wealth and power.

Stated bluntly, the Aztlán Strategy entails the end of the United States as a sovereign, self-sufficient, independent republic, the passing away of the American nation. They are coming to conquer us (Buchanan 2006, 128).

This quote is the most profound exhibit of Buchanan's use of knowledge construction. He intends to create a reality through his discourse where it is accepted as knowledge that Mexican

immigrants are uprooting themselves and, in many cases, their families in order to conquer America. Rather than view the immigrant as one who desires a better life, a new beginning, or in any other positive manner, Buchanan affixes to them the goals of conquest and destruction. It is no coincidence that Buchanan has chosen words that can be associated with war, as it is his desire that his readers accept his exaggerated rhetoric and unfounded theories as truth. In addition, such quotes make it clear that Buchanan does not believe it is necessary to have accurate knowledge of Mexican immigrants or their intentions. Buchanan has no use for information that is derived from the immigrants themselves or an inside-out perspective. Rather he insists that his superior status as an American allows him to make such assumptions derived from an outside-in perspective.

If there are so many reasons for Americans to be against immigration according to Buchanan, who in this country still supports it? He maintains that the split comes along the lines of the elite versus the people. Because the elite do not live near immigrants, they do not compete for the same jobs, and their children do not go to school with them, the elite do not see the effects of immigration on their daily lives. This of course includes the members of Congress. “Alienated intellectuals and cultural elites, discontented with the America we love, are committed to open borders to alter forever a country and culture they abhor. Deraeli called the ‘Cosmopolitan critics, men who are the friends of every country save their own’” (Buchanan 2006, 81).

Buchanan also labels people who believe in the false statement that we are a nation of immigrants that has never shut its doors to the poor souls of the world as immigration enthusiasts. The author cites the various times in our history when we have halted immigration in order to allow for assimilation, encouraged certain immigrants and not others (for example,

those with certain skills), and when we have prohibited immigrants from certain nations altogether. In general, our nation has always been under the impression that we should control immigration to meet our country's needs. The Immigration Act of 1965 changed this forever by unintentionally creating a "Third World invasion that is converting America into another country" (Buchanan 2006, 239). Patrick Buchanan believes that immigration reform, denounced by some to be anti-American, is not contrary to our nation's past belief that we have a right and responsibility to bring immigration into alignment with our country's needs. Buchanan ends this work with the many steps our country must take in order to obtain this necessary immigration reform lest our country be lost forever.

Before this thesis moves on to a critique of the anti-immigration discourse on a whole, an initial critique of Buchanan is presented. There are several flawed arguments that the author puts forward, many of which he provides evidence against. To begin, Buchanan argues that we are a nation of European immigrants much as the other authors analyzed in this paper. However, Buchanan himself notes that not all European countries were treated equally in the immigration processes of the past. For many of our country's first leaders, we were not a European country but an English one. Buchanan notes that "From 1789 to 1960, American leaders were obsessed about who came to this country, what beliefs they brought, what their innate capacity was to become part of the American people. Alarm about a radical change in our ethnic composition is as America as Ben Franklin. In 1751, Franklin asked aloud 'Why should Pennsylvania, founded by the English, become a Colony of Aliens, who will shortly be so numerous as to Germanize us instead of us Anglifying them?'" (Buchanan, 2006; 91). As discussed earlier in this thesis, Kulish (2008) notes that those with German ancestry make up a significant portion of the American population—the very population that Buchanan praises for making America what it is

today. If one couples such quotes with the many times our authors mention how Germans, along with Italians, Scandinavians, and Irish, have come to make up the great people of America, it only proves that hostile discourses toward certain immigrants of the past have become outdated and proven ignorant. Should not the authors of today's anti-immigration discourse understand they too could be harboring ill-founded concerns?

Along these same lines, the author notes the crime that was associated with Irish and Italian immigrants. Again, many authors of the American anti-immigration discourse such as Buchanan and Tancredo al now hail these immigrants, along with any other immigrant from a European nation, as the only immigrants our country needs or wants. Buchanan's several references to Mexican immigrant crime is undermined by the fact that the many European immigrants were once all grouped together as "criminals," only to prove over time that they can be productive members of our society. The author himself notes a poet that wrote that he did not want America to become the cesspool of Europe. Those participating in the anti-immigration discourse are against America becoming the cesspool of Mexico. How likely is this to become a reality based on past experience?

There is also flawed logic in Buchanan's description of the desire of Mexican-Americans to help return the lands lost after the Mexican War to their native country. While he argues the Aztlan plot of taking back their land is one that all Mexicans are aware of and are participating in, one could argue that the reason the US sees so many immigrants is because they are escaping from a poorly governed country to one of opportunity. It would be illogical for so many people to try so hard to make a new and better life in America, only to watch what they have built be returned to the jurisdiction of a government that failed them.

In addition, Buchanan rests his notion of the American nation based on what he perceives as one people. While he does not deny segregation, he believes that blacks were just as much a part of our people because we shared a common culture. Without disputing that African-Americans are undeniably part of our American people, this thesis raises concerns against those who believe that African-Americans do not have, and have not always had, their own culture based on Buchanan's definition. They do not always read the same magazines or the same books. They have not always watched the same shows or listened to the same music. They certainly have and deserve to have their own heroes. None of this is to say that there is not significant crossover in the culture that white America and black America share on a daily basis. But to deny that African-Americans do not have their own culture, is to deny them an identity they have every right to claim and preserve. Buchanan dismisses their separate culture in order to add weight to his claim that Mexicans can never really be a part of the American people.

This view of the Mexican immigrant is reinforced by Buchanan's discursive method of dehumanizing them. He does not see immigration from an immigrant's point of view, i.e. as something he longs for or fights for. Rather he sees immigration from our country's point of view where immigration is something that our nation should benefit from or promptly deny. "Immigrants must be designed to serve the needs of the nation, not the wants of the world" (Buchanan 2006, 46).

Finally, this author would like to point to knowledge-constructs with serious double standards contained within *Death of the West*. While bemoaning the left's aggressive moves to halt any freedom of speech on the immigration issue by calling all members of the opposition nativist, xenophobes, racists, Buchanan states "detoxification of America's culture is far more important than any absolutist interpretation of the First Amendment" (Buchanan 2002, 263). He



also claims to be for equal opportunity for all people, but claims women's careers are to be blamed for the failure of families. He calls Lincoln a dictator and speaks of the dishonor we do to the great soldiers of the confederacy, but claims to believe slavery is deplorable. In addition, he blames Mexican immigrants for the strain they put on our educational system, roads, and natural resources, but asserts that those families with just one or two children are not patriotic. Apparently concerns for sustainability only apply to Hispanics. Such glaring hypocrisy throughout the work take away from the many intelligent points brought forth.

Present in the writings of each of the authors previously analyzed is the problem of interlacing discourses that "Orientalize" Mexican immigrants with many reputable arguments. This thesis will now present the views of those who refute many of the claims brought forth by these authors, as well as provide a more complete critique of the anti-immigration discourse as a whole.

## **Chapter 6: Critique of the Anti-Immigration Discourse and Conclusion**

This final chapter presents a rebuttal of the arguments made by the authors chosen as representatives of the anti-immigration discourse. In addition, much of the chapter is dedicated to an overall critique of the discourse using Said and Foucault. A conclusion of the thesis follows.

### **In Rebuttal to the Anti-Immigration Authors**

Aviva Chomsky (2007) takes on many of the arguments presented by Tancredo, Buchanan, Brimelow, and Huntington in her book that seeks to dissect 20 myths about immigration. The first myth Chomsky addresses is that immigrants take jobs away from Americans. This is an unreasonable assertion as should businesses be denied the use of cheap labor, they would relocate to a place where such labor was more abundant, creating a worse situation for the laborer in America. In addition, immigrants and population growth create more consumers thus increasing the number of opportunities available to US workers. If more workers simply meant less opportunity for all, economists would see a pattern of increased unemployment with population growth, which is clearly not the case.

Chomsky challenges the idea that immigrants are a drain on our economy because they use more in public services than they pay in taxes. She argues “ the only kind of public service that immigrant households use at higher rates than natives is food assistance programs such as food stamps, WIC, and free or reduced school lunches” (Chomsky 2007, 40). However, it is generally not the immigrants using these services but rather their citizen children. Next, the author points out that our progressive tax system is set-up exactly so that those earning the lowest wages pay the least in taxes. “Within fifteen years, immigrants earnings –and their taxes—have caught up” (Chomsky 2007, 41).

Many of our authors argue that Latinos are refusing to assimilate or learn English and that bilingualism will ruin our national cohesion. Chomsky points out that speaking the same language has hardly meant social cohesion when many in our nation refuse to believe America should be anything but made up of a white majority. “Like earlier generations of immigrants, those arriving today still see learning English as crucial to survival and success. But new immigrants also become aware that learning to speak English will not resolve the problems of race. Native Americans and African Americans are native speakers of English—but this has not helped them to assimilate into US society that still in many ways defines itself as white” (Chomsky 2007, 108).

Buchanan, Tancredo, and Brimelow all postured that our current immigration policy is out of touch with the sentiments of a majority of Americans. However, a Pew research poll presented by Chomsky showed that despite the anti-immigration discourse, most of the people who thought that immigration negatively impacted education, jobs, and housing did not find immigration a major issue. This would explain Tancredo’s inability to gain momentum for the Republican presidential nomination for 2008 even though he was arguably the fiercest opponent to immigration. In addition, contrary to the belief of Peter Brimelow that places with a smaller number of immigrants are more likely to be accepting of immigration, the poll indicated that people who live in areas with “low concentrations of immigrants, a full 67 percent felt that immigrants were a burden and only 27 percent felt that they strengthened the country” (Chomsky 1997, 158). The numbers were split for respondents in areas of high concentrations of immigrants, meaning that people who have less contact with actual immigrants are more influenced by negative outside discourses.

There is no debate terrorist organizations exist that aim to perpetrate harm against the US. Thus many Americans on both sides of the immigration debate argue for securing our borders to protect against the possibility of terrorists illegally crossing our border, hidden among immigrants. However, Chomsky finds that there is little evidence indicating that terrorists have abused the border. A study done by the Center for Immigration Studies found that of forty-eight “militant Islamic terrorists” who committed crimes in the US, “thirty six of them were in the country legally at the time that they committed crimes, and seventeen were either permanent residents or naturalized citizens. Those who were not permanent residents had received visas” (Chomsky 1997, 181). Instead of spending even more money trying to close our border, the author suggests that the best way to reduce the terrorism threat that faces our nation would be to quell anti-Americanism through a change of policies.

The final myth presented in this thesis that Aviva Chomsky tackles deals with how people perceive the problem of immigration. She maintains that militarizing our border will not solve the immigration problem and those who suggest otherwise have a distorted view of why immigration takes place. “Immigration is indeed a problem, but not in the way it’s generally defined. Immigration is a humanitarian problem. People leave their homelands, their families, and their livelihoods and risk their lives. What is needed is a humanitarian solution: the creation of a new model of global economic integration—one that redistributes the planets resources more equitably among its inhabitants” (Chomsky 2007, 166). Understanding why people immigrate would lead us to policies that stop the immigration problem before it reached our border. For example, the relative stability of the Mexican economy and/or government has played a role in the number of Mexican immigrants we see coming to the US. In addition, each of the authors of the anti-immigration discourse presented in this thesis indicates that the people

who we once colonized are now the ones invading the West. If this is the case, our approach to the immigration problem should ask what are the lasting effects of colonization that need to be addressed? Chomsky's comments parallel Said in this manner.

### **Anti-immigration Discursive Formation**

As Chomsky's work makes clear, there exists many ways to view immigration. One way to explain the variation in these views of immigration and their subsequent discourses is presented in Maykel Verkuyten's research (2005). Her study of Dutch reaction to immigration could be applicable to the US. In the study, the author is exploring the connection between people's thoughts on whether immigration is a "personal choice" or whether it arrives from a "lack of choice" on the part of the immigrant and how those same people view multiculturalism and the state's responsibility for immigrants. As expected, the research shows that people who believe immigration arises from a lack of choice on the part of the immigrant believe that the immigrant has a right to hold on to his culture and are more likely to be tolerant of multiculturalism. These people are also more likely to believe that the state has a responsibility to help immigrants with regards to such things as welfare. Those who see immigration as a personal choice on behalf of the immigrant, more firmly believe in assimilation and limited help from the state (Verkuyten 2005, 237-238).

Although the research presented above sheds light onto the formation of the anti-immigration discourse, this thesis aims to unearth the more fundamental reasons for the discursive formation. For example, even if one thought that immigrants make a person choice in choosing to immigrate, why does that influence one's opinion of the immigrant, their needs, or their right to hold onto their culture? What else is behind these views, influencing our perceptions of the immigrant? As this thesis has shown, Foucault and Said have argued that

discourses such as those that constitutes the anti-immigration rhetoric arise from the matrix of knowledge, power and discourse, as well as the influence of bio-power and the perception of the “other.” Thus, let us return to these authors to critique the discursive formation of the anti-immigration discourse.

One can begin to understand what is truly at stake for participants in the anti-immigration discourse and why their discourse has formed in the manner in which it did when recalling Foucault’s discussion of bio-power. Foucault’s theories indicate that those perpetuating this discourse understand that they must be able to control the population to remain in power. It cannot do so if the demographics of the population continue to change due to mass immigration. They also cannot organize life when population increases at such a rate from outsiders. Those who are in powerful or dominating positions due to their majority status within our nation do not want to become a minority and have power change hands. In addition, those uninterested in the race issues within the discourse are concerned about the economic aspects, certainly bringing to mind the need of the powerful for a satisfactory workforce. The anti-immigration discourse tells us repeatedly that immigrants are unskilled and are failing to become educated, productive members of society.

As described above, in order to maintain power, it is necessary to control populations and order life. However it is also necessary to maintain domination through controlling what is accepted as knowledge or what constitutes truth (the will to knowledge). For example, the anti-immigration discourse relies heavily on the notion that we are a European people when in fact we were once an English people exceedingly concerned with immigrants from other parts of Europe. In order to create knowledge that is beneficial to the discourse (one which does not highlight a past preoccupation with immigrants who have proved desirable to our country), the

authors choose to begin their stories of immigration in America much later in our nation's history, thus becoming what Bernard Lewis warns are "misusers of history." "The misuser of history can to a considerable extent serve his purpose simply by defining the topic, that is to say, of what, of where, of whom, of when he is writing. Take even a simple matter like the starting point...Any starting point is necessarily in some degree artificial. History is a seamless garment; periodization is a convenience of the historian, not a fact of the historical process. By choosing carefully, one can slant history without any resort to actual falsehood" (Lewis 1999, 580). Lewis' quote shows how the anti-immigration discourse benefits from being able to choose a convenient "starting point" of history from which to make their case—a starting point that leaves out vital information concerning events that preceded it.

This misuse of history is just one example of how dominance is maintained through choosing what is considered knowledge. The powerful also distort knowledge by how it is obtained. Said warns of truth gained from knowledge *over* something rather than of it. Knowledge *over* something is derived from a perceived position of superiority and is thus misinformed due to the outside-in perspective from which information was gathered. In juxtaposition, knowledge *of* something is informed by an inside-out perspective that allows those who are being analyzed to contribute to the body of information collected. Buchanan, Brimelow, Tancredo, and Huntington have knowledge *over* the immigrant and his culture but not *of* the immigrant and his culture. Their information comes from an outside perspective looking inward. Their information is further biased by its top down perspective-- meaning their innate belief of superiority over the immigrant.

Many of the arguments presented by the key authors of the anti-immigration discourse involve the observation of the immigrant-- how they don't fit into society, how they refuse to

assimilate, and how their culture is so different and therefore threatening. Such observations bring back the concept of “the gaze” presented by Foucault. Our observations of the immigrant are not unbiased and should be acknowledged as such. In order to correct the bias to any extent possible, we should heed Said’s call to try to think of life as an immigrant and inform our discourse thusly. More important is the participation of the immigrant in the dialogue, which centers around them. The anti-immigration discourse would gain legitimacy from such efforts.

The American anti-immigration ideology has created its own truth through discourse’s productive capabilities. If this debate on immigration were taking place at another time, how would the discourse differ? How would we perceive the immigrant? The episteme of our time might hold little relevance in another time. For example, the concern over criminal activities of today’s immigrants might parallel those of earlier immigrants such as the Italians and Irish. A discourse that maintains that these two groups are still a danger to society would hardly be considered informed. Many arguments contained within the anti-immigration discourse of today can be challenged on the grounds that little of what has caused past hysteria has come to fruition.

The above paragraphs have described various reasons for the discursive formation of the anti-immigration discourse: for example, the influence of bio-power and the use of discourse by those in power to create knowledge, misuse history, and gain domination over “others.” Now that we have explored why their discourse formed, let us examine what their discourse is saying at its very roots.

The arguments of the anti-immigration discourse contend that our culture is superior and that our nation is superior due to our race. The authors analyzed want to retain our superiority and thus argue that the US must control its population by not allowing lesser races to mix into its population and destroy its superior culture. The anti-immigration discourse argues that



Americans must stop Latino immigrants, more specifically Mexican immigrants, from coming into the country at all as these immigrants are supposedly refusing to assimilate and because they are coming in such large numbers—two things that make it impossible to control their damage to the American people and culture. Otherwise we face losing power by becoming the minority, or the “gringo other” in our own country. Thus, real “Americans” should fear the Mexican immigrant because it is not possible for America to continue to be the same nation under immigrant control. The Mexican immigrant lacks Western superiority and the U.S. will fail to retain its greatness. All of these arguments rely on the authors’ conception of the Mexican as the “other.” Mexican immigrants are not the same as us and therefore the authors feel as though they can make judgments about what these immigrants will do to the American population and culture.

At the very least, the anti-immigration discourse demands that the immigrant must willingly become “Occidentalized” in order to carry on our tradition of greatness as Americans. The idea that immigrants must assimilate presupposes a view of the immigrant as the “other.” To demand that one become “Occidentalized” is to confirm one’s belief in the differences between that which is occidental and that which is the orient. In addition, to demand that immigrants become “Occidentalized” assumes that this word has a definitive value. However, looking at the various ethnic communities such as native Hawaiians that are accepted as “real” Americans highlights the fact that the anti-immigration discourse’s perception of Latino immigrants as “others” because they are not white, English-speaking, protestants from Europe is inconsistent to say the least. In essence, the participants of the anti-immigration discourse demand that immigrants need to be whatever they want the immigrants to be, when they want the immigrants to be it. In this case, immigrants to America must not be Latinos, or more

specifically, they must not be Mexicans. Any discourse that couples fear-mongering with such a fickle method of determining who is an acceptable American and who is not poses a significant problem. Those outside of the discourse must challenge such a discourse at every opportunity as the consequences of allowing the discourse to gain any type of substantiation would mean that every American should fear being labeled something that could eventually be seen as unacceptable or unwanted. For example, Americans have already begun to see this with the term “liberal.”

Some outside of the anti-immigration discourse would argue that the offer to be accepted if the immigrant chooses to become “Occidentalized” is not necessarily an honest one. There are many Hispanics whose families have been US citizens for generations, but who still face daily discrimination because of their surname or appearance. Many in the anti-immigration discourse lump all Latinos together, challenging their ability to be Americans even when they are US citizens or have been here longer than immigrants of other “preferred” countries. For those who subscribe to the anti-immigration discourse, no matter how hard they try, these immigrants will never be true Americans, whether it be because their ethnic background is not European or because there is little chance they can do anything but take away from our cultural superiority.

This example makes apparent the spectrum of “othering” that takes place within the anti-immigration discourse. The best Mexican immigrant is the one who never comes, the good Mexican immigrant comes only to work and then returns home (having had no children born here), and tolerable Mexican immigrant comes to be “Occidentalized.” Mexican immigrants who wish to retain their culture and language while living in America are considered a threat and of course, the worst Mexican immigrants are those who want to take their land back. These

shades of “othering” ignore our human commonalities as they all rely not just on the concept of the “other,” but in constructing and organizing it.

### **Intellectual Dishonesty**

Previously, this thesis has pointed out much of the intellectual dishonesty that exists within this discourse. For example, the discourse’s preoccupation with the threats of Mexican immigration ignore past such preoccupations that were proved over-reactionary at best. In addition, while many of the authors use arguments throughout their works that seemingly have little to do with “othering,” these can be seen as just the outer layer of what is at the center: the issue of “us” versus “them.” We see this with the discourse’s concern with immigrant labor. As Mary Odem (2008) points out, there was less concern over the use of undocumented workers from Mexico in the early to mid 1900s because we always thought we could send them home. However, now they have set up communities, send their children to school, have bought houses, and are remaining amongst us. “There would not be such heated public debate and widespread opposition to undocumented immigration if immigrants stayed in their place as low-wage temporary labourers. The problems arise because they are sending their children to school, renting apartments and buying homes in neighborhoods” (Odem 2008, 362).

The anti-immigration discourse’s preoccupation with havens, or the various cities (such as Miami and Los Angeles) and communities that have many immigrants, ignores the ethnic ghettos of the past. These places serve the same purpose they did for the Jews, Italians, or Polish communities. “The ethnic community—or ghetto—was the result not only of the internal needs of the ethnic group itself, but also of the external pressure of the outsider. Other Americans were often hostile to the newcomers. All ethnic minorities faced, to some degree or another, discrimination in housing, jobs, and social relationships. The prejudices of the outside world

reinforced ethnic loyalty and helped perpetuate the ethnic community” (Schwartz Seller 1988, 7). What is most interesting about this point of the ethnic ghetto’s constant presence in our nation’s history is the fact that those who want to force others to assimilate might actually be postponing it from taking place. Our inability to allow Latinos to feel a part of the society actually increases their dependence on each other and the chance of a slower assimilation. By demanding them to be “Occidentalized,” thus saying that they are not good enough as they are, could also slow assimilation.

The discourse also shows intellectual dishonesty by refusing to acknowledge any benefits of immigration. For example, the discourse seems unwilling to accept the idea that immigrant labor has any positive impact on our economy or that immigrants could be in fact filling a labor shortage for jobs Americans do not want. Their claim against the latter belies information indicating that in times of recession in the US less Mexican immigrants arrive in the US and more leave to return to their homeland. The fluctuation of immigration numbers from Mexico also refutes claims that immigrants simply come to America to feed off of the government. There would be no need for them to return home in a recession if this were the case.

One must understand the anti-immigration discourse for what it is—a discourse that formed because those in power must control their population from perceived threats of the “other.” In order to insure this, they use a discourse that creates knowledge and truth beneficial to the anti-immigration cause. The anti-immigration discourse views the Mexican immigrant as the “other” that poses a threat to the American people and to their “us-ness,” despite our nation’s immigration history indicating otherwise. This is intellectually dishonest and is reproachable for the negative impact it has on fostering an understanding of human commonalities.

## **Conclusion**

The study of discourse will continue to be prevalent in the social sciences as it looks to analyze the production of meaning in social life. Thus, discourse analysis is on the most basic level, the study of language in use. Through the examination of various texts, discourse analysis aims to find the links between conversations and texts and their impact on society, and the ways in which society formulates understanding. Critical discourse analysis insists that these impacts can be damaging. Analysts in this area focus on the ways in which in certain people are not given the same access to participate in discourses or the ways in which some groups use discourse to create a situation of dominance over others.

Michel Foucault's theories of discourse have had a lasting influence on our understanding of discourse. He challenges our perception of history, as what we know to be true is often a reflection of what those in power allow to be considered knowledge. This knowledge is made up of all the acceptable discourses and the way society is able to think of something at a given time. Often times this knowledge is not considered knowledge at a later date, creating the ruptures and complete reversals that Foucault maintains are present throughout history. Foucault argues that those in power control what is considered to be knowledge through discourse and thus can perpetuate their dominance. They use their positions of authority to pull knowledge from their subjects. In turn, this knowledge of the subject allows them to have power over it.

Foucault understands power's productive ability to create and cause to flourish, not just its ability to deny. Thus he postulates that modern day power lies in organizing life and administering to it where as in the past, power was derived from the ability to take away life. Those in power must be able to control their population, making sure it is fit to continue on because therein lies their power. This control of the populace that is so vital to those in power is

what highlights the distinction of us versus them. Those in power cannot let the “others” destroy or even weaken their populace, their powerbase.

It is Foucault’s concepts of how the powerful must delineate between us and them for the sake of their populace and how knowledge of something allows one to have power over it that are of utmost importance to Said. Said believes these concepts lead to the perception that those who are considered different from those in the West are the “other,” a perception that is based in how Westerners understand them to be rather than what they are. The West uses this concept to construct itself in juxtaposition to the “others.” For example, through the West’s creation of the Orient, it created the Occident, solidifying whom Westerns were by confirming Orientals did not belong. Westerners’ belief of superiority to Orientals allowed the West to gain knowledge and power over them. Thus, the West’s knowledge is biased and is based on generalizations and mischaracterizations, meaning that if Westerner’s rely solely on this knowledge they will never truly understand anything about the “other.” This pseudo-knowledge goes on to influence policy toward these “others”—policy that is often dehumanizing.

As will be evident from the summaries below of the authors analyzed in this thesis, the anti-immigration discourse perceives the immigrant as the “other.” These authors, who have been carefully chosen to represent the anti-immigration discourse, each focus on the differences between “us” and the immigrants arriving daily in America. In addition, they highlight the harm immigrants will cause to our nation and our cultural superiority.

Samuel Huntington believes our nation’s superiority is derived from our culture and our founding principles. He maintains that the massive number of Latino immigrants will ruin our nation through biculturalism. For our nation to survive, they must become like us and must

ascribe to our culture. Most of the arguments he presents throughout his works are based on his conception of the immigrant as the “other.”

Tom Tancredo holds that our nation is in an identity crisis. We no longer know how great of a nation the U.S. is, as multiculturalists are allowed to denigrate our cultural superiority to the point that Americans do not know who they are anymore. The U.S. cannot continue to accept Hispanics who are not assimilating and not learning about the greatness of America and Western civilization, as it will only further challenge American national identity. America’s open borders pose a threat to national security from terrorists, drug and human smugglers, and criminal aliens. However, most importantly, America’s open borders and current immigration policy pose a threat to the U.S. and to its culture as it is overrun with “others” who do not wish to become like “real” Americans.

Peter Brimelow maintains that immigrants are an economic burden that the U.S. cannot bear. Immigrants use too many government resources such as welfare, education, roads, and natural resources in contrast to the small amount they give back. He believes that the US will no longer be able to provide the standard of living it does now if it continues to take in as many immigrants as it does. In addition, the U.S. is an English-speaking, white nation and must remain so or there is no chance America will continue on.

Patrick Buchanan believes Western civilization is dying due to birth control/abortions and the loss of family values, faith, and patriotism. He argues that followers of Marx plotted a revolution in our country that first undertook to destroy the old culture in order for the new culture to take hold. America and Western civilization have been changed, and past accomplishments will become obsolete should Americans not reverse this tragic trend. Buchanan maintains that immigrants are to blame for this current situation as well. He argues

that Mexican immigrants are Balkanizing the U.S. through their lack of assimilation and trying to take back land that had previously belonged to Mexico, as many have no allegiance to our nation. In addition, he argues that because they share no common culture with us, they continue to threaten what once used to be a cohesive nation.

In conclusion, each of these authors focuses on the differences between Americans and immigrants. They are not like Americans and therefore spell doom for it as a nation and its people and culture. If Americans do nothing to prevent immigrants from overtaking the U.S. population, America as we know it will cease to exist. However, these authors have no real understanding of the immigrants or their cultures, rather they can only understand them in terms of how they are believed to be different. In addition, each of the authors analyzed in this thesis is guilty to some extent of rewriting history when they ignore the fact that immigrants of the past have now come to be embraced as making up the very fabric of our identity which the anti-immigration authors aim to protect.

In response to the question set out by this thesis to answer, much of the anti-immigration discourse can be understood through the contributions of Foucault and Said. Armed with Foucault's theories regarding discourse, readers can acknowledge that the participants of the anti-immigration discourse are worried about maintaining the dominant population that they are a part of and, that these participants are prepared to "will to truth" their concerns about immigrants. In addition, critics of the discourse can point to Said's contributions and recognize the pattern of "othering" that exists in the discourse.

Immigration may well be a problem that the US must rise to the task of controlling. But American policies must be informed and, policy makers must be able to understand the real reasons behind immigration if they are going to be able to control it. As Said argues, we must



also remain humane in our approach and should abandon our perception of the immigrant as the “other.” Informed policy would involve those with knowledge of the immigrant and the immigrant’s culture that comes from within rather than from without. Hysteria, based on assumptions of what the “other” actually is or is not, should not drown out the real concerns or real benefits of immigration.

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