Economic Insecurity, Prejudicial Stereotypes, and Public Opinion on Immigration Policy

PETER BURNS
JAMES G. GIMPEL

An infamous yet fictional American once said that in the United States we are all free to live in our own separate sections. Archie Bunker, the mouthpiece for this observation, expressed prejudicial attitudes not only toward blacks, but out-groups in general. If the popular television series, *All in the Family*, had lasted, the character Carroll O'Connor made famous would today be leveling his caustic aim at immigrant groups and calling for Pat Buchanan's great wall. Many supporters of immigration restriction could indeed be characterized as Archie Bunker types. But more respectable restrictionists never argue for reducing immigration on blatantly racist or nativist grounds. From the content of elite discourse and from the rich academic debate on the costs and benefits of immigration, observers would likely conclude that the main rationale for restricting immigration was an economic one.[1] But what lies

[1] George J. Borjas, *Heaven's Door: Immigration Policy and the American Economy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999); Gregory A. Huber and Thomas J. Espenshade, "Neo-isolationism, Balanced-Budget Conservatism and the Fiscal Impacts of Immigrants," *International Migration Review* 31 (Winter 1997): 1031–1054; Steven Camarota, "The Effect of Immigrants on the Earnings of Low-skilled Native Workers: Evidence from the June 1991 Current Population Survey," *Social Science Quarterly* 78 (June 1997): 417–431; Julian Simon, *Immigration: The Demographic and Economic Facts* (Washington, DC: The Cato Institute, 1995); William H. Frey, "Immigration and Internal Migration Flight: A California Case Study," *Population and Environment* 16 (December 1995): 353–375; William

PETER BURNS is an assistant professor of political science at Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut. He has just completed a book manuscript entitled *Electoral Politics Is Not Enough: The Struggle of African Americans and Latinos for Full Representation in Urban Politics.* JAMES G. GIMPEL is an associate professor of government at the University of Maryland in College Park. His most recent book is *Separate Destinations: Migration, Immigration, and the Politics of Places.*

© 2000 Academy of Political Science. No part of this article may be copied, downloaded, stored, further transmitted, transferred, distributed, altered, or otherwise used, in any form or by any means, except: one stored electronic and one paper copy solely for your personal, non-commer-cial use, or with prior written permission of the publisher.

at the bottom of mass attitudes toward immigrants and immigration? In this article, we use public opinion data to investigate the extent to which economic circumstances and prejudicial stereotypes serve as explanations for attitudes in a highly controversial policy domain.

Racial Prejudice or Economic Insecurity

Many investigators have noted that opposition to immigration rises during recessionary periods.[2] This raises the question of whether public attitudes favoring immigration restriction are volatile because they are rooted in shifting economic circumstances. Alternatively, symbolic prejudices formed in preadult years may create the basis for highly stable, relatively fixed attitudes toward immigrants and immigration policy.

Economic self-interest and symbolic prejudice have often been treated as rival explanations for attitudes on a wide variety of issues, but it is plausible that they are complementary on an issue such as immigration. This would be the case if prejudice were caused, at least partly, by economic insecurity. This idea is not especially new. A distinguished line of scholars has explored the idea that economic competition among rival ethnic groups produces hostile and prejudicial attitudes.[3] Historians have noted that hostility to immigrants in the

---

H. Frey, "The New Geography of Population Shifts: Trends Toward Balkanization" in Reynolds Farley, ed., *State of the Union—America in the 1990s, Volume II: Social Trends* (New York: Russell Sage, 1995), 271–334; William H. Frey, "Immigration Impacts on Internal Migration of the Poor: 1990 Census Evidence for U.S. States," *International Journal of Population Geography* 1 (January 1995): 51–67; Robert H. Topel, "Regional Labor Markets and the Determinants of Wage Inequality," *American Economic Association Papers and Proceedings* (May 1994): 17; Randall K. Filer, "The Effect of Immigrant Arrivals on Migratory Patterns of Native Workers" in George J. Borjas and Richard Freeman, eds., *Immigration and the Workforce* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993); George J. Borjas, *Friends or Strangers: The Impact of Immigrants on the U.S. Economy* (New York: Basic Books, 1990).

[2] James G. Gimpel and James R. Edwards, Jr., *The Congressional Politics of Immigration Reform* (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1999); John S. Lapinski, Pia Peltola, Greg Shaw, and Alan Yang, "The Polls—Trends: Immigrants and Immigration," *Public Opinion Quarterly* 2 (Summer 1997): 356–383; Rita J. Simon and Susan H. Alexander, *The Ambivalent Welcome: Print Media, Public Opinion and Immigration* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1993); Edwin Harwood, "Alienation: American Attitudes Toward Immigration," *Public Opinion* 2 (June/July 1983): 49–51.

[3] H. D. Forbes, *Ethnic Conflict: Commerce, Culture and the Contact Hypothesis* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997); Scott Cummings, "Racial Prejudice and Political Orientations Among Blue-Collar Workers," *Social Science Quarterly* 57 (June 1997): 907–920; Lincoln Quillian, "Prejudice as a Response to Perceived Group Threat: Population Composition and Anti-immigrant and Racial Prejudice in Europe," *American Sociological Review* 60 (August 1995): 586–611; M. Rothbart and O. John, "Intergroup Relations and Stereotype Change: A Social Cognitive Analysis and Some Longitudinal Findings" in P. Sniderman, P. Tetlock, and E. Carmines, eds., *Prejudice, Politics and the American Dilemma* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993); Susan Olzak, "Labor Unrest, Immigration and Ethnic Conflict in Urban America, 1880–1914," *American Journal of Sociology* 94 (May 1989): 1303–1333; Susan Olzak, *The Dynamics of Ethnic Competition and Conflict* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 1992); Scott Cummings, "Racial Prejudice and Political Orientations among Blue-Collar Workers," *Social Science Quarterly* 57 (March 1977): 907–920; Scott Cummings, "White Ethnics, Racial Prejudice and Labor Market Segmentation," *American Journal of Sociology* 90 (November 1980):

northeastern states in the 1840s and 1850s was the result of the competitive pressures put on natives by the presence of cheap immigrant labor.[4] At times, labor market competition resulting from generous immigration policy resulted in displaced hostility toward blacks, because they had less power to fight back.[5] In more recent years, low-skilled and uneducated whites have been found to express the most virulent racism because of the glut of unskilled immigrant and black workers alleged to be ready to take their jobs.[6] According to one tradition of scholarship, prejudice is ultimately an expression of self-interested calculations based on one's economic position; and anti-immigrant attitudes are traceable to economic anxieties.

The literature on racism and negative ethnic stereotyping is so extensive that it is impossible to summarize it in a few pages. Thankfully, the theoretical linkage between prejudicial attitudes, stereotypes, and opinions about immigration is straightforward and should not require elaborate justification. Briefly, stereotypes are widely used to generalize about the characteristics of groups of people through the assignment of simple labels that purportedly represent group traits.[7] Some of the most prominent stereotypes that have been the subject of psychological investigation involve ethnic identity.[8] Prejudiced persons are not prejudiced because they use stereotypes. It is the content of those stereotypes that matters in the determination of prejudice.[9]

938–950; Edna Bonacich, "A Theory of Ethnic Antagonism: The Split Labor Market," *American Sociological Review* 37 (October 1972): 547–559; Edna Bonacich, "Advanced Capitalism and Black/White Race Relations in the United States: A Split Labor Market Interpretation," *American Sociological Review* 41 (February 1976): 34–51; Hubert M. Blalock, "Economic Discrimination and Negro Increase," *American Sociological Review* 21 (October 1956): 584–588.

[4] Robert Ernst, "Economic Nativism in New York City During the 1840s," *New York History* 46 (April 1948): 170–186; Ray A. Billington, *The Protestant Crusade, 1800–1860: A Study of the Origins of American Nativism* (Gloucester, MA: Peter Smith, 1963).

[5] Olzak "Labor Unrest, Immigration and Ethnic Conflict in Urban America, 1880–1914."

[6] J. R. Kluegel and Eliot R. Smith, "Affirmative Action Attitudes: Effects of Self-interest, Racial Affect, and Stratification Beliefs on Whites' Views," *Social Forces* 61 (March 1983): 797–824.

[7] Galen V. Bodenhausen and Robert S. Wyer, Jr., "Effects of Stereotypes on Decision Making and Information-Processing Strategies," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 48 (August 1985): 267–282.

[8] Jon Hurwitz and Mark Peffley, "Public Perceptions of Race and Crime: The Role of Racial Stereotypes," *American Journal of Political Science* 41 (May 1997): 375–401; Eaaron I. Henderson-King and Richard E. Nisbett, "Anti-Black Prejudice as a Function of Exposure to the Negative Behavior of a Single Black Person," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 71 (April 1996): 654–664; Joachim Krueger, "Personal Beliefs and Cultural Stereotypes about Racial Characteristics," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 71 (September 1996): 536–548; Charles M. Judd, Bernadette Park, Carey S. Ryan, Markus Brauer, and Susan Kraus, "Stereotypes and Ethnocentrism: Diverging Interethnic Perceptions of African-American and White-American Youth," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 69 (September 1995): 460–481; Sniderman, Tetlock, and Carmines, eds., *Prejudice, Politics and the American Dilemma*; Paul M. Sniderman and Thomas Piazza, *The Scar of Race* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press, 1993); Patricia G. Devine and Sara M. Baker, "Measurement of Racial Stereotype Subtyping," *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 17 (February 1991): 44–50; Gordon W. Allport, *The Nature of Prejudice* (Cambridge, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1954).

[9] Allport, *The Nature of Prejudice*; W. Edgar Vinacke, "Stereotypes as Social Concepts," *Journal of Social Psychology* 46 (November 1957): 229–243.

Racial and ethnic stereotypes are relevant to opinion formation about public policy, because they influence information processing and decision making. Those who believe the stereotype that blacks are lazy are likely to be opposed to policies that seek to ameliorate racial discrimination through affirmative action.[10] Similarly, those who believe immigrants to be unintelligent, dirty, unwilling to learn English, or unwilling to work as hard as natives are more likely to oppose immigration than those who do not have such beliefs.

Of course it is well known that the term "immigrant" is increasingly associated with "ethnic minority" in both the United States and Europe.[11] As the immigration stream to the United States continues to be dominated by Asian and Hispanic immigrants, attitudes toward immigration may become even more closely linked to ethnic stereotypes than they were in the late 1990s. The more the term "immigrant" becomes associated with negatively-stereotyped minority groups, the more likely immigration policy will be decided on the basis of peoples' racial attitudes.

An Independent Role for Economic Self-Interest

While we believe that economic insecurity may manifest itself in racial prejudice and restrictionist preferences on immigration policy, it is easy to imagine someone who is economically vulnerable but does not express negative racial stereotypes. For this reason, individual economic fears should be considered a direct influence on attitudes independent of any indirect impact they may have through respondents' racial prejudices. Whether fears that immigrant labor could supplant native workers are well founded is subject to considerable dispute in the academic journals. But information is costly and people rarely form their opinions based on a complete account of the facts. Natives and established immigrants who are unskilled worry that the influx of immigrants may be injurious to their livelihood, even if the reality is otherwise. The fear of labor competition could easily bring about demands for protection even in the absence of racist beliefs.

Whether economic insecurity should be measured with a question about the outlook for one's personal financial situation or with a question about more general economic conditions has been a matter of controversy in voting and opinion studies.[12] One's personal financial position has generally not been as

[10] James H. Kuklinski, Michael D. Cobb, and Martin Gilens, "Racial Attitudes and the 'New South,'" *Journal of Politics* 59 (June 1997): 323–349; Sniderman and Piazza, *The Scar of Race.*

[11] Charles L. Glenn and Ester J. deJong, *Educating Immigrant Children: Schools and Language Minorities in Twelve Nations* (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1996), chap. 1.

[12] David O. Sears and Carolyn L. Funk, "The Role of Self-Interest in Social and Political Attitudes," *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology* 24 (1991): 1–91; Donald Kinder and D. Roderick Kiewiet, "Sociotropic Politics: The American Case," *British Journal of Political Science* 11 (April 1981): 129–161; Stanley Feldman, "Economic Self-Interest and Political Behavior," *American Journal of Political Science* 26 (August 1982): 446–466; David O. Sears and Carolyn L. Funk, "The Limited Effect of Economic Self-Interest on the Political Attitudes of the Mass Public," *Journal of Behavioral Economics* 19 (1990): 247–261.

significant to political behavior as a broader view of national economic performance. Although personal and national economic forecasts are usually related, there are respondents whose personal economic situation is secure but who are fearful for the nation as a whole. Still, the previous literature is explicit in its suggestion that one's personal economic well-being is related to prejudicial attitudes. We hypothesize that attitudes toward immigration levels are more a function of respondents' personal economic situations than of their outlook on the national economy. Since personal and national economic assessments may have an impact on prejudice and on immigration policy, however, we include measures of both in our models.

Education, Income, and Tolerance

The contribution of education to liberal attitudes on racial policies has often been associated with the learning of tolerance.[13] "Educational institutions are regarded as vital propagators of the democratic creed."[14] Education is also related to economic position, such that better educated people earn more money and are generally less threatened by economic downturn than the less educated. But education is not synonymous with either tolerance or economic well-being. Mary Jackman and Michael Muha indicate that better educated people are simply trained to avoid sounding bigoted when they express opposition to racial policies.[15] The well-educated may harbor many of the same views and stereotypes as the less well-educated. Bearing in mind that the survey questions may not be eliciting respondents' true level of prejudice, we still expect the well-educated to express less racist attitudes and express more generous views about immigration policy than the less educated.

We believe that wealth may insulate respondents from the economic pressure of a low-skilled, immigrant labor flow. Higher-income people are more secure in the labor market than the poor. If we conceive of the labor market as segmented, higher-income, better-educated respondents are at the top; immigrants and less well-educated natives are at the bottom. Because the influx of immigrants is unlikely to have much impact on the labor market position of the wealthy and well-educated, these respondents may harbor warmer attitudes toward immigrants than they would if they were on one of the bottom rungs of

[13] Mary Jackman, "General and Applied Tolerance: Does Education Increase Commitment to Racial Education?" *American Journal of Political Science* 22 (May 1978): 302–324; Mary Jackman, "Education and Policy Commitment to Racial Education," *American Journal of Political Science* 25 (May 1981): 256–269; Lawrence Bobo and Frederick C. Licari, "Education and Political Tolerance: Testing the Effects of Cognitive Sophistication and Target Group Affect," *Public Opinion Quarterly* 53 (Fall 1989): 285–308; John G. Condran, "Changes in White Attitudes Toward Blacks: 1963-1977," *Public Opinion Quarterly* 43 (Winter 1979): 463–476.

[14] Mary Jackman and Michael J. Muha, "Education and Intergroup Attitudes: Moral Enlightenment, Superficial Democratic Commitment or Ideological Refinement?" *American Sociological Review* 49 (December 1984): 751.

[15] Ibid.

society's economic ladder. Moreover, some high income respondents in managerial and proprietary positions may readily benefit from the deflationary effect that immigration has on wages. With a cheap labor supply guaranteed by a generous immigration policy, managers and corporate executives can increase the profitability of their enterprises by hiring out of a surplus labor pool consisting of both low-skill natives and immigrants.

Political Ideology

Political ideology, another factor likely to be related to attitudes toward immigration levels, has a distinct role to play in explanations of public opinion, independent of prejudice, self-interest, or education.[16] It is the conceptual tool used to link various public policy positions into a coherent belief system.[17] The terms "liberal" and "conservative" act as abstractions that define the poles on a continuum of favorable or unfavorable judgments about public policy alternatives. Ideology provides political content for events that might otherwise be evaluated in nonpolitical terms.[18] Relatively few voters actually qualify as ideological thinkers, if the standard for ideological thinking is that they be able to define the poles of the continuum.[19] Yet many Americans still identify themselves as liberals or conservatives, and the positions they take on issues are highly consistent with these ideological identifications.[20] If ideology is an expression of peoples' feelings, and not a reflection of an elaborate political knowledge structure, then ideology's impact on attitudes toward racial policies and toward an issue such as immigration may not be limited only to those who are highly sophisticated reasoners. Ideological reasoning has two facets: the traditional one is cognitive, the other is affective.[21]

[16] Jack Citrin, Beth Reingold, and Donald P. Green, "American Identity and the Politics of Ethnic Change," *Journal of Politics* 52 (November 1990): 1124–1153.

[17] Philip E. Converse, "The Nature of Belief Systems in Mass Publics" in David E. Apter, ed., *Ideology and Discontent* (Glencoe, IL: The Free Press, 1964); Warren E. Miller and Teresa E. Levitin, *Leadership and Change: Presidential Elections from 1972–1976* (Cambridge, MA: Winthrop, 1976).

[18] Angus Campbell, Philip E. Converse, Warren E. Miller, and Donald E. Stokes, *The American Voter* (New York: John Wiley, 1960).

[19] John Zaller, *The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992); John E. Chubb, Michael G. Hagen, and Paul M. Sniderman, "Ideological Reasoning" in Paul M. Sniderman, Richard A. Brody, and Philip E. Tetlock, eds., *Reasoning and Choice: Explorations in Political Psychology* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 140–163; William G. Jacoby, "Ideological Identification and Issue Attitudes," *American Journal of Political Science* 35 (February 1991): 178–205; Ruth Hamill and Milton Lodge, "Cognitive Consequences of Political Sophistication" in Richard R. Lau and David O. Sears, eds., *Political Cognition* (Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 1985).

[20] Chubb, Hagen, and Sniderman, "Ideological Reasoning."

[21] Ibid., 161.

Immigration and Attitudes Toward Welfare Use

The American public has very little tolerance for handouts.[22] The reality is that welfare use by legal immigrants has been on the rise. But even if that were not the case, attitudes toward welfare use by native-born minorities are likely to influence attitudes toward immigration insofar as it is increasingly the case that many of the immigrants are themselves distinguishable as ethnic and racial minorities.[23] Racial attitudes are generally not sufficiently refined to draw distinctions between natives and immigrants of a particular ethnic group. If one has unfavorable views of native-born Latinos, foreign-born members of this group are likely to be similarly tainted.

Undoubtedly, many citizens are as ambivalent about immigration as they seem to be about race.[24] But ambivalence can quickly turn into negativity if the ambivalent respondent is primed with negative information.[25] Welfare use is exactly the type of information that, like stories about crime, can translate ambivalence toward immigrants into negative emotions.[26] The media is a major source of information about ethnic groups, from coverage of criminal conduct where black and Latino faces are often shown in connection with arrests to stories about the use of welfare and social security benefits by immigrants.[27] One of the major issues addressed in the immigration debate between 1994 and 1996 was the use by immigrants of public benefits to which they were not entitled in the minds of many voters. The association of immigrants with welfare use and the connection between welfare use and negative racial stereotypes underscore how immigration can easily be translated into a racial issue with redistributive undertones.[28] We should not be surprised to find that the negative attitudes that

[22] R. Kent Weaver, Robert Y. Shapiro, and Lawrence R. Jacobs, "The Polls-Trends: Welfare," *Public Opinion Quarterly* (Winter 1995): 606–627; Martin Gilens, "Racial Attitudes and Opposition to Welfare," *Journal of Politics* 57 (December 1995): 994–1014; Hugh Heclo, "The Political Foundations of Anti-Poverty Policy" in Sheldon H. Danziger and Daniel H. Weinberg, eds., *Fighting Poverty: What Works and What Doesn't* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1986), 312–340.

[23] Glenn and deJong, *Educating Immigrant Children: Schools and Language Minorities in Twelve Nations*.

[24] I. Katz and R. G. Hass, "Racial Ambivalence and American Value Conflict: Correlational and Priming Studies of Dual Cognitive Structures," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 55 (December 1988): 893–905; Gregory R. Maio, David W. Bell, and Victoria M. Esses, "Ambivalence and Persuasion: The Processing of Messages about Immigrant Groups," *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology* 32 (November 1996): 513–546.

[25] Maio, Bell, and Esses, "Ambivalence and Persuasion: The Processing of Messages about Immigrant Groups."

[26] R. Michael Alvarez and John Brehm, "Are Americans Ambivalent Towards Racial Policies?" *American Journal of Political Science* 41 (April 1997): 344–374.

[27] Robert M. Entman, "Blacks in the News: Television, Modern Racism and Cultural Change," *Journalism Quarterly* 69 (Summer 1992): 341–361; Henderson-King and Nisbett, "Anti-Black Prejudice as a Function of Exposure to the Negative Behavior of a Single Black Person."

[28] Martin Gilens, "'Race Coding' and White Opposition to Welfare," *American Political Science Review* 90 (September 1996): 593–604.

most citizens hold about welfare dependency are at least partly responsible for the widespread hostility toward immigrants and elevated levels of immigration.

Family reunification has long been a bedrock principle of immigration policy in the United States. Since 1968, emigres have been granted visas largely on the basis of family ties to citizens or permanent residents. A history of immigration in one's family influences attitudes on immigration policy, because it reflects the self-interested sensitivity to the experience of those who are closest: one's parents, siblings, and children. "Self-interest encompasses the material interests of the family as well as the material interests of the self."[29] The family is accorded a special place, not just in Western society, but in Eastern societies as well, which explains why Asian-Pacific American interest groups worked so hard to preserve family reunification preferences in the most recent round of immigration reform. We hypothesize that those who have close relatives, in this case parents who are born elsewhere, will be far more supportive of generous immigration policy than those whose parents are native-born.

Social Context, Proximity, and Region

Does the proximity to racial groups other than one's own foster mutual hostility or understanding? This question has perplexed scholars for some time. Some argue that contact reduces negative attitudes between groups while others suggest that proximity breeds polarization.[30] Those believing that proximity reduces intergroup tension base this conclusion on the idea that knowledge and

[29] Donald Kinder and Lynn M. Sanders, *Divided by Color: Racial Politics and Democratic Ideals* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 52.

[30] Hubert M. Blalock, "Economic Discrimination and Negro Increase," *American Sociological Review* 21 (1956): 584–588; Hubert M. Blalock, "Percent Non-White and Discrimination in the South," *American Sociological Review* 22 (1957): 677–682; M. V. Hood and Irwin L. Morris, "Amigo or Enemigo? Context, Attitudes and Anglo Public Opinion Toward Immigration," *Social Science Quarterly* 78 (June 1997): 309–323; Robert M. Stein, Stephanie Shirley Post, and Allison L. Rinden, "The Effect of Contact and Context on White Attitudes Toward Immigrants and Immigration Policy" (paper presented at the American Political Science Association Meeting, Washington, DC 1997); Lee Sigelman, Timothy Bledsoe, Susan Welch, and Michael W. Combs, "Making Contact? Black-White Social Interaction in an Urban Setting," *American Journal of Sociology* 101 (March 1996): 1306–1332; Lee Sigelman and Susan Welch, "The Contact Hypothesis Revisited: Interracial Contact and Positive Racial Attitudes," *Social Forces* 71 (March 1993): 781–795; Donald Kinder and Tali Mendelberg, "Cracks in American Apartheid: The Political Impact of Prejudice among Desegregated Whites," *Journal of Politics* 57 (May 1995): 402–424; Michael W. Giles and Kaenan Hertz, "Racial Threat and Partisan Identification," *American Political Science Review* 88 (June 1994): 317–326; M. Rothbart and O. John, "Intergroup Relations and Stereotype Change: A Social Cognitive Analysis and Some Longitudinal Findings" in P. Sniderman, P. Tetlock, and E. Carmines, eds., *Prejudice, Politics and the American Dilemma*; Mary Jackman and M. Crane, "Some of My Best Friends Are Black. . . : Interracial Friendship and Whites' Racial Attitudes," *Public Opinion Quarterly* 50 (Winter 1986): 459–486; Miles Hewstone and Rupert Brown, *Contact and Conflict in Intergroup Encounters* (New York: Basil Blackwell Ltd., 1986); Allport, *Nature of Prejudice*, 1954.

hostility are inversely related. Familiarity breeds not contempt, but friendship.[31] Others, extending as far back as V. O. Key's landmark *Southern Politics*, have been less sure about this.[32] In the South that Key studied, contact with large black populations triggered perceptions of threat among whites and resulted in the most determined efforts by whites to preserve Jim Crow. In more recent studies of attitudes toward immigrants and immigration, familiarity does seem to breed contempt under certain circumstances and toward certain groups.[33] Using broad-brush contextual variables for contact, such as the population composition within a respondent's neighborhood or city based on U.S. census data, has generally produced results consistent with Key's early findings. In response to the equivocal nature of the literature, some have argued for more refined measures of group interaction, including an indication of the type of contact respondents have with other groups. Presumably, interaction in the workplace is qualitatively different from interaction in other settings such as neighborhood, church, or school.[34] The data we use here provide a measure of residential interaction based on the dissimilarity index widely used by sociologists and demographers to measure residential integration.[35] Using the dissimilarity index, we hypothesize that contact not only increases negative stereotyping of groups other than one's own but also negative opinions toward immigration, because our specific measure of contact is one of residential proximity. Exposure to out-groups through residential proximity, without correspondingly close social interaction, is likely to increase negative stereotyping.

For most of American history, the nation's largest cities have been the familiar points of entry for immigrants. People from these urban areas are likely to be more accustomed to and more inviting of diversity than those in rural areas. We hypothesize that once we control for related variables such as residential integration, urban areas are more likely to be immigrant-friendly than more rural areas and are less likely to engage in negative ethnic stereotyping.

Immigrants settle in high concentrations in just a few states. In many areas of the country, natives have no contact with immigrants and immigration policy is a nonissue. While having contact with immigrants is not strictly necessary to forming opinions about immigration policy, the ubiquity of immigrants in the border states has fueled a state-level policy debate on top of the issues of national policy making. Grassroots policy petitions aimed at reducing state government benefit levels to legal and illegal immigrants have been circulated in

[31] Thomas F. Pettigrew, *Racially Separate or Together?* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1971).

[32] V. O. Key, *Southern Politics* (New York: Knopf, 1949).

[33] Jack Citrin, Donald P. Green, Christopher Muste, and Cara Wong, "Public Opinion Toward Immigration Reform: The Role of Economic Motivations," *Journal of Politics* 59 (September 1997); Hood and Morris, "Amigo or Enemigo?"

[34] Sigelman, Bledsoe, Welch, and Combs, "Making Contact?"

[35] Douglas S. Massey and Nancy A. Denton, *American Apartheid: Segregation and the Making of the Underclass* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993); Robert M. Jiobu, *Ethnicity and Assimilation* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1988), chap. 5.

Florida, Texas, California, New Mexico, and Arizona. The movement behind California's Proposition 187 to restrict illegal immigrants from access to certain public services is the best known and most politically successful effort, but restrictionist interest groups continue to press for state-level policy changes. Because of the regional nature of immigrant settlement and the volume of illegal immigration across the southern border, we hypothesize that those living in border states will be more likely than those living elsewhere to negatively stereotype Hispanics and call for reduced immigration levels. Previous research has also shown that residents from southern states are less racially tolerant than those from other states. We therefore introduce a control variable for southern residence.

Several scholars have noted that over time negative stereotypes of certain minority groups have diminished.[36] If racial stereotypes are the product of preadult socialization, then the historical era in which respondents come of age is likely to have a strong impact on their attitudes on a multitude of subjects. A large accumulation of findings points to significant generational differences on a variety of political and policy attitudes.[37] For example, we would expect those who came of age in the post-civil rights era would have more favorable feelings toward the rights of other racial groups compared to those who grew up in earlier times.[38] Negative opinions about ethnic groups may vary with the age of the respondents, with younger cohorts expressing more positive opinions and older cohorts more desultory ones. Theories of modern versus old-fashioned racism also suggest generational differences in racial attitudes may exist. By the 1980s, most white Americans had abandoned the notion that blacks were biologically inferior.[39] Younger cohorts may express racial resentment, but not the baldfaced racism that had been widely accepted prior to the civil rights era.

Findings from a couple of previous studies showed clear differences between the sexes on immigration-related matters.[40] Women have been found to be more supportive of traditional American values than men, and women are more opposed to illegal immigration than men. Other research has pinpointed the growing political conservatism among white males, suggesting that men may be more likely than women to express racial intolerance and hostility toward generous immigration policy. Given these contradictory indications, we control for both gender and the interaction of gender and race.

[36] Rothbart and John, "Intergroup Relations and Stereotype Change"; Marvin M. Karlins, Thomas L. Coffman, and Gary Walters, "On the Fading of Social Stereotypes: Studies in Three Generations of College Students," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 13 (January 1969): 1–16.

[37] Warren E. Miller and J. Merrill Shanks, *The New American Voter* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996).

[38] A. Wade Smith, "Cohorts, Education and the Evolution of Tolerance," *Social Science Research* 14 (September 1985): 205–225.

[39] Kinder and Sanders, *Divided by Color: Racial Politics and Democratic Ideals*, 97.

[40] Citrin, Reingold, and Green, "American Identity and the Politics of Ethnic Change," 144. Also see Thomas J. Espenshade and Charles A. Calhoun, "An Analysis of Public Opinion toward Undocumented Immigration," *Population Research and Policy Review* 13 (February 1993): 189–224.

Data and Methods

Using the American National Election Studies (ANES) from 1992 and 1996, we evaluate the influence of a number of possible sources of opinion first on negative and positive stereotypes of groups, then on attitudes toward immigration policy. We address the sources of stereotyping first in order to understand the role that economic self-interest, both broadly and narrowly construed, may play in determining positive and negative judgments about rival ethnic groups. While we are working with cross-sectional surveys rather than a panel study, we hope to draw some inferences about attitude change on the issue over a short period of time.

For the first part of the analysis, we investigate the impact of personal and national economic outlook, income, education, ideology, ethnicity, social context, gender, and age on negative stereotypes of Hispanics, blacks, and whites. The data on stereotypes originate from two questions on the 1992 and 1996 American National Election Studies. The first question asked each respondent to rank each ethnic group (whites, Hispanics, and blacks) from 1 to 7 with 1 indicating that the group is typically hardworking and 7 indicating that the group is typically lazy. The second question asked respondents to rank the groups on an intelligence scale, with 1 indicating intelligent and 7 indicating unintelligent. The 1992 study also included a question about dispositions toward violence that was not asked in the 1996 study. The 1996 study asked a question about trustworthiness that was not a part of the 1992 study. Since these questions were not common to the two polls, we excluded them for purposes of our analysis. Because the responses to the two common questions were highly associated, we summed them to create a simple 14 point scale for each of the three groups.[41] Those scoring low on the scale are considered low in prejudice toward a particular group, and those scoring high on the scale were judged to be high in prejudice. Naturally, these questions are likely to be biased toward an underestimation of prejudice, since many respondents know the socially desirable answers. But there was ample variation in response to both questions in both years, suggesting that these queries are not totally without validity as instruments. The variable coding for personal and national economic outlook, attitudes toward welfare recipients, income, education, ideology, age, and contact with other groups is listed in the Appendix. Our measure for contact is the dissimilarity index for the county in which the respondent lives calculated

[41] The ordinal association between the stereotype questions for work ethic and intelligence for each ethnic group for the two years are as follows using both gamma and Cronbach's alpha:

Hispanic	*Black*	*White*
γ = .33 for 1992	γ = .47 for 1992	γ = .43 for 1992
α = .50 for 1992	α = .62 for 1992	α = .48 for 1992
γ = .57 for 1996	γ = .70 for 1996	γ = .71 for 1996
α = .69 for 1996	α = .78 for 1996	α = .76 for 1996

across census tracts within each county.[42] With the stereotyping scale as our initial dependent variable, we use weighted least squares regression to assess the impact of the independent variables.

Because the dependent variables for racial stereotyping are limited to a range of 1 to 14, and the dependent variables for immigration policy attitudes are truncated on a scale from 1 to 5, we use weighted least squares (WLS) regression to estimate the parameters of each model. These upper and lower limits on the values of the dependent variables violate classic ordinary least squares assumptions, including that of homoscedasticity of the error terms and the possibility that predicted values could lie outside the actual limits of the dependent variable. Weighted least squares addresses the first of these problems by adjusting the regression model according to procedures specified in standard econometrics texts.[43] In the case of predicted values that exceed the bounds of the dependent variables, these are assumed in the WLS framework to be equal to the lowest and highest values of the dependent variable.[44]

Results: Negative Racial Stereotyping in 1992

The results reported in Table 1 show that respondents who are pessimistic about their personal economic situation in 1992 are more likely than those who are optimistic to harbor desultory stereotypes of whites and blacks, but not Hispanics. One's outlook for the national economy has a more consistent impact on negative stereotyping than one's personal economic outlook. One way of understanding the results in Table 1 is that those who are pessimistic about the national economy are especially likely to blame blacks and Hispanics, and those who are optimistic are especially likely to credit whites. People's prejudice, then, is rooted in sociotropic economic fears as well as insecurity about one's own situation, but group interest is more influential than self-interest narrowly construed.

[42] Otis Dudley Duncan and Beverly Duncan, "Residential Distribution and Occupational Stratification," *American Journal of Sociology* 60 (March 1955): 493–503; Lieberson, *Ethnic Patterns in American Cities*; Karl E. Taeuber and Alma F. Taeuber, *Negroes in Cities: Residential Segregation and Neighborhood Change* (New York: Atheneum, 1969); Massey and Denton, *American Apartheid*.

[43] Samprit Chatterjee and Bertram Price, *Regression Analysis by Example* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1991), chap. 5; Damodar N. Gujarati, *Basic Econometrics*, 3rd ed. (New York: McGraw Hill, 1995), chap. 11. In this particular case, to obtain our weights for the WLS estimation, we utilized a customary two-stage estimation method, first obtaining the residuals, s_i, from an ordinary least squares estimation of each model, then transformed these residuals to obtain the weights, w_i. The values for w_i are given by $1/s_i^2$. The w_i are then multiplied by the original variables in the model and the resulting parameter values are the WLS estimates. An alternative specification of these models using ordered logit revealed very similar coefficients and significance levels. Given the similarity, and the journal's broad audience, we remained with the simpler, but less technically precise WLS estimation. Readers can obtain the ordered logit results and associated probabilities upon request from the authors.

[44] Gujarati, *Basic Econometrics*, chap. 16.

TABLE 1

The Effect of Personal Economic Well-Being on Negative Ethnic Stereotyping Controlling for Race and Related Variables, 1992

Variable	*Negative Black Unstandardized Coefficient*	*Negative Hispanic Unstandardized Coefficient*	*Negative White Unstandardized Coefficient*
Pessimistic Personal Economic Outlook	.089	.007	.162
Pessimistic National Economic Outlook	.137	—	.131
Family Income	—	−.008	—
Black	−1.477	−.430	.415
Hispanic	−.307	−1.028	−.513
Support for Welfare	−.018	−.017	−.007
Education	−.020	−.037	.132
Conservatism	.029	—	−.070
Age	.012	—	−.006
Female	−.403	—	−.276
Urban	−.037	−.029	—
Border State	—	−.318	—
Southern State	.151	−.079	−.128
Black-White Isolation	.002	—	—
Hispanic-White Isolation	—	−.005	—
Constant	8.599	9.541	5.390

Regression coefficients from weighted least squares estimation. Source: American National Election Study 1992.

Dependent variable: 1 = positive stereotype of group - 14 = negative stereotype of group.

All listed associations are significant to at least $p < .05$ level.

Race and ethnicity are strong substantive influences on the propensity to stereotype positively or negatively one's own group and other groups. Black respondents have more positive evaluations of blacks and Hispanics than non-Hispanic whites. On average, black respondents evaluated blacks about 1.48 points lower (more favorably) on the stereotype scale than non-Hispanic white respondents. Naturally, blacks are more likely to stereotype whites negatively than non-Hispanic whites are. In evaluating whites' intelligence and work ethic, Hispanics were much more positive than blacks, undoubtedly because many Hispanics are themselves white.

Attitudes toward welfare are more strongly related to negative stereotyping of ethnic groups than personal economic outlook. Blacks and Hispanics are more likely than whites to be the target of negative ethnic stereotypes as the result of attitudes on welfare.[45] A fifty-point increase in one's positive feeling toward welfare recipients as measured by the ANES feeling thermometer scale (which runs from 1-100) reduces negative stereotyping of blacks and Hispanics by nearly 1 point. In other words, those who think the least of welfare recipients

[45] Gilens, "Racial Attitudes and Opposition to Welfare."

clearly have harsher mental images of blacks and Hispanics than those who are not as critical of the poor.

Ranking behind race and attitudes toward welfare, education is the most powerful influence on the content of stereotypes. Education behaves as expected, with better educated citizens expressing less prejudice toward blacks and Hispanics. The finding for white stereotypes, however, shows that more education is associated with more negative evaluations of whites' work ethic and intelligence. Exploratory work reveals that it is mainly white respondents with lower levels of education who have especially favorable opinions of whites compared to white respondents who are better educated. Poorly educated whites are apparently reluctant to engage in much self-criticism when compared to their better educated counterparts.

Political ideology also has a predictable and statistically significant impact on racial stereotyping once we control for the other variables. More conservative citizens hold more negative stereotypes about blacks than liberals, but conservatives express more positive stereotypes of Hispanics and whites than liberals. While the magnitude of the impact is not especially strong, conservatives do see Hispanics in a more positive light than blacks. This may be due to the perception among conservatives that Hispanics have more intact families, are harder working, and less likely than blacks to use discrimination as an explanation for low economic and educational attainment.

As we hypothesized, older respondents are more likely to harbor prejudicial attitudes toward blacks and Hispanics, and less prejudicial attitudes toward whites than younger voters. Women are much less prejudiced toward blacks than men according to the estimates in Table 1. There is no difference between the sexes in the propensity to negatively stereotype Hispanics.

To no one's surprise, those residing in southern states express more critical attitudes of blacks than those in nonsouthern states. Southern residents more favorably judge Hispanics' intelligence and work ethic, though, than those living elsewhere. Consistent with expectations, urban dwellers are generally less critical of blacks and Hispanics than those living in more rural locales. The social context hypothesis is significant as an influence on stereotypical attitudes toward Hispanics, but it shows that the more residentially integrated an area is, the more hostility there is toward this ancestry group. For example, the coefficient in Table 1 suggests that if we move from an area with a score on the dissimilarity index of 30 (more integration) to an area where the dissimilarity measure is 80 (less integration), respondents in the less integrated area will have slightly more positive evaluations of Hispanics (by a magnitude of .25). This effect is weak, but it is statistically significant. It would appear, at least in 1992, that proximity to Hispanics breeds more hostile rather than benign attitudes toward them. Or, alternatively, distance from Hispanics is consonant with more positive stereotypes of them.

TABLE 2

The Effect of Personal Economic Well-Being on Negative Ethnic Stereotyping Controlling for Race and Related Variables, 1996

Variable	*Negative Black Unstandardized Coefficient*	*Negative Hispanic Unstandardized Coefficient*	*Negative White Unstandardized Coefficient*
Pessimistic Personal Economic Outlook	.043	.145	−.062
Pessimistic National Economic Outlook	.201	—	.123
Income	—	−.017	—
Black	−1.525	−.848	—
Hispanic	—	−.765	—
Support for Welfare	−.022	−.021	−.003
Education	−.050	−.050	.027
Conservatism	.083	—	−.074
Age	.017	.007	−.004
Female	−.283	—	−.170
Urban	.069	—	.093
Border State	−.116	−.397	—
Southern State	.255	—	−.136
Black-White Isolation	.003	—	−.004
Hispanic-White Isolation	—	—	—
Constant	8.35	8.774	6.39

Regression coefficients from weighted least squares estimation. Source: American National Election Study 1996.

Dependent variable: 1 = positive stereotype of group - 14 = negative stereotype of group.

All listed associations are significant to $p < .05$ level.

Results: Negative Racial Stereotyping in 1996

A lot changed in U.S. politics between the 1992 and 1996 presidential elections, especially with regard to immigration policy. In November 1994, as Proposition 187 passed in California, the Republican party won control of Congress. In the fall of 1996, GOP forces were pressuring President Bill Clinton to sign a sweeping new immigration reform law. The economy had also made a strong recovery, and far fewer people expressed pessimism about their future in 1996 than in 1992. Insofar as prejudice has roots in economic insecurity, we would expect respondents to be far less likely to express negative racial stereotypes in 1996 than in 1992.

Some of these contextual changes help us to make sense of the results in Table 2 for 1996. The personal economic outlook of respondents had some linkage to negative views of blacks and whites in 1992, but there was little relationship to attitudes toward Hispanics. In 1996, however, respondents who have a pessimistic personal economic outlook view Hispanics more harshly, but personal economic circumstances are not highly related to views of blacks and whites. One explanation for this finding is that between 1992 and 1996 Hispanic immigrants came into sharper focus as the primary economic competitors for

white and black natives. While fewer people were pessimistic about their personal outlook in 1996 than in 1992, those who were worried could more precisely target their negative feelings toward Hispanics in the latter year. Citizens may have learned from the ongoing elite debate that there was an ostensible economic connection between the Hispanic influx and the state of the labor market.[46] The idea that people made a clearer connection between immigration and personal economic insecurity in 1996 than they did in 1992 is bolstered by the results in 1996 for national economic evaluations. Perceptions of the state of the national economy remain influential in shaping attitudes toward blacks and whites in 1996, as they did in 1992, but not toward Hispanics.

Positive attitudes toward welfare recipients are inversely related to negative stereotypes of all three groups in 1996, but more for blacks and Hispanics than for whites. Education decreases the expression of racial prejudice toward African Americans and Hispanics. Just as in 1992, older voters are more likely than younger ones to express negative judgments about the work ethic and intelligence of Hispanics and blacks, but are more positive about these traits in whites. Black voters positively stereotype their own group more than nonblacks and are also more positive toward Hispanics than nonblacks. Blacks in 1996, however, seem rather indifferent toward whites compared to 1992, perhaps a function of the improvement in economic conditions across the four-year period. Hispanics, too, are naturally more favorable to their own group than non-Hispanics, but they are less harsh in their judgments of blacks and whites in 1996 than in 1992. To the extent that prejudice has self-interested or economic foundations, we would expect that prejudice by all groups would dissipate when economic conditions improve. The diminishing propensity of blacks and Hispanics to negatively stereotype others from 1992 to 1996 could easily be attributed to the better overall economic conditions of the latter year.

The variable capturing urbanization reverses direction from 1992. In 1992, those living in urban areas were less likely to negatively stereotype blacks and Hispanics than those in more rural areas. In 1996, however, urban dwellers are more negative than rural voters about all three racial groups. Explorations of the data revealed that the stereotypical attitudes of urban respondents did not shift as much from 1992 to 1996 as did the attitudes of those in small town and rural areas. The volatility of this indicator reflects the way in which rural voters' opinions of these groups improved over the four-year period. About 36 percent of voters in the most rural areas held generally positive stereotypes of blacks in 1996 (scores on the stereotype scale < 7), compared with only 23 percent in 1992. The stereotypes expressed by urban voters remained relatively unchanged.

Finally, in 1996, respondents residing in areas where there is considerable segregation between blacks and whites were far more likely to express negative

[46] Huber and Espenshade, "Neo-Isolationism, Balanced-Budget Conservatism and the Fiscal Impacts of Immigrants."

stereotypes of blacks than in counties that were more integrated. Moving from an area that scores a 30 on the dissimilarity index (low segregation) to an 80 (high segregation) increases negative evaluations of blacks by about .15 points on the 1-14 scale. This makes sense as black-white segregation and prejudicial attitudes go hand in hand. Areas that are highly segregated also have larger black populations than those that are more integrated. Larger black populations enhance the perception of threat among whites.[47]

Residential segregation between whites and Hispanics has no statistically significant impact on attitudes toward Hispanics in 1996 as it did in 1992. In 1992, respondents who lived in mixed Anglo-Hispanic neighborhoods expressed more derogatory stereotypes of Hispanics than those living in areas characterized by residential isolation. The difference between the two years may be due to the generally healthy supply of jobs throughout the country in 1996 compared to 1992. Fewer people were in economic distress, and competition against rival groups for employment and housing was simply not an issue in most places. Having acknowledged this difference in neighborhood effects, it is also worth noting that those living in border states remain as hostile toward Hispanics in 1996 as they did in 1992. We are also reminded that the coefficient for personal economic outlook in 1996 indicates that those who remain pessimistic about their future are stereotyping Hispanics more negatively than either whites or blacks.

Ethnic Stereotypes, Economic Assessments, and Attitudes on Immigration Policy

Our main goal is to understand attitudes toward levels of immigration in the United States. We hypothesized that ethnic stereotypes play a role in attitudes toward the admission of immigrants given that the foreign-born population consists increasingly of populations originating from underdeveloped countries in Latin America and Asia. We learned from Tables 1 and 2 that race, attitudes toward welfare, education, gender, and age influence negative stereotyping pretty consistently. The impact of personal economic circumstances and national economic evaluations on stereotyping varies. Hispanics (rather than blacks or non-Hispanic whites) bear the brunt of the negative sentiment by 1996. Social context, as measured by residential isolation in the counties where the respondents reside, does not always have an impact on stereotyping, once other variables are held constant. Black-white isolation is associated with negative black stereotypes in 1996, but less so in 1992. Hispanic-white isolation is associated with positive assessments of Hispanics in 1992 but not in 1996. The finding for Hispanics for 1992 is consistent with intergroup conflict theory as put forward by Susan Olzak.[48] Proximity to minority groups breeds competition

[47] Blalock, "Economic Discrimination and Negro Increase"; Giles and Kaenan Hertz, "Racial Threat and Partisan Identification."

[48] Olzak, *The Dynamics of Ethnic Competition and Conflict.*

and hostility. If one is isolated from these populations, positive assessments increase. But why is black-white isolation associated with negative black stereotypes if the reverse is true for Hispanics? The answer may be that the black population is an older, more established population and also one that is more negatively stereotyped. Since Hispanics are a newer population, attitudes toward them are less crystallized. In addition, neighborhoods may be segregated in areas of black concentration because whites have a long history of negatively stereotyping an established black population. Viewed in historical perspective, the causal arrow may run from negative stereotypes to segregation, in addition to the other way around. In areas of Hispanic concentration, however, neighborhoods are less likely to have a long history of segregation resulting from negative stereotypes, because the Hispanic population is more recent. In counties where Hispanics and whites are isolated from one another, whites have less contact with the Hispanic population, and this distance has produced less negative stereotyping than in neighborhoods where the Hispanic and white populations do come in contact.

To evaluate the impact of social context, personal economic outlook, and stereotypical beliefs on immigration policy attitudes, we utilize the 1992 and 1996 ANES studies to model opinion on immigration levels using weighted least squares regression.[49] The question producing the dependent variable asks whether respondents favored increasing or decreasing immigration levels. The dependent variable takes on five values: increase a lot; increase some; keep the same; decrease some; and decrease a lot. High values on the dependent variable indicate a desire for reduced immigration. The question on immigration levels is identically worded across both the 1992 and 1996 surveys.

The independent variables include the three indicators of the respondents' attitudes toward the work ethic and intelligence of blacks, Hispanics, and whites; attitudes toward welfare recipients; personal economic outlook; national economic outlook; education; ideology; age; gender; whether the respondents' parents are native or foreign-born; urban vs. rural residence; whether the respondent lives in a southern or border state; and the measures of ethnic isolation for each ethnic group relative to the respondents' ethnic group. (See variable coding in the Appendix.)

Results: Attitudes on Immigration Levels in 1992

Negative stereotypes of blacks and Hispanics are highly associated with a desire for decreased immigration in 1992. It is somewhat surprising that negative black stereotypes play a major role in determining attitudes toward immigrants, because most immigrants are not black. Apparently this is a primitive racism at

[49] An alternative specification of the model using ordered logit revealed very similar coefficients and significance levels. Readers can obtain the ordered logit results, and associated probabilities, upon request from the authors.

TABLE 3

Racial Stereotypes, Personal Economic Well-Being, and Attitudes Toward Immigration Policy, Controlling for Race and Related Variables, 1992 and 1996

Variable	*1992 Unstandardized Coefficient*	*1992 Standardized Coefficient*	*1996 Unstandardized Coefficient*	*1996 Standardized Coefficient*
Negative Black Stereotype	.077	.271	.029	.139
Negative Hispanic Stereotype	.044	.139	.068	.255
Negative White Stereotype	−.066	−.195	−.064	−.257
Pessimistic Personal Economic Outlook	−.076	−.074	—	.029
Pessimistic National Economic Outlook	.086	.085	.067	.096
Income	.007	.058	—	.004
Black	.328	.103	—	−.026
Hispanic	—	.037	−.122	−.078
Parents Born Abroad	−.108	−.069	−.248	−.189
Support for Welfare	−.007	−.249	−.006	−.234
Education	−.052	−.187	−.041	−.189
Conservatism	.054	.109	—	.026
Age	−.002	−.068	—	.021
Female	.366	.287	—	−.099
White Males (Interaction)	.339	.269	—	−.084
Urban	−.032	−.067	—	−.024
Border State	.181	.106	.133	.141
Southern State	—	−.039	—	−.022
Black-White Isolation	−.004	−.113	−.003	−.108
Hispanic-White Isolation	—	.027	—	.011
Constant	3.44		4.482	

Regression analysis from weighted least squares estimation. Source: American National Election Study 1992, 1996.

Dependent variable: 1 = increase immigration a lot, through 5 = decrease immigration a lot.

All listed associations are significant to $p < .05$ level.

work that does not make clear distinctions among minority groups. Among many whites, blacks and immigrants may count simply as outsiders, and, therefore, attitudes toward both groups may be cued by an underlying prejudice against those who are different.[50] Interestingly, respondents who favorably evaluate the work ethic and intelligence of other whites want to decrease immigration in 1992. This finding is consistent with the idea that ethnocentrism expressed in such positive evaluations of one's own group is consistent with a desire to exclude others.[51]

Once other variables are taken into account, personal economic evaluations have only a modest effect on attitudes toward immigration levels in 1992; here the worse one's personal outlook is, the more a respondent favors *increased* immigration. (See Table 3.) While stereotyping may be partly a func-

[50] Allport, *Nature of Prejudice*, chap. 4.

[51] Samuel L. Gaertner and John F. Dovidio, "The Aversive Form of Racism" in John F. Dovidio and Samuel L. Gaertner, eds., *Prejudice, Discrimination and Racism* (New York: Academic Press, 1986).

tion of personal economic outlook in 1992 (see Table 1), immigration policy attitudes are only weakly related to self-interest narrowly construed, and then the effect is in this counterintuitive direction. Using the same data, but specifying a different model, Citrin, Green, Muste, and Wong found that neither prospective nor retrospective assessments of personal economic situation were related to restrictionist views.[52] The effect for pessimistic national economic forecasts is stronger and more significant, suggesting that immigration policy is more closely related to sociotropic evaluations of the economy than to narrowly self-interested ones.[53] Family income, like personal economic evaluations, is only weakly associated with attitudes on immigration policy in this model, and the effect is to see a desire for decreased immigration among those with high income. This finding reminds us that income and education are not the same thing. Those with higher education favor increased immigration levels, but not necessarily those with higher incomes. Better educated respondents are apparently less worried about the ethnic diversity brought about by increased immigration levels. Or at the very least, these respondents are better able to cloak their prejudices when confronted with questions about race and ethnicity.[54]

One variable that may broadly reflect self-interested considerations is parental birthplace. It is obvious from the results in Table 3 that respondents with foreign-born parents are more favorable to generous immigration policy than those whose parents are native-born. However, this is not the kind of narrow self-interest one customarily thinks of in terms of short-term economic gains. Identification with immigrants and immigrant family members is a group identification, not an individual one.

Notably, women are among the most decisive supporters of decreased immigration in 1992. This result is consistent with the earlier findings of Citrin, Reingold, and Green.[55] But an interaction term capturing white males shows that they are also more likely to favor restrictive immigration policy. Both women in general and white men in particular were among the constituencies calling for decreased immigration early in the decade. We tested a number of other interactions among the independent variables in Table 3 but none were found to be statistically important.[56]

The social context variables indicate that residents of border states favor decreased immigration levels, compared with those in nonborder states in both

[52] Citrin, Green, Muste, and Wong, "Public Opinion Toward Immigration Reform."

[53] Kinder and Kiewiet, "Sociotropic Politics: The American Case"; Citrin, Green, Muste, and Wong, "Public Opinion Toward Immigration Reform."

[54] Jackman, "Education and Policy Commitment to Racial Education."

[55] Citrin, Reingold, and Green, "American Identity and the Politics of Ethnic Change."

[56] Among the interactions we tested were variables capturing black men, black women, Hispanic men, Hispanic women, and white women. For economic self-interest, we tested all personal economic evaluation by race interactions. None of these interactions was statistically significant for 1992 or 1996.

years. Residents living in urban areas are marginally in favor of increasing immigration compared with those in rural areas, but this is only true in 1992.

The results for black and Hispanic respondents are striking in 1992. Both blacks and Hispanics are more likely than those of other races to call for decreased immigration. This is consistent with the idea that minority groups are most threatened by the increased competition for jobs, services, and housing caused by increased immigration.[57] Evidently, some established immigrants are inclined to oppose generous immigration policies, expressing a desire to "pull up the ladder." Many whites, on the other hand, are more tolerant of generous immigration policy than either Hispanics or blacks once other variables such as ideology and racial prejudice are held constant.

Results: Attitudes on Immigration Policy in 1996

We have seen that personal economic assessments play a smaller role than national economic evaluation in producing prejudice and that family income has a minor and inconsistent impact. Turning to gauge the direct impact of racial prejudice and economic concerns on attitudes toward immigration policy, there is no question that racial prejudice plays the greater of the two roles in both the 1992 and 1996 surveys. When comparing the results from 1992 and 1996 in Table 3, a couple of differences in the statistical significance of coefficients are worth noting. First, negative black stereotypes play a greater role in determining immigration policy attitudes in 1992 than in 1996. Hispanic stereotypes play more of a role in 1996 than in 1992. In 1992, a more general attitude of prejudice mainly defined by attitudes toward blacks is influencing attitudes toward immigration policy. This shift in focus over four years suggests that people have learned to make the connection between Hispanics and immigration in the latter year. The greater importance of having immigrant parents in 1996 compared with 1992 is one of the other prima facie differences. Although a t-test on the difference in the magnitude of the coefficients[58] does not reach statistical significance, the difference between the standard errors relative to the coefficients points to substantively important differences. Having foreign-born parents is a more consistent predictor of immigration policy attitudes among the 1996 respondents than among the 1992 respondents.

[57] Steven Camarota, "The Effect of Immigrants on the Earnings of Low-Skilled Native Workers: Evidence from the June 1991 Current Population Survey"; Roger Waldinger, *Still the Promised City?*; Peter Skerry, *Mexican Americans: The Ambivalent Minority* (New York: Basic Books, 1993).

[58] To test the difference in the magnitude of the coefficients in 1992 and 1996, we followed the procedure for subgroup regressions spelled out in Melissa A. Hardy, *Regression with Dummy Variables* (Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1993) 48–53. Using this procedure, we found no statistically significant differences in the magnitude of the coefficients across the two years. This does not mean that the explanatory power or statistical significance of the variables were the same across the samples. Important differences are to be found in the standard errors and the statistical significance of coefficients, which we exploit in our discussion of results.

The explanation for these differences in the predictive power of these variables lies in the changing political context. Specifically, the level of public information about immigration clearly increased between 1992 and 1996, and so did the political threat to pro-immigration interests. Consider the media and campaign messages surrounding the 1994 and 1996 election campaigns. In California, incumbent Governor Pete Wilson ran his 1994 reelection campaign highlighting the costs of immigration to California taxpayers, endorsing Proposition 187.[59] After winning his party's nomination for president in 1996, Republican candidate Bob Dole ran campaign ads against President Clinton accusing him of lavishing welfare, food stamps, and social services on illegal immigrants.[60] Throughout 1995 and 1996, Republican congressional leaders such as Representative Lamar Smith (R–TX) and Senator Alan Simpson (R–WY) pushed for new restrictions on both legal and illegal immigration.[61] These various appeals had the effect of galvanizing pro-immigration interests and raising public awareness of the issues at stake.

In addition, by 1996, the issue of immigration restriction cut across ideological lines, with liberals and conservatives on both sides of the debate. These results show that ideology is not a statistically significant predicator of immigration attitudes by 1996. In this development, the public may have simply followed the tone and content of elite discourse.[62] Some prominent conservatives in Congress aligned themselves with the interests of big business and the high-tech lobby by arguing for more open borders in order to lower labor costs and maintain competitiveness in a global economy.

In most other respects, the results for 1996 are similar to those for 1992. Feelings toward welfare recipients remain highly related to immigration policy attitudes as does education. Voters living in areas of black-white residential segregation continue to be favorable toward generous immigration levels compared to those in more integrated areas, showing that contact with diverse populations is not consistent with warmer attitudes toward immigration.

Implications and Conclusions

The results presented here suggest that attitudes on immigration policy are highly contingent upon stereotypical beliefs about the work ethic and intelligence of other groups, especially among whites. The role of self-interest, as

[59] Amy Wallace and Cathleen Decker, "California Elections/Governor; Brown Begins Marathon Tour of State," *Los Angeles Times*, 3 November 1994; Dan Freedman, "Wilson Assailed as Demagogue on Aliens; Governor's Office, U.S. Spar Over Credit for Sealing Border," *San Francisco Examiner*, 13 October 1994.

[60] Louis Freedberg. "Clinton and Dole's Dueling Immigration Ads," *San Francisco Chronicle*, 7 July 1996.

[61] James G. Gimpel and James R. Edwards, Jr., *The Congressional Politics of Immigration Reform* (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1999).

[62] Zaller, *The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion.*

measured by personal economic forecasts or by one's national economic outlook, is not as important to attitudes on immigration once stereotypical thinking is taken into account. (See Table 3.) Stereotypical thinking does have an economic component, especially during times of hardship, as much of the literature on ethnic conflict and prejudice would suggest.[63] Still, the results presented here show that economic calculations are not the sole foundation of prejudice, or even the main one. The findings presented here are quite different from the results in one of the author's previous works that relied upon data from the early 1980s and alternative measures of prejudice and economic self-interest.[64] Further work would do well to test for the effects of a variety of self-interest and prejudice indicators on attitudes toward immigration across a greater time span. Tables 1 and 2 indicate that other variables such as education, attitudes about welfare use, gender, place of residence, and political ideology play an important role in respondents' unfavorable judgments about the intelligence and work ethic of other groups.

Differences in attitudes on immigration policy between 1996 and 1992 are worth highlighting. In 1992, the immigration issue was not highly salient outside of California, Florida, and a few other port-of-entry states. Many people simply did not have an opinion on the issue, and others were ambivalent about it. Between 1992 and 1996, however, exposure to rhetoric about immigration and immigration policy increased dramatically. First came the furor over Proposition 187 in California, accompanied by a gubernatorial election that prominently featured differences between the candidates on immigration policy.[65] Beginning in 1995, Congress took up a controversial round of immigration reform; and by 1996, the salience of the issue was much higher, particularly among immigrant families who saw their interests threatened by the restrictionist tide.

This increase in the public's knowledge about immigration helps to explain the differences between the results for 1992 and 1996. In 1992, attitudes on immigration policy were highly associated with attitudes toward blacks. Perhaps the term "immigrant" cued more vague notions of outsider status—a crude form of prejudice animated by derogatory notions about blacks that also found its expression in attitudes toward immigration. The impact of these negative black stereotypes on attitudes toward immigration policy fades in 1996, while the impact of negative Hispanic stereotypes increases sharply. The campaign

[63] Olzak, "Labor Unrest, Immigration and Ethnic Conflict in Urban America, 1880–1914"; Olzak, *The Dynamics of Ethnic Competition and Conflict*; Edna Bonacich, "A Theory of Ethnic Antagonism: the Split Labor Market"; Bonacich, "Advanced Capitalism and Black/White Race Relations in the United States: A Split Labor Market Interpretation."

[64] Gimpel and Edwards, *Congressional Politics of Immigration Reform*, chap. 2.

[65] Karin Macdonald and Bruce Cain, "Nativism, Partisanship and Immigration: An Analysis of Proposition 187" in Michael B. Preston, Bruce E. Cain, and Sandra Bass, eds. *Racial and Ethnic Politics in California*, vol. 2 (Berkeley, CA: Institute for Governmental Studies, 1998); Wallace and Decker, "California Elections/Governor; Brown Begins Marathon Tour of State."

seasons of 1994 and 1996 focused much attention on illegal immigration, something associated with the southwestern border, and identified closely in peoples' minds with Mexican migration. By 1996, the immigrant concept was given specific content, and respondents' prejudices toward Latinos could be more precisely linked to attitudes on immigration policy—and it is an issue of precision. The magnitudes of the coefficients do not greatly change, but the extent to which Hispanic prejudice explains immigration attitudes clearly does. Even in 1996, many respondents still saw immigration in black-white terms, but by this time many were also able to understand it in brown-white terms. Keeping in mind that we are not working with panel data, we are persuaded that changes from 1992 and 1996 are the result of the increase in information about immigrants and immigration resulting from the debate that was just beginning in 1992 but was to ignite in the following four years.

Immigrants have often faced opposition from natives at the lower end of the economic spectrum.[66] But the views of these natives cannot be understood simply. The findings here indicate that the pathway to anti-immigration attitudes is partly contingent on prevailing economic conditions, but that prejudice has more than an economic foundation. Even when economic conditions improve, one cannot count on natives to give immigrants a warm welcome. Perhaps this is why polls during economic good times show that the public is not very enthusiastic about the prospect of increasing immigration.[67] At most, proponents of a generous and open immigration policy can hope that anti-immigrant sentiment is less intensely felt during times of economic prosperity. The effect of economic hardship is to activate prejudices that are latent, adding fuel to the fire of preexisting views. For scholars and policy makers who are pushing the cause of immigration restriction, it is not encouraging that the public often bases its support for restriction on feelings of prejudice that are not rooted in economic insecurity. Most restrictionists are understandably desperate to avoid the appearance that they have been inspired by Archie Bunker, preferring to cast their arguments in economic and sometimes environmental terms. Unfortunately for these well-intentioned conservatives, the case for limiting immigration is more difficult to air with credibility precisely because a sizable share of the restrictionist sentiment among the masses is motivated simply by prejudice.

Appendix

Coding of Variables

Dependent Variable for Stereotyping: 1 = positive stereotype to 14 = negative stereotype.

[66] Olzak, "Labor Unrest, Immigration and Ethnic Conflict in Urban America, 1880–1914"; Olzak, *The Dynamics of Ethnic Competition and Conflict*; Edna Bonacich, "A Theory of Ethnic Antagonism: The Split Labor Market"; Billington, *The Protestant Crusade, 1800–1860: A Study of the Origins of American Nativism*; Ernst, "Economic Nativism in New York City During the 1840s."

[67] Simon and Alexander, *The Ambivalent Welcome: Print Media, Public Opinion and Immigration*; Harwood, "Alienation: American Attitudes Toward Immigration."

Dependent Variable for Immigration: 1 = increase immigration to 5 = decrease immigration.

Independent Variable for Welfare Recipients: feeling thermometer ranging from 0 = negative feelings to 100 = positive feelings.

Independent Variable for Personal Economic Outlook: 1 = better one year from now, 2 = same one year from now, 3 = worse one year from now.

Independent Variable for National Economic Outlook: 1 = better one year from now, 2 = same one year from now, 3 = worse one year from now.

Independent Variable for Income: 24 ordinal categories.

Independent Variable for Ideology: 1 = very liberal to 5 = very conservative.

Independent Variable for Education: years of formal schooling completed, ranges from 0 to 17.

Independent Variable for Parents' Place of Birth: 0 = both parents born in the U.S.: 1 = at least one parent not born in the U.S.

Independent Variable for Age: continuous variable ranging from 18 to 99.

Independent Variable for Sex: 0 = male, 1 = female.

Independent Variable for White Males: 0 = others, 1 = white males.

Independent Variable for Urban Area: 1 = Rural areas; 2 = Small towns adjacent to metropolitan area; 3 = Small towns within metropolitan area; 4 = Suburbs within metropolitan area; 5 = Small central cities; 6 = Large central cities.

Independent Variable for Border State: 0 = all other states; 1 = AZ, CA, FL, NM or TX.

Independent Variable for Southern States: 0 = all other states; 1 = VA, NC, SC, GA, FL, AL, MS, LA, TX, AR, TN, KY, WV.

Independent Variable for Contact or Group Isolation: continuous variable ranging from 0 to 100. This figure is based on the calculation of a dissimilarity index for counties in which respondents reside. The index of dissimilarity is given by:

$$D_{xy} = .5*\sum|(x_i/X)-(y_i/Y)|$$

Where:

x_i and y_i are the number of X and Y members in census tract i.

X and Y are the total number of X and Y members for the entire county.