Immigration and the election of Donald Trump: Why the sociology of migration left us unprepared…and why we shouldn’t have been surprised

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

- But I speak to border guards and they tell us what we're getting. And it only makes common sense. It only makes common sense. They're sending us not the right people.
Donald Trump said he would force the people of Mexico to build his vowed border wall to keep immigrants out of the United States, warning that if his order was not fulfilled, he would do something “severe.”

The 2016 presidential candidate added: “I’d build it. I’d build it very nicely. I’m very good at building things.”

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZGSAhNznisk
Key points

- The sociology of migration: an apolitical approach
- Bringing politics back in
  - International migration inherently political
  - Politics inherently conflictual
- Politics of immigration: expansion=>restriction=>stalemate
  - Greater liberalism, but less democracy
  - More democracy, but less liberalism
  - Perverse consequences of political stalemate
  - Feedbacks that deepen political cleavages
- Vote analysis
  - Anti-immigration views => vote for Trump
The Sociology of Migration: Key perspectives

- Network theory
  - Networks reduce costs and risks of migration
- Cumulative Causation
  - Migration => transformations that increase incentives for emigration
- Assimilation/Integration
  - “immigrant groups and host societies come to resemble one another”
- Post-nationalism
  - Denizenship secures core rights
- Transnationalism
  - Migrant transnationals “live lives across borders”
Sociology of migration: Critique

- About “them”, not “us”
- Internally contradictory
  - Network theory – migration \(\leq\) using social capital to solve problems of migration
  - “Integration” \(\leq\) individual search for the “good life” \(\Rightarrow\) running down of social capital
- “International”, political element falls out
  - Border control element of state sovereignty
  - Inherently political
    - How many, what type, with what rights
  - Inherently source of conflict
Sociology of migration: Critique

- International migration => international integration
  - Freedom of mobility to search for better life
  - Social networks => self-feeding process
- Migration control as international dis-integration
  - National community presupposes boundaries
  - Universality of migration control
- International migration as source of internal dis-integration
  - Migration => cultural, political, and social winners and losers
  - Movement of people inherently different from movement of things
  - Migration both rejected and wanted
  - Seemingly beyond capacity of governments to control
Policy paradox: Developed world’s migrant population has grown
Policy paradox: public opposed

Immigration should be...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Increased</th>
<th>Reduced</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td></td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>70</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>40</td>
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<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>50</td>
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</table>
Political economy model of migration policy-making: Gary Freeman

Types of politics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benefits</th>
<th>Costs</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Concentrated</td>
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<tr>
<td>Concentrated</td>
<td>Interest group politics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dispersed</td>
<td>Dispersed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dispersed</td>
<td>Entrepreneurial</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dispersed</td>
<td>Majoritarian</td>
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Costs, benefits, incentives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Costs</th>
<th>Client: recipients motivated to organize; cost/tax-payers not</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interest:</td>
<td>Cost-payers AND recipients motivated to organize</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Client politics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrepreneurial</td>
<td>Cost-payers motivated to organize; beneficiaries not</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Majoritarian</td>
<td>Neither cost-payers nor recipients motivated to organize</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Source: James Q Wilson, Politics of Regulation, 1980
Immigration expansion as undemocratic liberalism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups benefiting from immigration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Highly organized, mobilized, attentive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employers, immigrant/human rights advocates (benefits concentrated)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups paying for immigration</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not mobilized, inattentive; real costs not foreseen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General public (economic costs diffused)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<tr>
<th>Constrained discourse (“anti-populist norm”)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Taboo on racialized appeals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrepreneurial politics constrained</td>
</tr>
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MIGRATION CONTINUES
Politics of Immigration: “Unholy,” left-right alliances

Immigrationists

- Cosmopolitans, Human Rights Groups, Ethnic Advocates
  - Increased flows; selection on kinship, human rights criteria; expanded rights

Restrictionists

- Labor unions
  - Diminished/controlled flows; selection on kinship, human rights criteria; expanded rights

- Social conservatives
  - Diminished flows; selection on ethnic criteria; limited rights

- Business lobbies
  - Increased flows; selection on market criteria; limited rights
Politics of unauthorized migration: Immigration and Control Act, 1986

**Expansionary**
- General amnesty: in US since 1982: 1.6 million beneficiaries plus family members
- Agricultural amnesty: 90 days farm experience before May 1986: 1 million beneficiaries plus family members

**Restrictive/Control**
- Hiring undocumented workers prohibited; but only if "knowingly;" documents required, but no ID
- Border enforcement: supplemental funds
- Newest immigrants (post-1982) not eligible
Unauthorized immigration: Immigration Reform and Control Act, 1986

Expansionary

Amnesty
Anti-discrimination
No i.d. card
Agricultural amnesty

Restrictive

1982 amnesty cut-off date
Employer sanctions

Liberals, ethnic advocacy orgs
Employers

Social conservatives
Labor
1990 Immigration Act: Politics of Legal Immigration

Splits in the immigrationist coalition

Employers vs Ethnic advocates

- Maintain ceiling
- Diminish family migration
- High skilled temporary
- Points for high skilled permanent

- Maintain family migration
- Diversity migration
- Temporary protected status for Salvadorans
Legal immigration: 1990
Immigration Act

- Increased immigration: 540,000 to 700,000
- Immigration categories
  - Family sponsored: 465,000
  - Employment based: 140,000
  - Spouses/children of legalized immigrants: 55,000
Attitudes toward immigration

- Want more immigrants allowed
- Want number of immigrants allowed to stay the same
- Want fewer immigrants allowed
Restriction as democratic illiberalism

**Entrepreneurial politicians**
- Moral Panic
- Fear of/hostility toward suspect groups
- Instigates attention

**Benefits, costs, capacity**
- Costs (real/perceived) diffuse, but cost-bearing group mobilized
- Immigrants a concentrated, low capacity group

**Socially coercive policies (e.g. deportation, restriction)**
- Resistance from private interests
- Conflict with liberal values

**Political conflict: private interests (employers) protected, immigrants**
Reactive cycle: anti-immigrant reaction

- **Proposition 187 (CA) - 1994**
  - Undocumented immigrants barred from educational, health, social services

- **IIRIRA (Illegal immigration reform & responsibility act) - 1996**
  - Increased border enforcement; legal residents made vulnerable to deportation

- **Welfare reform – 1996**
  - Reduce benefits for legal immigrants; bar benefits to undocumented immigrants
Reactive cycle – 1990s
pro-immigrant reaction to anti-immigrant reaction

Mobilized interest groups

- Restrictionists:
  - Reduce overall legal migration
  - Via capping family migration
- Market oriented expansionists
  - Immigration yes, welfare no
- Liberals, ethnic advocates:
  - Protect legal immigration
  - Accept tougher stance on undocumented migration
Reactive cycle: 2005-6

Restrictionists
- Republicans in House - bill
  - Prohibits aid to undocumented immigrants
  - Steep penalties on employers
  - Increases grounds for deportation
  - Increased enforcement

Impact of immigrant response
- bill dies
Reactive cycle: Marches increase salience of immigration issue
Reactive cycle: 2010

Arizona State Bill 1070

- Not carrying immigration papers made a misdemeanor
- Police allowed to detain possible unauthorized migrants and verify status
- 1 of 222 immigration-related state laws enacted in past year

Reaction to SB 1070
Obama years: enforcement as “default policy”

- Simplicity of restrictionist agenda
  - Enforce existing laws v complicated, “comprehensive” reform
    - Obama as “Deporter in Chief”
- Boomerang effect:
  - Greater mobilization of immigrant advocates
  - Visibility increases opposition to liberalization
- Immigrant population continues to grow
  - Doubles between 1990 and 2016
  - Shifts from regional to national phenomenon
    - All areas of country affected
  - Unauthorized population stable, despite 400,000 deportations a year
Political feedbacks

Historically:
- Immigrants enter polity via easy naturalization, birthright citizenship of 2nd generation
- Both parties compete for immigrant vote

21st century exception
- Conservatives use opposition to immigration as mobilizing technique
  - Foments white nationalism
  - Transforms white Democrats into Republicans
  - Demise of business immigrationists
- Democrats use support for immigration as mobilizing technique
  - Strong Democratic Majority among emerging groups
  - Growing number of Latino Democratic representatives

Trump gamble: can mobilization of whites stem Democratic demographic tide?

- Face to face and internet nationally representative survey
- Pre-election survey: September 7 to November 7
- Re-interview: November 9 to January 8, 2017
- Pre and post-election sample: N=3,649
Key independent variables

- Favor, oppose, or neither favor nor oppose
  - Build a wall on U.S. Mexican Border
  - End birthright citizenship for children of unauthorized immigrants
  - Allowing Syrian refugees to come to the United States

- Policy toward unauthorized immigrant now living in the United States
  - Make all unauthorized immigrants felons and send them back to their home country
  - Have a guest worker program in order to work
  - Allow to remain and eventually qualify for U.S. citizenship, if they meet conditions
  - Allow to remain and eventually qualify for U.S. citizenship without penalties
### Determinants of vote: logistic regression coefficients

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Build wall: favor</td>
<td>3.05***</td>
<td>3.05***</td>
<td>2.86***</td>
<td>2.87***</td>
<td>1.11**</td>
<td>1.21**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End birthright citizenship:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Favor</td>
<td>-0.03</td>
<td>-0.016</td>
<td>-0.164</td>
<td>-1.42</td>
<td>0.62+</td>
<td>0.62+</td>
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<tr>
<td>Syrian refugees: Oppose</td>
<td>2.25***</td>
<td>2.31***</td>
<td>2.27***</td>
<td>2.30***</td>
<td>1.04**</td>
<td>.94*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy towards unauthorized</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Felons</td>
<td>0.271</td>
<td>0.407</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>0.45</td>
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<tr>
<td>Path to citizenship</td>
<td>-1.492**</td>
<td>-1.401**</td>
<td>-1.20**</td>
<td>-1.23**</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Controls</td>
<td>no controls</td>
<td>+demographic</td>
<td>+ guns &amp; religion</td>
<td>+media attention</td>
<td>+2012 vote &amp; partisan loyalty</td>
<td>+ attitudes towards blacks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Vote determinants: predicted probabilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Favor</th>
<th>Oppose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Admit Syrians?</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>0.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End birthright citizenship</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td>0.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Build wall</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>0.49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
National Academy of Science 2016 report on immigrant integration: “immigrants experience change once they arrive and native-born Americans change in response to immigration.….”

Correct, but....

Changes did not lead to integration
Rather disintegration, making immigration a central, continuing fault line in American politics
Thank you!