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# 'They Come Here To Work': An Evaluation of the Economic Argument In Favor Of Immigrant Rights

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## Abstract

Advocates commonly highlight the exploitation that hard-working undocumented immigrants commonly suffer at the hands of employers, the important contribution they make to the US economy, and the fiscal folly of border militarization and enhanced immigration enforcement policies. In this paper, I unpack these economic rationales for expanding immigrant rights, and examine the nuanced ways in which advocates deploy this frame. To do so, I rely on statements issued by publicly present immigrant rights groups in six places: California, Florida, Illinois, New York, Texas, and Washington, DC. I also draw on interviews with immigrant advocates in San Jose, CA and Houston, TX, press releases from two alternative national immigrant rights organizations, and an ethnographic photo-documentation of immigrant rights mobilizations in 2012-2014. Economic rationales, I emphasize, can be found in each of these contexts, but are not mutually exclusive to other justifications, including narratives about civil, human, and family rights for immigrants. However, I argue that an economic framing of immigrant rights nonetheless runs the risk reifying work over conventional understandings of criminality, often relies on a narrow definition of economic worth, and could have negative consequences for coalition building.

## Keywords

social movement, framing, rights, market citizenship, work

## Disciplines

Labor Economics | Labor Relations | Migration Studies

## Comments

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An Evaluation of the Economic Argument In Favor Of Immigrant Rights

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*Citizenship Studies* (2015), 19(3-4), 400-420.

## Abstract

Advocates commonly highlight the exploitation that hard-working undocumented immigrants commonly suffer at the hands of employers, the important contribution they make to the US economy, and the fiscal folly of border militarization and enhanced immigration enforcement policies. In this paper, I unpack these economic rationales for expanding immigrant rights, and examine the nuanced ways in which advocates deploy this frame. To do so, I rely on statements issued by publicly present immigrant rights groups in six places: California, Florida, Illinois, New York, Texas, and Washington, DC. I also draw on interviews with immigrant advocates in San Jose, CA and Houston, TX, press releases from two alternative national immigrant rights organizations, and an ethnographic photo-documentation of immigrant rights mobilizations in 2012-2014. Economic rationales, I emphasize, can be found in each of these contexts, but are not mutually exclusive to other justifications, including narratives about civil, human, and family rights for immigrants. However, I argue that an economic framing of immigrant rights nonetheless runs the risk reifying work over conventional understandings of criminality, often relies on a narrow definition of economic worth, and could have negative consequences for coalition building.

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## Introduction<sup>1</sup>

Immigrant advocates in the USA have decried the Obama administration's deportation of 400,000 individuals a year, pushed for an end to enforcement programs such as E-Verify and Secure Communities, and rallied in favor of elusive 'comprehensive immigration reform.' Organizations draw on a number of arguments to advance their cause, including the ways in which restrictive immigration policies are antithetical to the US democracy and our *civil rights* tradition, the universal concern for *human rights* and the well-being of all individuals regardless of legal status, and the morally bankrupt effects of border security on migrant *families*. Yet, one of the most common justifications for expanding immigrant rights has been the *economic* benefits of doing so. Through this lens, advocates commonly highlight the exploitation that hard-working undocumented immigrants commonly suffer at the hands of employers, the important contribution they make to the US economy, and the fiscal folly of border militarization and enhanced immigration enforcement policies. This perspective relies on the politically salient market logic, thus constructing what scholars have referred to as *neoliberal citizenship* (Baker-Cristales 2009), *market citizenship* (Nawyn 2011), or *economic citizenship* (Bosniak 2002).<sup>1</sup>

In this paper, I unpack these economic rationales for expanding immigrant rights, and examine the nuanced ways in which advocates deploy this frame alone, and in conjunction with rights justifications. To do so, I rely on statements (mission statements, press releases, position papers) issued by publicly-present immigrant rights organizations in six key immigrant destinations: California, Florida, Illinois, New York, Texas, and Washington, DC. I contrast these narratives to those advanced two of the most prominent alternative voices of reform: Presente.org and CultureStrike. These groups take a decidedly antiestablishment approach,

however, like their more mainstream ‘inside the belt’ counterparts, also allude at times to economic rationales. Finally, I draw on interviews with immigrant worker rights advocates in San Jose, CA and Houston, TX to further illustrate the strategic rationales for advancing economic justifications for immigrant rights. These data reveal that economic approaches to immigrant rights advocacy are often defensive responses to well-funded restrictionist anti-immigrant campaigns. They also strike a chord with the free market culture of the USA, and what Shklar (1991) highlights as the historical economic basis for citizenship in the USA.

Nonetheless, these economic approaches to rights expansion come with certain costs. These include the reification of ‘hardworking immigrants’ as *good*, while implicitly relying on implicit stereotypes of other *bad* immigrants and racial/ethnic groups, and also ignoring the rights of non-economic producers (Yukich 2013). Economic justifications also necessarily focus on the market value of immigrant labor, while eliding the labor exploitation that is the source of this profit. I argue that this strategic framing, while understandable given the onslaught of economic arguments for immigration restriction and deportation, can also run counter to broader goals of economic justice and potentially create challenges for broad coalition building.

## **Literature review**

### ***Importance of framing in social movements***

Social movement scholars have conceptualized a *frame* in myriad ways. I draw on the definition provided by Polletta and Ho (2006), who trace the concept back to the work of Erving Goffman. From this perspective, frames are interactive and dynamic concepts that are ‘jointly

and continuously constructed and reconstructed by movement actors and their audiences,' rather than simply the product of individual decision-makers in a rational market (4). Social movement framings do not occur in a vacuum, often reflecting the broader political and cultural principles that resonate for publics and decision-makers (McAdam 1982). These *discursive opportunity structures* affect who the relevant actors are in the debate, and the nature of the framing contest in which they engage (Ferree et al. 2002; Polletta et al. 2011). The strategies adopted by the immigrant rights movement have evolved in particular ways depending on the political environment and the historical relationship between the receiving state and migrant flows (Basok 2009; Nicholls 2013a). Transnational politics between the diaspora and sending region also present particular institutional opportunity structures that allow migrants to make broader claims on membership and rights (Landolt 2008).

Discursive frames about immigrant representation are seldom consistent. For example, Coutin and Chock's (1995) classic analysis of the media coverage of the Immigration Reform and Control Act reveal how journalists simultaneously 'reinforced and recreated' categories of citizenship in complex and paradoxical ways. Their use of racial, ethnic, and gender imagery both normalized and challenged stereotypes of the 'illegal immigrant' (130-141). Similarly, advocacy organizations themselves often switch between frames depending on their audience and their specific political aim (Binder 2002). This does not necessarily imply an incoherent political strategy, or mean that groups are unaware of the political compromise and moral implications of their messaging. This process of 'framing' can help recruit crucial support and motivate members to action (Tilly 1978; Snow et al. 1986; McAdam 1999), and in fact, an eclectic mix of frames likely reflects a sophisticated political strategy and one that involves a complex set of allies and publics (Cordero- Guzman et al. 2008).

The frames that a social movement adopts are likely to change over time and between institutional arenas (Benford 1997). For example, an economic cost-benefit analysis rooted in neoliberal legal principles might seem the most resonant for advocates in the policy arena, whereas grassroots mobilizations may very well take a broader social justice-oriented frame (Ferree 2012). Yet, social movements are themselves embedded in the broader political-economic structures in which they operate, and tend to unevenly promote policy goals that are most resonant for the relatively advantaged cadres of the movement (Strolovitch 2008). Within the immigrant rights movement, these tensions are evident between what the mainstream ‘inside the belt’ organizations, and newer groups led often by immigrant youth and *undocuqueer* movement (Chavez 2010, Gleeson 2014).

Ultimately, social movements must also respond to attacks from opponents, and craft strategic counter-frames in defense (Benford and Snow 2000, 617). Strategic framing may help advocates shift the mainstream discourse around an issue (Ziegler 2010), but these shifts may be limited by the political opportunity structures and material and symbolic resources available to do so (Coley 2013).<sup>2</sup> In the field of immigrant rights advocacy, a long list of racialized negative stereotypes dominate the public debate, based in large part on the perceived threat posed by the growing Latino population. Common restrictionist arguments promote stereotypes about Latino promiscuity, criminality, foreign invasion, and economic burden (Chavez 2008; Santa Ana 2002). Immigrant activists have challenged these negative images with powerful counter-campaigns imbued with a constellation of rhetorical and visual strategies.



*The landscape of immigrant rights frames*

In the USA, immigration reform efforts have long been framed as largely a domestic policy issue (Lakoff and Ferguson 2006). This approach represents a common ‘dilemma of migrant advocacy in advanced industrial democracies, where a more universal conception of immigrant rights based in human rights has little resonance (Cook 2010). As such, a large emphasis is placed on the constitutional protections afforded to immigrants, as was the case in the wake of Arizona’s controversial Senate Bill 1070. During these debates, the civil rights of immigrants were linked to the rights of other racial/ethnic minorities.<sup>3</sup> A less common, but also powerful approach, has appealed to international norms of human rights (Fujiwara 2005). Petitions to the United Nations are salient, especially for refugee advocacy, but occasionally also to address the exploitation of undocumented immigrants (e.g., Human Rights Watch 2005).

Immigrant rights advocates have also commonly appealed to the moral imperative of keeping immigrant families together (Voss and Bloemraad 2011). These messages often rely, however, on heteronormative and nuclear conceptions of family formation, while eliding the reality of single parenthood and often at the exclusion of LGBT households (Pallares 2009). In taking this approach, Pallares and Flores-Gonzales (2011) argue, advocates were able to highlight the importance of attending to not only the welfare of the children of immigrants, but also families as a whole. A moralistic strategy for justifying immigrant rights also attracts the support of faith leaders, such as the Catholic Church, who carry political weight and provide entree into audiences who may not otherwise lend their support (Heredia 2011; Hondagneu-Sotelo 2008).

Immigrant rights advocacy is dynamic and can change as new movement leaders emerge and the political and cultural environment evolves. Major ‘focusing events’ can also shift the priorities of a nation overnight (Birkland 1997). Most notably, the events of 11 September 2001 have overshadowed subsequent immigration debates with a focus on homeland security (Rodriguez 2008). This has, in turn, prompted advocates to highlight the importance of immigrants as *workers*, versus *criminals* or *terrorists* (Morris-Vasquez 2008; Baker-Cristales 2009). An unintended consequence of this approach, however, has been to divide the immigrant community into *good* and *bad*, wherein work and economic independence is a central virtue.

### ***The economic argument in favor of immigrant rights***

The economic argument in favor of immigrant rights has been one of the most salient ways to counter negative stereotypes against immigrants. Anti-immigrant attacks have prompted organized responses to restrictionist policies such as Governor Pete Wilson’s controversial Proposition 187 campaign in California, or more recently Sheriff Arpaio oppressive approach to immigration enforcement in Maricopa County, Arizona. Advocates have also mobilized in response to nativist groups such as the Minutemen, whose hostile presence has terrorized border communities. Yet, it is insufficient to characterize the economic framing of immigrant rights as solely a reactionary response to opponents who seek to otherwise frame immigrants as lazy burdens on taxpayers, or unwelcome invaders whose labor undercuts the wages of US workers. It is important to also note the centrality of neoliberal capitalism in the USA, which has fundamentally paved the way for the emergence of market-based arguments in favor of immigrant rights.

Political theorist Linda Bosniak characterizes the approach of liberal democracies such as the United States are thus both ‘soft on the inside, and hard on the outside’ (Bosniak 2006). On the one hand, unauthorized immigrants are subject to the continual surveillance of immigration enforcement officials whose aim is to deport them. On the other, once located within the borders of liberal democracies, these immigrants may enjoy ‘alien citizenship’ which entitles them to certain basic rights, such as entitlements to K-12 education. At the center of this provisional inclusion is their willingness to engage in paid labor. Conversely, their exclusion is buttressed by arguments that their presence compromises US citizens’ right to fully realize their economic potential in any competitive labor market in which they are included (Bosniak 2002).

This economic basis of citizenship is not unique to immigrants. Women, religious minorities, and scores of racial-ethnic groups have all been excluded from full citizenship rights throughout US history (Smith 1999). Central to their ultimate incorporation has been an argument about the value of their work and economic contribution. As Judith Shklar has argued, ‘the right to earn is a fundamental aspect of US citizenship (Shklar 1991).<sup>4</sup> Therefore, one might argue that economic justifications of rights are a familiar *master frame* that favors a market-based logic, particularly in the United States (Benford and Snow 2000; McCammon et al 2007). Similarly, antidiscrimination policies have long been espoused, not on the basis of equality, but on the basis of efficient returns to capital investment for companies who care to attract the best talent for their enterprise (Herring 2009). Likewise, one of the most powerful rationales for prison reform has long been that the costs of recidivism are far more expensive than that of functional inmate rehabilitation (McCollister et al., 2003).

Market citizenship has been a salient means of identifying the worth of a citizen, as either self-supporting, disciplined, or engaged in private enterprise, all qualities that are lauded in the

capitalist framework. Constitutional theorists also argue that work is a valid pathway to citizenship by fostering active participation at the workplace (Bosniak 2002, 503). These market citizens are often distinguished from noneconomic migrants, such as refugees, whose claims to belonging tend to center on their social standing and deservingness as victims of humanitarian crises or political persecution. Nongovernmental organizations have mimicked this approach to justifying inclusion, even with political refugees. Due in large part to their contractual relationship with the federal government, these groups are encouraged to promote a view of refugees that promotes quick employment and rejects welfare dependence and fiscal disruption. Refugees are thus both the ‘hard-working deserving poor’ who are presumably destined for self-sufficiency, as well as ‘model Americans’ who buck the stereotype of dependence on welfare and are lauded as economic success stories (Nawyn 2011, 684-686). These attempts to cast workers as heroic and economically beneficial are often a response to ‘apocalyptic’ narratives about the criminality, anarchy, and national security threats they might otherwise pose (Stewart 2012).

Past efforts to limit rights and benefits to immigrants in the United States reveal how this emphasis on the economic benefits of immigrants has been institutionalized in the immigrant rights movement. On the eve of the Personal Responsibility Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, attempts to challenge this draconian legislation relied on pushing back against the widespread trope of the ‘immigrant welfare problem.’ In doing so, activists constructed a ‘folk universe of morality’ in which elderly, disabled and post-war refugees became victims worthy of sympathy (Fujiwara 2005, 82). Advocates contrasted these sympathetic victims against other immigrants who were ‘characterized as “irresponsible” - the cause of their own poverty - and deemed undeserving’ (99). This same ‘good immigrant’ rhetoric emerged in the historic 2006

marches, wherein the English and Spanish language media and activists adopted a de-radicalized neoliberal discourse of citizenship and belonging, as ‘hard-working, peaceful, clean, self-possessed, law-abiding and well-behaved’ model citizens (Baker-Cristales 2009, 69).

According to Beltran (2009), the resulting ‘double-bind’ of this advocacy approach is that it ends up valuing immigrants via their collective mass as laborers, rather than as individuals, thus conflating ‘*who* they are with *what* they do’ (614). Immigrant activists’ demands for inclusion can certainly go far beyond the economic realm, including demands for ‘dignity and recognition’ (605). However, many of the resulting mantras, such as ‘I’m a Worker, Not a Criminal’ and ‘We Build Your Homes,’ ‘Got Food, Thank a Farmworker’ remain rooted in immigrant’s economic function. This de-radicalizing process of *insulation*, whereby ‘the state confines demands [of the insurgent] movements to terrains that are, if not entirely symbolic, at least not crucial to the operation of the racial order’ (Omi and Winant 1994, 86) results in advocates making demands on the state, while using the same oppressive language of the state (Kandaswamy 2012).

This paper interrogates the content of these economic justifications for expanding immigrant rights over the past decade, while evaluating the non-mutually exclusive ways economic frames are deployed alongside other narratives, including the civil rights, human rights, and moral/family imperative. My aim here is to document the varied ways an array of immigrant rights advocates have adopted this strategy, to discuss the implications of this approach, and finally consider the implicit *othering* it requires and the contradictions it poses for broader fights for economic justice.

## Methods

These findings draw on public statements issued by registered nonprofit organizations whose missions are focused on immigration and/or immigrants. I identify these organizations through a database of IRS-filings of 501(c)3 status, focusing on five traditional immigrant receiving states—California, Florida, Illinois, New York, and Texas—and the District of Columbia.<sup>5</sup> I began by searching for those organizations containing a variation of ‘immig\*’ in their title or mission, as well as series of other related terms.<sup>6</sup> I screened these organizations for a specific focus on immigration-related issues in the United States, and added any coalition members identified through the groups’ websites. I categorized each organization according to the (nonmutually exclusive) type of work they did (service, organizing, policy advocacy).<sup>7</sup> The final sample contained 153 organizations that conducted direct service with immigrants, 49 that promoted grassroots organizing, and 85 that engaged in policy advocacy. Organizations were also categorized according to their level of representation (national, state, and local). The vast majority of these organizations were either local (77) or national (68), and the rest were state or regionally identified.

With this list in place, I then honed in on those groups that have posted public information regarding their position on immigrant rights on their websites. I most often located these data under sections labeled ‘Media,’ ‘News,’ ‘In the Press,’ or ‘Blogs.’ Next, I analyzed those relevant press releases, newsletters, and policy statements reflecting the organization’s position on the issue of immigrant rights, immigration enforcement, and/or the economic benefits and costs of immigration. I excluded any material that was simply a compilation/reprinting of existing news stories. Only those documents that were written by, and came directly from, the

organization were included in the analysis. I focused on those archives dated 2005 or later.<sup>8</sup> Ultimately, the data presented here came from 36 organizations, categorized as the following (nonmutually exclusive) organizational types: 26 direct service, 16 grassroots organizing, and 28 policy advocacy. Ten of these organizations were based in Washington, DC.

Because this inquiry relies on written public statements identifiable through web searches, most of these public statements were issued by policy-oriented organizations and were designed to shape public opinion and influence legislative decision-making. I analyzed these resulting texts deductively using Atlas.ti, and a comprehensive list of thematic codes.<sup>9</sup> While I do not screen for any specific issue, position statements tended focus on one or more of the following: (1) either the debate over the need for comprehensive immigration reform at the federal level, or related piecemeal legislation (including, e.g., the DREAM Act), (2) challenges to immigrant detention and deportation practices, or (3) debates over specific institutional arenas of immigrant rights, such as labor, education, or law enforcement at the federal, state and local levels.

In order to broaden the analysis beyond these mostly mainstream advocates and perspectives, I also draw on the public documents of two nationally prominent alternative immigrant rights groups: 86 press releases archived by Presente.org (from 2010 to 2014),<sup>10</sup> and 17 news articles archived by the CultureStrike collective (2011-2013). I also reference ethnographic field notes from various immigrant rights marches held in San Jose, CA from 2012-2014, including photo-documentation of protest banners. Interviews with 56 immigrant worker rights advocates (i.e. community based organizations, labor unions, and coalitions) in San Jose and Houston conducted from 2005 to 2012 also inform this analysis to provide insight into the strategic decisions advocates make when adopting a particular frame.

## **Findings**

The following three sections walk through the key findings of this analysis. I begin by outlining the persistent economic arguments typically used by anti-immigrant/restrictionist groups, which necessitate defensive economic frames in favor of immigrant rights. I next interrogate the content of these economic immigrant advocacy frames, which I categorize into arguments about (1) the deserving hard work ethic of immigrants, (2) the benefits of these economic producers for the United States, and (3) the fiscal folly of continuing a draconian immigrant enforcement regime. I then situate these economic justifications of immigrant rights against other frames that advocates use (e.g., civil rights, human rights, and family reunification), which I contend are not necessarily mutually exclusive, but still commonly allude to economic justifications as well. I end by considering the normative implications of relying on an economic frame for immigrant justice.

### ***The central role of economic frames in dominant restrictionist discourse***

I begin by highlighting the predominance of economic arguments in the public statements issued by some of the most powerful and prolific anti-immigrant groups in the United States. This fact is crucial to first understand the political moment in which we live, which invites and requires the economic rebuttals that immigrant advocates are advancing. A review of the recent reports of these groups reveal the entrenched role of economic arguments, which can be summarized by the popular view of immigrants as lawbreakers taking jobs, sponging public resources, and engaging in criminal behavior (Chavez 2001).<sup>11</sup> For example, the Federation for



American Immigration Reform has argued that immigration is fueling income inequality (Martin 2013), is pushing low-wage native-born workers out of the labor force (Ruark 2013), and is a death knell for economic recovery (Martin 2013). Similarly, the Center for Immigration Studies, a prolific restrictionist immigration ‘think tank,’ has repeatedly highlighted the ‘fiscal drain of immigrants’ (Camarota 2013), their high use rates of means-tested programs and other social services (Camarota 2013), and the ways in which they contribute to the unemployment of low-skilled workers (Camarota 2013). These restrictionist groups often combine economic arguments with those regarding the purported illegal and illicit activity of undocumented immigrants. They commonly argue any amnesty would reward the identity theft and social security and tax fraud that ‘illegal immigrants’ regularly commit, and which is a drain on federal coffers (Mortensen 2013).

This is a familiar trope from the conservative political campaign trail. During the heated re-election campaign for California, Governor Pete Wilson used the image of a ‘flood of illegal aliens’ using up services and taking money from California’s taxpayers to help him in his re-election bid against Kathleen Brown (Nevins 2002). High-profile academics have also buttressed these arguments by arguing that immigrants’ general failure to assimilate emerges from a cultural deficit that will be devastating not only to the US economy, but also democracy as a whole (Huntington 2004). Other stereotypical attributes such as unrelenting ties to the home country and high fertility levels are framed as posing not only a cultural threat to US society,<sup>12</sup> but also to economic sustainability as populations grow and immigrants retain their political and economic investments in their country of origin (North 2010).

In sum, economic arguments predominate in anti-immigrant/restrictionist discourse, which no doubt shapes how immigrant advocates strategize. Cost-benefit analyses are therefore

considered a legitimate metric for assessing the value of extending rights. This logic likely also stems from the American myth of meritocracy and a retelling of the self-sufficient history of previous immigrant communities who came before, while racializing some immigrants as positive additions to society, and others as costly menaces (Ngai 2004; Perlmann 2005).<sup>13</sup>

### *The content of economic frames for immigrant advocacy*

Turning now to the rebuttals offered by immigrant advocates, the economic framings of immigrant rights discourse in the United States can be categorized into three key arguments: (1) that the hard labor of immigrants and their contributions to the US economy merit additional rights, (2) that ongoing crackdowns on immigrants and worksite enforcement campaigns unfairly disrupt the market, business profitability, and consumers' right to low prices, and (3) that the resources being poured into immigration enforcement are a poor investment of limited tax-payer resources.

#### *Hard work*

Regarding the first, a common image advocates promote of immigrant workers is as hardworking and law-abiding. During debates surrounding the embattled AgJobs bill, the United Farm Workers President, for example, argued that providing a path to legalization for undocumented farmworkers would not only respect 'the laws of our country' but also the 'hard labor of those who feed us.' He continued, 'They do the hardest, most difficult jobs other American workers won't do.'<sup>14</sup> Advocates also use this issue to push back against restrictive

integration policies. The Mexican American Legal Defense and Education, for example, criticized a proposal in Prince William County, VA that would require county officials to check the status of residents before providing services. ‘The assertion that undocumented immigrants are taking advantage of county services in droves is unfounded. Immigrants come here to work, not to take benefits.’<sup>15</sup> In response to the City of Farmers Branch housing ordinance, MALDEF similarly valorized the Latino immigrant population, ‘the great majority (of whom) live quietly, raise families, obey the law daily, and do work for our country.’<sup>16</sup> In this sense, hard work is equated with docility and lawfulness.

These tropes were evident at one of the recent immigrant rights marches in San Jose, CA where individuals and group members carried signs alluding to the importance of recognizing immigrants’ hard work. One individual carried a hand-made poster that read ‘I work hard and pay tax,’ while individuals with the Sacred Heart Community Service (a faith-based social service organization) contingent addressed the country’s leadership by asking, ‘Mr. President: I work hard, where is my amnesty?’ Members of the National Alliance for Filipino Concerns also demanded, ‘Value Our Labor (National Alliance for Filipino Concerns),’ and the International Migrants Alliance implored, ‘Stop the Deportations, Stop the Criminalization of Migrant Workers.’ The support of labor unions for immigrant communities similarly stems in part from the shared identity as workers. A sign carried by the Communication Workers of America (CWA) read, ‘Working People Standing Together,’ while a United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) sign read ‘*Trabajamos en America (We Work in America) -Vivimos en America (We Live in America) -Sonamos en America (We Dream in America) -Merecemos Reforma Migratoria Ahora (We Deserve Immigration Reform Now).*’

*Economic benefit*

A second predominant strand in the economic argument in favor of immigrant rights references the labor value of undocumented immigrants, which many studies have verified is central to the US economy (e.g., Hinojosa Ojeda and Robinson 2013). Accordingly, the progressive Immigration Policy Center has argued that immigration reform presents ‘a golden opportunity to enhance the gross domestic product, create and sustain new jobs and businesses, and maintain our competitive edge in the world.’ Such measures would ‘help to provide the framework for an economic recovery that will allow us all to pursue our American dreams.’<sup>17</sup> The entrepreneurial nature of immigrants is also a key benefit to the ailing economy. A report by the California Immigrant Policy Center argues that immigrants ‘provide leadership and labor for California’s growing industries,’ and are more likely to create their own jobs (or be self-employed) than native-born workers.<sup>18</sup>

These arguments frequently counter the popular sentiment that immigrants are stealing American jobs, a subject of much heated debate (e.g., Borjas 2001; Card 2005). Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS), for example, has lauded immigrants’ role in job creation and their contribution to stimulating economic growth for the country. LIRS President and CEO highlights ‘the important role that migrants play in the US economy, starting up new businesses, revitalizing communities, increasing tax revenues, and filling jobs that many Americans are unwilling to perform.’<sup>19</sup> These and other advocates view restrictive policies such as The Legal Workforce Act, which would make E-verify mandatory, as ‘burdensome to small businesses’ and likely leading to a scenario where ‘production costs and prices would increase, impacting Americans all over the country.’<sup>20</sup> The American Immigrant Lawyers Association has

also warned that a mandatory roll-out of E-verify, a program that employers use to screen job applicants for legal status, would ‘undermine the economic recovery and destabilize American businesses... At a time when economic recovery is vital, American jobs must be the priority.’<sup>21</sup>

The economic value of legalization remains a key aspect of the mainstream political debate, even with respect to immigrant youth who have led the charge for alternative narratives of belonging (Nicholls 2013b). For example, the executive director of the National Immigrant Justice Center executive director has argued,

The DREAM Act would allow local communities to capitalize on the investments they have already made in immigrant children who dream that they will be allowed to build their lives and careers here, open businesses, and in some cases join our military to help defend America, which they consider home.<sup>22</sup>

After President Obama issued his historic Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals directive in 2012, the National Immigration Law Center praised the law as providing DACA-mented students the opportunity to ‘complete their education and contribute to the economy.’<sup>23</sup>

### *Fiscal sense*

Finally, in addition to valorizing immigrant labor, and tying it to the vitality of the US economy, many advocates also scrutinize the fiscal impact of continuing to pour tax-payer resources into immigration enforcement. Citing the average \$166 daily cost of detention, and the potential \$1.6 billion annual savings of focusing detention efforts on only violent offenders, the National Immigration Forum has characterized border enforcement spending as ‘a gaping fiscal

black hole.’<sup>24</sup> In a letter to President Obama, the Border Action Network also argued against costly border militarization by stating,

Continuing to throw money, resources and military responses at the border is not fiscally responsible, efficient, or humane. The ever mounting costs of militarizing the border are costs borne by taxpayers who can ill afford ineffective and ill-conceived political responses.<sup>25</sup>

Economic arguments have also, not surprisingly, played a central role in attempts to restrict state and local cooperation with federal immigration enforcement, often appealing to the need to attract business during the recovery. The National Immigration Forum, for example, has argued that a failed attempt in Florida to enhance local immigration enforcement ‘would have tarnished Florida’s global reputation as a welcoming and business-friendly state.’<sup>26</sup> The American Immigration Council similarly warned that the anti-immigrant legislation HB 56 in Alabama would have a ‘chilling effect on state businesses that depend heavily on foreign talent and investments.’ Low- wage immigrant labor, as such, is an essential strategy for attracting commerce and managing the recession.

In addition, the cost of enhanced immigration is frequently highlighted as a fiscal burden for tax payers. According to the Border Action Network, Arizona’s SB1405, a bill that requires hospital staff to inspect and report the immigration status of patients, would have increased the ‘cost burden’ on affected agencies, and constituted a waste of taxpayer ‘money and resources.’<sup>27</sup> As in other states such as, Kentucky and Utah, the American Immigration Council has similarly highlighted the exorbitant costs of proposals such as Missouri’s SB590 to detail, arrest, jail, and prosecute suspected unauthorized immigrants. The organization contrasts these costs to the ‘\$2.3 billion in economic activity, \$1.0 billion in gross state product, and approximately 13,859 jobs’

that unauthorized immigrants bring to the state.<sup>28</sup> As such, immigration enforcement is simply not a good bargain.

### *Intersectional frames for immigrant justice*

To focus solely on the implications of the economic rationale for expanded immigrant rights would be to ignore the many other frames that are used to champion immigrant justice. Indeed, the immigrant rights movement in the United States has adopted a range of frames that do not rest on economic rationales in order to argue for reform. Although the purpose of this study is not to document this extensive list, there are at least three that bear mentioning: (1) a *civil rights* rationale based on constitutional protections, (2) arguments based on *human rights* principles, and (3) appeals to the primacy of *family values* and familial relationships. A rich and evolving area of research has examined these in their own right, but they are significant in the ways in which they intertwine with economic narratives.

Regarding the first, civil rights arguments are commonly used to challenge nefarious anti-immigrant practices such as racial profiling. For example, the Asian American Justice Center (AAJC) opposed the implementation of South Carolina's SB20, a bill that would mimic Arizona's controversial SB 1070 by requiring that residents carry identification papers at all times on the basis that this bill 'turns back the clock on the gains South Carolinians have made in eradicating discrimination.'<sup>29</sup> The American Immigration Council also blasted recent attacks on birthright citizenship, which the group argues constitutes 'a vicious assault on the US Constitution and flies in the face of generations of efforts to expand civil rights.'<sup>30</sup> Similarly, an appeal by legal scholars and immigrant advocacy groups to the United Nation's Committee on

the Elimination of Racial Discrimination calls for an international response to ‘the border wall’s severe discriminatory impacts upon Native Americans, Native Mexican Americans, Indigenous Peoples and poor Latinos’ (Tamez and Dulitzky 2012). Inherent in many of these arguments are appeals to constitutionality and democracy, and appeals to racial justice. A sign at a recent immigrant rights mobilization crystallized these sentiments and simply read, ‘Being Brown is Not a Crime.’

A second familiar frame is one that appeals directly to principles of human rights from a universal either moral or religious standpoint. To be sure, faith leaders have played an important role in the immigrant rights movement offering a moral compass for skeptical publics who may not otherwise be natural allies. For example, the Catholic Legal Immigration Network and the US Conference of Catholic Bishops advocated for the passage of the DREAM Act based on further ‘safeguarding the basic human rights of immigrants and to enacting humane and just reforms of US immigration law.’<sup>31</sup> The Border Action Network has also repeatedly referred to Arizona’s SB 1070 as ‘immoral,’ and the Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles has called on Congress to address the ‘the moral and human rights crisis caused by mass detention.’<sup>32</sup> A further focus of these human rights arguments has been the ongoing deaths along the border, and the deplorable conditions in US detention centers (No More Deaths 2011). Local campaigns have also issued a moral appeal to the public conscience. Similarly, a United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) giant puppet held signs at a recent mobilization in San Jose, CA that criticized a major ethnic grocer’s treatment of its immigrant workers. The *Mi Pueblo* chain first rolled out the use of E-Verify to crack down on an organizing campaign, then filed for bankruptcy with the threat of firing hundreds of its immigrant workers. UFCW slammed Mi



*Pueblo* as ‘morally bankrupt’ as its members marched alongside faith leaders and iconic religious images such as the life-size banner of the *Virgen de Guadalupe*.

Third, in addition to alluding to civil and human rights justifications for immigrant justice, advocates commonly emphasize the importance of ‘keeping families together.’ Responding to the Obama administration’s proposal to waive the current 3- and 10-year bars for spouses and children of US citizens who could prove ‘extreme hardship,’ the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights lamented the ‘heart-breaking dilemma’ that immigrants face when deciding to pursue permanent status and risk family separation.<sup>33</sup> The National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights likened this Catch-22 to a ‘Solomon’s choice’ that reflects immigration rules that are ‘simply out of step with our commonly held family values.’<sup>34</sup> Similar arguments are also commonly lodged to contest the devastation that the 4.2 million deportations over the past 15 years has had on immigrant families, many of whom included US-born citizen children (Golash-Boza and Hondagneu-Sotelo 2013). The banner of family reunification has also been carried by ‘DREAMer’ student groups who argue vociferously against the valorization of their accomplishments at the expense of the criminalization of their parents. On the ground, mobilizations echo these calls with signs that read ‘Immigrant Families Have Our Support’ (United Way), ‘Stop Separating Families (Somos Mayfair, a community organization on the immigrant-dense Eastside of San Jose), and ‘*Justicia Para Todos* (Justice for All), *Todos Somos Humanos* (We Are All Human), *No Mas Deportaciones* (No More Deportations), *Reunificacion Familiar* (Family Reunification), *Reforma Migratoria Humana* (Human Immigration Reform)’ (Voluntarios de la Comunidad, grassroots immigrant rights group). Individuals also held banners alluding to the deportations and destruction of immigrant families in the community.

In each of these three cases, economic frames are not mutually exclusive, and often

deployed alongside these narratives. For example, the American Immigration Lawyers Association has strategically condemned the conditions of immigrant detention centers as ‘inhumane’ and unconscionable,’ while also rejecting the \$2 billion/year expense of detention as an ineffective use of tax-payer dollars.<sup>35</sup> Similarly, the California Immigrant Policy Center has argued against the construction of a ‘costly and wasteful... multilayered border wall’ not only because it would disrupt international trade and ‘waste taxpayer dollars that could more efficiently be spent on improving the infrastructure and social sustainability of border communities,’ but also due to the negative effects on migrant safety and imminent rise in border deaths that would follow.<sup>36</sup> Labor unions too have invoked the rights of immigrant families as precisely the rights of workers. Another UFCW banner read ‘*Reforma Migratoria* (Immigration Reform), *Mantener las Familias Juntas* (Keep Families Together), *Un Camino a la Ciudadania* (A Path to Citizenship), *Derechos de los Trabajadores* (Rights of Workers).’ Even religious organizations have adopted a cost-benefit lens alongside their moral preachings. The director of the Catholic Legal Immigration Network has warned of ‘humanitarian repercussions,’ while also decrying how detention and deportation ‘costs taxpayers needlessly’ at an average rate of \$95 per day.<sup>37</sup>

There are also staunch alternative voices for immigrant reform that are pushing against a merely instrumental economic narrative for immigrant rights that also reifies the logic of national borders. Groups such as Presente.org and the art collective *CultureStrike* have dedicated their efforts to ‘engage in the struggle for migrant and human rights with the aims of developing counter-narratives, nurturing writers as witnesses and visionaries, and fostering new models for cultural change.’<sup>38</sup> One of the most predominant themes in these groups’ public statements is a decial of President Obama’s failure to ‘end policies that destroy communities and divide

families.’ They point especially to the racial profiling of interior enforcement programs such as 287(g) and Secure Communities, which push ‘immigrant and Latino communities to live under fear.’ Presente.org has highlighted the horror of conditions in detention, including rape and sexual abuse, and the complicity of the Department of Homeland Security in supervising the ‘destruction of families of immigrants across the United States.’ Like other organizations, Presente.org ties these various themes together, such as how economic precarity of deportability leads to the suffering of whole families. They acknowledge the economic benefit of DREAMers and other high-skilled immigrants without conceding the tradeoff of an enforcement-first approach whereby the President’s current immigrant detention/incarceration ‘model is essentially sanctioning these anti-Latino attacks to continue.’ Yet even these alternative voices make the obligatory nod to the economic (ir)rationality of current enforcement models, pointing especially to the bloated budget of immigration enforcement agency (which tops the entire budget of the FBI) and the cost of massive immigrant detention schemes.

Interviews with immigrant rights advocates reveal the utility of invoking economic arguments in favor of immigrant rights, particularly in hostile political environments where natural allies are not enough to move policy forward. For example, a union leader and immigrant rights ally in Houston explained why his initial attempts to frame immigrant worker rights as akin to the struggles of the civil rights movement was not effective even for certain union brethren.

Most people understood it in the union movement... that if you don’t raise their wages, my wages are gonna go down... The law of physics is in the market... Low wages drag wages, good wages, down. So that’s (more) comfortable for a lot of labor leaders to understand.

He explained also that even moral arguments in favor of immigrant worker rights required an economic reference. ‘(Some) knew intuitively that this was right and this was wrong to have a

subclass of people, like a slave class.’ However, for others, an economic bottom line was necessary. Another longtime immigrant rights advocate explained her approach in decidedly Marxist terms. For her, the current immigration regime was ‘congruent with the strategy of global economic development of high profits, low wages.’ She likened the current police state for immigration enforcement to the slave patrols of the southern states. ‘The function of the slave patrol was to reinforce the dominant economic relations between those who own and those who produce - those who profited from the labor and those who labored.’ These economic terms were central to her grassroots mobilizing strategy.

Even faith leaders recounted the importance of an economic approach to building alliances. In Houston, the leader of a faith-based Alinskyite organization explained how the local and state level agenda was a microcosm, and necessary precursor, to contentious federal politics. To win, business allies had to be brought into the conversation. ‘Most people are in the middle, so I think a lot of it (requires) a lot of education and agitation... to begin to really understand why it’s in their economic interest to do something different.’ In San Jose, an interfaith leader active on immigrant rights similarly referenced the opportune moment of the economic crisis.

In that fear and anxiety, religious leaders are preaching economics more than I’ve ever heard...My sense is that there’s an opportunity (now) to link both the faith and the fears of the middle to upper middle class with those of the working poor.

Part of the strategy of the immigrant rights movement, therefore, would be to highlight their shared economic plight of immigrants, rather than see them as competitors.

*The logic of economic frames for immigrant advocacy*

Thus, advocates are deploying strategic frames in multi-pronged ways to a range of audiences. Despite their necessity, economic approaches to immigrant advocacy pose a challenge for broader social justice goals. A deeper reading of the economic logic for immigrant rights reveals at least three assumptions about membership and the subjects who deserve access. The first is a utilitarian view of membership that focuses on the instrumental benefit of a subject to the broader polity, and specifically the market value of a subject. Second, in identifying the economic worth of certain immigrants, the market logics of immigrant rights necessarily divide immigrants into good and bad, whereby the virtue of the former is contrasted to the less economically productive native-born members as well. Finally, these economic rights logics unwittingly reify the residual benefits of labor exploitation. Meant neither as a political critique, or a moral condemnation, this analysis attempts to interrogate advocacy strategy vis-a-vis our understanding of the foundations of citizenship, the compromises of movement building, and the extent to which rights are quantifiable in economic terms.<sup>39</sup>

A utilitarian approach presumes that US society's need for immigrants determines whether they are worthy of receiving particular rights. Specifically, the economic arguments for immigrant rights that I have described emphasize the *market value* of immigrants (i.e., we need them because they either do the work Americans won't/can't do, or they add more value to the economy than they take out). At the core of these debates are whether immigrant workers 'substitute' or 'complement' native-born workers (Peri 2007), and whether their economic inputs (income, taxes, ingenuity, and innovation) surpass their economic burdens (welfare benefits, incarceration costs, health needs) (Chiswick 2009). This strategy reifies market logics of equality

and privileges the desert of economic actors. This cost-benefit analysis also presumes that fairness and equality cohere with existing business profit models, which research has shown is not always the case (Wilkins 2004).

The popular activist slogan, ‘We are workers, We create wealth, We have rights!’ is a crucial reminder of the value and dignity of immigrant labor. Yet, this framing also raises questions for the inclusivity of economic justifications for immigrant rights. For one, *who is left out of the circle of protection/benefits?* If economic productivity is the basis for rights, then what does this mean for noneconomic producers? Most benignly, this includes children, the elderly, the disabled, and other immigrants that could otherwise be framed as an ‘economic burden.’ For example, a May Day rally in Los Angeles featured several posters that declared ‘We are Workers not Criminals,’ and the more provocative, ‘We are Workers, not Terrorists.’ One implication of this approach is to further exacerbate existing stereotypes of criminalized racial/ethnic minorities such as African-Americans and those communities that are frequently labeled national security threats (Rodriguez 2008). This narrative also implicitly summons a comparison to individuals whose market position is devalued, including the unemployed, the incarcerated, and those engaged in unpaid reproductive labor. Thus, these binary framings of immigrant behavior, while politically powerful, also elide structural inequalities that divide the labor force and communities of color.

Finally, inherent in these arguments is a reliance on *economic exploitation* as the basic for labor savings and business success. This poses a significant contradiction for policy makers and movement organizers alike. How do we simultaneously herald the cheap labor that undocumented workers fulfill, while also championing their rights and demanding opportunities for advancement? In fact, economic productivity is a pre-requisite for status and rights, should

those rights be rescinded when the economic function of a migrant is no longer viable (as is the implicit case with proposals for a guest worker program) (Stilz 2010)? Conversely, what role should empowering immigrant workers play for extending membership rights? Rebuttals to the cost of supporting that immigrant communities incur also elide the need for public investment in low-income communities and the long-term societal costs of poverty. Gordon (2007) proposes a citizenship model that would offer migrants full labor rights, freedom of movement, and permanent residence in exchange for reporting employer abuse and upholding union solidarity. This analysis similarly suggests the practical need to address the exploitation of current undocumented migrants, while simultaneously envisioning a trajectory for social change that challenges the logics that undergird the very structures that produce undocumented migration and global inequality.

## **Conclusion**

In this article, I have drawn on the contentious debate over immigrant rights in the United States as a lens into the dynamics of immigrant advocacy, and the strategic ways in which social movements navigate allegiances in the face of enormous political opposition. I have shown how the economic discourse around immigrant rights hinges on allusions to deserving hard-working immigrants, the economic benefit of their labor, and the costs of either rejecting or incorporating immigrants. These frames are not mutually exclusive, and are often deployed alongside arguments for the civil, human, and family rights of immigrants. Yet even so, these alternative narratives are often invoked alongside economic justifications. Whether it be the long-entrenched economic logic of belonging in US society as Shklar (1991) suggests, or the current political

exigency of a Republican-controlled Congress and a slowing recovering economy, these narratives can be found across the spectrum of advocates.

Headed well into the second term of the Obama administration, immigrant advocates in the United States remain frustrated at the glacial pace of the long-promised immigration reform. A refusal on the part of congressional leadership to initiate discussions, and acquiescence on the part of the executive to the legislative process, has highlighted the entrenched opposition to alleviating the plight of the 11 million undocumented immigrants in the United States. It is within this highly contentious environment that immigrant advocates are struggling to demand change. Like any movement, immigrant rights advocates remain divided on a plan forward. In late May 2014, the National Immigration Forum and several allied organizations urged President Obama to delay administrative discretion while Congress continued debating potential reforms.<sup>40</sup> This letter sparked outrage from youth-led groups such as the National Immigrant Youth Alliance and United We Dream who demand that President Obama, who many have dubbed the ‘deporter in chief,’ stem deportations now without Congressional approval. The President’s 2014 announced expansion of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program and the creation of the Deferred Action for Parental Accountability (DAPA) program have also been met with both praise and frustration that a broader and more permanent solution is not forthcoming by the recalcitrant Congress.

Aside from an ideological division over the appropriate tactics to achieve lasting policy change, at the core of this chasm between advocates and legislators, are the stakes against which immigration reform is being weighed. Viewed within the realm of economic policy, the major actors shaping negotiations have been labor unions and business groups who highlight the demand for immigrant labor in the fields, retailers, and restaurants. Seen as yet another



ingredient shaping economic recession and growth, the rights of undocumented immigrants remain debatable and subject to rationale analysis. Morale considerations regarding family unification and immigrant safety are prominent, yet require the economic legitimacy to give them leverage. This is evident from the recent statements of congressional leaders attempting to get their colleagues on board, including ‘I think it’s important for the country and our economy’ - Senator Ayotte (R-NH),<sup>41</sup> and ‘Immigration reform could be an economic boon to this country’ - Rep. Eric Cantor (R-VA).<sup>42</sup>

Conservative activists pushing for reform are also clear about their intentions, as noted by a recent Tea Party activist editorial that read, ‘Conservatives should be at the forefront of reform so the law reflects the just interests of the United States, not misty-eyed ideals of some of the liberal do-gooder reformers. What is good for America should be the sole criteria for immigration reform.’ The criteria for this *good*, the author went onto explain, is *basic economic growth*, the health of US businesses, and the United States’ position in the ‘global marketplace.’<sup>43</sup> In a divided political milieu, economic justifications for reform indeed seem rationale and necessary in the United States. However, not to be mistaken as a unique US phenomenon, future research should examine these dynamics in light of recent conservative victories in European parliaments, many of which ran on a platform of anti-immigrant sentiment and dissatisfaction with European integration.

As the opening for legislative reform closes in the United States, what political deals must be struck in the short-term to surpass our current congressional impasse? Will it be emancipatory, or restrictionist?, as we saw following the 1996 debates that ushered in the largest limitations to social benefit provision under the guise of welfare reform, and paved the way legislatively for the robust system of interior enforcement that today facilitates the deportation of

400,000 immigrants a year. In a context where state legislators considered 437 laws and resolutions related to immigration in 2013 (a 64% increase since 2012), future research must also continue to attend to the varied ways in which immigrant advocates pressure their lawmakers, and the differential ways in which frames resonate across place and scale (National Council of State Legislatures 2014). Moving forward, social movement scholars must continue to examine the wide palette of frames being adopted by immigrant rights advocates, and the nuanced ways advocates attend to economic concerns alongside more universal considerations. We also need more information about the efficacy of these frames for political change, and the impact these compromises are having on coalition building.

## Notes

1. This paper further examines key questions posed at the 2008 ASA Thematic Session on ‘Citizenship, Immigration, and Work’ and a workshop at the 2011 Law and Society Meetings entitled ‘Towards a More Transformative Vision of Immigration Reform: Navigating the Realms of the ‘Ideal’ and ‘Non-Ideal.’ I would also like to thank the members of the Framing Immigrant Rights workshop at UC Berkeley for insight and suggestions in the development of this manuscript, including: Irene Bloemraad, Kim Voss, Kathryn Abrams, Catherine Albiston, Patricia Baquedano-Ldpez, Nils Gilman, Taeku Lee, Sarah Song, Veronica Terriquez, and Leti Volpp.
2. For example, when social movements choose to pursue the courts as a central strategy for social change, they are necessarily making a choice to frame an issue through particular legal reasoning. Cause lawyers and other movement actors are neither naive nor ambivalent about the implications of this approach (Jones 2006).
3. Following the creation of employer sanctions under the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act, the Department of Justice created the Office of Special Counsel for Immigration-Related Unfair Employment Practices, whose primary role was to ensure that workers would not be subject to discrimination on the basis of national origin or citizenship by employers seeking to avoid hiring immigrants.
4. Similarly, a free-market rationale and an emphasis on individualism have been foundational to the configuration of US citizenship and the decline of the US social safety net (Katz 2008).

5. I searched both a 2009 database of 501(c)3 organizations purchased from the National Center for Charitable Statistics (a program of the Urban Institute) - <http://nccs.urban.org/>, as well as keyword searches through the philanthropic database *GuideStar* - <http://www.guidestar.org/>.
6. These include: *refugee, ethnic, latin, hispan, chican, mexi, colomb, dominican, puerto ric, boricua, hait, jamaic, caribb, central americ, salvador, guatem, hondur, cuba, asia, chin, viet, korea, india, filip, philipp, and human rights.*
7. Here I draw on the definition provided by Fine (2006), who distinguishes between direct service *to* individuals, (2) collective organizing *with* workers, and (3) policy advocacy *on behalf of* workers.
8. Though organizations are certain to shift their language over time, a longitudinal analysis of shifting frames was not the goal of this research.
9. A list of organization names is available upon request to the author.
10. These include 2010 (3), 2011 (9), 2012 (7), 2013 (47), and 2014 (20).
11. For this analysis, I examined the press statements of the following six prominent antiimmigrant organizations: the Center for Immigration Studies <http://www.cis.org/>, Federation for American Immigration Reform <http://www.fairus.org/about>, NumbersUSA <https://www.numbersusa.com/content/>, the Immigration Reform Law Institute <http://www.irli.org/>, and State Legislators for Legal Immigration <http://www.statelegislatorsforlegalimmigration.com/>. (See also Center for New Community for more detailed profiles of who these groups are 2011, 2013.)
12. See for example the mission of the group NumbersUSA, whose key goals include stabilizing the US population via immigration restriction in order to address the

‘deteriorating quality of life due to sprawl, congestion, overcrowded schools, lost open spaces and increasing restrictions on their individual liberty caused by the new population explosion!’ <https://www.numbersusa.com/content/learn/about/what-numbersusa-all-about.html>.

13. Several of these groups have been designated as hate groups by the Southern Poverty Law Center. See: <http://www.splcenter.org/get-informed/hate-map>.
14. United Farm Workers, *UFW Praises Federal Judge for Blocking Key Parts of SB 1070, Arizona’s Anti-Immigrant Bill - United Farm Workers*, 28 July 2010.
15. Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund, *MALDEF Opposes Proposal In Virginia’s Prince William County To Check Immigration And Citizenship Status - Provisions targeting undocumented immigrants would lead to local immigration enforcement*, 10 July 2007.
16. Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund, *Fifth Circuit Affirms Farmers Branch Housing Ordinance As Unconstitutional Targeting of Undocumented Immigrants - Ruling caps five-year legal battle over latest unlawful ordinance enacted by the City of Farmer’s Branch, costing taxpayers millions*, 21 March 2012.
17. American Immigration Council, *President Declares Ongoing Commitment to Immigration Reform*, 27 January 2010.
18. California Immigrant Policy Center, *Looking Forward, Immigrant Contributions to the Golden State*, 2010, <http://www.clca.us/immigration/moreinfoDocs/ALLCAPages.pdf>.
19. Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, *NEWS RELEASE - LIRS Welcomes US Chamber of Commerce and IPC Recognition of Refugee Resettlement's Economic Benefits*, 29 February 2012.

20. Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, *STATEMENT - LIRS Statement for Hearing: 'H. R. 2164, the Legal Workforce Act,'* 15 June 2011.
21. America Immigration Lawyers Association, *AILA Responds to House Worksite Enforcement Hearing*, AILA InfoNet Doc. No. 11012662, 26 January 2011.
22. National Immigrant Justice Center, *Senate holds first-ever hearing on the DREAM Act*, 28 June 2011.
23. National Immigration Law Center, *As Deferred Action Becomes DREAMers' Reality, National Immigration Law Center Joins New Campaign to Help Thousands of Immigrants Who Arrived as Children*, 8/7/12.
24. National Immigration Forum, *Attention Super Committee: Help Reduce Deficit by Prioritizing Immigration Enforcement Spending*, 15 November 2011.
25. Border Action Network, *Border Residents Oppose Calls for Deployment of the Nat'l Guard to US-Mexico Border, 5/27/10*. Letter also co-signed by: American Friends Service Committee (CA); San Diego Immigrant Rights Consortium (CA); San Diego Foundation for Change (CA); Border Action Network (AZ); First Christian Church of Tucson (AZ); ACLU Regional Center for Border Rights (NM); Border Network for Human Rights (TX); Immigrant Justice Alliance (TX); Freedom Ambassadors (TX); US-Mexico Border and Immigration Task Force; Casa de Proyecto Libertad (TX); and Project Puente (TX).
26. National Immigration Forum, *Effective Visa System Would Boost American Economy*, 29 January 2012.
27. Border Action Network, *Arizona Senate Committee Wastes Time and Resources on Misguided Legislation*, 2/23/11.

28. American Immigration Council, *Missouri State Legislature Pursing Budget Busting Solutions to Immigration Anti-Immigrant Bill SB590 Will Cost the State Millions*, 31 January 2012.
29. AAJC, Press Release, *AAJC Leads Amicus Brief Challenging South Carolina's 'Arizona SB 1070' Copycat Law*, 24 November 2011.
30. American Immigration Council, *State Legislators Attack Fundamental Constitutional Values - State Legislators Attempt to Turn Back Clock to Pre-Civil War Era*, 5 January 2011.
31. Mar Munoz-Visoso, Catholic Legal Immigration Network, *USCCB Chairman Calls Senate Vote On Dream Act 'A Setback, Not A Defeat'*, 21 December 2010.
32. Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles, *ANTI-IMMIGRANT HEARING CUNNING AND DECEITFUL: Rep. Lamar Smith (R-TX) holds anti-immigrant hearing titled 'Holiday on ICE,'* 27 March 2012.
33. Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights, *ICIRR Praises White House Action to Keep Families Together*, 6 January 2012.
34. National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights, *Obama Administration Proposes Sensible Changes That Will Let Many Families Avoid Prolonged Separation*, 12 January 2012.
35. American Immigration Lawyers Association, *Administration Misses Opportunity to Protect Immigrants Held in Detention*, AILA InfoNet Doc. No. 12051860, 18 May 2012.
36. California Immigrant Policy Center, *Federal Immigration Enforcement Practices Harmful to California*, 30 March 2009.

37. Catholic Legal Immigration Network, *Clinic Commends DHS Office for Report on Removal of Aliens*, 2005.
38. CultureStrike, <http://culturestrike.net/festival/culturestrike-coalition-kicks-off-national-campaign>
39. Similar assessments have been offered in other social movement arenas, such as challenges to the unilateral focus of the LGBT movement for traditional marriage equality (Andersen 2009), the feminist critique of the civil rights movement (Robnett 1996), and the failure of ‘the war on trafficking’ to address the structural basis of sex work here and abroad (Parrenas 2011).
40. Statement issued by the National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference (NHCLC), National Immigration Forum, Service Employees International Union (SEIU), Sojourners, The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) Committee on Migration (27 May 2014).
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