

Racist Nativism in the 21st Century

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Abstract

Since the 1960s, academia and the public have frequently used racism as the catch-all phrase to explain any racial or ethnic injustice identified in America. However, are the disparities domestic minorities face the same as those faced by immigrant minorities? For example, journalists have suggested that the various state immigration policies targeting Hispanic immigrants in the United States recently are as racist as the Jim Crow laws enacted decades ago. In this essay, I contend that while nativism and racism are kissing cousins, distinguishing and using these concepts may lend to more precise explanations of the issues many racial and ethnic minorities face who exist outside of the Black–White dichotomy that has traditionally characterized United States. To untangle these terms, I review recent scholarship to provide up-to-date definitions, as well as reintroduce the concept of ‘racist nativism’ to better explain the variability that characterizes racial or ethnic prejudice and discrimination in 21st century America.

Introduction

Nativism and racism are often confused and conflated. After the 1992 Los Angeles riots, commentators were quick to suggest that the riots highlighted the continuing issue of racism in America. However, Sánchez (1997) points out that African-American’s fears of Korean and Hispanic ‘foreigners’ taking over their neighborhoods sparked most of the violent attacks and looting. The same uncertainty is evident when examining the backlash Arabs and Muslims faced after 9/11. Within 9 weeks of the attacks, over 700 violent incidents occurred, targeting Arab Americans or at least those perceived to be Arab or Muslim (Ibish 2003). Dubbed as ‘islamophobia’ by many reporters and scholars (see Sheridan 2006), this contemptuous fervor against ‘foreigners’ brought the United States government to enact several laws (i.e. the Patriot Act of 2001) that targeted Arabs, Muslims, and Hispanic immigrants for interrogation and imprisonment as suspects of terrorism and illegal drug activities (Barone 2004; Gardner et al. 2008; Sheridan 2006; Stein 2003). While some viewed these acts as racist because they singled out people of color (e.g. Akram and Johnson 2002; Barone 2004; Ibish 2003), others viewed these policies as nativist reactions (Galindo and Vigil 2006; Tumlin 2004).

The same confusion is clear in the recent build up of anti-immigrant attitudes and laws passed targeting Mexican immigrants, particularly those that are undocumented. Lovato (2008), a journalist, identified the current mistreatment of Latinos in Georgia as a throw-back to old South Jim Crow racism, which he labeled, ‘Juan Crow’. Within the past 5 years, Georgia has enacted its own immigration legislation in 2006 (*Georgia Security and Immigration Compliance Act*) and encouraged local law enforcement to partner with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to help with arresting and detaining undocumented immigrants (use this link for more on partnerships <http://www.ice.gov/news/library/factsheets/287g.htm>). Lovato (2008) also suggests that many of the crimes against

Latino immigrants in Georgia within the last few years have been racially motivated. For instance, six Latino immigrants were killed during a robbery of their homes in Tifton, Georgia by African Americans who suggested they were 'easy targets'.

Controversies over Arizona's Senate Bill 1070 provide another example of confusion over whether the recent state immigration laws represent a racist or nativist action (to read SB 1070, use the following link, <http://www.azleg.gov/legtext/49leg/2r/bills/sb1070s.pdf>). As suggested in the bill, Arizona state legislators wrote and passed this bill on April 23, 2010 to "discourage and deter the unlawful entry and presence of aliens and economic activity by persons unlawfully present in the United States" (*The Help Support Our Law Enforcement and Safe Neighborhoods Act*, Section 1). Even though by 2007 every state in the union has introduced or passed legislation to address growing concerns about immigration (Anrig and Wang 2006; Navarro 2009; NCSL 2007), Arizona's law stood out to many concerned immigrants and citizens because of the following clause (italics added for emphasis):

For any lawful contact made by a law enforcement official or agency of this state or a county, city, town or other political subdivision of this state where *reasonable suspicion exists that the person is an alien* who is unlawfully present in the United States, a reasonable attempt shall be made, when practicable, to determine the immigration status of the person (*The Help Support Our Law Enforcement and Safe Neighborhoods Act*, Section 2, B).

For several civil rights organizations including the NAACP, ACLU, and the National Council of La Raza, this particular clause encouraged Arizona law enforcement to use racial profiling to determine whether a person was an undocumented immigrant. Moreover, it became clear that being 'Brown', or being Hispanic or Latino, would be how law enforcement developed 'reasonable suspicion' of whether a person was illegally in the United States without actually seeing a suspect crossing the Mexico/US border. Or, as US House Representative Steve King suggested, law enforcement could target undocumented immigrants using a 'sixth sense' that hones in on type of dress, accent when speaking, and grooming habits, which are all at least cultural indicators denoting racial or ethnic classification (see the following video clip, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wMuuMZH4gWw>). As the NAACP suggested in their reasons for filing a lawsuit against Arizona, there are also other clauses in this bill that subtly point the finger at Mexican undocumented immigrants as the 'problem' (NAACP 2010). More important, the NAACP and the National Council of La Raza saw these laws as reminiscent of Jim Crow era laws Blacks faced in the South.

So, which is it? Are the incidents and actions that target immigrant minorities racist, nativist, or both? Certainly, this confusion is warranted. Americans have always struggled with how to define, identify, or even acknowledge the existence of either phenomenon (Bonilla-Silva 2001; Feagin 2010; Galindo and Vigil 2006; Higham 1955, 1999; Huber et al. 2008; Jacobson 2008; Sánchez 1997). This confusion about terms has only been magnified by the dramatic increases of Asian and Latino immigration to the United States since the 1960s, and the spread of these immigrants to new and unsuspected destinations (see Furueth and Smith 2006; Lippard and Gallagher 2011; Massey 2008). Or, it may be that, as suggested by Gallagher (2008), Americans cannot fathom the notion that racism continues to exist in the era of Tiger Woods, Oprah, and President Barack Obama. Or, as Huber et al. (2008) suggests, maybe Americans cannot see nativism at work because governments, anti-immigrant groups, and individuals frame any discriminatory actions against immigrants of color as a 'necessary evil' to address issues of terrorism or economic downturn.

In an attempt to better understand the nature of racism and nativism in 21st century America, this article presents recent definitions of racism and nativism in the context of today's society. The article then points out the glaring similarities between the two concepts and calls for a renewed discourse within academia and the public at-large on how these two phenomena interact. I also reintroduce Higham's (1955) 'racial nativism' to help bridge the gap between discussions of racism and nativism to decipher the recent attitudes and actions toward 'Brown' immigrants. More important, this essay provides a clear way to explain how today's racism and nativism have the same objective – to sustain White dominance in the United States.

Defining two concepts in the 21st century

Most scholars want to define nativism and racism as two distinct phenomena; therefore, I start by presenting these concepts separately. On one hand, nativism is an ideology based on nationalist sentiment and separates 'natives' from 'foreigners' (Galindo and Vigil 2006; Knobel 1996; Schrag 2010). Or, as Higham (1955, 4) defines nativism in his seminal work, *Strangers in the Land*, it is an "intense opposition to an internal minority on the ground of its foreign (i.e. 'un-American') connections." Later, Higham (1999, 384) states that "nativism always divided insiders, who belonged to the nation, from outsiders, who were in it but not of it." Thus, nativism is unique in that its ideological core rests on notions of nationalism and distinguishing between native and non-native.

As Huber et al. (2008, 41) explains, "The issue of nationalism is important to nativism because it not only illuminates the process of defending national identity from perceived threats, it also engenders a fear of the foreigner." Nativism becomes clearer during times of national crisis through anti-immigrant sentiment that emphasizes fears that foreigners are either threatening or taking over culturally, politically, or economically. These national calamities usually include economic downturns, wars (or even terrorist attacks), or sudden increases in visibility due to the size or concentration of immigrant populations (Galindo and Vigil 2006; Higham 1955; Perea 1997; Portes and Rumbaut 2006; Sánchez 1997).

These fears frequently manifest themselves in a public outcry or anti-immigrant attitudes that focus on a particular set of immigrants or even naturalized immigrant groups already in the country. Higham (1955) suggests that anti-immigrant sentiment is often shaped by a real or perceived challenge to natives' sense of group position, either economically, politically, or culturally. Jaret (1999) identifies four broad accusations against immigrants in the history of the United States. First, native-born groups have identified immigrants as a threat to the political order of America. For instance, some border vigilante and White extremist groups suggest that undocumented Mexican immigrants entering the United States today are here to 're-conquer' western territories part of Mexico (Chavez 2008; Navarro 2009) – (the following link is an example of discussions about a 'Reconquista Movement' in United States by Mexican immigrants, <http://www.humanevents.com/article.php?id=16245>).

Second, nativists often suggest that immigrants threaten the social and cultural fabric of America. Recently, much of this fear revolves around language issues in that some do not see Hispanic immigrants doing enough to learn the English language. For example, late Harvard University political science professor, Huntington (2004, 1), suggested the following concerning how Latinos would change the United States:

The persistent inflow of Hispanic immigrants threatens to divide the United States into two peoples, two cultures, and two languages. Unlike past immigrant groups, Mexicans and other Latinos have not assimilated into the mainstream U.S. culture, forming instead their own political and linguistic enclaves—from Los Angeles to Miami—and rejecting the Anglo-Protestant values that built the American dream. The United States ignores this challenge at its peril.

Third, some groups have suggested that immigrants are a threat to the environment; putting a strain on natural resources such as land and water use. This message comes through when we consider a new think-tank organization called *Numbers USA* (see <http://www.numbersusa.com/content/>). Emphasizing that influx of immigration will tax natural resources, their website states, “The 1990s saw the biggest population boom in U.S. history. This is truly astounding news coming three decades after widespread agreement among Americans that the country was mature and probably already overpopulated. No wonder Americans became increasingly alarmed at their 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” (Numbers USA 2010).

The final and most prominent accusation made against immigrants is that they are an economic threat to the US economy. Espenshade and Hempstead (1996) suggest that many native-born groups view increased influxes of certain immigrant groups as the key to job loss, higher unemployment, reductions in wages, and poor working conditions in selected industries. Strains on other resources, such as housing, public schools, and welfare programs are also considered as part of the economic burden of immigration and immigrants (Borjas 1998 [1993], 2003; Espenshade 1995; Rosenfield and Tienda 1999). As suggested in recent polls, 61% of Americans believe that undocumented immigration from Mexico places an unfair burden on US public services and schools (Saad 2010). The same poll found that 53% believe that undocumented immigrants making low wages make US employers less willing to pay American workers a decent wage. Interestingly, Jaret (1999), Marrow (2010), and McClain (2006) point out that Black, White, and Hispanic native-born groups believe that immigrants take jobs, regardless of research suggesting otherwise (e.g. Adelman et al. 2005).

While extremists often overshadow the mainstream public views, Americans do express some anti-immigrant sentiment. After doing a comparative study of recent immigration polls by large media sources such as *CBS*, *ABC*, *FOX*, and *Time Magazine*, the Pew Hispanic Center (2006) found that most polls reported an overall even division on whether immigration is good for the country or not. Based on Gallup polls, many Americans suggest that they are okay with current levels of immigration, think that immigration is good for America, and suggest that immigrants take jobs that Americans do not want or will not do (see Jones 2008; Morales 2010; Saad 2010). In addition, Gallup finds that 57% of Americans believe that immigrants provide positive attributes to the US’s cultural climate (i.e. food, music, and art). However, when it comes to crime, immigrants paying their share of taxes, or using the public education system, over 50% of Americans polled believed that immigrants make these situations worse than when they were not here (Jones 2008).

Nativism also inspires systematic discriminatory actions including restrictive immigration policies and laws, increases in riots and hate crimes, and the rise of nativist organizations. Historically, there are several examples. For instance, the United States has enacted several immigration laws to address perceived economic threats by immigrant groups including the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 (see Lee et al. 2003), the Mexican

Repatriation Movement of the 1920s (see Balderrama and Rodriguez 2006), and Operation Wetback of the 1950s (Garcia 1980). In the last two decades, many states and the US federal government have also enacted nativist laws targeting Mexican immigration due to economic downturns and public outcry. For instance, in 1994, California citizens voted for enacting *Proposition 187* that banned undocumented immigrants from receiving any social benefits or services such as public health care or schooling (see Jacobson 2008). This also includes the reorganization of the United States. Immigration and Naturalization Services (INS) into the more aggressive United States. Immigration and Custom Enforcement Agency (see <http://www.ice.gov/>). Also, from 1999 to 2005, over 300 new anti-immigrant and civilian border patrol organizations like *The Minutemen Project* and the *Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR)* were formed and thousands of citizens joined from across the United States.

On the other hand, today's racism is somewhat different than nativism. As some scholars suggest (Galindo and Vigil 2006; Huber et al. 2008; Sánchez 1997), nativism and racism differ in their targets and goals. First, racism relies on socially constructed racial categories to distribute privileges and resources within a given society (Huber et al. 2008). As Higham (1999, 384) contends, instead of focusing on nativity, culture, or 'American-ness' to divide groups, racism relies on 'indelible differences of status' based on pseudo-scientific assignments of a group's biological or genetic characteristics (i.e. skin color) to a society's favored social behaviors. Thus, as Galindo and Vigil (2006) and Huber et al. (2008) suggest, the goal of nativism is to justify and reward the superiority of the 'native' and racism's goal is to reinforce 'White' superiority. Galindo and Vigil (2006, 426) also state, "Unfavourable reactions to personal or cultural traits are not necessarily nativist but may still be racist. It is only when combined with hostile, defensive, and fearful nationalism that they become nativist." Thus, nativists view foreigners as the key to the decline of the American way of life instead of implying, as racists do, that all people of color are the problem (Bonilla-Silva 2001). Higham (1955, 1999) also suggests they differ because nativism ebbs and flows with national prosperity or despair, while racism is constant and unforgiving (Higham 1955, 1999).

Since the 1960s, scholars define racism as a persistent and entrenched American ideology that denies 'non-Whites' resources that 'Whites' receive (see Bonilla-Silva 2001, 2006; Feagin 2010; Omi and Winant 1994). More specifically, as suggested by Omi and Winant's (1994, 162) racial formation theory, American racism is a socio-historical and structuralized ideology that encourages social actions that "create or reproduce structures of domination based on essentialist categories of race." Thus, racism is about perpetuating 'White' superiority by using and infusing racial categories into American social institutions and policies to promote, sustain, and protect White dominance.

Omi and Winant (1994) also point out the mechanisms of racism today. One mechanism is the continued use of 'racialization' to assign racial meaning or identity to all social groups, especially those groups that were not racially classified. For instance, in recent years, the US Census created a new ethnic category in America for all Spanish-speaking individuals – 'Hispanic' or 'Latino' (see Rodriguez 2000; Sánchez 1993). While this may have allowed for more discussion on ethnic origins, Rodriguez (2000) suggests that, in reality, this new ethnic category helped to further racialize Hispanics and provide a clear distinction between European White Americans (non-Hispanic Whites) and everyone else. This process of racializing Hispanics has happened for all racial ethnic groups (see Bonilla-Silva and Embrick 2006), and these racialized categories are constantly rearticulated and made fluid to ensure 'Whites' stay on top.

However, Omi and Winant (1994) suggest that racialization is inert if it is not linked to a racial state of structural agents that encourage dominance based on race. They point to 'racial projects' as the necessary devices that any group, organization, or institution uses to "reorganize and redistribute resources along particular racial lines" (Omi and Winant 1994, 56). For example, indigenous American tribes were clumped together as 'Indians' or 'Native Americans' to rationalize Manifest Destiny policies to procure more territories for the United States that went mainly to White settlers. A current example is when lending agencies use the categories of 'White', 'Black', and now 'Hispanic', as a proxy to determine 'creditworthiness' to receive a home loan (see Sills and Blake 2010).

However, scholars point that racism has changed somewhat in America since 1960s. Bonilla-Silva (2006, 3) describes the actions of racism today, stating:

"New Racism"...In contrast to the Jim Crow era, where racial inequality was enforced through overt means (e.g. signs saying "No Niggers Welcomed Here" or shotgun diplomacy at the voting booth), today racial practices operate in "now you see it, now you don't" fashion. For example, residential segregation, which is almost as high today as it was in the past, is no longer accomplished through overtly discriminatory practices. Instead, covert behaviors such as not showing all the available units, steering minorities and whites into certain neighborhoods, quoting higher rents or prices to minority applicants...are all weapons of choice to maintain separate communities.

In short, while racism may not be overt like legalized segregation or lynching, it still continues subtly in many social institutions (see Bonilla-Silva 2006; Feagin 2010; Gallagher 2008). Here are a few examples to consider. For instance, as of 2010 Whites hold about 90% of all management level jobs in the United States (Wise 2008) and Whites make up 98% of all CEOs of Fortune 500 companies (Curry 2005). Whites also make up 83% and 94%, respectively, of all US House and Senate representatives and until recently, all presidents of the United States have been White. Also, as alluded to by Bonilla-Silva above, Farley (2008) finds that even when Whites live in diverse metropolitan areas, 75% live, work, and play in communities with little to no interaction with Blacks. Also, as Kovol (2005) finds in his study of public schools across the United States, most public schools have 'reseggregated' more and more based on measures of the percentage of racial and ethnic groups in US schools, as well as the exposure of various groups to others within the schools.

The racial disparities on most life indicators between Whites and other racial and ethnic minorities are still high. In 2009, around 25% of Blacks and Latinos lived below the official poverty line in comparison to only 9.4% of Whites (see U.S. Census report on poverty rates <http://www.census.gov/prod/2010pubs/p60-238.pdf>). As for wealth, Shapiro (2004, 47) suggests that "black families possess only 10 cents for every dollar of wealth held by whites." This holds true in almost every comparison between Whites and all other racial and ethnic groups, except for some Asian groups. The same is true for issues of education where over 75% of Whites graduate high school, but Black and Latino graduation rates are around 56% and 52% respectively (see the U.S. Census on education rates <http://www.census.gov/hhes/socdemo/education/index.html>). Wise (2009) points out that Blacks are 48 times more likely than Whites to be incarcerated for a first-time drug offense. Moreover, Blacks' chances of being in prison are four times more likely than Whites. For Latinos, the chances are two times greater than Whites to serve prison time. Finally, Blacks and Latinos face several health disparities in which they have higher rates of heart disease and cancer than Whites (see the Center for Disease Control's focus on

African-American health <http://www.cdc.gov/media/subtopic/resources/aaresource.htm>), as well as are least likely to be insured in comparison to Whites (U.S. Census 2010).

The shift in racist rhetoric, however, has censored many of the disparities suggested above. The racist rhetoric of today is also slight-of-hand. As described by Gallagher (2008, 1), most Americans delete race or racism from discussing what shapes the “socio-economic life chances of racial minorities.” Instead of blatant verbal attacks, many scholars suggest that Whites have resorted to a more ‘color-blind’ factors denouncing race as the primary factor but still pointing out the individual and cultural flaws of entire groups (see Bonilla-Silva 2001, 2006; Gallagher 2003, 2004, 2006). As Bonilla-Silva (2006, 3) affirms,

Compared to Jim Crow racism, the ideology of color blindness seems like “racism lite.” Instead of relying on name calling (niggers, Spics, Chinks), color-blind racism otherizes softly (“these people are human, too”); instead of proclaiming God placed minorities in the world in a servile position, it suggests they are behind because they do not work hard enough; instead of viewing interracial marriage as wrong on a straight racial bias, it regards it as “problematic” because of concerns over the children...

Arguably, racial attitudes research since the 1950s has demonstrated that Whites’ views of Blacks are not the same as measured before the civil rights movement and their support of total segregation has declined (Schuman et al. 1997). However, this same research continues to find discrepancies in which Whites do not have any harsh feelings toward or brutally stereotype Blacks but will not support any actions to further equality between Whites and other minorities (see Bobo et al. 1997). For instance, 2007 Gallup poll results suggested that 75% of Whites approved of interracial marriages among Blacks and Whites, which is a significant increase in comparison to the 4% approval rate recorded in 1958 (Carroll 2007). However, only about 9% of Whites are in interracial marriages and the percentages are much higher for Blacks, Hispanics, and Asians; thus, the attitudes do not match the actions (Passel et al. 2010). In short, while Americans have concealed their disdain for people of color in color-blind language racism and legal apartheid is over, America continues to use categories of race to reinforce the White status quo and racial disparities continue to abound, regardless of the institution examined.

The glaring similarities through racist nativism

While there are differences, much of the separation between the two concepts is because scholarship on race relations and racism has not ‘kept pace’ with the rapid diversification of the US population (Lee et al. 2003, 45). As of 2007, the US foreign-born population had reached 38 million people of which 31% came from Mexico and another 24% were from South and East Asia (Pew Hispanic Center 2009). Also, Passel and Cohn (2009) estimate that there are 12 million undocumented immigrants in the United States. Many of these new immigrants have settled in new places unaccustomed to significant demographic shifts due to immigration (Frey 2006; Furuseth and Smith 2006; Lippard and Gallagher 2011; Massey 2008). This is especially true for many southern states that saw thousands of Latino immigrants rapidly move in within the last twenty years to take advantage of jobs and a lower cost of living (see Furuseth and Smith 2006; Light 2006; Lippard and Gallagher 2011; Massey 2008).

Thus, until recently, many scholars and commentators still view, define, and interpret race relations and discrimination with a ‘lens of Black and White racism’ (Galindo and Vigil 2006, 421). While serving as the central organizing principle of race relations in the

US for hundreds of years (Lee et al. 2003), this limited definition does not recognize the long history of racial discrimination that many Asians and Latinos have faced (Sánchez 1997). For instance, Chinese and Mexican immigrants and citizens have on several occasions been forcibly removed from the country due to restrictive laws enacted including the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, the Operation Wetback of the 1950s. More recently, Asians and Latinos have faced more hate crimes (Ibish 2003; Lopez and Livingston 2009), and have become objects of current racist and nativist critiques (Espenshade 1995; Espenshade and Hempstead 1996; Jaret 1999; Passel 2005; Portes and Rumbaut 2006; Sánchez 1997). Or, in a recent study of the American South, researchers have documented Latino immigrants facing serious issues of racial discrimination in employment, housing, and accessing public education (Lippard and Gallagher 2011).

Therefore, some scholars have used nativism as a way to give a voice to the issues other people of color face in America. As Galindo and Vigil (2006) suggest, because America only views racism as a Black and White issue, nativist discrimination is habitually ignored or played off as necessary to protect national interests. Sánchez (1997) proposes that most Asians and Latinos are forever labeled as foreign, which means race scholarship often concedes this discussion to immigration scholars. And, because scholars ignore the relationships between racism and nativism, Asians and Latinos in the United States are also never accepted as 'White', even though they may view themselves as, or do as well as, Whites (Lee and Bean 2004; Rodriguez 2000; Sánchez 1993; Tafoya 2004). Thus, being a foreigner in the United States today means never possessing the identities of nativity and race that overwhelmingly dictate privilege, and moreover, disallow immigrant minorities to suggest racialized discrimination or request civil rights.

While new scholarship has begun to theorize a new racial order that includes non-White immigrant minorities, it is still lacking. Some continue to force the diversification of the population into a racial dichotomy (i.e. Black/non-Black bifurcation) and ignore the historical constructions of other minorities by focusing too much on recent trends (Gans 1999; Lee and Bean 2004; Yancey 2003). Bonilla-Silva and Embrick (2006) offer one of the only recent race theories that challenges current thought by suggesting a 'Latinization' of the racial hierarchy. Skin color remains the dominant determining factor but this revamped hierarchy also allows for economic status, acculturation, and other factors to predict racial value. Again, none of these new theories truly recognize that some of the racialized strife reported is due to the nationalistic anxiety of the times. Nor, do they discuss how these nativist fears may crystallize into racist doctrine. Overall, both sides of this discussion continue to be hesitant to recognize the concoction of 'racist nativism' used in the 21st century.

Bridging the gap: 'racist nativism'

Regardless of scholarly differences, nativism and racism are more similar than different, particularly based on recent events. As Higham (1999, 384) laments late in his career, "Racism and nativism were different things, though often closely allied." Reflecting on recent anti-immigrant sentiment concerning Asians and Latinos, he also stated that, "We require no theory of a 'new' nativism or a 'new' racism to account for the trouble that today's concentrated immigrations from abroad precipitate..." (Higham 1999, 388). Or, as Galindo and Vigil (2006, 426) admit, "racism and nativism intertwine during processes of nation building when immigrants happen to also be people of colour."

To redevelop the much needed link between nativism and racism, Higham's (1955) historical analysis of nativism in America between 1860 and 1925 is the bridge. In

Strangers in the Land, Higham (1955) identified three types of American nativism. The first two types of nativism he identified focused on the religious and political differences brought by newly arriving immigrants from Europe that supposedly challenged the core ideals of America, including Catholicism and communism.

The third and most prolific nationalist sentiment identified by Higham, however, was 'racial nativism'. Higham (1955, 1999) found that this brand of nativism was the most intense and enduring, and replaced other forms by the 1920s. Already successful in separating Whites from Blacks in the 19th century, nativism found an ally with the scientific notions of evolution and biology that formed racist ideologies in the 20th century. In fact, the racist principles that sparked eugenics movements in Europe and the United States provided the simplest means to establish friend from foe, native from foreigner; skin color (Higham 1955, 1999, 384). Thus, any foreigner would become 'racialized', as Omi and Winant's (1994) description of racialization suggested 40 years later. For instance, Jaret (1999) and Huber et al. (2008) point out that Italians were certainly racialized as less than Black and rejected. Also, to add more nativist flare, a racialized group's cultural traits would be attacked as 'un-American', or a serious threat to the American way of life. Put simply, like the social constructions of race in America that have condemned African-Americans and their culture, the racialization of immigrants would make them outsiders forever and provide nativists and racists a diverse set of targets.

In a recent application of Higham's argument, Sánchez (1997) defines three different sentiments expressed through 'racialized' nativism. The first sentiment conveys an "extreme apathy towards non-English languages and a fear that linguistic differences will undermine the American nation" (Sánchez 1997, 1020). A second sentiment highlights how new immigrant minorities receive special privileges because they are racialized minorities in a country that provides racial preferences (i.e. affirmative action), encouraging minority groups to keep their racialized identities. Like the recent rhetoric of color-blind racism, we see the same with racist nativism in which Americans camouflage their distaste for immigrants with slight-of-hand rhetoric. For instance, Saad (2010) reported that 64% of Americans feel sympathetic toward undocumented immigrants, but over 60% see them as a drain on public resources and 68% want better control of the borders. The final sentiment expressed is that racialized immigrants, both documented and undocumented, drain all public resources (i.e. welfare, public education, and health care services), as well as take away jobs that citizens need. However, as Sánchez (1997) clarifies, this particular nativist rant is not just about all immigrants but specifically identifies Hispanic immigrants, particularly Mexicans, as the culprit for this national crisis. Moreover, racial nativism becomes the best method to label all people who look, talk, or act like 'Mexicans', making the racialized category the primary designator, and not nativity.

Huber et al. (2008) help us to take a step further in understanding how nativism and racism are in cahoots within the 21st century, which they call 'racist nativism'. They define racist nativism as,

The assigning of values to real or imagined differences, in order to justify the superiority of the native, who is to be perceived white, over that of the non-native, who is perceived to be People and Immigrants of Color, and thereby defend the rights of whites, or the natives, to dominance (Huber et al. 2008, 43).

Based on this definition, Huber et al. (2008) point out several ways to see the linkages between racism and nativism. First, agreeing with Omi and Winant's (1994) racial formation theory, they view nativism as a racial project in which White America has

rearticulated the meanings of race and racism and have used to create social policies and practices to prop up White superiority. Like Higham (1955), they recognize the social construct of race became the catalyst in identifying who were the 'foreigners' and 'immigrants' with the arrival of Italians in the 1920s. More important, Huber et al. (2008, 42) suggests that there is a distinct link between how Americans view what it means to be White and how they view who is 'native' or 'American':

The notion of whiteness was privileged because it became strategically equated to Anglo-European heritage, Western religious traditions, and other values and beliefs deemed dominant and supportive of the 'American spirit'...Being an American, or being perceived as such, and thus enjoying the privileges that come with that identity, had much, if not everything, to do with being white. Whiteness, thus, became the most important requirement for profiting from the privilege of being native to US soil.

However, unlike Higham's racial nativism, Huber et al.'s (2008) conception emphasizes that it is more than just racializing an immigrant group to shape anti-immigrant attitudes. Racist nativism is a combination of racialization, anti-immigrant attitudes, and the implicit manifestation of this ideology within institutional practices to protect White privilege and oppress immigrant minorities. Thus, today's racist and nativist targets and goals have become very similar in that they both look to people of color to oppress and exploit to sustain White dominance in America. In fact, as we see in the examples at the beginning of this paper, much of the legislation and anti-immigrant attitudes have only focused on Latino immigrants, particularly undocumented Mexican immigrants. Interestingly, even though 56% of all undocumented immigration is coming from Mexico, Americans do not seem too concerned with the other 44% of undocumented immigration coming from Europe, Asia, Africa, and other Latin American countries (see Passel and Cohn 2009).

Huber et al. (2008) also specifically emphasizes that scholars should not blanket all issues immigrants of color face as simply racism because there are still nativist tinges. For example, Americans continue to focus on how Asians and Latinos are 'foreign' or 'illegal', even though many have been citizens for generations. As Johnson (1997, 180) states,

As the Chinese, Japanese, and Mexican experiences suggest, nativism generally is not limited to aliens of a particular immigration status but ordinarily directed at all persons of a group, whatever their immigration status, perceived to be different and 'un-American.' Latinos and Asian Americans often are treated by society as foreigners, even if they are long-term lawful permanent residents or citizens. It would not be extraordinary for an Asian American citizen to be asked which country she is from or for a Latino citizen in the Southwest to be approached by Border Patrol officers.

Americans also continually suggest that these groups will never assimilate into American culture even though recent generations have learned English and participate in American culture (see Alba and Nee 2003). However, Higham (1999) and Huber et al. (2008) point out, Americans use race (i.e. skin color and culture) as the instrument for determining whether groups are un-American or foreign.

For instance, the profiling, incarceration, and hate crimes committed against 'Arab-looking' or 'Muslim-looking' people after 9/11 affected more than just Arab immigrants but also Arab Americans and people who are not even Arab or Muslim. These feelings resurfaced in a recent protest against the possible Mosque or Muslim-oriented community center being built near Ground Zero (New York City World Trade Center). As you can see from the following video clip (see the *YouTube* clip, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EwaNRWMN-F4&feature=player_embedded), a man was attacked because he

looked like an Arab or Muslim to the opposing White crowd. Another example is how President Barack Hussein Obama has faced racist nativism when his citizenship status is questioned because of his skin color, parentage, and name (see this Southern Poverty Law Center article, <http://www.splcenter.org/publications/splc-report-return-of-the-militias/nativists-to-patriots>).

In short, all of the above factors push the discussion of prejudice and discrimination many foreign-born and recent immigrant minorities face in the recent era into a discourse of racist nativism and not solely in the camps of racism or nativism. Consequently, scholars and students of past and current events dealing with people of color should consider the following questions to detect whether racist nativism is afoot:

- (1) Are both conceptions of race/ethnicity and nativity used to organize fear and suspicion?
- (2) Do the attitudes and discriminatory actions by Americans and its institutions unfairly persecute a racial or ethnic minority group's immigrants and citizens?
- (3) Do any of these attitudes or actions help to prop up White dominance?
- (4) Do any of the institutional actions against targeted racial or ethnic minority groups have any social, economic, or political impact on the lives of White Americans?

As an example, let us apply these questions to determine if Arizona's immigration law (SB 1070) should be categorized as racist nativism. First, based on many of the clauses in the SB 1070, the law primarily targets undocumented immigration. However, as pointed out by the NAACP and other civil rights organizations, the clauses that suggest that law enforcement officials will have to use profiling to determine whether they should be suspicious of a person as undocumented makes this also about race, or at least ethnicity. Second and, dovetailing the first argument, the issue of profiling individuals who look like 'illegal immigrants' will impact both Latino immigrants and citizens, where Mexican Americans and other 'Brown' citizens will be asked to provide citizenship documentation. Finally, none of these laws enacted by Arizona (or any other state or federal push against undocumented immigration in the last 10 years) will impact the rights of White Americans. In fact, while there are no statistics to suggest the number of Whites versus non-Whites interrogated based on this law because it was stalled by litigation, it is likely that people, who look White or at least act American enough, will not be asked for proper citizenship identification at any point on the street or during a suspected crime. Thus, White Americans (or those that look White enough) will not be impacted by changes in state immigration laws and will be able to go about life without any fear of the police.

Certainly, we can also go back in time and use these questions to interpret any institutional actions against any minority who has recently been an immigrant or seen as foreign born. For instance, relate this to what happened with California's *Proposition 187* that targeted undocumented Mexican immigrants but affected Hispanic American citizens and never became a concern for White or Black Californians (see Barkan 2003; Huber et al. 2008; Jacobson 2008; Kilty and de Haymes 2000). Therefore, racist nativism can be a better tool to frame the recent prejudice and discrimination many racial and ethnic minorities face in the United States, especially in the current tide of frustrations surrounding perceived threats of terrorism, economic recession, and a growing racial and ethnic minority population.

Conclusions

This survey article has attempted to clarify the fine distinctions between nativism and racism, as well as point out the similarities. Scholars often view nativism as attitudes and actions that focus on securing nationalist concerns (i.e. political and economic shifts) and targeting foreign groups and immigrants, regardless of race or ethnicity. As for racism, scholars suggest that this ideology is about supporting White dominance and using the essentialist categories of race to determine life chances for all racialized groups. However, in the recent era of racist and nativist tensions, I have argued, as have other scholars, that nativism and racism have combined forces to ensure the White status quo and to use both race and nativity as dividing factors in an increasingly diversifying country.

To tie the two ideologies together, I resurrect John Higham's 'racial' nativism to assist scholars and students to argue a special case for and better digest the recent issues particularly facing Asian and Latino immigrants and citizens in the United States. Focusing on the last two decades, racial or racist nativism is an ideology that focuses prejudice on certain groups based on the factors of race, ethnicity, and nativity. This ideology also encourages understanding how systematic discrimination penalizes racial and ethnic groups for not being White- or American-enough, particularly in times of national economic and political calamity. It also requires spectators to focus in on how laws and policies set out to protect the American public and its nationalist concerns frequently attack racial and ethnic minority with few rights and ways to protect themselves.

As a result, I, like others (see Galindo and Vigil 2006; Higham 1999; Huber et al. 2008; Sánchez 1997), have asserted that racist nativism becomes an important analytical tool for examining the goals and outcomes of any prejudice attitudes or discriminatory actions targeting particularly immigrants of color, or any group perceived as foreign and a threat to American society. Scholars and students must consider how negative attitudes and rhetoric focused on Mexican undocumented immigration is both nativist and racist because it simultaneously labels being 'Brown' and 'alien' as the 'problem', despite the fact that many of these groups have inhabited the United States for generations, peacefully. This concept also makes us reconsider the past experiences of Asians and Latinos and focuses on the fact that it all supports White supremacy to the highest order. More important, America has to view racist nativism as a way to appropriately identify in our past and present what happens when White America feels threatened by immigrant minorities. As Acuña (2010) attests, racist nativism was apparent when over half of the 500,000–600,000 'Mexican' immigrants deported during the 1920s were actually Mexican American citizens who had lived in the United States for generations and could not speak Spanish. We must also apply this concept to deconstruct the purposes of recent institutional actions. While several state and federal immigration laws (e.g. Arizona SB 1070) were drafted to address growing immigration problems, they subtly reinforced the racist agenda of placing Whites at the top because any one who looks White or 'American' enough will not be affected by these laws. Also, these new racist nativist attitudes and actions shield European Whites from being bothered by law enforcement in their everyday lives and distant from experiencing the life-shattering events of deportation. Thus, I push American scholarship and the public to use racist nativism to at least highlight how nativism and racism are still alive and well, industriously working to pick its next victim to hold up whiteness as the continued standard.

Short Biography

Dr. Cameron D. Lippard is Assistant Professor of Sociology at Appalachian State University. Lippard serves on the executive board of the North Carolina Sociological Association and the Southern Sociological Society's committee on racial and ethnic minorities. His research and teaching interests include a broad examination of race and ethnic relations and inequality with a focus on the social problems Latinos face in the American South. Recent publications include two books: *Building Inequality*, which examines how race, ethnicity, and nativity shape entrepreneurship and *Being Brown in Dixie*, which is an edited volume examining how Latinos challenge and face the issues of race and racism in the American South.

Note

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