Sociology, Anthropology, and Social Work Faculty Publications

Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Social Work

2016

Undocumented Fears: Immigration and the Politics of Divide and Conquer in Hazleton, Pennsylvania

Jamie Longazel
University of Dayton, jlongazel1@udayton.edu

eCommons Citation

JAMIE LONGAZEL

UNDOCUMENTED FEARS

*Immigration and the Politics of Divide and
Conquer in Hazleton, Pennsylvania*

Introduction

Immigration and the Politics of Divide and Conquer

"Nestled deep in the Pocono Mountains," began a segment of CBS's *60 Minutes*, "Hazleton, Pennsylvania, has the look and feel of an all-American town."[1] The first visual of the telecast is a glimpse of the city's landscape. The screen then switches to images of smiling high school cheerleaders wearing red-and-white uniforms, walking down the street waving their pom-poms in unison. The viewer can hear the drumbeat of a marching band. The narrator continues, "Most of the people who turned out for the town's annual end-of-summer parade are descendants of immigrants, including the mayor, Lou Barletta."

"The Barlettas came from Italy," the voice specifies, "and ended up with a street named after them." We then see the mayor sitting atop the backseat of an antique convertible that parades him down the road. He waves to his constituents, who are all cheering him on. "Good job mayor! Way to go!" shouts one of his fans.

The narrator then chimes in with the story's hook. "Now the mayor is making a name for himself by going after a different kind of immigrant." Above the still audible cheers from the crowd, you can hear another shout from a vocal onlooker: "Keep the illegals out!" The camera zooms in on the mayor, whose bright white shirt and red tie stand out against the empty

maroon-painted brick storefront in the background. He smiles, nods, and waves again.

The scene then briefly shifts away from the parade to show a snippet from an interview with Lou Barletta—"I'm going to eliminate illegal aliens from the city of Hazleton," he says—and just like that, we return to the jovial celebration. Now there is a tuba blaring, the crowd continues to cheer, and there is another picture of the mayor smiling and giving a thumbs-up.

That portion plays on for a few more seconds before the celebratory sounds abruptly go silent. The visual changes over to a close-up of a clear glass door, presumably to a small grocery store. Hanging from the door is an advertisement handwritten in black marker on white poster board: "PLATANO Verdes 8 x 1.00." Someone wearing a dark red flannel shirt and blue jeans opens the door and walks inside. We cannot see a face; we see only a rear view of the person, from shoulder to calf. Over this image the narrator explains in more detail what motivated Hazleton's passage of the Illegal Immigration Relief Act (IIRA): "Barletta believes what's been going on in Hazleton is a microcosm of what's been going on all over the country: that illegal immigrants are overwhelming his city, draining its resources, and ruining the quality of life."

The *Local* Latino Threat Narrative

This book has two primary aims. The first is to problematize how misconceptions about Latina/o immigrants coupled with nostalgic collective imaginings of "Small Town, America," contribute to the construction of a racialized community identity that embraces exclusionary immigration policy. The powerful juxtaposition in the *60 Minutes* telecast introduces this argument quite well. Celebratory music, imagery of cheerleaders and marching bands, allusions to tradition, and references to European immigrants who "made it" bolster the description of Hazleton as a place with the "look and feel of an all-American town." In sharp contrast, the broadcast speaks only briefly of a "different kind of immigrant"[2] depicted as a shadowy—indeed, *faceless*[3]—figure that confronts unquestioned accusations of ruining what we are led to assume is an idyllic quality of life.[4]

The anthropologist Leo Chavez has examined the pervasive nature of such representations around Latina/o immigration, which coalesce into what he calls the Latino Threat Narrative. The taken-for-granted "truths"

that this narrative comprises, he writes, are that "Latinos are not like previous immigrant groups, who ultimately became part of the nation."[5] "Rather, they are part of an invading force from south of the border that is bent on reconquering land that was formerly theirs (the U.S. Southwest) and destroying the American way of life."[6]

As locales across the United States take action against undocumented immigration,[7] we see an extension of this familiar script. Thousands of Latina/o migrants arrived in Hazleton in the years leading up to the IIRA, and, as we will see, the story of what led them there is quite complex (see Chapter 1) and their experience is rich. The *60 Minutes* report, along with other, similar descriptions, however, narrowly depicts an unlikely "hero" emerging to "stem the tide" as the so-called "problem" of undocumented immigration "seeps" into the interior and afflicts an "All-American town."[8] It will become even clearer as I trace the politics surrounding Hazleton's IIRA over several stages how tales of a harmonious small town in peril represent a local-level iteration of the nationalistic threat of reconquest that Chavez describes. Regardless of the geographic space it imparts to protect, the narrative remains characterized by strong assertions that "they" have arrived with the intent to harm "us."

Part of my objective is to show how race permeates this narrative. I use two concepts to accomplish this: *Latina/o degradation* and *White affirmation*.[9] By Latina/o degradation, I mean the subordination that accompanies the (often subtle, but nonetheless consequential) symbolic linking of negative traits to Latina/os. Although this debate begins as a backlash against so-called "illegal aliens," cloaked race-neutrally as a defense for the rule of law, it will become apparent that exclusionary rhetoric about legal status is often simply an entry point for a discussion about larger racialized fears. Indeed, there are examples throughout the book of how this narrative extends its reach to encompass Latinas/os who are not undocumented immigrants.[10] There are also examples of how it is used to vilify pro-immigrant activists who resist.[11] The narrative holds strong to the notion that traits such as criminality, fiscal burdensomeness, and a penchant for seeking "special privileges" *characterize* "outsiders," even though these assumptions are grossly inaccurate,[12] problematically narrow,[13] and drawn from a long history of racism and nativism.[14] Quoting Lisa Marie Cacho, rhetoric that appears throughout this debate therefore constructs the undocumented and others by racialized association as "*ineligible for personhood.*"[15] What becomes taken-for-granted conventional wisdom is that "they" are *perpetu-*

ally incapable of following the law, *always* undeserving of public services, and *never* entitled to legal recourse. Put another way, Chavez explains how degradation amounts to *virtualization*. Epitomized by the facelessness of the figure in the *60 Minutes* report, "The virtual lives of 'Mexicans,' 'Chicanos,' 'illegal aliens,' and 'immigrants' become abstractions and representations that stand in the place of real lives. . . . They are no longer flesh-and-blood people; they exist as images."[16] It is in this context that it troublingly becomes acceptable to discuss "eliminating" a group of people.

By White affirmation, I refer to the parallel process—that is, (again, non-explicitly) associating positive characteristics with Whiteness while asserting whom in particular the alleged "immigrant invasion" has harmed. Importantly, White affirmation works *through* Latina/o degradation. Because "whiteness is a relational concept, unintelligible without reference to nonwhiteness,"[17] the defining of Latinas/os as inferior becomes a necessary step in the construction of White superiority.[18] Idyllic depictions of who "we" are—the cheerful parade, and so on—become more comprehensible when placed alongside assertions of who "we" *are not.*[19] Racialized binaries are apparent at each stage of Hazleton's immigration debate I explore: lawbreakers and law abiders; fiscal drains and hardworking people; separatists and egalitarians; neighbors who are noisy, messy, and careless and neighbors who are quiet, kempt, and careful.[20]

Beyond reinforcing difference and belonging, these binaries amplify the perception of the Latino Threat by *specifying who is threatened*. Representations of "invaders," in other words, are used to construct the identity of the "invaded." Encapsulated in the notion of White affirmation is thus what Cacho has elsewhere referred to as the *ideology of white injury*.[21] Even though it is Latinas/os and other people of color who endure degradation and confront institutional barriers because of their race, in this narrative Whites are continually constructed as *victims* of undocumented immigrants' criminality, as *suffering* because of "their" burdensomeness, and as *treated unfairly* by "efforts to remedy racial discrimination."[22]

The Politics of Divide and Conquer

The second aim of this book is to highlight how this narrative contributes to the perpetuation of social inequality at the intersection of race and social class. My thesis here is that, on one hand, Latina/o degradation enhances the exploitability of immigrant laborers and imposes limits on

meaningful resistance. On the other hand, White affirmation prompts an embrace of a White collective identity that not only degrades but also misdirects animosity and stunts the formation of class-based coalitions that could pursue economic justice.[23]

The history of U.S. immigration policy is largely an intertwining of economic exploitation and nativism.[24] In the particular case of immigrants from Latin America, U.S. officials have had a long history of calling on migrants when they needed them—during wartime labor shortages, for example—and forcibly removing them when labor demands subsided and anti-immigrant hostilities intensified.[25] In the contemporary political economic context, near-record numbers of immigrants are arriving in the United States.[26] However, the vacancies they fill this time around are the result not of labor shortages but, rather, of *structural transformations.*"[27] Amid globalization and rapid technological change, jobs in sectors such as manufacturing are leaving the United States, and immigrants are filling the often temporary, low-wage employment opportunities that crop up in their place. Companies competing in the global economy doing all they can to cut costs have grown increasingly reliant on "inexpensive" immigrant laborers—many of whom have been uprooted from their home countries by the same processes, including especially the so-called free-trade agreements that leverage U.S. control over other national economies.[28]

In contrast to the American dream narrative, which suggests that newcomers who start at the bottom can work their way up, the reality of a system that requires so much low-wage work is that it thrives on the labor of the marginalized.[29] When we realize that "exploitation can be more easily justified if the exploited are placed within a fixed hierarchy,"[30] Latina/o degradation emerges as an ideological tool that caters to such arrangements in the current historical moment.[31] While many reap the economic benefits of exploited immigrant labor, virtualization makes it harder to realize immigrants' place in the social structure and it belittles the various social harms that many who live their lives on the social, economic, and legal margins confront. From this perspective, we can delink the presence of undocumented immigrants from the notion of "unsecure borders." As Nicholas De Genova puts it, capitalists in a cutthroat global economy prefer "the continued presence of migrants whose undocumented legal status has long been equated with the disposable (deportable), ultimately "temporary" character of the commodity that is their labor power."[32] Because citizenship is often "visibly inscribed on bodies"[33] and,

as Kitty Calavita writes, "immigrants' position in the economy inevitably *reproduces* the visible markers of poverty, and further generates . . . material and social exclusion," many migrants who do have authorization also find themselves caught up in this web of marginality and exploitability.[34]

For poor and working-class U.S.-born Whites such as those who make up the bulk of Hazleton's population, economic uncertainty also abounds under these conditions. The structural patterns that have attracted immigrants to places like Hazleton have also enhanced insecurity for many people accustomed to stable, decent-paying work.[35] For example, Hazleton's Luzerne County has lost more than half of its manufacturing jobs since the late 1970s, with low-wage industries filling that void; temporary employment agencies seem to be popping up on every corner; and the city struggles with budget issues at the same time that many recently arrived firms are enjoying lavish tax breaks (see Chapter 1).[36] In short, de-manufacturing, demographic shifts, and austerity are all of a piece. However, just as few openly or accurately discuss the role of immigrant labor in the economy, I show how what some have called "depoliticized neoliberalism" (see Chapter 1) has helped conceal the relationship between these patterns, effectively removing them from the public debate. Individualistic assessments of economic circumstances predominate,[37] for example, and acknowledgments of job quality rarely accompany boasts of job creation.

This context provides fertile soil for the Latino Threat Narrative.[38] It plays simultaneously to the powerful sentiments of those experiencing insecurity and mourning the economic decline of their hometowns and to negative assumptions about people of color that are so deeply embedded that many accept them even in the face of clear contradictory evidence.[39] For this reason, part of this story is about pure political ambition. As an extension of the "Southern Strategy" launched by the Republican Party in the 1960s to attract racially aggrieved poor and working-class White voters,[40] many politicians have begun deploying racially coded rhetoric as they "[search] for electoral gold in warning about the Hispanic threat."[41] Electoral success accordingly follows the politician who can best depict himself or herself as tough on "illegal immigration," willing to "take a stand," "stem the tide," or "take back" "our" city or country.

When the *Washington Post* interviewed Mayor Barletta about the IIRA in the summer of 2006, he commented, "I lay in bed and thought, I've lost my city. I love the new immigrants; they want their kids to be safe just like I do. I had to declare war on the illegals."[42] These words concede that things

are not going well in Hazleton. The city is *lost*. Yet rather than providing commentary on how Hazleton should weather the economic storm, I argue in this book that this kind of rhetoric shifts the blame. Resembling what the legal scholar Ian Haney López refers to as "dog whistle politics,"[43] statements such as this are at the heart of the Latino Threat Narrative, portraying people without documentation narrowly and inaccurately as posing a profound (i.e., requiring a declaration of "war") and urgent (i.e., "I had to") problem and drawing attention to the politician who is accordingly prepared to lead the "fight." What makes this rhetoric especially powerful is that it is capable of withstanding any charges of racism that may arise—note here how race is never mentioned explicitly and how an expression of "love" for immigrants is sandwiched between the realization of loss and the declaration of war.

Ultimately, however, this is not a story about individual politicians.[44] *Undocumented Fears* connects the proliferation of the Latino Threat Narrative to a broader ideological project designed to divide and conquer poor and working people. While degradation assures the existence of exploitable immigrant laborers, *affirmation* encourages poor and working-class Whites to embrace their racialized rather than class-based identities. Akin to what some scholars refer to as a "racial bribe,"[45] the Latino Threat Narrative in this way promises a symbolic uplift to those White workers who choose to ally with White political and economic elites instead of conspiring with their fellow workers of color to protest their shared economic plight. Although it does little to improve their socioeconomic standing, the bribe is, and long has been, enticing for many, particularly at these moments of uncertainty, because it grants "public deference" and a "psychological wage."[46] Thus to paraphrase W.E.B. Du Bois, members of the White working class often become content with their class position once they come to see themselves, in this case, as "not Latina/o."[47]

The ideology of White injury factors in here, as well. More than simply evoking race *instead of class*, the rigid "us" and "them" binaries in this narrative *reinforce particular understandings of socioeconomic relations*. The politics I describe in this book use race to promote an individualistic worldview that attributes, quoting Katherine Beckett, "the plight of the average American" to people said to be "looking for the easy way out":[48] "'cheats,' 'thieves,' 'freeloaders[,]'"[49] and, in this case, "illegals." That is to say, my argument in this book is that the Latino Threat Narrative is embraced, at least in part, for its "*capacity to explain* the declining social and economic position of work-

ing people."[50] As opposed to concern about financial burdens imposed on *workers*, the understanding that has prevailed suggests that the behavior of racialized outsiders is *economically injurious to Whites* (e.g., "'Our' community is destitute because 'they' commit crime and milk the system").

In short, the Latino Threat Narrative reconstitutes the terms of the debate, controlling what we see and what we do not in a way that allows existing hierarchies to remain intact. Degradation reasserts the subordinate social and economic position of many Latina/os. Yet its colorblind rhetoric masks racism, its virtualizing of real people "blunts the empathetic response,"[51] and its scapegoating makes exclusionary policies appear justified. Mobilizing for immigrants' rights and racial justice in this context is therefore not surprisingly an uphill battle (see Chapters 3 and 4). Existing economic arrangements that concentrate wealth in the hands of just a small number of people also avoid contestation by remaining invisible to many. Working-class politics are drowned out along with the potential for class-based, cross-racial/ethnic solidarity as the prevailing narrative depicts immigrants not as workers but as fiscal burdens and encourages working-class Whites to see themselves *in contrast to* such racialized representations. The "harm" that the Latino Threat Narrative suggests Whites experience *as Whites* in this way becomes the harm around which activists in favor of laws like the IIRA can successfully mobilize. Consequently, it is this problematic conception of harm that garners the lion's share of attention. What we end up with, I argue, are counterproductive, *de-democratizing* local-level mobilizations:[52] calls for additional state power and control over racially marginalized populations and collective efforts that reinforce the market ideology responsible for perpetuating global and local economic inequality.

Plan of the Book

The book begins with an examination of how the structural arrangements I have just described filter down to the local level. In many nations striving to enhance their economic standing in the increasingly competitive world of global capitalism, immigrants are attracted for their inexpensive labor and subsequently demonized.[53] Domestically in the United States, many small cities and rural towns are also struggling to remain economically viable as their industrial base withers and they compete with other locales to attract industry. Many communities in this situation are settling for

exploitative firms and, as a result, are attracting large numbers of immigrant laborers who, in turn, are subject to backlash.[54]

In Chapter 1, I provide an account of this by studying the history of Hazleton's primary community economic development group, CAN DO. This organization provides a window through which we can see how broader political economic forces have affected Hazleton. By tracing CAN DO's evolution from its founding in the 1950s, through the introduction of a market-centric ideology in the 1980s, and into the present, we become aware of the structural shifts that both created economic uncertainty among local residents and prompted Latina/o immigration to Hazleton. My analysis also suggests that CAN DO has responded to recent economic shifts and demographic changes with a depoliticized approach that is characteristic of the current political economic order. In short, Chapter 1 documents the setting of the structural and ideological stage for the politics that ensue.

Chapter 2 begins with a comparative analysis of the media coverage of two homicides committed in Hazleton. The first is a Latino-on-Latino murder that prompted calls for calm. The second is the killing of a White Hazleton resident, for which two undocumented Latino immigrants were initially charged. The second homicide prompted a moral panic and catalyzed passage of the IIRA. This analysis introduces us to how politicians and other city officials draw from the broader Latino Threat Narrative and mold it to fit the local context. In the reaction to the Latino-on-White homicide, the notion that "they" have harmed "us" and that we therefore must "get tough" is very apparent. That is not so in the case featuring a Latino victim.

I follow the moral panic over the murder of the White resident into City Council debates, where it became the impetus for the introduction of the IIRA. Here, I suggest clear instances of Latina/o degradation and White affirmation are on display. Officials extend the implications of this single criminal incident with blanket constructions of undocumented immigrants as "crime-prone" and Hazletonians as potential innocent victims of their criminality. I show how officials also bring other issues in at this juncture—claiming, for example, that immigrants are a drain on city resources—as they construct what I interpret as an alternative explanation for Hazleton's economic decline.

Chapters 3 and 4 explore how members of the community majority respond to various pro-immigrant efforts put forth by local Latina/o com-

munity leaders and their allies. The first of these chapters focuses on how the majority used a particular strand of the Latino Threat Narrative to fend off pro-immigrant mobilizations that directly contested the IIRA. In this version of Latino Threat, which is similar to what scholars have documented in other local contexts and emblematic of national immigration debates,[55] we see Latina/o activists' efforts to claim discrimination and assert their rights dismissed by the majority as "inappropriate" evocations of race and "excessive" demands for "special rights." At the same time, the majority constructs its own rights claims and legal mobilizations as acceptable, even necessary, to ensure continued community harmony.[56] Thus, the backlash to the initial protests by Latina/o community leaders quelled pro-immigrant mobilizations and added "self-interested," "reverse racist" activists to the list of those who supposedly pose a threat to a previously "harmonious" Hazleton.

I also explore in Chapter 3 how these activists had a similar experience when they later turned to litigation, challenging the ordinance in the high-profile case *Pedro Lozano et al. v. City of Hazleton* (hereafter, *Lozano v. Hazleton*). Although pro-immigrant groups were ultimately victorious in court, the lawsuit and subsequent decision prompted some of the most vitriolic politics of the entire debate. Even in the shadow of the IIRA's defeat, we see how the conception of local Latino Threat further intensifies as "powerful litigators" and "activist judges" face accusations that they, too, have undermined this "innocent small town."

In Chapter 4, I examine subsequent pro-immigrant efforts—specifically, a volunteer coalition of Latina/o and White residents who mobilized with the goal of building a bridge between recent immigrants and established residents and institutions. As an adaptation to the backlash the initial pro-immigrant mobilization faced, this group was able to make important progress by avoiding contentious issues. For example, some infrastructure is emerging to support immigrants, the issue of integration has gained visibility and positive press, and there has even been cooperation from some who previously championed backlash politics. In this respect, what we see is a pattern that mirrors a common refrain in national immigration debates: Things will get better as time goes on, and conflicting groups are able to compromise. Remaining cognizant of how meaningful these gains have been, but also questioning this uncritical assessment, I argue that here, too, the Latino Threat Narrative still looms large and that the debate remains on the ideological turf of those who sit atop racial

and economic hierarchies. Specifically, I point to several key political limitations that activists continue to confront, including an ability to bring attention to the specific harms and burdens Latina/o immigrants endure, to directly contest the ideology of White injury, and to introduce class-based politics into the debate.

I conclude by recounting an example from Hazleton's history that I think takes on particular significance in light of these contemporary events. Back when it was a coal mining town, Hazleton was riddled by ethnic strife and labor-capital disputes. I argue that collective engagement with this history is but one tactic that has the potential to foster new community identities capable of resisting the politics of divide and conquer in Hazleton and beyond. As immigration law and politics localize, in other words, it becomes vitally important that we contest top-down constructions of community identity that have their basis in racialized myths and economic distortions and replace them with engaged, bottom-up activity that authentically and democratically confronts racial and economic inequality.

always depended on people who are standing independently and are able to
have that lover's quarrel with something they love too much to let it sink to its
lowest life form. So the empty self is a threat, I think, to fundamental demo-
cratic values and processes. (Parker Palmer, "Inner Authority and Democracy,"
interview, available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xVmt7FouwGo, ac-
cessed March 21, 2015)

20. Parker Palmer, interview by Bill Moyers, February 20, 2009, available at http://
www.pbs.org/moyers/journal/02202009/transcript2.html, accessed December 22, 2014.
21. Rita Hardiman and Bailey Jackson, "Conceptual Foundations for Social Justice
Education," in *Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice*, 2d ed., ed. Maurianne Adams,
Lee Anne Bell, and Pat Griffin (New York: Routledge, 2007), 41. Feagin and Vera simi-
larly write about liberation sociology:

We call for the reassertion of a sociological practice designed to empower ordi-
nary people through social science research and knowledge. By having better
access to critical sociological knowledge, people will be in a better position to
understand their personal and familial troubles, make better sense of the world
we live in, plan their individual and collective lives, and relate in egalitarian
and democratic fashions to others within and outside their own nation state.
This includes being in a better position to struggle for individual and collective
human rights. A broad-based democracy can be fully developed in our era only
if key types of knowledge are made available to all, not just to those at the top of
the socioeconomic pyramid and their professional servants. (Feagin and Vera,
Liberation Sociology, 10)

INTRODUCTION

1. The full video is available at http://www.cbsnews.com/news/welcome-to-hazle
ton, accessed July 30, 2015.

2. Compare this with Leo Chavez's observation that "since the Mexican-American
War, immigration from Mexico and other Latin countries has waxed and waned, build-
ing in the early twentieth century, diminishing in the 1930s, and building again [in]
the post-1965 years. These migrations paralleled those of other immigrant groups. But
Mexicans in particular have been represented as the quintessential 'illegal aliens,' which
distinguishes them from other immigrant groups. Their social identity has been plagued
by the mark of illegality, which in much public discourse means that they are criminals
and thus illegitimate members of society undeserving of social benefits, including citi-
zenship": Leo R. Chavez, *The Latino Threat: Constructing Immigrants, Citizens, and the
Nation* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2008), 3.

3. A similar image is presented later in this broadcast. With the narrator describ-
ing the IIRA as "an ordinance that punishes businesses or landlords who give work or
shelter to illegal aliens," we see the rear view of a person in a dark green jacket with the
hood up walking down a sidewalk on a dark, rainy day. Chavez insightfully describes
the significance of such depictions:

Media spectacles transform immigrants' lives into virtual lives, which are typi-
cally devoid of the nuances and subtleties of real lived lives. . . . It is in this sense

that the media spectacle transforms a "worldview"—that is, a taken-for-grant-
ed understanding of the world—into an objective force, one that is taken as
"truth." In their coverage of immigration events, the media gave voice to com-
mentators, pundits, informed sources, and man-on-the-street observers who
often invoke one or more of the myriad truths in the Latino Threat Narrative to
support arguments and justify actions. In this way, media spectacles objectify
Latinos. Through objectification (the process of turning a person into a thing)
people are dehumanized, and once that is accomplished, it is easier to lack em-
pathy for those objects and to pass policies and laws to govern their behavior,
limit their social integration, and obstruct their economic mobility. (ibid., 5–6)

4. To be sure, the telecast goes on to feature dissenting voices. Indeed, the story
attracted attention because the national media considered it *controversial*; that element
adds to the newsworthiness of the case. My point, however, is not simply that they pre-
sented only one side of the debate. Rather, following Chavez, I am pointing out that
assumptions about race and place are so taken-for-granted that even when journalists
and others strive for objectivity, they employ problematic imagery. For example, on an
episode of *Lou Dobbs Tonight* hosted live from Hazleton, Dobbs embraced the notion of
a "two-sided" debate while indiscriminately accepting the idea that "illegal immigra-
tion" is a *crisis*, saying, "Tonight, we're going to examine this community's efforts to deal
with the harsh realities of illegal immigration. We will tell you about the facts of our
national illegal immigration crisis. And we will have a vigorous and open debate, with
all viewpoints represented, and some potential solutions to the crisis, with our audi-
ence here, with advocates on both sides of this issue": see "Broken Borders," *Lou Dobbs
Tonight*, CNN, available at http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/0705/02/ldt.02.
html, accessed December 22, 2014.

5. Chavez, *The Latino Threat*, 2

6. Ibid.

7. Recognizing the dehumanizing nature of referring to human beings as "illegal," I
avoid using the phrase "illegal immigrant" (and variations thereof, such as "illegal alien")
and refer instead to "people without documentation" or "undocumented" or "unauthor-
ized" immigrants, except when one of the phrases is part of a quotation or part of the
rhetoric I am critically analyzing. Avia Chomsky, for example, notes that the phrase
"illegal immigrant" has been condemned by the United Nations High Commission on
Human Rights because "it contradicts the spirit and violates directly the words of the
Universal Declaration of Human Rights which clearly states in Article 6 that '[e]veryone
has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law'": Avia Chomsky, *"They
Take Our Jobs!" and Twenty Other Myths about Immigration* (Boston: Beacon, 2007), 58.
Notably, the Associated Press has also changed its stylebook to avoid use of this term:
see Lawrence Downes, "No More 'Illegal Immigrants,'" *New York Times*, April 4, 2013.

8. The introduction to the text version of the *60 Minutes* telecast that I am analyzing
here points out, "Not that long ago [illegal immigration] was a problem in a half dozen
border states; today it impacts virtually the entire country": see http://www.cbsnews
.com/news/welcome-to-hazleton. Lou Dobbs presented a similar angle in his "Broken
Borders" episode, saying, "Hazleton is a small community nearly 2,000 miles from our
southern border with Mexico. But, while it's far from our border, it's at the center of our
illegal immigration and border security crisis."

Along these lines, my use of the word "seeps" and the phrase "stem the tide" here is an intentional attempt to describe the prevailing narrative. Otto Santa Ana powerfully describes how frequently used metaphors of immigrants as "dangerous waters" contribute to the dehumanization of immigrants, writing, "The major metaphor for the process of the movement of [a] substantial number of human beings to the United States is characterized as IMMIGRATION AS DANGEROUS WATERS. . . . The DANGEROUS WATERS metaphors do not refer to any aspect of the humanity of the immigrants. . . . In contrast to such nonhuman metaphors for immigrants, U.S. society is often referred to in human terms": Otto Santa Ana, *Brown Tide Rising: Metaphors of Latinos in Contemporary American Public Discourse* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2002), 72–73.

9. These concepts have their roots in Chavez's notion of the Latino Threat Narrative, as well as in the work of other critical race, LatCrit, and immigration scholars. In addition to Chavez's *The Latino Threat*, I am especially influenced by the concepts of "white innocence" and "black abstraction" in Thomas Ross, "The Rhetorical Tapestry of Race: White Innocence and Black Abstraction," *William and Mary Law Review* 32, no. 1 (1990): 1–36 (see Chapter 3). Lisa Marie Cacho's concept of the "ideology of White injury" has also helped me develop this framework: see Lisa Marie Cacho, "'The People of California Are Suffering': The Ideology of White Injury in Discourses of Immigration," *Cultural Values* 4 (2000): 389–418. Ian Haney López's concepts of "dog whistle politics" and "strategic racism" also were instrumental to shaping my thinking: see Ian Haney López, *Dog Whistle Politics: How Coded Racial Appeals Have Reinvented Racism and Wrecked the Middle Class* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014). Departing slightly from the concepts these scholars use, I employ the terms "degradation" and "affirmation" to draw attention to how the uplifting of one group and the demoting of another form the basis of divide and conquer politics.

A few other notes on terminology: My focus in this book is on *racialization*—the (mostly top-down) process of attaching meanings to particular racial categories and the consequences thereof. Accordingly, as I use the term "Latina/o" throughout the text, I remain cognizant that it encompasses people from various ethnic and historical backgrounds, as well as some who may also self-identify as White. For instance, Hazleton's recent immigrants arrived mostly from the Dominican Republic, Mexico, and Peru, but they also came from, among other Latin American countries, Ecuador, Colombia, Argentina, Honduras, Guatemala, and Nicaragua: see "Ethnic Changes in Northeastern Pennsylvania: With Special Emphasis on Recent History within the City of Hazleton," Joint Urban Studies Center, July 2006, available at http://www.institutepa.org/pdf/research/diversity0906.pdf, accessed July 29, 2015. However, in this context, the encompassing term is appropriate because it is used to explain a *shared experience of racialization*.

This is also the reason I focus primarily on Latinas/os and Whites and not members of other ethnic/racial or immigrant groups who are also residents of Hazleton, albeit in much smaller numbers. This is not to deny that other residents inhabit, experience, and shape the city; it has to do with how the debate I studied racialized these two groups in particular.

The same applies to my use of the term "race" as opposed to "ethnicity." As Laura Gómez explains, race, as a socially constructed phenomenon, has "the quality of *assignment*. . . . [R]acial group membership is assigned by others, and particularly by members of the dominant group." Ethnicity, in contrast, has "the quality of *assertion*. . . . [E]thnic

group membership is chosen by members of the ethnic group. . . . Used in this way, race involves harder, less voluntary group membership" (although, to be sure, undesirable racializations can be—and often are—contested): Laura Gómez, *Manifest Destinies: The Making of the Mexican American Race* (New York: New York University Press, 2007), 2.

My use of the term "White" recognizes that "Whites [also] constitute a socially defined racial group, albeit with heterogeneous origins"—hence, my capitalization of the term: see Amy C. Steinbugler, Julie E. Press, and Janice Johnson Dias, "Gender, Race, and Affirmative Action: Operationalizing Intersectionality in Survey Research," *Gender and Society* 20 (2006): 822–823. Here, too, my focus is on the process whereby particular meanings are assigned to this particular racial category. The key difference, however, is that the racial hierarchy enables Whites to be much more involved in the "assignment" process and that White racialization tends to draw links between Whiteness and characteristics that are widely understood as positive and that are *articulated through* the negative characteristics the dominant group often assigns to and associates with subordinated groups. Understood this way, we realize that a phrase such as "reverse racism" is actually a contradiction in terms. The tendency is often to equate "racism" with "prejudice," but when we take the history of race relations and the profound power differentials that linger today into account, we realize that these terms are distinct in that prejudice amounts to individual malice, whereas racism can be carried out only with the backing of institutional and cultural power structures.

Note also that I write with the understanding that meaning is usually assigned to particular racial categories *implicitly*. For example, when I argue that the community "embraces a White identity," I am aware that very few people will explicitly state this. Indeed, many may not even be aware that this is what is happening. I make such interpretations despite this, however, because what I have observed is a widespread *embrace of the set of meanings* attached to Whiteness (made possible by a parallel embrace of the set of meanings attached to, in this case, Latinas/os) that are constructed in the context of a racially charged debate. In this regard, I follow a chorus of leading scholars who point out that, although overt racial degradation and affirmation may have become socially unacceptable after the Civil Rights Movement in the United States, this does not mean that public debates are now void of racialized communication. Especially when used in particular contexts and in particular ways, code words such as "illegal immigrant," "hardworking Americans," and "Small Town, USA," are often laden with race and conjure either negative connotations about people of color or idyllic depictions of Whites. Again, even though the utterer of such phrases never mentions race per se and may deny that race had anything to do with the statement, I acknowledge in this book that we still communicate race by speaking in code and that doing so is highly consequential. For more on this, see Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in an Age of Colorblindness* (New York: New Press, 2012); Derrick Bell, *And We Are Not Saved: The Elusive Quest for Racial Justice* (New York: Basic, 1989); Eduardo Bonilla-Silva, *Racism without Racists: Color-Blind Racism and the Persistence of Racial Inequality in America* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2006); Joe R. Feagin, *Systemic Racism: A Theory of Oppression* (New York: Routledge 2006); Ian Haney López, "Post-racial Racism: Racial Stratification and Mass Incarceration in the Age of Obama," *California Law Review* 98 (2010): 1023–1074; Michael Omi and Howard Winant, *Racial Formation in the United States: From the 1960s to the 1980s* (New York: Routledge, 1986).

Another caveat: One of the aims of this book is to problematize both the negative racialization of Latinas/os and the overwhelmingly positive racialization of Whites. In doing so, my intent in no way is to speak derogatively about *individuals* or to deny that those who identify as White are not "good people." Instead, I problematize these racializations because I see them as socially harmful. Again, because positive White racialization is coherent only when juxtaposed with negative assertions about the racial "other," it can have seriously detrimental implications. Similarly, when I problematize the "White injury" trope, my intent is not to say that White working-class people have not experienced *any* harm or endured *any* difficult social conditions. Quite the contrary: I want to emphasize that many are indeed going through some very difficult times. My point is that, contrary to dominant perceptions, the evidence overwhelmingly points to this being *class*-based as opposed to race-based harm. Thus, I see an embrace of White identity as harmful to poor and working-class White people, too—a group with whom I notably identify—because it keeps many of us from understanding our actual position in the social structure. All of this is to say that I recognize that my use of the term "White" may catch some readers off-guard, especially given that Whiteness is usually unacknowledged and "transparent": see Barbara Flagg, *Was Blind, but Now I See: White Race Consciousness and the Law* (New York: New York University Press, 1997). However, my sentiment is that it is important for those of us who are White to resist the inclination to recoil at critical analyses of racial ideology, because ultimately seeing and asking questions about White racialization is more socially productive for all of us.

10. Pat Rubio-Goldsmith and colleagues, for example, have found that simply "appearing Mexican" was the best predictor of being mistreated by immigration authorities: Pat Rubio-Goldsmith, Mary Romero, Raquel Rubio-Goldsmith, Manuel Escobedo, and Laura Khoury, "Ethno-Racial Profiling and State Violence in a Southwest Barrio," *Aztlán: A Journal of Chicano Studies* 34, no. 1 (2009): 93–123. See also, e.g., Mary Romero, "Racial Profiling and Immigration Law Enforcement: Rounding Up the Usual Suspects in the Latino Community," *Critical Sociology* 32, nos. 2–3 (2006): 447–473; Kevin R. Johnson, "'Aliens' and the U.S. Immigration Laws: The Social and Legal Construction of Nonpersons," *University of Miami Inter-American Law Review* 28 (1996): 269.

11. Derrick Bell, as a comparable example, describes how Blacks lack "racial standing" to "discuss . . . negative experiences with racism" unless "publicly [disparaging] or [criticizing] other blacks who are speaking or acting in ways that upset whites": Derrick Bell, *Faces at the Bottom of the Well: The Permanence of Racism* (New York: Basic, 1992), 111, 114.

12. For example, research on the relationship between immigrants and crime consistently shows that immigrants do not increase crime and may actually help reduce it: see, e.g., Matthew T. Lee and Ramiro Martinez Jr., "Immigration Reduces Crime: An Emerging Scholarly Consensus," *Sociology of Crime, Law and Deviance* 13 (2009): 3–16. Yet as Chapter 2 shows, undocumented immigrant criminality was presented as a "truth" through the course of this debate. Similarly, many claim that immigrants disproportionately use social services but do not contribute by paying taxes. This is untrue, as well. As Chomsky points out, "Immigrants, no matter what their status, pay the same taxes that citizens do—sales taxes, real estate taxes (if they rent or own a home), gasoline taxes. Some immigrants work in the informal economy and are paid under the table in cash, so they don't have federal and state income taxes, or social

security taxes, deducted from their paychecks. So do some citizens. In fact every time the kid next door babysits, or shovels the snow, he or she is working in the informal economy": Chomsky, *"They Take Our Jobs!"* 36. Even undocumented immigrants who work in the formal economy by presenting false Social Security numbers do pay Social Security taxes. In these instances, Chomsky continues, "The only ones who lose anything when workers use a false social security number are the workers themselves. Taxes are deducted from their paychecks—but if they are undocumented, they still have no access to the benefits they are paying for, like social security or unemployment benefits": ibid., 37–38.

13. Almost never, for example, does this narrative point to the various harms associated with living one's life, as Susan Bibler Coutin put it, "physically present but legally absent": Susan Bibler Coutin, *Nation of Emigrants: Shifting Boundaries of Citizenship in El Salvador and the United States* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2007), 9. The narrative also ignores the contributions undocumented immigrants make, including the production of those goods and services on which many in wealthy nations have come to rely. We also rarely see an acknowledgment of the complex nature of U.S. immigration law, including the challenges associated with gaining authorized presence, the various statuses that exist in between the simplistic legal-versus-illegal binary, and the historical antecedents to today's laws, which clearly show that racial exclusion and economic exploitation have long been central prerogatives (see below). Similarly, the story is usually an individualistic one in which people make poor choices in violating the law. Rarely does the narrative consider the structural factors that prompt migration.

14. As Joe Feagin notes in a historical overview of anti-immigrant nativism in the United States:

> Contemporary attacks on immigrants do not represent a new social phenomenon with no connection to past events. Anti-immigrant nativism in North America is at least two centuries old. . . . Historically, and on the present scene, nativists have stressed to varying degrees four major themes. One common complaint is that certain "races" are intellectually and culturally inferior and should not be allowed into the country, at least not in substantial numbers. Nativists have often regarded immigrant groups as racial "others" quite different from the Euro-American majority. A second and related theme views those who have immigrated from racially and culturally inferior groups as problematic in terms of their complete assimilation to the dominant Anglo culture. A third theme, articulated most often in troubled economic times, is that "inferior" immigrants are taking the jobs and disrupting the economic conditions of native-born Americans. A fourth notion, also heard most often in times of fiscal crisis, is that immigrants are creating serious government crises, such as by corrupting the voting system or overloading school and welfare systems. (Joe Feagin, "Old Poison in New Bottles: The Deep Roots of Modern Nativism," in *Immigrants Out! The New Nativism and the Anti-immigrant Impulse in the United States*, ed. Juan F. Perea [New York: New York University Press, 1997], 13–14)

15. Cacho, *Social Death*, 6.
16. Chavez, *The Latino Threat*, 43.

17. Howard Winant, "Behind Blue Eyes: Whiteness and Contemporary U.S. Racial Politics," in *Off White: Readings on Race, Power, and Society*, ed. Michelle Fine, Lois Weis, Linda C. Powell, and L. Mun Wong (New York: Routledge, 1997), 48.

18. Chavez makes this point in the context of citizenship. He writes, "The targeting of immigrants allows citizens to reaffirm their own subject status vis-à-vis the immigrant Other": Chavez, *The Latino Threat*, 17.

19. john a. powell, *Racing to Justice: Transforming Our Conception of Self and Other to Build an Inclusive Society* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2012), 53.

20. It is here that the *local* nature of the Latino Threat Narrative becomes perhaps most apparent. Chavez's analysis produced a similar set of binaries—for example, citizen–noncitizen, native–foreigner, inside the nation–outside the nation—that articulated conceptions of "us" and "them" in the context of *the nation* rather than *the city*: see Chavez, *The Latino Threat*, 128.

21. Cacho, "The People of California Are Suffering."

22. Ibid., 393. As an illustration of this idea, consider the following example: When campaigning for president in 2012, Mitt Romney said, "My dad, as you probably know, was the governor of Michigan and was the head of a car company. But he was born in Mexico . . . and had he been born of Mexican parents, I'd have a better shot at winning [the presidency]. But he was unfortunately born to Americans living in Mexico. . . . I mean, I say that jokingly, but it would be helpful to be Latino." Romney presents himself here as victimized because of his (White) race. Yet the reality is that—in addition to many other institutional disparities—when it comes to political representation, Latinas/os "are still grossly underrepresented in proportion to their population numbers," holding 3.3 percent of all elected positions even though they make up 16 percent of the U.S. population: see Vanessa Cárdenas and Sophia Kerby, "The State of Latinos in the United States," Center for American Progress, Washington, DC, August 8, 2012, available at https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/race/report/2012/08/08/11984/the-state-of-latinos-in-the-united-states, accessed May 26, 2014.

23. To be sure, there are other lines of difference (e.g., gender, sexuality, and religion) along which divisions are forged. Arlene Stein, for example, provides an account of a local-level debate around religion and sexuality that emerges from a political economic context very similar to the one I describe here: Arlene Stein, *The Stranger Next Door: The Story of a Small Community's Battle over Sex, Faith, and Civil Rights* (Boston: Beacon, 2012).

24. See, e.g., Kitty Calavita, "The New Politics of Immigration: 'Balanced Budget Conservatism' and the Symbolism of Proposition 187." *Social Problems* 43, no. 3 (1996): 284–305; Kitty Calavita, "U.S. Immigration and Policy Responses: The Limits of Legislation," in *Controlling Immigration: A Global Perspective*, ed. Wayne Cornelius, Takeyuki Tsuda, Philip Martin, and James Hollifield (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2004), 55–81.

25. See, e.g., Roger Daniels, *Coming to America: A History of Immigration and Ethnicity in American Life* (New York: HarperCollins, 2002); Leobardo F. Estrada, Chris Garcia, Reynaldo Flores Macis, and Lionel Maldonado, "Chicanos in the United States: A History of Exploitation and Resistance," *Daedalus* 110, no. 2 (1981): 103–131.

26. As a 2013 report from the Pew Research Center points out:

The United States is the world's leader by far as a destination for immigrants. The country with the next largest number is Russia with 12.3 million. The U.S. total of 40.4 million, which includes legal as well as unauthorized immigrants, represents 13% of the total U.S. population in 2011. While the foreign-born population size is a record, immigrants' share of the total population is below the U.S. peak of just under 15% during a previous immigration wave from 1890 to 1920 that was dominated by arrivals from Europe. The modern wave, which began with the passage of border-opening legislation in 1965, has been dominated by arrivals from Latin America (about 50%) and Asia (27%). ("A Nation of Immigrants: A Portrait of the 40 Million, Including 11 Million Unauthorized," Pew Research Center, January 29, 2013, available at http://www.pewhispanic .org/2013/01/29/a-nation-of-immigrants, accessed December 22, 2014)

27. See Calavita, "The New Politics of Immigration"; Calavita, "U.S. Immigration and Policy Responses," 64; emphasis added. See also Kitty Calavita, *Immigrants at the Margins: Law, Race, and Exclusion in Southern Europe* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

28. Justin Akers Chacón and Mike Davis explain the situation in Mexico in the context of, among other neoliberal developments, the implementation of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA):

It is in the context of . . . roughshod capitalist development of Mexican agriculture and its integration into the world market—primarily through its orientation toward the United States—that we must understand the establishment of patterns of cross-border migration. The subordination of Mexican capitalism to U.S. imperialism and the global institutions of neoliberalism set the stage for further economic convulsions. Out-migration serves as a release valve for the socially dislocated. This by-product was welcomed by a U.S. market eager to absorb not only Mexican imports, but also its reserve armies of labor, since migrants could be paid less and leveraged against unionized workers. (Justin Akers Chacón and Mike Davis, *No One Is Illegal: Fighting Racism and State Violence on the U.S.-Mexico Border* [Chicago: Haymarket, 2006], 110)

The story is similar in other Latin American countries, including the Dominican Republic. Chomsky writes:

[The Dominican Republic] was colonized first by Spain, then by the United States. (The U.S. invaded and occupied the Dominican Republic from 1916 to 1924 and again in 1965.) The first U.S. occupation brought about massive dispossession and transfer of Dominican land into the hands of U.S.-owned sugar plantations; the second brought about the modern version of colonialism . . . in which the governments of poor countries are forced to create low-wage, low-tax, low-regulation environments for the benefit of U.S. corporations. . . . The United States has the highest standard of living in the world, and it maintains it by using its laws, and its military, to enforce the extraction of resources and labor from its modern version of colonies, with little compensation for the populations. It is no wonder that people from these countries want to follow

their resources to the place where they are being enjoyed. (Chomsky, *"They Take Our Jobs!"* 56)

See also, e.g., Helen I. Safa, "Women and Globalization: Lessons from the Dominican Republic," in *The Spaces of Neoliberalism: Land, Place and Family in Latin America*, ed. Jacquelyn Chase (Bloomfield, CT: Kumarian, 2002), 141–158; Ronald L. Mize and Grace Peña Delgado, *Latino Immigrants in the United States* (Malden, MA: Polity, 2012); David Bacon, *The Right to Stay Home: How U.S. Policy Drives Mexican Migration* (Boston: Beacon, 2014).

29. Calavita is writing about Italy but makes a point with relevance to the contemporary global economy more generally when she says, "Immigrants are useful to Italian employers precisely because they are *different* from locals. . . . [T]heir lack of integration into Italian society and culture is a critical ingredient of their flexibility. . . . [T]hey work for wages and under conditions that locals increasingly shun. . . . It is by definition their *Otherness* that is useful": Calavita, *Immigrants at the Margins*, 64–65.

30. Haney López, *Dog Whistle Politics*, 47. He elaborates:

> For almost everyone, it is wrenching to encounter, let alone participate in, the level of intense suffering associated with driving persons from their homes or forcing people into bondage. If, however, we can convince ourselves that our victims are not like us—do not feel pain the way we do, are not intelligent and sensitive, indeed are indolent, degenerate, violent, and dangerous—then perhaps we're not doing so much harm after all; indeed, more than protecting ourselves, maybe we are helping the benighted others. And how much better, in terms of excusing our own self-interest, if it turns out that forces beyond anyone's control (and hence beyond our moral responsibility) doom these unfortunate others to subservience; if, say, God or nature [or law] fixed their insuperable character and determined their lot in life.

31. What I am describing here is consistent with the critical race theory notion of *differential racialization*: "At one point, for example, society may have had little use for blacks but much need for Mexican or Japanese agricultural workers. At another time, the Japanese, including citizens of long standing, may have been in intense disfavor and removed to war relocation camps, while society cultivated other groups of color for jobs in war industry or as cannon fodder on the front" (Richard Delgado and Jean Stefancic, *Critical Race Theory: An Introduction* [New York: New York University Press, 2012], 9).

32. Nicholas P. De Genova, "Migrant 'Illegality' and Deportability in Everyday Life," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 31 (2002): 438.

33. Romero, "Racial Profiling and Immigration Law Enforcement," 468.

34. Calavita, *Immigrants at the Margins*, 154.

35. As Calavita notes, "The structural transformations in the economy that reproduce a continued demand for immigrants *at the same time* contribute to restrictionist sentiment": Calavita, "U.S. Immigration and Policy Responses," 64. In an informative journalistic piece, Saket Soni similarly calls immigrant workers "the canaries in the coal mine," experiencing the negative effects of contingent labor as it gradually becomes the norm in the United States:

> Immigrant workers have long experienced vulnerability and instability, and have long been treated as disposable by their employers. Today, roughly one-

third of American jobs are part-time, contract or otherwise "contingent." And the number of contingent workers in the United States is expected to grow by more than one-third over the next four years. That means more and more families are without the benefits of full-time work, such as health insurance, pensions or 401(k)s. And more of us are without the employment certainty that leads to economic stability at home—and to the consumer spending that drives the economy.

In addition, while we are working harder and longer, wages are stagnant. Between 2000 and 2011, the US economy grew by more than 18 percent, while the median income for working families declined by 12.4 percent. Once upon a time, workers shared the economic prosperity of their employers: until 1975, wages accounted for more than 50 percent of America's GDP. But by 2013, wages had fallen to a record low of just 43.5 percent of GDP. Overall compensation, which factors in healthcare and other benefits has also hit bottom. Immigrants know where this downward spiral leads. (Saket Soni, "Low-Wage Nation," *The Nation*, January 20, 2014, 4)

36. Hazleton's unemployment rate has also been consistently high compared with Pennsylvania's. For example, during the summer that the IIRA was passed (August 2006), Hazleton's unemployment rate was 6.6 percent, whereas Pennsylvania's was 4.6 percent. The median income in Hazleton, as of 2012, was $31,295, which is also below the state and national median. And like many cities across the United States, Hazleton has struggled with budgetary issues that have led the city to consider the sale of public utilities to private companies: see, e.g., David P. Sosar, "Water Authority for Sale: Disadvantages of Selling City Assets to Purge Budgetary Deficits," *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science* 1, no. 18 (2011): 134–142.

37. See, e.g., Jill Weigt, "Compromises to Carework: The Social Organization of Mothers' Experiences in the Low-Wage Labor Market after Welfare Reform," *Social Problems* 53, no. 3 (2006): 322–351.

38. Sociologists have long understood that communities strongly reassert their collective identities at moments of uncertainty, especially when the dominant group feels threatened by the combination of demographic change and economic decline. For a particularly relevant example of this, see David Engel, "The Oven Bird's Song: Insiders, Outsiders, and Personal Injuries in an American Community," *Law and Society Review* 18, no. 4 (1984): 551–582.

39. Haney López, *Dog Whistle Politics*, 35–37.

40. See, e.g., Katherine Beckett, *Making Crime Pay: Law and Order in Contemporary American Politics* (New York: Oxford University Press), 1997, 40–42.

41. Haney López, *Dog Whistle Politics*, 121.

42. Michael Powell and Michelle García, "Pa. City Put Illegal Immigrants on Notice," *Washington Post*, August 22, 2006.

43. Haney López provides an overview of the history of this tactic and its present usage, writing:

The new racial politics presents itself as steadfastly opposed to racism and ever ready to condemn those who publicly use racial profanity. *We fiercely oppose racism and stand prepared to repudiate anyone who dares utter the n-word.*

Meanwhile, though, the new racial discourse keeps up a steady drumbeat of subliminal racial grievances and appeals to color-coded solidarity. *But let's be honest: some groups commit more crimes and use more welfare, other groups are mainly unskilled and illiterate illegals, and some religions inspire violence and don't value human life.* The new racism rips through society, inaudible and also easily defended insofar as it fails to whoop in the tones of old racism, yet booming in its racial meaning and provoking predictable responses among those who immediately hear the racial undertones of references to the undeserving poor, illegal aliens, and sharia law. (Haney López, *Dog Whistle Politics*, 3–4).

44. As Beckett notes, "To a certain extent this effort has been guided by electoral considerations: the New Right, based primarily in the Republican party, has rearticulated racial meanings in such a way as to encourage defections from the Democratic party. . . . But the New Right's 'authoritarian-populist' project is aimed, more broadly, at discrediting state policies and programs aimed at minimizing racial, class, and gender inequality and strengthening those that promise to enhance the states' control of the troublesome": Beckett, *Making Crime Pay*, 42–43.

45. Alexander uses this term in her discussion of the parallel politics that characterized slavery, Jim Crow, and now mass incarceration. She describes how,

> deliberately and strategically, the [elite] planter class extended special privileges to poor whites in an effort to drive a wedge between them and black slaves. White settlers were allowed greater access to Native American lands, white servants were allowed to police slaves through slave patrols and militias, and barriers were created so that free labor would not be placed in competition with slave labor. These measures effectively eliminated the risk of future alliances between black slaves and poor whites. Poor whites suddenly had a direct, personal stake in the existence of a race-based system of slavery. Their own plight had not improved much, but at least they were not slaves. Once the planter elite split the labor force, poor whites responded to the logic of their situation and sought ways to expand their racially privileged position. (Alexander, *The New Jim Crow*, 25)

And W.E.B. Du Bois's *Black Reconstruction in America* stands as the quintessential articulation of this phenomenon:

> The theory of laboring class unity rests upon the assumption that laborers, despite internal jealousies, will unite because of their opposition to exploitation by the capitalists. . . . This would throw white and black labor into one class, and precipitate a united fight for higher wage and better working conditions. . . . [T]his failed to work . . . because the theory of race was supplemented by a carefully planned and slowly evolved method, which drove such a wedge between the white and the black workers that there probably are not today in the world two groups of workers with practically identical interests who hate and fear each other so deeply and persistently and who are kept so far apart that neither sees anything of common interest. (W.E.B. Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction in America* [New York: Meridian, 1935], 700)

46. Du Bois elaborates:

It must be remembered that the white group of laborers, while they received a low wage, were compensated in part by a sort of public and psychological wage. They were given public deference and titles of courtesy because they were white. They were admitted freely with all classes of white people to public functions, public parks, and the best schools. The police were drawn from their ranks, and the courts, dependent upon their votes, treated them with such leniency as to encourage lawlessness. Their vote selected public officials, and while this had small effect upon the economic situation, it had great effect upon their personal treatment and the deference shown to them. (ibid., 700–701)

47. David Roediger, *The Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class* (New York: Verso, 1991), 13.

48. Beckett, *Making Crime Pay*, 87.

49. Ibid.

50. Ibid.; emphasis added.

51. Ross, "The Rhetorical Tapestry of Race," 6.

52. Du Bois said that such race-based class divisions "ruined democracy." The "resulting color caste founded and retained by capitalism was adopted, forwarded and approved by white labor, and resulted in subordination of colored labor to white profits the world over. Thus the majority of the world's laborers, by the insistence of white labor, became the basis of a system of industry which ruined democracy": Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction*, 26.

More recently, the political theorist Wendy Brown argued that neoliberalism and neoconservatism of the sort I am describing "work symbiotically to produce a subject relatively indifferent to veracity and accountability in government and to political freedom and equality among the citizenry": Wendy Brown, "American Nightmare: Neoliberalism, Neoconservatism, and De-Democratization," *Political Theory* 34, no. 6 (2006): 690.

53. The Italian sociologist Maurizio Ambrosini has used the phrase *utili invasori* (useful invaders) to describe this process. See also Calavita, *Immigrants at the Margins*, 48–74; Benjamin Fleury-Steiner and Jamie Longazel, "Neoliberalism, Community Development, and Anti-immigrant Backlash in Hazleton, Pennsylvania," in *Taking Local Control: Immigration Policy Activism in U.S. Cities and States*, ed. Monica W. Varsanyi (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2010), 157–172.

54. It is therefore important to contextualize immigration to new destinations rather than understand it as a sudden, unexpected occurrence. The meatpacking industry, which (as we will see) played a significant role in Hazleton, is a good example of this. As part of a neoliberal "survival strategy," this previously urban and unionized industry that originally employed primarily White workers has come to rely on less expensive rural, nonunionized Latina/o immigrant labor: see Stephanie E. Tanger, "Enforcing Corporate Responsibility for Violations of Workplace Immigration Laws: The Case of Meatpacking," *Harvard Latino Law Review* 59 (2006): 59–89.

55. As Winant writes:

Nowhere is this new framework of the white "politics of difference" more clearly on display than in the reaction to affirmative action policies of all sorts

(in hiring, university admissions, federal contracting, etc.). Assaults on these policies . . . are currently at hysterical levels. These attacks are clearly designed to effect ideological shifts, rather than to shift resources in any meaningful way. They represent whiteness as disadvantage, something which has few precedents in US racial history. . . . This imaginary white disadvantage—for which there is almost no evidence at the empirical level—has achieved widespread popular credence, and provides the cultural and political "glue" that holds together a wide variety of reactionary racial politics. (Winant, "Behind Blue Eyes," 5)

Indeed, one recent study found that Whites consider bias against Whites a more significant problem than bias against Blacks: see Michael I. Norton and Samuel R. Sommers, "Whites See Racism as a Zero-Sum Game that They Are Now Losing," *Perspectives on Psychological Science* 6, no. 3 (2011): 215–218. We also commonly see an example of this in the immigration debate when legal action favorable to immigrants is dismissed as "amnesty" while policies such as mass deportation that disaffect immigrants and their families receive uncritical praise as efforts to "secure our borders."

56. See, e.g., Engel, "The Oven Bird's Song"; Jonathan Goldberg-Hiller and Neal Milner, "Rights as Excess: Understanding the Politics of Special Rights," *Law and Social Inquiry* 28, no. 4 (2003): 1075–1118; Jeffery Dudas, "In the Name of Equal Rights: 'Special' Rights and the Politics of Resentment in Post–Civil Rights America," *Law and Society Review* 39, no. 4 (2005) : 723–757; Jeffery Dudas, *The Cultivation of Resentment: Treaty Rights and the New Right* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2008).

CHAPTER 1

1. Personal interview with W. Kevin O'Donnell, president of CAN DO, December 3, 2009, Hazleton, PA. In contrast to other interviews and in accordance with accepted research protocols, I use O'Donnell's real name because of his status as a public figure (i.e., the head of Hazleton's primary economic development group).

2. Community Area New Development Organization (CAN DO), *The CAN DO Story: A Case History of Successful Community Industrial Development* (Hazleton, PA: CAN DO, 1974). In the introduction of the chapter, I intentionally draw mostly from CAN DO's organizational recollection of these historical events.

3. CAN DO, *The CAN DO Story*, 7.

4. Quoted from CAN DO, *Vision, Determination, Drive: The CAN DO 50th Anniversary*, DVD, on file with the author.

5. Randy Stoecker, "The CDC Model of Urban Redevelopment: A Critique and an Alternative." *Journal of Urban Affairs* 19, no. 1 (1997): 8. To be sure, as Stoecker continues, the basis for the CDC idea, even in the beginning, was "an acceptance of supply-side economic models and "free-market" philosophy." The point was not to counter capitalism but, rather, to "correct three market failures: 1) The inability of potential investors to see opportunities in the neighborhood; 2) profit maximization that prevented socially conscious investing; 3) social/legal restrictions on investment such as zoning laws." In the case of Hazleton, as Dan Rose argues in his thorough analysis of CAN DO's history, these early local campaigns tended to overemphasize the grassroots nature of the movement, neglecting the extent to which it was led by elites: see Dan Rose, *Energy Transi-*