

THE BROWN MORAL PANIC: RACISM IN THE TRUMP ERA

A Thesis

by

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ABSTRACT

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The purpose of the study is to examine the language used by news media to report Trump's anti-immigration rhetoric against Mexican immigrants, from the beginning of his presidential campaign to the El Paso Massacre on August 3rd, 2019. The study focuses on the latest moral panic in the United States against Mexican immigrants (2015 to 2019) using qualitative methods. The research examines how Trump's racist anti-immigration rhetoric is depicted in news media categorized as neutral. The study focuses on the Associated Press (Neutral Center), New York Times (Neutral Left) and Reuters (Neutral Right).

DEDICATION

For my brother, Mark. Follow your dreams.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to examine the language used by news media to cover Trump's anti-immigration rhetoric against Mexican immigrants, from the beginning of his presidential campaign to the El Paso massacre of 2019. This thesis study will focus on the most current moral panic in the United States against Mexican immigrants (Agnew, 2019).

The Research Problem

The study proposes to examine how Trump's racist anti-immigration rhetoric has been depicted in the newsprint media. The following research questions are used in this study: How is racism portrayed/discussed in newsprint media categorized as neutral? How is Trump's racist depiction of Mexican immigrants depicted/reported during the period of 2015 to 2019?

Rationale of the Study

On August 3rd, 2019, a white nationalist drove from north Texas to El Paso to massacre Mexican Americans. According to the shooter's manifesto, his actions were a direct response to the Hispanic invasion of the United States (Walton, 2020). There has been a central theme that remained constant throughout the entirety of Trump's political career, the bashing of Mexican immigrants. He opened his campaign with blatantly prejudiced and xenophobic statements in which he referred to Mexican immigrants as 'criminals and rapists' (Burns, 2015). Over the

course of his candidacy, and subsequent presidency, Trump did not relent on his attacks against the Mexican people. Having witnessed the moral panic trump successfully generated left me with many unresolved questions (Agnew, 2018). Trump's anti-Mexican crusade, which was broadcast through media reporting, ultimately culminated in a domestic terrorist attack that was racially motivated and meant to kill innocent Mexican Americans.

The moral panic created during Trump's presidency is reminiscent of the Zoot Suit Riots that took place in 1943 in Los Angeles, California (Escobar, 1999). The Zoot Suit Riots have come to be one of the most notable and horrific examples of moral panics stemming from anti-Mexican racism (Escobar, 1999). Stoked by sensationalist newspaper articles, the Zoot Suit Riots were a week-long riot that engulfed Los Angeles in 1943. Military service members, along with police and even civilians, went out into the night to hunt down Mexican American Zoot Suiters. What crime did these youths commit that would elicit such a response from servicemembers and police? They looked different, they wore a particular urban style and they were portrayed as inherently criminal. The Los Angeles news used sensationalism to create a portrait of Mexican youth as inherently criminal and creating a moral panic, compounded by the xenophobic fears of WWII. As there is a history of anti-Mexican moral panics, this thesis research project seeks to examine how neutral news media outlets reported Trump's racist tropes of Mexican immigrants.

Since the nineteenth century, the United States has periodically experienced surges of nativism which frame immigration in a negative light (Brown, 2015). These bouts of nativism have culminated in the passage of several notable anti-immigration bills such as the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 or the Immigration Act of 1924 (Brown, 2015). Despite centuries of

cultural mingling, immigration remains a polarizing issue in the United States and frequently becomes a key issue in presidential debates. Unsurprisingly, immigration quickly became the focal point of the 2016 United States presidential race. Support for anti-immigration ideologies reached a crescendo in 2015 when Donald J. Trump began his presidential campaign by using racist rhetoric to vehemently oppose undocumented immigration by Mexican nationals (Agnew, 2019).

It was Trump's affinity for using immigration as a politically divisive issue, along with his promise of building a border wall in the name of national security that ultimately garnered him the support he needed to win the U.S. presidency (Agnew, 2019). The result of the 2016 U.S. presidential election shocked the world as many did not consider Donald Trump to be a serious contender.

Literature Review

Folk Devils and Moral Panics

In the third edition of his book, *Folk Devils and Moral Panics*, Stanley Cohen focuses exclusively on moral panics and how the concept has been used and criticized over the 30 years since its initial publication. He examines moral panics occurring between 1972 and 2002, the discourse regarding moral panics in the media and public spheres, and the use of moral panic theory in academic subjects. Cohen traditionally defines a moral panic as a period in which a condition, episode, or person/s is labeled as a threat to society; followed by the mass media then amplifying the perceived threat by covering it on its networks, subsequently public concern for

the threat grows, at which point lawmakers and opinion-makers react to public concern, ultimately the panic dies out or leads to some type of change (Cohen, 2002).

Cohen holds that moral panics exist within seven clusters of social identity: ‘young, working-class violent males’, ‘School Violence: Bullying and Shootouts’, ‘Wrong Drugs: Used by Wrong People at Wrong Times’, ‘Child Abuse, Satanic Rituals, and Paedophile Registers’, ‘Sex, Violence and Blaming the Media,’ ‘Welfare Cheats and Single Mothers,’ and ‘Refugees and Asylum Seekers: Flooding our Country, Swamping our Services’(Cohen, 2002).

Furthermore, Cohen (2002) argues that the line between immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers has become blurred. Both refugees and asylum seekers have been cast under the general banner of immigration, which is itself framed by race and ethnicity. Traditionally refugees have been viewed as ‘morally untouchable’, in recent years that narrative has begun to shift. Segments of the public now view refugees in a negative light, with growing support for minimizing the number of foreign refugees admitted into westernized nations. Those who foster negative views of refugees often claim that people escaping unstable or war-torn countries often lie to be given refugee status. The unfair prejudice against refugees is used to justify increased vetting and stricter criteria than are necessary. Peddling these views successfully makes it easier for society to view those fleeing from atrocities in their home country as nothing more than greedy economic migrants.

Such that Cohen categorizes moral panics regarding immigration as notably different than the other 6 major kinds of moral panics. He argues that all moral panics regarding

immigration are part of an overall unified message of hostility and condemnation (Cohen, 2002). Cohen holds that moral panics can be traced back to the interests of politicians, bureaucrats, and pundits. He makes this claim based on an analysis of the mass media's use of negative words and racial stereotypes, with 44% of references deemed to be negative (Cohen, 2002). Also, Cohen found a similar level of anti-immigrant narratives in a socio-linguistic study that examined Austrian newspapers reporting on Kurdish citizens seeking asylum in Italy (Cohen, 2002). He found this of notable importance as it demonstrated the metaphors used to link immigration with danger or as a cause for fear (Cohen, 2002). The three main metaphors used to paint asylum seekers as a threat were to label them as water, criminals, and invaders.

For example, in August of 2001, there were attacks on three Kurdish nationals, with one being stabbed to death. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees said the attacks were not surprising due to the "climate of vilification of asylum seekers that has taken hold in the UK in recent years" (Cohen, 2002, pxxv). The vilification of refugees and asylum seekers has become so prevalent that they have been weaponized and turned into insults in playgrounds throughout England.

Immigrants and Moral Panics

In the 1940s, the use of Zoot Suits by Mexican Americans, specifically Mexican American youths, led to the week-long riot that engulfed the city of Los Angeles. Between June 3rd and June 10th, 1943, the city of LA was engulfed by the violence and racist brutality that were the Zoot Suit Riots. Contrary to what the name would imply, the violence that scarred the

city did not come at the hands of Zoot Suiters but rather from white U.S. servicemen on leave at the Chavez Ravine Base (Escobar, 1999). The servicemen hunted and mercilessly beat Zoot Suiters, often tearing off their clothes and leaving a trail of bloodied naked bodies in their wake.

Zoot Suiters came about as a direct result of Mexican American youth who tried to rebel against American society (Escobar, 1999). The Zoot Suiters were seen as dabbling in excess as their Zoot Suits were made up of very baggy pants that rode high on the waist, a coat with wide lapels and shoulder pads, a wide-rimmed hat, and thick-soled shoes. This particular subculture aimed to create an identity that clashed with the dominant white U.S. American culture. The labeling of Zoot Suiters as a source of ire was further exacerbated by World War II since the material was meant to be conserved as a show of solidarity with the U.S. servicemen and was seen as a way for civilians to help defeat the enemy (Escobar, 1999). The use of the excess cloth needed to make Zoot Suits offended many whites.

The use of excess cloth was not the sole reason for rising anti-Mexican sentiments. In 1942 the Los Angeles newspapers began to print stories regarding both Mexican American crime and juvenile delinquency (Escobar, 1999). Stories on Mexican American crime were hardly a new sensation, with such stories being commonplace for decades, the major change became the frequency of reporting. before 1942 LA newspapers published the most sensational crimes, changing their tune and publishing nearly every single arrest of a Mexican American.

During that time LA newspapers would blow trivial incidents out of proportion. This aggressive reporting did little to quell anti-Mexican sentiments instead reinforcing the notion that

Mexican Americans were a cancer plaguing the community. Stories depicting a network of organized and armed Zoot Suit gangs were a common occurrence, despite evidence that most of these so-called gangs were groups of loosely associated youths (Escobar, 1999). The idea that Zoot Suiters were criminal delinquents running wild permeated in the consciousness of the LA community that one reader of the Times wrote in to advocate for police to increase their mistreatment of Zoot Suiters, going so far as to support the ideas of police killing or seriously injuring “young hoodlums”. The link between criminality and Mexican Americans that any crime involving a Mexican American youth was reported by LA newspapers as gang activity. These stories depicting Mexican American violence gained such a stranglehold in Los Angeles that even some Spanish language papers began publishing the stories.

The victimization of immigrants that come about as a result of moral panics has been studied before. In 2011, a study by Flore-Yeffal et al (2011) was done to determine the process by which moral panics take place via the internet. The study was focused on examining the role the internet plays in creating moral panic against Latinx immigrants. They found the internet made the moral panic process more efficient. Three think tanks were found to be the main source of the anti-immigration movement on the internet: 1. The Center for Immigration Studies (CIS); 2. Numbers USA; and 3. The Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR). These think tanks were directly linked to the vast majority of the 170 anti-immigration websites sampled in the study. The ability to rapidly spread inflammatory rhetoric expedites the moral panic process.

Although the internet has made it easier to spread anti-immigrant sentiments, Politicians’ use of anti-immigrant rhetoric continues to be an effective way of cultivating moral panics. A

2012 case study examined the passage of the Illegal Immigration Relief Act (IIRA) of 2006, which was passed in the small town of Hazelton, Pennsylvania (Longazel, 2013). The study by Longazel (2013) focused on how a racialized moral panic against “illegal” immigration was used to pass the IIRA. The moral panic in Hazelton was ignited by a homicide that occurred in May of 2006. The homicide victim was Derek Kichline, a white Hazelton resident who was allegedly killed by two undocumented Latinx immigrants. The Kichline murder caused an uproar in the Hazelton community. The Kichline murder was used to create a narrative that framed immigrants as outsiders who were coming into Hazelton and running amok. The mayor of Hazelton went on record claiming that all “illegal” immigrants are criminals, they create a sense of fear in the community, and are drug dealers who turn people into addicts. The Hazelton mayor also produced an onslaught of degrading rhetoric against immigrants, equating them to cancer which plagued the city. Several local newspapers responded to the Kichline murder by producing multiple articles on the subject, one of which was an investigative report on the criminal history of one of the alleged perpetrators (Longazel, 2013). The Hazelton Mayor heavily advocated for more aggressive law enforcement tactics as well as a more punitive judicial approach. The IIRA, which was crafted by nationalist Joseph Turner, was brought before the Hazelton city council mere weeks after the Kichline murder and received expedited approval.

The events that took place in Hazelton demonstrate a great example of a moral panic on a relatively small scale. The passage of Arizona’s Support Our Law Enforcement and Safe Neighborhoods Act, more famously known as SB1070, is a perfect example of anti-immigrant moral panics on a larger scale. An article by Adalberto Aguirre Jr. explains how the ballot

initiative process for acts like SB1070 is used to push anti-immigrant legislation (Aguirre, 2012). SB1070 was passed in the spring of 2010 and made it a state crime to be in the United States without proper documentation as well as granting police officers to ask about a person's legal status if there was reasonable suspicion they were in the U.S. without proper documentation. SB1070 framed Mexican immigrants as a source of moral panic in Arizona by associating immigrants with drug trafficking, crime, and negative fiscal consequences like unemployment and increased welfare costs. The passage of SB1070 was preceded by the passage of three propositions which prevented undocumented immigrants from being granted bail, receiving punitive damages in state lawsuits, and from applying for state services such as childcare (Aguirre, 2012). The passage of these propositions is indicative of the perceived threat presented by undocumented immigrants in Arizona, specifically the Latinx community

Although immigrants are a perceived threat in Arizona, the moral panic surrounding immigrants was not conjured overnight. Zatz and Smith (2012) found that the United States has a history of using inflammatory rhetoric to cultivate anti-immigrant sentiments. Latinx immigrants have historically been demonized in the United States, often portrayed as criminals or job thieves. This forced connection between immigration and crime makes it easy to radicalize anxieties and invoke moral panics, all without explicitly mentioning race. Historically studies have repeatedly found that immigration has either null or negative effects on the rates of crime at both the national and local levels, making the link between immigrants and crime false. Despite reality, moral panics, resulting from a misperceived threat from immigrants, have led to unprecedented anti-immigrant legislation in all levels of government. Although they were

presented as an answer to the fictitious immigrant crime problem, it was found that anti-immigrant legislation creates more harm and danger within communities by making immigrants more vulnerable to exploitation (Zatz & Smith, 2012).

Unsurprisingly according to Brown (2016) the fear of immigrants continues to play a role in modern politics. A study by Jessica Brown examined the framing of immigration, race, and crime in presidential debates by Republican candidates. It is no secret the Republican Party has a history of garnering support by exploiting fear and anxiety about minorities, most famously with the Southern Strategy. The Republican Party has pivoted from exploiting fear of African Americans to capitalizing on fears of immigrants. Brown uses the term Racially Divisive Appeals (RDAs) as rhetorical methods used to “...denigrates a particular minority, frames that group as a threat to the target audience, advocates for special restrictions against them, or reassures the audience of their rightfully privileged position vis a vis the problematized group” (p.315). These RDAs can be used as the foundation of moral panics as their primary function is to label groups as threats. Brown analyzed debate transcripts from republican primary and general election debates from the 2008 and 2012 presidential elections, as well as the first three debates of the 2016 presidential election.

Although RDAs are not exclusively used by the Republican party, Brown chose to limit her sample to the Republican debates due to the party’s 2005 admission that it had purposefully used racial polarization as a strategy for political gain (Brown, 2016). The statements analyzed in the study were selected by coding for terms related to immigration, race, and crime, and were then coded using a grounded theory approach. The study by Brown analyzed 487 statements

dealing with immigration, race, and crime. 123 statements dealt with race, 243 with crime, and 487 with immigration. 82% of Republican statements regarding crime portrayed foreigners as a threat, while 40% depicted immigrants as potential criminals. The Republican party's affinity for the term 'illegal immigrant' was apparent in the 399 times it was used when compared to the two times the term 'undocumented immigrant' was used. When analyzing the 243 crime-related statements made throughout the debates, Linking Latinx immigrants to crimes such as drug trafficking, gang violence, and human trafficking, were one of the common RDAs made by Republicans. In a 2015 debate, Donald Trump claimed the Mexican government was purposefully sending over "bad ones" who allegedly brought with them "killings, murders, crime, [and] drugs.." (p.327). Trump's claim perpetuates the erroneous link between immigrants and crime. This would be far from the last time Trump would utilize anti-immigrant rhetoric. This study aims to examine the effect of Trump's anti-immigrant sentiments.

Refugee Panic of 2018

In 2018, John Agnew published an article detailing the role the United States played in the refugee panic of 2018, along with their role in the world. Agnew begins by giving a brief overview of the refugee crisis America experienced in 2018 (Agnew, 2019). Throughout 2018 thousands of children were separated from their parents and held in private facilities until they could be given court hearings that would ultimately lead to their rapid deportation (Agnew, 2019). Agnew further establishes distinctions between immigrants, refugees, asylees, and asylum seekers. Immigrants are those who establish residence in a country, primarily for mostly economic opportunity, while a refugee is a person whose main motivating factor for moving to a

new country is war or fear of persecution. Alternatively, asylum seekers are those who claim to be a refugee but have not been granted legal status as a refugee, while asylees are those who are in the United States illegally or who have arrived at a port of entry wishing to apply for asylum. Recently these titles have become increasingly convoluted and confused amongst laymen. Immigrants have become a symbol of change in the country, particularly demographic and cultural changes. These changes are perceived as a threat to the current racial and cultural hierarchy of the U.S. where those of European heritage are seen as more valuable than others (Agnew, 2019).

There is a prevailing notion that immigrants show up to the U.S. uninvited and without cause, completely ignoring the effects of the U.S. government's political and military intervention, along with the negative influence U.S. entities have on countries that produce the refugees and immigrants headed towards the southern border in the U.S. (Agnew, 2019). Many Americans seem completely oblivious or willfully ignorant to the fact that U.S. interference has played a major role in the so-called immigration invasion (Todorov 2010, as cited in Agnew, 2019). The United States has a long history of exerting its vast geopolitical reach in countries that far exceed the reach of its borders. The U.S.'s ability to exercise its power on countries thousands of miles away gives it the privilege of sheltering its citizens from directly viewing the negative impact caused by American intervention (Agnew, 2019).

Agnew also focuses on three main issues. Agnew examines the prevalence of the U.S. government, and swaths of its citizens, to construct U.S. history in a way that simultaneously portrays America as a singular isolated nation and as a nation that exerts its power into the global

geopolitical sphere in the name of national defense by attempting to Americanize the rest of the world (Agnew 2005; Loyd and Mountz 2018, as cited in Agnew, 2019). Naturally, the question becomes, should American citizens bear responsibility for the acts carried out by their government or American businesses. Since its inception, the U.S. has had two main principles that tied together freedom with geographical expansion (Agnew, 2019). This can be seen in the concept of statehood, which is based on the idea of an ever-expanding border, and the concept of economic freedom, which “more than political freedom was the root of freedom tout court” (p511). We can see the reflection of these ideals in the relationship between the U.S. and Latin America.

Agnew (2019) noted how America’s failure to recognize its dualist vision was reflected in how it handled its refugee crisis of 2018. Throughout the crisis, the U.S. implemented policies that separated children from their parents and incarcerated them (Agnew, 2019). The use of such policies is an example of how the fear of America’s changing ethnic demographic is responsible for their implementation rather than an actual surge in undocumented immigration. When looking at how immigration is discussed in America, particularly since Donald Trump was elected to the U.S. Presidency in 2016 (Agnew, 2019). He argues that there has been a rise in white populism in America that labels refugees as a threat to the socio-political dominance of the white Anglo-Saxon majority, and the Americanization of the world (Agnew, 2019).

Why Border Enforcement Backfired?

The undocumented population of the U.S. grew from 3 million persons in 1986 to 12 million persons (Massey et al., 2016). This fourfold increase occurred despite a fivefold increase in manpower, a fourfold increase in border surveillance, and a twentyfold continued influx of funding, resources, and manpower. The article conducts a systemic analysis of why border enforcement failed as a viable method of immigration control in the United States (Massey et al., 2016). They hold that border enforcement policy is a response to a moral panic regarding the fictitious threat posed by Latinx immigration. This moral panic was pushed by “bureaucrats, politicians, and pundits” who saw it as a way to utilize political and material resources to further their interests. This ultimately led to a perpetual cycle of moral panics regarding Latinx immigration that led to the militarization of the border. Ironically, the over-allocation caused changes in undocumented immigration from a pattern of circular migration to a more permanent and geographically diverse one (Massey et al., 2016).

The idea to increase border enforcement as a deterrent for undocumented immigration was inspired from the work of Todaro & Marusko, 1978 as cited in Massey et al., (2016) who declared that migration was reduced to simple economics, with the decision to immigrate is based on a cost-benefit analysis regarding lifetime earnings minus the cost of migration. Increasing border enforcement would make coming into the country a riskier endeavor thus increasing the cost of immigrating to the United States which would then, theoretically, discourage migrants from making the journey (Massey et al., 2016). The desire to use increased border enforcement to reduce undocumented immigration came about from the framing of the Latinx community as a threat to America, a narrative that saw steady use from the 1970s through

the 1990s (Chavez, 2001,2008, as cited in (Massey et al., 2016). The continued use of the narrative that the Latinx community posed a threat to the country led to the labeling of Latinx as part of an outside group, different from mainstream America. This framing of Latinx as criminals gave those wishing to use fear of outsiders with a new boogeyman. In 1976 Leonard F. Chapman claimed that ‘illegal aliens’ were a ‘silent invasion’ that threatened the nation and falsely claimed there were 8 million undocumented immigrants in the United States and that the population grew by “at least 250,000 to 500,000 a year (p 87). In 1985 Ronald Reagan declared undocumented immigration to be a national security threat as terrorists were within a two-day drive of the southern border in Texas (Massey et al., 2002, p.87 as cited in Massey et al., 2016).

Despite having stabilized and no longer rising, the narrative of invasion by undocumented Latinx immigrants was used to create a moral panic that led to an increased devotion of border enforcement resources (Flores-Yeffal, Vidales, and Plemons 2011; Massey and Pren 2012b as cited in Massey et al., 2016). The increase in resources did inevitably lead to more apprehensions of undocumented border crossers and was subsequently used as proof of the Latinx threat (Massey and Pren., 2012b as cited in Massey et al., 2016). The narrative of a Latinx invasion continues to be perpetuated by politicians, pundits, and bureaucrats, who continue to call for increased border enforcement (Massey et al., 2016). In actuality, the levels of net undocumented immigration have remained negative or at zero since 2008, meaning that the number of undocumented immigrants coming into the country is roughly the same as those leaving (Passel, Cohn, and Gonzalez-Barrera 2013 as cited in Massey et al., 2016). Overall, 2014

saw a shift in undocumented immigration from a demographic consisting of Mexican citizens to one being made up of Central Americans (Massey et al., 2016).

U.S. immigration policies were meant to decrease the amount of earnings undocumented immigrants had (Massey et al., 2016). These changes were not effective at deterring undocumented immigration, however, they led to migrants staying in the United States for a longer period to earn back the increased cost of border crossings (Massey et al., 2016). Therefore, what was once a pattern of circular undocumented immigration became one of permanent immigration as the longer stays led immigrants to lay down roots in the country. The increase of border enforcement in 1986 did not affect the likelihood of a person deciding to begin undocumented migration to the United States (Massey et al., 2016). However, it did affect where the crossings were taking place moving crossing locations to more dangerous territories while also increasing the cost. The increase in border enforcement did increase the likelihood an undocumented immigrant would be apprehended during their crossing, but it did not affect the likelihood of successfully entering the U.S. over multiple attempts (Massey et al., 2016). The increasing cost of undocumented border crossings and the increasing level of danger made it a more fiscally sound option to remain in the United States instead of returning home and having to face the high cost and danger of a new crossing attempt. The probability of returning home after the first undocumented border crossing went from .48 in the 1980's to zero in 2010. Border apprehensions in 2010 went down by 61% when compared to the rate of apprehensions in 2005 (Massey et al., 2016).

Immigration Enforcement Under Trump

When the immigration enforcement issues, this occurred under Donald Trump's presidency. He took office in January of 2017, the federal government had thirty-seven- 287(g) agreements with law enforcement agencies across the country, which allow law enforcement agencies to enforce federal immigration laws. By May of 2018, there were 78 agreements, with 70 percent being granted in southern states (U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement 2018 as cited in Greene, 2018). In addition to increasing the number of 287(g) agreements, Trump signed an executive order to hire 10,000 new Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents, and 5,000 new Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) agents to track down undocumented immigrants who are eligible for removal from the United States (Greene, 2018).

Trump's anti-immigrant agenda was no secret. After being elected he announced his plans to deport two to three million undocumented immigrants with 'criminal records,' labeling them as 'gang members and drug dealers' (Greene, 2018). Trump's claim was quickly questioned as data from the Migration Policy Institute suggested there were at most 820,000 undocumented immigrants with criminal convictions (Gomez, 2016 as cited in (Greene, 2018). After his inauguration, Trump increased the spectrum of people who could be targeted for detention and deportation to include almost the entirety of the undocumented population, all 11 million (Greene, 2018).

Unbeknownst the number of ICE apprehensions drastically increased, in the first three months of 2017 ICE arrests increased by more than 33% (Greene, 2018). Trump's Executive Orders also made it possible for anyone who was apprehended for illegal entry to be subjected to

expedited removal in which they would not have a right to go before an immigration judge unless they resided in the U.S. for two or more years (Greene, 2018).

In addition to Trump's Executive Orders, then-Attorney General Jeff Sessions also pledged to prioritize immigration enforcement. Sessions designated 94 federal assistant U.S. attorneys as border security coordinators, vowed to increase charges against undocumented immigrants for document fraud, and enacted a zero-tolerance policy for the prosecution of undocumented immigrants (Greene, 2018). Most notoriously, Sessions announced he would be enacting a policy of separating children from families who were apprehended by ICE and CBP (Harmon, 2018 as cited in Greene, 2018). Two weeks after adopting a zero-tolerance policy, CBP and Ice had separated 658 children from their families (Massey & Pren, 2012 as cited in Greene, 2018). The increase of prosecutions of undocumented immigrants has changed the demographics of those involved in the federal justice system. Twenty percent of the federal prison population are undocumented immigrants, costing \$7 billion between 2005 through 2015, not including the cost of courts and law enforcement (Greene, 2018).

White Nationalism

The height of anti-immigration sentiments under the Trump administration came on August 3rd, 2019 when a domestic terror attack took the lives of twenty-two people in the name of ethnic defense (Walton, 2020). To avoid contributing to the infamy of the shooter, his name will not be utilized, being only be referred to as 'the shooter'. The El Paso Massacre took the lives of: Andre Anchondo, Jordan Anchondo, Arturo Benavides, Leonardo Campos, Maria

Flores, Raul Flores, Jorge Calvillo Garcia, Adolfo Cerros Hernandez, Alexander Gerhard Hoffman, David Johnson, Luis Alfonzo Juarez, Maria Eugenia Legarreta Rothe, Elsa Mendoza Marquez, Maribel (Campos) Loya, Ivan Filiberto Manzano, Gloria Irma Marquez, Margie Reckard, Sara Esther Regalado Moriel, Javier Rodriguez, Teresa Sanchez, Angie Englisbee, Juan Velazquez (Litton, 2019). In addition to those whose lives were taken during the attack, 9 others were injured: Jessica Coca Garcia and Memo Garcia, Mario de Alba, Olivia Mariscal Rodriguez, Erika de Alba Mariscal, Michelle Grady, Rosa Barron, Rosemary Vega, and Octavio Lizarde (Litton, 2019).

Before his attack, the shooter posted his manifesto online, where he explained the reason behind his mass shooting was the defense of America from “ethnic replacement brought on by an invasion” (Crusius, 2019 as cited in Walton, 2020). The shooter’s manifesto explains that the shooting was a result of a narrative that portrays Latinx immigration as the cause of America’s destruction (Walton, 2020). This narrative has been perpetuated by Donald Trump, in his 2018 State of the Union address, he linked open borders with the corruption of American communities from drugs and gangs, claiming poor Americans had to fight for jobs, and that it led to the deaths of innocent Americans (State of the Union, 2018 as cited in Walton, 2020).

In his manifesto, the shooter begins by giving an introduction where he justifies his attack as self-defense against a Latinx invasion (Crusius, 2019 as cited in Walton, 2020). The manifesto is broken down into five sections: political, economic, gear, reaction, and personal reasoning and thoughts (Crusius, 2019 as cited in Walton, 2020). The shooter believes that the supposed Latinx invasion will lead to an increase in power of the Democratic party, thus increasing the power of

corporations, the draining of American resources, and the inevitable ‘cultural and ethnic replacements’ (Crusius, 2019 as cited in Walton, 2020).

Additionally, the shooter felt that Latinx immigration threatened the cultural and ethnic aspects of America as well the consumption of resources, which would lead to an environmental collapse (Crusius, 2019 as cited in Walton, 2020). By his logic, the shooter concluded the only way to avoid such a terrible fate was to forcibly reduce the population. The shooter also showed support for a previous mass shooting in Christchurch, New Zealand, which targeted Muslims (Crusius, 2019 as cited in Walton, 2020). The shooter further stated that he was honored to “head the fight to reclaim” the United States from destruction or the Latinx invasion (Crusius, 2019 as cited in Walton, 2020). His manifesto continually reiterated the idea that immigration was a method for systematically replacing the white population and thus destroying America’s identity, which he linked to white nationalism (Walton, 2020).

CHAPTER II

METHODS

In researching newsprint media reporting, exploratory qualitative methodology was used to engage in exploratory research to facilitate content analysis from a grounded theory perspective. Before beginning the study, Institutional Review Board Determination Documentation was also done to get the study designated not needing IRB oversight as it did not use human subjects (please see Appendix).

The sample for this study will be news articles from print media reporting on Donald Trump's statements regarding Latinx immigrants, such as immigration, crime, cartels, and drugs. What separates this study from others, is it does not examine the headlines, but rather the content. To increase the efficiency of data collection, internet search engines will be used to locate digital copies of relevant print media. It is important to note that only news published between June 2015 and September 2019 will be collected. This time frame was chosen as 2015 was the year Donald Trump officially announced he was running for president of the United States. 2019 was set at a limit as it was the year in which a white supremacist conducted a mass shooting in El Paso, Texas in response to a perceived Latinx invasion of Texas.

Data Collection

Data collection for this study will require the selection of news articles from June 2015 to September 2019 to critically examine the language used in three newsprint media: Associated Press, New York Times, and Reuters. The news sources were chosen based on the independent

analysis conducted by AD Fontes Media, an organization that conducts content ratings of news media outlets (Ad Fontes Media, 2019). Based on the Ad Fontes Media chart, the Associated Press, New York Times, and Reuters were chosen as some of the most reliable and neutral news sources that fit the selection criteria for this study. The selection criteria done was 3 newspaper outlets that would be selected to represent the most accurate and neutral reporting, with one newspaper representing neutral left, neutral center, and neutral right. The Associated Press was labeled by Ad Fontes Media as the most neutral and reliable news organization, Reuters was labeled as Neutral with a slight right skew, and the New York Times was found to be neutral with a slight left skew. Only news sources with more than a hundred years of established reporting experience were chosen.

Short History of Selected News Sources

Reuters, officially known as Thomson Reuters, was founded in 1851 in Great Britain. It has become one of the leading news services in the world and has since switched its headquarters to Toronto, Canada. In 2008, Reuters entered into a merger with the Thomson Corporation to form Thomson Reuters, but it is still colloquially referred to as simply Reuters. Reuters has maintained its status as a news agency but has also come to provide information about the financial sphere (Britannica, 2020).

The New York Times is widely recognized as one of the world's premiere newspapers. The NYT was created in 1851 as a newspaper that specifically avoided sensationalism who would objectively report the news. Early in its history the paper purposefully set out to appeal to

a cultured and intellectual demographic. The NYT used technology to expand its readership by introducing an online version in 1995 (Britannica, 2020).

The Associated Press (AP) was founded in 1846 as a result of 4 New York City newspapers embarking on a cooperative venture to cover the Mexican-American war. The AP sold its service to other newspaper groups. By the 1980s the AP employed 2,500 reporters in 100 cities throughout the United States and provided information to newspapers from 100 countries. Today the AP employs approximately 4,100 workers worldwide. The AP has received more than 48 Pulitzer Prizes. It is currently the oldest and largest 24-hours news agency in the United States (Britannica, 2020).

Ad Fontes Media Metrics: Political Bias

News media outlets were selected based on an independent analysis conducted by AD Fontes Media (2019). Ad Fontes Media conducts multi-analyst content ratings of news media outlets, conducting over seven thousand individual ratings. The ratings were conducted by multiple analysts, representation from the multi-person ranking per article was designed to minimize the impact of any one person's political bias on the published ranking, and the breadth of coverage by each analyst over all the sources was designed to enhance each analyst's familiarity with sources across the spectrum. The research project took place over twelve weeks. Each news source selected in the study had a minimum of seven articles analyzed, with larger and more well-known sources having more than 80 articles analyzed (Ad Fontes Media, 2019).

During the project, researchers would gather sets of articles from various news media outlets which were all written the same day. According to Ad Fontes Media (2019), this was meant as a means of ensuring the articles covering topics that ran on the same news cycles. These steps were taken to ensure analysts would be able to include bias, omission, and bias by topic selection in their analysis. Each analyst was tasked with providing a coordinated ranking for each article they analyzed. Coordinate rankings are used by Ad Fontes Media to measure quality and bias in news articles. These coordinate rankings are compiled into a chart that measures overall source reliability and political bias on its x and y-axis, respectively. Coordinate rankings given to news media outlets are a result of a weighted average of each of their individually analyzed articles, as well as an algorithmic translation of the raw scores given to their articles. If a news media outlet receives an overall coordinate score that determines their content is low quality and highly biased, then they will be placed further down and outwards on the chart. Although the methodology used by Ad Fontes Media will be explained in this section, it is important to note that a full breakdown of their exact weighting algorithm is not possible at the time this is being written as it has not been fully disclosed due to its proprietary nature.

Ad Fontes Media created a standardized grading method that was used by analysts throughout the study (Ad Fontes Media, 2019). Standardizing the grading process minimizes the influence of an analyst's personal biases and allows for increased transparency regarding the quantitative measures utilized to analyze news media content. Analysts undergo training regarding Ad Fontes Media's standardized grading method. To further minimize the effects of personal biases, the overall rating score of each article is calculated by averaging the individual

scores given by multiple analysts (Ad Fontes Media, 2019). Ad Fontes Media's grading rubric consists of two parts, one which is used to determine both the quality and bias level of an article; the other is used to determine its bias score. The quality of an article is determined by element scores, sentence scores, and unfairness instances. Element scores are given to the title, introduction, the graphics used in the article, and other notable elements. The element scores range from 1 to 8 based on the reliability categories on the media bias chart, with 1 being given to elements that contain inaccurate or fabricated information while 8 is given to elements that contain original fact reporting. Sentence scores are rated on both veracity and expression, each on a scale of 1 through five. Veracity measures the truthfulness of a sentence, with 1 being fully factual and 5 being entirely false. Expression measures how a sentence is presented to the reader, as a factual statement or as an opinion statement. A 1 is given to sentences that are completely factual statements while a 5 is given to statements of opinion. The third factor used to determine an article's reliability score is the use of unfair instances in an article (Ad Fontes Media, 2019).

The process by which Ad Fontes Media determines bias is also standardized and is measured using three factors, topic selection and/or presentation, sentence metrics, a comparison to other articles on the same subject. Topic selection and/or presentation looks at the topic of the article and how it is being presented, and where it falls along the political bias axis. The political bias axis contains seven different categories ranging from most extreme left to most extreme right, with a neutral or balanced bias being the middle ground. The third factor used to determine the bias score of an article is a comparison to other articles on the same subject. It helps measure bias by omission. The comparison is made with other articles written on the same day as the

article being analyzed. This makes it easier to pinpoint bias as it allows analysts to understand all of the possible facts that could have been covered in the story (Ad Fontes Media, 2019).

In conjunction with reliability and bias scores, analysts also examine if any factor showed low reliability (Ad Fontes Media, 2019). Factors that demonstrate low reliability, such as inaccurate or misleading information, weigh negatively on the overall score of an article. Analysts are instructed to weigh their score either downward or outward on the media bias chart as a result of the low-reliability factors. Aside from low-reliability factors, the reach of a news media outlet has also affected its overall weighted score. If a news media outlet has articles that are both low-quality and highly biased, then they will receive an overall score that places them either in the lower left or lower right of the media bias chart. Ad Fontes Media's bias chart designates 27 news media outlets within their category of Most Reliable for News. It is important to note that not all news media outlets that fall within the Most Reliable for News category are print media based, such as television broadcasting news media companies which will not be utilized for this study.

Data Collection Sampling

This study uses nonprobability purposive sampling. The time frame of the news selected for this study will be from June 16th, 2015 to August 3rd, 2019. This time frame was chosen as June 16th, 2015 was when Donald Trump officially announced he was candidacy for president of the United States, and August 3rd, 2019 was set as a limit as it culminates as evidence of the moral panic created by Trump's anti-immigrant sentiment (Agnew, 2019). First, print-based news media

outlets were identified which fall within the neutral or balanced bias zone. From the Most Reliable and Neutral section, 3 newsprint media were selected to represent the spectrum from left to right. The news outlets selected for the data collection were chosen based on their biased rating, audience size, and neutrality. The final selection was Associated Press as Neutral Center, New York Times as Neutral Left, and Reuters as Neutral Right. Second, once the news sources had been narrowed to three, collecting the news articles required the use of internet search engines to locate digital copies of relevant print media. The most popular internet search engine results will be used as it is likely they will have been viewed the most.

To create a search that would yield consistent results, the same search terms were used to obtain the top 4 news articles for every month between June 2015 through August 3rd, 2019. Google was used to search for news pages that mention Donald Trump in combination with any of the following terms: Immigrants, Mexico, Latino, and Racism. To ensure that articles were collected by month, Google searches were limited to a search parameter in monthly intervals between June 2015 and August 3, 2019. Each search was limited to the content of the selected news sites and only for articles published during the specified month. For each month, the top 4 news articles were selected. The articles were then categorized based on their focus: 321 articles related to Mexican immigration; 31 articles related to Muslim immigration; 16 articles related to Mexican and Muslim immigration; and 130 articles were about immigration issues in general. In total, the research project reviewed a total of 498 articles.

	Associated Press	New York Times	Reuters	Total
Mexican	117	100	104	321
Muslim	10	6	15	31
Mexican & Muslim	6	5	5	16
General	25	66	39	130
Total	158	177	163	498

Table 1: Article Categorization Breakdown

Selection of News Articles: Google Search

Google search was utilized to expedite the data collection process. The data collection process required the identification and collection of 4 news articles per news source per month. To identify the 4 news articles that would be collected the same search parameters were input when conducting a google search, effectively collecting a standardized collection method.

Google was chosen as it is the largest search engine network in the world (Davies, 2021). Google was used to search for news pages that mention Donald Trump in combination with any of the following terms: immigrants, Mexico, Latino, and Racism. each search was limited in terms of one-month intervals using Google’s built-in search tools that allow searches for custom time ranges.

To provide users with relevant data, Google continuously gathers information from immense amounts of websites (How search Works, n.d.). The process by which Google gathers information from websites is known as crawling. The crawling process begins by searching a list of known websites that have been found from past crawls, or sitemaps provided to Google by

website owners. A sitemap is a file that website owners create that outlines information regarding the content on their website, e.g. pages, videos, photos, or other files. A sitemap will tell internet search engines, like Google, about the important pages on the website and other important information regarding updates, video categories, alternative website versions, etc. Sitemaps Website owners submit their sitemaps to Google, and other internet search engines, to make the crawling process more efficient (Manage Your Sitemaps, n.d.).

While sitemaps help in Google's crawling process, they are not the only way by which Google finds out information about websites. As Google searches its collection of known websites it comes across links on those websites that lead to new websites. Google's software identifies new websites and pays special attention to them, as well as to changes to existing sites and dead links. Google's computer programs determine when which, and how many pages to crawl from each website (How search Works, n.d.). Although Google may have all of the power regarding web crawling, that is not the case. Google offers website owners the ability to control some aspects of how it crawls their sites. Owners can provide Google with specific instructions on how to crawl their website, request that Google recrawl their site, or prevent their website from being crawled. Although Google gives website owners some power over how their sites are crawled, it never takes payment to crawl a site more frequently, and it provides the same tool to all website owners (How search Works, n.d.).

After crawling a website Google will place it in its Search index (How search Works, n.d.). The Google Search index is made up of hundreds of billions of web pages, currently adding up to more than 100,000,000 gigabytes of data (How search Works, n.d.). To process this

vast compilation of information Google established a ranking system that is meant to help sort through all of the information to provide the user with relevant information regarding their query. The ranking system is made up of a series of algorithms that examine a wide variety of factors including but not limited to, “the words of your query, relevance, and usability of pages, the expertise of sources, and your location and settings” (p 317). Googles assign a different level of importance/weight to each factor depending on the type of query you make (How search Works, n.d.). For example, if you search for ‘NFL schedule’ on Google, the Search algorithm will give more importance to the freshness of the content it's indexed to provide you with a recent schedule as opposed to a schedule from 20 years ago.

To ensure Search algorithms, provide relevant results, Google implements a system that involves live tests, experiments, and feedback from Search Quality Raters (How search Works, n.d.). Search Quality Raters are tasked with measuring the quality of search results (Rigorous Testing, n.d.). The raters determine how well the search results give users the information they are looking for (Rigorous Testing, n.d.). It is important to note the evaluations given by Search Quality Raters have no direct impact on index ranking and are only used to ensure high-quality search results (Rigorous Testing, n.d.). Google uses 5 key factors to determine what your search results will be, the meaning of your query, the relevance of webpages regarding your query, the quality of the content on those webpages, how useable those webpages are, and contextual information regarding a user and their settings (How search Works, n.d.).

Data Analysis

Qualitative methods were used in doing the content analysis. Each news story was reviewed using grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Grounded theory is a systematic and methodical approach for qualitative research. Grounded theory utilizes two stages of data analysis (Saldana, 2016). The beginning stage aims to produce individually coded data segments using first cycle coding methods. These methods are coding processes that provide an avenue for raw data to be broken down and thoroughly analyzed. The second stage involves the use of second cycle methods which are meant to focus the codes into categories by comparing, reorganizing, or reexamining code. Second cycle methods allow researchers to prioritize these categories and discover fundamental categories which the others revolve around (Saldana, 2016). These fundamental categories are then synthesized to create a base category which becomes the foundation of the developed grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss 1967; Saldana, 2016).

Grounded Theory

Six coding methods are primarily utilized as a part of a grounded theory approach, In Vivo coding, Process coding, Initial coding, Focused coding, Axial coding, and theoretical coding. Vivo coding is a process that takes the terms or words found in qualitative data to capture the meaning of the data as well as what is significant (Stringer, 2014; Charmaz, 2014). The terms are taken verbatim from the data to create In Vivo codes (Saldana, 2016). In Vivo, codes can be organized into clusters which may provide researchers with insight into potential categories (Saldana, 2016). Process coding aims to use gerunds to identify simple and/or conceptual actions within the data (Charmaz, 2002). Gerunds are verbs that act as a noun,

commonly ending in -ing (Gerund, 2020). Simple actions are classified as actions that can be observed and readily identified, such as watching television, driving a car, or playing a game. Conceptual actions are also observable but are based more on an abstract idea, such as surviving, anticipating, or imagining (Saldana, 2016). Process coding helps researchers understand the process they are examining as well as how it originates and evolve (Dey, 1993, p. 38).

Initial coding breaks down qualitative data into smaller pieces and allows researchers to examine them for similarities and differences (Saldana, 2016). Initial coding is meant to leave researchers open to all of the possible directions the study can go in based on their interpretations of data (Saldana, 2016). It allows researchers the opportunity to scrutinize the data and generate a starting point and allows researchers to see in which direction to take their study (Glaser, 1978, p. 56). Focused coding is used to categorize data by identifying either the most frequently used codes or the most significant. It brings to light the emerging themes within the data by requiring researchers to designate which initial coding schemes “make the most analytic sense” (Charmaz, 2014, p. 138). Axial Coding can be considered as a developed version of Initial Coding as well as Focused Coding, to some extent (Saldana, 2016). Axial Coding is used to determine the dominant codes within the data set and restructure the data set by eliminating redundancies and inefficiency (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 124). Axial Coding provides researchers with central categories from which others stem from. Identifying central or “axis” categories allows researchers to examine the relationships between them and how they are related (Charmaz, 2014, p.148).

Theoretical Coding is responsible for developing a core category that represents the primary theme of the research. The core category is meant to encapsulate the main issue within the area being studied. The main function of Theoretical Coding is to synthesize a theory from the categories developed throughout the study (Saldana, 2016). It is important to note that the creation of a new theory is not required when utilizing a grounded theory approach.

A prefigured coding scheme will be used which will look for concepts and ideas regarding immigration, crime, cartels, and drugs when analyzing the news headlines. The headlines will be analyzed using elemental coding methods. The first cycle of the coding method will involve descriptive coding and concept coding. Descriptive summarizes, typically in one word, the topic of the selected qualitative data whereas concept coding involves identifying an idea within the data. The second cycle of coding will be based on pattern coding and Axial coding. Pattern coding allows researchers to identify emerging themes in the data. Axial coding is used to explain how categories of data relate to their subsequent subcategories (Saldana, 2016). Code weaving will be used to integrate the coded data into a narrative form.

Analysis of News Articles

After having initially reviewed all the collected news articles, they were categorized into four main topics, then the focus was turned solely to that news article on anti-Mexican rhetoric by Trump. For each article, it was reviewed to identify how the news source reported Trump's racist language about his initial denouncement of Mexicans as 'rapists and criminals.' Once the data collection process was completed, the articles were analyzed to review how the news

sources were reporting Trump's racist anti-Mexican tropes. The first step in the process was to categorize every article into 4 different categories. The categories were Mexican, Muslim, Both (Mexican & Muslim), and General. These categories were chosen as they best represented the data we were looking for on the representation of Trump's racist rhetoric. The articles under the Mexican category were those articles that presented a focus on Trump's views on Mexican immigrants. The articles on the Muslim category were those that displayed a focus on Trump's views on the Muslim community. The articles in both categories were the articles that focus on both Trump's views on Mexican immigrants and the Muslim community. The articles in the General category were articles that focused on Trump's views on immigration in general or that covered topics relating to Trump's policies, supporters, or the effects they have had.

For each article selected, the content analysis focused on the language used to depict Trump's racist, xenophobic anti-immigrant rhetoric. After reviewing each article, 3 tables were created to document the language used by the news source by year and month, which facilitated a comparative analysis between the news sources from year to year, and across the news sources. For each news source, the language used by the news source was documented, as well as any use of direct quotes of Trump's racist or biased rhetoric. In doing the content analysis, the use of the phrase 'illegal immigrants' was noted vs. the use of 'undocumented immigrants.' This issue has been controversial and acknowledged as problematic by social justice organizations. In 2010 the organization Race Forward: The Center for Racial Justice Innovation, known then as the Applied Research Center, launched a campaign aimed at eliminating the use of the term 'illegal' as a descriptor for an immigrant's legal status (Scobey-Thal, 2014).

In 2013, after enduring pressure from immigration advocates, the Associated Press made changes to its stylebook and declared that it would no longer sanction the use of phrases such as ‘illegal alien’ or ‘illegal immigrant.’ (Scobey-Thal, 2014). As the Associated Press was deemed by Ad Fontes Media as the most neutral news organization, analyzing how they used the term ‘illegal’ in comparison to the New York Times and Reuters is important as it provides an understanding of how immigrants are framed. The phrases were highlighted and counted to gauge if the news sources were representative of the concerns of the social justice organizations. This allowed us to compare how news sources were engaged in the discourse for social justice in regards to immigration and human rights.

After the initial review, the data documented was verified with a second and third review of the news articles. In addition to this, the thesis chair of my committee assisted me in verifying data codes. This demonstrates and affirms inter-rater reliability. The collection process yielded 321 articles related to Mexican immigration; 31 articles related to Muslim immigration; 16 articles related to Mexican and Muslim immigration; and 130 articles were about immigration issues in general. In total, the research project reviewed a total of 498 articles. Finally, only the articles on Mexican immigration were reviewed and analyzed comparatively.

CHAPTER III

FINDINGS

The purpose of this research project is to examine the language used by news media to cover Trump's anti-immigration rhetoric against Mexican immigrants, from the beginning of his presidential campaign to the El Paso massacre of 2019. This thesis focused on the latest moral panic in the United States against Mexican immigrants (Agnew, 2019). Trump's first racist attack against Mexican immigrants occurred at the beginning of his presidential campaign when he said: "When Mexico sends its people, they are not sending their best - they're not sending you. They're not sending you. They're sending people that have lots of problems and they're bringing those problems with us. They're bringing drugs. They're bringing crime. They're rapists. And some, I assume, are good people." (Burns, 2015). Trump's anti-Mexican sentiments continued throughout the rest of his presidency and were thus repeatedly reported on by various news organizations. Examining how Trump's anti-Mexican sentiments were reported allows for an understanding of the societal tolerance for anti-Mexican sentiments.

To examine how Trump's anti-Mexican sentiments were reported Ad Fontes media was used to select news organizations with neutral bias and reliable reporting. Using Ad Fontes Media which measures reliability and political bias, 3 news sources were selected: Associate Press, New York Times, and Reuters. The news outlets selected were categorized by Ad Fontes Media as Neutral and Most Reliable. Associate Press represents the Neutral Center, New York Times is Neutral Left and Reuters is Neutral Right. A Google search was then conducted to

identify the most popular news stories by month, beginning with June 2015 to August 3rd, 2019. In total, 498 articles were collected and reviewed. After the initial review, the data were categorized into four main topics: Mexican immigration, Muslim immigration, Mexican and Muslim immigration, and General.

News Articles: Categories

The articles under the Mexican category were those articles that presented a focus on Trump's views on Mexican immigrants. The articles on the Muslim category were those that displayed a focus on Trump's views on the Muslim community. The articles in the Both-category were the articles that focus on Trump's views on Mexican immigrants, as well as the Muslim community. The articles in the General category were articles that focused on Trump's views on immigration in general or that covered topics relating to Trump's policies, supporters, or the effect they have had. The collection process yielded 321 articles related to Mexican immigration; 31 articles related to Muslim immigration; 16 articles related to Mexican and Muslim immigration; and 130 articles were about immigration issues in general. In total, the research project reviewed a total of 498 articles.

For this thesis project, only the news articles focusing on Mexican immigration were selected to analyze how Trump's racist anti-Mexican comments were reported. Three-hundred-and-twenty-one times (N=321) articles were selected in total: Associated Press had 117 related news articles; New York Times had 100 relevant articles, and Reuters had 104 articles. After reviewing and analyzing the articles on Mexican immigration, four types of reporting were found

in each of the news sources. The first category reported Trump's anti-immigrant speech by attributing the comments to him; Category 2 reporting used words as qualifiers to demonstrate a bias; Category 3 reporting used adjectives to describe Trump's comments, and Category 4 reported Trump's anti-immigration rhetoric by using direct quotes. These classifications were found in each of the news sources and will be detailed in the following sections.

Reporting on Mexican Anti-Immigration Rhetoric

Associated Press: Neutral Center

The Associated Press (AP) was founded in 1846 as a result of 4 New York City newspapers embarking on a cooperative venture to cover the Mexican-American War. The AP has received more than 48 Pulitzer Prizes. It is currently the oldest and largest 24-hours news agency in the United States (Britannica, 2020). Ad Fontes Media categorizes the AP as one of the most reliable news organizations with little to no bias in its reporting. The AP will serve as the Neutral Center news organization. The AP had 117 articles relating to Mexican immigrants, 10 articles relating to Muslim issues, 6 articles relating to both Mexican and Muslim issues, and 25 articles relating to general immigration, with a total of 158 articles.

These categories encapsulate the most common themes present when news outlets reported on Trump's Mexican anti-immigration rhetoric (see table below). The first category, comments attributed to Trump, covers comments in which no type of addition was added in the reporting of Trump's statements, most often simply reporting that Trump had said something. These statements link the anti-Mexican immigrant views to Trump but didn't offer any type of

analysis regarding his biases. The second category, words used as qualifiers, covers reporting that attempts to assign either a negative value towards trump’s comments, for example, ‘railed’ or ‘derided.’ The third category, adjectives used in describing Trump’s comments, covers comments in which the AP provided additional input when reporting, for example, the use of adjectives such as ‘controversial’ or ‘aggressive.’ These adjectives seemed to downplay the anti-Mexican immigrant nature of Trump’s comments by not acknowledging the racism. The fourth category includes quotes by Trump showing bias, which were used to report his anti-Mexican bias while maintaining neutrality and not denouncing his racism directly. A negative bias covers any quotes that expressed racist ideas, negative portrayals of immigrants, xenophobic remarks, and/or attempts at linking immigrants with crime.

Table 2. Associated Press Category Distribution

Category 1	Category 2	Category 3	Category 4
15	19	31	24

Under Category 1, there were 15 instances were documented linking anti-Mexican immigrant phrases to Trump by attributing the comments to Trump or showing ownership. AP reported Trump’s racism as the following: ‘his criticism,’ ‘his comments’ (N=3), ‘ Trump/he said (N=3),’ ‘he referred’ (N=2), ‘Trump/his remarks’ (N=2), ‘calling’ (N=2), ‘his past statements,’ and ‘Trump’s immigration rhetoric.’ There were no instances of this category found in 2019.

In category 2, 19 instances were documented in which qualifiers were used in reporting Trump’s racist rhetoric. There were no examples for 2015. The following were used by AP from 2016 to 2019: ‘compared,’ ‘derided’ (N=2), ‘labeling/labeled’ (N=2), ‘deeming,’ ‘blasting’ (N=3), ‘tapped,’ ‘cast,’ ‘accused’ (N=2), ‘echoed,’ ‘unloaded,’ ‘railed’ (N=2), ‘exaggerated,’ ‘contention.’

In category 3 the most frequent way to describe Trump’s anti-Mexican immigrant rhetoric in the form of adjectives was the use of the phrase ‘anti-immigrant’ (N=6). Under this category, there were 31 instances identified. This category had the most variability in adjectives being used: ‘controversial’ (N=3), ‘inflammatory,’ ‘contentious,’ ‘disparaging,’ ‘divisive,’ ‘hard line’ (N=4), ‘incendiary,’ ‘harsh,’ ‘aggressive,’ ‘campaign,’ ‘sharp,’ ‘tough and blunt,’ ‘anti-immigrant’ (N=6), ‘hawkish,’ ‘dark’ (N=4), ‘racially tinged,’ ‘racially loaded,’ ‘fiery,’ and ‘usual.’

Table 3. Associated Press Category 3 Breakdown

Year	Category 3
2015	Controversial comment Controversial comments Inflammatory comments Contentious remarks Disparaging remarks
2016	Controversial Pledge Divisive rhetoric Hard line speeches Incendiary comments Harsh words
2017	Aggressive stance Campaign rhetoric

	Sharp rhetoric Tough and blunt talk Anti-immigrant campaign Anti-immigrant campaign Hardline rhetoric Anti-immigrant rhetoric Trump’s immigration rhetoric Anti-immigration stance Hardline on immigration Anti-immigration rhetoric
2018	Hard-line rhetoric Anti-immigrant rhetoric Hawkish immigration bonafides Dark imagery to depict Racially tinged rhetoric Racially loaded rhetoric Fiery immigration talk
2019	Painted a dark picture To paint a dark picture Dark immigration rhetoric Painted his usual portrait of a lawles

The fourth category measures how often the AP directly quoted Trump’s anti-Mexican sentiment sentiments. The following table lists 24 racist Trump quotes published in the Associated Press.

Table 4. Associated Press List of Trump’s Direct Quotes

Year	Category 4
2015	“The judge, who happens to be, we believe, Mexican,” Trump told a San Diego crowd in a rant against Curiel. Curiel has “an inherent conflict of interest” because Trump is “building a wall,”
2016	“They come from Central America. They’re tougher than any people you’ve ever

	<p>met,” Trump told the magazine. “They’re killing and raping everybody out there. They’re illegal. And they are finished.”</p>
2017	<p>“This legislation demonstrates our compassion for struggling American families who deserve an immigration system that puts their needs first and puts America first,”</p> <p>“But you also had people that were very fine people, on both sides,”</p> <p>“Thousands of refugees are being admitted with no way to screen them and are instantly made eligible for welfare and free health care, even as our own veterans, our great veterans, die while they’re waiting online for medical care that they desperately need,”</p>
2018	<p>“Shithole countries”</p> <p>“Very fine people on both sides”</p> <p>“So disgraceful that a person illegally in our country killed @Colts linebacker Edwin Jackson,” Trump tweeted. “This is just one of many such preventable tragedies. We Must get the Dems to get tough on the Border and with illegal immigration”</p> <p>“They’re the best friend of the criminal,” Trump said. “That’s what exactly is happening. The criminals take refuge in these sanctuary cities and it’s very dangerous for our police and enforcement folks.”</p> <p>“California’s sanctuary policies are illegal and unconstitutional and put the safety and security of our entire nation at risk. Thousands of dangerous & violent criminal aliens are released as a result of sanctuary policies, set free to prey on innocent Americans. THIS MUST STOP!”</p> <p>“stop the big drug and people flows, or I will stop their cash cow, NAFTA. NEED WALL!”</p> <p>“Border Patrol Agents (and ICE) are GREAT, but the weak Dem laws don’t allow them to do their job. Act now Congress, our country is being stolen!”</p> <p>“They must stop the big drug and people flows, or I will stop their cash cow, NAFTA. NEED WALL!”</p> <p>“You wouldn’t believe how bad these people are. These aren’t people, these are animals.”</p>

	<p>Trump thanked officials, saying they had “bravely resisted California’s deadly and unconstitutional sanctuary laws.” He claimed those laws are forcing “the release of illegal immigrant criminals, drug dealers, gang members, and violent predators into your communities” and providing “safe harbor for some of the most vicious and violent offenders on earth.”</p> <p>He claimed those laws are forcing “the release of illegal immigrant criminals, drug dealers, gang members, and violent predators into your communities” and providing “safe harbor for some of the most vicious and violent offenders on earth.”</p> <p>“He used the loaded term “infest” to reference the influx of immigrants entering the country illegally.</p> <p>Trump has used the caravan to bolster his election-season warnings that the U.S. is being infiltrated by illegal immigrants “Pouring across the border,”</p> <p>Trump also said the group includes “gang members and some very bad people.”</p> <p>“Democrats are inviting caravan after caravan of illegal aliens to pour into our country, overwhelming your schools, your hospitals, and your communities,” Trump said in Ft. Wayne, Indiana, on election eve. “If you want more caravans if you want more crime, vote Democrat tomorrow...if you want strong borders and safe communities, no drugs, no caravans, vote Republican.”</p> <p>“You come into the country - you’re like two months old...and you’re gonna bring em all - your aunts and uncles and grandfathers and lots of people,”</p>
2019	<p>“When Mexico sends its people, they’re not sending their best,”</p> <p>Trump on Monday dug in on comments he had initially made a day earlier on Twitter that if lawmakers “hate our country,” they can go back to their “broken and crime-infested” countries.</p>

New York Times: Neutral Left

The New York Times (NYT) is widely recognized as one of the world's premiere newspapers (Britannica, 2020). The NYT was created in 1851 as a newspaper that specifically avoided sensationalism who would objectively report the news. Ad Fontes Media categorizes the NYT as one of the most reliable news organizations with slight left-leaning bias in its reporting. The NYT will serve as the Neutral Left news organization. The NYT had 100 articles relating to Mexican immigrants, 6 articles relating to Muslim issues, 5 articles relating to both Mexican and Muslim issues, 66 articles relating to general immigration issues for a total of 177 articles (see table below).

Table 5. New York Times Category Distribution

Category 1	Category 2	Category 3	Category 4
19	23	39	22

For Category 1, there were 19 instances in which his anti-immigrant comments were attributed to Trump. The following are examples of this category: 'his comments' (N=4), 'his remarks' (N=4), 'the remarks' (N=3), 'his criticism,' 'those remarks,' 'he said/saying' (N=2), 'called' (N=2), 'he referred' (N=2). No instances were identified for 2019. The second category identified 23 times qualifiers were used to report Trump's negative rhetoric of Mexican immigration: 'portrayed,' 'accused,' 'dismissing,' 'suggested,' 'dubbed,' 'demonized,' 'described,' 'bluntly accusing,' 'declared,' 'crusade,' 'assault,' 'denounced/denouncing' (N=3),

‘rail/railed’ (N=3), ‘branding,’ ‘labeled,’ ‘sought,’ ‘cast/recast’ (N=2), ‘ranted.’ For Category 3, NYT reported Trump’s anti-Mexican immigrant stance with strong adjectives was 39 times. The most frequently used adjective was ‘hard line’ (N=10), used to describe immigration views. Despite being the category with the most entries, Category 3 only had 15 unique adjectives. The descriptive reporting is as follows: ‘provocative,’ ‘anti-immigrant’ (N=3), ‘inflammatory’ (N=4), ‘caustic,’ ‘harsh’ (N=3), ‘hard line’ (N=10), ‘tough talk,’ ‘controversial,’ ‘sharp attack,’ ‘antagonistic’ (N=2), ‘incendiary,’ ‘hectoring’ (N=2), ‘fiery,’ ‘vehement,’ ‘anti-Mexican,’ ‘aggrieved,’ ‘furious,’ ‘heated,’ ‘racially tinged,’ ‘dark,’ and ‘misleading.’

Table 6. New York Times Category 3 Breakdown

Year	Category 3
2015	Provocative Anti-immigrant positions Inflammatory remarks Inflammatory remarks Caustic language Harsh outbursts against Hard line Anti-immigrant language Hard line Tough talk on immigration Controversial remarks
2016	Hard line Harsh campaign language Sharp attack Inflammatory Inflammatory hard-line approach Hard line approach Antagonistic attitude Incendiary Hectoring language

	Fiery language Antagonistic language Vehement terms Hard line stand Anti-Mexican stance
2017	Harsh language Anti-immigrant language Aggrieved language Hard-line immigration demands Furious response Hard-line immigration
2018	Heated remarks Hectoring and disparaging comments Hardline messaging Racially tinged remark Dark portrayals of undocumented Hard-line immigration
2019	Multiple misleading assertions

Under Category 4, there were 22 quotes used to point out Trump’s stance on immigration. The following table lists all of the Trump quotes published by the NYT between June 2015 and August 3, 2019.

Table 7. New York Times List of Trump’s Direct Quotes

Year	Category 4
2015	<p>“When Mexico sends its people they are not sending their best - they’re not sending you. They’re not sending you. They’re sending people that have lots of problems and they’re bringing those problems with us. They’re bringing drugs. They’re bringing crime. They’re rapists. And some, I assume, are good people.”</p> <p>“They’re bringing crime. They’re rapists. And some, I assume, are good people.”</p>

	<p>“When Mexico sends its people they are not sending their best” Mr. Trump declared. “they’re not sending you. They’re not sending you. They’re sending people that have lots of problems and they’re bringing those problems with us. They’re bringing drugs. They’re bringing crime. They’re rapists. And some, I assume, are good people.”</p> <p>“Do you think there’s a tremendous crime being committed by illegals?”</p> <p>“Many of these gang members are illegal immigrants. They’re rough dudes,”</p>
2016	<p>“We went under a fence and through a fence, and oh, boy, it felt like I was crossing the border actually”</p> <p>“When Mexico sends its people they are not sending their best” He added. “They’re bringing drugs. They’re bringing crime. They’re rapists. And some, I assume, are good people.”</p> <p>“We have to have a strong border, we have to keep the drugs out of our country - right now we’re getting the drugs, they’re getting the cash,” he added. “We have some bad hombres here, and we’re going to get them out</p>
2017	<p>Mr. Trump describes cities as “bloodstained killing fields” that were overrun with undocumented immigrants...</p> <p>“I am seriously considering a pardo for Sheriff Arpaio,” the president said in the interview on Sunday, speaking from his gold club in Bedminster, N.J. “He has done a lot in the fight against illegal immigration. He’s a great American patriot, and I hate to see what has happened to him.”</p>
2018	<p>“If we don’t straighten out our border, we don’t have a country”</p> <p>“They're not giving us their best people, folks. They're not giving us - use your heads. They’re giving us- it is a lottery.”</p> <p>“Doing They must stop the big drug and people flows, or I will stop their cash cow, NAFTA,”</p> <p>“Doing very little, if not NOTHING, at stopping people from flowing into Mexico through their Southern Border, and then into the U.S.” he said Mexican leaders “must stop the big drug and people flows, or I will stop their cash cow, NAFTA,”</p>

	<p>“We're toughening up at the border,” Mr. Trump said. “We cannot let people enter our country-we have no idea who they are, what they do, where they came from.”</p> <p>“We don't know if they're murderers if they're killers if they're MS-13,”</p> <p>“You wouldn't believe how bad these people are. These aren't people, these are animals, and we're taking them out of the country at a level and a rate that's never happened before.”</p> <p>“You heard about today with the illegal alien coming in, very sadly, from Mexico and you saw what happened to the incredible, beautiful young woman,” Mr. Trump said. “It should've never happened. Illegally in our country. We've had a huge impact, but the laws are so bad, the immigration laws are such a disgrace.”</p> <p>“Sadly, it looks like Mexico's Police and Military are unable to stop the Caravan heading to the Southern Border of the United States. Criminals and unknown Middle Easterners are mixed in.”</p>
2019	<p>“It's an invasion,” he added. “We have an invasion of drugs and criminals coming into our country.”</p> <p>“Sorry, can't let them into our Country.” Mr. Trump also tweeted on Sunday, referring to the groups of men held in filthy conditions in detention centers at the border. He suggested the groups were “loaded up with a big percentage of criminals.”</p> <p>“So interesting to see Progressive Democrat Congresswomen, who originally came from countries whose governments are a complete and total catastrophe, the worst, most corrupt and inept anywhere in the world,” Mr. Trump wrote on Twitter, “now loudly and viciously telling the people of the United States, the greatest and most powerful nation on earth, how our government is to be run.”</p> <p>Mr. Trump added: “Why don't they go back and help fix the totally broken and crime-infested places from which they came. Then come back and show us how it's done.”</p>

Reuters: Neutral Right

Reuters, officially known as Thomson Reuters, was founded in 1851 in Great Britain (Britannica, 2020). It has become one of the leading news services in the world but has also

come to provide information about the financial sphere (Britannica, 2020). Ad Fontes Media categorizes Reuters as one of the most reliable news organizations with slight right-leaning bias in its reporting. Reuters will serve as the Neutral Right news organization. Reuters had 104 articles relating to Mexican immigrants, 15 articles relating to Muslim issues, 5 articles relating to both Mexican and Muslim issues, and 39 articles relating to general immigration, with a total of 154 articles.

Table 8. Reuters Category Distribution

Category 1	Category 2	Category 3	Category 4
18	19	28	23

For Category 1, eighteen (N=18) instances were found to show ownership of Trump’s anti-Mexican rhetoric. The most frequent phrase used to attribute the rhetoric to Trump was ‘he said/saying’ (N=11). Category 1 has the least amount of variability with only 6 unique phrases used to link trump to his anti-Mexican immigrant statements: ‘he said/saying’ (N=11), ‘Trump’s statements,’ ‘his comments’ (N=2), ‘he called’ (N=2), ‘Trump voiced,’ ‘he referred,’ For Reuters, there were 19 instances of qualifiers under Category 2. The most popular of them was the word ‘accused,’ used 6 times. The following instances were categorized as qualifiers: ‘insulted,’ ‘accused’ (N=6), ‘swipes,’ ‘criticism,’ ‘vented,’ ‘singling,’ ‘attacked,’ ‘blasted,’ ‘likening,’ ‘characterized,’ ‘denounced,’ ‘linking,’ ‘blamed,’ and ‘labeled.’

Category 3 includes 28 instances in which strong adjectives were used in reporting Trump’s anti-Mexican rhetoric. The most used descriptors were ‘tough’ (N=5) and ‘anti-immigrant’ (N=5). Category 3 had 14 unique adjectives: ‘highly provocative/provocative’ (N=3), ‘insulting,’ ‘broadsides against,’ ‘anti-immigrant/sharpened his anti-immigrant rhetoric’ (N=5), ‘inflammatory’ (N=2), ‘rhetoric against,’ ‘bomb-throwing rhetoric,’ ‘tough’ (N=5), ‘hard line’ (N=4), ‘sometimes divisive,’ ‘racially charged,’ ‘hardened,’ ‘blunt,’ and ‘emotive language.’

Table 9. Reuters Category 3 Breakdown

Year	Category 3
2015	<p>In highly provocative comments</p> <p>Insulting remarks Broadsides against America’s southern Provocative comments Provocative remark</p>
2016	<p>Anti-immigrant tone Inflammatory rhetoric</p> <p>Rhetoric against illegal immigrants? Bomb throwing rhetoric Anti-illegal immigrant rhetoric Tough on crime and illegal immigrants? Hardline position on illegal immigration Inflammatory comments</p> <p>Sometimes divisive campaign rhetoric Hardline stance on immigration</p>
2017	Racially charged issue

2018	Hardline on immigration Tough immigration stance Tough line on immigration Hardline on immigration Sharpened his anti-immigrant rhetoric The anti-immigrant rhetoric A tough stance on immigration Tough stance on immigration Hardened his stance on immigration
2019	Blunt language Emotive language Anti-immigrant rhetoric

Category 4 included 23 trump quotes. The quotes were used to depict Trump’s stance on immigration when reported by Reuters. The table below lists all of the anti-Mexican Trump quotes published in collected Reuters articles.

Table 10. Reuters List of Direct Trump Quotes

Year	Category 4
2015	“A dumping ground for Mexico” “This is merely one of the thousands of similar incidents throughout the United States. In other words, the worst elements in Mexico are being pushed into the United States by the Mexican government” “I’m fighting for much more than myself. I’m fighting for the future of our country which is being overrun by criminals. You can’t be intimidated. This is too important.”

	<p>“When Mexico sends its people, they’re not sending their best,”</p> <p>“They’re bringing drugs. They are bringing crime. They’re rapists</p> <p>“They’re bringing drugs. They are bringing crime. They’re rapists”</p> <p>“He’s a Mexican. We’re building a wall between here and Mexico. The answer is, he is giving us very unfair railings, rulings that people can’t even believe. This case should have ended years ago on summary judgment,”</p>
2016	
2017	
2018	<p>“Caravans’ coming. Republicans must go Nuclear Option to pass tough laws NOW. NO MORE DACA DEAL!” ASK ABOUT THIS ONE</p> <p>“They must stop the big drug and people flows, or I will stop their cash cow, NAFTA,”</p> <p>“We have people coming into the country, or trying to come in, and we’re stopping a lot of them, but we’re taking people out of the country. You wouldn’t believe how bad these people are. These aren’t people. These are animals,”</p> <p>“The United States will not be a migrant camp, and it will not be a refugee holding facility. It won’t be,”</p> <p>“We cannot allow all of these people to invade our country. When somebody comes in, we must immediately, with no Judges or Court Cases, bring them back from where they came.”</p> <p>“You heard about today with the illegal alien coming in, very sadly, from Mexico and you saw what happened to the incredible, beautiful young woman,”</p> <p>“Grabbing children and they’re using children to come into our country in many cases,” ask about this one October 13</p> <p>“I must, in the strongest of terms, ask Mexico to stop this onslaught - and if unable to do so I will call up the U.S. Military and CLOSE OUR SOUTHERN BORDER!”</p>

	<p>“A lot of money has been passing to people to come up to try and get to the border by Election Day,”</p> <p>“The assault on our country at the Southern Border, including the Criminal elements and DRUGS pouring in, is far more important to me, as President, than Trade or the USMCA. Hopefully, Mexico will stop this onslaught at their Northern Border,”</p> <p>Trump also said, without providing evidence “Criminals and unknown Middle Easterners” are mixed in with the caravan</p> <p>“They want to throw a rock at our military, our military fights back...I told them to consider it a rifle. When they throw rocks as they did at the Mexico military police, I say: Consider it a rifle,”</p> <p>Trump denounced the approach of a caravan of migrants as an “invasion”...</p> <p>“I am proud to shut down the government for border security, Chuck because the people of this country don’t want criminals and people that have lots of problems and drugs pouring into our country,”</p>
2019	<p>Trump also said, without offering details, that Mexican soldiers recently had “pulled guns” on U.S. troops in what he suggested was “a diversionary tactic for drug smugglers.”</p> <p>“Mexico’s passive cooperation in allowing this mass incursion constitutes an emergency and extraordinary threat to the national security and economy of the United States,”</p>

Illegal v. Undocumented: Use of Words

In 2013, after enduring pressure from immigration advocates, the Associated Press made changes to its stylebook and declared that it would no longer sanction the use of phrases such as “illegal alien” or “illegal immigrant.” (Scobey-Thal, 2014). The Associated Press was deemed,

by Ad Fontes Media, the most neutral news organization. Analyzing how they used the term “illegal” in comparison to the New York Times and Reuters is important as it provides an understanding of how immigrants are framed. The phrases were highlighted and counted to gauge if the news sources had adjusted their reporting to address the concerns of the social justice organizations.

The Associated Press used the term “illegal” a total of 189 times. Despite the high number of uses, the term “illegal immigrant” was used 11 times. The other uses of the term were comprised of the phrase “illegal immigration” N=49 and phrases describing the act of entering the U.S. without authorization, “entered illegally” N=49. The AP also used the phrases “living illegally” and “in the country illegally” to describe unauthorized immigrants N=58.

The New York Times used the term “illegal” 235 times. The term “illegal immigrant” was used 39 times. The other uses of the term were comprised of the phrase “illegal immigration” N=64 and phrases describing the act of entering the U.S. without authorization, “entered illegally” N=67. The AP also used the phrases “living illegally” and “in the country illegally” to describe unauthorized immigrants N=26.

Reuters used the term ‘illegal’ 251 times. The term ‘illegal immigrant’ was used 110 times. The other uses of the term were comprised of the phrase “illegal immigration” N=53 and phrases describing the act of entering the U.S. without authorization, “entered illegally” N=39. The AP also used the phrases “living illegally” and “in the country illegally” to describe unauthorized immigrants N=26.

Table 11. Use of The Discriptor “illegal” Throughout All News Sources

Use of the word ‘illegal’ in News Sources			
Year	Associated Press	New York Times	Reuters
2015	9	25	14
2016	12	41	38
2017	35	61	80
2018	51	71	64
2019	82	37	55
Total	189	235	251

Table 12. Use of the Term “illegal immigrant/s” in All News Sources

Use of the word ‘illegal immigrants’ in News Sources			
Year	Associated Press	New York Times	Reuters
2015	0	7	11
2016	0	14	25
2017	2	5	44
2018	4	5	24
2019	5	8	6

Total	11	39	110
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Table 13. Use of the Term “undocumented/unauthorized” in News Sources

Use of the word Undocumented/Unauthorized in News Sources			
Year	Associated Press	New York Times	Reuters
2015	0	13	4
2016	3	14	6
2017	1	86	5
2018	2	47	0
2019	2	37	8
Total	8	197	23

The findings from this thesis project provide insight into how anti-Mexican attitudes persist in the media. From the 4 categories utilized in this thesis, we can examine how anti-immigrant sentiments become neutralized and normalized when being presented to American audiences. The following chapter will provide an in-depth discussion on what these findings can demonstrate.

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The purpose of the study is to examine the language used by news media to cover Trump's anti-immigration rhetoric against Mexican immigrants, from the beginning of his presidential campaign to the El Paso massacre of 2019. We focused on the latest moral panic in the United States against Mexican immigrants (Agnew, 2019). The questions addressed in this these were: How is racism portrayed/discussed in newsprint media categorized as neutral? How is Trump's racist depiction of Mexican immigrants depicted/reported during the period of 2015 to 2019?

The following chapter will discuss provide a more thorough explanation of the findings, as well as explore more in-depth topics related to how the media treated Trump's critics, how Trump's anti-Mexican sentiments were neutralized through reporting and a look at how the media responded to Trump's anti-Mexican sentiments after a racially motivated domestic terror attack.

Hate Crimes

Hate Crime in the U.S.A.

In 1930 the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) began a new program known as Uniform Crime Reporting Program (UCR) (Services, n.d.). This UCR report collects data from various agencies who voluntarily report their crime data to the FBI. Currently, the UCR report collects data from more than 18,000 law enforcement agencies throughout the country (Services,

n.d.). Although the UCR does not categorize hate crimes specifically against Mexicans and Americans of Mexican descent, the increasing rate of hate crimes against the overall Latinx community is of notable importance as Mexican born individuals amount to 10.9 million of the 45 million foreign-born residents currently living in the United States (Batalova et al., 2020). Mexican nationals also make up 51 percent of the unauthorized population in the United States (Batalova et al., 2020). With Mexican-born individuals making up so a large portion of the Latinx population it is reasonable to include the data as a rudimentary gauge of anti-Mexican sentiments in the U.S.

The UCR contains a section specifically on Hate Crime Statistics, which is made up of crimes that are “motivated by prejudice based on race, gender and gender identity, religion, disability, sexual orientations, or ethnicity.” (Hate Crime Statistics, n.d.). The data started being collected after the Hate Crime Statistics Act in 1990 was passed by Congress. The UCR defines a hate crime as a criminal offense that is motivated “motivated, in whole or in part, by the offender’s bias(es) against a: race, religion, disability, sexual orientation, ethnicity, gender and gender identity” (Hate Crime Statistics, n.d.). It is important to note that the UCR counts crimes as hate crimes regardless of whether the offender is correct in their assumption that the victim is a member of the groups mentioned above as the offense was still motivated by bias. When reporting a hate crime to the UCR the following data is collected, bias motivation, information about the victims, information about the offenders, information about location, as well as the jurisdiction (Hate Crime Statistics, n.d.).

When reviewing the data on hate crimes from 2015 through 2019, an upward trend was apparent (Incidents and Offenses, n.d.). In 2015 Hate Crimes against the Latinx community made up 9.4 percent of the 4,029 single-bias hate crime offenses reported to the UCR. Both the number of hate crimes and the percentage of hate crimes against Latinos steadily increased the following 4 years. In 2016 hate crimes against Latinos made up 10.6 percent of the 4,229 single-bias hate crime offenses reported in the UCR. 2017 saw a marginal increase to 10.9 percent of the 4,832 single-bias hate crime offenses reported. There was a jump to 13.0 percent of the 4,954 single-bias hate crime offenses in 2018. Hate crimes against Latinx making up 14.1 percent of the 4,784 single-bias hate crime offenses hate crimes reported in the UCR in 2019.

Table 14. Data on Hate Crimes Against the Latinx Community between 2015- 2019

Hate Crimes against Latinx as A Percentage of Overall Hate Crimes				
2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
9.4 percent	10.6 percent	10.9 percent	13.0 percent	14.1 percent

Source: Hate Crime Statistics annual reports

The increase in hate crimes against the Latinx community increased in quantity as both the amount of overall amount of hate crimes and the percentage of hate crimes against the Latinx community saw a steady increase from 2015 through 2019. When combined, Agnew’s work on the Moral Panic of 2018 and the rate of hate crimes against the Latinx community paint a portrait of the prevailing presence of anti-Mexican sentiments in the United States.

Revisiting the Literature Review

While analyzing the data from all three news sources it became evident that all three news sources seemed to use the words immigrant, migrant, and asylum seeker interchangeably. There did not appear to be any motive behind the interchanging of words. This was most prevalent throughout 2018 when the news sources covered the caravans that traveled from Central America to the United States. While it is highly unlikely that every person was an asylum seeker, there was not a thorough attempt at covering the nuances between the different terms. As previously mentioned, Agnew argues that these titles have become increasingly convoluted and confused amongst laymen (Agnew, 2019).

The flippant interchange between the terms when being reported by all three news sources may be indicative of a more systemic issue. Trump's presidency embodies Agnew's claim that immigrants have become a symbol of change in the country, changes that are perceived as a threat to the current racial and cultural hierarchy of the U.S. (Agnew, 2019). Support for Agnew's claim can be found in Cohen's work on moral panics. Cohen argues that blurring the lines between immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers makes it easier for the masses to associate negative connotations with refugees, and asylum seekers (Cohen, 2002). These are groups of people who are not leaving their countries to pursue their fortune in a more prosperous nation, but because their survival is at stake in their home country. Cohen argues that by getting the public to look at refugees and asylum seekers as immigrants it becomes easier to associate them with the crime and draining of government resources that have so successfully been tied to immigrants (Cohen, 2002).

Framing asylum seekers as threats to the American way of life is a tool expertly wielded by Trump. The data collected from category 4 of each news source is filled with a plethora of examples of Trump linking asylum seekers, refugees, and immigrants as threats: ‘You wouldn’t believe how bad these people are. These aren’t people, these are animals, ‘California’s sanctuary policies are illegal and unconstitutional and put the safety and security of our entire nation at risk. Thousands of dangerous & violent criminal aliens are released as a result of sanctuary policies, set free to prey on innocent Americans. ‘THIS MUST STOP!’, ‘We have an invasion of drugs and criminals coming into our country’, ‘They’re bringing drugs. They are bringing crime. They’re rapists. These quotes are a clear example of how Trump utilized his political platform to link crime and immigration.

In 1942, the Los Angeles newspapers began to print stories regarding both Mexican American crime and juvenile delinquency (Escobar, 1999). The news media zealously reported on every arrest of Mexican Americans to create a Latinx threat narrative that anchored itself in the deep in city’s white community. Exaggerating their reporting on incidents involving Mexican American youth. This aggressive anti-Mexican reporting cultivated a culture of hatred and ultimately led to the weeklong riots that were the embodiment of racist attitudes against the Mexican community.

There are clear parallels between the environment that fostered the anti-Mexican sentiments that led to the Zoot Suit Riots and the anti-Mexican narrative plaguing the nation and ultimately leading to the El Paso Shooting of 2019. Trump’s political career was anointed with the utterance of blatantly racist claims about Mexican immigrants. Trump spent the year

campaigning and referencing a murder of a young white woman at the hands of an “illegal immigrant” (Ax, 2018). The four years that followed fostered an environment of intolerance that led to an increase in hate crimes against the entire Latinx community and moral panic that gripped the nation in 2018 and culminated with a white nationalist committing a domestic terrorist attack because he had fully accepted the narrative of an invading Latinx culture that would fundamentally shift the racial hierarchy.

Comparative Analysis

The way in which the AP, NYT, and Reuters reported on Trump’s anti-Mexican sentiments provides an insight into the persistent tolerance for racist, xenophobic, and prejudiced views. None of the news organizations examined in this research project labeled Trump’s anti-Mexican views as racist, despite the multiple instances in which social organizations, academics, and fellow politicians were quoted saying that Trump’s anti-Mexican sentiments were racist. We can grasp how much these news organizations refrained from directly acknowledging the nature of Trump’s anti-Mexican sentiments when we look at the total number of qualifiers used by all organizations.

In total there were 211 instances in which the news organizations reported on Trump’s anti-Mexican sentiments, only once directly addressing Trump’s anti-Mexican sentiments. In November of 2016, the New York Times mentioned Trump’s “anti-Mexican stance” when reporting on a meeting between then Mexican President Enrique Pena Nieto’s and Trump (Ahmed, 2016). It is important to note that in August 2018 the NYT used the phrases ‘racially

tinged rhetoric' and 'racially loaded rhetoric' when referring to Trump's overall rhetoric but not specifically at his anti-Mexican sentiments.

The Associated Press reported on Trump's anti-Mexican sentiments 65 times between June of 2015 and August 3, 2019. The most frequently used phrase by the AP was 'anti-immigrant' (N=6). The AP used phrases that sometimes negatively framed Trump's anti-Mexican sentiments, such as 'inflammatory' and 'disparaging'. Although these phrases carry a negative connotation, they do not adequately convey the seriousness of Trump's anti-Mexican sentiments. As previously mentioned, anti-Mexican sentiments can express racist, xenophobic, or prejudiced ideas. By downplaying the nature of Trump's anti-Mexican sentiments, the AP effectively increased the palatability of the sentiments.

The New York Times reported on Trump's anti-Mexican sentiments more than any other news organization, a total of 81 times. The most frequently used phrase by the NYT was 'hard line' (N=10). This qualifier was used when the NYT reported on Trump's anti-Mexican sentiments regarding immigration. The NYT utilized 15 unique, non-repeating, adjectives when reporting on Trump's anti-immigrant sentiments. When looking at the NYT category 2 there were multiple instances in which the qualifiers used appeared to effectively nullify the seriousness of Trump's anti-Mexican sentiments. In particular the use of the qualifiers 'suggested', 'described', and 'dubbed'.

Reuters had 18 instances in which they utilized category one modifiers, 19 qualifiers in category two, and 28 adjectives in category three for a total of 65 times they reported on Trump's

anti-Mexican sentiments. Unlike the two prior news organizations, Reuters had two adjectives tied for the phrase they most frequently used. The adjectives ‘tough’ (N=5) and ‘anti-immigrant’ (N=5) made up more than one third of the adjectives used by Reuters.

From June 2015 through August 3, 2019, The Associated Press, the New York Times, and Reuters all continuously referenced Trump’s racist quote in which he emphatically categorized Mexican immigrants as criminals and rapists. To avoid repeatedly using the entirety of Trump’s racist insult, the shorthand ‘MCR’ was used. The following table categorizes the prevalence of Trump’s insult in the reporting of each source.

Table 15. MCR Count

Source	MCR
The Associated Press	18
The New York Times	16
Reuters	33

By continually reporting Trump’s racist insults, the news organizations repeatedly downplayed the insults by not acknowledging their racist nature.

Use of Illegal Immigrants vs Undocumented

Reuters heavily favored the term illegal and used the word as a descriptor, in regards to immigration, 251 times. Of those, the word ‘illegal immigrant/s’ was used 110 times. In stark

contrast, the use of undocumented/unauthorized as a descriptor for immigrants/immigration was used only 23 times. From 2015 through 2019 the phrase ‘illegal immigrants’ was used more frequently by Reuters, with the only exception being 2019 in which descriptors ‘undocumented/unauthorized’ were used 8 times compared to ‘illegal immigrant/s’ which was used 6 times.

Unlike Reuters, the New York Times heavily favored the use of the term Undocumented immigrant, using the terms a total of 197 times. The NYT phased out using the term ‘illegal immigrants, after 2016 the word was used less than 8 times a year. However, the NYT continued to use the phrase ‘illegal immigration’ when describing the actual act of entering the U.S. from an unauthorized port of entry. From 2015 through 2019, the NYT used the term ‘illegal immigration’ 64 times.

When compared to the New York Times and Reuters, the Associated Press kept the tightest margin between their use of the term ‘illegal immigrant/s’ and ‘undocumented/unauthorized. The AP used the phrase ‘illegal immigrant/s’ 11 times and the terms ‘undocumented/unauthorized’ 8 times.

Trump’s Critics

Despite not directly acknowledging the racist nature of Trump’s comments, the AP would occasionally quote prominent figures who did. The AP quoted then-Congressman Paul Ryan who unequivocally called Trump’s use of the slur “the textbook definition of racist comments” (Contreras, 2016). They also quoted the president of the League of United Latin

American Citizens (LULAC), the country's oldest Latinx civil rights group, as saying that trump's statements were racist. while they had no qualms about quoting others saying trump's statements were racist or reporting on the history of the term as a slur, the AP themselves did not take a position on the matter.

A similar occurrence can be found in an article published on September 1, 2016, where prominent Spanish language news anchor Jorge Ramos argued that journalists had an obligation to avoid neutrality when politicians make racist remarks, indirectly referring to Trump (Bauder, 2016). On July 15, 2018, the AP published an article regarding Mr. Trump's tweets in which he said that 4 minority congresswomen should go back to their crime-riddled countries since they, according to Trump, hated the U.S. Mr. Trump's racist comments came even though three out of the four congresswomen were born in the United States (Miller, Colvin, Lemire, 2019).

Unlike its other counterparts, Reuters did not appear to use any quotes from public figures that called out Trump for his racism. They did however call Trump's agenda nationalist in September of 2017 (Holland and Torbati, 2017). Reuters directly referred to Trump's "America First" message as nationalist. While they did not directly quote public figures who directly called Trump's comments racist, they did often report on the sentiment of Trump's critics. In January of 2018, Reuters reported that Trump had been criticized for his comment with many critics referring to the comment as racist (Rascoe & Rampton, 2018). These mysteries were never identified directly by Reuters, simply being referred to as Trump's critics. Reuters was, on occasion, direct in reporting on Trump's focus on trying to link immigration and crime. In an article published in august of 2018, Reuters reported that Trump had spent the vast

majority of 2015 speaking about the case of a young woman who was accidentally killed by an undocumented immigrant and how trump railed against the jury decision, which found the man not guilty of murder (Ax, 2018). This is notable as it appeared to be an attempt by Reuters to

According to a Reuters' article from November 2015, the NYT came out and officially rebuked statements made by Trump in which he mocked a disabled reporter (Gorman, 2015). Although the statement was not a part of the collected NYT articles, it is important to note that the news organization took a stand on ableism but appears not to have taken one on racism. On July 14, 2019, the NYT published an article regarding Mr. Trump's tweets in which he said that 4 minority congresswomen should go back to their crime-riddled countries since they, according to Trump, hated the U.S. Mr. Trump's racist comments came even though three out of the four congresswomen were born in the United States (Bogel-Burroughs and Jordan, 2019). The article quoted several prominent political figures who directly referred to Trump's comments as racist, xenophobic, or white nationalism, among them were The House of Congress, Nancy Pelosi, and Representative Ilhan Omar.

Quoting Trump

The AP had a penchant for quoting Trump's negative comments on immigrants, but never labeled or reported his racism directly and/or openly. Some of these comments demonstrated Trump's racism and xenophobia regarding immigrants, others were more nuanced and instead expressed direct displeasure with immigrants. Trump's quotes included racist ideas, negative portrayals of immigrants, xenophobic remarks, and attempts at linking immigrants with

crime. Instead of paraphrasing and stating that he was racist, AP quoted Trump to demonstrate his racism. Throughout the timeframe, AP quoted Trump's biased comments 33 times. The majority of these quotes came in 2018 when the AP quoted Trump's negative comments 16 times. Some of these comments include 'They're bringing crime. They're rapists. And some, I assume, are good people, 'When Mexico sends its people they are not sending their best, and 'We have an invasion of drugs and criminals coming into our country'.

Reuters would often use moderate language when reporting on Trump's anti-Mexican sentiments. They frequently used the terms that attempted to be neutral but instead severely removed the impact of Trump's statements. The word 'accused' (N=6) was used by Reuters to denote that Trump was accusing Mexican immigrants as opposed to a racist condemnation. Reuters reported on Trump's biased comments 16 times of these comments include: 'They're bringing drugs. They are bringing crime. They're rapists', 'We cannot allow all of these people to invade our country. When somebody comes in, we must immediately, with no Judges or Court Cases, bring them back from where they came, and 'the United States will not be a migrant camp, and it will not be a refugee holding facility. It won't be'.

The New York Times used the most aggressive language when reporting on Trump's anti-Mexican sentiments. They were the only news organization to use the term 'anti-Mexican' when describing Trump's stance. The New York Times reported on Trump's biased comments 22 times some these comments include: ' That's what exactly is happening. The criminals take refuge in these sanctuary cities and it's very dangerous for our police and enforcement folks, and 'When Mexico sends its people, they're not sending their best.'

Other Attacks against Mexicans/Mexican Americans

In addition to reporting on Trump's initial comments against Mexican immigrants, the AP covered other issues regarding Trump and Mexican Americans. One of the most infamous phrases Trump used to describe Mexican immigrants was the term Bad Hombres, with 'hombres' being the Spanish word for men. The word gained such notoriety that when reporting on a debate between Trump and Hillary Clinton the AP referred to the debate as a "'bad hombres' vs. 'deplorables'" a phrase that gained notoriety after it was used by Clinton to describe Trump's supporters. The AP also reported on other issues such as Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), for which Mexicans make up 81 percent of recipients (Batalova et al., 2020). On June 18 of 2016, the AP ran a story regarding Trump's use of the term Mexican to describe a judge presiding over a lawsuit Mr. Trump was involved in, and how the term has a history of being a racial slur (Contreras, 2016). While giving an interview Trump argued that the judge had "an inherent conflict of interest" because he was of Mexican descent and Trump was campaigning on a promise to build a wall on the U.S. Mexican border (Contreras, 2016).

In November of 2015, the NYT ran a story that reported on the congressional Hispanic caucus asked for Trump to be removed as a guest host of the T.V. show Saturday Night Live due to his history of using divisive and hurtful rhetoric (Parker, 2015). In May of 2016, the NYT reported that the president of Mexico had officially expressed criticism of Trump's comments. This was the first time the NYT had reported on such comments. In August of 2016, the NYT reported on how Mexican elites were responding to Trump's anti-Mexican stance. The article quotes prominent politicians, news anchors, and artists including reporting that these Mexican

elites referred to trump's views as being xenophobic. In February 2018 the NYT dedicated an entire article to fact-checking Trump's speeches.

In October of 2018, Reuters reported on Trump's attempts to militarize the border in anticipation of what claimed would be a surge of undocumented immigrants on a completely vulnerable border. Reuters reported that Trump's critics argued that trump had manufactured a crisis regarding immigration as a way to drive Republicans to the polls.

Neutralization and Normalcy of Racism

On June 15, 2015, Mr. Trump announced he was officially beginning his campaign to become the Republican nominee for the 2016 presidential election (Burns, 2015). In that speech, Trump uttered the first of what would become a string of seemingly endless prejudiced, racist, and or xenophobic comments. Despite the fact, each news organization would occasionally acknowledge that other organizations or political figures were addressing Trump's anti-Mexican sentiments as being racist, xenophobic, or white nationalist sentiments AP News, the New York Times, and Reuters never condemned Trump's language as racist.

The New York Times applied the strongest approach in refuting many of Trump's baseless claims. They often wrote about his speeches and statements to debunk them or provide clarity on the factual accuracy of the claims. In 2015 the NYT downplayed the racist and xenophobic nature of his labeling Mexican immigrants as rapists. Did provide quotes or paraphrases from political experts saying that Trump was bad for the Republican party. In 2016 the NYT mentioned the link between Trump and ethnocentrism. Since 2016 trump has been

referring to the flowing in of immigrants. The NYT reported on the Trump and overall republican strategy to appeal to white voters by playing on their fears and anxieties. Provided continued reporting on how trump was winning over the Republican base, reporting on white anxiety, on how trump was using conservative Hispanics as props to appeal to a Hispanic base. In 2017 the New York Times started to become more vocal in addressing Trump's claims. They became quick to announce any false or contradicting claims Trump made, yet they would still not call him a racist.

In 2018 things appeared as if they may change when the NYT wrote an article claiming that identity politics helped trump get into the white house. Ultimately no strong condemnation resulted from that article. Despite publishing 'Fact of the Day' articles meant to address Trump's false claims, this still refrained from calling him racist. In 2019 the New York Times published an article in which they covered Trump's racist comments against 4 congresswomen of color, despite including an abundance of quotes that included prominent political figures calling Trump's comments racist, the NYT only referring to Trump's xenophobic comments.

In comparison to the New York Times, Reuters frequently downplayed many of Trump's claims. Often referring to Trump's anti-Mexican sentiments as mere accusations. In 2015 they followed the trend of downplaying Trump's racist comments as political incorrectness. 2016 offered no real condemnation or judgment on trump, as Reuters chose instead to declare trump's commentary on Latinx immigrants as simply anti-immigrant or inflammatory. In 2017 they continued to downplay trump's comments, and when combined with their lack of context on certain issues led to an incomplete vision of current events. For example, their claim that the

relationship between Mexico and the Us was frayed as a result of trump's insistence that Mexico pay for a border wall is correct but factually incomplete as it shows a total disregard for the xenophobic vitriol spewed by trump throughout his presidential campaign. 2018 would be the year in which Reuters used the terms refugee and immigrant interchangeably. This directly impacts how the reader perceives individuals fleeing from their home countries. In 2019 was the year in which Reuters more frequently mentioned that Trump's critics were actively calling his anti-Mexican sentiments racist.

The Associated Press had a more centered approach regarding reporting on Trump. In 2015 they reported more on Trump's journey to becoming a presidential candidate when compared to the two other news outlets. They would provide context for some of trump's immigration plans, specifically the plans based on operation wetback. Ap did acknowledge the dark and racist history of the operation. In 2016 they provided readers with the context for a lot of the ties that Trump's campaign had to white nationalism, reported on the racist history of the America First slogan, reported on how white nationalists supported and advocated for trump's presidency. They also called out trump's false claims but did not condemn them, such as when trump claimed Obama started the Islamic state. In 2017 the AP Downplayed Trump's xenophobic approach to his 2016 campaign, but they also wrote an article providing in-depth context for why Trump's claim that Sweden was some post-apocalyptic immigrant hellhole was not backed up with facts. In 2018 when Trump was criticized for referring to immigrants as animals the ap supported seemed to support trump's claim that he was referring to gang members as immigrants and not immigrants. They did this by reporting that it was a phrase trumped used

often when referring to gang members but did not provide verifiable evidence nor did they acknowledge the xenophobic or prejudiced interpretation of the comments. 2019 continued the AP continued to downplay Trump's xenophobic language. It must be noted that the AP did acknowledge in an article that trump's political rise was based on his racial polarization but did not convey his views as racist.

After the Shooting

After the devastating terrorist attack in El Paso, there was a shift in how Trump's racism was reported on by the Associated Press, the New York Times, and Reuters. The following tables offer a breakdown of how the reporting changed. The categories for the articles analyzed in the month of the El Paso Shooting are structure the same as the categories for the articles analyzed in the finding chapter.

The first category, comments attributed to Trump, covers comments in which no type of addition was added in the reporting of Trump's statements, most often simply reporting that Trump had said something. These statements link the anti-Mexican immigrant views to Trump but didn't offer any type of analysis regarding his biases. The second category, words used as qualifiers, covers reporting that attempts to assign either a negative value towards trump's comments, for example, "railed" or "derided."

The third category, adjectives used in describing Trump's comments, covers comments in which the AP provided additional input when reporting, for example, the use of adjectives such as "controversial" or "aggressive." These adjectives seemed to downplay the anti-Mexican immigrant nature of Trump's comments by not acknowledging the racism. The fourth category

includes quotes by Trump showing bias, which were used to report his anti-Mexican bias while maintaining neutrality and not denouncing his racism directly. A negative bias covers any quotes that expressed racist ideas, negative portrayals of immigrants, xenophobic remarks, and/or attempts at linking immigrants with crime.

Table 16. AP News Reporting After El Paso Shooting

Year	Category 1	Category 2	Category 3
2019	Trump’s rhetoric	Railed Trump’s racial polarization	Racial provocations Incendiary Incendiary language Divisive language Anti-immigration rhetoric Tough talk on immigration

Table 17. Associated Press Reporting After El Paso Shooting of Trump Quotes

Year	Category 4
2019	“Invasion of illegals”

Table 18. New York Times Reporting After El Paso Shooting

Year	Category 1	Category 2	Category 3
2019	N/A	Trump embraced racist conspiracies	Anti-immigration screeds

Table 19. New York Times Reporting After El Paso Shooting of Trump Quotes

Year	Category 4
2019	“You look at what is marching up, that's an invasion !” “WHAT U REALLY SHOULD BE ANGRY ABOUT IS THE INVASION OF

	<p>MILLIONS OF ILLEGALS TAKING OVER AMERICA! NOT NOT Donald Trump “</p> <p>“We’re being invaded by drugs, by people, by criminals. And we have to stop it.”</p> <p>“We don't have a country right now”</p> <p>“We have people pouring in, they’re pouring in, and they’re doing tremendous damage”</p>
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Table 20. Reuters Reporting After El Paso Shooting

Year	Category 1	Category 2	Category 3
2019	He said that Mexicans were	Trump labeled illegal immigration Put-downs of Latino immigrants	Anti-immigrant rhetoric

Table 21. Reuters Reporting After El Paso Shooting, Trump’s Direct Quotes

Year	Category 4
2019	Ask about murders and rapists

As previously mentioned, on August 3rd, 2019 a domestic terror attack took the lives of twenty-two people in the name of ethnic defense (Walton, 2020). To avoid contributing to the infamy of the shooter, his name will not be utilized, being only be referred to as ‘the shooter’. In his manifesto the shooter explains that the defense of America from “ethnic replacement brought on by an invasion” was the reason for his attack (Crusius, 2019 as cited in Walton, 2020). While we cannot definitively conclude that Donald Trump was the inspiration for The Shooter’s motivation, we can compare the similarities in their messages.

On August 5, 2019, the New York Times reported that beginning in January of 2019 Donald Trump's re-election campaign posted more than 2,000 Facebook ads that included the word invasion (Kaplan, 2020). It is estimated that the Trump campaign spent more than 1.25 million dollars advertising immigration ads on both Facebook and Instagram (Kaplan, 2020). In an almost eerie comparison, in his manifesto, *The Shooter* reported that his actions were a direct response to the “Hispanic invasion of Texas” (Crusius, 2019 as cited in Walton, 2020).

The shooter firmly believes that Latinx immigration is the cause of America’s destruction (Walton, 2020). In his 2018 State of the Union address, Trump linked open borders with the corruption of American communities from drugs and gangs, claiming poor Americans had to fight for jobs, and that it led to the deaths of innocent Americans (State of the Union, 2018 as cited in Walton, 2020).

Out of the combined 211 times the Associated Press, the New York Times, and Reuters reported on Trump’s anti-Mexican sentiments, there was no instance in which they deemed his sentiments as racist. It was only after the white nationalist domestic terror attack in El Paso, Texas that the news organizations began to more vigorously link racism to Trump. Despite the white nationalist ideology behind the terror attack, only the New York times directly referred to Trump’s beliefs as racist. In an article published in August of 2019 the NYT reported that Donald Trump had “embraced racist conspiracies” like his belief that “unauthorized migrants ‘pour into and infest’ the United States (Bake and Shear, 2019). In an article published in 2016, Jorge Ramos, a prominent Spanish language news anchor, wrote a column in which he expressed that journalists, politicians, and voters will be judged in history by “how we responded to Donald

Trump. Like it or not, this election is a plebiscite on the most divisive, polarizing, and disruptive figure in American politics in decades. And neutrality is not an option.” (Bauder, 2016)

Limitations of the Study

The generalizability of the results is limited by the scope of the research as it focused solely on Trump’s anti-Mexican sentiments and how they were reported on by news organizations. The results are not indicative of how all of Trump’s anti-immigrant sentiments are presented. Despite the tendency to lump them together, there are significant differences between the ethnic groups that make up the Latinx community. The struggles and issues faced may have similarities but they are not uniform. While the results generated in this study may be indicative of a general trend regarding the reporting of anti-immigrant sentiments, the results found in this research project make no claims regarding how all anti-immigrant sentiments are presented in the news media.

The reliability of this data is impacted by how nuanced the expression of anti-Mexican attitudes can be. Not every anti-Mexican statement included blatantly racist, xenophobic, or negatively skewed language. Each statement had to be carefully examined to determine if enough anti-Mexican bias was present to qualify as an anti-Mexican sentiment. Some sentiments were not included in the final dataset, despite containing anti-Mexican bias, as they required readers to possess prior knowledge of historical events in order to meet the threshold of an anti-Mexican sentiment. There were instances in which some of Trump’s statements were so veiled and nuanced that they could not be considered anti-Mexican sentiments if read without the

knowledge of specific sociopolitical context, as there was no way to measure if the general public would reasonably conclude said statements were anti-Mexican sentiments, they were omitted from the dataset.

Conclusion

It is evident given this thesis that the language highlighted by the news media and used by Trump fails to be inclusive, diverse, respectful and mindful to Mexican Immigrants. We can see this occurrence with Trump's anti-immigration rhetoric against Mexican immigrants, from the beginning of his presidential campaign to the El Paso Massacre of 2019. In addition, although Trump has left the presidency, the anti-Mexican sentiments used and outlined in the three media outlets (Associate Press, New York Times and Reuters) selected for this study provides a historical mark to see racist, xenophobic, and prejudiced statements made by Donald Trump. Beyond this, studying this topic using news outlets identified by Ad Fontes Media provides a way to assess news organizations with neutral bias and reliable reporting. It is noted by downplaying the anti-Mexican nature of his comments, the news organizations neturalized and normalized Trump's rhetoric. Future research should explore what change, if any, has been established in the post, Trump Era.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX A



OFFICE OF RESEARCH COMPLIANCE

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS RIO GRANDE VALLEY

1201 West University Drive, Edinburg, Texas 78539

March 24, 2021

To: Carlos Vasquez

From: Office of Research Compliance

Subject: Determination – Non-Human Subjects Research

Project Title: The Brown Moral Panic: Analyzing the effect of Racially Divisive Appeals in the Trump Era

Dear Carlos,

We have determined that this project does not meet the HHS definition for human subjects research. Under this determination your project, as written, requires no further IRB oversight. If your project is modified, please contact our office to confirm that your project remains in the "Non-Human Subjects Research" category.

If you have any questions about this determination, please contact the UTRGV Office of Research Compliance at (956) 665-2093.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kimberly Fernandez". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Kimberly Fernandez
Sr. Research Compliance Specialist
Office of Research Compliance

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Carlos Vasquez received his undergraduate degree in criminal justice from the University of Texas Pan American in 2014 and a Master's degree in Criminal Justice from the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley in May 2021. While in graduate school Carlos worked as graduate research assistant in the criminal justice department at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV) and was involved in a number of student and academic organizations including the UTRGV chapter of the Alpha Phi Sigma National Criminal Honor Society, the McCain Institute's Student Alliance Against Trafficking, and the planning committee for South Texas College's Human Trafficking Conference.

In 2019 Carlos was accepted to present his thesis research at the American Society of Criminology. In 2020 he was selected to be a presenter at the National Association for Chicana and Chicano Studies. Mr. Vasquez has prior experience working with the Buffet-McCain Institute conducting outreach for labor trafficking. He also has experience working at an emergency youth shelter that helped ensure the safety and welfare of Unaccompanied Immigrant Minors. Mr. Vasquez can be reach at cavasq023@gmail.com .