The Role of Dehumanization in Shaping Attitudes about Undocumented Immigrants

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Abstract

In the context of undocumented immigration, dehumanization and humanization have potential to provide insight to the long sought-after question of what impacts public attitudes toward undocumented immigrants. The current study assessed whether dehumanizing and humanizing images and rhetoric impact political tolerance, prejudice, perceived threat, and immigration policy preferences. I hypothesized that dehumanization would predict less political tolerance for undocumented immigrants, support for more restrictive immigration policy, and a more negative view of undocumented immigrants overall, while humanization would do the opposite. It is important to investigate the role of both humanizing and dehumanizing rhetoric on attitudes about immigration policy to get a more holistic view of the effects of rhetoric and images. Moreover, investigating humanizing rhetoric and images provides somewhat of an introduction to potential moderating mechanisms on the effects of dehumanization. An online survey experiment was conducted to test the hypotheses. OLS regression models and a logit model found that those exposed to the dehumanization condition had significantly less political tolerance and more prejudice than those in both the control group and the humanization group. These findings provide interesting insights as to the nature of dehumanization and humanization in a political context.

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The Role of Dehumanization in Shaping Attitudes about Undocumented Immigrants

The use of hostility and dehumanization toward minority and immigrant groups has been widespread throughout history. From the Ellis Island days in the United States to contemporary depictions of terrorists and other political enemies, dehumanization has long been used to represent minorities or enemies, especially in political contexts. In 1924, a series of restrictive laws were passed regarding processes and inspections at Ellis Island, as a result of the concern that immigrants were vehicles for disease (Markel, 2000). More recently, Steuter & Willis (2009) found that the media in Canada consistently used dehumanizing language to represent Muslim citizens and enemy leaders.

The use of dehumanization to represent "enemy" minority groups in a political context is still prevalent in the United States in recent years and is specifically aimed toward immigrants from Mexico and Central America. In May of 2018, President Trump compared immigrants to animals, saying, "We have people coming into the country or trying to come in, 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." During the 2016 election, Trump notoriously said about Mexican immigrants, "They're bringing drugs. They're bringing crime. They're rapists. And some, I assume, are good people." Even more recently, in October of 2018, a host on Fox & Friends framed immigrants from Central America to be a threat when he asserted that they may be carrying diseases.

This rhetoric is widespread in the American media, making it easily accessible to the average media consumer. Corrigall-Brown (2012) noted that the average American in 2010 was spending over 5 months of every year being exposed to media. Since 2010, one can only assume that exposure to media has increased, especially with the rise of social media. There is, however,

very little existing research on the impact of such rhetoric or the images that often accompany it in today's media. Moreover, a recent study linked Trump votes to anti-immigrant sentiment, implying that this rhetoric has tangible political impact (Hooghe & Dassonneville, 2018).

Extreme and dehumanizing rhetoric and negative attitudes about immigrants today seem to disproportionately affect immigrants from Mexico, as they comprise the largest percentage of the American immigrant population at 26% (Lopez, Bialik, & Radford, 2018). The Pew Research Center estimates there to have been twelve million immigrants from Mexico in the United States as of 2016 (Gonzalez-Barrera & Krogstad, 2018). The recent negative rhetoric about Mexican immigrants seems to have some political and attitudinal consequences. Not only did anti-immigrant rhetoric significantly predict Trump votes, as noted before, but in California alone, the number of hate crimes against Latinos has increased by more than fifty percent since 2016 (Hinojosa, 2018). In a time where anti-immigrant rhetoric is on the rise and the public has more access to media than ever before, the increase in hate crimes against Latinos in California helps raise the question of the impact of such rhetoric, in the media and elsewhere, on the public's attitudes toward immigrants and immigration in the United States.

Providing further complexity to the issue, although Mexican immigrants are the largest immigrant population in the United States, the level of immigration from Mexico is decreasing and has declined by more than one million since 2007 (Gonzalez-Barrera & Krogstad, 2018). The decrease in immigration to the United States from Mexico seems contradictory considering the hostile and dehumanizing rhetoric observed in the past couple years. Further, it might seem like this decrease in immigration would correspond with a decrease in negative sentiments about immigrants in the United States, but it hardly seems as though this is the case. Data from the General Social Survey (GSS) covering 2008-2016 indicates that preferences regarding the level

of immigration in the United States have stayed relatively constant over that eight-year period, as shown in Figure 1 (Number of immigrants to America nowadays, 2016). With the issues of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and the border wall on Congress's legislative agenda, it is important to speculate as to why immigration policy preference hasn't changed, even while illegal immigration from Mexico to the United States has decreased.

The historical and contemporary significance of dehumanization on impacting public attitudes toward minority groups, along with the contradictory information that policy preferences have remained the same, even as immigration decreases lead me to question the mechanisms that may impact public attitudes regarding undocumented immigrants. More specifically, I am interested in the way rhetoric and media representations can affect attitudes about undocumented immigrants. The current study will explore the potential effects of dehumanization and humanization on political tolerance of immigrants, public attitudes toward immigrants, and opinion on immigration policy.

Review of Existing Literature

Economic vs Cultural Factors

Existing literature questioning what impacts public opinion on immigration often either looks toward economic or cultural threats to explain public attitudes toward immigrants in the United States and more specifically, to explain public opinion on immigration policy. Mayda (2006) found that economic variables, particularly labor market explanations, play a significant role in attitudes regarding immigration policy. Moreover, the study found that the significance of labor market explanation was not altered when other, noneconomic variables, were taken into account. Similarly, a study done by Scheve and Slaughter (2001) found that low-skilled workers

were more likely to support more restrictive immigration policies, providing support for labor

market based economic explanations of public preference surrounding immigration policy.

However, findings within this thread of literature are rather contradictory and, as a result,

many scholars have questioned the power of solely economic explanations for attitudes toward

immigrants and immigration policy preference and have supplemented this work with

noneconomic and cultural explanations, often suggesting that it is not one or the other but some

combination of the two that shapes public attitudes toward immigrants and opinion on

immigration policy (Burns & Gimpel, 2000; Malhotra, Margalit, & Hyunjung Mo, 2013;

Dustmann & Preston, 2007). While personal economic circumstances have been shown to have

minimal effect on immigration policy preferences, outlook about the state of the national

economy, as well as general feelings toward Hispanics do have a significant effect (Citrin,

Green, Muste, & Wong, 1997; Burns & Gimpel, 2000). Pertaining more to general attitudes

about immigrants, Burns and Gimpel (2000) suggest that a negative outlook about the national

economy can increase feelings of prejudice toward Hispanic immigrants, implying that it is not

either economic concerns or attitudes about race and culture that influence opinion, but a

combination of both.

Empathy and Humanitarianism

While much existing literature implies that some combination of economic concerns and

cultural concerns form opinions about immigrants and immigration policy, there is also a

growing body of literature suggesting that something much more innate can have an impact on

public opinion. Feldman and Steenbergen (2001), conducted phone interviews and asked

respondents questions that operationalized humanitarianism, followed by questions regarding

support for spending on certain welfare programs. The authors found that humanitarianism has a

significant positive effect on public preference for social spending, meaning that one's humanitarianism has potential to influence their policy preferences.

While this study demonstrates that humanitarianism and empathy have potential to influence public opinion, it does not inform the concept in the context of immigration. Batson and Ahmed (2009), in an attempt to determine how to improve intergroup relationships, examine the effect of four different forms of empathy on intergroup attitudes. Though the researchers found that all four types of empathy improve intergroup attitudes, they believe specifically that imagine-self perspectives and imagine-other perspectives can combine to increase intergroup relations by increasing aspects of relationships such as understanding and trust. Imagine self-perspective is conceptualizing how one would feel if placed in the situation of another and reduced stereotyping and leads to a more positive evaluation of both the individual out-group member whose situation a person is imagining and the out-group at large. Imagine-other perspective is imagining how someone must feel or think in regard to their situation and leads to greater concern for the out-group, greater willingness to aid the out-group, and greater empathetic concern. Provided this insight into the potential impact of empathy and humanitarianism on attitudes about outgroups, combined with the finding that invoking these concepts has an impact on policy support, it is easy to see how invoking empathy could impact public opinion on both attitudes about immigrants more generally and policies affecting immigrant populations.

Newman, Hartman, Lown, and Feldman (2013) seek to address this potential directly. The researchers ask whether humanitarianism can predict support for immigration, and more specifically, they seek to determine whether messages of humanitarianism can moderate the threat narrative that is often associated with immigrants. The threat narrative asserts that when

threats are posed to the ingroup, attitudes about immigration will consistently be more negative (Stephan et al., 2005). Though this narrative is common, Newman et al. (2013) wanted to determine if any factors could moderate the narrative and after conducting their own experiment in a North Carolina state election, researchers found that citizens who show greater humanitarianism tend to be more permissive on immigration. Further, they found that messages of humanitarianism reduce support for restricting access to government services for immigrants once they are in the country, providing evidence for the idea that negative attitudes caused by the threat narrative can be mediated.

Dehumanization

The growing body of literature on empathy and humanitarianism clearly demonstrates that there is reason to believe in a more innate motivation behind attitudes toward immigrants, along with demonstrating the power of rhetoric in shaping such attitudes. Newman, Hartman, Lown, and Feldman (2013) explored the impact on public opinion of seeing the innate humanness in others, but very little work has been done on the converse of this hypothesis. If humanitarian messages have an impact on public opinion surrounding immigration, surely dehumanizing messages will, as well.

There are two senses of humanness, which translate to two forms of dehumanization: animalistic dehumanization and mechanic dehumanization. Animalistic dehumanization is the result of denying one's human uniqueness, while mechanistic dehumanization is the result of denying human nature (Haslam, 2006). According to Haslam (2006), empathy should have no effect on animalistic dehumanization because it does not require the level of familiarity that mechanic dehumanization does. Further, dehumanization is often mentioned and used in the context of race and ethnicity, more specifically, in regard to immigration, making immigrants

particularly vulnerable to this mechanism (Haslam, 2006). This raises the interesting question of the potential impact of dehumanization on more general attitudes toward immigrants.

Though the literature on the relationship between dehumanization of immigrants and attitudes about immigrants is scarce, a small handful of scholars have found that dehumanization predicts support for restrictive or anti-immigrant policies (Ktiely & Bruneau, 2016; Utych, 2018). Kteily and Bruneau (2016) asked participants to rate Mexican and Muslim immigrants on multiple traits developed to indicate animalistic dehumanization. The authors found that individual willingness to blatantly dehumanize Mexican and Muslim immigrants was correlated with support for anti-immigrant policies and statements. Similarly, Utych (2018) ran an original experiment that exposed participants to one of two conditions. The first condition was a negative vignette about immigrants and the second condition was a negative vignette about immigrants that contained dehumanizing language attributing immigrants to disease. The study revealed that dehumanizing language can predict preference for more restrictive immigration policy. Pertaining more to attitudes about immigrants, the study revealed that dehumanizing language is correlated with harsher evaluations of immigrants. The study also found, however, that feelings of anger and disgust both mediate this finding (Utych, 2018). While previous studies have focused mainly on policy and negative feelings toward immigrants, they have yet to expand upon the potential impacts of dehumanization. My study will explore the impacts of dehumanization not only on immigration policy and feelings toward immigrants, but also on political tolerance of immigrants.

Political Tolerance

Political tolerance has been an instrumental component of public opinion research for the past few decades. It aims to measure one's willingness to ensure political access and rights to

objectionable or unacceptable groups of people (Sullivan, Marcus, Feldman, & Piereson, 1981). Political tolerance, or a lack thereof, has important political consequences. Political intolerance focused specifically on one group, usually a political minority, can increase support for restrictive policies targeting that group and, moreover, the passage of those restrictive policies as was seen in the Red Scare (Gibson, 1989). When political intolerance becomes pluralized, however, the policy effects are diminished and are replaced with a general unwillingness to share ideas (Gibson, 1989).

The current literature on political tolerance as it relates to immigrant groups is scarce, as most of the literature focuses on political minority groups. James Gibson (1989), found that Americans are extremely intolerant of minority political groups, specifically those they do not like. Moreover, he found very weak commitment to democratic liberties meaning that Americans were willing to take away basic liberties from the political minority groups they did not like. Political intolerance in the United States through the 1950s was focused on the political left, with wide consensus about the dislike of political leftists, like Communists. During this time, political implications of political intolerance were easy to see. The political intolerance of Communists led to the Red Scare in the United States, which manifested in McCarthyism and the passage of policies restricting the rights of Communists in the United States. Starting in the 1970s, however, the effect of less political tolerance toward minority groups has become more pluralized and, as a result, its effects have shifted from having direct relation to policy to a repression of the free exchange of ideas (Gibson, 1989).

Existing political tolerance literature also acknowledges the power of intolerance, especially relative to the power of tolerance. Gibson (1998) found that it was much easier to convince people to be intolerant than it was to convince people to be tolerant. In this study,

Gibson surveyed the Russian public and asked them what they would do if a political group they disliked wanted to put a candidate on the ballot. If respondents gave an intolerant response, researchers would respond with three tolerant counterarguments. Conversely, if respondents initially gave a tolerant response, they were countered with three intolerant arguments. Each time respondents were presented with a counterargument, they were given the opportunity to change their original response. Researchers found that presenting intolerant counterarguments to initially tolerant respondents was much more effective than presenting initially intolerant respondents with tolerant counterarguments (Gibson, 1998). The current literature demonstrates the strength and implications of political intolerance but focuses on political minority groups. My study will extend the findings of previous political tolerance research to undocumented immigrants in the United States.

Visual and Media Representations

Until now, literature on this topic has focused only on dehumanizing rhetoric but has failed to include images that lead to dehumanization as well. The current study will include images along with a vignette in order to better represent how people might come across dehumanizing rhetoric in a newspaper article or other form of media. In a society with increasing access to media, it is important to include images along with rhetoric, as the way information is presented is shifting to include more images. Farris and Mohamed (2018) analyzed how the media contributes to immigration politics by coding images from three major magazines in the US. Researchers found that the media portrays immigrants in a generally negative light and has a consistent threat narrative. Further, Esses, Medianu, and Lawson (2013) examined how media portrayals of immigrants affect dehumanization and found that media emphasis on threat when discussing immigration increases individuals' likelihood to dehumanize them. Soderland (2007)

also emphasizes the importance of images in portraying information and shaping opinions, saying that media coverage and certain images of poor immigrants led to a shift in the feelings of the public and to a change in policy. This study will fill a gap in the current literature by including images. Drawing on the findings of Esses, Medianu, and Lawson (2013), Farris and Mohamed (2018), and Soderland (2007) that the media plays an important role in portraying immigrants in a criminalizing light and in ways that promote dehumanization, and that the media portrayal of issues can lead to a shift in public feelings and policy, I will include images as an operationalization of dehumanization and humanization in my study.

Much existing literature surrounding public attitudes toward undocumented immigrants has traditionally centered around the threat narrative, focusing on both the perceived economic threat and perceived cultural threat that undocumented immigrants pose. A growing thread of literature, however, provides evidence that threat is not the only thing that impacts attitudes toward immigrants, but that rhetoric, specifically humanitarian messaging, can reduce support for restrictive policies. While this emerging literature points to the importance of messaging, very little literature exists regarding the effects of dehumanizing rhetoric on immigration attitudes. Moreover, the literature that does exist focuses only on rhetoric, omitting the use of images altogether, even in a time of increased media accessibility. Further, the scarce literature that does exist around the effects of dehumanization fail to include a counter-measure for potential mediating effects and only include policy and general negative attitudes about immigrants as measures.

The current study will expand upon all threads of existing literature on attitudes toward undocumented immigrants. I will investigate not only dehumanizing rhetoric, but also humanizing rhetoric to determine whether it also has an impact on public opinion and potentially

open the door for future research on possible mediating factors for dehumanizing rhetoric. I will

also include measures of political tolerance, a measure of public opinion that has been used for

years but that previous literature has failed to use when measuring attitudes toward immigrants.

Finally, I will include images along with rhetoric to more realistically represent the way the

American public consumes media and get a more accurate representation of the potential effects

of media rhetoric and images on attitudes toward undocumented immigrants.

Hypotheses

In this study, I will test three main hypotheses. Hypothesis 1 states that dehumanization is

expected to predict less political tolerance for undocumented immigrants, while humanization is

expected to predict more political tolerance. Gibson (1998) has found that people are quick to be

less tolerant of political minorities and I expect that this finding will translate to undocumented

immigrants as well. Moreover, I expect to see an increase in political tolerance for participants

exposed to the humanizing condition. While I expect a significant increase in political tolerance

toward undocumented immigrants for participants exposed to the humanizing image and

rhetoric, I expect this significance to be weaker than the effects seen from dehumanization. As

noted before, Gibson (1998) found that it is much easier to talk people out of tolerance than it is

to talk them into tolerance, demonstrating the inflexibility of intolerance. I expect the results of

this study to follow the findings of Gibson (1998), so that dehumanization will be a more

powerful predictor of political intolerance than humanization will be for political tolerance.

Hypothesis 2 expects that dehumanization will predict support for more restrictive

immigration policy preferences, while humanization will reduce support for more restrictive

immigration policies. Both Ktiely and Bruneau (2016) and Utych (2018) found support that

dehumanizing rhetoric gives way to support for more restrictive immigration policy preferences

from the public and I expect to find the same in my study. Further, existing research has started

to establish the power of humanitarianism and empathy on shaping public opinion and has found

that it can reduce support for harsher immigration policies among the public (Newman et al,

2013). Similarly, then, I predict that a less heavy-handed treatment of simply emphasizing the

humanness of immigrants from Mexico through both images and rhetoric in a news vignette will

lead to less support for strict immigration policies.

Hypothesis 3 states that dehumanization will lead to less favorable views of

undocumented immigrants as a whole, but humanization will lead to more favorable views.

Burns and Gimpel (2000) found that a negative outlook on the national economy leads to more

prejudice against Hispanics. More specifically, Utych (2018) determined that dehumanization led

to harsher views of immigrants. I expect that my findings will continue the trend of threat and

dehumanization leading to harsher evaluations of immigrants that is found in existing literature

on the topic.

Dehumanization, defined as, "the denial of full humanness to others" is often used in

relation to race and ethnicity and is seen in related concepts, such as immigration (Haslam, 2006,

p. 252). Moreover, it has many potential consequences for the groups it is used against. Haslam

(2006) outlines the potential effects of dehumanization such as ingroup aggression and

superiority toward the dehumanized group, violence, and negative evaluations of the

dehumanized group. Because dehumanization is prominent in relation to race and immigration,

its effects should be especially prominent when immigration is racialized, such as for immigrants

specifically from Mexico, as is the case in the current study. I expect dehumanization to have a

significant impact on all three of the measures discussed based on the consequences of

dehumanization detailed by Haslam (2006). Ingroup aggression toward and violence toward

dehumanized groups could easily translate into political intolerance and aggression could also manifest in more restrictive policy preferences. Given that dehumanization can lead to negative evaluations of the dehumanized group, I expect that it will lead to negative attitudes toward undocumented immigrants in the form of perceived threat and prejudice.

On the contrary, I expect that humanization will have the opposite effect of dehumanization, though its significance might be weaker. If dehumanization emphasizes ingroup-outgroup divisions, then humanization should do the opposite. I expect that those in the humanizing condition will see the outgroup as more similar to themselves than those in the dehumanizing condition and will react accordingly. People are more willing to punish people that they see as lacking human qualities (Haslam, 2006). If those human qualities and similarities are emphasized, the likelihood of respondents to punish the immigrant through political intolerance or policy, or evaluate the immigrant negatively, will be reduced and more favorable evaluations of the immigrant will be observed.

Inquiring about measures of political tolerance, immigration policy, and favorability of immigrants in general provides a holistic view of public attitudes about immigrants. The potential implications of political tolerance, by way of restrictive policy and reduced communication, make it an important concept to include in the study. Immigration policy has its own set of consequential outcomes for undocumented immigrants and is a good measure of how far people are willing to go to punish a dehumanized group. Further, general views or evaluations of immigrants through perceived threat and prejudice provide insight as to how people truly view immigrants and how rhetoric may impact that perception. Including all three of these evaluations allows for a holistic view of attitudes about immigrants, as well as insight into the overall consequences of dehumanization on the outgroup that it targets. The three hypotheses

outlined build on existing literature and provide new concepts for consideration in the literature on attitudes about undocumented immigrants.

Methods

Overview

In order to test my research question and determine whether dehumanization and humanization impact attitudes toward immigrants and immigration policy preferences among the public, I conducted a between-subjects, original survey experiment. The experiment was administered through Amazon's Mechanical Turk and participants were paid $0.35 as compensation for their participation in the survey experiment. The survey asked participants about many different topics concerning undocumented immigrants including their general feelings of warmth, perceived threat, political tolerance, and immigration policy preferences. Participants were also asked questions about their own levels of racism and empathy, along with some questions regarding demographics. There were three conditions each embedded with different language and images to vary the amount of dehumanization or humanization participants were exposed to. The study tested my hypotheses by investigating the main effects of dehumanizing and humanizing rhetoric and images on political tolerance, immigration policy preferences, and evaluations of undocumented immigrants.

Participants

The sample for this study had 1512 participants in total, with 730 males, 772 females, and 10 others. Participants were between the ages of 18 and 82 (M=33.00, SD=14.03). The survey was posted on Amazon's Mechanical Turk and participants read a statement of informed consent before agreeing to take the survey. They were then assigned to one of the three possible

conditions. The dehumanizing condition contained 512 participants, the humanizing condition

contained 511 participants, and the control condition contained 489 participants.

Measures

Participants in all three conditions were exposed to a question meant to ensure that there

were no bots in the survey before being exposed to the vignette. The question read, "A dog is

bigger than a mouse, but smaller than an elephant. What does the previous sentence imply?" If

participants were able to answer this question correctly, they were randomly assigned to one of

the three survey conditions previously described. Immediately after taking the survey,

participants were asked to answer a reading comprehension question to ensure that they carefully

read the vignette they were assigned. If respondents were able to answer this question correctly,

they were exposed to a feeling thermometer question meant to measure prejudice against

immigrants.

Following the feeling thermometer question were three questions measuring perceived

threat (a=.88). These questions were measured on a scale of 1-5 (1=*strongly agree* to 5=*strongly*

disagree) and asked participants to rate their agreement with statements like "Undocumented

immigrants are a threat to American culture." For statistical purposes, the answers to these

questions were later recoded so that a higher number on the scale indicated a higher level of

perceived threat. Respondents were then asked to answer two questions measuring political

tolerance (a=.64). These questions were also measured on a five-point scale (1=*no, certainly not*

to 5=*yes, definitely*) and asked respondents to determine whether they would be willing to accept

different actions done by illegal immigrants. For example, participants were asked to rate their

acceptance of free speech when asked, "Would you accept it when an undocumented immigrant

makes a public speech in your town?"

Participants were then exposed to five questions regarding immigration policy (a=.64) These questions contained immigration policies pertaining to a wide range of currently relevant immigration policy issues, from the amount of immigration allowed in the US, to immigration policies that would impact undocumented immigrants already in the country. These questions were dichotomous, asking that respondents either choose to favor or oppose the policy (1=*favor*, 2=*oppose*). An example of the sort of dichotomous statement participants were asked to respond to is, "Do you favor or oppose making it harder for people to legally immigrate to the United States?" All five questions pertaining to immigration policy were later recoded so that a higher number on this dichotomous scale meant that the respondent favored more restrictive immigration policy.

Finally, participants were exposed to eight questions measuring racism (a=.85) and one question measuring trait empathy before answering a series of eight demographic questions. Questions measuring racism were adapted from the Symbolic Racism Scale (Henry and Sears, 2002) and were changed slightly to make them more widely applicable to minority groups other than blacks. The Symbolic Racism Scale was created in response to criticisms of other racism scales and to avoid mindless responses or biased patterns of response, making it a good scale to use in the current study. To measure empathy, I used the single item trait empathy scale (SITES) from Konrath, Meier, and Bushman (2016). At the very end of the survey, there was a comment box for participants to convey any further thoughts on the topic.

Procedure

Each condition in the survey experiment began with a fabricated newspaper vignette from the "Washington Post." Participants were asked to read the vignette in conjunction with the image before being exposed to a series of questions asking about prejudice, perceived threat of

immigrants, political tolerance, preference on immigration policy, racism, trait empathy, and demographics.

Participants in the current study were randomly assigned to one of three conditions. The first condition, the dehumanizing condition, contained a fabricated newspaper vignette titled, "An Ongoing Problem: Illegal Immigrants Flooding the United States." The vignette was embedded with dehumanizing language and accompanied by a dehumanizing image. The paragraph included explicitly dehumanizing the immigrant described, including concern of disease and crime, and depicting the immigrant as immoral or irrational for their choice to cross the border illegally. Dehumanization in this vignette was operationalized through Nick Haslam's (2006) definition of animalistic dehumanization, as it is emphasized that animalistic dehumanization is most often used to characterize ethnic outgroups (p. 260). Animalistic dehumanization denies people of human uniqueness traits such as refinement, moral sensibility, and civility, leading to their perception as, "coarse, uncultured, lacking in self-control, and unintelligent" (p. 258). Elements of animalistic dehumanization in relation to traits of human uniqueness are better represented in Figure 2.

The second condition in the study was a humanizing condition. Participants in this condition were exposed to a fabricated newspaper vignette titled, "An Ongoing Problem: The Illegal Immigrant's Rational Choice," which was embedded with humanizing language and accompanied by a humanizing image as opposed to the dehumanizing language and image included in the first condition. The paragraph intended to humanize the immigrant and included language emphasizing immigrants' families, their rationality, and quite simply, their humanness. The language in this vignette was also adapted from the definition of animalistic dehumanization provided by Haslam (2006) and uses language opposite of that included in the dehumanizing

vignette. This vignette focuses on the common connections between the life of the immigrant described and the life of the reader or the lives of people the reader knows and puts emphasis on the rationality behind the immigrant's choice to enter the United States illegally.

Finally, the third possible condition for participants was the control condition. In this condition, participants were, again, exposed to a fake newspaper vignette accompanied by a title and an image. In the control condition; however, the vignette is essentially a skeleton of the other two conditions, describing the immigrant and her background but omitting any evocative language that portrays the immigrant as more or less human. The control vignette was titled, "Illegal Immigration in the United States." The control vignette was intended to introduce participants to the topic of illegal immigration, while avoiding any potential priming effects. OLS regression analyses and logit analyses were used to test each of the hypotheses and investigate the main effect of condition on political tolerance, immigration policy preferences, and evaluations of undocumented immigrants.

The photos used for each condition were selected based on the criteria for animalistic dehumanization detailed in Haslam (2006). The dehumanizing image portrayed the undocumented immigrant as unrefined and uncivil, as well as lacking in self-control, while the humanizing condition emphasized civility and self-control and further humanized the undocumented immigrant through the inclusion of a child in the photo. These images were selected based on the opinions of a small group of people who rated five dehumanizing and five humanizing images in terms of the perceived humanness of the immigrant in each image.

Throughout each vignette, certain elements were held constant to limit the variability in the content and get accurate responses on the survey. The descriptive information about the immigrant was held constant through all three vignettes, so the name, gender, and nationality of

the immigrant in each vignette were the same, as was her occupation, family, and the US city she

hoped to enter. Moreover, the immigrant's intent to cross the border was held constant. The

vignettes differed in the language they used to describe the immigrant's intentions and journey.

Each vignette contained three quotes, two from citizens of the city the immigrant was hoping to

enter and one from the mayor of that city. The quotes in the vignettes were included to make the

idea of a newspaper article seem more realistic to participants and were where most of the

humanizing or dehumanizing rhetoric was embedded. The control vignette did not contain any

quotes because it did not contain any evocative language.

Results

Hypothesis 1

To test the hypothesis that dehumanization would predict lower levels of political

tolerance and humanization would predict higher levels of political tolerance, an OLS regression

analysis was used. Political tolerance (M=4.48, SD=2.29) was measured using two questions

asking respondents if they would accept undocumented immigrants having certain rights. One

question asked respondents if they would accept an undocumented immigrant giving a speech in

their town, while the other asked respondents if they would be willing to give immigrants the

right to vote. The regression indicated that there was a statistically significant relationship

between the dehumanizing condition and the dependent variable of political tolerance (t= -2.88,

$p < .01$). There was not, however, a statistically significant relationship between the humanizing

condition and levels of political tolerance (t= -.28, $p > .05$).

These results provide interesting insight to attitudes about undocumented immigrants.

Dehumanizing images and rhetoric significantly predict lower levels of political tolerance,

meaning that participants who were exposed to the dehumanization condition were less likely to

grant political rights like free speech and voting to immigrants. Further, the humanizing

condition was statistically insignificant, meaning that images and rhetoric that emphasized the

humanness of undocumented immigrants did not significantly increase participants' levels of

political tolerance, as I had originally hypothesized. This result makes sense given the Gibson

(1998) findings that intolerance was much less flexible than tolerance; however, I find it

interesting that there was not even a slight effect of humanization. This could be a result of the

manipulation, as it is possible it was too subtle, or perhaps humanization is not an effective

mechanism for increasing political tolerance. The results of this hypothesis can be seen in Table

1 and Figure 3 below.

Condition	Observations	Coefficient	Standard Error	t	P>|t|	R^2
Dehumanizing	512	-.4183869	.1450601	-2.88	0.004*	.007
Humanizing	511	-.0411767	.1450601	-.28	0.777	
Constant		4.634497	.1036996			

Table 1. Condition and Political Tolerance (* indicates statistical significance)
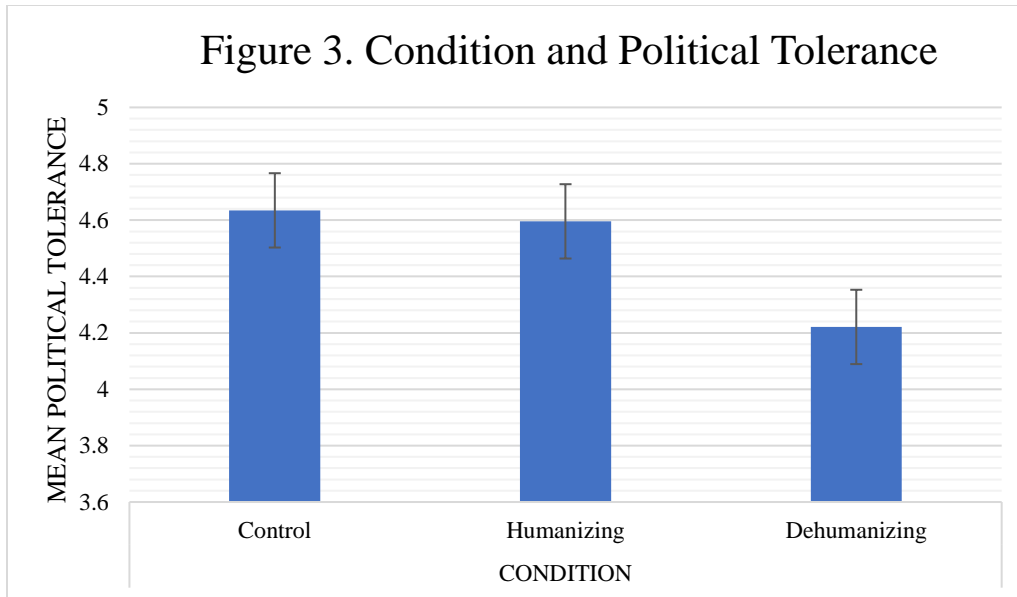
Figure 3. Experimental condition and political tolerance of undocumented immigrants.

Hypothesis 2

A logit model was used to test the hypothesis that dehumanization would predict support for more restrictive immigration policy and humanization would predict support for less restrictive immigration policy. Immigration policy was measured through five questions on the survey asking respondents about immigration policies pertaining to letting immigrants into the country, as well as questions regarding policies that would affect undocumented immigrants already in the United States. The logit indicated that there was no statistically significant relationship between either the dehumanizing condition, ($z=1.83$, $p >.05$) or the humanizing condition and the dependent variable of immigration policy preference ($M=1.78$, $SD=1.45$) ($z=0.16$, $p > .05$). This indicates that respondents' views of immigration policy did not change based on newspaper vignette they received in the survey.

Contrary to what I had expected, dehumanization did not significantly predict support for more restrictive immigration policies. Furthermore, humanization did not significantly decrease support for these policies. These results show that whether or not people see undocumented

immigrants as human has no bearing on their policy preferences. Perhaps people need to feel

threatened by undocumented immigrants in order to desire more restrictive legislative action and

dehumanization, while it strips people of their humanness, does not make people feel threatened.

Conversely, it is possible that people need more than to see undocumented immigrants as human

to support less restrictive policies. Perhaps something like humanitarianism, discussed by

Newman et al. (2013), that appeals to one's desire to help those less well-off, is more effective in

drawing support for less restrictive policies. The results of Hypothesis 2 can be seen in Table 2

below.

Condition	Observations	Coefficient	Standard Error	z	P>|z|	chi^2
Dehumanizing	512	.2828387	.1546398	1.83	0.067	4.13
Humanizing	511	.0244472	.148637	0.16	0.869	
Constant		1.145909	.1061339			

Table 2. Condition and immigration policy preferences

Hypothesis 3

To test the hypothesis that dehumanization will lead to harsher views of immigrants and

humanization will lead to less harsh views of immigrants, the current study used an OLS

regression analysis once again. To measure harsh views of immigrants, I used questions asking

about the perceived warmth of undocumented immigrants, which indicated prejudice and the

survey questions asking about perceived threat of immigrants. The question about perceived

warmth was a feeling thermometer question, asking respondents to rate the warmth of

undocumented immigrants on a scale of 0-100, with zero being very cold and 100 being very

warm. The threat measure was a series of three questions asking about the threat undocumented immigrants pose to American culture, norms, and identity. The regression analysis indicated that there was no statistically significant difference between either the humanizing, (t= -0.24, p >.05) or the dehumanizing condition, (t=1.45, p>.05) and the control condition on the dependent variable of threat (M=4.74, SD=3.79). This indicates that taking away or emphasizing the humanness of undocumented immigrants does not affect how threatened people feel by them. People might need to see undocumented immigrants as human to view them as a threat, so dehumanization may not make them feel significantly more threatened. Conversely, humanization may not make people feel significantly less threatened because they weren't threatened to begin with. When there is no perceived threat, it's impossible to reduce the threat. The results of the effect of condition on perceived threat of undocumented immigrants can be seen in Table 3.

Although perceived threat was not significantly related to either dehumanization or humanization, there was a statistically significant difference between the dehumanization condition and the control condition on the feeling thermometer question (M=55.87, SD=26.50) intended to measure prejudice (t=-2.01, p < .05). There was no statistically significant difference in feelings of warmth between the humanizing condition and the control condition (t=.73, p >.05). This indicates that, although dehumanization had no significant effect on perceived threat of undocumented immigrants, it does have an effect on participants' perceived warmth of undocumented immigrants. Dehumanization decreases the perceived warmth of immigrants and, because the question was measuring prejudice, increased prejudice toward undocumented immigrants. Seeing people as less human, therefore, makes people more prejudiced toward them. It makes sense that the less human someone seems, the less warm they will appear. It is easy to

be prejudiced against people you do not know or who you view as irrational and immoral. This argument, however, provides interesting complications to the discovery that humanization was not significantly predictive of more feelings of warmth and less prejudice. It is possible that it is easier for people to lean into their prejudice than be talked out of it, as is the case with tolerance (Gibson, 1998). It is also possible, however, that a more heavy-handed treatment is needed to achieve a significant effect here, and that rhetoric and images are not strong enough to elicit feelings of warmth. The results indicating the impact of the condition on the perceived warmth of immigrants can be seen in Table 4 and Figure 4 below.

Condition	Observations	Coefficient	Standard Error	t	P>|t|	R^2
Dehumanizing	512	.348891	.2402181	1.45	0.147	0.0023
Humanizing	511	-.0579951	.2409163	-0.24	0.810	
Constant		4.639344	.1717219			

Table 3. Condition and perceived threat of undocumented immigrants

Condition	Observations	Coefficient	Standard Error	t	P>|t|	R^2
Dehumanizing	512	-3.407857	1.69286	-2.01	0.044*	0.0056
Humanizing	511	1.230242	1.694512	0.73	0.468	
Constant		56.61345	1.212251			

Table 4. Effect of condition on perceived warmth of undocumented immigrants
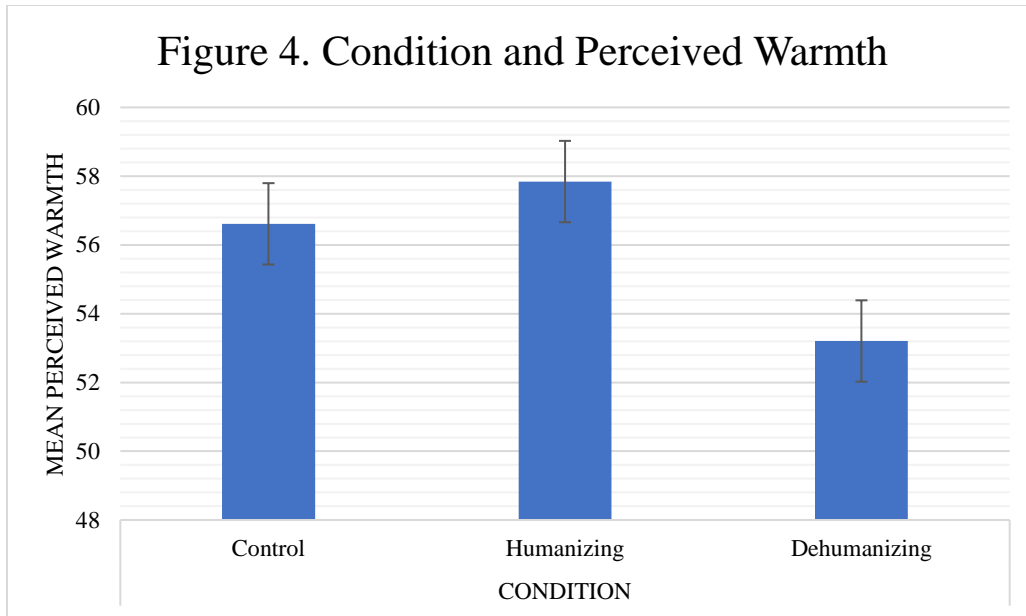(* indicates statistical significance)

Figure 4. Condition and perceived warmth of undocumented immigrants.

Discussion

The current study examines the effects of dehumanizing and humanizing images and rhetoric on political tolerance, immigration policy preference, and overall negative views of immigrants through measurements of perceived warmth and perceived threat. The study had three main hypotheses: 1) dehumanization would predict less political tolerance for immigrants and humanization would predict more political tolerance, 2) dehumanization would predict greater support for more restrictive immigration policies, while humanization would predict support for more permissive policies, and 3) dehumanization would lead to more negative evaluations of undocumented immigrants overall, while humanization would lead to more favorable views.

The results of the OLS regression models found support for the part of Hypothesis 1 that predicted that dehumanization would lead to less political tolerance. When people view undocumented immigrants as less human, they are less willing to guarantee them political rights, especially those of free speech and the right to vote. These results signify that dehumanization

can be a powerful mechanism to decrease political tolerance. Political intolerance can have many implications. When political intolerance is targeted by society at a specific group of individuals, as it was during the Red Scare, it can manifest as restrictive policy specifically targeting that group. However, when political intolerance is more pluralized, not targeting one specific group, Gibson (1998) says that it can have negative effects on the exchange of thoughts and ideas. Because previous research on political tolerance focuses on political minorities in the United States, I do not think the implication of political tolerance in restricting the free exchange of ideas would translate to undocumented immigrants. Decreased political tolerance regarding undocumented immigrants, I believe, would lead to more hostile attitudes and behaviors toward the group and potentially, should it be become more targeted, policy implications.

Also in Hypothesis 1, the current study discovered that the humanizing condition did not have a significant effect on political tolerance. Contrary to what I had predicted, then, humanization does not increase political tolerance for undocumented immigrants. This is in line with previous literature that demonstrates the flexibility of tolerance as opposed to the inflexibility of intolerance (Gibson, 1998). It is much easier, as shown in this study, to talk people out of tolerance and into intolerance than it is to talk somebody out of intolerance into tolerance. Given that humanizing undocumented immigrants is not enough to increase political tolerance, I think that a more humanitarian approach would be much more effective, as it would appeal to people's urge to help those less well-off than themselves and has potential to lead to more leniency regarding granting rights to or protecting the rights of undocumented immigrants.

No support was found for Hypothesis 2 in the current study, indicating that neither dehumanizing or humanizing undocumented immigrants has a significant impact on immigration policy preferences. The finding that dehumanizing language and images do not impact policy

preference is contradictory to the findings of Utych (2018) that dehumanization increased

support for more restrictive immigration policy preference. I suspect this inconsistency to be due

in part to differences in the operationalizations of dehumanization. Utych (2018) operationalized

dehumanization in a more straightforward manner, including language in the study that

specifically attributed immigrants to disease. In my study, on the other hand, I took the

components of animalistic dehumanization detailed by Haslam (2006) and incorporated them

into a newspaper vignette. It is possible, then that the dehumanization manipulation in this

experiment was simply not strong enough to elicit results for immigration policy. If this is the

case, it shows that it is much more difficult to convince people to punish undocumented

immigrants legislatively than it is to make them politically intolerant, as dehumanization was

significantly related to political tolerance, but not policy preferences.

The insignificant results of dehumanization on policy preference; however, could indicate

that the political intolerance of undocumented immigrants is not yet targeted enough among the

entire American public to result in restrictive policy. I would argue that the correlation between

targeted political intolerance and restrictive policy preferences can be seen anecdotally in the

polarization of immigration policy, as the Republican party has rallied around hard line

immigration restriction through increasing border security and repealing the Deferred Action for

Childhood Arrivals (DACA). The insignificance of dehumanization on policy preference in

tandem with its significance on political intolerance suggest that the political intolerance

observed regarding undocumented immigrants is still pluralized among the public and is not yet

targeted enough to cause widespread support for restrictive policies.

The insignificance of humanization in Hypothesis 2 indicates that simply seeing someone

as more human is not enough to motivate more permissive policy preferences. Similar to the

findings of Newman et al. (2013), I would argue that these results indicate that something much stronger is needed to influence the policy preferences of individuals. Humanitarianism, or appealing to one's desire to help someone in worse conditions than themselves, is most likely a more powerful way to influence the policy preferences of individuals to be more permissive on immigration policy.

The results of Hypothesis 3 indicate that there is a significant effect on the dehumanizing condition for perceived warmth, or prejudice against, undocumented immigrants, but not for perceived threat of undocumented immigrants. This indicates that when people view someone as less human, they are significantly less likely to view them warmly and are more likely to have prejudice against them but are not significantly more likely to feel threatened by them. It is possible that taking away someone's human qualities diminishes their ability to be threatening because they are no longer seen as human and possibly no longer seen as capable of being threatening. This also indicates that perhaps one's feelings toward immigrants are more significantly impacted by dehumanization than their fears about immigrants.

Humanization, once again, did not have a significant effect on either feelings of warmth or perceived threat. This indicates that simply seeing someone as human is not enough to shift one's feelings of prejudice toward the individual or their perceived threat of that individual. Perhaps invoking empathy would be a more impactful way to influence feelings of warmth because if people are able to see themselves in the shoes of the undocumented immigrant, as opposed to simply seeing them as human, they will be more likely to view them favorably.

The significance of both prejudice and political tolerance in the dehumanization condition not only suggest that dehumanization significantly impacts the way people view undocumented immigrants and their willingness to give them rights, but also indicates that

prejudice may be a factor by which political tolerance is decreased. In other words, perhaps if someone is more prejudiced toward a certain group, they will exhibit less political tolerance for that group, as both factors were affected by dehumanization. If someone shows more prejudice toward an individual and views them with less warmth, it makes sense that they would be more willing to take political freedoms from that individual. I do not think, then, that these two findings should be viewed completely separately, but should be discussed in terms of the potential impact of one on the other.

The results of this study also provide support for previous literature that shows the significance of the threat narrative, both economic and cultural, in determining immigration policy preferences (Burns & Gimpel, 2000; Malhotra, Margalit, & Hyunjung Mo, 2013; Dustmann & Preston, 2007). Neither perceived threat or policy preference were significantly related with dehumanization. This makes sense in the context of previous literature, as if one were significant, it would be expected for the other to be significant. The insignificance of both of these measures in the current study points to their potential relationship with one another. The absence of significance for both the perceived threat of immigrants and immigration policy preference is consistent with previous literature attributing threat to policy preference, indicating that threat may indeed be the root of immigration policy preference.

Overall, the current study demonstrates that dehumanizing rhetoric has important implications in some places, where it may not in others. Dehumanizing images and language have significant effects on people's political tolerance and their levels of prejudice. This suggests that dehumanization is a much more targeted mechanism for shaping attitudes than was perhaps previously thought. Moreover, I would argue that the areas in which dehumanization did significantly impact respondents' opinions are those areas in which responses are much more

innate. Dehumanization impacts feeling, not reasoning, which is why insignificance is seen in perceived threat and immigration policy preference, but not in political tolerance or perceived warmth/prejudice.

Implications

This study provides many potential implications for public attitudes toward and relationships with undocumented immigrants from Mexico in the United States. First off, it shows that rhetoric and images do matter and have political implications. More specifically, the results show that dehumanizing rhetoric and images encourage prejudice and political intolerance toward undocumented immigrants.

The finding that political tolerance is significantly affected by dehumanization comes with its own set of implications. People are much less willing to grant rights to undocumented immigrants if they view them as less human. Moreover, Gibson (1998), notes that targeted dehumanization can result in restrictive legislative consequences. Though this clearly has yet to be seen, should dehumanization of undocumented immigrants increase to a level where political intolerance is targeted and widespread, it is possible that this will manifest in more restrictive immigration policies.

It is also important to examine the findings of this study in the context of the current political climate. President Trump has blatantly dehumanized undocumented immigrants, specifically those from Mexico and Central America, throughout his campaign and his presidency. The results of this study show that this rhetoric leads to political intolerance and increased prejudice. Anti-immigrant rhetoric, especially that which includes dehumanization, therefore, should not be taken lightly, as it can have important implications for attitudes about the group being dehumanized. Further, in a political climate where anti-immigrant rhetoric is

widespread and dehumanization is seeping into colloquial language, we should be cognizant of our own rhetoric about undocumented immigrants, knowing that it has consequences.

The insignificant findings in this study also have important implications and help determine the impacts of dehumanization in the political realm. From the results of the current study, as noted earlier, it appears as though dehumanization is not a blanket mechanism that impacts all negative and restrictive attitudes, but rather has a much more targeted effect. Dehumanization did not influence either policy preference or perceived threat of immigrants, indicating that, as previous research has demonstrated, economic and cultural threat may be the primary mechanisms motivating immigration policy preferences (Burns & Gimpel, 2000; Malhotra, Margalit, & Hyunjung Mo, 2013; Dustmann & Preston, 2007). This study shows that political tolerance for immigrants is decreased and prejudice against immigrants is increased when exposed to dehumanization; however, the insignificant findings indicate that dehumanization may not have such a broad impact on opinion because it does not matter for perceived threat or policy preference. Knowing the more targeted implications of dehumanization could make it easier to develop interventions that will counteract its effects.

The insignificant effects of humanizing rhetoric on political tolerance, policy preferences, and negative evaluations of undocumented immigrants are discouraging, but I do not believe that humanizing rhetoric should be completely discounted. The manipulation used in this study was fairly subtle, in that it only emphasized the undocumented immigrants as being human. Before discounting the power of humanization in shaping attitudes about undocumented immigrants, researchers should try a more heavy-handed approach to the concept. Perhaps humanization should be used in such a way that invokes empathy or encourages humanitarianism.

Humanization in itself may not be strong enough to impact public opinion or overcome the power of dehumanization, but it should not be disregarded until more research is done.

Limitations and Direction for Future Research

One limitation worth noting in the current study is that it was done through Amazon's Mechanical Turk. Participants were able to choose to take the survey, which could have led to a self-selection bias, unintentionally recruiting people who are more interested in politics than the average worker on Mechanical Turk.

While the current research has important implications, the scarcity of the literature on this topic provides opportunity for much expansion in future research. The current study included images as part of the conditional vignettes in order to mimic the presentation of news seen in a newspaper or on TV. This study did not, however, investigate the impact of these images on attitudes toward immigrants and opinion on immigration policy. Future research should seek to isolate images in order to determine the effect of dehumanizing images on attitudes toward immigrants. This would provide a more holistic picture of the impact the media may actually be having on its consumers.

Further, with the number of hate crimes against Latinos on the rise, it is important to consider the behavioral translations of lower political tolerance and increased prejudice toward immigrants. (Hinojosa, 2018). The current study has demonstrated that dehumanizing rhetoric and images leads to less political tolerance and more prejudice, so future research should focus on the ways in which these attitudinal implications translate to behaviors. This could provide important information as to what drives people to commit hate crimes and would provide a better understanding of the wider implications of dehumanization.

Finally, future research should focus on potential mechanisms for mediation. The current study demonstrated the negative political effects of dehumanization on attitude but did not investigate if any mechanisms were available to mediate this effect. Given the findings of Gibson (1998) that is it easier to encourage political intolerance than it is to encourage political tolerance, it is important that future research focus on a mediating factor so that the negative impacts of dehumanization on attitudes toward immigrants can be curbed.

Concluding Thoughts

Throughout this thesis, I have argued generally that dehumanizing rhetoric and images have important implications for attitudes toward immigrants and immigration policy preferences. Existing literature on this topic is scarce, as the political outcomes of dehumanization have often been overlooked. The current study, however, found that dehumanization has significant implications for political tolerance and prejudice toward undocumented immigrants. It also found, however, that humanizing rhetoric had no effect on political tolerance, policy preference, or evaluations of undocumented immigrants. The findings on dehumanization provide an argument that this specific subject should be researched more thoroughly so that its impacts, both attitudinal and behavioral can be addressed. The null results on the concept of humanization indicate that more research should be done to identify potential mediating factors, or positive factors that are strong enough to influence public opinion. Overall, more research should be done to identify and prevent the potential wide-scale implications of dehumanizing rhetoric about immigrants.
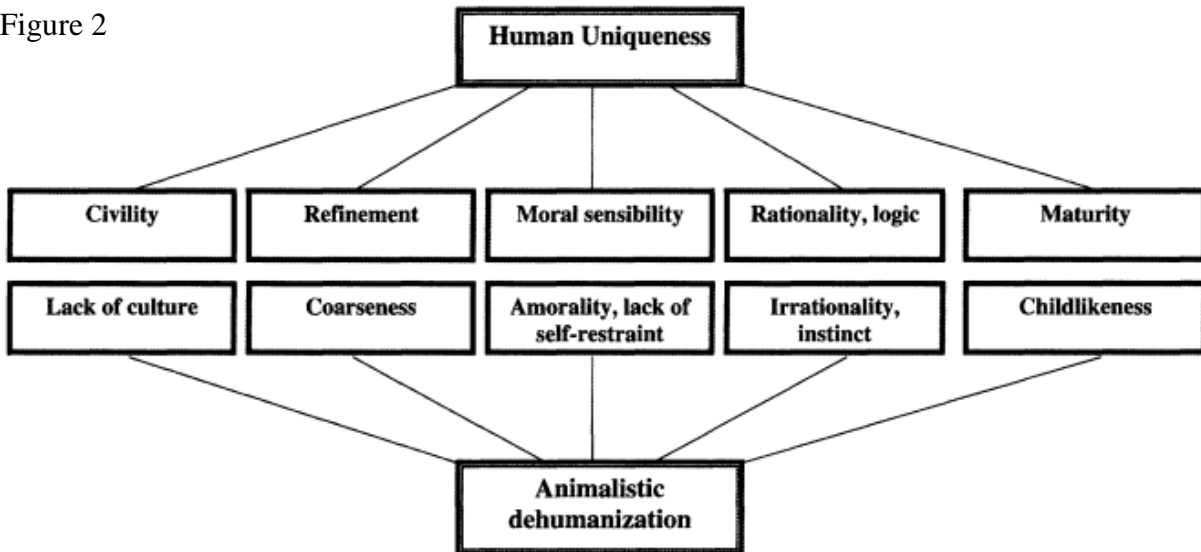
Appendix

Figure 1. GSS Data: Level of immigration in the United States
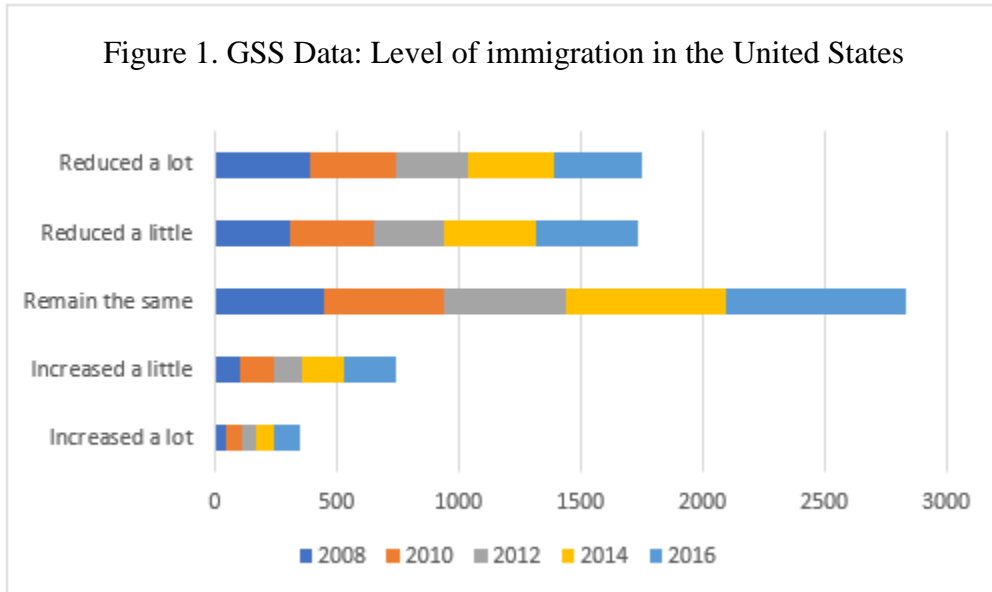
(*Figure 1*: GSS Data regarding level of immigration in the United States; data courtesy of GSS.

Question: The Number of Immigrants to America Nowadays Should Be)

Figure 2

(*Figure 2*: Human Uniqueness traits in Relation to Animalistic Dehumanization (Haslam, 2006)).

Survey

Preliminary Question:

A dog is bigger than a mouse, but smaller than an elephant. What does the previous sentence imply?

- A dog is smaller than a mouse
- A dog is very big
- A dog is the biggest
- An elephant is bigger than a dog

Question 1: Who does Maria Gonzalez want to bring with her to the United States?

- Her dog
- Nobody
- Her two children and husband
- Her brother

Question 2: Give undocumented immigrants in the US a rating, with 100 meaning a very warm, favorable feeling, zero meaning a very cold, unfavorable feeling, and 50 meaning not particularly warm or cold. If you are unable to give an opinion or do not have an opinion, please indicate that below

- DROP DOWN CHOICES FROM 0-100 IN INCREMENTS OF 5

Question 3: American identity is being threatened because there are too many undocumented immigrants

1 – strongly agree
2 – agree
3 – neither agree nor disagree
4 – disagree
5 – strongly disagree

Question 4: American norms and values are being threatened because of the presence of undocumented immigrants

1 – strongly agree
2 – agree
3 – neither agree nor disagree
4 – disagree
5 – strongly disagree

Question 5: Undocumented immigrants are a threat to the American culture

1 – strongly agree
2 – agree

3 – neither agree nor disagree
4 – disagree
5 – strongly disagree

Question 6: Would you accept it when an undocumented immigrant makes a public speech in your town?
     1 – no certainly not
     2 – probably not
     3 – neutral
     4 – probably
     5 – yes, definitely

Question 7: Would you be willing to guarantee the political right to vote in elections to immigrants?

     1 – no certainly not
     2 – probably not
     3 – neutral
     4 – probably
     5 – yes, definitely

Question 8: Do you favor or oppose building a wall along the US-Mexico border to try to stop illegal immigration?
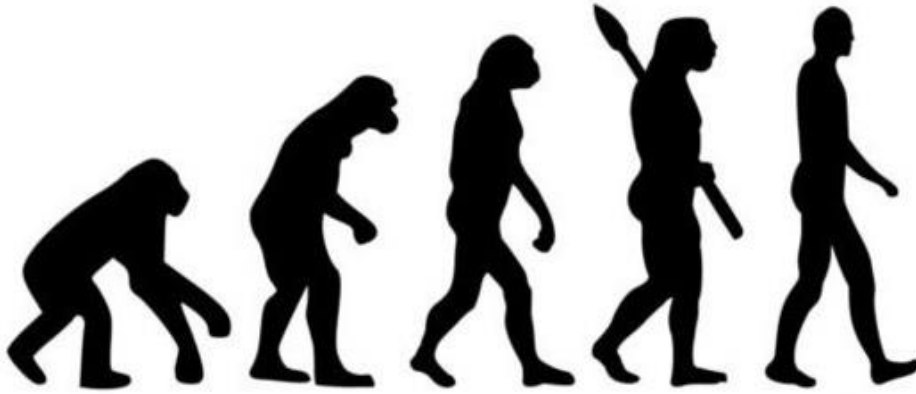
- Favor
- Oppose

Question 9: In general, do you favor or oppose allowing illegal immigrants currently living in the United States to remain in the country and eventually qualify for citizenship?

- Favor
- Oppose

Question 10: Do you favor or oppose abolishing US Immigration and Customs Enforcement known as ICE?

- Favor
- Oppose

Question 11: People may vary on how human-like they seem. Some people may seem highly evolved, whereas others seem no different than lower animals. Using the image below, indicate using the sliders how evolved you consider the average member of each group to be:

Americans --◯---

Arabs ---◯---

Canadians --◯---

Chinese --◯---

Mexican Immigrants --◯---

Europeans --◯---

Muslims ---◯---

Question 12: As you may know, many immigrants who came illegally to the US when they were children now have temporary legal status that may be ending. Would you favor or oppose Congress passing a law granting them permanent legal status?

- Favor
- Oppose

Question 13: Do you favor or oppose making it harder for people to legally immigrate to the United States?

- Favor
- Oppose

Question 14: It's really a matter of some people not trying hard enough; if minorities would only try harder they could be just as well off as whites.

      1- Strongly agree
      2- Somewhat agree
      3- Somewhat disagree
      4- Strongly disagree

Question 15: Irish, Italian, Jewish and many other minorities overcame prejudice and worked their way up. Minorities today should do the same.

      1- Strongly agree
      2- Somewhat agree

3- Somewhat disagree
4- Strongly disagree

Question 16: Some say that minority leaders have been trying to push too fast. Others feel that they haven't pushed fast enough. What do you think?
1- Trying to push very much too fast
2- Going too slowly
3- Moving at about the right speed

Question 17: How much of the racial tension that exists in the United States today do you think minorities are responsible for creating?
1- All of it
2- Most
3- Some
4- Not much at all

Question 18: How much discrimination against minorities do you feel there is in the United States today, limiting their chances to get ahead?
1- A lot
2- Some
3- Just a little
4- None at all

Question 19: Generations of slavery and discrimination have created conditions that make it difficult for blacks and other minorities to work their way out of the lower class.
1- Strongly agree
2- Somewhat agree
3- Somewhat disagree
4- Strongly disagree

Question 20: Over the past few years, minorities have gotten less than they deserve.
1- Strongly agree
2- Somewhat agree
3- Somewhat disagree
4- Strongly disagree

Question 21: Over the past few years, minorities have gotten more economically than they deserve.
1- Strongly agree
2- Somewhat agree
3- Somewhat disagree
4- Strongly disagree

Question 22: To what extent does the following statement describe you: "I am an empathetic person"

1 - Not very true of me

2 – Rarely true of me
3 – Occasionally True of me
4 – Often true of me
5 - Very true of me

Question 23: Age: (fill in)

Question 24: What is your gender?

- Man
- Woman
- Other

Question 25: What is your ethnicity?

- Hispanic/Latino
- Not Hispanic/Latino

Question 26: Are you American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian-American, Black/African American, Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander, White, or a race not listed?

- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian-American
- Black or African American
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- White
- Other

Question 27: What is the highest level of school you have completed or the highest degree you have received?

- Less than a high school diploma
- High school
- Some college
- College
- Graduate degree

Question 28: Which of the following categories best describes your employment status?

- Employed, working part-time (1-39 hours per week)
- Employed, working full-time (40 or more hours per week)
- Not employed
- Retired
- Disabled, not able to work

Question 29: How would you describe your political views--very conservative, conservative, moderate, liberal, or very liberal?

- Very conservative
- Conservative
- Moderate
- Liberal
- Very liberal

Question 30: In politics, as of today, do you consider yourself a Republican, a Democrat, or an Independent?

- Democrat
- Republican
- Independent

Vignettes

Condition 1: Dehumanizing

The Washington Post - Politics

An Ongoing Problem: Illegal Immigrants Flooding the United States

Mexican immigrants arrive at the U.S.-Mexico border every day, ready to flood the United States. Politicians have been debating immigration policy for years and often cannot agree on what should be done. Maria Gonzalez, has been trying to sneak into the United States for years, repeatedly approaching the border awaiting her chance to cross. Maria Gonzalez is a sales clerk at a local business in Chihuahua, Mexico and wants to smuggle her two children and husband into the United States with her. A resident of El Paso, Texas expressed concerns, saying, "Illegal immigrants bring disease to the US that could infect the citizens here." Another citizen expressed similar concerns, telling reporters "Infectious disease is pouring across the border. The United States has become a dumping ground for Mexico." While some may consider it irrational or immoral, Gonzalez, like many other immigrants from Mexico has decided to cross the border illegally. The mayor of El Paso summarized the current state of illegal immigration, saying, "The Mexican Government is forcing their most unwanted people into the United States. They are, in many cases, criminals, drug dealers, rapists, etc." Gonzalez is only one case out of thousands of illegal immigrants attempting to cross the border every day, causing worry among citizens that disease and crime are being brought as well.

Condition 2: Humanizing

The Washington Post - Politics

An Ongoing Problem: The Illegal Immigrant's Rational Choice

Mexican immigrants arrive at the U.S.-Mexico border every day, ready to come to the United States. Politicians have been debating immigration policy for years and often cannot agree on what should be done. Maria Gonzalez, has been hoping to enter the United States for years, patiently awaiting her chance to cross. Maria Gonzalez is a sales clerk at a local business in Chihuahua, Mexico and wants to bring her two children and husband into the United States with her. One El Paso citizen described the situation to reporters, saying "I feel so bad for immigrants trying to cross illegally. They have families and lives that they are willing to risk by coming here illegally because we've left them no other choice." Another citizen shared their perspective, saying, "Illegal immigrants like Gonzalez are people, just like you and I, making the choices they have to for themselves and their families, even if it might be against their own moral standing." Instead of waiting years for a green card or visa to cross the border legally, Gonzalez has decided it would be more rational for her to attempt to cross the border illegally. The mayor of El Paso summarized the situation, saying, "As humans, we have a responsibility to treat all humans with the utmost civility, regardless of the circumstances that brought them to the country." Unfortunately, Gonzalez is only one case out of thousands every day that demonstrate the desperation of immigrants at the U.S.-Mexico border attempting to illegally enter the United States.

Condition 3: Control Condition

Washington Post – Politics

Illegal Immigration in the United States

Mexican immigrants arrive at the U.S.-Mexico border every day, ready to come to the United States. Politicians have been debating immigration policy for years and often cannot agree on what should be done. Maria Gonzalez, has been hoping to enter the United States for years. Gonzalez is a sales clerk at a local business in Chihuahua, Mexico and wants to bring her two children and husband into the United States with her. This situation is common for many immigrants at the US-Mexico border.

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