

ILLEGAL: THE REPRESENTATION OF IMMIGRANTS IN
NEWSPAPERS IN SOUTHERN SPAIN AND THE
SOUTHWEST UNITED STATES

by

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A THESIS

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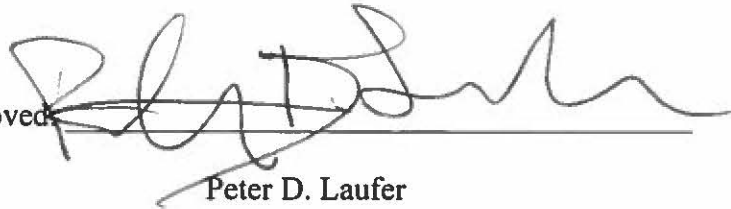
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**Title: Illegal: The Representation of Immigrants in Newspapers in Southern Spain and
the Southwest United States**

Approved

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Peter D. Laufer", written over a horizontal line. The signature is fluid and cursive.

Peter D. Laufer

This thesis employs critical discourse analysis to study the representation of immigrants in newspapers in southern Spain and the southwest United States. The research employs exploratory and ad-hoc analysis to draw conclusions regarding the use of vocabulary and metaphor in immigration news articles archived in national and regional newspapers over a two-month time period. The textual analysis is paired with a summary of social cognitive, agenda-setting, cultivation, and cognitivist media theories and in-depth interviews with migrants and journalists. In its conclusion, this thesis provides recommendations for journalists and publications in how to better improve immigration reporting.

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“Journalism is like a sacred book that’s difficult to interpret. You have to find someone who knows the topic and can help you get to where you want to go.”

--Abdelaziz, Moroccan immigrant

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Introduction

On April 23, 2013, dozens of activists piled into the New York Times headquarters to deliver a petition with 70,000 signatures demanding the elimination of the term “illegal immigrant” in news coverage.¹ The protest came several weeks after the Associated Press decided to stop using the word “illegal” to describe people who arrive to a country without proper documentation.² Among the crowd of activists was Helen Chavez, the wife of deceased labor leader and civil rights activist, Cesar Chavez. For decades, Helen Chavez remained quiet, never speaking publicly or to a reporter. Instead, as her husband led non-violent strikes and undertook spiritual fasts, she managed their credit union, walked picket lines and took care of their eight children.³

“All these years, I chose to stay in the background,” Helen Chavez said in a statement.⁴ “But I’m speaking out now to say: stop using the word ‘illegal’ to describe human beings.”

After years of silence, the use of one, simple word spurred Helen Chavez to stand up and join the growing number of immigrants, journalists and allies who oppose the term “illegal immigrant.” Since 2010, activists have worked on a campaign to eliminate the “I-word” and other dehumanizing slurs from everyday

¹ Howley, Patrick. "Activists Protest New York Times for Using the Term 'illegal Immigrant'." *The Daily Caller*. N.p., 23 Apr. 2013. Web. 30 Oct. 2013.

² Howley, Patrick. "Activists Protest New York Times for Using the Term 'illegal Immigrant'." *The Daily Caller*. N.p., 23 Apr. 2013. Web. 30 Oct. 2013

³ Howley, Patrick. "Activists Protest New York Times for Using the Term 'illegal Immigrant'." *The Daily Caller*. N.p., 23 Apr. 2013. Web. 30 Oct. 2013.

⁴ Howley, Patrick. "Activists Protest New York Times for Using the Term 'illegal Immigrant'." *The Daily Caller*. N.p., 23 Apr. 2013. Web. 30 Oct. 2013.

and institutional use, especially in the media. Terms like “wetback,” “brown tide” and “alien” were once common place in public discourse and news stories, but the employment of such language has come under intense scrutiny and decreased in usage in recent years. Yet phrases like “illegal immigrant” are still present in reporting, which prompts discussion about how vocabulary provides a framework for understanding our sociopolitical landscape.

This thesis aims to explore the aforementioned linguistic dialogue through an analysis of the representation of immigrants in newspapers, and asks whether or not vocabulary, metaphor, and subject matter in immigration stories can contribute to the perception of immigrants in the United States and Spain. It argues that language can be a form of oppression that reinforces public views concerning immigration. In its conclusion, the thesis encourages media outlets and journalists to revisit and reform their reporting vernacular.

The thesis is divided into eight parts. Part one outlines the methodology of the thesis and explains the logistical and tactical research methods. Part two explores immigration as a global phenomenon and key element in Spanish and U.S. history. Part three describes cognitive theory, cultivation theory and agenda-setting theory to study how language influences public perception of immigrants. Part four analyzes the role of vocabulary and metaphor in the media. Part five illustrates the findings of articles collected from four newspapers (El Mundo, the New York Times, Diario Sur and the Arizona Daily Star).

Part six analyzes those findings and integrates excerpts from interviews with dozens of migrants and journalists. Part seven draws conclusions on the presented research. Part eight provides suggestions for journalists and editors.

Part I: Methodology

Vocabulary

Illegal/Undocumented/Unauthorized/Irregular: I will use the terms undocumented and unauthorized interchangeably throughout this thesis to refer to someone who has entered or is in the United States without proper documentation. I have selected this terminology carefully and will elaborate on this word choice in later sections. I will not use the term illegal or irregular immigrant as they connote criminality and are offensive to many people, including the majority of my interview subjects.

Illegal/Undocumented/Irregular/Unauthorized Immigration: I will use these four terms interchangeably to refer to the act of crossing into the United States via clandestine means. I included the term “illegal” because in this case the adjective describes an action and not a person.

Migrant/Immigrant: I will use these two terms interchangeably to describe someone who has moved from one country to another; however, I recognize that, especially in Spanish, the words have distinct meanings. As neither is offensive, I will use both.

Information Gathering

Newspapers

I selected El Mundo as the national, daily newspaper of focus due to its reputability as a trusted news source and because it has a regional office based in

Seville, whereas its competitor, El Pais, does not. El Mundo is seen as a left-leaning newspaper and has a print circulation of 329, 822⁵. I chose DiarioSur based in Málaga as the regional, daily newspaper due to the paper's proximity to the border and because the website had a workable search engine, which I needed for archiving purposes. Its print circulation, according to Spain's Information and Control of Publications, is 26, 977⁶ and is the most-read local newspaper in Málaga. Both newspapers are printed in Spanish.

In the United States, I chose The New York Times as my national, daily newspaper due to its widespread reputation as a quality publication and its decision to maintain the use of the term "illegal immigrant" in its stylebook. The New York Times is seen as a left-leaning paper and its Monday-through-Friday print circulation is 676, 633⁷. I chose the Arizona Daily Star as the regional, daily paper because it's the most read newspaper in Tucson with a Monday-through-Friday circulation of 238,000⁸. The New York Times is printed in English, while the Arizona Daily Star has articles written in both English and Spanish, which are published in La Estrella, the bilingual weekly outlet.

⁵ "El Mundo S. Veintiuno." *Información y Control de Publicaciones*. Oficina de Justificación y la Difusión, Jan. 2013. Web. 10 May 2014.

⁶ "Diario Sur." *Información y Control de Publicaciones*. Oficina de Justificación y la Difusión, Jan. 2013. Web. 10 May 2014.

⁷ Zebian, Linda. "The New York Times Announces Solid Circulation Gains." *The New York Times*. N.p., 31 Oct. 2013. Web. 13 May 2014.

⁸ "Business : Arizona Daily Star Circulation." *Arizona Daily Star*. N.p., 11 Jan. 2013. Web. 15 May 2014.

Interviews

In Spain, I interviewed 10 immigrants, both documented and undocumented, from Africa, Latin America, and Europe. Most were economic migrants, meaning they moved for necessity rather than for pleasure, study, or family reunification. While the migratory motives of the interviewees were similar, I selected people from differing countries of origin, age groups, and genders in order to reflect the diversity of backgrounds of migrants in Spain. Among the interviewees, I found a father escaping drug violence in Mexico, a Colombian journalism student, a singer from Sierra Leone, an ice-cream scooper from Italy, and a former journalist from Nigeria. Interviews were conducted in homes and cafés and park benches and lasted for up to three hours. I asked questions related to their personal immigration histories and their views on language in the media, but the interviews were mostly led in a conversational style. Non-profits in Spain, including Mujeres Entre Mundos, Juntos en la Misma Dirección, Zemos98, and Oficina de Derechos Sociales, connected me with migrants. I also interviewed journalists from *El Mundo*, *DiarioSur*, and *Correo de Andalucía*, and asked questions that mostly focused on media theory and practice. I chose one journalist from each paper that had immigration reporting experience and could contextualize some of the newspaper's policies.

In the United States, I interviewed 10 migrants I found through acquaintances and previous volunteer experiences with organizations like Centro Latinoamericano and Huerto de la Familia. All of the immigrants I interviewed were from Mexico. I believe because Mexicans comprise 52 percent of the

undocumented immigrant population, they may have stronger affiliations to terms like “illegal immigrant.” I chose people that were documented and undocumented in order to incorporate a variety of viewpoints, as some were brought as children, while others climbed fences or overstayed their visas. During our interviews, I posed similar questions to those I asked in Spain, but not all interviews were held in-person due to logistical and geographical barriers and were instead conducted over the phone or via e-mail. Unless specified otherwise, all immigrants quoted in this thesis and in the following chapters are people whom I’ve interviewed.

To contextualize my interviewees’ experiences, I traveled throughout Spain, Morocco, the United States, and Mexico, visiting communities affected by immigration. In the Canary Islands, I attended an Islamic cultural event in a town called Fraile on the island of Tenerife, where more than 70 nationalities are represented; in Morocco, I stayed with a host family; in Tucson, I visited the burial site of unidentified bodies found along the border; in Nogales, I walked the border with migrants celebrating the Christmas *posada*; in San Diego, I placed water jugs on desert paths where migrants cross; and in Tijuana, I watched men scramble over fences before being apprehended by Border Patrol. Since I’ve never snuck through checkpoints in a car trunk or applied for work without documentation, I’ve tried to gain more insight into people’s migratory experiences through immersion.

Data Analysis

This multidisciplinary thesis uses exploratory research methods to conduct a discourse analysis. Moreover, through interviews and newspaper archiving, the thesis engaged post-hoc examination to identify discourse trends and patterns not specified a priori. This type of research focuses on the way in which social power and inequality are reproduced in text and is concerned with “discourse as the instrument of power and control as well as with discourse as the instrument of the social construction of reality.”⁹ It is, in its essence, a study that illuminates how discourse is an arena where language systems and social conditions meet.

This thesis incorporates cognitive psychology and media theories, as well. I chose not to survey immigrants and categorize responses, but instead to incorporate quotes from our conversations in a journalistic fashion. Examples from archived articles, conversely, will be examined through data analysis. I dissected articles to find the frequency of words (illegal, undocumented, irregular, etc.), types of metaphors (natural, force, political etc.), and subject matter of stories (crime, politics, border crossing etc.), which I will then present in chart and infographic form.

Before continuing, I will acknowledge that this thesis is not taking an authoritative stance on the presented topics. Rather, it is contributing to a dynamic conversation shared by stakeholders ranging from immigrants to journalists to academics. Color Lines pioneered the “End the I-Word” campaign in 2010 to push

⁹ Wodak, Ruth, and Michael Meyer. *Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis*. London: SAGE, 2001. 9. Print.

for the elimination of “illegal immigrant” from news style guides, and authors like Otto Santa Ana, Peter Lang, and Fernando Prieto Ramos have published books on discourse analysis, metaphor, and immigration in the media. Most of the academic research I’ve found, aside from a few exceptions¹⁰, however, dates back to the late 1990s and early 2000s, and does not include the “immigrant perspective.” I decided to incorporate interviews with migrants and journalists because their voices, collectively, are more powerful than mine.

Geography

I chose to compare the representation of immigrants in newspapers in Spain and the United States because both countries share political, economic, and social traits. Spain and the U.S. have heavily militarized southern borders, which can be crossed via land, air or sea. Furthermore, both nations have suffered from economic crises, which, as history shows, leave immigrants as scapegoats for financial failure. Spain and the U.S. also rank in the list of top ten countries with the largest number of foreign-born populations with near equal national proportions (U.S. with 14.3 percent and Spain with 13.8 percent¹¹). However, the countries differ in their policies and historical acceptance of immigrants, which allows for an interesting comparative analysis.

¹⁰ Dell’Orto, Giovanna, and Vicki L. Birchfield. *Reporting at the Southern Borders: Journalism and Public Debates on Immigration in the US and the EU*. Oxford: Routledge, 2013. Print.

¹¹ "Trends in International Migrant Stock: The 2013 Revision - Migrants by Age and Sex." *International Migration and Development*. United Nations, 2013. Web. 13 May 2014.

Tucson, Arizona

I chose to study newspapers in Arizona due to the state's long history with immigration and their current legislative practices like SB 1070 and Operation Streamline, which will be explored later in this thesis. Moreover, ever since Operation Gatekeeper, a Clinton-era program that doubled the number of agents and amount of fencing on the U.S.-Mexico border, "funneled" immigrants into the Arizona deserts, migration activity has increased in cities along the state's border. Tucson, specifically, became my city of focus because it has a population that is 15.2 percent foreign-born¹² and is home to activists, politicians and reform groups.

Seville, Spain

I studied abroad in Spain for six months in 2013 and chose to live in Seville due to its proximity to the southern border. Seville is located in the region of Andalucía, which contains 8.8 percent of the country's immigrants, according to the National Institute of Statistics. Seville is also home to dozens of immigrant and refugee organizations, which also proved helpful when looking for migrants to interview.

¹² "Tucson QuickFacts from the US Census Bureau." *US Census Bureau*. 27 Mar. 2014. Web. 13 May 2014.

Part 2: Immigration, Spain and the United States

In order to contextualize the migratory experiences of my interview subjects and the state of immigration in 2013-14, I have provided an abbreviated history of immigration in Spain and the United States.

Introduction to Immigration

Immigration is a basic human activity. From the Silk Road to Makkah, humanity's propensity for mobility has resulted in the exchange of ideas, resources and languages that have promoted innovation and enriched communities. But ever since the advent of the nation-state, countries have built borders and enforced multi-million dollar immigration policies to keep unwanted residents out. However, humans continue to travel between cities, nations and continents, by their own free will or, more often than not, due to necessity. Because when warlords slaughter communities, droughts suck the life out of deserts and unemployment leaves kitchen cupboards empty, people move, even if that means risking their lives.

Two hundred and thirty-two million people currently live outside their country of birth, according to the United Nation's Department of Economic and Social Affairs. Some fly first class, but most get from one country to the next by walking through deserts in 115-degree weather, hiding in the dashboards of cars or floating in inflatable rafts fit for swimming pools, not oceans. As countries spend billions of dollars militarizing their borders, migrants find creative solutions to get over the 20-foot walls or crawl under the electric fences, which generates more

construction and even more dangerous methods of border crossing. Consequently, nations' boundaries have transformed from barren landscapes into war zones and graveyards.

In order to understand borders and their enforcement, it is first necessary to understand the rise of nation-states and nationalism. Defining these terms is difficult, but each concept has its genesis, according to historian Benedict Anderson, in the development of print capitalism. Competing theories suggest that nation-states and nationalism originated with the consolidation of power among monarchs in the 15th century or after World War I with the Treaty of Versailles, but Anderson suggests that the advent of print-language and book publishing were the first real instruments of centralization and provided the initial models of what nation-states should look like.¹³ Printing presses, according to Anderson, assembled popular vernacular to create languages of power meant to connect people across vast territories, and whoever owned those printing presses wielded great political power. Mass communication seemingly fueled mass unification.

By the 18th century, the nation-state was the normative geopolitical structure, particularly in Europe—where linguistic diversity helped establish boundaries between territories. The demand for sovereignty and national pride augmented along with the creation of the nation-state. According to Anderson, the patriotic sentiment called “nationalism” insinuates that countries have an inherent antiquity manifested in customs, languages, and political structures. However, as

¹³ Anderson, Benedict R. O'G. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso, 2006. 6,46. Print.

previously explained, the nation-state is a relatively modern concept propagated through print media. Therefore, instead of using the term nation-state, Anderson has popularized the term “imagined communities.” He uses the modifier “imagined” because “the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion.”¹⁴ We can thus view the construction of borders as a way of protecting and establishing an “imagined” value system and collective identity. For example, when politicians claim that Spanish-speaking Latinos are a threat to the United States, the underlying assumption is that the United States is a country where people speak and value English. However, according to the 2011 US Census Bureau data, one in five people in the U.S. aged 5 or older speak a language other than English at home.¹⁵ Moreover, the United States does not have an official language¹⁶. As such, perceiving countries like the United States as having a persona with a belief system is weakly supported when thinking about the diversity of opinions, languages, and attitudes present in a country.

Moreover, how does a nationalist reconcile the coexistence of Lou Dobbs and Michael Moore? Or Brittney Spears and Jane Goodall? The existence of a homogenous, collective value system is clearly mythical, yet it’s a perception that

¹⁴ Anderson, Benedict R. O’G. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso, 2006. 6,46. Print.

¹⁵ Barron, Lisa. "Census: Non-English Speakers in U.S. Nearly Triple in 30 Years." *Newsmax*. N.p., 7 Aug. 2013. Web. 13 May 2014.

¹⁶ "Official Language of the U.S." *USA.gov*. N.p., 6 May 2014. Web. 22 May 2014.

drives immigration policy and public attitudes. Allowing foreigners to enter the U.S. means to many jeopardizing our language, freedom, wealth, and white hegemony. And what better American than Samuel Wurzlbacher, better known as Joe the Plumber made famous during Senator John McCain's 2008 run for presidency, to speak on behalf of the "classic" American. "For years I've said, you know, put a damn fence on the border going to Mexico and start shooting," Wurzlbacher said during a fundraising event while running for Congress in Ohio. "You know what, it's how I feel...I want my borders protected, I'm very, very adamant about that."

The United States

"These whole economic processes are provoking great migrations of people. These people agents, they are making decisions that have to be looked at as decisions that people make in part because they have to, but partly because they are taking their lives into their own hands. They are not just manipulated by the processes, they are pushed by them."

--Raquel Rubio Goldsmith, Professor at University of Arizona

The landmass now known as the United States had its first encounter with immigrants when the Spanish arrived in the 1500s. The French and English followed suit in the coming decades, establishing colonies along the Atlantic Coast. As most elementary school children have learned, these 13 colonies defeated Great Britain in the Revolutionary War and adopted the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776, to gain control of what we now call the United States of America.

During the 17th and 18th centuries more than half of all European immigrants arrived as indentured servants.¹⁷ Contrary to the once-romantic connotations associated with immigration, one in seven died on their journey across the ocean to the US and those that survived found harsh working conditions and long-term job contracts on the other side. It is estimated that as few as 8,000 immigrants arrived each year between the 17th and 19th century¹⁸. In 1790 the first federal naturalization act was passed, which granted citizenship to all white males living in the U.S. for two years or more and contributed to the increase in movement from Europe to the U.S.¹⁹ This act, however, excluded people who weren't of "good character," meaning indentured servants, slaves, free blacks, and Asians.

But those who were granted citizenship weren't necessarily greeted with open arms. With the influx of immigrants, xenophobic groups began surfacing and went so far as to form a political party called the "Know-Nothings" whose platform rested on anti-immigrant and anti-Catholic policies. These nativist groups, mostly Protestant, viewed the new Europeans as unwelcome competition for jobs²⁰. Yet despite the "Know-Nothings" attempts to curb immigration, during the 19th century migration continued and the population amplified on the East Coast.

As the U.S. began to grow, settlers moved west in search of new land and wealth. To many, expansion was seen as a divine right that not only brought civilization to the existing Native Americans but also promised economic

¹⁸ "A Nation of Immigrants". *American Heritage Magazine*. February/March 1994. Volume 45, Issue 1

¹⁹ History.com Staff. "Ellis Island." *History*. A&E Television Networks, 2009. Web. 12 May 2014.

²⁰ "Freedom: A History of the US." *PBS*. PBS, 2002. Web. 23 May 2014.

prosperity to those who made the journey. In 1845, newspaper editor John O’Sullivan coined the expansion philosophy as Manifest Destiny.²¹ The mass migration resulted in the expatriation of existing populations, including Mexicans, who inhabited what is now Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, Colorado, Utah, Wyoming, and Nevada. Coexistence was not an option for territory-hungry Americans and their president James Polk, whose platform rested heavily on westward expansion. In an effort to beat out the British, who were rumored to be coveting Texas and California, Polk moved quickly to annex Texas in 1845. Annexation escalated tensions between Mexico and the United States, and a year later, Polk waged what Ulysses S. Grant called the most “wicked war” on Mexico. The semantics of war vary on either side of the border and reflect contrasting perceptions of the conflict. For example, U.S. historians use the term “Mexican-American War” whereas Mexicans use “the U.S. Invasion.” To one side, war was a consequence of protecting state interests, while to the other a U.S. presence in Mexico could be nothing other than a takeover. According the diaries of a U.S. Colonel, Ethan Allen Hitchcock, “...We have not one particle of right to be here. Our force is altogether too small for the accomplishment of its errand. It looks as if the government sent a small force on purpose to bring on a war, so as to have a pretext for taking California.²²” Aside from the invasion itself, the belief in American superiority was inherent to the war, as exemplified by Albert T. Beveridge’s speech before the U.S. Senate: “God has not been preparing the English-speaking and Teutonic peoples for a thousand years

²¹ "Manifest Destiny." *Ushistory.org*. Independence Hall Association, n.d. Web. 11 May 2014.

²² Zinn, Howard. *A People's History of the United States*. New York: Harper & Row, 1980. Print.

for nothing but vain and idle self-admiration. No! He has made us the master organizers of the world to establish system where chaos reigns... He has made us adepts in government that we may administer government among savages and senile peoples."²³

Many soldiers defected throughout the Mexican-American war—including many immigrants who found solidarity in the Mexicans' persecution.²⁴ However, the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo was signed on February 2, 1848, ending the war, surrendering 500,000 square miles of Mexican territory to the United States, and promising American citizenship to former Mexican residents. Today, however, our Mexican ancestry is somewhat lost in a collective southwestern amnesia and an inconvenient truth when battling illegal immigration.

When the war ended, 75,000 Mexicans continued living in the conquered territory. Many felt, however, that they had become second-class citizens.²⁵ But now, with seven new states and an abundance of natural resources, including gold, more and more migrants from across the United States began settling along the Pacific Coast and southwest United States.²⁶ As trade escalated, thousands of Chinese males also came in search of work, many of whom contributed to the first transcontinental railroad. Local residents were apprehensive of the Chinese and soon passed the Page Act of 1875, one of the first pieces of exclusionary immigration legislation which prohibited the entry of immigrants deemed

²³ Diaz, Jose C. "USA. One Nation Under God?" *LibrosEnRed*, 1 Sept. 2007. Web. 13 May 2014.

²⁴ Cave, Damien. "A Reminder of a Conflict That Faded Into History." *The New York Times*. 30 Oct. 2013. Web. 13 May 2014.

²⁵ Weber, David J. "The Aftermath of War." *Public Broadcasting Station*. n.d. Web. 13 May 2014.

²⁶ VandeCreek, Drew. "Mexican-American War -- Impact." *Northern Illinois University Libraries*, 2004. Web. 13 May 2014.

undesirable: Asian individuals coming to the US as forced laborers, Chinese women who worked as prostitutes, and all people considered convicts in their own countries. The law came as a response to “what were believed to be serious threats to white values, lives, and futures.”²⁷ Chinese men were viewed as the cause of decreased wages and rising unemployment and Chinese women, who were working as prostitutes, threatened American morals and the white man’s “cleanliness.” The Page Act was a precursor for the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, which effectively barred immigration from China for 10 years and denied citizenship to Chinese already living in the US. The loss of the Chinese laborers resulted in a return of Mexican migrants to the southwest to satisfy the labor shortage.

Throughout the rest of the 19th century, immigrants from Europe also continued traveling to the U.S. For many, the Homestead Act passed in 1862, which offered Europeans the opportunity to own land and incentivized passage. Others left their homelands for many of the same reasons people migrate today: religious persecution, economic crisis, and political turmoil.

Prior to 1890, individual states were responsible for regulating immigration, but in 1892 millions of immigrants from Europe were processed through the new federal immigration station, Ellis Island, outside New York City. It is estimated that 40 percent of Americans can trace their ancestry to immigrants that passed through this port—ancestors who were greeted by the Statue of Liberty, who is a

²⁷ "Immigration." Law Library of Congress. N.p., n.d. Web. 13 May 2014.

migrant herself. Most Americans believe the statue was a gift from France. However, the statue was first commissioned to be stationed at the entrance to the Suez Canal in Egypt, but was rejected due to its lofty price tag.²⁸

In 1917 many restrictions placed on temporary workers were lifted and Mexican migrants were brought to the United States as part of a guest worker program to fulfill labor shortages. Consequently, by 1930 the United States was home to 300,000 temporary Mexican laborers and an estimated one million undocumented workers.²⁹ A few years later, the Immigration Act of 1924 enforced quotas, which restricted entry to 2 percent of the total number of people of each nationality in America based on the 1890 census. The act also created Border Patrol and defined “illegal alien” for the first time.³⁰

The imposed quotas were criticized for favoring northwestern European immigrants and disproportionately affecting southern European immigrants. For example, Italy’s quota went from 42,047 people to 3,845 people per year. Note: Asians were barred completely, while Latin Americans had no limits at all. President Lyndon B. Johnson later admitted the quota system “has been un-American in the highest sense, because it has been untrue to the faith that brought thousands to these shores even before we were a country.”³¹ Immigration soon experienced a drastic decline not because of the antediluvian nature of the quota

²⁸ Laufer, Peter. *Wetback Nation: The Case for Opening the Mexican-American Border*. Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2006. Print.

²⁹ Johnston, Elizabeth. "The United States Guest Worker Program: The Need for Reform." *Vanderbilt Journal of Transnational Law* 21st ser. 34.11 (2011): n. pag. Web.

³⁰ "Mexican Immigrant Labor History." *Public Broadcasting Station*. n.d. Web. 12 May 2014.

³¹ Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Lyndon B. Johnson, 1965. Volume II, entry 546, pp. 1037-1040. Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1966.

system but due to the global depression of the 1930s and later World War II. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, between 1930 and 1950, foreign-born people in the United States decreased from 11.6 to 6.9 percent of the total population. During the 1930s, more than 250,000 people were shipped south under the guise of “repatriation,” many against their will, for “illegally taking jobs and using social services.”³² Consequently, by the end of the 1930s, the Mexican population in the United States dropped by more than 40 percent.

During World War II the Mexican guest worker program was revived to account for labor shortages in the agricultural sector and immigration from south to north increased. The temporary worker program, known as the Bracero program, was made an executive order on August 4, 1942, and lasted until 1964, bringing more than 4.5 million Mexican nationals into the U.S. as temporary laborers.³³ However, the Bracero program could not accommodate the high number of Mexicans seeking work in the U.S. Consequently, many Mexicans and other Latin Americans entered the U.S. illegally and found work with farmers who could pay less for undocumented work. In order to control these unauthorized crossings and illegal work practices, the director of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, Joseph Swing, in 1954 implemented a new immigration law enforcement initiative called Operation Wetback. The act popularized the derogatory term “wetback,” which referred to the Mexican nationals who crossed

³² Laufer, Peter. *Wetback Nation: The Case for Opening the Mexican-American Border*. Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2006. Print.

³³ "Opportunity or Exploitation: The Bracero Program." *America on the Move*. National Museum of American History, n.d. Web. 13 May 2014.

into the United States by swimming through the Rio Grande. Throughout Operation Wetback's implementation, Border Patrol was accused of committing various human rights abuses, including leaving deported immigrants in the desert in 112-degree weather, shaving heads to keep track of immigrants who were apprehended more than once, and beating migrants prior to deportation³⁴. Although the degree of mistreatment is unclear, Operation Wetback marks some of the first uses of harsh border enforcement practices that are still reported today.

A year after the closure of the Bracero Program, the 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act abolished the quota system and radically changed the way the United States determined which immigrants could enter the country while placing an emphasis on family reunification and immigrants' skills.³⁵ The act drastically changed the demographics of immigrants in the U.S., as the number of Southern European, Asian, and Caribbean immigrants increased.³⁶

The next major piece of immigration legislation didn't arrive until 1986 with the Immigration Reform and Control Act, which focused on controlling illegal immigration. The reform, signed by President Ronald Reagan, legalized "aliens" who had resided in the U.S. since January 1, 1982, established sanctions prohibiting employers from hiring undocumented workers, and created a 7-year special agricultural work program. The law granted amnesty—a word not typically

³⁴ Hernández, Kelly Lytle. "The Crimes and Consequences of Illegal Immigration: A Cross-Border Examination of Operation Wetback, 1943 to 1954." *The Western Historical Quarterly* 37.4 (2006): 421-44. *JSTOR*. Web. 23 May 2014.

³⁵ Ludden, Jennifer. "1965 Immigration Law Changed Face of America." *National Public Radio*. n.d. Web. 9 May 2006.

³⁶ Keely, Charles B. "Effects of the Immigration Act of 1965 on Selected Population Characteristics of Immigrants to the United States." *Demography* 8.2 (1971): 157-69. *JSTOR*. Web. 8 May 2014.

associated with conservatism today—to 3 million immigrants. To add insult to the now Republican agenda, Reagan said of the new reform, “I believe in the idea of amnesty for those who have put down roots and lived here, even though sometime back they may have entered illegally.”³⁷ However, amnesty was coupled with 50 percent increase in Border Patrol staffing, which increased apprehensions along the border and somewhat counter-acted the aforementioned legalization of undocumented immigrants.³⁸ The number of immigrants allowed in the U.S. increased with the Immigration Act of 1990, which also revised grounds for deportation and increased the number of visas allotted through a new lottery system among other reforms. The deportation and exclusion changes included preventing entry to those involved with “terrorist activity,” drugs or smuggling.³⁹

The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) formed in 1994 altered the social, economic, and political environment in communities along the U.S.-Mexico border. The agreement bolstered trade by adding low or zero tariffs to certain items and added a new prominent reason for migration: business. NAFTA was also intended to decrease undocumented immigration by stimulating economic activity south of the border, but due to a variety of reasons, including

³⁷ Staff, NPR. "A Reagan Legacy: Amnesty For Illegal Immigrants." *National Public Radio*. 4 July 2010. Web. 11 May 2014.

³⁸ Cooper, Besty, and Kevin O'Neil. "Lessons from Immigration and Control Act of 1986." *Migration Policy Institute*. N.p., Aug. 2005. Web. 12 May 2014.

³⁹ Leiden, Warren. "Highlights of the U.S. Immigration Act of 1990." *Fordham International Law Journal* 14.1 (1990): n. pag. Web.

American corporations edging out Mexican businesses, Latin Americans found even more reasons to migrate to the U.S.⁴⁰.

Nine months after NAFTA was signed, a fierce new border initiative, Operation Gatekeeper, was implemented to manage undocumented immigration. The operation doubled the number of Border Patrol employees and the agency's budget and created a 40-mile, 14-foot-tall fence meant to deter immigrants from crossing. Fences and resources were added to California and Texas, which essentially funneled immigrants into the hot deserts and high mountains of Arizona.

Many historians argue that Operation Gatekeeper installed a full-blown militarization of the southern border, effectively turning the "no-man's land" in between Mexico and the United States into a war zone. Prior to Operation Gatekeeper, signs or fences with holes were the only markers of most of the U.S.-Mexico border, but now, law enforcement officers patrol in armored trucks, helicopters and horses, carting machine guns, night-vision goggles and bright lights.⁴¹ Keeping unauthorized immigrants out of the country became a fight against a common enemy: "illegals." To politicians, the solution to curbing undocumented immigration and keeping out "terrorists" meant build bigger walls. Just two weeks after the launching of Operation Gatekeeper, the LA Times reported that the new walls had pushed immigrants east of California into open land and mountain areas. In these unfamiliar territories, migrants began dying from

⁴⁰ Malkin, Elisabeth. "Nafta's Promise, Unfulfilled." *The New York Times*. 23 Mar. 2009. Web. 10 May 2014.

⁴¹ Cabrera, Paula. "U.S.-Mexico Border." *National Geographic Education*. N.p., n.d. Web. 12 May 2014.

exposure, exhaustion and dehydration. According to the chief agent at the Chula Vista station, Ray Ortega, the agents were "excited and enthusiastic" about the structural changes.⁴² The Immigration and Nationalization Services (INS) was well aware of the consequences of diverting migrant traffic, but viewed the fatalities as an inevitable part of illegal crossings. The idea was that if crossing became too dangerous, migrants might not make the journey to the United States. Between 1994 and 2009, an estimated 5,600 migrants died crossing the border.⁴³

"They have made a voluntary decision that they are willing to undergo the risk and danger to get out of Mexico, or wherever they're from, and come to the U.S.," said Peter Nuñez, a former U.S. Attorney. "Should we feel guilty because Mexico and other parts of the world have failed their own people, causing them to leave? No. I don't think the American people should have any guilt about that."⁴⁴

The overarching political sentiment at the time was that the law is the law, and regardless of whether they're escaping a civil war in Guatemala or fleeing drug violence in Mexico, those who break the law merit punishment. As President Bill Clinton said in 1993, "The simple fact is that we must not and we will not surrender our borders to those who wish to exploit our history of compassion and justice."⁴⁵

⁴² "Border Patrol Push Diverts Flow : Immigration: Operation Gatekeeper in San Diego Forces Illegal Crossers into Easier-to-police Areas. But Smuggling, Desperation Grow." *Los Angeles Times*. 17 Oct. 1994. Web.

⁴³ "U.S.-Mexico Border Crossing Deaths Are A Humanitarian Crisis, According To Report From The ACLU And CNDH." *American Civil Liberties Union*. N.p., 30 Sept. 2009. Web. 13 May 2014.

⁴⁴ Cubbison, Gene. "Operation Gatekeeper, 15 Years Later." *NBC 7 San Diego*. N.p., n.d. Web. 30 Sept. 2009.

⁴⁵ Nevins, Joseph. *Operation Gatekeeper: The Rise of the "Illegal Alien" and the Making of the U.S.-Mexico Boundary*. New York: Routledge, 2002. Print. P. 110.

To enforce new guidelines set forth in Operation Gatekeeper, the U.S. Border Patrol doubled its number of agents and began recruiting ex-military.⁴⁶ As a distant family member and soldier once told me, “I have friends who kill illegals.” For veterans seeking jobs that provide competitive salaries and a way to continue protecting their country, Border Patrol is a desirable option.

“The number of former veterans hired by the border patrol is very, very high,” Raquel Rubio Goldsmith, a professor at the University of Arizona in the Department of Mexican American studies, says. “When you look at people who have been trained by the military and have gone to war, and they come back here and they are put in a position where they are told to protect our borders from terrorists and criminals and drug dealers, what does that training do? Do they just turn off the military training? Or does it just transfer over into what they are doing now?”

The militarization of the border has its genesis in the war on drugs that emerged in the 1960s as marijuana use in the U.S. increased. In order to satisfy new demand, marijuana production became a lucrative activity in Mexico and drugs—both hard and soft—began passing through the border. Although Operation Intercept in 1969 launched an attack on illicit drug trafficking by employing technologies like pursuit planes, radar watches, and drug sniffing

⁴⁶ Hall, Mimi. "Border Patrol Targets Ex-Military as Agents." *USA Today*. N.p., n.d. Web. 13 May 2014.

dogs.⁴⁷ Operation Gatekeeper employed even harsher enforcement, targeting drug smugglers and immigrants alike.

The war on drugs implicitly connected immigrants with criminal activity, which bolstered strong anti-immigrant sentiments in border towns and many vigilante groups formed as a result. Residents of border communities felt threatened by immigrants, who were believed to be taking jobs, not paying taxes, abusing social services, and inciting criminal activity. For the record, the overall impact of immigration on the economy is positive:⁴⁸many undocumented immigrants pay taxes,⁴⁹ immigrants account for only 10 percent of total health spending,⁵⁰ and immigrants are less likely to commit crimes than native-born citizens.⁵¹ Regardless, a long list of vigilante groups exist, like Ranch Rescue, whose motto is “Private property, first, foremost and always,” and sends volunteers into the desert to “encourage” migrants to return home

“I think racism is at the bottom of it and the fear of losing American culture to this strange, lazy, inferior, not very intelligent group of people who come in great numbers and take all of our jobs and get drunk and whatever and all the things that go with that,” Rubio Goldsmith, in an interview in December 2013, said in reference to indigenous Central and South Americans. “I think the fear of losing one’s privilege and place is very great.”

⁴⁷ Nevins, Joseph. *Operation Gatekeeper: The Rise of the "illegal Alien" and the Making of the U.S.-Mexico Boundary*. New York: Routledge, 2002. Print. P.58.

⁴⁸ "Does Immigration Cost Jobs?" FactCheck.org. N.p., 13 May 2010. Web. 12 May 2014

⁴⁹ "Does Immigration Cost Jobs?" FactCheck.org. N.p., 13 May 2010. Web. 12 May 2014

⁵⁰ "Myths Versus Facts." Neighborhood Centers. N.p., n.d. Web. 13 May 2014.

⁵¹ "Immigrants and Crime: Are They Connected? A Century of Research Finds That Crime Rates for Immigrants Are Lower than for the Native-Born." *Immigration Policy Center*. N.p., n.d. Web. 13 May 2014.

But despite anti-immigrant sentiments, more Border Patrol agents, and dangerous crossing conditions, immigrants continued migrating north for the same reasons people have migrated forever: to escape violence, reunite with their families, and find work. By 2000, immigrants composed 11.1 percent of the U.S. population—a 2.4 percent increase from 1994. Of these immigrants, 51.7 percent originated in Latin America, mostly Mexico.⁵²The U.S. Census Bureau also estimates that the number of undocumented immigrants increased by 58.3 percent after the launching of Operation Gatekeeper to reach 8.4 million in 2000.⁵³

QuickTime™ and a
decompressor
are needed to see this picture.

Figure 1: Annual number of legal immigrants by decade. Source: Population Research Bureau

The U.S. Border Patrol's drones (inherited from the Iraq war), tower-mounted cameras and ground sensors seemingly weren't enough to curb unauthorized

⁵² "U.S. Immigration Trends." *Migrationpolicy.org*. N.p., n.d. Web. 13 May 2014.

⁵³ Hansen, Kristin, and Amara Bachu. "The Foreign-Born Population: 1994." *U.S. Census*. N.p., Aug. 1995. Web.

immigration. They still aren't. But many U.S. politicians, especially Republicans, insist that militarizing the southern border is the most effective tool for ensuring safe borders. Senator Marco Rubio said, "If we don't deal with this problem, and particularly with the border security but also identifying these people that are living in our country and start getting them to pay taxes and consequences for having violated our laws, we're going to leave in place a disaster, a de facto amnesty disaster."⁵⁴ Funding border security is one of the most popular solutions for winning the "war on illegal immigration" and it increased after the attacks on September 11, 2001. By some odd jump of logic, "a mass murder committed by mostly Saudi terrorists resulted in an almost limitless amount of money being made available for the deportation of Mexican house-painters."⁵⁵ Hence, Border Patrol receives more funding than all U.S. law enforcement agency budgets combined.⁵⁶

But maybe the investment is finally paying off. According to the Mexican Census, border crossings dropped by two-thirds between 2007 and 2012.⁵⁷ The Pew Hispanic Center also announced in 2012 that illegal immigration was at a 40-year low and net migration from Mexico had stopped and possibly reversed.⁵⁸ However, whether that is related to increased border enforcement, high unemployment in the U.S., or Mexico's growing economy is unclear.

⁵⁴ Kopan, Tal. "Marco Rubio on Immigration: No Parades for Me." *Politico*. N.p., 20 June 2013. Web. 13 May 2014.

⁵⁵ "The Great Expulsion." *The Economist*. 08 Feb. 2014. Web. 12 May 2014.

⁵⁶ "Secure Enough." *The Economist*. 22 June 2013. Web. 12 May 2014.

⁵⁷ Preston, Julia. "Number of Illegal Immigrants in U.S. May Be on Rise Again, Estimates Say." *The New York Times*. 23 Sept. 2013. Web. 29 Apr. 2014.

⁵⁸ "Immigration Statistics Fast Facts." *CNN*. Cable News Network, 06 Nov. 2013. Web. 12 May 2014.

What is clear is that fewer crossings don't mean fewer deaths. In 2012, migrant fatalities spiked by 27 percent to reach the highest number of deaths since 2005 when 492 people died.⁵⁹ Most immigrants die from exposure (heat stroke, hypothermia, and dehydration), but others fall victim to car accidents, vigilante killings, murder by smugglers, and Border Patrol abuse. The number of examples are staggering: in 2006, nine people were killed after a car carrying "Mexicans stacked like cordwood" crashed while driving 80 miles per hour evading Border Patrol.⁶⁰ On Christmas day in 2013, a woman was found with broken ribs and punctured lungs in the desert after her smuggler sexually assaulted her—a frequent occurrence at the border. As an aid worker in Arizona explains, "The question is not *if* a female migrant will be raped, but when and how often."⁶¹ According to a 2013 report by the University of Arizona, in the last three years there were at least 20 reported killings of Mexican nationals by the U.S. Border Patrol and 11 percent of polled survivors in the study reported having been physically abused by agents.⁶²

⁵⁹ Planas, Roque. "Border Deaths Spike 27 Percent, Even As Immigration From Mexico Drops, Report Says." *The Huffington Post*. N.p., 20 Mar. 2013. Web. 23 May 2014.

⁶⁰ Archibold, Randal C. "Risky Measures by Smugglers Increase Toll on Immigrants." *The New York Times*. The New York Times, 08 Aug. 2006. Web. 13 May 2014.

⁶¹ Archibold, Randal C. "Risky Measures by Smugglers Increase Toll on Immigrants." *The New York Times*. The New York Times, 08 Aug. 2006. Web. 13 May 2014.

⁶² Martinez, Daniel, Jeremy Slack, and Josiah Heyman. "Bordering on Criminal: The Routine Abuse of Migrants in the Removal System." *Immigration Policy Center*. N.p., n.d. Web.

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decompressor
are needed to see this picture.

Figure 2: Deaths and apprehensions along the southwest border. Source: Huffington Post.

“Because the whole policy of border patrol and ICE, customs and border protection, what they are doing is increase surveillance, drones, ATVs, night vision goggles that they have, the helicopters they use to dust people. All of that is designed to kill and deter people from crossing the border,” Paula Miller, a volunteer for No More Deaths, says. “It’s not working because more people are dying than ever before even though crossings are at an all-time low.”

Fewer crossings don’t mean smaller immigrant populations in the U.S., either. As of 2012, there were 11.7 million unauthorized immigrants living in the U.S.—52 percent of whom were Mexican.⁶³ Rather than go back to Mexico and risk another dangerous crossing into the United States, these immigrant families are now staying and sending money for their own children. The New York Times reported

⁶³ Preston, Julia. "Number of Illegal Immigrants in U.S. May Be on Rise Again, Estimates Say." *The New York Times*. 23 Sept. 2013. Web. 29 Apr. 2014.

in April that the number of unaccompanied minors entering the United States is expected to reach 60,000 by September 30, 2014.⁶⁴ Many of those children, 20 percent of whom are under the age of 14, are trekking hundreds of miles virtually alone.⁶⁵ And some, like Noemi Álvarez, don't ever make it to their final destination. The New York Times reported in April 2014, that the 12-year-old from Ecuador was found hung by a shower curtain rod in the bathroom of a shelter where she was sent after being apprehended by Border Patrol. The investigation into her death is ongoing, but her situation is reflective of how desperate families are to reunite.

⁶⁴ Dwyer, Jim. "A 12-Year-Old's Trek of Despair Ends in a Noose at the Border." *The New York Times*. 19 Apr. 2014. Web. 13 May 2014.

⁶⁵ Garcia, Maricela. "Unaccompanied Children in the United States Challenges and Opportunities." *Latino Policy Forum* (n.d.): n. pag. Web.

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Figure 3: Unauthorized immigrant population between 1990-2012. Source: Pew Research Center.

Other immigrant families, who'd rather not move or pay to smuggle their children, are choosing to settle down permanently in the United States. Consequently, the Pew Hispanic Center reports that between 2000 and 2010, birth rates exceeded immigration as the main reason for growth among the Mexican-American population.⁶⁶ If these trends continue, the number of Latinos in the United States will continue rising. In fact, by 2050, one in five people in the United

⁶⁶ Passel, Jeffery. "Net Migration from Mexico Falls to Zero-and Perhaps Less." *Pew Research Centers Hispanic Trends Project*. N.p., 23 Apr. 2012. Web. 13 May 2014.

States are projected to be foreign born and Hispanics are expected to compose 29 percent of the total population.⁶⁷

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Figure 4: White, African American, Asian, and Hispanic projected population. Source: Pew Research Center.

As the number of Latin American immigrants in the United States increases, so does the need of immigration reform. Barack Obama ran for presidency under a pro-immigration reform platform, preaching César Chavez's token slogan, "Sí, Se Puede" during campaigns in Latino communities. Hopes were high among the migrant community and Obama was seen as an advocate for immigration reform on both sides of the border.

In 2007, I traveled to Tijuana for a school-sponsored community service trip. While I was there, I visited one of the many "half-way" houses, where immigrants who are planning to cross or have been recently deported can spend a few days resting and waiting before heading to their respective ways. At lunchtime, I sat at a cafeteria table with one man who was contemplating crossing illegally into the

⁶⁷ Passel, Jeffery. "U.S. Population Projections: 2005-2050." *Pew Research Centers Hispanic Trends Project*. N.p., n.d. 11. Feb. 2008. Web. 13 May 2014.

United States. He had tried before by foot, but was apprehended upon reaching California. "Next time, I'm going in the back of my cousin's truck," he said. "If Obama wins the election, I'm going."

Six years after being elected, Obama has been unsuccessful in achieving the comprehensive immigration reform so highly awaited by the Latino and immigrant community. In fact, Obama has earned the nickname "deporter-in-chief" for deporting more people than any previous president.⁶⁸ Excuses related to the delay include the debt ceiling fiasco, the sluggishness of the political process, and resistance from Republicans. "Obviously just because something is smart and fair and good for the economy and fiscally responsible and supported by business and labor and the evangelical community and many Democrats and many Republicans, that does not mean it will actually get done," Obama said. "This is Washington, after all. ... I know that there are some folks in this town who are primed to think, 'Well if Obama's for it, then I'm against it.'"⁶⁹

But Republicans are now warming to the idea of reform, as they recognize how crucial the Latino vote is to winning an election. "Amnesty" may still be a naughty word for the GOP,⁷⁰ but Republicans who in 2008 were screaming "Complete the

⁶⁸ Augilar, Alfonso. "Opinion: President's Hypocritical Stance on Immigration." *Politico*. N.p., 11 June 2012. Web. 13 May 2014.

⁶⁹ Foley, Elise. "Barack Obama On Immigration Reform: 'Let's Go Get It Done'" *The Huffington Post*. 24 Oct. 2013. Web. 13 May 2014.

⁷⁰ Foley, Elise. "Barack Obama On Immigration Reform: 'Let's Go Get It Done'" *The Huffington Post*. 24 Oct. 2013. Web. 13 May 2014.

danged fence"⁷¹ can now be caught saying things like "We can't go on forever with 11 million people living in this country in the shadows in an illegal status."⁷²

If Republicans and Democrats do eventually agree on an overhaul of the immigration system, amnesty may be on the horizon. A bipartisan bill passed in Senate in 2013, which would reform border security and grant undocumented immigrants the chance to earn citizenship, but it is currently stalled in Congress.⁷³ The activist community has staged protests throughout the country, urging Obama and Congress to act⁷⁴.

⁷¹ Ball, Molly. "Why Republicans Are Suddenly Pro-Immigration Reform." *The Atlantic*. N.p., 14 Nov. 2013. Web.

⁷² Wilkie, Christina. "John McCain On Immigration Reform: Path To Citizenship, Dream Act Must Be Included." *The Huffington Post*. 27 Jan. 2013. Web. 13 May 2014.

⁷³ Newton-Small, Jay. "Democrats Look to Force Vote on Immigration Reform." *Time*. N.p., 26 Mar. 2014. Web. 23 May 2014.

⁷⁴ Altman, Alex. "Immigration Activists Try to Ramp up Pressure on Obama Again." *Time*. N.p., 21 Apr. 2014. Web. 23 May 2014.

QuickTime™ and a
decompressor
are needed to see this picture.

Figure 5: Public perception of citizenship among undocumented immigrants. Source:
Pew Research Center.

“Families in our communities are being ripped apart by deportations, and the system is in chaos,” said Tony Stieritz, director of Catholic Social Action. “A vote for delay is a vote for crisis and disorder in the current system.”⁷⁵

Until the bill is passed, many undocumented immigrants will continue to live without social security cards, access to health care, and driver’s licenses. They’ll be separated from the American community by ominous borders—both physical and imagined. Because even though they’re our gardeners, our nannies, and our neighbors; even though they “pick themselves up by their bootstraps” seven days a week to feed their families and work in jobs citizens don’t want, immigrants won’t

⁷⁵ Shear, Michael, and Julia Preston. "Immigration Reform Falls to the Back of the Line." *The New York Times*. 08 Sept. 2013. Web. 13 May 2014.

be “one of us” until the laws say they are. As history has shown, it’s the American way.

Spain

“Unfortunately, due to political and economic interests, immigrants have been used like a flag on both sides of the debate. One is interested in votes and the other is interested in unifying the country against them.”

--Roxanna Ortiz, Bolivian immigrant living in the Canary Islands

On the stone steps that lead to the Guadalquivir River in Sevilla, Spain, the same river where Christopher Columbus docked his ships after returning from the “New World,” African migrants sit in clusters, unoccupied and aimless. While some migrants work selling tissues, others parking cars, many of Spain’s southern neighbors congregate on these steps unsure of what to do or where to go. Home may mean a return to civil war or poverty, while staying means unemployment and living on the outskirts of Spanish society. Most of the migrants along the river are men who have left families behind they promised to support by traveling thousands of miles away. To get to Spain, many crossed the Strait of Gibraltar illegally in small inflatable boats, called *pateras*, only to find an economic crisis on the other side. Instead of work and opportunity, they encountered a country struggling with unemployment and eviction. So they sit by the river, unable to move forward or go back.

But it hasn’t always been this way. Prior to the 1990s, only one percent of Spain’s population was foreign born. The territory has historically been a point of

migration, but ever since the advent of the nation-state, Spain has been characterized as a country of emigration not immigration. During Francisco Franco's authoritarian rule, Spaniards fled the country seeking economic opportunity and political asylum, mostly in Latin American countries. In fact, during the 1960s emigration peaked and 2.5 percent of the population left annually.⁷⁶ By 1980, migration trends started to shift and immigration to Spain tripled from its rate in 1960.⁷⁷ In fact, in 2000, according to National Institute of Statistics, the foreign born population reached one million people—a 130-percent increase from 1980.⁷⁸ The increase in foreign-born persons resulted from various factors, including the turn to democracy after the death of Franco, economic growth largely spurred by a construction industry boom, and the joining of the European Union in 1986. Political turmoil, economic crisis, and violence in sending countries also pushed migrants to find new homes, and Spain quickly became a popular destination for immigrants.

Initially, people were mostly coming from Great Britain and Germany in search of somewhere to retire, but soon immigrants from Eastern Europe, Africa, and Latin America began arriving in large numbers. In 2001, 40 percent of immigrants originated in Morocco, Ecuador, or Colombia.⁷⁹ Many immigrants who arrived legally during this time came through guest worker programs established through

⁷⁶ "España como emisor y receptor de inmigrantes." ACCEM. Ministerio De Trabajos Y Asuntos Sociales, n.d. Web.

⁷⁷ Sperling, Jessica. "Spain Migrations: 1960 to Present." *The Encyclopedia of Global Human Migration*: n. pag. Web.

⁷⁸ Sperling, Jessica. "Spain Migrations: 1960 to Present." *The Encyclopedia of Global Human Migration*: n. pag. Web.

⁷⁹ Spain. National Institute of Statistics. *Census 2001*. N.p.: n.p., n.d. Web. 15 Apr. 2014. <file:///Users/janestevenson/Downloads/pags7-27_en.pdf>.

bilateral agreements between Spain and countries like Morocco, Ecuador, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Nigeria, Poland, and Romania. The agreements focused on regulating labor opportunities by assessing professional requirements, travel, and reception.⁸⁰

Those who arrived in clandestine ways did so via land, sea, and sky. African immigrants either crossed the Strait of Gibraltar, which separates Africa and Europe, in small rafts—not unlike those found in Costco—or hidden in cars on ferries. Latin Americans, who had traditionally migrated within their continent, began traveling to Spain due to their shared language and overstaying their visas. Undocumented eastern Europeans, especially Romanians, would either walk through countries like Turkey then bus or fly to Spain. “They came by land, air and water,” said Ana Pastor, a legislator from the conservative Popular Party. “There was a massive influx.”⁸¹

⁸⁰ Perez, Nieves O. "Spain: Forging an Immigration Policy." *Migration Policy*. N.p., 1 Feb. 2003. Web. 13 May 2014.

⁸¹ Deparle, Jason. "Spain, Grappling With Illegal Immigrants, Tries Forgiveness." *The New York Times*. 09 June 2008. Web. 13 May 2014.



Figure 6: A migrant is found in the compartment of a car in Spain. Source: El Mundo.

During the mid-2000s, Spain's economy grew at a rapid rate, which further increased the need for low-wage workers in the construction, agriculture and service sectors.⁸² However, immigrants were perceived as a social problem. Up until 2012, immigrants without proper residence permits had access to free healthcare. And despite the ban on access to services, many doctors have continued providing medical assistance to the undocumented population. Consequently, immigrants have been viewed as exhaustive on Spain's resources.⁸³

As a reaction to the drastic increase in immigrants, Spain has implemented several piece-meal legislative measures throughout the past few decades. In 1985, the Law on Rights and Freedoms of Foreigners in Spain became the first attempt to

⁸² Sperling, Jessica. "Spain Migrations: 1960 to Present." *The Encyclopedia of Global Human Migration* (2013): n. pag. Web.

⁸³ Tremlett, Giles. "Immigrants in Spain to Lose Right to Public Healthcare." *The Guardian*. N.p., 31 Aug. 2012. Web. 23 May 2014.

regularize undocumented immigrants and monitor temporary workers. The law implemented a registration program; however, between 1985 and 1986 only 23,000 of the 44,000 foreigners who applied were regularized.⁸⁴ Five mass legalization campaigns followed in 1991, 1996, 2000, 2001, and 2005 to compensate for the ineffectiveness of the 1985 law and accommodate newcomers. These programs grant one-year residency permits, but the limited duration and the difficulties in renewing such permits have forced many immigrants back into an irregular status.⁸⁵

Importing and formalizing labor and was of the utmost importance for Spain. "Spain clearly needs to import a work force. Many of its rural areas are suffering from depopulation, and crops are being lost for lack of workers to harvest them."⁸⁶ In the early 2000s, immigrants were crucial to offsetting Spain's birth rate (the lowest in the world) and revitalizing the rural economy, so legalization was convenient for the government.

In addition to regularization, several laws were passed in order to integrate migrants into Spanish society. In 1994, the Plan of Social Integration of Migrants was implemented, followed by another integration policy plan in 2000, but neither was effective in really incorporating foreign-born people. In 2006, a plan known as PECE (Strategic Plan for Citizenship and Integration) set national guidelines for integration and funding to regional governments based on the size of immigrant

⁸⁴ Levinson, Amanda. "The Regularisation of Unauthorized Migrants: Literature Survey and Country Case Studies." University of Oxford (n.d.): n. pag. 2005. Web.

⁸⁵ Perez, Nieves. "Spain: Forging an Immigration Policy." *Migration Policy*. N.p., 1 Feb. 2003. Web. 13 May 2014.

⁸⁶ Stolz, George. "Europe's Back Door." *The Atlantic*. Atlantic Media Company, Jan. 2000. Web. 13 May 2014.

populations.⁸⁷ The law emphasized the role of regional and local governments in monitoring immigration rather than relying on national or European-wide policies.

The European Union has been criticized for not sufficiently aiding Spain in its effort to curb illegal immigration. Spain and Italy are considered “gateway” countries to the European Union, which in 1985 removed internal borders and guaranteed passport-free passage between a large number of participating countries through the Schengen Agreement. External border policies, however, are largely subject to individual countries, which places a higher economic burden on places like Spain. The European Union has invested millions of dollars in preventing immigrants from leaving Africa through an external border surveillance system, but those immigrants who do successfully make the journey are placed under Spanish jurisdiction. The Spanish government largely absorbs securing the border, rescuing migrants at sea, providing social services, and legalization, as the European Union “does not have the resources to decently receive all the migrants hoping to find a better life here.”⁸⁸

To better understand Spain’s individualized approach to immigration policy, it is first necessary to explore Spain’s geography, migratory pathways, and border security. As shown in the map below, Spain is the southern-most point of Europe and separated from Africa by the straight of Gibraltar. The three most popular points for illegal entry into Spain are along the southern border in Ceuta, Melilla and the Canary Islands, Spanish outposts located in North Africa.

⁸⁷ Sperling, Jessica. "Spain Migrations: 1960 to Present." *The Encyclopedia of Global Human Migration* (2013): n. pag. Web.

⁸⁸ "Q&A: EU Immigration Policy." *BBC News*. 14 Oct. 2008. Web. 13 May 2014.

QuickTime™ and a
decompressor
are needed to see this picture.

Figure 7: Map of southern Spain and northern Africa. Source: Andalucia.com

Ceuta and Melilla were declared autonomous cities in 1995, which means they are not subordinated to any province yet lack legislative powers. Ceuta is located next to Morocco and is about 240 miles west of Melilla. In order to get to either territory from Morocco, migrants must either float across the straight in dingy boats or climb the fences that line the enclaves. In 2004, 30 million euros, the equivalent of 50 million dollars, were spent on fortifying the border walls in Ceuta and Melilla by increasing their height to 20 feet and installing infrared cameras and motion detectors.⁸⁹ In 2013, the Spanish government also installed concertina wire along the fences to deter the thousands of immigrants who enter the enclaves each year, but the number of immigrants crossing via land only amplified—by 50 percent.⁹⁰ To jump the fences, immigrants lay clothes and blankets over the wire, but many become severely hurt by the sharp blades. The

⁸⁹ Daley, Suzanne. "As Africans Surge to Europe's Door, Spain Locks Down." *The New York Times*. 27 Feb. 2014. Web. 13 May 2014.

⁹⁰ Daley, Suzanne. "As Africans Surge to Europe's Door, Spain Locks Down." *The New York Times*. 27 Feb. 2014. Web. 13 May 2014.

Spanish Guardia Civil, or border patrol, and Moroccan authorities contribute to the dangers of clandestine crossing, as well. According to an immigrant, Abbdol Cissé, interviewed by the New York Times, "The police in Morocco were throwing stones at us, at our heads...They had metal bars, and they hit our legs while we were climbing."⁹¹ Moreover, in February of 2014, the Guardia Civil shot rubber bullets at the estimated 250 immigrants scaling the border fence or swimming near the shoreline, killing at least 15 people.

According to the Association for Human Rights of Andalucía, between 15,000 and 16,000 people have lost their lives attempting to reach the Spanish coast in the last ten years.⁹² Those who don't die on the journey are usually intercepted by the Guardia Civil and taken to immigrant detention centers, or Centros de Internamiento de Extranjeros, where those who have been apprehended are held for a maximum of 40 days before either being deported or set free. While in detention, the Spanish government, with subsidies from the EU and aid groups, are supposed to provide food and medical attention, but the centers have been criticized for unsafe and sub-human living conditions.⁹³ Migrants remain in the detention centers until a repatriation agreement can be made with the immigrant's home country. However, because few African governments are willing to agree to such contracts, knowing how vital remittances from migrants in Europe are to their home economies, few such agreements exist.

⁹¹ Daley, Suzanne. "As Africans Surge to Europe's Door, Spain Locks Down." *The New York Times*. 27 Feb. 2014. Web. 13 May 2014.

⁹² "Derechos Humanos En La Frontera Sur." Asociación Pro Derechos Humanos De Andalucía (2013): n. pag. Web.

⁹³ George, Katy. "The Cruellest View." *Ethos Magazine*. N.p., 24 Sept. 2004. Web. 13 May 2014.

In order to further delay the repatriation process, many immigrants also present falsified passports. "In a logistic capacity, expulsion is difficult," Carlos Bengoechea, the director of Ceuta's Center for Temporary Stay of Immigrants, said. "Sometimes they give us false information about where they're from. It's very complicated to determine the truth."⁹⁴ If the individual's national identity is not determined, Title III of the Organic Law 8/2000 says the migrants must be released. Note: at the time of writing this thesis, Spain was negotiating new rules that would deport migrants who jumped the fences in Melilla or Ceuta on the spot. Meaning migrants are now being "rejected at the border" under the claim that they have not yet stepped on Spanish soil.⁹⁵

Ceuta and Melilla have thus become de facto halfway homes for the thousands of immigrants hoping to get to the Spanish mainland. Ceuta and Melilla are not members of the Schengen Agreement, so migrants cannot travel legally by ferry to the peninsula.⁹⁶ Furthermore, Spain operates on a visa system, which classifies entry by: transit, short-stay, residence, residence and work, seasonal residence and work, and study and research.⁹⁷ The inefficiency of Spanish bureaucracy makes getting a visa difficult, which leaves migrants in an undocumented status. They don't get deported, but neither are they granted residency. Returning home for many is not an option, so Africans will spend years living in tent cities called *chabalas* or in mountain caves before gathering the 400

⁹⁴ George, Katy. "The Cruellest View." *Ethos Magazine*. N.p., 24 Sept. 2004. Web. 13 May 2014.

⁹⁵ Ramos, Toñy. "Spain Deporting Migrants Back to Morocco on the Spot." *El País*. N.p., 4 Apr. 2014. Web. 13 May 2014.

⁹⁶ George, Katy. "The Cruellest View." *Ethos Magazine*. N.p., 24 Sept. 2004. Web. 13 May 2014.

⁹⁷ Rodriguez-Ferrand, Graciela. "Citizenship Pathways and Border Protection: Spain." *Library of Congress*. N.p., Mar. 2013. Web. 13 May 2014.

to 1000 Euros demanded by smugglers to take them north. Finding a job is difficult without proper documentation, so many migrants resort to begging or selling tissues on the street to raise the funds needed to cross the 20-kilometer stretch to the European continent.⁹⁸ However, this can take years of living in slums thousands of miles away from their homelands and families.

For those who want to avoid living in limbo in Ceuta and Melilla, the Canary Islands are another popular destination for unauthorized immigration. The islands are one of Spain's 17 autonomous communities. The Canary Islands are located 62 miles west of the border between Morocco and the Western Sahara, and, as of 2010, 20 percent of the local population is foreign born.⁹⁹ Because the Canary Islands are a part of the Schengen Agreement, immigrants who successfully arrive and are allowed to stay are able to travel unimpeded to the Spanish mainland. But crossing the choppy waters to the Canary Islands is perilous and Spanish officials have reported that almost one in six migrants who travel illegally to the Canary Islands from North Africa die.¹⁰⁰

Those who arrive successfully often find better living conditions on the other side. Roxana Ortiz, a Bolivian immigrant living in the Canary Islands, says, "I think we immigrants have many similarities with the people of the Canary Islands, seeing as we're both a conquered people," Ortiz said. "We all don't really feel like we're a part of Europe." Ortiz, who is graying and in her 60s, is a member of an

⁹⁸ George, Katy. "The Cruellest View." *Ethos Magazine*. N.p., 24 Sept. 2004. Web. 13 May 2014.

⁹⁹ Godenau, Dirk. "Demographic and Migration Trends in the Outermost Regions: Impacts on Territorial, Social and Territorial Cohesion" *European Union Regional Policy* (2012): n. pag. Web.

¹⁰⁰ Agencies. "Spain Reveals Perils of Migration." *Al Jazeera English*. N.p., 27 Dec. 2006. Web. 13 May 2014.

association called *Juntos en la misma dirección* (Together in the same direction) that helps organize activities in the Canarian immigrant community. I spent a weekend with Roxana who took me to several local events, including one in the Fraile neighborhood, which is home to more than 70 different nationalities. Located on the island of Tenerife in the Canaries, Fraile hosts hundreds of immigrant associations that have banded together through cultural exchanges. The event I attended was organized by one of the Islamic groups, but Bolivians, Uruguayans, Spaniards, and sub-Saharan Africans were all in attendance. We drank tea, ate Moroccan cookies, and sang traditional songs. Most people spoke different languages, but somehow in the congratulatory speeches that followed the gathering, the crowd of people nodded their heads in mutual understanding of the words' importance. "Because of the economic crisis, we don't receive much funding if any from the Spanish government," Ortiz said. "So we rely on each other and there's a sense of solidarity among the associations."

The Canary Islands are not the only part of Spain to have been affected by economic crisis. The whole country experienced a hellish economic downturn in 2008, whose impetus was a mixture of the global financial crisis originating in the US and the European sovereign debt crisis. Exaggerated by a half-century housing bubble, high unemployment, and failed stimulus packages,¹⁰¹ Spain was officially in a recession by 2009. By 2012, in combination with a series of austerity measures,

¹⁰¹ Hill, Steven. "To Hell and Back: Spain's Grotesque Recession and Its Surprising New Economy." *The Atlantic*. Atlantic Media Company, 18 Oct. 2013. Web. 12 May 2014.

Spain applied for a bank recapitalization package.¹⁰² Today, Spain is emerging from its Great Depression-esque economic funk, but the unemployment rate is at 26.7 percent¹⁰³ (the highest in the developed world), protests in front of government buildings are seemingly perpetual, and for-sale signs are so prevalent they're considered "Spain's national tree."¹⁰⁴ The worst may be over, but the after-shock hit deep. For example, when eleven jobs opened at the Prado Museum in Madrid opened, 18,700 people applied.¹⁰⁵

The economic crisis has altered migration dynamics in Spain, but not in the way the government may have hoped. Instead of immigrants leaving the country, Spaniards are. In fact, the number of emigrants in Spain now exceeds the number of immigrants.¹⁰⁶ Middle-aged professionals are leaving for high-skilled work in places like Germany and Britain, but many of Spain's young people grossly affected by unemployment (55 percent between those aged 16-24)¹⁰⁷ are leaving to study and work low-wage jobs elsewhere.

As job competition increases, immigrants are blamed for employment scarcity and the country's economic hardship. Jobs in construction and the service sector, which brought immigrants to the country in the first place, are now sought after by Spaniards who previously deemed the work inferior. Consequently, Spain

¹⁰² Hill, Steven. "To Hell and Back: Spain's Grotesque Recession and Its Surprising New Economy." *The Atlantic*. Atlantic Media Company, 18 Oct. 2013. Web. 12 May 2014.

¹⁰³ "Unemployment Rate by Sex and Age Groups." *Eurostat*. N.p., 8 May 2014. Web. 13 May 2014.

¹⁰⁴ Hill, Steven. "To Hell and Back: Spain's Grotesque Recession and Its Surprising New Economy." *The Atlantic*. Atlantic Media Company, 18 Oct. 2013. Web. 12 May 2014.

¹⁰⁵ "The Worst May Be over." *The Economist*. 12 Oct. 2013. Web. 13 May 2014.

¹⁰⁶ "La OCDE Constata Emigración Neta Por Primera Vez En España En 2011 De Más De 50.000 Personas Por La Crisis." *La Comfia*. N.p., 28 June 2012. Web. 13 May 2014.

¹⁰⁷ Burgen, Stephen. "Spain's Unemployment Rise Tempers Green Shoots of Recovery." *The Guardian*. 24 Jan. 2014. Web. 12 May 2014.

has employed several tactics to reduce the immigrant population—most notably the voluntary return program in 2009. The initiative is intended to persuade unemployed migrants to return home in exchange for their entire unemployment benefit in two lump sums (one upon departure and the other when arriving in their country of origin). The agreement also requires migrants to surrender their residency permits and not return to Spain for at least three years.¹⁰⁸ Participation is lower than expected, reminding Spain that migrants are not commodities to be shipped and returned at its convenience.

Spain has also attempted to formalize the labor economy and reduce the amount of undocumented workers by instituting sanctions against businesses that employ unauthorized laborers and establishing quota systems. For example, the quota system established in 2005 identified the number of jobs not desired by Spanish or EU citizens in each province and matched immigrants with available positions. In 2013, the “Catologo de ocupaciones de dificil cobertura” listed naval machinists and ship cooks as being in high demand in the coastal city of Cádiz, while professional athletes and coaches were the only available jobs in Sevilla.¹⁰⁹ Foreign citizens who apply and are accepted are rewarded with temporary visas. But this fast track to residency is seemingly only beneficial if you’re highly skilled or an athlete.

Despite the economic crisis and new regulatory programs, immigrants continue to arrive to Spain by the thousands. In 2013, 11 percent of Spain’s

¹⁰⁸ Madrid, Lisa Abend. "The Problem With Spain's Plan to Pay Migrants to Go Home." *Time*. 05 Mar. 2011. Web. 13 May 2014.

¹⁰⁹ "Los Profesionales Que Hacen Falta En España." *ABC*. N.p., 22 Jan. 2013. Web. 13 May 2014.

resident population was composed of foreign nationals—although that’s a 3.1 percent decrease since 2012.¹¹⁰ Of those immigrants, the top five nationalities represented were Romania (15.17 percent), Morocco (14.96 percent), the United Kingdom (6.23 percent), Ecuador (5.31 percent), and Colombia (4.39 percent). Identifying the number of irregular immigrants is difficult because most undocumented people overstay their visas rather than cross illegally by boat, but the total is estimated to be 573,712 as of 2012.¹¹¹

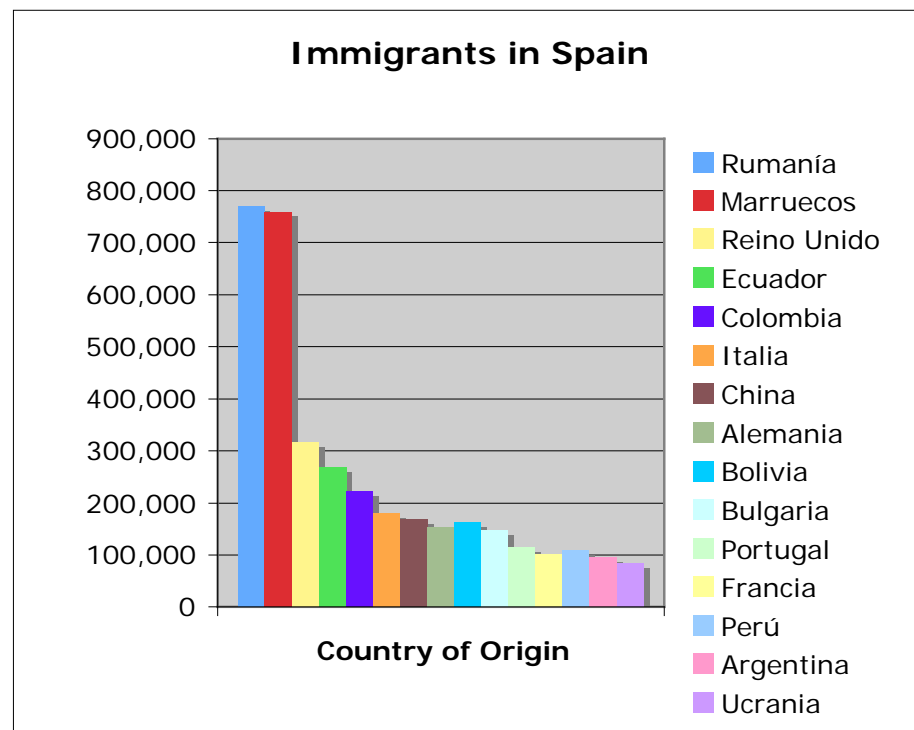


Figure 8: Number of immigrants in Spain by nationality. Data Source: National Institute of Statistics.

Quality of life for foreign-born people depends greatly on their documented status and country of origin. Immigrants from developed countries occupy certain

¹¹¹ "Medio Millón De Inmigrantes Irregulares Se Quedarán Sin La Cobertura Sanitaria." *El Mundo*. N.p., 23 Apr. 2012. Web. 13 May 2014.

quality jobs (doctors, professors, journalists), while people from Africa, Eastern Europe, and Andean Latin American countries tend to work in less skilled jobs, often finding employment as day laborers, caretakers, or construction workers. Occupational downgrading is common among migrants in Spain and it is estimated that many workers are in jobs below their educational level.¹¹² Because many foreign-born people are in low-paying jobs and work is scarce for those without documentation, moderate and severe poverty are more acute among immigrants than among nationals.¹¹³ Moreover, although article 12 of the Ley de Extranjería recognizes immigrants' rights to healthcare, the Spanish government announced in 2012 that it would no longer provide irregular immigrants with coverage.¹¹⁴

Immigrants, especially irregular immigrants, thus live in a volatile system that oscillates between regularization and deportation, between equal access to social services and exclusion from basic healthcare. As Spain addresses this new "social problem" under the European Union's watchful eye, immigrants keep arriving to Spain hoping that maybe, just maybe, a Spaniard will have refused a job picking strawberries so they can pick by the pound and earn what little they can to feed their families.

Although many immigrants will continue to arrive to study, work, and marry, those who arrive illegally play a game of cat-and-mouse with border patrol, waiting for the right time to dart to the other side of the Strait of Gibraltar and

¹¹² Reher, David, and Miguel Requena. "The National Immigrant Survey of Spain: A New Data Source for Migration Studies in Europe." *Demographic Research* 20.12 (2009): n. pag. Web.

¹¹³ Bustillo, Rafael Muñoz De, and José-Ignacio Antón. "From Rags to Riches? Immigration and Poverty in Spain." *Population Research and Policy Review* 30.5 (2011): 661-76. Print.

¹¹⁴ "Medio Millón De Inmigrantes Irregulares Se Quedarán Sin La Cobertura Sanitaria." *El Mundo*. N.p., 23 Apr. 2012. Web. 13 May 2014.

touch safe ground. It's a dysfunctional and reactive system that hasn't quite figured out how to balance welfare with public interest. But the chaos almost makes sense. Large-scale immigration is a recent phenomenon for Spain, and the unprepared government is scrambling to receive newcomers while dealing with their own problems, the economy.

"If this crisis continues for longer, maybe we're going to see the rise of xenophobic groups," Eduardo del Campo, an immigration author and reporter for *El Mundo*, says. "So far, considering how fast and how intense this change has been, in 20 years or less, the change has been assumed quite positively...the reality is that migrants are here and viewed well."

Although some Spaniards are accepting of their new neighbors, others aren't so keen on opening their borders—especially to Africans. Spaniards like to think they're "immune to the racial tensions that have plagued other European nations," but if the soccer field is a reflection of Spanish society, the country has a ways to go.¹¹⁵ Soccer fans have become infamous for harassing black players by yelling insults or making monkey sounds. At several of the games I attended while in Spain "eject the black player" or "run, blackie, run" were common jeers. As recently as April 27, a soccer fan threw a banana at one of Barcelona's most well known players, Dani Alves, during a game.¹¹⁶ Alves responded by picking up the banana and eating it. He later said, "We have suffered this in Spain for some time...You have to take it with a dose of humor."

¹¹⁵ Socolovsky, Jerome. "Spain Fights Soccer Racism Against Black Players." *National Public Radio*. 6 June 2006. Web. 13 May 2014.

¹¹⁶ "Alves Takes Bite out of Banana Racism." *Al Jazeera*. N.p., 27 Apr. 2014. Web. 13 May 2014.

Many of the people I interviewed acknowledged that these demographic changes are new and the acceptance of foreigners isn't going to come easily or immediately. Despite the racist insults at soccer games and mistreatment along the border, I also saw signs of hope.

In June 2013, during a late night bus ride back to Sevilla from northern Spain, my fellow passengers and I were jolted awake as national policemen boarded the bus to search for drugs. The faint smell of marijuana was in the air and German Shepherds searched the aisles, jumping on chairs and sniffing people's backpacks as they went. Two red-eyed, anxious looking men in the back were the clear targets, but the policemen decided to ask a Nigerian woman to exit the bus for questioning instead. Everyone was quiet as she gathered her things and walked out into the night. Finally, a Spanish woman near the front of the bus asked, "Why her? She may have black skin, but she's just like you and me." The policemen didn't answer, but after a few minutes the Nigerian woman returned to her seat, the driver started the engine, and turned back onto the road to continue our journey south.

Part Three: Media Theory

“As history constantly teaches us, discourse is not simply that which translates struggles or systems of domination, but is the thing for why and by which there is struggle...Discourse is the power which is to be seized.”

--Michel Foucault¹¹⁷

The media have ultimate access to our lives. Whether in the form of a newspaper, television program, blog or Twitter feed, mass media are a pervasive and integral appendage of modern society. Users on Facebook share 2.5 billion pieces of content on Facebook every day, 5,700 Tweets happen every second,¹¹⁸ and more than half of the world’s adult population reads a newspaper.¹¹⁹

Because the media is so insidious, it has historically been an attractive tool for wielding political and corporate power. Martin Luther used print media during the Protestant Reformation in the “titanic battle for men’s minds,”¹²⁰ and Hugo Chávez required Venezuelans to watch his political television show every Sunday. Media censorship and control aren’t isolated to countries with histories of authoritarian rule, however. Newspapers in countries like the United States, for example, struggle to avoid succumbing to corporate interests. Because even though President Barack Obama may not be threatening editors to censor content, wealthy investors and lobbyists, like the conservative Charles and David Koch, can.

¹¹⁷ Ana, Otto Santa. *Brown Tide Rising: Metaphors of Latinos in Contemporary American Public Discourse*. Austin: U of Texas, 2002. 211. Print.

¹¹⁸ Bennett, Shea. "Pinterest, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Google+, LinkedIn – Social Media Stats 2014." *Media Bistro*. N.p., 20 Jan. 2014. Web. 13 May 2014.

¹¹⁹ "World Press Trends: Newspaper Audience Rise, Digital Revenues Yet to Follow." *World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers*. N.p., 9 Mar. 2012. Web. 13 May 2014.

¹²⁰ Anderson, Benedict R. O'G. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso, 2006. 40. Print.

Understanding media's omnipresence and power is integral to understanding the more nuanced newspapers critiques I will be making later on in this thesis. It is imperative to address mass communication dynamics before analyzing the covert ways in which the media can contribute to the construction of public opinion. In this section, therefore, I draw upon existing academic research and use the social cognitive, cultivation, agenda-setting, and cognitivist communication theories to build a framework for media analysis later on in this work. I focus greater attention on the cognitivist theory because other researchers in the discourse analysis field employ it, but all four theories provide a framework for interpreting the media's role in reinforcing immigrant stereotypes and public perception.

Social Cognitive Theory

Social cognitive theory is used in psychology to explain how humans acquire understanding by observing others. Neal E. Miller and John Dillard initially proposed the theory in 1941 as a way to understand learned behavior, but it has since grown to become an analytical tool employed in classrooms, newsrooms, and other social arenas. In its essence, social cognitive theory posits that people learn new behaviors not only through experimentation, but by replicating the actions of others. In the case of the newspapers, social cognitive theory asserts that people model behaviors they read about. Rather than learning through trial and error, individuals can operate on a wealth of information derived from vicarious experiences found in news. For example, if a young woman with no prior sexual

experiences reads an article in Gawker entitled “Women Who Have Unprotected Sex Are Happier, Smarter Thanks to Mood-Elevating Properties of Semen,” she may be more inclined to nix the condom during future sexual encounters.¹²¹ Similarly, if pornography is considered a form of media, social cognitive theory has been most recently seen in attempts to regulate porn (legally requiring condoms in porn in California, “family-friendly” filters in Britain) in order to change sexual behaviors by changing the way porn is accessed and viewed.

Because humans’ self-development is rooted in social systems, behaviors and perceptions are often adopted through sociostructural influences.¹²² Our minds aren’t totally malleable, but we are vulnerable to the messages conveyed in what we watch, read, and hear. To support the theory, researcher Albert Bandura created an experiment to show how children’s behaviors are influenced by what they see. To conduct the experiment, boys and girls watched a movie in which an adult assaulted a clown doll. Afterwards, the kids had a chance to play with the doll without adult supervision. Bandura found that the children who watched the movie were more likely to act aggressively towards the doll than the children who did not watch the movie. Although the connection between media messages and human behavior is not as clear as Bandura’s experiment, the social cognitive theory supports the idea that newspapers effect how people interact with one another.

¹²¹ Zimmerman, Neetzan. "Women Who Have Unprotected Sex Are Happier, Smarter Thanks to Mood-Elevating Properties of Semen." *Gawker*. N.p., 22 Aug. 2012. Web. 13 May 2014.

¹²² Bryant, Jennings, and Dolf Zillmann. *Media Effects: Advances in Theory and Research*. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum, 1994. Print.

Cultivation Theory

The cultivation theory examines the long-term effects of media messages on social perception. The theory's primary proposition states that the more time people spend "living" in the media world, the more likely they are to believe media portrayals.¹²³ George Gerbner, a professor at the University of Pennsylvania, conducted several experiments to advance cultivation theory. His research found that heavy television viewers had a different perception of reality from light television viewers. Heavy viewers believed they were more likely to be a victim of violence and found people less trustworthy than the light television viewers. The theory thus suggests that individuals are susceptible to repeated media messages that reinforce certain views.

Very little study has been conducted on the application of cultivation theory in print media; however, in 2010, a new cultivation research study analyzed four months of news coverage in a newspaper in which foreigners were overrepresented as offenders. Among the 453 participants, those who spent more time reading the newspaper overestimated the frequency of foreigners as offenders.¹²⁴ This study reinforces the notion that the media can influence the perception of people, like foreigners, and usually not in a positive way, which is relevant to the analysis reported later on in this thesis.

¹²³ Cohen, J. & Weimann, G. (2000). "Cultivation Revisited: Some Genres Have Some Effects on Some Viewers". *Communication Reports*, 13(2), 99.

¹²⁴ Arendt, Florian. "Cultivation Effects of a Newspaper on Reality Estimates and Explicit and Implicit Attitudes." *Journal of Media Psychology: Theories, Methods, and Applications* 22.4 (2010): 147-59. Print.

Agenda-Setting Theory

Agenda-setting theory describes the media's influence on the salience of news topics. Professors Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw pioneered the theory through their 1972 study of the relationship between issues voters said were important and issues presented in the media during campaigns. In their conclusion, they found that the most frequently appearing new stories were considered by consumers to be the most important¹²⁵.

McCombs and Shaw divided the agenda-setting theory into two levels in a 2005 study¹²⁶. The first level claims that the media won't tell us *what* to think, but what to think *about*; the second goes further to assert that the media not only tells us what to think about, but how to think about it. The core assumptions of agenda-setting theory are that 1) the media filter reality and 2) the media elevate certain news stories to prominence.

This selectivity stems from the editors and publishers choosing what to print and what not to print based upon a constant need for profit. Although editors may be more inclined to feature world news, they often take readers' interests into account, which explains how the "best apartment views in New York City" can make it onto the front page of the New York Times. "If you let readers have what they want, soccer would be on the front page every day," Juan Carlos Blanco,

¹²⁵ McCombs, Maxwell E., and Donald L. Shaw. "The Agenda-Setting Function of Mass Media." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 36.2 (1972): 176. Web.

¹²⁶ McCombs, Maxwell. "A Look at Agenda-setting: Past, Present and Future." *Journalism Studies* 6.4 (2005): 543-57. Web.

editor-and-chief of Sevillian newspaper, Correo de Andalucia, says. "So it's a balance."

The agenda-setting theory focuses not only on what articles are on the front page, but what articles are placed in the back of the paper or don't appear at all. In the context of this thesis, the agenda-setting theory can be useful in analyzing the relationship between the prominence of news stories about immigration and the importance of immigration topics among the populace.

Cognitivist Theory

The cognitivist theory is concerned with the development of thought processes. It differs from social cognitive theory, as its influence is not limited to behavioral outcomes. Psychologist Jean Piaget pioneered the theory in the 1930s through a series of observational studies that showed how children obtain their understanding of the world through their environmental surroundings. The three basic components of Piaget's theory are: schemas, adaptation processes, and stages of development (sensorimotor, preoperational, concrete operational, formal operational).¹²⁷ For the purposes of this thesis, I will refrain from elaborating on the specifics of these components to remain concise; however, key to understanding the relationship between cognitive theory and this thesis is an awareness of the nature of schemas, which are defined as being "units" of knowledge and linked mental representations of the world. They can also be described as the mental structures that organize and provide a framework for

¹²⁷ McLeod, Saul. "Jean Piaget." *Simply Psychology*. N.p., 2009. Web. 13 May 2014.

preconceived ideas, or stereotypes. For example, the image of a well-dressed businessperson is associated generally with honesty and trustworthiness. Hence, if this person attempts to stab a Mexican laborer, the onlookers may remember the Mexican laborer stabbing the businessperson, which reflects a change in memory based on existing schema. To expand the theory, one study presented subjects with the Native American folk tale “The War of Ghosts” and asked them to recall it several times throughout the next year. The study found all of the participants transformed the details of the story to reflect their own cultural norms and expectations that aligned with their schemata.¹²⁸

As applied to media, cognitivist theory purports that metaphors found in stories shape commonsense thinking and influence behavior. Consequently, I have selected the cognitivist theory for the purposes of this research because it aligns well with my emphasis on vocabulary and metaphor. The study of metaphor has been around for centuries, but greater interest in how this form of rhetoric shapes public perception was popularized by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson in the 1980s. Ever since, metaphors have become a critical component of discourse analysis. Sociolinguists like Lakoff and Johnson have found that metaphors, with their “poetic color and superficial ornamentation,”¹²⁹ shape how people discern reality. These discourse practices, however, are so ingrained in our interactions and speech that most people don’t notice them in an everyday context. Yet,

¹²⁸ Bartlett, F.C. (1932). *Remembering: A study in experimental and social psychology*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press

¹²⁹ Ana, Otto Santa. *Brown Tide Rising: Metaphors of Latinos in Contemporary American Public Discourse*. Austin: U of Texas, 2002. 22. Print.

according to the cognitivist theory, metaphors constitute the social values of those who use them.¹³⁰

According to sociolinguist Otto Santa Ana, “the neurological processing of language is not assumed to be fundamentally different from other cognitive processes,”¹³¹ meaning that verbal metaphor operates in the same way as visual metaphor. For example, saying “time is money” has the same effect as reading “time is money.” According to the cognitivist theory, metaphors like “time is money” influence bodily and mental experience as they combine basic-level concepts (such as time), schemas, imaginative processes (such as metaphors), and basic cognitive processes (such as focusing, scanning, vantage-point shifting) to create meaning.¹³² Through these cognitive processes, time is thus monetized and can be “wasted,” “spent,” and “thrown away.”

Under the cognitivist theory, the press becomes a playground for sociolinguists who find metaphors in large-scale publications as social values and stereotypes in disguise. Cognitive analysis has rarely been applied to immigration discourse, but in 1999, sociolinguist Otto Santa Ana published a book called “Brown Tide Rising,” which analyzed metaphors of Latinos in contemporary public discourse and has served as a surrogate Bible for this thesis. Like Santa Ana, my thesis places metaphors under the “microscope” of critical discourse analysis, which I expand upon in part five.

¹³⁰ Ana, Otto Santa. *Brown Tide Rising: Metaphors of Latinos in Contemporary American Public Discourse*. Austin: U of Texas, 2002. 21. Print.

¹³¹ Ana, Otto Santa. *Brown Tide Rising: Metaphors of Latinos in Contemporary American Public Discourse*. Austin: U of Texas, 2002. 27. Print.

¹³² Eco, Umberto, Marco Santambrogio, and Patrizia Violi. *Meaning and Mental Representations*. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1988. 121. Print.

Part Four: Vocabulary and Metaphor

“You, who are so-called illegal aliens, must know that no human being is illegal. That is a contradiction in terms. Human beings can be beautiful or more beautiful, they can be fat or skinny, they can be right or wrong, but illegal? How can a human being be illegal?”

--Elie Weisel, Holocaust survivor and Nobel Peace Prize winner

During my six months living in Sevilla, Spain, I participated in a workshop called Remapping Europe that was sponsored by a local non-profit, Zemos98. The workshop was designed to bring migrants together to redefine the concept of borders through multimedia projects. On a technicality—being a U.S. citizen—I qualified as a “migrant” and was able to join the workshop, but I was cogniscent of the fact that my foreign passport did not grant me automatic passage into the shared socioeconomic or ethnic backgrounds of my “peers”. Immigrants in Sevilla have often been described to me as being part of a hierarchy, and I, as an American, was at the top.

During our first meeting, the leader of the workshop asked me to introduce myself and explain my reason for joining the course. I began riddling off the rehearsed, “I’m studying the representation of immigrants in newspapers in Spain and the United States...” thesis pitch in Spanish, but as I was talking I overheard an Italian girl whisper to her Romanian friend in an aggressive tone, “Immigrant? Who says I’m an immigrant. I’m a *migrant*.” My face turned red and I stumbled over the rest of my introduction, thinking the whole time, “Excuse me? Did I say

something wrong? Me? The girl who is insufferably politically correct?" I couldn't believe "immigrant" was another term to be added to the lexicon of forbidden words. Even I, the "it's-administrative-assistant-not-secretary" snob, couldn't help but roll my eyes at the thought. But then again, the terms immigrant and migrant have no bearing on my every day life. I don't know what it's like to leave everything and everyone I love to live in a place where I may or may not speak the language and have to work six days a week to provide for my family. Despite my foreign passport, I wasn't an immigrant *or* a migrant. I was a tourist.

I later learned that the word immigrant to many foreigners in Spain implies invasion and economic necessity. Granted, as both my Italian friend and I admit, the immigrant versus migrant debate is only a minor thread in immigration discourse. Yet, it's emblematic of the social dynamics surrounding word choice as a whole. Because, as obnoxiously nitpicky as political correctness might sound, words carry weight. It's the reason we don't say "nigger" anymore or that the LGBTQ community adopted "queer." Words, whether rooted in oppression or revolution, are inextricably linked to the histories in which they arise.

"Every word has an objective, every word carries an idea," Mohamed Salem Mohamed, a 22-year-old journalism student from Western Sahara, says. "Words are one of the most powerful weapons in communication...with them you can mobilize or harm society."

In that vein, part three of this thesis focuses on the influence of vocabulary and metaphor in shaping public perception. This portion of the analysis concentrates primarily on immigration discourse in the United States due to the

country's lengthy relationship with immigration, but the language of immigration in Spain is examined as well. An overview of reporting rhetoric in both countries facilitates critical discourse analysis to occur in part five of this thesis and help illustrate how words are anything but empty strands of letters. As Toni Morrison said in her lecture upon receiving the Nobel Prize for literature,

Oppressive language does more than represent violence; it is violence; does more than represent the limits of knowledge; it limits knowledge. Whether it is obscuring state language or the faux language of mindless media; whether it is the proud but calcified language of science; whether it is the malign language of law-without-ethics; or language designed for the estrangement of minorities, hiding its racist plunder in its literary cheek—it must be rejected, altered, and exposed.¹³³

Vocabulary

“The ill and unfit choice of words wonderfully obstructs the understanding.”

--Sir Francis Bacon

The adjectives and modifiers used to describe immigrants have evolved significantly throughout modern history. Especially in the United States, the semantic journey for immigrants from Latin America began with the emergence of “alien” in the Immigration Act of 1924 and transitioned to Bracero in the 1950s, wetback in the 1960s, illegal immigrant in the 1990s and finally to undocumented to unauthorized in recent years. Throughout this journey, the perception of immigrants has oscillated between positive and negative, which is not at all unrelated to the varying adjectives we use to describe them. As National Public Radio host Michelle Norris told me, “Immigrant used to be a romantic term; people

¹³³ Ana, Otto Santa. *Brown Tide Rising: Metaphors of Latinos in Contemporary American Public Discourse*. Austin: U of Texas, 2002. 1. Print.

thought of pick yourself up by your bootstraps and Ellis Island. But now, perhaps because of the coupling with the word illegal, the term has really evolved.” In the next few pages, I scrutinize the most prevalent and hotly contested adjectives to describe someone who is living in the United States without proper documentation: illegal, undocumented, and unauthorized.

Illegal Immigrant

The term illegal immigrant most likely arose as an adaptation of “illegal alien,” which was initially used in the 20th century to refer to people coming from Southern and Eastern Europe.¹³⁴ The first generation of “illegal aliens,” consequently, was not Latinos, but Italians, Russians, and Slovaks. According to newspaper archives, the term “illegal immigrant” emerged soon after when it appeared in the *Times of London* in 1939 as a word to describe Jewish migration to Palestine after World War II. Ever since, illegal immigrant has been adopted into our vocabulary to describe people who live in a foreign country without legal documentation. The Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 popularized the usage of illegal immigrant, and it has become a polemic and divisive term among the activist, immigrant, legal, and media communities in recent years. The overarching criticism of the term is summarized well by journalist and activist José Antonio Vargas, who revealed his undocumented status in 2011. “The term dehumanizes and marginalizes the people it seeks to describe,” he says. “Think of it this way: In what other contexts do we call someone illegal? If

¹³⁴ Vargas, Jose A. "Stop Calling Immigrants 'Illegal'" *Time*. N.p., 21 Sept. 2012. Web. 12 May 2014.

someone is driving a car at 14, we say ‘underage driver,’ not ‘illegal driver.’ If someone is driving under the influence, we call them a ‘drunk driver,’ not an ‘illegal driver.’ Put another way: How would you feel if you — or your family members or friends — were referred to as illegal?”¹³⁵

Groups like Color Lines have launched campaigns aimed at eliminating the use of the “I-word” in newspapers in favor of undocumented, and several media companies have complied. The Associated Press announced in April of 2013 that it would no longer use the term “illegal immigrant.” Kathleen Carroll, A.P.’s senior Vice President and executive editor said the term ends up, “pigeonholing people or creating long descriptive titles where you use some main event in someone’s life to become the modifier before their name.”¹³⁶ AP’s decision prompted other newspapers to change their style guides, including the Huffington Post, L.A. Times and USA Today.

The New York Times also opened conversation to journalists and readers about whether or not to continue using “illegal immigrant.” However, despite petitions and pleas, on April 23, 2013, the New York Times announced they would continue using “illegal immigrant.” Margaret Sullivan, the public editor at the New York Times, said of the change, “It is clear and accurate; it gets its job done in two words that are easily understood.”¹³⁷ Lead immigration reporter at the New York Times, Julia Preston, told me in an interview, “What we’re looking for is language

¹³⁵ Ana, Otto Santa. *Brown Tide Rising: Metaphors of Latinos in Contemporary American Public Discourse*. Austin: U of Texas, 2002. 1. Print.

¹³⁶ Sullivan, Margaret. "The Times, Too, Is Reconsidering the Term 'Illegal Immigrant'" *The New York Times*. N.p., 2 Apr. 2013. Web. 13 May 2014.

¹³⁷ Sullivan, Margaret. "Readers Won't Benefit If Times Bans the Term 'Illegal Immigrant'" *The New York Times*. N.p., 2 Oct. 2012. Web. 13 May 2014.

that will not express a partisan view to our readers.... If we stop using illegal immigrants, to some it would be a red flag. I think that illegal immigrant does have the asset of being factually accurate. That said, it has become a term that has become offensive to some of our readers and we have taken that into account. I now avoid using the term illegal immigrant in my copy whenever I can find a different way to write it.”

Many activists, researchers, and immigrants don’t accept the argument that “illegal immigrant” is both factually accurate and neutral. Firstly, because, as Justice Anthony Kennedy, says, "As a general rule, it is not a crime for a removable alien to remain present in the United States."¹³⁸The deportation of an unauthorized citizen, rather, is a civil manner in which federal authorities are granted wide discretion. For example, if an unauthorized immigrant is “trying to support his family by working or has "children born in the United States, long ties to the community, or a record of distinguished military service," officials may let them stay. However, as seen with new federal programs like Operation Streamline, illegal re-entry is a crime punishable up to six months in prison. Generally speaking, however, those who are apprehended for a first time are not tried in court. In Spain, too, unauthorized entry is considered an administrative infraction most commonly punishable with a slap on the wrist or a fine¹³⁹.

¹³⁸ Garcia, Charles. "Why 'illegal Immigrant' Is a Slur." *CNN*. Cable News Network, 01 Jan. 1970. Web. 13 May 2014.

¹³⁹ "Derechos Humanos En La Frontera Sur." *Asociación Pro Derechos Humanos De Andalucía* (2013): n. pag. Web.

“Illegal immigrant” is also seen as a partisan term. Why else would Senator Charles Schumer say in a 2009 speech at Georgetown Law Center, “People who enter the United States without our permission are illegal aliens. When we use phrases like ‘undocumented workers,’ we convey a message to the American people that their government is not serious about combating illegal immigration”? Sociolinguists purport that when politicians and journalists use “illegal immigrant,” especially in a negative light, public perception of immigrants is skewed. “When two things bear the same name, there is a sense that they belong to the same category,” Geoffrey Nunberg, a professor a linguist at the University of California, Berkeley, said. “So when you say ‘illegal,’ it makes you think of people that break into your garage and steal your things.”

The illegal immigrant debate in Spain is similar in nature to discussion in the United States. However, the adjective “irregular” also exists as a synonym for illegal. Some immigrants, like Anthony Oluwatosin Jolugbo from Nigeria, are not affected by the use of the term illegal immigrant. He says, “You came to another country, you don’t have residence, so you are an illegal immigrant. Your visa lapsed, so it’s bad. Whatever happens, you are illegal. It doesn’t bother me because I believe illegal immigrants will be immigrants one day.” To people like Anthony, *not* using “illegal immigrant” would be an injustice to their plight.

But other migrants disagree with Anthony. Alhassan Fofanah, an immigrant from Sierra Leone, says, “Nobody in this world is illegal. Everyone is human. We have the right to live where we want to live. Here, feeling illegal, irregular, without

documents...it's only a piece of paper. But it's a barrier that's been placed between those who have it and those who don't."

Alternatives

Because the adjective illegal connotes criminality and inferiority, several alternatives have been suggested. The term most commonly employed by the activist community is "undocumented," which alludes to an immigrant's lack of proper paperwork. Unlike illegal, undocumented "contains the possibility of reparation and atonement, and allows for a sensible reaction proportional to the offense."¹⁴⁰ Most of the migrants I interviewed described undocumented as sounding "friendlier" and "less threatening." One immigrant in particular, Luis Landeros, who came to the United States illegally from Mexico at age 20 to receive a corneal transplant, says, "I identified as undocumented but never as an alien or illegal... Even though we did cross without documents most of us are not doing anything illegal and we are just trying to live and honest life and support our families here and back in Mexico."

Several newspapers refrain from using "undocumented" as their alternative (including the Associated Press). To certain editors, "undocumented" is a blanket synonym for illegal immigrant and is inaccurate because some migrants do carry documents, like driver's licenses—they're just not the right ones. Moreover,

¹⁴⁰ Merolla, Jennifer, S. Karthick Ramakrishnan, and Chris Haynes. "'Illegal,' 'Undocumented,' or 'Unauthorized': Equivalency Frames, Issue Frames, and Public Opinion on Immigration." *Perspectives on Politics* 11.03 (2013): 789-807. Print.

“undocumented” can disguise very real issues that immigrants who live illegally in foreign countries experience.

“Unauthorized” is another more neutral alternative, commonly employed by academics and sociolinguists, but isn’t without criticism. Julia Preston, the lead immigration reporter for the New York Times, says, “Unauthorized does not have a political charge, but it’s jargon-ey and bureaucratic sounding.” The translations of undocumented and unauthorized have similar meanings in Spanish, but the media in Spain also employ the term “sin papeles” meaning “without papers.” However, immigrants in Spain also have documents like health insurance cards and work permits, so “sin papeles” is contested there as well. Thus, activists, journalists, and migrants, in the United States and Spain, are increasingly finding that no word is universally accepted or satisfactory.

“Words are so embedded in our minds as ways of seeing that when we try to shift that towards a sense of more equality and opening that space for equality we often don’t have the language,” Raquel Rubio Goldsmith, a professor at the University of Arizona, says. “Like unauthorized versus undocumented versus illegal right? What is the language? What are we going to say?”

Metaphor

“Metaphors have a way of holding the most truth in the least space.”
--Orson Scott Card, *Alvin Journeyman*¹⁴¹

Metaphors are traditionally seen as a matter of superficial linguistic interest, yet our everyday discourse is filled with metaphors that mold our behaviors and thought processes¹⁴². They facilitate understanding of complex topics like physics and communicate ineffable feelings like love, but most people aren't aware of the conceptual systems that process and translate metaphors. They are seen as figures of speech rather than representations of thought or action.

Research by sociolinguists like George Lakoff and Otto Santa Ana reveal how engrained metaphors are in our discourse and interactions. Lakoff defines metaphors as, “understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another.”¹⁴³ For example, *argument as war* is a conceptual metaphor reflected in our everyday language that is manifested in a variety of linguistic expressions i.e. I've never *won* an argument, if you use that *strategy* he'll *wipe* you out, her criticisms were *right on target*, your claims are *indefensible*, etc. Lakoff explains, “It is important to see that we don't just talk about arguments in terms of war. We can actually win or lose arguments.”¹⁴⁴ In order to win, we plan, we strategize and we fight: we act according to the way we perceive things. Lakoff ponders: what if arguing was thought of as a dance? Interlocutors might interact accordingly.

¹⁴¹ "Quote by Orson Scott Card." *Goodreads*. N.p., n.d. Web. 24 May 2014.

<<http://www.goodreads.com/quotes/67872-metaphors-have-a-way-of-holding-the-most-truth-in->>.

¹⁴² Lakoff, George, and Mark Johnson. *Metaphors We Live by*. Chicago: U of Chicago, 1980. 3. Print.

¹⁴³ Lakoff, George, and Mark Johnson. *Metaphors We Live by*. Chicago: U of Chicago, 1980. 4-5. Print.

¹⁴⁴ Lakoff, George, and Mark Johnson. *Metaphors We Live by*. Chicago: U of Chicago, 1980. 4-5. Print.

Arguments wouldn't likely end with a bow, but dialogue could be more amiable. As such, metaphors are rooted in experience and we live by them. For example, if "time is money," then our time can be wasted or spent well. We find ourselves getting frustrated with siblings who don't get ready fast enough or impatient with dates who arrive late. Metaphors gain currency with repetition, and it's thus important to be aware of their prevalence and applications.

I have selected metaphors as a point of analysis to reveal how social values are embedded in language. Little research regarding the use of conceptual metaphors in Spanish is accessible in the United States so I used English language as a basis for empirical study. However, as noted later on in this thesis, metaphors found in Spanish papers mirror metaphors found in U.S. publications. For brevity, this section focuses on two dominant metaphors—war and nature—although further examples are offered in part six.

Within cognitive discourse analysis, metaphors are categorized into either source or target domains (ideas). For example, with *immigration as war*, "immigration" is the target domain and "war" is the source domain. The source domain is what we use to better understand the target. Under this logic, if immigration is war, then the border becomes a battlefield and Latinos the enemy. Examples of this target/source domain relationship include, "I don't like this *Third World takeover*," "the *invasion* of illegal immigrants is causing economic hardship," and "this is a *state of siege* in California."¹⁴⁵ Here, the concept of immigration as an

¹⁴⁵ Ana, Otto Santa. *Brown Tide Rising: Metaphors of Latinos in Contemporary American Public Discourse*. Austin: U of Texas, 2002. 70. Print.

invasion is a subset of the domain of war. Otto Santa Ana critiques this metaphor as being deceptive. “The objective of immigrants is not conquest and spoils,” Santa Ana writes in his book *Brown Tide Rising*. “But rather industry and enterprise, and the hope of a better life for their children.”¹⁴⁶ Consequently, just as the U.S.-Mexico border has been militarized, so has our language used to describe it.

Immigration has also been portrayed in terms that correspond with environmental phenomena i.e. floods, avalanches, storms, etc. These “natural” metaphors appear in stories about migration trends or border crossing accounts. For example, Otto Santa Ana found the following examples in the L.A. Times in 1992: the *sea* of brown faces, foreigners who have *flooded* the country, and the *massive flow* of illegal immigrants. Floods and flows are dangerous bodies of water that emphasize the scale, power, and direction of migration from Latin America. Santa Ana notes, “greater volume and movement of water imply greater need for safeguards and controls.”

Consequently, the logic of the metaphor suggests that if unchecked, these flows leave devastation and destruction in their paths. Employing natural metaphors and “treating immigration as dangerous waters conceals the individuality of the immigrants’ lives and their humanity.”¹⁴⁷

Using domains like “war” and “nature” results in the mischaracterization of immigrants as invasive and overpowering, which can translate to legislative

¹⁴⁶ Ana, Otto Santa. *Brown Tide Rising: Metaphors of Latinos in Contemporary American Public Discourse*. Austin: U of Texas, 2002. 70. Print.

¹⁴⁷ Ana, Otto Santa. *Brown Tide Rising: Metaphors of Latinos in Contemporary American Public Discourse*. Austin: U of Texas, 2002. 77. Print.

policies. During immigration reform debates, for example, Florida congressman Vern Buchanan said, “Congress should reject amnesty and heed the American people’s call for border security and keeping terrorists, drug lords and illegal gang members out of the United States.”¹⁴⁸ If language vilifies, so will our policies.

¹⁴⁸ Wolfrum, Timothy. “Arizona Immigration Law Result of Fear, Hispanics in Manatee Say.” *Bradenton Herald*. N.p., 1 May 2010. Web. 13 May 2014.

Part Five: Findings

Information Gathering

I collected immigration articles in *El Mundo*, *Diario Sur*, *The New York Times*, and *The Arizona Daily Star* over a two-month time period. The Spanish papers were catalogued from February 1 to March 31, 2013, and the United States papers from October 1 to November 30, 2013. I selected articles in the news section in which immigrants or immigration were the main or secondary topics. I had reservations about limiting the scope of my analysis to news, rather than business, opinion, or entertainment, because I understand the importance of including immigrants in all sections of a newspaper to reflect the multifaceted ways immigrants contribute to society; however, I decided it would be more relevant to study articles that reflect popular discourse surrounding immigration issues, which is most commonly found in news reports.

In order to catalog these items, I inputted the search terms “inmigrante, inmigración, migrante, migración, ilegal” for the Spanish papers and “immigrant, migrant” for the U.S. papers. For incomprehensible technical reasons, more search terms yielded more results in the Spanish papers, whereas in the U.S. papers more search terms yielded fewer results. The archived 286 articles across all papers provide an overview of the rhetoric employed by journalists who write about immigration topics.

I have presented the data below in a series of tables and will analyze the findings in part four. The data has been divided into four sections: syndicates,

vocabulary, metaphor, and subject. The header “syndicates” refers to the number of immigration articles by publication. The header “vocabulary” refers to terms in articles used to describe people who have migrated to the United States or Spain. The header “metaphor” refers to the figures of speech applied to immigration actions and issues. The header “subject” refers to the thematic content of the archived articles. I did not perform a formal content analysis of the following data, but instead identified key terms, phrases, and subject matter and accounted for frequency to draw post-hoc conclusions. As such, this critical discourse analysis produces insights into the ways discourse reproduces social and political inequality.

Syndicates

Each media group published articles from media syndicates. For example, the collection of articles printed in the New York Times also contains pieces written by journalists at the Associated Press. Syndication typically occurs when a publication does not have a reporter available to cover current events and must pay another publication to use their content.

“That’s not unusual,” Peter Michaels, former National Public Radio producer, says. “In the case of the Daily Star, Howard Fischer fills that hole because the Star doesn’t have anybody in Phoenix... You’ll find that in other states too because AP has also downsized.” Syndication ensures readers are informed of current events regardless of a newspaper’s staffing; however, a reliance on syndicated articles means publications have fewer jurisdictions over the

presentation of topics. Journalists and Tuscon residents interviewed say that Howard Fischer Capitol Media News Services covers stories with a conservative bias. The Arizona Daily Star, because it doesn't have a reporter in Phoenix, is thus reliant on a company whose presentation of information may be incongruent with its own style.

Media syndicates, like the Associated Press, Europa Press, and Efe, are some of the world's largest wire services and appear frequently in hundreds of newspapers around the world. Highlighting the number of syndicated articles serves to illustrate media trends, not condemn wire services. In the tables below, the total number of immigration articles catalogued in each publication is listed at the top, followed by a breakdown of media companies whose articles also appeared in the archive.

Total Number of Articles	64
New York Times	61
Associated Press	3

Table 1: The New York Times (Article Count)

Total Number of Articles	55
Arizona Daily Star	44
Associated Press	5
Howard Fischer Capitol Media News Services	5
Cronkite News Service	1

Table 2: Arizona Daily Star (Article Count)

Total Number of Articles	62
El Mundo	46
Europa Press	10
Efe	6

Table 3: El Mundo (Article Count)

Total Number of Articles	105
Diario Sur	49
Europa Press	23
Efe	18
Agencias	13
Redacción	1
Reuters	1

Table 4: Diario Sur (Article Count)

Vocabulary Data

United States

The terminology used to modify immigrants in the New York Times and the Arizona Daily Star is grouped into several categories. Illegal, undocumented, and unauthorized immigrants are presented as their own entities, while “explanatory,” “nationality,” “citizenship,” “youth,” and “other” are umbrella terms for

corresponding phrases. The exact terminology in these groupings varies by publication. For example, in the New York Times, the “explanatory” group includes “here illegally,” “here without papers,” “people who broke the law,” and “people without legal status.” In the Arizona Daily Star, conversely, “explanatory” includes “those who broke the law,” “here without legal status,” “living in country illegally,” and “suspected of being in the country illegally.” Recall that the Arizona Daily Star prints stories in both English and Spanish and the word count below (including illegal/undocumented/unauthorized immigrant) reflects both the Spanish and English variations.

The “nationality” grouping reflects instances in which a story subject’s country of birth is referenced. While the exact nationalities may differ in both the New York Times and the Arizona Daily Star, the concept for both publications remains the same. The “citizenship” group in the New York Times refers to: naturalized citizens, noncitizens, green card holders, and immigrants who are not citizens. The “citizenship” group in the Arizona Daily Star refers to: those who are not citizens, and those overstay their visas.

The “youth” category in the New York Times includes: children of illegal immigrants, those brought here illegally, and Dreamers. “Youth” in the Arizona Daily Star refers to: Dreamers and those brought to the country illegally. The “other” category was created to absorb the superfluous less occurring terms, which in the New York Times are: emigrated from, foreign born, defendant, electorate, indigent, entrepreneurial, low skilled, Latino, strivers, and Spanish-

speaking. In the Arizona Daily Star, “other” includes: unauthorized alien, refugee, defendants, detainees, and seasonal farm workers.

Term	New York Times	Daily Star	Total	% Total NYT	% Total Daily Star	% Total
Illegal Immigrant	17	12	29	11.11	12.9	11.79
Undocumented	15	8	23	9.8	8.6	9.35
Unauthorized	12	8	20	7.84	8.6	8.13
Explanatory	40	21	61	26.14	22.58	24.8
Nationality	34	13	47	22.22	13.97	19.1
Citizenship	14	2	16	9.15	2.15	6.5
Youth	7	21	28	4.58	22.58	11.38
Other	14	8	22	9.15	8.6	8.9
Total	153	93	246	100	100	100

Table 5: United States Vocabulary by Number of Mentions

Spain

For readers who don’t speak Spanish, the translations of the terminology groupings in El Mundo and Diario Sur are as follows: inmigrante ilegal (illegal immigrant), situación irregular (irregular situation), inmigrante indocumentado (undocumented immigrant), sin papeles (without papers), nacionalidad (nationality), and otro (other). The “other” category in El Mundo includes: fugitivo (fugitive), niños inmigrantes (immigrant youth), terrorista (terrorist), inmigrante alumnado (immigrant student), and narcotraficante (drug trafficker).

Term	El Mundo	Diario Sur	Total	% Total El Mundo	% Total Diario Sur	% Total
Inmigrante Ilegal	3	4	7	3.75	2.99	3.24
Situación Irregular	6	4	10	7.5	2.99	4.63
Inmigrante Indocumentado	5	6	11	6.25	4.48	5.09
Sin Papeles	4	9	15	5	6.72	6.94
Nacionalidad	57	111	168	71.25	82.84	77.78
Otro	5	0	5	6.25	0	2.31
Total	80	134	216	100	100	100

Table 6: Spain Vocabulary by Number of Mentions

Metaphor

United States

The metaphors employed in immigration stories in the New York Times and the Arizona Daily Star are grouped similarly to the vocabulary division. Some metaphors are considered “umbrella” groups or what we’ll call “domains”, while others, like “overhaul” and “path to citizenship” are their own entities. “Overhaul” refers to the restructuring of the immigration system and “path to citizenship” refers to the naturalization of undocumented immigrants.

The “natural” domain includes a variety of metaphors that relate to the environment i.e. “flow of immigrants”, “tide of immigrants”, “the United States as a magnet,” and “emerge from the shadows” in the New York Times. The “natural” domain in the Arizona Daily Star includes: “back burner” and “turning up the heat.” The “force” domain in the New York Times includes: “show of force”, “immigrant stronghold”, “tackle the issue”, “immigrant fight”, “crackdown”, and “Trojan Horse”.

The “other” domain in the New York Times contains: “welcoming hand”, “seeking a foothold”, “war on terrorism”, “hurdle”, “packed”, and “untangle knots”.

Domain	New York Times	Daily Star	Total	%Total New York Times	% Total Daily Star	% Total
Overhaul	19	6	25	39.58	35.29	38.46
Path to Citizenship	7	8	15	14.58	41.18	23.08
Natural	6	2	8	12.5	11.76	12.3
Force	8	1	9	16.67	5.88	13.85
Other	8	0	8	16.67	0	12.3
Total	48	17	65	100	100	100

Table 7: United States Metaphor by Number of Mentions

Spain

The use of metaphor in immigration stories was minimal in El Mundo and the Arizona Daily Star; however, their groupings are similar to those in the U.S. newspapers. The “natural” domain in El Mundo and Diario Sur includes *avalancha* (avalanche). The “force” domain in El Mundo includes: *asalto* (assault), *lucha* (fight), and *operación* (operation). The “force” domain in Diario Sur includes *asalto* (assault). The “other” domain in El Mundo includes, *en las manos de justicia* (in the hands of justice) and *tráfico* (traffic).

Domain	El Mundo	Diario Sur	Total	% Total El Mundo	% Total Diario Sur	% Total
Natural	4	1	5	44.44	25	38.46
Force	3	3	6	33.33	75	46.15
Other	2	0	2	22.22	0	15.38
Total	9	4	13	100	100	100

Table 8: Spain Metaphor by Number of Mentions

Type of Article

The United States

Articles in the New York Times and Arizona Daily Star were organized by theme i.e. politics, economy, education, etc. The “politics” category included stories that centered on politicians, immigration reform, and issues of citizenship. For example, many articles were focused on the division between Republicans and Democrats on immigration reform policy. The “rights” category included stories that dealt with immigrants’ access to social services, unjust deportations, and cases of racial profiling and were more human-centric than government-centric. In the case of the Arizona Daily Star, many “rights” articles were regarding activist protests.

The education category included stories that focused on immigrants in schools, particularly undocumented immigrants in higher education institutions. The “economy” category included articles pertaining to unemployment and the benefits and disadvantages of immigrant labor. Stories centering on drug trafficking, robbery, and murder were grouped under “crime.” All other articles, which were mostly related to human-interest pieces and miscellaneous immigration statistics, were categorized as “other.”

Subject	New York Times	Daily Star	Total	%Total New York Times	% Total Daily Star	% Total
Politics	32	17	49	50	30.9	41.18
Rights	12	9	21	18.75	16.36	17.65
Education	3	6	9	4.69	10.9	7.56
Economy	3	4	7	4.69	7.27	5.88
Crime	3	14	17	4.69	25.45	14.29
Other	11	5	16	17.19	9.09	13.45
Total	64	69	119	100	100	100

Table 9: United States Subject by Article Count

Spain

The categorization of articles by content in *El Mundo* and *Diario Sur* are symmetrical to the organization of articles by content in the United States. However, because the majority of articles in the Spanish papers focus on crime, that category was split into two: authors of crime and victims of crime. The crime stories centered on drug trafficking, murder and robbery, and the “victims of crime” include stories in which immigrants are harassed, murdered, or abused by citizens and border patrol. Migration articles were mostly short press releases regarding the apprehension of migrants along the border, although they also include deportation stories. The “social services” category includes statistics regarding immigrants’ access to healthcare, education, and humanitarian aid. Lastly, the “other” category contains stories surrounding politics, religion, and human-interest topics.

Subject	El Mundo	Diario Sur	Total	%Total El Mundo	% Total Daily Star	% Total
Crime	31	43	74	50.82	37.39	42.04
Authors	17	30	47	27.87	26.09	26.7
Victims	14	13	27	22.95	11.3	15.34
Migration	11	53	64	18.03	46.09	36.36
Social Services	7	5	12	11.48	4.35	6.82
Economy	1	6	7	1.64	5.22	3.98
Other	11	8	19	18.03	6.9	10.8
Total	61	115	176	100	100	100

Table 10: Spain Subject by Article Count

Part Six: Analysis of Findings

The United States

The results of the newspaper findings in the United States were almost symmetrical by publication in terms of vocabulary and metaphor, but varied by article genre. The New York Times and the Arizona Daily Star published a near equivalent number of articles involving immigrants over the two-month period—64 and 55 respectively. Fifty percent of The New York Times' stories centered on immigration issues of national concern like political divide and reform, while 25 percent of the Arizona Daily Star's were about crime along the border. In regards to terminology usage, 24 percent of all references to migrants were categorized as "explanatory," meaning rather than use adjectives, journalists modified people's immigration statuses by using phrases such as "in the country illegally." The most commonly employed metaphor in both publications was "overhaul" followed by "path to citizenship." Overall, the genre of articles and use of vocabulary in The New York Times and the Arizona Daily Star provide the most material for analysis.

Vocabulary

The New York Times

The New York Times' public discussion of which terminology is included in their stylebook to describe people living in the United States without proper documentation facilitates an interesting analysis for the findings. Journalists at the New York Times seemingly followed editors' suggestions to seek alternatives

when describing people who reside in the U.S. illegally, as “explanatory” terms composed 26.14 percent of all references, which is more than double the “illegal immigrant” references. “Citizenship” terms, which mentioned primarily visa and residency status, were used 9.15 percent of the time and are similar in nature to the “explanatory” category.

When alternate adjectives, meaning undocumented and unauthorized, were selected they were either in news articles where terminology variance was needed or in human-interest pieces where “undocumented” was standard. For example, in an article about immigrant life in a poor neighborhood of New York City called Willets Point, foreign-born people are described as undocumented, strivers, and emigrants. The article describes people who “make their living among the rims and wheels and carburetors and filth.” This selectivity suggests that “undocumented” can be employed to evoke sympathy, pity, and humanity.

“Undocumented” has also adopted a new currency as a way to describe young immigrants. “I feel that when we’re talking about kids, people who were brought here as children, I don’t know that it’s fair to even call them immigrants,” Ted Robbins, the southwest reporter for National Public Radio, says. “Sure, they are, in the sense of generationally, but they didn’t make the choice to come here.”

One young immigrant, Hugo Nicholas, who crossed through Arizona desert at age 13, prefers the term “Dreamer” for youth who were brought to the United States illegally. “I feel like that’s the word we use to increase our movement and bring attention to what we’re doing,” he says. “I feel strongly about it because

when you're talking to someone and you say 'you're here illegally' they'll start thinking about what you did wrong."

Julia Preston at the New York Times agrees. "In this case, you can make a strong argument that it's factually correct. Young people for all intents and purposes are residents in the U.S., except for the document." The terms young immigrants, Dreamers, and undocumented youth comprised 4.58 percent of all references. Immigrants who lack agency, who are seen as victims of a migratory situation, are granted the coveted "undocumented" title.

"Illegal immigrant," conversely, is used frequently to refer to the "problem" of illegal immigration and in reference to reform, where illegality is a key component of political debate. For example, in an article about reform advocates' frustration with the Republican party, immigrants are referred to in this context; "But these tense divisions remain among House Republicans, with a core of conservatives rejecting any legalization for illegal immigrants as amnesty." Another article about the "immigration fight" includes: "The contention centers on what to do with the illegal immigrants already living in the country." Illegal immigrant is not used to reference those who have arrived in the United States to have a better life; it's used to describe people who are burdensome, problematic, and lawbreakers, and lacks the kind of sympathy reserved for undocumented young immigrants.

"Anyone of any intellectual capacity should be able to understand that there's a series of events that drew people here that are very complex," Amy Costales, a Spanish professor at the University of Oregon, says. "To keep on

insisting on the word illegal is actually taking a political position. It's mean-spirited."

The second most common reference to immigrants was by nationality. More specifically, among the archived New York Times articles, 22.58 percent referred to immigrants by their home countries—usually countries outside Latin America like Guinea, China, and Taiwan, whose emigrants receive little to no attention in U.S. media. Among the 64 articles collected, only four discussed immigrants outside Latin America.

The remaining terminologies used to describe foreign-born people, were specific to articles concerning employment programs and immigration trends. Overall, "explanatory" and "nationality" were the most common references followed by "illegal immigrant."

The Arizona Daily Star

Terminology usage in the Arizona Daily Star generally mirrored usage in the New York Times despite a few key differences. The top four categories in the Arizona Daily Star were: explanatory, youth, nationality, and illegal immigrant. The "youth" category composed a high percentage of the references—22.58 percent—because a number of Arizona counties were considering offering undocumented immigrants lowered tuition at higher education institutions and because several protests involving Dreamers, a term associated with immigrants who meet the

criteria of the Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors Act,¹⁴⁹ occurred during the period of study. Examples include, “Dreamers need to be given an opportunity to become legal permanent residents,” and “more than 550,000 young immigrants have been allowed to stay under the program, which also lets the immigrants get work permits good for two years.”

The nationality references in the Arizona Daily Star composed 13.97 percent of all terms and referred only to individuals from Latin America in the context of crime, drug smuggling, and deportation. For example, “A Mexican national with ‘trusted-traveler’ status was arrested Wednesday for attempting to smuggle nearly \$548,000 worth of methamphetamine at the Nogales port of entry” and “It’s been three months since an undocumented Mexican woman crossed the border...” All nationality references were specific to Mexico besides one article that described Marco Rubio as the child of Cuban immigrants.

The remaining references—illegal, undocumented, unauthorized, citizenship—parallel the prior analysis of the New York Times and were employed less frequently than the explanatory phrases. The immigration reporter for the Arizona Daily Star, Perla Trevizo, says, “You might have crossed through the desert or overstayed your visa. It is helpful to try and explain as much as possible what was the situation for that particular person rather than just saying illegal or unauthorized.” Trevizo’s answer is indicative of the minimal difference in term

¹⁴⁹ Foley, Elise. "Immigration Bill Would Expand Dream Act To Dreamers Of All Ages." *The Huffington Post*. N.p., 17 Apr. 2013. Web. 24 May 2014. <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/04/17/immigration-bill-dream-act_n_3101315.html>.

employment in the New York Times and the Arizona Daily Star. However, it is worth noting that “unauthorized alien” was used once in an article written by Howard Fischer Capitol Media Services. Moreover, when Dreamers were referenced in Fischer articles, the term appeared in quotation marks, which insinuates his resistance to using the term. Overall, the terminology used to describe immigrants in the Arizona Daily Star focused on illegality and Mexicans.

Metaphor

The New York Times

The majority of metaphors found in articles in the New York Times pertain to issues of citizenship, the act of migration, and legislative reform. “Overhaul” comprised 39.58 percent of references, “force” 16.67 percent and “path to citizenship” 14.48 percent. The term overhaul means to completely renovate and repair and was first used in the 17th century when fishermen examined nets to ensure no holes that would hinder them from collecting a big haul of fish.¹⁵⁰ The term insinuates large-scale changes and was often used in association with “fixing the immigration system.” Examples include, “...giving impetus to Congressional efforts to *overhaul* an immigration system that many say is *broken*” and “...has remained hesitant to support an immigration *overhaul* that he considers ‘amnesty.’” Overhaul is also used in non-immigration contexts, such as healthcare reform.

¹⁵⁰ "Overhaul." Vocabulary.com. N.p., n.d. Web. 13 May 2014.

The “force” domain in the New York Times suggests migration as a forceful act that should be reciprocated with equally forceful security measures. Examples include, “immigrant *strongholds* like Los Angeles, San Diego and Boston,” “intraparty tension that was apparent in the budget *standoff* could resurface in the immigration *fight*,” and “the toughest of recent state laws to *crack down* on illegal immigration.” These violent metaphors, combined with the creation of federal programs like Operation Streamline, the armament of border ranchers, and the rise of vigilante groups, foster the perception of immigrants as threats.

In an NBC Nightly News update on “The War Next Door” in 2012, ranchers who live along the Arizona border asked, “Can you imagine riding your horse through here on your own land and running into a guy with an AK-47 and 20 or 30 guys behind him dressed in camouflage and carrying drugs?” Violence along the border is a real issue; however, calling the issue of border crossing “the war next door” mischaracterizes the entire process. Highlighting the drug violence along the border and using terms like “the force of migrants” ignores the narratives of migrants who are also abused, killed, and abandoned by smugglers on their journey north. Ranchers aren’t the only “casualties” of this “war.”

The *path to citizenship* metaphor refers to the legalization of unauthorized immigrants in the United States and is referred to in the context of reform. Examples include, “...the effort for a comprehensive overhaul with a path to citizenship for immigrants in the United States illegally” and “We either have a path to citizenship or a path to hell.” Conservative politicians and organizations,

like the Center for Immigration Studies (CIS), view the pathway to citizenship as a partisan metaphor. In a list entitled “Department of Unhelpful Metaphors” on CIS’s website, the *pathway to citizenship* is considered “anemic” and “suggests a policy that is hard to defend on its merits when stripped of its rhetorical enhancers.¹⁵¹” CIS believes the metaphor suggests there isn’t already a defined citizenship process through which migrants should pass. This perspective clearly fails to take into account waiting lists for citizenship already provided by the law that can be as long as 24 years.¹⁵² Thus, the *path to citizenship* metaphor is problematic because the onus for securing citizenship is placed on the migrant. Yet, anyone familiar with the citizenship process is aware of the beaurocratic, lengthy, and confusing nature of the system.

Omar Martinez, a Mexican immigrant who lives in Portland, Oregon, with his wife Rebecca, a U.S. citizen, describes a residency application process that took months to complete. “Because I was already married, it helped but it was still hard to get the documents,” he says. Despite having a lawyer and an American wife, “because it’s so busy over at the Mexican consulate it probably took like 3 months just to get an interview.”

Despite these institutional barriers, citizenship is viewed as attainable if an individual simply moves along a designated path. Hopefully, reform would facilitate and expedite the application process; however, the Senate’s proposed

¹⁵¹ Renshon, Stanley. “Department of Unhelpful Immigration Metaphors: ‘Pathway to Citizenship.’” *Center for Immigration Studies*. N.p., 5 Oct. 2010. Web. 13 May 2014.

¹⁵² Khimm, Suzy. “How Long Is the Immigration ‘line’? As Long as 24 Years.” *Washington Post*. 31 Jan. 2013. Web. 13 May 2014.

reform bill requires immigrants seeking citizenship to “register with the government. Submit fingerprints. Pass background checks. Pay fines, application fees and taxes. Remain employed. Wait 10 years to apply for a green card. Learn English”¹⁵³ all before becoming a citizen. Consequently, if continuing the metaphor, the path to citizenship is perhaps longer and tougher than the “path” on Arizona’s desert floor.

The “natural” metaphors in the New York Times correspond with the “dangerous waters” metaphors discussed in part five. These natural metaphors were commonly employed during the 1990s when sociolinguist Otto Santa Ana studied of the representations of Latinos in contemporary discourse in his book *Brown Tide Rising*. Primary examples of natural metaphors found in the New York Times include, “the tide of immigrants” and “the flow of immigrants.” These metaphors were minimally employed, but their presence suggests that the image of migration as a mass, unstoppable and natural force, is still prevalent 14 years after Santa Ana’s study.

Additional metaphors are of peripheral importance and include one positive metaphor—Midwestern cities extending a “welcoming hand” to immigrant labor—and an additional negative metaphor—Obama’s effort to redefine the “war on terrorism.” Overall, in the absence of more positive phraseology, the metaphorical language found in the New York Times paints the

¹⁵³ Gonzales, Daniel. "Immigration Reform Bill's Path to Citizenship Draws Criticism from Both Sides." *AZCentral*. N.p., 21 Apr. 2013. Web. 13 May 2014.

picture of a broken, dangerous, and uncontrollable immigration system nearly impossible to “repair.”

The Arizona Daily Star

The analysis of metaphors in the Arizona Daily Star is brief as there were 35.4 percent fewer metaphors than in the New York Times. Moreover, “overhaul,” “force,” and “path to citizenship” appear in similar contexts. The “natural” metaphors found in the Arizona Daily Star, however, center on “heat” rather than water. The two instances in which natural metaphors are used are, “...immigration reform has been put in the back burner by some in Congress” and “Arizona’s attorney general is turning up the heat on Pima Community College for offering discount tuition to immigrant students.” Just as cheeks turn red while shouting, heat metaphors convey anger. Think: Billy’s a *hothead*, they were having a *heated* argument, and don’t get *hot* under the collar. “Back burner” expresses anger over delayed reform while “turning up the heat” directs anger at aiding undocumented students. The metaphor use may be minimal in the Arizona Daily Star, but the message is clear: immigration is a massive and uncontrollable problem that makes people angry.

Subject

The New York Times

If the collection of articles in the New York Times is any indication of public interest, politics and migrant rights are the primary immigration concerns in the

United States. Half of the 64 archived stories were related to politics and 18.75 percent pertained to rights. Political stories are those that center on politicians, immigration reform, and issues of citizenship. In these stories, immigrants were seen as strategic political weapons and a potential electorate. A November 20 article suggests that immigrants “could create millions of future Democratic voters,” which worries Republicans who view immigrants as Democratic voters¹⁵⁴. This rhetoric is emblematic of political discourse as a whole and many “immigration articles” weren’t about immigration at all; rather, the migrants were political pawns somehow mixed into the Republican and Democratic feud. Examples include, “In 1994, California Republicans rode a tide of anti-immigration sentiment to electoral victories but alienated Hispanics” and “House Democrats on Wednesday unveiled an immigration bill that provides a path to citizenship for the 11 million immigrants living here illegally and tightens border security, and they warned of political fallout if House Republicans fail to act.” Immigrants are dehumanized when their value and importance are tied to political strategy. In the collection of articles few specifics were discussed regarding actual reform. If readers were to characterize immigration reform based on these readings, they would probably describe a “broken” system incapable of repair—not due to actual structural concerns, but due to partisan politics.

Articles concerning immigrant rights focus on issues of racial profiling, voting laws, access to social services, and unjust deportation, and composed 18.75

¹⁵⁴ Sopo, Giancarlo. "Republicans' Electoral (Mis)Calculations on Immigration Reform." *The Huffington Post*. N.p., 17 Jan. 2014. Web. 24 May 2014.

percent of the collected articles. Examples include stories about protests by Dominicans over unjust citizenship laws in their home country, about libraries as being “points of integration” for immigrants, and about a new program that provides legal assistance to poor immigrants. But even stories about issues like voting rights were tied to the political divide in Washington. For example, a story about Arizona’s new voting system which requires proof of citizenship eventually transitions into how “the battle over voting is part of a larger struggle between the two parties.” This disparity in immigration topics highlights certain components of the immigrant experience while silencing others. Although immigration reform is critical to aiding foreign-born people in the United States, readers are left with little insight into everyday migrant life.

The Arizona Daily Star

In a dialogue between Arizona border city mayors and state representatives in November 2013, Bisbee Mayor Adriana Badal said, “Border communities are so much more than immigration legal or illegal, documented or undocumented, and that hasn’t been part of the discussion.”¹⁵⁵ Badal’s sentiment applies to the overall diversity of stories present in the Arizona Daily Star—just not in the way one might expect. Stories about crime and drug trafficking rivaled political stories for the highest representation by subject. These stories, usually catalogued in the “Border Busts” section of the newspaper, are Border Patrol press releases detailing the apprehension of immigrants and drugs at security checkpoints. The “border

¹⁵⁵ Trevizo, Perla. "Economy Must Be Factor in Immigration Debate, Border Mayors Say." *Arizona Daily Star*. N.p., 05 Nov. 2013. Web. 13 May 2014.

bust” stories in particular are written formulaically to include the origin of the driver, the car model, and the type, amount, and total value of the contraband. Images of the seized drugs, courteously provided by Border Patrol, were also attached to the articles.

The political stories in the Arizona Daily Star comprised 30.9 percent of the total collection and were similar in nature to the articles catalogued in the New York Times. However, many related to the controversial SB1070 law, which criminalizes the presence of immigrants without proper documentation in Arizona. These articles covered law revisions and enforcement issues in Tucson and throughout the state. Not all articles about SB1070 were legislative in nature, however, as some were about anti-SB1070 protests and were classified under the “rights” domain. During the two-month period of archiving, the activist community stages several protests, including one that gained national attention after activists chained themselves together in front of the Eloy Deportation Center. Articles pertaining to the legal rights of immigrants processed through Operation Streamline, a federal program that criminalizes illegal re-entry into the United States, also appeared under the “rights” domain.

While in Arizona, I visited one of the trials that occur every day at 2 p.m. in the Tucson courthouse and witnessed the mass sentencing of migrants of all ages. The men and handful of women sat silently, shackled, in the courtroom as they waited for their turn to stand before the judge. After answering a few yes/no questions about their illegal entry, migrants were sentenced up to six months in prison. I was later told by members of Casa Mariposa, an organization that houses

migrants released from detention, that the immigrants in the courtroom have usually not eaten, showered, or changed since being apprehended.

One migrant in particular, with disheveled hair and saggy jeans the guards helped pull up, repeatedly asked to speak to his lawyer or go to the bathroom, but was eventually silenced by the guards. When it was the migrant's turn to approach the stand, the lawyer and judge deemed him incapable to stand at trial due to his "confused" state. The judge asked a member from the Mexican consulate to ensure that the man was either institutionalized or transferred back to his hometown so that he wouldn't just be "dropped off at the border and potentially taken advantage of." The trial ended, and the migrants were escorted out of the room.

The next day, after crossing the border into Nogales to attend a Christmas *posada*, I saw the "confused" migrant walking along the road. Barely 24-hours after being deemed "incompetent," he was back along the border, undoubtedly waiting to return.

But rarely did stories such as these appear in the Arizona Daily Star. Instead, headlines like "Officers seize heroin, meth at Nogales crossing" outweighed headlines like "Tucson Refugees Celebrate an Early Thanksgiving."

"The newspaper does a better job of giving an in-depth analysis of issues, but they fall into the same trap," Peter Michaels, former National Public Radio producer, says. "They'll have a paragraph or story with cocaine or marijuana bust and maybe twice a year they'll do a feature on immigration." But La Estrella, the Spanish-language component of the Arizona Daily Star, compensated for the lack of human-interest and feature stories in the English-language version. Most articles

catalogued over the two-month period that appeared in La Estrella focused on the personal lives of immigrants living in Tucson and following their citizenship struggles, educational endeavors, and deportation woes. Despite the overwhelming number of crime-related stories, the Arizona Daily Star and La Estrella published an even spread of educational, economic, political, rights-based, and human interest pieces throughout the two-month study period.

Spain

The state of immigration journalism in Spain reflects the infantile nature of immigration in the country itself. While the use of vocabulary and metaphor was less threatening than in the United States, 63 percent of the articles centered on crime and border crossing and rarely did the stories incorporate the “migrant perspective.” By this, I mean migrants were seldom quoted, their socioeconomic, cultural, and political backgrounds barely explored, and their contributions to society—apart from fueling drug demand and performing low-skilled labor—minimally recognized. To be clear, my observations are not intended to vilify the Spanish media. Rather, the following analysis, just like the critique of newspapers in the United States, is intended to illuminate the banality of prejudice, whether intentional or not, present in Spanish newspapers. For the purposes of this thesis, all vocabulary, metaphor, and content have been translated from Spanish into English.

Vocabulary

El Mundo

Unlike in the United States newspapers analyzed, the term “illegal immigrant” composed only 3.75 percent of all references to foreign-born people in *El Mundo*. Alternate terms used to modify an immigrant’s legal status, including undocumented, unauthorized, irregular, and without papers, totaled to 22.5 percent. Instead, 71 percent of references identified migrants by their country of origin. For example, upon appearing in an article in *El Mundo*, an immigrant were referred to in the following fashion, “Border Patrol detained Ikdouren Karim, a 43-year-old Moroccan citizen, in relation to a Camorra drug syndicate.” Although Karim was probably living in Spain, not Morocco, his country of origin dictated his modifier rather than his migratory status.

A breakdown of references by country of origin in the archived articles indicated that 22.5 percent of all immigrants mentioned were Moroccan, followed by Sub-Saharan Africans with 16 percent and Latin Americans with 7.5 percent. Although Romanians are the largest immigrant group in Spain, comprising 15 percent of the total foreign-born population followed by Morocco with 15 percent, Moroccans were mentioned the most in *El Mundo* articles, while Romanians were mentioned once. Giving disproportionate attention to certain demographics over others can result in misconstrued perceptions of overall immigrant population. Moreover, if Moroccans are repeatedly referenced in articles and most articles are

centered on crime, readers may inaccurately associate Moroccans with criminal activity.

“In the news you see ‘a Moroccan man killed,’ but when it’s a Spanish person all you see is ‘a man killed,’” Abdelaziz, a Moroccan immigrant living in the Canary Islands, says. “That changes the way you think.” To Abdelaziz, a criminal’s country of origin is irrelevant to the report.

Some journalists see it differently. Eduardo del Campo, who’s been an immigration reporter at *El Mundo* for 13 years, believes indicating an individual’s nationality is necessary. “It’s not reasonable to hide nationality,” he says. “You have to show to the reader all the facts to the story.” Del Campo believes readers will choose to deduce things like “Morrocans commit crime” regardless of whether or not nationality is mentioned.

Even though nationality is the dominant modifier for immigrants in *El Mundo*, illegal immigrant is still employed in contemporary discourse in Spain and is a polemic term contested by journalists, migrants, and activists alike. “I don’t like the term illegal immigrant for the following: do you think someone can be illegal? No, it’s a person who is in an irregular situation,” Juan Carlos Blanco, editor of *Correo de Andalucía* in Sevilla, says. “We have to be very careful with language and word choice. That’s like saying people are outside the law when really they just don’t have the right documents.”

In Spain, the term irregular immigrant is used as a synonym for illegal immigrant, although my interviewees indicated the undertones are less harsh. Both terms appear a total of nine times in the archived articles in relation to

citizenship scams, unfair deportations, and racial profiling. Oddly enough, despite their negative connotations in Spanish public discourse, “illegal” and “irregular” are used in the context of immigrant rights. Undocumented and “without papers,” conversely, were used in articles dealing with questions of citizenship and illegality. The remaining items on the terminology list, “terrorist,” “narcotrafficker” and “young immigrant,” are each used once in self-explanatory ways. Overall, the adjectives associated with immigrants in Spain are not as dehumanizing as initially expected. References to nationality are troubling to many migrants, however, and compose the majority of references.

Diario Sur

Because 53 percent of the articles catalogued in *Diario Sur* are syndicated, the results are nearly identical to the findings in *El Mundo*. Due to this overlap, analysis is limited to avoid redundancy. *Diario Sur* represents the greatest disparity in terminology use out of the four selected newspapers. Nearly 83 percent of all references to foreign-born people in Spain use nationality as a modifier, leaving illegal, irregular, undocumented, and without papers to compose 17 percent of references. Of those nationalities, 46 percent are Moroccan and 40 percent are Sub-Saharan Africans. The other countries and regions of origin are: Pakistan, Nigeria, Guinea, Ecuador, Europe, and South America. The strong presence of Moroccans and Sub-Saharans lends itself to the nature of the articles, which concentrate on border crossings from Africa.

The usage of “illegal immigrant” is similar to El Mundo, but Diario Sur also uses the abbreviation “illegal” in headlines like “Imbroda Calls for the Expulsion of Illegals Who Enter the Country Violently,” which draws more attention to the act than the immigrants themselves. Moreover, because unauthorized crossing is an infraction not a crime, “illegals” is grossly misleading and only further exaggerates the negative portrayal of immigrants found in Diario Sur.

Metaphor

El Mundo

Because immigration metaphors appeared only nine times in the El Mundo archive, the following analysis is limited and brief. The most frequently occurring metaphor was “an avalanche of immigrants,” which falls under the domain of “natural” metaphors and was used four times. Avalanche has similar connotations to “tide” and “flow” and evokes an image of a massive, uncontrollable force. As Mauricio Lopez, a 21-year-old Mexican immigrant, says, “You don’t want to be under an avalanche.” Moreover, it’s inaccurate. “An avalanche is an exaggeration,” Del Campo says: “40 or 80 people arriving in a *patera* in a country of 40 million people? That is nothing.”

The remaining metaphors include traffic, assault, and operation, which fall under the domain of “force”. When used in the context of border crossing, “traffic” and “assault” reflect strong, relentless migratory activity that is somehow damaging to Spain. The last adjective, operation, was used in the following sentence, “A police operation across Spain and Italy detained various members of a

Camorra that transported large quantities of hachís from Morocco to Spain.¹⁵⁶

Operation seems to be used appropriately in this context, but the rest of the metaphors are problematic despite their nominal usage.

Diario Sur

Immigrant metaphors were employed four times in the archived *Diario Sur* articles. “Assault” was used three times to refer to immigrants attempting to cross the fence in Melilla and “avalanche” was used once in an article that was syndicated by Europa Press in *El Mundo* and *Diario Sur*.

Subject

El Mundo

“There aren’t many articles about immigration,” Mohamed Salem Zamit, an immigrant from Western Sahara living in Spain, says. “In image and in focus, very few news stories are positive, and what you do see is rarely on the front page.” Although the occasional feature story can be found, 69 percent of articles in *El Mundo* are related to crime and border crossing. Immigrants are described as “completely contorted” in car compartments, as murderers in mental health hospitals, as “completely naked and covered in sludge,” and as large packs that attack border fences “kamikaze” style. The only variance in immigrant roles is on which side of the knife they stand. In nearly half of the crime stories, immigrants are described as victims, but which is better: to be the victim or the aggressor?

¹⁵⁶ “La Audiencia Provincial Condena a 84 Años De Prisión Al Hombre Que Apuñaló a 10 Personas.” *El Mundo*. N.p., 2 July 2013. Web. 13 May 2014.

Migrants in news stories are either drug-toting invaders or found washed ashore on Spanish beaches.

Reports unrelated to crime are mostly focused on immigrants as recipients of healthcare, education, and other social services. The tone of these articles insinuates that foreign-born people are a burden to institutions, especially schools. For example, an article printed on February 21, 2013, about immigrant school children states, “Although the nationality of students isn’t a problem in and of itself, it is a problem that students don’t have command of the Spanish language, according to teachers.” The article goes on to explain how language barriers, which aren’t corrected at home because most immigrant children come from low-income families, are challenging for classroom instruction and create a “less than ideal situation for the community.”

More positively oriented articles denounced abuses by the Spanish border patrol and summarized aid given to immigrants by humanitarian organizations like the Red Cross and Amnesty International. Two feature articles focused on the Spanish emigrant experience and one on the migrants who live in the mountains of Morocco before crossing into Spain. Overall, the scope of immigration stories in *El Mundo* was limited to crime and border crossing which restricts the understanding of the migrant experience for readers. “It would help us to change that image of immigration,” Mohamed, who is studying journalism at the University of Pablo Olvide, says. “To give an image that is more real and shows that there are bad things and good things about migration.”

Diario Sur

With every inflatable boat that arrives on the shores of Spain comes a story. These fragile rafts carry men, women, and children who, if they survive the journey from one continent to the next, hope to find better lives than the ones they've left behind. Some escape drug violence, others political persecution or abuse or poverty. Most don't know what to expect at their destination, but all have decided staying is no longer an option.

When immigrants finally do reach the Spanish coastline, after long and sometimes dangerous journeys, that's when newspapers begin to pay attention. Among the archived articles in *Diario Sur*, about 46 percent are related to border crossing, but rarely does an article center on immigrants' stories rather than their subsequent detention or deportation. The majority of catalogued border crossing reports in *Diario Sur* are border patrol press releases that describe rescues at sea or 200-person "assaults" on the border fences at Melilla or Ceuta. The other 54 percent of stories deal with crime, the economy, and social services that are similar to or exactly the same as articles found in *El Mundo*. One crime story, however, differed from the typical robbery or murder report. The March 19, 2013, article entitled, "18 people are detained for using voodoo rituals to force Nigerian women into prostitution," describes women in extreme poverty who joined a religious group that required them to eat raw chicken hearts and become prostitutes in order to repay their debts to smugglers. Law enforcement intervened, but when Spaniards read this story what did they see: pity or disdain?

Part Seven: Conclusions

“When someone comes from Africa, it’s an incredible journey. They walk the entire way and anything could happen to them...they’re not passing through easy places.

What do you know about that person? What could have possibly happened to make them want to migrate?”

--Abigail Steph, Ecuadorian immigrant living in Spain

Alhassan Fofanah didn’t leave Sierra Leone to come to Spain because of the civil war that lasted 11 years and claimed more than 50,000 lives. He didn’t leave after seeing his friends killed before him or after living in the jungle for months to hide from rebel groups. Not even after the war was over and Sierra Leone began to pull itself together while his parents’ marriage fell apart did Alhassan consider coming to Spain. No, Alhassan left after he sang a song.

“We have a practice in Sierra Leone called bondo (female genital cutting) and you can’t speak up about it,” he told me as he bounced his one-year-old daughter on his lap. “But on National Youth Day in 2006 in Sierra Leone, my music group decided to have a show to condemn bondo.”

After the show ended, Alhassan and his bandmates were invited to Europe to play their music. A few weeks later, Alhassan received a letter from the Sierra Leone government requesting his immediate return. He was being called before a judge. “They didn’t like us speaking out against bondo,” Alhassan explained. “But we didn’t go back. We sought political asylum.”

The Spanish government rejected Alhassan's application, but after living without documentation for several months he finally received residency papers and is now living in Sevilla with his wife and daughter. He and his band mates own a bar where they continue to perform songs that criticize bondo. He has only returned to Sierra Leone once for fear of being caught and punished for his so-called crime.

Both Alhassan and his family are still suffering from his decision to speak out eight years ago. Soon after Alhassan left for Spain, his brother was walking down the street when a group of men attacked him thinking he was Alhassan. After they realized their mistake, they let Alhassan's brother go, but a few days later Alhassan's brother died from what his family believes was poisoning.

"Those who treat immigrants badly don't know anything about us," Alhassan said. "I don't come to rob, I come to give. People don't know what we've been through. I'm just inferior because I'm African. But this has to stop. It's better to unite than to divide."

After a year and a half of interviewing migrants like Alhassan, of engaging in discussion with journalists, of traveling to Spain and Arizona, and of researching immigration, I'm ready to make conclusions. For me, studying the representation of immigrants in newspapers in Spain and the United States was never easy. Like most people, it's hard to dissect the words and phrases we read in newspapers because they're so engrained in our everyday discourse. With words in particular, repetition normalizes, and even I have caught myself saying "illegal immigrant" from time to time. But under the guidance of professors, migrants, and journalists,

I've come to understand the covert ways prejudice is embedded in language and how critical our word choice really is.

"It takes quite the effort to analyze the media and say, 'Wait, this is what you're saying?'" Raquel Rubio Goldsmith, a professor at the University of Arizona, says. "As a public, we're not aware of how our discourse has shifted. People think 'what do you mean we're racist? We have a black president.' But anyone who looks at race, you know it's not something that has diminished. Many of the most violent expressions are gone, thank god, but we still have a sense that there is a lot of what we call structural violence that is still alive and well and there are code words there."

In immigration discourse, "illegal" is that code word. Although several of my conclusions are applicable only to the newspapers I studied, the elimination of the term "illegal immigrant" is a universal recommendation I put forward: first and foremost because the connotative definition has overwhelmed the denotation of the word. Although illegal immigration may be associated with the gravity of crimes like burglary or aggravated assault, according to the Immigration and Nationality Act in the United States, illegal entry is a civil provision. So, technically, it's a misdemeanor punishable with at least a \$50 fine.¹⁵⁷ To provide some perspective, the fine for failing to get a meter receipt in downtown Portland is more expensive. Additionally, in Spain illegal entry is considered an administrative infraction and is punishable with a fine, and for migrants whose countries of origin

¹⁵⁷ "8 U.S. Code 1325 - Improper Entry by Alien." *Legal Information Institute*. Cornell University, n.d. Web. 13 May 2014.

do not have deportation contracts with Spain, remaining in the country is not technically a criminal offense (although working is).

Even though unauthorized entry constitutes breaking the law, the perception of “illegal immigrant” may insinuate offenses far graver than reality. Moreover, “illegal” fails to specify how a migrant became undocumented—did they overstay their visa, cross the border by foot, enter with their parents as a child, buy a falsified passport? The ambiguity of the adjective limits understanding, and if readers are to develop informed perspectives on immigration, how can we continue to use “illegal immigrant,” especially in isolation, and expect citizens to have educated opinions? The vagueness of “illegal” opens the term to interpretation, which can lead to misplaced judgment. Without contextualization limiting descriptors can lead to limited understanding.

Using phrases like “illegal immigrant” creates a demonized group of individuals whose entire identities are marked by their undocumented status—and disproportionately so. Are employers who use undocumented labor called “illegal”? No, despite the fact that employment is often what motivates migration. Instead we see news stories describing “employers who knowingly hire illegal workers.”¹⁵⁸ Seemingly, breaking the law for immigrants not only comes with deportation or prison time, but with a label, too.

A study conducted in 1920 that polled college students in the United States about the term “alien” reinforces the demarcation between the perception and

¹⁵⁸ Preston, Julia. “A Crackdown on Employing Illegal Workers.” *The New York Times*. N.p., 29 May 2011. Web. 26 May 2014.

definition. It found that when students were “asked to define the word alien, they came up with—‘a person who is hostile to this country,’ ‘an enemy from a foreign land’—hardly qualified as meeting its legal definition.”¹⁵⁹ Even though “alien” is no longer used in mass media, the study shows how people’s personal definitions overwhelm the legal definitions of words like “alien.”

To add to the mounting list of reasons to eliminate the term, “illegal immigrant” isn’t used at all in the proposed immigration reform bill and, thanks to U.S. Justice Sonya Sotomayor, many senators have used “undocumented” since 2009. “Alien” is the preferred term for immigration legislation and by Border Patrol agents and is technically correct, but journalists have retired the term. Consequently, there is no significant legislative or judicial evidence that outweighs the negative implications of employing “illegal immigrant” and justify its continued usage.

Secondly, “illegal immigrant” is a partisan term. Rush Limbaugh uses it, Fox News uses it, and Cliven Bundy, the racist Nevada rancher, uses it. And they don’t say “illegal immigrant” because they’re uninformed; they do so maliciously and purposefully. If you don’t believe me, believe Frank Luntz, a GOP strategist who is known for popularizing terms like “death tax” for the estate tax and “energy exploration” for oil drilling. In a 2005 memo he instructed Republicans to “always refer to people crossing the border illegally as ‘illegal immigrants.’”¹⁶⁰ Luntz has

¹⁵⁹ Thompson, Gabriel. "How the Right Made Racism Sound Fair—and Changed Immigration Politics." *Color Lines*. N.p., 13 Sept. 2011. Web. 13 May 2014.

¹⁶⁰ Thompson, Gabriel. "How the Right Made Racism Sound Fair—and Changed Immigration Politics." *Color Lines*. N.p., 13 Sept. 2011. Web. 13 May 2014.

also been quoted as saying, “Let’s talk about the facts behind illegal immigrants. They do commit crimes. They are more likely to drive uninsured. More likely to clog up hospital waiting rooms. More likely to be involved in anti-social behavior because they have learned that breaking the law brings more benefit to them than abiding by it.”¹⁶¹ “Illegal” can’t be seen as neutral when conservatives who oppose reform have usurped it.

Thirdly, as so many activists, migrants, and allies have said before me, “illegal immigrant” is dehumanizing. Not because white, privileged, citizens advocating on behalf of immigrants say so (like me), but because immigrants have stood up and spoken for themselves. Immigrants like Hugo Nicholas, one of the 25 undocumented students in the Oregon University System, who says, “illegal makes people think poorly of all immigrants;” and Margarito Palacios, a Eugene farmer who has lived in the United States illegally since 1994, who says, “fighting against ‘illegal immigrant’ is the hard fight we have to achieve the dreams we brought with us or that we promised our families when we left our homes.” Through these conversations, I’ve seen that when people use “illegal immigrant,” or worse “illegal,” they send a message that isn’t always clear to journalists and readers, but one that penetrates deep in the hearts and minds of many migrants: you’re not wanted.

“I felt horrible when people made fun of me for not having papers,” Julio, who lived for two years in the United States illegally and agreed only to use his

¹⁶¹ Thompson, Gabriel. “How the Right Made Racism Sound Fair—and Changed Immigration Politics.” *Color Lines*. N.p., 13 Sept. 2011. Web. 13 May 2014.

first name for our interview, says. “They’d call me illegal and it made me want to cry I felt so bad.”

In analyzing word choice in the media, it’s important to understand *who* is deciding which words are used and in what context. It’s one thing if an undocumented migrant calls him or herself “illegal” and another if a journalist calls them “illegal.” Although many journalists are subject to what their style guides dictate, many, like those at the New York Times, are given discretion to use whichever term they so choose. And, in my opinion, those reporters who select “illegal immigrant” should have a strong rationale to support their decision. It’s easy to hide behind the banality of a keyboard, but journalists should be just as comfortable writing “illegal immigrant” as they are using it among migrants themselves.

Swapping the term “illegal immigrant” for words like “undocumented” and “unauthorized” could mask very real issues facing people who live abroad without the proper documentation. Living illegally in countries like the United States for many people means always looking anxiously in your rearview mirror for police, working low-skilled, underpaid jobs, and being taken advantage of by employers, lawyers, and authorities. But using “illegal immigrant” also hides another reality: the positive one. We forget that immigrants are mothers and fathers, landscapers and journalists, and young and old because “illegal” doesn’t summarize that diversity.

“Illegal doesn’t show us the whole story; it only focuses on that ‘crime,’” Amy Costales, a Spanish professor at the University of Oregon, says. “If you want to

talk about the undocumented El Salvadoreño and Guatemalan experiences, you'd have to talk about the dirty wars. Is it not illegal that the CIA is in their countries? So let's drop illegal because it's one-sided. We use it without understanding the real crimes that created immigration."

But even "undocumented" and "unauthorized" are problematic and limiting because the variety of experiences that influence someone to migrate can't be summarized in one adjective. "Finding the word that identifies one's status, when that status is so fluid, is difficult," says Goldsmith. "That's what borders do. They create these very fluid identities. It's difficult to find words that are static when the phenomenon is dynamic and shifting." Consequently, journalists can't rely on adjectives to describe migration—they must use phrases like "in the country illegally," "Luis Lopez, who overstayed his visa," etc. I'm not proposing alternate adjectives; I'm proposing more extensive descriptions of immigrants' migratory statuses because the more information readers have, the more informed their opinions are.

Lastly, "illegal immigrant" doesn't seem to have an agreed upon meaning and is what sociologist Stuart Hall called a "floating signifier."¹⁶² In the United States, Latino and "illegal immigrant" are often used interchangeably, and the same for Spain with "Moroccan" and "illegal immigrant." Consequently, 30 percent of respondents in a study conducted by the National Hispanic Media Coalition thought that the majority (50 percent or greater) of Latinos were

¹⁶² Kruger97. "Stuart Hall Lecture: Race/The Floating Signifier." Online Video Clip. *YouTube*. YouTube, 9 Nov. 2009. Web. 24 May 2014.

undocumented.¹⁶³

As evidenced in the articles in the United States here analyzed, “illegal immigrant” alone was used to refer to people from Latin America, while Asian “illegal immigrants” had to be referred to by their nationalities. Seemingly, the term “illegal immigrant,” although not biased towards any one nationality in its definition, evokes a certain image depending on in which country it’s used. David Gallardo, a Mexican migrant in Spain, says. “When I think of the word ‘illegal immigrant,’ I never think of an airplane. I think of a boat, of a black person, a brown person, my people: all South and Central Americans. Even though I’ve had a positive experience, I think of bad situations.”

The use of metaphors, like “avalanche,” “flow,” and “stronghold,” also contribute to the overall negative perception of immigrants, both documented and undocumented. Although the results of this study were far less significant than anticipated, the few metaphors that were employed contain meanings that are emblematic of larger conceptual trends pointing towards immigrants as problems to be solved. For example, in 2011, 74 percent of Spaniards and 58 percent of Americans were “worried” about illegal immigration. In the same study, conducted by a group called Transatlantic Trends, 48 percent of Spaniards and 47 percent of Americans thought there were “too many” immigrants in their respective

¹⁶³ "Impact of Media Stereotypes on Opinions and Attitudes Towards Latinos." National Hispanic Media Coalition (2012): n. pag. Web.

countries.¹⁶⁴ Perhaps it had something to do with that avalanche. Or maybe it was the tide.

As discussed in earlier sections, the type of content presented in immigration articles is also particularly concerning, especially in Spain. My own research doesn't draw any statistical correlation between the types of stories presented in the media and public perception. The National Coalition of Hispanic Media conducted a poll in 2012 that studied the relationship between media portrayals, Latino stereotypes, and public opinion. The coalition found that non-Latinos who had more interaction with Latinos held more positive stereotypes, while those people exposed to negative news narratives about Latinos and/or immigrants held the most unfavorable and hostile views about both groups. The study showed each focus group either a positive or negative news story about immigration. The participants were then polled about their general attitudes towards Latinos. Among the findings of those shown a negative article, 29 percent of respondents thought Latinos are patriotic, 54 percent thought Latinos use welfare, 49 percent thought Latinos have a culture of crime and gangs, and 59 percent thought illegal immigrants and Latinos are one and the same. The relationship between immigration news stories and public opinion can't be described as causal, but through my empirical study and polls such as these, a strong case can be made that the media play a significant role in the shaping of public opinion.

¹⁶⁴ "Transatlantic Trends: Immigration." (2011): n. pag. Web.
<http://trends.gmfus.org/files/2011/12/TTImmigration_final_web1.pdf>.

Changing the way journalists write about immigrants is secondary to changing immigration policy, but the two concepts are not mutually exclusive. In order to achieve immigration reform we have to change the way we talk about it. Especially for those who have little to no interaction with immigrants, the media is a print and digital portal to the migratory experience. Changing the vocabulary we use to describe immigrants doesn't have to be a partisan concern, either. It's simply an acknowledgement of the deceptiveness of the adjective "illegal" and a push for more informative reporting. In the following section I will elaborate on ways journalists can improve their immigration writing.

But let me first acknowledge that conducting research for this thesis has been an intimate and fascinating experience that I hope has translated into an informative and thought-provoking narrative. My travels over the past year and a half have taken me from squatters' camps in Sevilla to potlucks in the Canary Islands to markets in Morocco and countless places in between. I have met people who have escaped death, oppression and poverty, people who crossed borders on foot, boats and airplanes, people who have been held in detention centers and police stations and people who have no hope of ever returning home. Their stories, especially those of undocumented immigrants, largely influenced the development of this thesis and have given me pause to reconsider my word choice. Consequently, through my research, interviews and travels, I have discovered that human beings can be old or young, law-breakers or saints, brunettes or blondes, but no one, absolutely no one, can be illegal.

Part Eight: Recommendations for Journalists

“How do you feel about advocacy journalism? Personally, I’m all for it.

Professionally, it’s not good. So how do you reconcile that? I left.”

--Conversation with Peter Michaels, former producer at National Public Radio

Although this thesis should already serve as a quasi-guidebook for journalists, I have outlined below several explicit recommendations to aid in the delivery of responsible, fair, and socially conscious immigration news reporting. Although many newspapers lack the funding, staffing, and linguistic diversity to give the immigrant community the attention it deserves, the following recommendations should be achievable in time. My recommendations derive from my own experiences and research as a journalist and conversations I’ve had with professionals at the New York Times, Arizona Daily Star, El Mundo, Correo de Andalucía, and National Public Radio.

1. Don’t Use the Term Illegal Immigrant

Avoid using adjectives to describe someone’s legal status. Rather, use phrases like “in the country illegally” or “temporary resident.” Many journalists, including Julia Preston at the New York Times and Perla Trevizo at the Arizona Daily Star, express the need to use concise terms in their headlines and stories due to word-limits. However, “Negro” is shorter than “African-American,” but journalists abandoned the term in the 1980s and did just fine.

2. Avoid Dehumanizing Metaphors

Remember: 40 people are not an avalanche. Be mindful of the phrases used to color articles and their potential undertones. As Otto Santa Ana asserts, “Human thought is constructed with images that represent reality. These images are metaphors. We first invent, and then rely almost exclusively on, metaphors to make sense of the world we live in.”¹⁶⁵ Choose wisely.

3. Quote Immigrants

Be sure to include and quote immigrants as sources in your articles—and not just as victims. Whether in an immigration, business, or entertainment story, immigrants should be included as active members of society. Because they are.

4. Speak Spanish (or Arabic, Romanian, Japanese, etc.)

If your newspaper or your budget can sponsor night classes or a Rosetta Stone tutorial, learn another language. It’s your passage to another way of thinking and new communities and will expand the scope of your reporting. Especially with monolingual immigrants, it’s better to rely on yourself rather than a translator for stories.

5. Diversify Your Newsroom

According to a survey from Indiana University, 92 percent of journalists in the United States are white,¹⁶⁶ but as Eduardo del Campo, reporter for *El Mundo*, says, “The newsroom should be a good mirror of society.” White privileged people can report on immigration issues, too, but it helps to have a plurality of

¹⁶⁵ Ana, Otto Santa. *Brown Tide Rising: Metaphors of Latinos in Contemporary American Public Discourse*. Austin: U of Texas, 2002. xv. Print.

¹⁶⁶ Thompson, Derek. "Report: Journalists Are Miserable, Liberal, Over-Educated, Under-Paid, Middle-Aged Men." *The Atlantic*. Atlantic Media Company, 08 May 2014. Web. 13 May 2014.

ethnic and cultural backgrounds in the newsroom to produce a plurality of ethnic and cultural stories.

6. Don't be Lazy

Go to a local immigrant center or non-profit and ask for stories. People will most likely help you if you're nice and you write well. Get out of the office and into the community. If there are restaurants or community centers where migrants typically congregate: go there. Don't be afraid to talk to people and get to know your neighbors. You'll end up with more feature stories and quality work you care about.

7. Get the Whole Story

"So, when they do a little tiny thing on news saying they caught 40 people smuggling marijuana and crossing the border, then the implication is that all the migrants come over with marijuana and they're criminals. They should report that but report the whole story," Rubio Goldsmith says. "How many of these people made a choice to do it? Or were forced to do it? There's so much more than meets the eye." Don't settle for Border Patrol press releases. Call detention centers, professors, migrants, activists, and politicians on both sides of the border and find out what's *really* going on.

8. Widen Focus from Crime and Crossing

Remember that immigrants are involved in activities other than crime and border crossing. They are teachers, politicians, doctors, wait staff, writers, and yoga instructors. You don't need to go out of your way to know that.

9. Call the Right People

In several articles in *Diario Sur*, journalists took it upon themselves to characterize certain “types” of immigrants. For example, one story described an Islamic terrorist as, “These type of individuals try to hide their radical ideologies and blend in, so in as far as they maintain Islamic customs, by dressing in Western garb, shaving their beards, abstaining from alcohol, pork, and smoking, all with the intention of passing undetected in the society they plan on attacking.” Not only is this passage problematic because it suggests that terrorists are hiding in our midst, but that the journalist took an authoritative stance on the practices and mannerisms of individuals involved in terrorist activities. If you need background on a story, call a legitimate source i.e. professor, journalist, researcher, etc.

10. If You Need to Mention Nationality, Mention Everyone’s

As the *Arizona Daily Star’s* ethics guide instructs, “do not identify race or ethnic background unless the information is relevant. When racial identification is used, the race of all involved should be mentioned.” The same goes for nationality. Otherwise, the article diverts attention from an individual to his or her country of origin.

11. Do Your Homework

Don't be former Texas governor James Ferguson, who once famously said, "If English is good enough for Jesus, it's good enough for us."¹⁶⁷ Know your history. Ask a professor to coffee or pick up an Atlas. Having context for the stories you write is vital to understanding where your story fits in the long history of migration.

¹⁶⁷ Kristof, Nicholas. "God And Sex." *The New York Times*. N.p., 22 Oct. 2004. Web. 24 May 2014.

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