**Issue 12: Do Unskilled Immigrants Hurt the Economy?**

From its earliest days the United States has been the melting pot of the world, bringing in people from every religious, cultural, and ethical background imaginable. The immigration process has been closely monitored for many decades and we are beginning to see an alarming trend. In current years there have been exponentially increasing numbers of unskilled immigrants moving to the US from Mexico. The situation is not getting any better and it must be addressed in a proper, ethical manner . This brings us into the heated debate of "Do Unskilled Immigrants Hurt the Economy?"

Steven Malanga firmly believes that yes, unskilled immigrants do harm the US economy. He believes that with the massive amount of immigration into the US is causing untold expenses on our society as a whole. By employing the unskilled immigrants we are keeping our own citizens from being able to find work. Not every US citizen has a higher education or the well honed skills needed in an upper level job. These people are in desperate need of the jobs which are being taken up by the migration of unskilled workers. In addition to this, because these workers are willing to work for less than our own citizens, there is less investment needed to help increase production. This is a huge problem because instead of businesses investing in new progressive technologies they are only hiring more underpaid employees eating up additional jobs. The strongest of the arguments, being that these immigrants have been tapping into and depleting the Social Security and welfare systems. This is drawing the hard earned and built up funds supplied by the working force of the United States.

Arguing the opposing side, Diana Furchgott-Roth believes that no, the unskilled immigrants do not harm our economy, but in fact bolster it. Roth states that the immigrants only make up a very small portion of our workforce and that the numbers are actually negligible. It is actually believed that they are compliments to our workforce, filling in where our citizens have left off with the undesirable jobs. In addition to this argument Roth mentions that the National Academy of Science ran a study and concluded that the foreign born households are no more likely to use welfare than the native born households. This directly contradicts the argument stated by Malanga. Even though Roth did not supply as many arguments as Malanga did I believe that the strength of the arguments stated outweighs the quantity of arguments.

Although both parties delivered a very strong set of arguments there can only be one that pulls through in the end. My opinion was significantly swayed one way and then drawn right back to the neutral after reading through the other arguments leaving me torn and left with a difficult decision, but, I still sway toward the side of the unskilled workers being a detriment to our economy overall. The people of our country are in desperate need of these jobs with the economy in the position it is in today, and the welfare system is already teetering on a fine line. The added strain to the system is going to just pull it over faster than it would before. In addition to this, I believe anyone who wants to move to the US as a permanent place of work and residence should have to become a citizen. They will be able to better contribute to society, even if they do not have the necessary skill set to succeed in many of the jobs. It is now clear to me that the immigration problem that the US faces should be dealt with soon so the problem does not become larger because, yes, unskilled immigrants *do* hurt the economy.