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THE POLLS—REVIEW
THE MECHANICS OF IMMIGRATION POLLS

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Abstract This poll review examines how surveys assess the American public's views on immigration. It reviews four aspects of the current state of polling in this domain: *when* surveys are asking about immigration, *what* surveys are asking about immigration, *who* is being surveyed, and *how* the surveys are being conducted. The timing and content of surveys vary with policy debates and events like election campaigns, and there has been an increasing frequency and diversity of items over time. Along with this change, the samples of respondents themselves are changing as surveys have increasingly turned to the challenge of drawing representative samples of immigrants, Latinos, and Asian Americans. The review concludes with recommendations for continued improvements and future possibilities in this area.

Electoral politics in the United States today is a site of pitched battles over immigration. The 2016 presidential election campaign was no different. Key Republican hopefuls wooed voters with talk of "anchor babies" and an end to birthright citizenship, of "permanent border walls" and mass deportations, and of applying a religious test on the nation's migration policies. Yet just a year earlier, a bipartisan coalition in Congress very nearly took an altogether different path toward comprehensive reform legislation that included provisions for a pathway to citizenship for undocumented immigrants. And had Congress agreed to such legislation, it would have been on the tailwinds of public opinion.

How do we reckon such seemingly opposite fates, each at least facially responsive to public opinion on immigration? The question of where the

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American public stands on immigration has been a growing interest of social science research, especially as the nation's foreign-born population has dramatically increased in the past half century. This poll review examines how survey research has evolved in its attempts to monitor and explain such clashing views on public opinion. Specifically, it reviews four aspects of the current state of polling on immigration: *when* surveys are asking about immigration, *what* surveys are asking about immigration, *who* is being surveyed, and *how* the surveys are being conducted.

Previous Reviews

Previous reviews of polling on immigration, most notably in this journal, have generally described trends in the actual contours of public opinion itself, an important aspect that is not the focus of this piece.[1] Lapinski et al. (1997), for instance, establishes an early baseline on public opinion up to the mid-1990s, a period of heightened anti-immigrant politics represented in state-level initiatives like California's Proposition 187. The authors find an American public that favors decreased levels of immigration. In this period, surveys also begin to query Americans about immigrants and legal status, a harbinger of debates over "illegal" and "unauthorized" immigration today.

Subsequent reviews see greater ambivalence on immigration. Segovia and Defever (2010) find mixed but somewhat more liberal views on a range of issues like national identity cards, building a wall between the United States and Mexico, and attitudes on undocumented immigrants.[2] Muste (2013) picks up on this theme of ambivalence and pinpoints the intermittent timing of the surveys themselves as a key source of uncertainty in previous reviews. His work fills in gaps in timing by combining academic and non-academic surveys, with a resulting time series that shows the public's views on immigration becoming more restrictionist and conservative in the mid-1990s (the era of Proposition 187 and other anti-immigrant referenda) and also immediately following 9/11. Muste (2013) suggests that since 9/11, opinion on immigration has been generally more stable.

Outside this journal, Hainmueller and Hopkins (2014) are notable as a review that goes beyond a descriptive review of public opinion and summarizes the state of the field on how opinion on immigration is shaped and moved. They find little support for the view that the public's views are rooted in economic competition. Instead, the authors see stronger grounding in sociotropic

1. Examples of other recent reviews on the topic not in this journal include Fussell (2014), Hainmueller and Hopkins (2014), Schildkraut (2014), Berg (2015), and Pew Research Center (2015).

2. They also find more consistently negative views on how parties and administrations are handling the nation's immigration policy.

concerns and beliefs about the cultural impact of immigration. They further summarize recent experimental studies, which have been especially successful in isolating the triggers of negative attitudes toward immigration and immigrants—among them, language, skin color, educational level, and cultural differences.

The Dynamics of Surveying on Immigration

Muste's (2013) and Hainmueller and Hopkins's (2014) contributions remind us that polls reviews face limitations of how those surveys are designed and when they are fielded. For one thing, surveys are often designed to monitor public opinion, not to test specific hypotheses about the foundations of the public's expressed views. There are also at least two other limitations to extant surveys. First, the public's attentiveness to immigration (how "top of mind" and accessible its considerations are) is often triggered by specific events. Relatedly, the attentiveness of polling firms and survey organizations to immigration is also highly variable and responsive to specific events. Thus, what we observe in our polls is in part a function of when immigration is salient and politicized.

This responsiveness of opinion to events is seen in regularly collected, open-ended measures of issue salience. Gallup, for instance, repeatedly asks, "What is the most important problem facing this country today?" Figure 1 shows this series from January 1993 through February 2017.[3] It shows clearly that the salience of immigration spikes around key moments.

Figure 1 shows an early peak at 6 percent in the lead-up to the 1996 Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act, which was introduced in the House in June and signed by President Clinton in September. Later, salience experiences a modest jump to 5 percent in the aftermath of 9/11 in 2001. However, the most pronounced surge was sparked by the "Sensenbrenner bill" (H.R. 4437) and the subsequent immigrant protest marches the following spring, peaking at 19 percent in April 2006. Another spike occurred in June 2007 at 15 percent with the failed effort to pass the Comprehensive Immigration Reform Act of 2007 (S. 1348), and in reaction to Arizona's S.B. 1070 (passed on April 19, 2010), issue salience jumped to 10 percent in May 2010. A steep rise to 17 percent then occurred in July 2014, following the demise of the so-called "Gang of Eight" effort to pass comprehensive immigration reform and the defeat of then–House Majority Leader Eric Cantor in Virginia's June primary. Salience remained high through the year and hit 13

3. Gallup allows respondents to mention up to three issues. Responses are open ended and coded into common topics. The figure shows "immigration/illegal aliens" as a percentage of all mentions for the item from January 1993 to February 2017. From 1993 to 2000, Gallup asks this question between two and four times each year; from 2001 to 2017, the question is asked nearly monthly.

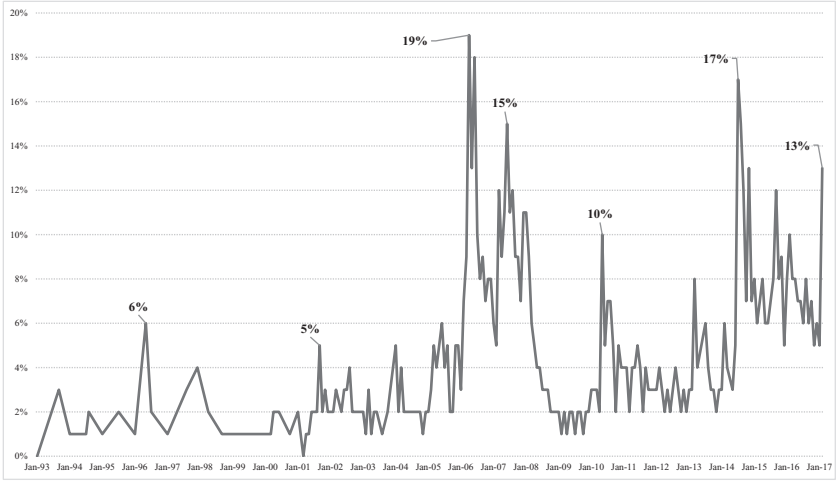

Figure 1. Gallup most important problem—immigration.

percent as President Obama's announced his "Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals" (DACA) program in November 2014. Most recently, the data show a spike to 13 percent in February 2017 as the Trump Administration announced its "travel ban" from targeted countries and its plans to build a continuous wall on America's southern border.

This variability of issue salience is mirrored by the variability in when the public is polled on its views about immigration. Figure 2 superimposes the Gallup issue salience series with a year-to-year tabulation of the number of survey items on immigrants and immigration, using a search of the Roper iPoll database from 1993 to 2016.[4] The peaks and troughs of the two series closely track each other, with a simple correlation of the two time series at 0.84.[5]

A high covariation here should not surprise, as surveys that dedicate a major portion of their interview time to the issue of immigration are often occasioned by intensified legislative debate on immigration reform or other major events

4. For figure 2, issue salience data are the peak values for each year from the numbers shown in figure 1. The Roper iPoll database compiles survey questions fielded by every major polling organization in the United States. Notably missing from this database are most academic surveys (typically cataloged with the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research) or polling for private clients such as political parties and candidates and 501c3 and 501c4 organizations. We searched for polls containing the word "immigration" and "immigrants." The terms "border control" and "illegal aliens" did not yield substantial additions. Other approaches (e.g., using yearly averages in the Gallup issue salience measure or tallying the number of *polls* asking about immigration rather than the number of poll *items*) yield very similar results.

5. The number of data points in the series is too small for more refined time-series analysis such as vector autoregression or Granger causality tests.

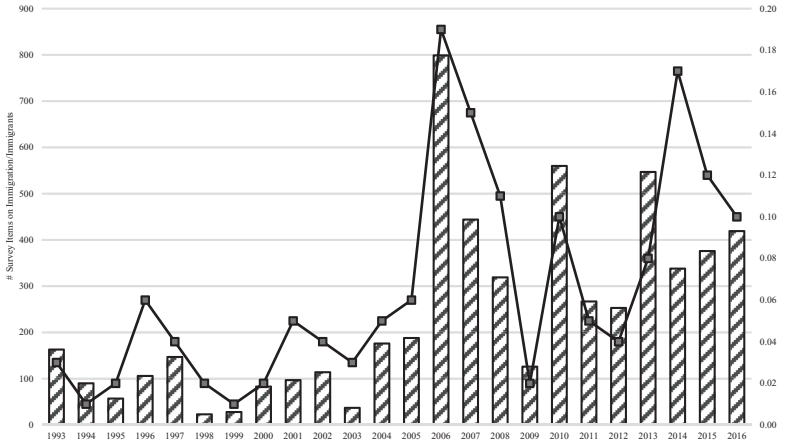

Figure 2. Immigration survey items and issue salience.

related to immigration. At such moments (e.g., 1996, 2006, 2007, and 2010), the sponsors of issue-focused polls span the gamut from major media outlets like the CBS News/*New York Times* poll, think tanks like Pew Research Center and the Chicago Council on Global Affairs, and interest groups like America's Voice. They also include sources of regular polling—such as the Pew Research Center, American National Election Studies and the General Social Survey—and targeted academic studies of immigrants and immigration-based ethnic minorities.

Changes in Content

What, then, are these surveys asking about immigration, and how has the content of public opinion—as seen through these questions—changed over time? Some content, such as the items tracked in previous "The Polls—Trends" articles, is asked regularly over time and establishes a baseline of sorts. Gallup has regularly been asking (since 1965) whether immigration should "be kept at its present level, increased, or decreased" (see figure 5). Another regularly asked topic is the perceived contributions of immigrants. For example, since 1994 the Pew Research Center has asked whether immigrants "strengthen" or "burden" "our country."[6] Other polls ask about perceived economic benefits

6. Poll show a perceptible decrease in recent years in the public's appetite for closing borders and decreasing levels of immigration and more positive regard for the contributions of immigrants. When first asked in 1994, 63 percent of Americans viewed immigrants as a burden, with 31 percent saying that immigrants strengthen the nation. In 2015, 51 percent opted for "strengthen" and 41 percent chose "burden."

and competition from immigrants. The American National Election Studies (ANES), for instance, asks "How likely is it that recent immigration levels will take jobs away from people already here?"[7]

Beyond immigration levels and economic consequences, much of survey content on immigration is shaped by ongoing events: legislative, executive, or judicial action; campaign rhetoric; grassroots activism; or focal events like a terrorist attack or a surge of refugee migrants. Recent decades have seen a recurrent interest in the public's views on "illegal" immigration, such as the public's support for a pathway to legal status (see, e.g., Pew Research Center [2015]), Arizona's S.B. 1070, security on the US-Mexico border, and, in the past few years, President Obama's use of executive discretionary powers in his Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and Deferred Action for Parents of Americans (DAPA) programs. Less common are questions on workplace raids, mass deportations, the Supreme Court's role in adjudicating presidential executive orders, federalism and the role of state and local governments on immigration, and the like.

Electoral politics are another obvious source of content. Pre-election polls today ask likely voters how salient immigration is to their vote choice, where they place candidates and parties on immigration relative to their own preferences, and where they stand on immigration policy reform proposals. For example, the 2012 Cooperative Congressional Election Study (CCES) asks respondents if they agreed or disagree with the following possible federal government responses to immigration: "Grant legal status to all illegal immigrants who have held jobs and paid taxes for at least 3 years, and not been convicted of any felony crimes"; "Increase the number of border patrols on the US-Mexican border"; "Allow police to question anyone they think may be in the country illegally"; "Fine US businesses that hire illegal immigrants"; "Prohibit illegal immigrants from using emergency hospital care and public schools"; and "Deny automatic citizenship to American-born children of illegal immigrants." Similarly, the 2012 ANES asked its respondents if they favored or opposed state laws like Arizona's S.B. 1070, which "require state and local police to determine the immigration status of a person if they find that there is a reasonable suspicion he or she is an undocumented immigrant."[8]

These topics do not exhaust the range covered in surveys. Other questions include attitudes about multiculturalism (e.g., whether immigrants threaten American national identity, whether groups like Latinos should retain their

7. The question was asked in 2004, 2008, and 2012, and the proportion of respondents who viewed immigration as "extremely likely" to take jobs from "people already here" ranged from 19.2 to 20.1 percent.

8. Differences here sometimes reflect differences between scholarly surveys (which emphasize sources of measurement error in question wording) and commercial or media polls (which favor the use of popularly used terms like "illegal," describe policy alternatives in lay terms, and respond to the "horse race" or the immediacy of a policy debate).

cultural heritage) and respondents' experience with immigrants and immigration (e.g., whether they know someone who has been deported and their interactions with immigrants in their community) (Schildkraut 2011; Citrin and Sears 2014; Street, Zepeda-Millan, and Jones-Correa 2015). Academic surveys also aim to specify the roots of opinion through measures of affect, implicit associations, skin tone, language, and question wording experiments (e.g., randomizing between the terms "legal" or "illegal"; "illegal" or "undocumented") (Brader, Valentino, and Suhay 2008; Pérez 2010; Malhotra, Margalit, and Mo 2013; Merolla, Ramakrishnan, and Haynes 2013; Hainmueller and Hopkins 2015; Pérez 2015). Conjoint analysis is an especially promising new direction here. Originally used in marketing studies, conjoint analysis tests simultaneously for the influence of multiple factors on public attitudes.[9]

The Appendix includes a more detailed sense of how instrumentation on immigration has changed over time and between survey sources. It contains a selective list of specific topics, variation in question wording under each topic, and their corresponding marginals, field dates, and survey firms.

Challenges in Survey Representativeness

So far, we have reviewed the measurement side—both *when* surveys choose to ask about immigration and *what* they ask when they choose to do so. Polling on immigration also has had to adapt and innovate on the sampling side. Representativeness is increasingly essential given the dramatic increase in immigration since the passage of the Hart-Celler Act in 1965 and the resulting change to the nation's demography. In 1970, less than one in 20 respondents in a nationally representative adult sample could be expected to be a first-generation immigrant. Today, that figure stands between one in seven and one in eight, and by 2060 that figure is expected to reach nearly one in five (Grieco et al. 2012). These new Americans are also especially likely to migrate from Asia and south of the United States. In 1970, Latinos and Asian Americans comprised just 4.6 and 0.8 percent of the total US population, respectively. Today they comprise 17 and 6 percent, and by 2060 these figures are projected to jump to 28.6 percent Latino and 11.7 percent Asian American (Colby and Ortman 2015).[10]

9. Hainmueller and Hopkins (2015), for instance, use conjoint analysis to uncover a broad, "hidden consensus" across dividing lines like partisanship, education, ethnicity, and economic self-interest (see also Schachter [2016]). At the same time, they find that Americans especially value those immigrants who adhere to norms of belonging (e.g., English language proficiency, legal status) and who contribute to the economy (e.g., high education matched to high-status employment).
10. The 11.7 percent figure is the Census projection for the "Asian American alone or in combination" category. For "Asian American alone," the figure is 9.3 percent.

Demographic changes, especially on this scale, create challenges to achieving a representative sample. Specifically, surveys today that do not routinely collect data on nativity and immigrant status—just as they routinely collect data on sex, age, race, and socioeconomic status—run the risk of sampling bias and potential errors of overcoverage or undercoverage. For example, national exit polls fail to ask about immigrant status, interview only in English (and, more recently, Spanish), and have well-documented limitations in their ability to obtain a representative sample of populations like Latinos and Asian Americans.[11] In recent elections, these omissions and the sample design of exit polls have led to an underestimate of the Democratic vote share among both Latinos and Asian Americans (Abramowitz 2016; Lee 2016; Segura and Barreto 2017).

To take another example, one of the most important recent studies on the social consequences of demographic diversity is Robert Putnam's "*E Pluribus Unum*" (2007). The study's data are from the 2000 Social Capital Community Benchmark Survey, which failed to ask about respondents' country of birth or immigrant status. This omission is especially conspicuous given that Putnam's key claim is that, at least in the short term, "immigration and ethnic diversity tend to reduce social solidarity and social capital" (2007, p. 137).[12]

Finally, consider the contrast between the General Social Survey (GSS) and the American National Election Studies—two of the three "gold standard" surveys supported by the National Science Foundation.[13] The GSS has regularly asked, "Were you born in this country?" and "Were both your parents born in this country?" since 1972. These items allow us to track how well the GSS's sample characteristics correspond with Census population parameters in terms of immigrant status.[14] As figure 3 shows, these two trends track very closely, with the notable exception of a peak in foreign-born respondents in the 2006

11. See, e.g., Barreto et al. (2006); Leal et al. (2005). As Warren Mitofsky notes, exit polls are not currently designed to yield precise estimates of "demographic groups that are both small … and those that tend to be geographically concentrated" (2005, p. 13; see also p. 62).

12. To be fair, the study's sample design allows Putnam to examine a community's concentration of immigrants as a source of contextual diversity. Yet without measuring immigrant status directly, we cannot know if certain claimed relationships in the study—for example, that preference for Spanish diminishes trust in one's neighbors, net of one's Hispanicity—are not proxies for an "immigrant effect."

13. The third, the Panel Study of Income Dynamics (PSID), uses a different study design. The ANES and GSS are recurring cross-sections, while the PSID is a longitudinal panel. Due to the panel design, the PSID loses some representativeness when the underlying target population changes (i.e., as the foreign-born proportion of the US population grows). To account for this, the PSID added, to the baseline sample from 1968, immigrant samples in 1997 and 1999 (see http://psidonline.isr.umich.edu for more details).

14. The time series for Census figures is a linear extrapolation of the growth of the US foreign-born population from 1970 to 2010 and the sampled estimates of the foreign-born population from the American Community Surveys for 2012 and 2014. The correlation between the two series is 0.93.

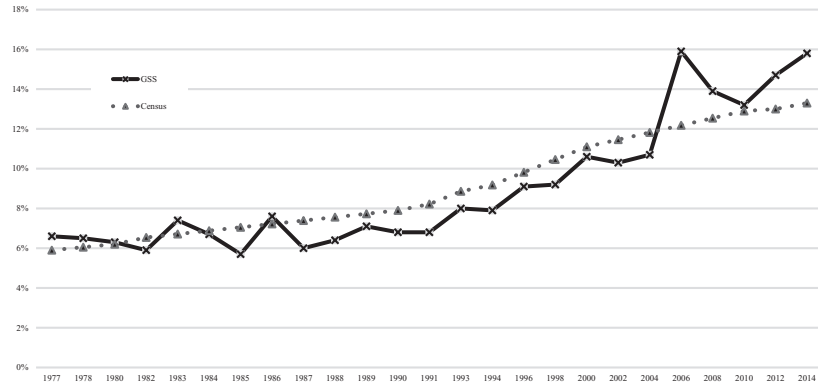

Figure 3. Percent foreign born, GSS and Census.

GSS sample. This peak results from introducing Spanish-only speakers into the GSS sample, which increases the proportion of foreign born (from 10.7 percent in 2004 to 15.9 percent in 2006) and Hispanics (from 9.2 percent in 2004 to 14.3 percent in 2006).[15] The fact that interviewing in multiple languages can have such a pronounced effect further demonstrates the importance of immigration not just in what we measure in surveys, but also in the sample properties of surveys.[16]

The ANES, by contrast, is more inconsistent and incomplete in its sampling of the US foreign-born population. From 1952 to 1994, with one exception (in 1962), the ANES has asked, "Where were you born?" Between 1996 and 2008, the studies in the ANES time series discontinued this question.[17] In these years, the ANES only asked, "Were both your parents born in this country?" While this item gives some indication of immigrant familial background, it does not allow researchers to differentiate between first- and second-generation immigrants in the ANES sample.[18] In 2012, the ANES time series fielded a revised item, "In what state, country, or territory were you born?"

15. The jump in the foreign-born and Hispanic sample in the 2006 GSS due to Spanish language interviews is confirmed via private correspondence with Tom Smith, co-principal investigator of the GSS. One-third of the 2006 sample is the first wave of a panel for which the variable "born" is listed as "not applicable," so the figures above are only for the 2,995 cases for which the question is asked.

16. See Lee and Perez (2014) for more on the effect of language on the measurement properties of a survey.

17. Per personal communication with Gary Segura, co-principal investigator of the 2012 ANES, the 2008 Latino oversample did include a nativity question.

18. The standard scholarly convention differentiates "first generation" (those not born in the United States) from "second generation" immigrants (those US-born children of first-generation immigrant parents).

This discontinuity might be negligible if the sample characteristics of the ANES survey very closely corresponded to population parameters of foreign born in the United States. Figure 4 compares the percent foreign born in the ANES time-series samples to two Census comparisons: the proportion of immigrant first generation in the Census (the dotted line series); and the proportion of immigrants and citizens in the Census (the solid line series).[19] By the first comparison, the ANES appears poor in its representativeness of the US foreign-born sample (FBORN). But this is not the proper comparison, since the ANES aims for a representative sample of US eligible voters (adult citizens). When the proportion of foreign-born eligible voters in the ANES time series is compared to naturalized immigrants (FB-CTZN), the two series track each other more closely and, if anything, the ANES appears to overrepresent immigrant (citizens) in its sample.[20]

Beyond representativeness for its own sake are potential substantive implications of sampling bias. Parameter estimates at a given point in time may be inaccurate, and changes in parameter estimates over time might be wrongly ascribed as changes in individual attitudes or generational change. Consider here the Gallup time series on whether levels of immigration should be increased, decreased, or kept the same. As figure 5 shows, the proportion of respondents who believe levels should be increased has jumped from 6 percent in 1993 to a high of 28 percent in 2014.[21] While most of this shift is likely due to opinion change or generational replacement, some of it may also reflect changes in the underlying composition of the American public since 1993 resulting from the higher proportion of immigrants.[22] The key point here is

19. "Immigrant and citizen" denotes naturalized as US citizens. Immigrants who are permanent residents and temporary residents are classified as foreign born, but remain outside the sampling frame of ANES. The time series on "immigrant and citizens" is from Census Bureau data, with linear extrapolation to smooth out the changes between decennial censuses. For reasons we have not been able to ascertain, there are no Census figures on naturalization rates for 1960.

20. The time series from the GSS and the ANES in figures 3 and 4 are not directly comparable to Census data in at least one other sense: both surveys are of the adult population, whereas the publicly available data from the Census Bureau on the US foreign-born population and on naturalization rates is of all individuals, adults and children. The two surveys also represent different sets of populations: the GSS draws a sample from the population of all adult individuals in the United States regardless of their citizenship status, whereas the ANES samples eligible voters, excluding non-citizens.

21. The figure has since declined to 21 percent in the most recent June–July 2016 Gallup poll.

22. The magnitude of effect here is hard to estimate because the relevant Gallup polls only ask about country of birth in 1993 and 1995, but not in any poll thereafter. The effect, however, can be roughly estimated by combining the responses of Latinos and Asian Americans in recent Gallup polls. These groups represent more than 80 percent of the US foreign-born population (Grieco et al. 2012) and roughly 10 percent of respondents in recent Gallup polls. In Gallup's June 2014 poll, 35 percent of Latinos and Asian Americans combined favored an increase in immigration levels; 21 percent of the remaining sample did so; and the figure for the full sample approached 23 percent (unweighted). A more exhaustive analysis across surveys and between different kinds of questions about immigration is beyond the scope of our poll review.

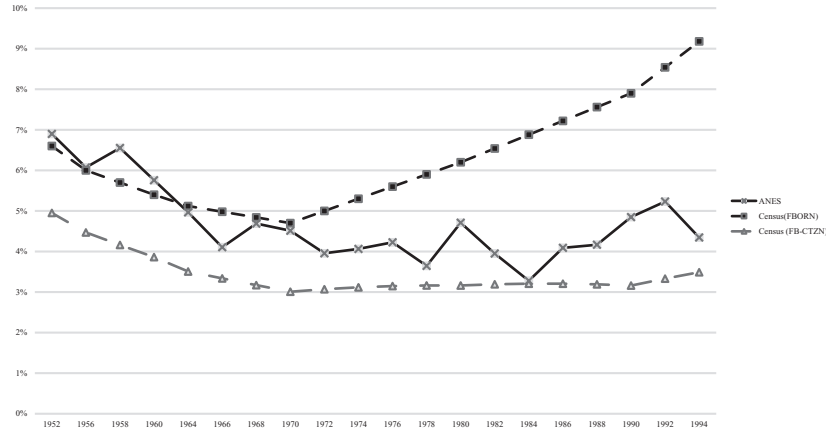

Figure 4. Percent foreign born, ANES and Census.

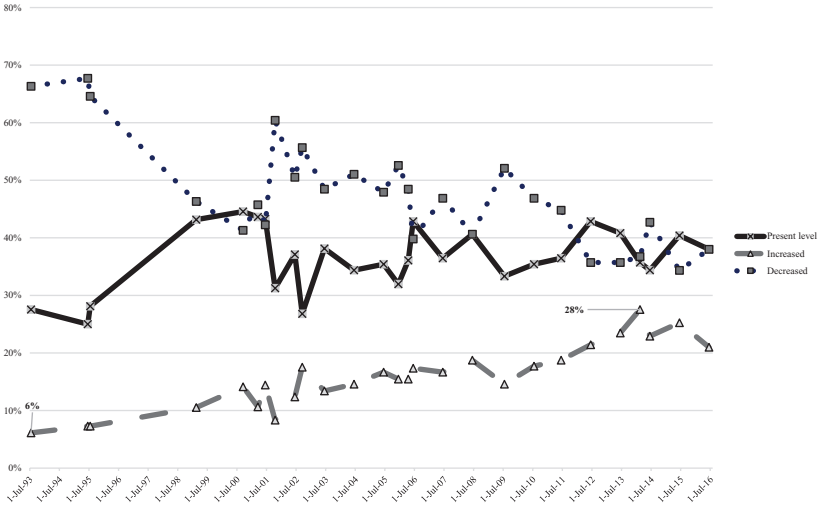

Figure 5. Gallup series on immigration levels.

that differentiating between attitude change and composition change (or other explanations of change over time) is an empirical question for which data on nativity and immigrant status are needed.

Changes in Target Population

In general, there are two ways that immigrants as a group, or immigrant-based groups like Latinos and Asian Americans, might be of interest to scholars of

public opinion. One is knowing whether there are distinct views on immigration for this group, compared to the general population, on the set of items typically found in surveys. The main data requirement here is for surveys to ask about the subgroup of interest (the respondent's country of birth for immigrants, racial/ethnic identification for Latinos or Asian Americans) and with enough observations in the subgroup of interest to sufficiently power the analysis.

Alternatively, immigrant-based groups might be of interest in themselves and not vis-à-vis the general population. Increasingly, surveys on immigration are surveys *of* immigrants and ethnic communities that are substantially composed of first- and second-generation immigrants. These surveys face particular challenges. For one, such surveys are often more expensive than a general population survey by several magnitudes of order. Higher costs here stem from lower incidence rates, differential cooperation rates, staffing costs associated with the need for bilingual and culturally competent interviewers, and the like. One consequence is that face-to-face mode surveys of immigrants are extremely rare.[23] Most surveys of immigrant-based populations are telephone surveys, with a burgeoning presence of web-based surveys. With telephone surveys, the first challenge is that random-digit-dialing (RDD) remains an inefficient means of contacting immigrant-based populations, given their relatively low proportions in the general population. Furthermore, although defined groups like Latinos and Asians are geographically concentrated in urban areas, their population density is often insufficiently high within sampling units to successfully use a probability proportional to size design. A third concern is that cell phone penetration is differential (e.g., between Latinos and Asian Americans, younger and older populations, first generation and second), so special attention is needed in deciding on the right cell-landline mix.

As a result, telephone surveys often adopt hybrid approaches: in some cases, selecting on geographical areas with higher coverage rates (e.g., states or metropolitan areas with high concentrations of the target population); in others, combining limited RDD with list-based samples that match names to ethnic/national origin groups (or that assign each name a propensity of eligibility for participation); in still others, combining probability-based with nonprobability-based sample designs. In many instances, surveys home in on select immigrant-based populations, whether umbrella groups like Latinos and Asian Americans or subgroups within them like Cubans and Vietnamese or targeted populations like undocumented immigrants, their children, and refugees.

23. Two notable exceptions here are the 1989–1990 Latino National Political Survey (see de la Garza et al. [1992]) and the 2002–2003 National Latino and Asian American Study (see Alegria et al. [2004]; Takeuchi, Gong, and Gee [2012]).

Once a target population is matched to a sampling frame, another barrier to obtaining representative samples of immigrant populations is language. Given the linguistic diversity of many immigrant communities, failure to program questionnaires and staff interviews in multiple languages can result in undercoverage and biased parameter estimates. Lee and Perez (2014) show that the language in which an interview is conducted can yield significant differences on survey response, even net of respondents' degree of assimilation, language ability, and demographic background factors. Yet major surveys like the Current Population Survey November Voter Supplement, the ANES, GSS, and PSID support Spanish only as a second language-of-interview option (and in some cases, only relatively recently), and it is unclear in mainstream media exit polls if and when there is language and translation support for Spanish. None of these surveys interview in Asian languages. When surveys do offer an in-language option, the uptake rate is substantial: in the 2006 Latino National Survey, 61 percent of respondents opted for a Spanish language interview; in the 2008 National Asian American Survey, 40 percent opted for an Asian language interview.[24]

In terms of content, targeted samples provide an important window into processes of acculturation and incorporation. They do so, critically, by asking questions that capture the specificity of the immigrant experience. In addition to questions on immigrant status, these surveys often feature questions on the "four benchmarks of assimilation": socioeconomic status, spatial concentration, language assimilation, and intermarriage (Waters and Jiménez 2015). Surveys of immigrant-based populations are also opportunities to study identity (e.g., linked fate), civic engagement (e.g., religiosity and voluntary associations), experiences with discrimination, transnational participation, and attitudes about multiculturalism, national identity, current policy debates, and so on. Finally, samples drawn from geographically specific areas allow researchers to ask respondents about the local institutional contexts and the place-based networks and resources that are key to understanding whether and how immigrants acculturate and become engaged in politics and civic affairs.

As surveys of immigrants and related groups are increasingly prominent, we briefly describe here a few key projects. Among immigrant-specific academic surveys, three that have made notable contributions have been the

24. Census figures on limited English proficiency (LEP) are helpful to estimate the likely effect of language on sample coverage. Measured as the percent of a group who report speaking English less than "very well," a recent report finds that 35 percent of Latinos and 35 percent of Asian Americans ("alone") are LEP, compared to 6 percent of whites and 3 percent of African Americans. Within these racial/ethnic groupings, moreover, LEP figures vary by immigrant status and subgroups. For Asian Americans, for instance, only 9 percent of the US born are LEP, while for foreign born the rate is 47 percent. The subgroup variation in LEP rates for Asian Americans ranges from 22 percent for Asian Indians and Filipinos at the low end to 46 percent for Chinese and 53 percent for Vietnamese Americans (Ramakrishnan and Ahmad 2014).

Children of Immigrants Longitudinal Study (CILS; Portes and Rumbaut [2005]), Immigrant Second Generation in Metropolitan New York City (ISGMNY; Kasinitz et al. [2009]), and Immigrant and Intergenerational Mobility in Metropolitan Los Angeles (IIMMLA; Rumbaut [2008]; Lee and Zhou [2015]). These projects address some of the aforementioned challenges to surveys of immigrants. Reflecting the fact that immigrants and their children tend to concentrate in a small number of geographical areas in the United States, these surveys sample respondents exclusively from a region or two: CILS from Florida and Southern California; ISGMNY from New York City; and IIMMLA from Los Angeles. These projects also sample on specific ethnic/national origin groups; in the case of ISGMNY and IIMMLA, including substantial numbers of white and African American respondents as a nonimmigrant "baseline." Surveys like CILS, ISGMNY, and IIMMLA also differ from polls that ask about immigration in their content, focusing on immigrants past and present experiences (e.g., "When did you come to the United States?" or "What kind of language do you speak in your home?"), rather than probing attitudes about immigration (e.g., "Do you think immigrants help economy?" or "Do you think immigrants bring crimes to the United States?").

Beyond surveys of immigrants per se, a growing number of surveys focus on Latinos and Asian Americans. Although Latinos are omnipresent in the fabric of American social, economic, and political life today, the history of academic surveys of Latinos remains relatively young, with the first systematic effort in the 1989–1990 Latino National Political Survey, which limited its sampling frame to Puerto Ricans, Cubans, and Mexican Americans (de la Garza et al 1992).[25] More recently, the 2006 Latino National Survey followed a sample design that surveyed enough respondents to permit ethnic/national origin subgroup analysis (e.g., respondents of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Salvadoran, Cuban, and Dominican origin) and analysis by states (15 states and the District of Columbia).[26] Today, it is increasingly commonplace for surveys to draw an oversample of Latinos, and the demand for data on Latinos is sufficient to sustain a stand-alone polling firm like Latino Decisions and a think tank like Pew Hispanic Center.[27]

25. The 1989–1990 LNPS sampling frame of Puerto Ricans, Cubans, and Mexicans achieved a coverage rate of 85 percent of the US Latino population. There were also previous efforts to survey Latinos prior to the LNPS that were limited either by group, such as a 1979 survey of Mexican Americans described in Hurtado (1994), or by geography, such a 1984 survey of Latinos in California described in Cain, Kiewiet, and Uhlaner (1991).

26. The subgroup samples by ethnic/national origin ranged from 311 respondents from the Dominican Republic to 6,034 Mexican Americans. The LNS also included substantial numbers of Guatemalans (174), Colombians (122), and respondents in the "other Central America" (177) and "other South America" (277) buckets. See Fraga et al. (2014).

27. There were also several important surveys that resulted from collaborations between the *Washington Post,* Kaiser Family Foundation, and Harvard University in 2000; and between Kaiser Family Foundation and the Pew Hispanic Center in 2002 and 2004. On Latino Decisions polls, see Barreto and Segura (2014).

For Asian Americans, the history of academic surveys is even more recent. The first notable effort was the 2000–2001 Pilot National Asian American Political Survey, which drew a five-city sampling frame (Chicago, Honolulu, Los Angeles, New York, and San Francisco). More recently, 2008, 2012, and 2016 National Asian American Surveys use mixed frame designs with sample sizes that permit disaggregated analyses by ethnic/national origin subgroups.[28] The Pew Research Center (2012) also conducted a dual-frame (cell and landline) survey with representative subsamples of the six largest Asian American subgroups. Each of these surveys conducted interviews in multiple languages and used a mix of limited RDD (usually geographically stratified by the density of the Asian American population) and list samples that allocate a propensity of being Asian based on surname and often first name, geography, and behavioral data. [29]

Finally, some of the most interesting and innovative recent contributions have been studies of unauthorized immigrants, an especially hard-to-sample population. A host of factors—their extralegal status, their subjective experience of alienation from civic life, their corresponding invisibility from many obvious possible sampling frames, (for some) their fluid movement between borders, among other things—often result in very low eligibility, contact, and cooperation rates and, depending on what is asked and how it is asked, completion rates as well. Scholars are nevertheless finding innovative ways to study this population (Gonzalez, Terriquez, and Ruszczyk 2014; Wong and Valdivia 2014; Street, Zepeda-Millan, and Jones-Correa 2015; Teranishi, Suárez-Orozco, and Suárez-Orozco 2015). Such efforts (to varying greater degrees) yield samples that are roughly representative, but rely on nonprobability sampling methods or a mix of probability and non-probability sampling with opt-in participation. Also notable here are groundbreaking studies of unauthorized migration as a cross-border phenomenon, with a corresponding interest in what motivates migration by sampling respondents (and their families) in immigrants' countries of origin.[30] To date, these studies have focused

28. See Wong et al. (2011) and www.naasurvey.com. The 2008 NAAS allows for disaggregated analysis for Asian Indian, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, and Vietnamese origin in 2008; the 2012 NAAS added to this "big six" large samples of Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders, Cambodians, and Hmong; the 2016 further added large samples of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis. See also Lien, Conway, and Wong (2001).

29. The 2012 and 2016 NAAS surveys offered their eligible sample possible interview languages: beyond English, also Cambodian, Cantonese, Hindi, Hmong, Khmer, Korean, Japanese, Mandarin, Tagalog, Thai, and Vietnamese. It is worth noting that adding survey languages increases survey costs substantially, due to translation and the need to recruit multilingual interviewers. Languages that add coverage to small AAPI populations like Hmong and Cambodians are especially challenging to staff in this regard.

30. Most prominent among these is the multi-year Mexican Migration Project, which combines ethnographic and survey methods to collect "life histories" of individuals and their families involved in border crossings (Massey, Durand, and Malone 2002, Durand and Massey 2004, and Massey, Durand, and Pren 2016). See also Ryo (2013).

on migration across the US-Mexico border, but the intellectual case for studying migration and immigrants in their transnational and extra-legal contexts obviously extends beyond the US-Mexico case.

Challenges and Future Directions

This review has described recent changes in *when* surveys poll on immigration, *what* they ask about immigration, *who* they survey, and *how* the surveys are being conducted. When surveys choose to ask about immigration and what topics they query vary as immigration flows continue to reshape the nation's population. Asking about attitudes on immigration is increasingly a staple of regularly fielded polls as well as a focus of more in-depth surveys. At the same time, the composition of survey samples itself is actively changing. With this change, surveys that draw samples of immigrants and immigration-based populations like Latinos and Asian Americans are increasingly commonplace. As we have reviewed, these surveys of targeted populations face specific challenges both in achieving representative samples and in developing relevant instrumentation.

Spanning these changes in who, what, when, and how we survey on immigration are several considerations for continued improvements. First among these is that surveys today should at minimum collect data on the nativity and immigrant status of their respondents. The bar for proposing a new entrant as a regularly asked "background" demographic marker should be high, but being immigrant in our view meets that bar.

Second, surveys that oversample immigrants or sample only immigrants (or Latinos or Asian Americans) should be mindful of the coverage issues involved in using non-RDD sampling frames and also consider the value of interviewing in multiple languages. While multilingual surveys raise project costs substantially, those costs have to be measured against costs in sampling bias and data quality if monolingual interviews are conducted of a target population that is multilingual.

Third, the challenges of America's growing diversity are reflected as challenges of survey operations. For instance, multiethnic, multilingual surveys sometimes face quality and cost trade-offs between using inexperienced but multilingual interviewers and using well-trained, experienced monolingual interviewers. With interviewer ethnicity, there are potential trade-offs between matching respondent and interviewer by ethnicity to avoid social desirability effects and opting not to match by ethnicity on culturally sensitive items, where coethnicity might lead respondents to self-censor their views.

Fourth, as survey research moves increasingly into web-based interviewing and, with it, a turn to nonprobability sampling designs, there are both opportunities and constraints to surveys on immigration and of immigrants. Web-based surveys have the potential to lower the bar on obtaining a self-identified

sample of undocumented immigrants or more generally serve as a better mode for asking about sensitive topics related to immigration. At the same time, more investment and testing is needed on the quality of multilingual surveys in web-based interviews and the quality of Internet panels of immigrants, Latinos, and Asian Americans.

This list is selective and far from exhaustive. Moreover, this poll review is limited to the United States, recognizing that the challenges to surveying on immigration extend beyond the United States as well (Landry and Shen 2005; McKenzie and Mistiaen 2009; Font and Méndez 2013; Reichel and Morales 2017). These and other considerations are increasingly necessary to conduct surveys in a plural and rapidly changing society. In his 1995 presidential address to the American Political Science Association, Sidney Verba invited audiences to think of "the social survey as a means of political participation" (1996, p. 1). Viewed thus, Verba boldly claimed, "surveys produce just what democracy is supposed to produce—equal representation of all citizens" (1996, p. 3). Yet for surveys to continue to stake a claim as democratic practice, they must tackle the challenges of sampling and measurement that immigration generates. The modern field of opinion research developed, to a significant extent, on the premise of a stable and largely racially homogeneous American public. Today's American public is radically altered, and diversity and dynamic change are now here to stay.

Appendix. Variations in Question Wordings of the Immigration-related Poll Questions

This appendix samples some of the variation in topics, question wordings, and sources of polling on immigration. Using the Roper iPoll database, the tables below categorize this variation under five core themes: (1) general assessments on unauthorized immigration, overall assessments; (2) border security and "the Wall"; (3) immigration levels; (4) immigration's impact; and (5) national identity. This list and grouping is by no means exhaustive. In some cases, two different questions within the same theme aim to measure different (if related) attitudes. The appendix also illustrates question wording choices in polls conducted by identifiably partisan political sources (e.g., Democratic Leadership Council). Numbers in the column "Responses" are the marginals for that item.

General Assessments on Unauthorized Immigration

NATIONAL CENTER FOR HEALTH STATISTICS (1991)

Do you think the U.S. (United States) government can significantly reduce illegal immigration, or do you think there really isn't much more it can do to

reduce illegal immigration? Can significantly reduce (69%); Can't do much more (28%); No opinion (3%)

GALLUP/*USA TODAY* (2007)

Do you think the US (United States) has made progress or lost ground in dealing with illegal immigration in the past year, or has there been no change? Made progress (12%); Lost ground (43%); No change (42%); No opinion (3%)

PEW RESEARCH CENTER (2011)

Now thinking about the way some things work in this country...Do you think... the immigration system in this country works pretty well and requires only minor changes, do you think it needs major changes, or do you think it needs to be completely rebuilt? Works pretty well/only minor changes (26%); Major changes (43%); Completely rebuilt (24%); Don't know (6%)

BROOKINGS INSTITUTION (2013)

Do you think the current immigration system in the United States is generally working, working but with some major problems, broken but working in some areas, or completely broken? (If Don't know/Depends, ask:) Just your general impression, do you think the current immigration system is generally working, working but with some major problems, broken but working in some areas, or completely broken? Generally working (7%); Working but with some major problems (29%); Broken but working in some areas (40%); Completely broken (23%)

Border Security and "the Wall"

NATIONAL CENTER FOR HEALTH STATISTICS (1991)

Please tell me whether you would generally favor or oppose each of the following steps which have been proposed as a way of reducing illegal immigration into the U.S. (United States) ... Erecting a wall along the border with Mexico. Favor (27%); Oppose (71%); No opinion (2%)

FOX NEWS (2005)

Which of the following do you think would be more effective at preventing illegal immigration along the U.S. (United States)-Mexico border?... A two-thousand-mile-long security fence, thousands of additional border patrol agents. Fence (23%); Agents (38%); Same (11%); Neither (18%); Don't know (10%)

CBS NEWS/*NEW YORK TIMES* (2016)

Would you favor or oppose building a wall along the US-Mexico border to try to stop illegal immigration? Favor (45%); Oppose (49%); Don't know (5%)

ASSOCIATED PRESS (2016)

Should the United States build a wall along the Mexican border to help stop illegal immigration? Yes (28%); No (71%)

Immigration Levels

ROPER ORGANIZATION (1992)

Currently, immigration laws allow about 700,000 legal immigrants each year into the United States. In your opinion, is this number of immigrants too high, too low, or just about right? Too high (59%); Too low (5%); About right (28%); Don't know (8%)

CBS NEWS (1996)

Should legal immigration into the United States be kept at its present level, increased or decreased? Present level (35%); Increased (8%); Decreased (50%)

GALLUP (2014)

Would you like to see the level of immigration in this country increased, decreased, or remain about the same? Increased (13%); Decreased (65%); Remain the same (22%)

Immigration's Impact

BUSINESS WEEK (1992)

Right now, do you think immigration is good or bad for this country (the United States)? Good (28%); Bad (68%); Neither (2%); Not sure (2%)

NBC (2005)

Would you say that immigration helps the United States more than it hurts it, or immigration hurts the United States more than it helps it? Helps more than it hurts (35%); Hurts more than it helps (53%); Not sure (10%)

PEW HISPANIC CENTER (2010)

Overall, what is the effect of undocumented or illegal immigration on Hispanics/Latinos already living in the US (United States)? Would you say it's a positive effect, a negative effect, or no effect one way or the other? A positive effect (29%); A negative effect (31%); No effect one way or the other (30%); Don't know (8%)

ASSOCIATED PRESS (2017)

In general, do you think the benefits the United States gets from legal immigration outweigh the risks, or are the risks to the United States great enough so that legal immigration should be further limited? Benefits outweigh risks (67%); Risks great enough to further limit (31%); Don't know (1%); Refused (2%)

National Identity

TIME/CNN (1994)

Now here are a few questions about immigration...Some people feel that America should keep its doors open to people who wish to immigrate to the United States because that is what our heritage is all about. Others feel that this philosophy is no longer reasonable and we should strictly limit the number of people who immigrate. Which of these positions comes closest to your opinion? Keep doors open (20%); Strictly limit immigration (77%); Not sure (3%)

NBC (2005)

And which of these statements comes closer to your point of view?...Statement A: Immigration adds to our character and strengthens the United States because it brings diversity, new workers, and new creative talent to this country. Statement B: Immigration detracts from our character and weakens the United States because it puts too many burdens on government services, causes language barriers, and creates housing problems. A (41%); B (48%); Depends/some of both (10%)

TNS (2011)

Some people think that immigration enriches American culture with new customs and ideas. Others think that these new customs and ideas negatively affect American culture. Which comes closer to your point of view? Immigration enriches American culture (55%); Immigration negatively affects American culture (35%); Don't know (9%); Refusal (1%)

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