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Permalink

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Chavez, Leo

Publication Date

2021

Peer reviewed

Latino *Resentimiento*

Emotions and Critique of Anti-Immigrant and Anti-Latino Political Rhetoric

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Abstract: *Resentment in anti-immigrant and anti-Latino political rhetoric often focuses on perceived demographic changes, white population decline, and economic decline. Resentimiento, by contrast, connotes disgust and anger at mistreatment through hostile words or acts such as those conveyed in negative political rhetoric. To explore the nature of resentimiento, Mexican-origin students at a California university were shown samples of negative (N = 95) or positive (N = 93) statements and visual images about immigrants and Latinos. Their written responses to the negative rhetoric included anger and sadness, feelings of being stigmatized, and bodily reactions. Participants argued that the negative rhetoric suffered from overgeneralizations, racism, and misinformation, and that it failed acknowledge why people migrate, the valiant struggles of families to secure a better life, and the contributions of Latinos and immigrants to US society. The students recast the negative rhetoric as a flawed and inadequate source of representation and knowledge about them, their families, and their communities. They denied the rhetoric's epistemological efficacy while at the same time recognizing the emotional toll of being its target.*

This essay takes as its starting point Didier Fassin's interest in "rancor, bitterness, acrimony, anger, ire, and indignation" (2013, 249), which are common responses to an experience, real or imagined, of injury or injustice. Fassin complicates these emotions by making a theoretical distinction between two modes of political subjectivation: "resentment" on the one hand, and the particular type of resentment captured by the French word *ressentiment* on the other. *Ressentiment* is related to a history of oppression and domination. According to Fassin, "*ressentiment* is a reaction to historical

facts, which generate an anthropological condition: victims of genocide, apartheid, or persecutions experience this condition" (260).

Fassin positions resentment in contrast to *ressentiment* and uses the French police's relationship to immigrants and their children as an example. Resentment, for Fassin, is relational. Police officers, unemployed workers, and members of the political far right may find themselves opposed to "others," whom they grow to resent and blame for the position they are in. Those who feel such resentment typically are not oppressed directly but are unhappy about their lives; they see themselves as losing out in relation to others, toward whom they direct their anger and rancor. Their discontent focuses on vulnerable groups, such as immigrants and their children, who are the object of their "diffuse animosity" and "vindictiveness" (260). Fassin underscores the importance of emotions during a time of heightened political rhetoric around immigration. By drawing a distinction between resentment and *ressentiment*, he suggests that the focus should be not just on

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the anger that produces anti-immigrant rhetoric but also on the responses of those who are targeted by this rhetoric.

Similar to Fassin's *ressentiment*, Spanish *resentimiento* carries a set of connotations related to disgust, bitterness, hurt, rancor, and anger at mistreatment by hostile words and/or acts, such as those conveyed in negative political rhetoric. We use the term as a way to sharpen the contrast between the resentment that underlies anti-immigrant and anti-Latino rhetoric on the one hand, and the type of resentment (*resentimiento*) felt by those whom the rhetoric targets on the other. We argue that anti-immigrant and anti-Latino rhetoric is an expression of resentment over changing demographics, specifically the perceived decline of whites in relation to immigrants and their children, who make up an increasing share of the US population (Ahmed 2015).

The purpose of this essay is not to reify the term *resentimiento*, but to use it heuristically to examine the less frequently articulated range of emotions and attitudes experienced by the targets of negative political rhetoric. Toward this end, our study examined the responses of Mexican-origin university students to the resentment inherent in samples of anti-immigrant and anti-Latino political rhetoric.[1] We were interested not just in the students' emotions in response to the negative rhetoric but also in their arguments against it. Their critiques challenged the veracity of such rhetoric while countering its hatefulness with love and admiration for their families' determination, sacrifices, and contributions to American society.

The students' class position is important to note here. J. M. Barbalet, in his classic discussion of the relationship between resentment, emotions, and class inequalities, stated that "persons *have* emotions, but *belong* to classes" (1992, 150, emphasis in original). As we explain below, the participants in our study come primarily from working-class and lower-middle-class families and have close relationships to the immigrant experience. Thus they bring to their review of political discourse a certain positionality: typically, these students and their families place value on education and are striving to belong in US society. Gilberto Q. Conchas and Nancy Acevedo (2020) call this the "the Chicana/o/x dream." It is a vision that embodies hope, resistance, and a desire for educational success.

Fassin is not the only scholar to note the importance of a strong emotional sense of resentment among populations who feel themselves losing out to undeserving others (Ware 2008). Thomas Cushman (2009, 2) noted that Adam Smith believed resentment had great power and valence because "unlike anger, which can be assuaged, or envy, which can

be sated, resentment is often a kind of woundedness that never heals." More recently, Bart Bonikowski (2017) has argued that ethno-nationalism has effectively mobilized collective resentment among those who feel their status threatened. "Political and media discourse has channelled such threats into resentments toward elites, immigrants, and ethnic, racial and religious minorities" (Bonikowski 2017, S181). Donald Trump appealed to low-skilled and blue-collar workers who believed they were losing out economically and demographically because of immigration (McVeigh and Estep 2019). Similarly, David Norman Smith and Eric Hanley (2020) argue that Trumpism's appeal to less-educated people is based to a large extent on xenophobia and racism, what they refer to as racial resentment, which blames both immigrants and undeserving domestic groups for the loss of whites' economic and political position in society. This is the sense in which we are using "resentment."

In addition, Fassin's use of *ressentiment* has its antecedents. Friedrich Nietzsche used *ressentiment* to discuss the discontent of oppressed people. Lynda Chouiten (2011) applies *ressentiment* to the resentment experienced by Africans, African Americans, and Indians in response to postcolonial and racial domination. Importantly, *ressentiment* can suggest redirecting destructive and debilitating self-loathing into learning, resistance, and a critique of discourses that reflect injustice. As we shall see below, it is in this sense that *resentimiento* is distinguishable from resentment and is detectable among Mexican-origin students who took part in our study.

Our analysis builds on the work of scholars in Latinx studies, sociology, and anthropology who have examined how Mexicans, and Latinos in general, are represented in contemporary political rhetoric. Otto Santa Ana's research has elucidated the pervasive metaphors in anti-Latino and anti-immigrant rhetoric, including those suggesting that Latinos are "animals," part of a "brown tide," and "drug addicts and rapists" (Santa Ana 1996, 2002; Santa Ana, Morán, and Sánchez 1998; Santa Ana et al. 2020). Jonathan Inda (2000) notes the rhetorical language that represents Latinos and immigrants as pathological to the social body, as parasites. Leo Chavez (2013) coined the term "Latino threat narrative" to indicate that Latinos are represented as a threat to the nation in many ways. They are seen as unable to assimilate, as changing American culture, as having a propensity for crime, and as overusing social services and medical care. Their high fertility rates and high levels of immigration are supposedly fueling a demographic takeover, invasion, and reconquest of American territory (Santa Ana 2002; Strom and Alcock 2017). Such imagined

characterizations of Latinos and immigrants often lack evidence but they are pervasive, nonetheless, in anti-Latino and anti-immigrant rhetoric. We argue that this rhetoric of resentment serves the needs of politicians, pundits, white nationalists, and anti-immigration groups.

We also build on research showing that political rhetoric can elicit strong emotions, including what we are calling *resentimiento* (Ahmed 2015; Bakewell 1998; Beatty 2014; Bericat 2015; Bloch 2016; Lutz 1986; Nussbaum 2016). Growing up undocumented in the United States has been linked to emotional stress and mental health issues (Del Real 2019; Gonzales, Suárez-Orozco, and Dedios-Sanguineti 2013; Moya Salas, Ayón, and Gurrola 2013; Rodriguez Vega 2018). Jessica Vasquez-Tokos and Kathryn Norton-Smith (2016) found that young Latino men utilize emotional strategies to resist negative images, such as those portraying Latinos as gang members. In 2016, Trump's presidential campaign caused significant stress to more than half of Americans, according to the American Psychological Association (2016). Similar effects are found in other societies as well: Sara Ahmed (2015) examined immigration-related discourse produced by hate groups in England and how those emotion-laden statements elicited bodily sensation. As these studies suggest, negative political rhetoric interpellates (hails or calls out) its targets as ideological subjects; but the targets, while recognizing that they are being targeted, may not accept the rhetorical message. Instead they may resist it (Althusser 1971, 162).

Although research has provided insight into the relationship between political rhetoric and emotions, there is still a need to delve more deeply into the range of emotions exhibited by the targets of negative political rhetoric. The pursuit of these emotions requires an analytical method that pays attention to multiple expressions of *resentimiento* rather than stopping at summative tables or percentages of similar emotions. It requires that we listen to what the targets of political rhetoric actually say. The following questions guide the analysis presented here: How does it feel to be the object of political rhetoric? How do emotions affect those whose bodies and lives are represented in political rhetoric? How do the objects of negative political rhetoric push back against the rhetoric's framing of their lives?

The Roots of Resentment

We have found the work of Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci helpful in thinking about the context of political rhetoric, especially its anti-Latino and anti-immigrant versions. In the 1920s and 1930s, Gramsci introduced

the concept of "hegemony" to understand the plurality of ideologies (1971, 45). Hegemony is the system of values, attitudes, morality, and other beliefs that passively or actively support the established order and thus the class interests that dominate that order. Political rhetoric relies on common sense, which Gramsci defined as the largely unconscious and uncritical way of perceiving the world that is widespread in any given historical epoch. Common sense incorporates within it the prevailing consciousness, or hegemony, that is largely internalized and taken for granted by members of society. Anti-immigrant and anti-Latino rhetoric relies on taken-for-granted narratives about crime, birth rates, inability to learn English, invasions, and reconquests. However, Gramsci also argued that power is constantly negotiated and changing among all classes of people, who struggle with and against one another in the economic, social, political, and ideological arenas where they live and work. *Resentimiento*, in this sense, is a means to counter and even subvert the hegemony inherent in the anti-Latino and anti-immigrant rhetoric that the students in our study question and struggle against.

Resentment in the political rhetoric at issue here is often bound up in the response to demographic change, which has fueled white nationalist movements and populist political campaigns in Europe and the United States. These populist movements often fan the flames of anti-immigrant sentiment by warning of white decline (Belew 2019; Mahmud 2020; Mazzarella 2019; Shoshan 2016; Stern 2019). Such emotions underlie Trump's rise to power and Trumpism as a continuing political force (L. Chavez 2021).

From the early 1990s, conservative authors such as Peter Brimelow, Patrick Buchanan, Georgie Anne Geyer, Victor Davis Hanson, Samuel Huntington, and others promoted a populist anti-immigrant and anti-Latino agenda that predated and contributed to the emergence of today's alt-right (L. Chavez 2013, 2021; Nwanevu 2017). Jeff Maskovsky and Sophie Bjork-James refer to a "politics of rage" that "frame[s] relatively privileged groups, especially those privileged along racial lines—as imperiled" (2020, 11). This narrative spoke to people, particularly white American men, who felt displaced and left behind by the "elites" who run the country and control the media. Those elites, they complained, portray them as ignorant rednecks and ignore their pain, which they attribute to economic decline, perceived job competition from immigrants, and government policies that help undeserving "others" at the expense of hardworking whites (Hochschild 2016; Mulligan and Brunson 2020).

Beginning in the 1970s, and accelerating after the Great Recession of 2008, the United States has experienced a decline in the proportion of whites in relation to the country's total population. Whites are projected to constitute less than half the US population by 2050 (Colby and Ortman 2015; Sáenz and Johnson 2018). Although Latina birth rates and fertility rates are often blamed, those rates have fallen significantly (Livingston 2019; Pew Research Center 2015). It is important to recognize that other important factors contribute to white demographic decline, most notably low birth rates and fertility rates among US white women and an excess of deaths among whites. In 2016, white deaths exceeded white births for the first time in US history, according to an analysis of National Center for Health Statistics data (Sáenz and Johnson 2018). Some demographers are calling the increase of deaths among whites "deaths of despair," as they include suicides, accidental drug overdoses, and alcohol-related deaths (Sáenz and Johnson 2018). With fewer births than deaths and fewer women of child-bearing age, the white population is aging rapidly, and the end of the white racial majority is in sight.

Demographic decline is not the only factor underlying white resentment. Douglas S. Massey and Magaly Sánchez R. (2012) have argued that the dramatic increase in economic inequality in the United States since the 1960s is an important reason for the rise of anti-Latino and anti-immigrant hostility. Data from the US Census Bureau on household income inequality support Massey and Sánchez R.'s observation (Semega et al. 2019). Economic inequality is often measured using the Gini coefficient, a statistical measure that ranges from 0 to 1. A Gini coefficient of 0 means that income and wealth are equally distributed among all people, while a Gini coefficient of 1 means that one person has all the money. In 1968, America's Gini coefficient was at a record low of 0.386. But economic inequality rose rapidly over the next five decades, and by 2018, the Gini coefficient was 0.486, a 21 percent increase.

Put another way: in 1960, the top quintile, or top fifth, of all Americans earned 42.6 percent of national income. This was almost the same as the 42.1 percent of income collectively earned by the next two quintiles, which we might call the middle and upper-middle classes. Over the next fifty-plus years, income inequality grew until those in the richest quintile received 52 percent—more than half the total. In contrast, the next two quintiles taken together saw their share of income plummet to 36.7 percent. The bottom two quintiles also lost ground relative to the top income earners. By 2018, two years into the Trump presidency, distribution of US income

was more unequal than at any time since 1929, the beginning of the Great Depression (Massey and Sánchez R. 2012, 59).

Resentment among less economically favored whites about losing ground during a long period of increasing inequality may be understandable, but their rancor is misdirected. Whites still earn more than Hispanics and Blacks at all steps of the income ladder. Between 1970 and 2016, whites gained in relative income compared to Latinx Americans, thus increasing economic inequality (Kochhar and Cilluffo 2018).

Together, white demographic decline and deepening economic inequality created fertile ground for scapegoating of immigrants and Latinos and increased support for anti-immigrant activism (Ward 2013). Political theorist John Tirman observed that these trends were "a key to the accumulating white anger that drives right-wing extremism to ever uglier heights. The prospects for living as well as their parents, or fulfilling the dreams fostered by popular culture begin to unravel in one's forties, and the easy availability of alcohol, opiates, and other drugs is one release. So is fascistic political noise-making" (2015, 3).

Political Rhetoric in the Trump Era

Even before Trump's presidential campaign, media representations of Mexican immigrants and Latinos in general were consistently negative (L. Chavez 2001; Massey and Sánchez R. 2012). Images of alien "floods," broken borders, a nation torn apart, disease-ridden immigrants, and tattooed youth circulated widely in the media and on the internet (L. Chavez 2013; Deckard et al. 2020; Inda 2000; Kil 2013; Santa Ana 2002; Santa Ana et al. 2020). Decades of such negative rhetoric gave Donald Trump fertile ground upon which to build his presidential campaign, which he began on June 16, 2015, by calling Mexican immigrants drug dealers, criminals, and rapists. Candidate Trump also targeted Americans of Mexican origin by using the term "anchor babies" and by questioning the fairness of a judge whose parents were Mexican immigrants (L. Chavez 2017). Nor was he alone. For example, Steve King, while serving as a Republican congressman from Iowa, suggested that Latino children are a threat to the nation's future: "Culture and demographics are our destiny. *We* can't restore our civilization with *somebody else's* babies" (Schleifer 2017, 1, emphasis added).

This rhetoric, which has continued since Trump's electoral loss, draws a clear distinction between "us" (legitimate members of the nation) and "them" (those who do not belong). It casts Latinos, especially those of

Mexican origin, as "others" whose belonging in the nation is questionable (A. Chavez 2021; Garcia 2017; Hodges 2020, 17; Zavella 2011). An underlying strategy of the rhetoric is to appropriate the concept of "native," arguing that white Americans built this land, which is now under siege by nonwhite invaders and foreigners. This, the Trumpian narrative warns, will change the nation's demographic profile, leading to the decline of "native whites" who are the "legitimate" Americans (Kil 2013; Pérez Huber 2016). The logic of this rhetorical argument is an example of how a politics of resentment generates its object as a defense against injury, real or imagined (Ahmed 2015, 42).

Study Methodology and Participant Characteristics

We collected the data at a public university in California whose student body was 21.4 percent Mexican American (OIR 2018).[2] The study was conducted between August 2016 and June 2017, beginning three months before the election of Trump and extending eight months after. We compared negative political rhetoric with positive political rhetoric and included a sample of neutral rhetoric (on the color of university buildings) for the purpose of experimental control. We wanted to examine the effects of political rhetoric, especially as experienced through the media, on the emotional or affective perceptions of those persons it targets and the subsequent effects on their self-reported levels of stress, health, and well-being. Chavez et al. (2019) present further details on the study methodology.

A sample of 95 students of Mexican origin was randomly selected to view two negative statements and two negative visual images about immigration and/or Latinos, in a controlled setting. A separate sample of 93 Mexican-origin students was randomly selected to view two positive statements and two positive visual images on the same topic.[3] The appendix to this essay describes the textual and visual samples used. After viewing the materials, each participant was asked two open-ended questions: What did you think as you read the quotes and saw the images? How did you feel as you read the quotes and saw the images? All the interviews were in English; participants' responses were written and varied in length. This essay presents and analyzes the qualitative responses to these questions.

All the student participants were of Mexican origin, defined broadly as either being born in Mexico or having at least one ancestor born in Mexico. They were drawn from all disciplines across campus. We did not select for

gender, but 78.2 percent of the participants were female, with little difference between those viewing positive rhetoric (72.8 percent female) and negative rhetoric (76.8 percent female). There were more female Mexican American undergraduate students (59 percent) than males (41 percent) at the university in 2017, and there is also a pattern of gender imbalance that is frequently observed in campus-based studies (OIR 2018; Dickinson and Owen 2012).

Participants had a mean age of 20.8, which is close to the mean age of all Mexican American undergraduates (20.6) at the university in 2017 (OIR 2018). Almost all participants were unmarried (95 percent). Their sources for news and current events were mainly online (80 percent), through the internet and social media, which they checked regularly.

About three-quarters (78.2 percent) of the participants were born in the United States. This is less than the US-born proportion of Mexican American students on campus (92 percent in 2017), but more than US-born proportion of the Mexican American population generally (67.7 percent in 2016) (OIR 2018; USCB 2018). Of the 61 foreign-born participants, most (82 percent) were of the 1.5 generation—that is, they came to the United States as children 14 years old or younger.

Participants overwhelmingly lived in families close to the immigrant experience. Large majorities had at least one foreign-born parent (89.3 percent) and spoke Spanish in addition to English (96.1 percent). Participants had a mean score of 3.5 out of 5 on the Short Acculturation Scale for Hispanics, where 5 indicates someone who is completely acculturated and English-dominant. These characteristics reflected their bicultural lives and the transnational nature of their families, patterns of language, culture, and family life that are common to Mexican Americans generally (Gonzalez-Barrera and Lopez 2013). Many lived in families with mixed immigration status, and this increased their concerns about immigration-related political rhetoric, given increasingly harsh immigration, detention, and deportation policies. For many participants, the rhetoric did not target some abstract group, but was about them and their families.

Participants generally reported being just below the midpoint (4.8 out of 10) on a ten-step socioeconomic ladder or status scale developed by Nancy Adler et al. (2000). At the top of the scale are the people who have the most money, the most education, and the most respected jobs. At the bottom are the people who have the least money, least education, and least respected jobs, or no job. Our participants, by their own estimation, thus come mostly from working-class and lower-middle-class families. While not

a direct comparison, the students' perceptions of their socioeconomic status corresponds with the proportion of the university's Mexican American students (56.2 percent) who were reported as low-income in 2017 (OIR 2018). In addition, the majority are the first in their families to attend college: only 14.3 percent of the students had at least one parent who attended some college, and only 9.2 percent had at least one parent with a bachelor's degree or higher. Their presence at the University of California suggests that they are future-oriented and anticipating successful professional lives (Conchas and Acevedo 2020). This positionality may directly or indirectly influence their responses to negative political rhetoric, especially their resistance to the rhetoric's representations.

As college students, participants may have taken a class in ethnic studies, or Latinx studies, or some other discipline that examines social dynamics and/or media and politics. It is therefore possible that their responses in some cases may reflect their educational experiences and engagement with these subjects.

Finally, a quantitative analysis of the study data found no statistically significant difference in participants' emotions by gender. The same was true when comparing US-born to foreign-born participants (Chavez et al. 2019). Nonetheless, in presenting the responses below, we indicate the students' age, gender, and country of birth to provide more context for the responses.

Coding Responses to Negative Political Rhetoric

Open-ended responses were coded and analyzed using MAXQDA 2018, a software package for qualitative and mixed-methods research. Coding was an iterative process that entailed multiple readings of the responses until all the responses were coded. Some codes were drawn from pre-existing research on emotional responses such as sad, mad, and happy, but the majority were generated from the responses themselves. This grounded approach allowed patterns and narratives to emerge from the students' responses rather than testing preexisting hypotheses (Strauss and Corbin 1990). This is an important distinction epistemologically in that we must not assume that we know in advance how people targeted by political rhetoric react and feel (Ahmed 2015, 59). We must listen to their responses to this rhetoric, which can elicit a range of passionate emotions, both critical and approving.

The students' responses included both emotional responses and arguments and critiques of the negative rhetoric. These two categories of

content reflected the questions, which asked participants what they *feel* and *think* when presented with statements and images. However, their emotional responses and arguments and critiques were not confined to those that directly addressed the two questions, as we shall observe. Codes referred to positive emotions, negative emotions, arguments and critiques, and scale of response (individual, family, nation, community and ethnic group). If immigration status was indicated, that was coded, as were a number of other items that arose from the responses.

The final emotion codes for the negative responses are presented in figure 1. Similar words, such as *anger* and *upset*, are grouped under one code. Although the codes have the advantage of simplifying the responses, figure 1 indicates that there are many important emotions elicited by negative rhetoric. Participants expressed anger, sadness, annoyance, irritation, hate, disappointment, fear, shame, and sorrow, and reported feeling offended, degraded, disturbed, insulted, and insecure. In addition, a number of emotions that signified the intersection of abject status and stigma were put into one category, as were emotions that reflected physical or bodily reactions. The emotions related to these theoretical concepts will be discussed below.

We also examined responses that take a critical stance and offer arguments against negative political rhetoric to better understand how *resentimiento* structures interpretations and responses to such rhetoric. Response codes for arguments and critiques of negative political rhetoric are shown in figure 2. Participants were effusive in their criticism of the negative rhetoric about immigrants and Latinos. They noted that the rhetoric singled out a particular ethnic group—theirs—and was based on generalizations, stereotypes, and inaccuracies. They found the rhetoric racist, ignorant, and judgmental, and stressed that it failed to consider why people migrate to the United States (to seek a better life) and their contributions to society.

Taken together, the emotions and arguments and critiques voiced by the student participants qualify as a "structure of feeling" (Williams 1977, 128–35). The *resentimiento* they expressed reflects how they organize the rhetoric that is found in media and popular culture and provides insights into how this rhetoric shapes their feelings and evaluative responses, as well as their sense of being in the world (Mulligan and Brunson 2020). Emotions and arguments and critiques are not separate frames in a structure of feeling; participants intertwined both into their interpretations of political rhetoric (Povinelli 2012, 388).

Emotions in Response to Negative Political Rhetoric

We turn now to the range of emotions that participants expressed after viewing negative political rhetoric and images about Latinos and immigrants (fig. 1). In their written responses, almost half (49.5 percent) of the students expressed anger. Other strong emotions were sadness (31.6 percent), annoyance and irritation (18.9 percent), offense (15.8 percent), disappointment (11.6 percent), and disgust (8.4 percent). Participants often expressed multiple emotions at the same time.

> [It] makes me upset to think that people out there actually live by these beliefs. (20-year-old female, US-born)
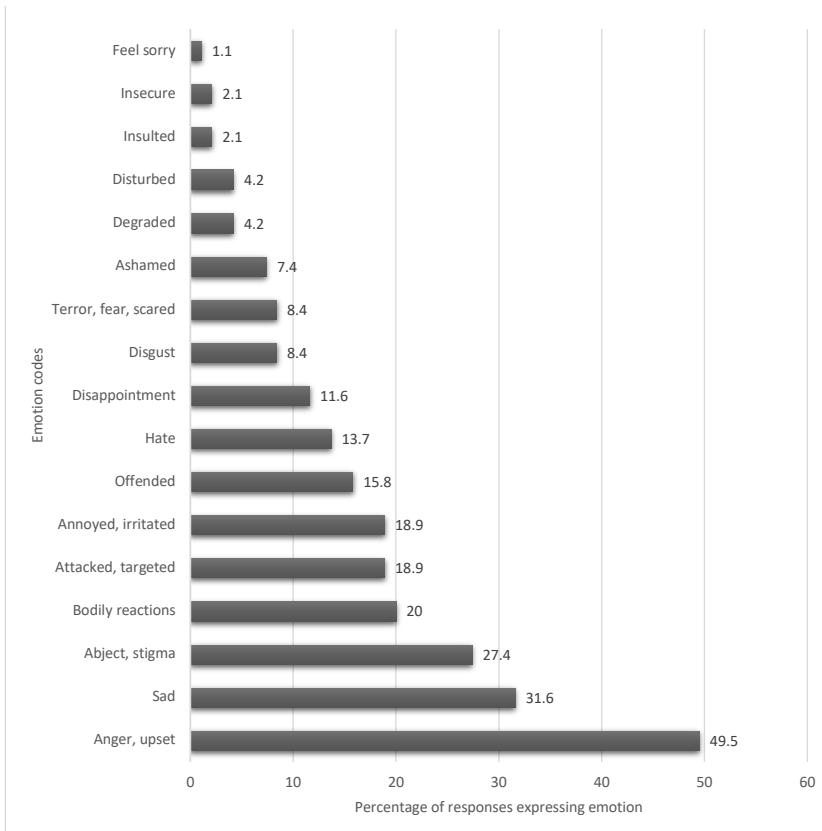
Source: Compiled by the authors based on study data.

Figure 1. Coding of Emotional Responses to Negative Political Rhetoric (n = 95)

The images provoked the strongest reactions; these were feelings of disgust and anger. (21-year-old female, US-born)

I felt angered because they are wrongful depictions of Mexican culture. What got me feeling even more upset is that these are pictures and statements that I see people from different ethnic groups talking about. It is disturbing. (19-year-old male, US-born)

I felt repulsed and upset but I realized that those are some of the obstacles that we have to overcome and show through action that those descriptions are not true of Mexican-origin individuals. (36-year-old male, born in Mexico)

Some participants felt personally attacked or targeted by the negative rhetoric (18.9 percent). This emotion was linked to fear (8.4 percent). Participants who said they felt attacked often countered this by expressing a perceived need to "do something."

I was shocked and scared as I read the quotes and saw the images because there are people who actually believe those things and some even say those things to others. (18-year-old female, born in Mexico)

I felt angered by the quotes and the images. In my opinion, each of them felt as a personal attack to the Latino(a) community, especially Mexican migrants. These images and quotes hit close to home because my parents at one point were migrants and have since then received proper documentation to stay in the country legally. With that said, although I was born in the US, I feel an obligation to stand up for the rights of these people. (19-year-old male, US-born)

I felt attacked. As an American-born citizen, I am given rights through the American Constitution but still somehow am looked down upon for being Mexican. My mother was born in Southern California and father was brought by his parents when he was only months old and yet somehow I am still looked down upon and looked at as a "rapist" or "criminal." (18-year-old male, US-born)

As these observations attest, participants expressed strong emotions at what they perceived as the negative political rhetoric's unfair treatment of them as individuals or as members of an ethnic group. The rhetoric foments an "us versus them" relationship, and the students clearly felt that they were the "them," the object of the vitriol, as witnessed by the use of "us," "we," and "our" in their quotes (Arditi 2007; Povinelli 2012). The power of the negative rhetoric derives from its familiarity: "I've heard this before." The themes and ideas are not novel but are known to the participants,

as anti-immigrant and anti-Latino political rhetoric is common in their everyday lives and constantly heard on television, radio, the internet, and elsewhere.

> The only thing I could focus on while looking at the images was how I have directly been told similar things in person and in writing. When I've heard these remarks, they used to make me insecure because I wasn't that great at speaking English and I used to hide my culture and my language, denying that I watched Mexican novelas or listened to Vicente Fernandez. These things just made it hard for me to figure out who I was, who I wanted to be and who I was supposed to be. (19-year-old female, born in Mexico)

Emotions Related to Stigma and the Abject

For these Mexican-origin students, the political rhetoric made them feel as if they did not belong and were unwanted, and they experienced various emotions linked to feeling stigmatized and abject. The us/them nature of negative political rhetoric objectifies the out-group, in this case, immigrants and people of Mexican origin. In their written responses, 27.4 percent of the students expressed emotions signifying that the negative political rhetoric stigmatizes them and places them in an abject status. However, as we shall observe, they also resist these practices of stigma and abjection through arguments against and critiques of negative political rhetoric.

Erving Goffman noted that the word *stigma* originally referred to the markings once burned into the skin of criminals, making them outwardly visible as morally polluted and to be avoided (1963, 1). Negative political rhetoric about immigrants and Latinos places a symbolic brand on the bodies of Latinos. Those stigmatized by society find themselves devalued, scorned, shunned, ignored, dehumanized, discardable, and even a threat to the larger society, most often for no reason of their own making (L. Chavez 2013). Latinos, and others, often experience stigma as the objects of negative stereotypes and discrimination (Del Real 2019).

Stigma intersects with *abject*, a word derived from the Latin verb meaning to "cast away" or "throw away." *Abject* has been used to describe those in the lowest, most contemptible, and most wretched social category (Butler 1999; Gonzales and Chavez 2012; Kristeva 1982; Willen 2007). It refers to a set of practices that mark off or bracket a group as different, degraded, unworthy, illegitimate, and undeserving. These rejected and abject subjects inhabit a liminal space where the boundary between their everyday lives

in the nation and their lives as *part of* the nation is maintained as a way of ensuring their control and social regulation (L. Chavez 2013, 213).

> I mostly felt insulted and disregarded. When people make remarks like that one, not knowing I'm an undocumented resident of the US, I don't know how to react. I want to fight and let the person know that they are being racist but then I don't want to fight and make them think they're right. It feels very disappointing that people actually think and feel this way about me and the people I love. Everyone deserves a chance to grow and be better. (19-year-old female, born in Mexico)

> It makes me feel hopeless because people are not willing to seek the truth, facts, or data that fail to meet their own beliefs. The dehumanization and lack of empathy is abysmal and disheartening. (19-year-old male, US-born)

The political rhetoric underscored a sense that they were undeserving somehow of being American:

> I did feel slightly offended because I am Mexican and basically, according to the quotes and images, I do not deserve to be called an "American" because my parents had me here. I also feel sad that the country where my dad is from, my culture, my heritage, essentially a large part of who I am, I have to be in a way ashamed or scared to be proud of, [given] all the negative stigma that comes with it. (20-year-old female, US-born)

> The political environment of the time has allowed for the Mexican and Latino population as a whole to be presented as an unwanted people. We are seen almost as a plague, taking away from this country and never giving back. However, this has been our reality throughout our history since this land became part of the US and even before then. But unfortunately, this ideology is now being presented throughout the media on a daily basis and will only push us back from any progress our community has made. (24-year-old male, born in Mexico)

Student participants felt stigmatized by political rhetoric that described them as outsiders and foreigners who do not belong in the United States. This was a direct affront to their sense of themselves and their position in American society. Such affronts can lead to feelings of both anger and shame.

> Anger, rage, frustration, impotence are just some of the words that come to mind, but I have so much to say that I am not able to properly articulate what I am trying to say—much less express myself in a healthy manner. These types of aggressions are not new to me, so I know what it's like to have these words and images being shouted at you, and making you feel

out of place, ashamed and inferior, even though you were born in the US. (24-year-old gender-neutral, US-born)

They are talking about people that are from the country I was born in. It's kind of triggering to read things like that that are indirectly about me, since I was born in Mexico. (19-year-old female, born in Mexico)

It's a reminder that although I was born in this country, I will never necessarily belong despite my citizenship status. (22-year-old female, US-born)

The negative force of anti-Latino rhetoric derives in part from its erasure of distinctions between undocumented immigrants, legal immigrants, and citizens, as well as its failure to recognize positive aspects of immigrant and Latino lives. From the participants' vantage point, they all share the stigma leveled indiscriminately at immigrants and Latinos.

Emotions Related to Bodily Reactions

Twenty percent of the students mentioned bodily reactions to the negative rhetoric. Students said it left them feeling numb, with no feelings, hurt, shocked, stressed, disheartened, confused, in pain, and feeling sick.

It was also very hurtful because some people view us in this manner. (21-year-old female, US-born)

It's sad to say but I didn't feel anything at all. I've gotten use to the negativity in society. I used to get angry, but I don't see society changing for the better. (19-year-old female, US-born)

Participants who say they are hurt, numb, or speechless, or so mad they can't think, are expressing bodily or physical interpretations. Their "gut" reactions reflect how the negative political rhetoric hits them like a blow to their body, causing them to fall back and catch their breath. This interpretive act is not necessarily an internalization of the stigma directed their way by the negative rhetoric (Povinelli 2012, 388). Nor are their responses those of a subject that we can characterize as a docile body. Rather, the participants gathered themselves and rejected the negative rhetoric, raising arguments against it and thus undermining the rhetoric's power over them.

Arguments and Critiques against Negative Political Rhetoric

As observed in many of the responses above, participants included with their emotional responses a range of arguments and critiques of the negative political rhetoric (fig. 2). Many (45.7 percent) pointed to the singling out of one particular ethnic group, and many others said that the rhetoric relied on generalizations (35.1 percent), ignorance (27.7 percent), inaccuracies (26.6 percent), stereotypes (23.4 percent), and misrepresentations (12.8 percent).

> Mexican people just like all other different races have a wide variety of cultural differences within the group, and making generalizations about them is wrongful. Mexicans do not all have citizenship, do not ask for welfare because first of all they can't, and they are hardworking. (20-year-old female, born in Mexico)

> As I am an undocumented student who came from Mexico at the age of 6, I honestly think that those images were definitely unfair and simply reminded me of the stereotypes that [exist] for people who come from Mexico. It is sad that there are people who think that everyone who comes from Mexico are automatically criminals and that they are bringing drugs. The part that stood out the most to me was when they spoke about them being undocumented and a valedictorian—which I happened to be. I think it is unfair that everyone is automatically placed in these stereotypes if they're Mexican origin. (18-year-old female, born in Mexico)

Participants also critiqued the rhetoric because they believed it was racist (31.9 percent), biased, judgmental, discriminatory (20.2 percent), and unfair (10.6 percent). Students did not receive the negative rhetoric merely as an abstract set of ideas. For them, it was personal; it unfairly judged them, their families, and their ethnic group.

> I think the images and texts that were presented to me were being racist. I believe that they [the speakers] should not be able to say that without knowing my circumstances. They are labeling everyone as being a criminal while in reality only a small portion of those who are here illegally break any laws. They [undocumented immigrants] instead want to pursue a better future for their families. (19-year-old male, born in Mexico)

> I am disgusted at the racism toward Mexicans. No human is "illegal" and you cannot generalize an entire population of people. We, as Mexicans, are hardworking people who come here for opportunities to provide a better life for our loved ones. The fact that people will hate me for being brown terrifies me, but I cannot be any prouder to be Mexican. (18-year-old female, US-born)
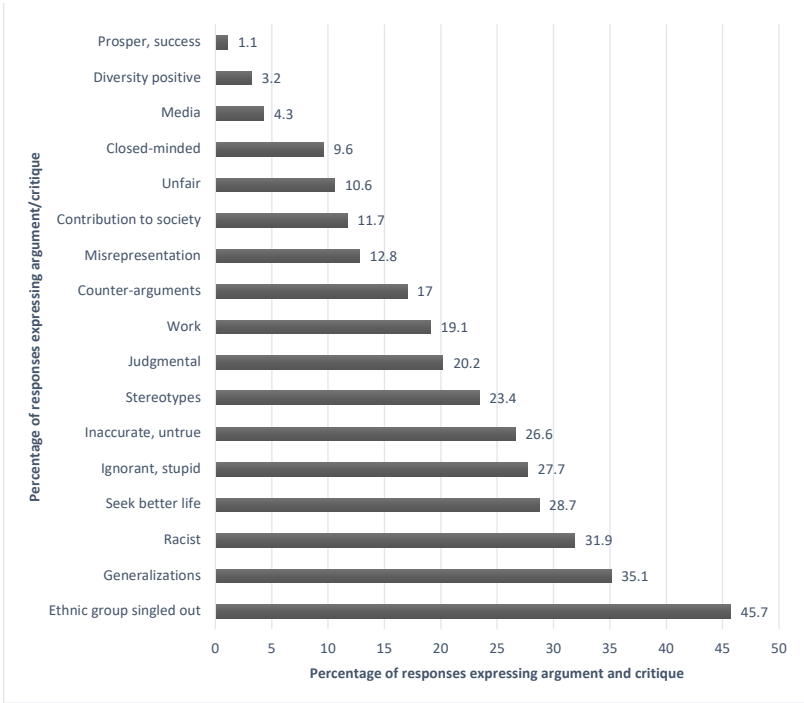
Source: Compiled by the authors based on study data.

Figure 2. Coding of Arguments and Critiques against Negative Political Rhetoric (n = 95)

> Obviously, these words and images are racist and discriminatory to not only Mexican people, but it extends to other groups, such as immigrants and other ethnic groups that come from various parts of the world. I have experienced my share of racist, discriminatory remarks and microaggressions. Seeing these images and words is no shocker to me (unfortunately), but reinforces the notion that there are still people with archaic white supremacist beliefs and ignorance that seem to always plague this "great nation." (24-year-old gender-neutral, US-born)

Participants also stressed the rhetoric's failure to include in a meaningful way the positive aspects of immigrant and Latino lives—most notably, the fact that immigrants migrate to seek a better life for their families (28.7 percent) and make a contribution to US society (11.7 percent). Participants were angry because the negative political rhetoric contradicted their own lived experiences, and they often pointed to their parents' hard work (19.1 percent).

It makes me upset to see these things because I personally know immigrants that are nothing like what was depicted. Just because they are immigrants, this automatically makes them bad people. Ultimately, they are seeking better lives, but these quotes make it seem like they are trying to steal from us. It just makes me mad to see images like this. (20-year-old female, US-born)

As I read these quotes and saw these images, I was shocked at how people can be so mean and vile at the Mexican population coming into the United States. I felt angry because this is not true. In my personal experience as an undocumented immigrant I felt like these pictures don't represent all of the Mexican community. Most of us are here to get a better future, a future that we wouldn't have had if we stayed back in our country. The Mexican immigrants that I know are here working hard to provide for a better future, so these statements by people make me mad because they degrade and dehumanize my people. (19-year-old female, born in Mexico)

I believe the quotes were extremely biased. I think people constantly associate immigrants as being criminals, when this is not true. I know many Mexicans that are extremely hardworking and will take low-wage jobs. They will work for low pay if it means that they will receive some sort of income. In addition, there is nothing wrong with Mexican mothers bringing their child over to the States. They allow their child a better lifestyle and opportunity for education. Why does this anger so many people? What is so wrong about the fact that these Mexican families want better opportunities in America? Personally, my parents became residents without either my brother or I turning 21. They did it through the court. In no way did they rely on us as their "anchor" child. (20-year-old female, US-born)

The student participants countered the negative rhetoric with a positive rhetoric of their own, one that countered hate with love. They spoke of their families, their community, and their ethnic group in positive ways, thus refuting the basic tenets of the negative rhetoric. Thirty-four participants (36 percent) mentioned their parents or other family members to illustrate why the negative political rhetoric failed to capture the Latino or immigrant experience. Ten others (10.5 percent) mentioned their pride in their families and being Latino.

I felt really upset because my parents came over to the US and worked extremely hard for me to achieve. I also have an uncle who is undocumented and has a family already, and I get constantly worried that I may not see him again. It is not fair that the immigrants who want to start a new life have to share the blame and consequences of the drug cartels. (20-year-old female, US-born)
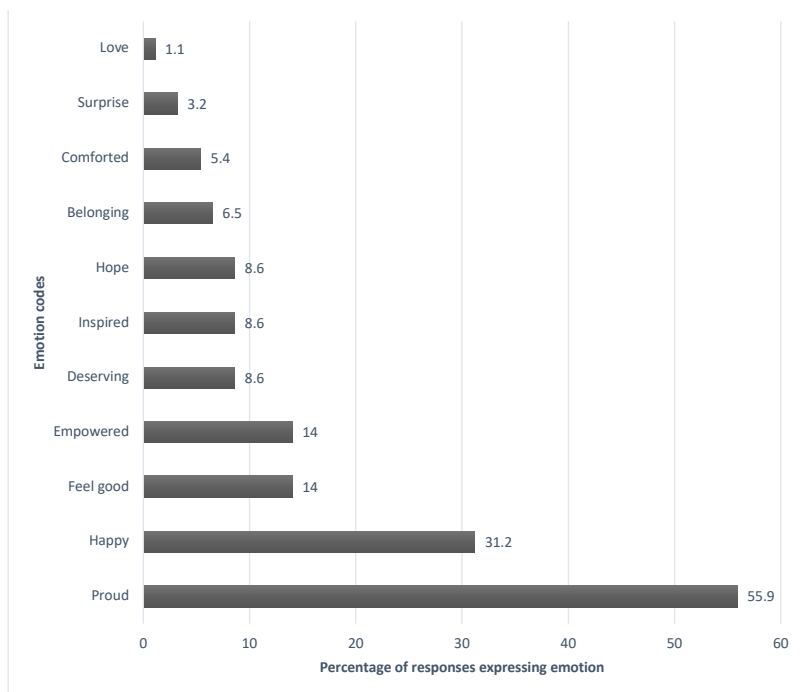
It was disturbing because even though I was born here in the United States, my parents weren't. They migrated over here with the help of family members who offered my father a green card. The main goal for my father was to find a better job and provide for his family. He moved to the United States and quickly started working in the fields. My mother came along as well and she started working at a home for the elderly. They knew no English but they put in hard work and effort. My own father even went to high school and received a high school diploma. He even had the motivation to go to community college, but he wasn't capable of going to school, working, and maintaining a family so he had to give up his education. However, to this very day, he still wishes that he had the time to go to school because he knew that he was capable of doing great. (20-year-old female, US-born)

In sum, negative political rhetoric is about the construction of stigmatized individuals and groups who are represented as "outsiders" and as "underserving." The students' responses to negative rhetoric included emotions reflecting pain, sadness, hurt, and upset. Their emotions focused on what they interpreted as assaults on their perceptions of self, family, and ethnic group. Their responses drew on concepts of family, community, ethnicity, and even US values in general, which reflects how emotions become an index of social relations and social structure. Participants also offered arguments against and critiques of the negative political rhetoric, which focused on factors outside the individual, pointing to the false premises of the rhetoric itself.

Responses to Positive Political Rhetoric

Over half (55.9 percent) of the Mexican-origin students' responses to positive rhetoric expressed emotions of pride. Others expressed happiness (31.2 percent) and feeling good (14.0 percent) (fig. 3). As reflected in the comments below, student participants combined their positive emotions with arguments that critiqued society's negative views of immigrants and Latinos, even though these negative views were not part of the statements and images they were shown.

I feel proud of being part of the Chicano community. This country was founded by immigrants, and the richness of the country is in great part due to their actions. It is sad to see "important" people putting negative stereotypes on people who they do not really know. (21-year-old female, US-born)

Chart showing percentage of responses expressing emotion by emotion code:

Emotion code	Percentage
Love	1.1
Surprise	3.2
Comforted	5.4
Belonging	6.5
Hope	8.6
Inspired	8.6
Deserving	8.6
Empowered	14
Feel good	14
Happy	31.2
Proud	55.9

Source: Compiled by the authors based on study data.

Figure 3. Coding of Emotional Responses to Positive Political Rhetoric (n = 93)

> As I read the quotes, I felt proud to be a child of undocumented immigrant parents from Mexico. I also felt a sense of happiness to hear something positive about undocumented immigrants, and not something negative, since usually most of the things that are said online tend to be negative (at least what I have heard lately). (21-year-old female, US-born)

Students found that the positive political rhetoric resonated with their sense of self, their positive views of their families, and the immigration history of the nation. It elicited happiness and pride in relation to past and future generations. Their responses emphasized how unusual it was to see positive statements about immigrants and Latinos. Students also expressed feelings of empowerment (14 percent), deservingness (8.6 percent), hope (8.6 percent), and belonging (6.5 percent).

> I thought about how my family and a few friends of mine can relate to this. I also felt proud and inspired by the images and the quotes because it made me feel wanted. (19-year-old female, US-born)

I felt empowered and proud to be a son of two immigrant parents. It goes to show that immigrants have been contributing to society in more ways than others would often think. (22-year-old male, US-born)

I feel empowered and proud because my parents are immigrants and I have seen them work hard on a daily basis. I fully support immigrants who come into this nation to succeed and do better for their family. (21-year-old female, US-born)

Students were also inspired (8.6 percent) and comforted (5.4 percent), and a few were surprised (3.2 percent) to see positive rhetoric about immigrants and Latinos.

I felt very inspired and proud to be Mexican. I myself came to this country as a child because my parents brought me, so I was originally born in Mexico. I thought the quotes were very accurate and I believe immigrants being here whether legally or illegally is not harming anyone. (21-year-old female, born in Mexico)

However, even when viewing positive political rhetoric about immigrants and Latinos, the Mexican-origin students' *resentimiento* surfaced in expressions of negative emotions. Many of their written statements in response to positive prompts expressed sadness (38.5 percent), anger (30.8 percent), feelings of stigma and being abject (30.8 percent), and being dehumanized and belittled (11.5 percent).

It made me feel proud to come from immigrant parents. However, it also made me feel anger toward those people who are against illegal immigrants in our country since I believe they are doing more good than harm. (18-year-old female, US-born)

I felt proud when it said that many children of immigrants come to this country for a better life, and that they soon will be part of our business fields. I felt a bit mad when I read that immigrants do not use up all benefits like the media and politics portrays us to do, but we actually contribute to society and this country, contrary to popular belief. (20-year-old female, US-born)

When I saw the images and read the quotes, I felt really positive inside. It made me feel really happy for some reason, that I assume is pride or hope. Perhaps it is because I feel very united and tied with these images as a Mexican, although I was born in the United States and have been a citizen all of my life. I felt really warm inside, mostly because it made me think of my little brother, and I'm extremely hopeful for him and his future. I don't feel as though there should be so much anti-immigrant

hate, but lately it feels as though it is becoming a norm in our society. It hurts, really bad, although it does not affect me as directly as it affects others. It makes me a little angry that people refuse to believe blatant facts and continue to be ignorant regarding immigrants and this country. (21-year-old female, US-born)

The negative emotions students felt led them to offer arguments and critiques, but not of the positive political rhetoric they viewed; rather, their comments were aimed at a larger societal problem of immigrant and Latino representation.

I think that the news portrays the immigrant community differently than what they really are. With the political situation going on right now, there are many stories of the benefits that immigrants actually bring. Seeing how much immigrants contribute and how some are going on to higher education, it makes me proud to say that I am myself an immigrant. Also, those that contribute good things and have lived here their whole lives should have the opportunity at citizenship. (19-year-old female, born in Mexico)

I am extremely proud to be Mexican American, and proud of my background with two parents who have come from Mexico, but still do not remain citizens. . . . I am truly heartbroken how much people assume false facts regarding undocumented immigrants and how they are hurting and killing this country. I thought about how false these allegations are, and how sad it is that people insist on dehumanizing this large group of people. I immediately thought about the words so often being repeated by Donald Trump. I thought about his famous speech stating Mexicans were "rapists" and "thieves." I also thought about the Muslim ban and the wall, and the specific instance in the news in which a women in a hijab was hit in the face by a woman who claimed that if she did not speak English she should not live in this country. (21-year-old female, US-born)

Even when confronted with positive political rhetoric about immigrants and Latinos, many of the students could not simply forget the negative political rhetoric so pervasive in contemporary political discourse. And so their positive emotions and sentiments were often offset by references to this negative rhetoric in society generally and in political discourse in particular. Their comments often balanced the positive rhetoric they viewed with reference to negative political rhetoric that they have experienced.

Conclusion: *Resentimiento* as Resistance

Resentment at perceived demographic changes and white status losses attributed to Latinos and immigrants has become pervasive in public discourse over the last few decades. This resentment reflects perceived slights and fears that often are not based on any empirical evidence of actual oppression or discrimination. But the resentment and rancor toward immigrants and Latinos is real in that it produces psychological effects among those it targets (Chavez et al. 2019). Trump's statements during and after his 2016 presidential campaign added to the negative rhetoric targeting immigrants and Latinos, and the upsurge in white nationalist activities during his presidency underscores the importance of this research. The Proud Boys, Aryan Brotherhood, Ku Klux Klan, and many others felt supported by the Trump administration, the alt-right, and right-wing media. It is unlikely, though, that anti-Latino and anti-immigrant rhetoric will decrease substantially as a result of Trump's loss in the 2020 presidential election. The narrative in which Latinos and immigrants are the enemy and the cause of demographic change, allegedly leading to white replacement, appears to have gathered its own momentum after decades of being repeated by politicians and the media (Belew 2019; L. Chavez 2013; Hemmer 2016; Stern 2019).

Negative political rhetoric about a particular group is a form of oppression for those it targets (Fassin 2013). This underscores the usefulness of the term *resentimiento* as a means to distinguish the students' reactions from the resentment that is so pervasive in negative political rhetoric about immigrants and Latinos. This rhetoric often blurs and erases neat categories of "immigrant," "undocumented," "foreign-born," and "US-born," deriving its power in part from this ambiguity. It paints with a broad brush, incriminating broad swathes of the Mexican-origin and broader Latinx community. This essay examined Mexican-origin students' responses to such political rhetoric to analyze the forms and expressions their *resentimiento* would take. Importantly, the student participants shared similar feelings regardless of their citizenship status, or where they were born, or their gender. They felt targeted by anti-immigrant and anti-Latino rhetoric.

It would be a mistake to assume that the students responded to the negative statements and images with a simple knee-jerk reaction of anger. Rather, participants in this study were thoughtful and eloquent in their responses. They expressed a complex set of emotions, ranging from anger and fear to sadness and disappointment, from feeling stigmatized to feeling unwanted. At

the same time, the students offered incisive critiques of the negative political rhetoric about immigrants and Latinos. They argued that such rhetoric suffered from overgeneralizations, racism, and misinformation; it did not reflect the reasons why people migrate (to seek a better life), the valiant struggles of their families to secure a life in the United States, or the contributions of Latinos and immigrants to society. So strong were their responses that they often expressed multiple emotions and critiques at the same time.

The students provided insights into their proactive engagement with processes aimed at constructing them as a threat to the dominant racial, social, and economic order of the nation. Their *resentimiento*, as shown here, is not docility. The students did not accept the false claims and assumptions about who they are and their place in American society, but forcefully rejected these notions. Coming from working-class and lower-middle-class backgrounds, the students (and their families) are focused on gaining a measure of security in the economic and social life of the nation. Pursuing their own version of the American Dream, they are unwilling to accept an unfairly negative rendering of their and their families' lives.

In contrast, Mexican-origin students reacted to positive political rhetoric with "sighs of relief." Students expressed feeling proud, happy, empowered, and pleased that immigrants and Latinos were recognized as contributors to society. They believed that the positive political rhetoric affirmed their sense of self, their families, and their place in the larger society. However, the students also felt sad and hurt that this positive rhetoric is not as evident in everyday discourse as the more prevalent negative rhetoric about immigrants and Latinos. Even those presented with positive statements and images felt compelled to express their *resentimiento* toward this larger negative rhetoric, which hovered like a phantom above the positive rhetoric they were shown.

A limitation of this study is that the participants were college students, a unique population. It would be instructive to compare these findings to those gathered from a non-university sample, say farmworkers and other essential workers during the Covid-19 pandemic, for whom anti-immigrant and anti-Latino rhetoric may be especially salient. Further research could also draw on other ethnic, racial, and religious groups targeted by similar political rhetoric. For example, it would be interesting to examine responses from a sample of Asian Americans targeted by Trump's habit of blaming Chinese (and by extension all Asians) for a range of ills, most notably the pandemic. His rhetoric led to a sharp increase in hate crimes against Asian Americans that has continued since his presidential defeat.

Encouragingly, the Mexican American students in our study voiced not only emotions but also strategies by which to counter the oppressive logic of negative political rhetoric about immigrants and Latinos. Their critiques of this rhetoric indicate an awareness of how it attempts to essentialize their lives and construct them as "others," an alien presence that threatens the nation with demographic, economic, and social change. They consistently responded in their own terms, recasting the negative rhetoric as flawed and inadequate as a source of representation and knowledge about them, their families, and their communities. Rather than letting hatemongers reframe their sense of self, they rejected the rhetoric's epistemological efficacy while at the same time recognizing the emotional toll of being its target.

Appendix

The study materials are described below. Each participant was shown either the positive or the negative statements and images, in randomized order.

Negative statements: (1) "When Mexico sends its people, they're not sending their best. They're sending people that have lots of problems, and they're bringing those problems with them. They're bringing drugs. They're bringing crime. They're rapists. For every illegal alien raised in the United States who's a valedictorian, there's another 100 out there that weigh 130 pounds and they've got calves the size of cantaloupes because they're hauling 75 pounds of marijuana across the desert." (2) "Each year, thousands of women enter the United States illegally to give birth, knowing that their child will thus have U.S. citizenship. Their children immediately qualify for a slew of federal, state, and local benefit programs and cost taxpayers millions of dollars. When the children turn 21, they can sponsor the immigration of other relatives, becoming 'anchor babies' for an entire clan. So, these children may be citizens, but they don't deserve to be citizens."

Negative visual images: (1) Uncle Sam with the quote "I want you to Speak English." (2) Image of a pregnant woman and a stereotypical Mexican with a sombrero sitting against a cactus, with a barbed wire fence behind, framed by the words "Squat & Drop should not make anyone an American."

Positive statements: (1) "Today, there are hundreds of thousands of students excelling in our schools who came as undocumented immigrant children. They were brought by their parents through no fault of their own. They grew up as Americans and pledge allegiance to our flag. They've lived a good life. They've proven themselves. They've beaten the odds. They

are talented, responsible young people who could be staffing our research labs or starting a new business, and who could be further enriching this nation." (2) "Immigrants contribute to our society in a number of ways. Cities and neighborhoods with greater concentrations of immigrants have much lower rates of crime and violence than comparable nonimmigrant neighborhoods. Evidence also shows that immigrants contributed an estimated $115.2 billion more to the Medicare Trust Fund than they took out in 2002–09. Undocumented immigrants nationally will add $276 billion to Social Security over next 10 years but cost only $33 billion."

Positive visual images: (1) A diverse group of people standing together with their left hands over their hearts, with the words "Swearing in New Citizens." (2) Silhouettes, from left to right, of a small child, an adolescent girl, a young man, and then a young woman in a graduation robe and mortarboard, holding a diploma, with the words "Children of Immigrants in Action."

Notes

1. As used here, *Latino* refers to people of Latin American origin living in the United States. Latinos can be immigrants or their descendants, and we use the term in a non-gender-specific way, similar to the more recent *Latinx*.

2. Undergraduate students from across the campus were recruited through the university's research participant pool. Most received extra credit for their participation, although a few chose to receive $10 gift cards to the campus bookstore instead. We limited the study to youth of Mexican origin because of the history of anti-Mexican political rhetoric.

3. The University of California, Irvine, Institutional Review Board approved all study material and procedures.

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