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Assessing Deportations: The Factors that Influence U.S. Deportations and Their Public Perceptions

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ASSESSING DEPORTATIONS:

THE FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE U.S. DEPORTATIONS AND THEIR

PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS

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By

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ABSTRACT

Deportations are an understudied component of U.S. deportation policy. While a range of literature focuses on the factors that influence immigration inflows and public perceptions of immigrants, relatively few have studied deportations. I studied deportations by conducting time-series analysis of yearly deportations and by analyzing three original public opinion surveys on perceptions of deportations. In my time-series chapter, I used regression analysis to find that the party composition of the U.S. House and Senate, the unemployment rate, and the incarceration rate influence deportations. In my public opinion chapter, I find that a plurality of American's support deportations, particularly when they believe an immigrant is undocumented and/or has committed a crime. I also conducted content analysis on responses to an open-ended prompt, finding that most respondents have a strong opinion on deportations, when tends to average as fairly neutral. This analysis helps determine the language and factors policymakers should emphasize when discussing deportations.

I dedicate this thesis to my family, Barry, Ginger, Robert, and Julia Einhorn, who have

always supported me in my academic pursuits.

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Timothy S. Rich, Isabel Eliassen, Madelynn Einhorn, Andi Dahmer, & Janis Chen. (2021). "All are Not Equal: Taiwanese Public Opinion on Southeast Asian Immigration." *The International Journal of Taiwanese Studies*. Forthcoming.

Timothy S. Rich, Isabel Eliassen, & Madelynn Einhorn. (2021). "Religion, Contact, and LGBT Acceptance: Survey Evidence from South Korea." *Korea Observer*, 52(4): 627-647.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The United States deports hundreds of thousands of migrants each year (DHS, 2019), and most of these immigrants have not been convicted of a criminal offense (DHS, 2013; DHS, 2014; DHS, 2015; DHS, 2016; DHS, 2017; DHS, 2018; DHS, 2019). The United States is distinct from many other countries that are hubs of immigration because of its heavy focus on punitive responses to undocumented immigration, including deportations (Pew Research Center, 2019; Statista, 2019). U.S. deportations have been heavily criticized for returning migrants to places of violence and inflicting human rights abuses (Partelow & Wolgin, 2018; American Oversight, 2021; Human Rights Watch, 2020).

Most scholars focusing on the implications of deportations have found that they are incredibly harmful for migrants' home countries and have a little or negative impact on the United States (Ambrosius, 2020; Ambrosius, 2021a; Ambrosius, 2018; Ambrosius; 2021b; Warren & Kerwin, 2017). Past research has found that U.S. deportations to Latin American countries increase violence in those countries are migrants are forced to work in illicit industries, such as alongside drug cartels (Ambrosius, 2020; Ambrosius, 2021a; Ambrosius, 2018; Ambrosius; 2021b). Rozo et al. (2021) compared Mexican municipalities with their respective deportee return rate and found areas with denser forced returnees experienced significantly more violent crime. Warren and Kerwin (2017) studied the implications of deporting significant portions of

the undocumented community, finding that many families would be pushed into poverty and the national GDP would be reduced by trillions.

While past research has focused on the implications of deportations or the causes and perceptions of immigration more broadly, relatively little research has studied the factors that influence deportations and public opinion of deportations (e.g., King & Obinna, 2018; King et al., 2012; Espenshade & Calhoune, 1993). King et al. (2012) conducted the primary time-series analysis analyzing criminal deportations from the United States. They found that the imprisonment and unemployment rate correspond with additional deportations, yet they find relatively few other variables have a significant relationship with deportations. Additionally, very few academic studies have analyzed public opinion of deportations. Public opinion surveys have found that Americans are fairly split on perceptions of deportations (e.g., Gallup, 2021) and past work theorizes that documentation status, perceptions of crime, nationality, and several demographic variables influence perceptions of deportations (e.g., Suro, 2009; Taylor-Clark, 2008; Emamzadeh, 2018; Sohoni & Sohoni, 2016; Neblo 2004; Voice of America News 2005; Wiegand 2009; Neblo et. al. 2012; Espenshade & Calhoune, 1993). Thus, this thesis seeks to study the following two research questions:

(1) What factors influence deportations from the United States?
(2) How does the public perceive individuals who are deported from the United States?

In order to address these research questions, I will first explain the relevant literature, summarizing the history of U.S. deportations, and the factors that influence yearly deportations, and public perceptions of deportations. I will, then, analyze the

factors that influence yearly deportations from the United States, particularly delving into the relevant political, economic, and social factors. I find that additional Republican members of Congress increase deportations and that the unemployment rate and incarceration rate have complex relationships with the deportation rate. In my second quantitative chapter, I will analyze the factors that influence public perceptions of deportations, relying on three original surveys, and dividing my analysis into evaluations of closed-ended and open-ended questions. I find that most Americans support deportations, particularly when immigrants are undocumented and/or committed crimes. I also find that most Americans have fairly neutral evaluations of deportations, which likely become favorable when they feel immigrants are "undesirable." Finally, I will conclude this thesis by analyzing my findings and providing suggestions for future work.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Why and How do Deportations Happen?

In the simplest sense, undocumented immigrants are deported from the United States because they are not legally residing in the United States. However, many undocumented immigrants are deported for reasons ranging from criminal convictions, improper documentation, or administrative errors (King & Obinna, 2018). Historically, U.S. courts have argued that deportations are not a method of punishment, rather a method of returning foreign individuals who have not followed U.S. law (Hester, 2010). Yet, many scholars argue that deportations are a form of retribution and social control, especially because they are often enforced inconsistently, which can lead to discrimination and undermine due process (e.g., Hester, 2010; Golash-Boza & Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2013).

Today, removals are typically categorized into criminal and non-criminal deportations, where deportees convicted of additional crimes are removed as 'criminal aliens,' rather than as 'illegal aliens' (Golash-Boza & Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2013). In rare cases, migrants are put into a third category: "fugitive aliens," which means "people who were released from ICE custody and failed to report for their immigration hearings, and people who have been ordered deported yet have not left" the United States (Golash-Boza & Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2013, p. 281). Criminal deportations are often regarded as the goal of law enforcement and can fall into level 1, 2, or 3, with level 1 including the most

severe crimes, such as aggravated felonies or murder, and level 3 including the most minor crimes, often misdemeanors with limited jail time (Leutert, 2015; Rosenblum & McCabe, 2014; DHS, 2014). In 2019, criminal deportations were about 43% of all U.S. deportations, which remained fairly consistent over the past decade (DHS, 2019).

Table 1 shows the ten most common criminal offenses for deportation, based on Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) data through 2020. The most common criminal justifications for deportations were illegal entry (12.55%), driving under the influence (8.23%), and assault (5.25%). Figure 1 shows criminal and non-criminal deportations from 2004 to 2019 (DHS, 2013; DHS, 2014; DHS, 2015; DHS, 2016; DHS, 2017; DHS, 2018; DHS, 2019). Non-criminal removals are consistently a larger percentage of overall deportations, particularly in the mid-2000s. The similarities in both categories over time suggest an underlying factor motivating both types of deportations.

Table 1. 10 Most Common Criminal Charges[1]

Conviction	Number of Deportees	Percent
No Conviction	**202,188**	**38.76%**
Criminal Conviction	**319,514**	**61.24%**
Illegal Entry	65,489	12.55%
Driving Under Influence	42,950	8.23%
Assault	27,363	5.24%
Traffic Offense	13,165	2.52%
Cocaine Possession	10,860	2.08%
Burglary	8,614	1.65%
Illegal Re-Entry	8,247	1.58%
Larceny	8,144	1.56%
Marijuana Possession	7,906	1.52%
Dangerous Drugs	7,105	1.36%
Total	**521,702**	

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[1] https://trac.syr.edu/phptools/immigration/remove/

Figure 1. Criminal & Non-Criminal Deportations from 2004-2019[2]

Migrants are deported through either judicial or non-judicial removals (Leutert, 2015), both of which are considered administrative rather than criminal procedures (Jacome, 2015). Judicial removals are determined by the court system, while non-judicial removals mean the migrant does not appear in front of an immigration judge (Leutert, 2015). Non-judicial removals include: (1) expedited removals: which is for those captured within two weeks of arriving in the U.S. and less than 100 miles away from the

[2] https://www.dhs.gov/immigration-statistics/yearbook/2019/table41

https://www.dhs.gov/immigration-statistics/yearbook/2018/table41

https://www.dhs.gov/immigration-statistics/yearbook/2017/table41

https://www.dhs.gov/immigration-statistics/yearbook/2016/table41

https://www.dhs.gov/immigration-statistics/yearbook/2015/table41

https://www.dhs.gov/immigration-statistics/yearbook/2014/table41

https://www.dhs.gov/immigration-statistics/yearbook/2013

U.S. border, (2) reinstatement of final orders: which is for those caught additional times after already being deported, and (3) administrative removals: which target those convicted of aggravated felonies (Leutert, 2015). Additionally, there are voluntary returns, which are not classified as deportations, where migrants agree to return to their home country, and they face no legal consequences from the United States (Leutert, 2015). From 1892 to 2013, there were "47.7 million returns, with 7.7 million returns between 2003 and 2013" (Leutert, 2015; DHS, 2014). Table 2 shows the distribution of deportees, based on type of removal (Leutert, 2015; Rosenblum & McCabe, 2014; DHS, 2014). Most removals are non-judicial removals (65%), and the three types of non-judicial removals are split fairly evenly (32-39%).

Table 2. Types of Removals (2003-2013)

Type	Number Removals	% Total Removals
Judicial Removals	**1,284,563**	**35%**
Non-Judicial Removals	**2,391,596**	**65%**
Expedited Removal	1,170,402	32%
Reinstatement of Final Orders	1,093,818	39%
Administrative Removal	127,376	3.5%
Total Removals	**3,676,159**	

One common misconception regarding deportations is that the United States only deports foreigners who are in the country illegally. Though it is rare, U.S. legal code actually allows the deportation of "immigrants who have committed crimes of moral turpitude or those classified as aggravated felonies" (The Offices of Stern Law, n.d., para. 8). Crimes of moral turpitude include, among others, fraud, theft, intent to harm, domestic abuse, and driving while intoxicated (The Offices of Stern Law, n.d). Hundreds of thousands of legal immigrants have been deported from the United States, often for minor offenses like petty theft and drug possession (Kanstroom, 2014; Jacome; 2015).

However, legal immigrants facing deportation are typically afforded more rights than undocumented migrants and are given the opportunity to challenge the decision in immigration court and "obtain a waiver that grants legal forgiveness (para. 16)" (The Offices of Stern Law, n.d).

History of Deportations in the U.S.

Forced removals have been tied to U.S. immigration law for several hundred years and have been controversial since their first usage. In 1798, the Alien and Sedition Acts expanded federal grounds for deporting male, non-citizens who were from enemy states and non-citizens suspected of sedition (History.com Editors, 2009). A few years later, The Chinese Exclusion Act allowed U.S. courts to deport Chinese immigrants and required Chinese immigrants to register with the government, otherwise they could face deportation (National Archives and Records Administration, 1989).

In the early 20th century, the United States engaged in expansive deportations, many of which were highly criticized and considered human rights violations (Young, 2007). Ellis Island, often praised as an entry point for diverse groups, was actually used to determine who was deported, which included those believed to become public charges, such as women and children without a male relative, criminals, and those regarded as "immoral" (Goldman, n.d.). Post-World War I, racial tensions, poor economic conditions, and concerns about radicalism and foreigners culminated in widespread anti-immigrant sentiment and led politicians to believe deporting immigrants could ensure American safety (Dehler, 2013). Thus, in 1919 and 1920, the United States engaged in the Palmer Red Raids, which detained and, in many cases, deported at least 10,000 foreigners suspected of communist, anarchists, and anti-American affiliations (Dehler, 2013;

Young, 2007). As economic growth plummeted during the Great Recession, White

Americans became increasingly concerned about Mexican immigrants taking their jobs

(Little, 2019). In response, local governments conducted raids, "which were informal and

lacked any due process" (para. 9), where they rounded up as many as 1.8 million

Mexicans, including countless American citizens, and deported them to Mexico (Little,

2019).

In 1952, the U.S. government passed the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA),

which expanded avenues for legal immigration, while allowing American citizens to be

charged with harboring undocumented immigrants (Herrling et al., 2013). While many

politicians advocated for additional progressive immigration legislation Attorney General

Brownell and other governmental figures, wanted to reduce undocumented Mexican

immigrant inflows and prevent Mexican laborers from illegally working in the United

States (Funderburk, 2016). Brownell initiated Operation Wetback, which was named

after an offensive term for undocumented Mexican immigrants and expelled up to 1.1

million undocumented Mexican workers from the country (though the actual number is

debated because some may have left voluntarily) (Funderburk, 2016). King and Obinna

(2018) analyzed deportation data from 1908-1986, disaggregating the data by reason for

deportation, and they found that mid-20th century deportations were often for

administrative reasons rather than concerning or violent behaviors, such as criminal

convictions.

In 1986, the United States passed the Immigration Reform and Control Act which

mandated that immigrants convicted of a deportation-worthy offense be immediately

returned to their home country (Blake, 2017). Prior to the law, many migrants were

imprisoned domestically rather than deported (Blake, 2017). Soon after, the Anti-Drug Abuse Act (ADA) of 1988 was passed, which allowed deportation for additional crimes and reduced appeal hearings (Blake, 2017). The Immigration Act of 1990 further expanded crimes requiring deportations, including drug-related charges and money laundering (Blake, 2017). Similarly, the Immigration and Technical Corrections Act of 1994 "added additional weapons offenses, some theft and burglary offenses, prostitution, tax evasion and several categories of fraud as aggravated felonies" (Blake, 2017, p. 6). Finally, the Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act of 1996 mandated deportation for immigrants convicted of terrorism and expanded crimes that justified deportations (Dole, 1996).

In the late 20th century, the United States passed one of the most impactful deportations laws in U.S. history. The 1996 Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act (IIRIRA) provided additional grounds for deportations, increased barriers for appeals, and accelerated the deportation process (Golash-Boza & Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2013). The law retroactively allowed the deportation of all non-citizens sentenced to at least a year in prison (Blake, 2017), which many experts argue dramatically accelerated deportations (e.g., Golash-Boza & Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2013; Blake, 2017). Additionally, the law intensified border security, mandating increased personnel and the creation of a fence along the Mexican border (Fragomen jr, 1997).

Post-9/11, the U.S. government funded and prioritized additional interior enforcement, including identifying undocumented immigrants (Colemand & Kocker, 2011). Particularly, in 2003 the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) were established and authorized to trace

undocumented immigrants (Golash-Boza & Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2013). The DHS

included the U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), which was charged with

protecting and enforcing U.S. border security (Chishti et al, 2017). Historically,

undocumented immigrants were deported mostly for national security reasons, but anti-

immigrant sentiment and increased resources led to law enforcement deporting migrants

for minor traffic infractions or misdemeanor offenses (Coleman & Kocker, 2011). In

addition to enhanced border security, U.S. deportation laws were strengthened. For

example, the 2001 USA PATRIOT Act expanded governmental powers to remove

foreigners for national security purposes (Hagan et al, 2008). Then, in 2005, the Real ID

Act provided additional grounds to deport migrants for terrorist activity (Blake, 2017).

In the 2010s, the U.S. government continued prioritizing border security. In 2012,

the federal government allotted $18 billion to border security, which was 24% more than

what was given to other non-border control law enforcement agencies, including the FBI,

Drug Enforcement Administration, the Secret Service, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco,

Firearms, and Explosives, and The U.S. Marshals Service (Chishti et al, 2017). In 2012,

some potential deportees faced relief when the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals

(DACA) program provided some migrants who entered the United States as children

temporary legal status (Human Rights Watch, 2020). However, by 2014, the Obama

administration deported over 405,000 migrants, the most in recorded U.S. history (DHS,

2019).

As the United States prioritized national security, border enforcement was heavily

criticized by human rights groups, including the American Civil Liberties Union

(ACLU), for using inhumane techniques and breaking families apart (ACLU, n.d.). ICE

has relied on strategies including tear gas when apprehending migrants (Partelow & Wolgin, 2018), and detained them in overcrowded and unsanitary conditions prior to deportation (American Oversight, 2021). The Human Rights Watch also critiqued U.S. deportation policy for returning migrants who would likely face violence and danger in their home country (Human Rights Watch, 2020).

Beginning in 2020, U.S. deportation policy was heavily scrutinized because the United States continued deporting migrants amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, which some medical experts identified as a disease risk (Cenat, 2020). Though, in 2021, the immigration and border security officials were directed that "immigration officers [could] no longer detain and deport people from the U.S. solely because they are undocumented" (Constantino, 2021, para. 1). Similarly, officials were also told to focus on deporting migrants who threaten public safety and national security (Constantino, 2021). Deportations under the Biden administration fell significantly to record low rates (The Economist, 2021).

Modern Deportation Characteristics

Modern deportations have several overarching trends. Starting with gender, the overwhelming majority of deportees are men. In 2008, 95% of deportees from El Salvador were men (Hagan et al, 2011), which is consistent with gender distributions across all United States removals (Golash-Boza & Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2013). Interestingly, the majority of immigrants to the United States are female (American Immigration Council, 2020), suggesting either undocumented immigrants or those who face deportations must be mostly male. Next, age: over 90% of deportees were 20-29 (44%), 30-39 (33%), or 40-49 (14%) (TRAC Immigration, 2014), suggesting most

deportees are in their 20s or 30s. Finally, regarding geography almost 60% of all U.S. deportees are from Mexico (DHS, 2019). Table 3 shows U.S. deportation per region in 2019. Nearly 94% of deportations from the U.S. were of people from North America, while just over 3% were from South America.

Table 3. U.S. Deportations per Region of Nationality, 2019[3]

Region of Nationality	Total Deportees	Percent
Africa	2,601	0.72%
Asia	6,296	1.75%
Europe	2,494	0.69%
North America	336,824	93.59%
Oceania	288	0.08%
South America	11,338	3.15%
Unknown	44	0.01%
Total	359,885	

Figure 2 displays the nationalities of deportees in 2019, divided by country. The United States deports the most people to Mexico, Canada, India, and China, likely due to the large population and/or geographic proximity of those countries. The map highlights Central America, given the association between the region and undocumented immigration.

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[3] https://www.dhs.gov/immigration-statistics/yearbook/2019/table41

Figure 2. Nationalities of Deportees, 2019

Causes of Deportations

Limited past research has focused on the various factors corresponding with, and potentially causing, deportations. King et al. (2012) conducted the primary time-series analysis of criminal deportations from the United States, finding that several factors such the unemployment rate and imprisonment rate correspond with deportations. However, their analysis and other authors have highlighted that several other potential factors influence deportations and immigration more generally, which are described below.

Political Context

Major U.S. political parties are often perceived as hyper-polarized on immigration issues, with Democrats viewed as advocates of liberal immigration policies and

Republicans viewed as pro-restrictive immigration policies. While the Republican Party is typically associated with limited government, suggesting support for few governmental restrictions on immigration, concerns over immigrants needing welfare and imposing public spending or tax burdens tend to reduce conservative support for immigration (Milner & Tingley, 2011). Additionally, many conservatives tend to oppose immigration because of apprehension that foreigners will take American jobs (Blake, 2014) and pose a threat to public safety (Hamer, 2019). Conversely, members of the Democratic Party often advocate for more open immigration policy because of a belief that people have the freedom to immigrate to the country and improve the United States (Casellas & Leal, 2013; Ivaldi, 2012; Facchini, 2011; Gimpel & Edwards, 1999; Fetzer, 2006). The Democratic Party also has a larger percentage of immigrant (Budiman et al, 2020) and urban voters (Savat, 2020) who are more likely to engage frequently with immigrants, corresponding with increased support for immigrants (Tu and Lee 2014; Pettigrew and Tropp 2008; King et al 2009).

Casellas and Leal (2013) analyzed substantive U.S. immigration legislation in Congress and found that Democrats where overwhelmingly more likely to support pro-immigrant policies, which is consistent with several other researcher's findings (e.g., Ivaldi, 2012; Facchini, 2011, Gimpel & Edwards, 1999; Fetzer, 2006). Other empirical studies found no statistically significant relationship between political party and immigration reform (e.g., Natter et al, 2020). Yet, the political divergence in deportation policy preferences is unclear based on the current literature. King et al. (2012) found that political party had no impact on deportation rates and Nowratsteh (2019) found that, on

average, more immigrants were deported during Democratic presidents' terms, compared to Republican administrations.

Table 4 shows the number of deportations, per president from 1892 to 2019. The most took place under the Obama administration, with the Trump administration in second place. There appears to be an incremental increase, then sharp declines under the Harding and Kennedy administrations. Figure 3 shows the average yearly deportations per political party, since 1892 and 1988. Democrats are responsible for more deportations, on average, in both figures. Interestingly, these trends diverge from general immigration reform, where Democrats tend to support more pro-Immigrant policies (e.g., Casellas & Leal, 2013; Ivaldi, 2012; Facchini & Steinhardt, 2011; Milner & Tingley, 2011). Of course, this data does not account for the political party representation in Congress or state governments that aid in deportations, nor does it address the factors that influence demand for undocumented immigration.

Table 4. Deportations per President[4]

President	Deportations	Deportation per Year	Political Affiliation	Years in Office
Benjamin Harrison	2,801	2,801	Republican	1
Grover Cleveland	9,069	2,267	Democrat	4
William McKinley	17,642	3,528	Republican	5
Theodore Roosevelt	76,390	10,913	Republican	7
William H. Taft	83,150	20,788	Republican	4
Woodrow Wilson	162,371	20,296	Democrat	8
Warren G. Harding	60,652	20,217	Republican	3
Calvin Coolidge	164,913	32,983	Republican	5
Herbert Hoover	110,275	27,569	Republican	4
Franklin D. Roosevelt	171,939	13,226	Democrat	13
Harry S. Truman	140,553	20,079	Democrat	7
Dwight D. Eisenhower	110,019	13,752	Republican	8
John F. Kennedy	23,969	7,990	Democrat	3
Lyndon B. Johnson	48,737	9,747	Democrat	5
Richard M. Nixon	81,022	16,204	Republican	5
Gerald R. Ford	82,316	27,439	Republican	3
Jimmy Carter	105,378	26,345	Democrat	4
Ronald Reagan	168,364	21,046	Republican	8
George Bush	141,326	35,332	Republican	4
Bill Clinton	869,646	108,706	Democrat	8
George W. Bush	2,012,539	251,567	Republican	8
Barack Obama	3,066,457	383,307	Democrat	8
Donald J. Trump	911,334	303,778	Republican	3

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[4] https://www.cato.org/blog/deportation-rates-historical-perspective
https://www.dhs.gov/immigration-statistics/yearbook/2019/table41

Figure 3. Average Yearly Deportations, per Party[5]

Economic Conditions

Historically, changes in immigration policy have often corresponded with economic conditions (Dehler, 2013; Little, 2019). However, the impact of economic policy on immigration, and deportation policy, is unclear. One theory is that when the unemployment rate is high, the government is more likely to pass restrictive immigration policy because of concern that foreigners will take Americans' jobs (Facchini & Steinhardt, 2011). Conversely, several economic studies have found that immigration improves economic outcomes by expanding labor markets and contributing to innovation, suggesting policymakers have an incentive to support liberal immigration policy (e.g.,

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[5] https://www.cato.org/blog/deportation-rates-historical-perspective
https://www.dhs.gov/immigration-statistics/yearbook/2019/table41

Constant, 2021; Huang, 2020; Duleep & Regets, 2014). However, the labor market theory of immigration policy suggests "those who gain from ~~it~~ [immigration] economically will support it and those who lose will oppose" immigration (Milner & Tingley, 2011, p. 7), which could suggest mixed policy outcomes. For example, Facchini & Steinhardt (2011) found that representatives living in wealthier districts were less likely to support additional immigration, likely because they were already wealthy, so they did not want to change status quo outcomes.

Empirical work has been mixed. Milner & Tingley (2011) found that higher unemployment rates correlate with more Congressional votes favoring border security. Facchini and Steinhardt (2011) found that higher unemployment rates corresponded with support for more liberal immigration policies, but these findings were attributed to omitted variable bias. Yet, several researchers found no relationship between politician support for immigration policy and economic conditions (e.g., Gonzalez & Kamdar, 2000; Facchini et al, 2011).

Theories for general immigration policy might poorly apply to analyses on deportation because many immigration policies focus on certain "desirable" types of immigration. Many politicians support immigration policies increasing high-skilled immigrants who are traditionally viewed as beneficial for the economy, while undocumented immigrants are perceived as more likely to lower overall wages (e.g., Milner & Tingley, 2011; Fasani et al, 2020), suggesting negative economic outcomes are more likely to correspond with increased deportations (King et al, 2012). Historical increases in deportations have often been attributed to worsening economic conditions,

such as the Great Depression (Dehler, 2013; Little, 2019), which is supported by the empirical findings of King et al. (2012).

Crime Concerns

Another potential influence on the deportation rate is U.S. crime rate statistics. Most immigrants who are removed have technically committed a crime, even if it is minor or merely illegal entry (Syracuse University, n.d.). Thus, King et al. (2012) theorizes and find supporting evidence for increased incarceration rates and higher homicide rates corresponding with more criminal deportations. One potential explanation for this is when crime rates are high politicians and the general public feel a stronger need for the government to respond to crime, which could manifest in additional deportations (e.g., O'Brien, 1996). Another explanation is when the United States is incarcerating more people, extra resources are devoted to stopping crime, expanding focus on deporting undocumented and/or criminally convicted immigrants. There is some research suggesting that undocumented immigrant communities underreport crime because they fear deportation from law enforcement (e.g., Sampson, 2008), but this likely would not greatly skew national crime statistics.

Public Opinion on Deportations

While public opinion surveys often assess the public's views on immigration, the related issue of deportations is rarely focused on in public opinion surveys. A 2019 Gallup survey asked Americans in 2019 whether all undocumented immigrants should be deported from the United States, and respondents were split with approximately 40% supporting the policy and 60% against the policy (Gallup, 2021). Cosby et al. (2013) analyzed the 2009 SCSHI national public opinion survey and 2006 Pew Hispanic Center

survey, and asked respondents whether undocumented immigrants should be deported,

allowed to stay temporarily on worker's permit, or allowed to stay permanently via legal

permanent residence status (LPR). Figure 4 shows the descriptive results of both surveys.

Respondents appeared substantially more likely to support deportations in 2009

compared to 2006 (51% vs 27%), while they were much more likely to advocate for

allowing undocumented immigrants to stay in 2006 (11% vs 32%). In 2015, a majority of

Americans said that they believed undocumented immigrants should be provided a path

to citizenship (Gallup, 2021) and most Americans supported allowing immigrants

brought to the country illegally as children to stay in the United States (National

Immigration Forum, 2020).

Figure 4. U.S. Policy Response to Undocumented Immigration

While descriptive statistics can help understand aggregate results, delving into the

factors that correspond with support for deportation helps further understand the public's

opinions. Several factors are theorized to help explain public support for deportation, which are described below.

Documentation Status

One potential factor that influences whether the public support deportation is immigrant's documentation status. Americans tend to be overwhelmingly more supportive of legal immigration, compared to undocumented immigration (e.g., Suro, 2009; Taylor-Clark, 2008). One explanation is that Americans are more likely to view undocumented immigrants as lazy and taking the "easy" way into the United States (Emamzadeh, 2019; Flores & Schachter; 2018). Emamzadeh (2018) analyzed psychological studies on perceptions of undocumented immigrants which argued that many Americans relied on stereotypes of undocumented immigrants, such as that they were freeloading, or disease ridden, causing negative perceptions of those who are undocumented. Alternatively, the theory of in-group identification could explain American distaste for undocumented immigrants (Emamzadeh, 2018). The theory argues that some Americans view their identity as superior to the rest of the world, to the point of group narcissism, leading some to reject those they believe have a different culture and lack an understanding of English (Emamzadeh, 2018). Finally, another explanation is that Americans could have an absolutist view on the law and could believe that crossing the border illegally should always lead to deportation. Thus, even though deported immigrants are sometimes permanent residents, Americans could be more supportive of deporting undocumented immigrants.

Crime

Historically, there has been a public association between immigration and crime, which could manifest into public distrust of undocumented immigrants. For example, in a Gallup survey that asked the same question for approximately ten years, 33-40% of Americans worried a great deal about immigration and up to 50% reported being concerned about high numbers of undocumented immigrants (Gallup, 2021). Though this question does not explicitly identify crime as the cause of concern, many respondents could have been thinking about crime when answering the question. However, when asked about crime specifically, nearly 75% of Americans believed that immigrants were at least somewhat more likely to increase overall crime rates (Rumbaut & Ewing, 2007 citing the National Opinion Research Center's 2000 General Social Survey).

Though immigrants are not associated with increased crime rates (e.g., Rumbaut & Ewing, 2007), Sohoni and Sohoni (2016) studied public discourse on immigrants and found that the media is likely to sensationalize immigrants committing crimes. They found many erroneous news articles in which undocumented immigrants were considered criminals who lacked morals or came from cultures where crime was acceptable (Sohoni & Sohoni, 2016). Additionally, perceptions of immigrants as criminals could be perpetuated by stereotypes and television, such as depictions of the Italian mafia, Colombian drug cartels, and other groups (Rumbaut & Ewing, 2007). Past studies have found that concerns over immigrant crime corresponds with reduced support for immigration (e.g., McLaren & Johnson, 2007). If Americans are presupposed to believe that undocumented immigrants are more likely to commit crimes, then they are also probably more likely to favor harsh responses to immigrant crime, such as deportations.

Nationality

Another potential factor that could influence American's perception of undocumented immigrants and deportations is the nationality of immigrant groups. Past research has found that Americans are more likely to view undocumented Asian, European, and Arab immigrants favorably, compared to undocumented Mexican immigrants and undocumented immigrants in general, suggesting that Americans conflate illegal immigration with Mexican immigrants (Ramakrishnan et al, 2015). One explanation is that Americans are more likely to view Latino immigrants negatively, likely because of the politicized media coverage focusing on Central America (Neblo 2004; Voice of America News 2005; Wiegand 2009; Neblo et. al. 2012). Conversely, Americans could be more distrustful of immigrants from non-Western or poor countries. Nadzaku (2018) argues that many Americans are experience metathesiophobia, meaning the fear of change, and are concerned that increased immigrants, particularly from very different areas and cultures, will change the American way of life.

However, past survey data found relatively little variation between respondents' perception of immigrants identified by their nationality. Survey data found that "a solid majority of Americans believe it is a good thing that people from Asia, Mexico and Latin America come to live and work in the United States" (Taylor-Clark, 2008). Nearly 60% of Americans support Asian and Latin American immigrants in a Pew Global Attitudes Project survey (Taylor-Clark, 2008 citing Pew Global Attitudes Project, 2005). Americans with a negative attitude towards undocumented immigrants of a specific nationality could favor deportations, compared to a more lenient response.

Demographics

We can expect certain demographic factors to influence perceptions of deportations. First, past research has found that older Americans are more likely to perceive undocumented immigrants negatively, often because of anticipated negative consequences (Espenshade & Calhoune, 1993). Second, while white American have empirically advocated for harsh responses to undocumented immigration (e.g., Cohen, 2021), Latinos are theorized to view immigrants more positively since they are likely to have more cultural connections (Espenshade & Calhoune, 1993). Third, Americans who are less educated have been found to support undocumented immigrants less (Emamzadeh, 2018), with possible explanations ranging from educated individuals having more experience and knowledge of immigration to education facilitating the development of more nuanced thinking (Espenshade & Calhoune, 1993). Fourth, low-income individuals might be more supportive of deportations because they are wary undocumented immigrants, often their competition in the labor market, could take their jobs (e.g., Emamzadeh, 2018). Finally, many polls found that conservatives are more likely to favor deportations than liberals (e.g., Cosby et al, 2013) because of ideological differences about the role of immigration. For example, a 2020 survey found that Republican respondents were more concerned about illegal immigration than COVID-19 (National Immigration Forum, 2020).

Research Questions

Based on my review of the literature, I ask the following research questions:

(1) What factors influence deportations from the United States?

(2) How does the public perceive individuals who are deported from the United

States?

CHAPTER 3: TIME SERIES ANALYSIS OF DEPORTATIONS

In this chapter, I seek to answer the question: What factors influence deportations from the United States, by analyzing which variables influence yearly changes in deportations in the U.S. Thus, this chapter will first summarize the relevant literature, then analyze the relevant data and variables, then conduct the empirical analysis, and conclude by analyzing my findings.

Literature Summary

In the first part of this chapter, I will summarize the relevant literature addressing the causes of deportations. Limited past research has analyzed the factors influencing deportations (e.g., King et al. 2012). However, relevant research has determined that the primary variables of interest are those related to political context, economic conditions, and perceptions of crime. First, past research has argued that the period's political context shapes the leniency regarding deportations. Historically, Congressional Democrats are overwhelmingly more likely to support substantive pro-immigration policies (e.g., Casellas & Leal, 2013; Ivaldi, 2012; Facchini, 2011, Gimpel & Edwards, 1999; Fetzer, 2006), yet Democratic presidents, on average, have deported significantly more immigrants (Nowratsteh, 2019). Second, economic conditions are theorized to influence the deportation rate. For example, Milner & Tingley (2011) found that higher unemployment rates corresponded with harsher border security, suggesting a desire to remove or prevent undocumented immigration to the United States. Finally, crime indicators are believed to correspond with deportations. King et al. (2012) found that

higher incarceration rates and homicide rates correlate with additional deportations, suggesting that crime could incentive crackdowns on immigrant communities.

Data and Variables

In the second part of this chapter, I will analyze my data and conduct the relevant empirical analysis.

Dependent Variable

I use data from the Department of Homeland Security, which has U.S. deportation data from 1892 to 2019. The data ranges from numbers low in the thousands to mid-hundreds of thousands, leading me to log the data, shown in Figure 5, so the plot is not exponential. Logging the data helps stabilize the series' variance and prevent undue influence from outliers. The plot shows many shifts in the number of yearly deportations, with a general upward increase over approximately the past thirty years.

Figure 5. Logged Deportations per Year (1892 to 2019)

To determine if my data has a trend, I conduct a Dickey-Fuller test with a null of a unit root. My data does not appear to have a trend, so I tested the data without a trend variable and calculated a Dickey-Fuller statistic of -0.83, so I failed to reject the null of a unit root. I tested the data with a trend variable just in case, and calculated a Dickey-Fuller statistic of -1.73, so once again I failed to reject the null of a unit root. Thus, I do not use a trend variable and I must remove the stochastic trend in the data, which I do by taking first differences and looking at the rate of change in deportations. Figure 6 below shows the results, suggesting significant change in the rate of deportations over time.

Figure 6. Rate of Change Deportations Per Year (1892 to 2019)

Independent Variables

Next, to assess the variables that influence deportations, I incorporate a range of independent variables, each representing the entire period of data (1892-2019). Summary statistics are included in appendix A. First, I include several political variables because

the political make-up of the federal government could influence deportations. I included a

variable indicating the change in the ratio of Republicans to Democrats in the House[6], a

variable indicating the same in the Senate[7], and a dummy variable for a Republican

president[8]. Next, I included a measurement of economic conditions. Specifically, I

included the unemployment rate (Ramy & Zubairy, 2018) because the unemployment

rate is theorized to impact perceptions of immigration. Next, I included a variable

proxying the overall crime rate. Accurate crime rate and homicide data are difficult to

find from the time period of my analysis, so I used the logged change in the yearly

incarceration rate[9], which has been used in past deportation analyses (King et al., 2012).

Empirical Analysis

To evaluate U.S. deportations, I included two types of regression models: OLS

regression and Vector Autoregression. First, I ran the OLS regression model with robust

standard errors to correct for heteroskedasticity and the results are presented in Table 5

below.

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[6] https://history.house.gov/Institution/Party-Divisions/Party-Divisions/
[7] https://www.senate.gov/history/partydiv.htm
[8] https://www.theguardian.com/news/datablog/2012/oct/15/us-presidents-listed
[9] https://bjs.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh236/files/media/document/cpus19st.pdf,
https://www.albany.edu/sourcebook/,
https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&ved=2ahUKE
wiwz-
DhjKP0AhXPCZ0JHXx1DxwQFnoECAYQAQ&url=https%3A%2F%2Fbjs.ojp.gov%2
Fcontent%2Fpub%2Fpdf%2Fhcsus5084.pdf&usg=AOvVaw0gYrsEeMWjCYtnRmXtBG
VF.

Table 5. OLS Regression on U.S. Deportations

	(1) Model
Δ ln (House Party Ratio)	0.001***
	(0.00)
Δ ln (Senate Party Ratio)	0.001***
	(0.00)
Republican President	-0.641
	(.527)
Δ ln (Unemployment Rate)	0.015**
	(0.006)
Δ ln (Incarceration Rate)	0.896
	(0.763)
Constant	-0.363
	(0.386)
Observations	126
R-squared	0.088

Robust standard errors are in parentheses
*** p<.01, ** p<.05, * p<.1

The OLS model finds that several of the political indicators (the ratio of Republicans to Democrats in the House and Senate) correspond with the yearly change in U.S. deportations. The regression suggests that increases in the number of Republican legislators in the House and the Senate correlate with additional deportations. While the coefficients appear relatively small (0.001), a 1% change in Congressional party ratio is a fairly small shift in the number of legislators (1 in the Senate and 4-5 in the House). However, the dummy variable for the Republican president was insignificant, suggesting that Congress passes more impactful deportation policies or that deportation policies are not dependent on the President's political party. Next, the logged change in the

unemployment rate corresponds with additional deportations and is significant at the 0.05 level, suggesting higher unemployment rates incentive harsher deportation policies. Finally, the model finds a null relationship between the incarceration rates and deportations.

Next, I run a Vector Autoregressive model, which allowed me to better evaluate the variable's dynamic relationships with each other. I chose to run a VAR model because it evaluates how each variable influences other variables, rather than just one-directional analysis, and allows me to test several lagged variables. I included the deportations rate, unemployment rate, and incarceration as the variables tested. I ran Final Predictor Error, Akaike Information Criterion, Hannan Quinn Information Criteria, and Schwartz Information Criteria tests to determine two lags were optimal for each variable. Table 6 below shows the regression results and Figure 7 shows the impulse response functions. The unemployment rate immediately corresponds with additional deportations, but after a few years appears to correspond with less deportations. While the incarceration rate yields null results in the OLS regression, the VAR model suggests that incarceration corresponds with additional deportations after 2 years, then less deportations after 4 years.

Table 6. Partial VAR Results

	(1) Model
Δ ln (Unemployment Rate)	
Lag 1	0.01*
	(0.01)
Lag 2	-0.01
	(0.01)
Δ ln (Incarceration Rate)	.
Lag 1	-0.31
	(1.18)
Lag 2	2.00*
	(1.10)
Observations	126

Robust standard errors are in parentheses
*** p<.01, ** p<.05, * p<.1

Figure 7. Impulse Response Functions Unemployment

Figure 8. Impulse Response Functions Incarceration

Robustness Checks

I ran several robustness checks, which did not alter the model's core findings. I tested several interaction terms between several variables, including each of the political variables, indexed for the U.S. population, tested the homicide rate, tested the yearly number of immigrants, tested the number yearly *New York Times* featured articles discussing immigration, tested the number of immigration-related bills in Congress and the number of bills that passed, and I tested dummy variables for the most significant deportation policies. I also tested the data divided into four time periods, to evaluate how the independent variables influence changed per period, yet the low sample size likely skewed the results.

Findings

Past time-series analysis focusing on deportations has primarily conducted OLS analysis (King et al., 2012). This chapter replicates and extends this prior analysis and presents several findings: First, I evaluated the political context's influence on deportation rates. OLS regression results found that increases in Republican policymakers in Congress corresponds with harsher deportation policy, which is consistent with past research (e.g., Ivaldi, 2012; Facchini, 2011, Gimpel & Edwards, 1999; Fetzer, 2006) and diverges from the null findings in King et al. (2012). However, the dummy variable for Republican presidents is insignificant, consistent with Nowratsteh's (2019) findings that there is little Presidential party relationship with deportation policy. Either Congress has more impact in deportation policies than the president, or past presidents tended to implement similar deportation policies.

Second, I analyzed the unemployment rate's impact on deportations and found a complex relationship. While the OLS regression and first lag in the Vector Autoregression suggest that increases in the unemployment rate increase deportations, the second VAR lag finds that a higher unemployment rate corresponds with reduced deportations. One explanation for this is that the immediate response to increased unemployment rates incentivizes anti-immigrant and pro-deportation policies (i.e., Facchini & Steinhardt, 2011; Milner & Tingley, 2011; King et al, 2012), but eventually policymakers moderate their stance and encourage immigrant to expand labor markers and improve the economy (e.g., Constant, 2021; Huang, 2020; Duleep & Regets, 2014).

Finally, I evaluated the incarceration rate's impact on deportations. While the OLS regression results are null, the second VAR lag suggests higher incarceration rates

correspond with additional deportations, while a few years later lower deportation rates. The theoretical justification for this is unclear, but potential explanations are that increased crime rates incentivize more restrictive incarceration and deportations policies (e.g., O'Brien, 1996) and encourage additional resources focused on finding undocumented immigrants, but that such an approach because fiscally and administratively unsustainable after several years. The results from the VAR model provide additional insight beyond OLS regression, and suggests models look at more dynamic variable interacts are ideal for analyzing deportations.

CHAPTER 4: PUBLIC OPINION OF DEPORTATIONS FROM THE UNITED STATES

This chapter attempts to answer the question: How does the general public feel about deportations from the United States? Thus, this chapter will first summarize the relevant literature, then analyze original public opinion survey results, and conclude with the chapter's findings.

Literature Summary

Past public opinion research focusing on perceptions of deportations is limited. Survey results have found that Americans are split on whether deportation is an appropriate respond to undocumented immigration (Gallup, 2021; Cosby et al., 2013). Past research has theorized several factors, including documentation status, perceptions of crime, immigrant's nationality, and several demographic variables influence perceptions of deportations. First, immigrants' documentation status is believed to influence public support for deportations. Americans tend to be overwhelmingly more supportive of legal immigration, compared to undocumented immigration (e.g., Suro, 2009; Taylor-Clark, 2008), who are viewed as freeloading or disease ridden (Emamzadeh, 2018), suggesting that Americans may be more supportive of deportations for undocumented immigrants. Second, public discourse often links immigrants, without supporting evidence, to crime acts and sensationalizes immigrant crime stories (Sohoni & Sohoni, 2016). Concerns over immigrant crime correspond with harsher responses to immigration, such as support for deportations (e.g., McLaren & Johnson, 2007). Third,

past research has found that Americans may view certain immigrant groups, such as Central American or non-Western immigrants (Neblo 2004; Voice of America News 2005; Wiegand 2009; Neblo et. al. 2012) more negatively, suggesting additional support for deporting those specific immigrations. Finally, several demographic factors, including age (e.g., Espenshade & Calhoune, 1993), race and ethnicity (e.g., Cohen, 2021; Espenshade & Calhoune, 1993), education (e.g., Emamzadeh, 2018), income (e.g., Emamzadeh, 2018), and ideology (e.g., Cosby et al, 2013) are believed to impact perceptions of deportations.

Survey Analysis

To answer my research question, I analyze three original surveys, two conducted in the United States and one in Mexico, all focusing on public perceptions of deportations from the U.S. I implemented each via Qualtrics web survey and used quota sampling based on age, gender, and region. The first U.S. survey and the Mexico survey were conducted from June 24-26th, 2021, each with 625 respondents and the second U.S. survey was conducted from November 10-12th, 2021, with 1,007 respondents. Summary statistics are available for the surveys in Appendix B, Appendix C, and Appendix D[10].

The empirical results are divided into two sections, the first section focuses on the results from close-ended questions in the June U.S. survey, November U.S. survey, then a comparison between all three surveys, and the second section analyzes content analysis from two-open ended questions on the U.S. surveys.

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[10] Each survey was fairly representative of the population; however, Hispanic individuals were slightly under-sampled in the second U.S. survey (15% vs 18%).

Closed-Ended Survey Analysis

June U.S. Survey

In the June U.S. survey, I asked an experimental question attempting to determine the level of animosity directed at undocumented immigrants and immigrants committing crimes. Additionally, the question allowed me to determine if respondents believed that deportation is more acceptable in certain contexts, such as when an immigrant is undocumented or has committed a crime. One thing to note is that in this survey I focused specifically on deportations to Mexico because most deportations from the U.S. are to Mexico (DHS, 2016), which helps eliminate other factors potentially influencing views. I asked the question below, with a version randomly assigned to each respondent, which they were asked to evaluate on a five-point Likert scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree:

Version 1: The U.S. should deport undocumented Mexican immigrants back to Mexico.

Version 2: The U.S. should deport undocumented Mexican immigrants who have committed crimes in the U.S. back to Mexico.

Version 3: The U.S. should deport undocumented Mexican immigrants who have committed violent crimes in the U.S. back to Mexico.

Version 4: The U.S. should deport documented Mexican immigrants back to Mexico.

Version 5: The U.S. should deport documented Mexican immigrants who have committed crimes in the U.S. back to Mexico.

Version 6: The U.S. should deport documented Mexican immigrants who have committed violent crimes in the U.S. back to Mexico.

Figure 8 shows the distribution of responses to the question of interest. For clarity in the images, I combined the answers for strongly disagree and disagree and strongly

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agree and agree. Overall, the majority of respondents agreed with every prompt, except

version four which discussed deporting documented immigrants to Mexico.

Unsurprisingly, respondents were much more likely to support deporting immigrants who

had committed a crime and even more so those who had committed a violent crime.

Additionally, respondents were substantially more likely to agree with the prompt

regarding deporting undocumented immigrants, compared to documented immigrants.

The descriptive results suggest that the public supports harsher responses to

undocumented immigrants committing the same crime as documented immigrants.

Figure 9. Deportations to Mexico Results, by Version

It is interesting to note that nearly 30% of Americans support deporting

documented immigrants who have not committed any crime. Potentially, some

respondents did not understand or glossed over the phrase "documented," while others

might be so anti-immigrant, they wanted most immigrants deported from the U.S. To

further explore this, I calculated a t-test between the response to version four, by support for legal immigration[11], and found a significant, positive response. Thus, while some respondents likely misread or misinterpreted the phrase "documented immigration", a significant portion were against legal immigration in general.

To further analyze perceptions of deportations, I aggregate the data to compare Americans' perceptions of immigrants who have committed crimes, regardless of documentation status, and Americans' perceptions of undocumented vs. documented immigrants, ignoring the prompt for crime type. Figure 10 depicts respondents' perceptions of immigrants who have committed a crime or a violent crime, compared to the baseline of no crime mentioned. Americans are about 15% more likely to agree with the prompt when primed that the immigrant committed a crime and an additional 10% more likely to agree with the prompt when told the immigrant committed a violent crime. Figure 11 compares respondents' perception of documented and undocumented immigrants, with respondents approximately 16% more likely to support deporting undocumented immigrants. These findings are consistent with expectations, which is that Americans' view undocumented immigrants and those who have committed crimes negatively.

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[11] On the survey, I asked respondents whether they supported legal immigration and they could either select yes or no.

Figure 10. Deportations to Mexico Results, by Crime Type

Figure 11. Deportations to Mexico Results, by Immigration Status

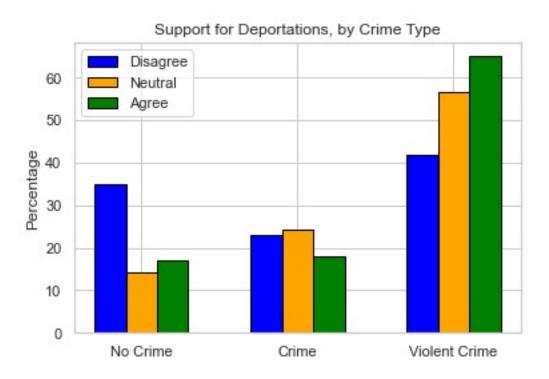Finally, I ran a series of ordered logistic regressions with respondent's answer to the prompt as my dependent variable. I ran three models: the first tested the significance of the experiment by adding dummy variables for respondents receiving versions 2-6 of the experiment, the second included demographic controls, and the final model added a series of attitudinal variables. For independent variables, I included a variable for age (9-point cohort measure), a dummy variable for gender (female), a dummy variable for race (White), a variable for education (7-point cohort measure), a variable for income (12-point cohort measure), and a dummy variable for political ideology (Democrat). Additionally, the survey included several attitudinal questions that I added as independent variables. First, a dummy variable for those agreeing with the statement "I support free trade between the U.S. and Mexico." I used this question to help determine if respondents desired a more open relationship between the United States and Mexico, which might signify stronger support for more free movement of people. Second, a dummy variable for those agreeing with the statement "I support continued tariffs on important Chinese goods." Though this question focuses on China, support for tariffs suggests a desire for a more isolated U.S., focusing more U.S. specific interests, which could signify reducing immigration inflows. Third, a dummy variable for those agreeing with the statement "I support legal immigration," which is included because support for legal immigration likely suggests respondents desire less harsh responses to immigration inflows. Fourth, I included a dummy variable for respondents answering no to the question "In your opinion, is it easy for Mexicans to immigrate legally to the U.S.?". I included this variable because Americans who believe legal immigration is simple, likely are more supportive of deportations for those who have "gamed" the system via illegal entry or

committed a crime. Finally, I included the question "One a 1-10 scale, with 1 being very negative and 10 very positive, how do you feel about the following countries [Mexico]?". I presume that Americans who view Mexico positively are likely more accepting of all immigrants from the country. However, perceptions of Mexico may be shaped by views on immigration and/or deportation, so the inclusion of this question could understate the influence of the experimental design. Table 7 displays the regression results below.

Across all three models, versions 2-4 of the experimental design were significantly different than the baseline. Thus, respondents appear more likely to support deporting migrants who have committed a crime or violent crime, and less likely to support deporting documented immigrants. The findings for my demographic variables are unsurprising: older Americans and White Americans are more likely to support deportations, while Democrats are less likely to support deportations. Regarding attitudinal variables, those perceiving legal immigration as easy and those supporting additional tariffs are more likely to support deportations, while those who view Mexico positively were less likely to support deportations.

Table 7. June U.S. Survey Results

	(1) Model	(2) Model	(3) Model
Version 2	0.424*	0.491**	0.507**
	(0.247)	(0.248)	(0.251)
Version 3	0.729***	0.679***	0.723***
	(0.255)	(0.258)	(0.262)
Version 4	-0.935***	-1.12***	-1.155***
	(0.25)	(0.256)	(0.258)
Version 5	-0.085	-0.111	-0.11
	(0.248)	(0.25)	(0.253)
Version 6	0.207	0.26	0.351
	(0.248)	(0.249)	(0.253)

Age		0.159***	0.097**
		(0.045)	(0.048)
Female		0.014	0.006
		(0.167)	(0.17)
White		0.593***	0.659***
		(0.183)	(0.186)
Education		-0.068	-0.036
		(0.057)	(0.058)
Income		0.05*	0.062**
		(0.026)	(0.027)
Democrat		-0.473***	-0.242
		(0.152)	(0.156)
U.S.-Mexico Free Trade			-0.296
			(0.186)
Tariffs on China			0.433**
			(0.185)
Support for Legal Immigration			-0.287
			(0.176)
Ease of Legal Immigration			0.55***
			(0.155)
Mexico Sentiment			-0.129***
			(0.034)
Observations	625	625	625
Pseudo R^2	0.026	0.058	0.084

Standard errors are in parentheses
*** p<.01, ** p<.05, * p<.1

Next, I ran additional ordinal logistic regressions that condensed the versions into dummy variables for immigrants who have committed crimes and violent crimes and a dummy variable for documented immigrants. Otherwise, I used the same model specifications. Table 8 includes dummy variables for the versions referencing crimes and violent crimes and Table 9 includes a dummy variable for the versions identifying documented immigrants. The additional models provided more support for my original models, finding that Americans are sensitive to crime and documentation status. Though versions five and six are insignificant in the first set of regressions, the conflicting factors

of crime and documentation status canceled out, but the next two sets of regressions provide additional evidence that crime and documentation status impact public opinion. Additionally, the control variable results remained fairly consistent with the earlier models.

Table 8. Deportations & Crime

	(1) Model	(2) Model	(3) Model
Crime	0.625***	0.718***	0.731***
	(0.176)	(0.178)	(0.181)
Violent Crime	0.903***	0.973***	1.055***
	(0.18)	(0.183)	(0.186)
Age		0.147***	0.084*
		(0.045)	(0.048)
Female		-0.045	-0.06
		(0.165)	(0.168)
White		0.586***	0.649***
		(0.181)	(0.184)
Education		-0.058	-0.027
		(0.056)	(0.058)
Income		0.041	0.051*
		(0.026)	(0.026)
Democrat		-0.426***	-0.198
		(0.151)	(0.155)
U.S.-Mexico Free Trade			-0.263
			(0.184)
Tariffs on China			0.467**
			(0.183)
Support for Legal Immigration			-0.324*
			(0.175)
Ease of Legal Immigration			0.549***
			(0.154)
Mexico Sentiment			-0.124***
			(0.034)
Observations	625	625	625
Pseudo R^2	0.014	0.043	0.069

Standard errors are in parentheses
***p<.01, **p<.05, * p<.1

Table 9. Deportations & Immigration Status

	(1) Model	(2) Model	(3) Model
Documented	-0.627***	-0.667***	-0.664***
	(0.145)	(0.147)	(0.149)
Age		0.163***	0.106**
		(0.045)	(0.048)
Female		0.018	0.008
		(0.166)	(0.168)
White		0.512***	0.578***
		(0.181)	(0.184)
Education		-0.058	-0.028
		(0.057)	(0.058)
Income		0.048*	0.059**
		(0.026)	(0.026)
Democrat		-0.406***	-0.191
		(0.15)	(0.155)
U.S.-Mexico Free Trade			-0.248
			(0.185)
Tariffs on China			0.348*
			(0.183)
Support for Legal Immigration			-0.268
			(0.174)
Ease of Legal Immigration			0.561***
			(0.153)
Mexico Sentiment			-0.119***
			(0.034)
Observations	625	625	625
Pseudo R²	0.01	0.038	0.062

Standard errors are in parentheses
*** p<.01, ** p<.05, * p<.1

I ran several additional variations of the model, omitted for brevity. Specifically, I included a dummy variable for living in a state bordering Mexico, a dummy variable for having children, support for expansion in U.S. foreign affairs, believing oneself to be a global citizen, believing one is likely to become unemployed soon, believing Biden

improved ICE policies, and supporting increasing yearly U.S. refugee intake. However, none of these inclusions changed the model's core findings.

What do the results tell us? Americans are significantly more likely to support deporting undocumented immigrants who have committed crimes, compared to those who are documented and/or have not committed crimes. While many Americans are concerned about undocumented immigrants (e.g., Suro, 2009; Gallup, 2021), there is little public consensus on the 'solution' to undocumented immigrant inflows, with some supporting deportations (Gallup, 2021), a path to citizenship (Gallup, 2021), or other alternatives. I have found that a majority of Americans support deporting undocumented immigrants and immigrants who have committed crimes. Though most Americans recognize that immigrants are not disproportionately likely to commit crimes (Gallup, 2021), many media sources report and groups of Americans believe that undocumented immigrants are heavily associated with criminal organizations (e.g., Barriere, 2019; Rumbaut, 2008). And, when explicitly told immigrants have committed a crime, particularly a violent crime, Americans support deportation as a "solution." The public appears to differentiate between immigrant deportations, suggesting pro-immigrant platforms should work to remove the false association between undocumented immigrants and crime from the media and public discourse.

Several of the other control variables, outside of the experiment itself, provided insightful information about U.S. public opinion on deportations. Interestingly, respondents who view legal immigration to the U.S. as easy are more likely to favor deportations. Many of these Americans likely believe that immigrants should come to the U.S. the "right" way, rather than "cheating" the system through entering the U.S.

illegally. Deportations might be a logical punitive measure taken for those who they believe deliberately immigrated illegally when they had a legal option. I also controlled for respondent's perceptions of legal immigration, but the results were null. A possible explanation for this is that respondents who view legal immigration favorably diverge in opinion on deportations because some support all immigration, while others believe undocumented immigrants deserve to be deported for 'cheating' the system. Thus, ease of immigration is likely a better indicator of support for deportations compared to general support for legal immigration.

I also found that Americans who agree with tariffs are more supportive of deportations. I used support for tariffs on China as a proxy for analyzing one's desire for America to isolate itself from the international community, suggesting an America-centric view of global affairs. Additionally, trade with China is a uniquely controversial issue, where many Americans take an "America First" stance similar to the issue of undocumented immigration from Mexico. Similarly, support for Mexico was significant, and Americans who viewed Mexico positively likely viewed Mexican immigrants as an asset to the American community, rather than hindrance. The results for the demographic variables were fairly consistent with past research, with older Americans and white Americans more supportive of deportations, though the dummy variable for Democrat was insignificant.

November U.S. Survey

While the dependent variable in the June U.S. survey focused on deportations from Mexico, the November U.S. survey focused on deportations more broadly, based on location. The goal of the experiment was to determine if the public differentiates between

undocumented immigrants' nationalities. As highlighted in the literature review, the overwhelming majority of deportees are North American (DHS, 2019), suggesting the public might conflate undocumented immigrants with undocumented Latin American immigrants. The main variable of interest was the following experimental question that respondents were randomly assigned a version of and asked to evaluate on a five-point Likert scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree:

Version 1: The U.S. should deport all undocumented immigrants.

Version 2: The U.S. should deport all undocumented Latin American immigrants.

Version 3: The U.S. should deport all undocumented African immigrants.

Version 4: The U.S. should deport all undocumented Asian immigrants.

Version 5: The U.S. should deport all undocumented European immigrants.

Version 6: The U.S. should deport all undocumented Middle Eastern immigrants.

In Figure 12, I combined respondents answering strongly disagree and disagree and answering strongly agree and agree for simplicity. Overall, a plurality of respondents (approximately 41 – 46%) either agreed or strongly agreed with each prompt. There was relatively little variation between version, with statistical tests confirming that there is no significant variation in responses between prompts.[12] One potential explanation in social desirability bias, where respondents believe it is socially undesirable to support deporting immigrants from a specific location, particularly Latin America. For the remainder of my analysis, I combine the responses to each prompt and ignore the experimental design since there is no evidence suggesting the experiment alter respondent's answers.

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[12] I confirmed this with through an ordered logistic regression.

Figure 12. Deportations from Place of Origin

Interestingly, about 46% of respondents agree with deportations on this survey, compared to 56% of respondents answering the baseline prompt in June 2021. The only distinction between the November and June survey is that the June survey specifically identifies deportees as Mexican. Historically, immigration from Mexico has been highly politicized and reporting often focuses on the negative attributes of Mexican immigrants (Neblo 2004; Voice of America News 2005; Wiegand 2009; Neblo et. al. 2012), so the identification of respondents as from Mexico could explain the variation between surveys. Even areas, such as Latin America, do not have the same negative political resonance for many Americans.

To further analyze perceptions of deportations, I ran ordered logit regression using support for deportations (ignoring the experiment) as the dependent variable. I ran two models: the first including demographic variables and a second model adding

attitudinal variables. As my independent variables, I included the same demographic measurements (age, gender, race, education, income, and political affiliation) as in the June U.S. survey. However, I added an additional dummy variable for Hispanic, Latin, and/or Spanish respondents and a dummy variable for respondents born in the U.S. I also included several attitudinal measures. First, "On a scale from 1-5, with 1 being not at all concerned and 5 being very concerned, how concerned are you about undocumented immigration?"[13] This question helps assess if fear of undocumented immigrants taking jobs, committing crimes, or taking some other harmful actions increase support for deportations. Second, a dummy variable for those answering yes to "In your opinion, is it easy for migrants to legally immigrate to the U.S.?" with the same justification as the June survey. Third, I included a dummy variable for those answering yes to "Would you support increasing foreign aid if this would lead to a decrease in undocumented immigration into the U.S.?". I included this question because it helps analyze what sort of solution respondents desire for undocumented immigration, while helping to analyze deportations themselves. Lastly, I included the statement "I am satisfied with how democracy works in the U.S.," which respondents answered using a five-point Likert scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Respondents who believe that the U.S. has a robust democracy might be more comfortable with the deportation process and less wary of human rights abuses and they might also express concern that additional undocumented immigrants disrupt the U.S.'s democracy.

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[13] I was concerned about multicollinearity between the dependent variable and level of concern over undocumented immigration. However, a Pearson Correlation test suggests the level of correlation is approximately 0.43.

Table 10 shows the regression results below. Overall, women, Hispanic, Latin, and/or Spanish individuals, and Democrats were, on average, less likely to support deportations. Conversely, respondents with a negative perception of undocumented immigrants, those who perceived legal immigration into the U.S. as easy, and respondents with strong faith in U.S. democracy were more likely to support deportations.

Table 10. Ordered Logit Regressions on Perceptions of Deportations

	(1) Model	(2) Model
Age	0.054	-0.04
	(0.034)	(0.036)
Female	-0.282**	-0.244**
	(0.118)	(0.123)
White	0.241*	0.217
	(0.136)	(0.143)
Hispanic	-0.376**	-0.492***
	(0.166)	(0.178)
Income	0.05***	0.018
	(0.019)	(0.02)
Education	0.01	0.028
	(0.043)	(0.044)
Democrat	-0.474***	-0.262**
	(0.115)	(0.127)
Born in the U.S.	0.059	-0.029
	(0.199)	(0.207)
Undocumented Immigration Concern		0.59***
		(0.05)
Ease of Legal Immigration		0.808***
		(0.122)
Foreign Aid		-0.092
		(0.12)
Faith in Democracy		0.136***
		(0.05)
Observations	1043	1000

Pseudo R^2		0.02	0.094

What do the results tell us? While the experimental results are null, several of the other independent variables correspond with support for deportations. Level of concern over undocumented immigrants is associated with respondent's likelihood of supporting deportations. Of course, this makes sense: respondents who are anti-undocumented immigrants are more likely to agree with deportations. This finding helps further the debate over respondent's preferred solution to undocumented immigration, which appears to be deportations for many. Like the June 2021 U.S. survey, those believing legal immigration is easy correlates with support for deporting undocumented immigrants, likely for the reasoning explained earlier in this chapter. The measure for faith in democracy helps develop this finding because those who believe the United States has a robust democracy are more likely to believe it treats undocumented immigrants fairly and provides a just legal immigration system. Additionally, those concerned undocumented immigrants are "untrustworthy" might be concerned illicit integration into the U.S. democracy could risk its solidity.

In terms of demographic variables, women are less likely to support deportations and Hispanic, Latin, and/or Spanish respondents are less likely to agree with deportations, possibly because of more personal connections to immigrant communities. Another possible explanation is that Hispanic respondents are tired of xenophobic and criminalizing media coverage directed at Latin American and Mexican immigrants in particular (e.g., Barriere, 2019; Rumbaut, 2008), so they are less likely to support more

extreme responses to undocumented immigration. Finally, Democrats are less likely to support deportations, which is consistent with past literature (e.g., Cosby et al., 2013).

Comparative Analysis

Finally, I used the survey conducted in Mexico to compare the way Mexicans and Americans responded to the question "In your opinion, is it easy for migrants to legally immigrate to the U.S.?". The question was asked almost identically on the June U.S. survey, November U.S. survey, and June Mexico survey. However, in the June U.S. and Mexico survey, I asked respondents whether they believed that legally immigrating to the United States from Mexico is easy, while in the November U.S. survey, I asked if legally immigrating to the United States is easy, without specifically mentioning Mexico.

While this question does not explicitly analyze public opinion on deportations, it provides valuable insight on how people believe that the immigration system works. As found with the two U.S. surveys, many American respondents who believe legal immigration is easy are more likely to agree with deportations. This is one of the most interesting explanatory variables in the earlier regressions and little empirical research has been done on perceptions of ease of legal immigration, so it helps yield more information about the characteristics of those who support deportations.

Figure 13 shows the responses on all three of the surveys. Unsurprisingly, Mexicans were overwhelmingly more likely to believe that legally immigrating to the United States from Mexico is difficult (about 78%), compared to Americans. Americans were 4% more likely to believe immigrating to the U.S. generally is easy, compared to from Mexico (49% vs 54%). One possible explanation for this that Americans assume

there is an obvious legal path for immigrants, often based on stories about their ancestors

coming to the U.S. the "right" way.

Figure 13. Ease of Immigrating Legally to the U.S.

Finally, I run a series of logit regressions with assumed ease of legal deportation

as my dependent variables. I run three models, one for each survey I conducted. For the

June U.S. survey, my independent variables were age, gender, race, education, income,

political affiliation, perceptions of immigration, and perceptions of Mexico.[14] For the

November U.S. survey, my independent variables were age, gender, race, income,

education, political affiliation, perception of undocumented immigrants, and a dummy

variable for increasing foreign aid if it reduces undocumented immigration to the United

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[14] Each question was explained in further detail earlier in the paper when explaining independent variables
for the experimental deportation question on the June survey.

States.[15] For the Mexico survey, my independent variables were age (continuous measure), gender (a dummy variable for female), race (a dummy variable for White), education (10-point scale), income (6-point scale), political affiliation (a dummy variable for members of the PAN and Morena), a dummy variable for knowing someone deported from the U.S., a dummy variable for traveling outside of Mexico, and a measurement of perceptions of the U.S. (10-point scale, 1 being most negative). Table 11 shows the regression results for the three surveys.

Table 11. Ease of Legal Immigration to the US

	(1) June	(2) November	(3) Mexico
Age	0.055	0.083**	-0.176**
	(0.053)	(0.041)	(0.070)
Female	-0.246	0.030	-0.301
	(0.189)	(0.144)	(0.211)
White	-0.126	0.080	0.398*
	(0.214)	(0.162)	(0.216)
Education	-0.100	-0.042	-0.052
	(0.065)	(0.051)	(0.082)
Income	-0.033	-0.029	-0.090
	(0.145)	(0.022)	(0.094)
Democrat	-0.591***	-0.487***	
	(0.173)	(0.146)	
Mexico Sentiment	-0.104***		
	(0.035)		
Support for Legal Immigration	-0.313*	0.342***	
	(0.179)	(0.052)	
Foreign Aid		0.265*	
		(0.139)	
Faith in U.S. Democracy		-0.005	
		(0.055)	
Born in the U.S.		0.694***	
		(0.242)	

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[15] Each question was explained in further detail earlier in the paper when explaining independent variables for the experimental deportation question on the November survey.

PAN			-0.044
			(0.277)
MORENA			-0.331
			(0.238)
Traveled Abroad			0.448*
			(0.243)
Know a Deportee			-0.382*
			(0.210)
U.S. Sentiment			0.149***
			(0.051)
Observations	625	1007	598
Pseudo R²	0.052	0.070	0.052

Standard errors are in parentheses
*** *p<.01, ** p<.05, * p<.1*

Unsurprisingly, there were stark differences between respondents on the U.S. surveys and the survey conducted in Mexico. Particularly, there was strong differences in partisan perceptions of ease of legal immigration, with Democrats significantly less likely to perceive legal immigration as easy and the party dummy variables null on the Mexico survey. Thus, while Mexicans in general believe that immigration to the U.S. is difficult, Americans are more likely to base their opinion on their political affiliation, suggesting the American public needs better information on the immigration process.

The regression results help inform our understanding of public perceptions of deportations in several ways. First, believing legal immigration to the United States is easy corresponds with several immigration-related variables, suggesting it is a powerful indicator of support for deportations. Second, the regression and descriptive results from the Mexico survey are dramatically different from the U.S. survey results, indicating that American perceptions of immigration is quite different from countries like Mexico where there is a larger percentage of emigration. This tells us that American perceptions of deportations might correspond with other countries that experience moderate to large

amount of immigration but is possibly distinct from countries with more emigration. Finally, few Americans have direct experience with immigrants or deported migrants, suggesting that proximal or direct contact with immigrant communities could reduce American's desire for punitive responses to undocumented immigration, consistent with contact theory (Tu and Lee, 2014; Pettigrew and Tropp, 2008; King et al., 2009).

Content Analysis

In the second section of this chapter, I conduct content and sentiment analysis of open-ended questions asked on the June and November surveys. Each respondent was given unlimited space to write whatever came to mind about the prompt they were given. To ensure accurate results, I removed respondents who had clearly written a string of letters or words rather than a substantive response. I also fixed easily identifiable spelling errors so that I could analyze the specific words used by each respondent.

For my actual content and sentiment analysis, I used the Syuzhet package in R, which has three options for sentiment analysis: the Syuzhet, Bing, and Afinn packages. The entire package was developed by researchers at Stanford University to associate specific words with certain emotions allowing researchers to determine the sentiment patterns in the text (Mhatre, 2020). Syuzhet, Bing, and Afinn each have a similar overall goal of determining how positive, neutral, or negative the language used by respondents was. The Syuzhet lexicon comprises 10,748 words, which are labeled as positive or negative based on linguistics research and are matched with words in the response text to determine if they have a positive or negative sentiment (Naldo, 2019). For example, the world "evil" would be given a very low score because it is an extremely negative phrase. The Bing package is composed of 6,789 words, including 2,006 positive words, and does

not code for neutral words (Naldi, 2019). Similarly, the Afinn package includes slang words and comprises 2,477 words, including 878 positive words, and the scale is broader than the Syuzhet and Bing packages. (Naldi, 2019). Fortunately, the type of sentiment analysis I am conducting avoids the most common problem researchers encounter with the Syuzhet, Bing, and Afinn packages, which is that the packages do not pick up on negative modifiers (Naldi, 2019) (i.e., the package would categorize the phrase "immigrants are not scary" as negative, because it focuses on the world "scary" and ignores the modifier "not"), but most respondents just answered with a single word and I did not find any modifiers used in respondent's answers.

June U.S. Survey

In the June U.S. survey, I asked the open-ended question: "Please name the first word or phrase that comes to mind when thinking of the following countries [Mexico]". Using this question, I wanted to assess the number of respondents who immediately thought of immigration-related issues, particularly the border, undocumented immigrants, and deportations, when prompted to think about Mexico. Interestingly, out of 603 respondents, 114 (nearly 20%) wrote something about immigration or the U.S.-Mexico border. Table 11 shows a word frequency of the five most common words among overall respondents and respondents whose answers related to immigration. Immigration was the most common word respondents provided, with 57 mentions, and border was the fifth most common word, with 29 mentions. Respondents appear to think about immigration or related topics quite often when thinking about Mexico.

Table 12. Word Frequency Perceptions of Mexico

All		Immigration	
Word	**Frequency**	**Word**	**Frequency**
Immigration	57	*Immigration*	57
Taco	45	*Border*	29
Food	38	Illegal	24
Drugs	37	Stay	3
Border	29	Wall	3

Next, I evaluated the levels of positivity and negativity respondents used when answering the prompt. Figure 14 shows a Kernel Density plot analyzing the sentiment (from very negative to very positive) used by respondents when responding to the prompt about Mexico with an immigration-related answer, and Figure 15 shows a Kernel Density plot analyzing all responses. The results suggest that respondents mostly relied on neutral evaluations, skewing moderately negative. Table 12 reports the summary statistics the Syuzhet, Bing, and Afinn for the immigrant-specific and general analysis. Overall, most respondents appear to provide fairly neutral, descriptive responses. However, those writing about immigration specifically tended to skew more negatively, suggesting many of those who choose to write about immigration could have strong opinions about the issue. Thus, I wanted to determine if the individuals who responded to the open-ended question about immigration had different opinions regarding deportations. I attempted to do this via logit regression where I coded respondents who answered the prompt with an immigration-related response as 1 and all other respondents as 0, but I found limited results. Even when including demographic and attitudinal variables, I found no significant relationship between the dependent variable and any independent variable tested.
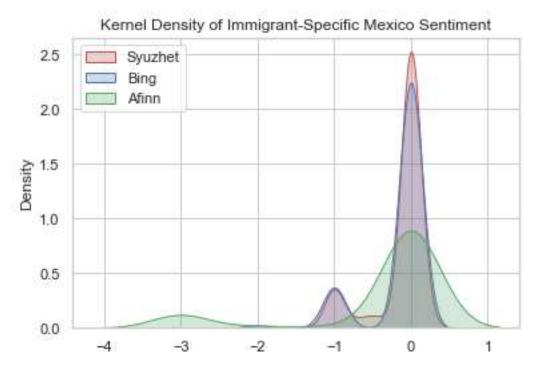
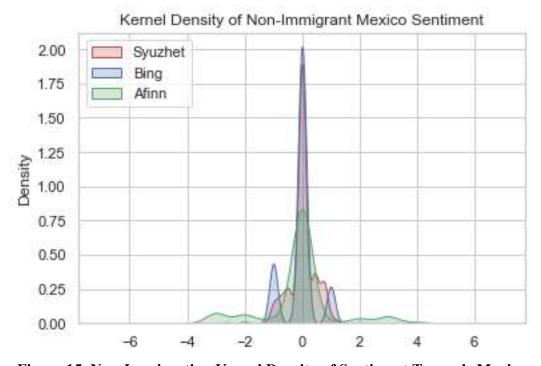**Figure 14. Immigration Kernel Density of Sentiment Towards Mexico**

Figure 15. Non-Immigration Kernel Density of Sentiment Towards Mexico

Table 13. Summary Statistics for Sentiment Analysis (immigration)

	Minimum	First Quartile	Median	Mean	Third Quartile	Max
Immigrant-Specific						
Syuzhet	-1	0	0	-0.14	0	0.25
Bing	-2	0	0	-0.16	0	0
Afinn	-3	0	0	-0.34	0	0
General						
Syuzhet	-2.6	0	0	0.01	0	1.25
Bing	-2	0	0	-0.06	0	2
Afinn	-6	0	0	-0.1	0	6

Thus, I found that most respondents tended to provide neutral descriptors of Mexico, rather than emotionally charged responses. However, those who wrote about immigration specifically were more likely to provide negative responses regarding Mexico and immigration. The results find support for immigration as a salient U.S.-Mexico issue, which is especially evidenced by 1/5th of respondents writing about immigration. What this tells us is that when many Americans are prompted to think about Mexico, their initial thought is often negative and about immigration.

Surprisingly, the regression results suggest initial thought about immigration does not correspond with specific opinions about deportations. I wanted to analyze this further, so I looked at the break down between respondents who wrote about immigration and compared it to their perceptions of deportations. Figure 16 shows the results, and I found that respondents who wrote about immigration were more likely to have a strong opinion on deportations, whether it was agreeing or disagreeing. Respondents who wrote about immigration were almost 3% more likely to disagree with deportations and 6% more likely agree. Therefore, respondents who were prompted to think about deportations most likely had thought about immigration from Mexico in the past and developed a strong

opinion. Though the regression results were null, the response to the open-ended question likely does provide insight into one's perception of deportations, but it pushes one towards a strong opinion on either side, rather than just one direction. Perhaps a better measurement would be whether one's response was positive or negative, but the sample size of only 114 makes it difficult to find robust results when categorizing the data by sentiment. Additionally, determining the correspondence between sentiment and/or writing about immigration with support for deportations is difficult in this instance because the experiment design meant each version of the question was asked respondents about slightly different issues.
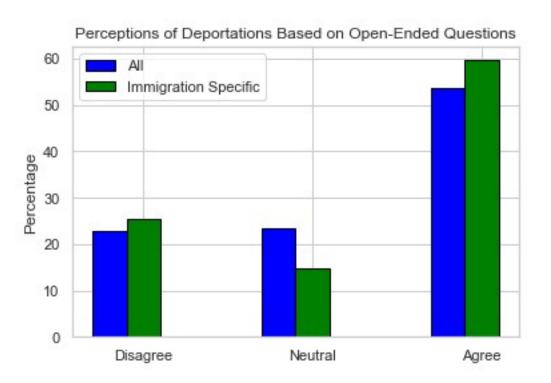

Figure 16. Thoughts on Mexico and Perceptions of Deportations

November U.S. Survey

In the November U.S. survey, I asked the open-ended question: "What is the first word or phrase that comes to mind when you think about deportations from the United

States?" This question allowed me to home in on specific opinions of deportations, rather than much broader opinions determined by the open-ended question on the June survey. Table 14 shows the 20 most frequent words and their count from the open-ended questions.

Table 14. Word Frequency Perceptions of Deportations

Word	Frequency	Word	Frequency
Illegal(s)	62	*Yes*	14
Good	57	*Cruel*	13
Sad	48	*Wrong*	13
Mexican	30	*Enough*	13
None	29	*Bad*	12
Necessary	21	*Justice*	12
Nothing	20	*Freedom*	11
Immigration	32	*Legal*	11
Unfair	16	*ICE*	11
Great	15	*Back*	10

While many people provided descriptive responses, such as "immigration" or "illegal," quite a few answered with an opinion-based response, such as "good" or "cruel." Of the 20 most frequent word choices, "good," "necessary," and "great" suggest positive perceptions of deportations, while "sad," "unfair," "cruel," "wrong," and "bad" are clearly negative. However, some responses likely suggest a certain opinion (i.e., illegals), but I cannot definitively determine their opinion of deportations. Some responses, such as "Mexican" suggest that people attribute deportees to certain characteristics, particularly based on their nationality. Figure 17 shows a word cloud of the 200 most common words respondents used to describe deportations.

Figure 17. Word Cloud on Perceptions of Deportations

Next, I analyze how positive or negative respondent's evaluations of deportations were. Figure 18 shows the Kernel Density of one's emotional connotation towards deportations. Syuzhet, Bing, and Afinn find similar results regarding the positivity or negativity of responses, which is confirmed by statistical tests[16]. Most people had a neutral or slightly negative response to deportations, typically meaning that they supported deportations or viewed undocumented immigrants negatively. Table 15 shows the summary statistics for the emotional response to deportations for each type of sentiment analysis conducted. After analyzing individual's responses, the Afinn package appears to best interpret the answers because its dictionary includes slang words used by many respondents.

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[16] I ran Pearson Correlation tests and found that all three sentiment analysis packages were highly correlated.

Figure 18. Kernel Density of Deportation Sentiment

Table 15. Summary Statistics for Sentiment Analysis

	Minimum	First Quartile	Median	Mean	Third Quartile	Max
Syuzhet	-2.5	-0.5	0	-0.11	0	2.4
Bing	-3	-1	0	-0.13	0	2
Afinn	-10	-2	0	-0.32	0	7

Next, I determined the types of emotions respondents used when answering the

prompt. The Syuzhet package goes beyond just positive and negative labeling, but also

determines if words in a text use language denoting anger, anticipation, disgust, fear, joy,

sadness, surprise, and/or trust (e.g. Mhatre, 2020; Kelbel 2021). Table 16 displays the

results of the sentiment analysis based on specific emotions. The most common

emotional responses were trust, joy, and fear. Quite a few respondents appeared to trust

the U.S. immigration system or were joyful when describing immigrants being deported.

Alternatively, many respondents expressed fear or anger when describing the U.S. immigration system, possibly in line with partisan differences. The emotional responses calculated least often were disgust, surprise, and sadness, suggesting that respondents skewed in favor of deportations. Interestingly, there were 1,008 respondents who answered the open-ended questions and only 366 responses coded to one of the 8 emotions, meaning only approximately 1/3rd of responses fit into these emotional categories.

Table 16. Emotional Responses to Deportations

Sentiment	Percent	Count
Disgust	10.38%	38
Surprise	10.93%	40
Sadness	11.20%	41
Anticipation	11.75%	43
Anger	12.02%	44
Fear	12.30%	45
Joy	14.21%	52
Trust	17.21%	63
	Total	366

Finally, I ran a series of ordered logistic regressions to further interpret the open-ended responses. For my dependent variable, I used the scale calculated by the Afinn sentiment analysis package. Since the scale used negative numbers as low as -6, I added 7 points to every observation, so that every number would be coded above zero.[17] For my independent variables, I included the standard demographic variables age, gender, race, ethnicity, income, education, political affiliation, and whether one was born in the United

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[17] I removed two extreme outliers. The respondents each wrote a very long paragraph, which is more difficult for sentiment packages to analyze, compared to words or short phrases.

States. Additionally, I included attitudinal variables measuring favorability of deportations[18], perceptions of ease of immigration, and faith in U.S. democracy.

Table 17 shows the regression results. The regression analysis finds that older Americans, those with higher incomes, respondents supporting deportations, those believing legal immigration is simple, and respondents with strong faith in U.S. democracy had more positive perceptions of deportations. Most likely, many of the respondents who provide positive evaluations of deportations are supporting deportations or advocating for additional deportations.

Table 17. Ordered Logit Regressions on Afinn Sentiment Analysis

	(1) Model	(2) Model
Age	0.13***	0.08**
	(0.035)	(0.036)
Female	0.041	0.05
	(0.12)	(0.121)
White	0.247*	0.183
	(0.138)	(0.14)
Hispanic	0.141	0.096
	(0.165)	(0.168)
Income	0.081***	0.062***
	(0.019)	(0.019)
Education	0.014	-0.023
	(0.043)	(0.044)
Democrat	-0.06	-0.112
	(0.118)	(0.125)
Born in the U.S.	0.838***	0.505**
	(0.196)	(0.20)
Support for Deportations		0.281***
		(0.045)
Ease of Legal Immigration		0.31**
		(0.121)

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[18] I was concerned about support for deportations perfectly explaining the variation in the dependent variable. However, statistical tests confirm that there is insufficient evidence to assume multicollinearity.

Faith in U.S. Democracy		0.196***
		(0.042)
Observations	1074	1067
Pseudo R²	0.023	0.048

Standard errors are in parentheses
*** p<.01, ** p<.05, * p<.1

What does this the analysis from this question tell us? Most of the nuance in individual responses cannot be captured by questions answered on a Likert scale, which makes this open-ended question particularly useful. Many respondents used strong language to describe deportations, relying on phrases such as "sad," "cruel," "justice," or "freedom," and describing issues such as family-separation or even advocating for violence against immigrants. This means that deportations are a very salient issue for many Americans, with responses highlighting extreme polarization in opinions. Overall, perceptions of deportations skewed slightly negative, which is consistent with the results from the survey question on support for deportations. The regression results are fairly consistent with the earlier results from the November U.S. survey. Americans who have positive opinions on deportations are, naturally, more likely to support deportations as a solution to undocumented immigration.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

This thesis contributes to the deportation literature by analyzing the factors that influence deportations and public perceptions of deportations. Chapter 3 focuses on a time series analysis of deportations, analyzing the various political, economic, and social factors that correspond with changes in the deportation rate. Specifically, I found that additional Republican Senators and Representatives in Congress correlates with higher deportation rates. I also found that the unemployment rate immediately corresponds with additional deportations, but after a few years has a null or even negative relationship with deportations. Finally, I found that the incarceration rate, after a few years, correlates with additional deportations, but after several years corresponds with reduces deportations, suggesting a complex relationship with deportations. My findings replicate and extend the findings of King et al. (2012) by including slightly different variables and a VAR model which asses the duration of relationships between variables. However, there are some limitations to my findings, including data availability and accuracy. U.S. government agencies report different deportation statistics (i.e., DHS, 2019; Remsen, 2022) and it is unclear how accurately early deportation data is reported. Similarly, the incarceration rate and unemployment rate are reported differently by different organizations and agencies. Additionally, the results likely are subject to omitted variable bias, given the difficulty in proxying economic and social conditions, particularly reactions to crime. Future work could expand research on deportations by analyzing

different methods of measuring the relevant data and determining how it impacts the results.

Chapter 4 analyzes public perceptions of deportations. The first section of the chapter finds that respondents are more supportive of deportations when is undocumented and/or has committed a crime, particularly a violent crime. I also found that there is no significant variation in support for deportations when a provided an immigrant's nationality. However, respondents were substantially more supportive of deportations in the first experiment when told migrants were from Mexico, compared to the second experiment when they were told migrants were from other locations, suggesting Mexico is uniquely politicized. I also found that several demographic and attitudinal variables corresponded with additional support for deportations, notably including a belief that immigrating to the United States is easy. I compared perceptions of the ease of immigration between two U.S. surveys and a survey in Mexico, finding that Americans were substantially more likely to believe that immigration to the U.S. is easy. In the second section of Chapter 4, I evaluated respondent's answers to open-ended prompts using novel sentiment analysis. When asked to write their initial thoughts about Mexico, nearly 20% of respondents described deportations, relying mostly on neutral to moderately negative descriptions. I also evaluated respondent's answers to a prompt asking them to provide their initial perceptions of deportations, finding that Americans mostly provided neutral evaluations and used the emotional languages of trust and joy. Regression analysis further found that positive evaluations of deportations corresponded with older Americans, higher income Americans, being born in the United States, and

faith in U.S. democracy. Chapter 4 helped understand American perceptions of deportations and the variables that influenced those perceptions.

Admittedly, Chapter 4 has several limitations. First, the chapter focuses on perceptions of deportations, but does not provide alternative responses to immigration. Past public opinion research has found that many respondents might prefer a different "solution," such as a path to citizenship for undocumented immigrants or imprisonment for immigrants who have committed crimes (e.g., Gallup, 2021; Cosby et al., 2013). Thus, future work could provide respondents with a list of increasingly punitive responses to immigration, to determine if the public still desires deportations, even if given other options. Additionally, many Americans may have little understanding of the U.S. immigration system, how deportations work, or even of immigration-specific terms (i.e., undocumented vs. documented immigration). Future work could provide more information on the immigration system to yield more accurate results.

Deportations are an understudied component of the immigration system. Relatively little research has analyzed influences of deportations and public evaluations of deportations. This thesis seeks to fill the research gap regarding deportations, by conducting time-series analysis of deportations and analyzing three original public opinion surveys. The United States is one of the few countries in the world that still heavily relies on deportations as a response to immigration, particularly undocumented immigration. Studying the influences of deportations and public opinion is essential to furthering policymaker's discussion and understanding of deportations.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Δ ln (Deportations)	127	-0.34	2.85	-7.51	9.21
Δ ln (House Party Ratio)	127	49.58	553.4	-159.44	6219.16
Δ ln (Senate Party Ratio)	127	-22.92	308	-3422.12	466
Republican President	127	0.53	0.50	0.00	1.00
Δ ln (Unemployment Rate)	127	4.04	31.16	-81.33	204.01
Δ ln (Incarceration Rate)	127	0.22	0.31	-0.79	1.00

Appendix B

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Deportations Experiment	625	3.53	1.41	1.00	5.00
Age	625	10.72	1.92	8.00	15.00
Female	625	0.49	0.50	0.00	1.00
White	625	0.77	0.42	0.00	1.00
Education	625	3.68	1.58	1.00	7.00
Income	625	5.76	3.54	1.00	12.00
Democrat	625	0.43	0.49	0.00	1.00
U.S.-Mexico Free Trade	625	0.34	0.47	0.00	1.00
Tariffs on China	625	0.35	0.48	0.00	1.00
Support Legal Immigration	625	0.50	0.50	0.00	1.00
Ease of Legal Immigration	625	0.49	0.50	0.00	1.00
Mexico Sentiment	625	6.16	2.52	1.00	10.00

Appendix C

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Deportations Experiment	1043	3.24	1.36	1.00	5.00
Age	1074	10.49	1.88	7.00	15.00
Female	1074	0.50	0.50	0.00	1.00
White	1050	0.73	0.44	0.00	1.00
Hispanic	1050	0.15	0.35	0.00	1.00
Income	1050	5.73	3.43	1.00	12.00
Education	1050	3.50	1.51	1.00	7.00
Democrat	1050	0.43	0.50	0.00	1.00
Born in the U.S.	1050	0.91	0.29	0.00	1.00
Undocumented Immigration Concern	1050	3.50	1.34	1.00	5.00
Ease of Legal Immigration	1050	0.54	0.50	0.00	1.00
Foreign Aid	1007	0.57	0.50	0.00	1.00
Faith in U.S. Democracy	1050	6.94	1.28	5.00	9.00

Appendix D

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Ease of Legal Immigration	625	0.22	0.42	0.00	1.00
Age	625	3.36	1.53	1.00	7.00
Female	625	0.51	0.50	0.00	1.00
White	598	0.32	0.47	0.00	1.00
PAN	625	0.22	0.42	0.00	1.00
MORENA	625	0.45	0.50	0.00	1.00
Knows a Deportee	625	0.52	0.50	0.00	1.00
Traveled Abroad	625	0.60	0.49	0.00	1.00
U.S. Sentiment	625	7.71	2.36	1.00	10.00