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Trump Paradox: How Immigration and Trade Affected Voting in 2016 and 2018

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ABSTRACT

We show that less educated and lower incomes whites were especially likely to vote for candidate Trump, presumably because he promised to curtail immigration, claiming it was responsible for their diminishing prospects. However, our research – the first that examines actual immigration and trade - finds that white voting for Trump was generally unrelated to the actual presence of immigrants or trade. Rather, our findings show that anti-immigrant and anti-trade attitudes rather than actual immigration and trade consistently and strongly explain Trump voting while levels of immigration and trade explain the loss of 40 Republican House seats, two years later. The overall results suggest that Trump rallied white voter support by stoking xenophobic, racist and nationalist fears. However, the backlash against Republican candidates in the 2018 House midterms was largely from a growing rejection of the appeal to fear in the face of actual immigration and trade.

Much has been made of early studies that equated Donald Trump's victory in 2016 with voters who had been hard hit by free trade policies and by job competition and social disintegration created by an increase in immigration—even though the actual economic and social impacts of immigration and trade have not been considered. In particular, immigration from Latin America (Huntington and Dunn 2004, Chavez, 2013) and trade with China (Autor, Dorn and Hanson, 2016) and Mexico (Yúnez-Naude , Mora-Rivera and Govea-Vargas unpublished) have been portrayed as particularly threatening since at least the past two decades but such depictions have been especially menacing under Trump.

Donald Trump made the fear of immigration and trade central to his Presidential campaign and now his Presidency, wielding threats to end, curtail or heavily tax trade with those two countries and curtail immigration across the Mexican border. Specifically, Trump's rhetoric and policy recommendations blame the deteriorating position of American workers on immigration and trade and are consistent with his nationalist narrative to make America great again (Green, 2018). Trump successfully defended this position in his Presidential campaign and many Republican legislative candidates staked out similar positions in 2016 and 2018 (Kamarck & Podkul, 2018).

In this study, we examine the extent to which actual economic and social exposure to immigration from Latin America and Chinese and Mexican trade or attitudes about immigration and trade affected voting among whites in the 2016 Presidential election and then again in the 2018 midterms. Despite the centrality of immigration and trade to Trump's campaign and his ongoing messaging as President, there is surprisingly little evidence on how immigration and trade are related to his support. We also explore whether the socioeconomic conditions of whites were related to local levels or attitudes about immigration and trade.

The U.S.-Mexico Narrative and Economic Self-Interest

From the launch of his campaign in June 2015, Donald Trump adeptly focused on U.S.-Mexico relations to create a media narrative that America ceased being great because of border raiding illegal immigrants ("murderers and rapists") and trade agreements like NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement; the new version is called USMCA) and TPP (Trans Pacific Partnership) that ship U.S. jobs across the border (Green, 2017). In this narrative, "real" American working people are hurt because America's border is being overrun by Mexico sending their worst people and "unfair" trade deals made by our "bad" leaders. This diagnosis leads to the Trump solution that he can "Make America Great Again" by building a "Big, Beautiful Wall," deporting millions and renegotiating trade agreements with greater tariffs and protections for American workers. "We have no choice." "Without borders, we don't have a country." (Thrush, 2020). He has continued to use this narrative with great success among his political base.

The dog whistle of this simply construed yet dangerously fictitious cross-border narrative—not to mention the full-throated denunciations of Mexicans and Central Americans—should not have been underestimated, especially given Trump's openly racist demonizing, unprecedented for modern presidential campaigns (Bobo, 2017). His narrative of nostalgia forged as it is by white racial identity politics invokes a long historical legacy of privileged supremacy but with a twist. In this telling of the story it is an "embattled" white citizenry that must make a stand or be swallowed up by a demographic transformation to a non-white dominant multiracial America (Abrajano & Hajnal, 2015).

The collective failure by media and political leaders to immediately counter not only the blatant bigotry of his initial position but also its basis in fact, allowed Trump to elaborate a 21st

century nativism**,** based on anti-immigrant politics and reminiscent of past waves of nativism in American history **(**Young, 2017**)**. Then as now**,** Trump's nativist narrative insults immigrants, particularly Mexicans, with calls for: Deporting all undocumented immigrants and their U.S. born children and making Mexico pay for the wall by seizing family remittances sent to Mexico **(**Ordoñez, & Kumar, 2018**)**. Today, the narrative is augmented by vilifying international trade, especially from China and Mexico. Trade policies promoted by Trump's narrative include voiding NAFTA and imposing tariffs as coercive threats around international migration **(**Nakamura, Wagner, & Miroff 2019). He has now claimed victory that the Mexican President, by succumbing to Trump's tariff pressures, has built a virtual wall on the border by preventing immigration to the United States.

Journalists accepted preliminary scholarship suggesting voters' economic insecurity was the basis for Trump's appeal and h electoral victory in key swing states (Davis & Hilsenrath, 2016;Waldow, 2018). They inferred that attitudes about immigration and trade were the result of actual immigration and trade, conflating these attitudes with the idea that Trump supporters had experienced negative impacts from both migration and U.S. trade in a global economy. Extrapolating from a well-known research paper's (Autor, Dorn, and Hanson 2016) analysis of the "trade exposure" caused by Chinese imports on some economic sectors in some parts of the country, Davis and Hilsenrath (2016) attribute a wide array of the US economy's shortcomings to trade with China and Trump's support in these parts of the country. They report that in "presidential primary races, Mr. Trump won 89 of the 100 counties most affected by competition from China."

Immigrants from Latin America tend to be low-skilled and are mostly the subject of Trump's messaging that they take American jobs but there is little evidence of the effects of actual immigration on voting. Scholars have generally shown that immigration means greater economic growth for the United States and there are small economic consequences for U.S. native workers, as immigrant workers have in fact become a needed labor source for continued prosperity where the size of the American workforce is shrinking (National Academies, 2016; Myers, 2007). On the other hand, fiscal impacts are often negative in the short term, especially for some states (due primarily to child education expenditures) but positive in the long run. Overall, immigrants tend to be a boon for the U.S. economy and American with relatively small negative effects workers (National Academies, 2016). However, our point is that despite actual positive or negative impacts of immigration, Trump regularly and mistakenly claims its effects are negative in order to shore up support for himself and Republicans.

On trade, some economists use data on temporally specific regional impacts, looking for correlations between the "China Shock" of increased imports in the early 2000s and voting that swung for Trump in 2016 (Autor, Dorn, Hanson, & Majlesi, 2016; Autor, Dorn, & Hanson, 2016). Chinese import penetration was also found to be a predictor of the rise of right-wing candidates and nationalism in Europe (Colantone & Stanig, 2018). Other economists found a correlation between the decline in manufacturing employment, the sector that is especially vulnerable to international trade, and the counties that voted for Trump (Altik, Atkeson, & Hansen, 2018). Economists have increasingly found that economy-wide gains from globalization and free trade appear highly concentrated among the upper decile of earners while the broad majority of the population receive defused gains from trade (Rodrik, 2017).

Anti-Immigrant Attitudes and Racial Resentments

In contrast to the economic interests position, arguments for the importance of attitudes are based on at least three decades of sociological and political science research. Work in group position theory, for example, posits that increases in the size of a given racial minority group can be seen as a group threat to political and social resources by the majority, triggering the fear that immigrants pose a potential challenge to the dominance of the white majority and generating hostility and negative stereotyping of the minority group (Blalock, 1967; Hood III & Morris, 1997; Quillian, 1995). Because of the growing size of the Latino population across the United States (Krogstad & Lopez, 2015), Latinos and particularly Mexicans may be perceived as a major threat to the white majority, especially when those fears are activated by political candidates (Chavez, 2013). Hainmueller and Hiscox (2010) used a survey experiment (not actual immigration) to find that voter attitudes toward immigration are not explained by economic self-interests, arguing that instead they are probably related to ethnocentrism or considerations about how the local economy as a whole may be affected by immigration

Similarly, growing trade may threaten whites by challenging their sense of not only racial but global supremacy. In this way, white Americans situate themselves as the "real" Americans in a world where "America's" global leadership is at stake. White anxieties or negative attitudes about immigration and trade may also be stirred up by political actors. These actors activate latent racial hostilities (Hopkins, 2010; Valentino, Hutchings, & White, 2002) as well as a preference for like-minded candidates (Mendelberg, 2001), independently of actual immigration and trade.

Regarding Trump's election, Political scientist Diana Mutz (2018) in a highly-publicized paper uses data from election panel surveys to infer that attitudes concerning white status, rather

than white economic interests, better explained Trump's victory. She concludes that candidate Trump was able to tap into white voter anxiety about globalization and diversity and concerns about job displacement predicted greater support for Trump than actual threats to the economic security of American workers (Mutz, 2018 a). In a reanalysis of Mutz's data, Stephen Morgan (2018a) concludes that she overstated the status threat explanation, Rather, Morgan claims, voters' perceptions of economic interests were at least as important and their economic interests were intertwined with status issues, which Mutz (2018b) rebuts. Political scientists Marc Hooghe and Ruth Dassoneville (2018) found that anti-immigrant attitudes and racial resentments explained much of the Trump vote, though neither they nor any of the other mentioned authors explored actual levels of immigration or trade.

We examine local levels of trade and immigration and attitudes about immigration and trade. As far as we know, no one has examined the effect of immigration on the 2016 election and the only paper that we know of that has examined trade flows (goods and services that are bought and sold between countries) is that by labor economist David Autor and his colleagues on Chinese imports (Autor, Dorn and Hansen 2016, Autor, Dorn, Hansen and Majlesi 2016), though they did not examine attitudes. In particular, we focus on trade from China and Mexico and immigration from Latin America, which is predominantly from Mexico and has been particularly vilified by Trump's campaign and his presidency as a primary source of the nation's economic and social ills (Green, 2017). Moreover, we question how these attitudes themselves are related to immigration and trade.

Data and Methods: Trump Support, Trade, and Immigration

We examine voting patterns at the national level for whites. We use hierarchical logit regression to analyze both individual data on Trump voting at both the individual and county levels. Individual data come from the Cooperative Congressional Election Study (CCES), which is a 50,000+ person national stratified sample survey of the adult U.S. population administered by YouGov.com. For our analysis of the extent of local immigration and trade, we use county level data, which provide refined local contextual effects of immigration and trade.

Our dependent variables are whether or not individual whites voted for candidate Trump in 2016 among all white voters and those that voted for Romney in 2012 (Table 1) and whether Trump voters flipped their vote to a Democratic candidate in the 2018 house elections (Table 2). Our independent variables are partisanship, education, gender, age, income and employment status as well as attitudes about immigration and trade. For education and age, we use college educated (B.A. or more) and age over 65, as commonly operationalized in studies of voter behaviors (Altick, Atkeson, & Hansen, 2018). Family income, temporarily laid off, unemployed and whether working in the manufacturing sector represent socioeconomic conditions. Table 4 regresses the immigration and trade attitudes on the remaining independent variables, among all whites in the CCES.

The CCES items on immigration and trade attitudes that we use are for immigration: agreement or disagreement on whether the U.S government should deport undocumented immigrants (2016) or whether we should build the border wall (2018) and for trade: whether voters support the Trans-Pacific Partnership Act (TPP), in both 2016 and 2018. There were no similar questions for immigration in 2016 and 2018. The trade questions were similar but slightly different. The 2016 item queried simply whether respondents were for or against the TPP while the 2018 question referred to whether the U.S. should withdraw from the TPP. These variables

are independent variables in alternate models in Tables 1 and 2. For Table 3, we utilize logistic regression to analyze immigration and trade attitudes as our dependent variables. The independent variables for this analysis are the remaining independent variables in the analysis of voting.

We are particularly interested in parsing out the effects of actual trade and immigration versus attitudes about them, independent of personal economic situations and social characteristics. To combine the personal behavior and characteristics with the contextual influence of immigration and trade, we use hierarchical linear regression models that model these variables at the individual and county levels (Raudenbush & Bryk, 2002). At the county level, we include the main independent variables of the proportion immigrants from Latin America and per capita trade imports from China and Mexico. To do this, we link the individuals in the CESS data to the information about immigration and trade in the county in which they reside.

We use immigration from Latin America in particular because this segment, particularly Mexicans and Central Americans who make up the vast majority, was particularly vilified by Trump in his candidacy and throughout his Presidency. To quantify the stock of immigration from Latin America, we use the percent foreign-born Hispanic population, which is based on the 2016 American Community Survey.

We hypothesize that white voting and attitudes may also respond to Hispanic immigration in places where it grew suddenly rather than simply its size. There is evidence that white attitudes about immigration may be particularly hostile in new destinations where immigration grew suddenly and resentment against them was particularly strong (McDermott 2011; Marrow 2019). Thus, we also introduce a second immigration variable: the percentage growth of the Hispanic immigrant population from 1990-2000, which is based on the U.S.

Census. This represents the peak years of Latino immigration (Pew, 2015), when many places with few Latinos -so-called new destinations -had suddenly grown to have sizeable Latino populations. For example, the Latino population of North Carolina grew 3.9 times in the 1990s and particular counties grew well more than that (Haverluck & Trautman, 2008).

To examine the level of imports from Mexico and China repeatedly referred to by Trump, we use data on imports by sector (e.g., agricultural products, textiles) from the World Institute for Strategic Economic Research (WISER) trade database. To distribute this trade data at the county level we created a ratio based on county sales by sector and then distributed the higher level data according to this ratio. This sector sales data was collected from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2012 Survey of Business Owners and Self-Employed (SBO). Our analysis sought to replicate core aspects of the methodology used by Autor, Dorn and Hanson (2016) for measuring regional trade exposures in U.S. trade with China. Their analysis of U.S.-China trade is based on "the share of each industry in region (e.g. county's) *i*'s total sales on the U.S. market"[1]; it summarizes differences across U.S. regions in industry specialization patterns (for example, for the distribution of labor, goods and services in particular industries). Thus, their methodology captures variation in regional exposure to China's supply-driven export growth. For our analysis of U.S. trade with Mexico, we also extended and, we believe, improved the specificity of this measurement by including imports from China and Mexico for counties. Finally, we divide this measure of variation in regional exposure by total population to get a per-capita measure of

[1] Trade sectors include, for example, agricultural products; forest products; electronic products, chemical products; energy products; minerals and metals; textiles, apparel, and footwear; machinery; and transportation equipment.

trade. Since we don't have full data on very small counties, we end up with data on 3030 of the 3142 counties in the United States, which represent 99.88 percent of the national population.

Finally, we control for anti-immigrant and anti-trade attitudes. In 2016, these are based on whether respondents agreed that "illegal aliens should be identified and deported" and whether they are against the TPP, which is explained in the survey item. In 2018, these are based on whether respondents agree that "the U.S. should increase spending on border security by $25 billion, including build a wall between the U.S. and Mexico" and if they agree that the U.S. "should withdraw from the Transpacific-Partnership trade agreement that included the U.S., Japan, Australia, Vietnam, Canada, Chile, others" (CCES 2020).

Findings

Figures 1 and 2 show bivariate relations between immigration and trade with Trump/Republican voting. Figure 1 presents scatterplots that show the relation between Trump voting and immigration and trade for counties in the United States. The figures show that the extent of immigration and trade is negatively related to the proportion in each county that voted for Trump in 2016. That is, Trump voting tends to be greater where there are fewer immigrants and less trade with Mexico or China. Although these relations are highly significant as indicated by the p values, the correlations are modest reflecting wide dispersion in the relationship. Of course, these relations are bivariate so we employ multivariable regressions to control for potential confounding influences referred to earlier in this paper.

Figure 1 about here

For the 2018 midterm elections, Figure 2 examines the mean immigration and trade characteristics of all US Congressional Districts by whether they switched from Republican to

Democrat (RD) between 2016 and 2018, remained Democratic (DD) or remained Republican (RR). Significantly, the districts that switched from R to D had much higher levels of immigration and imports from both Mexico and China compared to those that remained Republican. In general, the midterms elections heightened a Trump paradox at the bivariate level, whereby districts that switched had more immigrants and trade, leaving the remaining GOP voting districts even less exposed to immigration and imports than GOP voting districts in 2016.

Table 1 shows coefficients and standard errors for four hierarchical logit regression models predicting the extent to which whites voted for Trump. Model 1 represents the baseline model controlling partisanship, demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of individuals and levels of immigration and trade in the counties in which they reside. We then introduce anti-immigration and anti-trade attitudes in model 2. For a robustness check, we present Models 3 and 4, which repeats the same pair of models but we change the sample for a stricter test of a Trump effect. Specifically, we restrict the sample to whites that voted for Romney in 2012.

TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE

At the individual level, our evidence shows that Republican, Independent, less educated and senior white voters tended to vote for Trump, in all four models. Not surprisingly, being Republican has by far the strongest effect on voting for Trump as Republicans were about five times as likely to vote for Trump as Democrats as Models 1 and 2 show. Of course, party effects diminish for the sample of Romney voters in Models 3 and 4. Both models 1 and 3 show that males and those that were unemployed and in manufacturing jobs were more likely to vote for Trump, until we introduced controls for attitudes in Models 2 and 4. Income had no effect in any of the models although missing income data, which tends to select those with higher incomes,

shows that they are more likely to have voted for Trump. Although not always significant, results for education, unemployment, being laid off and income suggest that Trump's candidacy may have appealed to less fortunate whites. Trump voters also tended to work in manufacturing industries, suggesting that persons in those sectors may have felt particularly vulnerable economically (Altick, Atkeson, & Hansen, 2018). Notably, our analysis of Trump voting was fairly consistent across the two samples, at the individual level.

When attitudes are introduced, models 2 and 4 reveal that anti-immigration and anti-trade attitudes were strongly and positively related to Trump voting, in both samples. Indeed, the coefficients suggest that these may be the most important effects predicting Trump voting, aside from partisanship. Thus, our results suggest that candidate Trump was able to mobilize anti-immigrant and anti-trade sentiments among white voters through his narratives, whether or not there was an actual presence or threat of immigration or trade.

The results in the bottom rows of Table 2 show our results for actual levels of immigration and trade. The proportion of Hispanic immigrants is unrelated to Trump voting, in all four models. This is strong evidence that white voting for Trump had nothing to do with the presence of Hispanics even though he pontificated that they were taking their jobs and bringing crime. Rather, anti-immigrant attitudes accounted for Trump voting. However, Hispanic immigrant growth is positive and significant, indicating that white voters that experienced rapid demographic change from Hispanic growth were especially likely to vote for Trump. Models 2 and 4 reveal that this effect remains after attitudinal controls, suggesting that white voters felt threatened by demographic change from immigration, regardless of whether they reported being anti-immigrant. However, the effect of immigration growth is clearly stronger when the sample is restricted to Romney voters, suggesting that while traditional Republican voters tend to be

more anti-immigrant and anti-trade, candidate Trump was particularly successful in attracting white voters in counties with rapid immigrant growth.

Results for the presence of trade show that Trump voting tended to be positively correlated or unrelated with greater imports from Mexico or China. The one exception among the eight cases is that Trump voting was negatively correlated with Mexico imports in Model 1 but that correlation was barely significant and reversed in Models 3 and 4, with the stricter modeling of a Trump effect. This suggests that Trump may have led white voters to feel particularly vulnerable to Mexico imports, although such a change in the sample weakens the effect of China imports.

Table 2 models results for the midterm House elections in 2018 in which fully 40 congressional seats switched from Republican to Democrat, representing a voter backlash against the Trump presidency. The Table 2 sample consists of persons that voted for Trump in 2016 and the dependent variable represents whether they flipped to vote for a Democratic candidate for the House in 2018. Table 2 is set up to mirror the models in Table 1, except that the signs for coefficients are reversed because the dependent variable represents voting for a Democrat rather than a Republican. For example, the coefficient for female in Model 1 shows that women who voted for Trump in 2016 were more likely than men to vote for Democratic candidates in 2018, though this effect disappears when attitudes are controlled. Younger, lower income and unemployed persons are likely to have switched, in both models though consistently negative and significant coefficients reveal continued loyalties to Republican candidates (and Trump) among seniors, higher income persons and the employed. We show that manufacturing workers were more likely to flip, when attitudes are controlled. Read together, Table 1 and Table 2 results show that while whites in manufacturing jobs, the unemployed and those with lower incomes

were more likely to vote for Trump in 2016, in 2018 they were especially likely to switch their votes to Democratic House candidates.

Model 2 shows that negative attitudes about both immigration and trade continued to drive voters against Democrats and the effects are strong in 2018, as they were in 2016. Our findings also suggest that gender differences disappear with controls for anti-immigration and anti-trade attitudes in 2016 and 2018.

TABLE 2 ABOUT HERE

However, again actual immigration and trade may be a different story. Unlike in 2016 when the presence of immigrants from Latin America was unrelated to Trump voting, white voters in counties with more immigrants were more likely to flip to Democrat in 2018. This effect is particularly strong, at the highest level of significance. This suggests support for a contact hypothesis, that this time proximity to immigrants may have led to turning away from the Republican party, which had become increasingly anti-immigrant under the leadership of Donald Trump. On the other hand, Hispanic immigration growth is negatively related, suggesting that white voters in new destinations remain especially attached or even deepened their commitment to the Republican/Trumpian base.

We also find that imports from Mexico is unrelated to White voter flipping while China imports is negatively related. That is, white voters who went from voting for Trump to supporting a Democratic candidate in the 2018 midterms lived in counties that had fewer imports from China. In no case, was greater international trade associated with White voters flipping to Democratic candidates.

In Table 3, we analyze the anti-immigrant and anti-trade attitudes of whites in 2016 and 2018 by regressing them on the other variables. In addition, we have added a county level

variable of the percent voting for Trump (Trump Vote Share). Statistically significant coefficients show in all four models that Independents and especially Republican voters were more likely than Democrats to be anti-immigrant and anti-trade, though the magnitude of the coefficients suggest that the intensity of these attitudes increased, which we show in Table 4 with more direct evidence. Among the white voters we examine, men, those without a college degree, seniors, and those working in manufacturing were consistently more likely to have anti-immigrant and anti-trade attitudes. Interestingly, the unemployed tended to have more negative immigration and trade attitudes in 2016 but in 2018 they had developed positive attitudes about trade and their attitudes on immigration were not different from the employed. Although, income bore no relation to anti-immigrant and anti-trade attitudes for the 2016 Presidential race, higher income whites tended to be more anti-immigrant and anti-trade in 2018.

TABLE 3 ABOUT HERE

Regarding county level variables, the Trump Vote Share variable that we added is positive and highly significant in all four models. Thus, in 2016 and 2018, white voters were clearly more likely to express anti-immigrant and anti-trade attitudes in counties where Trump support was greater. This suggests that Trump's anti-immigrant and anti-trade messaging was most effective in counties where he had his largest base of support.

Table 3 reveals little relation between actual immigration and trade with attitudes. There is a negative correlation between immigrant size and anti-trade attitudes in 2016 and a positive relation with immigration in 2018 but these relations are both only at the $p<.05$ level. However, both immigration variables were clearly stronger before Trump Vote Share was introduced (data not shown but in appendix or available from authors). Thus, the negative messaging of Trump about trade and immigration was effective in places with more support rather than the levels of

immigration. Although white voters in new immigrant destinations were more likely to vote for Trump, they did not seem to become more anti-immigrant or anti-trade; rather they voted for Trump where his messaging gained more resonance. However, the direction of immigrant places changed white voting in the midterms. The presence of immigrants had no effect on white voting in 2016 but whites flipped their votes to Democrats in 2018 where there were more Latino immigrants. White voters were less likely to vote for Trump where there more immigrants but by 2018, immigrant presence no longer had an effect. Finally, there was no correlation between attitudes and local extent of trade with China or Mexico, in 2016 or 2018.

Table 4 uses the CCES data to show changes in anti-immigrant and anti-trade attitudes in 2016 and 2018. The top panel of Table 4 presents anti-trade and anti-immigration attitudes by party for both years while the bottom panel shows 2018 attitudes among Trump voters that also voted for a Republican candidate in the 2018 midterms versus those that flipped to vote for a Democrat. The top panel of Table 4 are snapshots of American attitudes two years apart and the bottom panel is retrospective and refers to voters in 2018 who had voted for Trump in 2016.

The top panel of Table 4 reveals that although the anti-immigrant attitudes being measured differ in 2016 and 2018, the direction of the change in both immigrant and trade attitudes by party reveals a contrasting shift in voter attitudes by party. Regarding immigration, 53 percent of Republicans agreed with deporting illegal immigrants in 2016 compared to 55 percent agreeing with building the border wall in 2018, a small change albeit these represent distinct measures of immigrant attitudes. However, the contrast in changing attitudes by party is striking. While anti-immigrant sentiments among Republicans *increased* for Republicans, anti-immigrant attitudes *declined* from 23.7 to 9.1 percent among Democrats, a fall of fully 260 percent! Similarly, for trade attitudes. The share of Republicans against the TPP increased from

59.8 to 73.4 percent while for Democrats it declined sharply from 42.1 to 11.8 percent, a decline of 357 percent. Overall, our results for immigration and trade reveal a rapidly widening polarization in immigration and trade attitudes by party but growing polarization is asymmetrical and especially apparent among Trump voters, as the bottom panel of Table 5 shows.

The bottom panel of Table 4 shows that among Trump voters, fully 92.8% of those who voted Republican again in 2018 held anti-immigrant attitudes compared to only 64.1 percent of those who switched their votes to a Democrat in the 2018 midterms. Similarly, 82.9% of consistent Republican voters were opposed to trade in 2018 compared to 48.4% of those who flipped to a Democratic candidate in 2018. These results also show increased polarization as anti-immigration and anti-trade voters seemed increasingly drawn to the Republican party while those in favor tended to switch parties. Overall, Table 4 showed Republicans and especially Trump voters became more virulently anti-immigration and anti-trade while Democrats became much less so.

Discussion and Conclusions

Our research shows that virtually no aspects of Trump's simple narrative to his voters about immigration and trade has any factual basis in the actual reality of immigration and trade. Ironically, in analyzing counties across the United States, Trump's voters are less likely to live in places that have a significant number of Latino and immigrants and that have been affected by imports from Mexico or from, China, both of which have been demonized by Trump. When examining white voters specifically, neither the actual immigration nor the trade contexts are related to where his supporters resided but in the 2018 midterm elections, the immigration

context may have become important as many Trump voters switched to vote for Democrats, especially in counties with more Latino immigrants.

When we did find a relation between immigration and Republican voting in 2016 and 2018, it was paradoxically negative. That is, whites voted for Republicans in places where there were fewer Latino immigrants (stock), suggesting that contact with Latino immigrants may have led to greater acceptance and reduced fear of them and an understanding of their economic and social benefits. These places tended to have a longstanding presence of Latinos and better economic prosperity than in the U.S. heartland. On the other hand, we also find that white voters went for Trump and Republicans where there was greater percentage growth in the Latino immigrant population, which characterize the so-called "new destinations." These places had few Latinos before the 1990s. Trump's nativist and anti-Latino rhetoric seems to have resonated with whites experiencing the sudden appearance of Latinos and their own economic problems, even though the latter were not associated with immigration. Most importantly, our findings show that anti-immigrant and anti-trade attitudes rather than actual immigration and trade, more consistently and more strongly explain Trump voting in 2016 and the loss of 40 Republican House seats, two years later.

Our research demonstrates that using data on actual trade and migration challenges both the economic and attitudinal based explanations for Trump support. Rather our research shows the existence of a Trump Paradox which exposes dual yet systematic contradictions between Trump voter behavior and actual economic exposure to trade and immigration, as well as contradictions between the attitudinally perceived economic and social impacts compared to actual economic and social exposure to trade and immigration. We do, however, confirm that places that voted

for Trump are more economically challenged by unemployment and failing incomes than others. Yet these challenging economic conditions are unrelated to exposure to trade and immigration.

Trump used nationalist rhetoric to tie poor economic conditions with globalization and diversity (Monnat, 2016; Rothwell & Rosell, 2016), successfully mobilizing voters on the underlying sentiments that trade and immigration have hurt them. However, his rhetoric obfuscates the deeper underlying dynamics of high unemployment and low income by falsely blaming trade and immigration for the economic challenges of unemployment and poverty. The challenging economic conditions in much of Trump country are real but are unrelated to local exposure to international trade and immigration. In the wake of Trump's political ascension, the worst thing that America's policy makers could do is to treat Trump supporters' misdirected anger as a set of legitimate grievances in need of redress through anti-immigrant and anti-trade policies.

The overall results suggest that Trump rallied white voters to support him by stoking xenophobic and racist sentiments. Indeed, Trump's strategy was likely based on corralling voters by enhancing these feelings rather than any real concerns over the economic interests of voters. However, the backlash against Republican candidates in the House midterms seems to reflect a growing rejection of that strategy as Republicans with more moderate immigration and trade attitudes flipped to Democratic candidates. Party polarization also increased as Republicans overall became more stridently anti-immigrant and anti-trade while the percent of Democrats holding those attitudes greatly diminished.

Trump's ability to successfully tap into anxieties about immigration and trade rather than the presence or threat of actual immigration and trade is consistent with social science research showing that economic self-interest generally has relatively little effect on sociopolitical

attitudes, especially when they concern issues of race and immigration (Sears & Funk, 1991; Citrin et al., 1997; Green & McElwee, 2018). Instead attitudes about immigrants or racialized others may be based on factors such as media exposure (Herricourt & Spielvogel, 2014), religious identity (Margolis, 2018), racial anxieties (Sears & Funk, 1991) or stereotypes about Latinos (Timberlake, Howell, Grau & Williams, 2016), all of which have been further stimulated during Trump's campaign and administration. They may see people of color growing in political power and changing the meaning of American culture because of immigration. Whites may perceive that globalization, largely represented by international trade, also threatens American power (Mutz, 2018). Our evidence suggests that Trump's support is based on such racialized beliefs even though leading scientific evidence suggests that diversity and globalization may be beneficial to (or at least, does not harm) even white working-class voters (National Academies of Sciences, 2017).

The need to provide solid data and critical analysis is now more important than ever, particularly with respect to an understanding of the real forces driving the Trump phenomenon. Rarely does research examine actual trade and migration and weakly informed questioning by the media and their misleading reports legitimizes Donald Trump's false claims about the real problems facing the economy has implicitly endorsed a dangerously wrong-headed set of solutions: implementing the highly restrictive trade and/or migration policy that Trump proposes would disproportionately hurt those areas that voted for Trump.

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Figure 1. Trump Vote Share in 2016 by logged Hispanic Immigration and Imports from Mexico and China for U.S. Counties

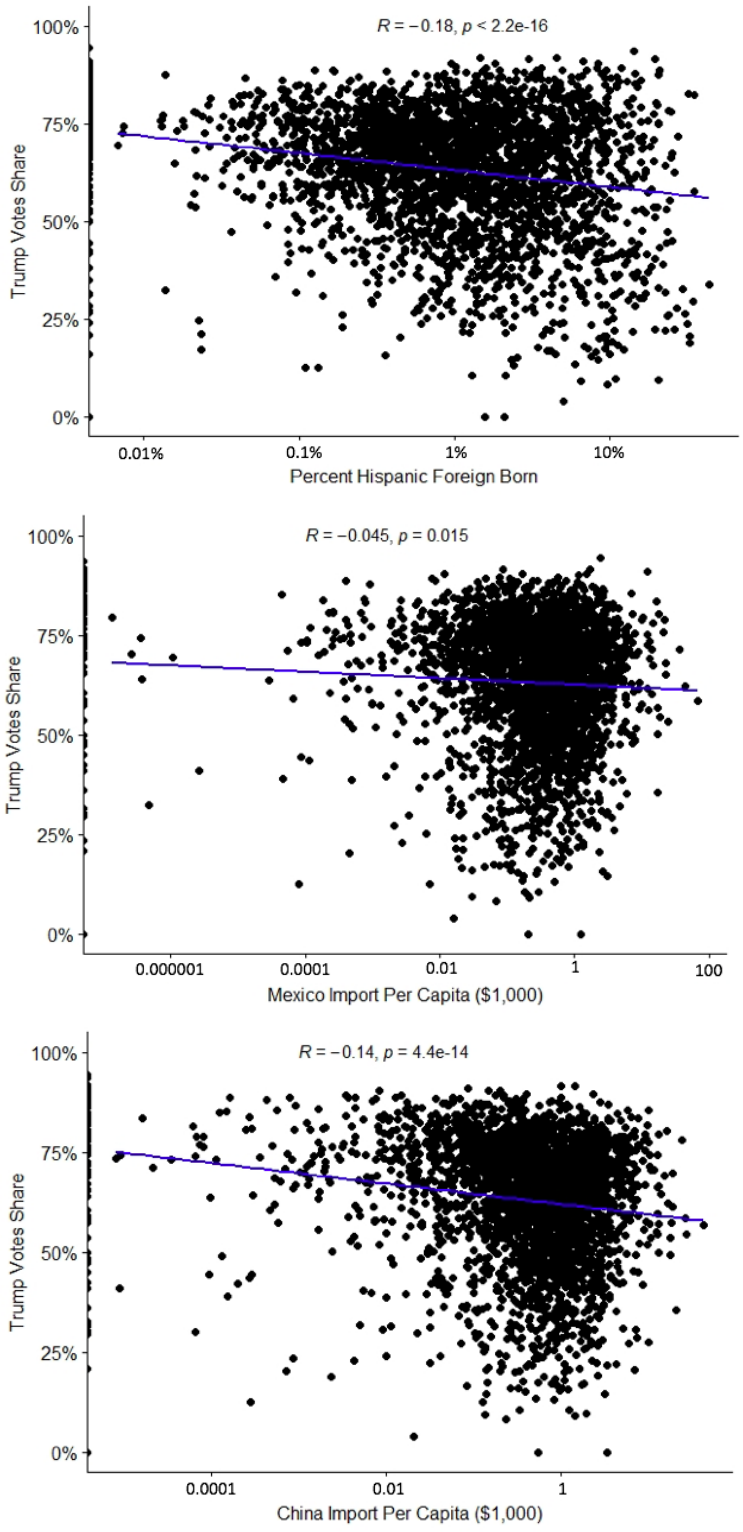
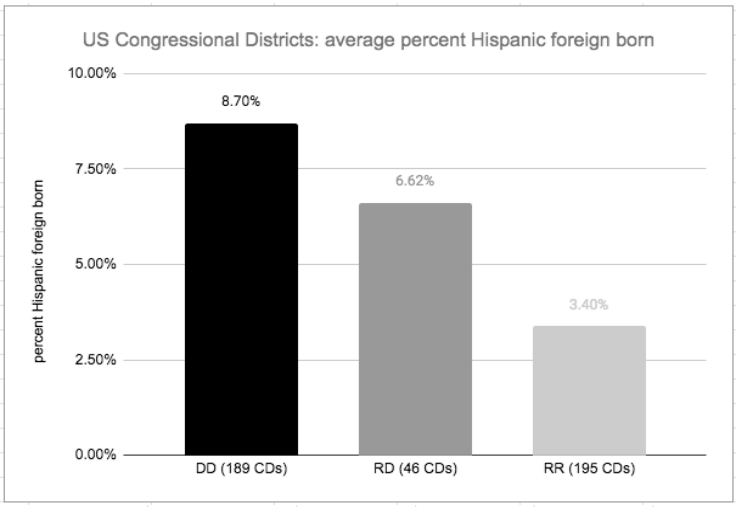
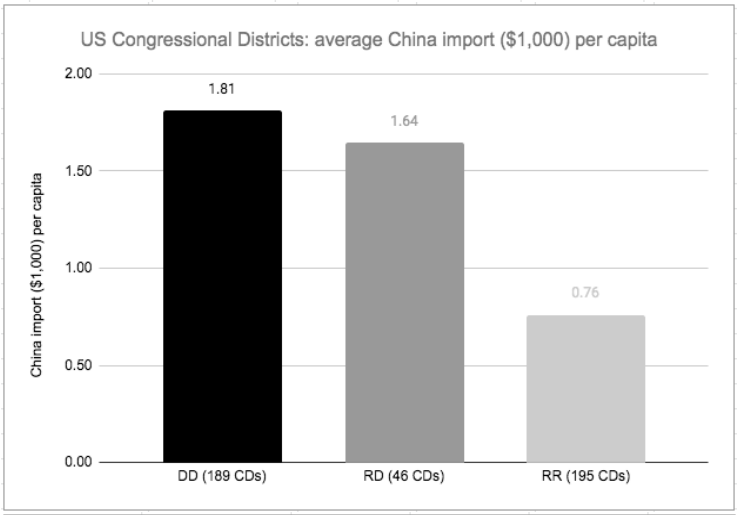


Figure 2. US House Elections Results for 2016-2018 by Party by logged Hispanic Immigration and Imports from Mexico and China for U.S. Counties





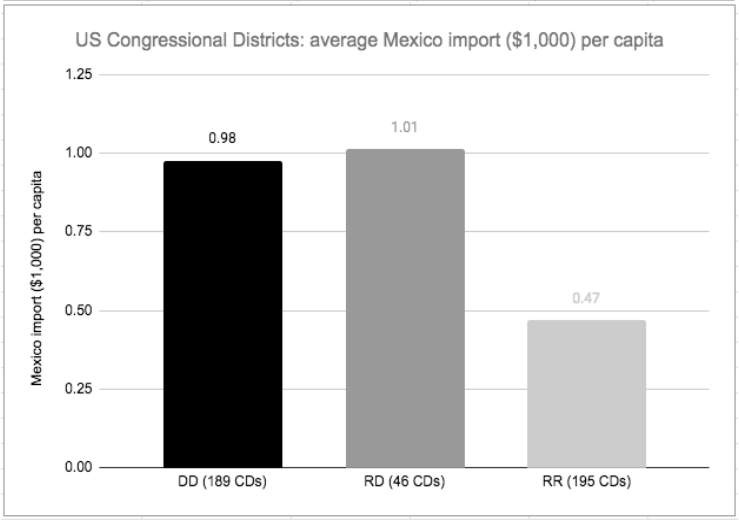


Table 1. Coefficients (and Standard Errors) for Hierarchical Regressions Predicting Trump Vote among NH White Voters (Models 1 & 2) Levels and Trump Vote among Whites that Voted for Romney in 2012 **(Jiahui, please insert standard errors in models 3 and 4**), 2016

	Samples and Models			
	All White Voters		Whites that Voted for Romney	
Individual Level	1	2	3	4
Independent	1.830*** (0.0693)	1.603*** (0.0697)	0.877***	0.791***
Republican	4.008*** (0.123)	3.731*** (0.117)	2.039***	1.977***
Female	-0.229*** (0.0462)	-0.00874 (0.0459)	-0.330***	-0.0397
B.A. or more	-0.733*** (0.0472)	-0.572*** (0.0562)	-0.838***	-0.741***
Age over 65	0.383*** (0.0607)	0.293*** (0.0707)	0.751***	0.638***
Mean Family Income (log)	-0.0569 (0.0319)	-0.0363 (0.0371)	0.0269	0.0512
Income Undeclared	0.199** (0.0672)	0.0844 (0.0707)	0.505***	0.410***
Temporary Laid Off	-0.298 (0.342)	-0.222 (0.360)	1.031**	1.074*
Unemployed	0.482*** (0.133)	0.285 (0.147)	0.234	-0.0909
Manufacturing Job	0.346*** (0.0900)	0.135 (0.0967)	0.237*	0.118
Agree w Deporting Illegals	--	1.991*** (0.0485)		1.381***
Against Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP)	--	0.854*** (0.0476)		1.228***
County Level				
% Hispanic immigrant (log)	-1.049 (1.542)	-0.134 (1.462)	-2.179	-1.446
Imports from Mexico	-0.0292* (0.0135)	-0.0247 (0.0151)	0.0535**	0.0493*
Imports from China	0.0923*** (0.0201)	0.0919*** (0.0208)	-0.0409	-0.0262
% Hisp. Immigration Growth 1990-2000	0.0352** (0.0133)	0.0356* (0.0146)	0.125***	0.130***
Constant	-0.891* (0.382)	-2.514*** (0.432)	0.907	-0.974
N	29,593	29,536	12,420	12,400
N Groups	2,262	2,262	1,901	1,901

Source: CCES (individual data) & xxxx
Robust standard errors in parentheses
Significance: *** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05

Table 2. Coefficients (and Standard Errors) for Hierarchical Logit Regression Predicting that Voters Switch to Voting for Democratic House Candidate in 2018 among NH White Trump Voters

Variables	**Models**	
Individual Level	1	2
Independent	-1.409***	-1.396***
	(0.177)	(0.180)
Republican	-2.664***	-2.646***
	(0.155)	(0.163)
Female	0.339***	0.0517
	(0.0975)	(0.109)
B.A. or more	-0.0594	-0.143
	(0.0956)	(0.106)
Age over 65	-0.542***	-0.302**
	(0.0986)	(0.104)
Mean Family Income (log)	-0.230***	-0.165*
	(0.0672)	(0.0726)
Income Not Declared	-0.692***	-0.431**
	(0.144)	(0.151)
Temporary Laid Off	0.711	0.737
	(0.729)	(0.740)
Unemployed	-0.981*	-1.070*
	(0.486)	(0.493)
Manufacturing Job	0.227	0.336*
	(0.130)	(0.149)
Agree w Building Border Wall	--	-1.643***
		(0.151)
Against Trans-Pacific Partnership	--	-1.289***
		(0.121)
County Level		
% Hispanic immigrant (log)	4.933***	5.241***
	(1.184)	(1.196)
Imports from Mexico	0.0591	0.0650
	(0.0385)	(0.0430)
Imports from China	-0.161***	-0.167***
	(0.0391)	(0.0386)
% Hisp. Immigration Growth 1990-2000	-0.162*	-0.160*
	(0.0754)	(0.0743)
Constant	1.460	2.987***
	(0.767)	(0.836)
N	10,819	10,758
N Groups	1,890	1,883

Table 3. Coefficients (and Standard Errors) for Hierarchical Logit Regression Predicting Attitudes about Immigration and Trade in 2016 and 2018 among Non-Hispanic Whites

Variables	**2016**		**2018**	
Individual Level	Deport Illegals	Against TPP	Build Wall	Withdraw from TPP
Independent	0.977***	0.443***	1.611***	1.290***
	(0.0526)	(0.0477)	(0.0715)	(0.0516)
Republican	1.862***	0.741***	3.607***	2.501***
	(0.0660)	(0.0484)	(0.0883)	(0.0509)
Female	-0.265***	-0.608***	-0.640***	-0.696***
	(0.0378)	(0.0412)	(0.0450)	(0.0282)
B.A. or more	-0.539***	-0.0797**	-0.523***	-0.321***
	(0.0473)	(0.0289)	(0.0503)	(0.0437)
Age over 65	0.166***	0.456***	0.635***	0.422***
	(0.0446)	(0.0360)	(0.0584)	(0.0392)
Mean Family Income (log)	-0.0527	0.0208	0.0580*	0.113***
	(0.0305)	(0.0244)	(0.0343)	(0.0302)
Income Not Declared	0.145*	0.423***	0.275**	0.237**
	(0.0597)	(0.0614)	(0.0871)	(0.0746)
Temporary Laid Off	-0.0111	-0.147	-0.225	-0.263
	(0.238)	(0.179)	(0.421)	(0.372)
Unemployed	0.289*	0.323***	-0.261	-0.222*
	(0.117)	(0.0976)	(0.142)	(0.109)
Manufacturing Job	0.406***	0.244***	0.423***	0.262***
	(0.0596)	(0.0654)	(0.0766)	(0.0723)
County Level				
% Hispanic immigrant	.577	-1.139*	1.633*	0.0966
	(0.827)	(0.566)	(1.077)	(0.668)
Growth of Hispanic Immigrant Population 1990-2000	0.0247	0.000868	0.0529	0.0198*
	(0.0214)	(0.0101)	(0.0183)	(0.0125)
Imports from Mexico	0.0176	0.00456	-0.00622	-0.00685
	(0.0121)	(0.0101)	(0.0142)	(0.0119)
Imports from China	-0.0144	-0.00721	-0.0201	0.00230
	(0.0132)	(0.0117)	(0.0140)	(0.0149)
Trump Vote Share	***1.227****	***.443****	***1.724****	***1.099****
	(0.170)	***(0.168)***	***(0.214)***	***(0.151)***
Constant	-0.184	-0.198	-1.976***	-2.310***
	(0.338)	(0.270)	(0.377)	(0.346)
N	31,568	31,506	33,342	33,419
N Groups	2,295	2,295	2,367	2,365

Robust standard errors in parentheses
Data Source: CCES, American Community Survey
Significance: *** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05

Table 4. Anti-Immigration and Anti-Trade Trade Attitudes by Party and Trump Support among NH Whites, 2016 and 2018

	2016			2018		
	% Agree with Deport Illegal Immigrants	% Against TPP	Distribution	% Agree with Build Border Wall	% Against TPP (Withdraw)	Distribution
NH Whites by Party ID (full sample):						
Republican	67.8%	59.8%	33.7%	85.0%	73.4%	33.6%
Democrat	23.7%	42.1%	35.1%	9.1%	11.8%	33.1%
Independent	45.2%	52.0%	29.5%	45.4%	43.8%	28.4%
Others	39.5%	53.6%	1.7%	51.0%	56.9%	4.9%
TOTAL	45.4%	49.3%	100.0%	46.2%	42.7%	100.0%
Trump Voters	72.7%	66.4%	47.3%	89.2%	77.9%	100.0%*
Also Voted R in 2018	--	--	--	92.8%	82.8%	90.2%*
Switched to Vote D in 2018	--	--	--	64.2%	48.5%	7.6%*
Switched to Other in 2018	--	--	--	90.6%	84.5%	2.2%*

*refers to distribution among Trump voters

Appendix

The Following are Available from Authors:

Maps of Counties by Trump Voting, Immigration and Imports

Individual Level Regressions with Congressional District Level Data

Regressions at County Level

Regressions at Congressional District Level