

Nativism and xenophobia

Sociology



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

To the editor: The sad fact of the matter is that xenophobia, prejudice, racism, and nativism have long impacted the way in which individuals within the United States understand and interact with new and/or recent immigrants to the nation. By much the same token, many recent or past immigrants, or family members of them, have come to appreciate the power and resiliency that the United States has been able to achieve as a direct result of its policies of immigration. As such, these two camps come in near constant conflict with one another; with pro immigration supporters attempting to stop anti-immigrant sentiment and those who oppose immigration seeking to use fear and nativist sentiment as a means of discouraging the process in the future.

Those that oppose immigration oftentimes use nativism and xenophobia as a cover for intrinsic levels of racism; not wishing a different group or ethnic background to gain a foothold within the United States and/or see an increase in the overall number of minority groups that might already be represented. Because of this tacitly racist point of view, individuals that resist immigration based upon these principles oftentimes involve emotional appeals regarding the fact that the United States is being lost or that "real Americans" will soon no longer exist within the United States is ultimately controlled by a faceless mob of immigrants that do not share the same values and moral character as half past generations (Koppelman, 2014). By much the same token, the descendants of immigrants that seek to stop discriminatory opposition to immigration attempt to paint the picture of what the immigrant has ultimately been able to accomplish within the United States. Due to the fact that the United States is a nation of immigrants, these people illustrate the fact that without constant and continual

immigration from such places as Europe, Africa, Latin America, Asia, and elsewhere, the United States could not possibly have achieved the overall wealth and success that it exhibits within the current era. Furthermore, this is a symbiotic relationship. Individuals that are oftentimes descendants of immigrants, or immigrants themselves, argue for the fact that the United States has provided them an opportunity to gain wealth, prestige, education, and social parity that the nations that they might have come from could not provide for them.

Essentially, the situation that has been described is one in which these two distinct viewpoints come in conflict with one another. However, in terms of weighing these viewpoints based upon their logical arguments, it is clear and apparent that the anti-immigration crowd relies upon racial overtones and emotional appeals as a function of seeking to restrict or outright stop immigration from taking place. By means of comparison and contrast, those that support immigration, due to the fact that they themselves are immigrants or due to the fact that their ancestors were immigrants, point to verifiable statistics and measurable proof with regard to the way in which the United States has, and should continue, to be a nation that was founded upon immigration.

Reference

Koppelman, K. (2014). *Understanding human differences : multicultural education for a diverse America*. Boston: Pearson.