

Rights, Economics, or Family?

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# Frame Resonance, Political Ideology, and the Immigrant Rights Movement

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**A**lthough social movement scholars in the United States have long ignored activism over immigration, this movement raises important theoretical and empirical questions, especially given many immigrants' lack of citizenship. Is the rights "master" frame, used extensively by other US social movements, persuasive in making claims for noncitizens? If not, which other movement frames resonate with the public? We leverage survey experiments—largely the domain of political scientists and public opinion researchers—to examine how much human/citizenship rights, economics, and family framing contests shape Californians' views about legalization and immigrants' access to public benefits. We pay particular attention to how potentially distinct "publics," or subgroups, react, finding significant differences in frame resonance between groups distinguished by political ideology. However, alternative framings resonate with—at best—one political subgroup and, dauntingly, frames that resonate with one group sometimes alienate others. While activists and political theorists may hope that human rights appeals can expand American notions of membership, such a frame does not help the movement build support for legalization. Instead, the most expansive change in legalization attitudes occurs when framed as about family unity, but this holds only among self-reported conservatives. These findings underscore the challenges confronting the immigrant movement and the need to reevaluate the assumption that historically progressive rights language is effective for immigrant claims-making.

When making claims for immigrants, which frames are most resonant for ordinary Americans? Social movement scholars have long argued that activists can

*Authors are listed in alphabetical order; all contributed equally. They thank Jack Citrin, Gabe Lenz, and Morris Levy for assistance with the survey, and the Institute for Governmental Studies, the Institute for Research on Labor and Employment, the Institute for International Studies, and the Social Science Matrix, all at the University of California, Berkeley, for financial support. They also thank Kathy Abrams, K. T. Albiston, Shannon Gleeson, Jim Jasper, Taeku Lee, Tom Postmes, Sarah Song, Veronica Terriquez, Frederik Thuesen, Leti Volpp, Phil Wolgin, Chris Zepeda-Millán, members of the UCB Social Movements workshop, and journal reviewers for their helpful feedback on earlier drafts. Prior versions of the paper were presented at the 2014 American Sociological Association Meeting, the 2014 International Sociological Association Meeting, the Barnard College Forum on Migration, and the Social Interactions, Identities, and Well-Being Program of the Canadian Institute for Advanced Research.*

shape support for their goals through strategic framing. What many observers now call the immigrant rights movement uses a key “master” frame (Snow and Benford 1992) in its very name: the language of rights. In doing so, immigrant activists appeal to and extend a rights framing that many US social movements have used to identify problems, make demands, or defend positions. This language is most evident in progressive movements, whether embedded in calls to eliminate “second-class” citizenship for racial minorities and women or the right to marriage equality articulated by LGBT activists. But conservative movements also employ rights language, as when those who defend gun ownership appeal to citizens’ right to bear arms. This language of rights, we believe, often presupposes citizenship in the United States. Given the lack of legal residency, much less citizenship, of many who are the focus of immigrant activism, are rights claims resonant? If not, which other frames resonate with the American public?

We draw from social movement, public opinion, and immigration studies to answer these questions. Framing is a key concept in social movement research, but US scholars have long ignored immigrant rights activism, partly because when major US social movements agitated for change in the 1960s, the share of immigrants in the country was at its lowest point in the twentieth century. Immigration also often falls into the realm of institutionalized politics, with legislative change an outcome of elite political bargaining and targeted pressure by interest groups (Freeman 1995; Tichenor 2009).<sup>1</sup> If we follow Snow, Soule, and Kriesi (2004, 6) in identifying a social movement as based on collective action, change-oriented goals, extra-institutional action, a degree of organization, and some temporal continuity, one is hard pressed to identify a US immigrant rights movement prior to the 1980s.<sup>2</sup>

This is no longer the case. One in eight US residents is foreign born, and about 12 million people lacked legal residency in 2012 (Passel, Cohn, and Gonzalez-Barrera 2013). The vibrant immigration movement encompasses multiple streams, from alliances between national immigrant rights groups and labor unions to local activism by young DREAM ACTivists (Nicholls 2013; Voss and Bloemraad 2011; Yukich 2013). Since a core movement goal is legalization—which can be passed into law only by Congress—winning the “hearts and minds” of politicians and the public is central to the movement’s success. Consistent with others’ calls for cross-fertilization between social movement scholarship and allied fields (Andrews and Edwards 2004; Tilly and Tarrow 2007, 124–29), we bring social movement concepts into conversation with the insights and methodological tools used by public opinion and immigration researchers.

We conceptualize resonance in terms of framing contests between movement proponents and opponents. We investigate framing contests in three domains: rights, economics, and the family. Specifically, we juxtapose the economic benefits of migration to the threat of job competition, contrast family unity and deportation logics, and compare the appeal of human rights versus “American citizens first” claims. In the latter framing contest, we distinguish between rights couched in universal appeals (i.e., human rights) and those grounded in US citizenship. Does the rhetoric of rights, used by so many US social movements, influence opinion on immigrants’ membership?

To evaluate this question, we distinguish between two types of membership claims that carry theoretical (Bloemraad, Korteweg, and Yurdakul 2008; Joppke

2010) and substantive relevance. The first relates to membership as physical presence and legal status; that is, who gets into a country and can stay, which we measure through attitudes toward legalization. Legalization has been a dominant goal of immigrant rights mobilizations from 2006 through to the present. The second type of membership relates to the benefits extended to individuals, which we measure through opinions on who should access a range of publicly provided benefits, from food stamps to in-state college tuition. Benefits were the key issue in California's Proposition 187 debates in the early 1990s, and continue to animate politics today, as seen in the decision to exclude undocumented migrants from the Affordable Healthcare Act. Framing contests that resonate for one type of membership claim may be ineffective for the second type; indeed, legal status and access to benefits may evoke distinct notions of "deservingness" in the minds of Americans. For example, the public may be more responsive to a human rights appeal for access to medical care than a path to citizenship.

To gain purchase on frame resonance, we adopt a methodological innovation from public opinion research: the survey experiment (Chong and Druckman 2007; Mutz 2011). Social movement scholars have long acknowledged the dangers of circular reasoning when studying framing dynamics (e.g., Benford and Snow 2000, 626; Ferree 2003, 305). Retrospective reconstructions of social movement activity often assume that the movement's eventual success indicates that frames were resonant or, if a movement fizzles, that a particular framing was faulty. In a survey experiment, respondents are randomly assigned to distinct groups that receive questions with variations in wording or answer categories. A comparison across randomized groups reveals how particular phrasing or answer options—the framing of an issue—affect people's expressed attitudes and policy preferences.

Attention to public opinion also encourages more nuanced thinking about the different audiences embedded in umbrella terms like "public sphere" used by social movement scholars. Social movement researchers identify multiple audiences (or targets) in assessing frame resonance, but they mostly distinguish between activists, potential recruits, the media, and elites rather than subgroups within the public. Yet ways of thinking about issues often vary by one's underlying beliefs and social location, which in turn could affect how resonant a frame feels. Subgroups might vary along classic sociological divisions based on gender, race, and class position or, as a growing body of political sociology and political science finds, by contemporary ideological divisions in American society (e.g., Brooks and Manza 2013; Druckman, Peterson, and Slothuus 2013). We use survey experiments to evaluate how potentially distinct "publics" might react differently to economic, rights, and family unity framing contests.

To anticipate, we find that appeals to human rights, when juxtaposed with a language of "American citizens first," is problematic for movement activists: it moves political liberals to more expansive attitudes on public benefits, but politically moderate voters, by far the largest group in our study, shift to excluding noncitizens from the circle of membership, as measured by support for legalization. An economic framing contest does little to shift opinion about legalization or access to public benefits. This is surprising given that economic arguments have been prominent in public debates, perhaps because the "rationality" inherent in

such cost/benefit language is less inflammatory than alternative narratives (Stewart 2012). In contrast, the family framing contest moves a particular subgroup of the public toward greater acceptance of legalization: political conservatives. The family framing does not, however, significantly affect conservatives' opinion on access to benefits, hinting at the limits of membership claims-making in the United States. Political ideology thus matters for frame resonance, but in cross-cutting ways, adding weight to calls for sociologists to take political orientation seriously. Surprisingly, framing effects do not differ much by other social groupings, such as by race, gender, or education. We conclude by underscoring how the normative bias toward a citizenship discourse may hurt immigrant rights activism.

## Frame Resonance, Circular Arguments, and Survey Experiments

For social movement scholars, the call for attention to “framing,” or “the struggle over the production of mobilizing” and “counter-mobilizing ideas” (Benford and Snow 2000, 613; Snow et al. 1986), brought agency and culture into a field dominated by structural and organizational accounts of collective action. Benford and Snow's notion of frame resonance is generally seen as the *sine qua non* of movement success (Ferree 2003). At root lies the contention that social movements are more likely to succeed when activists articulate their cause in terms that are legitimate and meaningful to people outside the movement; that is, when frames “resonate” with key beliefs, values, and ideas held by ordinary people (Benford and Snow 2000, 621). To date, analysts have investigated resonance largely by tracing, retroactively, how activists and opponents act as interpretive agents who develop collective action frames that reverberate with target audiences (e.g., Čápek 1993; Zuo and Benford 1995). Yet, such studies “fail to shed much light on the factors that ... shape the outcomes of [framing] contests, other than stating or implying the tautology that those who won employed the most resonant framings” (Benford and Snow 2000, 626).

To tackle the problem of circular arguments, we employ a survey experiment. Survey experiments embed the logic of experimental design into opinion surveys, enabling researchers to measure how differences in the way a question is worded (or framed) affect responses. Since respondents are randomly assigned to receive alternate versions of questionnaire items (Mutz 2011), causal inference is more firmly grounded than in traditional surveys or retrospective accounts of movement success. This method offers a useful tool for analysts of frame resonance, yet to our knowledge, only one study, investigating framings of marriage equality, has been done from a social movement perspective (Pizmony-Levy and Ponce 2013). The survey experiment helps identify whether some immigrant movement frames are more effective than others in the court of public opinion.

## Targets of Framing Contests: The Differentiated Public

The “court of public opinion” has been largely absent in analyses of frame resonance in sociological studies of social movements, arguably part of a broader disregard of public opinion in the field (Burstein 1998; McAdam and Su 2002).

This disregard is puzzling since activists and social movement scholars often see changing the hearts and minds of the public as a key element in movement success. Affecting public opinion is central to mobilization by and for immigrants, both to challenge negative public perceptions of “illegal” immigrants and to get voters behind legislative action on immigration reform.

Social movement scholars who have considered the “public sphere” have primarily analyzed claims articulated in mass media by social movement actors, their opponents, and political elites. These media studies describe an amorphous public sphere that is an audience to the “playing field” or a “gallery” of discursive contestation (Koopmans et al. 2005, 18–21; Ferree et al. 2002, 10–12). Ironically, given interest in framing as an agentic and creative enterprise, cross-national studies of media discourse identify strong national patterns in immigration claims-making (Koopmans et al. 2005) and abortion politics (Ferree et al. 2002), which researchers attribute to differences in “opportunity structures” of political institutions and national discursive norms. Discursive opportunity structures help explain cross-national variation, but they imply structural forces such that only a few frames “win” in a society, irrespective of subgroups in an audience. We posit that subgroups within the public sphere matter, especially in single-country analyses, and we seek to conceptualize and measure this possibility. Research already shows that frames that persuade some people to become or remain activists can be counterproductive for winning the support of others (McVeigh, Myers, and Sikkink 2004; McCammon 2012). The “public” is a heterogeneous category.

How and why might frames resonate differently for distinct subgroups? Common categorizations in sociology, by gender, class, age, or ethnicity, might matter to the extent that such subgroups have common interests or experiences that shape worldviews. We know, for example, that younger Americans are more favorable to legalization of undocumented immigrants than older citizens, perhaps because they grew up in more diverse schools, with more multicultural curricula, and with greater pluralism in popular culture and media. It is not clear, however, whether such generational differences mean that particular framing debates resonate differently for younger and older Americans. Indeed, wide variation in interests and experiences exists *within* common sociological categories; women, for instance, might embrace progressive or conservative causes, or not be interested in politics at all. Whether membership in a subgroup acts as a prism, refracting the impact of messages articulated by social movements, is an open question.

In exploring subgroup resonance, we pay particular attention to political ideologies. Drawing on Jost, Federico, and Napier (2009, 309), we consider these to be shared mental frameworks that help interpret the world as it is and envision it as it should be. Viewed cognitively, political ideologies can filter frames by increasing resistance to disconfirming information (Sniderman and Bullock 2004; Sniderman and Levendusky 2007), or by providing reasoned principles to make sense of public debates (Chong and Druckman 2007). But political ideologies are also about values, and thus can tap into morality and emotions, a link that is receiving increased attention from social and political psychologists as well as sociologists of culture (Graham, Haidt, and Nosek 2009; Jost, Federico, and Napier 2009; Miles and Vaisey 2015). We are agnostic on the vigorous debate

over the sources of political ideology, be it from membership in political parties, deep-seated personality traits, or socialized notions of morality. Instead, we focus on the *consequences* of ideological differences for refracting the influence of frames used in the immigrant rights movement.

## Framing in the Immigrant Rights Movement

The frames put forth by opponents and supporters of immigrants have varied depending on the social and political context of the day. Historically, immigrants were depicted as courageous settlers of the Western frontier, dangerous radicals and anarchists, or racially suspect foreigners. To identify frames that may resonate with the contemporary public, we draw on empirical accounts of the present-day immigrant rights movement.<sup>3</sup> The movement arguably began in California when immigrants and advocates rallied to oppose the 1994 ballot initiative, Proposition 187, which sought to bar undocumented migrants from healthcare, public education, and other social services. The most dramatic collective, non-institutional action occurred in 2006 when 3.5 to 5 million people took to the streets to protest a House bill that would have criminalized being undocumented (Voss and Bloemraad 2011). Since then, young undocumented migrants and the children of deported parents have engaged in high-profile protest, from stopping vehicles leaving detention centers to initiating hunger strikes. From this activism, we examine framing contests centered on three domains: rights, economics, and the family.

### *Rights for Whom? Civil and Human Right Frames*

A “rights frame” stands out among the small set of identifiable “master” frames: a frame sufficiently elastic, flexible, and inclusive to be deployed by many social movements and holding particular cultural relevance (Benford and Snow 2000, 619). As Snow and Benford argue, the civil rights movement articulated a resonant master frame around “the ideal of equal rights and opportunities regardless of ascribed characteristics” (1992, 146), one adopted by subsequent movements. Indeed, what is sometimes referred to as a generic “rights” frame was, in the US context, initially termed the “civil rights” master frame (Morris 1999; Snow and Benford 1992), a touchstone that continues to inspire activists, including those promoting immigrant rights. For example, in 2003, two labor unions, UNITE HERE and SEIU, organized cross-country bus rides under the banner of “Immigrant Worker Freedom Rides,” drawing parallels to the cause, tactics, and language of black and white activists who protested segregation in 1961 by riding buses in the South (Bloemraad, Voss, and Lee 2011, 24). Contemporary activists assume that appeals to civil rights traditions will build support for immigrants because such appeals resonate with the American public.

We worry, however, that a broad “rights” label elides a critical distinction between civil rights frames (and laws) and human rights frames (and laws). “Civil rights” are embedded in a particular American set of institutions (the Constitution, judicial review) and an implicit appeal to a narrative of US citizenship. Scholars of US social movements have often assumed the protesting *citizen* in



their theoretical and empirical accounts, excavating how appeals to the Constitution and rights animate social movements. Although rights need not be linked to citizenship (Soysal 1994), appeals to equal rights and social inclusion are, we posit, deeply fraught for noncitizens, who may not be seen as legitimate members of the polity (Nicholls 2013; Yukich 2013).<sup>4</sup> Indeed, opponents of the 2006 immigration rallies sought to portray protestors as anti-American, criticizing the display of “foreign” flags by marchers and underscoring nationality-based us/them distinctions.

Human “rights” offer an alternative framing: they are moral and philosophical claims to values based on human dignity and equality (Merry et al. 2010), irrespective of citizenship or birthplace. Research in Europe and Japan suggests that human rights appeals can offer advocates a discursive and legal framework to advance immigrant rights (Gurowitz 1999; Soysal 1994). This might also be the case in the United States. In 2006, marchers waved placards with slogans like “No human being is illegal,” calling on human rights values. Indeed, Sassen (2006) contends that a human rights frame is the best way to understand claim-making in the 2006 protests.

If rights constitute a master frame in the United States, they should resonate broadly, for everyone, irrespective of subgroup membership. Alternatively, research on the moral foundations of individuals’ worldviews suggests variation in frame resonance across the political spectrum. Since conservatives are more likely than liberals to value in-group loyalty, an “American citizens first” counter-frame may generate more exclusionary positions for them (Koleva et al. 2012).

### ***“We Are Here to Work”: Economic Frames***

Advocates have long highlighted the economic contributions of immigrants, bypassing political or legal membership by accentuating membership as workers and consumers in the American economy. During the 2006 protests, banners proclaimed, “We work hard, we pay taxes,” and activists organized work stoppages and “day without a Mexican” events to highlight the centrality of immigrant labor in the US economy. Economic arguments also framed the cause of driver’s licenses for undocumented immigrants in Utah (Stewart 2012) and the federal DREAM Act (Nicholls 2013). Underscoring immigrants’ economic contributions shifts membership claims away from formal legal status, and feeds into long-standing notions of the “good” American. As Shklar (1991) argues, earning and controlling one’s labor signals social standing and garners public respect. It seems plausible, due to the political and cultural resonance of economic contributions, that frames tapping this could shift public opinion relative to other frames.

Opponents counter by claiming that immigrants threaten the jobs and wages of American workers, especially those at the bottom of the labor market. Such arguments are often hypothesized to resonate most with low-income groups most vulnerable to wage competition, a hypothesis animating much of the political science literature on immigration attitudes (for a review, see Hainmueller and Hopkins [2014]). If correct, such groups should be less likely to support immigrant legalization when exposed to economic framings. Other research focuses on political ideology rather than financial situation, suggesting that liberals are

more likely than conservatives to believe immigration has positive economic consequences (Sides and Citrin 2007); accordingly, liberals may be persuaded by frames that emphasize immigrants' economic contributions, while conservatives may react to depictions of immigrants as an economic threat.

### ***Keeping Families Together: Family Frames***

Economic and some rights frames appeal to deliberative judgment. But as Stewart (2012) argues, reasoned cognition can easily falter against emotion-laden appeals. Emotive framing is typical in activists' appeals to family unity in the face of deportation. Changes to federal immigration law in the mid-1990s expanded the grounds of deportation and reduced judicial discretion. Emotional language of families torn apart also gained prominence in the highly publicized activism of Elvira Arellano, an undocumented Mexican migrant who sought sanctuary from deportation in her Chicago church, and who involved her young US-born son in her activism (Pallares and Flores-González 2011). During the 2006 protests, participants linked family unity and American values; as one activist put it, "we're saying family reunification is about American values" (Martinez 2011, 134). After 2006, as deportations climbed in the Bush and Obama presidencies, more advocates underscored the harms of deportation for those living with undocumented family members, including US-born children (e.g., Chaudry et al. 2010; Dreby 2012).

The family unity frame casts immigrants as parents and family members, which draws a circle of membership around those in the home and not just in the labor market, irrespective of citizenship. Existing research, on both immigration and emotions in social movements, hints that this frame might be more powerful in shifting public opinion than cognitive appeals to economic contributions or rights. In considering subgroups, the resonance of family framing contests could vary by marital status, gender, and political ideology. For example, given appeals to family values as a core political and moral touchstone of conservatives, perhaps this segment of the public will respond more strongly to a family unity frame than economic or rights-based ones.

### ***Other Frames and Voices***

These frames do not exhaust the discursive appeals made by movement supporters and opponents. Opponents have shifted from framing immigrants as a drain on government services to labeling them as criminals and potential terrorists (Dowling and Inda 2013; Stewart 2012). Movement advocates combat this frame with portrayals of law-abiding immigrants (Yukich 2013). We incorporate such framing battles into our survey experiment by using the term "illegal" in question wording, and we specify that legalization would follow "background checks."<sup>5</sup> Our decision to focus on contests employing economics, rights, and family frames partly stems from a desire to evaluate the contention by Bloemraad, Voss, and Lee (2011) that the most resonant frames in 2006 were those that centered on American values of family and work. They suggest that frames using the language of human or civil rights found limited resonance: "The American public ... need[s]



immigrants to make appeals to their Americanism” (Bloemraad, Voss, and Lee 2011, 5). If valid, this assessment carries important implications for understanding how social movement actors can (and cannot) effectively frame immigrant “rights,” as well as the parameters that shape—and constrain—the ongoing contest over membership and belonging in the United States.

## Data and Methods

To evaluate framing resonance, we embedded an experiment in an Internet survey of registered California voters conducted in May 2013.<sup>6</sup> California is an ideal site given the saliency of immigration since the early 1990s. The proportion of immigrants living in California—27 percent of all residents—is the highest in the country, and the state is home to the nation’s largest undocumented population (Passel, Cohn, and Gonzalez-Barrera 2013). Because comprehensive immigration reform must go through the formal political system, passing both houses in Congress and garnering the president’s signature, voters’ opinions are important for the success of the movement.

We used a random subsample of 1,935 respondents for our experiment. Respondents compare well to the full population of California registered voters, as reported by the California secretary of state. Among California’s registered voters, 44 percent are Democrats and 29 percent are Republicans; the percentages in the subsample were 46 and 28 percent, respectively. We find similar correspondence with a Field poll probability sample of registered voters conducted in September 2012 for gender, party registration, and education (see table 1). Participants in our survey were, however, more likely to be born in the United States, to be younger, and less likely to be married than Field poll estimates, differences that may reflect who has access to and feels comfortable with computer-based technology. For our purposes, these modest limitations are not a serious concern since our experiment leverages random assignment *within* the sample to examine framing effects on public opinion.<sup>7</sup> By administering the survey over the Internet, we avoid interviewer effects and minimize social desirability bias compared to other modes of survey administration (Holbrook and Krosnick 2010), real concerns for a study of immigration attitudes (Janus 2010).<sup>8</sup>

## Dependent Variables

Our main outcomes are attitudes about legalization and access to public benefits. These dependent variables build on distinct concepts of membership, as either territorial access and status in the polity or the benefits open to those living in the country (Bloemraad, Korteweg, and Yurdakul 2008; Bosniak 2006; Joppke 2010).<sup>9</sup> For the former, respondents were asked whether illegal immigrants who could pass a background check should be offered permanent legal status in the United States with a path to citizenship, permanent legal status without a path to citizenship, or no change in legal status.<sup>10</sup> Substantively, these choices reflected the three main legislative options debated at the time. Conceptually, the question taps views on the most basic element of national membership, namely the right to residence and citizenship status.

**Table 1. Comparison of Selected Characteristics of Sample with 2012 Field Poll of California Registered Voters**

	Framing experiment (May 2013)	Field poll (September 2012)
<b>Party registration</b>		
Democratic	46%	46%
Republican	28%	31%
Nonpartisan/Decline to state	17%	18%
Other	9%	5%
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	45%	49%
Female	55%	51%
<b>Age</b>		
18–24	16%	11%
25–34	18%	15%
35–49	19%	19%
50–64	31%	24%
65 & over	16%	30%
<b>Education</b>		
High school or less	15%	19%
Some college	37%	33%
College degree	31%	26%
Graduate or professional Degree	17%	21%
<b>Marital status</b>		
Single, never married	34%	29%
Married	43%	56%
Separated/divorced/widowed	19%	14%
Domestic partnership	5%	–
No answer	–	1%
<b>Birthplace</b>		
In the US	93%	83%
Outside the US	7%	17%
<b>Race/Ethnicity<sup>a</sup></b>		
White	65%	
African American	6%	
Asian	9%	
Latino	15%	
Other	6%	
<i>N</i>	1,935	1,183

<sup>a</sup>The race/ethnicity questions are not comparable between these surveys because the ethnicity (Hispanic/not Hispanic) is asked separately from race in the Field poll.

Immediately following, respondents were asked which groups of people should be allowed to access seven publicly provided benefits: access to public elementary and high schools; in-state tuition for public colleges and universities; social security benefits for those who work and their families; emergency healthcare; Medicare and Medicaid; food stamps; and welfare benefits.<sup>11</sup> For each benefit, respondents were asked whether it should be available to US citizens only (0), available to US citizens and all legal immigrants (1), or available to US citizens and all immigrants, both legal and illegal (2).<sup>12</sup> We sum responses to create an Access to Public Benefits index (APB index), ranging from 0 to 14 (Cronbach's  $\alpha = 0.91$ ).<sup>13</sup> The APB index measures the openness in boundaries demarcating “insiders” who are allowed to receive taxpayer-provided benefits from “outsiders” denied access (in essence, a benefits chauvinism index). Higher values indicate greater support for immigrant access to benefits.

### **Experimental Design**

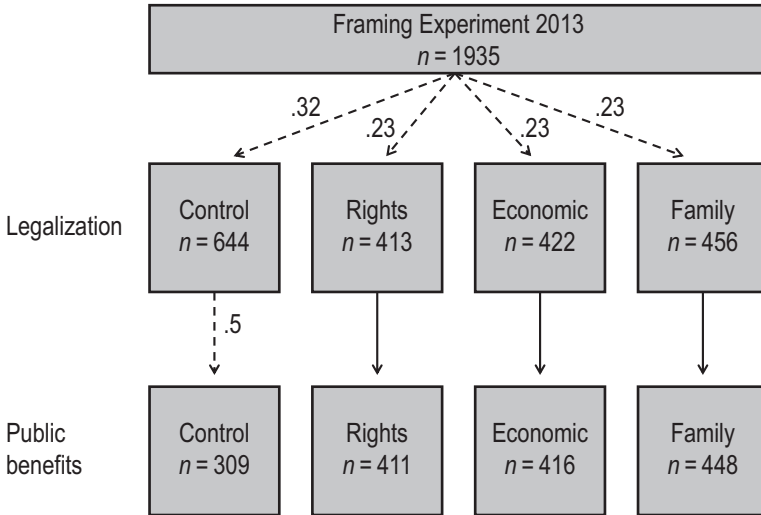
Survey participants were randomly assigned to one of three framing debates—over human rights/US citizenship, economics, or family—or to the control condition. By design, the probability of being assigned to the control condition (.32) was higher than the probability of being assigned to one of the three treatments (.23). The primary treatment consisted of a phrase inserted into the legalization question. The control condition did not include an additional phrase. The three phrases were as follows:

- Some say we need to protect everyone’s human rights, even illegal immigrants, while others say we need to protect the rights of US citizens first and foremost.
- Some say such immigrants contribute to economic growth, while others say that illegal immigrants take American jobs.
- Some say illegal immigrant parents should be deported to their homeland, while others say that we should keep families together.

We thus offered both a “pro” and a “con” argument centered on three domains: rights, economics, and the family. We structured questions in this way to recognize that framing contests are precisely that—advocates and opponents articulate competing claims. Often survey research on priming effects tests only one frame to see how public opinion shifts; we contend that the external validity of framing effects is stronger with bidirectional frames (see also [Sniderman and Theriault \[2004\]](#); [Chong and Druckman \[2007\]](#), 112–14).

Respondents were subsequently presented with the public benefits questions. All respondents in the three treatment conditions were prompted to answer the benefits questions, as were half of respondents in the control condition (see figure 1). To underscore the frames, respondents in the treatment conditions read one of three parallel introductory phrases, prior to the public benefits questions:

- Given the debate about citizenship and human rights...
- Given the debate about illegal immigrants and the economy...
- Given the debate about illegal immigrant families...

**Figure 1. Overview of experimental design**

**Note:** Solid lines indicate that all participants who received the treatment in the legalization question also received the treatment in the set of public benefits questions. The number next to the dashed lines is the probability that a respondent in the preceding group was randomly selected to the subsequent group.

### **Additional Variables**

The survey captured additional information about the respondents. We do not use these data to model outcomes, since respondents were randomly allocated to framing treatments or the control condition. Variables likely to correlate with our outcomes, such as political ideology, should be balanced (subject to chance variability) across the control and treatment groups.<sup>14</sup> Instead, we use these variables to conduct subgroup analyses of how frame resonance might vary, in strength and direction, among different types of people. Existing scholarship finds that attributes such as age, education, ethnicity, and political ideology influence opinion on immigration (Ceobanu and Escandell 2010; Citrin and Sides 2008; Hainmueller and Hiscox 2010). What we do not know is whether and how much these particular attributes *interact* with social movement frames. Are women more likely to respond to language that primes family concerns, or are people with lower income more likely to shift their opinion in the face of economic frames?

To evaluate how frames may interact with individual characteristics, we focus on age, ethnicity, nativity, gender, education, income, marital status, religiosity, and political ideology.<sup>15</sup> These are key attributes identified in research on attitudes toward immigration and/or public benefits. We are particularly interested in political ideology since we hypothesize that the effect of framing battles will be refracted by one's orientation to the political world. Political ideology was initially measured using respondents' self-placement on a 1 to 7 scale, ranging from strong liberal to strong conservative. We recode this variable into "liberals" (1–2), "moderates" (3–5), and "conservatives" (6–7).<sup>16</sup> Under a quarter (23 percent) of survey respondents are liberals, 59 percent are moderates, and 18 percent are conservatives.

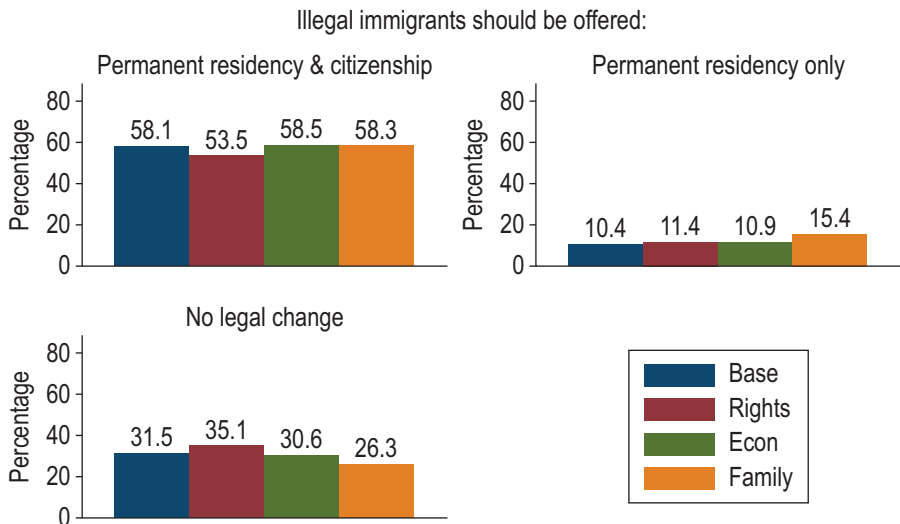
## Analytic Approach

To model support for legalization, we use the partial proportional odds model, a special case of the generalized ordered logit (Williams 2006). Unlike the ordered logit model, the partial proportional odds model does not assume proportional odds, namely that the effect of an independent variable on the odds of being in a higher rather than a lower category is the same for all outcome categories. If the partial proportional odds assumption is not met for a given independent variable at  $p < .05$ , we allow its coefficients to vary across dependent-variable thresholds. Substantively, this allows us to consider situations in which a particular framing affects the odds of support for extending permanent residency, with or without citizenship, over the status quo, without assuming the same effect on the odds of favoring a path to citizenship over just permanent residency or the status quo.<sup>17</sup> To model support for the APB index, we use ordinary least squares regression.

## Results: Frame Resonance and Legalization

A majority of California registered voters in our study support permanent residency and a path to citizenship for undocumented immigrants (ranging from 53.5 to 58.5 percent across the frames). However, a substantial minority (26.3 to 35.1 percent) supports the status quo, while a smaller group (10.4 to 15.4 percent) supports restricted legalization—permanent residency without a path to citizenship (figure 2). These results roughly echo national polls conducted in spring 2013: similar proportions opposed legalization; among those who favor

**Figure 2. Percentage of respondents answering that illegal immigrants should be offered permanent residency and citizenship, permanent residency but no citizenship, or no legal change, by framing contest**



legalization, a somewhat higher proportion of Californians support a path to citizenship.<sup>18</sup>

### ***Frame Resonance: Rights, Economics, and Families***

How do these attitudes vary by framing contest? Respondents exposed to a rights framing are least supportive of immigrant legalization, those exposed to a family framing are most supportive, and respondents exposed to an economics framing hardly differ from those in the control group. The variation across experimental conditions is, however, fairly minor. Compared to the control group, only the effect of the family framing achieves marginal statistical significance ( $p = .06$ ).<sup>19</sup> Individuals exposed to the family framing contest are more likely to support some type of legalization (74 versus 69 percent), but no more likely to support a path to citizenship.

### ***Subgroups and Frame Resonance: The Importance of Political Ideology***

Effects in the full sample—conceptually understood as an undifferentiated “public”—may obscure heterogeneity across subgroups, however. Individual attributes matter for legalization preferences. African Americans and Latinos are more supportive of legalization than white respondents; for example, 71 percent of Latinos back a path to citizenship (see table A1). We also see modest differences by age, marital status, and income. In contrast, we find few differences in opinion based on religiosity, gender, birthplace, or education. Differences by political ideology are striking: 78 percent of liberals support a path to citizenship, compared to 57 percent of moderates, and only 32 percent of conservatives. Are certain subgroups of people swayed more by one framing battle than another?

We find that the type of framing contest matters most depending on respondents’ political ideology. Viewed as an undifferentiated public, the effect of exposure to rights framings was statistically insignificant. However, as table 2 reveals, a framing contest between human rights and the rights of US citizens affects the views of political moderates, and the effect is statistically significant.<sup>20</sup> Compared to the control condition, rights framings increase moderates’ predicted probability of supporting the status quo by 10 points—from 28 to 38 percent—while moderates’ predicted likelihood of supporting a path to citizenship, 61 percent in the control condition, falls to 49 percent in the rights condition (figure 3). Invoking human rights does not open greater access to membership; instead, mentioning US citizenship makes moderates less favorable to legalization.

The economic framing contest does not, however, have a statistically significant effect on legalization attitudes among liberals, moderates, or conservatives. This is perhaps surprising given that liberals, moderates, and conservatives hold differing views on the economic consequences of immigration: 63 percent of liberals in the survey believe providing undocumented immigrants with a chance to become US citizens would strengthen the US economy; only 43 percent of moderates and 22 percent of conservatives hold this opinion. The null resonance effect suggests that voters do not respond to immigration primarily as an economic



**Table 2. Ordered (partial proportional odds) Regressions on Support for More or Less Expansive Immigrant Legalization Options, by Political Ideology and Framing Contest**

	Liberal		Moderate		Conservative	
	> No change	> Permanent, no citizenship	> No change	> Permanent, no citizenship	> No change	> Permanent, no citizenship
<i>(Ref: Base)</i>						
Rights	0.474 (0.347)	0.474 (0.347)	-0.469** <sup>a</sup> (0.167)	-0.469** <sup>a</sup> (0.167)	0.220 (0.306)	0.220 (0.306)
Economic	-0.004 (0.317)	-0.004 (0.317)	-0.114 (0.172)	-0.114 (0.172)	0.379 (0.297)	0.379 (0.297)
Family	-0.183 (0.312)	-0.183 (0.312)	0.051 (0.177)	-0.251 (0.163)	0.984** <sup>b</sup> (0.307)	0.984** <sup>b</sup> (0.307)
Constant	1.864** (0.223)	1.232** (0.206)	0.941** (0.112)	0.444** (0.108)	-0.549** (0.196)	-1.102** (0.203)
N	420		1,055		317	

Standard errors in parentheses.

\*\* $p < .01$  (two-tailed tests)

Coefficients from the two thresholds are identical when the proportional odds assumption is met at the  $p < .05$  level.

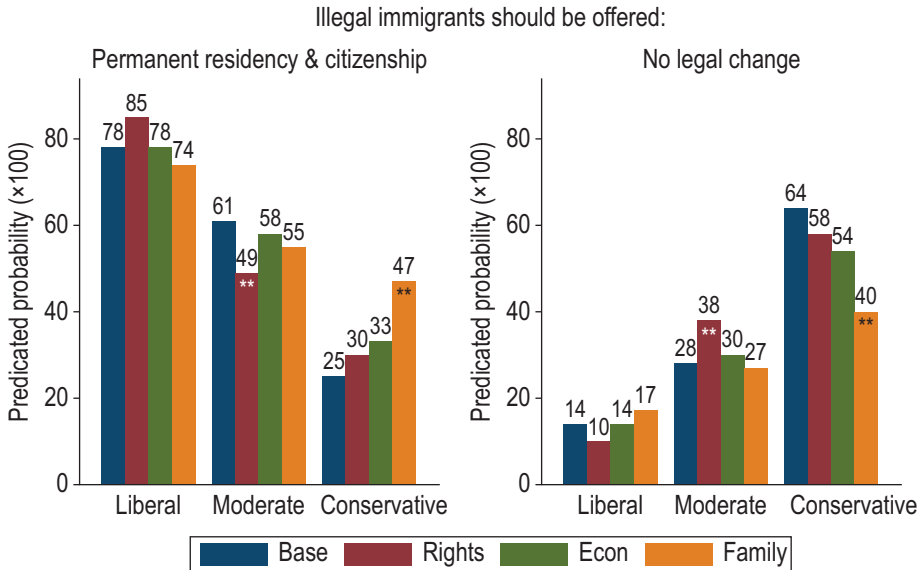
<sup>a</sup>The interaction between being moderate, rather than liberal or conservative, and the rights framing contest, compared to the base condition is significant ( $p < .01$ ). Given difficulties interpreting differences in the effects of variables across groups in logistic models, we confirmed that the interaction is also significant at  $p < .01$  using OLS regression.

<sup>b</sup>The interaction between being conservative, rather than liberal or moderate, and the family framing contest, compared to the base condition is significant ( $p < .05$ ). Given difficulties interpreting differences in the effects of variables across groups in logistic models, we confirmed that the interaction is also significant at  $p < .05$  using OLS regression.

issue, a conclusion also reached by others (Sides and Citrin 2007; Schneider 2008). The null result could also be a sign of a stalemate in economic framing battles.

Finally, we find that the positive effect of the family framing on support for legalization in the full sample is driven by changes in conservatives' opinions. Conservatives are more supportive of legalization and a path to citizenship when exposed to the family framing contest compared to the control condition: the predicted probability of supporting the status quo falls sharply, from 64 to 40 percent. Additionally, although full-sample analysis showed no statistically significant change in the percentage of individuals willing to support a path to citizenship, among conservatives, the predicted probability of supporting this option increases from 25 to 47 percent. The family framing effect is especially strong among conservative women: their predicted probability of supporting the status quo falls from 65 to 28 percent, and their predicted probability of supporting a path to citizenship increases from 24 to 59 percent as compared to the control condition. Opinion among liberals and moderates (even if restricted to women)

**Figure 3. Predicted probability of supporting permanent residency and a path to citizenship, or no legal change, by political ideology and framing contest**



**Note:** Based on table 2.

\*\* $p < .01$  (two-tailed tests)

is not significantly different in the family condition than the control condition. If gender affects frame resonance, it appears limited to conservatives.

Beyond political ideology, we examined whether categorizations such as grouping people by ethno-racial background, education, and the like reveal distinct patterns of frame resonance. To our surprise, alternate subgroup specifications mattered little, and they were much less consequential than political ideology.<sup>21</sup> We do not mean that other subgroups do not matter for opinion on legalization—as we indicate above, Latinos are among the most supportive of a pathway to citizenship—but rather, the effects of distinct framing contests and, by extension, frame resonance, do not differ in statistically significant ways across subgroups. Men and (most) women respond to the family or rights frame in similar ways, as do people of different ethno-racial and education backgrounds. The big story is that the prism of political ideology refracts framing effects in distinct directions.

## Results: Frame Resonance and Access to Public Benefits

A large majority of those in our sample do *not* believe that illegal immigrants should have access to public elementary and high schools, in-state tuition to public colleges and universities, social security for workers and their families, emergency healthcare, Medicare and Medicaid, food stamps, or welfare benefits (table 3). Although the level of support does vary by benefit—43 percent of respondents in the base condition support access to emergency health services for

**Table 3. Percentage Answering That Only Citizens, Citizens and Legal Immigrants, or All Individuals Deserve Access to the Following Benefits, by Framing Contest**

	Base	Rights	Economic	Family
<b>Public schools</b>				
Citizens only	11.7	11	15.4	11.2
Citizens & legal	58.9	57.4	51	56.4
All	29.5	31.6	33.7	32.4
<b>In-state tuition</b>				
Citizens only	25.9	23.4	26.9	26.6
Citizens & legal	60.8	62.3	59.6	62.7
All	13.3	14.4	13.5	10.7
<b>Social security</b>				
Citizens only	35.9	34.3	36.8	36.2
Citizens & legal	56.3	55.7	52.4	55.1
All	7.8	10	10.8	8.7
<b>Emergency healthcare</b>				
Citizens only	12.6	11.9	11.5	11.2
Citizens & legal	44.3	41.9	38.2	41.7
All	43	46.2	50.2	47.1
<b>Medicare and Medicaid</b>				
Citizens only	36.9	31.4	31.7	33.9
Citizens & legal	52.8	56.2	56.3	54.7
All	10.4	12.4	12	11.4
<b>Food stamps</b>				
Citizens only	35.9	31.9	33.7	34.2
Citizens & legal	51.1	54.5	52.2	54.5
All	12.9	13.6	14.2	11.4
<b>Welfare</b>				
Citizens only	40.1	37	38	38.4
Citizens & legal	50.8	52.8	52.9	54
All	9.1	10.2	9.1	7.6
N	309	411	416	448 <sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup>One respondent in the family treatment condition did not answer the “public schools” question, for a total *N* of 447.

everyone, including illegal immigrants, while only 9 percent support access to welfare benefits for all—support for universal access rarely surpasses 13 percent. In contrast, almost 70 percent of voters support legalization. The difference is consistent with the idea that legal status and access to benefits are distinct facets of societal membership in the minds of voters, or evoke distinct notions of “deservingness.”<sup>22</sup>

### **Frame Resonance: Rights, Economics, and Families**

How do framing contests influence views on benefits? The short answer is that they matter very little in the undifferentiated sample. The coefficients for all three frames are positive compared to the control condition, but they are small; all imply a change in the APB index of less than 5 percent, and none are statistically significant.

### **Subgroup Analysis: The Continued Importance of Political Ideology**

As with legalization, demographic variables affect views on extending public benefits to immigrants, and they are largely consistent with earlier results. Liberals support more expansive positions on both legalization and access to benefits. African Americans and Latinos are less supportive of restricting immigrants' access to public benefits, compared to white respondents. Younger respondents are more likely to support inclusionary benefits than older ones.<sup>23</sup> Such variation does not, however, mean that frames will resonate differently across attributes. Indeed, framing effects vary little across demographic, social, or economic subgroups, in line with the legalization findings.<sup>24</sup> Thus, frame resonance does not seem to differ across social categories traditionally of interest to sociologists.

Political ideology is, again, an exception. Among liberals, rights framings increase support for immigrant access to public benefits by 17 percent, a statistically significant effect (see table 4 and figure 4). In contrast, as with legalization, moderates move to a more exclusionary position when exposed to rights framings, but the effect is small (less than a 5 percent decline in the APB index) and

**Table 4. Linear Regressions on Support for Immigrant Access to Public Benefits (APB index), by Political Ideology and Framing Contest**

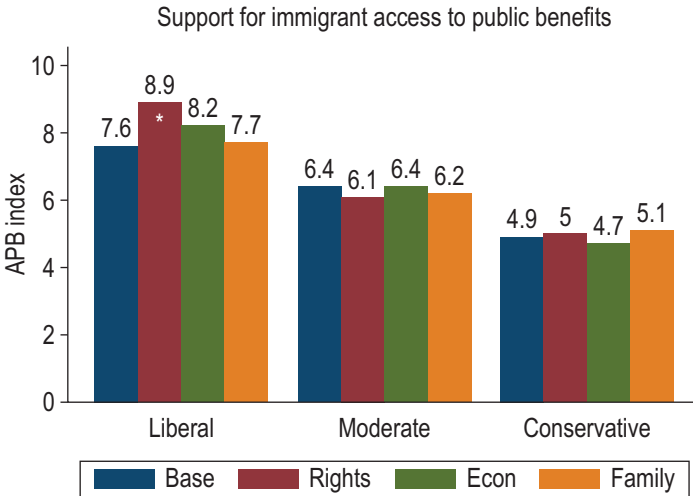
	Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
<i>(Ref: Base)</i>			
Rights	1.318* <sup>a</sup> (0.597)	-0.304 (0.354)	0.129 (0.546)
Economic	0.616 (0.598)	-0.018 (0.355)	-0.232 (0.538)
Family	0.140 (0.603)	-0.229 (0.338)	0.194 (0.560)
Constant	7.559** (0.472)	6.396** (0.265)	4.885** (0.399)
N	347	869	269

Standard errors in parentheses.

\* $p < .05$  \*\* $p < .01$  (two-tailed tests)

<sup>a</sup>The interaction between being liberal, rather than moderate, and the rights framing contest, compared to the base condition is significant ( $p < .05$ ).

**Figure 4. Support for immigrant access to public benefits (index), by political ideology and framing contest**



**Note:** Based on table 4.

\* $p < .05$  (two-tailed test)

insignificant. For conservatives, the effect of rights framings is positive, but also insignificant and small (less than 3 percent increase in the index). Surprisingly, respondents' evaluation of the importance of human rights does not affect the resonance of the rights framing. Liberals are much more likely to say human rights are extremely important (71 percent, compared to 54 and 43 percent for moderates and conservatives, respectively), but the difference does not explain liberals' greater responsiveness to rights framings. Instead, liberals may be put off or less responsive to the "American citizens first" counter-frame, relative to moderates and conservatives. Conversely, while a "citizens first" counter-frame may push moderates to take a harder stance on legalization, opinion on benefits might be influenced more by notions of deservingness linked to racialized framings of recipients (Fox 2004; Gilens 1999).

Neither economic nor family framing contests have a substantive or statistically significant effect on liberals', moderates', or conservatives' views on who should access benefits. This is surprising given the strong effect of family framings on conservatives' support for legalization. It is plausible that conservatives' disapproval of public benefits is more deeply entrenched than their beliefs about legalization or, put differently, that the family unity frame resonates more strongly when considering the deportation of parents rather than access to benefits paid by tax dollars.

## Concluding Discussion

While many sociologists, political theorists, and activists hope that appeals to human rights can expand the circle of membership, our findings suggest that such a frame does not help the immigrant rights movement build support for

legalization among California registered voters. Indeed, a framing contest that juxtaposes human rights and the rights of US citizens makes political moderates less inclined to support legalization than asking the question without any rights language. This finding is in line with qualitative analyses by Bloemraad, Voss, and Lee (2011) and Nichols (2013), who posit that immigrant claims-making finds resonance only to the extent that activists can argue immigrants are already “de facto” Americans. If membership is understood as access to publicly provided benefits, then rights framing moves opinion in a more inclusionary direction only among those we might expect to be sympathetic: self-identified political liberals.

In contrast, and perhaps surprisingly given their prevalence in public debate, economic framings of immigration do little to sway liberals, moderates, or conservatives, whether we ask about legal status or access to benefits (see also Hainmueller and Hiscox [2010]; Harell et al. [2012]). Perhaps economic arguments do not tap sufficiently strong emotional or moral responses to sway opinion, or voters already take these widely available economic arguments into account in forming their opinions. It is possible that a uni-directional prime, presenting only a “pro” or “con” economic frame, might resonate more, but one-sided arguments do not reflect the framing battles that occur in public debate.

The most expansive change in attitudes, toward support for legalization of undocumented migrants, occurred using a family unity frame, but this frame resonates primarily among self-identified conservatives. This result is noteworthy given that activists often target the “moveable middle” of public opinion rather than ideological poles. Yet, it might be that those at the poles, precisely because they are more invested in a political worldview, find certain frames especially resonant. The LGBT movement’s success using the language of marriage equality hints at a more broadly applicable lesson about the resonance of “family” discourses among the American public. However, family framing does not produce a more expansive orientation on the question of who can access public benefits, among conservatives or others across the political spectrum. Perhaps a family frame gives rise to connotations of welfare mothers and dependency, canceling any positive emotional valence of “family” for conservatives. Since the politics of public benefits in the United States are also sensitive to racialized framings (Fox 2004; Gilens 1999), future research should explore how racial framings may interact with economic, family, or rights appeals for immigrants.

Beyond political ideology, we were surprised to find virtually no differences in framing resonance across subgroups traditionally of interest to sociologists, such as those distinguished by gender, ethno-racial background, or income. Being a member of such subgroups helps predict attitudes on legalization and access to benefits, but framing contests do not appear to sway opinion differently across the groups. The lack of variation could be a product of the competing frames used in the survey experiment, since exposure to competing frames reduces effects, even as it more realistically mimics actual political debate (Sniderman and Theriault 2004). In this respect, the set of robust and significant effects we do find for political ideology stands out, indicating that differential frame resonance might lie in cognitive, normative, or moral beliefs that come with these ideologies.



Future research should probe possible mechanisms behind frame resonance by political ideology.

Future research should also seek to replicate and extend our findings. Political ideology likely affects frame resonance among registered voters, who constituted our sample, more than among the nonvoting population; presumably, the latter are less invested in political worldviews. Nonvoters are, however, less likely to influence decision-makers in Congress who must vote on immigration reform or state legislators voting on who can access benefits. Resonance dynamics might also vary across the United States, though we have no reason to think that political ideology is more or less of a prism for framing effects in California than other states. If political ideology provides a worldview generating differential frame resonance, religiosity might operate in a similar way, although we found no variation by frequency of religious attendance. Nevertheless, alternative measures of religiosity should be investigated.

Our research also illustrates how survey experiments, as a methodological tool, can be productive in studying social movement framing. Application to other movements would help us understand the extent to which claims-making in the name of noncitizens differs from that of the citizen-protesters assumed by much social movement theory.

Finally, our results suggest a correction to, or at least caution about, existing theorizing on rights frames and social movements in the United States. The rights “master” frame, articulated powerfully in the civil rights movement and later borrowed by almost every American social movement, may be inaccessible to noncitizens, at least in the minds of many in the public. Moreover, the framings investigated here resonate with—at best—one political subgroup of the American public and, dauntingly, framing contests that resonate with one group sometimes alienate others. Our research consequently underscores the challenges activists confront when making claims for the legalization, social inclusion, and membership of immigrants and undocumented residents in the United States.

## Notes

1. European researchers have long conceptualized immigrants as “challengers” or political outsiders who need non-electoral collective action to make their voices heard (e.g., Koopmans et al. 2005).
2. Although labor movements like the United Farm Workers included immigrants, immigrant advocacy was not front and center among their concerns. The movement’s start could plausibly be dated to around the 1982 Supreme Court *Plyer v. Doe* decision, guaranteeing undocumented children access to K–12 public schools, or to legislative efforts behind the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act, which legalized about 3 million migrants. However, *Plyer* and IRCA were, on balance, elite-driven efforts fought in courtrooms and the backrooms of Congress, not through mass mobilization.
3. Grounding our frames in social movement activity seems obvious, but this approach is rare among public opinion researchers.

4. By “noncitizen,” we mean those who lack a formal, legal status as a citizen or national and who can, therefore, be deported. We highlight noncitizenship out of a concern that assumptions about the inclusive nature of rights frames ignore how citizenship creates social and legal closure against those outside its boundaries (Bosniak 2006; Joppke 2010). We recognize that in US history, other groups have also been denied federal citizenship or have been “second-class” citizens without certain rights.
5. In what follows, we use “illegal” when discussing the survey questions and “undocumented” otherwise. We do not test the effect of using “illegal” in question wording; prior research indicates limited effects on public attitudes whether one uses “illegal,” “unauthorized,” or “undocumented” (Merolla, Ramakrishnan, and Haynes 2013).
6. Respondents were recruited by Survey Sampling International via opt-in recruitment methods.
7. We tested whether results are robust to these sample limitations. Framing contests affect respondents of different age groups and nativity similarly. Our main findings are also robust to the statistically significant interaction between the family framing contest and marital status.
8. Participant attentiveness is a concern with self-administered surveys. Two screener questions tested whether respondents read the text carefully. Seven respondents failed screener questions and were dropped. Cases with missing information on the variables used in the analyses were also deleted.
9. In US courts, what might be a legitimate exercise of sovereignty to exclude or remove noncitizens can be a less legitimate basis for allocating benefits, as in the *Plyer v. Doe* Supreme Court decision about the right to a public school education. We wondered whether respondents would make such distinctions.
10. The full text of the question for the control condition is “There is a lot of discussion about changing the legal status of the approximately 11 million illegal immigrants now living in the US. Should illegal immigrants who can pass a background check be offered: (1) No change in legal status; (2) Permanent legal status in the US and a chance to become citizens; or (3) Permanent legal status in the US **but not** a chance to become citizens.” In the treatment conditions, an additional phrase was included after the first sentence. We explicitly reference 11 million “illegal” immigrants to mirror language used in public debate.
11. The legalization and public benefits questions were the first set of attitudinal questions on the survey, mitigating order effects from other questions.
12. The question in the control condition is “Now I am going to ask you about a series of public benefits, and who should be able to use them. For each, could you tell me whether it should be available to US citizens only, available to US citizens and all legal immigrants, or available to US citizens and all immigrants, both legal and illegal.”
13. Our results are robust to using the factor score derived from exploratory factor analysis (using a polychoric correlation matrix) instead of the additive index. The correlation between the factor score and the index is 0.99. Although some respondents might see certain benefits as basic human rights (e.g., emergency healthcare), and the benefits span opportunity-promoting measures (e.g., education), social insurance schemes (e.g., social security), and redistribution programs (e.g., welfare) (McCall and Kenworthy 2009), our analysis strongly suggests that the seven items belong to the same factor. The retained factor explains 96 percent of the variance in the seven public benefits and is the only factor with an eigenvalue above 1; all the benefits have factor loadings above 0.7.

14. Almost all variables used in the subgroup analyses were balanced across experimental conditions. Women are somewhat overrepresented in the control condition, and individuals with family income between \$60,000 and \$99,999 are somewhat underrepresented in the economic framing condition. All results are robust to controlling for gender and income.
15. Coding for these variables was as follows: age (18 to 24, 25 to 34, 35 to 49, 50 to 64, and 65 and over), ethnicity (white, African American, Asian, Latino, other), foreign birthplace (foreign = 1), gender (male = 1), education (high school degree or less, some college, college, postgraduate degree), income (less than \$30,000; \$30,000–59,999; \$60,000–99,999; \$100,000 and over), marital status (single, married, separated/divorced/widowed, domestic partnership), and religiosity (attend religious services once a week or more, sometimes, or almost never).
16. We prefer political ideology over partisanship since ideology better captures the idea that worldviews might provide distinct moral cues or cognitive roadmaps. Formal measures of model fit, including the Bayesian Information Criterion and McFadden's pseudo *R*-squared for model selection, also indicate better fit for ideology over partisanship, and we have less missing information for ideology than partisanship (*N* of 1,792 to 1,631, respectively, for the legalization question).
17. We use the `gologit2` (Williams 2006) command in Stata 12.1 to estimate the partial proportional odds model.
18. A national Pew Research survey, using very similar question wording, found that 43 percent of respondents favored legalization with a path to citizenship, 24 percent favored legalization without citizenship, and 27 percent opposed legalization. <http://www.people-press.org/2013/03/28/most-say-illegal-immigrants-should-be-allowed-to-stay-but-citizenship-is-more-divisive/>.
19. All analyses discussed, but not presented, are available upon request.
20. Liberals and conservatives are somewhat more supportive of legalization in the rights framing contest, but the effects are not statistically significant.
21. Only two categories had significant interactions with the framing contests. Married respondents are more supportive of immigrant legalization when exposed to the family framings; single respondents are less supportive. The marital interaction is partly accounted for by difference in political ideology. An economic framing battle, compared to the control condition, also decreases support for legalization among individuals with a family income between \$60,000 and \$99,999, while slightly increasing support for legalization among individuals with incomes under \$30,000. The result is not robust to a continuous specification of income and is inconsistent through the income scale. For these reasons, and since we would expect some statistically significant results due to chance alone with three treatments and multiple demographic and socio-economic variables, we do not make much of this result.
22. Public opinion differs from actual law and regulations. Undocumented children's access to public schools was affirmed in *Plyer*. In California, undocumented students have paid in-state college tuition since 2002. Federal law mandates emergency medical care regardless of legal status. The eligibility rules for Medicare, Medicaid, food stamps, and welfare are more complex. See Bitler and Hoynes (2013) for an overview.
23. Unlike for the legalization question, birthplace and education mattered more for opinion on benefits; the foreign born and those with graduate degrees are more supportive of greater access.
24. The one exception is Asian respondents, who are more supportive of access to public benefits when exposed to rights and economics framings; these framing contests have no statistically significant effect on white, Latinos, or black respondents.

**Table A1. Support for Various Immigrant Legalization Measures, by Selected Respondent Characteristics**

	No legal change	Permanent residency only	Permanent residency & citizenship
<b>Political ideology<sup>a</sup></b>			
Liberal	13%	9%	78%
Moderate	30%	13%	57%
Conservative	55%	13%	32%
<b>Gender</b>			
Male	30%	12%	57%
Female	31%	11%	57%
<b>Race/ethnicity<sup>a</sup></b>			
White	36%	11%	53%
African American	24%	15%	61%
Asian	26%	16%	58%
Latino	16%	13%	71%
Other	23%	9%	68%
<b>Birthplace</b>			
In the US	31%	12%	57%
Outside the US	24%	15%	61%
<b>Age<sup>a</sup></b>			
18–24	19%	15%	66%
25–34	25%	14%	61%
35–49	35%	13%	52%
50–64	35%	11%	54%
65 & over	34%	8%	58%
<b>Education</b>			
High school degree or less	27%	13%	60%
Some college	32%	11%	57%
College degree	33%	11%	56%
Graduate or professional degree	30%	12%	58%
<b>Income<sup>a</sup></b>			
< \$30,000	27%	11%	62%
\$30,000–59,999	31%	12%	58%
\$60,000–99,999	34%	12%	53%
\$100,000+	31%	11%	58%
<b>Marital status<sup>a</sup></b>			
Single, never married	25%	12%	63%
Married	35%	11%	54%
Separated/divorced/widowed	34%	10%	57%
Domestic partnership	29%	17%	54%

(Continued)

Table A1. *continued*

	No legal change	Permanent residency only	Permanent residency & citizenship
<b>Religious service attendance</b>			
At least once a week	33%	12%	55%
Sometimes	31%	13%	57%
Almost never	30%	12%	59%

<sup>a</sup>These variables have a significant effect on immigrant legalization views. Running partial proportional odds models, moderates and conservatives are significantly less supportive of immigrant legalization compared to liberals. African American, Latino, and respondents who identify as “other” are more supportive of immigrant legalization than white respondents. Respondents with family incomes between \$60,000 and \$99,999 are less supportive of immigrant legalization than those with family incomes under \$30,000. Respondents who are married, separated, divorced, or widowed are less supportive of immigrant legalization than single respondents. Respondents who are 35 and older support more restrictive immigrant legalization positions than 18- to 24-year-olds.

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**Irene Bloemraad** is Professor of Sociology and Thomas G. Barnes Chair of Canadian Studies at the University of California, Berkeley. Current research investigates civic inequality among nonprofits and the political socialization of mixed-status immigrant families. She is the author or coeditor of *Rallying for Immigrant Rights* (2011, with K. Voss), *Civic Hopes and Political Realities* (2008, with K. Ramakrishnan), and *Becoming a Citizen: Incorporating Immigrants and Refugees in the United States and Canada* (2006).

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**Kim Voss** is Professor of Sociology at the University of California, Berkeley. She is currently investigating the dilemmas facing US labor, how immigration is reshaping workers’ identities (with Fabiana Silva), and the shifting terrain of US higher education. Her books include *Rallying for Immigrant Rights* (2011, with I. Bloemraad), *Hard Work: Remaking the America Labor Movement* (2004, with R. Fantasia), *Inequality By Design* (1996, with five Berkeley colleagues), and *The Making of American Exceptionalism* (1993).

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