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Abstract

We outline four connections between xenophobia and punitiveness toward criminals in a national sample of Americans. First, among self-identified whites xenophobia is more predictive of punitiveness than specific forms of racial animus. Second, xenophobia and punitiveness are strongly connected among whites, but are only moderately and weakly related among black and Hispanic Americans, respectively. Third, among whites substantial proportions of the variance between sociodemographic, political, and religious predictors of punitiveness are mediated by levels of xenophobia. Finally, xenophobia is the strongest overall predictor of punitiveness among whites. Overall, xenophobia is an essential aspect of understanding public punitiveness, particularly among whites.

Keywords: xenophobia, immigrants, racial threat, racial animus, punitiveness, Donald Trump

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Introduction

When Donald Trump sailed down an escalator at Trump Towers in Manhattan and announced his candidacy for President of the United States with a long, extemporaneous speech, his opening, defamatory remarks about immigrants received the most media coverage:

> When do we beat Mexico at the border? They're laughing at us, at our stupidity. And now they are beating us economically. They are not our friend, believe me. But they're killing us economically. The U.S. has become a dumping ground for everybody else's problems. [applause] Thank you. It's true. And these are the best and the finest. When Mexico sends its people, they're not sending their best. They're not sending you [pointing to crowd]. They're not sending you. They're sending people that have lots of problems, and they're bringing those problems with us. They're bringing drugs. They're bringing crime. They're rapists. And some, I assume, are good people…. It's coming from more than Mexico. It's coming from all over South and Latin America, and it's coming probably— probably—from the Middle East. But we don't know. Because we have no protection and we have no competence. We don't know what's happening. And it's got to stop and it's got to stop fast.[1]

While the media noted that Trump's characterization of immigrants clearly traded in broad, negative stereotypes, his sweeping condemnation of outsiders struck a chord with Republican primary and general election voters (Whitehead, Perry, and Baker 2018), with support from substantial shares of older white voters in swing states in the Sun Belt (Florida and North Carolina) and Rust Belt (Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, and Wisconsin) (Frey 2016).

Accompanying his xenophobic stance toward foreigners, Trump's campaign promised a wide range of punitive actions not only against standard rhetorical outsiders such as terrorists and criminals, but also against immigrants, refugees, and Muslims. The popularity of Trump's message and his electoral victories highlight the importance of understanding the connections between xenophobia and punitiveness, particularly among white Americans. Building on theories of racial threat and empirical studies of racial animus and punitiveness, we examine patterns of punitiveness in relation to xenophobia, a more generalized construct than specific forms of racial and ethnic animus, with potentially more useful measures.

Racial Threat, Animus, and Punitiveness

Hegemonic social groups—such as white elites and the middle and upper class in Western countries—often identify racial and ethnic minorities as "social threats." Racial threat theory proposes that social control is wielded by powerful groups in response to perceived threats to their collective interests (Liska 1992). When hegemonic white groups perceive non-whites as competition for scarce resources and threats to the power and privileges their social groups enjoy, they (either explicitly or implicitly) display discriminatory behavior, leading to structural inequalities (Blalock 1967). As initially posited, racial threat theory proposes macro, structural explanations for differential levels of social control directed toward minorities in specific spatial areas. Accordingly, research testing the theory has primarily focused on the relationship between macro demographic predictors, such as the size of and changes to minority populations, and forms of social control, such as rates of arrest for minorities (Parker, Stults, and Rice 2005), the use of police force (Chamlin 1989; Jacobs and O'Brien 1998), and enforcing capital punishment (Jacobs and Carmichael 2002).

While originally posited to explain macro level patterns of social conflict, racial threat theory also provides a useful framework for examining and understanding social psychological patterns of racial prejudice and punitiveness, as fear is the precursor to prejudice (Stephan and Stephan 2000). Further, Blalock's (1967: 29) theory explicitly posited *fear* of minority threats as the link between macro level sociodemographic patterns and the motivations for enacting punitive social policies. Integrating these two levels of analysis, researchers have shown that changes to demographic patterns can result in increased perceptions of threat among the public (Quillian 1995). However, while the population dynamics of minority groups and the perceived threat of minorities are related, they have also been shown to exert independent and interactive effects on punitive ideology at the individual level (King and Wheelock 2007; Stewart et al. 2015).

For instance, demonstrating the potentially complex relationship between population dynamics and public perceptions of threat, Hispanic Americans have been found to be perceived as more threatening where their population numbers are both scarce (Welch at al. 2011) and prevalent (Eitle and Taylor 2008). Importantly then, perceptions of social threat are not wholly dependent on residential proximity or population size, as the conflation of race and crime exists even in homogeneous and hegemonic residency areas (Chiricos, Welch, and Gertz 2004). In terms of magnitude, when examined together, *perceived* threat has been found to have a stronger relationship to support for punitive policies than population dynamics (Chiricos et al. 2014; King and Wheelock 2007; Wang 2012).

Perceived threats from outgroups may be cultural, economic, or criminal in orientation (Chiricos et al. 2014). Cross-cultural research has shown increased support for punitiveness particularly when minorities are perceived as an economic threat (Wheelock, Semukhina, and Demidov 2011). Accordingly, changes to unemployment rates and the size of minority populations can trigger the desire to punish among whites who perceive minorities as strains on material resources (Stewart et al. 2015). Another important dimension of the link between perceived threat and punitiveness is when outgroups are stereotyped as more criminal, as such views have been shown to be a strong and consistent predictor of punitive attitudes (Barkan and Cohn 2005; Chiricos et al. 2004; Pickett et al. 2014; Stewart et al. 2015; Stupi, Chiricos, and Gertz 2016; Welch et al. 2011; Welch 2016). Similar to studies of perceived threat, empirical research has shown consistent, cross-cultural evidence linking animus against specific minority groups to support for harsh criminal justice policies (Barkan and Cohn 2005; Unnever and Cullen 2007; Unnever and Cullen 2010a, 2010b). Although hardly a novel strategy (see Mendelberg 1997), Donald Trump's rhetoric and electoral success reiterates that these patterns of public punitiveness provide ample opportunity for exploitation by opportunistic politicians who can denigrate minority groups as having "no place in our society" in order to portray themselves "protectors" (Unnever and Cullen 2010a: 852).

Xenophobia and Punitiveness

Nearly all of the empirical research on racial animus and punitiveness operationalizes minority threat perception by asking about specific racial or ethnic groups (for an exception, see Chiricos et al. 2014); however, the broader concept of xenophobia may offer a better way of examining perceptions of minority threat by measuring outgroup animus without forcing individuals to identify as overtly racist toward specific targets, which is significantly influenced by social desirability bias (Krumpal 2012).

Importantly, racism and xenophobia are related but conceptually distinct phenomena (Bernasconi 2014; Sundstrom and Kim 2014; Wimmer 1997). Racism reflects nationalized

narratives and a "social/historical structure and a set of accumulated signifiers" (Omi and Winant, 2015:125), often devolving, at least in Western societies, to the binary difference between black and white (Sundstrom and Kim 2014). Whereas racism focuses on physical characteristics to identify a specific outgroup that is deemed inferior, xenophobia focuses more on a sense of fear of the unknown and of a generalized outgroup which exists outside the community (UNESCO n.d.). Thus, the differences between racism and xenophobia can be understood in terms of hierarchization, as racism implies outgroups can be ranked, while xenophobia identifies a generalized outgroup without rankings beyond a "them vs. us" dichotomy (Wimmer 1997). As a result, xenophobia and racism can be placed on a continuum of increasingly exclusive discourses. So although racism and xenophobia are clearly related—racists will also tend to be xenophobes, but less likely the inverse[2]—there is a conceptual difference between a generalized distrust of those-who-are-not-us and devaluations of more specific groups identified by physical characteristics.

While distinct, there are also, of course, many similarities between racism and xenophobia. Like racism, xenophobic beliefs are stereotyped understandings of particular categories of people based on erroneous inference biases, which are used as shortcuts for quickly reading daily interactions (Rydgren 2004). Also like racism, "essentialism" is a primary tool for implementing exclusion, as beliefs about perceived essential differences provide the foundation for dehumanization and demonization (Chiricos, Welch, and Gertz 2004: 379). Ultimately it is best to understand xenophobia and racism as related, but distinct, social phenomena.

Hypotheses

So what place should xenophobia have in broader theories about and assessments of racial threat, animus, and punitiveness? To answer this general research question, we test four specific hypotheses about the connections between xenophobia and punitive ideology using a national sample of Americans.

H_1: Xenophobia will be a stronger predictor of punitiveness than more specific forms of racial animus among self-identified whites.

H_2: Xenophobia will be a stronger predictor of punitiveness among self-identified whites than among self-identified racial minorities.

H_3: Xenophobia will significantly mediate the relationships between sociodemographic, political, and religious characteristics and punitiveness among self-identified whites.

H_4: Xenophobia will be the strongest overall predictor of punitiveness among self-identified whites.

Data

We test these hypotheses by analyzing data from Wave I of the Chapman Survey of American Fears, which was collected in April of 2014. The survey was developed with the intent of assessing a wide range of topics involving fear and anxiety, and also included standard sociodemographic, political, and religious questions. The data were collected by GfK (previously Knowledge Networks), drawing from its online KnowledgePanel pool of respondents. KnowledgePanel is a probability-based web panel initially generated through random digit phone dialing, then maintained using the Service Delivery Sequence File from the United States Postal Service, which includes households without telephone lines. GfK is

a long-standing (founded in 1934) consumer research firm with expertise in probability samples. Based in Germany, GfK acquired Knowledge Networks in 2011.

The data were tailored to be representative of the adult population of the United States. Selected households were asked to participate in an online panel study. Households that agreed to participate but did not have the necessary equipment were provided a computer and internet connection in order to complete the survey. After being added to the panel pool, respondents are asked to participate in select surveys and given unique login identifiers to access relevant surveys. In general, this mode of survey collection has been shown to be a reliable method for generating parametric national samples (see Baker et al. 2010; Chang and Krosnick 2009; Yeager et al. 2011). The completion of the survey in an online, anonymous mode also helped reduce desirability bias for questions on sensitive topics.

The 2014 Survey of American Fears was administered in English. GfK first administered a pre-test to 35 respondents to ensure that questions were clear and participants adequately understood the procedure. After the successful pre-test, 2,500 respondents were recruited from the panel to answer the questionnaire. Of the 2,500 recruited, 1,572 completed the survey.[3]

Measures

Dependent Variable

The outcome of interest is an index of punitiveness based on a six-question battery with a prompt that read: "The criminal justice system should…." The specific items were: "Make sentences more severe for all crimes"; "Use the death penalty for juveniles who murder"; "Limit the appeals available for death sentences"; "Use 'three strikes' laws for repeat offenders"; "Use chemical castration on sex offenders"; and "Reduce the privileges available to prisoners (televisions, recreation, etc.)." Each question had answer choices coded from strongly disagree (0) to strongly agree (3), such that higher scores indicate greater punitiveness. A principal components factors analysis yielded a single factor with an Eigenvalue of 3.7 and all items loading at $\geq$ .745. The index has a Cronbach's α = .871.

Primary Independent Variables

To test whether views of immigrants are more predictive of punitiveness than specific forms of racial animus (H_1), we use three "feeling thermometers," which asked respondents to rate how they felt about specific groups of people on a scale from 0 to 100. We used feeling thermometer measures for "blacks," "Hispanics," and "immigrants" to predict the punitive ideology index among self-identified white respondents.

After this initial assessment, we turn to the primary predictor of interest, which is an index of xenophobia based on multiple indicators from a prompt that read: "Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements about immigrants." The items in the battery of questions about xenophobia were designed to tap into fears regarding immigration among Americans. Researchers developing xenophobia scales for different countries or to be applied cross-nationally (e.g. Jolly and DiGiusto 2014; van der Veer et al. 2011; van der Veer et al. 2013) have emphasized that such measures should reflect commonly held fears regarding unknown others. The Chapman University survey team conducted small group interviews and reviewed news reports to identify key terms in American discourse on immigration. Though the items differ slightly, they are comparable to those used by Jolly and DiGiusto (2014) and van der Veer et al. (2011).

The six specific statements used to create the additive index of xenophobia were: "Recent immigrants are more reluctant to assimilate than previous immigrants"; "Immigrants are a drain on the economy"; "Immigrants bring diseases into the United States"; "Immigrants are more likely to commit crime than U.S. citizens"; "Deportation is a good solution for immigration issues"; and "Creating a 'pathway to citizenship' will encourage illegal immigration." Each question had answer choices coded from strongly disagree (0) to strongly agree (3), such that higher scores indicate greater xenophobia. A principal components factor analysis yielded a single factor with an Eigenvalue of 3.7 and all items loading at ≥ .730. The index has a Cronbach's α = .881.[4] Combined, these indicators provide a composite measure of xenophobia that incorporates perceptions of economic, cultural, and criminal threat from immigrants.[5]

Another predictor of interest is the self-identified race or ethnicity of respondents, which was coded into four mutually exclusive dummy variables for white, black, Hispanic, and mixed or "other" race. Whites are used as the reference category in multivariate analyses of the full sample. To test whether there are significant interaction effects between self-identified race/ethnicity and xenophobia for predicting punitiveness (H_2), we created three multiplicative terms for the xenophobia index and each of the self-identified racial/ethnic categories other than white.[6] In models assessing these interactions, the lower order coefficient for xenophobia represents its slope on punitiveness among whites, while the interaction terms assess whether there are statistically significant differences in the slopes of xenophobia among each of the other racial and ethnic categories compared to whites (see Aiken and West 1991).

Control Variables

We also use a number of control variables to account for factors that have been shown to predict punitiveness, including sociodemographic, political, and religious characteristics, as well as fear of crime, perceived safety, and viewing television shows about crime. Specifically, we account for sociodemographic factors shown to be important negative predictors of punitiveness, such as education level (King and Wheelock 2007), income (Stupi et al. 2016), being currently employed (Stewart et al. 2015), and being a woman (Wang 2012), as well as factors found to have a positive relationship with punitiveness, such as age (Chiricos et al. 2004), being married (Costelloe, Chiricos, and Gertz 2009), urban residence (Unnever and Cullen 2010b), and living in the South (Chiricos et al. 2004; Unnever and Cullen 2007). Education was measured in degree categories, ranging from less than high school (1) to bachelor's degree or higher (4). Annual personal income was measured in categories ranging from less than $5,000 (1) to $175,000 or more (19).[7] Gender, marital status, and employment were coded as three separate dummy variables, such that women, those currently married, and those currently employed = 1. Age was measured in years, ranging from 18 to 92. Rural/urban status was coded as a dummy variable depending on whether a respondent's location was classified by the Census Bureau as metro (1) or non-metro (0). Region of the country was coded into four dummy variables for South, Northeast, Midwest, and West based on Census designations. South is used as the reference category in multivariate models.

A consistent and strong predictor of punitive ideology is political identity, with conservatives averaging higher levels of punitiveness (Stupi et al. 2016; Wang 2012). To account for this relationship we used a question that read: "How would you describe yourself politically?" Answer choices ranged from "extremely conservative" (1) to "extremely liberal" (7), with "moderate" (4) as the middle category.

Religion has also been shown to significantly predict punitiveness. Specifically, fundamentalist Protestant affiliation and beliefs increase punitiveness (King and Wheelock 2007). The strongest connection between religion and increased punitiveness has been found for belief in religious evil, with believers in such concepts as Satan and hell being much more punitive than non-believers (Baker and Booth 2016). Once these aspects of religious ideology are accounted for, higher levels of religious practice may reduce punitiveness. To account for the complex and potentially multivalent effects of religion on punitiveness, we included three religious control measures: 1) religious affiliation; 2) a belief orthodoxy index that includes fundamentalist views of the Bible and beliefs about religious evil; and 3) a measure of religious service attendance. Affiliation was coded into dummy variables for Protestant, Catholic, "other" Christian, Jewish, "other" religion, and no religion. Protestants are used as the reference category for multivariate models. The fundamentalist orthodoxy measure combined questions addressing biblical literalism, the belief that "Satan causes most evil in the world," and the belief that "the world will end as prophesied in the Bible." Stance on the Bible was measured on an ordinal scale from "The Bible is an ancient book of history and legends" (1) to "The Bible means what it says. It should be taken literally word-for-word on all subjects" (5). Belief that "Satan causes most evil" and that Armageddon is impending were measured from "strongly disagree" (1) to "strongly agree" (4), with higher scores indicating greater orthodoxy. The index had a Cronbach's α = .73.[8] Religious service attendance was measured from "never" (1) to "several times a week" (8).

Individuals' perceptions of their own safety (Chiricos, McEntire, and Gertz 2001) and fears about crime (Eitle and Taylor 2008) are also important aspects of punitiveness, particularly from the perspective of racial threat theory. To control for perceived safety, we created an index based on five questions that asked about how safe respondents felt in their homes at night, walking alone at night, in their neighborhoods, in their cities, and at their work or school. Answer choices were coded from "not safe at all" (1) to "very safe" (4). The index had a Cronbach's α = .817. For fear of crime, we created an index by combining nine questions from a battery that asked: "How afraid are you of being victimized in the following ways?" The specific questions were about being the victim of mugging, gang violence, identity theft, stalking, murder, police brutality, sexual assault, racial/hate crime, and mass public shootings. Answer choices were coded from "not afraid at all" (0) to "very afraid" (3). The fear of crime index had a Cronbach's α = .928.

Lastly, we included an index that assessed levels of viewing television in general, and shows about crime specifically, as the consumption of media about crime has been shown to predict attitudes about criminal punishment (Rosenberger and Callanan 2011). Respondents were asked how frequently they watched TV in general, "true" crime shows (such as *Dateline* or *America's Most Wanted*), and fictional crime shows (such as *CSI* or *Law & Order*). Answer choices were coded from "never" (1) to "very often" (5). The TV viewing index had a Cronbach's α = .676.[9]

Table 1 presents descriptive statistics for all variables used in the study (other than the multiplicative interaction terms), as well as the bivariate correlation between each predictor and the punitive ideology index. Providing initial support for H_1, for the feeling thermometer measures (among self-identified whites only), views of immigrants have the highest correlation with punitiveness (r = -.38), as well as a significantly lower overall mean score ($\bar{X}$ = 56.2) compared to specific animus toward "blacks" (r = -.23; $\bar{X}$ = 68.3) and "Hispanics" (r = -.26; $\bar{X}$ = 65.6).[10] Providing initial support for H_4, the xenophobia index has by far the strongest correlation to punitiveness (r = .45) among the independent variables in the full sample, with political liberalism a distant second (r = .29).

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics for Variables Used in Study

Variable	Mean	S.D.	Min	Max	r with Punitiveness
Punitiveness	7.19	4.19	0	18	---
Xenophobia	8.96	4.05	0	18	.446**
Blacks therm.[a]	68.32	24.12	0	100	-.225***
Hispanics therm.[a]	65.54	25.85	0	100	-.261***
Immigrants therm.[a]					-.383***
	56.21	28.53	0	100	
White	0.66	0.47	0	1	.075**
Black	0.12	0.32	0	1	-.127**
Hispanic	0.14	0.35	0	1	-.038
Other/mixed race	0.06	0.24	0	1	.066*
Education	2.74	1.01	1	4	-.140**
Income	11.89	4.52	1	19	.004
Gender	1.52	0.50	1	2	-.047
Married	0.51	0.50	0	1	.048
Age	46.86	17.25	18	92	.109**
Employed	0.56	0.50	0	1	-.051
Political liberalism	3.77	1.44	1	7	-.288**
Urban	0.84	0.37	0	1	.020
South	0.37	0.48	0	1	.025
Northeast	0.18	0.39	0	1	.049
Midwest	0.22	0.41	0	1	-.045
West	0.23	0.42	0	1	-.030
Protestant	0.36	0.48	0	1	.083**
Catholic	0.23	0.42	0	1	.069**
Other Christian	0.12	0.33	0	1	.020
Jewish	0.02	0.14	0	1	-.081**
Other religion	0.08	0.27	0	1	-.037
No religion	0.18	0.39	0	1	-.142**
Service attendance	3.94	2.48	1	8	.063*
Belief orthodoxy	4.85	2.85	0	10	.232**
Perceived safety	14.55	2.95	5	20	-.072**
Fear crime	6.94	6.05	0	24	.111**
TV Crime Viewing	9.13	2.74	3	15	.130**

Source: 2014 Chapman Survey of American Fears
* p < .05; ** p < .01
a: Descriptives among white respondents only

Analytic Strategy

We begin by comparing the relative power of feeling thermometers about "blacks," "Hispanics," and "immigrants" for predicting punitive ideology (H_1). Because two of the questions are about racial and ethnic minorities who comprise a substantial proportion of respondents to the survey, we conduct the comparative examination among self-identified white respondents only, so as not to bias the assessments against the measures of specific forms of racial animus compared to a non-racially specific view of "immigrants." Table 2 presents OLS regression models using the index of punitiveness as the outcome. The models provide a test of the relative magnitude of the partial correlations between specific forms of racial animus compared to a more generalized xenophobia (or philia) for predicting punitiveness. We sequence the models such that each feeling thermometer is used

independently first. This allows for comparisons of the size of the coefficients across the models. We then include all the feeling thermometer measures in the same model to see which ones remain significant predictors. Finally, we include all the feeling thermometer measures along with our primary multi-item xenophobia index to see how the composite measure compares to the single-item thermometer measures for immigrants and specific racial and ethnic groups.

After establishing the relative efficacy of the more comprehensive xenophobia index, we then assess the bivariate relationship between xenophobia and punitiveness for those who self-identify as different races and ethnicities using scatter plots fitted with Epanechnikov kernel density function LOESS lines. This provides an initial assessment of the interaction between racial/ethnic self-identification and xenophobia for predicting punitive ideology (H_2). We also assess whether there are significant differences in the correlations between xenophobia and punitiveness across racial and ethnic groups. Next, we staged OLS models predicting the punitive ideology index such that the first model includes the interactions of interest between race/ethnicity and xenophobia, the second model shows only the controls without the xenophobia index or interaction terms, and the third model includes the xenophobia index, multiplicative interaction terms, and all controls. Models 1 and 3 in Table 4 provide a baseline and robust assessment of the hypothesized interactions (H_2), respectively. All variables were mean centered before entry into the models, with the exception of the xenophobia measure and multiplicative terms, for ease of graphically representing the results.

The changes in coefficients for the control variables between Models 2 and 3 in Table 4 provide an initial assessment of the potential mediating effects of xenophobia for social status characteristics and perceptions of crime and safety (H_3). We then offer a more rigorous analysis of these mediating effects by using PROCESS modeling developed by Hayes (2013), an expansion of earlier work by Preacher and Hayes (2004, 2008). This method uses a bias-correcting bootstrapping technique to provide a direct assessment of mediating relationships, and has been shown to provide more accurate estimates of indirect effects than other analytic methods (Williams and MacKinnon 2008). We derived estimates of the mediating effects of xenophobia on punitiveness among white Americans using 5,000 bootstrapped samples. These models allow us to empirically assess the extent to which xenophobia is a cognitive mechanism linking social statuses to punitiveness among whites (H_3).

Finally, we present standardized coefficients—total (indirect and direct) effects for the controls and direct effect only for the xenophobia index—to evaluate the predictive strength of xenophobia relative to variables known to significantly influence punitive ideology among whites (H_4). This produces a conservative estimate of the strength of xenophobia compared to other predictors by accounting for the indirect effects of the controls, but not any potential indirect effects of xenophobia through other variables. This allows us to see if and to what extent xenophobia is the strongest predictor of punitiveness among white Americans, under empirical conditions favorable to other predictors.

Findings

Table 2 compares generalized xenophobia to antipathy toward black and Hispanic Americans for predicting punitiveness among white respondents using the feeling thermometer measures. When no controls for xenophobia are included, feelings toward "blacks" (b = -.022; p < .001) and "Hispanics" (b = -.028; p < .001) are significant predictors of punitive ideology; however, the coefficient for general feelings toward "immigrants" is substantially larger (b = -.039; p < .001), and Model 3 explains more variance in

Table 2. OLS Regressions Predicting Punitive Attitudes by Specific Racial Animus, Views of Immigrants, and Xenophobia Among Whites (Unstandardized Coefficients Shown)

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Racial Animus					
Blacks therm.	-.022***	---	---	.014	.002
Hispanics therm.	---	-.028***	---	-.003	.008
Xenophobia					
Immigrants therm.	---	---	-.039***	-.044***	-.022**
Xeno. Index	---	---	---	---	.381***
Sociodemographics					
Education	-.517***	-.458**	-.441**	-.423**	-.222
Income	.031	.031	.039	.042	.017
Gender	-.498	-.516*	-.421	-.477	-.359
Married	.209	.201	.178	.184	.201
Age	-.002	-.001	-.001	-.001	-.007
Employed	.527	.524	.522	.498	.287
Political liberalism	-.688***	-.682***	-.615***	-.621***	-.379***
Urban residence	.183	.160	.219	.218	.401
Northeast[b]	.389	.431	.323	.309	.392
Midwest[b]	-.397	-.366	-.437	-.462	-.461
West[b]	.956**	.956**	.830*	.774*	.595
Religion					
Catholic[c]	-.274	-.247	-.120	-.054	-.233
Other Christian[c]	.290	.234	.281	.286	-.039
Jewish[c]	-1.586	-1.469	-1.142	-1.109	-1.494
Other religion[c]	-1.144	-1.132	-.876	-.833	-.586
No religion[c]	-1.184**	-1.126*	-.997*	-.943*	-.752
Service attendance	-.129	-.118	-.093	-.101	-.060
Belief orthodoxy	.232***	.235***	.198**	.197**	.115
Fear of Crime					
Perceived safety	-.133**	-.119	-.111*	-.116*	-.122**
Fear of victimization	.056*	.051	.036	.034	.005
TV Viewing					
Crime shows index	.188***	.191***	.175***	.171***	.159***
Model Stats					
Constant	12.665	12.949	13.265	12.826	8.047
N	840	840	840	840	830
Adjusted R-squared	.260	.271	.305	.305	.376

Source: 2014 Chapman Survey of American Fears
* p < .05; ** p < .01; *** p < .001
b: South is reference category
c: Protestants are reference category

punitiveness (R^2 = .305) than Models 1 (R^2 = .260) or 2 (R^2 = .271).[11] In Model 4, the measures for specific racial animus toward black and Hispanic Americans are attenuated to statistical non-significance by including the feelings toward immigrants measure (b = -.044; p < .001). As a comparative test of measures on the same scale, feelings about immigrants are a more powerful predictor of punitiveness among whites than more specific forms of racial animus, supporting H_1. In Model 5, the primary xenophobia index similarly reduces the feelings toward blacks (b = .002; p = .795) and Hispanics (b = .008; p = .395) measures to non-significance, and also explains a greater proportion of the variance in punitiveness than the models using only the feeling thermometer measures (R^2 = .376 for Model 5).[12]
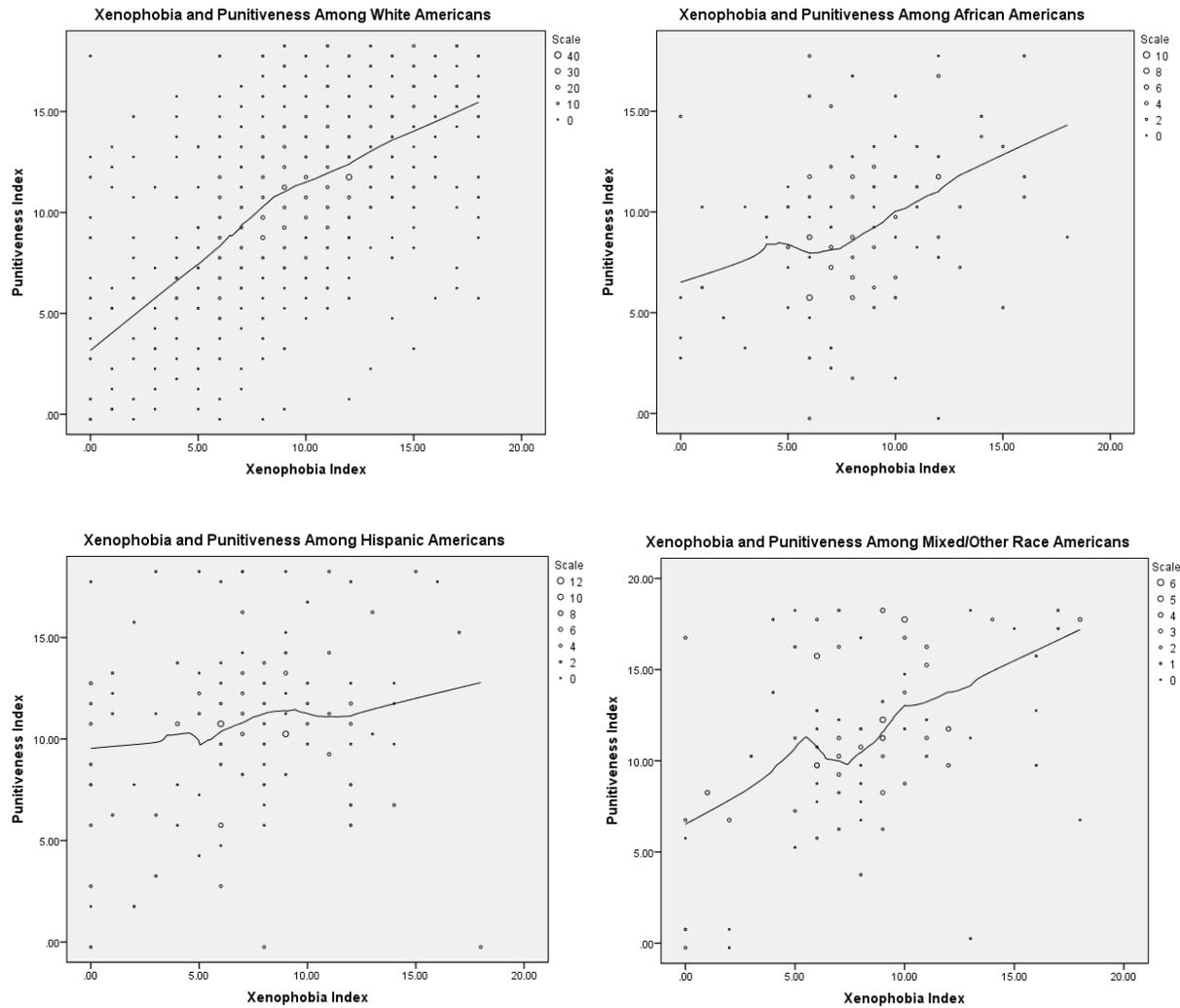
Figure 1. Scatterplots of the Relationship Between Xenophobia and Punitiveness by Self-Identified Race/Ethnicity (with LOESS Lines)

Turning to the initial test of H_2 about the interaction between racial identity and the strength of the connection between xenophobia and punitiveness, Figure 1 shows scatterplots with LOESS lines for the xenophobia and punitiveness indices paneled by self-identified race and ethnicity. There is a strong positive relationship between xenophobia and punitiveness among whites, a moderate positive relationship among African Americans, and a weakly positive relationship among Hispanic Americans. This pattern is further evident in Table 3.

Table 3 shows descriptive statistics for the variance of both xenophobia and punitive ideology within specific racial and ethnic self-designations. Interestingly the xenophobia measure had the highest standard deviation among Hispanic respondents. This is informative, as an initial concern we had in fielding the xenophobia measures was whether they would generate adequate levels of variance among ethnic minority populations. The results of the Chapman Survey are promising in this regard.

Providing more detail about the patterns shown in Figure 1, the last column in Table 3 shows the Pearson correlations between xenophobia and punitiveness among respondents of different racial and ethnic categories. The correlation is significantly stronger among whites (r = .54) compared to African Americans (r = .25; difference of correlations test p < .01) and especially Hispanic Americans (r = .15; difference of correlations test p < .01). This provides additional support for H_2. Among respondents of "other" or mixed races, there was also a strong correlation between xenophobia and punitiveness (r = .45), but the ambiguity of the category obviates clear interpretations of this result. In the bivariate context, the weakest correlation between xenophobia and punitiveness was among Hispanic Americans, presumably because of the cultural stereotyping of "immigrants" in general with Latino/as specifically (á la Trump).

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics and Pearson Correlations between Xenophobia and Punitiveness by Self-Identified Race/Ethnicity
Source: 2014 Chapman Survey of American Fears

	Mean of Xeno	S.D. of Xeno	Mean of Punitive	S.D. of Punitive	r of Xeno. and Punitive
White	9.51	4.01	11.03	4.13	.542**
Black	8.31	3.42	9.31	4.02	.253**
Hispanic	7.32	4.23	10.43	4.16	.149*
"Other"/mixed races	8.03	3.98	11.77	4.50	.446**

* p < .05; ** p < .01
Note: Differences of correlations between white and black and between white and Hispanic are significant at .001 level (Fisher's r to z transformation)

Table 4 presents the OLS models predicting punitiveness among all respondents. In Model 1, only race/ethnicity, xenophobia, and the interaction terms are included. The lower order terms for mixed or other race respondents (b = 2.138; p < .05) and Hispanic respondents (b = 3.596; p < .001) were significantly different compared to white respondents. This means that at the lowest levels of xenophobia (y-intercept), white respondents were less punitive than Hispanic and mixed race respondents. Xenophobia had a strong and significant positive effect on punitiveness among whites (b = .555; p < .001), but its effects were significantly weaker among black (b = -.261; p < .01) and especially Hispanic respondents (b = -.409; p < .001). In Models 1 and 3, the interaction terms represent the difference in the slope of the effect for xenophobia on punitiveness compared to whites (e.g., the slope of xenophobia on punitiveness is .294 [.555 – .261] for black respondents and .146 [.555 – .409] for Hispanic respondents in Model 1).

Table 4. OLS Regressions Predicting Punitive Attitudes by Xenophobia and Self-Identified Race/Ethnicity (Unstandardized Coefficients Shown)

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Fear of Immigrants			
Xenophobia index	.555***	---	.449***
Race and Ethnicity			
Black[a]	1.277	-2.190***	.891
Hispanic[a]	3.596***	-.774*	3.215***
Other/mixed race[a]	2.138*	1.217**	2.664**
Interactions			
Black*xenophobia	-.261**	---	-.281**
Hispanic*xenophobia	-.409***	---	-.413***
Other race*xenophobia	-.054	---	-.091
Sociodemographics			
Education	---	-.466***	-.228
Income	---	.044	.020
Gender	---	-.600**	-.413*
Married	---	.174	.191
Age	---	.005	.003
Employed	---	.243	.184
Political liberalism	---	-.675***	-.357***
Urban residence	---	.651*	.689*
Northeast[b]	---	.427	.397
Midwest[b]	---	-.474	-.621*
West[b]	---	.479	.327
Religion			
Catholic[c]	---	.066	.081
Other Christian[c]	---	-.210	-.362
Jewish[c]	---	-1.280	-1.069
Other religion[c]	---	-1.430**	-1.138*
No religion[c]	---	-.680	-.270
Service attendance	---	-.133*	-.063
Belief orthodoxy	---	.221***	.145**
Fear of Crime			
Perceived safety	---	-.091*	-.053
Fear of victimization	---	.066**	.035
TV Viewing			
Crime shows index	---	.185***	.154***
Model Stats			
Constant	5.738	11.063	6.812
N	1407	1263	1242
Adjusted R-squared	.235	.193	.296

Source: 2014 Chapman Survey of American Fears
* p < .05; ** p < .01; *** p < .001
a: Whites are reference category
b: South is reference category
c: Protestants are reference category

Model 2 includes all sociodemographic, religious, political, and perception of crime and safety controls, while excluding xenophobia. In this model black (b = -2.190; p < .001) and Hispanic Americans (b = -.774; p < .05) have significantly lower levels of punitiveness than whites, while mixed or other race Americans have significantly higher levels of punitiveness (b = 1.217; p < .01). To reiterate, these are the baseline differences by self-identified race and ethnicity, whereas the lower order coefficients for race and ethnicity in

Models 1 and 3 represent the differences across racial groups *at the lowest levels of xenophobia.* In Model 2, respondents with higher levels of education (b = -.466; p < .001), women (b = -.600; p < .01), political liberals (b = -.675; p < .001), religious minorities (b = -1.430; p < .01), those attending religious services more frequently (b = -.133; p < .05), and those with higher perceived levels of safety (b = -.091; p < .05) all had significantly lower levels of punitiveness. Urban residence (b = .651; p < .05), higher belief in religious evil (b = .221; p < .001), fear of victimization (b = .185; p < .001), and higher levels of watching television about crime (b = .185; p < .001) all had significant positive relationships with higher levels of punitiveness.

Notably, Model 1 predicted more variance in punitiveness using only self-identified race/ethnicity and the xenophobia index (adjusted R^2 = .235) than Model 2 did with all control variables, including sociodemographics, political identity, religion measures, fear of crime, perceived safety, and television crime viewing (adjusted R^2 = .193).

Providing strong support for H_2, in Model 3 the interaction terms testing for differential effects of xenophobia on punitiveness between white and black Americans (b = -.281; p < .01), as well as between white and Hispanic Americans (b = -.413; p < .001) remain significant, such that xenophobia has a stronger positive effect on punitiveness among whites (slope = .449) than it does among black (slope = .168) and especially Hispanic respondents (slope = .018). These differences are presented graphically in Figure 2.

At the lowest levels of xenophobia index, whites (6.8) are not significantly more punitive than African Americans, and are significantly less punitive than Hispanic Americans (b = 3.215; p < .001); however, at the highest levels of xenophobia, whites (14.9) are much more punitive than both African Americans (9.8) and Hispanic Americans (10.7). It is also notable that highly xenophobic whites average close to the maximum score (18) on the punitive ideology index.   In sum, there is a very strong connection between xenophobia and punitive ideology for white Americans, but only a weak connection among African Americans, and there is essentially no connection between xenophobia and punitiveness among Hispanic Americans after accounting for control variables.

Comparing Model 2 to Model 3, the effects for education, gender, religious service attendance, perceived levels of safety, and fear of victimization are all attenuated to statistical non-significance with the inclusion of the xenophobia and interaction measures. Similarly the effects for political identity (b = -.357; p < .001) and religious belief orthodoxy (b = .145; p < .01) are substantially reduced between Models 2 and 3. This provides initial support for H_3 that xenophobia serves as an important mediator connecting sociodemographic, political, and religious characteristics to higher levels of punitiveness.

To further examine these mediating effects, Table 5 shows the results of the PROCESS models estimating the direct and indirect effects of significant variables that showed substantial mediation across the OLS models. Because xenophobia is connected to punitiveness primarily among whites, these models were conducted using white respondents only. Table 5 also shows standardized coefficients for total effects for these variables that incorporate both direct effects and indirect effects (mediated through the xenophobia index). Xenophobia was a significant predictor of all the variables examined, with the exception of perceived safety. Consequently, estimates of the indirect effects of perceived safety through xenophobia were non-significant. For gender, political identity, religious service attendance, religious belief orthodoxy, and fear of victimization, *the indirect effects through xenophobia were stronger than the respective variables' direct effects on punitiveness* (indirect-to-total effect ratios above .5). In other words, greater than half of the overall effects for these variables were indirect, mediated by virtue of being associated with differential levels of xenophobia.

Figure 2. Punitive Ideology
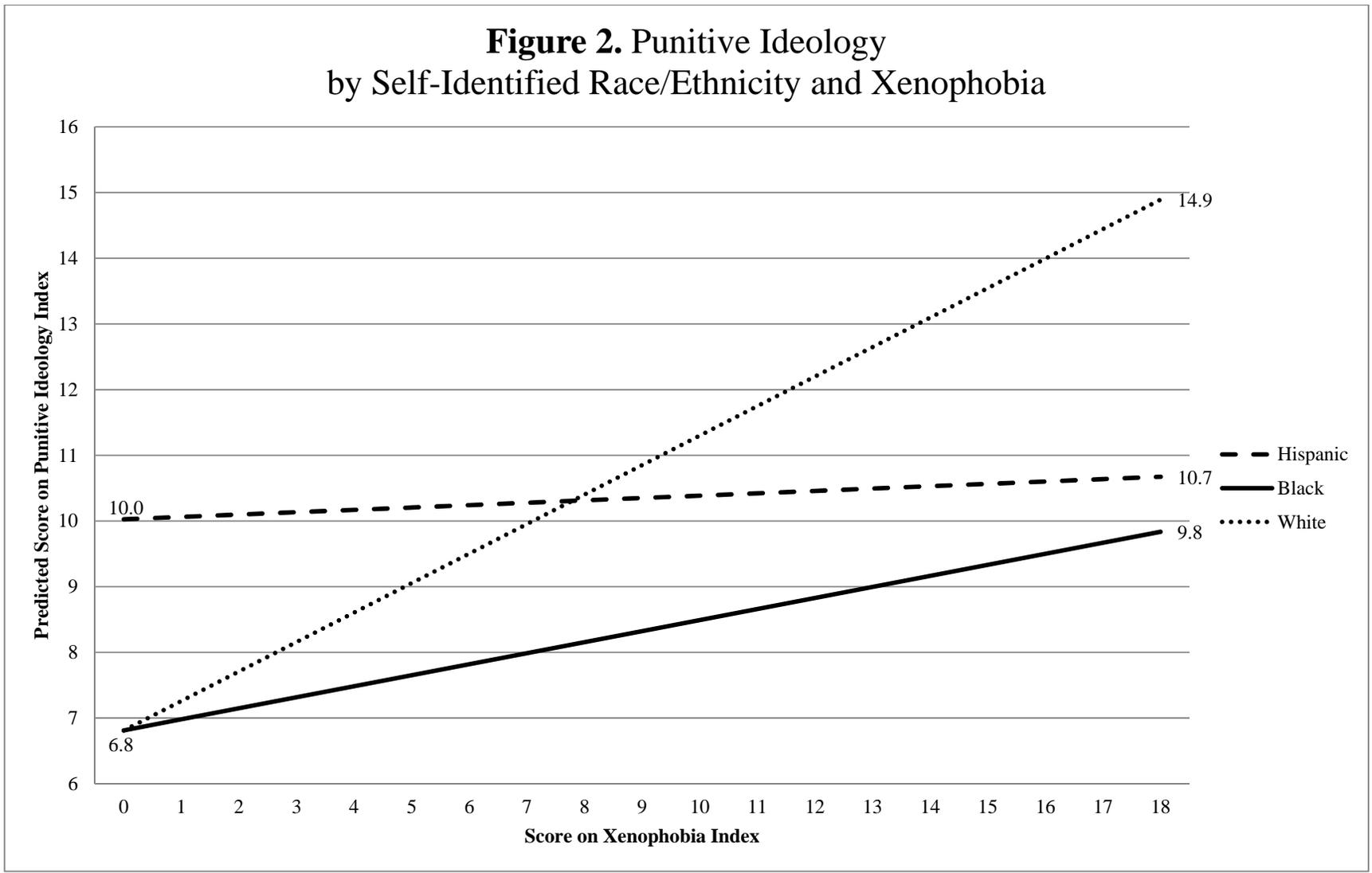by Self-Identified Race/Ethnicity and Xenophobia

Table 5. Mediation of Significant Predictors of Punitive Attitudes through Xenophobia among

	Direct Effect (b)	Indirect Effect (b)	Indirect/Total Ratio	β for Total Effect
Xenophobia	.449	---	---	.498
Education	-.356	-.317	.471	-.162
Gender	-.212	-.219	.508	-.052
Political liberalism	-.376	-.429	.533	-.294
Attendance	-.076	-.112	.596	-.113
Belief orthodoxy	.104	.118	.532	.152
Fear of victimization	-.006	.060	1.111	.068

Whites
Source: 2014 Chapman Survey of American Fears
PROCESS Mediation Models (see Hayes 2013)

While the indirect effects for education are slightly smaller (indirect-to-total effect ratio = .47), they were also substantial and significant (b = -.356 for direct effect and b = -.317 for indirect effect). Thus, we find consistent support for H$_3$, as most of the effects of social status characteristics on punitiveness among whites are accounted for by differential levels of xenophobia across such characteristics.

Finally, in support of H$_4$, xenophobia has by far the strongest relationship to punitiveness among the predictors assessed (β = .498), with a standardized coefficient 69% higher in absolute value than the second strongest predictor of political identity (β = -.294). This is particularly noteworthy since the standardized coefficients presented are a conservative assessment of the relative strength of xenophobia, allowing the other predictors to include indirect effects as part of the estimates of their respective total standardized effects.

Discussion

The results show strong support for the four hypothesized connections between xenophobia and punitiveness. First, xenophobia is a better predictor of punitiveness than more specific forms of racial animus among white Americans. Second, the relationship between xenophobia and punitiveness is contingent on self-identified race. There is a much stronger positive relationship between xenophobia and punitiveness among whites than among black and Hispanic Americans. While there is a moderate positive relationship between xenophobia and punitiveness among African Americans, it is significantly weaker than among whites. Among Hispanic Americans, there is only a very weak connection between xenophobia and punitiveness after accounting for control variables. Third, xenophobia also significantly and substantially mediates the relationship between social, religious, and political characteristics and punitiveness among self-identified whites. Finally, not only does xenophobia operate as a cognitive mechanism linking status characteristics to punitiveness among whites, it is by far the strongest overall predictor of punitive attitudes among whites.

Collectively these findings show that for white Americans negative views of "immigrant" outsiders provide a dominant framework for justifying harsh penal policies and practices. Returning to our general research question, xenophobia is an indispensable and integral aspect of understanding punitive attitudes and perceptions of racial threat, particularly among whites. Consequently, xenophobia should assume a more central place in theories about and studies of the relationship between racial threat and punitiveness.

In addition to integrating xenophobia into theories of racial threat, the connections

between xenophobia and punitiveness in political rhetoric and electoral strategy should also receive more attention from scholars. Accepting the nomination of the Republican Party for President, Donald Trump told listeners that:

> Nearly 180,000 illegal immigrants, with criminal records, ordered deported from our country, are tonight roaming free to threaten peaceful citizens…. They are being released, by the tens of thousands, into our communities, with no regard for the impact on public safety or resources.

A few weeks later, in a speech about immigration, he promised the following as part of his policy agenda:

> This is the one, I think it's so great. It's hard to believe, people don't even talk about it. Zero tolerance for criminal aliens. Zero. Zero. Zero. They don't come in here. They don't come in here. According to federal data, there are at least two million—two million, think of it—criminal aliens now inside of our country. Two million people, criminal aliens. We will begin moving them out day one. As soon as I take office, day one.[xiii]

As the phrasing, emphasis, and intonation made clear, the eventual President believed that undocumented immigrants warranted extremely harsh punishment.

The fact that Trump's campaign successfully secured a major party's nomination and eventually the Presidency is testament to the prevalence of these views among contemporary white Americans. Overall this signals a shift away from "dog whistle" rhetoric about race, crime, and punishment (López 2014), toward more overt "bullhorn" rhetoric about "criminal aliens." As politicians, both national and local, follow suit and increase rhetorical emphasis on immigrants and crime, it is important to understand how the American public connects these issues.

In short, if politicians are able to stoke fears about immigrants, they can also increase support for punitive criminal justice policies and practices. The remaking of political rhetoric about racial threat toward xenophobia also presents a serious impediment to criminal justice reforms that, for a moment, had attained some bi-partisan support (Obama 2017). To the extent that right-wing politicians link opposition to immigrants and punitive rhetoric about crime with greater frequency and intensity, support for criminal justice reform is likely to decline among political conservatives. More disconcerting still, our analyses show that Trump's overt focus on immigrants rather than dog whistle coding about race may be more effective at mobilizing public fears, and therefore animosity toward those viewed as outsiders.

Due to institutional characteristics of the criminal justice system in the U.S.—such as electing judges, and politicians beholden to localized constituencies—public opinion about punishment has a greater impact on policies in the U.S. than in other Western democracies (Savelsberg 1994). As a result, if public opinion takes a turn back toward greater punitiveness, harsher public policies are likely to follow. Indeed, recent research shows that changes in public punitiveness led to changes in social policy and political messaging, rather than the inverse (Enns 2014, 2016). The decades-long expansion of harsh punitive policies occurred in the United States because of the voting public's desire for "just deserts." The role of the public's (perceived) "knowledge" about crime warrants a more prominent place in the ongoing discourse about the causes of and barriers to the reversal of mass incarceration. Within such a discussion, the role of perceptions of minority threat from racial and ethnic "others" must be central rather than peripheral.

Regarding studies of racial threat and animus, xenophobia has some advantages that recommend its utility. Racial animus measures often ask respondents to select the degree to

which they hold favorable or unfavorable attitudes about members of specific racial or ethnic groups. Such measures are primarily useful across groups (i.e., by looking at how non-black respondents feel about "blacks"); however, questions about non-ethnically specified "immigrants" allow for flexibility in application and context. Questions about generic immigrants allow for the possibility of more comparative studies about minority threat across cultural contexts, regardless of which types of individuals are perceived by different publics as constituting "immigrants." Questions about immigrants are also less likely to be perceived by respondents as eliciting overtly racist attitudes, and can help avoid desirability bias (see Quillian 2006). Racially or ethnically non-specific measures of xenophobia effectively split the difference between measures of explicit and implicit racial bias (Dovido, Kawakami, and Beach 2003).

While our study has contributed to the literature on racial animus and punitiveness by shifting attention to the importance of xenophobia over specific forms of racial animus, it is also limited in a number of ways. In particular, a full integration with the theory and literature on racial threat requires an assessment of population dynamics in relation to xenophobia. Nested data that can account for levels of and changes to immigrant populations while assessing individual-level patterns of xenophobia are needed. Testing these dynamics with data from different national, regional, and cultural contexts is ultimately what is required for a more comprehensive evaluation of xenophobia within the context of racial threat theory.

Similarly, aggregate data on levels of xenophobia and punitive policies and practices are needed to more rigorously evaluate whether and how collective xenophobia shapes criminal justice policies and outcomes. At the individual level, connecting xenophobia to psychological traits and outcomes, as well as to social network dimensions, is needed to gain a better understanding of how xenophobia is similar to, and different from, more specific forms of racial and ethnic prejudice (see van Zalk, Walter, and Kerr 2014). Also at the individual level, targeted samples of mixed race Americans with additional questions about ethnic identity are needed to improve some of the suggestive but ambiguous findings shown here.

Likewise, while we have shown that xenophobia is a strong predictor of punitiveness among white Americans, our data are cross-sectional and country specific. Although much of the research on these topics has been conducted in the West, connections between xenophobia and socio-political context are by no means limited to Western contexts. Explorations of the connections between xenophobia and punitiveness in different cultural contexts, within specific sub-populations, and at higher levels of analysis such as aggregates of public views within political boundaries (e.g., counties, states, and nations) all warrant further research. Understanding of the social dynamics of xenophobia is particularly important to studies of right-wing and penal populism, as these dimensions of ideology are inextricably connected.

Conclusion

Punitiveness is intimately linked to fear and sense of security. Xenophobia is a uniquely important dimension of fear in relation to punitiveness because it is fundamentally a fear about both outsiders and the social order. Attempting to neutralize the fear of change from outsiders, individuals who are in racial or ethnic in-groups are more likely to hold harsh attitudes toward outsiders and perceived rule-breakers, and to endorse accompanying draconian policies. Whenever powerful groups feel threatened, xenophobia is likely to intensify as the dark underside of in-group solidarity. The endorsement and enactment of punitive measures by racial and ethnic majorities are an oppressive outgrowth of the fear that society will soon belong to "them" rather than "us."

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Notes

[1] Quote is from authors' transcript of the speech. Full text of Trump's presidential announcement speech is available at: http://time.com/3923128/donald-trump-announcement-speech/.

[2] For instance, in the 2014 Chapman Survey of American Fears, among white respondents who rated "blacks" below 50 on the feeling thermometer, 78% also rated "immigrants" below 50. Conversely, of white respondents who rated "immigrants" below 50 on the feeling thermometer, only 35% rated "blacks" below 50.

[3] The sociodemographic frequencies in the Chapman Survey compare favorably to those from the 2014 General Social Survey. One area of difference was that the Chapman Survey has significantly more currently married respondents (58.9%) than the GSS (45.7%). Tabled results of the comparisons are available upon request.

[4] Supplemental analyses with a xenophobia index weighted by factor loadings produced results identical to those presented.

[5] We did not use a question from this battery about whether police should be allowed to conduct raids to find undocumented immigrants because of its similarity to the punitiveness outcomes. In support of the centrality of economic concerns in racial threat theory, the measure for whether "immigrants are a drain on the economy" had a stronger relationship to the punitive ideology outcome ($r = .498$) than the question about whether "immigrants are more likely to commit crime" ($r = .399$).

[6] The xenophobia index had high reliability for scaling across the racial and ethnic categories. For black respondents, the items loaded on a single factor with an Eigenvalue of 3.5. For Hispanic and mixed race respondents there were single factors with Eigenvalues of 3.7 and 3.8, respectively.

[7] We also tested models that used a series of dummy variables for education and income levels. Results did not differ substantially from those presented, with college graduates being significantly less punitive, and non-significant results for income levels. We also tested for potential non-linear effects of income using logged and quadratic measures. These results were statistically non-significant.

[8] We created this index of "belief orthodoxy" that included views of the Bible for consonance with previous research on punitiveness, but supplemental analyses examining the individual indicators (belief in an active Satan, belief in future Armageddon, and Bible views) showed that beliefs about Satan were more predictive of punitive ideology than beliefs about the Bible, Armageddon, or the overall orthodoxy index. This provides a replication of the recent finding that an important aspect of religiosity for predicting punitiveness is views of supernatural evil (Baker and Booth 2016).

[9] Due to the marginal reliability of the TV viewing index, we conducted supplementary analyses excluding this control. Focal results for the connections between xenophobia and punitiveness were unchanged. Among the specific indicators, punitiveness had the highest correlation with consuming "true crime" television shows.

[10] P < .001 for paired samples T-tests of the differences between mean scores on the "immigrants" thermometer compared to the thermometers for "blacks" and "Hispanics."

[11] Z tests for significant differences of coefficients across Models 1–3 (see Paternoster et al. 1998) showed a statistically significant difference between the coefficients for "blacks" and "immigrants" (Z = 2.40; p = .01) and a marginally significant difference between the coefficients for "Hispanics" and "immigrants" (Z = 1.60; p = .05, one-tailed tests).

[12] The xenophobia index (VIF = 1.8) had a relatively low level of multicollinearity in this model. The feeling thermometer measures had elevated, but tolerable, levels of multicollinearity (VIF = 2.6 for "blacks" and "Hispanics" thermometers; VIF = 3.0 for "immigrants" thermometer).

[xiii] Quotations are from authors' transcripts of both speeches. Textual transcripts are publically available for the nomination speech (http://www.politico.com/story/2016/07/full-transcript-donald-trump-nomination-acceptance-speech-at-rnc-225974) and the immigration policy speech (http://www.latimes.com/politics/la-na-pol-donald-trump-immigration-speech-transcript-20160831-snap-htmlstory.html).