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Forgotten Immigrant Voices: West Indian Immigrant Experiences and Attitudes towards Contemporary Immigration

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Forgotten Immigrant Voices:
West Indian Immigrant Experiences and Attitudes towards Contemporary Immigration

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ABSTRACT

Scholarly work and media coverage both point to the negative effect that the rhetoric and policy of former US President Donald Trump had on the lived experience and wellbeing of immigrant groups explicitly targeted by it (i.e., the “Trump effect”). Typically, the focus has been on Muslim and Latino immigrants as well as those less-explicitly targeted but still affected by Trump-era policies, such as temporary workers. This thesis explores whether Black immigrants from the English-speaking Caribbean, a group notably missing from the literature of “Trump effects” on immigrant experiences, experienced similar attitudinal or practical effects as a result of contemporary US immigration policies, rhetoric or national attitudes. My second research goal is to measure Black Caribbean immigrant attitudes towards immigration policy by adapting a survey instrument used with Asian-American immigrant respondents regarding Trump-era immigration policies. Drawing on original qualitative data gathered through interviews with members of the English-speaking Black Caribbean community in Connecticut, this thesis analyzes variation in their immigrant experiences as a result of Trump-era immigration policies and rhetoric. Additionally, I explore attitudes regarding linked fate, group consciousness, acculturation and contextual factors in order to discern their potential influence on the self-identification of English-speaking Afro-Caribbean immigrants, their attitudes toward Trump-era immigration rhetoric and policies, and potential effects on their lived experience.

INTRODUCTION

The US presidential election of 2016 ushered in a president whose rhetoric and policies surrounding immigration received frequent attention and scrutiny by both the public and the media. Much of this attention, and the scholarly work that has been produced since that time, tended to focus on ways in which policies and directives produced by the Trump Administration affected immigrants from Mexico, Central American Northern Triangle countries (i.e., El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras), and majority-Muslim nations (Everett Marko, 2019; Mamone & Smith, 2019; Wood, 2018). English-speaking Afro-Caribbean immigrants (“West Indians”) received comparatively little media attention for the ways in which their lives may have been affected by the tightening immigration policy under the Trump administration (Palmer, 2017).

Moreover, contributions *from* immigrants themselves on their lived experiences through various immigration policies, and their attitudes *towards* said immigration policies tend to be rare in comparison to scholarly work about how native members of a nation respond to immigrants and immigration policy (Becker, 2019; Doña-Reveco & Gouveia, 2021).

The present work also addresses the silence on Trump-era immigration policy impacts on West Indian immigrants by collecting and analyzing the lived experiences of West Indians in the context of the Trump administration policies. In doing so, it answers the first two of four research questions (1) Do West Indian immigrants perceive any changes to United States immigration policy, discourse or national attitudes; (2) how, if at all, do those perceptions affect their lived experiences? This paper additionally seeks to understand the attitudes towards immigration held by West Indians more generally and asks the following questions to that end: (3) What are West Indian immigrant attitudes towards immigration policy generally and in comparison to other groups; (4) What factors may affect these attitudes towards immigration?

The present study has a dual focus of understanding whether West Indians were affected by Trump immigration policies within their own views, and why or why not that might be the case, and also understanding the policy attitudes this group already holds. Attitudes of immigrants towards immigration and experiences under immigration policies are linked but distinct concepts. “Experiences” refers to areas of their life that could be impacted by immigration policies, including thoughts, feelings and behaviors. Their immigration experiences can be affected by the policies under which they live, but have the capacity to be highly individualized based on the person’s expectations prior to arrival, circumstances once they enter the United States, and continued experiences once in the United States, among other factors.

Immigrant attitudes refers to a set of public policy perspectives held by members of an immigrant group towards immigration policy. Immigrant identity sits at the intersection of both concepts in that an individual's group membership can shape their attitudes towards various policies, and their experiences of those policies (Kolawole, 2017; Park, 2021).

I first start by discussing factors that shape immigrant attitudes towards policies that target immigrants, and the ways in which these same factors may be applied to understanding how the lives of group members can be affected by immigration policy. Next, I discuss the intersectional identity of Black immigrants that add an additional layer of nuance to this group's immigration attitudes and experiences. Then I discuss who English-speaking Black Caribbeans are and give a brief overview of their immigration patterns and relation to the concept of a "Black immigrant". I then discuss immigration in the time of Trump, with a brief overview of some of the more "invisible" changes made during the Trump Era that influenced immigration policy, followed by a discussion of more overt rhetoric and policies and immigrant lived experiences as a result of those overt policies. I then focus on the immigration policy attitudes and lived experience of Black immigrants in the time of Trump, and complete my review of the literature by discussing the focus of the present study on West Indian immigrants' experiences, in the time of Trump and attitudes towards immigration more generally. Following a review of the literature, I discuss my methodology for both collecting and analyzing the data, and review my findings regarding immigration attitudes and the self-narrated impacts and perceptions of the immigration in the Trump era by Caribbean immigrants in Connecticut.

I then discuss my findings. West Indians do perceive changes to United States immigration policy, discourse and national attitudes. 40% of participants discussed feeling that

Trump policies and rhetoric empowered racists, 15% discussed nativist empowerment, and 45% of participants did not explicitly discuss these perceptions of empowerment. Experiences were not uniform based on these perceptions with some individuals noting that they did not feel personally impacted by policy or rhetoric changes because of their distance from the immigration process. They attributed this distance to (1) becoming a naturalized citizen or (2) no longer having personal or family dealings with various immigration services (ex. filing for family members, having a mixed status family, etc.). Citizenship, however, was not a universal buffer to participants experiencing immigration-related difficulties under the Trump administration. 30% of participants explicitly noted their citizenship as a buffer to experiencing physical harm related to immigration, while 15% explicitly discussed their citizenship *not* being a buffer to experiencing these harms.

In addition to physical harm, 20% of participants discussed experiences with various aspects of the “Invisible Wall,” under the Trump-era immigration policies. This total excludes participants who noted similar effects due to other sources such as the COVID-19 pandemic or the policies of previous administrations. Participants faced increased wait times and fees for their family’s immigration processes and decreased transparency and accessibility of immigration agencies and services. Fully 60% of participants noted emotional responses during this time including “fear,” “worry,” “concern” and “depression.” Some 25% of participants did not feel emotionally affected while 15% did not discuss emotional impacts.

These findings are particularly interesting when considering the participants’ demographic profile. While this question was not asked, 75% volunteered that they were currently citizens of the United States, with 15% volunteering that they were permanent

residents. 10% of participants did not volunteer this information. 65% of participants held college degrees or high 45% held graduate or professional degrees, while an additional 20% held college degrees. 70% of participants had been in the United States for 21 or more years. While individual participant stories shed light on the varying experiences of individuals during this time, participants on the whole skewed towards being more educated, longer-residing residents and citizens of the United States. Even within this sample, however, there were significant emotional fears and procedural hurdles for West Indian immigrants within the state of Connecticut under Trump-era immigration policies and rhetoric.

The present study also measured participants' attitudes towards immigration by adapting questions previously used with Asian Americans and with Black immigrants more generally during the Trump Era of immigration (Greene, 2021; Park, 2021). Additionally, participants held largely positive attitudes towards immigration. Low variation across participant responses and inconsistent variation according to factors such as length of time spent within the United States and the racial mix of the neighborhood allowed for only minimal discussion of factors affecting participant attitudes towards immigration. Future studies can expand by gathering more stories from other immigrant group underrepresented in the news media and literature to give a more complete understanding of the lived experiences and attitudes of immigrants during the Trump Era of immigration policies and rhetoric.

Definition of terms

Defining key terms in the work is useful for clarification. See Table 1 below.

Term	Definition
The “Trump-era”	refers to the years between former President Trump’s announcement of his candidacy in June 2015 and the end of his term as president in January 2021.
“Rhetoric”	solely refers to statements made by President Trump himself during that time period, which set the tone for the administration’s stance towards immigration and received extensive scholarly coverage in its own right (Finley & Esposito, 2020; Young, 2017).
“Policies,” and “practices” ¹	is used in an expansive sense, inclusive of administrative practices, legislation, executive orders, policy priorities and plans, attempted government action, and enacted government action. Czaika and Haas note four different levels of immigration policy that contribute to confusion over how to discuss their effects (Czaika & De Haas, 2013). Policy can be conceptualized as “(1) public policy discourses, (2) actual migration policies on paper, (3) policy implementation, and (4) policy (migration) outcomes,” (Czaika & De Haas, 2013).
“Trump-effect”	has previously been used to describe “how the election of Donald Trump has had a damaging impact on undocumented immigrants,” (Nienhusser & Oshio, 2019). The present study uses the term “Trump-effects,” more expansively to describe any changes to the immigration system and to documented and undocumented immigrant lived experiences and attitudes that resulted from Trump rhetoric and administrative policies. This definition better captures the potential for “Trump-effects,” to exist for individuals of different immigration statuses. While immigration status does have the potential to impact participant lived experiences and attitudes, it is not the focus of this paper and participants will not be asked to identify their immigration status during the course of the interviews.
“Afro-Caribbeans” & “West Indians”	Will be used interchangeably in the following paper and will only refer to immigrants from the Anglophone or “English-speaking” Caribbean. A wide variety of terms have been used to describe populations of African descent within the Caribbean region including “Black Caribbean,” “Afro-Caribbean,” “African-Caribbean” and “West Indian.” “Black” is often used to center skin color, while other terms center the cultural background of the group. These countries also have linguistic differences such as the largely French-speaking Haiti, Spanish-speaking Cuba and English-speaking Jamaica. The present study will only include individuals from the Anglophone Caribbean, or the English-speaking nations of the Caribbean. In order to center individuals’ racial identity, and to distinguish between the languages spoken by Black peoples within the Caribbean, the present study will shorten the term “Afro-Caribbeans from English-speaking nations” to “Afro-Caribbeans” or “West Indians.”
“Black Immigrant”	Will be used expansively to refer to immigrants of African descent within the United States, which includes immigrants from African nations and the Caribbean. Race is a social construct, and identities often overlap. For the sake of group comparison and simplification, “Black immigrants” will refer to individuals from the Caribbean and Africa primarily who enter the US and become racialized as “Black.”
“Muslim Immigrant” “Latino Immigrant”	While there exists a significant portion of Black African Muslim immigrants, “Muslim immigrants” will be discussed as a separate category due to their religion-based targeting under the Trump administration. There are also Black Spanish-speaking immigrants from the Caribbean, who will be discussed under the more expansive grouping of “Latino immigrants.” Afro-Latino identities may present their own unique immigration experiences and I encourage future studies to address this group separately, as this is beyond the scope of Afro-Caribbeans from Anglophone nations.

LITERATURE REVIEW: IMMIGRATION IN THE TIME OF TRUMP

Former President Donald Trump campaigned for office on a promise to “Make America Great Again,” and proposed immigration as a major barrier to America once again achieving this greatness (Young, 2017). Young points out that “Trump famously launched his campaign by calling Mexican immigrants rapists and criminals” (2017). While some have debated whether the policies that flowed out of this time were simply based on rhetoric or reflected a greater shift within the United States, various individuals have studied the effects of this time period specifically in relation to immigration in the United States. Before understanding the effects of these shifts on immigrants, we must understand what types of changes were made during the Trump presidential era.

While much of Trump-era rhetoric and policies overtly targeted other immigrant groups, such as Muslim and Latin American immigrants, less overt policies promoted a tightening of the immigration system and still have the potential to affect Afro-Caribbean lived experience, especially for members of the community who have family members, friends, or are themselves in the orbit of immigration services. Chen and New dub these added procedural hurdles created during the Trump-era the “second wall,” a more silent attempt to curb immigration in comparison to President Trump’s more overt attacks, such as the call to build a physical border wall (Chen & New, 2018). This “second Wall” has blocked legal immigration through procedural hurdles and new requirements enacted through Trump-era administrative changes put in place by means of executive agency of the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS) (Chen & New, 2018).

Chen and New point to three main categories of administrative changes that “pose barriers to legal immigration,” (Chen & New, 2018). First, additional procedural hurdles increase costs for immigration-related policies. Second, reduced transparency then makes it harder to gauge the impact of policy changes. Third, substantive priority changes means that the agency is less accessible for immigrants seeking to use its services. The result is that it “impedes families seeking to unite, employers seeking to sponsor workers for their businesses, and refugees or military service members taking the next steps in their journey toward becoming citizens” (p. 549). Family notes this same phenomenon as having the potential to impact all immigrants and similarly calls it an “invisible border wall” (Family, 2021).

These procedural hurdles, when applied to the context of Trump administration immigration policies, have been dubbed “invisible border wall” or the “second wall” (Chen & New, 2018; Family, 2021). The “first wall” refers to the former Trump administration’s attempt to build a physical border wall or divert immigrants to other countries through programs like the Migrant Protection Protocols (known to critics as the “Remain in Mexico” policy). This “second wall” refers to tightening administrative procedures and increased administrative fees for processing immigration paperwork (Chen & New, 2018; Family, 2021). It would affect both recent migrants or their families, as well as those who have been in the United States for some time and are seeking services such as permanent residency or citizenship.

These policy shifts were accompanied by inflammatory anti-immigrant rhetoric, notably towards Mexican, Muslim and Haitians immigrants, as well as those nations themselves (Baranik de Alarcón et al., 2020; Everett Marko, 2019; Finley & Esposito, 2020; Young, 2017). Others note the prevalent anti-immigrant sentiment, or rise of nativism, as a key point affecting

immigrant experiences (Kluver, 2019; Young, 2017). These experiences themselves have not been widely studied, and there remains a question of if, and to what degree, certain immigrant groups feel personally affected by the tightening immigration regime, and whether they view this as an effect of Trump-era changes, or simply the continuation of the country's longstanding stance towards immigration. Rhetoric and policies from the Trump era have had distinct impacts on different immigrant groups, and on their perceptions of the United States, the state of immigration, and their own level of comfort in the country. Different groups of immigrants show an awareness of these changes, as do media sources focused on covering this period of time.

Muslim Immigrants

Marko, in reviewing the Trump rhetoric around Muslim immigrants notes that Trump “attacked Syrian refugees as a ‘secret army’... compared them to the ‘Trojan Horse’... [and] said Islam is a ‘sickness’ and Muslims are a ‘sick people,’” among other statements (Everett Marko, 2019, p. 247). Muslim Immigrants were also targeted through policies such as Presidential Executive Orders 13769, 13780: Protecting the Nation from Foreign Terrorist Entry into the United States, commonly known as the “Muslim Travel Ban,” which prevented nationals from several majority-Muslim nations from entering the United States (Everett Marko, 2019, p. 248).

Interestingly, however, studies that looked at Muslim American reactions to Trump's rhetoric and policies noted increased political participation and voting and a high level of optimism about the future (Pew Research Center, 2017). While many Muslim American showed a sharp decrease in their dissatisfaction over the US' direction since Donald Trump's election as President, as well as fear for their families, most remained generally positive about their own lives as immigrants in the United States (Everett Marko, 2019; Pew Research Center, 2017). It is

important to note that Islamophobic sentiments and policies precede Trump, though the data does show an effect during the years he was President on Muslim immigrants' lived experiences in a way that may not have contradicted the trend but still exacerbated it (Everett Marko, 2019). Additionally, African immigrants, who have often been studied alongside Afro-Caribbean immigrants to understand diverse experiences within the Black diaspora, hold identities that often intersect with Muslim identities in the United States (Kolawole, 2017). While recent research called for further study of this group, and it would make an excellent comparative point to understand the impacts of race and ethnicity on Black immigrants more generally, the present study focuses on Afro-Caribbean immigrants because of theoretical interest (Kolawole, 2017).

Latino Immigrants

Like Muslim immigrants, Latino immigrants, especially from Mexico and the Northern Triangle countries of Central America, were frequently targeted by Trump rhetoric and policies. This targeting affected immigrant perceptions of their own safety and acceptance in the United States. Chavez et al. note that "Mexican-origin people...were the direct targets of much of that rhetoric," (Chavez et al., 2019, p. 240-241). Trump "characterized Mexican migrants as criminals, drug smugglers, rapists, and 'bad hombres,' among other highly negative attributions" (Verea, 2018, p. 198).

Scholars point to Latino immigrants being a main target of Trump era policies as well. Executive Order 13767, *Border Security and Immigration Enforcement Improvement* issued in 2017 framed the need for a border wall as an urgent matter of safety (Executive Office of the President, 2017a). Executive orders carry a considerable weight, though this order's call for a border wall was ineffective due to Congress' decision not to fund his directive (Verea, 2018).

Executive Order 13768, *Enhancing Public Safety in the Interior of the US*, also issued in 2017, called for additional enforcement and removal officers and the withholding of federal funds from sanctuary cities that do not comply with the enforcement measurements he reaffirms (Executive Office of the President, 2017b). The Migrant Protection Protocols, also known as the “Remain in Mexico” policy required that asylum seekers to the United States wait in Mexico for their hearing date (Department of Homeland Security, 2019; Pineo, 2020). The official statement by the Department of Homeland Security at the time said that this process was necessary to “help restore a safe and orderly immigration process, decrease the number of those taking advantage of the immigration system,” among other reasons (Department of Homeland Security, 2019). This program was seen as targeting Latinos from Northern Triangle seeking refugee protection through the United States-Mexico border by “predispose[ing] asylum cases even more towards negative outcomes” and using “exposure to regional violence as a deterrent to future asylum seekers” (Kocher, 2021, p. 251; Pineo, 2020). Requiring refugees to wait in Mexico made it that much more difficult for them to attend scheduled court dates (Pineo, 2020). A lawsuit against the Department of Homeland Security in 2019 argued that the policy required asylum seekers to wait in dangerous locations that would violate United States and international laws against non-refoulement, that is, against sending refugees back to places where they would continue to be in danger (*Innovation Law Lab v. Wolf*, 2020; Pineo, 2020).

Latino immigrant experiences of, and responses to, these Trump policies and rhetoric are well-documented across the fields of psychology, sociology and political science (Finley & Esposito, 2020; Medel-Herrero et al., 2021; Roche et al., 2020; Vereza, 2018). For example, Roche et al. conducted a study in 2017 with 50 parents split between one of four focus groups

based on immigration status (2020). They found that parents were united across all four groups (citizens, permanent residency, undocumented individuals and Temporary Protected Status individuals), in decreasing their frequency of travel, reporting more discrimination and believing that Latinos were more fearful because of former President Trump's rhetoric. Other impacts varied by group (Roche et al., 2020). Whereas Marko grounded the Trump-era policies and rhetoric towards Muslim immigrants in the country's history of islamophobia, Finley and Esposito and others ground the "Latino threat narrative" of Trump-era rhetoric and policies in a wider history of nativism against groups seen as "un-American" (Finley & Esposito, 2020, p. 181; Slaughter, 2016). This would posit that groups seen as un-American would be the principal recipients of nativist rhetoric.

Romanian H-2B Immigrants

While less discussed in the literature and through media outlets, Romanian temporary workers indirectly suffered from the overall tightening of the immigration system. Through an inductive ethnographic study, Kluver found that Trump administration changes to the H-2B visa program (1) changed immigrant recognition of their rights and ability to move, (2) changed immigrant ideas of belonging, and (3) made them fearful that they would be sent back home (2019). It should be noted that immigrants in this study were temporary workers who have continuous interaction with the immigration system as opposed to some first-generation Afro-Caribbean immigrants who may not continue to have interactions with the immigration system after initial migration.

Clearly, former President Trump's rhetoric and policies had an effect on immigrant community members' levels of comfort and incorporation within the United States. However, the

aforementioned groups (with the exclusion of Romanian H-2B workers) were explicitly targeted through President Trump's rhetoric, and often had policies directed towards their groups and nations. English-speaking Afro-Caribbean immigrants present an interesting case of an immigrant group that was targeted less overtly by the Trump administration, but may nonetheless offer reactions to the tightening immigration system.

Situating Caribbean Immigration: West Indian Immigration in the United States

There is a long history of West Indian immigration to the United States, proceeding in three major waves (Davis, 2013; Johnson, 2008; Warner, 2012; Wright Austin, 2018). The first wave began in 1900 and steadily increased until there were over 12,000 immigrants in 1924 (Johnson, 2008). Some argue that because this first wave represented highly skilled labor and contributed to the growing idea of English-speaking Afro-Caribbean immigrants as a “model minority,” group of Black people within the United States (Johnson, 2008; Waters, Mary, 1999). That number decreased after the Johnson-Reed Immigration Act of 1924 limited immigration through a quota system aimed at keeping only immigration from Western European countries (Davis, 2013). There was very little immigration during the Great Depression, though a small “second wave” of Caribbean immigrants came in the 1940s and 1950s following World War II (Johnson, 2008). The 1952 McCarran-Walter Act again decreased Black Caribbean immigration during this time by tying the number of immigrants that could come from this region to Britain and only giving small allowances after nations started becoming independent (Johnson, 2008). The third, and largest, wave of Black Caribbean immigration began after passage of the 1965 Hart-Celler Act (Wright Austin, 2018). This act eliminated quotas preferential to European immigrants, and focused on family reunification and skilled workers (Wright Austin, 2018).

Black English-speaking Caribbean immigration greatly increased at this time from 4,700 in 1965 to 27,300 in 1970 (Johnson, 2008).

While there are English-speakers in a variety of Caribbean nations, my study primarily focuses on those from the Anglophone, or English-speaking, Caribbean. This refers to countries with English as an official language spoken frequently (Ammon et al., 1988; Grant-Woodham & Morris, 2009). These countries include Anguilla, Antigua & Barbuda, the Bahamas, Barbados, the Cayman Islands, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Montserrat, St. Kitts & Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, Trinidad & Tobago, the Turks & Caicos Islands (Ammon et al., 1988; Grant-Woodham & Morris, 2009).

Figure 1: Map of the Anglophone Caribbean



Source: Cacahuete, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Map_of_the_Caribbean.png, licensed under CC 4. Edited to add stars.

Table 2: US Census Data - CT Caribbean Population Total

Country of Descent	Population Total
West Indian (All groups [300-359], excluding Hispanic origin groups)	86,719
West Indian (All groups [300-359], excluding Hispanic origin groups), excluding Haitian (336-359)	68,308
West Indian (All groups [300-359], excluding Hispanic origin groups), excluding Haitian (336-359), including Guyanese (370-374)	71,701
Barbadian (301)	1,289
Guyanese (370-374)	3,393
Haitian (336-359)	18,411
Jamaican (308-309)	55,097
St Lucia Islander (331)	1,014
Trinidadian and Tobagonian (314-316)	2,383

Source: US Census Bureau 2015 ACS 5-year estimate survey, CT Population Total

Jamaicans account for the largest share of English-speaking Afro-Caribbeans, making up 16.9% of all Caribbean immigrants in the United States as of 2017 (Zong & Batalova, 2019). They are third among Caribbean only to immigrants from Cuba (29.7%) and the Dominican Republic (26.3%) (Zong & Batalova, 2019). Trinidadians are the next largest English-speaking Black Caribbean group with 5.3% of the Caribbean immigrant population (Zong & Batalova, 2019). Additionally, Jamaicans constituted the largest foreign-born population in the New York Metro area as of 2007 (Kent, 2007).

There is a significant history of English-speaking Afro-Caribbean migration to the United States and specifically to Connecticut with 86,719 non-Hispanic West Indians total and 55,097 Jamaican immigrants specifically (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015a; U.S. Census Bureau, 2015b). The language difference experienced by French and Spanish-speaking may create differences in their immigrant experience, so my research remains focused on English-speaking Afro-Caribbean immigrants. I further refine my scope by focusing on immigrants as opposed to temporary workers in Connecticut, acknowledging that migrant farm workers and other

temporary workers might have a distinct experience and view of the immigration system (Kluver, 2019).

The Invisibility of Black Immigrants

West Indian immigrants are often conceptualized as a subset of “Black immigrants” to the United States who have historically faced erasure in conversations around immigration (Bryce-Laporte, 1972; Greene, 2021; Kolawole, 2017). Bryce-Laporte described this trend of Black immigrant erasure as “double invisibility” on account of being overlooked as both “Blacks” and “Black foreigners” (Bryce-Laporte, 1972). He later updated this view of “invisibility” to account for the disparaging discussion of Haitian immigrants by the media (Bryce-Laporte, 2002).

Haitians present somewhat of an exception to the general discussion of the treatment of Black and Caribbean immigrant groups because they were explicitly targeted by Trump-era immigration policies and rhetoric. President Trump verbally attacked Haitian immigrants when he, according to United States Senator Durbin and others, called Haiti and the African nations “shithole countries,” (McKanders, 2019). On November 20, 2017, the Department of Homeland Security made clear its intentions to cancel Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for Haitian immigrants because it believed that “those extraordinary but temporary conditions caused by the 2010 earthquake no longer exist,” (Press Release, Office of the Press Secretary, 2017). Two court cases, *National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) v. U.S. Department of Homeland Security* (1:18-cv-00239-MJG (D. Md. Jan. 25, 2018)) and *Ramos, et al. v. Nielsen* (TPS. 321 F. Supp. 3d 1083 (N.D. Cal. 2018)) both sued to prevent the cancellation of TPS (McKanders, 2019). The second suit was successful in preventing the cancellation of TPS

for Sudan, Nicaragua, Haiti, and El Salvador with the California court ruling that “the administration was guided by racism -- not a sober consideration of the facts on the ground” (McKanders, 2019). While Haitian immigrants are phenotypically Black Caribbeans they have a French linguistic heritage and a history of maltreatment in immigration debates that could explain their visibility in immigration discussions relative to other Black immigrant groups (Baranik de Alarcón et al., 2020).

With Haiti as a notable exception, early explanations for this double invisibility included the concept of race as a “master status” erasing the prominence of immigrants’ nativity and immigrant status in the face of their treatment as Black people in the United States (Deaux et al., 2007; Foner, 2005, p. 109). Whereas the threat to Latino immigrants was grounded in nativism and the perception of Latinos as un-American, race being a master status would point to West Indians being treated similarly to African Americans within the social structure of the United States on account of their shared race (Foner, 2005). This association with African Americans would then lead to a decreased perception of this immigrant group as foreign. Claire Kim, for example, argues that some Asian American groups are seen as perpetual foreigners, and therefore outsiders to the United States relative to African Americans who are seen as inferior to White Americans, but still United States insiders relative to Asian Americans (1999). While this view has received mixed support, it points to the idea that West Indians may simply enter the United States and be counted among African Americans according to the idea of “race as a master status,” and then regarded as United States insiders as opposed to “foreigners” affected by immigration policies (Xu & Lee, 2013). Therefore, discussions around the impacts on West

Indians would be grouped with, and possibly engulfed by discussions of Trump impacts on “Black people” more generally, without specifications of West Indians as an immigrant group.

Numerous scholars have pointed to the exact opposite occurring, with West Indian immigrants often being singled out and compared with African Americans. Mary Waters in *Black Identities* proposes the concept of first-generation West Indian immigrants composing a model minority group relative to African Americans (1999). She argues that positive attributes of Caribbean culture and West Indian’s decreased animosity towards White Americans, as a result of not growing up in a racialized setting, initially helps in their relationships with White Americans (Waters, 1999). In her view, this would open the door to economic opportunities leading to the relative “success” of West Indians as a minority group compared to African Americans. That is, until the eventual realities of race relations in America settle in, which causes West Indians to become more like African Americans in their views towards race and socio-economic attainments. Following this hypothesis, West Indian immigrants may have left out of the conversation surrounding contemporary immigration due to attributes of the group that allow them to reach an elevated level of success and make them predisposed to safety from nativist or racist attacks. Greer in her 2013 book *Black Ethnics* argues for the related yet distinct idea of Caribbean immigrants holding an elevated minority status relative to native born Black people. Numerous studies have since questioned the idea of West Indians as a model minority relative to African Americans (Ifatunji, 2017; Lindsay, 2015).

Still, researchers found that this relative silence in comparison to other immigrant groups did not reflect the reality that Black immigrants, and specifically West Indians, have experienced (Hamilton, 2020; Palmer, 2017). This group was impacted by American policy initiatives such as

the Immigration Act of 1965, and has since faced disproportionately high rates of deportation and interaction with the criminal justice system from the 1990s to the present as compared to non-Black immigrant groups (Hamilton, 2020; Palmer, 2017). Immigrants, regardless of race, also continue to face increased procedural hurdles in attempting to remain in the United States and advance their legal immigration standing, due to an overall tightening of the immigration system (Bryce-Laporte, 1972; Chen & New, 2018; Palmer, 2017).

This produces the first two research questions:

- (1) Do West Indian immigrants perceive any changes to United States immigration policy, discourse or national attitudes; (2) how, if at all, do those perceptions affect their lived experiences?

Black Immigrant Attitudes Toward Immigration Policy in the USA

In general, the existing research shows that immigrants tend to hold differing views from native-born individuals, and that those views are not uniform across different populations of immigrants (Doña-Reveco & Gouveia, 2021). Little research has been done, however, to gather Black Caribbean immigrant attitudes towards immigration policy and rhetoric (Greene, 2021). There appears to be emerging work on Afro-Caribbean immigrant attitudes towards contemporary immigration. A recent study looks at the attitudes of Afro-Caribbean immigrants regarding immigration in the Trump era. Greene uses the Houston Area Survey to learn about “Black Americans and Black immigrant’s attitudes toward immigration policy” (2021). He notes that previous studies point out “stark differences among immigrant populations and how they perceive opportunities in America due to their voluntary or involuntary status,” with “voluntary immigrants” more likely to view America as a “land of opportunity” (Greene, 2021). Greene

found that Black immigrants in the United States, which included but was not limited to Afro-Caribbeans, “hold strong supportive beliefs regarding immigrants” and believe an “increase in immigration strengthens American culture” (Greene, 2021).

While there is little research regarding Black immigrant attitudes towards immigration, there is more work regarding Latino and Asian immigrant attitudes toward immigration, as well as around factors affecting Afro-Caribbean immigrant perceptions of policies, that allow for a discussion of immigrant attitudes. Previous studies on Latino immigrants have pointed to the importance of nativity in explaining immigration attitudes with foreign-born immigrants having more favorable views towards immigration than their second and third generation counterparts (Branton, 2007; Rouse et al., 2010). This can change, however, with time spent in the United States and acculturation to United States culture. Citizenship was not seen as greatly predictive of Latino attitudes towards immigration policies in the United States (Rouse et al., 2010).

Acculturation theories posit that greater integration in the United States decreases Latino immigrant support for policies that provide benefits to immigrants and support continued or increased immigration (Branton, 2007; Hood et al., 1997; Park, 2021). Measures of acculturation varies, with one of the more common tripartite measures being inapplicable to the present study. Acculturation in respect to Latino immigrants is often conceptualized as a being based on immigrant generation, being born in the United States and preference for English over Spanish (Branton, 2007; de la Garza, Rodolfo O. et al., 1996; Hood et al., 1997). The present study focuses on first-generation West Indian immigrants who would, according to this measure have very little acculturation to the United States. More expansive definitions of acculturation, and application to Asian immigrant groups, however, highlight the importance of time spent within

the United States as having the potential to affect attitudes towards immigration, which allow acculturation to still be a relevant determinant (Park, 2021). Recent literature has also focused on the way that contextual factors, such as the racial makeup of the neighborhood in which an immigrant lives will, impact their attitudes towards immigration policy (Hood et al., 1997; Rouse et al., 2010)

Group consciousness has also been found to affect Afro-Caribbean perceptions of public policy and immigrant attitudes toward immigration policies. Group consciousness grew out of earlier studies on group closeness, which were applied to Caribbean immigrants in order to understand their conceptualization of group identity and solidarity when considering policies. Thornton uses “closeness” to explain different types of group identities that Afro-Caribbean immigrants might take on in relation to how close they feel to other groups (2012). According to social identity theory people value members of their in-group more than members of their out-group. “Collective Minority Identity” models emphasize the convergence of traditional race boundaries towards a minority status that creates a pan-ethnic identity, making minority status individuals an in-group that would feel closeness (Thornton et al., 2012, p.752). “Pan-African” views emphasize that Black people of all ethnicities should feel closeness based upon their shared race and the impacts of that racial classification (Thornton et al., 2012, p. 753). “Mainstream Assimilation” views would posit the opposite effect – that there is actually growing divergence between minorities and Black ethnic groups as they undergo a “whitening process” or “Black distancing” and assimilate into the mainstream culture (Thornton et al., 2012, p. 752).

Thornton’s results showed that Afro-Caribbean immigrants are most likely to perceive closeness to other Afro-Caribbean immigrants, meaning that Black Caribbean immigrants in this

country are able to distinguish themselves as a separate group along the intersectional lines of race, ethnicity and national origin. They are secondly most closely related to other Black immigrant groups, specifically Black people in Africa and Spanish-speaking people, many of whom, like Cubans and Puerto Ricans, also tend to be phenotypically dark-skinned.

Group Consciousness, however, goes beyond an acceptance of group identity. Group consciousness is best defined as “a politicized in-group identification based on a set of ideological beliefs about one’s group’s social standing, as well as a view that collective action is the best means by which the group can improve its status and realize its interests.” (Sanchez & Vargas, 2016). While there are many definitions of group consciousness, this definition by Sanchez and Vargas provides a multidimensional understanding of group consciousness as not just group identity, but a *politicized* group identity with a recognition of the group’s “disadvantaged status,” and a “desire for collective action to overcome that status” (Sanchez & Vargas, 2016). Regis suggests that experiences within the United States cause a sense of group consciousness to grow among Afro-Caribbean immigrants to the United States, which may impact their views of different policies. (Regis, 1988)

Linked fate is a related though distinct method of understanding the level group identity an individual possesses. It is a distinct concept from group consciousness that, instead of measuring the politicized set of belief one has about their own group, measures the amount that someone can use their group wellbeing as a proxy for their own personal being, i.e. how much they see what happens to them as being tied to what happens to a group that they are a part of (McClain 2009). Dawson used the term “Black utility heuristic” to describe many African Americans’ tendencies to support economic policies not by economic status but by race, based

on the idea that to help their race was to help themselves (1994, p. 10). While there are some disagreements as to the correct definition, linked fate is generally considered a measure of racial solidarity connected to an understanding of how members of minority groups see their interests and outcomes as tied to the group of which they are a part (Nunnally, 2010; Vargas et al., 2017). Studies show that the level of linked fate within a group is a strong predictor of “Black political behavior,” for African Americans, with the potential to hold true for other “Black” groups of people like Afro-Caribbeans, in relation to their political attitudes towards immigration, and as a result of immigration rhetoric and policies (Nunnally, 2010).

While some authors see a level of danger in too closely identifying the two and using them interchangeably, others have used Linked Fate as a stand-in to practically measure group consciousness. In my study, I use the three-prong measure from Sanchez and Vargas to discuss group consciousness, and discuss linked fate separately, as linked fate has the potential to be impacted by citizenship status and language. That being said, I collectively discuss what impacts they may have on participants.

Group Consciousness in Immigrant Experiences

Group Consciousness has primarily been used to understand immigrant attitudes but it does provide possible explanations for immigrant experiences as well. While previous studies point to a tightening of immigration policies during the Trump-era, several constructs describe how minority groups may additionally feel impacted by the immigration system even in the absence of explicit attacks on their immigrant group. Groups with which an individual’s identity aligns could affect their perceptions of policy and lived experience.

There is no clear consensus on which factors impact immigrant attitudes most greatly, and there is evidence to show that this impact depends upon the ethnic group to which an individual belongs. In that regard, there are few studies that focus on Afro-Caribbean attitudes towards immigration. Group consciousness, acculturation and contextual factors, however, have been linked to Afro-Caribbean policy attitudes in other spheres, and has also been found to affect Asian American attitudes towards immigration.

This produces a third and fourth research question, namely:

- (3) What are West Indian immigrant attitudes towards immigration policy?; (4) What factors may affect these attitudes towards immigration?

While a plethora of explanations for immigrant attitudes towards immigration exist, the present paper focuses on discussing the attitudes towards immigration that exist among West Indians, and qualitatively reporting the impacts of group consciousness, acculturation and contextual factors on this group's explanation of their immigration policy preferences. These explanations, however, are not able to capture the qualitative depth necessary to understand the relative invisibility of West Indian immigrants in the present immigration discourse.

Present Study

Therefore, the present study follows a hybrid approach. It uses in-depth semi-structured interviews to gather and analyze whether participants were affected during the Trump era, and asks previously standardized survey questions about immigrant attitudes in the context of these interviews to gather information on participants' existing attitudes towards immigration.

Previous studies looked at Afro-Caribbean immigrants as a category of Black person similar to and different from US-born Black people, and used a comparative lens to understand the

differing trajectories of the groups (Greene, 2021; Jackson & Cothran, 2003; Manuel et al., 2012; Rogers, 2020). I instead look at Afro-Caribbean immigrants as an immigrant group similar to or distinct from other immigrant groups, Black or otherwise, to understand how members of this community in Connecticut understand and narrate their experiences, given the Trump-era immigration rhetoric and policies. I specifically look at Black Caribbean experiences and immigration attitudes directly following the Trump era. I have asked interviewees to define for themselves their race, their ethnicity, and their primary form of social identity to explore the potential salience of their immigrant or Black identities and whether or not these create differences in how they understand different immigration policies.

I ask questions to ascertain group consciousness among Afro-Caribbean immigrants with other Black immigrant groups and other immigrants in general to understand whether or not this increases Black immigrants' level of fear, discomfort, etc. over the current state of immigration in the United States. Lastly, I ask questions about linked fate to see whether this impacts the degree to which Afro-Caribbean immigrants in the interview sample view their lives as being impacted by Trump-era immigration effects on other immigrant groups in the United States. I specifically focus on Muslim, Latinx and Haitian immigrants to understand linked fate, as these are the groups that studies point out have been directly targeted by Trump immigration policies and rhetoric.

It is also important to note that Afro-Caribbeans may perceive no "Trump Effect" at all. To them, this immigration time might simply be more of the same, or just a continuation of the trend, and may not have changed their views or comfort level as immigrants in America at all. Understanding individual's immigrant experiences from their time of immigration gives a

historical perspective necessary to track any changes on their viewpoints between 2015 and 2021 as compared to previous era's policies and rhetoric.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Questions & Measures

Qualitative methods were particularly helpful in first identifying whether Black Caribbean immigrants view Trump-immigration policies as restricting or otherwise impacting immigration at all in their own lives, or the lives of Black Caribbean immigrants more generally. To understand not only their immediate experience, but also their group perceptions of potential impact(s), I asked questions adapted from the Pew Research Center's 2017 Survey of U.S. Muslims, including: "In recent years, has it become more difficult to be a [Caribbean American] in the U.S. or has it not changed very much?" (Pew Research Center, 2017).

Acculturation, group consciousness and contextual factors were shown to matter for Asian American attitudes towards Trump immigration policies to varying degrees and I have intentionally utilized similar questions in order to better understand the Afro-Caribbean attitudes towards these same policy issues. Acculturation was measured by amount of time lived in the United States. While previous measures also look at an immigrants' ability to speak English and their generational status, the present study is already looking at first-generation, English-speaking immigrants (Park, 2021).

Group consciousness, seen as a politicized in-group identity, was measured through two of its more popular dimensions: "closeness/commonality" and "linked fate," (Sanchez & Vargas, 2016; Thornton et al., 2013). "Closeness/commonality" was measured through four questions asked of each group: "How closely related do you feel with (1) Caribbean immigrants in the US,

(2) Black people in the United States? (3) Latino people in the US? (4) White people in the US?"

Linked fate was measured by asking "Do you believe your level of success / ability to reach that success is tied with other social, racial or ethnic groups within the United States? If so, explain which groups and why?" Immigrants who have a higher sense of group consciousness (measured through two of its dimensions "linked fate" and "closeness") are hypothesized to more negatively evaluate the Trump-Era immigration policies and rhetoric and see statements about immigration as affecting their own lived experience (Doña-Reveco & Gouveia, 2021).

Contextual factors, referring to the racial context in which the person lives, was collected by asking "How would you describe the racial mix of your current neighborhood where you live?" I also seek to rule out possible alternative explanations by asking participants to identify individual-level demographic information such as their age, gender, marital status, religion, employment and level of education, as previous studies point to such factors as affecting immigrant perceptions of policies (Doña-Reveco & Gouveia, 2021).

A benefit of the semi-structured interview style and in-depth qualitative interviewing is that participants have the opportunity to fully describe how they have witnessed and/or directly experienced these changes. "Policies" was therefore be loosely defined within the discussion of their responses to allow for an expansive discussion of policy changes. Specific policies are discussed when measuring participant attitudes toward immigration in order to closely mirror a recent study on Asian American immigrants. Questions aimed at exploring an individual respondent's immigrant experiences from their time of immigration gives an historical perspective necessary to track any change over time in their viewpoints between 2015 and 2021, as compared to previous era's policies and rhetoric.

In order to answer these questions, and to ascertain Afro-Caribbean immigrant experiences as well as attitudes towards immigration policy, I first asked open-ended questions followed by attitudinal survey questions adapted for my interview context in order to allow immigrants to narrate their own stories and bring forward themes while also having measures of immigration attitudes that are connected to previous studies (Doña-Reveco & Gouveia, 2021; Greene, 2021; Kluver, 2019). There has been little nationally representative survey data collected during or following the Trump-Era that includes Afro-Caribbean immigrant perspectives on immigration. As such, I determined the best approach was to collect my own primary data. While both quantitative and qualitative data have both been called upon to fill the gap in illustrating immigrant life experiences, a qualitative approach best serves my aims in this project because it allows for themes that may have been potentially overlooked to emerge out of questions posed to individuals interviewed for the study.

Sampling Methods

I collected participants through a combination of snowball sampling and community advertising through various West Indian organizations through the state of Connecticut. There are potential drawbacks to snowball sampling including the potential homogeneity of responses because of possible linkages between participants. I was able to avoid this outcome by advertising with West Indian organizations at the University of Connecticut, in the town of Windsor, and in the town of Hartford, among other locations. I was therefore able to draw participants without linkages to one another, and from a variety of backgrounds. All participants were screened prior to the start of the interview for the following criteria, being: (1) Black / Afro-Caribbean, (2) English-speaking, (3) a first-generation immigrant from a Caribbean

country, (4) a current resident of CT, and (5) 18 years or older. Immigration status was intentionally unasked in the screening question, or by the interviewer within the study because of the heightened tensions surrounding immigration enforcement. In order to keep participants safe, and allow people who may fit the category of “undocumented” to participate without feeling like they needed to say, participants were allowed to volunteer this information, rather than being asked by the interviewer.

Interview Procedures

I conducted 20 semi-structured qualitative interviews with English-speaking Afro-Caribbean immigrants living in the state of Connecticut between December, 2021 and February 2022². I explored their attitudes regarding policy enacted and pervasive rhetoric over the course of their lifetime, with a specific focus on the years of the Trump administration (2015 to 2021). While I cannot elicit “real-time” perspectives because President Trump is no longer in office, this study was nevertheless designed to collect immigrant perspectives and to allow respondents to contextualize previous events so that Afro-Caribbean immigrant voices are not left out of the historical analysis of Trump-era immigration policies. My aim is to begin to break the relative silence on Black Caribbean immigrants’ experiences of, and attitudes toward, immigration policies (Doña-Reveco & Gouveia, 2021). The stated topic of the interview was immigration rhetoric as understood and evaluated by Afro-Caribbean immigrants residing in the state of Connecticut. It covered the evolution of rhetoric since Trump first announced his candidacy (2015) up and until the day that he left office (January 20, 2021).

I corresponded with interested participants primarily through email, and secondarily through a Google Voice phone number in order to constitute a snowball sample (i.e., by allowing

participants to recommend other individuals who could then contact me through phone if they were interested). Once interested participants reached out, I emailed the information sheet, consent form, and screening questions. After participants were screened, they were interviewed for 45 minutes to one hour about their life history, their responses to the Trump immigration era, and their identification with other immigrant groups. Interview questions were provided on the day of the interview. Participants did not receive the questions ahead of the interview time so that I would not lose out on their immediate and authentic answers to the questions.

Per IRB requirements, I reviewed key points from both sheets before beginning each interview. After this discussion, participants had the opportunity to ask questions and then consented orally before the interview began. I coordinated with Professor Fiona Vernal of the University of Connecticut Department of History and Professor Jane Gordon of the University of Connecticut Department of Political Science, to ensure clarity of my questions for a Caribbean audience and neutral phrasing to withhold my own opinions on the topics of interest. These questions are included below as “Appendix A.” Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, interviews were held virtually to maintain participant health and safety. Interview audios were recorded and resulting data was stored in an encrypted, password protected Dropbox folder. All participants, save for one, agreed to be recorded for this research study.

Analytical methods: Thematic Analysis of Experience

After collecting the data, I conducted a thematic analysis of the interviews for immigrant experiences, and separately analyzed participant attitudes towards immigration to look for variation due to closeness, acculturation, and contextual factors. In order to answer my first research question of whether Caribbean immigrants experienced impacts due to Trump-era

immigration policies and rhetoric, I developed the codes in the table below prior to the start of analyzing the data based on previous studies of how immigrants experienced and responded to the Trump immigration policies. Previous studies helped shape the content of the questions that I asked, such as participants specifically being asked whether they experienced any “economic effects” or changes to their “perceived or actual level of safety” (See Appendix B). The responses themselves were first sorted by whether participants experienced (0) No effects, (1) Indirect Effects or (3) Direct Effects. “Indirect Effects” refers to changes the participant witnessed in the life or experiences of others, while “direct effects” refers to changes within the participants’ own life or within the life of their family members.

The second column of codes refers to words, phrases and ideas related to immigration policies/procedures that together form an the “invisible border wall” discussed by Chen and New (2018). As noted above, this type of “wall” is more difficult to perceive, so I anticipated that for a group which is routinely ignored by the media in the context of immigration reporting (dominated by discussion of the physical border “wall” at the US-Mexico border), such potential “invisible border wall” effects may have actually been their primary source of “direct effects” from the Trump administration. I additionally analyzed the interviews for phrases and ideas that were repeatedly discussed by various participants related to what they experienced during the Trump administration. These codes were grouped into themes or “categories for analysis.” These themes generally aim to describe how West Indian immigrants narrate their experiences under Trump-era policies and rhetoric (Doña-Reveco & Gouveia, 2021).

Table 3: Code Words and Phrases Developed Prior to Analysis

<u>First Layer of Analysis</u>	<u>Invisible Border Wall (in reference to immigration proceedings & processes)</u>	<u>Contemporary Immigration Effects</u>
0) No Effect “No Change” “I didn’t feel anything different” “I didn’t notice anything different”	1) Procedural Hurdles “Higher fees” “Higher Processing Times” “Longer Waits / Delays” “No notice of rejection”	1) Muslim Immigrants Responses to Trump “Increased civic activism”; “Increased voting”
1) “Direct Effect” “I was personally impacted...” “Made <i>me</i> feel...” “_____ happened to my family.”	2) Reduced transparency: makes it harder to gauge the impact of policy changes. “I can never speak to anyone at immigration services...”	2) Muslim Immigrant Response “Anger” “Worry” “Proud to be American”
2) “Indirect Effect” “I heard that for some people...” “I know my neighbor...” “People I know...”	3) substantive priority changes: immigration services have a greater focus on national security and merit over family reunification “Hard to bring my family because of cost...” (Public charge rules)	“Trump is unfriendly to (Caribbean/switched for Muslim)”

First Layer of Analysis Source: Source: Author’s Own Interview Data; Invisible Border Wall Source: (Chen & New, 2018;

Family, 2021); Contemporary Immigration Effects (Marko, 2019; Pew Research Center, 2017)

Quantitative and Thematic Analysis of Attitudes

In contrast to semi-structured interview style of the immigrant experiences questions, questions about immigrant attitudes to immigration policies were directly taken from both the Greene (2021) and Park (2021) studies, and were asked in the same order, and with the same wording to each participant. Both of these studies were initially performed through surveys with large sample sizes. I, however, decided to ask these questions within the context of the interview, and specifically ordered it to come second to last, before the last set of demographic questions, so as not to bias participants’ discussions of their own immigration experiences. Participants

were given the answer choices for each question, and provided the opportunity to optionally expand upon their answers. Participant responses were tabulated and reported numerically below. Due to the small sample size, raw counts were included along with percentages in order to give a contextualized picture of participants' responses.

Additionally, I reviewed participant responses, for variations within their answers based on their level of acculturation (measured as the amount of time they resided in the U.S.), their closeness with other immigrant groups, specifically "Latinos" and as they were identified by previous literature as having been most fiercely targeted by Trump-era immigration rhetoric and policies, contextual factors (measured by the racial mix of their neighborhood), and demographic factors including age, political party/leaning and news media sources. Park's initial study discussed closeness along a 4-level scale with the options being "Not Close at All," "Not Too Close," "Fairly Close," and "Very Close" in increasing order. Participants were asked the same question: How closely related do you feel with _____ (1) Black people in the United States? (2) With Latino/a people? (3) With White people? Why or how? Responses were then coded along the 4-point scale from "Not Close at all" to "Very Close." Allowing for an open-ended response without providing these four initial anchors proved fruitful in that it allowed participants to define what they meant by being "close" with other groups and provide examples. In the Table 4, "Very Close," "Fairly Close" and "Not Too Close" examples were excerpted from responses regarding Caribbean immigrants. "Not Close at All" examples were excerpted from responses regarding Latino immigrants as no participant expressed feelings consistent with "Not Close at All" in regards Caribbean immigrants.

Table 4: Group Consciousness Code Words: Closeness

0) “Not Close at All”	1) “Not Too Close”	2) “Fairly Close”	3) “Very Close”
“I do not associate with...” (Participant J)	“let's say I don't go out and seek...” (Participant B)	“I associate with other people from...” (Participant C)	“I would say very close...” (Participant O)
“I don't have any relationship at all...” (Participant T)	“I don't feel like I'm that connected to...” (Participant S)	“Similar background, similar culture” (Participant T)	“We are basically one” (Participant J)

Source: Author's Own Interview Data;

RESULTS

Participant Demographics

Twenty oral histories were completed, and participants were assigned letters “A” through “T” to maintain anonymity. Four of the twenty participants were male and sixteen were female. The pool of participants was majority Jamaican, which matches the oversized population of Jamaicans in Connecticut relative to other Caribbean communities. While there was variation among participants in education levels, the sample tended to skew towards individuals with college or graduate degrees compared to the Connecticut West Indian population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). Citizenship status was purposely left unasked so that participants felt comfortable sharing details about their story, though all but two participants volunteered their immigration status as part of their overall immigration narratives. Of those that volunteered their status, 15 participants were citizens at the time of their interviews, with an additional three volunteering their permanent resident statuses.

All participants, save for one, were born in Caribbean nations and were therefore first-generation immigrants. The lone American-born participant was included within this study because, while born in the United States, both of their parents were Jamaican natives and

residents at the time of this individual’s birth. After birth, they only remained within the United States for the first 5 months of life, before returning to Jamaica, and immigrating later in life.

Therefore, they offer a unique though closely related perspective from someone whose experiences similarly reflect the other participants, regardless of their citizenship status at birth.

The sample heavily favored individuals who have lived in the United States for over 20 years.

Table 5: Participant Distribution by Ethnicity, Race, Age, Gender and Language

Ethnicity	Race	Age	Gender	Language	
West Indian 100%	Black	90%	18 - 35	15%	
	Don't use racial terms	10%	36 - 55	55%	
			56+	30%	
			Female	80%	
	Male	20%			
				Second Language	
				Patois	60%
				Creole	5%
				Spanish	5%
				None	30%

Source: Author’s Own Interview Data

Table 6: Participant Distribution by Education, Religion and Political Affiliation

Education	Religion	Political Affiliation
(1) High School Degree or Below	(0) No Religion	(0) Republican
(2) Some College	(1) Christian	(1) Independent
(3) Certificate Program/Trade School/Associates Degree		(2) Democrat
(3) College Degree		(3) "Not think in terms of party"
(4) Graduate or Professional Degree		(4) Refused to answer

Source: Author’s Own Interview Data

Table 7: Participant Distribution by Country of Origin & Citizenship Status

Country of Origin	Volunteered Citizenship Status
(1) Jamaica	(0) Not volunteered
(2) Trinidad	(1) Citizen
(3) St. Lucia	(2) Permanent Resident
(4) Guyana	
(5) United States	

Source: Author’s Own Interview Data

Immigrant Attitudes towards Immigration

Immigrant Attitudes More Generally

The following questions were adapted from Greene's (2021) study, which used questions from the Houston Area Survey. While participants were only given two options for each category, three participants provided a "No Opinion" response with three more agreeing with the need for such policies.

Table 8: Immigrant Attitudes Generally (in numbers and percentages)			
Undocumented are "cause of unemployment "			
	Disagree	20	100%
	Agree	0	0%
	No Opinion	0	0%
Immigration "strengthen or threaten US Culture"			
	Mostly Threatens	0	0%
	Mostly Strengthens	20	100%
	No Opinion	0	0%
Granting pathway to legal citizenship for "illegal immigrants"			
	Against	1	5%
	For	19	95%
	No Opinion	0	
Need "policies to reduce the number of new immigrants"			
	Disagree	14	70%
	Agree	3	15%
	No Opinion	3	15%
"Do immigrants take more or contribute more to the US economy"			
	Take More	0	0%
	Contribute More	20	100%
	No Opinion	0	0%

Source: Author's Own Interview Data

There was little variation in the answers provided by participants, with high support for immigration among West Indians. Questions did not vary significantly or consistently by party identification. One question that did see some variation was participant responses to whether the United States needs policies to reduce the number of new immigrants coming to the United States. Citizenship was not seen as greatly predictive of Latino attitudes towards immigration policies in the United States, though the lack of variation based on immigration status and

inconsistent elaboration on participant reasoning behind this first set of questions does not allow for the present study to accurately discuss the impact that citizenship may have had on participants' policy decisions (Rouse et al., 2010). While there is little variation in participant responses, this partially follows the trend found among Latino immigrants. First generation immigrants, such as the ones in this study, register much higher support for immigration policies, both surrounding legal and illegal immigrants, than do second and third generation immigrants (Rouse et al., 2010).

Immigrant Policy Attitudes, More Specifically

The following questions originated from a study of Asian American public policy attitudes and were specifically centered around policies heavily discussed within the Trump era. Similar to Asian Americans within the Park study, West Indian immigrants held strong positive views towards immigration. The greatest variation coming from the question of whether participants supported or opposed the banning of people from majority-Muslim nations. As 90% of participants identified as Christian, with varying levels of involvement in religious activities, this increased division relative to the other questions may implicate their religious identity above other identities. Moreover, participants were more likely to discuss concerns over "safety" relative to majority Muslim nations as compared to attitudes towards Syrian refugees. Syrian refugees were seen as a group that was "checked" and vetted, and disadvantaged on account of fleeing violence at home, thereby eliciting greater support from the participant pool.

	Oppose	Support	No Opinion
Accepting Syrian Refugees to the U.S.	5%	85%	10%
Giving Legal Status to DREAMers	0%	95%	5%
Banning People from Muslim Countries to enter the U.S.	70%	25%	5%
Constructing a Border Wall b/w the U.S. and Mexico	100%	0%	0%

Source: Author's Own Interview Data

Contextual factors, measured by the racial makeup of the neighborhood, allowed for a comparison between individual who identified their neighborhoods as being racially mixed versus those describing their neighborhoods being majority White. Only two participants said that they lived in a majority-Black neighborhood in Connecticut, with one saying that they lived in a majority Latino neighborhood.

Racial Mix of Neighborhood	
(0) Mostly White	35%
(1) Mostly Black	10%
(2) mostly Latino	5%
(4) Mostly Asian	0%
(3) Mixed	50%

Source: Author's Own Interview Data

Acculturation was initially measured solely by length of time spent in the United States. This might initially lead one to believe that this sample of West Indians represents a highly acculturated segment of the Connecticut West Indian population, but actual the levels of incorporation that participants self-reported varied. An additional factor that was salient for many participants was the region of the United States to which they initially moved, and the ethnic composition of their initial neighborhoods. Participants who did not initially moved to the Northeast similarly commented on how this affected the depth of their connection to their

ethnicity, or the depth of connection they see amongst their children. The impact of individual factors is consistent with the individual speed of incorporation for Latino immigrants depending partially on individual-level factors (Rouse et al., 2010).

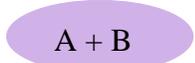
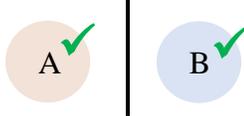
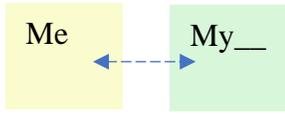
Decade Immigrated ³		Years Residing in the United States	
(1) 1960s or before	5%	Lived in the U.S. less than 5 years	5%
(1) 1970s	20%	Lived in the U.S. 5 to 10 years	10%
(3) 1980s	10%	Lived in the U.S. 11 to 20 years	15%
(4) 1990s	25%	Lived in the U.S. 21 years or more	70%
(5) 2000s	25%		

Source: Author's Own Interview Data

Participant T, for example, noted how initially immigrating to a region of the United States with a smaller Jamaican population relative to New York and Florida affected their children's acculturation:

I know people that say migrate and they kids still have a Jamaican accent and they still 100% identify as Jamaican. But for some reason, our kids did not develop- go down that path. Although they still acknowledge their Jamaican heritage in a lotta ways, but they don't necessarily identify as Jamaican. I think partly it's because your experience here is highly dependent on where you live. You know, if you come in live in New York, in a Jamaican community, of course, it's going to be different because you're surrounded by your peers, by Jamaicans. You eat Jamaican food. Everybody speak patios. So you kind of live in a more Jamaican bubble if you migrated and lived certain places, say New York or in South Florida or whatever. Where we lived, we didn't really have that much Jamaicans around. So they didn't have any Jamaican friends at school or anything like that. So that sort of influence- we didn't have any Jamaican- much Jamaican friends either say come into the house or live in a close-knit Jamaica community. So they didn't necessarily. So that affected how they identified as well.

After analyzing the interviews, certain patterns were evident in how and why people felt “close” or “not close” to certain groups, in a way that complicated analysis according to Group Consciousness.

Table 12: Participant Conceptualization of “Closeness” within Group Consciousness			
Basis for Closeness	Description of Closeness	Sub-Category (1)	Sub-Category (2)
<u>I. Direct Group Membership</u>	(No differentiation between self and group)	(Code phrases) “I am _____ (ex. Caribbean, Black, etc.)	
<u>II. Affinity-Based Closeness</u> (Based on similarity between own and other culture OR based on commonalities / closeness among the group) (Similar v. Dissimilar)	<p>Visual A = own culture B = other culture <u>Similarity between</u></p>  <p>“My culture is similar to their culture”</p> <p><u>Commonality among</u></p>  <p>“We are all _____” (superordinate similarity)</p>	<p>1) Cultural Affinity (artistic)</p> <p>“I identify with the food, music, arts...”</p> <p>“I see the food, music and arts as very similar to my own culture’s...”</p> <p>*Differentiate from an approval-based closeness (that is, it is not that there is any similarity to one’s own culture, food, etc. – just a liking of what the other culture is providing).</p>	<p>2) Cultural Affinity (values)</p> <p>“I identify with their work ethic...”</p> <p>“I identify with their views towards family/value of family...”</p>
<u>III. Approval-Based Closeness</u> (Based on enjoying or liking the culture of another <i>without</i> noting similarities between or commonalities among the culture) (Like v. Dislike)	<p>Visual</p> 	<p>Approval-Based Code Phrases</p> <p>“It is very different from my culture, but I like the food, music, arts...”</p> <p>“I do not identify with the food, music, arts, but I enjoy them...”</p>	None.
<u>II. Individual Closeness with Group Members</u> (Based on personally knowing people within this group, or being around them by choice, or circumstance) (Personal v. Impersonal)	<p>Visual ME – Participant My___ – Member of group to which participant feels individual closeness (if applicable)</p> 	<p>I. Interpersonal Closeness</p> <p>(Positive individual experiences / relationships with individual members of another group)</p> <p>“My roommate is...” “My best friend is...” “My partner/spouse is...” “My sister-in-law...”</p>	<p>II. Physical Closeness</p> <p>“I am often around _____” (Often described as a reason for other forms of closeness)</p> <p>“I choose to be around _____”</p>

Source: Source: Author’s Own Interview Data

There were distinct patterns in how people were responding. Answers depended based on the groups that individuals were speaking about. “Direct Group Membership” was more typical when describing closeness with Caribbean immigrants for participants, generally. “Affinity-based closeness” was more typical when describing Latino closeness, as well as approval-based on individual closeness. “Individual closeness” was also used when describing interactions with White Americans. Though a majority of participants noted the lack of closeness with White people in the United States, and noted the reasons for that lack of closeness (distrust, past experiences of racism, etc.), there were often caveats made for individual relationships with White people that participants enjoyed, even while noting that, on the whole, there did not exist a high level of closeness with White Americans.

DISCUSSION: WEST INDIAN IMMIGRATION UNDER TRUMP

Invisible Wall Impacts

Though 90% of participants volunteered that they were either permanent residents or citizens of the United States, this did not make participants within the sample immune from noting impacts of the Trump immigration policies upon their own lives. 20% of participants noted increased wait times or increased fees that impacted the lives of family members that were, in their own experiences, either caused or exacerbated by the Trump administration. One participant, in addition to the aforementioned 20%, also noted increased wait times, but said that the family member who was impacted attempted to move during the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020-2021. As such, this participant noted that the COVID-19 pandemic was the most likely reason for their family member’s delay in filing. Hence, they were not included in the

count of participants noting “Invisible Wall” effects, as the Trump administration’s policies, practices, and rhetoric were not identified as the primary cause of their family members’ delays.

For the remaining four participants who did note delays, three volunteered that they were citizens, while a fourth volunteered that they were a permanent resident. Three noted delays or increased cost in trying to file for family members to enter the United States, while a fourth participant noted delays in a close family member’s ability to progress from permanent resident status to citizenship, which caused a great deal of emotional distress. Two participants noted that their personal finances were a barrier to coping with the increased cost of immigration.

Participant M, for example, discussed their need to get a better job in order to meet the increased financial requirements for an affidavit of support for their mother. They were ultimately able to secure a better paying job so these requirements ceased to affect them, though it did initially create a difficult situation in trying to reunite their family:

Yes, a lot has changed pertaining requirements. For example, I'm trying to get my mother here. When I speak to my lawyer basically, that's trying to help me, the requirements has changed drastically within a couple years...Certain requirements makes it hard like affidavit of support. The required amount for a person salary have gone up, went up drastically, just in space of a couple of months, or a year I should say. So if you're not making a certain amount of money, it's like, you're not allowed be around your family members, or your family members are not allowed to live here, you know. So in, in certain circumstances, you know, it changes who can come and why can't you come.

Participant R, on the other hand, discussed their mother’s difficulty in progressing from permanent residency to citizenship under the Trump administration:

My mom, her processing got delayed. So during the Trump presidency, I believe we saw a lot of immigration getting delayed and documenting being delayed and the price for documentation got more expensive. So kind of all these different impacts to you know to

limit immigration to the US. Yes, I know it was very stressful for my mom because my mom, it's always been her dream to be an American citizen. She came here alone and started living here on her own away from everyone just so that she could get to that point. And when she got to that point, 'cause I think she hit that almost five-year mark ready to file for citizenship, but when the Trump presidency came in, it was very stressful for her because I remember they upped the price and it's already hard enough to afford a living wage. And to, you know, find everything for my family because we are a middle class, so it's it doesn't come easy. So that was more money for her. A lot of stress. My mom has two jobs. So it's like for her to work more hours to afford the documentation and the processing. And it just taking a longer time. I believe it got delayed for an entire year for her before it started processing.

Immigration Status, A Sometimes Buffer

30% of participants noted that they no longer had dealings with the immigration system, or that their citizenship acted as a buffer to feeling any impacts from Trump era immigration policies. In a sample with 90% of participants volunteering their status as a permanent residency or a citizen, and 85% having lived in the United States for 11 years or more, acculturation theory would posit that their distance from the immigration processes would make them less likely to feel the impact of policies aimed at immigrants through their personal identities as immigrants. Participant G evidences part of the reasoning, as their lack of fear comes from the ability to outwardly display their immigration status through their work uniform. In responding to whether they felt any impacts to their safety during the Trump era, they said:

In my era, you know, before, you know, before 9/11, a lot of things was free and clear to do and stuff like that but under Trump I know you had nervous people. So, it didn't bother me no way because I'm working for [Connecticut state agency]. Right? So I basically. I used to carry my real green card in my wallet and stuff like that. Now, I just normally have the old one and stuff like that right there. Because you don't get into [Connecticut

state agency] if you're not properly well documented. So, the uniform speaks for me when I'm Downtown Stamford and I'm walking around. You don't get these kinds of jobs if you're not legalized.

Participant E notes that their lack of fear comes from having most of their family already in the United States:

You know it's- being honest, I haven't really thought about it too much because my entire family came together and so, once we were here, I never really thought about immigration that much. We didn't have anybody left in Jamaica. We weren't trying to file for anybody else to come back over here with us. So, I really never thought about the process itself...I mean, his policies towards immigration again, we're all citizens so they haven't really affected us in any way. But just his policies I find have been a bit discriminatory, and targeted. So, it does give you a sense of unease for those trying to come. But personally I haven't- it has not affected me.

Similarly, Participant J noted that most of their family being citizens kept contemporary changes around immigration from affecting their lived experiences:

No, immigration has not affected my life at all. Because my children are United States citizens. I am a United States citizen so it hasn't affected me directly.

This was not, however, a uniform perception. 55% of participants did not overtly comment on the role that their immigration status had in determining the level and types of impacts they felt from the Trump administration. 15% of participants noted that their citizenship or permanent residency status did not offer protection from the chance of physical harm due to immigration-related changes.

Identity-Based Emotional Concerns

Even among participants that did not report experiencing procedural hurdles or direct physical impacts as a result of Trump-Era immigration policies, 60% of participants reported experiences negative emotions including “fear,” “worry,” “concern” and depression based on their race,

immigrant identity or both during as a result of the Trump administration. 30% of participants experienced emotional concern due to their race (Black/African American). 15% were affected due to their immigrant identity, and 10% explicitly expressed being affected due to the intersectionality of both their racial and immigrant identities. 25% of participants explicitly stated they were not affected emotionally, while 15% did not discuss emotional concerns. Participant R's narrative regarding her own experiences and those of her mother trying to gain citizenship during the Trump Era is relays multiple sources of emotional concern and will be included at length here to more fully capture the story. First, she discussed the feeling of helplessness that came with increased procedural hurdles:

My mom. Whenever we watched the news, it would just be like oh boy, you know. It's like this is just one other obstacle for us to get through to get by. Because we've sacrificed a lot to be here, and to know that the one thing that has been my mum's dream has just like kind of not being able to do it, she had to delay and it was a nervous time for her. I think she was just out. She was upset and she was just like "Oh my goodness what is this man doing?" He's just trying to stop all this and all members of my family were impacted. My grandma's friends, we would all talk about it and be like "Oh my goodness. Yeah this got delayed that got delayed. We can't believe it. What we're gonna do?" We have no control over this and just feeling helpless, you know and just it was not good. We just talked about how there's nothing we can do.

She then discussed a theme repeated by other participants of wondering whether to return to Jamaica given the state of immigration proceedings within the United States at the time:

And a lot of the time, I think during that time we talked about going back to Jamaica. I can't tell if it was just jokingly or also seriously, but it's like at this rate we have to go back home because we're it's like we're getting prosecuted here and you know, the deportation was, for some period, it was on an incline you know there is going through a

lot of things and it just felt like fear. So we just were thinking maybe we should go back home where we feel safer. And even though there is a crime, are in Jamaica because I won't pretend that you know it's perfect, but it's like we have to worry about not being like treated a certain way differently because of our race and because of our immigration background. So I think during that time we talked a lot about returning home to Jamaica.

Participant R also discussed negative emotional experiences tied to Trump rhetoric:

I think something I just remembered was during the Trump presidency. The entire opinions of immigration definitely impacted what we said. So it's just like when you say things like. You know? Like shit countries and their toilets and it really impacts how people view immigrants overall. And I remember my mom saying it's kind of sad because immigrants built this country up for sure. There's no question about it, and it was just kind of sad because, for example, at the Trump presidency, he would say all these things. Yet the Trump Tower, mostly probably had immigrants working around the different places and it's just kind of sad because as immigrants, we definitely have to work harder to get to the places where we want, and then we're being discriminated at the same time. So it's like you have to work harder and then you're being discriminated for doing your jobs.

This discussion of Trump's more general rhetoric directly led into a story regarding the intense negative affect experienced by this participant and her mother due to attitudes towards immigration during the Trump Era.

And it was just very scary 'cause I remember my mom works in a call center and she would tell me sometimes when they hear her accent. Because I've been here long enough, it's easier for me to mask my accent but for my mom it's a bit harder and as soon as some people would hear a whiff of it, they would be like what are you doing here? You need to go back home. And I remember feeling very shocked 'cause I don't think that's something that was talked about prior to the Trump presidency. So I think, like an idea or theory we had is that the Trump presidency really emboldened certain people to say, certain things

that they always wanted to say about immigrants and he gave them the power and authority to say these things and get away with it. So my mom would oftentimes cry after work because some people would say “learn English” when in Jamaica we do speak English. It's just there's a dialect of Broken English and then say to my mom, essentially like go back home to where you're coming from. You know? So I think that's definitely one of the different things that we talked about and she would talk to us about it kind of very depressed around it since that prior to that Trump era, she never had anyone so emboldened to say that to her. But they were just kind of mimicking what they were seeing and what they heard, because these people probably had never stepped a foot outside of US so they think all these third world countries and all these countries that immigrants come from, they're all just really bad, a really bad place, and there's no good to them.

This extended narrative ties into the idea of “seeing people’s true colors,” that other participants also discussed. 40% of participants noted that Trump policies and rhetoric “empowered,” “emboldened” and “revealed” racism among those in their lives. 15% of participants discussed the nativist empowerment, while 45% of participants did not explicitly discuss Trump policies revealing people “true colors.” While this was generally seen as a completely negative phenomenon, participant A discussed the revealing of people’s “true colors” as potentially providing some level of physical protection:

Yeah, I think in terms of safety, like I mentioned before, I feel like during that time, there was definitely a lot more talks about immigration. I think a lot of people kind of show their true colors on, what they think about certain things... So, yeah, definitely in terms of safety, there was definitely some suspiciousness, I feel like whenever I'd be in unfamiliar places... Essentially what happened I feel had some benefits for those discussions to be had. Because I think the people who were very vocal about “they don't want anybody in their country” and things like that, I feel now it's like, okay, now I know where you stand. And now I know you could be a threat. You could be dangerous. You could potentially-

you know, especially if someone says anything harmful or whatever, I feel like, in a way it's like, okay, now, at least, we know that there are people out there that think that way and now they're making themselves more obvious. So it's, it's just better for us.

Participants discussed “fear,” “worry” and “concern” for their own safety, for their non-citizen family members, for the children who were already citizens and for family members seeking to enter the United States among other sources of worry.

Group Consciousness, Linked Fate & Contextual Factors

Most participants responded with answers coded as “fairly close” or “very close” in response to their closeness with Afro-Caribbeans. Participants were less clear in relaying whether they felt that West Indians held a disadvantaged status within the United States, or whether collective action was necessary to improve outcomes for the group. A number of participants cited that in the past, and under President Trump, their status as West Indians actually helped insulate them from the harm felt by other immigrant groups, or elevated them above the status of African Americans. While in the minority, some participants held internal views consistent with the idea of West Indians as a model minority, with one participant noting that this was less the case today than in the past. As there was inconsistency in participants’ approaches to responding regarding group consciousness, I will primarily discuss the impact of linked fate on participants lived experiences.

The question on linked fate was slightly altered from questions generally used in other studies to allow for an open-ended response. Participants named the groups to which they felt that their success was linked. Participants’ linked fate was very racially and ethnically linked, with people tying themselves and attributing their personal success to general improvements fought for by West Indians and African Americans, and in two instances, women.

Table 13: Frequency of Linked Fate Groups Shared by Participants (in percentages)				
“Black People” / African Americans	West Indians/Afro-Caribbean	Women	Misc. Others	No Group
45%	20%	10%	10%	20%

Source: Author’s Own Interview Data; percentage for each category is percentage of total participants who responded to the question specifically asking about linked fate by explicitly discussing each group. Some participants answered with multiple groups. They are added into each calculation of the overall percentage per category. For example, if an individual noted that their success was linked to both “West Indians” and “African Americans,” it would increase the total percentage for both categories by 5%. Misc. Others refers to Participant D citing being tied to Caucasians through her primary identity as a Christian and Participant B citing “everyone, whether you're black, whether you're white, whether you're a judge, whether your lawyer,” which flowed from Participant B’s emphasis on a community identity and desire not to identify with racial terms. There was no response given by 15% participants.

While 55% of participants tied themselves and their successes to West Indians, Black people/African Americans/Black Americans, and/or women (based on number of participants citing one or all of these groups out of the total participants), 20% tied themselves to “no one.” This may have to do with the success-focused vs. harm-focused wording of the questions. Other scholars of linked fate word the question to ask if things that “happen to” the group affect the participant as an individual (Sanchez & Vargas, 2016, p. 166). “Happen to” may evoke a negative connotation, such as shared experiences of trauma or discrimination. My wording, focused on success, seemed to evoke a concept of shared uplift among participants as opposed to a shared dragging down due to their ties with various groups. As such people discussed their “work ethic” or “hard work” as getting them to where they are in life. As Participant Q put it:

Well, my level of success is because I'm a go getter and I don't think it's because of any, any group that make me what I have, you know. You come to this country and you can, you see the opportunities and you go for it you know. So, I wouldn't say it's because I'm was friends with a white person or not, you know, that make me, or because a Black person that makes me becomes what I am. You know, so I just do it because, as I said, you see the opportunities and

you go for it and. And whatever I have is working hard, because work was always, I wasn't scared of working. You know, and I work hard and I saved.

Further studies may consider applying psychological principles of Attribution Theory and Loci of Control more commonly applied in an educational setting to individual's evaluation of their general success (Rotter, 1966; Weiner, 1985). This may assist with understanding the degree to which linked fate may be tied to individuals internal and controllable attributions of success versus external and uncontrollable attributions of hardships or failures (Rotter, 1966; Weiner, 1985). Participants, on the whole, however, discussed their fates more generally being tied to African Americans and West Indians at higher rates that not being tied to anyone or being focused on hard work. This tying of fates produced differing effects. 15% of participants felt that President Trump's anti-immigrant rhetoric and policies were primarily targeted at Latino and/or Haitian immigrants, leaving West Indian immigrants, and by proxy themselves, in a better position relative to the impacts on other immigrant groups. It should be noted though these participants still shared impacts on their family and/or their own emotional states due to Trump era policies or rhetoric. Participant C, who was among the three participants discussing her safety relative to Haitian and Latino immigrants said:

And even though I was a citizen, became a naturalized citizen, I still have concern if you know if he got re-elected or something else. He, if he was able to continue on the way he was doing with immigrants, it could spill over and even people from the Caribbean or even people who became naturalized citizens you know. So there was a really definite a definite concern there for me.

Participant C was, interestingly, one of the few participants who was interpersonally "very close" with Latinos in the United States. Their excerpted response above, and their closeness with Latino immigrants, points towards a heightened awareness to the impacts on

Latino immigrants accounting for a decreased sense of danger in regards to West Indian immigrants compared to Latino immigrants under the Trump administration.

Participants with linked fate also felt a heightened sense of danger due to their immigrant status. Participant K's experience, for example, gives an in-depth look into how their racial identity, immigrant identity, and the intersectional impact of being an immigrant Black male in America informed the participants' discussion of the ways in which the Trump era impacted their lived experience:

Yes, I would say it did affect knowing who you are. Being a Jamaican, we're a proud people... My son says he's Jamaican and he's never been to Jamaica. However, he knows his parents [are] Jamaican, and he's headstrong that he's Jamaican. So, in terms of the identity of where I'm from, and my culture and my roots, that's current, and it was always and will always be such. I'm American because, you know, I'm a part of this American society. Part of American nation. You know I'm citizen of the United States. I work and pay taxes. I'm a contributor to the American economy and society. And I encourage everyone around me to be positive so these identities are very strong. However, during that time you start, second-guessing and questioning. What's your worth? So you start thinking of is my citizenship even worth it? You know, does it hold any weights. Because it can mean something to you, but if it doesn't mean anything to the federal government, what, you know, you start thinking because you were hearing rumors yeah, certain citizenships might get revoked. I'm a black man in the United States. I can get pulled over and falsely accused of something I've never done. You know, and if I'm being told that, yeah, you could probably get sent home for any crime that they see fit, they can send you home. I could just imagine what would have happened to me that hasn't been in Jamaica, only to visit once maybe, but I hadn't lived in Jamaica since I was 15 years old. You know, so these are some of the immigration issues that we find that are so, for lack of better word, wrong.

Participant K discussed a further disillusionment with the worth of their citizenship in the United States:

However, my standing as to my identity as a human being was in question during the Trump administration because, like, hey, I feel like I'm property here. You know? Like my paper, my citizenship was, can just be waived off and passed off to someone else. Say, hey, you know, this, "he belongs to you now. Take him." And like "oh I don't like him, you know, he's not worthy, you know, keep him over there and bring him back to the island and deal with them over there." So you were kinda like tipping (tip-toeing) on eggshells because you're kinda like, you know, you didn't want to just do regular things because you didn't want to get caught up in any situation for the fear of being deported and sent to a country that you love, but yet you don't live at any more.

It is worth noting that Participant K was the only participant who responded to living in a "majority Latino" neighborhood (see Table 10). This reality did not, however, produce a sense of closeness with all Latinos, to which participant K's responses aligned with the coding of "Not Too Close," citing incidents of nativist discrimination from said group. It did, however, produce group consciousness with Latino *immigrants*. The following response was consistent with being "fairly close" with Latino immigrants:

I've been told that I'm not really an American and their an American by Latinos because – especially Puerto Ricans — because they consider themselves to be more American than people from any other island or country coming into the United States...People from South America, they don't have that entitlement. They feel that, hey, you know, I had to go through the immigration process. I had been through it. So I know what you've been through. So, you know, you have that that bond, so to speak. But when someone hasn't gone through, jumped the hoops and hurdles that you have where it's just, uh, "yeah, I've got my passport and I traveled over." You know, when they- it's easy for them, so they feel entitled.

This closeness was on the basis of shared immigration experiences, which Sanchez and Vargas cited as the main reason driving Latino linked fate (2016). While participant K was the

only one to live in a majority-Latino neighborhood, numerous other participants noted that majority-White neighborhoods in which they currently resided caused them to feel a high, though decreased level of closeness with Caribbean immigrants (resulting in a coding of “fairly close” as opposed to “very close”). Participants’ assertions support the idea that the context in which they lived determined the closeness with not only their own racial group, but with *other* racial groups that made up their neighborhoods. Future studies should explore this link more closely with a sample size that includes a greater diversity of racial neighborhood makeups, and a focus on the differing experiences between immigrants in urban, suburban and rural contexts.

Acculturation

We measured acculturation in the present study through length of time spent in the United States, expecting that the focus on immigrants from the Anglo-Caribbean would make preference for the English language moot as a measure of acculturation. While 100% of participants did originate from English-speaking islands and were native speakers of English, language still played a role in 10% of participants’ immigration experiences. In addition, the prevalence of an accent was also a source of fear for 15% participants during the Trump era, as they worried that it would give away a foreign-born identity and invite harm or persecution from others in the United States. 65% of participants spoke patois or a creole language. Future studies may seek to expand in knowing whether in the absence of a completely different root language, or preference for a dialect may act in a similar way to language as a signifier of levels of acculturation, and affect immigration experiences.

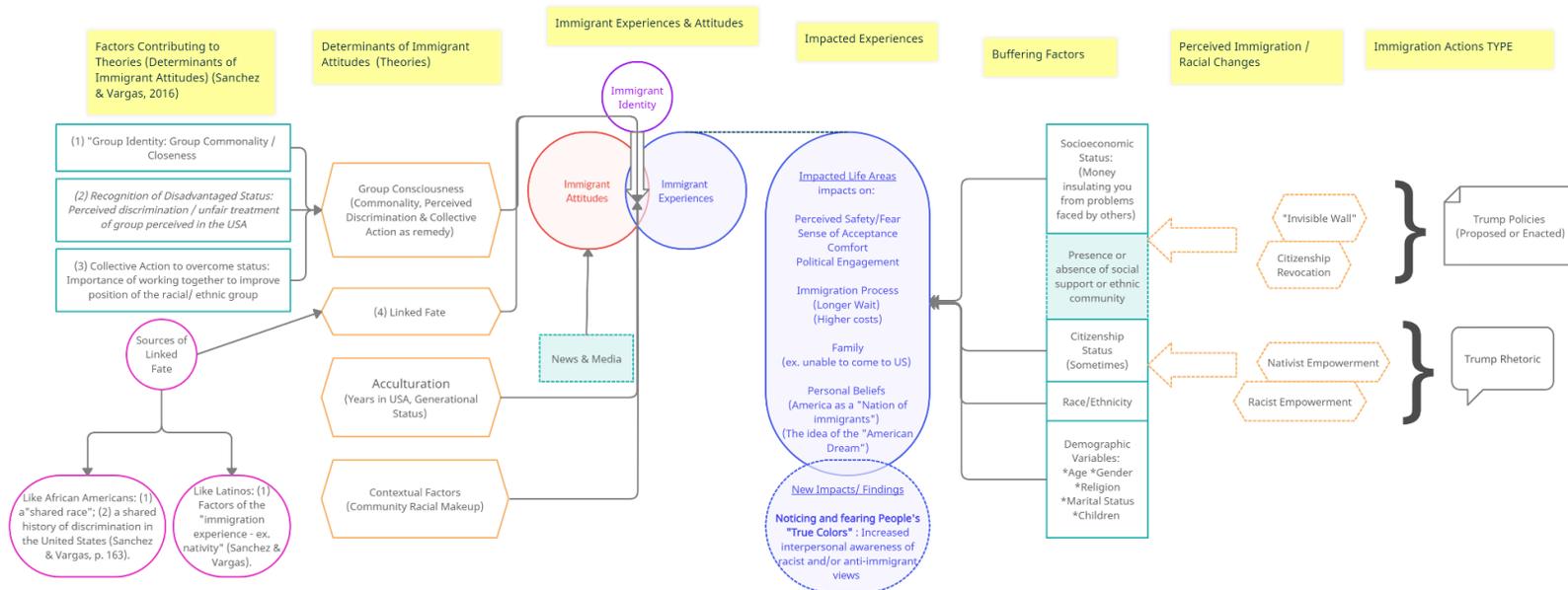
CONCLUSION

Even with a sample who had generally been in the United States for a long time, with permanent residency or citizenship, there was still an awareness of Trump-related rhetoric and policies, and numerous stories about the impact that had on their family's lives through increased fees, increased wait times, fear over filing for family members, and fear of harm due to circumstances created or exacerbated by Trump era policies and rhetoric. West Indians also represent an intersectional group put in jeopardy not only by their immigrant identity but additionally because of their race in the United States. This reality was salient for almost all participants, some of whom reported no fear and worry regarding immigration, but high levels of fear and worry regarding their racial identity in the United States. This study is in line with previous studies of Latino immigrants that note increased fear among Latino communities based on race and ethnicity arising from the Trump administration (Roche et al., 2020). Future studies can expand by targeting specific groups, or immigration statuses, within the West Indian population in CT to note whether similar experiences, or all new experiences are felt by recently arrived immigrants, temporary workers (such as H-2A farmworkers) and undocumented West Indian immigrants.

West Indians additionally reported positive attitudes towards the impact of immigration on the United States, and liberal attitudes towards immigration policies regarding Syrian refugees, DACA, inclusion of Muslim immigrants, and the construction of a border wall with the United States and Mexico. While participants were not required to provide a rationale behind their choice, they were invited to do so should they desire. Most participants ridiculed the idea of a border wall on the basis of its ineffectiveness and exorbitant cost, and not necessarily from the

standpoint of its impact on immigrant communities. This is in line with 2017 surveys through the Pew Research Center finding that 62% of Americans opposed a border wall, with 43% finding that it would “not have much impact” on preventing “illegal immigration to the United States,” (Suls, 2017). Further studies can include a larger sample of participants within Connecticut, and across the United States with an explanatory component for participant answers, in order to discern whether those explanations reveal attitudes swayed more by participants’ role as taxpayers within the United States or as, for example, immigrants opposed to restricting various forms of immigration. Though a sample of 20 participants is too small to be generalizable to West Indians across Connecticut or across the United States, it provides an initial understanding of the direction such an inquiry may take through a descriptive lens. 65% of participants also had college degrees or higher, though the small variation that did exist among participants did not occur along educational lines. Immigrant attitudes can be further analyzed with a large sample survey allowing for more linear regressions to determine the relative impact of different factors on immigrant attitudes.

APPENDIX A: MAP OF RESEARCH



Key:

From Left: Immigrant attitudes as predicted by the theories of group consciousness, linked fate, acculturation and contextual factors. Includes the three parts of the definition of group consciousness (“group identity”, “recognition of disadvantaged status” and “collective action,” as well as differing sources of linked fate identified by previous literature (Sanchez & Vargas, 2016). The present study showed that shared race and shared immigration experience were both salient reasons for participants displaying linked fate.

From Right: Flow of both Trump immigration policies and rhetoric leading to various impacts in the lived experiences of participants. The present study, however, pointed to factors that some participants referred to as insulating them from experiencing certain effects. These factors did not universally act as buffers for participants. They were especially not buffers against emotional impacts based on increased awareness of nativism and racism that participants said Trump rhetoric and policies sanctioned or exacerbated.

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW QUESTION GUIDE

TEMPLATE FOR QUALITATIVE INTERVIEW (conducted in person or via Web-Ex)

****Note:** This is simply a template for the qualitative interview and will serve as a guide for the semi-structure conversation**

Confirm via email before the interview:

- Currently resides in Connecticut
- 18 years of age and older
- Immigrated from an English-Speaking Caribbean country
- identify as Black/Afro-Caribbean

***Note*:** The following is a suggested list of questions for a semi-structured interview format, and will only serve as a general guideline for discussions with participants.

SCRIPT:

Hello Mr./Ms./Mrs./Dr. **PARTICIPANT**,

Thank you for meeting with me! I am in the political science department at the University of Connecticut, writing my senior thesis project. My project is about the immigration experiences of Black immigrants to the United States from the English-speaking Caribbean and how immigration policies and rhetoric inform their experience and understanding of their own migration. These interviews are especially important because the Black Anglophone Caribbean perspective is key to understanding immigrant experiences and attitudes towards immigration in the United States. Your ideas will increase the number and range of stories that people are able to hear to understand their own immigration experience and the immigration of others.

Please review the information sheet I sent you. I would like to highlight a few portions:

- Your participation is voluntary. You can stop at any time for any reason.
- You can refuse to answer any question.
- Your responses will be anonymous. You will only be referred to by a participant code when being referenced in the study (for example, Participant A).

Do you consent to being recorded? I will be recording the interview so that I can transcribe it and fill in any gaps based on the notes I will be writing while we talk. Only my Professor and I will have access to the recordings and only our voices will be on the recording – no images. Do you have any questions before we begin?

Background Questions:

- What is your age?
- With what gender do you identify?
- In what country were you born?
 - Need to have moved to the U.S. from the Anglophone Caribbean – i.e., Anguilla, Bahamas, Bermuda, Cayman Islands, British Virgin Islands, Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Barbados, Grenada, Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago, Jamaica,

St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Montserrat, St. Lucia, and Turks and Caicos.

- How do you define yourself in racial terms? (What race do you identify as?)
- How do you define yourself in ethnic terms? (What ethnicity or ethnicities do you identify as?)
- What language(s) do you speak (including creole/patois)?

Immigration Journey: Please tell me about your immigration journey to the United States.

- *NOTE*: Prompts are to help guide conversation and will only be asked for clarification
- Prompts
 - When did you first settle in the United States? Have you lived here, uninterrupted, since? How long have you lived in the United States?
 - Why did you come to Connecticut? Were there other places to which you migrated before coming to CT? Did you come directly to CT? If so, why?
 - Before you came to the United States, what did you think it would be like here? What did you base these impressions on? (Kluver, 2019)
 - Can you describe your interactions with the immigration system before, during, and after your immigration?
 - Have your thoughts about the immigration system changed as you have lived in the United States? Can you describe to me what those changes are and what might have caused those changes?
 - Do you still have family members, friends, social connections (community ties) in your country of origin?

Immigration Changes: Have you or your family members witnessed any changes in the U.S. immigration system that affected your experiences? If there were changes, can you describe them and what they meant for you and your family?

- Prompts:
 - (Trump Perspective) Specifically, were there any changes during former President Trump's campaign and presidency that affected you or your experiences in the United States? Can you describe them?
 - Are there ways that immigration was discussed in the last 4 years that you see as affecting your life? Can you describe them?
 - Have you or your family members witnessed any changes to immigration laws or practices in the United States that affected you or your experiences at any point in your immigrant journey? Can you describe what those were? How did you and your family members respond? (**NOTE**: You do not have to know the name of the law, practices, or policies)
 - Were there any changes to immigration laws or practices in the United States that affected you or your experiences during former President Trump's campaign and presidency? Can you describe what those were?
 - Impacts on family, perceived and actual levels of safety, sense of acceptance by the US, level of comfort within the country, economic impacts, level of political engagement, America as a nation of immigrants, the "American dream."

Questions of Group Identity & General Wellbeing (U.S. Muslims Concerned About Their Place in Society, but Continue to Believe in the American Dream. 2019):

- In recent years, has [being] a [Caribbean American] in the U.S. changed in any way for you? (p. 165)
- Were there any other changes in your life due to other identities you hold during the 4 years of the Trump administration?

Linked Fate & Closeness:

- Do you feel close with other immigrants from the Caribbean? How closely related do you feel with Black people in the United States? With Latino/a people? With White people? Why or how?
- Do you believe your individual success / ability to reach that success is tied with the thriving of other social, racial, or ethnic groups within the United States? If so, explain which groups and why or why not?

Script (Transition)

- I would also like to ask you some questions about your opinion on some immigration policies. This comes from another study and you answer with one of the two options I will say at the beginning.

Immigration/Immigrant Survey Questions (Greene, 2021)

1. Agree/Disagree: undocumented immigrants are a major cause of unemployment in [Connecticut] today.
2. Mostly Threaten/Mostly Strengthen: does increasing immigration into this country today mostly strengthen American culture or mostly threaten American culture?
3. For/Against: what about granting undocumented immigrants in the USA a path to legal citizenship, if they speak English and have no criminal record?
4. Agree/Disagree: we should take action to reduce the number of new immigrants coming to America.
5. Take More/Contribute More: do immigrants to the USA generally take more from the U.S. economy than they contribute, or do they contribute more than they take?

Script (Transition)

- I would also like to ask you some questions about how different people view immigration. These are questions taken from other research studies and you can answer “support” or “oppose”
- (Park, 2021)
 1. Do you support or oppose accepting Syrian refugees into the United States?
 2. Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) allowed young people who were brought to the United States illegally when they were children to receive a renewable two-year period of deferred action from deportation and to be eligible for a work permit. DACA recipients are commonly called DREAMers. Do you support or oppose to giving legal status to DREAMers?
 3. Do you support or oppose temporarily banning people from a few predominantly Muslim countries to enter the United States?

4. Do you support or oppose constructing a border wall between the U.S. and Mexico?
Script (Transition)

I would like to end by collecting a few more bits of information on your background.

Demographic Questions for the End

1. “How would you describe the racial mix of [the] neighborhood where you live?” (Park, 2021)
2. What is your current occupation?
 - a. Do you earn income in multiple ways, and if so, how?
3. What is the highest degree or year of education that you obtained?
4. What is your marital status?
 - a. *NOTE* Leave open-ended but here are some example categories
 - i. Married
 - ii. Living with a partner
 - iii. Divorced
 - iv. Separated
 - v. Widowed
 - vi. Never been married
5. Do you have any children?
 - a. *Note* Children can be broadly defined to include nephews, nieces, grandchildren who you live with and/or care for
6. How frequently they are you in communication with people/family in the country of origin?
7. How would you describe your political orientation and affiliations?
8. What is your religious orientation or affiliation (if any)? How involved are you with religious groups or organizations?
9. What, if any, news media do you regularly watch, listen to, or read?

Thank you so much! That is all the questions I have for you.

- a. Do you know any other Black immigrants from English-speaking Caribbean countries over the age of 18 living in the Connecticut that might be interested in sharing their story with me? If you think of anyone later, you can contact me at Danielle.cross@uconn.edu with any questions they have and to discuss meeting. I will send you the e-gift card over email. Please repeat which email you would like the gift card to be sent to. If you have any other questions or concerns please feel free to reach back out to me. Have a wonderful day!

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¹Many people consider Executive Order 13769 (the “Muslim Ban” or “travel ban), the Migrant Protection Protocols (MPP), or the “Remain in Mexico” policy along with the push to end Temporary Protected Status for Haitians and other nations some of the most high-profile immigration policies produced by the Trump Administration. These specific policy moves all followed substantial rhetoric by then-President Trump against immigration by these respective groups; the policies, in turn, were implemented and these groups were blocked to certain degrees. For the purposes of this study, all of the above policies would be examples that respondents might discuss in their interviews.

² IRB protocol approval number : Exemption #X21-0252 “Afro-Caribbean Immigrant Experiences”; Approved on December 8, 2021.

³ Decade Immigrated refers to the most recent migration and settlement of the participant to any place in the United States. If immigrants immigrated to the United States, return to their country of origin or live in another country, and moved back to reside in the United States, this would reflect the date of their most recent move, as opposed to their initial move to the United States. This was done so that discussion would accurately reflect the recency of their immigrant journey into the United States. Further studies may explore the impact of multiple moves, or a return to the host nation, on immigrant experiences and attitudes.