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Revitalizing Ethnographic Studies of Immigration and Crime

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Abstract

Ethnographic studies of immigration and crime were prominent in the early decades of the twentieth century, yet contemporary scholarship has been dominated by quantitative approaches. In this review, we heed the call of those who have lamented the "collective amnesia" and "newness fetish" that characterize much of contemporary criminology and revisit classic ethnographies of immigration and crime, with an emphasis on the unique methodological contributions of this early work. Next, we synthesize the small but growing body of contemporary ethnographic research on immigration and crime, which includes the policing of immigrant communities in the age of "crimmigration;" the lived experiences inside contemporary deportation/ detention regimes; the integration experiences of Muslims, a highly marginalized but understudied population; and immigrants' unique vulnerabilities to and experiences of victimization, to illustrate the value of qualitative approaches for capturing the nuances of immigrants' experiences in the new age of immigration.

INTRODUCTION

Today more than 40 million immigrants, hailing from nearly every country in the world, reside in the United States, making it home to the largest population of immigrants worldwide (Budiman 2020). Although the demographics of the foreign-born population have shifted dramatically since the first waves of European migrants arrived in the United States at the turn of the twentieth century, divisive political rhetoric and deep-seated public fears that immigrants bring with them a host of social problems, including low human capital, poverty, crime, and violence, have remained surprisingly consistent. The discipline of criminology was initially slow to examine the relationship between the most recent waves of immigration and crime (Bursik 2006, 2009). When Sampson (2006) first contended that growth in immigration was likely a major factor contributing to the dramatic crime drop in US cities during the 1990s, the body of empirical evidence (while growing) was still equivocal, due in large part to variations in design characteristics across studies (Ousey & Kubrin 2018). As researchers have continued to probe the immigration–crime nexus, the commonly held perception that immigration is criminogenic continues to falter under the weight of the evidence. With few exceptions, studies conducted at both the aggregate and individual levels demonstrate that high concentrations of immigrants are not associated with increased levels of crime and delinquency across neighborhoods and cities in the United States (Desmond & Kubrin 2009, Kubrin & Ousey 2009, Martinez et al. 2010), nor are foreign-born individuals more likely than their native-born counterparts to commit crime (Bersani 2014, Morenoff & Astor 2006, Rumbaut et al. 2006, Sampson et al. 2005). Underscoring what is now widely regarded (at least among academic circles) as a timeworn conclusion is Ousey & Kubrin's (2018, p. 64) recent meta-analysis of 51 studies published between 1994 and 2014, from which they conclude that "overall, the immigration–crime association is negative—but very weak."

Ousey & Kubrin's (2018) review raises important questions about the state of the empirical evidence on the immigration–crime link and the discipline's path forward. Notably, much of what we know about the complex relationship between immigration and crime in contemporary criminological research emerged predominantly from quantitative studies. Whereas aggregate and survey-based studies of the link between immigration/assimilation and crime are critical to informing our understanding of broader trends and patterns at multiple levels (e.g., individual, community, city), they are unable to fully capture the multifaceted and complex nature of this relationship or the distinct social processes at work within immigrant families, neighborhoods, and communities. To illustrate, among the theoretical perspectives used to explain the null or negative effects of immigration on crime is the immigrant revitalization perspective, which posits that high concentrations of immigrants, especially in disadvantaged contexts, help promote social organization through the presence of strong social institutions (e.g., intact families, religion) and new forms of informal social control—all of which buffer against crime (Desmond & Kubrin 2009, Kubrin & Ishizawa 2012, Martinez et al. 2010, Martinez & Lee 2000). As Ousey & Kubrin (2018, p. 68) point out, however, "the mechanisms by which this takes place are not fully understood." That is, despite the proliferation of studies in recent years, and the use of varied, sophisticated analytical approaches, significant gaps remain in our understanding of the precise ways in which high concentrations of immigrants revitalize disadvantaged areas and how social institutions contribute to this process of revitalization. Similar deficits exist in the body of individual-level research. Whereas the paradox of assimilation or the phenomenon of second-generation decline (Bersani et al. 2014, DiPietro & McGloin 2012, Morenoff & Astor 2006, Zhou & Bankston 2006) has been well substantiated, a comprehensive understanding of the interstitial processes involved in the assimilation–crime relationship has been hindered by the use of overly broad categorizations (e.g., generational status) to capture complex and nuanced assimilatory processes.

We contend in this review that significant gaps in our understanding of the immigration–crime nexus can be filled by a greater reliance on qualitative methodologies (e.g., ethnography, case studies, life history methods) to augment the substantial body of quantitative work in this area. Although, as Wright et al. (2015, p. 339) argue, "the roots of American criminology are anchored firmly in qualitative research," contemporary criminological research—particularly on the topic of immigration and crime—has been dominated by quantitative approaches. The relative scarcity of qualitative research in this area is a function of two converging trends in American criminology. The first is the broader paradigmatic shift consequent to the Enlightenment and the Industrial Revolution that resulted in a view of quantitative methods as more credible, precise, and objective than human-centered approaches. Reflecting on the cause of this shift, Wright et al. (2015, p. 340) refer to the "allure of the physical sciences," offering that the appeal of quantitative criminological research lies, in part, in its ability to offer "a 'big picture' perspective supported by aggregate data that can be contrasted to other aggregates" (Wright et al. 2015, p. 341). With this perceptual shift toward quantitative research as "real" science, however, has been the gradual unseating of qualitative methods rather than their continued use to inform and shape quantitative research. After a post–World War II lull, recent decades have witnessed a resurgence in the use of qualitative research methods among criminologists, particularly in the areas of urban violence (e.g., Anderson 1999, Contreras 2013, Jacobs & Wright 2006, Miller 2008), criminal desistance (e.g., Gadd & Farrall 2004, Giordano et al. 2008, Laub & Sampson 2003, Leverentz 2006, Maruna 2001), and prison studies (e.g., Ellis 2020, Liebling 1999, Ugelvik 2012), but these methods have yet to occupy a more prominent role in the study of immigration and crime.

The second, broader trend has been the neglect of our own intellectual history, or what Laub & Sampson (1991) once termed the "collective amnesia" that has swept over the discipline. In his 2008 American Society of Criminology Presidential Address, Bursik (2009, p. 10) similarly lamented the "newness fetish" that has characterized much of contemporary criminology and entreated the discipline to walk the "dusty, rarely visited corridors of libraries" in search of insights from our intellectual predecessors (see also Bursik 2006, Laub 2004, Rafter 2010). Ethnographic studies of immigration were a keystone of the Chicago School of Urban Sociology, and classic tomes, including Thomas & Znaniecki's (1918a,b; 1919a,b; 1920) *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America*, Thrasher's (1927) *The Gang*, and Shaw and colleagues' life histories of the children of immigrants (Shaw 1930, 1931; Shaw et al. 1938), serve as the foundations from which some of the discipline's most enduring theoretical concepts and frameworks emerged. Despite the richly nuanced portraits of immigrant life painted by these early theorists, the sort of in-depth case studies and immersive ethnographic methods that characterized the Chicago School have since been relegated to a marginal place in the discipline. Nearly a century later, these classic works still have much to offer in the way of understanding how immigration fundamentally shapes the relationships among place, culture, human consciousness, and behavior.

Radical growth and dramatic shifts in the demographic makeup of the foreign-born population since the 1970s have coincided with multiple trends, including new patterns of immigrant settlement, as greater numbers of immigrants are moving to new, nontraditional immigrant destinations; new politics of exclusion and control, evident in the rise of "crimmigration," or the blurring of immigration and criminal law (Menjívar et al. 2018, Stumpf 2006); and a new era of anti-immigrant sentiment that—although echoing alarmist refrains of the past—is targeted at different populations (e.g., Muslims, Mexicans). As these sweeping changes continue to shape the cultural landscape of the United States, we need to utilize the full range of methodological tools to understand the complexities and caveats of the new immigration–crime nexus.

We begin this review by revisiting the work of our intellectual predecessors and the innovative methodologies that enabled them to produce in-depth and "thick" (Geertz 1973) accounts of

immigrant life and, by extension, some of the most enduring and iconic works in the study of immigration and crime. Next, we examine the small but growing body of contemporary ethnographic research on immigration and crime, which includes the policing of immigrant communities in the new age of "crimmigration;" the lived experiences inside contemporary deportation and detention regimes; the integration experiences of Muslims, a highly marginalized but understudied population; and immigrants' unique vulnerabilities to and experiences of victimization.

CLASSIC ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDIES OF IMMIGRATION AND CRIME

The value of qualitative methodologies to contemporary studies of immigration and crime is best illustrated by classic works in the field, including Thomas & Znaniecki's (1918a,b; 1919a,b; 1920) groundbreaking five-volume monograph, *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America*, and those produced by the pioneers of the Chicago School of Urban Sociology (e.g., Robert Park, Clifford Shaw, and Frederic Thrasher, among others). For scholars studying immigration in the early decades of the twentieth century, cities were bustling sociological laboratories, and landmarks such as Chicago's stockyards and Hull House provided the backdrop against which some of the most enduring theories of social disorganization, culture conflict, and symbolic interactionism emerged. Critically, it was only by developing innovative methodological approaches to understanding social phenomena (Thomas & Znaniecki's life history method and Whyte's participatory research model, for example) and immersing themselves in the lives and cultures of the groups they studied that these scholars were able to produce the richly detailed portraits of immigrant life that have since been overshadowed by what Glaser once termed "the usual overabstract theoretical representations of the city."[1]

With respect to contemporary theorizing on the immigration–crime nexus, several contributions to this early work are noteworthy. First is their explicit attention to racial–ethnic heterogeneity within the immigrant population. By contrast, the use of broad categorizations (e.g., foreign-born) and pan-ethnic amalgamations (e.g., Asian) has become the de facto rule rather than the exception in contemporary immigration–crime scholarship (Bursik 2006, DiPietro & Bursik 2012). Second, a defining contribution of early ethnographic studies is their attention to the social structural organization of immigrant enclaves, made possible through researchers' sustained involvement with and immersion in the communities they studied. Third, the use of life history methods was popularized in some of the most seminal studies of immigration and proved a boon to theorizing on processes of assimilation and acculturation. Finally, early studies of immigration had a distinctly phenomenological slant and, as such, were invaluable to capturing the sentiments of individuals and groups under consideration as well as the broader sociocultural epoch in which they lived. We discuss each of these contributions and the seminal works of classical immigration scholars in greater detail below.

Disaggregation of Immigrant Groups by Nativity

Whereas most contemporary immigration and crime research relies on nationally undifferentiated immigration statistics and broad pan-ethnic categorizations (e.g., Latino, Asian), careful examination of the distinctive cultural and social organization of immigrant groups of different national origins was a cornerstone of early immigration studies. Speaking to the need for this delineation, Handlin (1959, pp. 1–2) remarked in his introduction to *The Newcomers*:

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[1]Glaser's comment appears on the back cover of Suttles's (1968) *The Social Order of the Slum*.

It would be deceptive in speaking of the population of a city to forget that it is actually compounded of numerous dissimilar groups which are themselves but congeries of unique individuals. It is essential in dealing with the city's population to keep distinctly in mind the respects in which its elements are and are not comparable.

Among the virtues of a more finely grained approach to the study of immigration is a fuller understanding of the genesis and nature of intergroup (and intergenerational) conflict as well as the ways in which unique cultural repertoires and systems of meaning transplanted by immigrants from the old world to the new world might catalyze criminal adaptations. In one of the earliest studies of European immigrants at the turn of the century, Park & Miller (1921, p. 2) referred to the "well-known fact" that "different races and nationalities attach values to different things, and different values to the same thing" (Park & Miller 1921, p. 3), and that they "differ widely in the details of their conception and practice of life, [such that] even their behavior in connection with general ideals which they hold in common is often curiously and startlingly different" (Park & Miller 1921, p. 2). As Bursik (2009, p. 11) observed decades later, Park & Miller "most likely would be horrified by a generic term such as 'Foreign Born European,' for it would imply that the dynamics of crime essentially are identical for all European immigrants despite the important social, cultural, political, and historical differences that existed among the various countries of origin subsumed by this classification." More than simply recognizing variances in culture and custom across immigrant groups, this early scholarship established that the very meaning of social norms and institutions was unique to ethnic groups and consequently of great theoretical import to understanding patterns of culture conflict and the dynamics of immigrant assimilation. Importantly, this meaning could only be ascertained through careful observation and attention to the meaning individuals ascribed to their lived experiences—what Weber termed *verstehen*.

The significance of immigrants' cultural heterogeneity to the study of crime specifically was brought to light by Thrasher's (1927) groundbreaking study of more than 1,300 gangs in Chicago at the turn of the century. Thrasher's socioecological approach was clearly rooted in the work of his predecessors, Park and Burgess, and the fledgling Chicago School, but his own multifaceted ethnographic approach to examining the interplay among social psychological processes, cultural patterns, and social organization was novel for its time and yielded insights into the dynamics of gang formation within immigrant communities that has yet to be replicated fully in its depth or nuance. Although never explicitly described in his monograph, Thrasher's methods, described by Young (1931, p. 516) as an "amplification of the survey and the case-study technique," included painstaking content analysis of data files from schools, police departments, and social agencies as well in-depth interviews and ethnographic observations over a span of 7 years. Part of his data collection included the collective interview method, which allowed him to observe the inner workings of the gang, including their social roles and personalities, and the hierarchical structure of the group. He described in great detail the natural areas inhabited by immigrants and the patterns of ethnic invasion and succession that gave rise to intergroup conflict and gang formation. His work shed light on the ways in which immigrant youth navigated differential access along ethnic lines to industrial jobs as well as the familial and social strains attendant to acculturation, observing that "the gang. . .is simply one symptom of a type of disorganization that goes along with the breaking up of the immigrant's traditional social system without adequate assimilation to the new" (Thrasher 1927, p. 75).

Among the insights gleaned from this ambitious project was Thrasher's observation of the legacy of cultural enmities among immigrant groups—what he termed "old world antagonisms." Thrasher (1927) acknowledged that intercultural enmities did not merely arise from immigrants' residential proximity but were transplanted from the old world to the new, as in the case of vendettas carried over among Italians from the Corsican region, which he likened to the blood

feuds in the Kentucky mountains. He described Chicago as having the "character of a vast cultural frontier—a common meeting place for the divergent and antagonistic peoples of the earth [where] traditional animosities are often carried over into gangs and color many of their conflicts" (Thrasher 1927, p. 69). Although Thrasher's study has proven among the most seminal of its kind, cited nearly 4,000 times in the 90 years since its publication, and largely regarded as a foundational work for contemporary gang research, few have endeavored to replicate the sort of detailed ethnographic methods that he used. Furthermore, Thrasher's focus on culture conflict and the consideration of cultural enmities specifically has all but disappeared from contemporary immigration–crime research.

Social Structural Organization of Immigrant Enclaves

Detailed examination of the patterned social arrangements and structural organization of immigrant enclaves is another hallmark of early ethnographic studies (e.g., Wirth 1928, Zorbaugh 1929). Whereas theories of immigrant revitalization, social capital, and informal social control are central to contemporary studies of the immigration–crime nexus, this work seldom considers the patterns of interaction and communication among various ethnic groups or the complex social hierarchies that might hinder (or facilitate) crime in immigrant communities. In *Street Corner Society*, Whyte's (1943) intimate portrayal of "Cornerville"—later revealed as Boston's North End, a historically Italian immigrant enclave—was foundational in this regard and made possible only through his immersion in the community for more than 3 years (including a yearlong stint living with an Italian American family). Regarding the use of surveys as woefully inadequate to tap into the complexities of interpersonal networks and organizational systems, Whyte (1943, pp. xv–xvi) pioneered the participatory research method, arguing that "the only way to gain such knowledge is to live in Cornerville and participate in the activities of its people." It was through his intimate involvement with local residents that Whyte came to understand the most pressing (albeit mundane) problems in the community, including the failure of local settlement programs to serve street corner gangs and the dearth of hot water and towels in public bathhouses (Whyte 1995). Whyte (1943) translated his understanding into social action, helping to organize local protests against city hall and staffing outreach centers with former gang members. His efforts to enact meaningful social change for the people of Cornerville laid the groundwork for the more refined participatory action research methods employed in contemporary criminological scholarship (see Payne 2006).

Although Whyte's methods, and his personal relationships with the people of Cornerville, have been criticized by some as an affront to the sterile, impassive role of a social scientist (see Boelen 1992), it was precisely these relationships that enabled him to develop such a fine-tuned understanding of the network of corner boys and college boys, politicians, and racketeers that made up the mosaic of immigrant life in Boston's North End. Whyte's insights into the structure and formation of social hierarchies among Italian immigrants proved particularly important to understanding racketeering, but the legacy of *Street Corner Society* extends well beyond his insights into organized crime. Whyte (1943, p. 269) effectively dismantled the popular perception of impoverished slums as disorganized, noting instead that the people of Cornerville "conceive society as a closely knit hierarchical organization in which people's positions and obligations to one another are defined and recognized."

Whyte's work paved the way for similarly detailed studies of immigrant enclaves, including Gans's (1962) *The Urban Villagers*, an ethnography of an Italian enclave in Boston's West End, and Suttles's (1968) *The Social Order of the Slum*, an ethnography of the Addams neighborhood in Chicago's Near West Side. The detail with which Suttles brings the Addams neighborhood— where he lived for 3 years—to life is noteworthy. He painstakingly captured the ways in which the

four dominant ethnic groups (Italians, Mexicans, Blacks, and Puerto Ricans) navigated the shared space and their unique code of "practical morality" that guided behavior and provided meaning to their interactions. His monograph includes tabular data on clothing preferences and types of offenses committed across groups, diagrams of group oppositions and antagonisms, and descriptions of gestures and other forms of unspoken communication in processes of interaction. His is a portrait of a well-defined "segmentary system of special and ethnic units. . .so well understood that residents seldom bother to tell you of it" (Suttles 1968, p. 35). His blend of social ecology and symbolic interactionism provides a theoretical framework within which he expands his notion of "ordered segmentation," which captures the relationships among groups and the processes in which they navigate conflict and opposition. Like Whyte, his deeply immersive method enabled him to elucidate the delicate balance of social organization and coexistence among ethnic groups, including the unmarked territorial boundaries that transcend official neighborhood lines, and patterns of ethnic invasion and succession that—although a keystone of classic ecological paradigms—have all but disappeared in contemporary studies of immigrant communities.

The Life History Method

One of the methodological innovations popularized by classic immigration scholars was their use of historical documents (e.g., letters, autobiographical statements) to capture not only the experiences of individuals but also the broader cultural historical epoch in which they lived. Few monographs have proven as seminal as *The Polish Peasant*, which is among the few immigration studies to adopt an explicitly transatlantic approach. It was through this work that Thomas & Znaniecki (1918a,b; 1919a,b; 1920) pioneered the life history method, whereby immigrants relayed their own life stories, directly in interviews or by constructing written autobiographical accounts. Augmenting these life histories were what Thomas (1912, p. 770) referred to as undesigned records, which included letters, diaries, organizational records, chronicles of Polish organizations, and even religious sermons. In total, the five-volume monograph draws from 764 letters exchanged between Polish immigrants and family/community members in Poland between 1893 and 1914. Through detailed analysis of these historical documents gathered over time and across continents, Thomas & Znaniecki effectively bridged the gap between microlevel processes and broader sociohistorical milieus and gave voice to a marginalized population. The outcome of their efforts was an intricately detailed portrayal of a global community held together (however tentatively) by personal communication, the exchange of money and resources, and an ongoing pattern of transnational migration.

A prominent theme in the letters exchanged among Polish immigrants was the gradual unraveling of collective solidarity within immigrant families and communities as the younger generation shed the mores and values of the old world to find their place in the new. Thomas & Znaniecki's insights have been especially relevant to the study of assimilation and the phenomenon of second-generation decline implicated in subsequent studies of immigrant crime and delinquency (Bersani 2014, Gans 1992, Morenoff & Astor 2006, Portes & Rumbaut 2001, Portes & Zhou 1993, Zhou 1997a). Adopting a similar methodological approach, Wirth (1925) analyzed an array of data sources (e.g., case histories provided by social agencies, autobiographies, personal interviews, and letters) to analyze patterns of culture conflict within Eastern European Jewish immigrant families. His dissertation provided insight into the causes and manifestations of intergenerational strife— including the gradual untethering of religious moorings that served to anchor immigrant youth to their families—that would have been indiscernible with surveys or quantitative approaches. Like Thomas & Znaniecki, Wirth's (1925, p. 6) research revealed what contemporary theorists have termed acculturative dissonance (Le & Stockdale 2008, Portes & Rumbaut 2001, Rumbaut & Portes 2001), observing that "the life histories of these immigrant parents and children become

intelligible only if we reckon with the fact that in the immigrant family we find not a homogeneous body of sentiments, traditions and practices, but conflicting currents of culture and divergent social codes bidding for the participation and allegiance of its members." Importantly, Wirth (1925, p. 6) recognized these "conflicting currents of culture" as a primary catalyst for delinquent adaptations.

Phenomenological Emphasis

Finally, what distinguishes some of these classic works in the study of immigration from the body of contemporary scholarship is their distinctly phenomenological flavor and explicit recognition of human consciousness as an essential element in the study of the social world (Kacperczyk 2020, Wiley 1986). *The Polish Peasant* is one of the earliest treatises on the social and cultural organization of immigrant groups from the vantage point of the immigrants themselves; at its core was the search for those "concrete historical changes in human meanings" attendant to migration (Wiley 1986, p. 32). Although crime was not a main focus of this work, Thomas & Znaniecki's (1918a,b; 1919a,b; 1920) theorizing on the disorganizing effects of moving from the traditional, collectivistic, family-oriented culture of rural Poland to more modern, urban, individualistic communities in the United States proved foundational to theories of social disorganization, anomie/strain, social control/bonding, and symbolic interactionism. Of particular import was their emphasis on the meanings and definitions individuals ascribe to their lived experiences—their definitions of the situation (Thomas & Znaniecki 1918a). To this point, Thomas reflected, "the individual mind cannot be understood apart from the social environment and. . .a society cannot be understood apart from the operation of the individual mind" (Thomas 1905, p. 445). To illustrate, Thomas & Znaniecki observed that the etiology of homicide among the Polish varied between Poland and the United States. Whereas lethal assaults in Poland were typically limited to one's own community and motivated by the desire for revenge, murder in the United States was more often provoked by trivial affronts, which took on exaggerated significance within the context of weakened social controls and a general disconnect from the community.

This focus on individual subjectivities in early scholarship meant that these works effectively captured something that is often overlooked in contemporary scholarship: the emotional underpinnings of the immigrant experience. More than an explanation of the dynamics, processes, and outcomes of immigration, works such as *The Polish Peasant* and Handlin's (1973) *The Uprooted* reveal what Rothman (1982, p. 312) once termed "the darkness of the vision, the depth of pain and the amount of loss that first-generation immigrants endured." Thomas & Znaniecki's and Handlin's syntheses of the immigrant experience were tales of declension and demoralization brought to life through the personal story exchanges of immigrants struggling to reorganize in the new world. Importantly, these early works captured the interplay of the social and the psychic (Gadd & Jefferson 2007)—the connection between individuals' perceptions and systems of meaning and their particular time and place in history.

CONTEMPORARY ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDIES OF IMMIGRATION AND CRIME

The contemporary landscape of immigration in the United States looks vastly different from the era in which the aforementioned studies were conducted. Compared to the earlier waves of Southern and Eastern European immigrants—the majority of whom were phenotypically White—today's immigrants hail predominantly from Asia and Latin America, with small but significant numbers coming from the Middle East and North and sub-Saharan Africa. Areas of settlement have also changed significantly. Although earlier waves of immigrants settled primarily in urban centers along the East Coast and in the Midwest, more and more immigrants are settling

in nontraditional destinations, including rural areas and the suburban fringes of metropolitan cities (Massey & Capoferro 2008). Contexts of reception have long been regarded as decisive in immigrants' integration experiences and assimilatory pathways (Portes & Rumbaut 2001, Stepick & Stepick 2010, Zhou 1997b), but relatively little is known about the degree of receptivity (or lack thereof) in these nontraditional areas of settlement, particularly for immigrants who—due to racialized identities—may be easier to identify as outsiders.

Also different are the primary rationales for migration. Prior to the 1970s, many immigrants were drawn to the United States by attractive "pulls," including economic opportunity and family reunification. Although these pulls continue to draw immigrants from around the world, the number of immigrants "pushed" from their home countries under vastly more arduous circumstances has grown exponentially in recent decades. Since the advent of the federal Refugee Resettlement Program in 1980, more than three million refugees—the largest number worldwide—have arrived in the United States, driven from their home countries by fear of persecution, political conflict, war, and genocide (Budiman 2020). Notably, this dramatic shift in the number of involuntary migrants raises important questions about the applicability of traditional self-selection arguments (see Tonry 1997) to contemporary immigrant populations and about the ways in which premigratory exposure to extreme forms of violence might shape behavioral trajectories, particularly among the younger generation (see DiPietro 2019).

Demographic and geospatial shifts in immigration have coincided with increasingly harsh immigration policies, and the more recent convergence of immigration policy with crime control policy, known as crimmigration (Menjívar et al. 2018, Stumpf 2006). Although the history of anti-immigrant legislation is a long one, dating back to some of the earliest policies of exclusion (e.g., Emergency Quota Law of 1921), recent years have seen an unprecedented rise in the number of draconian policies, including the Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act (AEDPA) and Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigration Responsibility Act (IIRIRA) passed in 1996, which expanded the list of deportable crimes to include trivial offenses like fleeing an immigration checkpoint and shoplifting. More recently, the Trump Presidency ushered in a spate of harsh anti-immigration legislation, including the controversial Executive Order 13780 in 2017 (Trump 2017), which restricted the entry of foreign nationals originating from Iran, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, and Yemen.

Converging trends in immigration and the politics of exclusion and control have spurred new directions in criminological research. Although the question of whether immigration is criminogenic remains a central focus, the discipline's purview has extended to the consequences of immigration policies for immigrants and immigrant communities, the ways in which experiences of exclusion shape identity formation and assimilatory pathways among marginalized groups, and the unique vulnerabilities of immigrants in a new age of heightened social control. Below, we examine some of these emerging research trends and the use of ethnographic and qualitative methods to tap into uncharted terrains of the immigration–crime nexus. We focus our attention on four of these areas: the policing of immigrant communities in the new age of crimmigration; the lived experiences and collateral consequences of contemporary deportation and detention regimes; the integration experiences of Muslims, a highly marginalized but understudied population; and immigrants' unique vulnerabilities to and experiences of victimization.

Crimmigration on the Ground: Policing Immigrant Communities in the Age of the "Brown Threat"

Among the more contentious trends in recent decades has been the blurring of boundaries between immigration and criminal law—or crimmigration (Stumpf 2006)—manifest in the radical expansion of law enforcement and surveillance of immigrants at the borders and in local

communities (for a review, see Menjívar et al. 2018). The rise of crimmigration and the attendant growth in rates of deportation and detention are a global phenomenon, inexorably linked to the racialization and gendering of already marginalized populations; today, a "constructed, globalized immigrant 'Brown threat' is increasingly surveilled, imprisoned, and deported" (Armenta 2017a; Menjívar et al. 2018, p. 1). Although the movement toward crimmigration began in the 1980s, the ways in which federal exclusionary immigration policies are translated and enforced by local police—particularly within nontraditional immigrant destinations—are only beginning to come into focus.

The richly detailed ethnographic work of Armenta (2017a,b) provides one of the most comprehensive views to date of the ways in which federal law trickles down to local law enforcement. Her research on the interactions between Latino residents and local law enforcement in Nashville, Tennessee—a new immigrant destination—provides a rare view of the institutional policies that target and criminalize unauthorized Latino immigrants in the community. Drawing upon multiple data sources gathered between 2009 and 2013, including in-depth interviews with law enforcement officials, local Latino immigrants, city officials, and immigrant advocacy organizations; ethnographic observations of police officers made during 120 hours of police ride-alongs in Nashville's South Precinct; and participation in community events with Latino residents and police officers, Armenta (2017a,b) delineates how local law enforcement uses traffic stops as a pretext to criminalize and deport unauthorized Latino immigrants who fail to provide a valid driver's license—as part of the 287(g) federal program in which the Metropolitan Nashville Police Department (MNPD) participated. Armenta (2017a, p. 4) captures an essential element of Nashville's context of reception by providing on-the-ground accounts of Nashville's exclusionary sentiments toward unauthorized Latino immigrants while highlighting how contemporary immigration enforcement was shaped by the "convergence of local politics, state laws, and institutional politics." In doing so, she illustrates how policing practices at the local level are at the heart of the deportation regime.

Armenta's (2017b, p. 83) bottom-up approach to examining how "the power of the state emerges through the daily practices of institutional actors that form part of the crimmigration system" yields important insights into the ways in which immigrant enforcement is racialized. Institutional ethnographies such as hers provide an uncommon view of the rationales of law enforcement actors, including the pressures of being proactive, which often override more humanistic concerns. Furthermore, her unique view into the perceptions of officers reveals the contradictions that help perpetuate a system of racialized crimmigration, including their insistence that they are "colorblind" in spite of engaging in processes that clearly target civilians based on race/ethnicity (Armenta 2017b). Her work also underscores the unintended consequences of immigration enforcement, which may undermine (rather than promote) public safety. The involvement of local law enforcement in policing immigration runs counter to the principles of effective community policing, which relies on increased trust and cooperation between residents and law enforcement authorities. When law enforcement officials employ racial profiling and traffic stops to apprehend unauthorized individuals, they end up targeting members of the Latino community, regardless of immigration status (e.g., unauthorized, permanent resident, citizen). This indiscriminate targeting of Latino immigrants adds to their perception of being unfairly treated by the police, which further contributes to their social isolation. Such tactics have been found to increase mistrust and fear of the police, which in turn compromise public safety (see Theodore & Habans 2016). Thus, studies like Armenta's will likely yield new insights into the complex and nuanced relationship between immigration and crime, exposing the unintended consequences of these policies on public safety in immigrant communities.

Collateral Costs of Crimmigration: Ethnographies of Immigrant Detention and Deportation

The number of immigrants deported from the United States has grown precipitously in the past two decades. Since 2000, more than 6.2 million people have been forcibly removed (a figure that exceeds the number of removals for the entire twentieth century by 2.5 times) (Off. Immigr. Stat. 2020). As the number of deportations has grown, so too has the apparatus of immigrant detention. The unholy union of corporate interests and the justice system has given way to a new economic enterprise: what Ugelvik & Damsa (2018) have termed "crimmigration prisons." Immigrant detainees now make up the fastest-growing segment of the nation's carceral population (Welch 2012, p. 31). The broader implications of these exclusionary policies, for both individuals and communities, are only beginning to come into focus, thanks to the ethnographic research of a handful of scholars who have managed to access these difficult-to-reach populations and attend to the voices of individuals forced into positions of legal, social, and economic liminality. To this point, two emergent fields of study have been of great import. The first is the field of deportation studies and the related criminology of mobility (Coutin 2015, Pickering et al. 2015), which took root in the early 2000s. The second is the fledgling field of detention center ethnographies (Bosworth 2014, Gashi et al. 2021, Martinez-Aranda 2020, Ugelvik & Damsa 2018). Collectively, this body of work has been integral to shedding light on the human and societal toll of these new deportation regimes as well as their unforeseen criminogenic effects.

Ethnographic studies of deportation offer a unique perspective on the ways in which macrolevel policies filter through enforcement regimes to impact individuals and communities—in both the sending and receiving countries. Contrasting quantitative approaches to the study of deportation, which, by default, treat deportation as a discrete event, ethnographic approaches allow for careful examination of the process of deportation, which, as Coutin (2015, p. 674) observes, "begins long before an individual is apprehended, through the myriad practices that make someone vulnerable to deportation in the first place. [Furthermore]. . .deportation continues long after an individual is returned, through the difficult process of readjustment, the ripple effects on family members and the continued prohibition on reentry." Among the emergent themes in this body of work are the role of human emotions and the ways in which experiences of exile and deportability engender feelings of stigma, strain, alienation, and anxiety, not only for the individuals targeted for detention and removal but for their families caught in this ever-widening net of "collective liminality" (Martinez-Aranda 2020). Several terms have been coined to capture the experiences of the deported (and would-be deported), including Reiter & Coutin's (2017) "disintegrated subjects" and Coutin's (2000) concept of "legal nonexistence." Zilberg (2011) uses the term "security-scapes" (see also Gusterson 2001) to capture those tenuous spaces—created through fear, omnipresent scrutiny, and the impossibility of securing documents—occupied by asylum seekers and the undocumented that effectively give ethnographies of individuals in absentia a "ghostly" quality (Coutin & Vogel 2016, p. 638). In many ways, the experiences of the deported mirror those of incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals (Reiter & Coutin 2017), who must find ways to manage spoiled identities and rebuild social capital and social connections in the wake of a violent restructuring of community and self.

The harms of modern government policies extend beyond the individuals deemed deportable. Coutin and colleagues' research on the experiences of Salvadoran migrants deported from the United States (Coutin 2015, Dingeman-Cerda & Coutin 2012, Reiter & Coutin 2017) illustrates the ways in which macrolevel policies subjugate and marginalize individuals while simultaneously producing social suffering by creating a dark cloud of deportability over the collective (see also De Genova & Peutz 2010). Drawing on in-depth interviews with Salvadoran men who grew up

in the United States and were deported to El Salvador, their work reveals multiple confounding effects of deportation, including the violent supplanting of de facto US citizenship with alienage and the victimization of deportees and their families upon their return to their countries of origin (Dingeman-Cerda & Coutin 2012). Importantly, their work also highlights the salient role of premigratory experiences in shaping the experiences of immigrants and refugees. In the case of El Salvadoran refugees, wartime violence consequent to the civil war between 1980 and 1992 "penetrated Salvadoran society so deeply that virtually all Salvadorans had been affected either directly or indirectly" (Dingeman-Cerda & Coutin 2012, p. 117). Whereas exposure to extreme forms of violence (e.g., war, genocide, political persecution) has long been recognized as a risk factor for a host of deleterious outcomes, including crime and violence, the implications of such exposure have been given limited attention in the immigration–crime literature (however, see DiPietro 2019). From the vantage point of men in Coutin's research, experiences of exile resemble the violent uprooting they experienced during the war.

The criminogenic consequences of deportation have been borne out in Zilberg's (2011) innovative research on the dispersion of gang members from the United States to El Salvador. Her richly detailed transnational study of the experiences of Salvadoran immigrants in Los Angeles and El Salvador shows how zero-tolerance gang-abatement strategies in both contexts engender the forms of gang-related violence and illegal migration they are designed to curtail. Collectively, this work has been integral to shedding light on the unforeseen consequences of deportation policies and the ways in which policies of exclusion contribute to hostile contexts of reception and, in turn, deleterious outcomes such as violence, victimization, and the emergence of street gangs.

A second line of research examines the lived experiences of detained immigrants, housed in detention facilities in Norway (Ugelvik & Damsa 2018), Britain (Bosworth 2012, 2014), and the United States (Martinez-Aranda 2020). Based on her 2-year ethnographic study of Southern Californian detention centers, augmented with in-depth interviews with detainees and their family members, Martinez-Aranda (2020, p. 761) developed the concept of collective liminality, which she defines as the "shared condition of constant uncertainty experienced by detainees and their families, caused by the intensified threat of deportation. . . . [Its] uniqueness stems from the combination of the indefinite nature of immigration detention and the precarious nature of immigrants' (and family members') legal status." For criminology, the insights gleaned from detention and deportation ethnographies provide a path forward for testing and refining theories of coercive mobility (Clear et al. 2003), labeling (Becker 1963), and spoiled identities (Goffman 1963), among others (e.g., social control, strain), and for understanding how the experience of exile—long ago deemed an unacceptable and archaic criminal penalty (Kanstroom 2012)—might shape criminological pathways. The ever-present threat of deportation produces a state of legal, emotional, and financial liminality for both the detained/deported and their families. But what are the broader implications of collective liminality over time and for criminal pathways? How might the strains, stigmatization, isolation, and decimation of social bonds shape criminological processes? The full reach and implications of these policies are still unclear.

The New Americans: Muslim Immigrants in a Post-9/11 World

The past two decades have witnessed unprecedented growth in the US Muslim immigrant population, with more than half (56%) of Muslim immigrants having arrived after 2000 (Pew Res. Cent. 2018). Alongside increases in voluntary migration from Southeast Asia, North Africa, and the Middle East has been the arrival of more than 310,000 Muslim refugees fleeing countries marked by oppression, political conflict, war, and genocide (Krogstad 2019). Growth in the Muslim immigrant population has coincided with new patterns of settlement, as greater numbers of Muslims

are moving to nontraditional immigrant destinations. Although large cities like Chicago, Detroit, and Dearborn, Michigan continue to host the largest enclaves of Muslim refugees and immigrants in the nation, smaller cities throughout the United States, including Rutland, Vermont and Boise, Idaho, have become home to growing numbers of Sudanese, Syrian, and Iraqi immigrants, signaling a sweeping cultural and demographic shift in many parts of the country in the coming decades. Growth in the Muslim immigrant population has also ushered in a wave of anti-Islamic sentiment, evident in the rise of White nativism and the mounting number of bias-motivated assaults against Muslims in recent years (FBI 2016, Foran 2016, South. Poverty Law Cent. 2021).

Despite these converging trends, relatively little criminological research has focused on the integration experiences of Muslim immigrants or their unique barriers to social and cultural inclusion. Some trace the omission to Western-centrism and the "gross misunderstandings and representations of Islam [that] have been pervasive in western political and social arenas" (Spalek 2002, p. 12). Furthermore, as Ajrouch & Jamal (2007, p. 861) observe, religious affiliation in general is often ignored as a central element of immigrant integration, a surprising omission given that "religious affiliation shapes how the host country views the immigrant as well as how the immigrant views him/herself vis-à-vis the host country" (see also Ajrouch & Kusow 2007). Although Muslims have been the frequent targets of xenophobic intolerance, the ways in which national- and state-level discourses and policies filter down to the local level to impact more proximate spheres of influence (e.g., experiences of exclusion and discrimination in the local community) are not well understood.

Thus far, a small but growing body of ethnographic work on the experiences of Muslim immigrants suggests that anti-Islamic sentiment is a formative backdrop against which identities (individual and collective), associations, and behaviors are shaped among Muslim immigrants, particularly in the post-9/11 world (Cainkar 2002, 2009; Gowayed 2020; Howell & Shryock 2003; Naber 2006; Spalek 2002). Notably, though, the question of how experiences of racialization and social exclusion will shape the assimilation experiences of Muslim immigrants in the coming decades and, by extension, the implications of these experiences for criminal pathways are still not well understood. To date, the work of Zaatut (2016) and Bucerius (2014) offers a window into the unique experiences of Muslim immigrants in the United States and Europe and the ways in which culture, religion, and context intersect to shape assimilatory and behavioral pathways (see also Zaatut & Jacobsen 2022).

Drawing from 5 years of ethnographic research in the Bockenheim district of Frankfurt, Germany, Bucerius (2014) provides a nuanced portrait of the relationships among immigration, social exclusion, and crime among a group of second-generation Muslim immigrants involved in the drug trade. As her study elucidates, Muslim immigrants are among the most discriminated against and marginalized groups in Germany, an unfortunate position that is worsened by the country's immigration policies, which deny citizenship to the German-born children of Muslim immigrants. The young men in the study were never granted citizenship because of their parents' immigration status (i.e., being a guest worker), despite being born and raised in Germany, the only country they knew. In addition, they experienced systemic discrimination in the country's public school system, as they were constantly placed in the lowest educational tracks, diminishing their future job prospects in the formal economy and limiting their upward mobility.

Importantly, Bucerius (2014) illustrates how macrolevel forces unique to the German context coupled with structural marginalization intersect with participants' cultural and religious backgrounds to shape their assimilation trajectory and ultimately their pathway to (and through) the drug market. It is within this context of social, political, and economic exclusion that second-generation Muslim immigrants felt that they were "perpetual foreigners" and, ultimately, "unwanted." Through participant observation and interviews she conducted with 55 Muslim drug

dealers, Bucerius was able to document how these experiences deeply impacted participants' sense of belonging, which in many ways paved the way for their downward assimilation and participation in the drug trade. Her extensive ethnographic data also allowed for a vivid account of how participants' religious beliefs and attachment to their neighborhood gave them a sense of belonging and helped them navigate and participate in the drug market. Guided by their belief system, which was deeply influenced by Islamic values, the young men rationalized their engagement in crime by distinguishing themselves as the "good drug dealers" and using religious terms like "pure" and "impure" to describe the way they sell drugs. For example, they did not sell drugs to fellow Muslims, especially women, and only sold to German customers who were "honorable" (e.g., lawyers, doctors, other white-collar professionals) and not "junkies" or heavy users. Additionally, participants avoided selling hard and "dirty" drugs like crack and heroin and instead only sold marijuana and cocaine. Their religious beliefs were central in drawing moral boundaries, even when they sold drugs and engaged in criminal activity.

More recently, Zaatut's (2016) ethnographic study of this hard-to-reach population investigated how various local and social institutions, namely family, schools, and religious institutions, functioned and operated in one of the largest Arab ethnic enclaves in the northeastern United States, which happens to be located in a highly disadvantaged urban context. She specifically examines how this particular urban context, coupled with the presence of an ethnic enclave community, influences the second generation's risk for involvement in delinquency and crime. Zaatut conducted a 3-year ethnographic study (2012–2015) in the city of Kingston,[2] using participant observation and in-depth interviews with 91 Arab immigrants (including Muslims and Christians), their American-born children, local community figures, and others who served in various local institutions, such as social workers, youth counselors, teachers, religious leaders, and law enforcement officials. Her methodological approach allowed her to provide an intensive look into mechanisms of social control within a working-class Arab-Muslim enclave community. Zaatut (2016) describes how working-class Arab immigrant parents navigate raising their American-born children in a segregated American inner city, where high rates of violence, poverty, unemployment, and failing school systems shaped their perceptions of risk and fear of crime (see also Zaatut & Jacobsen 2022). The presence of violence and marginalized youth in the area that surrounds the ethnic enclave played a salient role in how Arab immigrant parents responded to criminogenic influences within the boundaries of the ethnic enclave community, which they often referred to as the "Arab neighborhood." Fearing the downward assimilation of their second-generation children, along with the spillover of crime and gang violence into their neighborhood, the first generation demonstrated high levels of collective efficacy and was proactive in combating these crime-producing elements in their neighborhood (Zaatut & Jacobsen 2022).

Notably, Zaatut depicts how these efforts by Arab residents are facilitated in large part by their religious institutions, namely the local mosque and Islamic Center, which play a pivotal role in fighting crime and disorder. They do this by fostering informal networks among Arab residents, boosting attachment to the community, and promoting social organization to confront the spillover of crime from outsiders, who they perceive as bringing violence, disorder, and incivilities into their neighborhood. For example, the local mosques are active participants in helping residents close problematic establishments (e.g., businesses serving alcohol that mainly attract local drug dealers and gang members) and actively work to disrupt criminogenic hot spots in the area by purchasing land and renovating dilapidated buildings (often occupied by local drug users) to

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[2]In this study, Kingston was used as a pseudonym for the city where the study took place to protect the anonymity of participants and their community.

expand commercial businesses. In doing so, they removed visible signs of disorder and physical decay in and around the boundaries of the ethnic enclave.

Zaatut's study highlights the protective effects of concentrated immigration and provides a glimpse into how immigrant communities can revitalize urban spaces—not just socially, culturally, and economically but also physically—by transforming vacant spaces and signs of urban decay left behind by decades of deindustrialization. This finding is similar to Sampson's (2017) recent prediction that immigration may be associated with decreased vacancy rates, which in turn can contribute to the spatial diffusion of crime. Overall, Zaatut's findings provide further evidence regarding the value that ethnographic methods can provide to our understanding of the immigration–crime nexus. Her work demonstrates how ethnically situated informal mechanisms of social control—in this case, a local mosque and an Islamic Center—can influence a poor, urban community's ability to combat neighborhood crime, something that has been overlooked in the immigration and crime literature.

THE VICTIMIZATION OF IMMIGRANTS

Despite the growing interest in the immigration–crime nexus, a relatively scant body of research exists on the inverse of this relationship: crime against immigrants. A review of the qualitative literature on the victimization of immigrants suggests that work in this area can be broadly categorized under two subareas: (*a*) domestic violence (e.g., Erez & Globokar 2009, Erez et al. 2009, Menjívar & Salcido 2002) and (*b*) crimes against undocumented migrant workers and day laborers (Bucher et al. 2010; Fussell 2011; Negi et al. 2013, 2020; Valenzuela 2006), with the latter receiving more scholarly attention within the past decade than the former.

Much of this research shows that immigrants, and especially those who are undocumented, are significantly more likely to be victims of crime and abuse (Kittrie 2005) and far less likely to report their victimization experiences when compared with their native-born counterparts (Khashu 2009). In studying one of the most underreported crimes among immigrant populations, a handful of qualitative scholars sought to understand the lived experiences and help-seeking behaviors of immigrant women who were victims of domestic violence. Collectively, the results of these studies highlight that women's immigration status (e.g., undocumented, permanent legal residents) was a salient factor in their susceptibility to violence and abuse by their intimate partners, which also had significant implications for their help-seeking behaviors, including reporting the crime to law enforcement agencies. That is, being undocumented or a permanent legal resident not only increased women's risk for victimization but also contributed to their diminished likelihood of seeking help from formal agencies, including social services and the police, due to their deep-seated fear of being deported or losing legal status (which in many cases would have resulted in losing custody of their children). The significance of immigration status was compounded by other factors, such as legal, economic, and cultural challenges, that further exacerbated the problem of underreporting and seeking help among immigrant women who experienced victimization.

Undocumented migrant workers or day laborers make up another group that is highly susceptible to victimization because of their immigration status. Research in this area has found that undocumented workers have been subjected to violence, abuse, and wage theft from both employers and street criminals. Their higher risk of victimization stems directly from their presumed citizenship status as well as their lack of access to legal protections—both of which have implications for crime and victimization reporting (Bucher et al. 2010, Fussell 2011, Negi et al. 2013, Valenzuela 2006, Zatz & Smith 2012). Recently, Caraballo & Topalli (2022) sought to delineate precisely how and why street robbers choose to target undocumented immigrants in Atlanta, a new immigrant destination. With rare access to 25 street offenders, they found that undocumented immigrants

were robbers' prime targets because they are more likely to rely on cash-intensive or under-the-table jobs, and it is commonly assumed that those who are undocumented will be unable to legally open bank accounts to securely store their cash earnings (also see Barranco & Shihadeh 2015). Additionally, Caraballo & Topalli (2022) found that undocumented immigrants were appealing targets for street robbery because they are unlikely to report their victimization experience to the police, due to fear of possible deportation. Interestingly, the authors found that perpetrators relied heavily on physical cues and stereotypes to determine who they thought was undocumented, often conflating ethnicity (i.e., Latino) with foreign status.

The results from this body of work highlight the collateral consequences immigration policy and anti-immigrant rhetoric can have on crime and victimization. Given today's sociopolitical context, along with the unprecedented growth of anti-immigrant and xenophobic sentiments, which has coincided with a rise in bias-motivated assaults against immigrant groups, future research should explore the perceived social, cultural, and psychological implications of such crimes on immigrants and immigrant communities.

CONCLUSION

Nearly a century ago, Cooley (1927, p. 127) argued that "the phenomena of life are often better distinguished by pattern than by quantity." At the time of his observation, criminology was still a fledgling discipline, and some of the most enduring theories were underway by a group of urban ethnographers working against the backdrop of tremendous social change (e.g., population growth, rapid industrialization, and mass migration). In the decades since the Chicago School's heyday, the discipline of criminology has grown exponentially, undergoing multiple turning points and paradigmatic shifts along the way (Laub 2004). Among these shifts has been the increasing reliance on quantitative methods and macrolevel social theories (e.g., Wright et al. 2015), and a movement toward what Bursik (2009, p. 6) termed a "newness fetish" that has manifested in the "failure to consider similar work conducted in earlier historical eras." Although some of the most groundbreaking studies of immigration and crime are rooted firmly in the Chicago School tradition of urban ethnography, these methods have become the exception rather than the rule in contemporary immigration–crime research. More than fodder for nostalgia, these early works remind us of the rich detail that can only emerge from immersing oneself in the lives of those we study and by attending to the voices of those under consideration.

The costs of ethnographic research are prohibitive, as evident by the seminal works in this area, which necessitated prolonged periods of residence in the communities and extensive scrutiny of documents (e.g., letters and autobiographical statements) gathered over years. Importantly though, as these early tomes remind us, a comprehensive understanding of interactional dynamics and processes of assimilation and acculturation within immigrant enclaves necessitates consideration of human subjectivities and firsthand observation of individuals whose actions make up the very patterns of life (Whyte 1943, p. xix). Take, for example, the important concept of "contexts of reception," which figures prominently in several theoretical perspectives, including immigrant revitalization (Martinez & Lee 2000), immigrant enclave theory (Portes 1987, Portes & Bach 1985), and segmented assimilation theory (Alba & Nee 2003, Portes & Rumbaut 2001, Zhou 1997b). To date, no precise measure exists to capture this construct, but fundamentally it includes individuals' perceptions of the degree of receptiveness (versus hostility) of the receiving society and the opportunity structures available to them (Portes & Rumbaut 2001, Stepick & Stepick 2010, Zhou 1997b). In this vein, a positive context of reception can be defined broadly as one in which immigrants are able to forge social ties, build social capital, and achieve economic advancement in the absence of hostility. Conversely, a negative context of reception might impede socioeconomic

advancement and engender feelings of isolation, rejection, and rebuke. Critically, though, the only way to capture it fully is to learn from the lived experiences of immigrants themselves.

The virtues of ethnographic approaches lie in their unique ability to help capture the meanings individuals ascribe to their lived experiences and the implications of these meanings for later life decisions, including crime; in doing so, they "provide the human voices to counterbalance the wide range of statistical data in criminology and the social sciences at large" (Laub & Sampson 2003, p. 59). Furthermore, ethnographies capture the cultural historical milieu in which human lives are embedded (see, e.g., Elder 1994, Laub & Sampson 2003). That is, "over time...good ethnography can turn into great social history" (Duneier et al. 2014, p. 2). A poignant illustration can be found in one of the earliest ethnographies of New York's Chinatown by Jacob Riis [1971 (1890)]. Written more than 130 years ago, Riis's vivid descriptions and trenchant critique of the culture and customs of Chinese immigrants offer a window into the xenophobia and intolerance toward Chinese immigrants that permeated the era. Much like Riis's work provided an enduring portrait of the sentiments toward Chinese immigrants at the time, today's deportation and detention ethnographies capture the social forces of this particular historical epoch.

Duneier et al. (2014, p. 6) observed that "in one form or another, the great problems of early urban ethnography had to do with migration, race, and the changing nature of social bonds." Since the 1970s, the United States has entered a new age of immigration, marked by dramatic shifts in the demographic composition and geospatial distribution of immigrant populations. As Sampson (2017, p. 24) recently observed, large-scale demographic and spatial transformations are "calling into question traditional urban and criminological models." The old problems of migration, race, and changing social bonds still exist but are now augmented by new problems of state control, policies of exclusion, and culture conflict in a new age of globalization. Thus far, the body of aggregate-level and survey-based research on the immigration–crime nexus has been critical for both countering anti-immigrant rhetoric that contends immigration to be criminogenic and assessing the veracity of some of the discipline's most enduring theoretical frameworks (e.g., social disorganization). There remain, however, significant gaps in our understanding of the interstitial processes linking immigration/assimilation and crime as well as new questions about the implications of policies of exclusion and the integration of immigrants in new destinations. As the discipline moves forward to address the new migration, we contend that the methods employed by classic scholars (e.g., ethnographies, life histories, and participant observation) will prove particularly fruitful for uncovering the complexities of the new immigration and its relationship to crime and crime control.

DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

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