

Article

Proposition 187 and the Travel Ban: Addressing Economy, Security, and White Christian Nationalism in U.S. Christian Communities

Laura E. Alexander

Religious Studies, University of Nebraska Omaha, Omaha, NE 68182, USA; lealex@unomaha.edu

Abstract: The ideology of white Christian nationalism has become increasingly visible in the United States. This ideology intersects with public debate over immigration, posing a threat both to immigrants' well-being and to American ideals of democracy. This essay considers how religious leaders in primarily white Christian communities addressed two historical moments related to immigration in the U.S.: Proposition 187 in California, and the "travel ban" instituted by the Trump administration in 2017. Christian leaders who supported Prop 187 and the ban, and those who opposed the two policies, tended to talk past each other when they discussed the issue of immigration and these specific policies. Pro-187 leaders used rhetoric of economic damage and pro-ban leaders used rhetoric of national security, whereas anti-187 and anti-ban leaders used rhetoric of hospitality and nondiscrimination. Christian leaders who opposed these policies attempted to apply the moral teachings of their religious tradition, but ethicists and religious leaders who wish to fully engage in conversation about immigration in the U.S. should incorporate discussion of economic and security concerns into their consideration of hospitality, in order both to address anxieties and to pull the veil back on racial and religious discrimination that hides behind these anxieties.



Citation: Alexander, Laura E. 2022. Proposition 187 and the Travel Ban: Addressing Economy, Security, and White Christian Nationalism in U.S. Christian Communities. *Religions* 13: 337. <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel13040337>

Academic Editors: John D. Wilsey and Mark T. Edwards

Received: 11 February 2022

Accepted: 8 April 2022

Published: 9 April 2022

Publisher's Note: MDPI stays neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.



Copyright: © 2022 by the author. Licensee MDPI, Basel, Switzerland. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

Keywords: immigration; white Christian nationalism; hospitality; discrimination; Christian communities; Christian ethics; Proposition 187; travel ban

1. Introduction

Journalists, public figures, and the public at large have become increasingly attentive to the phenomenon of Christian nationalism—and specifically *white* Christian nationalism—in the past five years or so. With extremist groups feeling increasingly empowered to express nationalistic sentiments publicly, to gather in support of a vision of white Christian nationalism, and to commit violence, scholars have recognized that ideologies of the “American nation” as fundamentally and properly white and Christian have not gone away. The “Unite the Right” march in Charlottesville, VA in 2017 and the 6 January 2021 insurrection at the United States Capitol are the most shocking examples of extremist violence, although smaller groups have held marches and rallies elsewhere, including (most recently at the time of this writing) a march by self-avowed Nazis in Orlando, FL on 30 January 2022 (Starr 2022). Furthermore, ideologies of “America” as properly white and Christian infiltrate the speeches and actions even of some political figures with power to shape both national dialogue and policy. U.S. Representatives Paul Gosar and Marjorie Taylor Greene both spoke at a 2022 conference organized by white nationalist Nick Fuentes; Gosar is friendly with bloggers and influencers who share antisemitic content (Kaczynski and Steck 2022); and former national security advisor Michael Flynn recently stated that the United States must have one religion only, clearly referencing Christianity (Bull 2021). Former President Donald Trump has also made well-publicized statements that Mexican immigrants were rapists and bad people, and that the U.S. should be seeking to attract immigrants from countries like Norway, rather than immigrants from “shithole countries”

in Africa (Trump later denied using those exact words, but multiple attendees of the meeting at which he spoke confirmed the phrasing) (Vitali et al. 2018).

These phenomena have prompted a deeper reckoning in recent scholarship about how to understand and characterize contemporary ideas about religion and race in the United States, specifically the influence of a type of nationalism that sees whiteness and (a specific form of) Christianity as foundational characteristics of U.S. policy and citizenship. As an entry into the discussion, this essay examines the phenomenon of white Christian nationalism in relation to immigration. I draw on scholarly research on white Christian nationalism—what it is, how it impacts public dialogue and policy-making, and how it intersects with debates over other social issues—in order to analyze the attitudes and actions of white Christian communities at two historical moments. One is the statewide vote in California in 1994 on Proposition 187, a ballot initiative that denied certain basic services to undocumented immigrants and their children and required some local and state agencies, including public schools and universities, to report suspected “illegal aliens” for investigation. The other is the implementation of the “travel ban”¹ by the Trump administration in 2017, which barred citizens of several countries from traveling to the United States, even for humanitarian reasons, and halted refugee resettlement for a period of time. After considering how ideologies of white Christian nationalism functioned during the public debates over Prop 187 and the travel ban, I suggest that Christian ethicists and leaders in Christian communities who wish to bring a moral perspective into arguments over immigration should more explicitly address the social concerns that white Christian nationalist ideology often intertwines with or masks itself behind, namely economic and security concerns. In so doing, Christian ethicists and leaders have a better chance of connecting to the Christian communities they seek to influence and of bringing discussions of race, religion, and nationalism into the light.

2. White Christian Nationalism in the United States

White Christian nationalism has been part of American cultural life and ideology since the earliest colonial period. Scholars of color have mapped and examined its features for centuries, at least since the work of Sojourner Truth, Frederick Douglass, and W.E.B. Du Bois, and continuing through the twentieth century and until today (Gilbert 2017; Douglass 2010, 2019a, 2019b; Du Bois 2003). The clearest recent definition of contemporary “Christian nationalism” was articulated by Andrew L. Whitehead and Samuel L. Perry in their 2020 work *Taking America Back for God*, and I will use their definition: “Christian nationalism” is “an ideology that idealizes and advocates a fusion of American civic life with a particular type of Christian identity and culture” (Whitehead and Perry 2020, pp. ix–x). As Whitehead and Perry note, in ideologies of Christian nationalism, “Christian identity” does not necessarily incorporate specific practices of doctrinal orthodoxy or personal piety. Instead, “Christian identity” or a commitment to “Christian culture” serves as an identity marker that incorporates multiple characteristics, with “symbolic boundaries that conceptually blur and conflate religious identity (Christian, preferably Protestant) with race (white), nativity (born in the United States), citizenship (American), and political ideology (social and fiscal conservative)” (Whitehead and Perry 2020, p. x).

In acknowledging these conflations between different identity markers, Whitehead and Perry recognize that what they call “Christian nationalism” has many facets. A belief that American civic life should be infused with a specific type of Christian identity cannot be extricated from ideologies of race, citizenship, and other markers.² However, Whitehead and Perry’s “Christian nationalism scale” focuses primarily on attitudes about Christianity within the public sphere: they track survey respondents’ agreement or disagreement with statements such as “The federal government should declare the United States a Christian nation”. In other words, they analyze responses to statements about the United States and Christianity, but they do not ask questions specifically about race and citizenship. Because this paper deals with questions of racial identity and citizenship status, I will examine the phenomenon of *white* Christian nationalism. To define white Christian nationalism, I begin

with Whitehead and Perry's definition and add to it: white Christian nationalist ideology advocates "the fusion of American civic life with a particular type of Christian identity and culture", and it also conflates "Christian identity" with "white identity", and views nonwhite residents of the United States as less than fully American.

Understanding white Christian nationalism in this way allows us to clarify a few things about the phenomenon. First, it recognizes, as Whitehead and Perry do, that whiteness often merges with "Christian identity" and "Americanness" to shape an ideology of who is perceived as a "real" American. Second, understanding white Christian nationalism as an ideology recognizes that it can be held, or not held, by any given person: it is not enmeshed with a particular identity. White folks in America do not all hold this ideology; nor do all white Christians; nor do all members of a given subgroup of white Christians, including white evangelicals, although scholars have shown that there is a strong overlap in U.S. society between identification with contemporary white evangelicalism and having white Christian nationalist beliefs (Butler 2021; Jones 2021). The categories of both "white" and "Christian" are extremely complicated in American political and social life, but again, because white Christian nationalism is an ideology and not an identity, it crosses historically contested boundaries between, for example, Protestant and Catholic Christians—and even between Christians and other religious groups. In a recent poll conducted by the Public Religion Research Institute, for example, 4% of non-Christians agreed that they would "prefer the U.S. to be a nation primarily made up of people who follow the Christian faith"—not a large percentage, but an indicator that aspects of Christian nationalist ideology can appear in the opinions and preferences of any demographic group, even non-Christians (PRRI 2021). It is also possible for people of color or people who identify as Hispanic or Latino/a to embrace identities within the wider category of "whiteness" or to hold white Christian nationalist beliefs (Martí 2022; Twine and Gallagher 2008).

Finally, by specifying that this paper addresses white Christian nationalism, I acknowledge that there are forms of nationalism in the U.S. that the paper will not deal with, including Black nationalism as well as Black Christians' use of ideologies of a "Christian America" during the Civil Rights Movement (Ongiri 2009; Taylor 2011; Ogbar 2019; Noll 2008; Raboteau 2016). These nationalisms have their own particular origins and impacts, and some (in the case of the Civil Rights Movement) have even enriched the cause of democracy and inspired immigration policies that treat different groups more equitably. The ideology of white Christian nationalism, however, has generally posed a threat to democratic ideals and has closed off democratic participation from some groups of U.S. citizens and residents, while also seeking to restrict immigration to only some groups, based on racial and religious identity.

3. White Christian Nationalism and Immigration

People have multiple, complex reasons for viewing immigration in particular ways. It can, therefore, be difficult to study white Christian nationalist ideology within debates over immigration. Most Americans will not attribute their opinions about immigrants or immigration policy, whatever those opinions are, to prejudice for or against a particular religious or racial group, even if their responses to a survey might indicate such a prejudice. Researchers have, however, been able to tease out social perspectives and attitudes about immigration in the aggregate. One set of studies demonstrates that attitudes about undocumented immigration involve economic concerns as well as prejudice against some religious and racial groups, specifically Muslims and Latinos. Kirill Zhirkov has recently conducted a study of attitudes toward immigrants in the U.S. and the U.K. that underscores respondents' anxieties about immigrants' economic contributions and education levels, even as it also shows that negative feelings about Hispanics/Latinos and Muslims impact attitudes about immigration (Zhirkov 2021). A pair of studies by Lee, Ottati, and Hussain that specifically considered attitudes about immigrants and Proposition 187 showed that respondents' opinions were impacted by their own ethnicity, economic concerns, prejudice against Mexicans, and commitment to the idea of obeying the law (Lee et al. 2001). Huber

et al. have shown how racist and nativist framings of immigration issues have influenced legislation that conflates Latino immigration with undocumented immigration and targets Latino populations for punishment or deportation, while describing undocumented immigrants as deceitful and costly (Huber et al. 2008).

Similarly, studies have shown, particularly with regard to refugees, that attitudes are shaped both by anxiety about safety and by prejudice against religious and racial groups. Scholars demonstrate that perceived threats to personal or national security posed by immigrant groups impact attitudes about immigration (Willis-Esqueda et al. 2017); however, in some cases, such as the arrival of refugees from Syria in the U.S., racial and religious prejudice seems to play a larger role than perceived threat (Nassar 2020). One research team drew on survey data to demonstrate that “Christian nationalism is a robust determinant of immigrant animus” (McDaniel et al. 2011, p. 205). Another set of researchers conducted a qualitative and ethnographic investigation of public testimony about a 2016 bill in South Carolina that sought to ban refugee resettlement in the state. Their notes showed that refugees were conflated with Muslims and that Islam, as a tradition, was described as violent, with the word *jihad* used incorrectly 115 times to imply violent tendencies or plans of (presumed Muslim) refugees. Furthermore, “[the researchers] found fifty-two . . . examples of white members of the public physically using their body to signal whiteness in testimony” (Grace and Heins 2020, p. 564). In short, individuals’ and communities’ views of immigrants are inflected by multiple factors, not only white Christian nationalist ideology, and each individual person will have a different perspective. However, when researchers consider community attitudes as a whole, aspects of white Christian nationalism (prejudice against nonwhite and non-Christian immigrants) influence Americans’ viewpoints on policies, including Proposition 187 and the travel ban.

In addition to the above scholarship that analyzes recent survey data, ethnography, and critical theory, researchers have also shown how the connection between white Christian nationalism and anti-immigrant sentiment and policies developed historically. The work of both Mae Ngai and Willie James Jennings lays out the history of race-thinking through the modern colonial period (Ngai 1999; Jennings 2010, pp. 243–45), showing how debates over immigration in the United States reflected white Christian nationalist concerns over the racial makeup of the country and whether immigrants could assimilate into an imagined “white Christian” culture. These worries about race intertwine inseparably with worries about religion, from the anti-Catholic (primarily Irish and Italian Catholics) vitriol of the American Protective Association and the Know-Nothing Party (McBride 2018, pp. 33–40)³ to contemporary anti-Muslim sentiment. In current public dialogue and ideology, Muslim identity is racialized. Muslim identity is conflated with “a set of essential and immutable characteristics” (Garner and Parvez 2020, p. 136), and being Muslim has also been associated in public imagination with having a particular racial or ethnic identity—often Arab, and certainly Black or Brown. Muslims of color also experience double suspicion and marginalization due to both race and religion (Jacobson and Wadsworth 2010, pp. 4–9; Jacobson 2010, pp. 179, 182–83; Selod 2015; Ibrahim 2008).

In U.S. politics and cultural ideologies, then, conceptions of race, religion, and “the nation” are intertwined. White Christian nationalism shapes the way that many Americans think about and act on political and social issues, immigration among them. This poses a threat to democratic ideals in the United States. The idea of democracy and scope of democratic principles are contested in public debates and policies (Coppedge et al. 2022; Kurki 2013; Hanson 1985). Still, scholars generally (though not universally) agree that democratic ideals include at least the principles that all citizens of a country can participate fully in political life and that all residents have a right to basic goods such as religious freedom and education (Zembylas and Keet 2018; Gutmann and Thompson 2004). When ideologies about immigration and immigrants lead to policies that deny basic rights or discriminate on the basis of race or religion, democratic ideals are not upheld. Christian ethicists, leaders, and communities who wish to publicly support welcoming immigrants without discrimination need to attend to the impact of white Christian nationalism on

public deliberation over immigration policies, in order to recognize the context of the debate and determine how to shape effective rhetoric in that context.

4. Proposition 187 and the Travel Ban

To contribute to that understanding of context, I will now turn to the two specific policies I have mentioned—Proposition 187 and the travel ban—and analyze how (primarily) white Christian leaders and communities responded during these moments of upheaval regarding immigration in the United States. To do this, I will compare public statements and comments by primarily white Christian leaders and communities in the United States, both in response to the state of California’s passage of Proposition 187 in 1994 and in response to the travel ban imposed in 2017 by the Trump administration. I ask whether these public statements express the idea that the U.S. is properly a “Christian nation” or even a white Christian nation, or whether they push back against that idea. I also consider how ideologies of white Christian nationalism, whether overt or covert, intersect with discussions of economic life, personal and national security, hospitality, and non-discrimination.

Proposition 187 was a statewide ballot initiative in California that passed in 1994. It denied certain basic services to undocumented immigrants and required some local and state agencies to report suspected “illegal aliens” to the California Attorney General and to Immigration and Naturalization Services.⁴ The measure required public schools to verify students’ citizenship or residency status, report any suspected undocumented immigrants to the INS, and exclude children from school after 90 days if their status could not be verified. Public colleges and universities were likewise required to report and exclude students whose status could not be verified, and social service agencies and health care organizations had similar requirements to report suspected undocumented immigrants and deny welfare or medical care, excluding emergency medical care. Finally, the initiative required every state and local law enforcement agency to report anyone they arrested, who was suspected of being undocumented, to the INS and the state of California ([University of California Hastings 1994](#)). The measure passed, with 58.93% of voters in approval and 41.09% against ([Jones 1994](#), p. xxv).

Proposition 187 was immediately challenged in court. A federal judge ruled against portions of the law in late 1994 and then, in 1997, declared the entire initiative unconstitutional on the grounds that U.S. immigration policy falls under the role of the federal government and not individual states. Proposition 187, the judge ruled, was attempting to create a separate immigration policy ([United Press International, Domestic News 1997](#)). The state pursued an appeal for a time, until the administration of Governor Gray Davis withdrew the appeal in 1999 and the case was dropped.

The 2017 travel ban, also known as the “Muslim ban”, was an executive order signed in by then-President Donald Trump that banned citizens of certain countries, most of them Muslim-majority, from entering the United States. The original executive order, 13769, signed on 27 January 2017, banned travelers from Iran, Iraq, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, and Yemen for 90 days ([Exec. Order 13769 2017a](#)). It also suspended the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program for 120 days and suspended Syrian refugee entry to the United States indefinitely. On 6 March 2017, Executive Order 13780 superseded 13769. The new order removed Iraq from the list of banned countries and continued the suspension of the Refugee Admissions Program ([Exec. Order 13769 2017b](#)). Later presidential proclamations would remove or modify the bans on some of the listed countries, while extending the ban to some immigrants from Chad, citizens and residents of North Korea, and certain government officials of Venezuela. Five further countries were added to the list in early 2020 ([Presidential Proclamation 9645 2017](#); [Presidential Proclamation 9723 2018](#); [Presidential Proclamation 9983 2020](#)).⁵

Both executive orders were challenged in court, and E.O. 13780 was crafted partly as a response to some of the legal challenges presented to E.O. 13769. In the end, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld most of the second travel ban,⁶ despite arguments from several

states and many advocates that the ban was rooted in anti-Muslim prejudice. Advocates most commonly cited Trump's declaration, posted in 2015 on his campaign website, that he sought a "total and complete shutdown of Muslims entering the United States" (Wang 2017). The Supreme Court majority opinion, authored by Chief Justice John Roberts, took note of Trump's "shutdown" statement and other verbal statements that seemed to indicate that anti-Muslim prejudice provided at least one motivation for the ban.⁷ The Court ultimately dismissed the concern, however, on the grounds that the executive order fell within the powers of the executive branch and had a "facially legitimate" national security purpose.⁸ The ban remained in place until President Joseph Biden signed a new proclamation overturning it in January 2021 (Presidential Proclamation 10141 2021).⁹

5. Religious Support for Proposition 187

For both Proposition 187 and the travel ban, it is easier to find public statements from Christian clergy, congregations, or organizations who are against the policy in question, despite the strong support for the initiative reflected in its passage with almost 60% of voters in support. I have not found studies that specifically consider the reasons behind this reluctance by Christian leaders and groups to support Prop 187 publicly. Research on preference falsification, in which people communicate a preference that differs from their true preference because they view the former as more socially acceptable (Kuran 1997), would suggest that leaders and communities might have felt uneasy about being seen as holding racist or nationalistic biases. Along the same lines, the phenomenon of self-censorship could explain a tendency simply to remain silent (Cook and Heilmann 2013). However, direct qualitative data on religious communities' reasons for speaking out or not is not available in this case.

Research *does* show that, whatever any given clergy or church member may have felt individually, both racial prejudice and a restrictive view of the "nation" influenced the development of and support for Proposition 187. In the case of Proposition 187, I will primarily discuss *white nationalism* as opposed to *white Christian nationalism* as an animating ideology, since most of the debates over the policy focused on nationality and race.¹⁰ In a 1998 analysis, New and Petronicolos argue that the debate over Proposition 187 developed into a question of who was allowed in American public schools. Disputants on all sides accepted a nationalist framework that assumed "immutable national boundaries" that marked off differences between citizen and foreigner as fixed and natural (New and Petronicolos 1998, p. 84). On the more extreme fringes, proponents of Proposition 187, including members of activist groups that strongly and publicly pushed for implementation, made statements like "this is part of a reconquest of the American Southwest by foreign Hispanics" (Davis 1995, p. 28) and accused immigrants of urinating and defecating by the street side while having babies who would take up social service resources (New and Petronicolos 1998, p. 84). New and Petronicolos also note that then-Governor Pete Wilson and other public figures "took pains to distance themselves from their co-supporters with overtly racist agendas, notwithstanding the private financial support received from groups like the Pioneer Fund, a right-wing philanthropy that sponsors eugenics 'research' like Murray and Hernstein's *The Bell Curve*" (New and Petronicolos 1998, p. 85).

Regarding the text of the proposition itself, Tara M. Lennon argues that on its face, Proposition 187 promoted only nationalism without regard to race. The text of Proposition 187 itself primarily discussed economic anxieties, citing the amount of money the state and its localities provided for education, welfare, and healthcare for undocumented immigrants. Based on these concerns, the policy sought to deny undocumented immigrants goods and services, while ostensibly helping immigrants with legal status to assimilate into to the wider population of citizens (Lennon 1998, pp. 83–84). However, enforcement of the policy required racial identification. Untrained officials in schools and medical clinics were required to identify possible undocumented immigrants and reporting them to INS, but were provided no criteria for making that identification. In practice, "the mere suspicion of an illegal alien is, though not stated in the Proposition, one that is most likely to be

based on race” (Lennon 1998, p. 85). Lennon, citing Davis, also notes that advocates for Prop 187 associated the economic decline of the San Fernando Valley with significant growth in the area’s Latino population, thus connecting economic decline to changes in racial demographics (Lennon 1998, p. 85). In short, concerns about economic decline intertwined with nativist and racist conceptions of immigrants and Latinos in the run-up to the Proposition 187 vote (see also Alvarez and Butterfield 2000; Tolbert and Hero 1996; Macias 1996). As Lennon and others have noted, overtly stated fears of economic decline sometimes serve as a front to conceal other priorities and biases, and that seems to have been the case in the wider public discussion of Proposition 187.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the statements of Christian leaders who did publicly express support for Prop 187 drew primarily on the economic arguments made by the bill’s proponents, arguing that the economic harm purportedly caused by undocumented immigrants should influence Christian communities’ interpretation of Biblical texts. For instance, Rev. Lou Sheldon, leader of an Anaheim-based coalition of thousands of conservative evangelical churches, argued that Biblical commands to welcome the “sojourner” referred only to hospitality toward people passing through one’s land and did not include taking newcomers into the community, particularly if they “[plan] to stay illegally and use up resources”. Rev. Jim Baize of Midway Baptist Church near San Diego stated that support for Proposition 187 was appropriate since the Bible says people are “not to steal” or “not to take what doesn’t belong to us” (Dolbee 1994). Although there is no support for the argument that immigrants harm the economic vitality of a community—in fact, research overwhelming shows that immigration enhances the economy of cities, states, and countries—many lay Christian supporters of Proposition 187 do seem to have believed that undocumented immigrants were taking resources away from citizens and legal residents and that reducing the number of undocumented immigrants within the state would improve its economic health. Laypeople interviewed by Dolbee said things like, “you can’t wrap your arms around the whole world”; “we have so many problems here and we really have to focus more strongly on our own country’s problems”, and “we shouldn’t be helping them in this way” (Dolbee 1994).

As is always the case with complex policy matters, a number of factors intermingled in attitudes toward Proposition 187. The leaders and laypeople who spoke out were perhaps more willing to admit to economic rather than racial or nativist motivations, but Christian leaders and communities could not easily separate out economic concerns and aspects of white nationalism. When considering Christian teachings that support hospitality to strangers, pro-Prop 187 communities used arguments that invoked theft, as well as arguments that “you can’t wrap your arms around the whole world”, to justify the refusal to offer social services and assistance to undocumented immigrants. This argument is rooted in nationalist ideology at least (we only help people who “belong” to our country). Furthermore, research, at the time and since, has shown how anti-immigrant attitudes in California at the time incorporated elements of white nationalist ideology, in particular racial and cultural prejudice against Latino and Mexican immigrants.

6. Religious Opposition to Proposition 187

Most Christian leaders and groups who spoke out publicly in the lead-up to the vote on Proposition 187 argued against the policy. Christian priests, pastors, and institutional leaders variously described Proposition 187 as discriminatory, a violation of basic rights, cruel to families and children, and a way of scapegoating immigrant communities for larger problems. They denounced the policy as a violation of Christian teachings of hospitality and love for all of one’s neighbors, arguing that the “neighbors” who should be helped include people who do not share one’s own personal family, community, social identity, or immigration status.

Catholic churches, priests, and hierarchical leaders in the California area were particularly vocal. The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops called the initiative “a catalyst for divisiveness” and argued that it directly targeted the most vulnerable people in society

while ignoring broader social and political issues (Selby 1994). Father John T. Steinbock, of the Diocese of Fresno, stated at a news conference that Proposition 187 “would create a subhuman caste in our society” (Taylor 1994). Religious leaders organized a Christmas *posada*, a religious celebration of the journey of Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem and their search for hospitality and a place to rest, along the U.S.–Mexico border near San Diego. The service highlighted the shared religious heritage of residents of the two countries and symbolized the leaders’ advocacy for hospitality toward immigrants. Father Armando Lopez, a Franciscan priest, lamented that immigrants were being told “there is no *posada* [inn, hospitality] for you hereWe don’t want your kids here”. Instead, he argued, borders should be open to people who are in need of hospitality and assistance (Rother 1994).

Protestant Christian leaders likewise denounced Proposition 187 as either racist, xenophobic, or cruel and inhospitable. The three California-based bishops of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America described the initiative as being rooted in fear, which leads to poor decision-making (Anderson 1994). Pastor Danny DeLeon, leader of a Latino evangelical congregation, stated that the initiative was anti-Christian due to favoring one group of people over another for education, services, and full inclusion in the community (NPR 1994). Pastor Bill Radatz, a Lutheran pastor and lead organizer of the border-area Christmas *posada* mentioned above, lamented anti-immigrant sentiment that was both fomented by and expressed in Proposition 187. Radatz voiced support for immigrants, expressed the conviction that many traveled to the United States out of desperation, and argued in favor of hospitality based partly on the fact that Mary and Joseph, Jesus’s parents, were themselves refugees (Rother 1994). Both Catholic and Protestant churches also became involved in voter-registration drives, including after the initiative had passed, drawing on Latinos’ and immigrant-rights supporters’ opposition to the measure (Hardy 1996).

In contrast to the few Christian leaders who spoke publicly in favor of Proposition 187, those who opposed its passage generally did not discuss either individuals’ or the state’s economic concerns. Some leaders argued that immigrants were being used as scapegoats for economic downturns and instability, but they did not explore the issue further, instead focusing on the moral issues of hospitality and care for the vulnerable. For anti-187 proponents, the role of Christian communities in light of undocumented immigration was one of welcome and care. At an individual level, they advocated kindness toward immigrants and their families, and at the social and political level, they sought to push the state government to continue providing services of care and support, such as healthcare and education. To be fair, leaders did view these acts of “care” for the vulnerable as acts that would enhance economic as well as physical and mental well-being. States should, they thought, provide food or cash benefits to families, and leaders’ advocacy for education and health care likewise can be understood as advocacy on behalf of immigrants’ economic prospects. For the most part, however, Christian leaders did not directly address how immigration impacts economic life.

This omission may have represented a missed opportunity, since study after study has demonstrated that robust immigration into a community significantly improves that community’s and its people’s economic well-being (Blau and Mackie 2017; Zavodny 2021). This is true at all levels of government. The federal government clearly benefits from the taxes paid by immigrants, both those who have legal documents and those who do not. State and local governments, meanwhile, do end up taking on the heavier financial burden of providing education and some health services, but even so, states and localities break even economically, at worst, when they take in immigrants, and they usually see a net positive benefit.¹¹ Insofar as the economic concerns cited by mainstream proponents of Prop 187 intertwined with racial, national, and ethnic biases, those latter biases would not be mitigated by economic arguments. Nevertheless, anti-187 Christian leaders could have made a stronger effort to neutralize the more explicit and “acceptable” economic argument against providing services to undocumented immigrants, by providing facts and narratives demonstrating the economic benefits of immigration. If leaders had more directly

addressed the economic argument alongside calls for hospitality and non-discrimination, they would have had the benefit of (1) articulating a vision of care and cooperation among all people, (2) helping communities envision immigrants not only as guests, but as agents who participate in and contribute to economic life, (3) exploring the role of racism in attitudes toward immigrants more deeply by going beyond arguments about economic life, and (4) demonstrating that hospitality to immigrants in fact benefits the entire community.

One worry that religious leaders, ethicists, and others might have about this approach is that emphasizing the economic contributions of immigrants can lead people to view immigrants only in terms of their productivity, not as full human beings who deserve respect and care no matter what. For Christian leaders who interpret the texts and teachings of their tradition to say that all human beings are infinitely valuable, no matter how “productive” they are, this is a reasonable concern. Indeed, many Christian leaders would argue that the community should be most concerned precisely about the well-being of those who are in need and cannot “produce” material goods or services. However, speaking of the economy need not dehumanize people or take attention away from principles of hospitality and welcome. Labor and economic participation is part of a full human life, and all people participate in economic life in some way, even those who need assistance or care. Leaders could have mitigated concerns about instrumentalizing immigrants’ contributions by pairing discussions of economic benefit with personal stories, appeals to the importance of childhood and family life, and other strategies to emphasize immigrants’ full humanity. In fact, discussing economic contributions might have served as a way of recognizing that immigrants are not simply helpless victims in need of care, but are agents in their own right—fellow human beings who give hospitality as well as receive it. Connecting these appeals would have allowed anti-187 groups to address the issue from all angles and, by lifting the veil of economic concerns, to more forcefully admonish pro-187 groups to state clearly whether their motivations stemmed from ideologies of American nationalism, or ideologies of whiteness as a key aspect of Americanness.

The fight over Proposition 187 in California was, among many other things, a fight within and among Christian communities over how those communities viewed immigrants—and how they viewed themselves. Should Christians in the state of California “take care of their own” by denying services to undocumented immigrants—including children? Did religious teachings about hospitality demand that immigrants be welcomed and provided with basic services by the state? Was it appropriate for Christians to worry (rightly or wrongly) about their localities’ and state’s economic well-being, and to prioritize the economy over the health and education of millions of immigrants living next door? Some thinkers have suggested that Proposition 187 demonstrated the waning of religious leaders’ power to move their communities, since most religious leaders opposed the policy and yet almost 60% of the state voted for it (Feldman 1994). Many members of Christian communities in California clearly *did* find it possible to integrate their Christian identity with denial of services to immigrants and to prioritize nationalism (“taking care of our own”) over hospitality. Although Proposition 187 was overturned in court, and many thinkers have viewed it as a catalyst for political action that brought about more pro-immigrant policies (Monogan and Doctor 2017), the fight over 187 demonstrates that the majority of Christian leaders who spoke out against the policy were not able to move significant numbers of Christians to their vision of hospitality.

7. Religious Support for the Travel Ban

As with Proposition 187 twenty-three years earlier, few Christian leaders were willing to express unmitigated public support for the 2017 executive order known as the “travel ban”. Most took a relatively quiet approach to the issue, despite the fact that by early 2017, 61% of white evangelical Christians in the U.S. supported a temporary ban on Muslims entering the U.S., alongside 44% of white Catholics and 39% of white mainline Protestants, according to the polling organization PRRI (Kamboj and Jones 2017). The Pew Research Center reported 76% approval for the travel ban among white evangelical Protestants, 50%

among white mainline Protestants, and 50% among white Catholics. In the Pew Survey, many American Christians also expressed concern about Muslim extremism (Smith 2017). Still, few clergy or Christian churches made outright statements of support. Given that candidate Trump had originally promised a “shutdown of Muslims entering the United States”, which seemed to imply intent to discriminate on the basis of religion, preference falsification and/or self-censorship could certainly have played a role in leaders’ reluctance to say much on this issue, although qualitative evidence is not available to evaluate why some leaders who supported the ban did not speak out publicly.

A few Christian clergy did make brief statements or posted support on social media. For example, a Catholic priest in Orange, NJ, in addition to penning inflammatory postings about Hillary Clinton and others, expressed support for the ban on Facebook and Twitter (AP 2017). Ernie Sanders, a pastor in Ohio, stated that he was not against bringing in refugees *per se* but supported the ban because he worried about Muslims coming to the United States in any significant number (Brunius 2017).

Furthermore, at least two leaders of large, primarily Christian coalitions expressed support publicly in traditional media, primarily citing national security concerns. Tim Head, the leader of the Faith & Freedom Coalition, an advocacy organization composed primarily of evangelical Christians and conservative “Tea Party” voters (West 2011), praised the Supreme Court decision that left the second travel ban in place, arguing that it was a “pause button” on “countries that threaten our security” and that the coalition supported “strictly vetting foreign nationals from countries plagued by civil war, terrorism and radical Islamic extremism that pose a danger to our national security” (Smith 2018). Franklin Graham, president of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association and the aid organization Samaritan’s Purse, was likely the best-known Christian leader to publicly support the ban. Graham’s primary argument was that, while Christians are called to help those in need, the president of the country does not have the same responsibility to show hospitality. Instead, Graham said, the president was protecting the country and ensuring that those who settled in it held principles of “freedom, democracy, and liberty”. Graham claimed that the issue of admitting or barring refugees was a political issue, “not a Bible issue”, stating: “We want to love people, we want to be kind to people, we want to be considerate, but we have a country, and a country should have order and there are laws that relate to immigration and I think we should follow those laws. Because of the dangers we see today in this world, we need to be very careful” (Keltt 2017). Graham dealt with possible religious aspects of the travel ban by, in a sense, not dealing with them at all: he sought to remove the travel ban from religious consideration and argued that the Christian ideas of neighbor-love and welcoming the stranger were unrelated to the actions of a country and its government.

For Franklin Graham as for many white Christians, promoting national security took precedence over teachings of welcome or hospitality. However, there is a lack of evidence that the ban actually did enhance personal or national security. While the number of acts of terrorism in the United States dropped in the few days after the ban was implemented, within a week the rate of terrorism increased, eventuating in a rate of terrorist acts two and a half times the rate that preceded the ban (Hodwitz and Tracy 2020).

Many supporters of the travel ban may simply have been unaware of its true impact: that it had no effect on national security at best, and a negative impact at worst. However, parallel to the influence of racial prejudice in a case like Proposition 187, research has shown that white Christian nationalist ideology influences both the development of, and public support for, policies like the travel ban. Trump’s own actions as president came in the context both of his “shutdown” comments and his recital of debunked statistics claiming that a quarter of Muslims approved of violence against Americans and half wanted to live under sharia law (Hodson 2020, p. 274). White House Senior Advisor Stephen Miller and White House Chief Strategist Steve Bannon, who wrote the text of Executive Order 13769, have ties to Islamophobic hate organizations (Hodson 2020, p. 275)¹². Before arriving at the White House, Bannon had set forth the idea of a global conflict between “the Judeo-Christian west” and “Islamic fascism” whose adherents were trying to infiltrate the U.S.

and Europe in order to do violence (McCarthy 2017); Miller had exchanged emails with editors at Breitbart magazine referencing the white nationalist book *The Camp of the Saints* and encouraging the magazine to draw from links at the white supremacist website VDARE (Guerrero 2019; Behrmann 2019).

In the general public, religious, racial, and nationalistic prejudices correlate with support for the travel ban and similar policies, even if most supporters publicly cite a concern for security. As noted, significant percentages of white Christians who responded to the PRRI poll about the ban specifically said they supported a temporary ban on *Muslims* (not just nationals of certain countries, or people who posed a danger) entering the United States. Furthermore, data from PRRI's American Values Surveys in 2018 and 2019 shows a correlation between respondents' views on the travel ban and whether they think America has moved away from being a Christian nation. In 2018, respondents who agreed that "America was a Christian nation in the past, but is not now" and thought the change was "a bad thing" favored the travel ban by 65 percent, as compared to 34 percent opposed. Respondents who thought it was "a good thing" that America "is not now" a Christian nation opposed the ban by 62 percent, compared to 37 percent in favor. In 2019, the percentages were 61 percent in favor to 39 percent opposed for those who answered "a bad thing", and 59 percent opposed to 39 percent in favor for those who answered "a good thing" (PRRI 2018, 2019). These survey results indicate a connection between a Christian nationalist stance (respondents who view it as bad that America is no longer "a Christian nation") and support for the ban.

Further ethnographic and survey research supports these connections, while also demonstrating the overlap between the "white" and "Christian" descriptors in "white Christian nationalism". Grace and Heins's analysis of a refugee-ban bill in South Carolina, which bore similarities to the federal travel ban (including the ban's "pause" on the refugee program), uses ethnographic analysis to show that supporters of the bill "reconstructed the social meaning of the legal status of refugee to be synonymous with Brown, Muslim, Terrorist, and Third World, by presenting refugees as a unified threat to the white, Christian, civilized nation" (Grace and Heins 2020, p. 556). Grace and Heins note that white Christian nationalist ideology creeps in even to public discussions among supporters of refugee programs: in the South Carolina case, pro-refugee speakers highlighted the arrival of white Christian groups, "reinforcing the idea that white Christian refugees were preferred" (Grace and Heins 2020, p. 557). Dahab and Omori have demonstrated a connection between Christian nationalism and willingness to override the civil liberties of Muslims, while also noting that the category of "Muslim" has become racialized in the American imagination, especially since the terrorist attacks of 9/11 (Dahab and Omori 2019), thus lending support to the connection between Christian nationalism and white Christian nationalism in this case.

In short, historical and ethnographic research shows that "Muslim" is a racialized category in American public discourse that is often conflated with race: the descriptor "Muslim" itself is understood as a racial category, and there is a pervasive idea in American society that Muslims are Brown or Black and not white. Survey and ethnographic data further show that, while individuals no doubt had varying ideologies and motivations, support for the 2017 travel ban tracks alongside white Christian nationalist ideology. That said, in public discourse including the statements of white Christian leaders and communities, support for the ban was generally *expressed* in terms of security concerns, which is worth paying attention to for scholars and religious leaders who study and participate in public dialogue.

8. Religious Opposition to the Travel Ban

Again, as with Proposition 187, opposition by religious leaders and groups to the travel ban was much more vocal and public than support. Many white evangelical Christian leaders, especially those affiliated with humanitarian aid groups, were quick to denounce the ban. Scott Arbeiter of the evangelical organization World Relief and David Curry of

Open Doors USA both argued that the U.S. should not be in the business of prioritizing one group over another—in this case, Christian over Muslim refugees (Beckett 2017). Arbeiter further expressed concern that banning refugees from any country would traumatize already-vulnerable populations (Shellnut 2017). Evangelical leaders from all 50 states also signed a full-page newspaper advertisement stating their opposition to the ban and reiterating commitments to providing a welcome for refugees and reducing suffering (Burke 2017).

Roman Catholic leaders and mainline Protestant clergy spoke out as well. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops declared strong opposition to the travel ban and argued that refugees of all faiths must be protected. Multiple U.S. Catholic cardinals spoke against the ban as well (Green 2017). The Bishop of Washington in The Episcopal Church, Mariann Edgar Budde, signed an interfaith amicus brief opposing the ban in court and argued that national security was jeopardized by discrimination on the basis of religion in immigration policies (Banks 2017). Many clergy participated in local gatherings or spoke to the media in their local areas as well. For example, Zach Martinez, pastor at Sojourn Mennonite Church in Fort Collins, CO, joined a rally to express support for immigrants and refugees targeted by the travel ban, and Collin Cannon, a teaching pastor at another local church, stated that supporting refugees was what “being a good neighbor looks like” (Ragan 2017).

On the whole, Christian leaders’ statements against the travel ban invoked principles of Christian hospitality, non-discrimination, and love of neighbor. Despite the strong and consistent opposition among most leaders across the political spectrum, the number of white Christians who supported the ban remain high, as we have noted. While there is no single reason for this disconnect, pro-ban and anti-ban Christians did seem to talk past each other, and the “national security” narrative pushed by the Trump administration and some other leaders was not strongly challenged. The Christian clergy who spoke out seemed to view their (mostly) white Christian communities as places of hospitality, but did not speak very much about security and risk—whether to express a willingness to take on risk, or to correct the false claim that Muslim immigrants or refugees posed a security risk to American communities. In my research on churches’ and leaders’ words, I found security concerns mentioned only in the one statement by Bishop Budde of the Episcopal Church, in which the bishop argued that discrimination created more security problems than it solved. Nearly all clergy and religious leaders and organizations instead focused on moral teachings about welcome and showing love. Mandates to welcome and love the neighbor were clearly central to these leaders’ interpretations of Christian teachings, but a failure to consistently address security concerns—however disingenuous political leaders and pundits might have been in stoking those concerns—potentially allowed a pro-ban “security” narrative to take hold, where religious leaders could be viewed as naïvely advocating for “welcome” while the United States and its citizens were at risk.

Leaders who speak out publicly on policy issues, including religious leaders, do have to take care in how they respond to misinformation, lest they risk amplifying it. However, it is not necessary to directly repeat misinformation to craft a truer narrative. Within religious communities, ethicists and clergy who ascribe to teachings of welcome would more fully address all aspects of an issue—in this case, the travel ban—by discussing questions about immigration and national security head-on and proactively. Confronting these concerns, at least within local communities, could open up the possibility for a dialogue on the facts around immigration and refugee resettlement. Furthermore, when rhetoric about security concerns provides cover for discriminatory treatment of Muslims, leaders’ willingness to hold dialogue and make statements that recognize the facts about security—in short, a refusal to provide cover—can create an opening for communities to recognize and speak honestly about discrimination and prejudice. The Christian leaders who decried the travel ban viewed their Christian churches as places of universal welcome and pushed back against white Christian nationalist ideology. Further engagement with the fears (authentic

or manufactured) that can facilitate white Christian nationalist ideology is one way for those leaders to take the next step in articulating their own ideologies of hospitality.

9. Conclusions

Debate over both Proposition 187 and the travel ban followed multiple simultaneous threads. In both cases, the policies themselves were written with an emphasis on specific concerns: economic well-being in the former case, national security in the latter. Examination of the origins of each policy demonstrates that individuals and groups who strongly advocated for the policy (in the case of Proposition 187) or even wrote it (in the case of the travel ban) held nationalist ideologies: white nationalism in the former case and white Christian nationalism in the latter. Opinion survey data, which is available for the travel ban, also shows a connection between white Christian nationalist ideologies and support for the ban in the wider public arena.

On the whole, white Christians who supported Prop 187 and the travel ban, and those who opposed them, largely spoke past each other. Rhetoric of welcome and non-discrimination was set in opposition to rhetoric of economic harm and national security. Christian leaders and communities who protested both Prop 187 and the travel ban understandably focused on what they viewed as the moral teachings of their tradition. However, the failure of leaders to say very much, in their public statements, about the economic benefits of immigration and the national and human security benefits of refugee resettlement represent a possible missed opportunity to shape a deeper and more truthful dialogue about American community and democracy.

Conversations about white Christian nationalism are not easy, but ethicists who study immigration and religion, as well as clergy and other leaders in Christian communities, can help shape those conversations by addressing all facets of the public debate—hospitality, equality, race, religion, security, and economic status—in light of religious teachings. A deeper and fuller dialogue will not suddenly eradicate the influences of white Christian nationalist ideology in policy debate around immigration, but it can begin to lift the veil of concerns about economic and security issues, and place issues of race, religion, and immigration under greater scrutiny within white Christian communities.

Funding: This research received no external funding.

Institutional Review Board Statement: Not applicable.

Informed Consent Statement: Not applicable.

Data Availability Statement: Not applicable.

Acknowledgments: The author would like to thank research assistant, Brianna Parr, for assistance in identifying and annotating sources.

Conflicts of Interest: The author declares no conflict of interest.

Notes

- ¹ Executive Order 13780 (and 13769 before it) has been called a “Muslim ban” by some pundits, journalists, and activists. While this does reflect debates about the role of anti-Muslim bias in the development of the ban, I will call it the “travel ban” throughout.
- ² Samuel Perry’s book with Philip S. Gorski, *The Flag and the Cross: White Christian Nationalism and the Threat to Democracy*, scheduled for publication in April 2022, will presumably take Perry’s work on the topic of white Christian nationalism further (Gorski and Perry 2022).
- ³ McBride provides images of political cartoons from the late-19th-century era of the American Protective Association in which Irish immigrants are caricatured in ways that mimic racist caricatures of Black Americans (see p. 34).
- ⁴ Immigration and Naturalization Services, or INS, served as the federal agency overseeing immigration until 2003, when it was dissolved and its functions split between U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), and Customs and Border Patrol (CBP).
- ⁵ For texts of the orders and proclamations, see: Executive Order 13769 of 27 January 2017, “Protecting the Nation from Foreign Terrorist Entry into the United States”, 82 FR 8977 (2017), pp. 8977–82, document number 2017–02281; Executive Order 13780 of 6 March 2017, “Protecting the Nation from foreign Terrorist Entry into the United States”, 82 FR 13209 (2017), pp. 13209–19,

document number 2017–04837; U.S. President, Proclamation, “Enhancing Vetting Capabilities and Processes for Detecting Attempted Entry Into the United States by Terrorists or other Public-Safety Threats, Proclamation 9645 of 24 September, 2017”, 82 FR 45161 (2017), 26 September 2017, pp. 45161–72, document number 2017–20899; U.S. President, Proclamation, “Maintaining Enhanced Vetting Capabilities and Processes for Detecting Attempted Entry Into the United States by Terrorists or Other Public-Safety Threats, Proclamation 9723 of 10 April 2018”, 83 FR 15937 (2018), 10 April 2018, pp. 15937–40, document number 2018–07864; and U.S. President, Proclamation, “Improving Enhanced Vetting Capabilities and Processes for Detecting Attempted Entry into the United States by Terrorists or Other Public-Safety Threats, Proclamation 9983 of 31 January 2020”, 85 FR 6699 (2020), 31 January 2020, pp. 6699–707, document number 2020–02422.

⁶ *Trump v. Hawaii*, 585 U.S. ____ (2018).

⁷ *Trump v. Hawaii* 27.

⁸ *Trump v. Hawaii* 30.

⁹ Presidential Proclamation 10141 of 20 January 2021, “Ending Discriminatory Bans on Entry to the United States”, 86 FR 7005 (2021), 20 January 2021, pp. 7005–7007, document number 2021–01749.

¹⁰ The historians I have referenced above would argue that whiteness and Christianity are so closely tied together in American ideologies and debates over immigration, that ideologies of who is a proper “Christian” subject of the United States were undoubtedly present as well. However, proponent of Prop 187 did not overtly express worries about the religion of undocumented immigrants. Opponents drew on religious teachings, but only to argue for principles like hospitality, not to critique Christian nationalist ideologies.

¹¹ A study conducted by The Urban Institute in 2017 (Hill and Wiehe 2017) found that states, counties, and cities do spend between about \$450 and \$3000 more per year on services to immigrant families than on native-born citizens, largely because immigrant families have more children in school, although the exact amount depends on how costs are calculated—for example, whether one counts services such as pensions that immigrants cannot actually access. The study authors also noted that the report was not able to take into account the economic benefits that would ensue later from those children beginning to work after their education was completed (2–3). That report did not discuss how immigrants’ tax contributions at the state and local level weighed against the cost of services used; a report from the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy estimated that undocumented immigrants alone (not counting immigrants with legal authorization) contribute \$11.74 billion in state and local taxes each year. To take one case that demonstrates immigrants’ contribution to economic growth in localities, a 2003 study from my own state of Nebraska (Bodvarsson and Van den Berg 2003) showed that from 1990 to 2000, an increase in the number of Latino immigrants in Lexington, NE (county seat of Dawson County), from 400 immigrants to 4000, drove an increase in both supply and demand for labor in that county, with a subsequent rise in both wages and employment rates. This reversed a downward trend in wages and employment during the previous decade (1980–1990).

¹² N.B. Hodson is clearly discussing Executive Order 13769, but mistakenly lists it as E.O. 13796.

References

- Alvarez, R. Michael, and Tara L. Butterfield. 2000. The Resurgence of Nativism in California? The Case of Proposition 187 and Illegal Immigration. *Social Science Quarterly* 81: 167–79.
- Anderson, David E. 1994. California Faces Political, Moral Decision in Vote on Illegal Aliens. *The Cleveland Plain Dealer*, November 5.
- AP. 2017. Archdiocese Looks to Curb Priest’s Social Media. *Associated Press State Wire*, February 28.
- Banks, Adelle M. 2017. Interfaith coalition says ‘no principled basis’ for Trump’s travel ban. *Religion News Service*, September 24.
- Beckett, Lois. 2017. Evangelical Christian leaders: Travel ban violates religious belief on refugees. *The Guardian*, January 30.
- Behrmann, Savannah. 2019. Advocacy group releases leaked emails from White House advisor Stephen Miller to Breitbart. *USA Today*, November 12. Available online: <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/2019/11/12/emails-show-white-house-advisor-stephen-miller-touting-white-nationalism/2582150001/> (accessed on 30 March 2022).
- Blau, Francine D., and Christopher Mackie, eds. 2017. *The Economic and Fiscal Consequences of Immigration*. National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. [CrossRef]
- Bodvarsson, Örn, and Hendrik Van den Berg. 2003. The Impact of Immigration on a Local Economy: The Case of Dawson County, Nebraska. *Great Plains Research* 13: 291–309.
- Brunius, Harry. 2017. Why Evangelicals are Trump’s strongest travel-ban supporters. *The Christian Science Monitor*, March 3.
- Bull, Brad. 2021. Michael Flynn says America needs ‘one religion under God’. *Baptist News Global*, November 15. Available online: <https://baptistnews.com/article/michael-flynn-says-america-needs-one-religion-under-god/#.YixDZXrMK5c> (accessed on 12 March 2022).
- Burke, Daniel. 2017. 100 evangelical leaders sign ad denouncing Trump’s refugee ban. *CNN*, February 8. Available online: <https://www.cnn.com/2017/02/08/politics/evangelicals-ad-trump/index.html> (accessed on 30 January 2022).
- Butler, Anthea. 2021. *White Evangelical Racism: The Politics of Morality in America*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press.
- Cook, Philip, and Conrad Heilmann. 2013. Two Types of Self-Censorship: Public and Private. *Political Studies* 61: 178–96. [CrossRef]
- Coppedge, Michael, John Gerring, Carl Henrik Knutsen, Staffan I. Lindberg, Jan Teorell, David Altman, Michael Bernhard, Agnes Cornell, M. Steven Fish, Lisa Gastaldi, and et al. 2022. V-Dem Codebook v12. In *Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) Project*. Gothenburg: University of Gothenburg, V-Dem Institute.

- Dahab, Ramsey, and Marisa Omori. 2019. Homegrown Foreigners: How Christian Nationalism and Nativist Attitudes Impact Muslim Civil Liberties. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 42: 1727–46. [CrossRef]
- Davis, Mike. 1995. The Social Origins of the Referendum. *NACLA Report on the Americas* 29: 24–28. [CrossRef]
- Dolbee, Sandi. 1994. On both sides of Prop, 187, churches claim The Word. *San Diego Union-Tribune*, October 14.
- Douglass, Frederick. 2010. What, to the Slave, is the Fourth of July? In *Preaching with Sacred Fire: An Anthology of African American Sermons, 1750 to the Present*. Edited by Martha J. Simmons and Frank A. Thomas. New York: W.W. Norton, pp. 135–60.
- Douglass, Frederick. 2019a. *My Bondage and My Freedom*. New York: Gildan Media LLC.
- Douglass, Frederick. 2019b. *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*. New York: Gildan Media LLC.
- Du Bois, W. E. B. 2003. *Darkwater*. Amherst: Humanity Books.
- Exec. Order 13769. 2017a. United States, Executive Office of the President [Donald Trump]. Executive Order 13769: Protecting the Nation from Foreign Terrorist Entry into the United States. 27 January 2017. *Federal Register* 82: 8977–82. Available online: <https://www.federalregister.gov/d/2017-02281> (accessed on 12 March 2022).
- Exec. Order 13769. 2017b. United States, Executive Office of the President [Donald Trump]. Executive Order 13780: Protecting the Nation from foreign Terrorist Entry into the United States. 6 March 2017. *Federal Register* 82: 13209–19. Available online: <https://www.federalregister.gov/d/2017-04837> (accessed on 12 March 2022).
- Feldman, Paul. 1994. THE TIMES POLL: Anti-Illegal Immigration Prop. 187 Keeps 2-to-1 Edge. *Los Angeles Times*, October 15.
- Garner, Ashley, and Z. Fareen Parvez. 2020. Gender and the Racialization of Muslims. In *Religion is Raced: Understanding American Religion in the Twenty-First Century*. Edited by Grace Yukich and Penny Edgell. New York: New York University Press, pp. 134–256.
- Gilbert, Olive, ed. 2017. *The Narrative of Sojourner Truth*. New York: Open Road Integrated Media.
- Gorski, Philip S., and Samuel L. Perry. 2022. *The Flag and the Cross: White Christian Nationalism and the Threat to American Democracy*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Grace, Breanne Leigh, and Katie Heins. 2020. Redefining Refugee: White Christian Nationalism in State Politics and Beyond. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 44: 555–75. [CrossRef]
- Green, Emma. 2017. Where Christian Leaders Stand on Trump's Refugee Policy. *The Atlantic*, January 27.
- Guerrero, Jean. 2019. Stephen Miller and White Nationalism. *NPR Morning Edition*, November 14. Available online: <https://www.npr.org/2019/11/14/779208233/stephen-miller-and-white-nationalism> (accessed on 30 March 2022).
- Gutmann, Amy, and Dennis F. Thompson. 2004. *Why Deliberative Democracy?* Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Hanson, Russell L. 1985. *The Democratic Imagination in America: Conversations with Our Past*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Hardy, Terri. 1996. A Voice to Be Reckoned with—Valley Church, Temple Members Rally at Start of Drive to Register 26,000 Voters. *Daily News of Los Angeles*, June 24.
- Hill, Misha E., and Meg Wiehe. 2017. *State & Local Tax Contributions of Young Undocumented Immigrants*. Washington, DC: Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy.
- Hodson, Margaret. 2020. 'Modern Day Trojan Horse?' Analyzing the Nexus between Islamophobia and Anti-Refugee Sentiment in the United States. *Islamophobia Studies Journal* 5: 267–82. [CrossRef]
- Hodwitz, Omi, and Hailee Tracy. 2020. President Trump's Travel Ban: Inciting or deterring terrorism? *Behavioral Sciences of Terrorism and Political Aggression* 12: 292–306. [CrossRef]
- Huber, Lindsay Perez, Corina Benavides Lopez, Maria C. Malagon, Veronica Velez, and Daniel G. Solorzano. 2008. Getting Beyond the 'Symptom, Acknowledging the 'Disease': Theorizing Racist Nativism. *Contemporary Justice Review* 11: 39–51. [CrossRef]
- Ibrahim, Nagwa. 2008. The Origins of Muslim Racialization in U.S. Law. *UCLA Journal of Islamic & Near Eastern Law* 7: 121–55.
- Jacobson, Robin Dale. 2010. The Stranger Among Us: The Christian Right and Immigration. In *Faith and Race in American Political Life*. Edited by Robin Dale Jacobson and Nancy D. Wadsworth. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press.
- Jacobson, Robin Dale, and Nancy D. Wadsworth, eds. 2010. Introduction: Intersecting Race and Religion. In *Faith and Race in American Political Life*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press.
- Jennings, Willie James. 2010. *The Christian Imagination: Theology and the Origins of Race*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Jones, Bill. 1994. Secretary of State (California). In *Statement of Vote, November 8, 1994 General Election, State of California*. Sacramento: Secretary of State.
- Jones, Robert. 2021. *White Too Long: The Legacy of White Supremacy in American Christianity*. New York: Simon and Schuster.
- Kaczynski, Andrew, and Em Steck. 2022. Rep. Paul Gosar's lengthy ties to White nationalists, pro-Nazi blogger and far-right fringe received little pushback for years. *CNN Politics*, March 6. Available online: <https://www.cnn.com/2022/03/06/politics/republican-paul-gosar-white-nationalists-kfile/index.html> (accessed on 12 March 2022).
- Kamboj, Harmeet, and Robert P. Jones. 2017. Most Americans Oppose a Temporary Muslim Ban. *Public Religion Research Institute Spotlight*, June 26. Available online: <https://www.prri.org/spotlight/supreme-court-temporary-muslim-travel-ban-executive-order/> (accessed on 30 March 2022).
- Keltt, Leah Marieann. 2017. Franklin Graham Clarifies Stance on Trump's Refugee Travel Ban. *Gospel Herald*, January 30. Available online: <https://www.gospelherald.com/articles/69483/20170131/franklin-graham-clarifies-stance-on-trump-refugee-travel-ban-presidents-job-not-the-same-as-churchs-job.htm> (accessed on 10 January 2022).
- Kuran, Timur. 1997. *Private Truths, Public Lies: The Social Consequences of Preference Falsification*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Kurki, Milja. 2013. *Democratic Futures: Re-Visioning Democracy Promotion*. New York: Routledge.

- Lee, Yueh Ting, Victor Ottati, and Imtiaz Hussain. 2001. Attitudes toward 'Illegal' Immigration Into the United States: California Proposition 187. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences* 23: 430–43. [CrossRef]
- Lennon, Tara M. 1998. Proposition 187: A Case Study of Race, Nationalism, and Democratic Ideals. *Policy Studies Review* 15: 80–100. [CrossRef]
- Macias, José. 1996. Resurgence of Ethnic Nationalism in California and Germany: The Impact on Recent Progress in Education. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly* 27: 232–52.
- Martí, Gerardo. 2022. Latinx Protestants and American Politics. *Sociology of Religion: A Quarterly Review* 83: 1–11. [CrossRef]
- McBride, James. 2018. From the American Protective Association to Trump's America First: American Xenophobia in Historical Perspective. In *The Meaning of My Neighbor's Faith: Interreligious Reflections on Immigration*. Edited by Alexander Y. Hwang and Laura E. Alexander. Lanham: Lexington Books, pp. 31–62.
- McCarthy, Tom. 2017. Steve Bannon's Islamophobic film script just one example of anti-Muslim views. *The Guardian*, February 3. Available online: <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2017/feb/03/steve-bannon-islamophobia-film-script-muslims-islam> (accessed on 30 March 2022).
- McDaniel, Eric Leon, Irfan Nooruddin, and Allyson Faith Shortle. 2011. Divine Boundaries: How Religion Shapes Citizens' Attitudes toward Immigrants. *American Politics Research* 39: 205–33. [CrossRef]
- Monogan, James, III, and Austin C. Doctor. 2017. Immigration Politics and Partisan Realignment: California, Texas, and the 1994 Election. *State Politics & Policy Quarterly* 17: 3–23.
- Nassar, Rita. 2020. Threat, Prejudice, and White Americans' Attitudes toward Immigration and Syrian Refugee Resettlement. *The Journal of Race, Ethnicity, and Politics* 5: 196–220. [CrossRef]
- New, William, and Loucas Petronicolos. 1998. Proposition 187, Public Education and the National Imagination. *PoLAR* 21: 83–95. [CrossRef]
- Ngai, Mae. 1999. The Architecture of Race in American Immigration Law; A Reexamination of the Immigration Act of 1924. *The Journal of American History* 86: 67–92. [CrossRef]
- Noll, Mark A. 2008. *God and Race in American Politics: A Short History*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- National Public Radio (NPR). 1994. Number of Latinos Joining Evangelical Churches Grows. *Weekend Edition*, December 25.
- Ogbar, Jeffrey O. G. 2019. *Black Power: Radical Politics and African American Identity*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Ongiri, Amy Abugo. 2009. *Spectacular Blackness: The Cultural Politics of the Black Power Movement and the Search for a Black Aesthetic*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press.
- Presidential Proclamation 10141. 2021. United States, Executive Office of the President [Joseph R. Biden, Jr.]. Proclamation 10141: Ending Discriminatory Bans on Entry to the United States. *Federal Register* 86: 7005–7. Available online: <https://www.federalregister.gov/d/2021-01749> (accessed on 30 March 2022).
- Presidential Proclamation 9645. 2017. United States, Executive Office of the President [Donald Trump]. Proclamation 9645: Enhancing Vetting Capabilities and Processes for Detecting Attempted Entry in the United States by Terrorists or Other Public-Safety Threats. *Federal Register* 82: 45151–72. Available online: <https://www.federalregister.gov/d/2017-20899> (accessed on 30 March 2022).
- Presidential Proclamation 9723. 2018. United States, Executive Office of the President [Donald Trump]. Proclamation 9723: Maintaining Enhanced Vetting Capabilities and Processes for Detecting Attempted Entry into the United States by Terrorists or Other Public-Safety Threats. *Federal Register* 83: 15937–40. Available online: <https://www.federalregister.gov/d/2018-07864> (accessed on 30 March 2022).
- Presidential Proclamation 9983. 2020. United States, Executive Office of the President [Donald Trump]. Proclamation 9983: Improving Enhanced Vetting Capabilities and Processes for Detecting Attempted Entry into the United States by Terrorists or Other Public-Safety Threats. *Federal Register* 85: 6699–707. Available online: <https://www.federalregister.gov/d/2020-02422> (accessed on 30 March 2022).
- Public Religion Research Institute (PRRI). 2018. Partisan Polarization Dominates Trump Era: Findings from the 2018 American Values Survey. *Public Religion Research Institute*, October 29. Available online: <https://www.prri.org/research/partisan-polarization-dominates-trump-era-findings-from-the-2018-american-values-survey/> (accessed on 30 March 2022).
- Public Religion Research Institute (PRRI). 2019. Fractured Nation: Widening Partisan Polarization and Key Issues in 2020 Presidential Elections. *Public Religion Research Institute*, October 21. Available online: prri.org/research/fractured-nation-widening-partisan-polarization-and-key-issues-in-2020-presidential-elections (accessed on 30 March 2022).
- Public Religion Research Institute (PRRI). 2021. Competing Visions of America: An Evolving Identity or a Culture under Attack? Findings from the 2021 American Values Survey. Available online: <https://www.prri.org/research/competing-visions-of-america-an-evolving-identity-or-a-culture-under-attack/> (accessed on 30 March 2022).
- Raboteau, Albert J. 2016. *American Prophets: Seven Religious Radicals and Their Struggle for Social and Political Justice*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Ragan, Kelly. 2017. Trump's travel ban sparks increased interest in rallies, protests in Greeley. *Greeley Tribune*, February 4.
- Rother, Caitlin. 1994. 2 nations join in song at a posada at border. *The San Diego Union-Tribune*, December 23.
- Selby, Holly. 1994. Catholic bishops condemn Calif.'s Proposition 187. *Baltimore Sun*, November 18. Available online: <https://www.baltimoresun.com/news/bs-xpm-1994-11-18-1994322020-story.html> (accessed on 8 January 2022).
- Selod, Saher. 2015. Citizenship Denied: The Racialization of Muslim American Men and Women Post-9/11. *Critical Sociology* 41: 77–95. [CrossRef]

- Shellnut, Kate. 2017. Evangelical Experts Oppose Trump's Refugee Ban. *Christianity Today*, January 25. Available online: <https://www.christianitytoday.com/news/2017/january/evangelical-experts-oppose-trump-plan-to-ban-refugees-syria.html> (accessed on 30 January 2022).
- Smith, Gregory A. 2017. Most white evangelicals approve of Trump travel prohibition and express concerns about extremism. *Pew Research Center*. February 27. Available online: <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/02/27/most-white-evangelicals-approve-of-trump-travel-prohibition-and-express-concerns-about-extremism/> (accessed on 25 January 2022).
- Smith, Samuel. 2018. Some Evangelical Leaders 'Lament' Supreme Court's Travel Ban Ruling, Others Voice Support. *Christian Post Politics*, June 27. Available online: <https://www.christianpost.com/news/evangelical-leaders-lament-supreme-court-trump-travel-ban-ruling-voice-support-225446/> (accessed on 30 March 2022).
- Starr, Michael. 2022. 'The Jew is the devil—Neo-Nazis rally in Florida. *The Jerusalem Post*, January 30. Available online: <https://www.jpost.com/diaspora/antisemitism/article-694960> (accessed on 30 January 2022).
- Taylor, John G. 1994. Priests' Opposition to Prop 187 Endangering Church Fund Raising. *The Fresno Bee*, November 12.
- Taylor, James Lance. 2011. *Black Nationalism in the United States: From Malcolm X to Barack Obama*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers.
- Tolbert, Caroline J., and Rodney E. Hero. 1996. Race/Ethnicity and Direct Democracy: An Analysis of California's Illegal Immigration Initiative. *The Journal of Politics* 58: 806–18. [CrossRef]
- Twine, France Winddance, and Charles Gallagher. 2008. The future of 'whiteness': A map of the 'third wave'. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 31: 4–24. [CrossRef]
- United Press International, Domestic News. 1997. Judge rules against Proposition 187. *United Press International, Domestic News*, December 14.
- University of California Hastings. 1994. Scholarship Repository. In *Illegal Aliens. Ineligibility for Public Services. Verification and Reporting. California Proposition 187*. Available online: http://repository.uchastings.edu/ca_ballot_props/1104 (accessed on 4 January 2022).
- Vitali, Ali, Kasie Hunt, and Frank Thorp V. 2018. Trump referred to Haiti and African nations as 'shithole' countries. *NBC News*, January 10. Available online: <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/white-house/trump-referred-haiti-african-countries-shithole-nations-n836946> (accessed on 14 March 2022).
- Wang, Christine. 2017. Trump website takes down Muslim ban statement after reporter grills Spicer in briefing. *CNBC*, May 8. Available online: <https://www.cnn.com/2017/05/08/trump-website-takes-down-muslim-ban-statement-after-reporter-grills-spicer-in-briefing.html> (accessed on 5 January 2022).
- West, Paul. 2011. Republican contenders compete for Christian conservatives. *Los Angeles Times*, June 5. Available online: <https://www.latimes.com/nation/la-xpm-2011-jun-05-la-na-religious-conservatives-20110605-story.html> (accessed on 30 March 2022).
- Whitehead, Andrew L., and Samuel L. Perry. 2020. *Taking America Back for God: Christian Nationalism in the United States*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Willis-Esqueda, Cynthia, Rosa Hazel Delgado, and Karina Pedroza. 2017. Patriotism and the Impact on Perceived Threat and Immigration Attitudes. *The Journal of Social Psychology* 157: 114–25. [CrossRef] [PubMed]
- Zavodny, Madeline. 2021. Immigration's Contribution to Population Growth and Economic Vitality. National Foundation for American Policy Brief. Available online: <https://nfap.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Immigrations-Contribution-to-Population-Growth-and-Economic-Vitality.NFAP-Policy-Brief.February-2021.pdf> (accessed on 10 January 2022).
- Zembylas, Michalinos, and André Keet, eds. 2018. *Critical Human Rights, Citizenship, and Democracy Education: Entanglements and Regenerations*. London: Bloomsbury Academic.
- Zhirkov, Kirill. 2021. Who Are 'The Immigrants'? Beliefs about Immigrant Populations and Anti-Immigrant Attitudes in the United States and Britain. *Social Science Quarterly* 102: 228–37. [CrossRef]