

**Here are some examples of literature reviews to help you grasp what I mean by synthesis of materials:**

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**Here is an example of a recent literature review I did for a journal article.**

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Nativism and Racism – Separate Phenomena**

Most scholars want to define nativism and racism as two distinct phenomena. On one hand, nativism is an ideological belief based on nationalist sentiment and separates “natives” from “foreigners” (Galindo and Vigil 2006). Higham (1955:4) defines nativism as an: “intense opposition to an internal minority on the ground of its foreign (i.e., ‘un-American’) connections...a zeal to destroy the enemies of a distinctively American way of life.” Also, Higham (1999:384) states that “nativism always divided insiders, who belonged to the nation, from outsiders, who were in it but not of it.” Nativism frequently becomes imbedded in social structures, shaping the treatment of foreigners within institutions, deciding “who counts as an American” (Galindo and Vigil 2006:422; Higham 1955; Knobel 1996).

Nativism rises up during times of national crisis through anti-immigrant sentiment that emphasizes fears that foreigners are either threatening or taking over culturally, politically, or economically. These national calamities usually include economic downturns, wars (or terrorist attacks), or sudden increases in visibility due to the size or concentration of immigrant populations (Galindo and Vigil 2006; Higham 1955; Perea 1997; Portes and Rumbaut 2006; Sánchez 1997). Systematic actions influenced by nativism have included restrictive immigration policies and laws, increases in riots and hate crimes, and the rise of nativist organizations.

Racism, on the other hand, relies on socially constructed racial categories to distribute privileges and resources within a given society. As Higham (1955, 1999:384) contends, instead of focusing on nativity, culture, or “American-ness” to divide groups, racism relies on “indelible differences of status” based on pseudo-scientific assignments of a group’s biological or genetic characteristics (i.e., skin color) to a society’s favored social behaviors. They differ also because nativism ebbs and flows with national prosperity or despair, while white racism is the older of the two, constant, and unforgiving (Higham 1955, 1999).

Scholars studying American racism since the 1960s have made an effort to define racism as a persistent and entrenched American ideology that denies “non-whites” resources that “whites” receive (see Bonilla-Silva 2001, 2006; Feagin 2001; Feagin and Vera 1995; Omi and Winant 1997). More specifically, as suggested by Omi and Winant’s (1997:162) racial formation theory, American racism is a socio-historical and structuralized ideology that encourages social actions that “create or reproduce structures of domination based on essentialist categories of race.” Thus, racism is about perpetuating “white” superiority by using and infusing racial categories into American social institutions and policies to promote, sustain, and protect White dominance.

Omi and Winant (1997) also point out the mechanisms of racism today. One mechanism is the continued use of “racialization” to assign racial meaning or identity to all social groups, especially those groups that were not racially classified. For instance, in recent years, the U.S. Census has created an almost new racial category in America for all Spanish-speaking individuals – “Hispanic” or “Latino” (see Rodriguez 2000). This process of attaching value to subjective racial assumptions has happened for all groups, and these categories are constantly rearticulated and made fluid to ensure “whites” stay on top.

However, Omi and Winant (1997) suggest that racialization is inert if it is not linked to a racial state of structural agents that encourage dominance based on race. They point to “racial projects” as the necessary devices that any group, organization, or institution uses to “reorganize and redistribute resources along particular racial lines” (Omi and Winant 1997:56). For example, indigenous American tribes were clumped together as “Indians” or “Native Americans” to rationalize Manifest Destiny policies to procure more territories for the U.S. that went mainly to white settlers. A current example is when lending agencies use the categories of “white,” “black,” and now “Hispanic,” as a proxy to determine “creditworthiness” to receive a home loan.

Based on the descriptions above, there are recognizable differences. The most important are the phenomena’s foci. As Higham (1999) suggests, racism classifies all groups into status positions based on race. Higham (1999) also suggests that racism assures that the resources and power within the same nation goes to the dominant racial group and that can also include non-citizens. For instance, while Irish immigrants were first rejected based on nativist fears, they were soon incorporated into the “white” dominant group to secure white superiority against other immigrants and freed Blacks after the American Civil War (see Roediger 1991).

Nativism, however, gives special attention to the conflict that arises due to nationalist sentiment that views non-citizens (i.e., those un-American immigrants) as a profound threat to an entire nation’s culture, politics, and economy. Galindo and Vigil (2006:426) state, “Unfavourable reactions to personal or cultural traits are not necessarily nativist but may still be racist. It is only when combined with hostile, defensive, and fearful nationalism that they become nativist.” Thus, nativists view foreigners as the key to the decline of the America way of life instead of implying, as racists do, that all people of color are the problem (Bonilla-Silva 2001).

## **A Call for Change**

While there are differences, much of the separation between the two concepts is because scholarship on race relations and racism has not “kept pace” with the rapid diversification of the U.S. population (Lee, Bean, Batalova, and Sandu 2003:45). As of 2007, the U.S. foreign-born population had reached 38 million people of which 31% came from Mexico and another 24% were from South and East Asia (Pew Hispanic Center 2009). Also, Passel and Cohn (2009) estimate that there are an additional 12 million undocumented immigrants in the U.S. Many of the new immigrants have settled in new places unaccustomed to significant demographic shifts due to immigration (Anrig and Wang 2006; Massey 2008; Frey 2006; Furusest and Smith 2006). This is especially true for many southern states that saw thousands of Latino immigrants rapidly move in within the last twenty years to take advantage of jobs and a lower cost of living (see Furusest and Smith 2006; Light 2006; omitted *forthcoming*; Massey 2008).

Thus, until recently, many scholars and commentators still view, define, and interpret race relations and discrimination with a “lens of black and white racism” (Galindo and Vigil 2006:421). While serving as the central organizing principle of race relations in the U.S. for

hundreds of years (Lee et al. 2003), this limited definition does not recognize the long history of racial discrimination that many Asians and Latinos have faced (Sánchez 1997). For instance, Chinese and Mexican immigrants and citizens were forcibly removed from their homes due to the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 and the Mexican Repatriation movement from 1929-1939. More recently, Asians and Latinos have faced more hate crimes (Ibish 2003; Lopez and Livingston 2009), and have become subjects for current racist and nativist critiques (Espenshade 1995; Espenshade and Hemstead 1996; Jaret 1999; Passel 2005; Portes and Rumbaut 2006; Sánchez 1997). For instance, recent discussions within the Ku Klux Klan have now identified Latinos as the new threat to White America (see [www.kkk.bz](http://www.kkk.bz)). Even recent legislation in new immigrant destination states like Georgia, Arizona, and North Carolina all identified Mexicans as their “immigrant problem” (see Anrig and Wang 2006; Kingsolver 2007). Latinos have faced discrimination in employment, housing, and accessing public education, which has recently surfaced in new destination states as well (see omitted, *forthcoming*).

Some scholars have used nativism as a way to give a voice to the issues other people of color face in America. As Galindo and Vigil (2006) suggest, because America only views racism as a black and white issues, nativist discrimination is habitually ignored or played off as necessary to protect national interests. Sánchez (1997) proposes that most Asians and Latinos are forever labeled as foreign, which means race scholarship brushes the discussion off to immigration research. And, because scholars ignore the relationships between racism and nativism, Asians and Latinos in the U.S. are also never accepted as “white,” even though they may view themselves as, or do as well as, whites (Lee and Bean 2004; Rodriguez 2000; Tafoya 2004). Thus, being a foreigner in the U.S. today means never possessing the identities of nativity and race that overwhelmingly dictate privilege, and moreover, disallow immigrant minorities to suggest racialized discrimination or request civil rights.

While new scholarship has begun to theorize a new racial order that includes non-white immigrant minorities, it is still lacking. Some continue to force the diversification of the population into a racial dichotomy (i.e., black/non-black bifurcation) and ignore the historical constructions of other minorities by focusing too much on recent trends (Gans 1999; Lee and Bean 2004; Yancey 2003). Bonilla-Silva and Embrick (2001) offer one of the only recent race theories that challenges current thought by suggesting a “Latinization” of the racial hierarchy. Skin color remains the dominant determining factor but this revamped hierarchy also allows for economic status, acculturation, and other factors to predict racial value. Again, however, none of these new theories truly recognize that some of the racialized strife reported is due to the nationalistic anxiety of the times. Nor, do they discuss how these nativist fears may crystallize into racist doctrine. Overall, both sides of this discussion continue to be hesitant to recognize the concoction of racist nativism used in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### **Bridging the Gap - Racial Nativism**

Regardless of scholarly differences, nativism and racism are at least estranged cousins. As Higham (1999:384) laments late in his career, “Racism and nativism were different things, though often closely allied.” Reflecting on recent anti-immigrant sentiment concerning Asians and Latinos, he also stated that, “We require no theory of a ‘new’ nativism or a ‘new’ racism to account for the trouble that today’s concentrated immigrations from abroad precipitate...” the same nativist and racist problems of the past (Higham 1999:388). Or, as Galindo and Vigil

(2006:426) admit, “racism and nativism intertwine during processes of nation building when immigrants happen to also be people of colour.”

To redevelop the much needed link between nativism and racism, John Higham’s (1955) historical analysis of nativism in America between 1860 and 1925 is the bridge. In *Strangers in the Land*, Higham (1955) identified three types of American nativism. The first two types of nativism he identified focused on the religious and political differences brought by newly-arriving immigrants from Europe that challenged the core ideals of America. For instance, the surge of anti-Catholic nativism in the 19<sup>th</sup> century suggested that Catholic immigrants were “enslaved followers” who would convert and subvert the newly-formed Protestant republic (Higham 1999:384). The Red Scare during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century also represented a fear that Russian refugees would change America to communism.

The most prolific nationalist sentiment identified by Higham was racial nativism. Higham (1955, 1999) found that this brand of nativism was the most intense and enduring, as well as replaced other forms by the 1920s. Already successful in separating whites from blacks in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, nativism found an ally with the scientific notions of evolution and biology that formed racist ideologies in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In fact, the racist principles that sparked eugenics movements in Europe and the U.S. provided the simplest means to establish friend from foe, native from foreigner; skin color (Higham 1955, 1999:384). Thus, any foreigner would become “racialized,” as in the sense of Omi and Winant’s description of racialization suggested forty years later. Also, to add more nativist flare, a racialized group’s cultural traits would be attacked as “un-American,” or a serious threat to the American way of life. Put simply, like the social constructions of race in America that have condemned African Americans and their culture (e.g., D’Sousa 1994), the racialization of immigrants would make them outsiders forever and provide nativists and racists a diverse set of targets.

In a recent application of Higham’s argument, Sánchez (1997) defines three different sentiments expressed through racial nativism. The first sentiment conveys an “extreme apathy towards non-English languages and a fear that linguistic differences will undermine the American nation” (Sánchez 1997:1020). A second sentiment highlights how new immigrant minorities receive special privileges because they are racialized minorities in a country that provides racial preferences (i.e., affirmative action), encouraging minority groups to keep their racialized identities. The final sentiment expressed is that racialized immigrants, both documented and undocumented, drain all public resources (i.e., welfare, public education, and health care services), as well as take away jobs citizens need. However, as Sánchez (1997) clarifies, this particular nativist rant is not just about all immigrants but specifically identifies Hispanic immigrants, particularly Mexicans, as the culprit for this national crisis. Moreover, racial nativism becomes the best method to label all people who look, talk, or act like “Mexicans,” making the racialized category the primary designator, and not nativity.