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FRAMING FOR DEMOCRACY: EXPLORING THE IMPACTS OF ADVERSARIAL AND DELIBERATIVE FRAMING, UNDERSTANDING THE LONGER-TERM BENEFITS OF DELIBERATION

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Kettering Foundation research has long been focused on the implications of the insight that the nature of political discourse is critically affected by the ways and means through which an issue becomes named and framed. Only when issues become seen in ways that engage the disparate concerns of people as opposed to polarized ideology, when issues are framed in ways that identify complementary approaches to address the problem rather than technical solutions alone, and when issues are framed in a way that encourages the consideration of what people hold valuable in *distinct* approaches and the tensions among them, are people able to engage each other productively around the problems they care about. The experiment reflected in this paper seeks to explain how exposure to this idea through practice can impact public discourse. Using a creative and interesting experimental research design, the researchers examined the effects that exposure to deliberative frameworks, such as those reflected in the National Issues Forums, has on the nature of the subsequent discourse that the students promote. By comparing groups of students with different levels of exposure to deliberative practice, the ability of the experimental group to reframe an issue deliberatively, as compared with the control group, becomes clear. The research has implications for ways that deliberative events, such as those using National Issues Forums materials, can be used to improve political discourse among citizens.

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Introduction

In what follows, we seek to extend and deepen our understanding of the impacts of different types of issue framing on deliberative decision making. This work builds on previous explorations by Kettering and Public Agenda (PA) into the relationship between issue framing and the quality of public deliberation. Through a uniquely productive partnership with researcher/practitioners from the Colorado State University Center for Public Deliberation (CPD), we designed a research plan aimed at shedding light on three core questions:

- Do people who experience deliberative issue framing begin to develop a preference for it, and do they begin to discriminate between it and partisan framing for persuasion?

- What other longer-term impacts occur for people who become used to deliberatively framed issues? For example, are these people more likely to demonstrate resistance to hostile partisan manipulation (i.e., does becoming habituated to deliberation inoculate citizens against partisan manipulation?)?

- How do the findings of this research connect with, inform, and amplify the findings of previous and ongoing Kettering research on "naming and framing"?

The Design

This research project thus focused on two key variables: the impact of framing and the impact of experience with deliberative issue framing. In order to examine the first variable, PA and CPD created and piloted two different "issue guides" on the subject of immigration, one reflecting a typical media framing (two sides, adversarial, debate oriented) and the other a "choicework" framing (three approaches, with pros and cons considered in each). We piloted both issue guides with two focus groups of students before starting the formal research project. See the appendices for the complete materials.

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Given the impracticality of a longitudinal study, we came at the question concerning "longer-term impacts" of deliberation by comparing the quality of deliberation across three types of students:

- Minimal exposure: students with no known exposure to National Issues Forums (NIF) or public deliberation courses. This group functioned as a control group.
- Moderate exposure: students who had been exposed to the main themes of public deliberation by virtue of having taken one course on Public Argumentation designed by Martín Carcasson at the CPD, which partially examines issues related to deliberation and utilizes NIF materials. These students have participated in an abbreviated NIF forum on the Energy Problem and had worked in a group to develop a NIF-style discussion guide on a key issue for a semester project.
- Deep exposure: students who have had deep exposure to NIF forums through ongoing participation with the CPD as student associates. These students had been trained as facilitators and issue framers and had helped run deliberative projects in the community.

Four focus groups were conducted with students who had minimal exposure to deliberation, two using the adversarial framing and two using the deliberative framing. Four groups were conducted with students who had exposure to deliberation (moderate exposure and deep exposure), with one group of each using an issue guide frame for debate and one using the issue guide framed for deliberation (choicework). Over all, 76 students participated in the forums.

Figure 1: Research design. Our focus groups were designed to explore the impacts of two key variables: issue framing and deliberation experience.

	Minimal exposure	Moderate exposure	Deep exposure
Adversarial	2 groups	1 group	1 group
Deliberative	2 groups	1 group	1 group

The CPD conducted the eight forums with students in which either the adversarial or deliberative issue guides were used to ground the conversation. In order to best see the impacts of our two variables, the moderator played a limited and consistent role in all the groups, and the same moderator was used throughout all the forums. During discussion, the moderator was instructed to make sure that everyone had an equal opportunity to speak and asked only general questions about additional topics that they wanted to discuss if the conversation stopped or got bogged down in a tangent. The moderator did not actively facilitate the conversation, ensure discussion of a full range of issues, or prompt deliberative norms. No ground rules were used for either discussion, and the process did not include dedicated time to discuss each approach of the deliberative frame or each side of the adversarial frame. Participants merely read the framing aloud as a group, the moderator then asked them all to go around and provide an initial response, and then it was opened up to general discussion. The moderator was not aware of the research questions or the purpose of the research.

While the use of a limited moderator helped us focus on the impact of the framing materials, such a move came with the trade-off of not being able to examine whether an active, experienced facilitator focused on producing high-quality deliberative interaction would be able to do so equally well with either framing. High-quality deliberation likely requires multiple design aspects, including a strong framework, ground rules to develop a particular environment, a process designed to ensure interaction and a broad discussion of the issue, and moderators focused on nurturing deliberative norms and intervening as necessary to help the group deliberate. This research focused almost exclusively on the impact of differently framed materials and past experience with deliberation and attempted to hold steady these other key variables.

The Analysis

To set the stage for our analysis, we began by reviewing Kettering's long-standing work on naming and framing and revisited relevant themes from recent work by Public Agenda's Center for Advances in Public Engagement on the topic of "framing for

deliberation." [1] While there is a long list of principles of effective deliberation that might be gleaned from the work of Kettering and Public Agenda and used to analyze the impact of different framings, we zeroed in on two main hypotheses, which we sought to learn more about in our research:

- Both Kettering and Public Agenda have found that when issues are framed for deliberation instead of persuasion or debate, the conversations that result are more productive (i.e., less ideological, more solution oriented, and more realistic).

- The Kettering research on naming and framing has identified that those with deeper exposure to authentic deliberation develop a preference for deliberative framing and are more aware of the limitations of traditional debate framings. Stated differently, deliberation can become a habit for those more familiar with it, and they would in turn naturally support deliberative norms and push back against adversarial tactics.

Instead of focusing on the analytic context provided by the traditional body of literature around framing in sociology and political science,[2] we instead chose to focus on the smaller but more directly relevant body of literature in the field of deliberative democracy that looks specifically at the deliberativeness of communication as it takes

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[1] We reviewed *Naming and Framing Difficult Issues to Make Sound Decisions,* Kettering's June 2009 publication, which updates *Framing Issues for Public Deliberation* (2002) and the companion document, *We Have to Choose: Democracy and Deliberative Politics*, published in March 2008. *Sound Decisions* incorporates findings from Kettering Foundation research on how potentially divisive issues can be presented in ways to promote shared and reflective judgments. For our purposes, the most relevant Kettering research is summarized in Doble and Peng's study "The Enduring Effects of NIF on High School Students." Because the Doble and Peng report focuses on young people who have been exposed to NIF in the course of the citizenship education in high school, it is in some key respects similar to the sample of students we studied in our current research. With respect to the work produced by Public Agenda, we focused specifically on building on the themes developed in Will Friedman's "Reframing Framing" and Alison Kadlec and Friedman's "Beyond Debate: Impacts of Deliberative Issue Framing on Group Dialogue and Problem Solving."

[2] For an excellent overview of the most relevant literature, see *Framing Public Life: Perspectives on Media and Our Understanding of the Social World,* S. D. Reese, O. H. Gandy Jr., and A. E. Grant, eds. (Lawrence Erlbaum Associates 2001). See also G. Lakoff (2008, 2002), R. Entman (1993), and J. Druckman (2007, 2003). The framing research that most connects to our interests here is that being conducted by researchers like James Druckman, who examine the impacts of framing effects on citizen competence and the impacts of citizen deliberation on framing effects. While this literature certainly provides useful context, our focus on the impact of framing on deliberativeness requires a different focus.

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place in conversation. To date, most deliberative research focuses on the outcomes of deliberative events instead of on *what is actually happening* when people deliberate.[3] In recent years, a number of researchers from a range of disciplines have begun looking at interaction during deliberation rather than presuming that a deliberative process equals deliberation. Through the efforts of scholars like John Gastil, Janette Hartz-Karp, Jane Mansbridge, Jenny Stromer-Galley, and Laura Black, the deliberative community is developing a set of standards to evaluate the deliberativeness of groups.[4]

To make the most of our small data set, we adopt a "Discourse Analysis" (DA) approach to this research. DA involves four main activities: video or audio recording of conversations, transcription of the video/audio, analysis by a small group of researchers studying and comparing notes on the transcripts and audio/video, and development of a scholarly argument in which "subtle observations and analytic points … are brought into a larger frame."[5] One of the great benefits of this approach is that we were able to bring together the insights of researcher-practitioners from a range of different theoretical orientations and backgrounds, including rhetoric, argumentation, social interaction, cultural anthropology, and democratic theory (from the disciplines of communication, sociology, and political science). The advantages of having researchers from different backgrounds analyzing the same set of materials (focus group transcripts and videos in this case) have been documented in recent literature,[6] and we were fortunate to be able to adopt this particularly fruitful and interesting approach to our exploration.

Focus group transcripts and videos are tremendous resources for exploring a wide range of issues and questions around deliberation, and our examination here represents a fraction of what can be explored by taking a DA approach. In our closing section, we point to a number of other powerful avenues of inquiry made possible by this approach and the wealth of knowledge we have in the form of complete video and transcripts for eight focus groups.

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[3] D. M. Ryfe, "Narrative and Deliberation in Small Group Forums," *Journal of Applied Communication Research* 34 (2006): 72–93.

[4] Jane Mansbridge, Janette Hartz-Karp, Matthew Amengual, and John Gastil. "Norms of Deliberation: An Inductive Study," *Journal of Public Deliberation* 2.1 (2006): Article 7.

[5] Karen Tracy and Julien Mirivel, "Discourse Analysis: The Practice and Practical Value of Taping, Transcribing, and Analyzing Talk," *Routledge Handbook of Applied Communication Research,* Lawrence R. Frey and Kenneth N. Cissna, eds. (New York: Routledge, 2009): 153–177.

[6] Ibid.

A Ground Map of Inquiry

In the literature that focuses on the quality of deliberation in face-to-face groups, deliberation is defined in a variety of ways.[7] For our purposes, we look to Laura Black's synthesis of the handful of studies that directly examine communication in deliberative forums. Drawing on John Gastil's framework, Black distills a working definition of deliberativeness that provides useful background here. Among the main analytic tasks of deliberation, Black includes "getting information, making arguments, and weighing pros and cons of different options." On the social side of deliberation, Black notes that communication must be "respectful, egalitarian, and inclusive of multiple perspectives." Finally, "some research also indicates the importance of emotional expression, identity statements, and personal storytelling as important in deliberative discussion."[8]

In addition to Black's multidimensional account of deliberation, we also look to Stromer-Galley's coding scheme for analyzing the deliberative content of conversations. Defining deliberation as "a process whereby groups of people, often ordinary citizens, engage in reasoned opinion expression on social or political issues in an attempt to identify solutions to a common problem and to evaluate those solutions," Stromer-Galley identifies six elements of deliberation that may inform a coding scheme for analyzing transcripts, including reasoned opinion expression (reason giving); sourcing (what sources participants are using to support claims); disagreement (which is an indication that there are diverse points of view); equality (equal ability to participate); topic (staying on topic in conversation); and engagement (active listening, building on each other's points). While transcripts might be coded for any of these elements, our specific interest in framing led us to focus our examination on sourcing.

We initially sought to focus our examination on sourcing as it relates to the social and analytical norms of deliberation, but as we began analyzing the transcripts, we realized that this was a tricky approach because participants in the groups were not told to

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[7] See Timothy Steffensmeier and William Schenck-Hamlin, "Argument Quality in Public Deliberations"; Jennifer Stromer-Galley, "Measuring Deliberation's Content: A Coding Scheme" (2007); and Jane Mansbridge, Janette Hartz-Karp, Matthew Amengual, and John Gastil, "Norms of Deliberation: An Inductive Study" (2006).
[8] Laura W. Black, "What Do We Know About How People Communicate During Deliberative Events?" (Ohio University, 2009).

find and evaluate solutions, nor were they given normative guidelines for how to act during deliberation either through ground rules or active facilitation. Because we actively sought to remove active facilitation, ground rules, and other stated norms of deliberation as confounding variables in our analysis (instead choosing to peel away all the variables except the framing itself), we found that we could not expect participants to fulfill the characteristics of deliberation as detailed in the literature.

Because we didn't design the group discussion for deliberation (designing instead to test the impact of issue framing), it proved analytically problematic to look at sourcing as a way to identify deliberative moves in the conversations. In other words, we could not judge groups for failing to do something that they were never asked to do. In fact, we doubted that a deliberative issue guide alone would be enough to create deliberation in the absence of other elements of deliberative processes, such as active facilitation and an issue-relevant purpose. While we would have been able to examine the extent to which participants are "deliberative" based on the issue framing alone—and this examination could help us better understand the influence of issue guides on conversation—we decided to shift our focus toward an examination of norms that govern interaction and to the role of framing in the operation of these norms.

Instead of using "deliberativeness" as the analytic framework, we instead treated sourcing in the adversarial and deliberative issue framings as windows for looking into the ways in which conversations get accomplished in systems governed by either adversarial norms or deliberative norms. By viewing the different framings as the vehicles for establishing conversational norms, we had the opportunity not only to learn about the impact of deliberative framing on conversations but also to look carefully at the impact of typical, partisan media representations on citizens with differing levels of deliberative experience and exposure.

As we began down this path, a number of interesting questions began to emerge:

- What does this experiment tell us about the impact of adversarial politics on citizens and how citizens with different levels of deliberative experience negotiate adversarial politics in the absence of a different set of expectations or norms?

- Do participants with deep, longer-term exposure to deliberation in other contexts negotiate adversarial politics in a different way than their peers who have never had any experience with deliberation?

- What does a "successful" conversation look like in an adversarial context, and what can that tell us about the habits being fostered by our adversarial political culture?

- What can we say about the impact of deliberative framing in the absence of deliberative norms, and what questions does this raise for researchers and practitioners?

Sourcing

Sourcing is a particularly useful focus when the goal is to better understand the impact of issue framing on the quality of interaction. In Stromer-Galley's coding scheme, sourcing includes any reference to the documents participants are provided for the deliberation, references to mass media, references to other participants and their points, and personal narratives or stories used as part of participants' elaboration of their ideas.

Given our specific interests, we chose to focus exclusively on the kind of sourcing that is most directly related to our guiding questions about the impact of framing: how people refer to and use the issue guides in their conversations. To ensure that we weren't neglecting other relevant forms of sourcing, we tested to see whether other forms of sourcing varied significantly across the groups by looking at how participants speak from personal experience and tell stories. We didn't find any meaningful patterns across the groups for this form of sourcing. While other forms of sourcing may be especially illuminating for understanding small-group deliberation, our comparatively narrow approach yielded a wealth of information about the impact of issue guides in particular. We are confident that we took the right approach here by focusing squarely on how participants use and refer to the issue guides in their conversations. In what follows, we

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present emerging themes from our analysis and then close with a number of avenues of inquiry revealed by these themes.

The Themes in Brief

1. Discussion about the Adversarial Framing

Participants in all the groups using adversarial framing, regardless of deliberative experience, spent a good deal of time reacting to the framing itself instead of talking about the issues. Even in the groups with no deliberative experience, participants reacted negatively to the framing and returned periodically to comment on the framing itself. While some students wondered about the impact of the framing on "less educated" people (aka "not us"), those with deep exposure to deliberation actively worried about the general public being victimized by the framing.

2. Adrift in the Murky Middle

Participants with little or no deliberative experience who were given the adversarial framing (the groups most like average citizens being exposed to typical media representations) retreated to a middle ground that participants seemed to see as more positive and productive than it appeared to researchers. In the absence of deliberative framing and active facilitation, participants congratulated themselves for resisting the partisan framing, even when they weren't able to generate productive discussion. This false sense of accomplishment was a striking theme in these groups and tells us a great deal about the impact of adversarial norms on citizens' expectations for discussion and deliberation.

3. Empowered Resistance

Those with deep exposure to deliberation who were given an adversarial framing were far less likely to retreat to a murky middle and instead focused from the outset on the failure of the issue guide to create the conditions for effective deliberation. This group spent a great deal more time reacting against the framing as distortive, manipulative, unhelpful, and unsatisfying, whereas their counterparts with less deliberative experience were more likely to simply view the adversarial framing as "extreme" or "what you get on TV." By

looking at the reactions of those with deep deliberative experience, our hypothesis about the unproductive move toward the middle in the groups with minimal deliberative experience is bolstered.

4. Toward Creative Combination

Participants in groups framed for deliberation, regardless of deliberative experience, tended to use the materials in a wider range of ways than the adversarial groups. Participants in all the groups using deliberative framing called for some combination of all the approaches, but, unlike their counterparts working with adversarial framing, participants using deliberative framing did not end up adrift by calling for a combination of the approaches. Instead, they effectively used the framework as starting points to work through the pros and cons of different approaches, which allowed for a kind of creativity and innovation not seen in the adversarial groups.

5. Longer-Term Impacts of Deliberation: Self-Facilitation and Solution-Seeking

In the final section of the findings, we summarize our main findings about the longer-term impacts of deliberation by focusing specifically on the group with deep exposure to deliberation that was given the adversarial framing. This most interesting group revealed two main themes that confirm and amplify Kettering's and Public Agenda's research on issues related to framing: efforts at self-facilitation and greater solution-seeking behavior.

The Themes in Detail

As noted above, when looking at the sourcing, we focused predominantly on the participants' reactions to the issue guides themselves. We focused on explicit references to materials, as well as intertextual references to materials as they arose in conversation. We also focused on responses given to reflection questions posed by the moderator, which included questions about participants' perceptions of the issue guide, where participants get information on the issue, and how they feel about the quality of mainstream media depictions of the issue (also a kind of collective resource for the group, although somewhat removed). The materials provided for deliberation may be understood as a collective resource for having a conversation, and we found that the two different

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framings functioned differently as a collective resource for the group. By looking to this area of sourcing, we were able to identify a number of themes that shed light on our main questions concerning the quality of conversation, how the different framings functioned differently as conversational resources, and the impacts of longer-term exposure to deliberation.

1. Discussions about the Adversarial Framing

In every group that used the adversarial framing, someone commented on the adversarial nature of the issue guide during the first round when participants were asked to share their initial reactions. Participants called both sides "extreme," noting name-calling (e.g., "bleeding-heart liberals") and calling the materials "more persuasive than they are informative." Participants questioned the validity of the arguments, wondering whether they "give us the best picture of what the actual issue[s]" are. Several participants connected the framing to partisan framing, concluding, "how the paper we just read, it showed if you're left wing, you agree with immigration and kind of the overall term *amnesty*. If you're a conservative, then you automatically agree with building the fences and keeping people out."

The group with moderate deliberation experience never discussed the adversarial nature of the issue guide after the initial round. But the rest of the groups made additional comments about the framing. One of the groups with no deliberation experience started the open conversation by noting that the framing had "no data," calling it "political rhetoric" instead. One participant connected the framing to media discourses. "This is exactly how the media is now … it doesn't open a discussion for immigration reform. It sounds like Fox News and CNN trying to talk to each other, and it's not working."

The groups using the deliberative framing spent much less time critiquing the framing. Across all four groups, participants challenged individual arguments made in the issue guide, but they didn't rally against the framing by labeling it biased or useless. There were only two comments made about topics or information that were missing from the guides.

With all the groups challenging the adversarial framing, the question is, how did the participants use the framing as a source in their discussions? Here we see striking

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differences between students with deep exposure and students with minimal or moderate experience with deliberation.

We're OK, but What about Others?

Interestingly, in the adversarially framed group with participants who had deep exposure to deliberation, participants worried about others being victimized by the hostile framing. When asked to reflect on the usefulness of the adversarial issue guide, the group with deep exposure to deliberation worried aloud about how such a framing would play with those who've not been exposed to deliberation.

> *The lay citizen doesn't know anything about NIF and doesn't know how to look at [a guide] and say, "I agree with that part of it, but I don't agree with that part of…" I don't think it would be nearly as productive for other citizens…[who would] identify with one side over the other, then they would kind of defend that side and stick to that more than anything.*

> *I would be terrified to give [this issue guide] to a group of citizens…. It's such an antagonistic discussion guide that—unless that's really what your goal was, to really bring out a lot of emotion—I feel like it would be hard for me to expect that everyone would handle this as rationally as we did.*

> *The CPD[9] in me really came out…. I feel like we did a pretty good job of facilitating, but I can't see the process working with other people who aren't familiar with facilitation techniques.*

While there is much to be gleaned from how students with deep exposure to deliberation talked about these concerns (particularly with respect to their recognition that there are many sides to an issue, trade-offs involved in every solution, generally more room than most think for crafting common ground, etc.), a few participants in the other groups also

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[9] The student is referring to his/her own long-term exposure to deliberation through the Center for Public Deliberation.

expressed concerns about how the adversarial framing might play among "average" citizens outside the "open-minded" context of a university.

> *You're also talking to a very educated group of people. We're in college, so we're not going to be listening to Fox News or CNN…. We're not going to just listen to what someone tells us to listen to.*

These types of comments, however, seemed to be motivated more by curiosity than by concern or empathy. For the groups with little or no exposure to deliberation, the moments in which they speculated that other "less educated" people might fall for the bait of the hostile rhetoric seemed more condescending than concerned. For the students with deep exposure to deliberation, their concerns about how the impact of the adversarial framing on "average" citizens seemed motivated by a more empathetic and democratic-spirited concern about the thwarting effects of adversarial politics on citizens' capacities to navigate difficult issues.

There was a kind of empathy in this move made by those with deep deliberative experience that is interesting; unlike their peers in other groups who expressed that uneducated people might fall for the hostile rhetoric, those with deep deliberative experience worried about anybody who hasn't been exposed to an alternative approach to public discourse.

2. Adrift in the Murky Middle

While one might intuitively assume that the adversarial framing would provoke debate among participants, particularly those with minimal deliberative experience, we found instead that virtually nobody in any group identified strongly with either position in the adversarial framing.[10] At the same time, different levels of deliberative experience did seem to have an impact on how participants reacted to the adversarial framing. The way participants reacted to the materials sheds light both on the nature of adversarial politics

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[10] Nobody felt comfortable taking an extreme side, but part of that may be the framing, the bandwagon effect, and the minimalist facilitation. Without a facilitator making room for someone to be more "extreme," most people expressed a middle viewpoint.

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and on the kinds of conversations that are made possible or impossible with different issue framings.

The groups with no deliberation experience reacted to the hostile rhetoric of the adversarial framing by retreating to a middle ground: during the first round in one of the groups with no deliberation experience, 6 of the 10 participants identified themselves as being "somewhere in the middle" during the first round when participants were asked to share their initial views on the issue.

What is most interesting is that this move toward the middle, while unsurprising in some regards, clearly did not function as a move toward considered common ground, nor did it create the conditions for participants to deepen their conversations on the topic. In one of the adversarial groups populated by students with minimal exposure to deliberation, the first person stated that he/she was "somewhere in the middle" and went on to explain: "To just stop immigration is, I think, not practical, and I think that giving legal citizenship to every person who is already here is also not practical." This "middle" is explained by showing that two opposite impulses—stopping immigration and allowing full amnesty—are not realistic. But this treatment is still simplistic. It didn't lead anyone in the group to consider implications, weigh pros and cons, or reflect a considered understanding of either side.

Two students followed up by positioning themselves "in the middle," but then used this position to explain reasons for both sides, explaining being in the middle as a conflict between compelling pulls to opposite directions (e.g., enforcing illegal immigration to maintain legitimacy of laws yet honoring our history as a nation of immigrants who benefit diversity). Yet students also positioned themselves "in the middle" in relatively unreflective ways. For example, "I'm like everyone else in the middle. I'd like it to be easier to get citizenship, but since it's illegal, and we can't let everyone become citizens, we need to find the middle ground."

The problem is that the adversarial framing didn't provide resources for pursing a productive option between these two extremes. One participant commented: "It's funneled us into those two categories, and there's nothing we can do about it. We can either take this side or this side, and that's politics." Participants expressed pride in avoiding falling into the trap of adopting an extreme view, but unfortunately the move to

the murky middle wasn't a particularly productive outcome and didn't create the conditions for working through political solutions that could represent the middle.

While participants reacted against the adversarial framing by positioning themselves in between the two extreme positions, once in this middle, participants in the adversarial groups had a difficult time using the materials to help advance and deepen the conversation. The groups mostly referenced the background materials when directly refuting them. In fact, the only explicit reference to the background materials in the group with moderate deliberation experience after the initial round was to directly refute it. Likewise, one of the groups with minimal deliberation experience referenced the handouts mainly when challenging them (this occurred five times). A participant noted, "I'm just pointing out that comment…. It just doesn't compute."

Only once did a participant justify an argument made in the issue guide. A participant attacked a statement made about terrorism, and another participant responded: "I think what they meant by that line was not that illegal immigrants would cause terrorist attacks, but if terrorists see how easy it is to get in one border or another, then they can fly into Canada, or they can fly into Mexico and do what they do." This move is deliberative in that it suggests considered understanding of another perspective. It is notable that this is the only instance of this occurring in the adversarial groups with no or moderate deliberation experience.

In some ways, the adversarial framing worked as a foil and set untenable extremes, thus placing all the participants in the "common ground" of the middle. From one perspective, that could be seen as a positive move that naturally had them considering their similarities and negotiating more specific differences of scale. From another, though, it can be seen as a negative as the participants reacted against two weak, poorly argued extremes, found common ground too easily, and thus did not actually work through any significant tensions. Rejecting the false extremes, in other words, perhaps led to a false sense of accomplishment.

3. Empowered Resistance

Turning to those students with deep exposure to deliberation gives us another view of how participants reacted to the adversarial guides. Participants with deep exposure to

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deliberation who were given the adversarial framing were far less likely to identify themselves somewhere in the middle; instead, in the initial round, several students expressed strong opinions about the issue but stated that they were open to hearing other perspectives. As participants adopted a deliberative stance of being open to different ways of approaching the issue, they noted the failure of the issue guide to create conditions for effective deliberation. While the control group kicked off their conversation by everyone running for cover in the middle, the students with deep exposure to deliberation spent more time reacting against the framing as distortive, manipulative, unhelpful, and unsatisfying.

> *[The issue guide] is not informative…. It's emotional, but not informative.*

> *I think when you get down to the specific statements in here and rhetoric that's in here, I mean, it's just full of emotional pleas and logical fallacies, and it just bogs you down.*

> *I would challenge that we not even look at the document because … my particular belief isn't reflected in this language at all.*

> *[The presentation of issues in the guides are] definitely twisted … just very extreme on each side.*

> *I wouldn't say those kinds of things about my neighbor—that's what I would hope, but it sort of starts you off sort of agitated, and you look at it and you're like, "Are other people in this room going to think I'm a bleeding-heart liberal?" I just—I can't see it being the most effective tool for starting a conversation.*

> *I think this piece is reflective of the extremes that we see in the news every day, and I think this group is a little more open-minded to political issues in general.*

> *I think starting a polarizing conversation with polarizing materials is*
> *probably not a good idea.*

Participants with deep deliberation experience thoroughly critiqued the background materials as the basis for a conversation. In the absence of strong background materials to ground their conversation, they drew on deliberation skills in an effort to improve the conversation. For example, several participants attempted to reframe the adversarial issue guide. This discussion started with someone critiquing the background materials for how they position people against each other:

> *It feels like my opinion is a lot more of the option two, but I do not like the*
> *way that is worded. I don't believe in welcoming them with open arms.*
> *You know, that's a main issue that I'm having with this document in*
> *particular…. Like, in approach one I don't want to be deemed a bleeding-*
> *heart liberal just because I agree more with approach two or like all these*
> *things.*

> *I also don't think that, like, I would never classify you as a conservative*
> *extremist or racist or any of these things. Like the passage with the Statue*
> *of Liberty and everything like that … I don't—like the framing the way*
> *that this is framed is like I feel like it's trying to get us to, like, get at each*
> *other's throats, you know what I mean?*

> *Like, "Well, you're a conservative extremist, and I'm a bleeding-heart*
> *liberal," and so you're going to automatically disagree, and that's why*
> *this is such a horrible framing. I don't think that, while I'm leaning more*
> *towards approach two … really these aren't my beliefs, either. That's why*
> *I have a hard time identifying with either one, because this document does*
> *not represent my beliefs.*

I believe in some of the ideas of it, but this document does not represent my opinion. That's why I'm having issues with this approach one and this approach two. Like, if we're going to fix it, I don't think it should be about approach one or approach two. I think it should be about what does the system look like?

We talked about what's broken. We talked about what's wrong. If we can all agree on things that are—like, if we can all agree that not all illegal immigrants are bad and not all illegal immigrants are good. Then what do we do with that? Without separating that there's, like, if you believe in approach one and I believe in approach two, how do we forget about these approaches and just figure out how to do it?

In this passage, the participant attempts to reframe the conversation by leaving the approaches behind to focus on the question of what should the system look like? Posing this general question shifts the conversation toward generating and evaluating solutions instead of working from the approaches in the issue guide.

The students with deep exposure to deliberation also attempted to recapture the utility of the issue guides by reframing the approaches based on their underlying issues rather than extreme language.

Abby: I think what these approaches represent is really broad ideas in an abstract sense, and I was kind of disagreeing with Darnell about what approach two is about. I would say that approach two is about incentives and amnesty, and approach one is about law enforcement and restrictions on immigrants that could come in. I think if you look at it in an abstract way at those broad concepts, you need both. I think when you get down into the specific statements in here and rhetoric that's in here, I mean, it's just full of emotional pleas and logical fallacies, and it just bogs you down. I think you need a combination of firm regulation and defined laws about what is allowed, what is not allowed, and how that's going to be enforced.

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Then you need incentives and a system that does allow immigrants and under certain conditions, or immigrants who are already here, allows them to become citizens or become contributing members of American society. I think that's a combination they need, that we need to see.

Rise: I agree. I think the first one that you talked about, about law enforcement and different regulations that need to be put in place, are for future immigrants, whereas the second part about amnesty and different ways to deal—it's more directed towards people who are already here, and we need to address both. So I think that's a good summation.

Here, both Abby and Rise work together to identify basic characteristics that might be part of productive solutions. This move to strip away the "emotional pleas and logical fallacies" demonstrates how previous deliberation experience has empowered these students to have a more deliberative conversation even in the absence of deliberative framing. To be clear, these students still struggled to have a productive conversation about immigration. In the absence of information about immigration—information that they would expect to get from a deliberative issue guide—the substantive conversation about solutions was not particularly productive. Nonetheless, evidence of their deliberative experience can be seen in the ways that they reacted to and reframed the materials. Students with deliberation experience were able to separate their positions from the adversarial framing while maintaining strong positions and ideological commitments.

If one looks to different levels of deliberative experience as a basis for comparing the reactions of those who were given the adversarial framing, it becomes easier to see what is happening when people retreat to a murky middle and how those moves functioned to produce a false sense of accomplishment for participants with little or no deliberative experience. On the one hand, it is heartening to watch the groups with little or no deliberative experience refuse to become hostile and combative (and to watch them express pride about not falling into this trap). On the other hand, because the framing gives them nowhere to go with their conversation, and because they do not have the

experience with deliberation that might give them perspective about what they are missing out on, it is distressing to watch them make no progress in their conversation and yet come away from the conversation expressing satisfaction about the conversation they had.

In a sense, the retreat to the murky middle—especially when held up against the empowered resistance of the groups with deep deliberative exposure—can be read as an implicit preference for deliberation, though one that cannot be capitalized on. In the absence of deliberative framing and effective facilitation, the participants with little or no exposure to deliberation are clearly both victimized and disempowered by the norms of adversarial politics.

4. Toward Creative Combination

Participants in groups framed for deliberation, regardless of deliberative experience, tended to use the materials in a wider range of ways than the adversarial groups, and though this didn't necessarily result in "working through," it is significant for understanding the impact of different types of framing on the quality of conversation.

Rather than retreat to a murky middle, participants in all the groups using deliberative framing called for some combination of all the approaches. This pattern was clearest in one of the groups with no deliberation experience in which 6 of the 10 participants called for a combination of the approaches in the initial round. At the start, the call to combine the approaches seems similar to saying "I'm in the middle," and it even plays off the extreme views of welcoming or excluding immigrants. For example: "We definitely do need a combination of all of these options. They are such a vital part of our workforce and provide our … great lifestyle and ability to work hard and achieve beyond. But we definitely need to crack down or make it—crack down on the immigrants or make an easier process to become a legal citizen."

Unlike their counterparts in the adversarially framed groups, participants using deliberative framing did not end up adrift by calling for a combination of the approaches. Instead, they used the approaches as starting points to work through the pros and cons of different approaches, allowing for a kind of creativity and innovation not seen in the adversarial groups. After hearing multiple calls to combine approaches, a participant

builds off this by saying, "I think as far as these three approaches go, it makes more sense to sort of incentivize things for both the illegal immigrants, the legal immigrants, as well as employers, so that we can efficiently come up with the proper level of restriction for the entry." This comment works across the different approaches to think about the problem differently by introducing the notion of incentives.

As the conversations progressed, participants in deliberatively framed groups continued to use the issue guide as a resource for advancing and deepening the conversation. The most frequent way that participants used the issue guide was to cite statistics in the guide to support their arguments. This move occurred in all the groups: deep experience (6 times), moderate deliberation experience (10 times), and no deliberation experience (5 and 7 times). This demonstrates that the deliberative framing provided useful information to participants that allowed them to engage in reason giving and influenced how they made arguments about immigrants.

More telling is that in all the groups, some participants used the different approaches as sources of possible solutions. This doesn't mean that participants liked or endorsed the solutions in the approaches; instead, the approaches sparked a conversation about whether a solution would be desirable:

> *Approach one, again, has punish employers who hire undocumented workers. Is that a route that one should take? Because it's switching the emphasis, the motivation, for coming over. Is that the way to stop it so that we don't need this wall? There's just nothing to do once you get over here. Would that be a solution?*

> *So, if we're not going to build a wall—and maybe that's addressing the wrong side of the problem—how do we feel about using the E-verify system and prosecuting companies who hire undocumented workers? If the need arises for undocumented workers because, frankly, low-skilled workers are in demand in this country, how do we feel about a guest worker program?*

> *So I think number one, obviously, is really harsh, but if we start paying*
> *more attention to who's coming across the border and putting stricter*
> *enforcements at the borders, maybe it'll deter some people who don't need*
> *to be here.*

In all these quotes, participants are entertaining an argument or solution discussed in the framing to work through the implications of that approach to addressing the immigration problem.

Longer-Term Impacts of Deliberation: Self-Facilitation and Solution-Seeking

Building on previous Kettering research (Doble and Peng), we sought to better understand if people with longer-term exposure to deliberation express a preference for it and, if so, what that expression of preference actually looks like. Toward this end, we paid particular attention to the focus group in which students with deep exposure to deliberation were given the adversarial/debate-oriented issue guide to ground their conversation. In taking a closer look at this group specifically, we gleaned that students with deep exposure to deliberation were more resistant to the adversarial framing than their counterparts in the other groups and that this resistance can be read as a preference for deliberative issue framing. In addition, two themes that relate directly to previous Kettering research on framing emerged in this research: efforts at self-facilitation and greater solution-seeking behavior.

Efforts at Self-Facilitation

Students with deep exposure to deliberation were more likely to act as facilitators for each other to improve the quality of deliberation, a sign that a longer-term impact of deliberation is the ability and willingness independently to assume responsibility for the quality of the conversation and thus support deliberative norms. In both the adversarial and deliberatively framed groups, students with deep exposure to deliberation were more likely to 1) ask clarification questions of one another and 2) seek out and articulate connections made between various points being made in the conversation. We did not see these same moves in the groups with minimal or even moderate exposure to deliberation.

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These students were trained to be more active as moderators, so they were surprised that the moderator took such a minimalist stance.

Greater Solution-Seeking Behavior

Those with deep exposure to deliberation were more likely to express a desire for solution-oriented progress in the conversation, regardless of the framing. These participants were particularly dissatisfied with the adversarial framing, but it is worth noting that experienced deliberators in the deliberatively framed groups also expressed dissatisfaction for deliberating in a vacuum (with no apparent purpose and in the absence of active facilitation keeping them on track toward a goal). The first two quotes below come from students with deep exposure to deliberation who were given the deliberative framing, while the last quote is from a student with deep exposure to deliberation who was given the adversarial framing.

> *I didn't feel the satisfaction that there was progress being necessarily made…. I felt frustrated by that because I wanted a sense of at least we know—it may not be solved, but we can move on to the next issue.*

> *A lot of good questions were brought up … but I felt like nothing really came out of it.*

> *If we can all agree that not all illegal immigrants are bad and not all illegal immigrants are good. Then what do we do with that? How do we forget about these approaches and just figure out [how to address the problem]?*

Looking Forward: Avenues for Future Inquiry

As is often the case with productive research, we have emerged from this study energized and excited to explore a range of questions that exceed the scope of this current project. Put another way, there are a number of questions opened up by this data set that cannot be fully answered by it. These questions are extremely important to the field of

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deliberative democracy and to Kettering's previous and future investments in this knowledge-base, and they merit close attention. By way of clarification, when we use the term *products of deliberation* we are referring to Martín Carcasson's recent work for Kettering in which he identifies five key products of deliberation: overcoming barriers to collaborative decision making (such as wishful thinking or stereotyping), acceptance of tough choices, discovering common ground, cultivation of creativity/innovation in generating solutions, and identification of the broad range of relevant stakeholders and the roles they can play.

We think it would be extremely interesting to replicate these small-group conversations but to introduce variables that were removed from this round of research (such as facilitation, goal orientation, and participant diversity) to tease out and learn more about the products of deliberation and how they are achieved. The following questions represent the beginnings of what such a research agenda might look like:

What are the impacts of facilitation on deliberative norms and the products of deliberation?

There's a great deal more to know about the role of facilitation as it relates to issue framing. We sought to remove facilitation as a confounding variable and instead focus on the impact of the issue framing itself, but this decision came with a price and yielded a number of questions about what an active facilitator might accomplish in groups with different types of framing. For example, could an experienced, active moderator use an adversarial framing to help a group see the flaws of adversarial political norms and thus lead the group to high-quality deliberation in spite of the framings?

In a subsequent setting, Carcasson and Leah Sprain from the CPD have used clips of the video and sections of the transcripts to engage CPD students in conversation about facilitation. By essentially using the transcripts and videos as training modules for CPD students, Carcasson and Sprain learned more about how facilitation might impact these groups. There is reason to believe—though this needs to be borne out by further research—that active and skillful facilitation by someone with deep deliberative experience could counteract much of the ill effects of the adversarial framing.

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How does participant diversity impact reactions to adversarial framing?

By using college students for this research, implicit deliberative norms that impacted the reaction to the adversarial framing may have been in play. This same experiment with members of the general public may have proceeded very differently, and it is worth exploring how different framings impact the products of deliberation among groups of citizens who come from a range of backgrounds, starting points, deliberation experience, and ages.

Conclusion

While our research raised as many questions as it answered, we learned a great deal about the impact of framing on the quality of conversation and about the relationship between deliberative experience and the norms of adversarial politics that dominate contemporary public discourse. We were heartened to find that participants with deep exposure to deliberation were empowered to resist the victimizing effects of unproductive adversarial framing and that they were more likely to attempt to reframe issues to generate more productive conversations and take responsibility for their conversations through self-facilitation. This certainly resonates with previous findings in research commissioned by Kettering and conducted by Public Agenda and the Center for Public Deliberation.

Although we were heartened by what we learned about the longer-term impacts of deliberation, we were also sobered by what we saw happen in the groups in which participants did not have deliberative experience. The false sense of accomplishment in these groups, along with their unproductive conversations, shed light on what is at stake for those of us committed to improving public life through deliberation.

We were somewhat disappointed to find that the removal of confounding variables (active facilitation, explicit goals, participant diversity) prevented us from being able to say more about the impact of deliberative framing on deliberation, but we were energized by the idea that these variables can be studied more systematically in subsequent research. We believe that this current research serves as yet another calling for advocates of deliberative democracy to refine our practices and disseminate our insights to an ever-widening range of audiences and publics. We look forward to incorporating these insights into our own practices and analyses of initiatives we're

involved with on the ground and to opportunities for expanding this research in new directions.

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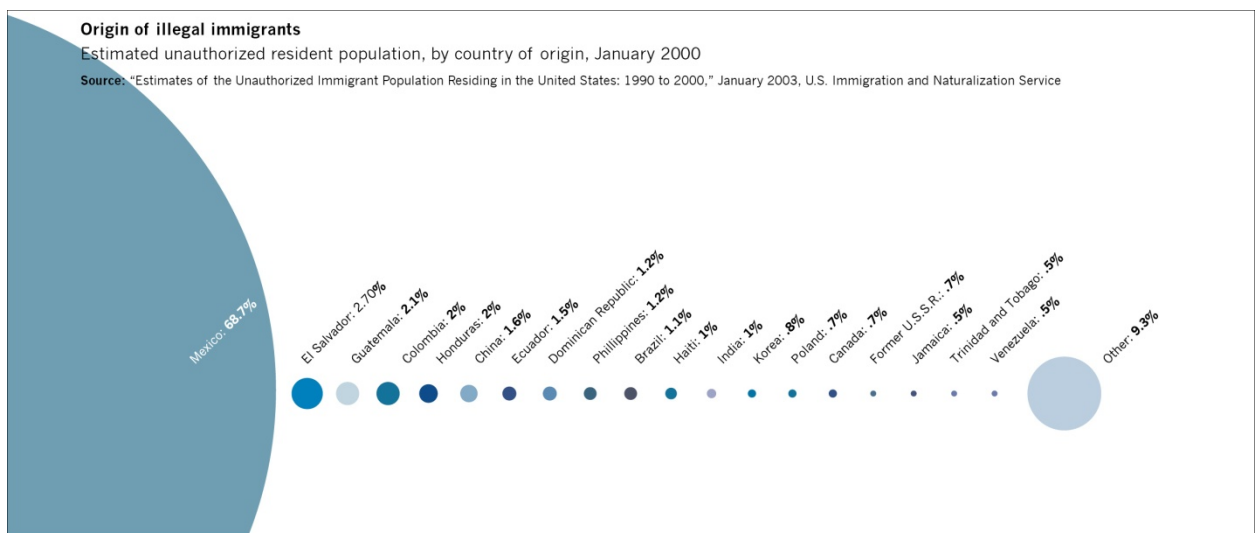**Appendix 1- Deliberative Discussion Guide**

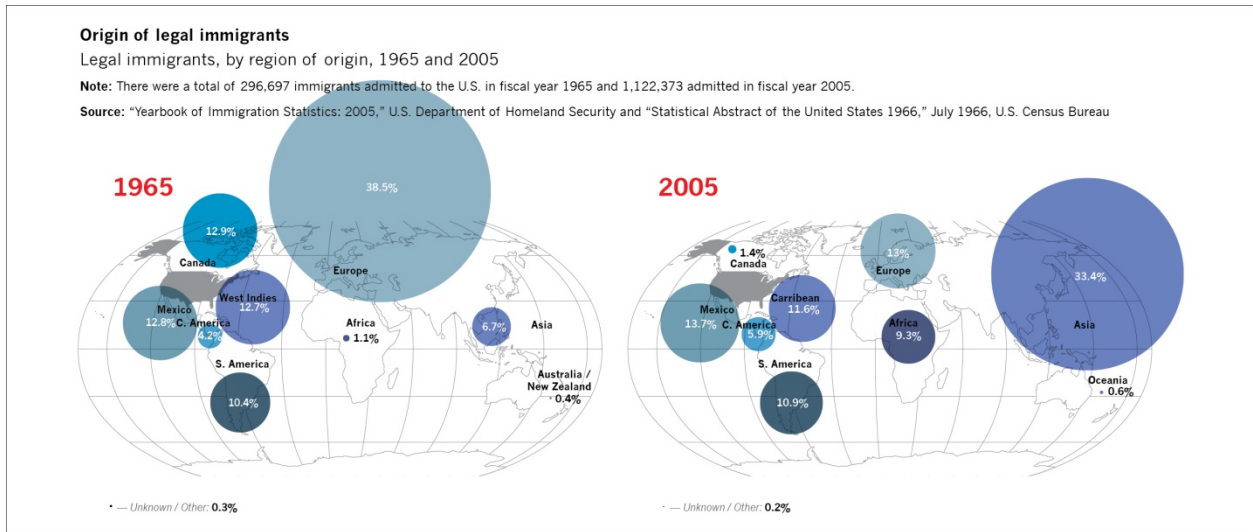**Who Gets to Come, Who Gets to Stay?**
Clarifying the Immigration Debate

- The United States admits more than one million legal immigrants a year, and more than 12 percent of the US population (over 36 million people) is foreignborn.

- There are an estimated 11.1 million illegal or undocumented immigrants in the country (3 percent of the population).

- Current laws emphasize family ties for admission, and most legal immigrants are, in fact, relatives of people already here.

- Although legal immigration rates are historically high, they have fallen since the mid-2000s.

- More than half of immigrants settle in just four "gateway" states (California, Florida, New York, and Texas). Increasingly, however, immigrants are moving to areas of the country with very little history of immigration.

- More than half of illegal or undocumented immigrants are Hispanic.

Source: Pew Hispanic Center Reports

The charts below display the countries of origin for undocumented and legal immigrants to the United States.

Origin of illegal immigrants
Estimated unauthorized resident population, by country of origin, January 2000
Source: "Estimates of the Unauthorized Immigrant Population Residing in the United States: 1990 to 2000," January 2003, U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service

Mexico: 68.7%   El Salvador: 2.70%   Guatemala: 2.1%   Colombia: 2%   Honduras: 2%   China: 1.6%   Ecuador: 1.5%   Dominican Republic: 1.2%   Phillippines: 1.2%   Brazil: 1.1%   Haiti: 1%   India: 1%   Korea: .8%   Poland: .7%   Canada: .7%   Former U.S.S.R.: .7%   Jamaica: .5%   Trinidad and Tobago: .5%   Venezuela: .5%   Other: 9.3%

Origin of legal immigrants

Legal immigrants, by region of origin, 1965 and 2005

Note: There were a total of 296,697 immigrants admitted to the U.S. in fiscal year 1965 and 1,122,373 admitted in fiscal year 2005.

Source: "Yearbook of Immigration Statistics: 2005," U.S. Department of Homeland Security and "Statistical Abstract of the United States 1966," July 1966, U.S. Census Bureau

1965

12.9% Canada
Europe 38.5%
West Indies 12.7%
Mexico 12.8%
C. America 4.2%
Africa 1.1%
Asia 6.7%
S. America 10.4%
Australia / New Zealand 0.4%

• — Unknown / Other: **0.3%**

2005

1.4% Canada
Europe 13%
Mexico 13.7%
C. America 5.9%
Carribean 11.6%
Africa 9.3%
Asia 33.4%
S. America 10.9%
Oceania 0.6%

• — Unknown / Other: **0.2%**

HOW WE GOT HERE

If you want to get people arguing these days, there's no better topic than immigration. The topic is so bitter, and Americans are so divided about it that we seem to have decided to live with a broken system rather than compromise on crafting a new one. In some ways, this is surprising. The United States has long been the destination for millions of people who hope that hard work and freedom will secure a better life for them and their children. Compared to many other countries, we've been much more willing to put out the welcome mat. And yet as a nation, we still haven't made up our minds about immigration.

Here's some food for thought that may help you think through your own views on the issue.

- There are actually two issues. The first is what kinds of policies we should have on legal immigration—how many people we can welcome and how we decide who should come. The second is what to do about illegal immigration—how to reduce it and what to do about the 11 million illegal or undocumented immigrants currently in the United States, about a third of whom have entered since 2000.

- There's often talk of deporting undocumented immigrants but, realistically deporting 11.7 million people would be a massive undertaking—that's nearly the equivalent of the population of Pennsylvania.

- Much of the debate over legal immigration revolves around the economic impact and the degree to which new immigrants join the American mainstream. Unfortunately, economists don't agree on whether the United States benefits economically from immigration. Does the US economy benefit from the talents of immigrants, or do immigrants take jobs away from citizens? Does illegal immigration bring down wages for American workers by giving employers a steady stream of people who will accept very low wages and poor working conditions? To what extent does illegal immigration keep costs down on products,

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which helps keep the cost of living down for other US residents? Should immigrants be required to learn English? Too what extent should immigrants be eligible for social programs?

- Illegal immigration also raises questions about how secure the border is and whether terrorists and criminals might take advantage of the easy access. There are also issues of fairness and the rule of law. What does it mean when US laws are widely disobeyed without much consequence for those who violate them— either undocumented immigrants themselves or US employers who hire them? How should we handle people who enter the country illegally? If they have obeyed the law and built honorable, constructive lives since entering, what should we do then?

Approach One: Dramatically Strengthen Enforcement

Our immigration system is out of control. With about 11.1 million illegal immigrants living in the United States and nearly half a million new ones arriving each year, the current system undercuts American workers and risks allowing dangerous criminals and terrorists into the United States. It's just wrong to tolerate the widespread breaking of the law.

To get control of the situation, we should:
- Employ more Border Patrol agents, build high-tech barriers along the border, and make illegal immigration a felony.

- Pursue and punish employers who hire undocumented workers and require that employers check the status of all new and current workers in a government database.

- Stop granting citizenship to the children of illegal immigrants and require illegal immigrants already here to learn English and apply for citizenship. Those who are unwilling to do so should be deported along with their families.

Arguments For:
- It is dangerous and wrong to make it so easy to slip into the country illegally. The 9/11 Commission Report noted that several of the September 11 hijackers could have been detected and removed if immigration officials had enforced routine immigration checks.

- People are coming here for jobs. Cracking down on employers who hire illegal immigrants, whether they are large companies or private individuals, will remove the economic incentive to do so.

Arguments Against:
- Drastically cutting the number of immigrants will derail the economy. Employers rely on well-educated immigrants for scientific and technical help and on less-

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educated immigrants to do jobs that Americans won't take. It's just irresponsible to ignore this reality.

- This massive crackdown will be costly, would punish people who are simply trying to make a better life for themselves, and will end up pushing out good people who are contributing to our society—both immigrants and employers.

Approach Two: Reform Immigration Law to Match the Economy

About 15 percent of US workers are foreign born, and over the last decade they have accounted for about half of the growth in the work force. Our economy won't function well without them, but we need to adjust the system so that we really do bring in the people who can help us most.

We should:
- Adjust the number of legal immigrants allowed into the country each year to fit the existing job market through a guest worker program, so that employers who need low-skilled workers can bring them into the United States in a legal, but temporary, way.

- Bring in more highly skilled science and technology workers, as long as employers say they need them (and as long as our schools are not producing these workers).

- Make it possible for undocumented children to improve their condition by having full access to higher education.

Arguments For:
- If US companies like Microsoft, GE, and IBM can't get the highly skilled engineers and specialists they need, we simply have to bring them in from abroad. And the truth is that most Americans do not want the tough, low-wage jobs that immigrants fill, and our economy cannot run without them.

- Children of illegal immigrants who are born in the United States are afforded many opportunities. They should be allowed to raise themselves out of poverty and become productive valuable members of society by having access to education.

Arguments Against:
- A guest worker program just lets American companies get by on cheap labor and creates an underclass of poor immigrants who will be a drain on local schools and health systems.

- Giving greater social benefits to children of illegal immigrants (i.e., access to financial aid for college) will only encourage more illegal immigrants to come to

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the United States in order to have children and will require resources that are already strained at the K-12 and higher education levels.

Approach Three: Give Undocumented Workers a Path to Citizenship

The United States is a nation of immigrants, and our whole society benefits from having a human policy that recognizes that the vast majority of undocumented workers have become valued members of our society. Plus, the country basically allowed illegal entry for decades. To suddenly pull the rug out from under people who have built good lives here is wrong.

This should be done by:
- Passing a compassionate and fair-minded amnesty program that gives undocumented residents without a criminal record the opportunity to legalize their status. We can't round up and punish 11.7 million people who are our neighbors and co-workers. It just won't work.

- Increasing the number of slots for legal immigration so that foreigners will not be so tempted to enter illegally.

- Ensuring that legal immigrants receive educational benefits—including real opportunities to learn English—and have good access to health care and other basic rights.

Arguments For:
- For more than a hundred years, immigrants have come here and aspired to build a better life for their families. We have always been a nation that prides itself on welcoming people of all different backgrounds, and our diversity enriches our cultural heritage and quality of life. Besides, how can we deny to others the opportunity that brought our own families here?

- Legal immigrants pay taxes and contribute to Social Security. Because of immigration, the United States is substantially better off than many European countries where the population is aging so dramatically.

Arguments Against:
- We aren't even taking good care of the educational and health-care needs of our own citizens. An open-door policy and generous public services essentially rewards people for breaking the law. It's not fair to our citizens or those people following the rules and waiting for their turn to come here.

- This choice does almost nothing to address the lax border enforcement. We live in a dangerous world, and no country can afford to let tens of thousands of people enter each year illegally.

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The Three Approaches in Brief:

1. **Dramatically strengthen the enforcement of current laws to reduce the levels of both legal and illegal immigration.**
   Our immigration system is out of control. With about 11.1 million illegal immigrants living in the United States and nearly half a million new ones arriving each year, the current system undercuts American workers and risks allowing dangerous criminals and terrorists into the United States. It's just wrong to tolerate the widespread breaking of the law.

2. **Reform immigration law to match the needs of the economy—bring in more highly skilled immigrants and create a guest worker program for low-skilled immigrants.**
   About 15 percent of US workers are foreign born, and over the last decade they have accounted for about half of the growth in the workforce. Our economy won't function well without them, but we need to adjust the system so that we really do bring in the people who can help us most.

3. **Reform the system to take advantage of the enormous contributions immigrants make to the United States and give decent, honest undocumented workers a clear path to citizenship.**
   The United States is a nation of immigrants, and our whole society benefits from having a human policy that recognizes the vast majority of undocumented workers have become valued members of our society. Plus, our country basically allowed illegal entry for decades. To suddenly pull the rug out from under people who have built good lives here is wrong.

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Appendix 2- Adversarial Discussion Guide

Reforming Immigration Policy

Most if not all Americans agree that reform is necessary to improve US immigration policy. However, the substance of such reform is hotly contested. Below are two very different perspectives on this question.

1. **We should drastically reduce the number of immigrants coming into this country.**

Our country is going through a period of severe financial distress. The current legal immigrant admission rate of roughly one million people a year poses a threat to the health of our faltering economy. More distressing, however, is the rate of illegal immigration, estimated by the Pew Hispanic Center to be 500,000 people every year, or 1,300 each day. Not only does immigration hurt our economy, it poses a serious threat to our national security.

Unfortunately, bleeding-heart liberals would have us believe that we are turning our backs on the American Dream if we don't simply open our borders to any and all immigrants, but this perspective is both naïve and dangerous. It is also a slap in the face to hard-working Americans who struggle every day to make life better for their families.

High levels of immigration to this country mean fewer job opportunities and lower wages for real Americans. Moreover, immigrants are offered all kinds of government handouts such as welfare checks, health care, and education—all at no cost to them. Allowing immigrants to receive handouts like these only serves to incentivize immigration into the United States.

All of us have been hit hard by this recession, and American citizens should be the first to receive a means to financial stability. In a time when we can barely take care of our own, why should we further burden our already distressed system by helping millions of broken people from broken lands?

Furthermore, we must keep in mind that illegal immigration is precisely that—illegal. Instead of coming here through legitimate means, illegal immigrants have crossed the border, infiltrated our system, and broken our laws. Allowing lawbreakers to live and work here poses a threat to the integrity of our legal system and to our national security. The United States is and always will be under attack from those who want to destroy us, but the difference with immigration is that it is an internal threat, which makes it all the more dangerous. In fact, the 9/11 Commission Report noted that

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several of the September 11 hijackers could have been detected and removed if immigration officials had enforced routine immigration checks.

This is why we need to restore moderation to legal immigration by restricting it to the minimum consistent with stabilizing the US population and invest significantly more resources into border control to entirely eliminate the problem of illegal immigration. Illegals already in the country should go to the back of the line, behind the people who have been waiting to come here the *right* way.

It is our government's duty to do whatever it takes to protect and defend our borders, and with it, our livelihoods and security. If we can't stem the flow of millions of illegal aliens, how can we possibly hope to save our economy, create jobs for the rest of us, and protect our citizens from terrorist attacks?

2. We should pass comprehensive immigration reform and create a path to citizenship for undocumented immigrants.

We know our immigration system is broken when millions of undocumented immigrants are made to suffer simply for trying to pursue the American dream. As a nation of immigrants, we must overhaul our immigration system and help to create hope for the millions of people, especially children who endure terrible conditions just to try to get the opportunities we take for granted.

Regrettably, conservative extremists have questioned our country's values and traditions by spreading racist lies about the 11 million people who have entered this country illegally and comprise the backbone of our country's most important industries. These privileged individuals have repeated the same tired arguments, about threats to our economy and security, all of which are false.

Undocumented workers pay taxes but aren't able to reap the benefits of social programs such as Medicaid and Social Security. If we passed comprehensive, progressive immigration reform, it would boost the American economy by encouraging undocumented immigrants to become better educated, contribute more to society, while increasing tax revenue and creating more jobs.

When it comes to securing our borders, the promise of this country is great, and immigrants will find a way to come to the United States, regardless of how many American men and women are diverted from current wars to guard against hungry families seeking opportunity in the United States. More important, it would actually improve American security if undocumented immigrants weren't afraid of being deported when reporting crimes and were allowed to earn citizenship by joining the military.

Undocumented immigrants should not be treated like criminals; they should be viewed as economic refugees and welcomed with open arms. Men and women are

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drawn to this country for the same reasons that our families came to this country in past generations: to create better lives for their children than they experienced themselves. Let us not forget the words inscribed on the base of the Statue of Liberty:

Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!

The people who suffer most as result of our broken immigration system are the undocumented children who are collectively punished by our society. These children are denied the opportunities of their "legal" peers, all because of actions over which they had no control. This is discrimination, plain and simple. For this reason, Congress should pass the DREAM Act, which would grant citizenship to undocumented youth who contribute to our society by excelling in higher education or joining the military.

Our diversity has always been and always will be America's greatest strength. It's time to end the persecution of undocumented immigrants perpetrated by right-wing extremists and live up to the American values of inclusion and opportunity for all.

About the Kettering Foundation

The Kettering Foundation is an independent, nonpartisan research organization rooted in the American tradition of cooperative research. Everything Kettering researches relates to one central question: what does it take for democracy to work as it should? Chartered as an operating corporation, Kettering does not make grants. The foundation's small staff and extensive network of associates collaborate with community organizations, government agencies, researchers, scholars, and citizens, all of whom share their experiences with us.

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