

# RETHINKING “GREENING OF HATE”

## CLIMATE EMISSIONS, IMMIGRATION, AND THE LAST FRONTIER

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There has been a recent resurgence of what Betsy Hartmann dubbed “the greening of hate” (blaming immigrants for environmental issues in the US). When immigrants move to the U.S., the argument goes, their CO<sub>2</sub> emissions increase, thereby making climate change worse. Using migration from the Lower 48 to Alaska as a model, I illustrate how this anti-immigration argument has more traction than it is generally given credit for, and might be more convincing in a different situation. Nonetheless, it is not convincing given the current pattern of climate emissions and prevailing justice considerations. Climate matters; how we treat each other matters, too.

*The sheer number of immigrants has simply overwhelmed our country's ability to continue to provide for newcomers and natives alike, and in many cases has only added to America's problems... Our population growth ... is a root cause of many of the United States' problems and presents a serious threat to our limited natural resources such as topsoil, forests, clean air and water, and healthy ecosystems.*

—Carrying Capacity Network, example of “greening of hate” argument

*It's not so much the number of people  
that matters, but how they live.*  
—Betsy Hartmann

## I. INTRODUCTION: GREENING OF HATE HISTORY AND DEFENSE

Concerns for the environment are more present than ever in national discourse and climate change continues to be a hot topic. Yet many people in public discussions are debating whether climate change is happening, instead of seriously discussing how to deal with it. Amidst this political situation, environmentalists have found unlikely allies amongst strongly conservative groups. Groups such as the Carrying Capacity Network (CCN), Negative Population Growth (NPG), Californians for Population Stabilization (CAPS), and the Federation of American Immigration Reform (FAIR) all acknowledge the threat of environmental degradation in the U.S. and they offer drastic solutions on these “controversial issues” and “difficult choices,” using “innovative approaches” (Carrying Capacity Network 2012) in a time when drastic solutions are sorely needed. At first their solutions seem in-line with a traditional American environmentalist goal: reduce population. For instance, one such group currently describes its mission in environmental terms:

Negative Population Growth (NPG) is a national nonprofit membership organization with over 30,000 members nationwide. It was founded in 1972 to educate the American public and our political leaders about the devastating effects of overpopulation on our environment, resources, and standard of living.... We believe that in order to be sustainable indefinitely our population should not exceed 150 million, its size two generations ago. (NPG)

Yet on closer inspection, these drastic solutions are extremely specific: reduce a certain kind of population, namely immigrants and people of color.

We are convinced that goal could be reached within several generations by non-coercive tax incentives to encourage parents to have not more than two children, coupled with a substantial reduction in immigration. (NPG)

Note the double-standard, with non-coercive measures being promoted

for existing citizens, while legally binding changes are proposed to reduce immigration (instead of, again, non-coercive measures). In places, the racial overtones are explicitly stated:

Fertility of the educated and prosperous is lower than for the poor and ill educated.... Hispanics are far above replacement level. That perhaps is associated with the recent arrival of many of them from high-fertility societies and with the very low work force participation rate of young Hispanic women. Fertility would not be a problem if they adopted the levels of the other groups, but this can only be accomplished through non-discriminatory policies. We must help the most fertile to become aware that high fertility has immense social consequences.... (NPG)

Betsy Hartmann first noted these racial overtones in 1994 while attending a conference on environmental law. She labeled this the “greening of hate” (Hartmann 2010). Closer inspection of some of these groups quickly reveals more than environmental concerns. The Carrying Capacity Network website, for instance, contains a section entitled “Save American Culture and Derring-Do! Arizona UP! Multiculturalists DOWN!” which includes:

Preserving the USA’s cultural carrying capacity has been a central concern of Carrying Capacity Network since CCN’s founding some twenty years ago. It is the First Principle of CCN’s 5-point program.

Practices which impair or destroy *fundamental cultural values* impair the sustainability of a nation—as the eminent Garrett Hardin asserted in his classic 1986 essay ‘Cultural Carrying Capacity’ -- just as over-use of not-easily replaceable resources is a transgression of long-term ecological carrying capacity.

Among cultural values essential to the sustainability of the United States are, for example, Freedom of Speech, Rule of Law, and *Respect for a shared Heritage and English Language*—all basic to social cohesion, national unity and national preservation. (CCN 2010, emphasis added)

Here we see that preserving a certain culture and English language is considered important for its own sake, and the Carry Capacity Network arguments against immigrants are based in social and political reasons as well as environmental reasons.

The argument against immigrants for environmental reasons has been

adapted more explicitly to climate change by Californians for Population Stabilization (CAPS), though with much more subtle racial tones. A 2009 commercial made by CAPS proclaims that we must make hard choices between allowing immigration and addressing climate change. This anti-immigration argument is the focus of this paper, and it generally proceeds as follows:

### **Anti-Immigration “Greening of Hate” Argument**

*Since U.S. residents have relatively high climate emission footprints, immigrants moving to the U.S. will increase their own emissions, thereby making climate change worse. Thus, proponents argue, this provides a powerful environmental reason to curtail immigration to the US.*

For instance, the CAPS commercial cites statistics published by the Center for Immigration Studies which states that “immigrants in the United States produce an estimated four times more CO<sub>2</sub> in the United States as they would have in their countries of origin” (Camarota 2008). Two crucial pieces of information are left out of the commercial. The first undermines the anti-immigration argument: according to the same study, immigrants (unsurprisingly) have an 18% *smaller* carbon footprint than non-immigrants in the US (Camarota 2008). Second, when calculating the numbers, one cannot simply look at local numbers (such as US emissions) if one is aiming to curtail climate change; it is crucial that one look at global emissions. This means one must account for the impact immigrants have on their country of origin, as well as their impact once they arrive in the US. The Center for Immigration Studies includes this number as well, and this time the results are striking and strongly support CAPS’s argument:

US immigrants produce annually...482 million tons more than they would have produced had they remained in their home countries.

and more shockingly:

The impact of immigration to the United States on global emissions is equal to approximately five percent of the increase in annual world-wide CO<sub>2</sub> emissions since 1980. (Camarota 2008)

So if we really do care about limiting CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, this argument does have some weight after all. In particular, if we look past the unac-

ceptable racial motivations and the tie-ins with a history of eugenics (see Hartmann 2010), we see that there actually is *some* merit to the argument itself. Immigration to the US has accounted for a five percent global increase in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions since 1980; these emissions have negative consequences that should be avoided, and curtailing immigration in the future could limit these emissions.<sup>1</sup>

To help illuminate the subtleties of this argument, I will make an analogy with a less politically charged situation: US citizens migrating from the Lower 48 states to Alaska, specifically during the two decades between 1980 and 2000. Adapted to the Alaska case, the CAPS argument proves more convincing that climate change is a *prima facie* reason to disapprove of migration to Alaska. However, I argue, the anti-immigration conclusion is ultimately overruled by more significant moral considerations than just the carbon emissions of immigrants. Pointing to possible disanalogies between the Alaska migration case and the US immigration case will show us which of the responses already put forward are effective for arguing against greening of hate, and which responses should be set aside.

### Responses

The greening of hate arguments blame population increase in the U.S. for climate change, and they draw heavily from the Malthusian scarcity of resources model (Malthus 1798) and Garrett Hardin's Life Boat ethics (Hardin 1974):

**Formula 1: Loss of resources = Population (too many people)**

Yet there has been a strong reaction against Hardin, with many environmentalists rejecting these models. As Hartmann first argues, overpopulation is no longer seen as the primary concern for many environmentalists. Instead, environmental impact is now seen by many as a combination of population and consumption (Kates 2000, Curan and Sherbinin 2004, Rosa et al. 2007, Jiang and Hardee 2011 eps. pg. 292–93). As Hartmann writes, "It's not so much the number of people that matters, but how they live" (Hartmann 2010):

**Formula 2: Loss of resources = Population x Per capita consumption**

This formula presents a different way to calculate environmental impact. As Rosa et al. write,

Population drives environmental impacts not in isolation, but as a multiplier of other drivers—consumption, in particular.... Even in those countries that are approaching or are already below replacement level fertility, this respite in population pressure is more than offset by the ideology of unfettered economic growth and high levels of consumption. (Rosa et al. 2010)

According to Negative Population Growth's own website, from 1950 to 2004 global population increased 2.5 times (from 2.5 billion to 6.5 billion). This is indeed worrisome from an environmental standpoint. However, according to the World Resources Institute, CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from fossil fuels increased 5.4 times during that period, from two to 26 billion tones. This means that overall CO<sub>2</sub> emissions are rising—not simply because we have more people, but also because, on average, each person is emitting much more CO<sub>2</sub> than fifty years ago (cf. Lambert 2004). Looking to the future, UN models predict that the world population could conceivably stabilize around 10 billion people near 2100 if global fertility rates continue to drop, while per capita consumption and emissions are still rising (United Nations 2007).

Joseph Chamie, the former director of the United Nations Population Division, even speculates that global population could actually decrease:

The downward global trend in fertility may likely converge to below-replacement levels during this century.... The world population could peak sooner and begin declining well below the 10 billion currently projected for the close of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. (Chamie 2011)

Although a world on the order of 10 billion people still puts a considerable strain on environmental resources regardless of their consumption, the fact that population could be stabilizing has led many to turn their efforts towards stabilizing consumption.

Second, Hartmann continues her response by pointing out that immigrants actually consume less than the average American citizen, and, third, that there has been no proven link between immigrants and environmental degradations such as urban sprawl and traffic jams (two major concerns of CAPS); these problems can be easily explained by non-immigrants.

Hartmann's fourth and fifth responses point out that there is no automatic connection between high income and environmental degradation (which we know by looking at other developed countries) and that there are many possible solutions to excessively high emissions. CAPS, FAIR,

CCN and others focus on immigration, when there are other much more effective and acceptable ways to solve environmental problems. “In other words, [they are copping out by saying] let’s build border fences instead of taking steps to conserve energy, switch to renewables and implement a sensible climate policy in step with European nations like Germany and Denmark that are ahead of the curve” (Hartmann 2010).

Finally, Hartmann, like many others, points to the racial, nativist motivations and historical connection with eugenics. In this paper, I will show that the solution lies within Hartmann’s fourth and fifth responses, and that the other responses are misleading.

### **Focus on Climate Change**

These six responses are initially very compelling. However, when the “greening of hate” arguments shift to climate emissions in particular, rather than environmental degradation in general, the relevant formula becomes:

#### **Formula 3: Climate emissions = Population x Per capita emissions**

What is unique about the shift of this argument to climate change is that the reasons also shift. According to CAPS: “Immigrants produce four times more carbon emissions in the US than in their home country.” Also from the CAPS website, Diana Hull, President of Californians for Population Stabilization commented,

Imagine taking close to 100 million people with a relatively small carbon footprint and quadrupling their carbon emissions overnight just by moving them to the US. That’s going to significantly impact Global Warming. Cutting immigration to the US isn’t the only thing we should do to solve the global warming problem, but stopping mass immigration, especially from low carbon use nations will go a long way towards a solution because it is a significant contributor to the problems we face. (CAPS 2009)

Now the emphasis on high current U.S. emissions, rather than high population, is used as an argument to keep people from moving to the US! What seemed the definitive response in earlier debates (focus on consumption, not population) has become the latest tool for opposing immigration (see Figure 1).

So while Hartmann’s first response (focus on consumption, not popu-

According to Greening of Hate arguments, the blame for climate emissions lies with *immigrants*:

$$\begin{aligned}
 \text{Climate emissions} &= \text{Per capita emissions} \times (\text{Population}) \\
 &= \text{Per capita emissions} \times (\text{Current citizen} + \text{Immigrant}) \\
 \text{Climate emissions} &= (\text{Per capita emissions} \times \text{Current citizen}) + (\text{Per capita emissions} \times \text{Immigrant}) \\
 &= (5 \text{ times global avg.} \times 300,000,000 \text{ people}) + (4 \text{ times global avg.} \times 35,000,000 \text{ people}) \\
 &= 6 \text{ billion tones} \qquad \qquad \qquad + \underline{.6 \text{ billion tones}}
 \end{aligned}$$

Alternatively, one could blame climate emissions on *the emissions of current U.S. citizens*:

$$\begin{aligned}
 \text{Climate emissions} &= \text{Per capital emissions} \times (\text{Population}) \\
 &= \text{Per capital emissions} \times (\text{Current citizen} + \text{Immigrant}) \\
 \text{Climate emissions} &= (\text{Per capita emissions} \times \text{Current Citizen}) + (\text{Per capita emissions} \times \text{Immigrant}) \\
 &= (5 \text{ times global avg.} \times 300,000,000 \text{ people}) + (4 \text{ times global avg.} \times 35,000,000 \text{ people}) \\
 &= \underline{6 \text{ billion tones}} \qquad \qquad \qquad + .6 \text{ billion tones}
 \end{aligned}$$

*Figure 1. Shifting the Blame* | The greening of the hate argument directs one to blame immigrants for a problem that US citizens caused. By doing so, it obscures more promising solutions, such as reducing US citizen emissions, and diminishes potential benefits of immigration, such as decreasing global population while stabilizing US population.

lation) still holds, this new focus only fuels the greening of hate argument. Hartmann’s second response (immigrants consume less than the average American) is being acknowledged, but again is being used as a premise in the new argument—they consume less than other Americans, but more than they did before they moved to the US. Thirdly, if the data is correct, there really is a link between immigration and one environmental problem: climate emissions. So Hartmann’s third response is now false.

Finally, even if there is a historical connection with eugenics, and questionable motives (the sixth response), that alone cannot undermine the logic of the argument. As Frederick Meyerson writes about this issue, “Discussing immigration policy does not make one a racist, even if racists also discuss that issue” (Meyerson 2004, 67). We have to evaluate the argument on its own terms. And on its own terms, it appears pretty convincing: when people move to the US, their climate emissions tend to increase. We are trying to cut down climate emissions as much as possible, so, all things being equal, people should not be moving to the US. This argument paints a grim picture, and as I will demonstrate with an analogy, the implications of such an argument are actually even worse than what is stated here. In the end, however, Hartmann’s fourth and fifth responses



will point to the solution: it turns out that *not all things are equal* and, most importantly, climate change considerations are not the *only* issues on the table at the moment.

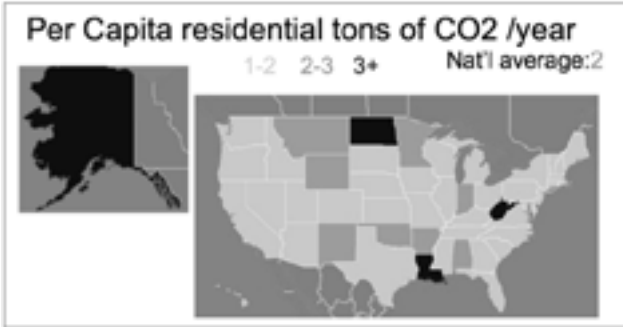
## II. COUNTEREXAMPLE: CARRYING CAPACITY OF ALASKA

Whether CAPS offers a *prima facie* reason to oppose immigration to the US is contingent on the numbers. That part cannot be decided in the abstract. I illustrate this with an analogy to a different scenario of migration and emissions. Consider the surge of migration from the Lower 48 states to Alaska during the decades of 1980 to 2000. From purely a climate change perspective, what was the impact of this migration? Should environmentalists have supported it?

From 1980 to 2000, the population of Alaska increased over fifty percent. According to the US Census, 402,000 people lived in Alaska in 1980, growing to 627,000 in 2000.<sup>2</sup> That is twice the population increase of the US during that time (226,500,000 to 281,400,000, which is a twenty-four percent increase) (Gurney, et al 2009). Like in the US case, the increase was due to a combination of fertility and migration. However, according to a report put forward by the state of Alaska, “the vast majority of all persons living in Alaska at the time of the census in 2000 were migrants to Alaska. Only 38.1% of Alaskans were born in the state” (Williams 2004, 14).<sup>3</sup> In comparison, eighty-nine percent of all people in the US were born in the US (Williams 2004, 14).

So what does this mean for calculating migrant emissions? In some ways, it points to a disanalogy between the US and Alaska cases. The Alaska population is marked by significant turnover, which means that thousands of Alaskan residents are leaving the state while others are arriving or returning (Hunsinger and Howell 2012). In contrast, US residents are not leaving the US at such high rates. However, for the purposes of understanding the greening of hate argument, our key question is whether climate emissions in Alaska went up from 1980 to 2000 and how much of this increase could be attributed to people living in Alaska who, under different migration patterns, might have been living elsewhere.

In this Alaska scenario, note further that we can remove race as a factor in the discussion in the Alaska case, as this migration has been primarily due to white American citizens moving from the Lower 48 to a majority white population. We can also set aside international immigration, since it represents less than six percent of the migration figures, and



*Figure 2. Analogy with Alaska* | When Americans migrate to Alaska from other states, they triple their residential CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, increasing them on average from 2.0 to 6.9 tons per year. The state with the next highest residential emissions is Wyoming with 3.6 tons. Both are above the national average of 2.0 tons. I compiled this map using data collected by the Vulcan Project (Gurney et. al 2009)

so set aside the issues around international borders, language, culture, etc. (Williams 2004).<sup>4</sup>

From purely a climate emissions perspective, should an environmentalist have supported this migration? To begin, let's apply Formula 3 to see the effect of people moving up to Alaska on net Alaskan emissions. Since global emissions, not local emissions, affect global climate change, we must look at the overall net change in emissions. How much would people be emitting if they had stayed in their original state during that time? The average residential rate of per capita emissions in the US in 2002 was two tons per capita per year, with almost all states falling between 1.5–2.5 tons per year (Gurney, et al. 2009, see Figure 2). So if these migrants had remained in the Lower 48, their emissions would have been, on average, two tons per year. The Alaska rate, however, is over three times this, at 6.9 tons per capita per year—substantially higher than any other state (the next lowest state was Wyoming at 3.6 tons).<sup>5</sup>

**(Formula 3 revisited) climate emissions = population x per capita emissions**

If we calculate residential climate emissions using 2002 net emissions, then all the residents in Alaska in 2002 increased global climate emissions by:

Personal emissions = 627,000 people x 4.9 tons CO<sub>2</sub> per capita/per year = 3,072,300 tons of CO<sub>2</sub> *per year*

That comes to an additional 3 million tons of CO<sub>2</sub> in 2002 alone versus an equivalent number of Americans living in the Lower 48. When we consider that the vast majority of Alaskans moved there from another state, this was a huge increase in CO<sub>2</sub>. This additional source of emissions comes, not surprisingly, from transportation and aircraft usage, since the vast majority of food, fuel, products, building materials, and people are shipped or flown to and around Alaska.

It is important to note that if you do not count the aircraft figure, Alaska residential per capita emissions would fall to 1.8 tons per year, *below* the national average. So there is little Alaskans are doing in their day-to-day life that emits more carbon dioxide than the average American—which is somewhat surprising, given the heating costs. Rather, it is simply living in a state that depends on imports that causes the change—along with the fact that Alaskans travel extensively by plane due to the lack of road and rail connections and the size of the state. So just by moving to Alaska, migrants contributed to additional carbon emissions. On the face of it, this would have been an environmental reason to discourage, if not outright oppose, the waves of migration.

Some might object by noting that it is not entirely clear which of these extra emissions are due to migrants and which are due to local residents in remote areas. There are variations of emissions across different areas of the state, with more remote areas such as Nome and Dillingham relying much more heavily on aircraft; these areas also receive fewer migrants than the more populated (and lower emitting) Anchorage and Fairbanks.<sup>6</sup> Nonetheless, every community in Alaska has emissions above the national average. As people have moved to Alaska, this has historically raised their CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and these extra emissions are hard to change. Anyone currently living or moving to Alaska contributes additional CO<sub>2</sub> *on top of* the kinds of residential emissions in the Lower 48.

Some might further object, arguing that Alaskans could reduce their emissions further. Like other Americans, Alaskans could drive less, and bike (or ski) more, use more fuel-efficient cars (though it is still difficult to find efficient four-wheel drive vehicles), use more efficient lighting in the winter and so on. All of this is absolutely true, and most likely will be necessary to fight climate change. Yet, as I mentioned above, in terms of

day-to-day living the average Alaskan produces *less* CO<sub>2</sub> than the average American. So, while Alaskans still can and should make important environmental changes to lower their emissions like any other Americans, these types of changes would have little effect on the emissions that are due to living in Alaska. That is, these changes would not themselves counter the effect of migrating to Alaska.

So couldn't Alaskans work to reduce their extra (location-induced) 4.9 tons of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions as well? This might be quite feasible, actually. There are movements to grow more food locally, thereby importing less, such as the Renewable Energy Alaska Project. Alaskans could take fewer trips out of state, or there could be an increase in the fuel-efficiency of both in-state bush planes and out-of-state airplanes. To the extent that these kinds of changes are implemented, the effects of migration *per se* are lessened, which makes the Alaska example less striking. Indeed, this actually supports my claim that whether or not one should oppose im/migration on environmental grounds depends on the numbers: What percentage of people are migrants, and by how much are their emissions increasing? Are emissions coming primarily from migrants or from locally born residents? Can we lower those emissions, or are they fixed?

Here we have examined a scenario in which people moved from within the US to other parts of the US during a specific time period in order to pursue a life in the Last Frontier. The majority of these people were not desperate or destitute, they were majority white, and they left families behind (families that they fly to visit on a regular basis, emitting yet more CO<sub>2</sub>). With this move most of them more than tripled their climate emissions. If you consider climate change to be a grave threat, and then, indeed, there would have been *prima facie* reasons to oppose this migration to Alaska.<sup>7</sup>

With this analogy, I have shown that the basic structure of the anti-immigration argument is strong. Yet there is still this feeling that in the anti-immigration case, something has gone horribly wrong. What are the key differences in the two cases that will allow us to pinpoint what is wrong with the anti-immigration case? What are the important disanalogies between the Alaska migration and US immigration?

The first, and most important, disanalogy is the false dichotomy and distribution of blame that Hartmann mentions.<sup>8</sup>

## Blame

The extra Alaska emissions due to air transportation have been extreme. The state is geographically distant from the Lower 48, the majority of the state is not connected by road or rail, and the state imports the vast majority of food, fuel, and other consumables. Although many people can and do supplement their food supply by living off the land in Alaska, the land cannot support all 700,000 people currently living there. So adding people has historically added to climate emissions.

In contrast, in the US case, the base level of two tons per year can be reduced. (As mentioned above, these reductions could apply to the Alaskan base residential emissions, as well, but not to the *difference* between Alaska and the Lower 48, which is at issue.) As stated earlier, the Center for Immigration studies calculates that immigrants in the U.S. actually emit less CO<sub>2</sub> than existing US citizens (Camarota 2008). So if existing US citizens reduce their emissions *to the levels of those immigrants*, they would save 900 million tons per year of global emission, more than compensating for their neighbors' increase. And there is room for even more improvement—in Japan, for instance, residential emissions are around .5 tons (World Resources Institute: Earthtrends). Of course, for Japan that comes with its own tragic costs of using nuclear power. Still, the relatively low emissions in Germany, Japan, and other developed countries strongly suggest that, with drastic structural changes, the US could reach lower emissions without “sacrificing” a good life—though this would likely mean curtailing US sprawl, possibly introducing more nuclear power, and almost certainly a change in our idea of a good life. These changes could conceivably allow the US to reduce emissions enough to accommodate immigrants.

So the real questions here are: *By how much can US residents reduce their carbon emissions and with what sorts of consequences?* Those who oppose immigration often eventually mention the possibility of reducing US emissions, but not as a feasible one. For instance, Robert Chapman writes:

The developed nations wonder out loud, “Can we keep up with the increased growth in population fuelled primarily by immigration?” It would seem highly unlikely, unless, of course, we adopt lifestyles consistent with severe asceticism. (Chapman 2000, 192)

Yet if the greening of hate argument is to be taken literally, as its propo-

nents suggest, then we should look at the numbers, and just at the numbers. By this logic, not only should immigrants not be allowed to move to the US, but U.S. citizens should be forced to move to Mexico (and other low-emitting countries). If this sounds absurd, as it does to Chapman and the makers of the CAPS commercial, then they must recognize that there are more considerations in play here than simply current carbon emissions.

These additional considerations include consideration of a lifestyle and the promise of the American Dream. They include the freedom to choose certain aspects about one's own life. And they must include justice issues, such as reparations for damages due to past emissions, as well as the possibility of curtailing future carbon emissions and global carbon emissions, not just present, local emissions.

So the first disanalogy between the US immigration case and the Alaska migration case is that for Alaskans, the increase of emissions is far more fixed due to the required imports and air travel. In this case, the most reasonable way to reduce these extra emissions down to the US per-capita average is to reduce population. For the US immigration case, however, there is room to reduce the per-capita emissions of both the non-immigrant and immigrant populations, which means that reducing population is not the only solution. This leads us to the second disanalogy between the US and Alaska cases. Climate emissions provide only *prima facie* reasons to oppose migration and immigration: other considerations of justice and overall quality of life might trump these, even for an environmentalist. I will turn to that second disanalogy now.

### Justice

Lower 48ers have more choices than most immigrants. They can stay in their home state and probably live a very good life there, rather than move to Alaska. In fact, most Lower 48ers make this choice.<sup>9</sup> The immigrants, on the other hand, are often in difficult political or economic situations in their counties of origin. There must be some recognition of the causes of those situations and their possible solutions if a just policy is to be reached.

Building off of Hartmann's fourth and fifth points above on quality of life and high standards of living, Jessica Leann Urban points out that environmental degradation is caused more by political instability and unjust political structures, rather than just increased numbers of people.

Scapegoating racialized and gendered ‘Others’ for the ills of the world not only absolves members of more structurally privileged groups in the USA from self-interrogation and personal responsibility, but also colludes with white supremacy, hetero-patriarchy, classism and xenophobia, as well as with the consequences that result. I adamantly agree with Hartmann who, as a member of the Committee on Women, Population and the Environment (CWPE), argues that the “root causes of poverty, environmental degradation and political instability lie in unjust and inequitable social and economic systems—not in women’s fertility,” and not in immigration across the US/ Mexico border. (Urban 2007, 252)

The implication from Urban is that the environmental and social problems we are facing now do not stem just from how many people there are, or even just how much they consume, but rather also from how those people treat each other. These authors emphasize that the application of Malthusian scarcity models are misplaced.

One possible objection to Urban’s reasoning is that *there is a population figure at which Malthusian overcrowding and scarcity of resources will make it difficult for people to treat each other well*. One of my claims in this paper is that the numbers do matter: the numbers we are looking at now (seven billion worldwide, 300 million nationwide) are not enough to cause Malthusian problems in the US, but there is some theoretical number that would make a fair allocation of resources nearly impossible, regardless of by how much we reduce consumption, thereby forcing us to treat each other in ways that would otherwise be completely unjust.

For instance, if our current population were so high that even absolute minimum per capita emissions (such as breathing) would lead to dangerous levels of carbon dioxide, then we should consider immediately reducing the population by whatever means necessary. This is, of course, the extreme case; even before then we could find ourselves with dangerously high emissions that would require us to reduce the population in ways that we ordinarily would not consider, such as forced sterilization. However, we have not yet reached such extreme levels. Analogously, if we were starving, we might consider eating the family dog for dinner. However, if I have twenty dollars in my pocket, then I go to the grocery store down the street. *There is an alternative way out*. Similarly, there are several alternatives for reducing both total carbon emissions (such as changing infrastructure) and population levels (incentives for smaller families) that are significantly less morally ambiguous than closing off

borders to immigrants in need, or legalizing an “us/them” mentality that undermines our ability to treat each other with respect. Thus, in responding to the greening of hate, it seems less fruitful to reject Malthusian or Hardin arguments outright, as Hartmann does; a more effective strategy would be to acknowledge them in theory and instead emphasize that we are not actually in those “life-boat” situations.

In addition, in the case of climate change, certain additional puzzles arise. We have to remember that we are balancing different sets of injustices. There is nothing inherently immoral about climate change itself; rather, we are trying to avoid its effects. In addition to the non-anthropocentric effects (e.g., on species diversity), the anthropocentric effects are about justice: displaced people, famine, and severe weather leading to the destruction of cities and rural areas. This has two implications. First, if the climate emissions of the US have caused people in other countries to have to immigrate to survive, then the US plausibly has a moral obligation to accommodate them. Second, which is my point here, and as Henry Shue points out in another context (Shue 1999), we should not let the current climate injustices (mistreating immigrants) outweigh the future injustices that we are trying to avoid (flooding, drought, and displacement).

Campbell takes this route as well, and details out the exact number of immigrants that justice would require the US to accept before it outweighs the climate emission considerations. This number, according to him, is still much lower than current immigration figures. That is why, to counter Chapman’s argument, one still needs the first response above about blaming the wrong party.

We should keep in mind the context of the environmental goal. We want to lower global carbon emissions, *all while balancing personal freedoms and justice*. And that later point is the key point. Yes, we have hard decisions to make. The choices put forward by the “greening of hate” arguments are real. It is where we choose to “make sacrifices” that differentiates those of us environmentalists who are for immigration from those who are against.

### **Positive Consequences of Immigration**

Some respond to the greening of hate by noting that the overall impact in the US might very well be to reduce emissions, if immigrants join a movement to lower overall national emission. For instance, immigrants might get their new higher emission US neighbors to mimic their own



(relatively) lower lifestyles. It is important to remember this venue for change is possible in theory, however unlikely.

At the same time, immigrants have many other positive effects on the economy and culture. While these have been widely recognized elsewhere, I want to highlight two in particular. The first potential effect is on culture. A welcoming attitude towards immigrants and positive experiences with new neighbors could help foster and support what Roldan Muradian calls a “multicultural and open society” (Muradian 2005). Anti-immigration policies could potentially foster the opposite values, supporting a society that is suspicious and closed to new people and new experiences. If studies reveal that these effects do indeed follow, then this would suggest a substantial benefit of having more immigrants, and a drawback from limiting immigration.

The second positive effect is more directly focused on large-scale environmental concerns: redistributing current global population in more environmentally and economically sustainable ways. The US population *would be declining if not for immigration*. Fred Eibel of the Sierra Club splinter group SUPS cites this as further support for restricting immigration:

Overall US fertility is slightly less than replacement level and has not exceeded replacement level since 1972.... Population has been a concern of environmentalists since the first Earth Day in 1970. Had we stabilized immigration at replacement numbers in 1970, US population would have stabilized at 255 million in 2020 and then gradually decreased to an environmentally sustainable level. (Eibel)

As Eibel notes, without immigration, US population would have actually decreased, as it has in most other developed countries. However, economic issues arise with a decreasing population. The US could have been facing severe problems such as those in Japan and Scandinavia (Bermingham 2001).<sup>10</sup> These problems are due primarily to imbalanced age distribution, with too few young people. The US is already facing some of those problems of an imbalanced age distribution because of the baby-boomer generation. It would have been even more severe without immigrants. For instance, undocumented immigrants are currently contributing significantly to social security, even though they will never be able to collect on that money. Although not entirely fair to them, this illustrates one of the many ways immigrants help balance out the population deficit issues in the US.

Some object to using immigrants to rebalance the US population, but they object on the kind of cultural grounds mentioned at the beginning of the paper, not on environmental grounds. Indeed, there is some indication that balancing the workforce with immigrants can improve environmental impact. Through modeling running through different scenarios, Brantley Liddle found:

The savings rate in the [model] run with migration does not fall as much since migrants mitigate aging, and the [wellbeing] level rises in the run with migration because the higher savings rates translates into a larger investment pool and more spending on environmental quality upgrading (Liddle 2002 pg 189).

So as younger people get added to the workforce, society is able to invest in transitions to more environmentally friendly practices. This benefit comes without adding to the global population increase.

More generally, since local population increases and decreases vary across different regions in the world, immigration and emigration can be tools for redistributing the strains on environmental resources (Jiang and Hardee 2011, 306). Yes, there is higher consumption in the US and higher per capita CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, but there is also good access to clean water, soil, and infrastructure to maintain higher environmental standards more generally. So whether immigrants' moving to higher consumption countries translates to a higher global environmental impact depends on the specifics, and cannot be decided in the abstract, or just by current CO<sub>2</sub> emission numbers. Thus, the greening of hate may be a good reason to limit migration in some situations, but not in others.

Additionally, supporting immigration to the US is potentially a great way to *reduce global population*. It has been well-documented that as infant mortality decreases, so do fertility rates (Barnum 1988, Talwalker 1981). Thus is it reasonable to assume that as people move to the US, they will have fewer children than they would have otherwise; lower fertility rates for immigrants support this speculation (Lindstrom and Saucedo 2002). One of the most vocal organizations against immigration mentioned above, Californians for Populations Stabilization (CAPS), claims to aim to reduce population for environmental reasons. However, by focusing on California's population, they miss the bigger picture of global population and how their measures might be facilitating an increase of population somewhere else. Combining these two consequences—main-

taining US population while reducing global population—solves many problems at once. By redistributing existing populations, we can achieve the environmental benefits of reducing global population while avoiding the economic problems of reducing the population of any one country too quickly.

Thus, we have our responses to the greening of hate argument. *If* we can achieve the necessary goal of reducing emissions for all US residents, then we can avoid the problems presented by the greening of hate argument and instead see immigration as a *solution* to global climate emissions and global overpopulation.

#### IV. IMPLICATION:

If the logic of the greening of hate argument feels persuasive, that is because it is: “Per capita emissions in the US are currently the highest in the world. If more people move here, then climate change will get worse. So,” the argument concludes, “the US should have stricter immigration policies to reduce immigration.” However, if we step back and evaluate this argument, we can see ways to respond to it.

First, the logical conclusion is actually different from what is stated above: we arrive at a *prima facie* reason why people should not move to the US. However, that reason could be trumped by more important justice considerations. The most powerful stem from obligations owed by the US government and its citizens to climate change refugees, Iraqi translators, and others who have been put at risk by US actions. A less pressing but still present justice consideration is that of people wanting to pursue a better life and the American Dream. A third justice issue is that it is not clear who, morally, should be allowed to decide the immigration issue. If the problem is caused mainly by US citizens, then the US government and US citizens do not seem the right agents to decide about whether immigrants should increase their carbon emissions. Rather, the people deliberating on whether to move perhaps should be making that moral decision (cf. Shue 1999). In addition, even if new legislation limiting immigration is not racially motivated, it could contribute to divisions along racial lines, further undermine a sense of community with people who are labeled “other,” and obscure important possible solutions to climate change by shifting the blame (cf. Urban 2007, Muradian 2005).

The second response is that, as the analogy with Alaskan migration

shows us, if U.S. climate emissions were fixed, then the anti-immigrant argument would indeed be more persuasive. However, US emissions are not fixed, which undermines the anti-immigrant argument significantly. Thus, one of Hartmann's original responses to "greening of hate" is still a powerful one: blaming immigrants is a red herring that detracts from the real issue of the excessive emissions of current Americans.

The CAPS commercial mentions hard choices, implying that current Americans need to make the hard choice of whether to refuse immigrants entry or allow climate emissions to continue to rise. However, this is a false dichotomy. A more accurate hard choice is between refusing immigrants entry and maintaining an over-consumptive lifestyle. Put this way, the environmental choice still seems uncomfortable, but less morally ambiguous.

#### NOTES

- 1 It is worth noting that the text of the Center for Immigration Studies report is less anti-immigration than the commercial based on it. The report states, "It is certainly not our intention to imply that immigrants are particularly responsible for global warming.... But to simply dismiss the large role that continuing high levels of immigration play in increasing U.S. and world-wide CO<sub>2</sub> emissions is not only intellectually dishonest, it is also counter-productive. One must acknowledge a problem before a solution can be found." (Camarotra 2008, 8–9).
- 2 The years from 1980–2000 cover a population boom in Alaska that followed the 1970s population boom during the pipeline construction. Urban areas such as Anchorage and Fairbanks were particularly impacted by migrants (Williams 2004). I am focusing on this period since we have data on both population and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.
- 3 By 2010 this had increased to 39%, compared to a 59% national average for other states (Hunsinger and Howell 2012, 8).
- 4 There is still the issue that white people are moving onto native land, an issue that is prominent in Alaskan politics. In addition, there is a noteworthy impact on Alaskan culture due to international immigration. Considering these factors would move the analogy in yet another direction.
- 5 I focus on CO<sub>2</sub> for simplicity, although other gases are relevant to the discussion. I also focus on residential numbers, since many of the gross numbers include commercial and industry. Since Alaska, Wyoming, and West Virginia are major energy exporters, their emissions were two to three times the national average. However, arguably, this is not being consumed by the residents of the state, so should be distributed across the end users; thus, it was not

included in the calculations here. This also accounts for some differences between these figures and the Center for Immigration Studies statistics.

- 6 Writing about their research of Arctic populations, researchers note, “The populations of Arctic Alaska [including Kotzebue, Nome, and Bethel] show much variability. Year-to-year fluctuations are dominated by net migration” (Hamilton et al. 2011, 123). As people move around to various rural communities, this has a huge impact on those communities—especially given how small they are. However, they also note that births are the primary driving factor in population increase. “Population dominates other predictors of electricity use, which is noteworthy for two reasons. First, due to migration, population in these small places tends to be more volatile than in larger communities to the south [Hamilton and Mitiguy 2009; Huskey and Southcott 2010]. Second, natural increase, when not offset by migration, exerts pressure for population growth... Population dynamics thus will play a central role in the sustainability of many Arctic communities” (Hamilton et al 2011, 124). Although out-of-state migrants are not the driving factor here, we do see a situation in which the sheer number of people living in and moving to an area affects climate change in striking ways. The authors note the irony here, given that these communities are some of the hardest hit by changes in global average temperature.
- 7 Many migrants move for military service or to fulfill desperately needed health care positions. To the extent that these moves are involuntary or provide moral benefit, then one cannot simply claim that the migrants had a moral obligation to remain in the lower emitting state. Again, this detail in the scenario supports my overall thesis that there are other factors involved besides climate emissions, even for environmentalists.
- 8 There is another major point of disanalogy with the U.S. immigration case. Many move to Alaska to pursue good jobs in a growing local economy—an economy fueled by oil development, thereby actively contributing to climate emissions in a more direct way. Here I am reminded of a headline in the *Onion*, the satire newspaper, which proclaimed “Millions of barrels of oil safely reached port in Environmental Catastrophe” (Onion 2010). So while I have been focusing on residential emissions, the industrial emissions are also going up as people move to Alaska with the aim of oil development. These should not be attributed to the individuals, but should be counted in the overall global picture of emissions. The *Onion* article continues: “In what may be the greatest environmental disaster in the nation’s history, the supertanker TI Oceania docked without incident at the Louisiana Offshore Oil Port Monday and successfully unloaded 3.1 million barrels of dangerous crude oil into the United States...From there, experts confirmed, the oil will likely spread across the entire country’s infrastructure and commit unforetold damage to its lakes, streams, and air.”

- 9 See note 7.
- 10 US fertility rates are below replacement level. Immigration keeps the population from decreasing, although the US currently gets more immigrants than needed for that function. The US also gets more than enough immigrants to stabilize the working age population, though not enough immigrants to rebalance optimal age distribution (Bermingham 2001, 362).

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