

Immigrants are the core of America

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Since 1776 the United States of America has been stabilized by the pillars of freedom, liberty, justice, democracy, and human rights. Our society wouldn't exist without these fundamental pillars, but they are not our foundation. However, the foundation of our country isn't the American Revolution, the Bill of Rights, the Constitution, nor the Declaration of Independence. It is in fact immigration.

Our foundation was laid by those who left their homes in search of a better life elsewhere. And unless someone here is one-hundred percent Native American, than each of you can trace your family history back to immigrants.

From the mass immigration of the Irish in the early nineteenth century, to today's arrivals in the twenty-first century, the issue of immigration has always presented controversy among politicians and citizens. They have been blamed for stealing Americans' jobs, increasing crime rates, and preventing prosperity and productivity across the board (Griswold). Current presidential candidate Donald Trump has even used immigrants as a scapegoat, openly supporting these claims. However, a closer look at the facts reveals otherwise.

In regards to immigrants stealing jobs, they actually do the complete opposite. According to Daniel Griswold, the director of Center for Trade Policy Studies at Cato Institute, "Immigrants tend to fill jobs that Americans cannot or will not fill...in such high-skilled fields as medicine, physics and computer science, but also...hotels and restaurants, domestic service, construction and light manufacturing"(Griswold). Immigrants are also 30% more likely to start their own business, therefore creating their own jobs and additional jobs for American workers (Furman).

When it comes to crime, gang activity, etc. immigrants "are less likely than the native population to commit violent crimes or to be incarcerated"(Riley). The rate of incarceration is actually the lowest for immigrants. In the end, according to an FBI report, violent crime rate has actually declined 48% in the last twenty-five years (Riley).

Blame has also been laid on immigrants for causing "overpopulation," which isn't fair either. America has an annual population growth of 1%, which is below our average growth rate of the last century. Immigrants actually help revitalize demographically declining areas of the country. New York City wouldn't be what it is today without its immigrant population and influence.

Immigrants have been stereotyped as criminals and menial laborers, when they really contribute to American culture, enrich our society, and enhance our influence in the world. They represent

33% of engineers, 27% of mathematicians, and 24% of physical scientists (Furman). Following the tragedy of 9/11 the immigrants helped save the American economy by continuing to travel to the States for vacations, business trips, and to continue their education. With millions of people in our borders from every corner of the globe, the United States has had more opportunities to strengthen foreign relations, and have opportunities to learn from someone else (Griswold).

At the end of the day it comes down to this: The United States is like a house of cards. Pull out a card from the bottom, and it all comes crumbling down. Remove immigrants from the American equation, and the country falls.