



White nationalist Stephen Miller is Fox News' newest immigration expert

NIKKI MCCANN RAMIREZ

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Leaked emails have shown Miller embracing white nationalist ideology

Former Trump senior adviser Stephen Miller finds himself a leech without a host, and Fox News is perfectly content to let him latch on. As the network scrambles, Fox has run back to more familiar territory: fearmongering about immigration. And Miller — who has a documented affinity for white nationalism and was a key figure behind the Trump administration's family separation policy — has fit in comfortably at Fox.

Miller has appeared on Fox weekday programming at least 10 times in 2021, according to a review by Media Matters, in almost every instance as part of segments fearmongering about President Joe Biden's immigration plans. Miller's near-weekly recent appearances on Fox have served as a regular drumbeat of lies and distortions about undocumented immigration in the United States, with an almost exclusive focus on attacking immigrants from Latin America.

Miller has claimed that the Biden administration is prioritizing the protection of "hardened criminals," defended the Trump administration's catastrophic child separation policy, claimed that undocumented immigrants are infiltrating American high schools and endangering American children, and accused the Biden administration of enabling human trafficking.

These are lies, and they have been repeatedly debunked by experts, who have pointed out that noncitizens do not commit crimes at higher rates than native-born citizens. A study by the Cato Institute examining 2015 arrest rates in Texas found that noncitizens were less likely to be perpetrators of criminal activity than native-born citizens. Fox News itself admitted in a 2017 op-ed that it was difficult to find evidence of an illegal immigrant crime wave. Immigration officials have also been explicit in their intent to continue investigating and prosecuting allegations of human trafficking and sexual abuse.

Miller's appearances on Fox have served the dual role of propagating distortions about the Biden administration's immigration policy and excusing the actions of Miller and the Trump administration. On the March 4 edition of *The Ingraham Angle*, Miller claimed that the Trump administration had created a "safe, secure, humane border" and that immigrants were apprehended and returned "safely" to their home countries. (Under the Trump administration, deaths of migrants in U.S. custody increased dramatically.)

In a January 21 appearance, Miller claimed that changes made by the Biden administration to Trump's immigration policy had relegated native-born Americans to the status of "second class citizens" and permitted immigrants to "do whatever [they] want, including committing crimes against U.S. citizens."

In a February 11 appearance on *Fox & Friends*, Miller accused the Biden administration of creating a public health crisis by releasing immigrants with COVID-19 into American communities. The claim that migrants are bringing diseases into the country, also made by Fox host Jeanine Pirro, is a common anti-immigrant trope among white nationalists that was previously cited by Miller during his time in the Trump administration as a pretext to close U.S. borders. A study by the Cato Institute found no correlation between COVID-19 infections and the immigrant share of a country's population, and a recent report by NBC News and Telemundo found a lower positivity rate among immigrants released from custody at the border in Brownsville, Texas, than in the overall county

Appearing on the March 2 edition of Fox's *Tucker Carlson Tonight*, Miller fearmongered that immigrants "pretending to be minors" are "just saying they're 17 to get into the country," and "some of those adults are going to end up in high schools around America. ... This is a fundamental safety issue for America's children."

Fox's increasing reliance on Miller as "the most deeply informed person ... on the question of immigration," as Carlson described him above, means the network's audience is being informed by Miller's well-documented fondness for white nationalist ideology, which was reported through leaked emails by the Southern Poverty Law Center in 2019.

In a series of emails disclosed by the SPLC between Miller and former Breitbart editor Katie McHugh, Miller discussed conspiracy theories about immigration, including referencing the white nationalist "great replacement" conspiracy theory that white people are being systematically "replaced" by non-white immigrants. He suggested that evidence for the claim was being suppressed "because elites wanted to keep the country in the dark about immigration." The SPLC discussed the "source material that has influenced Miller's visions of policy":

That source material, as laid out in [Miller's] emails to Breitbart, includes white nationalist websites, a "white genocide"-themed novel in which Indian men rape white women, xenophobic conspiracy theories and eugenics-era immigration laws that Adolf Hitler lauded in "Mein Kampf."

Miller's perspective on race and immigration across the emails is repetitious. When discussing crime, which he does scores of times, Miller focuses on offenses committed by nonwhites. On immigration, he touches solely on the perspective of severely limiting or ending nonwhite immigration to the United States. Hatewatch was unable to find any examples of Miller writing sympathetically or even in neutral tones about any person who is nonwhite or foreign-born.

The nativist ideology Miller so gleefully circulated to colleagues and news outlets meshes perfectly with Fox News' coverage of immigration. In one message to McHugh in September 2015, Miller praised a *Tucker Carlson Tonight* segment criticizing Republican senators who appeared too sympathetic to asylum seekers and refugees as "a good chance" to attack pro-immigration talking points. The network in turn celebrated Miller's immigration work attacking immigration under the Trump administration.

In his emails, Miller also shared content from white nationalist sites VDare and American Renaissance while previewing the rhetoric of some Fox News hosts who have avidly pushed the "great replacement" conspiracy theory and other racist talking points. Prime-time host Tucker Carlson, for example, has become Fox's most prominent mouthpiece for white nationalism by

decrying immigration and diversity for “radically and permanently changing our country.” And in 2019, Carlson’s comments on Indigenous Peoples’ Day and Columbus Day directly mirrored the language of American Renaissance’s Jared Taylor, a well-known white supremacist.

Enabled by Fox, Miller and the network’s prime-time lineup have succeeded in creating a steady broadcast of racist tropes regarding undocumented immigration. By hosting the architect of Trump’s family separation policy to fan the flames of xenophobia while its own hosts portray immigrants as criminals, gang members, child traffickers, and abusers, Fox is once again spreading white nationalist talking points and buttressing a climate that endangers migrants and the people around them.