

Contextualizing Sanctuary Cities:
A Descriptive Analysis into America's "Most
Welcoming Spaces"

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Abstract

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Sanctuary cities are jurisdictions that implement various local-level policies limiting cooperation with federal immigration authorities. Inspired by the literature exploring the historical and legal process by which they emerge, this study is motivated to expand this topic into analyzing the descriptive characteristics that contextualize sanctuary cities and compare the places that adopt sanctuary policies opposed those that do not. Building on the group threat literature that explores how racial prejudice manifests into immigration policy, this paper complicates these theoretical assumptions by considering how the combination of demographic characteristics, population opinion, and government structure are associated with sanctuary status. Using a novel comprehensive dataset of contemporary sanctuary cities, the findings produced statistically significant results suggesting that sanctuary cities are situated in a complex relationship of liberal political ideologies, positive population attitudes towards immigrants, and a government structure that is normally incentivized to legislate in favor of progressive policies.

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INTRODUCTION

Sanctuary cities are commonly known as jurisdictions that limit cooperation with federal immigration authorities. The concept generally centered around positive contexts of reception, or pro-immigrant stances in the form of inclusive policies and resolutions. These hold both symbolic and legal merit with the intent of securing the livelihoods of immigrant communities residing within these jurisdictions, as well as making these cities more welcoming and inclusive. This study is inspired by the existing literature that examines the historical and legal process by which sanctuary cities emerge. However, this project is motivated by the observation that there was little scholarship that studied the city-level descriptive characteristics that contextualize sanctuary cities. This analysis helps to shed insight into what differentiates the places that adopt these pro-immigrant stances and those that do not. To achieve this end, this paper presents a unique empirical analysis considering demographic characteristics, government structure, and population opinion that compares sanctuary and non-sanctuary cities during their reemergence in 2017 following the 2016 presidential election.

Sanctuary cities were first introduced in the United States during the 1980s Central American refugee crisis (Bau, 1994). Their presence in the public consciousness has come and gone, usually re-emerging during periods of political contentiousness (Lai and Lasch, 2017). More recently, sanctuary cities were reintroduced to political debate during the 2016 US presidential race when then-candidate (and later president) Donald Trump made them central to his anti-immigrant campaign. His platform largely centered on perpetuating misinformation that sanctuary cities were unlawful jurisdictions interfering with federal actions to detain “dangerous criminal aliens”, among other claims (Lasch, 2016; Lasch et. al., 2018; Collingwood and O’Brien, 2019). Following President Trump’s election victory and subsequent inauguration in

2017, dozens of cities across the US publicly adopted sanctuary status or reaffirmed or expanded already existing sanctuary policies, usually in a visible display of defiance against the administration's inflammatory rhetoric (Collingwood and O'Brien, 2019). There is conflicting scholarship debating the efficacy of sanctuary cities in providing meaningful legal protections for immigrants, but there is also a substantial portion of literature that justifies their significance via the improvement of the day-to-day life of the community (Darling and Bauder, 2016; Lasch et al., 2018; Collingwood and O'Brien, 2019). Sanctuary cities create a sense of community solidarity that is motivated to welcome and include immigrants, effectively creating a symbolic and equally tangible sense of security – and belonging – among an otherwise vulnerable population.

The sanctuary city literature needs expanded scholarship because they lack uniformity as a concept as well as in its historical application. Comparatively, definitions of sanctuary as well as the types of legislation adopted and enforced vary across cities. Because of this randomness, it necessitates an examination into the contexts of sanctuary cities, beginning with an analysis of population characteristics such as economic status, and changes of demographic compositions. Furthermore, this study will help to expand the sanctuary city discussion from the uninformative cacophony of contradicting political narratives. It is insufficient to assume that it was Trump's election that triggered sanctuary city's revival, as anti-immigrant rhetoric – as well as pro-immigrant legislation – transcends his administration and has been an issue throughout almost every administration in US history (Goodman, 2020). While the mechanism of sanctuary adoption is partially reactive to national political events and figures (Bau, 1994; Darling and Bauder, 2016; Lasch, 2016; Lasch et al., 2018), standing literature would suggest that immigration policies such as sanctuary legislation is more likely associated with city's internal

characteristics (Huang and Liu, 2018; Oskooii et. al., 2018; Collingwood and O'Brien, 2019; Collingwood and Martinez, 2020).

The historical accompaniment of political rancor and negative attention that is focused on sanctuary cities has deeply muddled an already nuanced and misunderstood topic. This thesis takes the first steps in clarifying this issue by differentiating the descriptive characteristics of cities that have adopted sanctuary policies opposed those that do not in 2017. 2017 is selected as the year of interest of this cross-sectional analysis because of the timely declaration of numerous sanctuary cities following the 2016 election, being identified as the “fourth wave” of sanctuary emergence (Lai and Lasch, 2017; Collingwood and O'Brien, 2019). The theoretical foundation of this paper is based on literature exploring group threat as a mechanism that impacts immigrant policy adoption (Blumer, 1958). This analysis then complicates the existing literature by arguing that the context in which the city is situated needs to be considered in addition to racial prejudice and population changes. Since sanctuary status is usually adopted at the city level, local level variables such as political structures (Huang and Liu, 2018; Sharp et al., 2011; de Wilde and Nicholls, 2022) and population opinions (Abrajano and Hajnal, 2015; Hajnal, 2021) needs to be included.

To this end, I seek to understand the conditions that are associated with sanctuary cities. This project benefits from a novel sanctuary city dataset that identifies places that have adopted sanctuary resolutions and ordinances from their initial conception in the 1980s through 2017. To my knowledge, at the time of writing this project, this uses one of the most comprehensive sanctuary city datasets that encompasses the variety of sanctuary cities as they exist. This is useful considering this is an exploratory study that intends to ascertain a general descriptive analysis of these pro-immigrant places. This project also uses a nationally representative survey

that included questions inquiring favoritism or opposition on various immigration debates such as border security and amnesty for undocumented migrants. Finally, I identified the type of city government employed by each city in my dataset in the form of a nominal measure in order to identify cities with mayor-council structures, which historically are more likely to adopt progressive city policies (Huang and Liu, 2018; de Wilde and Nicholls, 2022). All additional covariates were attained from Census data and the American Community Survey (ACS). The models analyzed reflect the focal variables and were examined using logistic regression analysis and predicted probability models.

The findings produced statistically significant results lending evidence that sanctuary cities are situated in a complex relationship of ideological, demographic, political, and economic contexts. While president Trump was an important catalyst in the reemergence of sanctuary cities following his 2016 election, this research shows that the patterns in which they exist are in the conditions of certain pretexts that include liberal political ideologies, positive population attitudes towards immigrants, and a government structure that is normally incentivized to legislate in favor of progressive policies. Furthermore, findings suggest that demographic changes of minority groups, such as Hispanic populations, are associated with decreased odds that a city has adopted sanctuary policy, even when controlling for other demographic and economic variables. While this analysis makes it difficult to parse between the endogenous effects between covariates, these findings provide compelling evidence that sanctuary cities are sensitive to measures associated with demographic and population characteristics over other conditions such as economic precarity.

LITERATURE REVIEW

CONTEMPORARY SANCTUARY CITIES

Sanctuary cities emerged in the United States in 1982 to provide protections to Central American refugees that had immigrated in search of asylum (Bau, 1994; Bauder, 2017). Today, sanctuary cities have largely shifted towards advocating on behalf of undocumented immigrants by providing security from immigration enforcement. They also convey a narrative of community solidarity and inclusion (Collingwood and O'Brien, 2019; Peck, 2019; Villazor, 2010; Lasch et al., 2018; Martinez et al, 2018). It is important to preface that there is no universal set of characteristics to identify sanctuary cities – although there are overlapping and recurring policies and practices adopted in some variation that are explained in greater detail below (Peck, 2019; Lasch et al., 2018; Collingwood and O'Brien, 2019). There is no standardization in the types of policies a city needs to justify calling itself a sanctuary city, and just because a city has sanctuary policies does not mean that the city identifies as a sanctuary city (Maya, 2002; Houston, 2019). For example, Los Angeles did not adopt their “City of Sanctuary” status until 2019¹, even though they had sanctuary-like policies such as Special Order 40 adopted in 1979; Special Order 40 prohibited police from engaging in policing activities for the purpose of inquiring into an individual’s documentation status (Kittrie, 2006; Lasch et. al., 2018). Across the board however, most sanctuary cities adopt a combination of legislations and practices that hold both formal and symbolic implications in the community (Houston, 2019; Collingwood and O'Brien, 2019).

¹ <https://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-ln-city-of-sanctuary-cedillo-20190208-story.html>

Formally, applications of sanctuary stances generally fall into 3 major typologies of legislation: don't enforce, don't ask, and don't tell (Kittrick, 2006; Peck, 2019). "Don't enforce" policies may prevent police from cooperating with the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to identify and detain undocumented migrants (Lasch 2016). "Don't ask" policies restrict an employer's ability to inquire into the legal status of their workers (Peck, 2019). "Don't tell" policies aim to curtail practices intended to establish communication between local, state, and federal law enforcement regarding the whereabouts of undocumented individuals (Peck, 2019). These policies are usually adopted under ideological values including preserving local sovereignty over local immigration policy, enhancing community trust with law enforcement, the protection of human rights, as well as a form of protest or disagreement with federal immigration laws (Lasch et al., 2018).

The efficacy of these policies has been debated with some literature finding that city policies are not always effectively implemented due to underfunding, poor organization and inefficient resource mobilization, leaving undocumented migrants unassisted and unincorporated into the community that supposedly welcomed them (Atak, 2019; Darling and Bauder, 2019). Furthermore, independent reports have found that local police departments in Washington² and Oregon³ were continuing to collaborate with federal immigration agencies such as ICE and Customs and Border Protection (CBP), despite having enacted sanctuary policies. Police departments across Washington state were found to regularly email with immigration authorities, sharing their detainee's personal information such as court dates, country of origin, and

² <https://jsis.washington.edu/humanrights/2021/08/11/protecting-immigrant-rights-is-washingtons-law-working/>

³ <https://www.opb.org/news/article/ice-subpoena-clackamas-wasco-hillsboro-oregon/>

birthdates. In Oregon, several county police offices were effectively coerced into supplying information to ICE, with ICE using subpoenas to outmaneuver Oregon's sanctuary state laws.

Despite these incidences, however, sanctuary cities maintain a prominent symbolic value for both undocumented migrants and the city's residents. Sanctuary cities play a significant role in providing a sense of security that encourages participation in the community (Collingwood and O'Brien, 2019). They may also adopt initiatives that extend city resources to undocumented migrants that would otherwise be unavailable to them such as healthcare programs, employment and education opportunities as well as other public services (Darling and Bauder, 2019). Sanctuary cities also make efforts to safeguard human rights and equal protections from discriminatory practices such denying employment based on language abilities or addressing police bias in unlawful detentions based on suspect nationality and skin color (Lasch et al., 2018). Furthermore, the visible promotion of messages of diversity and inclusion – often by city mayors and other city leadership – can serve to counter inflammatory and hostile anti-immigrant federal narratives (Lasch et al., 2018). The totality of these practices, both formal and symbolic, constitute an important role in the overall feelings of solidarity and refuge – sanctuary, so to speak – for undocumented immigrant communities and can provide a sense of belonging and access to opportunity.

DEFINING SANCTUARY CITIES

As briefly noted earlier, the sanctuary city literature has not adopted a formal definition for these types of pro-immigrant localities (Collingwood and O'Brien, 2019; Peck, 2019; Villazor, 2010; Lasch et al., 2018; Martinez et al, 2018; Maya, 2002; Houston, 2019), although the recurring definition denotes sanctuary as a place that adopts policies at the local level regulating cooperation with and participation in federal immigration enforcement (Walker, 2010;

Houston, 2019). Research on the subject has generally adopted broad definitions, with certain exceptions case to case. Because this paper intends to comprehensively characterize sanctuary cities, utilizing a broad definition including declarative, procedural, and criminal justice-oriented sanctuary policies – explained below – is advantageous. Therefore, this paper conceptualizes sanctuary cities as does Houston (2019) and Collingwood and O’Brien (2019) to cities that have enacted policies by local government, police and sheriff offices, and resolutions that regulate city actions in cooperating or enforcing federal immigration laws.

Houston’s (2019) use of this definition was operationalized in their dataset to include a broad assortment of policies at the city and county level that are both declarative and procedural in nature; the former being a formal statement of sanctuary while expressing concerns of federal anti-immigrant policies, and the latter outlining workarounds to federal immigration mandates. Collingwood and O’Brien used a similar definition, with the intention meant to capture “ideological” and “nonideological” sanctuary cities, which generally reflects Houston’s (2019) conceptualization of declarative and procedural types of policies, respectively. This provides a more extensive and inclusive definition compared to other sanctuary research. Lasch’s (2018) dataset was limited by primarily focusing on policies that “disentangled federal immigration enforcement from local criminal justice systems”. These policies were enacted at the local level dictating law enforcement practices towards undocumented migrants. Martinez-Schuldt and Martinez’s (2021) definition extends from Kittrie’s (2006) typology of sanctuary cities – don’t ask, don’t enforce, don’t tell – to include local ordinances and department policies limiting the role of local police agencies in enforcing immigration laws. His typology, however, does not include city resolutions of any kind.

DETERMINANTS OF SANCTUARY POLICY

This paper is interested in how a city's demographic and structural characteristics are associated with having adopted sanctuary policies. Broadly speaking, American sanctuary cities have always been situated in politically contentious periods (Lasch, 2016; Collingwood and O'Brien, 2019), with some permutation of individual and group actors influencing their development based on a variety of social, political, and economic factors. Narrowing the scope shows that factors that motivate favorable or antagonistic attitudes towards sanctuary cities reside in charged attitudes towards immigrant populations, often influenced by politicized narratives of migration patterns between the United States and its southern neighbors from Latin America. This paper's theoretical framework therefore builds on the group threat hypothesis which stipulates that feelings of prejudice or antagonism are triggered within a dominant group when there is a collective belief their position and power in society is under threat from a prominent minority group (Blumer, 1958; Quillian, 1996). This paper then complicates the group threat hypothesis by introducing the nuances that population opinions towards immigration debates have in influencing group threat. Furthermore, because sanctuary cities are ultimately legislated and enforced by local city governments, this paper hypothesizes that local structures are significant in tandem with other local demographic characteristics in determining how sanctuary cities emerge. Note that when discussing the group threat literature, the term "dominant group" is used as defined by the literature cited in this project, generally referring to homogenous populations of non-Hispanic whites. Conversely, the term "minority group" is an all-encompassing stand-in for BIPOC populations and immigrant groups of all documentation statuses (naturalized citizen, undocumented, resident alien, etc.).

(IMMIGRANT) GROUP THREAT

Perceptions of threat against immigrant communities in the US are a product of generations of socially constructed biases (Blumer, 1958; Flores and Schacter, 2019; Goodman, 2020). More recently, immigration attitudes have been shaped by the salient immigration of Hispanic migrants into the US throughout the 1980s-onward, Ronald Regan's War on Drugs and the anti-immigrant political rancor that characterized many immigration debates. This ultimately manifested into what would become (and remain as) contemporary ideas that broadly typecasted immigrants from Latin America as criminal and illegal aliens that perpetuated violence and other drug-related crime (Fields and Fields, 2014; Ewing et al., 2015). In addition to shaping the stereotypes and stigmas that exist today, it also led to the development of infrastructure and the mobilization of law enforcers designed for identifying, detaining, and deporting immigrants. Reasons for detainment were justified by a ranging assortment of criminal charges, most of them being non-violent nor non-threatening to society and largely associated with minor drug-related offenses (Simanski, 2014; Ewing et al, 2015). The subsequent criminalization of immigration – or “cimmigration” – of undocumented migrants (Stumpf, 2006; Lash et al., 2018) was largely harped by prominent political figures, community leaders and law enforcers, which aided in solidifying the myth of immigrant criminality as well as Hispanic “illegality”. This resulted in several state and federal programs such as the 1996 Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigration Responsibility Act (IIRIRA), the 287(g) program, and Operation Streamline (Ewing et al., 2015; Lydgate, 2010), with most of these programs relying on racially profiling individuals to determine potential illegality (Ewing et al., 2015; Lydgate, 2010). Due to the emphasis placed by the political spotlight coupled with anti-immigration policy enforcement on the southern border, Hispanic migrants faced the brunt of being typecasted as undocumented migrants, along with all

the other problematic narratives that continue to be perpetuated today (Flores and Schacter, 2018).

This history sets the precedent for shaping the public consciousness of who (undocumented) immigrants are, which are heavily reliant on prevalent and powerful stereotypes, images, and framing created by political elites and media platforms. It further situates the context for group threat to be triggered among the majority population in places that feel that Hispanic or other minority populations are becoming more of a salient demographic. Blumer (1958) was one of the first to suggest the concept of group threat – calling it race prejudice in his thesis – and postulated that the coexistence between the dominant and minority populations is a reactive relationship based on power, status, and having exclusive access to resources, relative to the perceived minority group. Advancements made by minority groups that economically, socially, or politically create a perceived incursion on the status of the dominant group triggers antagonistic feelings on behalf of the dominant group. The interest of the dominant group is to maintain a status quo where a clear distinction between “us” versus “them”. Blumer notes that race prejudice assumes the dominant group collectively holds feelings of suspicion of the minority group and is constantly weary of potential threats that places them at a systemic disadvantage – acts interpreted as “attacks” on their position are simply triggering already-existing race prejudice.

This distinction is crucial for theorizing how the presence of Hispanic populations and other minority groups are associated with sanctuary policy adoption. More importantly, changes in their population size may have an effect that impacts this association. Notable studies building off Blumer’s thesis postulates that race prejudice – or group threat as it is henceforth called – may be triggered based on salient demographic increases of minority populations relative to the

dominant group (Quillian, 1995; Quillian, 1996). This project is therefore interested in how changes to Hispanic and foreign-born populations are associated with cities having sanctuary policy. More specifically, due to the recent history of Hispanic migrants bearing the brunt of negative political and social typecasting (Longazel and Fleury-Steiner, 2011), this project hypothesizes that any changes in Hispanic populations, regardless of documentation status or country of origin, will be associated with group threat and therefore a lowered likelihood that a city have sanctuary policies. Documentation status is assumed to be negligible because group threat is a reactionary process that perceives “different people” changing the demographic landscape. Flores and Schacter (2018) argue that legality – documented or undocumented status – is an indiscernible characteristic and is instead a socially constructed idea based on stereotypes and racialized ideas of who are “illegals”. A precise measure that distinguishes between legal and undocumented immigrants by country of origin is therefore potentially insignificant. There are other variables to consider, however, that can drive these effects. Quillian’s research considers economic circumstances and finds that perceived threat by the dominant group is negatively influenced by precarious economic circumstances (Quillian, 1996). Extended research on group threat finds that additional variables including education, geographic location in the US, political partisanship, and salient political debates all influence sentiments of threat and animosity, or conversely, acceptance and support by the dominant group towards minority populations (Quillian, 1996; O’Neil and Tienda, 2010; Hopkins, 2010; O’Neil, 2010; Avery et al., 2017; Flippen and Farrell-Bryan, 2021).

A subsection of the group threat literature is studied in the context “new destination” cities: cities that at the time of rapid immigrant growth lack the established coethnic populations and institutions established to aid in their integration (Lichter and Johnson, 2009). Findings vary,

however, with some research noting increased patterns of discrimination, residential segregation and adverse health effects for immigrant groups situated in these new destinations (Singer, 2015; Hall and Stringfield, 2014; Flores, 2014; Flippen and Farrell-Bryan, 2021). Other research finds that contextual circumstances such as contact, education and political partisanship make the dominant population more receptive and welcoming of their new immigrant neighbors (Tienda and Fuentes, 2014). Overall, the framing of minorities and migrants as being threats to community welfare combined with the politicizing of growing immigrant communities have the potential to shape the attitudes towards inclusive or exclusive immigration policies. Longazel's (2011; 2016) ethnographic analyses of Hazelton, PA exemplifies constructed immigrant threat resulting in the legislation of numerous anti-immigrant policies. It serves as a strong empirical case for the theory of new destinations that become "politicized places" – or cities where immigration issues are a salient matter influencing political narratives and policy action.

As previously stated, sanctuary cities have been historically situated in politically contentious periods that pander towards the existing biases populations holds towards immigration (Lasch et. al., 2018). This project is therefore inclined towards support of Blumer's (1958) original theory that group threat is predicated on the dominant groups *existing* sentiments and attitudes towards perceived minority populations. The historical timeline of sanctuary cities showcases however, that their emergence extend beyond racial biases. The year 2017 demonstrated that the rapid (re)emergence of numerous sanctuary cities was reactive to the presidential victory and anti-immigrant narrative of President Donald Trump (Collingwood and O'Brien, 2019). It is unlikely then, that the determinant of whether a city has sanctuary policies is contingent on demographic changes alone, as suggested by Quillian (1995; 1996). Ramakrishnan and Wong (2007) found that restrictionist responses by local governments were

less so tied to growth of recent immigrants and were instead tied to political factors such as partisanship and the politicization of immigration debates. Building off the contemporary literature, this paper hypothesizes that additional demographic, structural, and economic variables play a crucial role in mediating pro- or anti-immigrant attitudes that would incline cities to adopt sanctuary policies.

POPULATION OPINION AND POLITICAL PARTISANSHIP

This section will delve into on how race prejudice manifests in the form of population opinions towards immigrant groups and extends from the group threat literature. Furthermore, this section argues that contemporary positionalities that dictate group attitudes and sentiments towards minority groups are intrinsically linked with political partisanship that influence support for or opposition against them by the dominant population (Baker and Edmonds, 2021; Baker and Bader, 2021; Hajnal, 2021).

There is extensive literature examining how implicit prejudice translate into anti-immigrant attitudes (Blumer, 1958; Stephan and Stephan, 2000; Wilson, 2001; O'Neil, 2010; de Wilde and Nicholls, 2022; Wilkes et al., 2008; Gravelle, 2018; O'Neil and Tienda, 2010; Flores and Schacter, 2018; Canizales and Vallejo, 2021). Attitudes towards certain migrant groups are generally rooted in their unique historical process that created stereotypes and stigmas on which these ideas are founded (Fussell, 2014). In line with Blumer's (1958) thesis, a review by Hainmueller and Hopkins (2014) on attitudes towards immigration groups find that negative sentiments are shaped by concerns that immigrants will impact the cultural status quo resulting in redefinition of values and norms that are rooted in the ethnocentric concepts of national identity.

An example of a symbolic threat is language diversification that deprioritizes English as the primary language, which can be perceived as resistance to assimilating into American society (Chandler and Tsai, 2001; Newman et al., 2012; Newman et al., 2013). Furthermore, those who define as more nationalistic are also more likely to be xenophobic and hold restrictionist attitudes invested in limiting immigration and their integration into the US (Wong, 2010; Knoll, 2013).

Attitudes and opinions towards immigrants are not uniformly distributed however, and like group threat, is heavily moderated by political ideology and partisanship (Blumer, 1958; O'Neil and Tienda, 2010; Hainmueller and Hopkins, 2014; Collingwood and O'Brien, 2019). Immigration is intrinsically linked to political machinations that shape debates surrounding immigration which carry on into the public conscientiousness among respective political partisanship (Hajnal and Rivera, 2014). While Democrat and Republican attitudes towards immigration mostly aligned for the majority of the 1990's, partisan polarization began to emerge in the early 2000's with anti-immigrant narratives centered around Islamophobia dominating the national immigration discourse (Baker and Edmonds, 2021). Eventually, partisan lines were divided between two opposing ideologies. Democrats and other liberal groups adopting more favorable attitudes towards immigrants and pro-immigrant policies and Republicans and other conservatives being more antagonistic towards immigration with a preference for restrictive and punitive policies (Baker and Edmonds, 2021; Baker and Bader, 2022; Hajnal and Rivera, 2014, Hajnal, 2021, Huang and Liu, 2018, Neiman et. al., 2006). Conservative proponents of anti-immigrant stances heavily benefitted from existing narratives that targeted internalized prejudice and fears held against immigrants that generated suspicion of migrants while revitalizing support for restrictive actions. In recent times, this has seen real world applications with the restriction of

travel from seven Muslim-majority countries⁴ and the threat to withhold federal funds from sanctuary cities ⁵ (Peck, 2019).

The literature would suggest that attitudes and voting patterns on immigration matters are significantly predictable post-2016 based on political partisanship which explains the events of the 2016 presidential election (Baker and Bader, 2021). The historical context developed over the last several decades laid the foundation on which President Trump built his anti-immigrant narrative. It allowed him to garner support by using inflammatory rhetoric that pleased his right-wing constituency (Collingwood and O'Brien, 2019). His positionality also did produce a strong negative reaction from the opposition that created an anti-Trump backlash, resulting in Democrat voters becoming significantly more favorable towards immigrants after 2016 (Baker and Bader, 2021; Peck, 2019). However, as reviewed earlier, the fact that anti-immigrant narratives have been perpetuated and solidified in the public conscientiousness since the 1980's would suggest that anti-immigrant attitudes transcend the Trump administration and could not be solely explained by his tenure in the White House. It follows therefore that while the support for and contrarian opposition against sanctuary cities were catalyzed by President Trump, population opinions towards the immigrant groups that inhabited these localities were likely already decided before his presidency.

In line with this literature, this project hypothesizes that population attitudes and opinions towards immigration debates will be significantly aligned with whether a city has sanctuary policy or not. Populations with positive attitudes towards immigrant and immigration debates are more likely to reside in cities with sanctuary status while populations with overall negative and

⁴ Executive Order 13769, "Protecting the Nation from Foreign Terrorist Entry into the United States"

⁵ Executive Order 13768, "Enhancing Public Safety in the Interior of the United States"

restrictive attitudes towards immigration will not. Furthermore, due to the inherent political nature with which sanctuary cities are situated in, political partisanship will also have a strong association with sanctuary adoption and will predictably be divided along partisan lines. Findings from this analysis contribute to the expanding literature examining the relationship between immigration attitudes and political partisanship, and how it informs immigration policy making outcomes (Hainmueller and Hopkins, 2019).

GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE

As a political issue, the emergence of sanctuary cities exposes political alignments and coalitions when local governments mobilize to legislate sanctuary resolutions and ordinances. While the sanctuary movement initially began with individual and organized collective action (Bau, 1994; Chinchilla et al., 2009), sanctuary cities today are typically adopted by local city governments. This requires a closer examination into how different government structures are associated with the legislation of sanctuary policies.

The immediate question is whether local government stances on sanctuary policies are reflective of the ideologies of their constituents. Scholars have theorized that state legislators are more likely to respond to the restrictive immigrant policy demands during periods of political salience, with the influence of anti-immigrant sentiment waning when contentious forces decline (Hopkins, 2010; Butz and Kehrberg, 2019). However, the authors report inconclusive evidence, finding that local attitudes are not always associated with actual policy implementation and that other forces need consideration, such as more refined measures for anti-immigrant sentiment. Regardless, this provides an opportunity for considering the role of local government structures

and how they are associated with the legislation of immigration policies (Trounstine, 2010; Sharp et al., 2011; Sharp, 1991; Morgan and Pelissero, 1980).

The literature that does exist suggests that the city's form of government (mayor-council versus council manager), can procure significant differences in the adoption of progressive policies benefiting minority communities. Council-manager forms of government seek to professionalize bureaucracy by separating it from political influences and instead appointing a "professional city manager" to carry out administrative functions. Conversely, mayor-council city governments provide mayors more authority to promote and implement innovative and inclusive policies. Also, due to their exposure to political pressures, they are more likely to adopt symbolic policies and credit-claiming initiatives to appease their constituents (Huang and Liu, 2016; Clingermayer and Feiock, 1990). Huang and Liu (2016) find evidence analyzing the Welcoming Cities network – a platform created by the Welcoming America organization to share resources and encourage inclusive policies among member cities (different from sanctuary cities) – that mayor-council form of governments show a higher inclination of adopting inclusive programs compared to professional city-managers. Likewise, de Wilde et. al. (2022) finds evidence that cities operating under a mayor-council system were more likely to implement inclusive day-laborer policies compared to council-manager systems.

Neither analysis, however, consider under what pretext the city government was operating under and whether their decisions are reflective of the opinions of their voting constituencies. It is evident that government structure has a critical role in influencing the likelihood of adopting inclusive immigration stances. Sanctuary city policy is no exception, especially because most sanctuary statuses are implemented at the local city level. Yet considering that past literatures conclude that both public opinion and immigration policy are

significantly correlated, this project argues for the need to include these two variables in testing how they are associated with a city's likelihood of having sanctuary policies.

OTHER VARIABLES THAT MATTER

REGIONAL VARIATION and EDUCATION

In the interest of a robust analysis, this paper considers the following additional variables. This project has been concerned with collective group sentiments and attitudes shaped by structural and political forces that manifest as support for or against immigrant groups. Geographic region, which consolidates group culture and ideology, is assumed to be significantly associated with the likelihood a city has sanctuary policies. During Trump's presidential tenure, both local and statewide anti-sanctuary legislation have been adopted by about a dozen states, most in the American South including Alabama, Florida, Mississippi, and Georgia^{6,7}. The South has had long-standing associations with political and social conservatism, stemming from a legacy of racial prejudices, segregation, and discrimination (Quillian, 1996; Garcia and Davidson, 2013). As of 2010, Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana were surveyed to be the most self-identified conservatives in the country (Jones, 2010). Wilson (1973) attributes discriminatory attitudes in the South due to a history of slavery and race relations that extended until the 1960s, at least in legal capacities; Quillian (1996) associated conservative prejudices and racial biases with lower rates of education in the region. Granted, conservatism should not be assumed to be the universal ideological dogma in the South, as Cotter and Stovall (1990) argue that Southern conservatism is not absolute across the region and that many southerners

⁶ <https://www.cnn.com/2019/05/09/politics/sanctuary-city-bans-states/index.html>

⁷ <https://www.ncsl.org/research/immigration/sanctuary-policy-faq635991795.aspx>

hold moderate stances on various topics such as women's rights, LGBTQ rights, and economic welfare⁸.

Population characteristics still need to be considered as well, most notably education. As discussed in prior sections, political partisanship has been a reliable predictor of positionality and sentiment towards immigrant groups and debates (Blumer, 1958; Quillian, 1996; O'Neil and Tienda, 2010; Hainmueller and Hopkins, 2014; Collingwood and O'Brien, 2019). Likewise, education has been found to be a significant moderator associated with raised tolerance for diversity and change. Increased levels of education are positively associated with welcoming and inclusive attitudes towards immigrants and overall, less restrictive views (Haubert and Fussell, 2006; O'Neil and Tienda, 2010). Haubert and Fussell (2006) attribute education as a precursor for pro-immigrant sentiments – as it develops a “cosmopolitan” worldview among groups who are employed in white collar professions – in addition to having had exposure to other minority groups while also rejecting ethnocentric ideologies. More educated groups also express increased optimism about the economic impacts of immigration and are less concerned with immigrants being threats to wages and job opportunities (Hainmueller and Hiscox, 2010). In this project, education is not a measure of occupational skill, as it has been found to be a very poor measure of it. Rather, the education effect more than likely captures ideology such as tolerance and a rejection of ethnocentric worldviews (Citrin et al., 1997; Chandler & Tsai, 2001; Hainmueller and Hopkins, 2014).

ECONOMIC PRECARITY and LABOR MARKETS

⁸ This literature should be cautiously approached given the authors do not control for demographic variables such as age, race, sex, education, etc. in their survey analysis.

Labor market competition has been an important dimension of group threat research (Blumer, 1958; Quillian, 1995). However, examining the literature produces contradictory findings that have ultimately failed to justify empirical support in explaining population attitudes towards immigration (Hainmueller and Hopkins, 2010). Past research hypothesized that anti-immigrant prejudice resulted from blaming minority groups for economic hardships, creating competition for labor opportunities, and placing strain on social service programs (Quillian, 1995; Hainmueller and Hopkins, 2014; O'Neil and Tienda, 2010). There is supporting research that locals who felt economically threatened by immigrants were more likely to support restrictive ballot initiatives (Alvarez and Butterfield, 2000), and that less educated groups as well as those pessimistic about the economy and their own economic circumstances are less supportive of immigration (Pantoja, 2006; O'Neil and Tienda, 2010). Miller (2012) finds that self-assessed poverty and high unemployment rates is associated with an increased likelihood of restrictive attitudes towards immigration. Citrin et al. (1997) introduced some nuance to the debate, finding that personal economic anxieties and adversity has negligible influence on immigration attitudes. Rather, there was more immediate concern about the national economy and racialized sentiments towards salient immigrant groups.

Contrary evidence by Hainmueller and Hiscox's survey research (2007; 2010) find that while high skilled and low skilled respondents strongly preferred high skilled immigrants over low skilled immigrants, their findings did not suggest that labor market competition was a powerful driving of anti-immigrant sentiment in the United States. In general, economic self-interest does not have a strong impact on immigration policy preferences. And as discussed in the section above, US respondents with higher education overall showed more support for immigration of all skill levels (Hainmueller and Hiscox, 2010). Furthermore, Ramakrishnan and

Wong (2007) find evidence to suggest that political factors such as political party composition of city government holds a more important role in determining local immigration ordinance over economic challenges.

Considering the consensus of the existing literature, it may be unlikely that economically precarious conditions manifest anti-immigrant sentiments that are associated with whether a city has sanctuary city policies or not. It is worth considering the alternative, that cities may have an invested interest in protecting their immigrant laborers from federal immigration laws given that immigrant labor is and always has been a fundamental backbone of multiple industrial markets – especially in occupations of manual labor (Longazel and Fleury-Steiner, 2011; Huang and Liu, 2018; Gomberg-Munoz and Nussbaum-Barberena, 2011; Goodman, 2020). Revisiting the group threat literature examining new destinations notes that migrants are brought to these cities to take advantage of labor opportunities in manufacturing and construction (Hall and Stringfield, 2014). Incidentally, existing research has noted that some cities including sanctuary cities have mobilized policies and initiatives to protect the rights of immigrants to live and work within the city, such as through the establishment of day-labor centers (O’Neil, 2010, Ramakrishnan and Wong, 2007; Huang and Liu, 2018). This provides credence to assuming that economic precarity and competition within labor markets between native and immigrant groups have little association with the adoption of sanctuary city policies.

HYPOTHESIS

The culmination of this literature lays the roadmap for the analytic interests of this project. As outlined above, this project’s theoretical foundation is predicated on the group threat

literature that analyzes how population sentiments towards minority groups are triggered by changes in demographic, social, and political factors. Classic literature on group threat examines how increases of minority group population size triggers antagonistic sentiments from native residents. For the purposes of this paper, we are focused on how changes in the Hispanic and total foreign born population size may be associated with a decrease in the likelihood that a city has sanctuary policies. The Hispanic growth rate measure is inclusive of all Hispanic populations both foreign and native born. Flores and Schachter (2018) observe that citizenship is generally indiscernible without demonstrating legal documentation, and that assumptions about belonging and illegality is often predicated on preexisting assumptions and stereotypes of who immigrants are. This literature informs the decision to not differentiate between documentation statuses or Hispanic country of origin and instead include them all in the analysis as a single measure. The foreign-born measure includes all international migration into the US. Finally, because new destinations that experience rapid demographic change in foreign born individuals, this would theoretically follow that group threat may be experienced in these cities, making them less likely to have adopted sanctuary policies.

I. Group threat

- a. Cities that experience demographic changes among Hispanic populations will be negatively associated with lower likelihood of cities adopting sanctuary policies.
- b. Cities that experience demographic changes among foreign born populations will be negatively associated with lower likelihood of cities adopting sanctuary policies.
- c. New destination cities will be associated with a negative association in the likelihood that a city adopts sanctuary policy.

This paper also stipulates that sanctuary cities are primarily driven by the population opinions held towards minority groups. While group threat assumes that population changes triggers animosity among native populations, population opinion may also be influenced by forces beyond population change and is instead rooted in sentiments long established by social and historical processes. While the Trump administration's anti-immigration rhetoric was inflammatory and catalytic for the most recent wave of sanctuary policy adoption (Lai and Lasch, 2017), the cross-sectional nature of this project makes it impossible to determine whether population opinions were moderated by Trump's tenure, or if they transcended his presidency. There is supporting literature to suggest that while political leaders can validate and encourage individual prejudices and sentiments (Newman, 2021), overall ideologies tend to be long established that transcend the individuals that hold political office. Regardless, it would stand to reason that the city would be a reflection of the people that reside in it, and that population opinion and ideologies towards immigration topics would be strongly associated with a city's sanctuary status. Furthermore, it is well established in the literature that political ideologies are closely tied to political partisanship. At least since the early 2000's, support for immigration has been split along partisan lines, with Democrats and more liberal identifying bases supporting inclusive pro-immigrant stances. It follows then that cities with more liberal political leanings will be more likely to have sanctuary policies.

II. Population opinion and political partisanship

- a. Cities with positive attitudes towards immigrant groups/policies will be positively associated with the likelihood a city has sanctuary policies.

- b. Conversely, cities with negative population attitudes towards immigrant groups/policies will be negatively associated with the likelihood a city has sanctuary policies.
- c. Cities that voted Democrat/liberal in the 2016 presidential election will be positively associated with the likelihood that a city has sanctuary policies.

The likelihood that a city adopts sanctuary city is further contextualized on the type of government structure that they have, as some systems are more likely to adopt progressive stances on political debates concerning human rights. Mayor-council forms of government are more likely to reflect the opinions of their constituency, in addition to being more adaptive to the current political climate in ways that push forward inclusive legislation. It is important to consider government structure given that most sanctuary policy is legislated at the city level and most of the activism against federal initiatives starts at the local level.

III. Government structure

- a. Cities with mayor-council forms of government will have a positive association with the likelihood that a city has sanctuary policy.

METHODOLOGY AND DATA

OUTCOME VARIABLES

The dependent variable for this study is whether a city has sanctuary policies or not and is measured as a dichotomous outcome of the presence of (1) or absence (0) of one or more sanctuary policies, regardless of type. Sanctuary city data was obtained from Loren Collingwood

et al.⁹, who generated their dataset by retrieving legislation from the National Immigration Law Center, the National Conference of State Legislatures, and the LexisNexus state bill database. These laws were cross referenced with news publications or information posted on city council websites. Compared to other datasets used for a national analysis of sanctuary cities (Lasch et al., 2018; Houston, 2019; Martinez-Schuldt and Martinez's, 2021), Collingwood and O'Brien's methodology to source sanctuary cities is the most comprehensive while also covering the full timeline of sanctuary policy adoption in the United States from 1979 until 2017. His original database consisted of a total of 303 cities having sanctuary policy or some sort of sanctuary status.

This project operationalizes "cities" as census-designated places as defined by US Census, and city data is retrieved from the American Community Survey. In order to capture large urban centers, this paper only includes cities with a population size of 100,000 or more as of 2017 ACS estimates. The focus is on large urban centers as they are primary destinations for migrants in pursuit of economic and other resource opportunities (Flippen and Farrell-Bryan, 2021). Furthermore, larger cities are generally centers for social movements, as they tend to be politically charged arenas where initiatives that challenge national discourse emerge and activism for access to rights are articulated (Bauder, 2017). The original dataset consisted of 303 cities. However, 17 cases were dropped due to missing data among some of the covariates, resulting in a total sample size of 286 cities.

PREDICTOR VARIABLES

⁹ Political Science, University of New Mexico

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Sanctuary and Non-Sanctuary Cities 2017

	Mean (SD)			Minimum			Maximum			t-value	p-value
	Overall	Sanctuary	Not Sanctuary	Overall	Sanctuary	Not Sanctuary	Overall	Sanctuary	Not Sanctuary		
Population 2000	263,000 (565,000)	489,000 (982,000)	173,000 (183,000)	14,700	70,200	30,800	8,010,000	8,010,000	1,950,000	-8.05	2.01e-14
Population 2017	300,000 (591,000)	528,000 (1,030,000)	211,000 (210,000)	101,000	101,000	101,000	8,560,000	8,560,000	2,270,000	-8.95	2.2e-16
% Hispanic Growth Rate (2000 – 2017)	103 (119)	54.2 (43.0)	110 (70.8)	-9.97	-9.97	2.99	1540	190	450	-14.91	2.2e-16
% Foreign-Born Growth Rate (2000-2017)	1360 (1980)	1370 (2420)	1250 (1540)	-47.7	-1.69	-47.7	16400	16400	8180	-11.89	2.2e-16
% Hispanic 2017	25.6 (20.4)	26.7 (20.6)	25.1 (20.2)	1.14	2.95	1.14	96.4	96.4	95.4	1.35	0.178
% Foreign Born 2017	18.2 (11.6)	22.3 (13.8)	16.3 (10.2)	1.28	3.47	1.28	74.4	74.4	58	4.14	4.28e-05
% Voted Democrat 2016 Election	54.6 (13.3)	64.0 (11.7)	51.0 (11.8)	14.2	36.9	14.2	90.9	90.9	75.7	-9.12	2.2e-16
% Bachelor's Degree or higher 2017	21.4 (9.45)	23.7 (10.4)	20.3 (8.29)	4.43	7.50	6.45	55.5	51.4	45.2	3.01	0.002
Median Income 2017	58,300 (18,700)	56,800 (17,900)	58,200 (18,000)	27,800	27,800	30,100	122,000	122,000	121,000	-55.09	2.2e-16
% Poverty rate at 0.5 – 0.99 2017	8.99 (3.43)	10.0 (3.36)	8.65 (3.32)	1.14	2.57	1.70	18.5	18.5	16.4	-44.30	2.2e-16
% Poverty rate at 1.0 – 1.24 2017	4.96 (1.60)	5.20 (1.57)	4.89 (1.53)	0.723	1.59	1.05	9.08	8.59	9.06	-49.5	2.2e-16
% Construction Jobs 2017	2.75 (0.950)	2.47 (0.867)	2.86 (0.948)	0.666	0.666	0.858	7.14	4.60	7.14	10.11	2.2e-16
% Manufacturing Jobs 2017	0.0423 (0.0197)	0.0414 (0.0218)	0.0437 (0.0185)	0.681	0.681	0.777	13.0	13.0	10.8	9.55	2.2e-16
% 15 yrs. old and younger 2017	19.5 (3.18)	18.2 (3.12)	20.0 (3.06)	10.2	10.2	10.5	28.3	26.1	10.5	-105.7	2.2e-16
% 65 yrs. old and older 2017	12.4 (2.91)	12.2 (2.36)	12.4 (3.06)	5.91	8.11	5.91	23.0	20.0	23.0	-72.44	2.2e-16
% Professional occupations 2017	9.18 (3.23)	9.75 (3.29)	8.85 (3.03)	4.17	4.22	4.17	22.5	18.8	20.1	11	2.2e-16

Table 1 provides descriptors of the covariates gathered for this project. Covariates were obtained from the 5-year 2017 American Community Survey and the 2000 American Census. Measure of group threat includes Hispanic and foreign-born population change between 2000 and 2017¹⁰. The model also includes a dummy variable for “new destination” to be any city with a population increase in the foreign-born count of 49% or more from 2000 until 2017 (Terrazas, 2011). New destinations are coded as “1” and non-new destinations are coded as “0”.

Population opinions towards immigration attitudes were fielded from the 2017 Congressional Election Study (CES, formerly known as the Cooperative Congressional Election Study, Appendix B, Table 2). The CES is a nationally representative study administered yearly by YouGov to assess national attitudes towards elected politicians, voting experiences, and behavior and attitudes on various political and social issues. This data was collected by YouGov using county-level surveys. The survey was filtered for questions on immigration topics and can be viewed in Appendix B, table 2. Plotting a correlation table (Appendix B.1) indicates strong collinearities between several of these questions. To better analyze this data, I employ the principal component analysis method (PCA) – a data reduction technique that helps visualize the variance between multiple variables within a dataset. Analysis of the PCA output suggests that principal components one and two are sufficient to explain just over 70% of the variance in the survey responses. PC1 and PC2 are therefore the two components included in the model. PC1 predominantly captures the overall variance of affirmative responses to survey questions that present more restrictive and punitive immigration stances, while PC2 largely captures the

¹⁰ Refer to Appendix A.1 and A.2 for scatterplot testing correlation between various POC and foreign-born born variables (Black, Hispanic, Hispanic FB, FB, Mexican FB, Hispanic naturalized, Hispanic citizen). The high correlations between several variables presents the issue of collinearity and suggests that adding additional FB variables or variable for citizenship status would not significantly contribute to the model. I therefore chose to only keep Black, Hispanic, and FB as they were the most theoretically relevant within the framework of this project.

variance of affirmative responses to pro-immigration stances such as expanding amnesty to undocumented migrants and increasing the number of distributed visas to foreign workers. Tables 4 and 5 in Appendix B.2 include more thorough information regarding analysis and justifications of the PCA.

Measures of political ideology is captured by the 2016 election data and were retrieved from MIT Election Data and Science Lab. The data was filtered to include Democrat and Republican candidates of the 2016 election and omitted data of Independent candidates.

Like the population opinion data, the election data was collected at the county level. Both the population opinion and election dataset were joined to the primary dataset assuming that each city is the central population center of the county that it occupies. While this method does not impact the outcome of the analysis, it is worth noting that this approximation could result in some rural or suburban areas being misrepresented because these areas that lie outside main city boundaries might also have different voting patterns.

Information on city government structure was retrieved primarily from city government websites; if the website did not note the city's government structure, I looked at the municipal code of ordinances, usually under "administration". In line with methods used by Huang and Liu (2018) and Sharpe et. al. (2011), cities with a strong-mayor/mayor-council city government, as well as consolidated city-county governments¹¹, were coded as 1. All else, including council manager, commission-manager, home rule municipality and parish government systems (amongst other names) employed a city manager to oversee general administrative and leadership duties and therefore was made the referent category and coded as 0.

¹¹ the chief executive acts as both the city mayor and the head of the county government, in effect mimicking the structure of a strong-mayor system.

A dummy measure is included for cities located in southern states and are coded as 1 for South and 0 for non-South. A higher education measure is included to account for the city's population with a bachelor's degree or academic higher credential. In controlling economic precarity, I include household median income and percent unemployed. I also include absolute measures of percent poverty rates reported by the US Census at .5 to .99 (right under the poverty level) and 1.0 to 1.24 (right above poverty level). While poverty measures are flawed due their accounting of only household income and excluding other forms of assistance such as food stamps and tax credits, it is worth controlling for how quantified poverty rates are associated with the likelihood a city has pro-immigrant policies. Findings contrary to this assumption, may point in the direction of O'Neil and Tienda (2010) that indeed, perceived economic precarity is what leads to anti-immigrant sentiments. I included occupation measures for construction and manufacturing to account for labor commonly performed by immigrant populations. I also controlled for professional jobs in finance, insurance, real estate, rental, and leasing occupations, as well as scientific, management, and administrative services to account for higher skilled occupations¹². Finally, as is standard for demographic analysis, I include demographic measures for age 15 and under and 65 and over in 2017 and percent of the population being foreign born and Hispanic in 2017. Age is measured as a categorical variable of older and younger populations because older cohorts have been found to hold more conservative attitudes (Quillian, 1996; O'Rourke, Sinnott, 2006).

The focal variables of analysis for this study are variables associated with group threat, local opinion responses and government structures that are associated with likelihood of having

¹² I ran a model with professional occupations "Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing" and "Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services" separately as well as the two occupation categories combined and found the latter had a better BIC score, hence I only included one variable of both occupation categories combined, named "% Professional occupations".

sanctuary policy. The primary method of analysis is the completion of a logistic regression to model this dichotomous outcome. The equation below summarizes the regression model, where y is the outcome variable (sanctuary/not sanctuary), β_0 is the constant all else equal to zero, and β_a through β_e represent the models one through five.

$$y = \beta_0 + \beta_a (\text{focal variables}) + \beta_b (\text{education and location}) + \beta_c (\text{economic and labor measures}) + \beta_d (\text{other demographic measures}) + \beta_e (\text{full model})$$

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Table 3 summarizes the logistic regression findings of the associations between demographic characteristics and the likelihood that a city has sanctuary policy. Odds ratios for all covariates are found in Appendix C, table 6. Overall, negative population opinion, being located in the South, and an older population is negatively associated with a city having sanctuary policy, while having voted Democrat in the 2016 presidential election and having a Bachelor's degree or higher is positively associated with a city having sanctuary policies.

Model 1 captures the focal variables of interest including group threat measures (foreign born and Hispanic growth rate, new destination), population opinion, % voted Democrat in the 2016 presidential election, and city government structure. Hispanic growth rate is found to be statistically significant at the 0.001 level in models 1 through 4, all else equal. Only in the full model does it lose significance. Having a negative coefficient across models, Hispanic growth rate is associated with a decreased likelihood that a city has sanctuary policies in 2017. This finding is sufficient to reject the null hypothesis for H1a and supports the literature that changing demographic shifts of a salient minority group impacts immigration policy adoption.

Table 3: Logistic Regression of Focal variables of a city having sanctuary city policies, log odds presented (SD)

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
	Focal variables	Education and Location	Economic and Labor	Other Demographic Measures	All
Foreign-Born Growth Rate 2000 – 2017	-0.0002 (0.0001)	-0.0001 (0.0001)	0.00001 (0.0002)	0.00004 (0.0002)	0.0003 (0.0003)
Hispanic Growth Rate 2000 - 2017	-0.017*** (0.004)	-0.014*** (0.004)	-0.016*** (0.004)	-0.018*** (0.004)	-0.007 (0.005)
New Destination 2017	0.820 (1.100)	0.850 (1.100)	0.220 (1.200)	0.240 (1.300)	-0.450 (1.500)
PC1 (Negative population opinion) 2017	-0.250 (0.220)	-0.200 (0.230)	-0.300 (0.240)	-0.390* (0.240)	-0.600** (0.270)
PC2 (Positive population opinion) 2017	0.890** (0.380)	0.590 (0.410)	1.100*** (0.420)	0.660* (0.400)	0.490 (0.480)
% Voted Democrat 2016 Election	0.093*** (0.019)	0.094*** (0.020)	0.083*** (0.022)	0.096*** (0.021)	0.110*** (0.028)
City Mayor 2017	0.810** (0.340)	0.860** (0.350)	0.140 (0.400)	0.710** (0.350)	0.070 (0.430)
South		-1.000** (0.440)			-2.500*** (0.660)
% BA degree or higher 2017		0.015 (0.021)			0.260*** (0.077)
Median Income 2017			-0.00003 (0.00003)		-0.00004 (0.00004)
% Unemployed 2017			0.310 (0.210)		0.330 (0.240)
% Poverty Rate 0.5 – 0.99 2017			0.150 (0.150)		0.200 (0.170)
% Poverty Rate 1.0 – 1.24 2017			-0.200 (0.270)		0.270 (0.320)
% Construction occupation 2017			-0.220 (0.220)		0.620** (0.300)
% Manufacturing Occupation 2017			-0.001 (0.090)		0.034 (0.100)
% Professional occupations 2017			0.170** (0.085)		-0.200 (0.150)
% 15 yrs. old and under 2017				-0.190** (0.077)	-0.150 (0.110)
% 65 yrs. old and over 2017				-0.150* (0.077)	-0.200** (0.092)
% Foreign Born 2017				-0.024 (0.024)	-0.015 (0.036)
% Hispanic Population 2017				-0.001 (0.014)	0.003 (0.019)
Constant	-4.900*** (1.200)	-5.400*** (1.300)	-5.500** (2.800)	0.800 (2.300)	-8.600** (4.000)
Log Likelihood	-120.000	-117.000	-113.000	-116.000	-98.000
Akaike Inf. Crit.	257	255	257	256	237
BIC	286	291	311	300	314
Notes	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01				

Furthermore, the models suggest that there are potentially confounding effects from a few possible covariates driving this association, although their effects seem insufficient to alter the overall significance of Hispanic growth rate. Model 2 highlights how cities in the South are significantly less likely to have adopted sanctuary policy. Furthermore, model 4 shows that older populations over 65 years of age are also associated with a decrease in the log odds that a city has sanctuary policy and is significant at the 0.05 level. Both measures are associated in the literature with political conservatism as well as more restrictionist attitudes towards immigrant and minority communities. It would be logical to assume that this, in part, has driving effects on the significance of Hispanic growth rate negating the likelihood of a sanctuary city. Conversely, as predicted in H1b, foreign-born growth rate is statistically insignificant in its association with a city having sanctuary policy. The findings are insignificant and therefore fails to reject the null hypothesis. Overall, this is indicative that in the context of sanctuary cities, group threat stemming from Hispanic populations – regardless of documentation status or country of origin – is a stronger predictor of the adoption of sanctuary policy than immigrant threat, or the perceived threat of incoming foreign-born populations.

New destination – having had experienced a rapid increase in the community's foreign-born population – is insignificant in predicting the likelihood that a city has sanctuary policy, although the coefficient falls in the positive direction across models 1 through 4 indicating that new destinations are positively associated with a city being sanctuary. This finding therefore fails to reject the null hypothesis; within this dataset, there is insufficient evidence to suggest that new destinations alone are associated with sanctuary policy adoption. Reasons for this could vary, as new destinations may have economic incentive to protect immigrant groups since they fill the labor markets that attracted migrants to move there in the first place.

Alternatively, new destination cities may have demographic characteristics such as an educated population or a more liberal constituency that makes them more tolerable to changing demographics. Exposure and contact, such as at work, school, places of worship may make populations more familiar and friendly with their new neighbors, in essence dissipating threat and instead fostering community (O'Neil and Tienda, 2010). Models 1 through 5 all indicate a significant (0.001) positive association between liberal political partisanship and sanctuary cities and could therefore provide evidence that it has some effect in this relationship. Education, on the other hand, is insignificant when controlled in model 2, although it is statistically significant in the full model at the 0.001 level. Every unit increase in the percent of the population with a Bachelor's degree or higher indicates a 0.260 increase in the log odds that a city has sanctuary policy, all else equal. Education, therefore, in addition to the other covariates could partially explain the positive association of new destination cities and sanctuary policy.

As hypothesized in H2a and b, population opinion reflects the theoretical pattern in predicting the likelihood that a city has sanctuary policy or not, although significance across models vary. Negative population opinion (H2a) holds a negative coefficient across all models, meaning that negative population attitudes against immigrants is associated with a decrease in the likelihood that a city had sanctuary policies. This relationship holds statistical significance in model 4 when controlling for other demographic measures, and in model 5 when included in the whole model. This suggests, and is verified later in this analysis, that other factors such as education, economic and labor markets, and other demographic characteristics moderate negative population opinions and in turn, the types of legislation adopted.

On the other hand, positive attitudes (H2b) towards immigration are associated across all models with an increase in the likelihood that a city has sanctuary status. This effect was

significant across most models except when controlling for being in the South and education (model 2), as well as in the full model (5). While favorable attitudes are positively associated with cities having sanctuary policy, the statistical significance of the South covariate suggests that regional location may have a strong influence over what kind of policies are adopted despite popular opinion. As reviewed in the literature, the South has had a long history of legislative conservatism. While general attitudes, especially in larger Southern cities, may look upon immigrants more favorably and be more willing to include them in the community, conservative political narratives and legislative actions may still lean anti-immigrant and would inhibit them from adopting welcoming and inclusive immigration stances. Curiously, a reverse effect is observed when controlling for professional occupations (model 3), showing that every unit increase is associated with a 0.170 increase in the log odds that a city adopts sanctuary policy and is significant at the 0.01 level. An explanation could be that cities that have a larger professional/white collar workforce may be less concerned by immigrant presence, who traditionally fill blue collar occupations. They may therefore be perceived to pose a lesser threat to their status or job security. All considered, the data provides credence on how general group attitudes are associated with policy adoption and provides a rich opportunity for future study.

Consistent with theoretical assumptions made with H2c, political partisanship is an important predictor for whether a city has sanctuary status, with cities having voted more liberal also being more likely to be sanctuary. This is found to be statistically significant across all models. In each model, every unit increase in the percent voted Democrat in the 2016 presidential election is associated with an increase in the log odds that a city has sanctuary policy, all else considered. This offers evidence that sanctuary cities are indeed tied to the political environment of the community and is indicative of how immigration attitudes are drawn

along party lines. However, while sanctuary cities are associated with the percentage of a place having voted Democrat in the 2016 election, it is unclear the mechanism influencing sanctuary adoption. Two ideas come to mind: one is that progressive voters lead to progressive legislation, as they may lobby or encourage city council to adopt such measures; the alternative would be that liberal votes are more likely to vote for progressive city representatives who would then pass progressive immigration policies such as sanctuary legislation. Either way, sanctuary cities are irrefutably entrenched in political narratives and machinations, whether they are a product of community activism or city government action.

Finally, there is some evidence to suggest that city government is important in determining sanctuary status, although the significance of this finding varies by model. While a city having a strong mayor form of government is positively associated across all models with the likelihood that a city has sanctuary status, the association loses significance when controlling for city economic and labor characteristics and again in the full model. Like the justification provided for new destinations, economic conditions could be moderating how local governments decide on legislating progressive immigration stances. City governments may be monitoring the economic and labor conditions of the community that would incentivize them to prioritize the wellbeing of immigrant groups, especially if they are a significant demographic of the workforce.

This relationship should be cautiously affirmed however, given that no controls for economic precarity report significant coefficients. Also, model 1 shows that positive population opinions and liberal political partisanship are significant in also increasing the likelihood a city has sanctuary policy, suggesting that these variables could also have a colinear association with the effects of city government. Overall, there is sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis

and accept H3a. It would be interested to follow up on the specifics of how the characteristics of city council members influence progressive policy adoption, as some literature has explored how city governing bodies comprised of minority members are associated with progressive legislative action that benefit minority communities (Avery et al., 2016).

The results outlined above follow the existing literature and is further contextualized below. As stated earlier, the focal variables of interest analyze how population opinion, minority population growth-rate, and city government structures impact the likelihood that a city adopts sanctuary policy. A key moderator discussed in the literature review was political ideology, which prompts the question: if liberal politics has been associated with more positive attitudes towards immigrants and pro-immigration policy, does it translate to actual policy adoption? The data would suggest so, but only to an extent. To better visualize these patterns, Graph 1 (refer to Appendix D) provides a visual description of the marginal effects between the primary focal variables and the percentage of a city voting Democrat in the 2016 presidential election. The graphs plot the mean of %Voted Democrat in blue, with +/- 1 standard deviation on either side of the mean (green and red, respectively), with the x-axis numerating the range of the control value and the y-axis numerating the predicted probability a city has sanctuary policy.

Even when controlling for political ideology, the marginal effects of a city having sanctuary policy follows the results of the logistical regression. Graph 1a and 1c shows that as negative perception of immigration decreases and Hispanic growth rate increases, respectively, the predicted probability of a city having sanctuary policy decreases, all else considered. Graphs 1b and 1d, conversely, demonstrate that positive attitudes towards immigration and foreign-born growth rate both reflect an increase in the probability that a city adopts sanctuary policy, all else considered. The latter point presents an interesting finding when accounting for politically liberal

populations, that increases in the foreign-born population is associated with an increase in the likelihood that a city has sanctuary policies. However, noting that even when controlling for politically liberal populations, overall Hispanic growth rate is still associated with a decrease in the likelihood a city has sanctuary policies. This is indicative that anti-immigrant stances may still be reactive to racialized bias over subjective knowledge of total minority growth rate.

An additional caveat to consider is the regional location of cities of interest. Southern states have historically been associated with more political and social conservatism, and therefore are presumed to be less likely to have sanctuary policies relative to non-southern cities. Graph 2 (refer to Appendix D) verifies these results by plotting the marginal effects of the relationships in Graph 1, then adding an additional control of a city being in the American South. While the direction of the marginal effects is consistent to what is observed in Graph 1, there is noticeable difference in the probability of cities having sanctuary policies between southern cities and non-southern cities. This relationship is indicative that, all else considered, political partisanship influences progressive immigration stances only so far. Other contexts such as long-standing associations with political and social conservatism, and a legacy of racial prejudices, segregation and discrimination – all associated with many Southern localities – may have underlying influence on these relationships. Of course, this data does not capture racism or segregation patterns and should be interpreted loosely. However, this data does suggest that cities that adopted sanctuary policy have done so through mechanisms entailing a combination of regional, political, and demographic characteristics.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The objective of this paper was to establish a preliminary understanding of the characteristics of sanctuary cities. To my knowledge, this is the first project to study the role that demographic change, population opinion, and government structures are associated with the adoption of sanctuary policy. Overall, these findings demonstrate that sanctuary cities are a product of a complex assortment of variables at the group/city level. The intention of this paper was to build off the concept of group threat and complicate it with other variables known to impact immigration policy adoption. Blumer's (1958) conceptualization of group threat explains how the coexistence between dominant and minority groups is a reactive relationship dependent on who has access to power, status, and capital. The "us versus them" narrative is reflective in population attitudes towards immigration debates, with negative attitudes being in favor of restricting entry into the country, limiting work opportunities, and increasing immigration enforcement. Experiences of "threat" is also a feature of changing demographic patterns but is also readily moderated by other population characteristics such as education level and political partisanship. Sanctuary cities serve as an interesting case study of how immigration policy is enacted on behalf of a combination of forces at the civic and government level, and how ultimately, they are a product of contentions political ideologies. Sanctuary cities emerge and regress in the public conscientiousness relative to the political attention given to them. Moreover, political narratives make use of existing stereotypes and sentiments of immigrant populations that can further increase support for or against immigrant groups. Understanding how all these variables intersect will help to better understand how immigration policy is adopted more broadly.

There are a couple of limitations to this project. The first and most obvious is the broad definition used to quantify a sanctuary city. As discussed earlier, sanctuary cities have a variety

of policies that address different facets of the community from policing to employment security. There are also varying capacities that sanctuary cities provide regarding protections and resources to immigrant communities, not to mention that some cities are bereft of ordinances and legislated policies. This study therefore occludes nuances between the different types of sanctuary cities, making some variables more contextually significant in some spaces over others. Second, cross sectional analysis limits the ability to draw causal inferences as to how changes over time may mediate the variables that matter for sanctuary adoption. Future research should focus on the definitions of sanctuary policy with longitudinal data to better understand their emergence.

These limitations, however, create opportunities for future courses of study. Contemporary events provide justification that sanctuary cities are still a relevant topic worth investigating. Texas governor Greg Abbott announced early August 2022 that he had begun bussing undocumented migrants detained at the Texas border to New York City, Chicago, and Washington DC – all of which are sanctuary cities. The goal was to attract the attention of the Biden administration and galvanize action towards addressing the “catastrophic failure” their “open border policies have created” for the state^{13,14,15}. In the weeks that followed, leadership in both NYC and DC have called on assistance from the federal government, asking for funds and resources such as legal and medical assistance, as well as support from the National Guard to aid in accommodating the surge in migrants entering the cities^{16,17}. Governor Abbott^{18,19} publicly

¹³ <https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/texas-governor-sends-migrants-new-york-city-immigration-standoff-accelerates-2022-08-05/>

¹⁴ <https://www.npr.org/2022/08/05/1115479280/migration-border-greg-abbott-texas-bus-dc-nyc-mayors>

¹⁵ <https://chicago.suntimes.com/2022/8/31/23332036/migrants-sent-by-texas-governor-arrive-in-chicago>

¹⁶ <https://www.cnn.com/2022/08/19/us/texas-migrants-bus-washington-dc-new-york/index.html>

¹⁷ <https://www.cnn.com/2022/08/10/us/new-york-city-migrants-texas-buses/index.html>

¹⁸ <https://www.foxnews.com/opinion/nyc-dc-mayors-border-crisis-real-call-biden-step-up>

¹⁹ <https://nypost.com/2022/08/23/greg-abbott-eric-adams-is-all-talk-when-it-comes-to-open-borders/>

critiqued Mayor Eric Adams of NYC and accused him of hypocrisy for “talking the talk” of being a sanctuary city but flailing when forced to “follow through on those lofty promises”^{20,21}. While Abbott claims the move to be a desperate move to shed light on the immigration issues experienced in Texas, others point out that Abbott is attempting to draw attention to the Texas-Mexico border as a campaign tactic to make himself a popular contender in the upcoming 2024 presidential general election²². Regardless of what the long game may be, the long-lasting implications of these events are of course, unknown for now. Whether this sudden influx of migrants will influence the attitudes of city cities towards immigrants is still to be determined. There is also the residing uncertainty as to how the city leadership will continue to address the problem and if these events will influence future legislation to be more pro or anti-immigrant.

Informed by this event and expanding on the existing research, future projects include an inquiry into how the salient and politicized influx of immigrants into liberal sanctuary cities impacts the broader political and social landscape of these spaces. More specifically, do attitudes of city locals and politicians change in the wake of these events? Also, what is the efficacy of sanctuary cities in accommodating the populations their policies aim to assist. Collecting semi-structured interviews with city residents – immigrant and non-immigrant – as well as city officials and immigrant rights workers will help to provide a better understanding of the inner workings of sanctuary cities. Ultimately, it will aid in determining if sanctuary cities fact provide respite from antagonistic immigration laws, as well as opportunities for upward mobility and integration into the community.

²⁰ <https://www.foxnews.com/politics/nyc-dc-sanctuary-city-policies-come-back-haunt-them-feud-texas-arizona>

²¹ <https://www.foxnews.com/politics/5-more-migrant-buses-texas-arrive-nyc-1000-already-new-york>

²² <https://www.texastribune.org/2022/08/24/greg-abbott-eric-adams-migrant-busing-new-york/>

Appendix

Appendix A:

A.1) Correlation tables for %Hispanic 2017, %foreign-born 2017, %Hispanic foreign-born 2017, %Mexican foreign-born 2017, %Hispanic naturalized 2017, %Hispanic not-citizen 2017, and %Black 2017



A.2) Correlation table for Hispanic growth-rate and foreign-born growth Rate



Appendix B: CCES Survey questions and Principal Component Analysis

Table 2: Survey questions on Immigration from CCES 2017, n = 18,200

Question: What do you think the US government should do about immigration? Select all that apply:

1. Grant legal status to all illegal immigrants who have held jobs and paid taxes for at least 3 years, and not been convicted of any felony crimes.
2. Increase the number of border patrols on the US-Mexican border
3. Allow police to question anyone they think may be in the country illegally
4. Fine US businesses that hire illegal immigrants
5. Identify and deport illegal immigrants
6. Increase the number of visas for overseas workers to work in the US
7. Build a wall between the US and Mexico
8. Require local police departments to report to the federal government anyone they identify as illegal immigrant
9. None of the above

B.2: Principal Component Analysis Tables

	PC1	PC2	PC3	PC4	PC5	PC6	PC7	PC8
Standard Deviation	2.1708	0.9773	0.81526	0.70375	0.60982	0.58624	0.49516	0.46007
Proportion of Variance	0.5891	0.1194	0.08308	0.06191	0.04649	0.04296	0.03065	0.02646
Cumulative Proportion	0.5891	0.7085	0.79154	0.85345	0.89993	0.94289	0.97354	1.00000

	PC1	PC2	PC3	PC4	PC5	PC6	PC7	PC8
Question 1	0.3107	0.2189	-0.8218	0.1289	-0.0381	0.1279	0.3813	-0.0112
Question 2	-0.3851	-0.0081	-0.2361	-0.0084	-0.6289	0.4477	-0.4060	-0.1864
Question 3	-0.3654	0.0926	-0.1804	0.6914	0.3274	-0.2916	-0.2562	-0.2989
Question 4	-0.3429	0.2832	-0.2836	-0.6993	0.2983	-0.2625	-0.1466	-0.2305
Question 5	-0.4008	-0.0077	0.2125	0.0135	0.1793	0.4392	0.6435	-0.3931
Question 6	0.1593	0.9154	0.3134	0.1028	-0.0962	0.1165	-0.0642	-0.0264
Question 7	-0.3904	0.1095	0.0204	0.0514	-0.5209	-0.5683	0.4272	0.2355
Question 8	-0.4066	0.1141	-0.1093	0.0526	0.3063	0.3156	-0.0398	0.7821

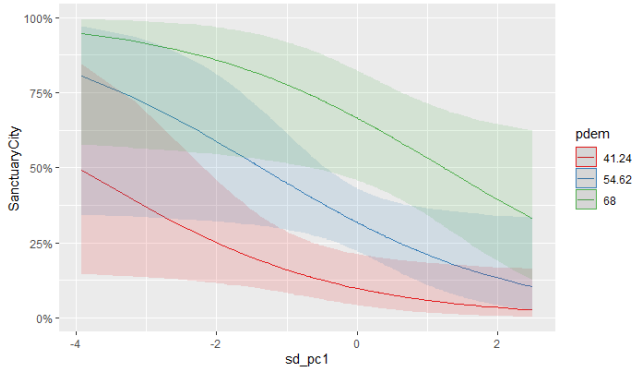
Appendix C: Odds Ratios for Model 5 (Full model)

	Odds Ratio	2.5% CI	97.6 CI
Foreign-Born Growth Rate 2000 – 2017	1.000	0.999	1.00
Hispanic Growth Rate 2000 - 2017	0.993	0.982	1.00
New Destination 2017	0.635	0.030	10.17
PC1 (Negative population opinion) 2017	0.550	0.317	0.94
PC2 (Positive population opinion) 2017	1.635	0.645	4.22
% Voted Democrat 2016 Election	1.118	1.062	1.19
City Mayor 2017	1.072	0.459	2.47
South	0.079	0.019	0.27
% BA degree or higher 2017	1.299	1.123	1.52
Median Income 2017	0.999	0.999	1.00
% Unemployed 2017	1.395	0.873	2.26
% Poverty Rate 0.5 – 0.99 2017	1.219	0.877	1.71
% Poverty Rate 1.0 – 1.24 2017	1.315	0.692	2.50
% Construction occupation 2017	1.853	1.025	3.39
% Manufacturing Occupation 2017	1.034	0.838	1.27
% Professional occupations 2017	0.822	0.610	1.10
% 15 yrs. old and under 2017	0.860	0.684	1.08
% 65 yrs. old and over 2017	0.815	0.676	0.97
% Foreign Born 2017	0.984	0.916	1.06
% Hispanic Population 2017	1.002	0.965	1.04

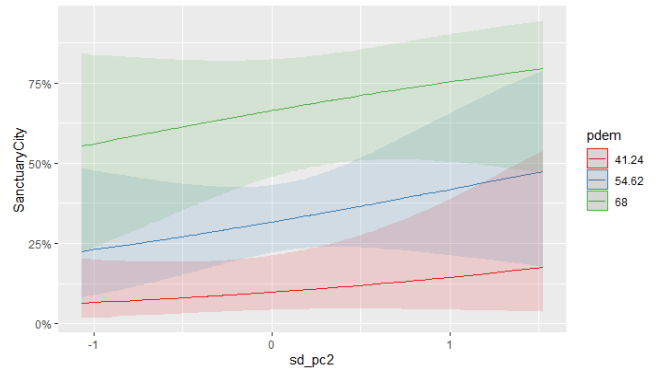
Appendix D: Predicted Probability Models of sanctuary city policy adoption and political partisanship

Graph 1: Predicted probability models, focal variables, and statistically significant controls

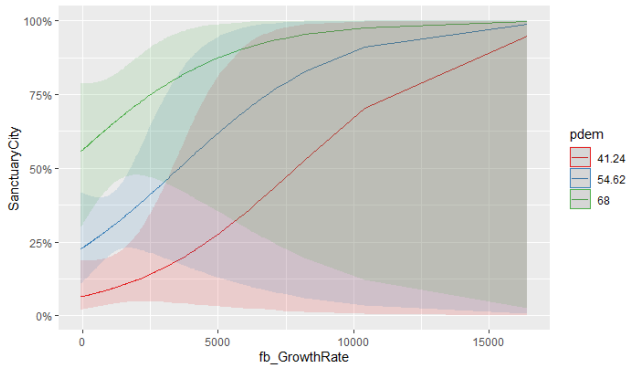
A: Negative Attitudes Towards Immigration



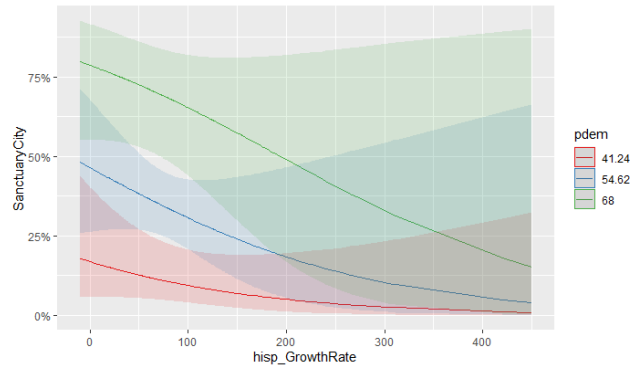
B: Positive Attitudes Towards Immigration



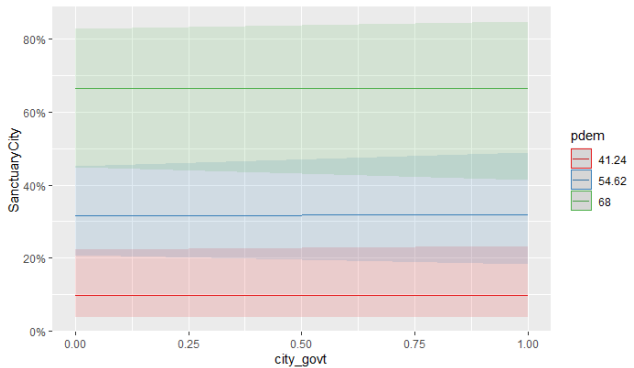
C: Foreign-Born Growth Rate



D: Hispanic Growth Rate



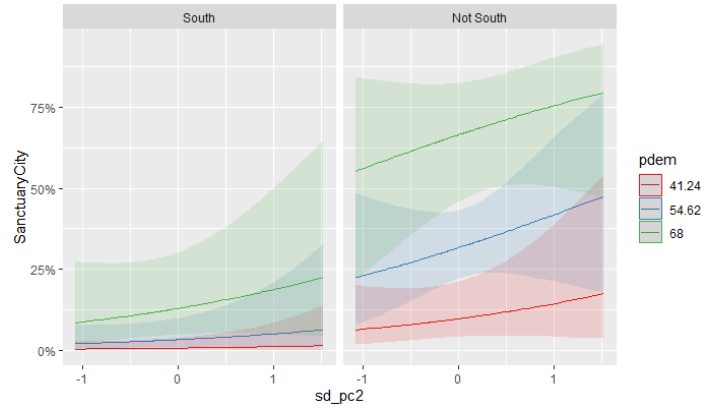
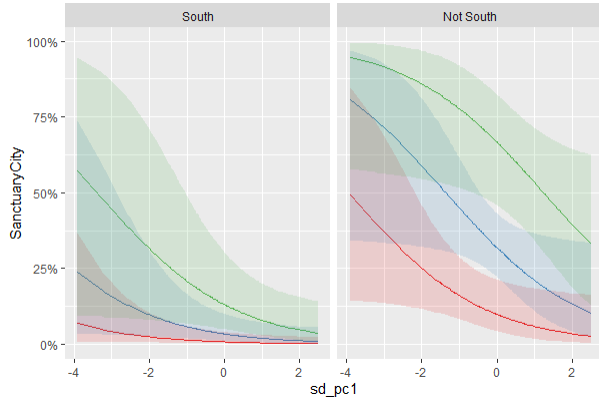
E: City Government Structure



Graph 2: Predicted Probability models controlled by US Region South/Not South

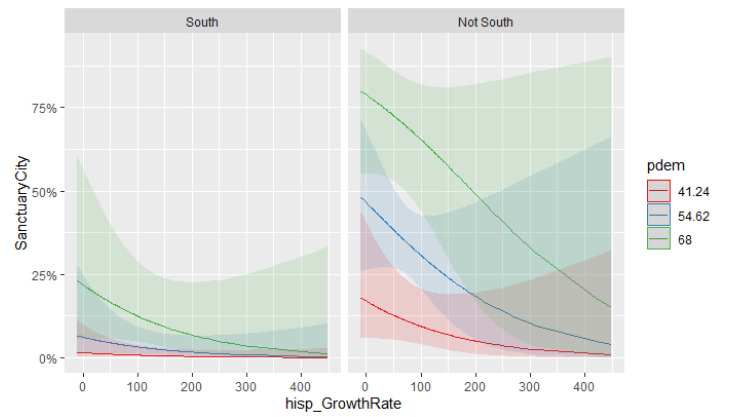
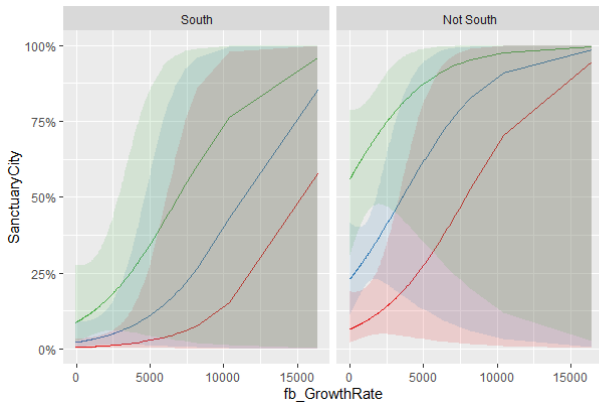
A: Negative Attitudes Towards Immigration

B: Positive Attitudes Towards Immigration

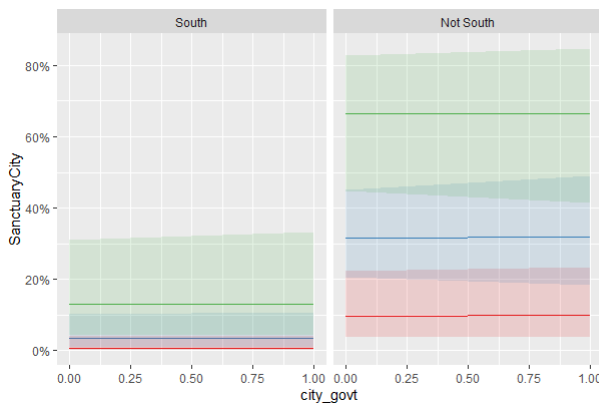


C: Foreign-Born Growth Rate

D: Hispanic Growth Rate



E: City Government Structure



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