



CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF LAW AND SOCIETY

BERKELEY LAW

CSLS SPEAKER SERIES

Cosponsored with the Thelton E. Henderson Center for Social Justice

Monday, November 25, 2019

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“Making Claims on Behalf of Noncitizens: What Works and What Does Not”

How can individuals and groups advocate effectively on behalf of noncitizens? Contemporary populism, whether in Hungary, the United Kingdom or the United States, appears to pit appeals to national values against the entry or inclusion of immigrants. In response, immigration advocates frequently call on rights language. Some appeal to human rights, contending that no human is illegal. Others, especially in the United States, call on the history and resonance of civil rights. But are these competing frames persuasive? This talk draws on survey experiment data drawn from registered voters in California to examine whether frames couched in the language of civil rights, human rights, or national values affect support for undocumented immigrants and citizens in need. Overall, respondents are much less supportive of government action for undocumented immigrants than citizens. Rights-based appeals do not mitigate this categorical inequality based on legal status. While people express high support for the idea of rights, in the abstract, such language falls short when applied to specific scenarios of workplace discrimination, hunger, and medical need. Indeed, among California voters, the civil rights frame might decrease respondents' support for government action, for citizens and noncitizens alike. Perhaps surprisingly, appeals to national values appear, in some cases, to make people more generous and willing to be inclusive, even to undocumented or irregular migrants.

The related paper is available on our website and in hard copy at the Center.

**PLACE
TIME
INFO
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Selznick Seminar Room, 2240 Piedmont Avenue

12:45 – 2:00pm. Coffee and water provided. Bag lunches welcome.

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