

CULTURE & SOCIETY / BRIEFING PAPER



# Hudson Institute

## America's Patriotic Assimilation System Is Broken

John Fonte  
&  
Althea Nagai

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Hudson Institute  
1015 15th Street, NW  
6th Floor  
Washington, DC 20005  
[www.hudson.org](http://www.hudson.org)



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**John Fonte, Ph.D.**

**Director, Center for American Common Culture,  
Hudson Institute**

and

**Althea Nagai, Ph.D.  
Nagai Lerner Consulting**

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# I. Executive Summary

## America's Patriotic Assimilation System is Broken

**Quantitative analysis of Harris Interactive Survey reveals that the patriotic assimilation of immigrants to American identity is weak and ambivalent**

As Congress debates immigration reform legislation many argue that “our immigration system is broken and needs to be fixed.” Perhaps. This quantitative analysis of Harris Interactive survey data however (originally commissioned by the Bradley Foundation Project on American National Identity) suggests that our patriotic assimilation system is also broken and needs to be fixed.

**A large “patriotic gap” exists between native-born citizens and immigrant citizens** on issues of patriotic attachment and civic knowledge. Despite what some may believe, **native-born citizens have a much higher degree of patriotic attachment** to the United States than naturalized citizens.

### Some Findings

- By 21 percentage points (65% to 44%), native-born citizens are more likely than naturalized immigrants to view America as “better” than other countries as opposed, to “no better, no worse.”
- By about 30 points (85% to 54%), the native-born are more likely to consider themselves **American citizens rather than “citizens of the world.”**
- By 30 points (67% to 37%), the native-born are more likely to believe that the **U.S. Constitution** is a higher legal authority for Americans than **international law**.
- By roughly 31 points (81% to 50%), the native-born are more likely than immigrant citizens to believe that schools should focus on **American citizenship rather than ethnic pride**.
- By 23 percentage points (**82% to 59%**), the native-born are more likely to believe that it is **very important for the future** of the American political system **that all citizens understand English**.
- By roughly 15 points (77% to 62%), the native-born are more likely to believe that that there is a unique American culture that defines what it means to be an American.
- By 15 points (82% to 67%), the native-born are more likely than immigrant citizens to support an emphasis in schools on **learning about the nation's founding documents**.

In addition, despite some common misconceptions, **native-born citizens have much greater civic knowledge** than naturalized citizens.

## **Some Findings on Multiple-Choice Questions Taken from the U.S. Citizenship Test**

- By 14 percentage points (93% to 79%), more native-born than immigrant citizens knew that Thomas Jefferson (not Ulysses S. Grant, George Washington, or Martin Luther King) wrote the Declaration of Independence.
- By 19 percentage points (87% to 68%), more native-born than naturalized citizens knew that the Emancipation Proclamation freed the slaves.
- By 19 percentage points (85% to 66%), more native-born than naturalized citizens knew that the U.S. fought Germany in World War II.
- By 12 percentage points (74% to 62%), more native-born than naturalized citizens knew that the U.S. Constitution outlined the division of powers between the states and federal government.

## **Policy Implications**

In the final analysis, there can be **no comprehensive immigration reform without comprehensive assimilation reform**. We cannot determine immigration policy unless we seriously examine what our assimilation policy should be.

Why is there a patriotic gap between native-born and naturalized citizens? Undoubtedly there are many different reasons. One in particular, however, strikes us as responsible, at least partially, for this gap. Since the 1970s **American elites have altered our “de-facto assimilation policy” from Americanization (or patriotic integration) to a multiculturalism** that emphasizes ethnic group consciousness at the expense of American common culture.

In short, **we have sent immigrants the wrong message on assimilation. It is our fault, not theirs** that this gap exists.

## **Federal Government Barriers to Patriotic Integration**

Administrative-legal barriers to patriotic assimilation have developed gradually through a combination of federal bureaucratic policies, congressional activities, executive orders and court decisions. These government-funded and government-imposed barriers could well be the “root causes” of the problems that exist with the patriotic integration gap.



**Remove the barriers to patriotic integration.** It would make sense to remove these barriers by cutting off federal funding for any programs promoting multicultural education, bilingual education, diversity training, and any so-called multi-cultural or cultural competency training.

Some of the funds saved by de-funding harmful multicultural programs could be used to pay for civic instruction for naturalization training for immigrants applying for citizenship. Federal money for civic instruction should not go to special interest groups, but could reimburse community colleges for work in naturalization.

**Patriotic integration versus multiculturalism is a moral issue.** America's decision on how to integrate newcomers—through patriotic assimilation (traditional Americanization) or the contemporary approach of multiculturalism-group consciousness—is a moral issue that will define the character of our citizenship and our constitutional democracy.

Do we welcome newcomers as individual citizens with equal rights and responsibilities or do we determine that they are members of a “protected class” because they were born into a particular ethnic, racial, or linguistic group?

Those forces in our nation that seek to establish a truly welcoming system of patriotic integration for newcomers based on equality of individual citizenship (not on group rights and group consciousness) should seize the moral high ground and remove the barriers to full Americanization—now—while immigration policy has captured national attention.

## II. Introduction

Congress is preparing to undertake a major initiative in immigration reform. Many believe that it is necessary to examine a wide range of immigration related issues simultaneously. In other words, it is necessary to be comprehensive. In the past, the final end point of successful immigration policy culminated in the patriotic assimilation (or integration) of newcomers into what was once proudly called the “American way of life.” Any approach to immigration policy that calls itself “comprehensive” would logically have to examine patriotic assimilation/integration as well.

*Washington Post* columnist Robert J. Samuelson wrote that assimilation “means more than having them [immigrants] join the economic mainstream. It also means that they think of themselves primarily as Americans. If the United States simply becomes a collection of self-designated ‘minorities,’ then the country will have changed for the worst.”<sup>1</sup>

Further, we are not just a market, but a nation. American leaders from the Founding period to the Ellis Island era always considered immigrant assimilation or the “Americanization” of newcomers more than a process of simply learning English, buying a home, and advancing economically. George Washington wrote John Adams that he wanted immigrants to become “assimilated to our customs, measures, laws,” in order that the native-born and the naturalized would “soon become one people.”<sup>2</sup> Alexander Hamilton wanted “to enable aliens to get rid of foreign and acquire American attachments; to learn the principles and imbibe the spirit of our government.”<sup>3</sup> Hamilton believed that the maintenance of America’s constitutional republic depended upon the “preservation” of a “national character” in both naturalized and native-born citizens.<sup>4</sup>

Woodrow Wilson told newly naturalized citizens in 1915, “You cannot dedicate yourself to America unless you become in every respect and with every purpose of your will thoroughly Americans.”<sup>5</sup> Also in 1915, one of America’s most successful immigrants and future Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis said in a naturalization ceremony that “Americanization” meant that the new citizens would “possess the national consciousness of an American.”<sup>6</sup>

The task of quantifying patriotic attachments and core normative issues of American national identity in the nation’s newest citizens and their children is certainly difficult, but not impossible.

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<sup>1</sup> Robert J. Samuelson, “Can America Assimilate?” *Washington Post*, April 6, 2001.

<sup>2</sup> George Washington, “Letter to the Vice President,” November 15, 1794, available at [http://www.founding.com/founders\\_library/id.2223,css.pring/defalut.asp](http://www.founding.com/founders_library/id.2223,css.pring/defalut.asp)

<sup>3</sup> Frank George Franklin, *The Legislative History of Naturalization in the United States* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1906), p. 101.

<sup>4</sup> Alexander Hamilton, “The Examination, No. 7,” 1802.

<sup>5</sup> Woodrow Wilson, “Address to Several Thousand Foreign-Born Citizens after Naturalization Ceremonies,” Philadelphia, May 10, 1915, in *President Wilson’s State Papers and Addresses*, ed. Albert Shaw (New York: George H. Doran Co., 1918), pp. 114–18, available online.

<sup>6</sup> Louis D. Brandeis, “True Americanism,” July 4, 1915, available at <http://www.law.louisville.edu/library/collections/brandeis/node/224>.

For the past two decades there has been a series of fine quantitative studies that have probed some of these key questions.

Professors Alejandro Portes and Ruben G. Rumbaut published a massive longitudinal study of 5,000 children of immigrants from 77 different countries. The study revealed that after four years of American high school, the students were less likely to identify themselves primarily as Americans and more likely to self-identity by their parents' home country (as Mexican, Filipino, Chinese, etc.), or by a pan-ethnic category (Latino, Asian).<sup>7</sup> The Pew Foundation's Hispanic Center in surveys conducted in 2002<sup>8</sup> and 2007<sup>9</sup> found that Latinos who are American citizens self-identity primarily by national origin (as Salvadorians, Guatemalans, Mexicans, etc.), rather than as Americans or Latinos/Hispanics.

For example, the 2007 Pew study revealed that among American citizens of Hispanic descent, only 14% thought of themselves primarily as Americans, whereas 54% identified themselves by national origin (Salvadorian, Honduran, Mexican, etc.). A 2012 Pew survey found that among second generation Latino children of immigrants only 35% self-identified primarily as Americans rather than the parent's home country or a pan-ethnic designation (Latino/Hispanic).<sup>10</sup> Also in 2012, a different Pew study revealed that only 28% of American-born citizens of Asian descent considered themselves primarily Americans.<sup>11</sup>

Using census data beginning in 1900, Duke University professor Jacob Vigdor created an immigrant assimilation index. Vigdor identified three categories of assimilation: economic (home ownership, educational attainment, employment success), cultural (English ability, intermarriage rates), and civic (naturalization, military service.) The results of the survey published in 2008 showed all these factors of assimilation to be "low by historical standards."<sup>12</sup> On a scale from 1 to 100, immigrants who came through Ellis Island in 1900 averaged 55 on Vigdor's overall immigrant assimilation index.<sup>13</sup> Today's immigrants average a mere 30 on the same assimilation index, in stark contrast to the 55 average of the immigrant of 1900, as Vigdor found in a new Manhattan Institute survey just released on March 25, 2013.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Alejandro Portes and Ruben G. Rumbaut, *Legacies: The Story of the Immigrant Second Generation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), pp. 154–57.

<sup>8</sup> Mollyann Brodie, Annie Steffenson, Jaime Valdez, Rebecca Levin, and Roberto Suro, "2002 National Survey Of Latinos: Summary of Findings." Pew Hispanic Center/Kaiser Family Foundation, Washington, D.C. and Menlo Park, C.A. (December 17, 2002), available at <http://www.pewhispanic.org/files/reports/15.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> Roger Waldinger, "Between Here and There: How Attached Are Latino Immigrants to Their Native Country?" Pew Hispanic Center Survey, October 25, 2007, p. 14.

<sup>10</sup> Paul Taylor, Mark H. Lopez, Jessica H. Martinez, and Gabriel Velasco, "When Labels Don't Fit: Hispanics and Their Views on Identity." Pew Research Hispanic Center, Washington, D.C. (April 4, 2012), p. 12, available at <http://www.pewhispanic.org/files/2012/04/PHC-Hispanic-Identity.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> Pew Research Center's Social & Demographic Trends Project, "The Rise of Asian Americans." Washington, D.C. (June 19, 2012), p. 15, available at [http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/files/2013/01/SDT\\_Rise\\_of\\_Asian\\_Americans.pdf](http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/files/2013/01/SDT_Rise_of_Asian_Americans.pdf)

<sup>12</sup> Jacob L. Vigdor, *Measuring Immigrant Assimilation in the United States*, Manhattan Institute for Policy Research, Civic Report no. 53, May 2008, Executive Summary.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, *Measuring Immigrant Assimilation in the United States*, Chapter 3, p. 11.

<sup>14</sup> Jacob L. Vigdor, *Measuring Immigrant Assimilation in Post-Recession America*, Manhattan Institute for Policy Research, Civic Report no. 76, March 2013, Introduction, p. 4.

Our goal in this paper, however, is to examine not assimilation in general, but specifically the issue of patriotic assimilation or integration, because we believe that **patriotic attachment to American constitutional democracy is the single most important aspect of immigrant integration in the United States**. To meet this goal, we re-examined a national survey of 2,421 American citizens commissioned by the Bradley Foundation Project on American National Identity, conducted by Harris Interactive and first released in June 2008.<sup>15</sup> The original analysis of the survey was in the context of the Bradley Project. It was also concerned with the contrasting attitudes of American policy elites and non-elite American citizens as discussed in John Fonte's *Sovereignty or Submission: Will Americans Rule Themselves or Be Ruled by Others?*<sup>16</sup>

In this paper, we focus on the comparison between native-born citizens and naturalized citizens.<sup>17</sup> The survey includes *only* American citizens. The survey suits our purposes because it probed questions concerning the intensity of patriotic attachments, national identity, and American exceptionalism. We believe the questions asked on this survey are unique. At least, we have not found a similar study with this deep emphasis on the patriotic attachment of American citizens.

This paper consists of two parts. The first is a quantitative analysis of the Harris Interactive survey that examines patriotic attitudes of American citizens.<sup>18</sup> In re-examining this survey, we compared the patriotic attitudes and attachment of native-born citizens and naturalized citizens. In general, the Harris data analysis reveals that there is a large patriotic gap. Native-born citizens are much more intensely patriotic than naturalized citizens.

The second part of this paper, "Remove Federal Government Barriers to Patriotic Integration," is an essay that goes beyond the data and speculates as to why there is this "gap" and what could be done to narrow it.

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<sup>15</sup> "E Pluribus Unum: A Study of Americans' Views on National Identity," prepared for the Bradley Project on American National Identity, Harris Interactive, May 13, 2008.

<sup>16</sup> John Fonte, *Sovereignty or Submission: Will Americans Rule Themselves or Be Ruled by Others?* (New York: Encounter Books, 2011).

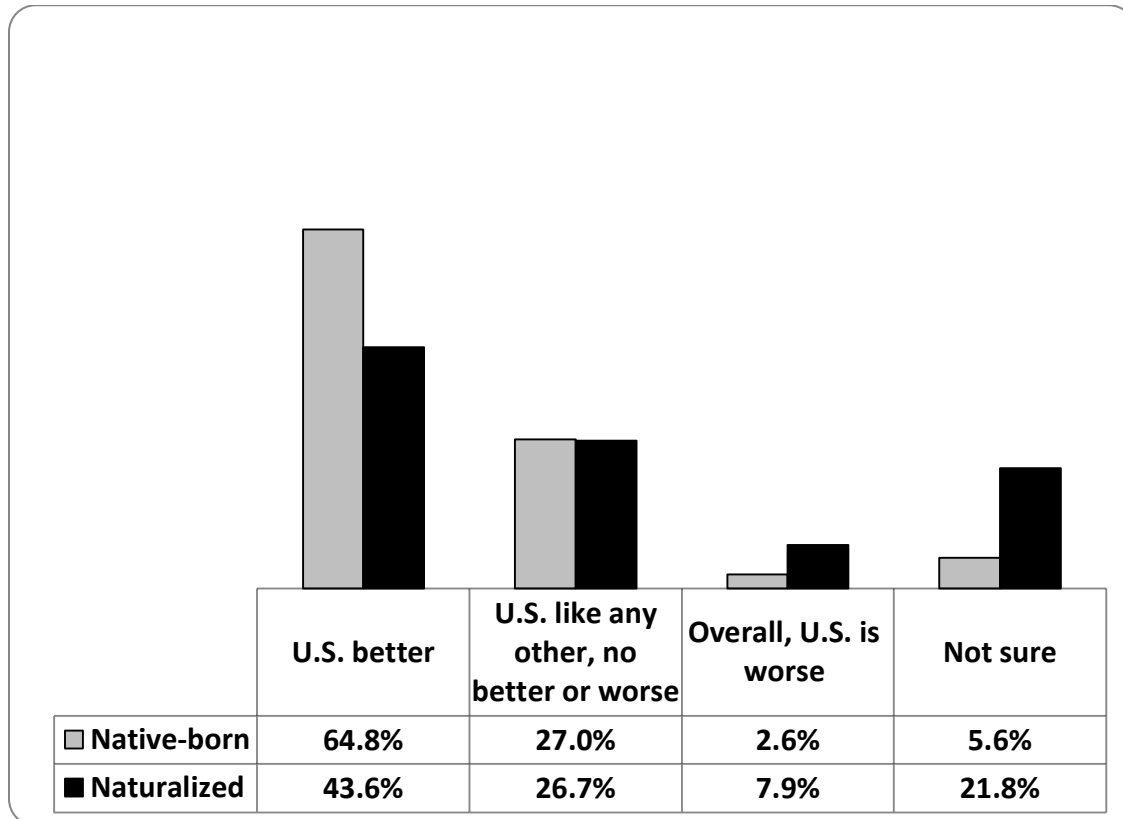
<sup>17</sup> N.B.: The categories, "native-born" and "naturalized," were statistically constructed from Harris's standard demographic questions, based on place of birth.

<sup>18</sup> N.B.: The internet survey was conducted by Harris Interactive in autumn, 2007. The sample consisted of 2,421 randomly selected American *citizens*. Subsequent weights were created and attached to the sample by Harris Interactive to reflect the standard demographic categories among U.S. citizens.

### III. Statistical Analysis

#### American Exceptionalism and National Identity

Figure 1. Is the U.S. better or worse than other nations? <sup>19</sup>

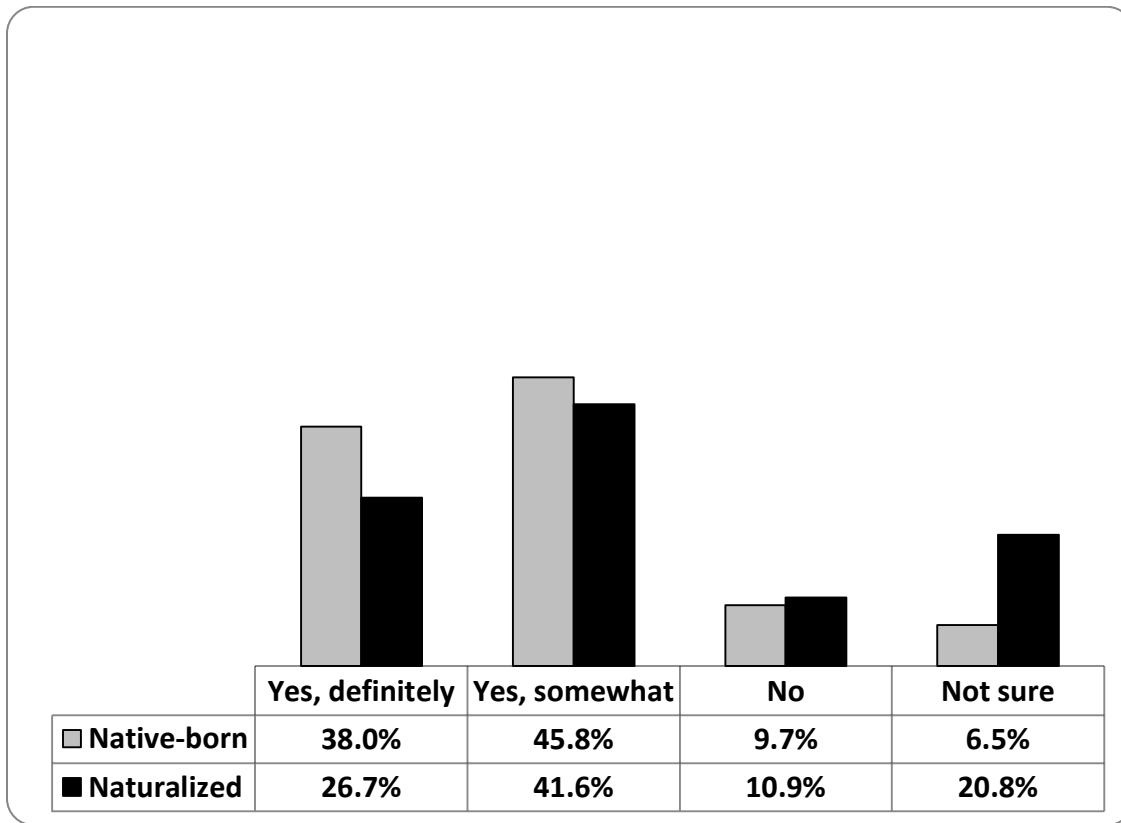


- By a 21 percentage point gap, native-born citizens are more likely than immigrant citizens to view America as “better than other nations.”

64.8% of native-born respondents felt that the U.S. was better than other nations, compared to only 43.6% of naturalized citizens. Approximately the same percentage of each group thought the U.S. was no better or worse than other countries (27% and 26.7%, respectively), while 2.6% of the native-born and 7.9% of the naturalized thought the U.S. to be worse than other countries. Furthermore, 21.8% of the immigrant citizens were unsure whether America was better than other nations, which is more than three times the percentage of the native-born who were unsure (5.6%).

<sup>19</sup> The actual wording: Which of these statements comes closest to your opinion? Overall, the U.S. is better than other nations; The U.S. is a country like any other, and is no better or worse than other nations; Overall, the U.S. is worse than other nations; Not sure.

**Figure 2. Americans share unique national identity <sup>20</sup>**

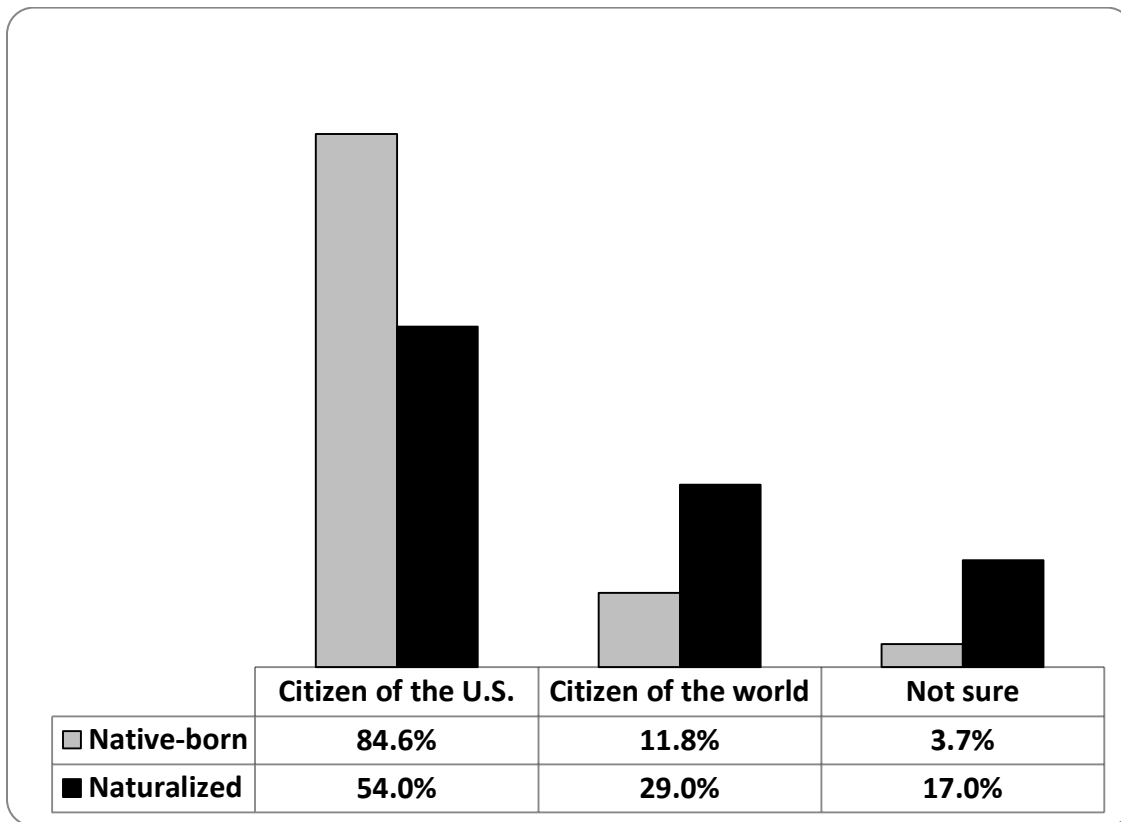


- Significantly more native-born citizens think that Americans share a unique national identity based on a shared beliefs, values, and culture.

38% of native-born Americans unequivocally believe in a unique national identity compared to 26.7% of naturalized citizens. A plurality of both groups however think this identity is shared only somewhat (45.8% of native-born and 41.6% of naturalized citizens). Roughly one out of ten native-born and naturalized respondents completely reject the notion of American uniqueness, while the largest gap between native-born citizens and naturalized citizens is among the unsure—20.8% of naturalized citizens are unsure, compared to 6.5% of the native-born.

<sup>20</sup> Do you believe that Americans share a unique national identity based on a shared set of beliefs, values, and culture? No; Yes, somewhat; Yes, definitely; Not sure.

**Figure 3. Respondent's view of him/herself as a citizen of the U.S. or of the world<sup>21</sup>**

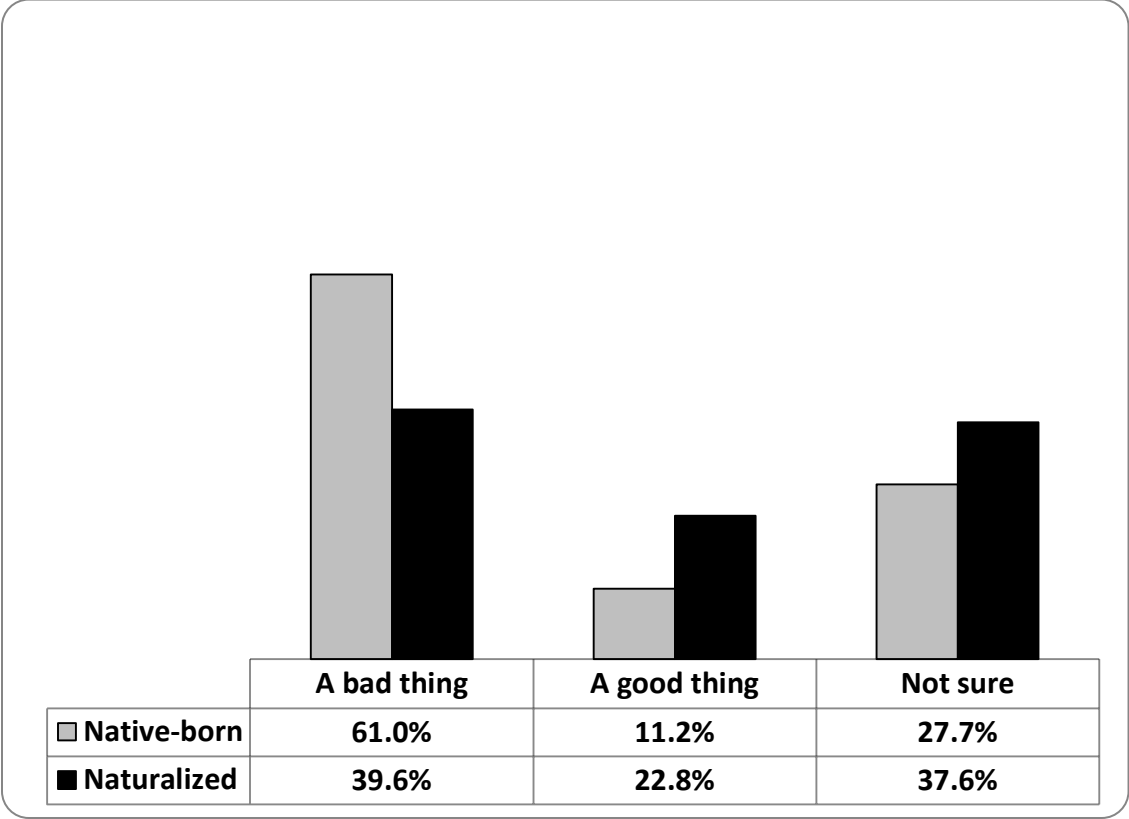


- There is roughly a 30-point gap on whether the respondent thinks of him/herself more as a citizen of the United States or a citizen of the world.

The overwhelming majority of native-born respondents (84.6%) think of themselves primarily as U.S. citizens, slightly more than one in ten native-born said they were citizens of the world, and only 3.7% native-born respondents were unsure. Among naturalized citizens, 54% said they were primarily U.S. citizens; 29% of the naturalized respondents said they were primarily citizens of the world, while another 17% were unsure of their response.

<sup>21</sup> Do you think of yourself more as: A citizen of the United States; A citizen of the world; Not sure.

**Figure 4. Respondents' feelings toward U.S. multinational corporations that see themselves as global companies <sup>22</sup>**



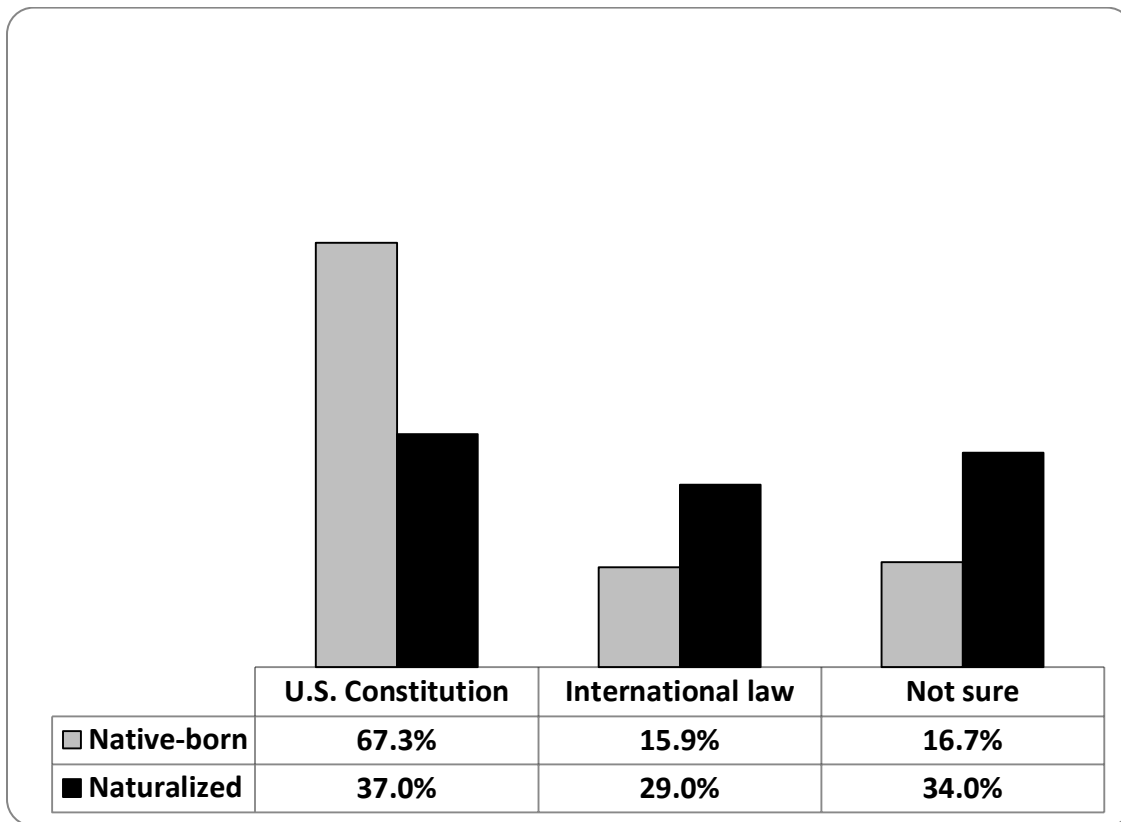
- Native-born citizens are more suspicious than naturalized citizens of multinational corporations that consider themselves to be global companies with no more responsibility to America than to any other country.

61% of the native-born said that it's a bad thing that these corporations feel no greater responsibility to the U.S. than to other countries; 39.6% of naturalized respondents believe the same. 11.2% of native-born and 22.8% of naturalized respondents think it's a good thing that corporations see themselves as global companies, and finally, 27.7% of the native-born and 37.6% of the naturalized said they were unsure.

<sup>22</sup> Some U.S.-based multinational corporations may consider themselves to be global companies with no more responsibility to America than to any other country. Do you think this is: A bad thing; A good thing; Not sure.



**Figure 5. Respondents' views as to what should be the highest legal authority when the U.S. Constitution and international law conflict <sup>23</sup>**



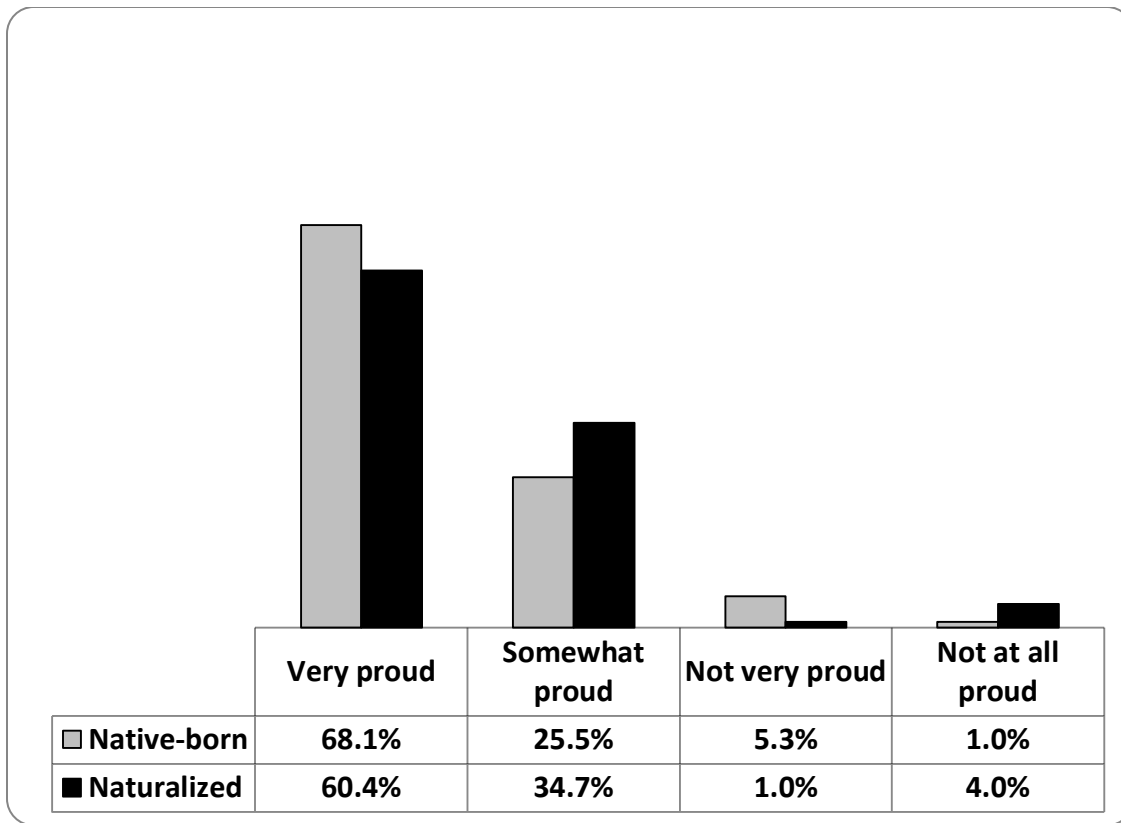
- There is also a 30-point gap on the question of whether the U.S. Constitution or international law is the supreme legal authority for Americans when there is a conflict between the two.

67.3% of the native-born think the U.S. Constitution should be the highest legal authority for Americans, but *the majority of immigrant citizens think differently*. Only 37% of immigrant citizens think the U.S. Constitution should be the highest authority for Americans. 29% of immigrant citizens think international law should be above the U.S. Constitution and 34% of them remain unsure.

<sup>23</sup> When there is a conflict between the U.S. Constitution and international law, which should be the highest legal authority for Americans, for instance, on human rights, economic, environmental, trade, family and other issues? U.S. Constitution; International law; Not sure.

# Patriotism

Figure 6. Pride in being American <sup>24</sup>



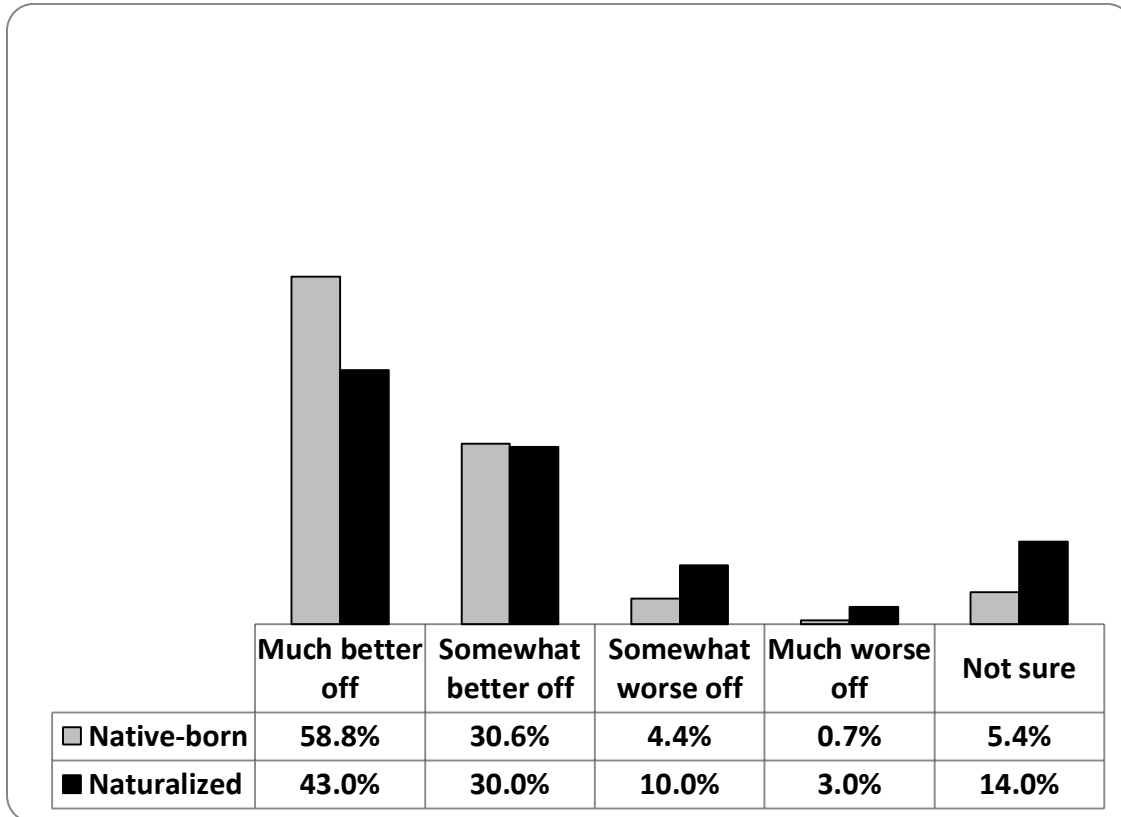
- Extremely large percentages in both groups are proud to be American, but a larger percentage of native-born respondents are “*very* proud” to be Americans.

68.1% of native-born respondents and 60.4% of naturalized respondents said they were *very* proud to be Americans. Another 25.5% of the native-born and 34.7% of naturalized citizens said they were *somewhat* proud. This leaves 5.3% of the native-born and 1% of naturalized who said they were not very proud and another 1% of native-born and 4% of naturalized citizens saying they were *not at all* proud to be Americans.

<sup>24</sup> In general, how proud would you say you are to be an American? Not at all proud; Not very proud; Somewhat proud; Very proud.

# American Citizenship/Dual Citizenship

Figure 7. Are U.S. citizens better off than citizens of other countries? <sup>25</sup>

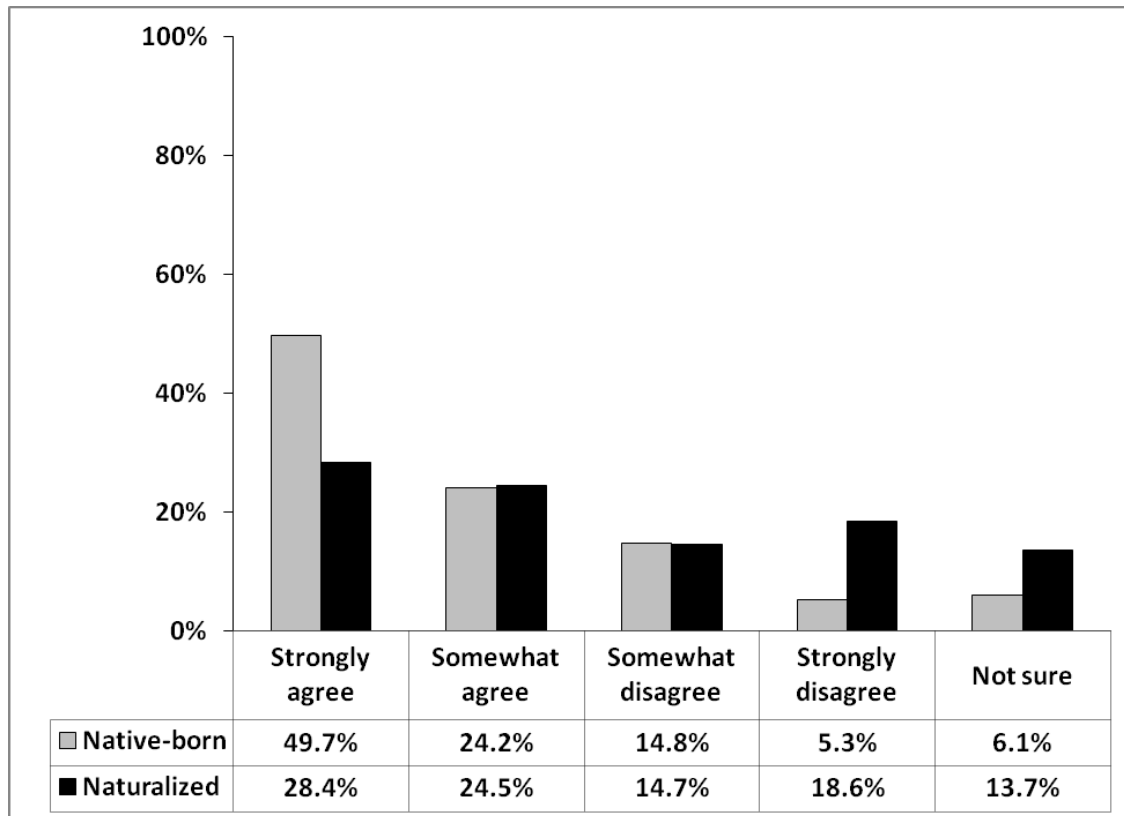


- Native-born respondents as a group are more likely than naturalized citizens to think that Americans are better off than citizens of other countries.

58.8% of native-born respondents said that U.S. citizens are much better off compared to those in other countries; 43% of naturalized respondents feel the same. Another 30.6% of native-born citizens and 30% of naturalized citizens said that American citizens are somewhat better off. In contrast, 4.4% of native-born respondents and 10% of naturalized citizens said Americans are somewhat worse off, while 0.7% of the native-born and 3% of the naturalized said Americans were much worse off. Finally, 5.4% of native-born respondents said they were unsure; 14% of naturalized citizens were also unsure (a 9-point difference).

<sup>25</sup> In general, how would you compare being a citizen of the United States with being a citizen in other countries? Would you say citizens in the United States are: Much worse off than those in other countries; Somewhat worse off than those in other countries; Somewhat better off than those in other countries; Much better off than those in other countries; Not sure.

**Figure 8. Respondents' views about individuals giving up loyalty to their former country upon becoming an American citizen <sup>26</sup>**



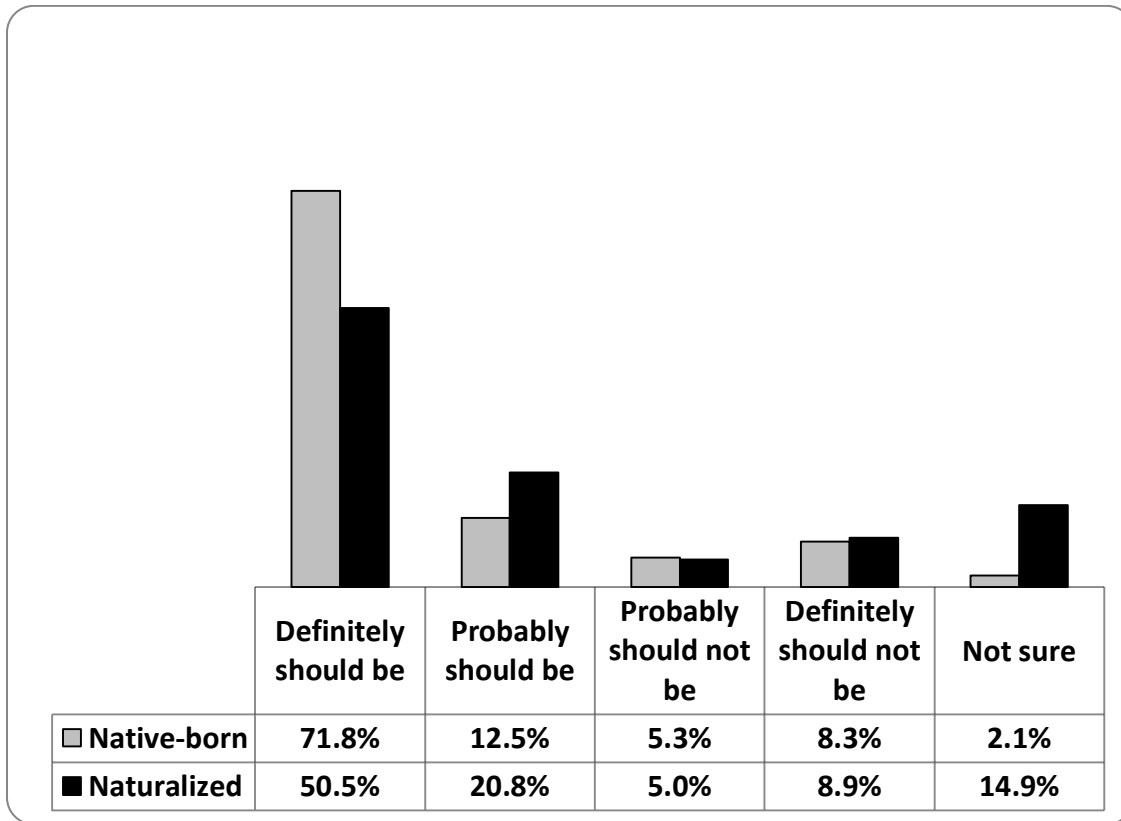
- The opinions of native-born and naturalized respondents differ widely on the question of whether new citizens should be required to give up loyalty to their former country when becoming American citizens.

49.7% of the native-born *strongly agree* that a new citizen should be required to give up loyalty to their former country when becoming an American citizen. Only 28.4% of naturalized citizens felt the same—a 21-point difference. The same percent of both groups somewhat agree (24.2% and 24.5%, respectively), and roughly the same percentage somewhat disagreed (14.8% of the native-born and 14.7% of the naturalized). Finally, there is a 13-point gap among those who strongly disagree. Only 5.3% of the native-born *strongly disagree*, versus 18.6% of the naturalized. An additional 6.1% of the native-born and 13.7% of naturalized were not sure.

<sup>26</sup> In the oath that immigrants take when they become American citizens they promise to renounce all loyalty to their former country. Do you agree or disagree that individuals should be required to give up loyalty to their former country when they become American citizens? Strongly disagree; Somewhat disagree; Somewhat agree; Strongly agree; Not sure.

## Attitudes toward English

Figure 9. Attitudes towards English as the official language of the United States <sup>27</sup>

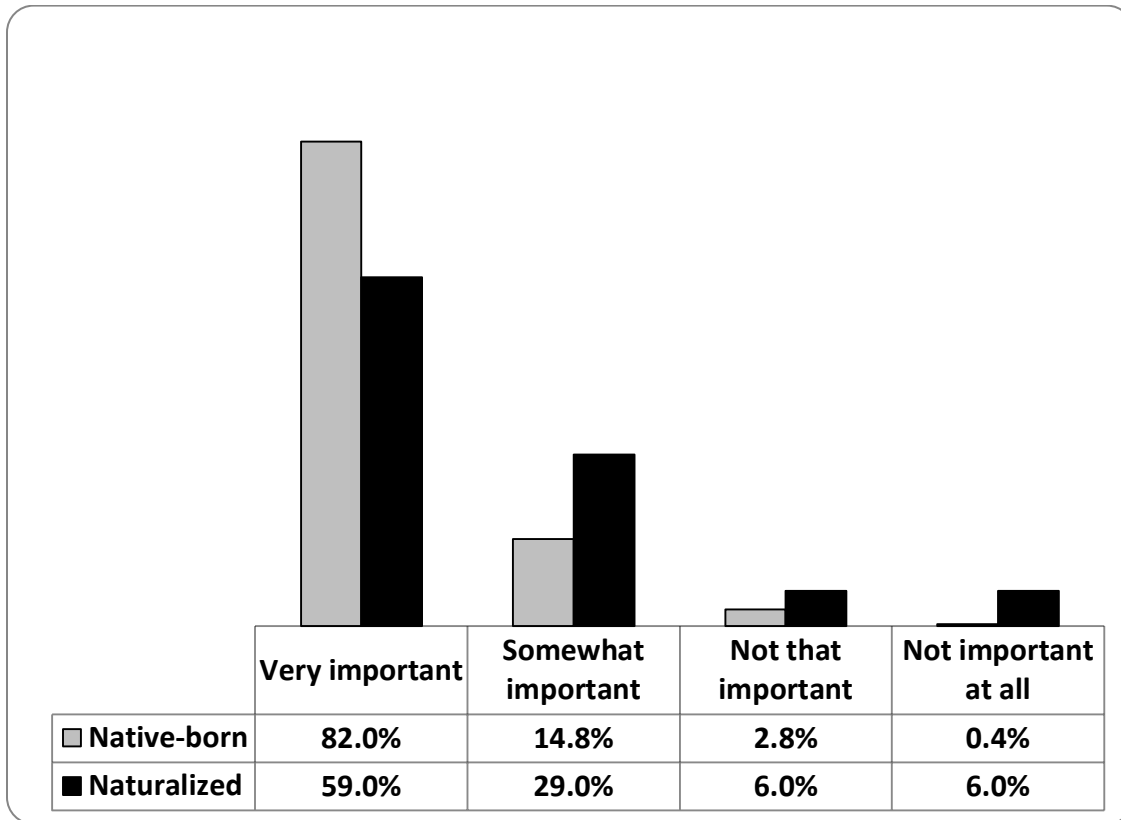


- Substantially more native-born respondents think English should be the official language of the U.S. There is a 21- point disparity between the two groups.

71.8% of the native-born compared to 50.5% of the naturalized said that English *definitely should be* the official language of the U.S. Another 12.5% of native-born and 20.8% of the naturalized said it probably should be. Roughly 5% in each group said English probably should not be the official language, while a little more than 8% in both groups said it *definitely should not be*. Finally, only 2.1% of the native-born said they were unsure versus 14.9% of naturalized citizens.

<sup>27</sup> Do you believe English should be made the official language of the United States? Definitely should not be; Probably should not be; Probably should be; Definitely should be; Not sure.

**Figure 10. Importance for the American political system that all citizens speak and read English <sup>28</sup>**



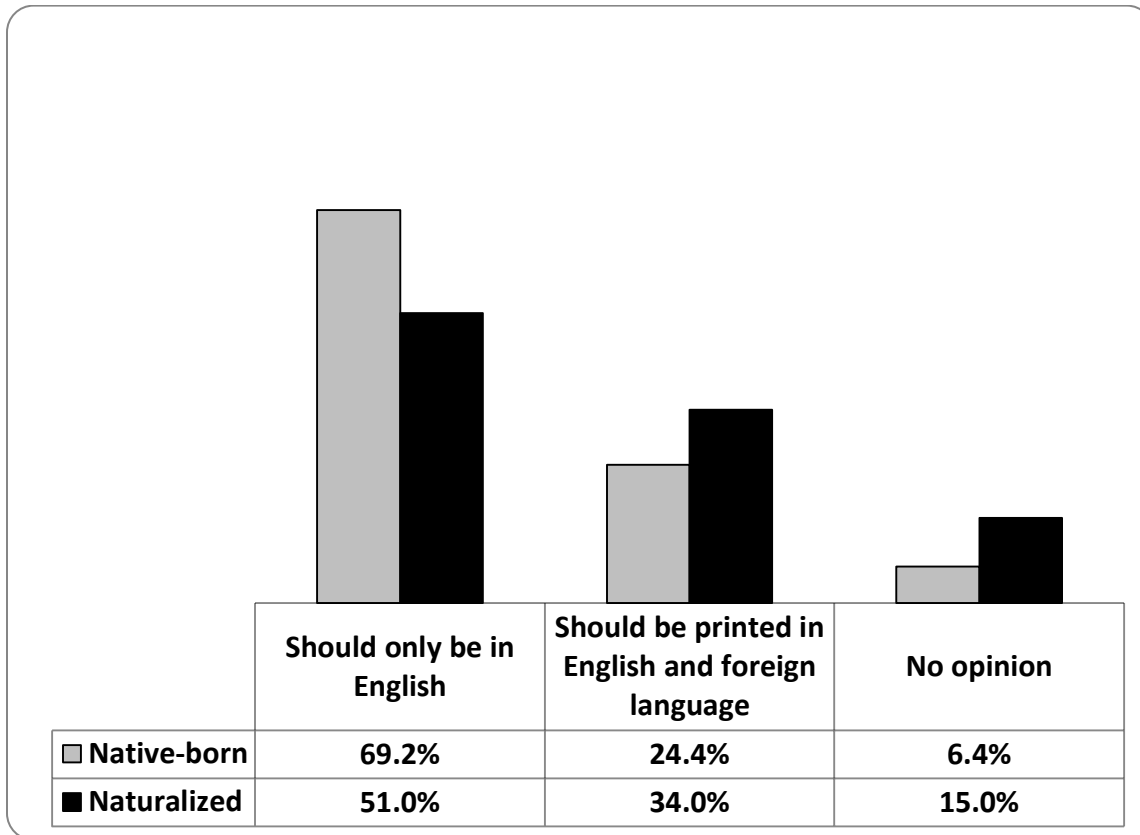
- There is also a significant gap (23 points) when it comes to the importance of citizens speaking English for the future of the American political system.

82% of native-born respondents said that it is very important for the future of the American political system that citizens speak English, compared to 59% of naturalized citizens. Additionally, 14.8% of native-born citizens said that it is somewhat important, compared to 29% of naturalized citizens.

At the other end of the continuum, 6% of naturalized respondents think it not that important and another 6% think it *not important at all*. Considerably fewer native-born citizens feel that same—roughly 2.8% of the native-born think it not that important, while just 0.4% think it not important at all.

<sup>28</sup> How important do you think it is for the future of the American political system that all citizens be able to speak and read English? Not important at all; Not that important; Somewhat important; Very important.

**Figure 11. Should election ballots be printed only in English or printed in English and foreign languages? <sup>29</sup>**



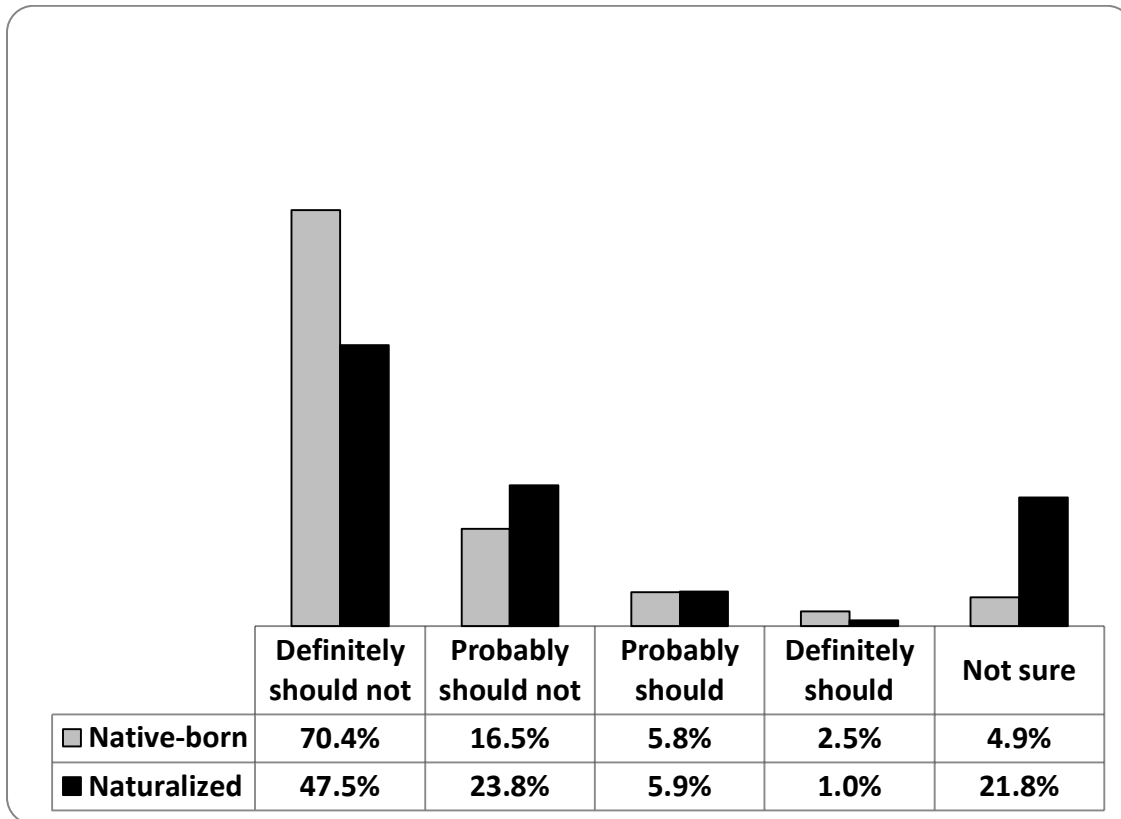
- Native-born respondents are significantly more inclined to support ballots printed only in English.

69.2% of native-born respondents believe ballots should be printed only in English, compared to 51% of naturalized—a difference of 18 points. 24.4% of native-born and 34% of naturalized respondents think ballots should be printed in English and other foreign languages. Finally, 15% of the naturalized had no opinion, versus 6.4% of the native-born.

<sup>29</sup> Please indicate which of the following statements comes closest to your own opinion: Election ballots should only be printed in English; OR Election ballots should be printed in English and foreign languages spoken by people living in the U.S.; No opinion.

## Multiculturalism vs. Civic Assimilation

Figure 12. Should the U.S. allow immigration of radical Islamists who are against the U.S. Constitution and favor replacing it with Islamic law? <sup>30</sup>



- There is a 23-point gap between native-born citizens and immigrant citizens on the question of allowing the immigration to America of radical Islamists who want to replace the U.S. Constitution with Islamic law.

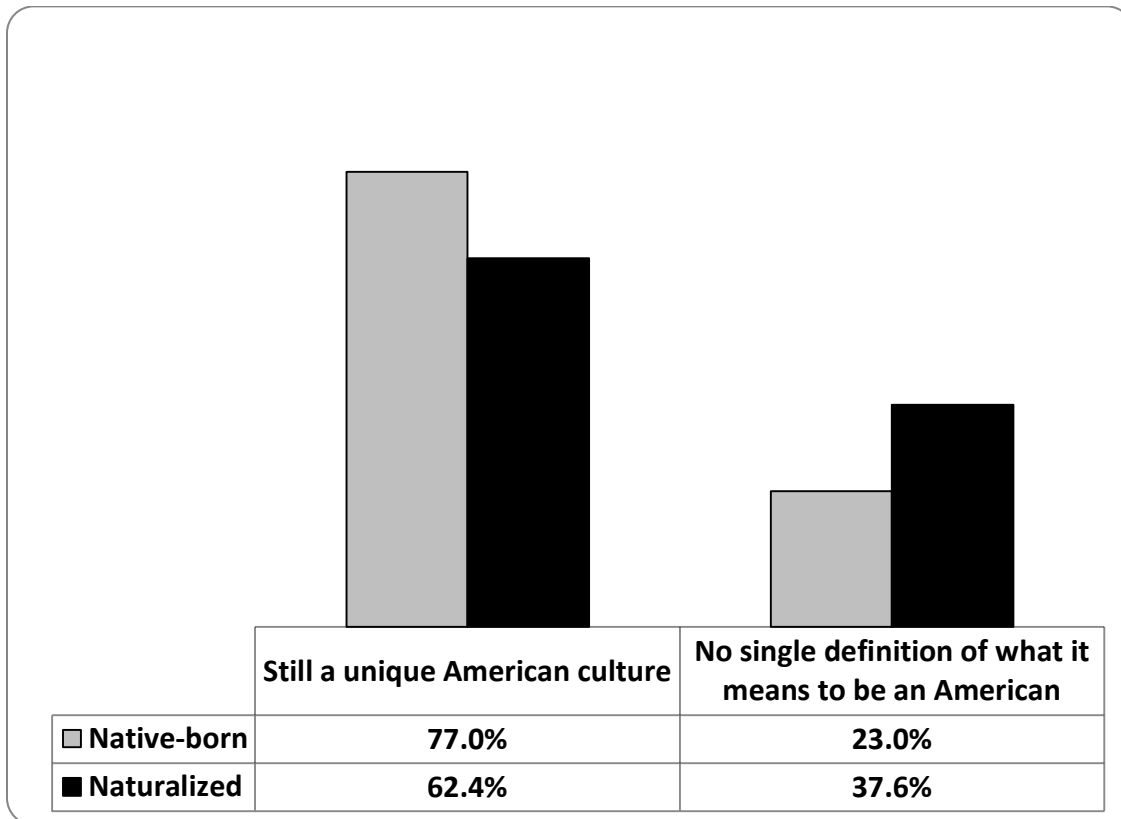
70.4% of native-born citizens think that people who believe that the U.S. Constitution should be replaced with Islamic law *should definitely not* be allowed to immigrate to the United States, while less than half of immigrant citizens (47.5%) would not allow people with these views to immigrate to America—a difference of 23 percentage points. Another 16.5% of the native-born think radical Islamists probably should not be allowed to immigrate to the U.S., versus 23.8% of the naturalized. Additionally, 21.8% of naturalized were not sure if radical Islamists who favor replacing the U.S. Constitution with Islamic law should be allowed to immigrate to America, compared to 4.9% of the native-born.

<sup>30</sup> At times in American history, Congress has passed legislation banning members of certain groups from immigrating to the United States if they opposed the U.S. Constitution and system of government. For example, in the past, anarchists, Nazis, and Communists were forbidden to immigrate to the United States. Currently, some radical Islamists have said that they are against the U.S. Constitution and that it should be replaced with Islamic law. If someone believes this, do you think they should be allowed to immigrate to the United States? Definitely should not; Probably should not; Probably should; Definitely should; Not sure.



The next question presented the respondents two positions, asking them to pick the one that most closely resembled their opinion: 1) Although there are many ethnic groups and cultures in the U.S., there is still a unique American culture that defines what it means to be an American; OR 2) Since there are so many different ethnic groups and cultures in the U.S., there is not a single definition of what it means to be an American.

**Figure 13. Defining what it means to be an American** <sup>31</sup>



- Most respondents said there was a unique American culture defining what it means to be an American. There was, however, a gap of roughly 15 points between native-born citizens and naturalized citizens.

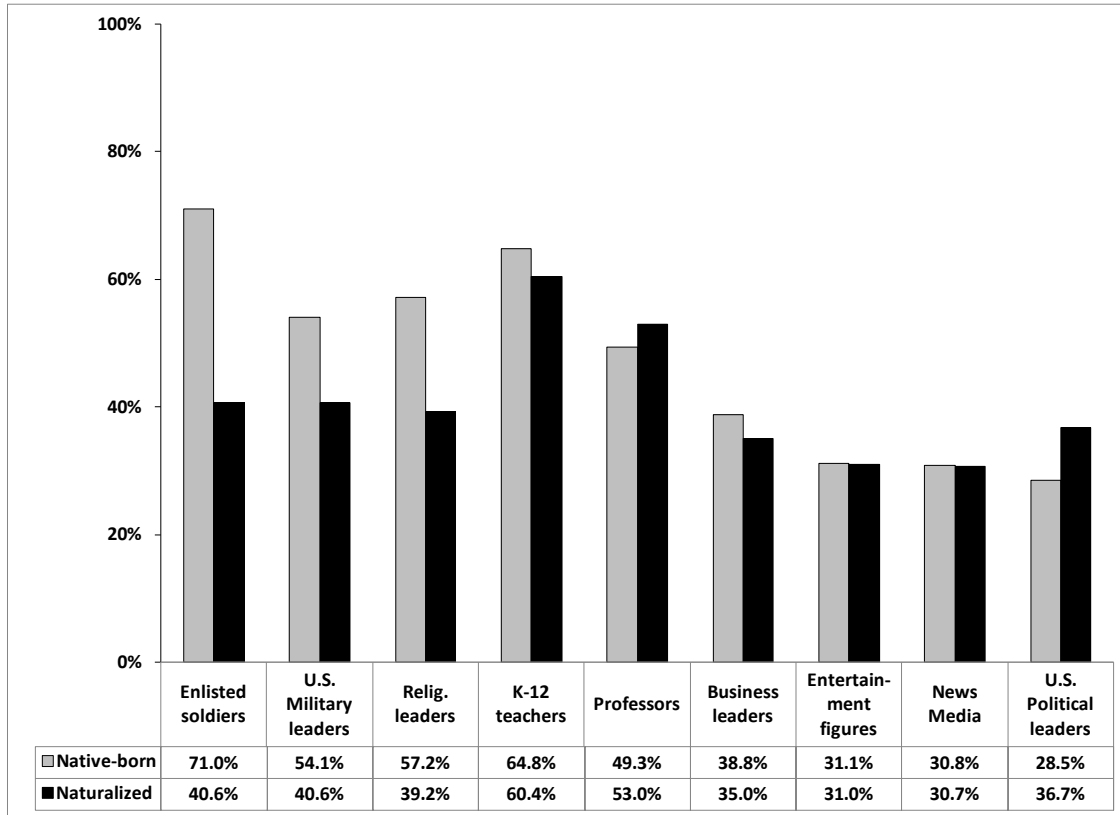
77% of native-born citizens said there is a unique American culture although there are many ethnic groups and cultures in the U.S.; 62.4% of the naturalized also agreed. In contrast, 23% of native-born respondents and 37.6% of naturalized citizens said there was no single definition of what it means to be an American (a 14-point gap).

<sup>31</sup> Which of the following statements is closest to your opinion? Although there are many ethnic groups and cultures in the U.S., there is still a unique American culture that defines what it means to be an American; OR Since there are so many different ethnic groups and cultures in the U.S., there is not a single definition of what it means to be an American.

# Attitudinal Distance from Various Groups & Elites

Respondents were asked if the following elites and professions shared their personal values.

**Figure 14. Groups that respondents see as sharing their values** <sup>32</sup>



- Native-born citizens feel much closer than immigrant citizens to enlisted soldiers, U.S. military leaders, and religious leaders.

71% of the native-born said that enlisted soldiers shared their values, compared to only 40.6% of the naturalized (a gap of 30 percentage points). 54.1% of the native-born said military leaders shared their values, compared to 40.6% of the naturalized (a gap of 13 points); and 57.2% of the native-born compared to 39.2% of the naturalized said the clergy shared their values (a gap of 18 points).

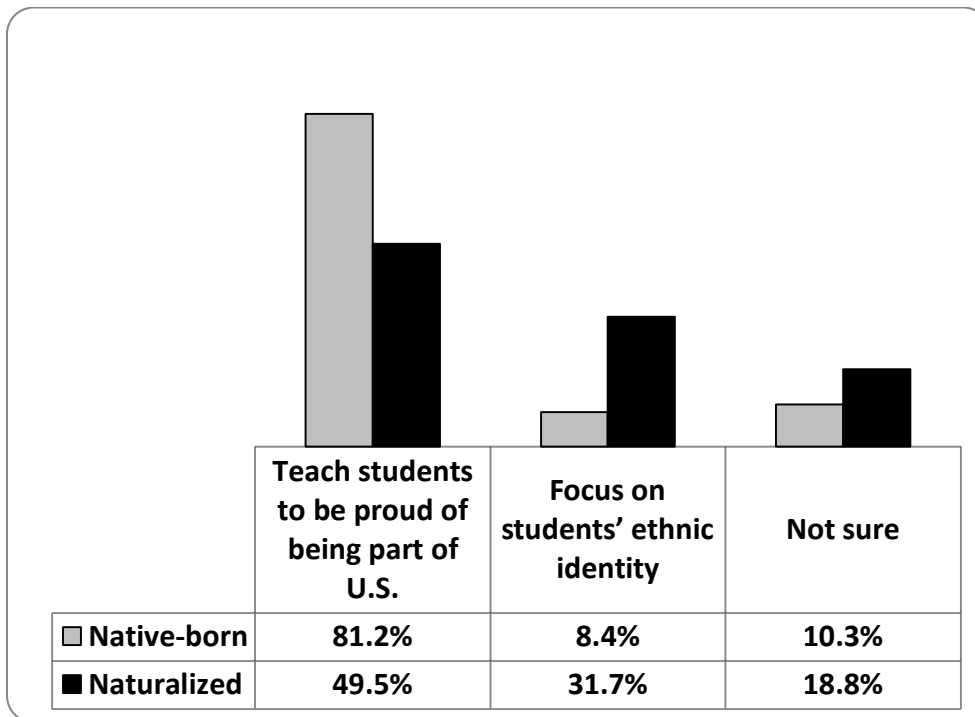
Majorities in both groups feel that teachers share their values (64.8% of the native-born and 60.4% of naturalized citizens). Roughly half in both groups also view professors in the same light (49.3% of the native-born and 53% of the naturalized).

<sup>32</sup> Looking at this list of people and groups, please indicate if you believe they do or do not share your personal values: 1) Members of the news media; 2) Business leaders; 3) U.S. Political leaders; 4) College and University Professors; 5) K-12 teachers; 6) Entertainment figures; 7) U.S. Military commanders; 8) Enlisted soldiers; 9) Clergy and religious leaders. Definitely do not share my values; Probably do not share my values; Probably do share my values; Definitely do share my values; Not sure.

Overall opinion regarding the news media, business, political leaders and entertainers was significantly lower for both groups. Less than half the native-born and naturalized thought these groups shared their values. Naturalized citizens however were more inclined than the native-born to see politicians as sharing their values (36.7% of the naturalized versus 28.5% of the native-born).

## Opinions Regarding Civic Education

**Figure 15. What should be a greater priority for schools— promote students’ ethnic identities or teach them to be proud of being part of the U.S.?** <sup>33</sup>

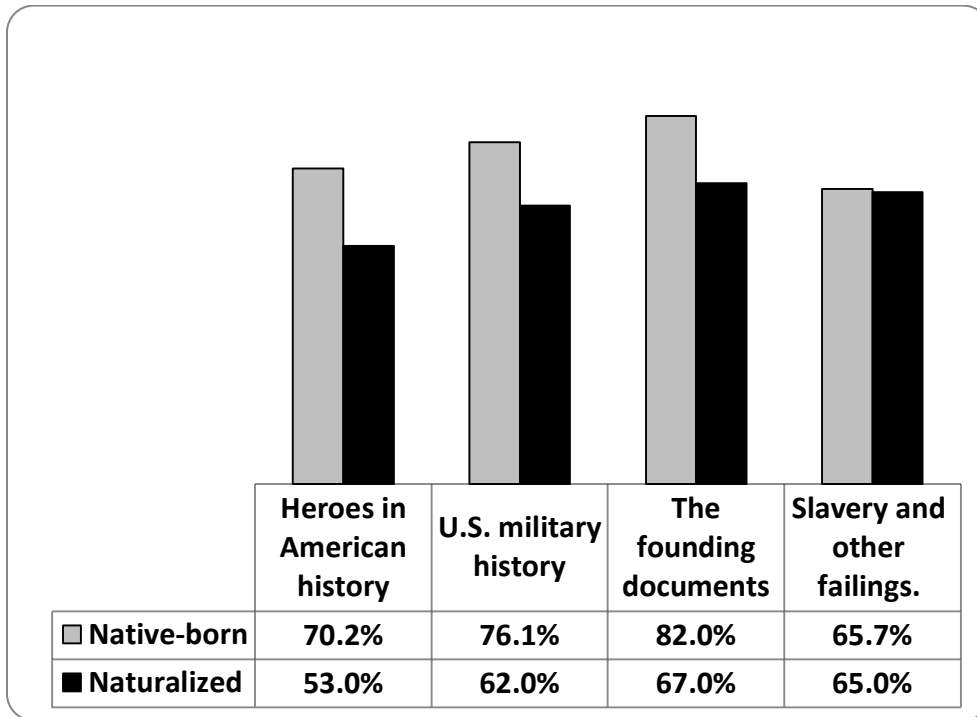


- There was also a large gap of about 31 points on whether schools should focus on pride in being part of America or pride in their own ethnic group and heritage.

81.2% of native-born citizens said schools should focus more on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and pride in being part of America rather than an emphasis on ethnic pride; 49.5% of the naturalized citizens adhered to this view. Moreover, more naturalized citizens (31.7%) compared to the native-born (8.4%) thought it more important for schools to focus on ethnic identity. Lastly, 18.8% of naturalized respondents were not sure, versus 10.3% of the native-born.

<sup>33</sup> What should be a greater priority for our schools? To focus on each student’s ethnic identity to ensure that they feel proud of their own heritage and ethnic group; OR To teach students to be proud of being part of the U.S. and about the rights and responsibilities of citizenship; Not sure.

**Figure 16. Topics K-12 students should learn in school (i.e., the percent saying students should learn more about particular topics in American history) <sup>34</sup>**



- A significantly larger percentage of native-born citizens than naturalized citizens think schools should teach more about American heroes, military history, and the founding documents.

70.2% of the native-born think schools should teach more about American heroes compared to 53% of naturalized citizens.

76.1% of the native-born say more military history should be taught compared to 62% of naturalized citizens.

82% of native-born citizens compared to 67% of immigrant citizens say the schools should teach more about the Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution, and other founding documents.

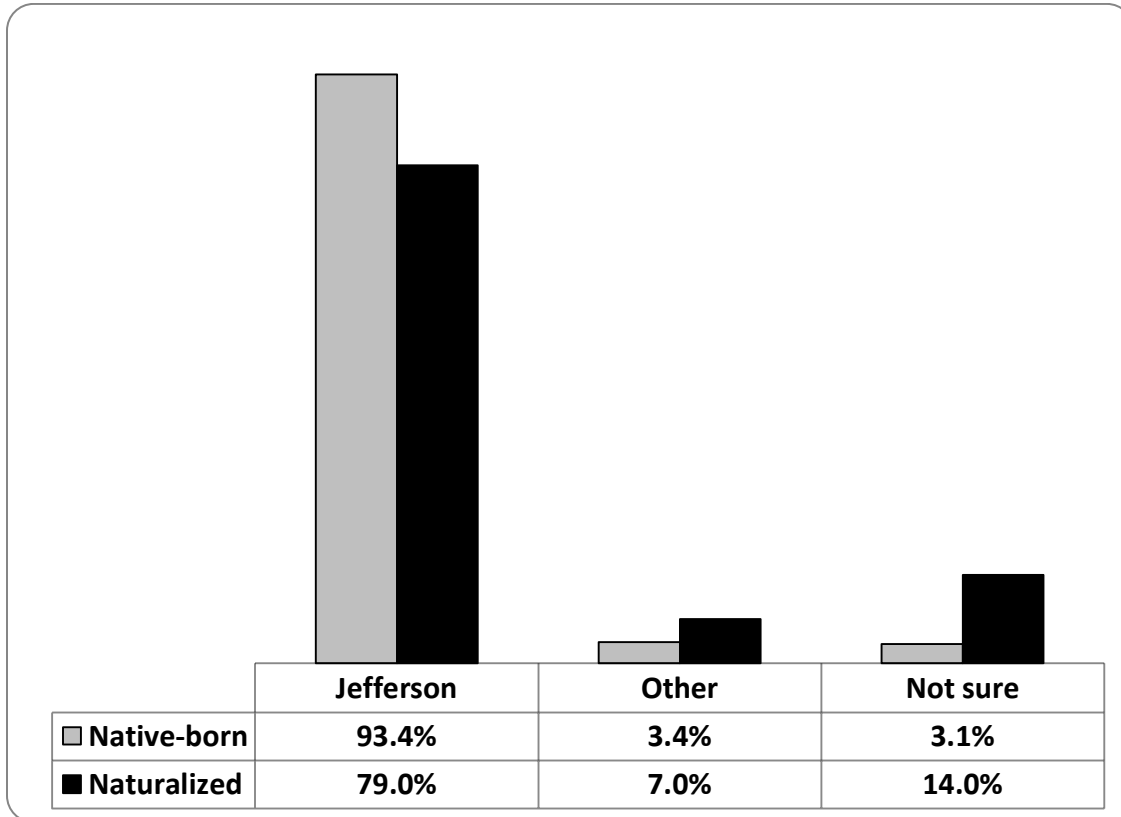
Roughly two out of three in both groups think more should be taught about slavery and other American failings.

<sup>34</sup> Do you believe that students in U.S. public schools (kindergarten-12<sup>th</sup> grades) should learn more or less about the following topics: Heroes in American history; U.S. military history, including how the Revolutionary War, Civil War, and World Wars were fought and won and the difficulties America faced in Korea and Vietnam; The history and role of America's founding documents, including the Declaration of Independence and U.S. Constitution; Slavery and other of America's failings? Much less; Somewhat less; Neither more nor less; Somewhat more; Much more; Not sure.

## Civics Test

Respondents were asked four questions drawn from the U.S. citizenship test.

**Figure 17. Who wrote the Declaration of Independence?** <sup>35</sup>

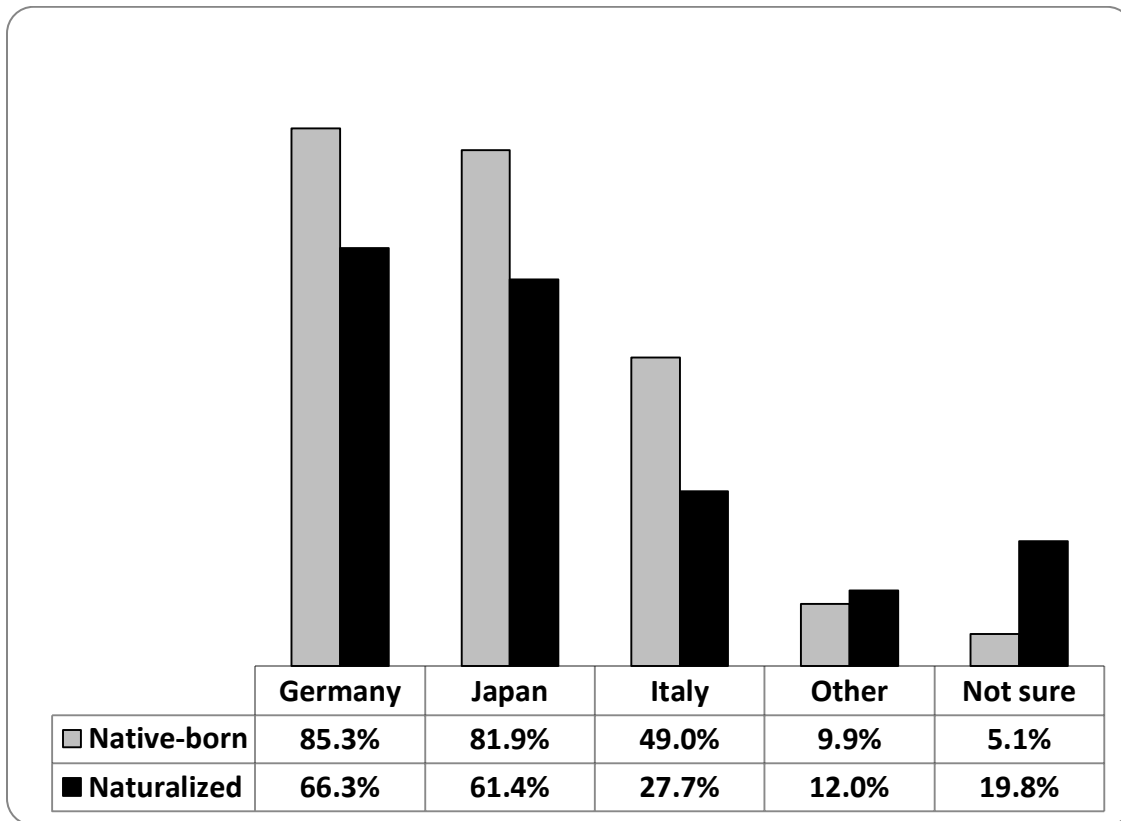


- Most respondents knew who wrote the Declaration, but there was a significant gap between the two groups.

93.4% of the native-born answered “Jefferson.” Among the naturalized respondents, 79% got the correct answer (a gap of 14 points). Furthermore, 7% of the naturalized and 3.4% of the native-born gave the wrong answer (Grant, Washington, or Martin L. King). Finally, 14% of the naturalized and 3.1% of the native-born were not sure—a gap of 11 points.

<sup>35</sup> Who wrote the Declaration of Independence? Thomas Jefferson; Ulysses S. Grant; George Washington; Martin Luther King; Not sure.

**Figure 18. Which nations did the U.S. fight in WWII?** <sup>36</sup>



- When analyzing individual answers, we found that most respondents from both groups knew that Germany and Japan were America’s enemies in WWII, but more than half failed to include Italy.

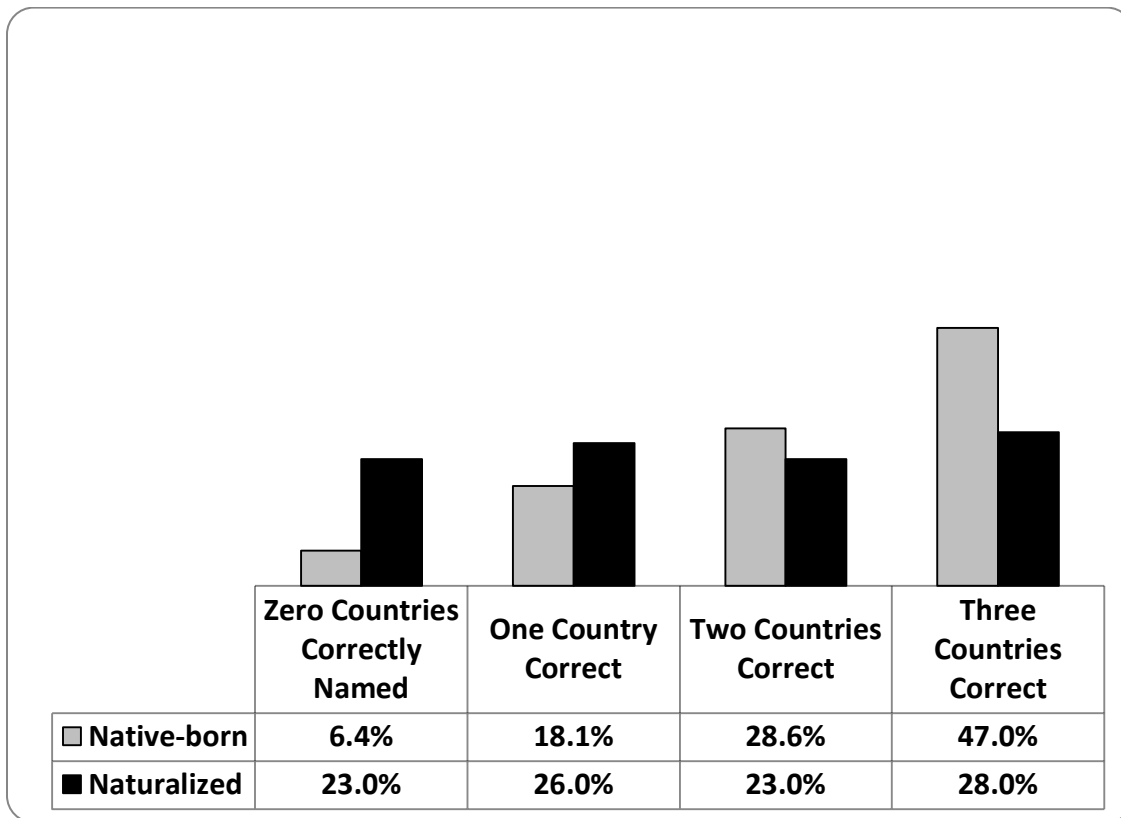
More native-born citizens than naturalized citizens correctly identified Germany and Japan as U.S. enemies in WWII.

85.3% of the native-born answered, “Germany,” compared to 66.3% of the naturalized, and 81.9% of the native-born knew the U.S. was fighting Japan, versus 61.4% of the naturalized. Unfortunately, only 49% of the native-born and 27.7% of the naturalized knew the U.S. was also fighting Italy.

Furthermore, roughly 10% of the native-born and 12% of naturalized respondents gave at least one wrong answer (“France,” “U.S.S.R.,” “Poland,” “None of these”), while 5.1% of the native-born and 19.8% of the naturalized respondents said they were not sure of the correct answer.

<sup>36</sup> Who did the United States fight in World War II? Please select **all** that apply: Italy; Germany; Japan; France; The Soviet Union; Poland; None of these; Not sure.

**Figure 19. Percentage of respondents correctly naming the countries, which fought the U.S. in WWII <sup>37</sup>**

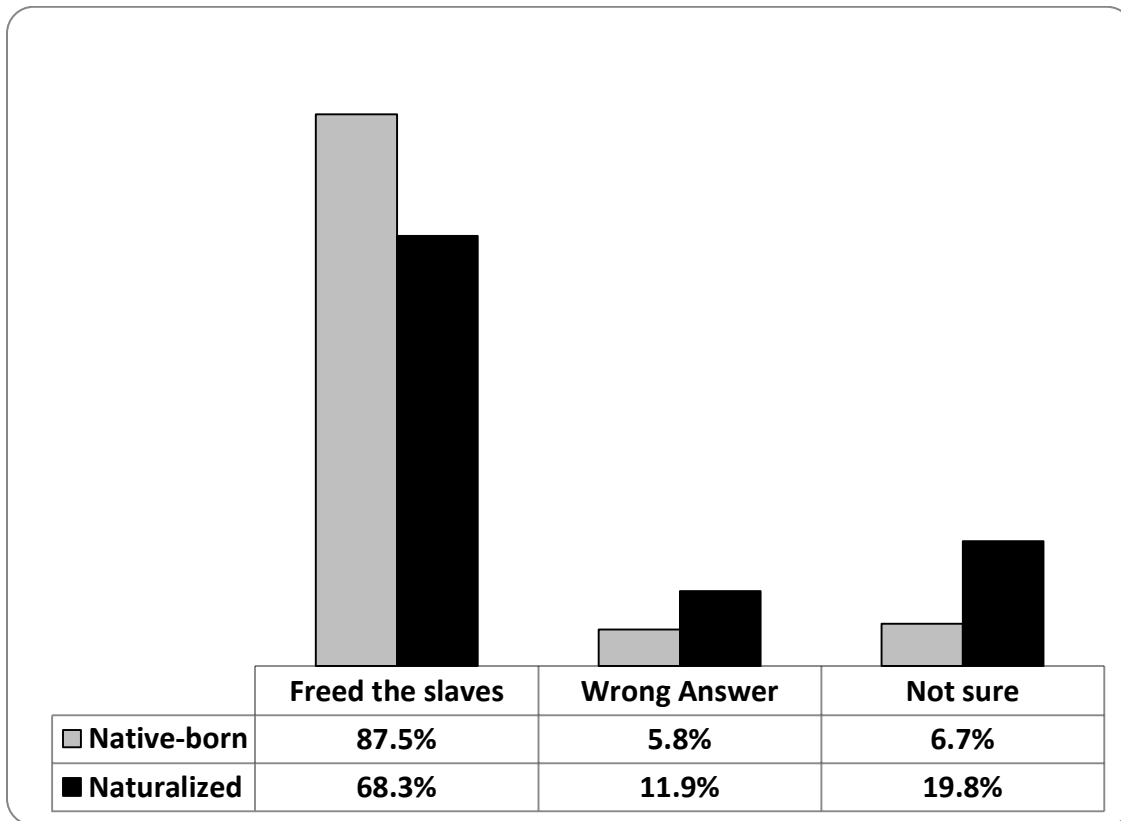


- Most respondents could not name all three countries.

While the vast majority of each group could name at least one enemy country, only 47% of the native-born and an even smaller 28% of the naturalized citizen could pick out all three enemies. 28.6% of the native-born and 23% of the naturalized got two out of three, while roughly one in five native-born and one in four naturalized picked one enemy. Lastly, 23% of the naturalized citizens and 6.4% of the native-born citizens could not correctly pick out one enemy.

<sup>37</sup> Who did the United States fight in World War II? Please select **all** that apply: Italy; Germany; Japan; France; The Soviet Union; Poland; None of these; Not sure.

**Figure 20. What did the Emancipation Proclamation do?** <sup>38</sup>



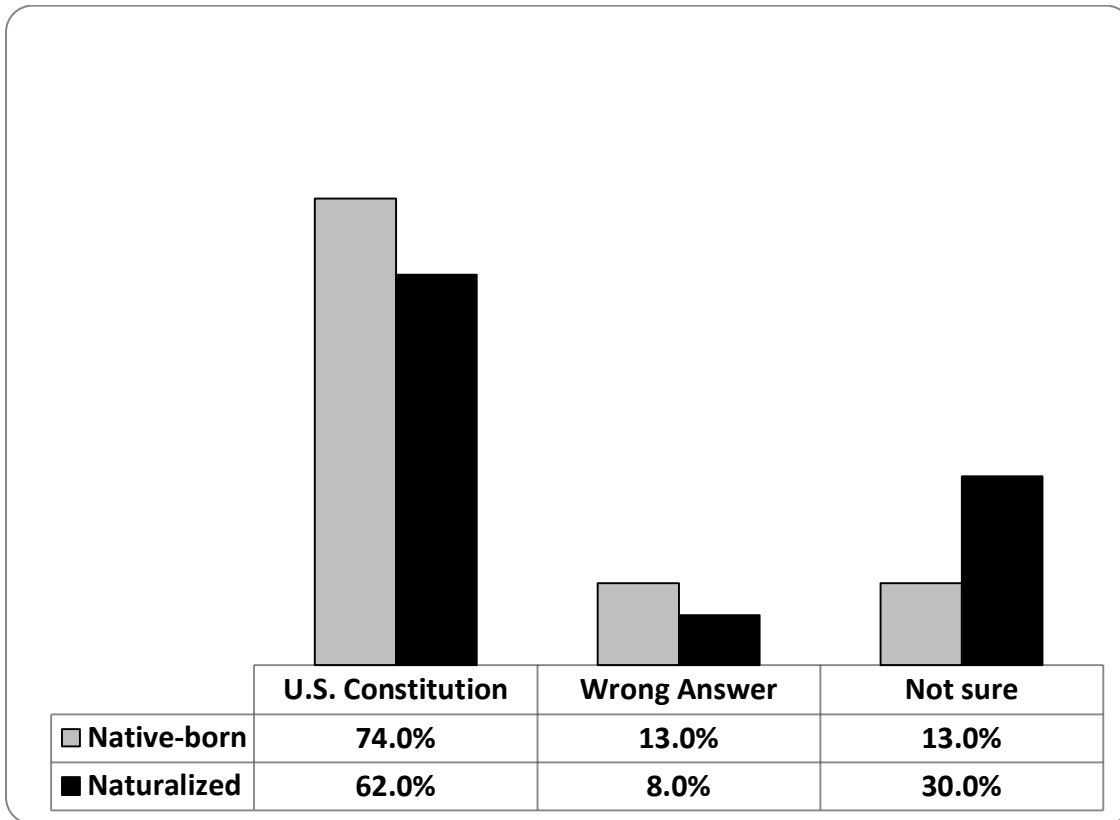
- Most respondents got this question right, but significantly more native-born citizens than naturalized citizens knew what the Emancipation Proclamation did.

87.5% of native-born respondents picked “freed the slaves,” versus 68.3% of naturalized respondents, a 19-point difference. Furthermore, 6.7% of the native-born and 19.8% of the naturalized respondents were not sure of the correct answer.

<sup>38</sup> What did the Emancipation Proclamation do? Freed the slaves; Gave slaves the right to vote; Ended the Civil War; Added new state(s) to the Union; Not sure.



**Figure 21. Which document outlines the division of powers between the states and federal government?** <sup>39</sup>

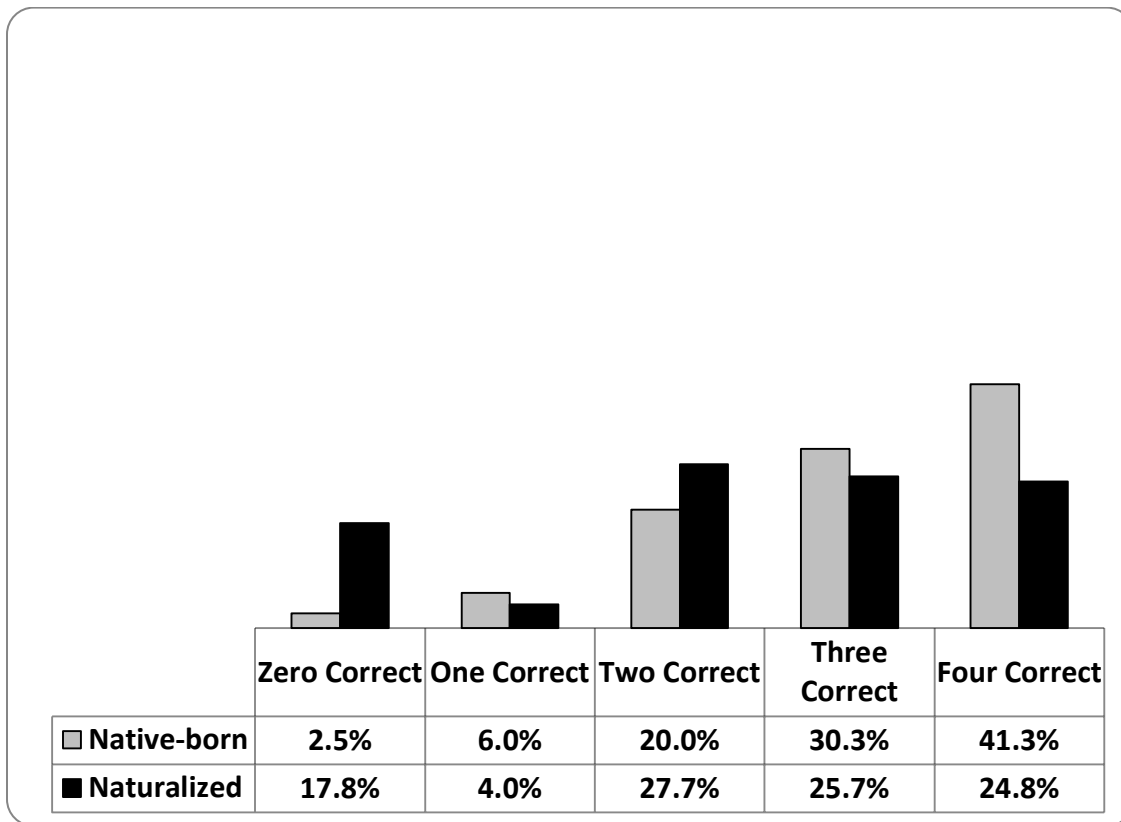


- Most respondents also knew that the U.S. Constitution outlined the division of powers between the states and the federal government but there is a 12-point gap between the two groups.

74% of native-born citizens and 62% of naturalized citizens knew the correct answer. 13% of the native-born and 8% of the naturalized respondents, however, gave the wrong answer, and an additional 13% of the native-born and 30% of the naturalized were not sure.

<sup>39</sup> Which document outlines the division of powers between the states and federal government? Marshall Plan; Declaration of Independence; U.S. Constitution; Homestead Act; Not sure.

**Figure 22. Overall Citizenship Test Score, Number of Questions Answered Correctly**



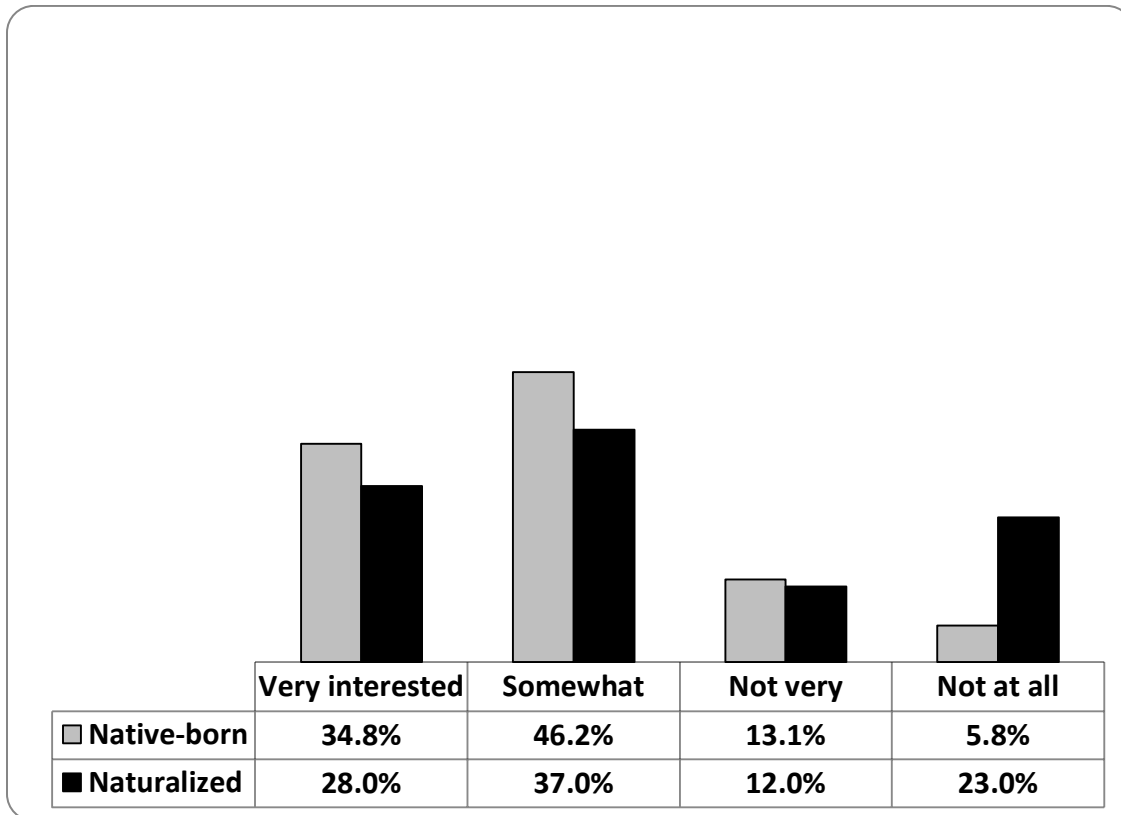
- Less than half the native-born and one in four naturalized respondents got all questions correct.<sup>40</sup>

41.3% of the native-born got all four questions correct, and another 30.3% got three correct. 24.8% of the naturalized respondents got four correct, and another 25.7% got three correct. In addition, several individuals in both groups simply failed the test. 2.5% of the native-born got zero questions correct, and another 6% got only one question right. 17.8% of the naturalized got no questions correct, and another 4% of the naturalized got only one right.

<sup>40</sup> The mean number of questions answered correctly was 3.0 for the native-born and 2.3 for the naturalized.

## Political Attitudes

Figure 23. Respondents' interest in U.S. politics<sup>41</sup>

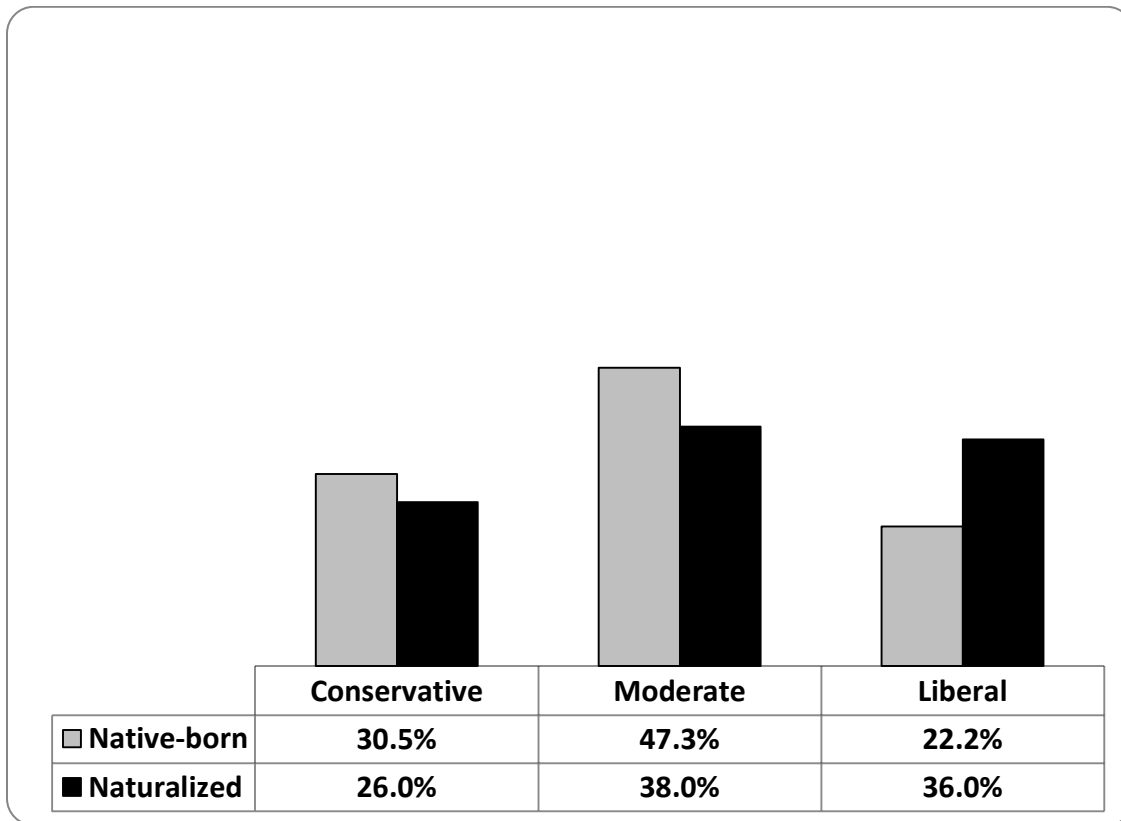


- Most respondents in each group are interested in politics, but the native-born are significantly more so.

34.8% of the native-born are very interested, compared to 28% of the naturalized. 46.2% of the native-born are somewhat interested, versus 37% of the naturalized. 13.1% of the native-born and 12% of the naturalized are not very interested in politics, and another 5.8% of the native-born and 23% of the naturalized are not interested in politics at all.

<sup>41</sup> How interested are you in following U.S. politics? Not at all interested; Not very interested; Somewhat interested; Very interested.

**Figure 24. Respondents' political philosophy** <sup>42</sup>



- The plurality of both groups called themselves moderates.

47.3% of the native-born said they were political moderates, as did 38% of the naturalized respondents. 30.5% of the native-born said they were conservative, along with 26% of naturalized respondents.

The largest difference between the two groups has to do with the percentage calling themselves liberal. 22.2% of the native-born call themselves liberal, as did 36% of naturalized respondents—a 14-point gap.

<sup>42</sup> How would you describe your own political philosophy? Conservative; Moderate; Liberal.

## **IV. Policy Implications**

### **Remove Federal Government Barriers to Patriotic Integration**

The quantitative analysis in the previous section prepared by Dr. Nagai is striking in a number of ways. First, it puts to rest the often repeated misconception that because they choose to immigrate to America, naturalized citizens somehow have greater patriotic attachment to and civic knowledge of the United States than native-born citizens.

Second, this analysis measures the depth and intensity of patriotic attachment. It measures something deeper than civic integration or civic assimilation, in which the immigrant becomes a citizen, votes, and becomes acclimated to the American political order. We were interested in measuring something more emotional and intense, something closer to Montesquieu's and Madison's concept of patriotism as love of country. Hence, we use the concept of "patriotic assimilation" or "patriotic integration."

Third, some rather blunt and direct questions in the Harris survey helps provide a more accurate and clearer picture of the patriotic gap in attachment and intensity between native-born and naturalized citizens. Questions such as "Are you primarily a U.S. citizen or a citizen of the world?," "What should be the highest legal authority for Americans if there is a conflict between the U.S. Constitution and international law?," and "Is the U.S. better than other nations or a country like any other, no better and no worse?" elicit an emotional "gut" type response. There was a 30 percentage point gap on two of these questions and a 21-point gap on the "Is the U.S. better" question.

Fourth, the analysis reveals large differences between native-born and naturalized citizens, not simply on "yes or no" and "either or," types of questions; but, more significantly, on questions that highlight intensity. For example, respondents were asked if naturalized citizens should give up loyalty to their former countries when becoming American citizens. Possible responses were "strongly agree," "somewhat agree," "somewhat disagree," and "strongly disagree."

Among native-born citizens 49.7% strongly agreed and 24.2% somewhat agreed, whereas among naturalized citizens only 28.4% strongly agreed and 24.5% somewhat agreed. About 14% of both groups somewhat disagreed. At the same time, while only 5% of native-born citizens strongly disagreed, close to one in five (or 18.6%) of naturalized citizens strongly disagreed with the idea that new citizens should be required to give up previous national loyalties when they become American citizens.

It is often maintained that immigrants more than anyone else in American society recognize the important of mastering English. But the empirical data suggests otherwise. The respondents were asked if it is "very important," "somewhat important," "not that important," or "not important at all" for the future of the American political system that all citizens speak and read English. While 82% of the native-born believed speaking and reading English was "very important" for

the future of American democracy, there was a 23-point drop, down to 59% among naturalized citizens who believed English mastery for all citizens was “very important” for the future of our political system.

Attitudes towards the American military were also revealing. There was a gap of 30 points (71% to 40.6%), with seven out of ten of native-born citizens believing that enlisted soldiers “shared their values,” while only four in ten among immigrant citizens felt this values compatibility with America’s enlisted service members. There is roughly a 14 percentage point gap (54.1% vs. 40.6%) on the question whether U.S. military leaders “share their values.” Again, native-born citizens were more strongly attached to American soldiers than naturalized citizens. These questions are interesting because even though some immigrants become citizens while serving and, no doubt, have a strong attachment to the U.S. military, in the aggregate, native-born citizens still have a much higher emotional attachment to the American armed forces than naturalized citizens.

Why is there this large patriotic gap between native-born and naturalized citizens? Undoubtedly there are many different reasons. One particular reason, however, strikes us as, at least partially responsible for this gap. American leaders have essentially altered our de-facto assimilation policy from Americanization (or patriotic integration) to a multiculturalism that emphasizes ethnic group consciousness at the expense of American common culture. In short, we have sent immigrants the wrong message on assimilation. **It is our fault, not theirs that this gap exists.**

We will now discuss how “multicultural assimilation” replaced “patriotic assimilation” and how the “changing demographics” of the American population are used (and misused) as a rationale to promote a multicultural framework of immigrant integration. Finally, we make recommendation directed towards a re-birth of a patriotic integration policy.

## **Multicultural Assimilation Replaces Patriotic Assimilation.**

There are different types of assimilation or integration. For example, economic assimilation means the immigrant does well materially buys a home and contributes to the productive economy. Different forms of assimilation are necessary (e.g. linguistic learning English) but not sufficient. The type of assimilation that ultimately matters most of all is patriotic assimilation: this means first and foremost political loyalty and emotional attachment to the United States.

No doubt assimilation or integration is occurring in some form today. But the question is: what type of assimilation is it? Patriotic or multicultural?

In a *Wall Street Journal* column on March 30, 2006, Peggy Noonan wrote: “We are not assimilating our immigrants patriotically now. We are assimilating them culturally. Within a generation their children speak Valley Girl on cell phones....So far we are assimilating our

immigrants economically, too...But we are not communicating love of country.”<sup>43</sup> Noonan is right.

For most of American history the nation’s elites agreed that the Americanization or the patriotic integration of immigrants was vital to the political health of the republic. George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Alexander Hamilton during the Founding era and Theodore Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, and Louis Brandeis in the Ellis Island period all advocated some form of patriotic assimilation. Today, however, there are disagreements over immigrant integration expressed in controversies over bilingualism, multicultural education, multilingual voting, dual citizenship, illegal immigration, and border enforcement. These disagreements generally divide between two broad models of immigrant assimilation: the traditional Americanization-patriotic integration approach and what could be called multicultural assimilation.

If we examine what is happening on the ground it could be argued that assimilation in America today means that immigrants are being integrated into an expansive multicultural regime. Instead of being welcomed as individual American citizens, newcomers are told that they belong to a particular racial-ethnic or linguistic group in America and will be treated accordingly. They are initiated into ethnic-linguistic group consciousness and loyalties through federal government programs and actions such as bilingual and multicultural education, diversity training, multilingual voting, and the acceptance of such practices as permitting dual citizens to vote in foreign as well as American elections, which clearly raises questions of primary allegiance.<sup>44</sup>

This “multicultural assimilation” is reinforced by state governments, the public schools, major universities, Fortune 500 corporations, and the mainstream media. In effect, citizenship itself is viewed as primarily “multicultural,” based on ascribed characteristics that immigrants are born into, rather than on a status that is individual (in terms of rights), civic-associational (in terms of participation), and national (in terms of loyalty).

State governments are openly promoting multicultural assimilation rather than patriotic assimilation. In Illinois, a state government task force recommended the following programs to promote immigrant integration: 1) Emphasize bilingualism with large scale hiring of bilingual employees, a special new “bilingual pay policy,” a new statewide “bilingual competency testing process;”<sup>45,46</sup> 2) Recruit bilingual teachers and trainers from Spain;<sup>47</sup> 3) Explore the possibility

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<sup>43</sup> Peggy Noonan, “Patriots, Then and Now: With Nations as with People, Love Them or Lose Them.” *Wall Street Journal*, March 30, 2006, available at: <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB122512408935772391.html>

<sup>44</sup> N.B.: To be clear, we are, of course, aware that there is a wide continuum of activities that come under the rubric of “multiculturalism.” We are not referring in this essay to benign ethnic festival celebrations, Cinco de Mayo, Japanese tea ceremonies, and the like — but to administrative-legal policies that divide citizens into “protected” and “dominant” classes with different rights, responsibilities, and privileges. These policies have their intellectual roots in, among others, the “critical theory” Frankfurt School analysts, Marxist class war thinkers such as Antonio Gramsci, and leading education theorist Paulo Freire. These concepts are antithetical to the core ideas of a liberal democracy based on individual rights and responsibilities.

<sup>45</sup> State of Illinois, New Americans Interagency Task Force, Office of Governor Rod R. Blagojevich, *Immigrant Integration: Improving Policy for Education, Health and Human Services for Illinois’ Immigrants and Refugees* (December 2006), pp. 8, 15.

<sup>46</sup> N.B.: The Illinois Office of New Americans and the immigrant integration project was launched by Governor Blagojevich and reinforced as official state policy by his successor, Governor Patrick Quinn.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, State of Illinois, New Americans Interagency Task Force, p. 31.

of “Mexican national social workers coming to Illinois” in order to “train” Illinois state employees on “cultural” issues;<sup>48</sup> 4) Develop comprehensive linguistic and cultural competency training for all state staff. Require the development of a “cultural competency curriculum” that would be mandated “for all state employees.”<sup>49</sup>

The Massachusetts governor’s office told educators to “emphasize multilingual and multi-cultural skills when hiring teachers.” The governor’s office also recommended creating “a bank of professionals who can provide cultural competency training for schools and other public agencies.”<sup>50</sup> Massachusetts promotes bilingual education. The state explicitly rejects the idea of “pushing children to learn English as quickly as possible.” Instead, state officials favor “programs [that] would aim to build students’ literacy in their native languages as well as English.”<sup>51</sup>

In Maryland a task force was created to promote the maintenance of the immigrants’ birth languages with funding from state government. This was necessary, the state maintained, for reasons of multiculturalism to preserve the “core identities of children, representing their values, culture, and traditions.”<sup>52</sup> Likewise in Indiana, the state department of education supports “multilingualism in all learners” and the use of “curricula that reflect the culture, values, interests, and concerns of language minority students.”<sup>53</sup>

The actions of the state governments of Illinois, Massachusetts, Maryland, and Indiana are all examples of how multicultural assimilation has replaced patriotic assimilation as the de-facto policy for integrating immigrants. During the heyday of the Ellis Island era, public schools promoted Americanization, not multiculturalism; immigrant children were pushed to learn English as soon as possible; school curricula was designed to represent the values and culture of the American mainstream in order that the children of immigrants would be assimilated into the American way of life. Could anyone imagine Presidents Theodore Roosevelt or Woodrow Wilson importing “cultural competency “ specialists from Italy or Poland to train American federal and state government employees in “cultural competence” or Italian or Polish language teachers for the purpose of maintaining foreign languages among new American citizens?

The explicit goal of yesterday’s Americanization was to forge an American identity among immigrants and their children—in effect, to sustain American common culture. The implicit goal of today’s multiculturalism is to maintain, reinforce, and, indeed, create a distinct ethno-cultural identity separate from mainstream American culture, in effect, to redefine American culture as simply a group of different (and often competing) cultures.

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid., State of Illinois, New Americans Interagency Task Force, p. 25.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., State of Illinois, New Americans Interagency Task Force, p. 16.

<sup>50</sup> State of Massachusetts, Governor’s Advisory Council for Refugees, Office of Governor Deval Patrick, *Massachusetts New Americans Agenda* (October 1, 2009), p. 20.

<sup>51</sup> Sarah Karp, “A Makeover for Bi-lingual Ed?” *Catalyst Chicago*, December 2007.

<sup>52</sup> Maryland Department of Education, *Report of the Task Force on the Preservation of Heritage Language Skills in Maryland* (2008), p. 1.

<sup>53</sup> Indiana Department of Education, *Language Minority and Migrant Programs, Best Practices: The Use of Native Language during Instructional and Non-Instructional Time*, updated 2005.



## The “Changing Demographics” Rationale for Multicultural Assimilation

The “changing demographics” rationale is the core argument, the intellectual-moral driver behind the shift from the traditional Americanization (patriotic integration) policy towards our contemporary de-facto multicultural assimilation policies. This rationale (which is clearly dominant in elite circles) runs something like the following:

American demography is changing as immigration results in much greater ethnic and racial diversity. The traditional idea of a dominant mainstream American culture to which new immigrants should assimilate is obsolete in today’s multicultural and global world of the twenty-first century. The old assimilationist “melting pot” concept of immigration should be replaced with the “mosaic” or “salad bowl” in which new citizens retain their old languages, identities, cultures, and, often loyalties (through new dual citizenship arrangements).

Further, the American workforce includes an increasing number of both minorities and women. This leads to two conclusions: (1) the need for *proportional representation* of ethnic, racial, and gender groups in all institutions (so that they “look like America”) and (2) the need for an *inclusive environment* in these institutions, meaning that different ethnic, racial, and gender groups have their own values, cultures, learning styles, world views and that their perspectives should not be subordinated to a “dominant white male perspective” in the workplace.

The “changing demographics” rationale with its demands for wide ranging ethnic-racial and gender group proportionalism has permeated the major institutions of American society. For example in 2012, the Pentagon published a report “From Representation to Inclusion: Diversity Leadership in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Military.” The official Pentagon report declares that “It is critical for DoD leaders to understand that, by all accounts the *racial/ethnic and cultural makeup of the United States is changing.*”<sup>54</sup>

The Pentagon report decried the fact that “[r]acial/ethnic minorities and women still lag behind non-Hispanic white men in terms of *representative percentage* of military leadership positions held,” while simultaneously evoking the “changing demographics rationale,” the Pentagon noted that “Marked changes in the demographic makeup of the United States will throw existing disparities into sharp relief...”<sup>55</sup> Implicit in these statements (and in the accompanying statistical tables) is the assumption that all the separate units of the American military services (non-commissioned Marine officers, Air Force pilots, Naval Reserve officers, Army civilian employees, active duty officers in tactical operations, etc.) must somehow eliminate ethnic-racial-gender group “disparities” and “reflect” the percentage of all the different ethnic, racial and gender groups in the American work force.

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<sup>54</sup> United States. Military Leadership Diversity Commission. *From Representation to Inclusion: Diversity Leadership for the 21st-Century Military: Final Report*. (Arlington, VA: Military Leadership Diversity Commission, 2011), p. 14, available at <https://www.hsdl.org/?view&did=11390>

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, *From Representation to Inclusion*, p. vii.

But the report also makes it clear that mere “representation,” “parity” or ethnic, racial and gender group proportionalism is not enough. The military must “broaden” its definition of diversity to include the corporate concept of “inclusion” or creating a “culture of inclusion.”<sup>56</sup>

During the post World War II period of de-segregation, the military prided itself on “equality of opportunity” on the moral imperative and principle of treating soldiers of equal rank equally. A veteran remembers a Marine Corps drill instructor in boot camp imparting the mantra: “If your daddy is a doctor or if you come from the projects in East St. Louis or a reservation in Arizona, it no longer matters. Black. White. Mexican. Vietnamese. Navajo. The Marine Corps does not care! Your drill instructors do not care. You are now green! You are light green or dark green. You are not black or white or brown or yellow or red. Do you understand me, recruits?”<sup>57</sup>

Today, however, because of the “changing demographics” rationale the Pentagon tells us explicitly that diversity management “is not about treating everybody the same.”<sup>58</sup> Different ethnic, racial, and gender groups have different characteristics, attributes, and perspectives and, therefore, members of “protected classes” should be treated differently in terms of recruitment, evaluation, promotion, etc. Further, in promoting *inclusion*, the report directly attacks the very principle of *assimilation* itself. “Cultural assimilation, a key to military effectiveness in the past, will be challenged *as inclusion becomes, and needs to become, the norm* [italics added].”<sup>59</sup>

Just as forces at the Pentagon are wielding the “changing demographics” rationale to redefine the meaning of equal opportunity, leading elite institutions are using the same demographics argument to redefine the meaning of citizenship and national identity. For example, the Migration Policy Institute (MPI) has long been a major player in formulating immigration and assimilation policies in both the U.S. and Europe. Former heads of the U.S. immigration service and homeland security including Doris Messiner and Michael Chertoff, as well as an array of significant European leaders (included former Italian Prime Minister Giuliano Amato and former Spanish Foreign Minister Ana Palacio), have participated in formulating MPI papers and recommendations. MPI will be at the center of the coming debate in the Congress over comprehensive immigration reform.

A new MPI “statement” in February 2012 began by declaring: “Large-scale immigration has led to unprecedented levels of diversity around the globe, transforming communities in fundamental ways and challenging long and closely held notions of national identity.”<sup>60</sup> In response to these “changing demographics,” the MPI recommends “re-defining” national identity and citizenship in more multicultural directions. It further claims that “[i]mmigrant integration cannot succeed unless national identity is redefined.”<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> Ibid., *From Representation to Inclusion*, p. 18.

<sup>57</sup> Anthony Swofford, *Jarhead: A Marine's Chronicle of the Gulf War and Other Battles* (New York: Scribner, 2003), pp. 28-29.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., *From Representation to Inclusion*, p. 18.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., *From Representation to Inclusion*, p. 18.

<sup>60</sup> Demetrios G. Papademetriou. *Rethinking National Identity in the Age of Migration, Council Statement from the 7th Plenary Meeting of the Transatlantic Council on Migration*. (Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute, 2012), p. 1, available at <http://www.migrationpolicy.org/transatlantic/tcmstatement-identity.pdf>

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., *Rethinking National Identity in the Age of Migration*, p. 6.

This “re-defining” means encouraging “multiple identities” (including emphasizing ethnic identities); expanding dual citizenship; revising school curricula; relaxing citizenship and residency requirements; funding immigrant integration in employment and education rather than legislating “norms and values” that immigrants could view as “coercive;” and when problems arise between and among native-born citizens and immigrant groups “re-defining” means fostering dialogue and negotiation between groups.<sup>62</sup>

In a related MPI paper, Canadian scholar Will Kymlicka, a leading advocate of multicultural citizenship, develops a series of policy formulations (and recommendations) that create an Multicultural Policy Index as a standard in which to judge the advance of multiculturalism in leading Western nations including the U.S., Canada, Australia, and countries in Western Europe. This Index includes the following policies most of which have (in some form) been incorporated into American immigration and assimilation policy (de-facto, if not de-jure). The policies include: legislative affirmation of multiculturalism at the regional (state) level; multicultural school curricula; ethnic representation/sensitivity in the mandate for public media; dual citizenship; funding bilingual education; funding ethnic group cultural activities; exemptions from dress codes for new [presumably Muslim] immigrants; and affirmative action for immigrant groups.<sup>63</sup>

Of course, at one level, the multiculturalism-diversity-legal-administrative regime serves the interests of those who administer the system, much more than it serves the integration process for the intended minority group recipients.

## **Changing Demographics: 1913 vs. 2013.**

One hundred years ago, the American leadership class faced a similar phenomenon. In 1913 large-scale immigration was clearly leading to unprecedented levels of diversity and major demographic changes in the ethnic, cultural, linguistic, and religious make-up of the United States. The Polish and Sicilian peasants, Jewish immigrants from the shtetls of Eastern Europe, the Greeks and Lebanese from the Levant represented immigrants as different in perception (ethnically, culturally, religiously, linguistically) from the native-born of 1913, as today’s immigrants do from the native-born of 2013.

As we all know, the response of America’s mostly progressive leadership class (people like Theodore Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, and Louis Brandeis) to the “changing demographics” of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century was the mirror opposite of the response of our contemporary leadership class.

It was exactly because of the “changing demographics” that America’s leaders of that day sought to re-affirm—not “re-define” American citizenship and national identity. The “changing demographics” of the nation in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries were the *precise reason* why

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid., *Rethinking National Identity in the Age of Migration*, pp. 6-8.

<sup>63</sup> Will Kymlicka, *Multiculturalism: Success, Failure, and the Future*. (Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute, 2012), available at <http://www.migrationpolicy.org/pubs/multiculturalism.pdf>

Roosevelt, Wilson, and Brandeis choose Americanization and rejected the multicultural arguments of the time proposed by people like Horace Kallen and Randolph Bourne. It was exactly why they choose English immersion over bilingualism. It was exactly why they emphasized the *Unum in E Pluribus Unum* and celebrated national unity rather than diversity as an overarching norm of American society.

And ultimately, to their credit, they succeeded in Americanizing tens of millions of newcomers and their children just in time for the great existential challenge of World War II. (To be completely accurate, and however uncomfortable it is for many to acknowledge, the Americanization process was also aided by Presidents Harding, Coolidge and the immigration restriction legislation of the 1920s).

The decision to Americanize immigrants rather than accept multiculturalism (which, as noted above, was an option in the period 1900-1920) was a deeply ethical and moral response. The decision ultimately rested on the firm moral vision of the concept of equality of individual citizenship the foundation of American liberal democracy. In a liberal constitutional democracy such as ours, individual citizens voluntarily join a wide variety of groups, but their legal rights are not supposed to be based on the ethnic or racial group into which one is born. Political scientists call this non-liberal and in some cases illiberal (multicultural) form of government by a variety of names including consociational democracy, corporatism, or pillarization (a description of the Dutch government earlier in the 20<sup>th</sup> century).

Arthur Schlesinger Jr., Harvard historian and chronicler of the Kennedy Administration, described the change in American culture from patriotic integration to multiculturalism in the following language:

Instead of a nation composed of individuals making their own unhampered choices, America increasingly sees itself as composed of groups more or less ineradicable to their ethnic characteristics. The multiethnic [Schlesinger's term but more accurately multicultural] dogma abandons historical purposes, replacing assimilation by fragmentation, integration by separatism. It belittles *unum* and glorifies *pluribus*.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> Arthur M. Schlesinger, *The Disuniting of America: Reflections on a Multicultural Society*, Revised and Enlarged Edition (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1998), p. 21.

## **Conclusion: Remove the Barriers to Patriotic Integration**

Congress is preparing to enact the most far-reaching immigration legislation since the mid-1980s. Careful attention should be paid to all aspects of immigration policy. This means that the Congress should seriously consider the assimilation component of any proposed legislation as much as it considers any other aspect of immigration policy, such as labor needs. Any examination of immigration policy that claims to be comprehensive must address the issue of how well (or how poorly) we are patriotically integrating immigrants into the mainstream of American civic life.

Our quantitative analysis of the Harris data revealed that a large gap exists between native-born and naturalized citizens. Native-born citizens are much more patriotically attached to America than immigrant citizens and the native-born are much better informed about American history and government than naturalized citizens. This analysis suggests to us that Americanization or patriotic integration is not working as well as it should today. In the current debate many public figures continually remind us that our immigration system is “broken,” **we suggest in this paper that our assimilation system is broken as well.**

For almost forty years, or since the 1970s, American elites have created a structure of laws and administrative procedures that discourage immigrants from forming a strong American identity. These administrative-legal-ideological barriers to patriotic assimilation have developed gradually through a combination of federal bureaucratic policies, congressional activities, executive orders and court decisions. At the highest level of core values (as we have discussed) the melting pot has been slowly replaced by the mosaic and the social cohesion of the “American way of life” by the unreflective promotion of diversity as a goal for its own sake, not as the result of the activities of individuals in a free society, which is the basis of authentic diversity.

The various programs in this administrative-legal regime of multiculturalism-group consciousness constitute serious barriers to patriotic assimilation. The programs exist, for the most part, through Federal funding. In other words, negative Big Government programs have created barriers to the patriotic integration of immigrants. These government-funded and government-imposed barriers could well be the “root causes” of the problems that exist with the patriotic integration gap. Therefore, it would make sense to remove these barriers by cutting off federal funding for any programs promoting multicultural education, bilingual education, diversity training, and any so-called multi-cultural or cultural competency training.

Some of the funds saved by de-funding harmful multicultural programs could be used to pay for civic instruction for naturalization training for immigrants applying for citizenship. Community colleges working with the Office of Citizenship in the Citizenship and Immigration Services section of the Department of Homeland Security could be the center of any civic instruction initiative for immigrants. Community colleges and the Office of Citizenship have a wide range of curricular resources already available to prepare immigrants for naturalization.

Hopefully, any new immigration legislation would avoid the mistakes that were prevalent in the assimilation parts of previous proposals. For example, the main problem with the assimilation component in the proposed comprehensive immigration reform legislation in 2007 was that

federal funding for civic instruction for naturalization would have gone to special interest groups that were actually promoting anti-assimilationist multiculturalism. No federal funds should go to these outside special interest groups. Instead, any federal funding used should go to community colleges.

In the final analysis, there can be no comprehensive immigration reform without comprehensive assimilation reform. We cannot determine immigration policy unless we seriously examine what our assimilation policy should be. Further, America's decision on how to integrate newcomers—through patriotic assimilation (traditional Americanization) or the contemporary approach of multiculturalism-group consciousness—is a moral issue that will define the character of our citizenship and our constitutional democracy.

Do we welcome newcomers as individual citizens with equal rights and responsibilities or do we determine that they are members of a "protected class" because they were born into a particular ethnic, racial, or linguistic group? To be sure, as members of a "protected class," some naturalized citizens may well be the recipients of certain benefits. But, more significantly, in terms of national political power if newcomers are placed into ethnic-racial boxes they unwittingly provide the "clients" that the vast social service professional bureaucracy needs to rationalize the multicultural-administrative regime that it ultimately runs for its own power and benefit.

Those forces in the Congress and among our active citizenry that seek to establish a truly welcoming system of patriotic integration for newcomers based on equality of individual citizenship (not on group rights and group consciousness) should seize the moral high ground and remove the barriers to full Americanization now while immigration policy has captured national attention.

## **John Fonte**

John Fonte is a Senior Fellow and Director of the Center for American Common Culture at Hudson Institute. He is the author of *Sovereignty or Submission: Will Americans Rule Themselves or be Ruled by Others?*, winner of the Intercollegiate Studies Institute's Paolucci-Bagehot book award for 2012 and a number-one rated Amazon best-seller in international law. Fonte's ideas on "lawfare" were cited in the *New York Times Magazine's* "Year in Ideas." He received a Ph.D. in History from the University of Chicago.

## **Althea Nagai**

In the Washington, D.C., area for over 20 years, Althea Nagai is an independent statistical consultant and has worked on numerous statistical studies in the field of social policy. Her first study was a content analysis and critique of the national history standards with John Fonte and Lynne Cheney. She has also conducted studies on racial and ethnic preferences in higher education; on marriage, religion, and family structure; on adolescent risk behavior; on philanthropy and social change; and on American elites. Nagai received her B.A. from the University of Hawaii in psychology and political science and her M.A. and Ph.D. from the University of Chicago in Political Science.

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