Innocent until Stereotyped Guilty?

Terrorism and US Immigration Court Decisions*

Justice Tei Mensah†

Kweku Opoku-Agyemang‡

December 20, 2018

Abstract

We investigate the impact of terrorist attacks on asylum court decisions made by US immigration judges. We exploit quasi-random variations in the timing of attacks and immigration court hearings, and the random variations in the success or failure of US-based terrorist attacks, finding a significant negative effect of terrorism on asylum approvals. Our results suggest that immigration court judges stereotype asylum seekers as potential terrorists. Such stereotypes seem unique to asylum applicants, as parole approvals do not significantly change after attacks. Applicants from predominantly Muslim, Middle-Eastern and North African countries are disproportionately denied after successful terrorist attacks in the US.

JEL Codes: D74, K37, K38, K41, P16.

*Original Version: September 2018. The usual disclaimer applies. We have no financial or material conflicts of interest related to the paper to disclose. We thank Tobias Häggmark Svensson, Abenezer Zeleke Aklilu, Stefan Merza, Ted Miguel, Dan Posner, and participants of the 2nd Annual Symposium on Geospatial Analysis for International Development (Geo4Dev) at CEGA, UC Berkeley for their constructive comments and encouragement. We similarly thank Eli Berman, Atin Basu Choudhary and participants of the Economics of National Security Association session of the Western Economics Association International conference for valuable feedback. We also thank several participants of the Migration Session of the Stanford Institute for Theoretical Economics, especially Ran Abramitzky, Samuel Bazzi, Lorenzo Caliendo, Peter Hammond, Jennifer Hunt, Ethan Lewis, Melanie Morten, Mushfiq Mobarak and Giovanni Peri for encouragement and feedback. We are similarly grateful to Moses Shayo for helpful and encouraging comments.

†Department of Economics, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Ulls Hus, Ulls Vag, Uppsala 75651, Sweden. Email:justice.tei.mensah@slu.se

‡Center for Effective Global Action, Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics, University of California, Berkeley, 207 Giannini Hall, Berkeley, CA 94720, USA. Email: kao75@cornell.edu

1 Introduction

Immigration is an urgent policy concern, with every second averaging a displaced person (United Nations High Commission for Refugees, 2017). Even as millions of people seek asylum in new countries to start new lives, immigration is a sensitive political issue in many developed countries. The fear of people who are different can fuel harmful stereotypes, where refugees are mistaken for the terrorism that may have displaced them. This topic is clearly a development issue partly because international remittances to migrants' countries of origin depend on migrants being able to enter developed countries. As such, our emphasis is on the demand for forcibly displaced migrants from developing countries, which are increasingly representative of US asylum seekers (Chinn and Cortes, 2014). We focus on whether immigration judges[1] are prone to stereotyping asylum seekers.

This paper asks: do immigration judges stereotype asylum applicants in evaluating asylum applications? Answering this question can help policy makers understand whether unconscious biases or mental shortcuts may affect immigration outcomes. Legally evaluating an asylum application can be a challenging process, in part due to resource constraints[2], some of which may be cognitive in scope. To explore the possibility of stereotyping, we investigate the impact of terrorist attacks on US soil on asylum approvals by immigration courts. We propose that stereotypes may be significant enough to affect judge decision-making even though virtually all US terrorist attacks in September 11, 2001 have been orchestrated by citizens and not foreigners (New America Foundation, 2018). Our focus is on how immigration judges may be sensitive behavioral economic problems such as confirma-

[1] In the United States, judges working in the national immigration court system must approve disputable cases that could not be evaluated by the US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), the body which administers the entry of asylum seekers into the country.

[2] The United States immigration legal system is under significant stress. For example, only about 37 percent of immigrants have a lawyer (Washington Post, 2018). It can take more than a year before a case is brought before an immigration judge, partly due to a backlog of more than half a million cases.

tion bias while evaluating asylum seekers.

Our analysis relies on rich georeferenced data on terrorist attacks in mainland US matched with a detailed dataset spanning the universe of immigration court decisions[3] in the country between 2000 and 2004. We consider domestic terorrist attacks as triggering self-control problems in judges. To identify the causal effects of terrorism on immigration judges' decisions, we use two empirical strategies. Our first strategy is an event study analysis which compares cases adjudicated in the same county within a given time period after a successful terrorist attack with cases evaluated before the attack by the same judge. This strategy exploits the plausibly quasi-randomness in the timing of terrorist attacks and scheduling of immigration court hearings. In our baseline analysis, we employ a three months window, by comparing asylum cases adjudicated within three months after a successful attack with asylum cases adjudicated within three months prior to a successful attack. The results suggest that asylum applications adjudicated within three months after a successful attack are 1 percentage point less likely to be granted. This corresponds to about 8.5 percent reduction in the average asylum approvals by immigration courts in the US. Our second identification strategy uses a difference-in-difference approach that exploits plausibly random variations in the success or failure of terrorist attacks to estimate the impact of terrorist attacks on judges' decisions. Using the same sample windows, the results corroborate the initial findings of a negative effect of terrorist activities on asylum approvals.

Overall, our results show that terrorist attacks significantly affect the likelihood of being granted asylum to the US. In other words, immigration judges, on average, are less likely to approve applications of asylum seekers after a successful terrorist attack. The results are robust to many specification checks. In our empirical examinations, we control for an exhaustive list of daily weather conditions including precipitation, temperature, air pressure, cloud cover, wind speed, and dew point measured as the 6am to 4pm averages in the city in which the case was adjudicated, on the day of the adjudication, in addition to the controls of applicant's nationality×year, judge, immigration court type and county fixed effects, and find our results robust. Although we find evidence of short-term impacts, the effects over

[3]We also have information on various attributes of the applicant and judge in each recorded legal case.

time mostly disappear when we consider judicial decisions up to a year before and after an attack occurred[4].

Second, we explore stereotypes of people from particular nationality or religious orientation following attacks, focusing on whether or not applicants from a predominantly Muslim or Christian country are disproportionately impacted by terrorist attacks. We evaluate three groups of countries: Middle East and North Africa (MENA), Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), and other regions. Our findings suggest that applicants from predominantly Muslim, and MENA countries are more likely to be rejected for asylum, after a successful terrorist attack. Applicants from Christian majority countries, or SSA countries are not generally more likely to be denied for asylum following a successful terrorist attack. Our estimates suggest that within MENA and pre-dominantly Muslim applicants tend to be affected. Although a successful attack counter-intuitively makes the bias slightly lower qualitatively, based on religious practice and national origin, the overall negative likelihood of being declined asylum is robust to these analyses.

We also explore the role of media coverage as a possible mechanism. Popularizing terrorist attackers and violent behavior more broadly could encourage copy-cats and inadvertently contribute to the diffusion of asylum rejections by nudging immigration judges, leading to different asylum decisions than may have transpired, had such coverage been different. In our results, however, we depart from recent work in that we do not find that the media coverage of terrorism attacks is an important mechanism. Thus, the biases judges show in being more likely to reject asylum cases that occur after an attack does not appear to be

[4] To explore the possibility of more medium-term effects, we explore a six month window (where we look at monthly terrorism exposure bins 3 months before and 6 months after an attack), finding the effect to remain sizeable: around a 1.3 percentage points chance of being denied asylum by a judge. We also look at the year before and after an attack (up to 12 months before and 12 months after an attack occurs) but do not find a statistically significant effect in the sub-analysis of the event study. Our results are mostly confirmed when we causally compare successful attacks with failed attacks as natural experiments. However, the effects over time mostly disappear when we consider judicial decisions up to a year before and after an attack occurred.

responsive to the intensity of media coverage of such attacks. This result suggests that immigration judges are not swayed by media discussions. We also explore whether the gender of a judge is a mechanism for terrorist attacks influencing judge decisions. We do not find any significant effect, which suggests that male and female judges do not differ significantly in how they handle immigration court cases in our context.

We show that the effect of terrorism on judges' decision is peculiar to immigration cases and not linked to the broader judicial system. Parole hearings for violent and dangerous offenders are a context that is useful for contextualizing our results since inmates convicted of such crimes may stereo-typically overlap with terrorists. If the reactions of immigration judges to terrorist attacks differ from how judges on parole cases react, then perhaps the context of immigration asylees may be unique as far as judge biases are concerned. Looking at the variations in parole decisions between 2012 and 2015, we find no evidence that terrorist attacks also affect parole decisions made by judges.

Our paper makes several contributions. Our results are in line with the view that terrorism can provoke xenophobia. To the best of our knowledge, we are the first to document how terrorism can affect immigration asylum cases in the US. We believe that an empirical analysis of the first term of the Bush Administration (2000-2004) is appropriate partly since, according to Chinn and Cortes (2014), this period is close to when immigration asylum application sources to the US generally transitioned from developed to developing nations (estimated to have occurred between 1998 to 2000). Since attacks affect immigration asylum but not local parole decisions, we find a behavioral lens to be useful for unpacking our findings. The presumption of innocence ("innocent until proven guilty") is considered a fundamental human right that may be easier to connect with citizens than asylum seekers in practice. Legal scholars of human rights argue that refugees are considered credible unless contrary evidence is found (Li 2017: 204), which is contradicted by our results. Our findings have more in common with ethnic biases faced by capital punishment-related defendants (Alesina and La Ferrara, 2014), and jury pools (Anwar, Bayer, and Hjalmarsson, 2012). The paper that is most salient to our discussion is Shayo and Zussman (2011), which finds that terrorist attacks in Israel led to judge biases in small claims courts. We extend the

discussion to immigration courts in the US during the same period around September 11, which makes us confident in our findings. We build on this work by comparing immigration court and parole decisions in terms of their reactions to extremist attacks done mostly by US citizens.

We turn to our policy implications. Contrary to anti-refugee stereotypes, a comprehensive report finds that the vast majority of US terrorist attacks have been caused by US-born citizens, not immigrants (New America Foundation, 2018). Indeed, a plethora of studies find that immigrants are generally less likely to cause crime than citizens and do not generally increase local crime rates (Nowrasteh, 2018). However, we do not advocate replacing refugee stereotypes with citizen stereotypes, but rather to draw further attention to unconscious bias as a policy concern.

The paper proceeds as follows. In the next section, we review the literature in depth and discuss the conceptual framework that directs our data analysis. In section 3 we present a brief description of the asylum and immigration court system in the US. A description of the data and their respective sources are outlined in section 4. The empirical strategy related to the impacts of terrorism on judge decision-making and results are presented in section 5 while a discussion of the mechanisms are presented in section 6. Section 7 concludes the paper.

2 Literature Review

There is a growing focus in the literature on the social and economic impacts of migration, with most recent studies finding positive or no effects. In an overview, Clemens, Lewis and Postel (2018) do not detect significant labor market impacts[5].

Similarly, there is a parallel literature on crime effects of refugees in the United States, which, overall, appear to have little to no negative effects (Amuedo-Dorantes, Bansak and Pozo, 2018). Butcher and Piehl (1998) for instance, find no significant link between immigration flows and crime at the city level. Spenkuch (2013), however, concludes that immigra-

[5]The largest natural experiment to the best of our knowledge is Murard and Sakalli (2018), who find that the result of migrants increasing the entire Greek population by more than 20% within a few months in the 1920s, have today led to better economic outcomes decades later.

tion has a small positive impact on property crime, but none on violent crime. On the other hand, Chalfin (2014) finds little evidence linking immigration to crime, with the exception of aggravated assault (Chalfin 2015). Although the impacts of refugees on both the economy and crime seem to range mostly from benign to positive, perceptions of refugees have been much more negative than the literature above suggests, with most Americans generally favoring fewer immigrants (Niskanen Center, 2017). On the other hand, recent work by Dreher, Gassebner and Schaudt (2017) find that increasing the foreign population of the average OECD country relates to an increased risk of terrorist attacks from both locals and foreigners alike.

Research has looked at the impact of terrorism on immigration policies in developed countries, but many existing papers have focused on how visa policies within and across nation-states become more strict after an attack (e.g. Martin and Martin, 2004; also see Avdan, 2014). The main shortcoming of this approach is that immigration legal institutions typically differ in various geographic, demographic, political, and economic dimensions subnationally, and the existence of unobserved heterogeneity complicates the causal interpretation of cross-country correlations. Also, although recent work has considered the effect of terrorist attacks on the decision to migrate from the supply side in developing countries (Dreher, Kriegerd, and Meierriek, 2011) little research has looked at the effect of terrorist attacks on the demand for immigration from the host nation from a causal perspective. Yet, there are policy implications of native's perceptions of immigrants in areas such as preferences for redistribution: making natives experimentally think about immigrants leads to less support for redistributive policies (e.g. Alesina, Minao and Stantcheva, 2018), with such effects holding most strongly for right-wing policy supporters.

This paper builds on the literature on policy-relevant perceptions by investigating the impacts of terrorist attacks on the likelihood of being approved for asylum in the United States during the first term of the Bush Administration. Our work connects to the literature on the impacts of refugees since asylum seekers must obviously be admitted into the host nation for any of these effects to be observed. Unfortunately, little to no research attention has focused on what specific factors and mechanisms may influence such decision-making.

Our work is also relevant for a rich literature that looks at predicting judicial decisions that affect Americans (see Kleinberg, Lakkaraju, Leskovec, Ludwig and Mullainathan, 2018 for an overview) as well as the rich literature on biases that can affect such decision-making (e.g. see Steffensmeier, Ulmer, and Kramer 1998; Eberhardt, Goff, Purdie, and Davies 2004; Anwar, Bayer and Hjalmarsson, 2012; Alexander 2010).

Our focus is on stereotypes of immigrants as violent. Psychologists have found that stereotypes are often not deliberately deployed but subconsciously activated. Such stereotype outcomes are known in the literature as automatic stereotyping, and occur when subject to certain contexts and settings (e.g. Casper, Rothermund and Wentura, 2010). Our findings are in line with recent arguments in psychology concerning how terrorist perpetrators are portrayed. For example, Kunst, Myhren and Onyeador (2018) use a reverse-correlation approach to find that when a terrorist attack was perceived to be attributed to mental illness rather than ideology, white Europeans study participants thought about a white perpetrator with reduced culpability. It is less clear whether or not immigration legal systems are susceptible to such stereotypes when attacks actually occur, and the degree to which such biases are acted upon.

Our paper focuses on the role of potential psychological biases in immigration judge decision making. In so doing, we focus on a psychology-related approach known in legal scholarship as legal realism. Legal realism is distinct from legal formalism, which means that judicial decisions are strictly rational, mechanical and deliberative (see Danziger, Levav and Avnaim-Pesso, 2011). Our focus on asylum seekers and terrorism adds an international political economy dimension to the discussion. Also, existing work tends to construct asylum seekers and Americans as separate units, with corresponding independent literature, and we attempt look at whether or not a relationship can be found between the two types of judicial decisions. Specifically, part of our study looks at how bias in judges' asylum seeking decisions may be related to parole decisions. We are able to untangle whether judges, when biased, may be showing a specific bias against immigrants in particular, or just defendants in general when a terrorist attack occurs. Another contribution is that we also explore whether or not media coverage affects judges' reactions to terrorist attacks, given that recent find-

ings that terrorist attacks are responsive to media coverage (Jetter, 2017; Opoku-Agyemang, 2017). One of the most significant impacts of modern terrorism has been changes in the perceptions of foreigners in general. Few sectors has been affected by this phenomenon than immigration. We explore whether such perceptions have policy implications, with a focus on the immigration system and legal profession.

2.1 Conceptual Framework

From a theoretical perspective, a rich literature has identified several major mechanisms through which people exhibit behavioral biases in legal decision-making contexts. Sterotypes are oversimplified ideas or images that are context-dependent and usually inaccurate (see Bordalo, Coffman, Gennaioli, and Shleifer, (2016) for a discussion based on Kahneman and Tversky's (1972) representativeness heuristic). The behavioral economics literature (summarized in Camerer and Loewenstein, 2004) argues that in making judgments, people instinctively dwell on how a profile matches a stereotype, even when they know they should not stereotype. Our discussion focuses on legal immigration *outcomes* that are potentially related to stereotypes. A survey of the law and behavioral economics literature that guides most of our analysis of the impact of terrorist attacks on immigration judges in this subsection is Jolls, Sunstein, and Thaler (1998).

Our main assumption is that the human cognitive facilities of immigration judges are not unlimited. Actual judgments show systematic departures and biases, so that actual decisions violate the axioms of expected utility theory. Immigration judges would make consistent decisions regardless of terrorist attacks if they were not subject to behavioral biases. This is an argument we are able to empirically test in our study.

Also, bounded willpower means that judges may take actions that they know to be in opposition to their long-term self-interests. That is, an immigration judge may prefer to take a neutral perspective when judging cases, but may not be unbiased so in practice, since terrorist attacks often trigger emotional responses. According to Jolls, Sunstein, and Thaler (1998), judges subject to behavioral biases should be more spiteful or vindictive than the judges would be if they were entirely rational agents. As such, experiencing a terrorist attack

may lead to a judge scapegoating an asylum seeker and giving in to stereotypes[6]. Specifically, attacks may activate negative stereotypes about asylum-seekers from certain countries (e.g. Middle East and North Africa (MENA) nations) in judges and lead to applicants from such countries being more likely to be denied asylum after an attack occurs. If the bias is sufficiently strong, attacks of any sort classified as terrorism could affect their decision making–irrespective of where the attacker is actually from.

Similarly, due to possible Islamophobia, applicants from predominantly Muslim nations may be more likely to be declined than applicants from predominantly Christian countries when a terrorist attack occurs. Also, given that the gender of a judge has been shown to affect family court and employment court decisions (Miller, 2018) as well as the outcomes of sex discrimination cases (Knepper, 2018), the gender of a judge may similarly affect the likelihood of being accepted for asylum when a terrorist attack occurs. Fifth, the effect of terrorism on judge decisions should be robust to accounting for weather variations, since high temperature for instance has been shown to influence judicial decisions (Heyes and Saberian, 2018). Finally, a major hypothesis is whether the stereotypes which terrorist attacks provoke in judges are unique to asylum seekers, or whether convicted offenders could also be disproportionately denied parole after an attack. If the stereotypes triggered by an attack are not immigration-specific, such stereotypes should affect both immigration decisions and parole decisions. However, if the stereotypes are anti-immigrant in nature, they should affect immigration decisions but not parole decisions.

We are able to evaluate these mechanisms in our data. We find a negative impact of terrorism on the likelihood that an asylum application will be granted by a judge. The results are robust to controlling for weather variations. We find some evidence that indicates that applicants from predominantly Muslim and MENA countries are most exposed to such asylum rejections. An explanation is that stereotypes of immigrants as being potential terrorists

[6]This argument is consistent with bounded self-interest more generally. In the absence of stereotypes being triggered by attacks, judges may care about the plights commonly faced by asylum seekers and be more likely to approve asylum for an asylum seeker fleeing conflict, for example. Similarly, a commissioner deciding whether to release a convicted criminal during a parole hearing may sympathize with the fact that incarcerating parents can negatively affect social outcomes for children (see for e.g. Murray and Farrington (2008) and Arteaga (2018)) from a bounded-rationality perspective. However, parole hearings and asylum cases may respond differently to terrorist attacks.

seem to be triggered by the attacks. This argument is supported by the finding that parole decisions are not significantly affected by the terrorist attacks.

3 Asylum and the US Immigration Court System

The United States Refugee Act of 1980 was based on a humanitarian and nondiscriminatory policy and aimed at coordinating the admission of refugees to the United States (Anker and Posner, 1981). For applicants seeking asylum to the United States, and for visitors to the US in general, the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) is the first point of official contact. Our data concerns applicants who were referred to an immigration court by the USCIS. Such cases refer to instances where two conditions hold (USCIS, 2018). First, the USCIS should be unable to approve an asylum application. Second, the applicant(s) referred to in the application should be in the US illegally. If both conditions hold, the application is referred to the immigration court system[7]. A referral to the immigration judge includes an applicant's spouse and unmarried children under 21 if they were included on the asylum application and if they are in the United States illegally.

According to USCIS (2018), the USCIS sends the applicant a letter of explanation and a Notice to Appear form (Form I-862), which states the date and time the applicant in question is scheduled to appear in court. The immigration judge has full discretion to evaluate an asylum claim independently of the USCIS decision and is not required to follow or even rely on the decision made by USCIS.

3.1 How and When the Immigration Judge Gives a Decision

After considering evidence pertaining to the case, the judge chooses to either issue the formal decision orally in court or submit the decision in writing. If the decision is orally delivered, a summary of this decision will be sent to the applicant. Our data is from Heyes and Saberian (2018), which does not have data on appeals. Being denied asylum means being subject to deportation, in part because appeals can only be related to technical or procedu-

[7] An applicant can receive one of four types of decisions from the USCIS: (1) Grant of Asylum (2) Referral to an Immigration Court (3) Recommended Approval (4) Notice of Intent to Deny (5) Final Denial. Decisions related to the first, third, fourth and fifth options mean that an applicant does not need to be evaluated by the immigration court system, so we not discuss those here. Details are available at USCIS (2018).

ral errors but not strictly against how judge discretion is implemented (Heyes and Saberian, 2018). Also, judges wield significant discretion in asylum cases, and the rights to appeal in asylum immigration are not as robustly implemented since such rights are within the legal frameworks that are reserved for US citizens (Heyes and Saberian, 2018: 5).

Many asylum seekers do not have lawyers, but an immigration asylum case proceeds whether or not a lawyer is present, or even if the applicant is absent on the set date. Even in the rare cases where procedural errors occur, financial costs may be another reason why a refugee or asylum applicant may not pursue an appeal upon being denied. Also, if the applicant is in detention, deciding to appeal the case would keep the applicant detained, so the applicant may decide to waive appeal simply to minimize detention. Such applicants are likely to have an order of deportation on their behalf meaning they must depart the US soon. The significant backlog of cases and the small number of immigration judges means that it can take years before a case is brought before an immigration judge, and the stress on the system, in turn, suggests that cases are relatively stable over time. The distribution of asylum cases across cities is plausibly quasi-random across the country and immigration courts in the United States are setup at the city level to serve specific regions. The assignment of judges to the cases are also technically random (Heyes and Saberian, 2018). The Executive Office for Immigration Review of the Department of Justice is responsible for the guidelines that administrate US immigration court proceedings. In the online appendix, we show the trends in number of asylum cases adjudicated in US immigration courts in between 2000 and 2004 across counties that have experienced successful, failed or no terror attacks during the period. The evidence in the graph shows uniform distribution of asylum cases across the immigration courts in the respective counties across the period. This lends credence to our claim that the assignment of cases across US immigration courts are not in response to terrorist attacks.

3.1.1 No attack on record has been linked to asylum denials

We can mostly rule out reverse causality or the possibility of terrorist attacks being caused by the denial of an asylum case for three main reasons. While an asylum application is pending before a judge the applicant(s) are only automatically authorized to remain in the US while awaiting a decision from the court judge. When an application appeal is denied and the removal of the applicants(s) is ordered, such applicant(s) are immediately subject to deportation procedures (NOLO, 2018).

Another reason why we are comfortable with our argument is that, the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) excludes terrorists from being granted asylum to the United States, and most developed countries have equivalent or similar legal requirements. This policy appears to be relatively successful: records show that only 1.7% of all of the deportation proceedings conducted in the US from October 1990 through May 2018 have been terrorist-related (Transnational Records Access Clearinghouse, 2018a). In such cases, the terrorist activity would have occurred before the applicant applied for asylum and was denied.

There are indications that even this low estimate may be larger than the actual population of asylum applicants that are violent. It is worth noting that the legal definition of certain terms by deportation officials are different from standard definitions in the literature. Under a range of provisions of the law, and perhaps for security reasons, broad grounds are given for deportation or removal on either national security or terrorism grounds. To be deported "for terrorism," for example, does not actually mean that a terrorism allegation was proven to hold in the immigration court. It is sufficient to deport a rejected asylum seeker if "a consular officer or the Attorney General knows, or has reasonable ground to believe" that the individual "is likely to engage after entry [in the United States] in any terrorist activity." (Transactional Records Access Clearinghouse, 2018b) . Such applicants did not actually commit terrorist acts in the United States to be deported but are considered *suspicious of potentially doing so* at the discretion of the deportation officials. We cannot and do not rule out the possibility of such actions being warranted.

Deportation for terrorism, as defined above, is the highest priority for deportation (Trans-

actional Records Access Clearinghouse, 2018b). As such denied applicants who are most strongly suspected of having terrorism tendencies rank the highest in terms of deportation priorities and as such, may be the most likely to be most quickly deported. As such, we need not be concerned that denied applicants and reverse causality may be driving our arguments, as such rejected applicants would not be in the country long enough after being rejected to plan such an attack[8].

No terrorist attack on record, to the best of our knowledge (during the time frame of the study or otherwise) has yet been connected directly or indirectly by authorities to the denial of an immigration asylum application. One concern noted in the literature that further favors our arguments is that it is possible that people who are not actually guilty of terrorism may be inappropriately identified. For example, legal scholars suggest that the low estimate of 1.7% may even significantly overestimate the terrorist-related population in asylum applicants (Kidane, 2008). Partly due to these reasons, we focus on the possibility that a terrorist attack may shift the priors of immigration judges and affect their decision making.

4 Data

Global Terrorism Database: We use rich georeferenced data on terrorist activities around the world from the the Global Terrorism Database (GTD) 2017, organized by the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START) at the University of Maryland[9]. The database contains detailed information on terrorist events such as day, month, year, longitude and latitude, motive of the attack, casualties, whether the attack was successful or failed, *inter alia*. Here, a terrorist attack focuses on illegal force, fear, coercion or intimidation by a non-state actor (Global Terrorism Database, 2017). The main characteristics of a terrorist attack is that it needs to be deliberate, a threat of violence or actual violence, and that the actors responsible be non-state agents. Also the GTD defines

[8] Acts of terrorism in solidarity of family members or acquaintances who have been denied asylum is plausible, although there has been no evidence so far to support this as a reason for terrorist attacks.

[9] http://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/

an attack as terrorist if it fulfills at least two of the following criteria[10]: " i. The act must be aimed at attaining a political, economic, religious, or social goal; ii. There must be evidence of an intention to coerce, intimidate, or convey some other message to a larger audience (or audiences) than the immediate victims; and iii. The action must be outside the context of legitimate warfare activities". Following Brodeur (2018), our analysis focuses on attacks that fulfill all the three criteria. Further, we focus on attacks that occurred in mainland US from 2000 through 2004 which overlaps with our immigration judge decisions data.

Using the longitude and latitudes of the locations of the attack, we match our data to the shapefile of US counties. Thus we define a county as attacked if it experienced at least one terrorist attack within a relevant time period. Between 2000 and 2004, there were a total of 146 attacks on mainland US that meets our classification of terrorism, of which 78 percent were successfully executed. Figures 1 shows the number of terrorist (both successful and failed) attacks across US counties between 2000 and 2004.

Judge Decisions Data: Our data on immigration court decisions is obtained from Heyes and Saberian (2018). Using data from www.asylumlaw.org, Heyes and Saberian (2018) compiled a comprehensive dataset on the universe of asylum cases adjudicated in US immigration courts from January 2000 through September 2004. The data contains information on gender of the judge, judge ID, nationality of the applicant, type of application[11] , day-month-year of adjudication, as well as the longitudes and latitudes of the city where the immigration court is located. In addition, the dataset from Heyes and Saberian (2018) includes the information on daily weather conditions in the city where the case was adjudicated. The weather variables include temperature, precipitation, air pressure, cloud cover, wind speed and dew point, all measured as the 6am to 4pm averages in the city and on the day of adjudication. The granularity of the weather information, enable us to control for variations in the weather conditions across the cities and time periods during the adjudication of the cases. We return to these variables in our main results when we discuss the robustness of terror-

[10] http://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/downloads/Codebook.pdf

[11] "There are two main types of cases in immigration courts: affirmative cases in which the applicant presents in the courts on her/his own and defensive cases in which the applicant is instructed to attend on the initiative of the immigration authorities" Heyes and Saberian (2018, pp 8.).

ist effects on judge decisions to focusing on particularly hot days where judges may have been more likely to reject applicants when a terrorist attack occurred than on less-hot day when a terrorist attack occurred. As shown later, results are consistent across econometric specifications.

Parole Hearing Decisions Data: We also look at geo-coded data on parole hearings from the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation between 2012 and 2015, again provided by Heyes and Saberian (2018). The Board of Parole Hearing (BPH)assesses whether or not to release prisoners who have been incarcerated. The data contains the following: hearing date, panel member identifier, inmate unique identifier, location of hearing, hearing type and decision outcome. We use Hayes and Saberian's (2018) data which contains more than 18000 hearing decisions across California and summarize their description of the data here. Hearings are done in person and a year before parole eligibility. A Board Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner make the decision (Kathryne et al. (2016), Hayes and Saberian, (2018)).

Our final dataset(s) are obtained by spatially matching the court data with terrorist data using the relevant time windows as described section 5.1.1

5 Empirical Strategy and Results

This paper uses two variant strategies to estimate the effect of terrorism on migration court decisions. First a baseline model which exploit the plausibly quasi-random variations in the timing of immigration court hearings and the timing of terrorist activities. Our second model utilizes a difference-in-difference strategy that exploits the random variations between failed and successful terrorist activities.

5.1 Baseline Model

Our baseline model compares the outcome of immigration court decisions of cases that were adjudicated just before a successful terrorist event with the outcome of immigration cases held after a successful terrorist decision. The estimation equation is summarized in equation (1)

$$1[outcome]_{ict} = \alpha + \gamma PostSuccess_{ct} + \theta' Z_{ct} + \Gamma_i + \varphi_{c,t} + \Omega_c + \mu_{ct} \tag{1}$$

where $1[outcome]_{ict}$ is the judge's decision in asylum case i , taken in county c, at time t. The outcome is a binary variable equal to 1 if the asylum application was approved and 0 if otherwise. $PostSuccess$ is a dummy variable equal to 1 if the court hearing took place after a successful terrorist attack in the county and 0 if otherwise. We define Z as a vector of controls for weather conditions such as temperature, air pressure, cloud cover, wind speed, and dew point measured as the 6am to 4pm averages on the day of the adjudication in the city in which the case was adjudicated. The results are robust to the inclusion of the weather indicators. Γ_i is a vector of fixed effects for judge and type of application. Judge fixed effect absorbs any time-invariant determinants of judge leniency or decisions, while the application type fixed effect absorbs time invariant heterogeneity among court applications that would otherwise confound our results. $\varphi_{c,t}$ and Ω_c represent respectively, applicant's nationality×year and county fixed effects. Nationality×year absorbs temporal shocks in the country of origin that could for example influence the number of people from these countries seeking asylum in the US. County fixed effect on the other hand, absorbs unobserved time invariant heterogeneity across counties in the dataset. μ is the residual term clustered at county level.

The specification in equation (1) suggests that we identify the effect of successful terrorist activities by comparing the outcome of asylum applications adjudicated after any successful terrorist activity, with other asylum applications by immigrants of the same nationality, adjudicated by the same judge, in the same county before any successful terrorist activity in a given time period. Our coefficient of interest is γ, which represents the relative

impact of successful terrorist attacks on immigration court decisions.

In order to capture the direct influence of terrorism on the immigration court decisions, our baseline analysis focuses solely on asylum cases adjudicated within three (3) months (90 days) before and after a successful terrorist activity in the county where the immigration court is located. As robustness check, we also extend the analysis to include cases adjudicated three months before and six (6) months after a successful attack, as well as 12 months before and after a successful attack.

The main identifying assumption for equation (1) is that timing of terrorist activities are largely random and do not influence the timing of asylum case hearings. As outlined in Section 3.1, the distribution of asylum cases across cities and time is plausibly random. Indeed, setting dates for the court hearing and assignment of judges to cases are scheduled in advance, sometimes with the time lag between assignment and actual hearing well over a year (Heyes and Saberian, 2018). Concerns of simultaneity between asylum application decisions and the probability of successful terrorist activities are highly unlikely. First, an unsuccessful asylum application implies that steps are taken by the authorities to deport the applicant and not given the chance of living in the US. As a result, it is reasonable to assume that an applicant whose case was denied will be unable to participate in any terrorist activity as a form of revenge (as discussed in detail in Section 3.1.1). Second, this specification focuses solely on successful attacks rather than the incidence of a terrorist activity. The outcome of a terrorist activity in terms of either a success or failure is arguably random as failed attacks are often a result of the inability of a bomb to explode, prompt response by security agencies to foil the attack, etc. Thus by focusing solely on counties exposed to successful attacks during the relevant period, simultaneity may play a minor role to confound our results.

To validate our identifying assumptions, we examine whether the attributes of the asylum application predicts the timing of the hearing relative to a terrorist attack. In order words, if some groups of asylum applications are more likely to be adjudicated before or after a terrorist attack, then our estimates would be biased. In Table 1 we present a balance test by regressing the attributes of the asylum application (i.e. type of application, judge id,

and attributes of the applicants nationality[12]) on whether the case was adjudicated within 3 months after any terrorist activity (regardless of the outcome) in the county where the case was adjudicated or otherwise, and whether the case was adjudicated within 3 months after a successful terrorist activity or otherwise. In column 1, we find that the characteristics of asylum applications are strongly balanced between cases adjudicated before and after any terrorist activity in the same country, as none of the attributes are statistically significant. Similarly, in column 2, the results show that the characteristics of asylum applications are strongly balanced between cases adjudicated before and after successful terrorist attacks in the same country. The only exception is the gender of the immigration judge. Female judges are more likely to adjudicate a case after a successful terrorist attack. In spite of this, we argue that this is unlikely to have any impact on our identification assumptions. Indeed, our results in Section 6.4 show no robust evidence of gender biases in the effect of terrorism on judges' decisions. Summary statistics of the key variables used in the (baseline) analysis are presented in Table 2.

5.1.1 Results: Successful Terrorist Attacks and Immigration Court Decisions

To examine the relationship between exposure to successful terrorist attacks and immigration court decisions, we estimate the baseline equation (1) with variant specifications. The results are shown in Table 3. In column 1, we control for fixed effects for applicant's nationality×year, immigration judge, type of immigration court application, and county where the immigration court is located. The results show a negative impact of successful terrorist attacks on asylum approvals. Our preferred specification is column 2 which include a full set of controls in column 1 and as well as weather indicators. Evidence from Heyes and Saberian (2018) suggest that weather conditions, in particular, temperature on the day of the adjudication have a significant impact on judges' decision. Findings from the paper suggest that a 10°F rise in ambient temperature reduces the probability of asylum approval by im-

[12] this include the geographic and religious composition of the country of origin. In all, our dataset contains 215 unique countries of origin. Hence, a balance test on each of these countries will yeild at least 214 coeficients, posing a challenge for reporting them in a table.

migration courts by 1.1 percent. Therefore, following Heyes and Saberian (2018), we include as covariates, six (6) weather indicators[13] (precipitation, temperature, air pressure, cloud cover, wind speed, and dew point). Controlling for weather indicators on the day of adjudication increases the magnitude of the point estimates marginally. The standard errors are also slightly larger compared to column 1, albeit the results remain statistically significant at 95 percent confidence level. The estimated effects suggest that asylum cases adjudicated (within 3 months) after a successful terrorist attack have a 1 percentage point chance of being denied. This corresponds to about 8.5 percent[14] reduction in average probability of asylum approvals. In column 3, we estimate a less conservative specification by excluding judge and/or application type fixed effects. The results nonetheless remain robust, as the point estimates and standard errors are qualitatively and quantitatively similar to column 2.

How does the effect evolve with time? In figure 2 we examine the relationship between terrorism and asylum application approvals by immigration courts before and after a successful terror attack. The figure plots the point estimates and their corresponding 95 percent confidence intervals of time dummies for each month before and after an attack. The figure is based on the estimation of equation (1) using time dummies for up to three months before and after a successful attack. We normalize the coefficient of the period 3 months before an attack to zero. Hence, we interpret the coefficients as how asylum approvals change over time relative to the third month prior to a successful attack. The results provide suggestive evidence that asylum applications are less likely to be approved after a successful terrorist attack, with the effect persisting up to at least, the third month.

5.2 Comparing Successful and Failed Terrorist Attacks

Our second identification strategy exploits variations in the success or failure of terrorist attacks in a difference in difference (diff-in-diff) framework to estimate the impact of ter-

[13] measured as the 6 AM to 4 PM averages on the day of the adjudication in in the city where the case was adjudicated.

[14] i.e., -0.01/0.1165=-0.085

rorist activities on immigration court decisions. Even though terrorist activities are often planned and orchestrated by individuals or groups, there is some inherent randomness in the outcome (Brodeur, 2018). Dysfunctional weapons, technical errors or prompt reaction of security agencies may influence the outcome of attacks. As a result, not all terrorist activities are successful. Exploiting the quasi-randomness in the success or failure of attacks across space and time, we implement a diff-in-diff strategy as specified in equation 2

$$1[outcome]_{ict} = \alpha + \phi PostSuccess_{ct} + \rho PostTerror_{ct} + \theta' Z_{ct} + \Gamma_i + \varphi_{c,t} + \Omega_c + \mu_{ct} \quad (2)$$

where $PostTerror_{ct}$ is an indicator variable equal to 1 if a case was adjudicated after any terrorist attack (successful or failed) and 0 if otherwise. All other variables remain as before. This estimation focuses solely on cases adjudicated in counties that experienced a terrorist activity, irrespective of their outcome, within the relevant period. As a result, $PostSuccess$ is equal to 1 for cases determined after a successful attack in the post terror period, and 0 for the per-terror and post failed terror periods. Therefore, ϕ is the diff-in-diff estimate measuring, the pre/post change in the court decisions in counties that experienced successful terrorist attacks compared with counties that experienced unsuccessful terrorist attacks. As in the baseline regressions, we use the same 3 month window for the analysis.

5.2.1 Results for Successful versus Failed Attacks

In Table 4, we present additional evidence on the relationship between terrorist activities and asylum approvals using the diff-in-diff strategy outlined in equation 2. The controls in columns 1-4 are identical to their respective columns in Table 3. Our variable of interest is $PostSuccess$ whose coefficient is the diff-in-diff estimate of the impact of terrorist activities on the approval rates of asylum applications. The results are also qualitatively and quantitatively similar to Table 3, and statistically significant at the 5 percent error level. A noticeable observation is that magnitudes of the impact in Table 4 are slightly higher than in Table 3.

Relative to failed terrorist activities, our results in column 2 suggest that successful terror events reduces asylum approvals by 2.9 percentage points. This corresponds to a 11.6 percent reduction in the average probability of asylum approvals by US immigration courts.

5.3 Robustness Checks

So far, we have focused on a tight sample window (three months before and after a (un)successful terror event). This confines the analysis to the short run impact of terrrorism. However, in some cases, particularly due to high human and economic cost, the footprints of an attack can persist over time. In Tables 5 and 6, we assess the medium-long term consequences of terrorism by estimating equations (1) and (2) respectively using two alternate samples: (i). cases adjudicated three (3) months before and six (6) months after a (successful) terror event, and (ii). cases adjudicated twelve (12) pre and post (successful) terror events.

The results in Table 5 confirm the baseline results of a negative effect of successful attacks on asylum approvals. In columns (1-4), asylum cases adjudicated within six months after a successful terrorist attack are less likely to be approved relative to cases adjudicated three months before a successful attack. The estimates range between 1.1 and 1.3 percentage points and significant at 95 percent confidence level. Extending the sample to compare cases within a twelve month window however results in lower magnitude (approximately 0.8 percentage points) and confidence level as well (columns 5-8). Figure 3 plots the event study estimates for the threee months prior and six months after sample. Again the results show negative and statistically significant effect of successful terrorist activities on asylum cases adjudicated after the attacks. The coefficient of the dummy, two months post the attack, is however not significant. Months prior to the attacks have no statistically significant impact.

Next, Table 6 presents the results from comparing the effect of successful attacks with the effect of failed attack for the two sub-samples. In columns 1-4, we find a negative and statistically weak significant (90 percent confidence level) relationship between terrorist attacks and immigration court decisions using the sample of cases adjudicated three months

prior to an attack and six months after an attack. Extending the sample to include cases adjudicated 12 months pre and post any attack, yields no statistically significant relationship. Combining these results, we conclude that the effect of terrorist activities on immigration court decisions are more pronounced in the short to medium term.

6 Mechanisms

We investigate some specific mechanisms or pathways that may help explain our main result. We hypothesize bias against foreigners of particular nationality or religious persuasion, as a channel through which the incidence terrorist activities affects judges' decision in the adjudication of asylum cases. To validate this hypothesis further, we address the following questions: Do terrorist activities affect other court decisions, for instance, adjudication of parole cases? Are particular groups of immigrants disproportionately affected by the events? What is the role of mass media in propagating anti-immigration sentiments after terrorist events? Is the impact of terrorist activities on asylum approvals driven by gender differences among immigration judges? Do the county-level effects replicate when terrorist attacks are studied at the state level, which would suggest some coordination by judges or perhaps sympathy-based decisions from non-attacked counties in the same state when an attack occurs? We attempt to answer these questions in turn now.

6.1 Terror Events and Parole Decisions

Is the effect of terrorism on court decisions unique to immigration cases or they affect a broader spectrum of court cases? If the latter is true then our claim that the terrorist activities reinforces pre-existing social biases against foreigners is invalid. To ascertain this claim, we rely on the universe of parole hearings conducted by the BPH in California between January 2012 and December 2015 and match it to all terrorist activities in California to examine the effect of the latter on the parole hearing decisions made by BPH commissioners.

In Table 7, we exploit the plausibly exogenous variations in the timing of parole hearings and timing of successful terror events to compare the differences in the outcome of hearings before and after the event[15]. The results show no robust association between the terror events and the outcome of parole hearings. This provides suggestive evidence that the outcome of broader judicial hearings are independent of terrorist activities.

6.2 Nationality and Religious Bias

To further understand the sources of the bias, we investigate whether the asylum cases of particular groups based on nationality, ethnic and/or religious affiliation are targeted following a terrorist attack. In Table 11 column 1 and 2, we evaluate the differential impact of successful terrorist activities on the outcome of asylum applications made by applicants from Muslim majority countries, and Christian majority countries compared with applicants from other countries. We define a country as Christian (Muslim) majority country if at least 70 percent of the population are Christians (Muslims). The coefficient of the interaction between the dummy variables for Islamic and Christian countries, and the treatment variable $PostSuccess$ is interpreted as the effect of successful terrorist attacks on the outcome of asylum applications by asylum seekers from the respective country groups. The results suggest a negative impact of successful terrorist activities on asylum approvals of applicants from Muslim majority countries. The relationship is statistically significant at 1 percent error level. The effect on applications from Christian majority countries is positive (in most cases), but statistically insignificant.

To further understand, the bias here, we focus on the geographic distribution of the countries, specifically on countries from North Africa and Middle East[16](MENA), and Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). MENA countries are predominantly Muslims, while SSA countries

[15]Terrorist activities in California during the parole data period were all successful. As a result, comparing the effect of successful and failed terror activities yeild the same results as in Table 7

[16]excluding Israel. The exclusion of Israel from this group is informed by the strong social and political ties between the US and Isreal. Also, unlike most countries in MENA, the share of Isreali population that are Muslims is insignificant.

have relatively diverse religious landscape ranging from Christianity, Islam, and a plethora of indigenous religions. The results (columns 4 - 6) show a negative and statistically significant interaction effect for applicants from MENA countries, while a statistically insignificant interaction effect for applicants from SSA countries is observed. We support these findings with the event-study analysis in Figure 4 which shows the evolution in asylum approval rates across the four groups before and after a successful terrorist attack. The results are suggest that asylum applicants from MENA and/or Muslim majority countries are less likely to be approved after a successful terrorist attack in the US.

Overall, the results from Table 11 provide suggestive evidence of a systematic discrimination against asylum applications from Muslim majority countries, particularly, from the MENA region following a successful terrorist activity in mainland US. Stated differently, asylum applications of citizens of MENA countries to the US are less likely to be granted following a successful terrorist attack on mainland USA. In Table **??** in the online appendix, we provide the results when comparing successful with failed attacks. The results are qualitatively and quantitatively similar to Table 11. Again, our results provide suggestive evidence of a systematic bias against asylum seekers from Muslim majority and MENA countries following a successful terrorist attacks. This bias is indicative of the stereotypes against nationals from these countries in the US.

6.3 Terror Events and Mass Media

Next, we examine whether the mass media (mainly television coverage) is a possible medium through which terrorist attacks influence judges' decisions. If news about terrorism gain significant attention in the television and print media, it may influence public sentiments against immigration, particularly conditioned on potential pre existing negative social biases towards foreigners. We use unique data on terror-related news stories for three major television news networks (ABC, CBS, and NBC) compiled by Brodeur (2018) using the Vanderbilt Television Archive matched with terrorist activities in the US. Three indicators of

media coverage are used: i. whether terrorist activities were covered by the television news network, ii. the number of terrorism related news stories covered by the networks, and iii. the duration of the terrorism related news stories.

Using this data, Brodeur (2018) shows a positive association between terrorist activities and their coverage in the US news media. Given this backdrop, we test whether the coverage of these news influence, indirectly, judges' decision on asylum cases or otherwise.

To examine the amplifying (mediating) effects of media coverage of terrorist activities on on judges' decisions, we interact the indicators of media coverage with the measures of exposure to terrorist activities. In Table 9, we utilize data on coverage of terrorism related events from all the three television networks. The results show no statistically significant terrorism induced relationship between the media coverage and the judges' decision-making, implying that media coverage of these events was not a decisive factor in court rulings that were made after terrorist attacks. In Tables 12, 13, and 14 in the online appendix, we perform similar analysis using data from each TV network. The effect remains statistically insignificant, except in the case of ABC television network (Table 12) where the effect is negative and significant at 90 percent confidence level. Hence, we rule out the news media as a potential channel for the biases in judge decision making that we observe in our main results.

6.4 The Role of Gender

Further, we examine whether judges' decision are underpinned by gender biases. In Table 10 we interact the gender of the judge with $PostSuccess$. In columns 1-3 we use the identification strategies in equation (1) and include an interaction with the gender of the immigration judge. Similarly, columns 4-6 are estimated using the specification in equation (2) with an interaction term. Across the specifications, we find no statistically significant gender induced biases. The only exception is column 6, when judge fixed effect is excluded. Therefore, we conclude that gender is not a factor that influences the effect of attacks on judge decisions.

6.5 Terrorism at the State Level

To better understand judges' reaction to the terrorist attacks, we extend the analysis to the attacks at the state level. We explore this line of analysis for two reasons. First, since the immigration judges appear to show biases at the county level, it is possible that some coordination may be occurring: perhaps the behavior of judges in different counties within a particular state may correlate with one another with respect to reactions to terrorist attacks. If this is the case, the observed judicial bias may have systemic undertones that have policy implications. Secondly, this approach enables us to explore the extent to which the biased decision making may be aggregated (or spillover) within states. It is possible that judges in counties that did not directly experience an attack may identify with their peers in the counties that were attacked.

To this end, we estimate equations (1) and (2) with the terrorist activities in a state as the level of treatment. In Table 15 we observe no relationship between exposure to successful terrorist activities at the state level and the outcome of immigration court adjudications. By comparing successful and failed terrorist activities, the results in Table 16, confirms the above results. As such, we argue that the observed judicial bias may not be a systemic problem at the state level, but a more localized county-level one. It appears that the effects of terrorist attacks on judicial decision-making are felt at a more localized county level than at a broader state level. This result suggests that judges are relatively consistent with their mandate to be unbiased at the state level than at the localized county level. Since there seem not to be any coordination among judges across counties within a particular state when an attack happens, the attacks do not appear to affect decision-making when we examine the data at the state level.

7 Conclusion

We show that terrorist attacks significantly affect immigration judge decisions, by making judges more likely to deny asylum applications. The finding is robust to alternative specifi-

cations that include accounting for comprehensive weather variations over the period. We do not detect evidence that the specific national origin of asylum seekers matters, but asylum seekers from predominantly Muslim nations are slightly more likely to be denied than other asylum seekers, suggesting a slight bias that is triggered by attacks. Even though judges are often thought of as being fully rational, our findings that they are subject to behavioral biases is consistent with the literature that has focused mostly on legal settings other than immigration. Optimistically, our inability to detect significant effects in the case of most of the studied mechanisms seems to suggest that the immigration court system has certain capacities to resist bias in its decision making, although our main effect suggests that it is imperfect in doing so.

Since judges do not receive new information concerning an asylum application, we argue that while seeming unrelated, domestic terrorist attacks appear to shift judge's perceptions concerning asylum seekers. These attacks appear to motivate judges to be more stringent while considering asylum cases in a way that the judges did not appear to do when no attack occurs. It is also possible that empirical studies can help policy makers know how to direct resources to limit psychological biases in the immigration system, and further research should explore this area. Such policies may eventually help improve the flow of remittances from developed to developing countries over time; another topic worthy of further discussion.

8 References

1. Alesina, A. and E. La Ferrara (2014). "A Test of Racial Bias in Capital Sentencing." *American Economic Review*, 104(11): 3397–3433.

2. Alesina, A., A. Minao and S. Stantcheva (2018). Immigration and Redistribution. NBER Working Paper 24733.

3. Alexander, M. (2010). *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblind-*

ness. New Press, New York.

4. Amuedo-Dorantes, Catalina, Cynthia Bansak and Susan Pozo, (2018). "Refugee Admissions and Public Safety: Are Refugee Settlement Areas More Prone to Crime?" IZA Discussion Paper 11612.

5. Anker, Deborah E., and M. H. Posner (1981). "The Forty Year Crisis: A Legislative History of the Refugee Act of 1980." *The San Diego Law Review,* 9-89.

6. Anwar, Shamena, Patrick Bayer and Randi Hjalmarsson (2012). "The Impact of Jury Race in Criminal Trials." *Quarterly Journal of Economics,* 127(2), 1017–1055.

7. Avdan, Nazli (2014). "Do asylum recognition rates in Europe respond to transnational terrorism? The migration-security nexus revisited." *European Union Politics,* 15(4), 445-471.

8. Arteaga, C. (2018). "The Cost of Bad Parents: Evidence from Incarceration on Children's Education." UCLA Working Paper.

9. Bordalo, Pedro, Katherine Coffman, Nicola Gennaioli, and Andrei Shleifer (2016). "Stereotypes." *Quarterly Journal of Economics,* 131(4), 1753--1794.

10. Brodeur, Abel (2018). "The Effect of Terrorism on Employment and Consumer Sentiment: Evidence from Successful and Failed Terror Attacks." *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics,* forthcoming.

11. Camerer, Colin F. and George Loewenstein. (2004). "Behavioral Economics: Past, Present, and Future," in *Advances in Behavioral Economics.* Colin F. Camerer, George Loewenstein and Matthew Rabin, eds. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

12. Casper, Catharina, Klaus Rothermund and Dirk Wentura (2010). "Automatic Stereotype Activation Is Context Dependent." *Socal Psychology,* 41, 131-136.

13. Chalfin, Aaron (2014). "What is the Contribution of Mexican Immigration to U.S. Crime Rates? Evidence from Rainfall Shocks in Mexico." *American Law and Economics Review*, 16(1): 220-268.

14. Chalfin, Aaron (2015). "The Long -Run Effects of Mexican Immigration on Crime in US Cities: Evidence from Variation in Mexican Fertility Rates " *American Economic Review,* 105(5): 220-225.

15. Chinn, Aimee and Kalena Cortes (2014). "The Refugee/Asylum Seeker" , in *Handbook of the Economics of International Migration, Volume 1A The Immigrants*, Barry Chiswick and Paul Miller (eds.), Amsterdam: Elsevier.

16. Clemens, Michael, Ethan G. Lewis and Hannah M. Postel (2018). "Immigration Restrictions as Active Labor Market Policy: Evidence from the Mexican Bracero Exclusion, *American Economic Review,* 108(6), 1468-1487.

17. Danziger, Shai Jonathan Levav, and Liora Avnaim-Pesso (2011) "Extraneous factors in judicial decisions." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 108 (17) 6889-6892.

18. Dreher, A, D Meierrieks, and T Krieger (2011), "Hit and (They Will) Run: The Impact of Terrorism on Migration", *Economics Letters* 113(1): 42-46.

19. Dreher, A, P Schaudt and M Gassebner (2017), "The Effect of Migration on Terror-Made at Home or Imported from Abroad?", CEPR Discussion Paper No. 12062.

20. Eberhardt, J. L., P. A. Goff, V. J. Purdie, and P. G. Davies (2004). Seeing Black: Race, Crime, and Visual Processing. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 87 (6), 876–893.

21. Elie Murard and Seyhun Orcan Sakalli (2018). "Mass Refugee Inflow and Long-Run Prosperity: Lessons from the Greek Population Resettlement." IZA Discussion Paper No. 11613.

22. Global Terrorism Database, (2017). National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). Global Terrorism Database. Retrieved from http://www.start.umd.edu/gtd

23. Heyes, A, and S. Saberian (2018). "Temperature and Decisions: Evidence from 207,000 Court Cases." *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics (2018).*

24. Jetter, Michael (2017). "The effect of media attention on terrorism." *Journal of Public Economics*, 153, 32-48.

25. Jolls, Christine, Cass R. Sunstein, and Richard Thaler (1998). "A behavioral approach to law and economics." *Stanford Law Review*, 1471-1550.

26. Kahneman, Daniel, and Amos Tversky. (1972). "Subjective Probability: A Judgment of Representativeness." *Cognitive Psychology,* 3(3), 430 – 454

27. Kidane, W. (2008). "The Terrorism Exception to Asylum: Managing the Uncertainty in Status Determination." *University of Michigan Journal of Law Reform,* 41(3), 669-714.

28. Kleinberg, J. Lakkaraju, H. Leskovec, J. Ludwig, J. and S. Mullainathan. (2018). *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, forthcoming.

29. Knepper, Matthew (2018). "When the Shadow Is the Substance: Judge Gender and the Outcomes of Workplace Sex Discrimination Cases." *Journal of Labor Economics*, 36(3), 623-664.

30. Kunst, Jonas R., Lisa S. Myhren and Ivuoma N. Onyeador (2018). "Simply Insane? Attributing Terrorism to Mental Illness (Versus Ideology) Affects Mental Representations of Race." Criminal Justice and Behavior, https://doi.org/10.1177/0093854818794742.

31. Li, Y. (2017). *Exclusion from Protection as a Refugee: An Approach to a Harmonizing Interpretation in International Law* (International refugee series, Vol. 9, Brill, 2017)

32. Martin, Susan and Philip Martin, (2004), "International Migration and Terrorism: Prevention, Prosecution and Protection." *Georgetown Immigration Law Journal* 18, 2: 329- 344.

33. Miller, Andrea L. (2018). "Expertise Fails to Attenuate Gendered Biases in Judicial Decision-Making." *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1948550617741181.

34. Murray, Joseph, and David P. Farrington. (2008). "The effects of parental imprisonment on children." *Crime and Justice* 37(1), 133-206.

35. Niskanen Center (2017). "What Americans Think About Refugees is More Complicated Than You Think."
Retrieved from https://niskanencenter.org/blog/americans-attitudes-refugees/.

36. New American Foundation (2018). "Terrorism in America After 9/11 Part II. Who are the Terrorists?" New American Foundation International Security Program Report. https://bit.ly/2keSmUO

37. NOLO (2018). "Can I Be Deported Before Filing Appeal on a Denied Asylum Case?" Retrieved from https://bit.ly/2KIAQkR.

38. Nowrasteh, Alex (2018). "Criminal Immigrants in Texas." CATO Institute Immigration Research and Policy Brief. http://tiny.cc/iykixy

39. Opoku-Agyemang, Kweku (2017). "Narcissism Over Ideology: Revealed versus Stated Terrorist Preferences." University of California, Berkeley Working Paper.

40. Shayo, Moses and Asaf Zussman (2011). "Judicial Ingroup Bias in the Shadow of Terrorism." *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 126(3), 1447–1484,

41. Steffensmeier, D., J. Ulmer, and J. Kramer (1998). The Interaction of Race, Gender, and Age in Criminal Sentencing: The Punishment Cost of Being Young, Black, and Male. *Criminology* 36 (4), 763–798

42. Transactional Records Access Clearinghouse (2018a). “New Deportation Proceedings Filed in Immigration Court by Nationality, State, Court, Hearing Location, Year and Type of Charge.” Retrieved from https://bit.ly/OisIdf.

43. Transactional Records Access Clearinghouse (2018b). “About the Data.” Retrieved from https://bit.ly/2iWfyqJ.

44. UNHCR (2017). “Forced displacement at record 68.5 million.” Retrieved from https://bit.ly/2LxIijY.

45. United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (2018).”Types of Asylum Decisions.” Retrieved from https://bit.ly/2r6Xeun.

46. Washington Post (2018). “Seeking asylum isn’t a crime. Why do Trump and Sessions act like it is?” Retrieved from https://wapo.st/2mxJyc9.

Figures

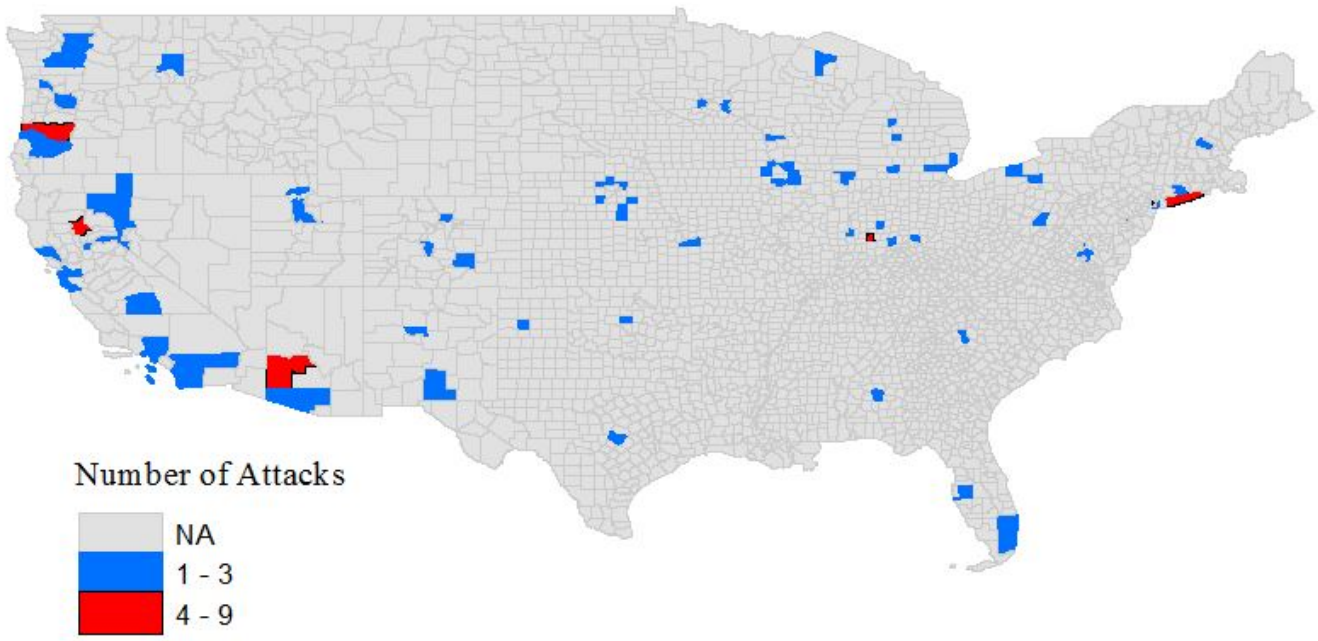

Figure 1: Terrorist Attacks in US Counties (2000-2004)

Note: Based on data from Global Terrorism Database, 2017

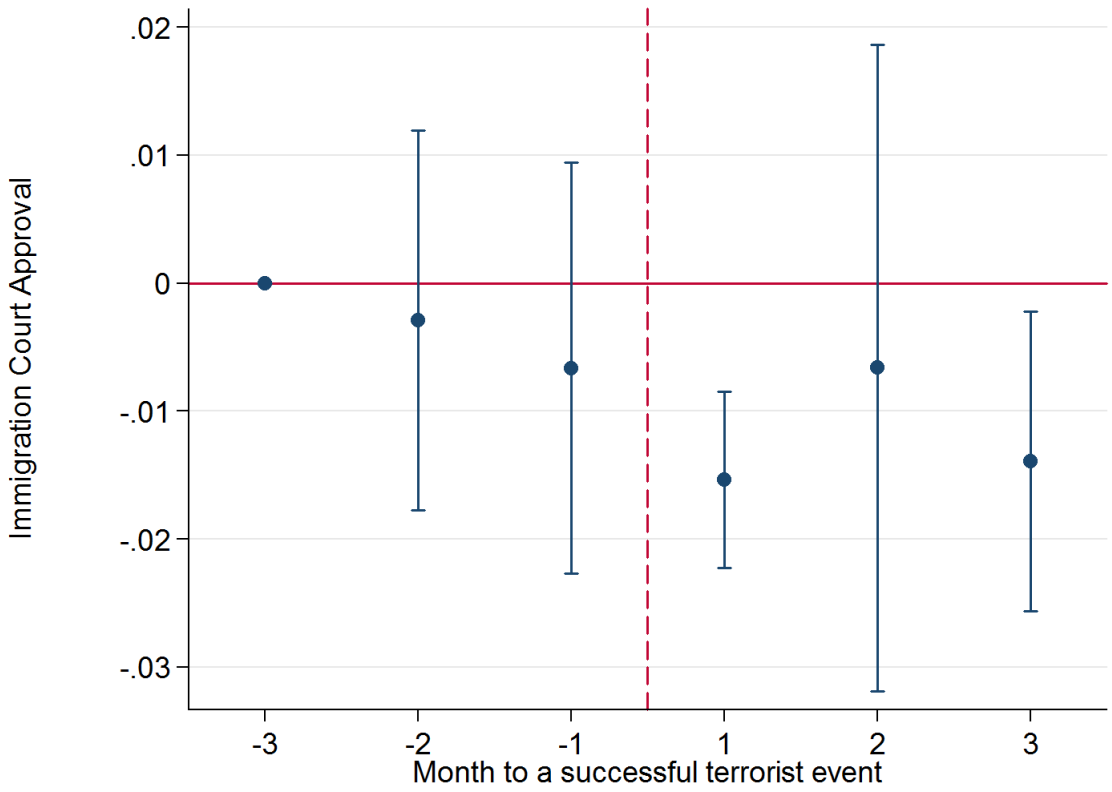

Figure 2: Successful Terrorist Attacks and Immigration Court Decisions

This figure plots the estimated coefficients and 95% confidence intervals for time dummies at monthly (30 day) intervals 3 months before the attack and 3 months after a successful attack. The coefficient of the third month (90 days) before the attack is normalized to zero. Months are defined as 30 day intervals from the day of attack. Day of the attack is excluded from the analysis. The coefficients are estimated from a regression where we control for county and year fixed effects; as well as fixed effects for applicants nationality, judge, and type of asylum. Confidence intervals are based on robust standard errors clustered by county level.

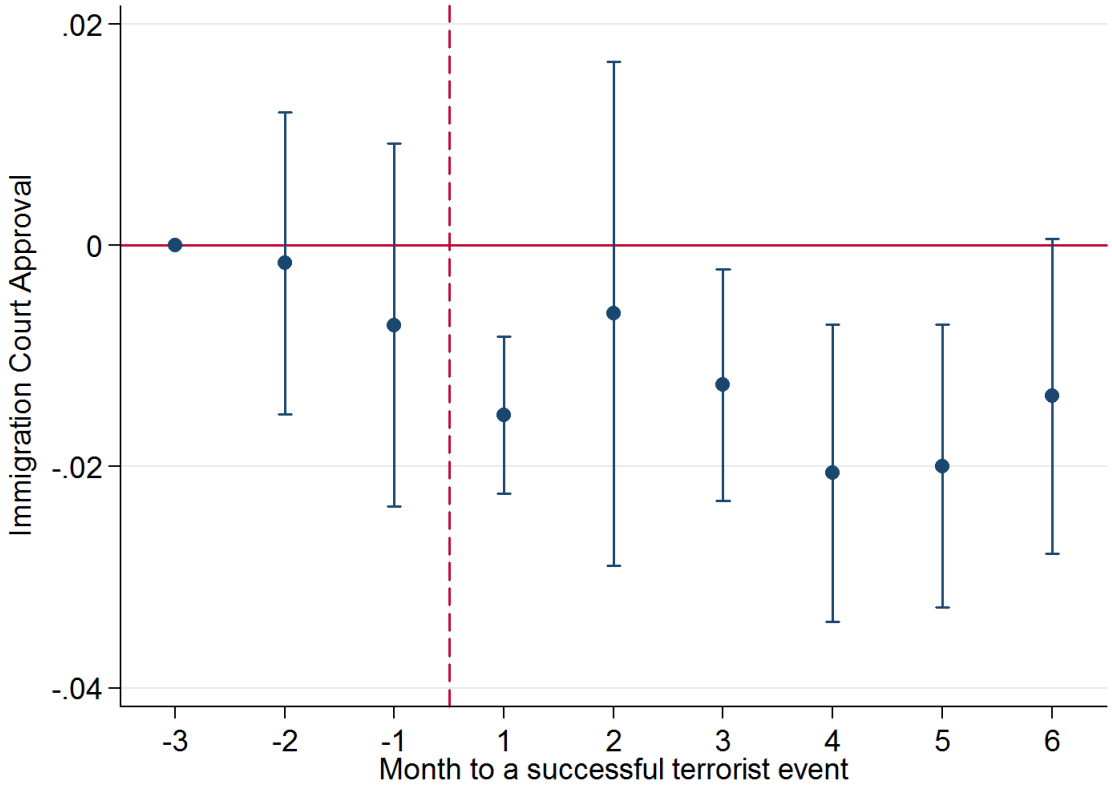

Figure 3: Successful Terrorist Attacks and Immigration Court Decisions

This figure plots the estimated coefficients and 95% confidence intervals for time dummies at monthly intervals 3 months before the attack and 6 months after a successful attack. The coefficient of the third month (90 days) before the attack is normalized to zero. Months are defined as 30 day intervals from the day of attack. Day of the attack is excluded from the analysis. Day of the attack is excluded from the analysis. The coefficients are estimated from a regression where we control for county and year fixed effects; as well as fixed effects for applicants nationality, judge, and type of asylum. Confidence intervals are based on robust standard errors clustered by county level.

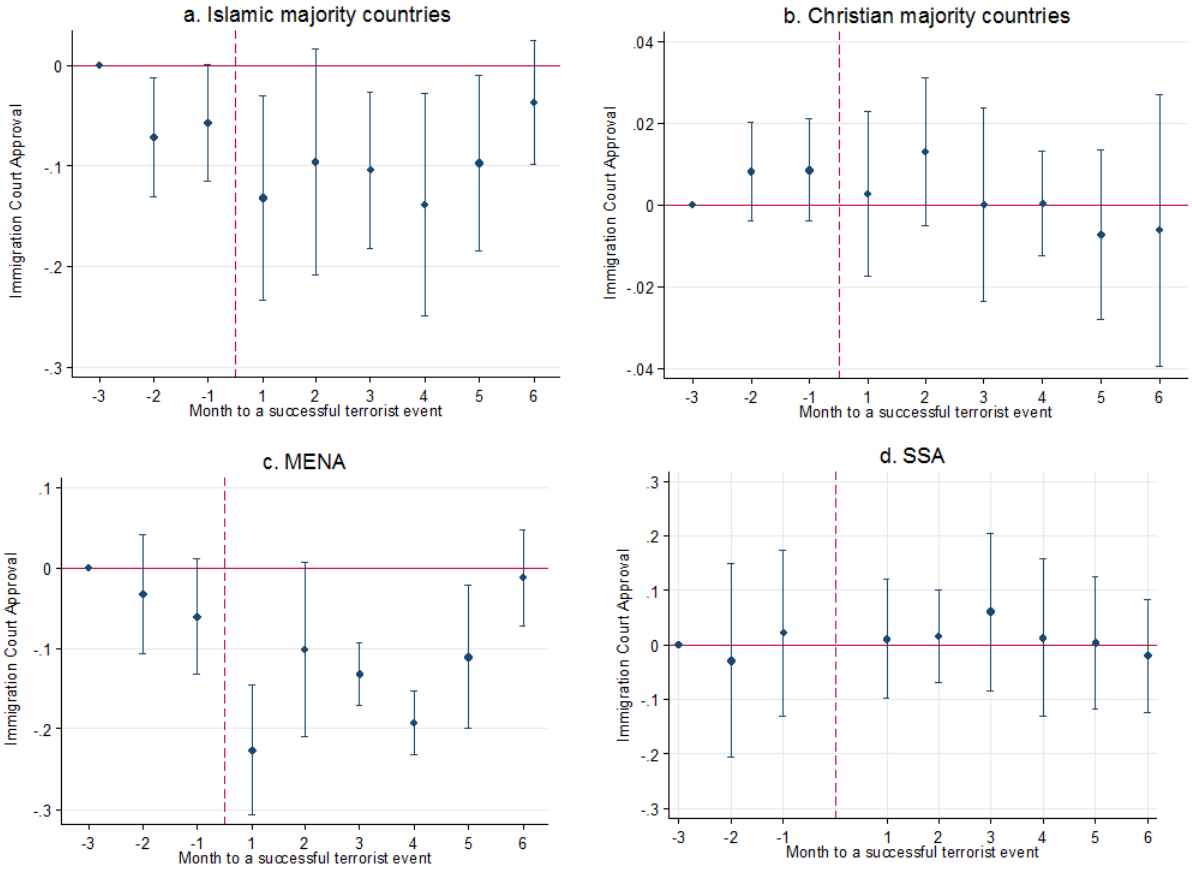

Figure 4: Successful Terrorist Attacks and Immigration Court Decisions by Nationality of Applicant

This figure plots the estimated coefficients and 95% confidence intervals for time dummies at monthly intervals 3 months before the attack and 6 months after a successful attack. The coefficient of the third month (90 days) before the attack is normalized to zero. Months are defined as 30 day intervals from the day of attack. Day of the attack is excluded from the analysis. The coefficients are estimated from a regression where we control for county and year fixed effects; as well as fixed effects for applicants nationality, judge, and type of asylum. Confidence intervals in panels a-b and c-d are based on robust standard errors clustered by county and county-year levels respectively. MENA refers to countries in Middle-East and North Africa; SSA refers to countries in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Tables

Table 1: Balance in Covariates: Three Months Before and After

	Panel		
	A	B	
	PostTerror	*PostSuccess*	Obs
Application type	-0.0155	0.00221	27488
	(0.0206)	(0.0152)	
Female	0.0101	0.0154**	27524
	(0.0102)	(0.00628)	
MENA	-0.0124	-0.0105	27524
	(0.0187)	(0.0156)	
SSA	-0.000645	0.000845	27524
	(0.0126)	(0.0126)	
Christian Maj. Country	-0.00653	-0.00508	27524
	(0.00558)	(0.00578)	
Islamic Maj. Country	-0.000302	0.00533	27524
	(0.00807)	(0.00674)	

Notes: Each panel represents the point estimates and standard errors of six (6) regressions on PostSuccess (Panel A) and PostTerror(Panel B). PostTerror takes the value 1 if the case was adjudicated within three (3) months after any (successful/unsuccessful) terrorist activity in the county and 0 if otherwise. PostSuccess takes the value 1 if the case was adjudicated within three (3) months after a successful terrorist activity in the county and 0 if otherwise. Asylum type is a dummy equal to 1 for asylum type I and 0 if otherwise. Female is a dummy equal 1 if the judge is female and 0 if male. MENA is a dummy equal to 1 if the applicant's country of origin is a Middle-East or North African country. SSA is is a dummy equal to 1 if the applicant's country of origin is in Sub-Saharan Africa. Christian Maj. Country is a dummy equal to 1 if the applicant's country of origin is a Christian majority country, while Islamic Maj. Country is a dummy equal to 1 if the applicant's country of origin is a Muslim majority country. All regressions control for county fixed effect to ensure that the covariate balance test is done between cases adjudicated in the same county. All columns are estimated using OLS. Robust standard errors clustered by county in parenthesis.

* Significant at 10 percent level

** Significant at 5 percent level

*** Significant at 1 percent level

Table 2: Summary Statistics: Baseline Sample

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Asylum Approval	0.128	0.3	0	1
Female (judge)	0.363	0.481	0	1
PostSuccess	0.402	0.5	0	1
PostTerror	0.569	0.5	0	1
Temperature (°F)	57.051	16.0	-4.9	85.6
Air pressure (pa)	29.791	0.4	25.5	30.6
Dew point (F)	49.897	17.6	-13.3	77.7
Precipitation (mm)	0.002	0.01	0	0.2
Wind speed (km/h)	3.683	3.04	0	22.3
Sky cover (%)	58.133	26.2	0	100

Table 3: Successful Terrorist Activities and Immigration Court Decisions

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
PostSuccess	-0.0079**	-0.0100**	-0.0104**	-0.0107**
	(0.0035)	(0.0040)	(0.0044)	(0.0043)
Weather Ctrls	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Nationality ×Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Judge FE	Yes	Yes	No	No
Application Type FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
County FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mean Dep. Var	0.1157	0.1165	0.1166	0.1171
R-squared	0.2525	0.2561	0.1801	0.1797
Obs	19752	17959	17963	17990

Notes: Dependent variables is a dummy equal to one if the asylum application was granted and zero if otherwise. *PostSuccess* takes value 1 if the case was adjudicated after a successful terrorist activity in the county. Weather controls precipitation, temperature, air pressure, cloud cover, wind speed, and dew point measured as the 6 AM to 4 PM averages in the city in which the case is adjudicated, on the day of the adjudication. All estimations is based on a sample of cases adjudicated within three (3) months before and after a successful terrorist activity. Cases adjudicated on terror days are excluded. All columns are estimated using OLS. Robust standard errors clustered by county in parenthesis.
* Significant at 10 percent level
** Significant at 5 percent level
*** Significant at 1 percent level

Table 4: Successful Terrorist Activities and Immigration Court Decisions

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
PostSuccess	-0.0314**	-0.0289*	-0.0365**	-0.0366**
	(0.0108)	(0.0151)	(0.0149)	(0.0147)
PostTerror	0.0239**	0.0198	0.0267	0.0265
	(0.0108)	(0.0150)	(0.0152)	(0.0151)
Weather Ctrls	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Nationality ×Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Judge FE	Yes	Yes	No	No
Application Type FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
County FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mean Dep. Var	0.127	0.128	0.128	0.129
R-squared	0.246	0.249	0.182	0.182
Obs	27380	24863	24868	24900

Notes: Dependent variables is a dummy equal to one if the asylum application was granted and zero if otherwise. PostSuccess takes value 1 if the case was adjudicated after a successful terrorist activity in the county and 0 if otherwise. PostTerror takes value 1 if the case was adjudicated after any terrorist activity in the county and 0 if otherwise. Weather controls precipitation, temperature, air pressure, cloud cover, wind speed, and dew point measured as the 6 AM to 4 PM averages in the city in which the case is adjudicated, on the day of the adjudication. All estimations is based on a sample of cases adjudicated within three (3) months before and after a successful terrorist activity. Cases adjudicated on terror days are excluded. All columns are estimated using OLS. Robust standard errors clustered by county in parenthesis. * Significant at 10 percent level
** Significant at 5 percent level
*** Significant at 1 percent level

Table 5: Successful Terrorist Activities and Immigration Court Decisions

	Sample							
	3 months before and 6 months after				12 months before and after			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
PostSuccess	-0.0106**	-0.0133**	-0.0119**	-0.0119**	-0.0071*	-0.0080*	-0.0080*	-0.0078*
	(0.0034)	(0.0043)	(0.0048)	(0.0042)	(0.0039)	(0.0039)	(0.0036)	(0.0036)
Weather Ctrls	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Nationality ×Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Judge FE	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No
Application Type FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
County FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mean Dep. Var	0.1121	0.1131	0.1131	0.1135	0.1127	0.1131	0.1131	0.1134
R-squared	0.2411	0.2452	0.1711	0.1711	0.2124	0.2126	0.1531	0.1529
Obs	30329	28061	28067	28104	71186	65030	65036	65097

Notes: Dependent variables is a dummy equal to one if the asylum application was granted and zero if otherwise. *PostSuccess* takes value 1 if the case was adjudicated after a successful terrorist activity in the county. Weather controls precipitation, temperature, air pressure, cloud cover, wind speed, and dew point measured as the 6 AM to 4 PM averages in the city in which the case is adjudicated, on the day of the adjudication. All estimations is based on a sample of cases adjudicated within three (3) months before and after a successful terrorist activity. Cases adjudicated on terror days are excluded. All columns are estimated using OLS. Robust standard errors clustered by county in parenthesis.

* Significant at 10 percent level

** Significant at 5 percent level

*** Significant at 1 percent level

Table 6: Successful Terrorist Activities and Immigration Court Decisions

	Sample							
	3 months before and 6 months after				12 months before and after			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
PostSuccess	-0.0261*	-0.0186	-0.0237*	-0.0231*	-0.00428	0.00161	0.000757	0.00334
	(0.0126)	(0.0110)	(0.0119)	(0.0120)	(0.0173)	(0.0130)	(0.0156)	(0.0147)
PostTerror	0.0191	0.00989	0.0143	0.0138	-0.00495	-0.0113	-0.0112	-0.0138
	(0.0120)	(0.00966)	(0.0119)	(0.0122)	(0.0196)	(0.0155)	(0.0191)	(0.0185)
Weather Ctrls	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Nationality×Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Judge FE	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No
Application Type FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
County FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mean Dep. Var	0.130	0.131	0.131	0.131	0.138	0.138	0.138	0.138
R-squared	0.230	0.233	0.170	0.170	0.208	0.211	0.154	0.153
Obs	50822	46787	46791	46839	101069	92576	92580	92666

Notes: Dependent variables is a dummy equal to one if the asylum application was granted and zero if otherwise. PostSuccess takes value 1 if the case was adjudicated after a successful terrorist activity in the county. Weather controls precipitation, temperature, air pressure, cloud cover, wind speed, and dew point measured as the 6 AM to 4 PM averages in the city in which the case is adjudicated, on the day of the adjudication. Columns 1-4 are estimated using a subsample of cases adjudicated within three (3) months before and 6 months after a successful terrorist activity. All columns are estimated using OLS. Robust standard errors clustered by county in parenthesis.

* Significant at 10 percent level

** Significant at 5 percent level

*** Significant at 1 percent level

Table 7: Successful Terrorist Activities and Parole

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
PostSuccess	0.0591	0.0637	0.0479	0.0468*
	(0.0352)	(0.0400)	(0.0743)	(0.0249)
Weather Ctrls	No	Yes	Yes	No
County FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Panel FE	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Chair FE	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Hearing Type FE	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Mean Dep. Var	0.167	0.167	0.163	0.167
R-squared	0.233	0.242	0.0370	0.233
Obs	702	702	718	702

Notes: Dependent variables is a dummy equal to one if the parole was granted and zero if otherwise. PostSuccess takes value 1 if the parole hearing was undertaken after a successful terrorist activity in the county. Weather controls precipitation, temperature, air presure, cloud cover, wind speed, and dew point measured as the 6 AM to 4 PM averages in the city in which the case is adjudicated, on the day of the adjudication. The regression includes commissions chair, other members of the panel, and type of parole application. All estimations is based on a sample of cases adjudicated three months before and after a successful terrorist activity. Sample consist of all parole hearings conducted by the Board of Parole Hearing (BPH) in California within a 3 months window before and after a successful terrorist, during the period 13th August 2013 and 18th December 2015. All columns are estimated using OLS. Robust standard errors clustered by county-year in parenthesis.
* Significant at 10 percent level
** Significant at 5 percent level
*** Significant at 1 percent level

Table 8: Heterogeneous impact

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
PostSuccess	-0.00460	-0.00500	-0.00693	-0.00411	-0.00341	-0.00394
	(0.0106)	(0.00627)	(0.00483)	(0.00444)	(0.00379)	(0.00492)
PostSuccess× Islamic Country	-0.0500**	-0.0652***	-0.0756***			
	(0.0182)	(0.0136)	(0.0115)			
PostSuccess× Christian Country	-0.00029	0.00507	0.00679			
	(0.0137)	(0.00895)	(0.0100)			
PostSuccess× MENA				-0.106**	-0.119**	-0.143***
				(0.0459)	(0.0470)	(0.0428)
PostSuccess× SSA				-0.0107	0.000383	-0.0115
				(0.0354)	(0.0308)	(0.0232)
Islamic Country	0.145***	omitted	omitted			
	(0.0105)					
Christian Country	-0.0725**	omitted	omitted			
	(0.0319)					
MENA				0.297***	omitted	omitted
				(0.0293)		
ssa				0.176***	omitted	omitted
				(0.0488)		
Weather Ctrls	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
Nationality×Year FE	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Judge FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Application Type FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
County FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Year FE	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No
Mean Dep. Var	0.116	0.116	0.117	0.116	0.116	0.117
R-squared	0.132	0.253	0.257	0.132	0.254	0.258
Obs	19845	19752	17959	19845	19752	17959

Notes: Dependent variables is a dummy equal to one if the asylum application was granted and zero if otherwise. PostSuccess takes value 1 if the case was adjudicated after a successful terrorist activity in the county. Weather controls precipitation, temperature, air pressure, cloud cover, wind speed, and dew point measured as the 6 AM to 4 PM averages in the city in which the case is adjudicated, on the day of the adjudication. All estimations is based on a sample of cases adjudicated within three (3) months before and after a successful terrorist activity. Cases adjudicated on terror days are excluded. Islamic Country is a dummy equal to 1 if a country has at least 70 percent of its population being Muslims and 0 if otherwise. Christian Country is also a dummy equal to 1 if at least 70 percent of a country's population are Christians and 0 if otherwise. MENA is a dummy variable equal to 1 for countries in Middle-East and North Africa (excluding Israel) and 0 if otherwise. SSA is a dummy variable equal to 1 for countries in Sub-Saharan Africa and 0 if otherwise. All columns are estimated using OLS. Robust standard errors clustered by county in parenthesis.

* Significant at 10 percent level

** Significant at 5 percent level

*** Significant at 1 percent level

Table 9: Terrorism, Media Coverage and Asylum Adjudication

	TV Networks (ABC, NBC & CBS)		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
PostSuccess	-0.0106	-0.00438	-0.00415
	(0.0123)	(0.0107)	(0.0103)
PostSuccess× Terror News in Media (0/1)	-0.000204		
	(0.0153)		
PostSuccess× # Terror News in Media (log)		-0.00492	
		(0.00497)	
PostSuccess× Duration of Terror News in Media (log)			-0.00399
			(0.00351)
Terror News in Media (0/1)	0.164**		
	(0.0615)		
# Terror News in Media (log)		0.0652**	
		(0.0220)	
Duration of Terror News in Media (log)			0.0489**
			(0.0163)
Weather Ctrls	Yes	Yes	Yes
Nationality×Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes
Judge FE	Yes	Yes	Yes
Application Type FE	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mean Dep. Var	0.116	0.116	0.116
R-squared	0.255	0.255	0.255
Obs	17444	17444	17444

Notes: Dependent variables is a dummy equal to one if the asylum application was granted and zero if otherwise. PostSuccess takes value 1 if the case was adjudicated after a successful terrorist activity in the county and 0 if otherwise. PostTerror takes value 1 if the case was adjudicated after any terrorist activity in the county and 0 if otherwise. Weather controls precipitation, temperature, air pressure, cloud cover, wind speed, and dew point measured as the 6 AM to 4 PM averages in the city in which the case is adjudicated, on the day of the adjudication. All estimations is based on a sample of cases adjudicated within three (3) months before and after a successful terrorist activity. Cases adjudicated on terror days are excluded. Terror News in Media (0/1) is a dummy equal to 1 if there was any media coverage of terrorist activity in the year. # Terror News in Media (log) is the natural log of 1 + the number of terrorism news stories in the year.Duration of Terror News in Media (log) is the log of 1+ the total number of minutes devoted to the terrorism related news stories. All columns are estimated using OLS. Robust standard errors clustered by county-year in parenthesis. * Significant at 10 percent level

** Significant at 5 percent level

*** Significant at 1 percent level

Table 10: Gendered Effect of Terrorism on Asylum Adjudication

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
PostSuccess	-0.00998**	-0.00963**	-0.00414	-0.0289*	-0.0290*	-0.0285*
	(0.00400)	(0.00415)	(0.00549)	(0.0151)	(0.0151)	(0.0145)
PostSuccess× female		-0.000995	-0.0198		0.000458	-0.0285**
		(0.00694)	(0.0174)		(0.00642)	(0.0103)
PostTerror				0.0198	0.0198	0.0276*
				(0.0150)	(0.0150)	(0.0154)
female			0.0356			0.0457
			(0.0471)			(0.0261)
Weather Ctrls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Nationality×Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Judge FE	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
Application Type FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
County FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mean Dep. Var	0.117	0.117	0.117	0.128	0.128	0.128
R-squared	0.256	0.256	0.182	0.249	0.249	0.185
Obs	17959	17959	17963	24863	24863	24868

Notes: Dependent variables is a dummy equal to one if the asylum application was granted and zero if otherwise. PostSuccess takes value 1 if the case was adjudicated after a successful terrorist activity in the county and 0 if otherwise. PostTerror takes value 1 if the case was adjudicated after any terrorist activity in the county and 0 if otherwise. Weather controls precipitation, temperature, air pressure, cloud cover, wind speed, and dew point measured as the 6 AM to 4 PM averages in the city in which the case is adjudicated, on the day of the adjudication. All estimations is based on a sample of cases adjudicated within three (3) months before and after a successful terrorist activity. Cases adjudicated on terror days are excluded. All columns are estimated using OLS. Robust standard errors clustered by county in parenthesis. * Significant at 10 percent level
** Significant at 5 percent level
*** Significant at 1 percent level

9 Online Appendix

Figures

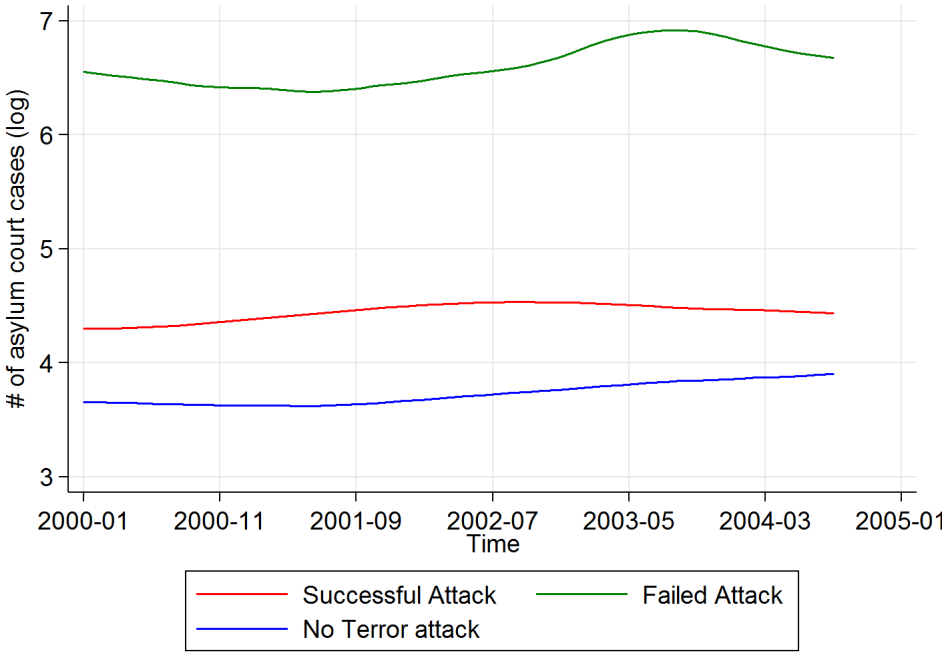

Figure 5: Trends in number of Asylum Adjudications in US Counties (2000-2004) by experience with terrorism.

Note: Graph obtained a kernel-weighted local polynomical smooth regression.

Tables

Table 11: Heterogeneous impact

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
PostSuccess	0.0299	-0.0206	-0.0187	-0.0331**	-0.0280**	-0.0248
	(0.0424)	(0.0129)	(0.0174)	(0.0129)	(0.0111)	(0.0149)
PostSuccess× Islamic Country	-0.103**	-0.0734***	-0.0781***			
	(0.0403)	(0.0130)	(0.00891)			
PostSuccess× Christian Country	-0.0746	-0.00396	-0.00227			
	(0.0620)	(0.0105)	(0.0116)			
PostSuccess× MENA				-0.0788*	-0.0968**	-0.112**
				(0.0373)	(0.0384)	(0.0380)
PostSuccess× SSA				0.0635	0.00921	0.00394
				(0.0499)	(0.0254)	(0.0249)
PostTerror	0.0259**	0.0237**	0.0197	0.0246*	0.0238**	0.0200
	(0.0105)	(0.0109)	(0.0149)	(0.0121)	(0.0109)	(0.0150)
Islamic Country	0.197***	omitted	omitted			
	(0.0350)					
Christian Country	0.00242	omitted	omitted			
	(0.0701)					
MENA				0.272***	omitted	omitted
				(0.0260)		
SSA				0.0969**	omitted	omitted
				(0.0420)		
Weather Ctrls	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
Nationality×Year FE	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Judge FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Asylum Type FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
County FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Year FE	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No
Mean Dep. Var	0.127	0.127	0.128	0.127	0.127	0.128
R-squared	0.124	0.246	0.250	0.115	0.246	0.249
Obs	27479	27380	24863	27479	27380	24863

Notes: Dependent variables is a dummy equal to one if the asylum application was granted and zero if otherwise. PostSuccess takes value 1 if the case was adjudicated after a successful terrorist activity in the county and zero if otherwise. PostTerror is takes value 1 if the case was adjudicated after a any terrorist activity in the county and zero if otherwise. Weather controls precipitation, temperature, air pressure, cloud cover, wind speed, and dew point measured as the 6 AM to 4 PM averages in the city in which the case is adjudicated, on the day of the adjudication. All estimations is based on a sample of cases adjudicated within three (3) months before and after a successful terrorist activity. Cases adjudicated on terror days are excluded. Islamic Country is a dummy equal to 1 if a country has at least 70 percent of its population being Muslims and 0 if otherwise. Christian Country is also a dummy equal to 1 if at least 70 percent of a country's population are Christians and 0 if otherwise. MENA is a dummy variable equal to 1 for countries in Middle-East and North Africa (excluding Israel) and 0 if otherwise. SSA is a dummy variable equal to 1 for countries in Sub-Saharan Africa and 0 if otherwise. All columns are estimated using OLS. Robust standard errors clustered by county in parenthesis.

* Significant at 10 percent level

** Significant at 5 percent level

*** Significant at 1 percent level

Table 12: Terrorism, Media Coverage and Asylum Adjudication

	TV Network: ABC		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
PostSuccess	-0.00486	-0.00486	-0.00486
	(0.00714)	(0.00714)	(0.00714)
PostSuccess× Terror News in Media (0/1)	-0.0173*		
	(0.00819)		
PostSuccess× # Terror News in Media (log)		-0.00965*	
		(0.00457)	
PostSuccess× Duration of Terror News in Media (log)			-0.00677*
			(0.00321)
Terror News in Media (0/1)	0.175**		
	(0.0565)		
# Terror News in Media (log)		0.0976**	
		(0.0316)	
Duration of Terror News in Media (log)			0.0685**
			(0.0222)
Weather Ctrls	Yes	Yes	Yes
Nationality×Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes
Judge FE	Yes	Yes	Yes
Application Type FE	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mean Dep. Var	0.116	0.116	0.116
R-squared	0.255	0.255	0.255
Obs	17444	17444	17444

Notes: Dependent variables is a dummy equal to one if the asylum application was granted and zero if otherwise. PostSuccess takes value 1 if the case was adjudicated after a successful terrorist activity in the county and 0 if otherwise. PostTerror takes value 1 if the case was adjudicated after any terrorist activity in the county and 0 if otherwise. Weather controls precipitation, temperature, air pressure, cloud cover, wind speed, and dew point measured as the 6 AM to 4 PM averages in the city in which the case is adjudicated, on the day of the adjudication. All estimations is based on a sample of cases adjudicated within three (3) months before and after a successful terrorist activity. Cases adjudicated on terror days are excluded. Terror News in Media (0/1) is a dummy equal to 1 if there was any media coverage of terrorist activity in the year. # Terror News in Media (log) is the natural log of 1 + the number of terrorism news stories in the year.Duration of Terror News in Media (log) is the log of 1+ the total number of minutes devoted to the terrorism related news stories. All columns are estimated using OLS. Robust standard errors clustered by county-year in parenthesis. * Significant at 10 percent level

** Significant at 5 percent level

*** Significant at 1 percent level

Table 13: Terrorism, Media Coverage and Asylum Adjudication

	TV Network: NBC		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
PostSuccess	-0.0106	-0.00446	-0.00446
	(0.0123)	(0.0108)	(0.0109)
PostSuccess× Terror News in Media (0/1)	-0.000204		
	(0.0153)		
PostSuccess× # Terror News in Media (log)		-0.00790	
		(0.00825)	
PostSuccess× Duration of Terror News in Media (log)			-0.00478
			(0.00503)
Terror News in Media (0/1)	0.164**		
	(0.0615)		
# Terror News in Media (log)		0.107**	
		(0.0361)	
Duration of Terror News in Media (log)			0.0648**
			(0.0219)
Weather Ctrls	Yes	Yes	Yes
Nationality×Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes
Judge FE	Yes	Yes	Yes
Application Type FE	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mean Dep. Var	0.116	0.116	0.116
R-squared	0.255	0.255	0.255
Obs	17444	17444	17444

Notes: Dependent variables is a dummy equal to one if the asylum application was granted and zero if otherwise. PostSuccess takes value 1 if the case was adjudicated after a successful terrorist activity in the county and 0 if otherwise. PostTerror takes value 1 if the case was adjudicated after any terrorist activity in the county and 0 if otherwise. Weather controls precipitation, temperature, air pressure, cloud cover, wind speed, and dew point measured as the 6 AM to 4 PM averages in the city in which the case is adjudicated, on the day of the adjudication. All estimations is based on a sample of cases adjudicated within three (3) months before and after a successful terrorist activity. Cases adjudicated on terror days are excluded. Terror News in Media (0/1) is a dummy equal to 1 if there was any media coverage of terrorist activity in the year. # Terror News in Media (log) is the natural log of 1 + the number of terrorism news stories in the year.Duration of Terror News in Media (log) is the log of 1+ the total number of minutes devoted to the terrorism related news stories. All columns are estimated using OLS. Robust standard errors clustered by county-year in parenthesis. * Significant at 10 percent level

** Significant at 5 percent level

*** Significant at 1 percent level

Table 14: Terrorism, Media Coverage and Asylum Adjudication

	TV Network: CBS		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
PostSuccess	-0.0106	-0.00446	-0.00428
	(0.0123)	(0.0108)	(0.00829)
PostSuccess× Terror News in Media (0/1)	-0.000204		
	(0.0153)		
PostSuccess× # Terror News in Media (log)		-0.00790	
		(0.00825)	
PostSuccess× Duration of Terror News in Media (log)			-0.00754
			(0.00436)
Terror News in Media (0/1)	0.164**		
	(0.0615)		
# Terror News in Media (log)		0.107**	
		(0.0361)	
Duration of Terror News in Media (log)			0.0787**
			(0.0256)
Weather Ctrls	Yes	Yes	Yes
Nationality×Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes
Judge FE	Yes	Yes	Yes
Application Type FE	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mean Dep. Var	0.116	0.116	0.116
R-squared	0.255	0.255	0.255
Obs	17444	17444	17444

Notes: Dependent variables is a dummy equal to one if the asylum application was granted and zero if otherwise. PostSuccess takes value 1 if the case was adjudicated after a successful terrorist activity in the county and 0 if otherwise. PostTerror takes value 1 if the case was adjudicated after any terrorist activity in the county and 0 if otherwise. Weather controls precipitation, temperature, air pressure, cloud cover, wind speed, and dew point measured as the 6 AM to 4 PM averages in the city in which the case is adjudicated, on the day of the adjudication. All estimations is based on a sample of cases adjudicated within three (3) months before and after a successful terrorist activity. Cases adjudicated on terror days are excluded. Terror News in Media (0/1) is a dummy equal to 1 if there was any media coverage of terrorist activity in the year. # Terror News in Media (log) is the natural log of 1 + the number of terrorism news stories in the year.Duration of Terror News in Media (log) is the log of 1+ the total number of minutes devoted to the terrorism related news stories. All columns are estimated using OLS. Robust standard errors clustered by county-year in parenthesis. * Significant at 10 percent level

** Significant at 5 percent level

*** Significant at 1 percent level

Table 15: Successful Terrorist Activities in the State and Immigration Court Decisions

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
PostSuccess	0.00983	0.00818	0.00784	0.00773
	(0.00839)	(0.00788)	(0.00716)	(0.00712)
Weather Ctrls	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Nationality×Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Judge FE	Yes	Yes	No	No
Application Type FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
State FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mean Dep. Var	0.145	0.146	0.146	0.146
R-squared	0.210	0.212	0.154	0.152
Obs	44866	41980	41984	42026

Notes: Dependent variables is a dummy equal to one if the asylum application was granted and zero if otherwise. PostSuccess takes value 1 if the case was adjudicated after a successful terrorist activity in the county. Weather controls precipitation, temperature, air pressure, cloud cover, wind speed, and dew point measured as the 6 AM to 4 PM averages in the city in which the case is adjudicated, on the day of the adjudication. All estimations is based on a sample of cases adjudicated within three (3) months before and after a successful terrorist activity. Cases adjudicated on terror days are excluded. All columns are estimated using OLS. Robust standard errors clustered by county in parenthesis.

* Significant at 10 percent level

** Significant at 5 percent level

*** Significant at 1 percent level

Table 16: Successful Terrorist Activities at State Level and Immigration Court Decisions

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
PostSuccess	0.0165	0.0166	0.0166	0.0166
	(0.0120)	(0.0119)	(0.0119)	(0.0119)
PostTerror	-0.00600	-0.00860	-0.00860	-0.00860
	(0.0120)	(0.0111)	(0.0111)	(0.0111)
Weather Ctrls	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Nationality×Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Judge FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Application Type FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
State FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mean Dep. Var	0.145	0.146	0.146	0.146
R-squared	0.204	0.205	0.205	0.205
Obs	50313	46561	46561	46561

Notes: Dependent variables is a dummy equal to one if the asylum application was granted and zero if otherwise. PostSuccess takes value 1 if the case was adjudicated after a successful terrorist activity in the state and 0 if otherwise. PostTerror takes value 1 if the case was adjudicated after any terrorist activity in the state and 0 if otherwise. Weather controls precipitation, temperature, air pressure, cloud cover, wind speed, and dew point measured as the 6 AM to 4 PM averages in the city in which the case is adjudicated, on the day of the adjudication. All estimations is based on a sample of cases adjudicated within three (3) months before and after a successful terrorist activity. Cases adjudicated on terror days are excluded. All columns are estimated using OLS. Robust standard errors clustered by county in parenthesis. * Significant at 10 percent level
** Significant at 5 percent level
*** Significant at 1 percent level