USING A CLEVER DESIGN AND TWITTER DATA, FLORES' RESEARCH REVEALS HOW ANTI-IMMIGRATION LAWS EMBOLDEN THOSE WITH ANTI-IMMIGRANT SENTIMENTS.

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Before a border wall became a budget bargaining chip, before the presidential pardon of a controversial sheriff and before federal policies were announced on social media, there was Arizona Senate Bill 1070, the “show me your papers” law.

And of course, there was Twitter.

To René D. Flores, an assistant professor of sociology at the University of Washington, Twitter is a trove of insight into people’s beliefs and their willingness to express them. By analyzing tweets in the months before and after the 2010 passage of the controversial Arizona law, Flores found that the average tweet about Mexican immigrants and Hispanics, in general, became more negative. Social media data, Flores found, was useful in determining whether people had changed their attitudes about immigrants as a result of the law or whether they had begun behaving differently.

Read the full UW news story about this research.

People Involved: René Flores
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