



also had forced immigration, i.e. slavery, so these aren't the only theoretical positions, just the only persuasive ones.)

2. The supposed socio-cultural problems of migration come from particular numbers of migrants. No one thinks 5,000 migrants a year to a country the size of the UK will fundamentally undermine its customs, laws, institutions and so on. Many people think 5,000,000 migrants per year would. So to be anti-open borders you implicitly *have to* have an estimate of how much migration you think is going to occur. If open borders only led to 5,000 migrants per year, then almost no one would be against it. It is because open borders would be expected to lead to *too much* migration that people oppose it. This doesn't change if it's a question of probability distribution? then migration is opposed because it raises the chances of too much migration occurring to too high a level. Everyone must (at least implicitly) have an expected level of migration to oppose open borders.

3. Any claim that migration should be kept to a particular level, because of the risk of undermining British institutions, implies an assumption about how much damage the marginal immigrant does or will do (reliably or with some probability). One cannot cop out of the question, you need to have an answer. But no one has yet set out good evidence about exactly how much damage to institutions the marginal immigrant does or will do? typically arguments in this area depend on anecdote or things that people feel they "just know". This won't do when the benefits to immigration are so high. We cannot simply assume the cost to our institutions outweighs the other benefits.

I think once these three points have been accepted, there is a lot of room for good empirical work. But until they have, a lot of the migration debate will be unclear, vague, and people will be talking past one another.

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