

Course Syllabus: History 5310: W01: Immigration and Ethnicity in American History/Fall 2014

Dr. Mark Saad Saka/ Sul Ross State University

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Course Objectives:

This course provides the history of immigration and the issues of ethnicity in American history. We will begin with the theoretical approaches to U.S. immigration history and then trace the history of immigration through the early colonial era and the early national experience. We will then focus on the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in two chronological sections and regions; 1800-1876 and the American Northeast and Southwest/West; and 1870-1924 for the American Northeast and Southwest/West. Within these time and spatial constructs we shall examine the forces that encourage emigration (push factors) and immigration (pull factors) as well as the immigrant's role and place in the American economy (agriculture, mining, ranching, industrial manufacturing, etc) and the questions of experiences (assimilation, acculturation, isolation) and established Americans' responses (nativism and xenophobia, active encouragement). We will then examine immigration and ethnicity during the interwar years (1924-1945, the early Cold War era, 1945-1965). The year 1965 represents a critical point in the recent era as restrictions implemented in 1924 were rescinded and a wave of immigration from Asia, the Middle East, and Latin America has ensued. For this phase of American history, we shall continue to examine the experience of immigration through the lens of economy, immigrant's experiences, and established American's responses.

Required Readings:

Gerde, Jon. *Major Problems in American Immigration History*, Second Edition. Wadsworth Publishing, 2013, ISBN # 978-0-547-14907-3

Gonzalez, Juan. *Harvest of Empire: A History of Latinos in America*. Penguin Press, 2000. ISBN # 978-0-14-025539-3.

Guest, Robert. *Borderless Economics: Chinese Sea Turtles, Indians Fridges and the New Fruits of Global Capitalism*. Palgrave Macmillan 2011 ISBN # 978-0230342019

Reimers, David M. *Other Immigrants: The Global Origins of the American People*. NYU Press, 2005. ISBN # 0-8147-7535-7

Roediger, David R. *Working Toward Whiteness: How America's Immigrants Became White*. Basic Books, 2005. ISBN # 978-0-465-07074-9

Course Requirements:

There are a number of requirements for this course.

First, stay in regular contact, with assignments being turned in on time but also if you have any questions or problems.

Second, I will need a current address for you so that when I read and comment on your reviews and papers I can return it to you. If you have taken me before and your address is the same, just let me know that and we are good.

Third, you have weekly assignments, due on Mondays, no later than 5:00 p.m. The reviews are covered in the following section.

Fourth, you must research and write a ten to fifteen research paper on a topic in immigration history. This topic must be approved by me. It should cover an immigrant experience, why they emigrated (push-factors) and what brought them to America (pull factors). Included in this should also include what region of the nation they moved to and why, what economic sector they worked in, what experiences, strengths and hopes they aspired too, and their assimilation or acculturated process, including resistance and nativism (which some groups experienced more harshly-such as the Irish, or the chines in 19th century America).

Course Outline:

Aug. 25-Course Begins

Sept. 1-Review over *Major Problems in American Immigration History*, pages 1-75 due.

Sept. 8-Review over *Major Problems*, pages 77-179 due.

Sept. 15-Review over *Major Problems*, pages 180-311 due

Sept. 22-Review over *Major Problems*, pages 313-405 due

Sept. 29-Review over *Major Problems*, pages 407-482 due.

Oct. 06-Review over *Working Toward Whiteness* due

Oct. 13-Review over *Major Problems*, pages 483-564 due

Oct. 20-Review over *Other Immigrants: the Global Origins of the American People*, pages 1-98 due

Oct. 27-Review over *Other Immigrants*, pages 99-206 due (Also, your paper topics must be chosen by this date)

Nov. 03-Review over *Other Immigrants* pages 207-292 due

Nov. 10-Review over *Harvest of Empire*, pages 1-80 due

Nov. 17-Review over *Harvest of Empire*, pages 81-166 due

Nov. 24-Review over *Harvest of Empire*, pages 167-273 and *Major Problems*, pages 566-609 due

Dec. 01—book review over *Borderless Economics* by Robert guest due.

Dec. 10-final papers due.

Things to Think About for *Major Problems in American Immigration History*

This book is rather complex in that it integrates both secondary articles and essays from major historians of American ethnicity and immigration as well as primary documents pertaining to the era and theme of each section. For your essays/reviews, please write a five to seven page review/essay over each section addressing commonalities and differences in the immigration experience of each group and the era etc. For instance, for chapter one:

Chapter One : What are the differing approaches to American immigration history provided in the six authors in chapter one (Habdlin, Bodnar, Conzen and company, Gabaccia, Sanchez and Jacobson)? What are the strengths and weaknesses of each approach?

For the other fourteen chapters in this text, approach it in a similar fashion.

Things to Think About for *Working Toward Whiteness: How America's Immigrants Became White*

This is a critical book in understanding to concept of “whiteness” and race in American immigration history. Roediger’s first book *The Wages of Whiteness* covered this theme for the nineteenth century and this book *Working Toward Whiteness* covers the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Many immigrants during the nineteenth century were not considered “white”, in particular the Irish. But over time, whiteness would become a badge of identity for immigrant groups that resided along the bottom of the American socio-economic class and status. How this occurs is a major subaltern theme in immigration history. This book picks up in the late nineteenth century as Eastern European immigrants—Italians, Hungarians, Slavs, Poles, Russians, Serbs, Jews, etc. migrated to America and challenged a racial order which relegated these groups to a “non-white status” in the American political economy. Labor restrictions, unions, residential housing etc. all excluded these groups as well as their

children from being accepted into American society as white. This changes however between the 1920s and 1950s. How, Why? That is the theme of this book. How did America's immigrants become "white". What does this notion of white privilege entail and mean?

Things to Think About for *Other Immigrants: The Global Origins of the American People*

This book covers American immigration history from a longitudinal (length of time) and a spatial (globalized) perspective. Forty years ago this book could not have been written in this manner. The melting pot continues. How has the diversity and global origins of America's new immigrants, 1940-present (Mexicans, Central and South Americans, Pacific East and South Asians, new "Blacks" Middle Easterners, and those who come with "refugee status" built upon the American melting pot, 1492-1940 and changed America's ethnic and demographic landscape. What have been some of the common features of this global migration? What have been differing experiences and

Things to think about for *Harvest of Empire: A History of Latinos in America*

1. In part one: "Roots" the author provides critical historical background for comprehending Latino immigration to the United States. In chapter one, Gonzalez examines the history of the Spanish Borderlands, which in many ways posits an entirely different way in which to view American history. Traditionally, we view American history through the prism of the English migrations to the Atlantic Seaboard, and then through westward migration. But Gonzalez, by providing a north-South view incorporates the Spanish presence in the Americas and allows for a broader comprehension of American history; both east-west AND north-South. Do you find this view valuable? Why or why not? In chapter two, Gonzalez examines the United States and Latin America in the context of the nineteenth century; as the newly created American Republic began its westward march under the guise of manifest destiny. These confrontations, territorial acquisitions (Florida, Texas and Mexico), freebooting imperialism (Central America and the Caribbean) laid the groundwork for the American Empire (both territorial and economic) How does this chapter provide you with a background in understanding the term used by Gonzalez in the title "Harvest of Empire". In chapter three, the author carries through the era of the Banana Republics, the American Empire and domination of the Circum-Caribbean from the Spanish American War of 1898, the neo-colonial domination of the Circum-Caribbean, and the origins of migrations to the American mainland. How did American economic penetration, military occupation, and the establishment of military dictatorships (Somoza in Nicaragua, Bautista in Cuba, Trujillo in the Dominican Republic etc.), as well as the colonization of Puerto Rico continue to lay the groundwork for comprehending the mass migration of Latinos in the second half of the 20th century?
2. The second section -- "*Branches*" contains six chapters covering the migration and experiences of Puerto Ricans, Mexicans, Cubans, Dominicans, Central Americans, Panamanians, and Columbians. How did they differ? How were they similar? What are some underlying themes?
3. In the third section -- "*Harvest*" the author examines the impact that Latinos are having on the remaking of American politics, language and education, economics and global trade, and finally,

the question of America's last colonial possession (unless you count Hawaii) , Puerto Rico. How does this section tie in with the broader theme of Harvest of Empire, and how will Latinos reshape the United States in the twenty-first century?

Things to think About for *Borderless Economics*

1. How is immigration creating a new and dynamic element in the process of globalization or the 21st century?
2. How does immigration in an increasingly globalized world make us richer? Provide some examples from the book.
3. What does the author mean by the "curse of isolation"? Why is South Korea wealthier and healthier than North Korea?
4. Why can migrants seem to find economic opportunity where native born citizens often overlook economic opportunity? Who is Cheung Yan?
5. How have immigrant scientists helped transform and new technology sector? What does the author mean by "networks of trusts"?
6. Why do migrants come to America?
7. How does immigration in an era of globalization help America more than other countries?
8. Why will America remain number one? What does the author mean by "America being the hub of the world"?
9. What are some potential policy changes in our immigration policies that will ensure America's future?