

CES 304 / HIST 314
American Roots: Immigration, Migration, and Ethnic Identity
Fall 2010
T / Th 2:50 – 4:05
Todd 204

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Office: Wilson Short Hall 118
Office hours: Tuesday 1:30 – 2:30
Wednesday 1:30 – 3:00
and by appointment

Required Reading

Roger Daniels. *Guarding the Golden Door: American Immigration Policy and Immigrants Since 1882*. New York: Hill and Wang, 2004.

Tram Nguyen. *We Are All Suspects Now: Untold Stories from Immigrant America After 9/11*. Boston: Beacon Press, 2005.

Coursepack available at Cougar copies.

We will also read some handouts and view some Web sites and films. You will be responsible for keeping up with these.

Introduction and Description

According to archivist Aloha South, most visitors to the National Archives in Washington, DC, are not professional scholars but are people curious to investigate their family tree, their genealogy—their roots. After the popular TV miniseries *Roots* aired in the late 1970s, genealogy became a popular preoccupation, and even in our own time at least two TV reality shows have helped celebrities trace their family origins. But *Roots*, based on Alex Haley's book, was no mere visit to a happy family tree; for it told the story of Haley's slave origins. It was a story of institutional racism.

Indigenous people are the only true natives of this country. Everyone else is a product of immigration. Mark Moreno, who taught this course in Summer 2007, wrote in his syllabus, “There are few original populations currently occupying lands that are claimed by nations in the Western Hemisphere.” This is truer in some nations than in others. Concentrations of indigenous populations vary across the nations of the Americas. History explains these differences. For example, while this past spring Arizona’s governor and legislators justified a new immigration law by claiming (falsely, as we will see) that undocumented immigrants terrorize their state with crime, consider that indigenous peoples in North America were routinely massacred by immigrating Europeans, even in sites near the Pacific Northwest—which should cause us to ask who the criminals really are.

Immigration is a contentious issue. But what do people mean by “the immigration problem”? What exactly is that “problem”? The best way to find an answer is to look into history. Immigration happens everywhere in the world; and, though we will focus on the United States, we will learn, early in the semester, a bit about its evolution elsewhere.

One problem with common conceptions is that immigration is not always a one-way, one-step process by which a person leaves a homeland and moves straight to a new home nation. Often the person makes several moves, back and forth, between the originary homeland and the adopted land. Sometimes the person makes several indefinite stops in different lands and nations before settling. Many Cambodian refugees were detained for years in refugee camps in Thailand before moving to other places.

The word “migration” also appears in our course title. We will have time for only brief attention to migrations, but note that they have taken several forms in U.S. history. The most famous migration is the so-called “black migration” of the early twentieth century. But an ambient feature of the U.S.

workforce is migrant labor. How, exactly, do black migrants and migrant farmworkers fit into the history of population movements?

Requirements

Attendance and Participation (10% of course grade)

You must attend every day, arrive on time, and participate. Anything less will result in a reduced grade. After two unexcused absences, each missed class will reduce your course grade by one-fourth of a letter. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of class, so lateness will probably result in an absence for the day. If you are absent, you are responsible for checking on announcements made while you were away.

Come to class prepared to discuss the material. This requires more than simply reading. Think about what you read: Question and challenge it. You can participate in different ways. But you need to make your participation evident to me, so that you may receive credit for it. Participation options include e-mailing me comments or questions prior to class and keeping up with current events. Outside of class, read newspapers, or listen to broadcast news. Better yet, read alternative news sources.

Several times during the semester, in class and without prior notice, I may ask you to respond, in writing, to a question based on the readings, discussions, films, or presentations. Your responses will count toward your participation grade.

Reading Journals (10%)

Notice, in the schedule below, that three Reading Journals are due. Each Journal should be roughly two to three typed pages (550 to 900 words) on our discussions, readings, and films. The first should cover all material assigned through that date. The second should cover all material since the first; and so on.

Midterm Examination (25%)

You will respond, in four to five pages, to an essay question in a take-home midterm examination.

Oral History (10%)

You will submit a short paper (two or three pages) that tells the immigration history of your family or of the family of a close friend. Part of this may take the form of a family tree diagram. Your paper should identify the source of your information, determine the information's reliability and significance, and briefly compare the narrative to narratives of nineteenth-century Asian and twenty-first century Latino immigrants.

Final Project (40%) and Presentation (5%)

By the beginning of the tenth week I will ask you to identify the subject of your Final Project. Near the end of the term you will submit your project. This may be a traditional research paper of five to eight pages—no fewer than five full pages. It must cite your sources in the text, and it must include a bibliography listing all sources you use. Since this is a 400-level class, you must format your paper according to one of the traditional stylesheets: MLA, APA, Chicago, Turabian, etc.

I encourage you to consider an alternative form for this project, such as:

Art (your own engagement with an issue)

Spoken word/Performance

If you use an alternative form, you will also turn in a short (two- to three-page) paper explaining your work. Why did you choose this issue/topic? Where did you find sources of information and ideas? Why did you choose this form to present your material and argument?

Near the end of the term, you will present your final project to the class. This presentation should take eight to ten minutes and include an identification of your topic, your approach, and your sources. The exact nature of your presentation will depend of course on your format. For example, if you create a spoken-word piece, you may perform it or share it in a handout. If you write a research paper, you will discuss your argument and your findings. You may receive extra credit if you augment your presentation with video or audio material, or if you show PowerPoint slides that are not text-heavy.

Whatever form your project takes, do not wait to start it till the last few days before it is due.

Course Policies

Ideally, each class meeting will be a lively, student-directed discussion of our course material. Short of that ideal, I will try to lecture as little as possible, not because lectures are boring or inefficient. In fact, good lectures often provide excellent ways of learning. Rather, I hope we will model a good community, driven by shared concerns and goals even when we disagree. To do well in this class, please note the following guidelines:

Read the assigned material when it is due. *Bring the assigned reading to class.*

Come to class on time.

Do not read newspapers or magazines in class, and turn off cell phones and all other electronic devices, unless you can show that you are using them for note taking.

Do not use class time for sleeping or otherwise disengaging, or you will count as absent.

Name-calling and other signs of disrespect will result in your removal from class. See the Note on Language and Terminology below.

Feel free to disagree, respectfully.

Consider others' views. Reflect on your own social location, your privileges and power.

Learn a historically informed definition of racism, and challenge all racist discourse.

Reflect your grasp of history and social relations by respecting shy and quiet classmates, and by deferring to the experiences of people of color.

Finally, understand and consider the rage of people who are victims of systematic injustice.

James Baldwin wrote that people of color have an obligation to feel rage over this nation's history of racism. If injustice does not fill you with rage, then perhaps you should ask yourself why.

Written graded assignments, including Reading Journals, will not be accepted late for any reason. Nor will they be accepted by e-mail. If you know in advance that you will be unable to attend class when a written assignment is due, let me know in advance and make arrangements for getting the paper to me.

Note on Language and Terminology

The author of our principal text, Roger Daniels, refers to “illegal immigration” and “illegal immigrants.” You might have seen posters and bumper stickers asking how humans can possibly be illegal. Language is an extremely controversial site in social relations, and, as always, the best guide is simply to recognize historical causes of power differentials. (Following this guide, you can understand why people of color can, among themselves, jokingly use terms that, spoken by whites, are racial slurs.) For purposes of this course, we will distinguish between illegal immigration and illegal immigrants. The former is an issue that may be legitimately debated; the latter are persons whose legal status is subject to the whims of popular prejudices and policies. Therefore, though I will not prohibit the term “illegal immigrant,” I will strongly discourage it.

Academic Integrity

See the WSU Student Handbook on Academic Dishonesty. Academic honesty is much easier to achieve than academic dishonesty, if only, whenever you use someone else's information or ideas, you cite that source. This is a legal issue, and is not negotiable. Plagiarism involves misuse of others' published or unpublished work by presenting that work, their intellectual property, as your own. Penalties range from an F on an assignment to an F for the course, even to expulsion from the university.

Students with Disabilities

Reasonable accommodations are available for students with a documented disability. If you have a disability and may need accommodations to fully participate in this class, please visit the Disability Resource Center (DRC). All accommodations MUST be approved through the DRC (Washington

Building, Room 217). Please stop by or call 509-335-3417 to make an appointment with a disability specialist.

Campus Safety Plan/Emergency information

In the interest of campus safety and emergency procedures, please become familiar with the information available on the following websites: <http://safetyplan.wsu.edu> (Campus Safety Plan), <http://oem.wsu.edu/emergencies> (Emergency management web site), <http://alert.wsu.edu> (WSU Alert site).

Assignment Schedule

Note: Texts are listed as Daniels (for *Guarding the Golden Door*) or as Nguyen (for *We Are All Suspects Now*). Assignments are subject to change. You are responsible for keeping up with changes.

Week 1

T, Aug 24: Course introduction and syllabus.
Th, Aug 26: Read Nguyen Foreword and Introduction.

Week 2

T, Aug 31: Read Daniels chapters 1 and 2.
Th, Sept 2: Read Daniels chapter 4.

Week 3

T, Sept 7: Read Daniels chapters 5 and 6.
Th, Sept 9: Read Daniels chapter 7.

Week 4

T, Sept 14: Read Daniels chapter 8. FIRST JOURNAL DUE.
Th, Sept 16: Read Daniels chapter 9.

Week 5

T, Sept 21: Read Daniels chapter 10.
Th, Sept 23: Read Daniels chapter 11.

Week 6

T, Sept 28: Read Daniels chapter 12 and Epilogue.
Th, Sept 30: Read Nguyen chapter 1. SECOND JOURNAL DUE.

Week 7

T, Oct 5: Read Nguyen chapter 2. MIDTERM EXAM ASSIGNED.
Th, Oct 7: Read Nguyen chapter 3.

Week 8

T, Oct 12: Read Nguyen chapter 4. MIDTERM EXAM DUE.
Th, Oct 14: Read Nguyen chapter 5.

Week 9

T, Oct 19: Read Nguyen chapter 6.
Th, Oct 21: Read Nguyen Conclusion and Timeline. ORAL HISTORY DUE.

Week 10

T, Oct 26: Read Coursepack: Hayashi.

Th, Oct 28: Read Coursepack: Haake.

Week 11

T, Nov 2: Read Coursepack: Berlin. THIRD JOURNAL DUE.
Th, Nov 4: FINAL PROJECT PRESENTATIONS BEGIN.

Week 12

T, Nov 9: FINAL PROJECT PRESENTATIONS.
Th, Nov 11: NO CLASS.

Week 13

T, Nov 16: FINAL PROJECT PRESENTATIONS.
Th, Nov 18: FINAL PROJECT PRESENTATIONS.

Week 14

T, Nov 30: FINAL PROJECT PRESENTATIONS.
Th, Dec 2: FINAL PROJECT PRESENTATIONS. FINAL PROJECTS DUE.

Week 15

T, Dec 7: FINAL PROJECT PRESENTATIONS.
Th, Dec 9: Course conclusion.

A few online resources on immigrants' rights (sites active on 6 January 2010)

<http://www.aclu.org/immigrants-rights>

ACLU's basic information on immigrant rights

<http://www.immigrantsolidarity.org/>

Immigrant Solidarity Network site

<http://www.nnirr.org/>

Site of the activist National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights

http://www.racewire.org/archives/2009/12/amid_immigration_crisis_some_relief_for_asylum_seekers.html

An article from *ColorLines* on asylum seekers: the magazine carries other good articles on immigration, accessible through its home page: <http://www.colorlines.com/>

<http://www.commondreams.org/>

Resource with occasional work on immigration

<http://www.dreamactivist.org/>

Information on, and activism on behalf of, the DREAM Act

<http://www.campusprogress.org/issues>

The "issues" page of the Campus Progress Network site

<http://www.nwirp.org/>

Northwest Immigrant Rights Project