

THE BORDER: RACE, POLITICS, AND HEALTH IN MODERN MEXICO

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Lecture: Tuesday & Thursday, 10:30am – 11:45am
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If you cannot make these office hours, please reach out to your TF to schedule an appointment!



Course Description

This course examines how the 1848 creation of the U.S.-Mexico border came to define not just the border region but the relationship between two nations. It is this imagined “in-between” space between and within two countries that will concern the course. In terms of disease prevention both countries have historically worked cooperatively and usually successfully. Yet public health concerns have often been used to justify troubling actions on both sides of the international border; such as the U.S. practice of spraying some border crossers with DDT in the 1950s. The course relies on historical case studies to demonstrate how health, hygiene, and disease policy often take on a different tone and mission when discussing the border. We will also discuss current news such as the consequences of drug cartel violence (more than 100,000 Mexicans killed in one decade) as emergencies with significant public health repercussions and, of course, how Covid-19 impacted and altered policies on our shared border.

***Please note that occasional subject material in lecture and in readings describe death, forced sterilization, and other acts of violence against human beings.**

Course Objectives:

The course is divided into three (3) modules, and each has a concrete objective:

- I. Historical background that situates our course and examines Mexico’s history from the 1830s- 1930s. We cannot fully comprehend twentieth and twenty-first century policies surrounding the border without a good understanding of the policies and ideas birthed in the nineteenth century. To think about these issues critically, we need to understand Mexico’s history.
- II. Case studies pertaining to Mexicans/Mexican- Americans along the border region and in the United States from the 1980s, 1990s, 2000s, and 2020. This section will help to understand how certain decisions or policies affect the health and well-being of people at the border.
- III. Contemporary ethnographies of migrant health in the U.S. This final section illustrates how border policies are not constrained to the border region but rather impact the lives of individuals often far removed from the physical U.S.-Mexico border.

Given our country’s current focus on the U.S.-Mexico border, please be advised that, while unlikely, some weekly topics might be altered slightly (a short reading substituted or added, for example) so we can be conversant with the daily news.

What can I expect to gain from taking GenEd 1089? After this course students will think critically about a region that is often misrepresented as being criminal, corrupt, and populated by “illegals” seeking to cross into our country. In understanding the historical origins of the border, this class shows that without Mexico, specifically without the creation of the 1848 border, there would not be a United States as we understand it today. Most crucially, students will understand how public health and threat of disease have been used as political tools in this region since the nineteenth century.

Attendance: Attendance in lecture and section is mandatory, and participation is essential. I request that everyone be present during class and section.

Students are asked to do their readings before coming to lecture and section and post a question, a two to three sentence reflection, or image that came to mind about the readings on the online discussion board once a week by Monday 11:59 p.m. ET.

Questions should reflect students' engagement with the material and should spark an on-line discussion. Students should feel free to read others' questions to come prepared to discuss ideas in class. The on-line discussion board is also the site for further student discussion and participation. I highly encourage students to share relevant and interesting material there.



How do I find the readings? Go to the Canvas site, open Files, go to Readings Folder.

Course Requirements:

Course readings will be available through the course website. Two books are digitized and available.

Books:

1) De León, Jason. *Land of Open Graves: Living and Dying on the Migrant Trail*. Berkeley: UC Press, 2015. WEEKS 7-8

2) Nazario, Sonia. *Enrique's Journey: The Story of a Boy's Dangerous Odyssey to Reunite with His Mother*. New York: Random House, 2007. WEEK 11 (please note that you will need to read the bulk of this book this week, plan accordingly).

Articles will be posted on Canvas or will be clearly cited so students may download them directly or visit specific websites. **If the article is not posted, please check Hollis before contacting the teaching team.**

Grades & Evaluations:

Weekly discussion board: 10%

Map exercise (Sept 15): 5%

Short critical analysis (October 31): 10%

Brief film analysis (November 7): 10%

Oral history (November 21): 15%

Final project (December 12) 30%

Participation/Lecture and section attendance (Potential quizzes contribute to this grade): 20%

Assignments:

There will be no exams. Grades will be based, as listed above, on four brief assignments, a final project, weekly discussion board, mandatory section attendance, and participation.

All written assignments will be typed, double-spaced, with one-inch margins, Times New Roman 12 font. **All assignment requirements and full descriptions are listed on Canvas.**

Submit written assignments through **Canvas by midnight** on the due date. Your TF will share any specific instructions about preference for submission format. Papers submitted after 12AM will be marked late unless you have a medical note or one from your Resident Dean. Late papers will be marked down by one grade each day (e.g. B+ to B) for the first six days. If papers are more than one week late, students will need to meet with their TF or Professor Soto Laveaga to discuss the situation. Your TF will return papers with comments within one week so that you have time to consider their feedback before proceeding with the next assignment.

Contact Info:

Office Hours:

If you cannot make my office hours, please contact Yaz Alfata (yalfata@fas.harvard.edu) to arrange a meeting. Yaz may ask for your phone number so we can have a phone conversation instead. Most meetings are scheduled in 15-minute intervals.

Emails: I try to respond to e-mails as soon as possible but usually do not respond immediately. If 48 hours have passed and I did not respond, please e-mail me again to make sure I received your initial message.

A note on attendance:

It is expected that students will attend all lectures and sections and participate fully in each. This means staying up to date with the readings, assignments, and making sure to check in with your TF one-on-one at least once per semester.

Course Policies:

Discussion section:

A required section meeting will be held weekly. Students will have the opportunity to discuss general and module readings more deeply, to think about the reading's relevance and applicability in their projects, and to discuss and review the progress of their work. Sections do not repeat lecture material, rather they introduce new ideas for discussion.

Academic Integrity and Collaboration:

Discussion and the exchange of ideas are essential to academic work. For the writing assignments in this course, you are encouraged to consult with your classmates on the choice of topic and for advice about picking useful sources. However, you should ensure that any written work which you submit for evaluation is the result of your own research and writing (and your writing alone), and that it reflects your own approach to the topic. You must also adhere to standard citation practices in this discipline and properly cite any books, articles, websites, lectures, etc., that have helped you with your work. You should also acknowledge anyone who provided substantial help with your research or writing (e.g., feedback on drafts from colleagues, etc.). For help with citation usage and formatting, please consult the Harvard Guide to Using Sources, which is used in Freshman Expos and which can be found online at:

<http://usingsources.fas.harvard.edu>

Honor Code:

Students are expected to adhere to the values and practices of the Harvard College Honor Code in all of their work: "Members of the Harvard College community commit themselves to producing academic work of integrity – that is, work that adheres to the scholarly and intellectual standards of accurate attribution of sources, appropriate collection and use of data, and transparent acknowledgement of the contribution of others to their ideas, discoveries, interpretations, and conclusions. Cheating on exams or problem sets, plagiarizing or misrepresenting the ideas or language of someone else as one's own, falsifying data, or any other instance of academic dishonesty violates the standards of our community, as well as the standards of the wider world of learning and affairs."

Accommodations:

Any student needing academic adjustments or accommodations is requested to present their letter from the [Accessible Education Office \(AEO\)](#) and speak with the professor by the end of the second week of the term. Failure to do so may result in the course head's inability to respond in a timely manner. All discussions will remain confidential, although AEO may be consulted to discuss appropriate implementation.

Late Assignments:

We are living in unusual times, if something unexpected arises, please contact me or your TF as soon as possible. This is especially important if you feel you cannot complete an assignment on time.

Module I. - Historical Background

WEEK 1 — Introduction & the Emergence and Defense of the Border in the 19th Century

PLEASE NOTE: Normally the reading response will be due Monday by midnight. For this week only, a reading response will be due Wednesday, September 4 by midnight.

September 3: Introduction to course: What is the role of a Border? Are borders fixed? Is a border a pre-requisite for nationhood? Stats on the U.S.-Mexico Border. Why did Texas secede from Mexico? Why did the U.S. invade Mexico? Why was the border drawn at the Rio Grande?

September 5: Foreign invasions of France, England, and Spain: what does this mean for the provision of healthcare, education, building of institutions?

Major point: The current border emerges from a war that Abraham Lincoln described as “unnecessarily and unconstitutionally commenced” by President Polk. This week we examine how the contours of our southern border were drawn in 1848 and 1853 but the intention to expand our territory has roots to an earlier expansionist period. Historical narratives and national myths are not free of politics, especially when we speak about the border. Invasions quickly altered Mexico’s map.

Terms: American Invasion/Mexican-American War 1846-48; Texas, The Alamo; Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo; James Polk campaign; Spot Resolution; Gadsden Purchase, Manifest Destiny

Readings:

- 1) *Independent Indians and the Mexican American War* by Brian Delay, in American Historical Review, February 2007, pp. 35-68. (in Canvas Files)
- 2) Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo – on website pgs 922 - 941:
https://www.loc.gov/resource/llsalvol.llsal_009/?sp=976&r=-0.133,0.679,1.556,0.774,0
- 3) President Polk’s Address to Congress, May 11, 1846:
<https://millercenter.org/the-presidency/presidential-speeches/may-11-1846-war-message-congress>
- 4) March 18, 1846 Proclamation by Gen. Francisco Mejia:
<https://shec.ashp.cuny.edu/items/show/795>
- 5) Ulysses S. Grant’s Memoirs, Preface and Chapter 3, especially paragraphs 9-12 (Army Life—Causes of the Mexican War—Camp Salubrity): <https://www.bartleby.com/lit-hub/personal-memoirs-of-u-s-grant/army-life-causes-of-the-mexican-war-camp-salubrity/>
- 6) The Mexican War and Lincoln’s “Spot Resolutions” (in Canvas Files)

WEEK 2 - Imagining the Border & Early Public Health at the Border: How does cleanliness, criminality, public health and race become intertwined in Porfirio Diaz's (1876-1910) Mexico?

Map exercise due by 11:59pm on Sunday, September 15.

September 10: What is happening in the new border region? What does the border look like at this time?

September 12: Public health projects in Mexico during the *Porfiriato*, origins and examples.

Major Point: The new border takes on new political and economic importance.

Terms: Porfiriato, Maximilian, The crisis of Church and State (and how it affected healthcare)

Readings:

- 1) Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, Chapter 4., pp. 48- 58.
- 2) Douglas S. Massey, "The Mexico-U.S. Border in the American Imagination," in *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, 2016, Vol. 160, No. 2, pp. 160-177.
- 3) James David Nichols, "The Line of Liberty: Runaway Slaves and Fugitive Peons in the Texas-Mexico Borderlands," in *Western Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 44, No. 4 (Winter 2013), pp. 413-433.
- 4) Juliana Barr, "From Captives to Slaves: Commodifying Indian Women in the Borderlands," in *The Journal of American History*, vol. 92, no. 1 (June 2005), pp. 19-46.
- 5) Sergio Miranda Pacheco. "Urban Globalization and its Historicity: The Case of the Global Sanitary City in Mexico in the Nineteenth Century," in *Philosophy of Globalization*, Boston: De Gruyter, 2018, pp. 225-236.

Suggested:

- Maurice Crandall, *These People Have Always Been a Republic*, Introduction pp. 1-12
- Miguel Tinker Salas, "Sonora: The Making of a Border Society, 1880-1910," in *Journal of the Southwest*, 34, no. 1, 1992, pp. 429-456.
- Alice L. Baumgartner, "The meaning of liberty," in *South to Freedom: Runaway Slaves to Mexico and the Road to the Civil War*, Chapter 2, Basic Books, 2020.

WEEK 3 - Revolutionary Violence (1910 - 1917) and the Impact on the Border

September 17: Public health concerns about foreigners and immigrants. The case of the Chinese in Mexico.

September 19: American interests and the socio-political roots of the Mexican Revolution. Impact of the Revolution on the Border.

Major Point: How are bodies being criminalized and portrayed as “unclean” on both sides of the border?

Terms: Massacre of Chinese, Zyklon B and the Border

Readings:

- 1) Alexandra Minna Stern, “Buildings, Boundaries, and Blood: Medicalization and Nation-Building on the U.S.-Mexico Border, 1910-1930,” in *The Hispanic American Historical Review* Vol. 79, No. 1, 1999), 41-81.
- 2) “Inspection Service, Mexican Border. Precautions against Yellow Fever at Eagle Pass,” in *Public Health Reports* (1896-1970), Vol. 18, No. 42 (Oct. 16, 1903), pp. 1763-1764.
- 3) Hernandez, Kelly Lytle. “Mexican Immigration to the United States,” in *OAH Magazine of History*, Vol. 23, No. 4, North American Migrations (Oct. 2009), pp. 25-29.
- 4) Glen David Kuecker, “Public Health, Yellow Fever, and the Making of Modern Tampico,” *Urban History Review / Revue d'histoire urbaine*, Spring 2008 Printemps, Vol. 36, No. 2, pp. 18-28.
- 5) Schiavone Camacho, Julia Maria. “Chinos, Antichinistas, Chineras, and Chineros. The Anti-Chinese Movement in Sonora and Chinese Mexican Responses, 1910-Early 1930s,” in *Chinese Mexicans*, The University of North Carolina Press, 2012, pp. 39-62.

Suggested:

- Kennett Cott, “Diplomacy and the Chinese Issue, 1876-1910,” in *The Hispanic American Historical Review*, Vol. 67, 1, 1987, 63-85.
- Tom Patrick, “Pan Am Highway and Cattle Disease,” in *The New York Times*, Jan. 23, 1972.

WEEK 4 -The health cost of poverty, violence, and oppression.

September 24: Socialized medicine in Mexico and social service for medical students

September 26: Science in Mexico, Case of *barbasco*, and steroid hormones

Major Point: Understanding the social context for why immigrant diseases are portrayed as a social burden in the United States. International health efforts in Mexico.

Terms: Disney, Repatriation, Great Depression, Social Medicine

Readings:

- 1) María Rosa Gudiño. "Disney Health Films in Mexico," in *Oxford University Press Research Encyclopedias*, Oxford University Press, 2016.
- 2) Laura D. Gutiérrez, "'Trains of Misery': Repatriate Voices and Responses in Northern Mexico during the Great Depression," in *Journal of American Ethnic History, Undocumented Histories: Generative Approaches to Undocumented Immigrant Experiences and Immigration Histories*, Vol. 39, 4, Summer 2020, 13-26.
- 3) Heather M. Sinclair "White Plague, Mexican Menace," in *Pacific Historical Review*, Vol. 85, 4, Nov. 2016, 475-505.
- 4) Emily K. Abel, "Only the best class of immigration," in public health policy toward Mexicans and Filipinos in Los Angeles, 1910-1940. *American Journal of Public Health*, June 2004, 94(6):932-9.
- 5) Natalia Molina. "Borders, Laborers, and Racialized Medicalization Mexican Immigration and US Public Health Practices in the 20th Century," in *Public Health Then and Now*, 2011 June; 101(6): 1024-1031.
- 6) Gabriela Soto Laveaga. "Seeing the Countryside Through Medical Eyes: social service reports in the making of a sickly nation," in *Endeavour*, Vol. 37, 1, March 2013, 29-38.

Suggested:

- Mark Overmeyer-Velázquez, "Good Neighbors and White Mexicans: Constructing Race and Nation on the Mexico- U.S.Border," in *Journal of American Ethnic History*, Vol. 33, No. 1, 2013, pp. 5-34.
- Emily K. Abel. "From exclusion to expulsion: Mexicans and tuberculosis in Los Angeles, 1914-1940," in *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, 2003 Winter; 77(4):823-49.

Module II.-- Case Studies in Public Health

WEEK 5 - Labor and health.

October 1: Increased racial violence against Mexicans during WW II, Zoot Suits.

October 3: Bracero Program.

Major Point: “Diseased bodies” as acceptable workers in times of labor shortages

Terms: Braceros; World War II in Mexico; The Bracero Program; Zoot Suit riots; The Mexican Miracle.

Readings:

- 1) Official Bracero Agreement (9 pages).
- 2) Richard Griswold del Castillo, The Los Angeles “Zoot Suit Riots” Revisited: Mexican and Latin American Perspectives Mexican Studies/Estudios Mexicanos, Vol. 16, No. 2 (Summer, 2000): 367-391
- 3) “United States-Mexico Border Public Health Association: Conference Report 1” Public Health Reports (1896-1970), Vol. 77, No. 2 (Feb., 1962), pp. 140-146.
- 4) The Land of Open Graves by Jason De León, Introduction (1-20).
- 5) Select one oral history to read from this website: <https://scholarworks.utep.edu/bracero/>

Suggested:

- Marcos Cueto. “Appropriation and Resistance: Local Responses to Malaria Eradication in Mexico, 1955- 1970,” *Journal of Latin American Studies*, Vol. 37, No. 3, Mexico (Aug, 2005), pp. 533-559.

WEEK 6 - Cooperation along the Border and Forced Sterilization of Mexican Women in 1975 Los Angeles

October 8: TBA

October 10: TBA

Major Point: Reproductive violence and controlling women's bodies

Terms: Sterilization and reproductive control

Readings:

- 1) *The Land of Open Graves* by Jason De León. Part I (20-86). [Library Reserves]
- 2) Alexandra Minna Stern. Sterilized in the name of public health: race, immigration, and reproductive control in modern California. *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, 2003 Winter;77(4):823-49.
- 3) Myla Vicenti Carpio, "The Lost Generation: American Indian Women and Sterilization Abuse," *Social Justice* Vol. 31, No. 4 (98), *Native Women and State Violence* (2004), pp. 40-53

Suggested:

- Take a look at this website: <http://www.ourbodiesourselves.org/health-info/forced-sterilization/>

WEEK 7 - Mexican Laborers, increased militarization of the Border control

October 15: 1970s economic crisis in Mexico and the shift in migration

October 17: GUEST SPEAKER

Readings:

- 1) Ieva Jusionyte. "Part 3: Wildland" in Threshold: Emergency Responders on the US-Mexico Border, University of California Press, 143-206, 2018.
- 2) Continue reading: *The Land of Open Graves* by Jason DeLeón. Part II (107-202)

WEEK 8 - Maquiladoras and colonias: origins and environmental health

October 22: Surge of maquiladoras and the border environment

October 24: Urbanization of border towns and their impact on health

Major Point: Feminization of the border work force

Terms: Maquiladora, colonias

Readings:

- 1) Angela Donelson. "The role of NGOs and NGO networks in meeting the needs of US colonias," in *Community Development Journal*, October 2004, Vol. 39, 4, Oct. 2004, 332-344.
- 2) Jean W. Parcher and Delbert G. Humberson. "Using GIS to Assess Priorities of Infrastructure and Health Needs of "Colonias" along the United States-Mexico Border," in *Journal of Latin American Geography*, Vol. 8, 1, 2009, 129-148.
- 3) 1906 Water Treaty. Distribution of Waters of Rio Grande, pp. 1-3
- 4) Lucero Radonic and Thomas E. Sheridan. "Co- Producing Waterscapes: Urban Growth and Indigenous Water Rights in the Sonoran Desert," in *The U.S.-Mexico Transborder Region. Cultural Dynamics and Historical Interactions*, Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, pp. 287-303.

Suggested:

- Manuel Navarrete, "Garment Maquiladoras in Rural Yucatán: An Environmental Tale," *Journal of Latin American Geography* Vol. 7, No. 2 (2008), pp. 105- 132.
- "1944 International Water Treaty. Treaty with Mexico Relating to the Utilization of the Waters of Certain Rivers," pp. 1-25.
- George Sanchez, selections from his book *Becoming Mexican American: Ethnicity, Culture and Identity in Chicano Los Angeles, 1900-1945*: 1) Across the Dividing Line 2) Newcomers in the City of Angels 3) Americanization and the Mexican Immigrant. 38-106.

WEEK 9 -1980s - Cocaine, drugs, and drug enforcement. If time, Central America

Short Critical Analysis by 11:59pm on Thursday, October 31

October 29: Drug cartels, DEA, and the border in the 1980s

October 31: ...Continued

Major Point: What if we had used a public health narrative instead of a war analogy to understand drugs at the border?

Terms: War on drugs, Cartels, and Addiction

Readings:

- 1) Payan, Tony (2016). "The Drug War on the Border," in *The Three US-Mexico Border Wars: Drugs, Immigration, and Homeland Security: Drugs, Immigration, and Homeland Security*. ABC-CLIO, pp. 23-52.
- 2) Muehlmann, Shaylih. "The Narco Uncanny," in *Public Culture*, 2020, 32(2), 327-348.
- 3) "How Mexico's Drug Cartels Are Profiting from the Pandemic," NYTimes, July 7, 2020. <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/07/opinion/sunday/mexico-drug-cartels-coronavirus.htm>
- 4) "U.S. Drug Habit Helps Finance Mexican Cartels," Associated Press May 26, 2009. <https://www.nbcnews.com/id/wbna30946730>

Suggested:

- If you are interested in a timeline: http://www.cnn.com/2013/09/02/world/america_s/mexico-drug-war-fast-facts/

Module III. - Migrant Health

WEEK 10 - Health and Mexican immigrants in USA

No Mas Bebés Assignment due by 11:59pm on Thursday, November 7

November 5: Watch film *No Más Bebes* in class

November 7: Individual research project



WEEK 11 - Race and Citizenship in a contested region: Whiteness, Brown-ness and the Border

November 12: Pesticides Labor, and Racism in the fields

November 14: GUEST SPEAKER: Gabriella Chavez, PAIR Project - Boston.

Readings:

- 1) Check out PAIR Project's website before class on 11/21:
<https://www.pairproject.org/about>
- 2) Ortiz, Vilma and Edward Telles. "Racial Identity and Racial Treatment of Mexican Americans," *Race Soc Probl.* 2012Apr;4(1)
- 3) Anzaldua, Gloria. "How to Tame a Wild Tongue"
- 4) Accents (Puerto Rican but can still apply to those with Mexican Spanish accents) http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/poet-beautifully-describes-why-spanish-accent-are-so-special_us_565c926ae4b079b2818b111e
- 5) Anya Montiel. "The Tohono O'odham and border wall," in *American Indian Magazine*, Summer2017, vol.18,2. <https://www.americanindianmagazine.org/story/tohono-oodham-and-border-wall>
- 6) Holmes, Seth. *Fresh Fruit, Broken Bodies - Chapters1-3*. [Library Reserve]
- 7) [Why a Designer Turned the U.S.-Mexico Border Into an Art Installation | The New Yorker](#) (YouTube, 15 minutes)

WEEK 12 - Undocumented field workers

Oral History due by 11:59pm on Thursday, November 21

November 19: Genes, Race and Citizenship Along the Border

GUEST SPEAKER: América Lutz, Water Wars along the U.S.-Mexico border

November 21: Mental Health and Crossing the Border

Readings:

1) Select *one* of the below:

- a. Albrecht, T. R., Varady, R. G., Zuniga-Teran, A. A., Gerlak, A. K., Routson De Grenade, R., Lutz-Ley, A., ... & Willems, B. (2018). Unraveling transboundary water security in the arid Americas. *Water International*, 43(8), 1075-1113.
- b. Lutz Ley, A.N., Lee, R., Peralta-Lugo, Y. & Scott, C. A. (2018). Food and Water Security in North America's Transboundary Sonoran Desert: A Water-Exporting Dryland. In Allan, T., Bromwich, B., Keulertz, M. & Colman, A. (eds.), *Oxford Handbook of Food, Water and Society*, 344-362. Oxford University Press.

2) Robert Kaestner, Jay A. Pearson, Danya Keene and Arline T. Geronimus, "Stress, Allostatic Load, and Health of Mexican Immigrants," *Social Science Quarterly* Vol. 90, No. 5, Special Issue: on Health Policy and Healthy Populations (December 2009), pp. 1089-1111.

3) Nazario, Sonia. *Enrique's Journey: The Story of a Boy's Dangerous Odyssey to Reunite with His Mother*. New York: Random House, 2007. **Entire book this week —it is a quick read but give yourself time to digest the content.**

Suggested:

- Montoya, Michael. "Genes and Disease on the U.S.- Mexican Border," in *Making the Mexican Diabetic: Race Science and the Genetics of Inequality*, University of California Press, 2011, 69-85.

WEEK 13 - Reverse Migration: Americans Heading to Mexico for Health Care

November 26: TBA

November 28: Thanksgiving -
No Class



Readings:

- 1) Wallace, Steven P., Carolyn Mendez-Luck and Xóchitl Castañeda, "Heading South: Why Mexican Immigrants in California Seek Health Services in Mexico" in *Medical Care*, Vol. 47, No. 6 (Jun. 2009), pp. 662-669
- 2) "Migrating North, but to Mexico, Not the U.S." *The New York Times*, Feb 12, 2017. <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/12/world/americas/mexico-migration-asylum.html>
- 3) "Fleeing Lockdown, Americans Are Flocking to Mexico City," *The New York Times*, January 2, 2021.
- 4) "Many California farmworkers fear a winter of hunger and homelessness amid the pandemic," *Los Angeles Times*, Oct. 26, 2020. <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2020-10-26/central-valley-farmworkers-hunger-evictions-coronavirus-covid19>
- 5) "Treat Farmworkers as Essential, not Sacrificial," NRDC, Sept. 14, 2020 <https://www.nrdc.org/experts/lena-brook/treat-farmworkers-essential-not-sacrificial>

***America Lutz, Kacey C. Ernst, Leila Barraza, Pablo A. Reyes Castro, [Climate Change-Driven Disease: How the U.S. Can Protect Migrants](#)

WEEK 14 - The Pandemic and the Border

December 3: Continuity and Change: How did the Pandemic alter our perception of the border? How did things remain the same? The Border in Today's News - Analysis and Historical Reflection

FINAL ESSAY/ PROJECT: DUE 12PM, DECEMBER 12

INSTRUCTIONS FOR WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

(Additional detailed instructions found on Canvas)

1. MAP ANALYSIS: DUE September 15

In this short exercise, you will answer four questions about a selection of maps of the US and Mexico from the eighteenth to the twenty-first centuries that depict, in some fashion, a border or borders. Maps and questions can be found on Canvas.

2. NEWS ARTICLE ANALYSIS: DUE October 31

For this assignment, you should find a recent article from a reputable press like the *Associated Press*, *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, or *The Houston Chronicle* from the last year or so and apply three course concepts to analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the arguments or claims that it presents. Your write-up should be relatively short --**650-700 words**--so you should focus on quality, not on quantity.

The point of this assignment is to give you some practice in identifying when and how historical concepts learned in class help you better understand our current world. Choose a newspaper article on 1) technology at the border OR 2) Covid and Mexico and explain how it relates to the history of the border. Analyze the article and trace its historical relevance. Engage critically by connecting the newspaper article with some of the themes discussed in class.

Please remember to cite your sources--both the primary source from the popular press and any readings from class or other sources. Please use Chicago-style citation. Here is a link to a citation guide: https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html

3. FILM ANALYSIS: DUE November 7

600-word, single space analysis of “No Mas Bebés” that places the film in a longer and broader historical perspective.

4. ORAL HISTORY: DUE November 21

Oral history with a Mexican citizen, Mexican-American, or Latine immigrant *written in the first person “I.”* The length of what you turn in will vary depending on how long you speak with the person, if the person is chatty, etc. but at minimum you should have 3-4 pages.

During an oral history one person interviews another and asks about a specific episode or time period in the interviewee’s life. The interviewer then takes the responses and creates a short narrative (**not** an exact transcript) using the point of view of the interviewee. The final narrative should convey the voice of the interviewee.

Throughout this course, you have learned of some socio-economic and political factors pushing Mexicans to cross the U.S.-Mexico border. To gain insight into the lives of

Mexican and Latino immigrants in the United States each student will interview one person, a first, second or third generation immigrant from Mexico (if not available to you then someone from the Caribbean and South America).

The person may be a peer, a friend, family member, or acquaintance and they should have memories of their arrival to the United States.

You must obtain oral or written consent from the person being interviewed. If you are recording the interview, you can request this by stating something along the lines: "I STATE YOUR NAME am an undergraduate student at Harvard taking a course on Mexico, the Border, and Public Health. As part of the course requirements, I have to conduct an oral history of someone from Mexico. This information will only be seen by my professor and TF. If you feel more comfortable, I can use a pseudonym instead of your name. You can ask me to stop the questions at any time. You can also request not to have certain stories repeated either in writing or in oral form. I will respect your wishes. I NAME OF INTERVIEWEE give permission." If you chose to record the interview you must obtain explicit consent from the interviewee that he/she agrees to be recorded.

Objectives:

- Determine to what extent Latine lives are fairly represented in the media
- Provide a first-hand engagement that will allow a new, more informed perspective regarding immigration
- Learn to conduct a basic interview and write up an oral history experience.

Remember that though you are telling the person's story in narrative form remember to contextualize certain historical events. You may wish to start your oral history by giving key information (name, gender, place of birth, age) about the person in a short paragraph.

Many of the below questions are borrowed from a Dartmouth Oral History project.

Note: **they do not have to be questions you ask. You can add/delete, or create new ones.**

Guiding Questions for Oral History Interview

- What country are you originally from?
- Why did you leave this country?
- When did you leave? How old were at that time?
- * What did you do in your country before you moved here?
- What were the conditions in the country when you left?
- How did you prepare for your trip here?
- Who came with you when you emigrated? Who did you leave behind? What did you leave behind?
- How did you get here? Did you stay somewhere else before arriving here?
- Why did you choose the United States? Why not some other country?
- Who decided you would come here? Did you want to leave?
- Where did you first settle when you came to this country?
- Did you know English when you came here? What other languages did you speak?
- How did others in your home country treat you when they knew you were leaving?
- What changes in lifestyle did you make when you came here?

- What was your first impression of the United States? Has this initial impression changed over time?
- What are some of the differences/similarities you've noticed in the cultures here and in your home country?
- What were your hopes for yourself (and/or your family) when you came here? Have you realized these hopes?
- How were you treated when you first arrived in the United States? How are you treated now?
- Were your expectations of America met? Was your idea of America the same as the reality?
- How often did you see a doctor in your home country?
- Did you have access to healthcare in your community of origin? What type of care?
- How has access to healthcare changed now that you are in the USA?

5. FINAL ESSAY/Project: DUE 12PM, December 12

Please select **one** of the below options for your final paper essay.

I.- A Harvard museum wishes to put on an exhibit on modern Mexico and they turn to you as a potential consultant. What should the theme be? Why? Please describe four artifacts that must be included in the museum exhibit, explain your rationale for proposing each piece including the item's historical and educational value.

II. In Harvard's archives locate a primary source (or sources) pertaining to Mexico, Mexicans, the border and public health, or U.S.-Mexico relations. Use these sources to develop a research question (speak with Professor Soto Laveaga or your TF) that uses the archival material as the pivot to your research. This option entails a bit more research legwork and the use of archival material but these skills (ability to find information and construct a narrative from it) have multiple applications in the real world.

III.- Select a current newspaper article written between October 2020 to November 2022 on any topic of interest to you but pertaining to the border, Mexico, Mexicans, or border health. Your essay will be an historical analysis of the origins of the present-day article. You must nuance present-day news reporting/commentary with primary and secondary sources.

After researching the news item's history, you should be able to respond:

- How accurate (historically factual) is the article?
- What needed to be changed or elaborated to make it a better news piece?
- How did historical knowledge specifically (give concrete examples) aid your understanding of the news?

Example: You can take an article on Mexican assembly plants and U.S. politics in multiple directions. Further examine 1) the long history of foreign investments in Mexico, 2) the background that led to the creation of assembly plants in Mexico, 3) labor relations, 4) environmental impact of foreign assembly plants in Mexico, or 5) the health impact of assembly plants on workers or neighboring communities, etc.

IV.- Please select a theme, idea, law, person, etc. from either the course lecture and/or readings and choose a medium other than an essay to challenge our current conception of the border. This can take the form of a painting, a poem, an original song, a play acted out and recorded, a short movie, a sculpture, etc. All of these previous examples have been presented by students. You will then write a shorter paper, 4-5 pages, which explains the larger themes presented in the creative work.

With the exception of option IV, all essays will be 8-10 typed pages, double-spaced, with one-inch margins, Times New Roman 12 font. Students must cite at least 4 sources (books and articles) **and** at least one website. Submit writing assignments through

Canvas by 12 PM, December 1

