**Immigration Across the Disciplines**

**Week 13 Notes**

**Questions**

While I am certainly aware that stereotypes exist on personal levels across the country following 9/11, are any of the government policies/laws specifically racist?

Is the US violation of the civil rights of Middle Easterner within its borders, and subsequent promise to improve civil rights in Middle Eastern countries, and conscious attempt to encourage those of Middle Eastern descent to return to their homelands?

**Barkan, Diner, & Kraut**

**Chapter 9: The Immigrant as Threat to American Security: A Historical Perspective (Gary Gerstle)**

In contradiction to other texts, this essay begins by saying that America has been remarkably open to immigrants. (p. 217)

Immigrants are generally accused of four types of subversion: (p. 218)

1. Religious

Traditionally, the US endeavored to create a strictly Protestant system and feared the world-wide power and numbers of the Catholic church. (p. 219)

Political and unofficial (usually violent) resistance to Catholic immigrants was powerful, especially the Irish. (p. 220)

This religious fear continues in regard to Islam. (p. 220)

1. Political

Early US history saw a fear that, because its political system was unique, it would fall to monarchies or aristocracies. (p. 220-221)

Foreigners that came from different political systems (and religions) created a fear that they wouldn’t defend the US and what it stood for. (p. 221)

Anarchism, socialism, and communism quickly arose as threats brought by immigrants. (p. 221)

1. Economic

Influxes of immigrants resulted in massive labor surpluses that created a lack of employment opportunities. (p. 222)

1. Racial

Racial subversion was the fear of racially inferior groups gaining dominance by sheer numbers and subverting & perverting American society. (p. 222-223)

This led to the pseudo-sciences (eugenics) focusing on the virtues inherent in certain races and not others, which was bolstered by Social Darwinism. (p. 223)

**Immigrant Subversion: Cases (Crusades)**

**Germans (WWI)**

Prior to WWI, Germans were the highest ranked among the immigrant groups & the most economically successful. (p. 225)

Note: Germans still received some suspicion because they proclaimed and cultivated their ethnic heritage, rather than directly assimilating. (p. 225)

Germans were painted as bestial Huns by the government to garner support for the war effort. (p. 226)

Many German Americans abandoned their heritage and assimilated almost totally. (p. 228)

**The Red Scare & Immigration Restriction (1919-24)**

Revolutions in Easter Europe at the end of WWI garnered considerable attention from workers in the US, resulting in several new political organizations. (p. 228)

Dozens of bombing attempts were made in 1919, targeted at capitalists and inciting greater fear. (p. 229)
Several radical groups (including anarchists, communists, & socialists) accepted violence & assassinations as parts of the political process. (p. 230)

Distinctions between actual radicals and the immigrant groups they might be a part of were not made. (p. 232)

**Japanese (WWII)**

American fears following Pearl Harbor resulted in massive civil rights violations, even without evidence. (p. 234)

Again, racial fears persisted: Japanese were too clannish, and their abject worship of the emperor made them disloyal. (p. 235)

**Using Past to Illuminate Present**

Those marked as “different” are easily construed as “dangerous.” (p. 237)

In opposition to the past, current immigrant fears and perceived security threats have resulted in a desire for knowledge of the immigrant culture, especially Arab and Muslim cultures. (p. 239)

However, the government has policies in place that would allow it to quickly cut off such immigrants. (p. 239)

**Chapter 10: Post-9/11 Government Initiatives in Comparative and Historical Perspectives (Mehdi Bozorgmehr & Anny Bakalian)**

While historians cannot truly analyze an event, like the backlash following 9/11, until after it has occurred, sociologists can contribute by carrying out analysis as the events unfold. (p. 247)

**Historical Perspectives**

The first 3 historical instances involve Germans (WWI), the Red Scare/Palmer Raids, and Japanese (WWII). (p. 247-250)

During the Iran Hostage Crisis, sanctions against Iran (and Iranian students in other countries) were enacted by several countries because of American embassy employees that were taken hostage for 444 days. (p. 250)

**Muslims & Middle Easterners Following 9/11**

In many historical instances, conflicts in the Middle East have resulted in discrimination in the US, but 9/11 brought the issue to American soil and created a much stronger backlash/reaction. (p. 252)

Laws relating to detentions were twisted in the cases of expected terrorists, whether proof was provided or not. (p. 253)

Immigrants born in specified countries were targeted for interviews by governments. (p. 254)

Foreign students were tracked and monitored, and immigrants from 26 named countries were required to be fingerprinted and photographed upon arrival and periodically afterward. (p. 254-255)

Members of the Sikh community, though neither Arab nor Muslim, are often singled out by these discriminatory laws. (p 255)

Men from specific countries were required to register with the INS, resulting in disrupted families & increased protests. (p. 255-256)

Charities with connections to the Middle East had their assets frozen. (p. 256)

In the past, single ethnic groups or nations were targeted; since 9/11, a large swath of countries and their nationals are targeted. (p. 258)

Efforts since 9/11 have focused largely on noncitizens. (p. 259)

**Conclusion**

Civil rights efforts since the 1960s have increased civil liberties and resulted in a more restrained government response to such perceived threats. (p. 263)

Anti-American sentiments are increasingly rising, especially when the US mistreats Middle Easterners within its borders but promises to improve their civil rights in their own countries. (p. 264)

**Chapter 11: Immigrant “Transnationalism” and the Presence of the Past (Roger Waldinger)**

Transnationalism results from immigrants that maintain strong ties with their homeland, made possible by new technology & faster ways of communication. (p. 267-268)

The increased use of dual citizenship and greater use of student visas contributes to this. (p. 269)

Four relations of past and present regarding the idea/development of transnationalism:

1. Dehistoricization

Many historians try to point out the common themes between past and present, but a multitude of changes have resulted in entirely new ideas and methods of analysis, such as technology, multiculturalism, ethnic societies, & international human rights. (p. 271)

1. Recurrence

Connections that bring about movement of any group are common on nearly every level. (p. 272-273)

1. Secular Change

There is now, more so than ever, an intense desire to keep the “other” out. (p. 275-277)

Refugee legislation never existed before, but is very prominent now. (p. 277-278)

1. Contingency

Relations between nations result in changes in the severity of enforcement of borders, thus creating a change to the flow of immigrants (p. 279)