

History of US Immigration Policy





Immigrant children in cages at US border 2018.

"All Americans, not only in the states most heavily affected but in every place in this country, are rightly disturbed by the large numbers of illegal aliens entering our country. The jobs they hold might otherwise be held by citizens or legal immigrants. The public service they use impose burdens on our taxpayers. That's why our administration has moved aggressively to secure borders more by hiring a record number of new border guards, by deporting twice as many criminal aliens as ever before, by cracking down on illegal hiring, by barring welfare benefits to illegal aliens. In the budget I will present to you, we will try to do more to speed the deportation of illegal aliens who are arrested for crimes, to better identify illegal aliens in the workplace.

We are a nation of immigrants. But we are also a nation of laws. It is wrong and ultimately self-defeating for a nation of immigrants to permit the kind of abuse of our immigration laws we have seen in recent years, and we must do more to stop it."

1996 President Clinton's State of the Union speech

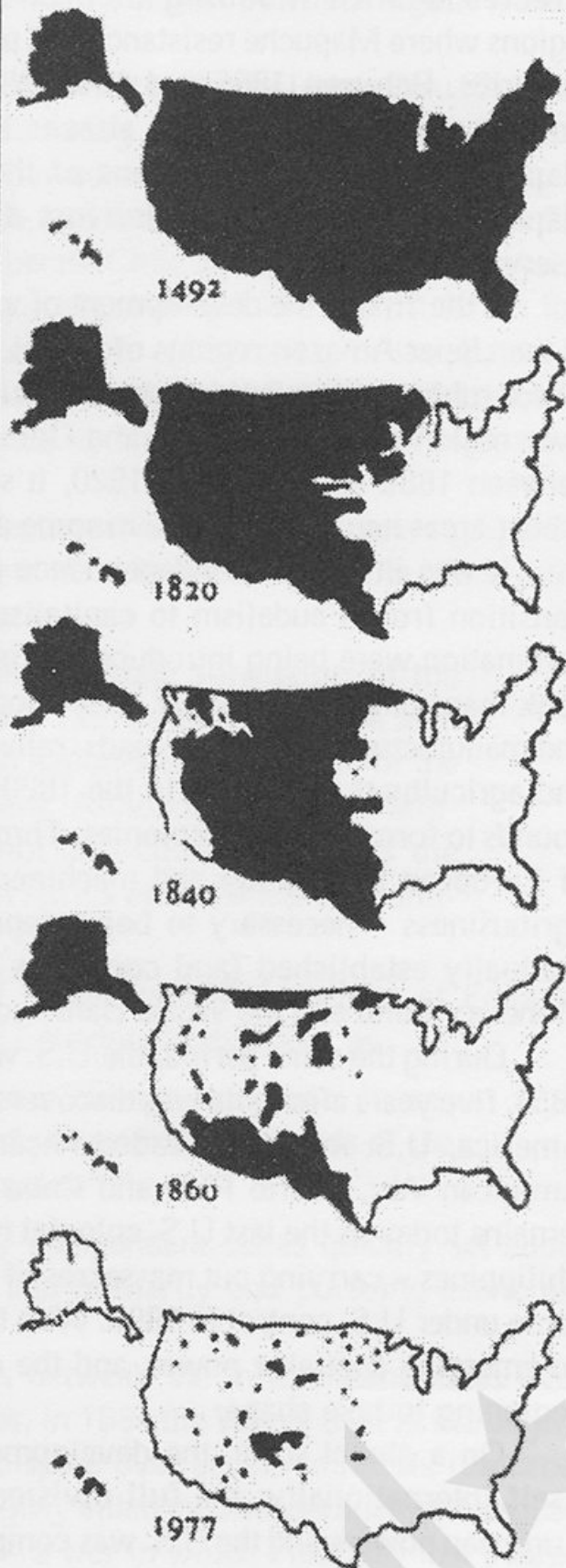
Investigation #1

Are we a nation of immigrants?

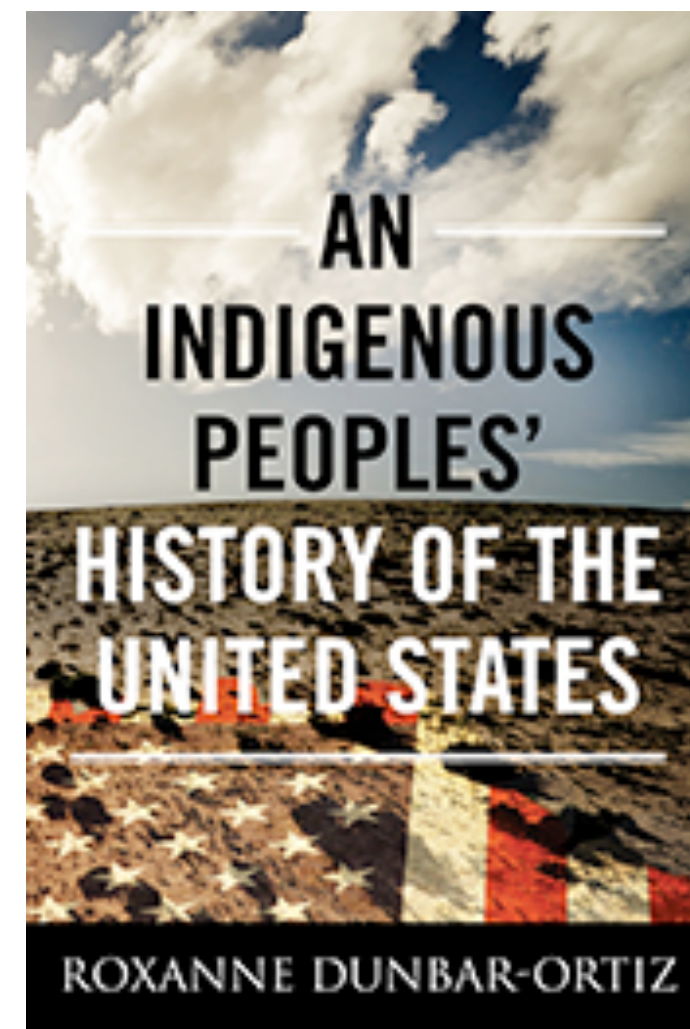
WHY AMERICA IS NOT A NATION OF IMMIGRANTS

- 1. SETTLER COLONIALISM IS NOT IMMIGRATION, IT IS A VIOLENT INVASION THAT FUNCTIONS ON INDIGENOUS ELIMINATION.**
AMERICA WAS FOUNDED BY SETTLER COLONIALISM, WHICH IS A TYPE OF COLONIALISM THAT FUNCTIONS AS AN INVASIVE STRUCTURE DEPENDENT ON THE ONGOING ELIMINATION OF INDIGENOUS POPULATIONS IN ORDER TO ASSERT SETTLER SOVEREIGNTY. THIS ELIMINATION IS SEEN THROUGH THE GENOCIDE OF 80+ MILLION INDIGENOUS PEOPLES, FORCED ASSIMILATION (THROUGH NATIVE BOARDING SCHOOLS), CONTINUED DISAPPEARANCES OF INDIGENOUS WOMEN AND TWO SPIRIT PEOPLES, RESOURCE EXTRACTION / VIOLATIONS OF TREATIES, AND MUCH MORE.
- 2. KIDNAPPED AFRICANS WHO WERE FORCIBLY BROUGHT TO TURTLE ISLAND AS SLAVES, WERE NOT IMMIGRANTS.**
AFRICAN SLAVES WERE CONSIDERED "PROPERTY" BY COLONIZING FORCES AND WERE VIOLENTLY TRANSPORTED BY SLAVE SHIPS TO BUILD THE SETTLER COLONIES ON STOLEN INDIGENOUS LANDS.
- 3. RACIST LAWS OPPOSING IMMIGRATION HAVE BEEN THE NORM.**
AMERICAN STATE PROPAGANDA SAYS "GIVE ME YOUR TIRED, YOUR POOR..." BUT IN REALITY THEY MEANT "GIVE ME YOUR WHITE PEOPLE." IN 1882 THE CHINESE EXCLUSION ACT WAS PASSED, PROHIBITING ALL IMMIGRATION OF CHINESE LABORERS AND THE U.S. BORDER PATROL ORIGINATED AS THE "MOUNTED GUARDS" IN EL PASO, TEXAS, WHOSE PRIMARY PURPOSE WAS TO RESTRICT THE ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION OF CHINESE PEOPLE.
- 4. SAYING "AMERICA IS A NATION OF IMMIGRANTS" IS A VIOLENT FORM OF ERASURE, WHITE-WASHING, AND STATE PROPAGANDA.**

**Indigenous Land
Within United States,
1492-1977**



*“**Settler colonialism** has best been defined as more of an imposed structure than an historical event. This structure is characterized by relationships of domination and subjugation that become woven throughout the fabric of society, and even becomes disguised as paternalistic benevolence. The objective of settler colonialism is always the acquisition of indigenous territories and resources, which means the native must be eliminated. This can be accomplished in overt ways including biological warfare and military domination but also in more subtle ways; for example, through national policies of assimilation.”*



We didn't cross the border, the border crossed us.



Discuss - Are we a nation of immigrants?

THE END OF THE MYTH



**From the Frontier to the Border Wall
in the Mind of America**

GREG GRANDIN

Bestselling Author of Fordlandia

EMPIRE

OF

THE EXPANSION
OF THE U.S. BORDER
AROUND THE WORLD

BORDERS

TODD

MILLER

Investigation #2

An investigation into the history of US Immigration Policy

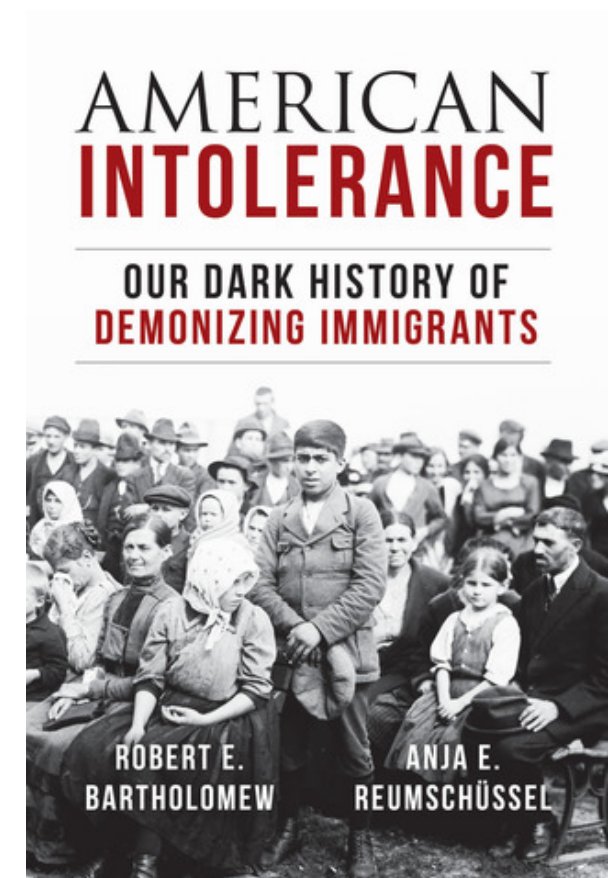
Look at US immigration legislation since 1790

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_United_States_immigration_laws)

[List of United States immigration laws](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_United_States_immigration_laws)

**What patterns do you see with US immigration policy?
Which immigrants have benefited and which immigrants have
been denied legal status in the US?**

Read excerpts from the book, *American Intolerance: Our Dark History of Demonizing Immigrants*, by Robert Bartholomew & Anja Reumschüssel



Chinese Exclusion Act

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

*This article is about the former U.S. law. For the similar Canadian law, see [Chinese Immigration Act, 1923](#).
Not to be confused with [Asian Exclusion Act](#).*

The **Chinese Exclusion Act** was a [United States federal law](#) signed by President [Chester A. Arthur](#) on May 6, 1882, prohibiting all immigration of [Chinese](#) laborers. Building on the 1875 [Page Act](#), which banned Chinese women from immigrating to the [United States](#), the Chinese Exclusion Act was the first law implemented to prevent all members of a specific ethnic or national group from immigrating.

This article is from the Grand Rapids Evening Leader, dated December 24, 1885, which encouraged people to go to California to help round up Chinese people.

The Chinese Must Go.

Nine members of the Cigarmakers' Union of this city will leave Saturday to join the army that is going to California to help drive out the Chinese. They will meet a train load of tobacco rollers at Chicago going in the same direction. E. B. Griffith, formerly of Michigan, now located in San Francisco, writes that there are situations for about 2,000 white cigarmakers in that city, the war on the Chinese having been a success.

Committee on Public Information

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

The **Committee on Public Information** (1917-1919), also known as the **CPI** or the **Creel Committee**, was an independent agency of the government of the United States created to influence public opinion to support US participation in World War I.

In just over 26 months, from April 14, 1917, to June 30, 1919, it used every medium available to create enthusiasm for the war effort and to enlist public support against the foreign and perceived domestic attempts to stop America's participation in the war. It used mainly propaganda to accomplish its goals.

Anti-German attitudes were cultivated during WWI, such as this cartoon here on the right.

The Committee on Public Information also played a significant role in shifting public opinion to support going to war, because Germans were being demonized.

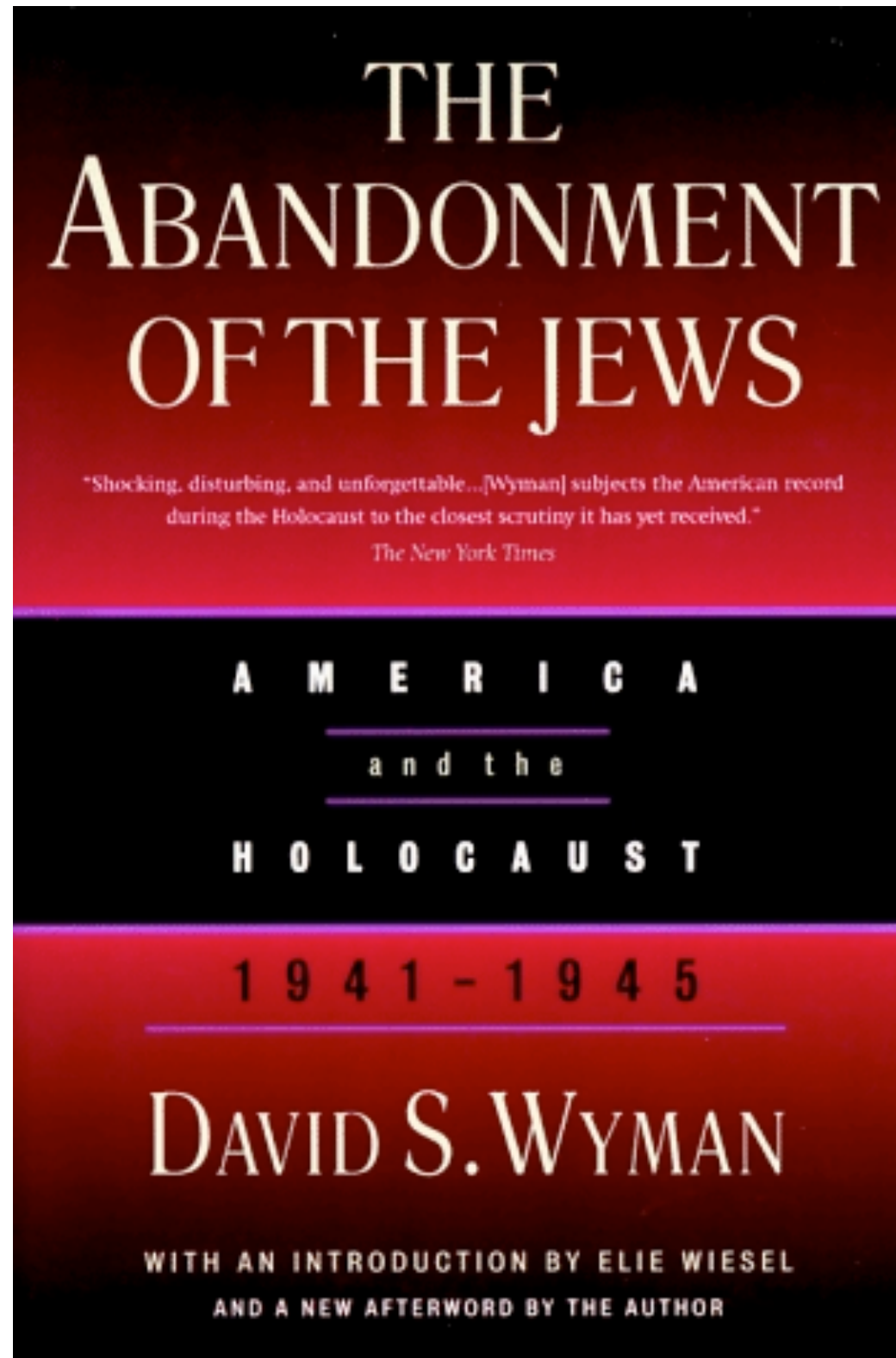




It was perfectly ok for white people to demonize the Japanese Americans for decades prior to WWII.

The public then supported the rounding up of thousands of Japanese Americans, which were put into internment camps.





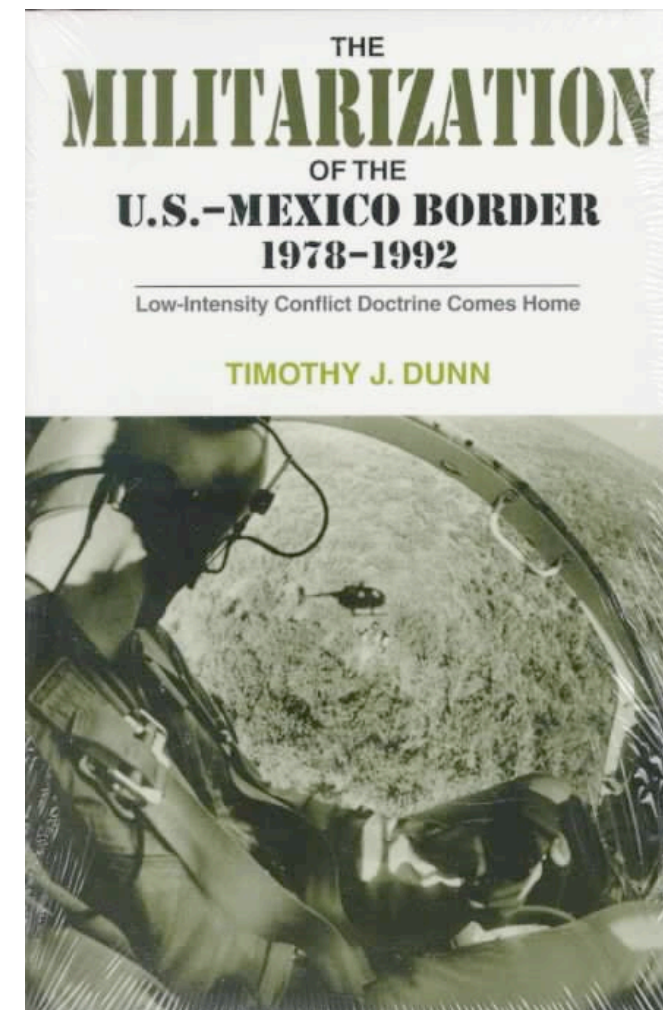
Anti-Semitism is widely accepted and practice in US culture.

During WWII, the US refused to allow thousands of Jewish people who were fleeing Nazi Germany.



The US/Mexican border was more open and fluid for a long time.

The militarization on the US side really began in the 1980s then escalated in the 1990s after NAFTA was passed and again became even more militarized after Sept. 11, 2001, when the Department of Homeland Security was created.



1986

AMNESTY ACT
3 MILLION

1994

NAFTA
OPERATION GATE KEEPER
OVER 3 MILLION
MIGRATED

1996

IIRIRA
3 & 10 YEAR BARS
STATE BENEFITS

2001

9/11, BUSH AND FOX DEAL
INS RENAMED DHS

2005

SENSENBRENNER BILL
PASSED IN THE HOUSE

2008

OBAMA, FAILED PROMISE
INCREASE DEPORTATIONS

2007

MINUTE MEN
RISE OF ARPAIO, INCREASE ENFORCEMENT

2006

MEGA MARCHES
"TODAY WE MARCH,
NOVEMBER WE VOTE"
THE SLEEPING GIANT



COSECHA

2010

CIR VS DREAM ACT
THE DREAM MOVEMENT

2012

OBAMA "DEPORTER-IN-CHIEF"
DACA, UNITED WE DREAM

2014

DAPA, NOT1MORE CAMPAIGN

2018

NOW

2013

CIR, REPUBLICAN
AUTOPSY, THE GANG OF 8
CIR FAILURE

2011

PRIVATE PRISON LOBBY
AZ SB-1070 (GA, SC, AL)
IMMIGRANTS FOR SALE

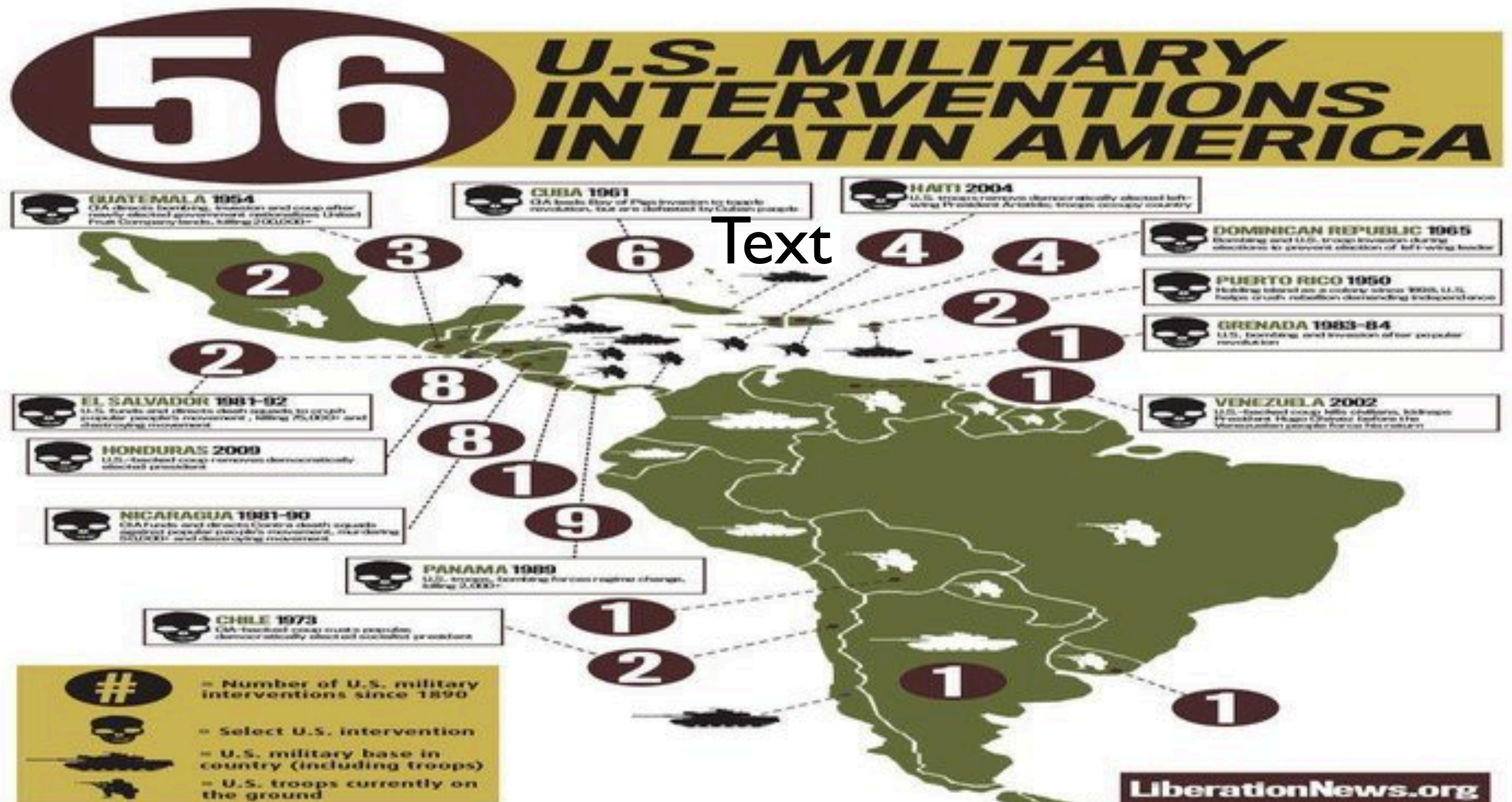
2015 - 2016

OBAMA'S LEGACY
3 MILLION DEPORTATIONS
DACA
45



Investigation #3

How has US Foreign Policy created an immigration/refugee crisis?



Example of Mexico

Read parts of the book, *No One is Illegal: Fighting Racism and State Violence on the US-Mexican Border*, by Justin Akers Chacon & Mike Davis.

Question:

How has the US continued to try to influence Mexico's politics and Mexico's economy?

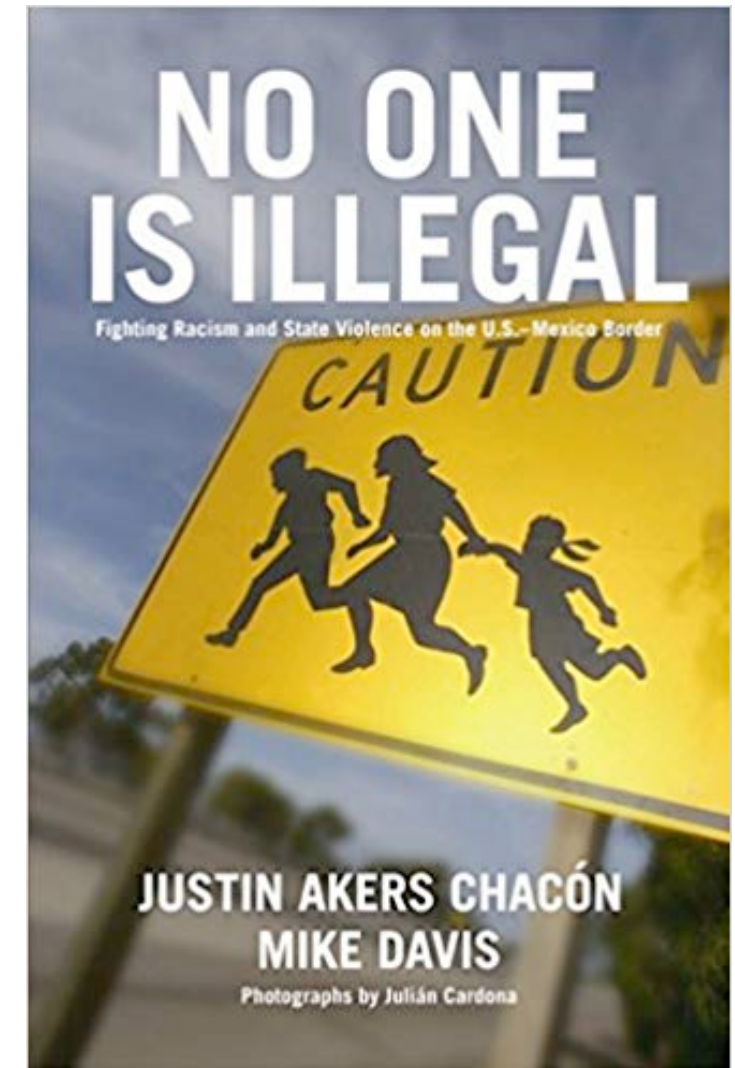
Part II: Mexico: Caught in the Web of U.S. Empire Justin Akers Chacón

Introduction

12. Conquest Sets the Stage

13. Neoliberalism Consumes the “Mexican Miracle”

14. From the Maquiladoras to NAFTA: Profiting from Borders





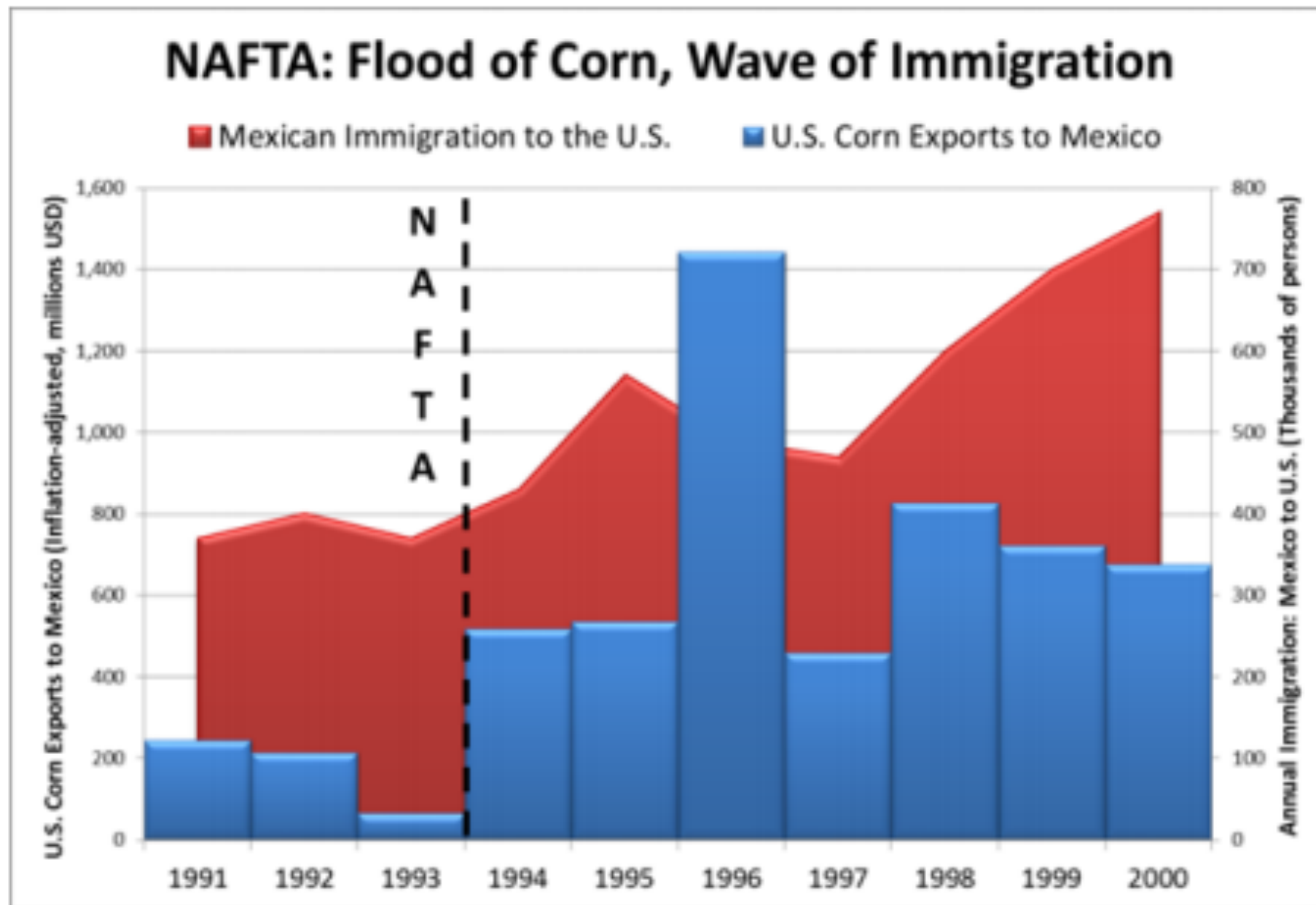
<https://sites.evergreen.edu/zoltan/interventions/>

NAFTA

<http://infographic.replacenafta.org/nafta-at-25-promises-vs-reality/>

NAFTA & Mexican immigration

https://www.citizen.org/wp-content/uploads/nafta_factsheet_immigration_may.pdf



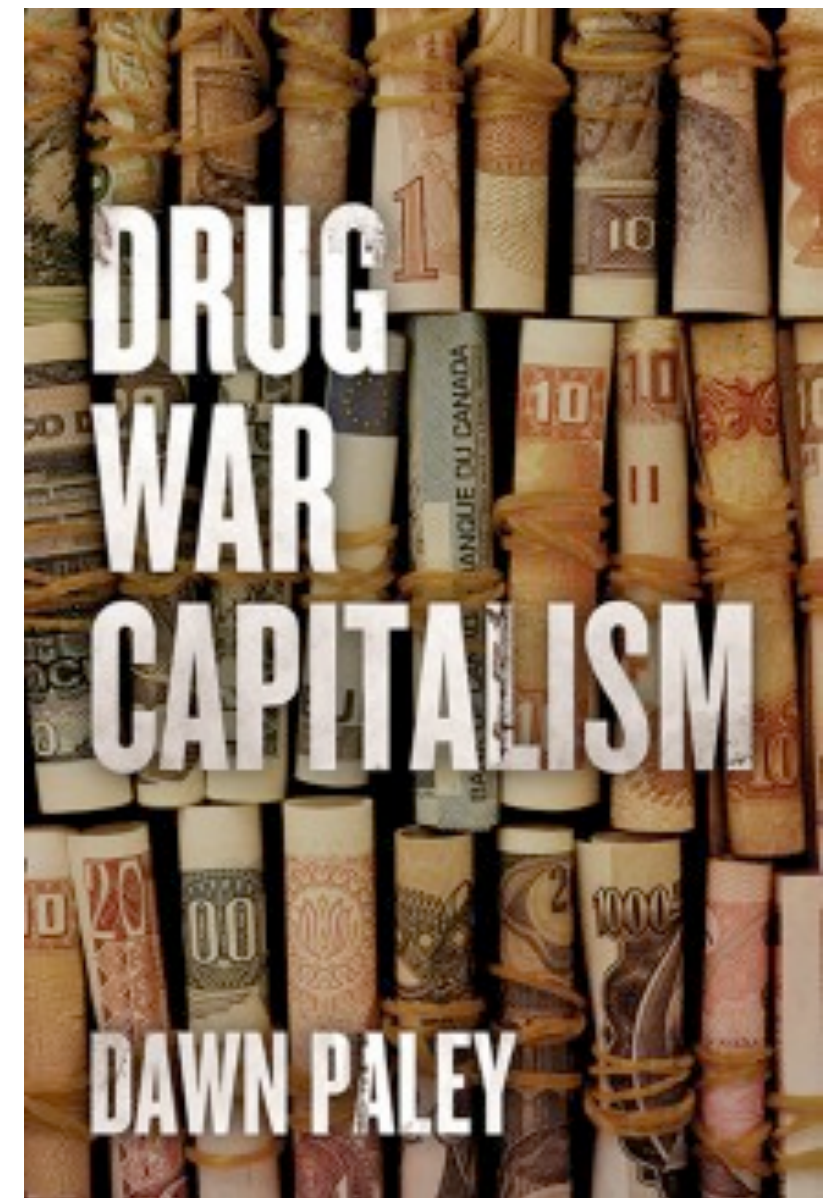
Source: U.S. International Trade Commission and Pew Hispanic Center

Plan Merida and the US-backed Drug War

Read: https://fpif.org/a_plan_colombia_for_mexico/

Read Chapter 5 from the book, Drug War Capitalism, by Dawn Paley.

Discuss - How the drug war has been a pretext for further US militarization in Mexico and how it has contributed to the immigration crisis.



Example - Central America

US Intervention in Central America timeline

<https://medium.com/s/story/timeline-us-intervention-central-america-a9bea9ebc148>

Watch the film, Harvest of Empire

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UyncOYTZfHE>

Discuss - how US intervention created the current immigration crisis?



GUATEMALA 1954

CIA DIRECTS BOMBING, INVASION AND COUP AFTER NEWLY ELECTED GOVERNMENT NATIONALIZES UNVITED FRUIT COMPANY LANDS
KILLINGS 200,000+

CUBA 1961

CIA LEADS BAY OF PIGS INVASION TO PEOPLE REVOLUTION, BUT ARE DEFEATED BY CUBAN PEOPLE



HAITI 2004

US TROOPS REMOVE DEMOCRATICALLY ELECTED LEFT-WING PRESIDENT ARISTIDE. TROOPS OCCUPY COUNTRY

redfish



PUERTO RICO 1950

HOLDING ISLAND AS A COLONY SINCE 1898 US HELPS CRUSH REBELLION DEMANDING INDEPENDENCE.



DOMINICAN REPUBLIC 1965

BOMBING AND US TROOP INVASION DURING ELECTIONS TO PREVENT ELECTION OF LEFT-WING LEADER.



EL SALVADOR 1981-92

US FUNDS AND DIRECTS DEATH SQUADS TO CRUSH POPULAR PEOPLE'S MOVEMENT.
KILLING 75,000+ AND DESTROYING MOVEMENT



HONDURAS 2009

US-BACKED COUP REMOVES DEMOCRATICALLY ELECTED PRESIDENT



NICARAGUA 1981-90

CIA FUNDS AND DIRECTS CONTRA DEATH SQUADS AGAINST POPULAR PEOPLE'S MOVEMENT, **MURDERING 50,000+ AND DESTROYING MOVEMENT**



PANAMA 1989

US TROOPS, BOMBING FORCES REGIME CHANGE, **KILLING 2,000+**

CHILE 1973

CIA-BACKED COUP OUSTS POPULAR, DEMOCRATICALLY ELECTED SOCIALIST PRESIDENT



NUMBER OF US MILITARY INTERVENTIONS SINCE 1890



US TROOPS CURRENTLY ON THE GROUND



US MILITARY BASE (INCLUDING TROOPS)

1

6

4

2

4

1

1

1

1

56

US MILITARY INTERVENTIONS IN LATIN AMERICA

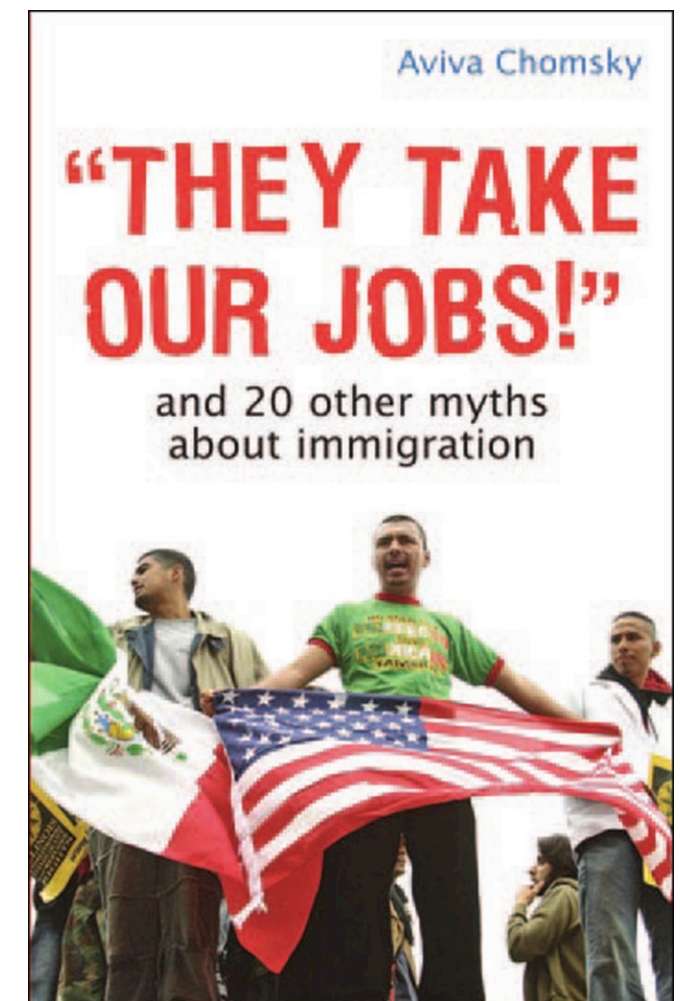
Investigation #4

How do we counteract the dominant narratives about immigration and immigrants in the US?

Read from Aviva Chomsky's book, *They Take Our Jobs: And 20 Other Myths about Immigration*

PART ONE · IMMIGRANTS AND THE ECONOMY

- Myth 1. Immigrants take American jobs · 3
- Myth 2. Immigrants compete with low-skilled workers and drive down wages · 11
- Myth 3. Unions oppose immigration because it harms the working class · 30
- Myth 4. Immigrants don't pay taxes · 36
- Myth 5. Immigrants are a drain on the economy · 39
- Myth 6. Immigrants send most of what they earn out of the country in the form of remittances · 46



Continue reading from, They Take Our Jobs

PART TWO · IMMIGRANTS AND THE LAW

Myth 7. The rules apply to everyone, so new immigrants need to follow them just as immigrants in the past did · 53

Myth 8. The country is being overrun by illegal immigrants · 58

Myth 9. The United States has a generous refugee policy · 64

PART THREE · IMMIGRATION AND RACE

Myth 10. The United States is a melting pot that has always welcomed immigrants from all over the world · 77

Myth 11. Since we are all the descendants of immigrants here, we all start on equal footing · 91

Based on the analysis provided in the readings, collectively work to develop counterarguments/talking points.

Investigation #5

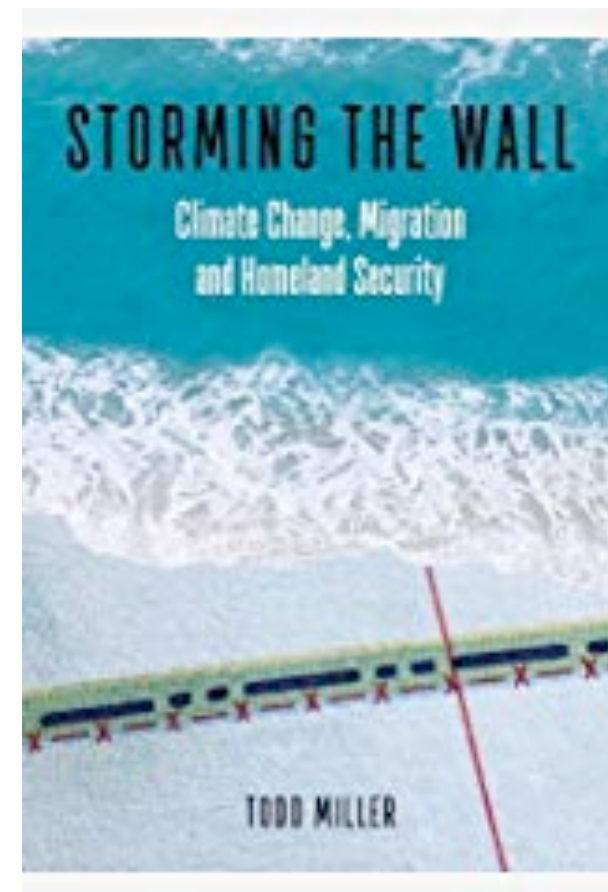
Climate and Immigration

Watch: How the Climate Crisis Is Pushing Central Americans Out of Their Homes Toward the U.S.

https://www.democracynow.org/2019/7/10/john_carlos_frey_immigration_us_mexico

Read chapter 1 & 3 from Todd Miller's book,
Storming the Wall: Climate Change, Migration and Homeland Security

Discuss - How does climate change directly impact the immigration crisis and how important is it to include in the organizing around immigrant justice?



Investigation #6

The ICE Matrix and harm done to immigrants

Matrix of ICE in Kent County



Privately owned detention centers in the US.



FATAL NEGLECT

How ICE Ignores Deaths in Detention

ACLU Reports

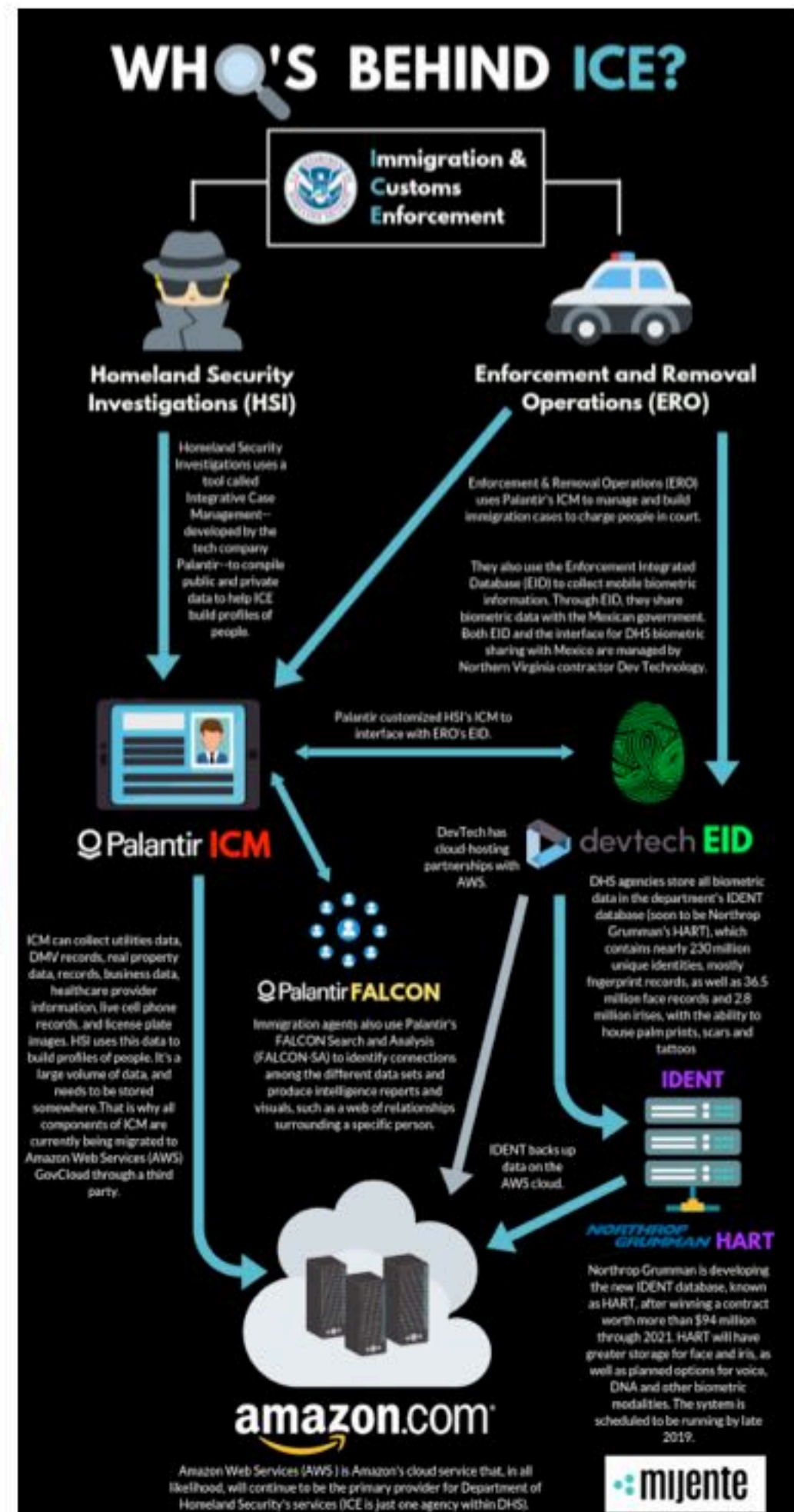
https://www.aclu.org/search/%20?f%5B0%5D=field_issues%3A270&f%5B1%5D=type%3Aasset&f%5B2%5D=field_asset_type%3Areport

AMAZON Collaborates with ICE to Separate Immigrant Families

The Amazon Web Services' cloud computing platform is the host for Palantir's Investigative Case Management (ICM) software. ICM is then used by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to manage their caseload and facilitate the tracking down and deportation of undocumented immigrants. Palantir, a data analytics firm, receives taxpayer dollars to provide these algorithms to government agencies, with its ICE contract being worth over \$51 million. For its part, Amazon in turn receives \$600,000 a month from Palantir. In addition, Amazon's new home-security company (Ring), works with hundreds of law enforcement agencies and ICE to provide video from the Ring system that can also be used to target the undocumented community.



- * We are calling on Amazon to END their collaboration with ICE.
- * Employees of Amazon & Whole Foods (also owned by Amazon) are calling for an end to Amazon's collaboration with ICE.
- * Sign our petition, which sends a direct message to Jeff Bezos, CEO of Amazon bit.ly/EmailJeffBezos
- * If you are interested in being part of our Abolish ICE work in Kent County and specifically the campaign to end Amazon's collaboration with ICE, message us at info@grrapidresponsetoice.org
- * For more information on Amazon's collaboration with ICE, see the report by Mijente, [*Who's Behind ICE? The Tech and Data Companies Fueling Deportations*](#)

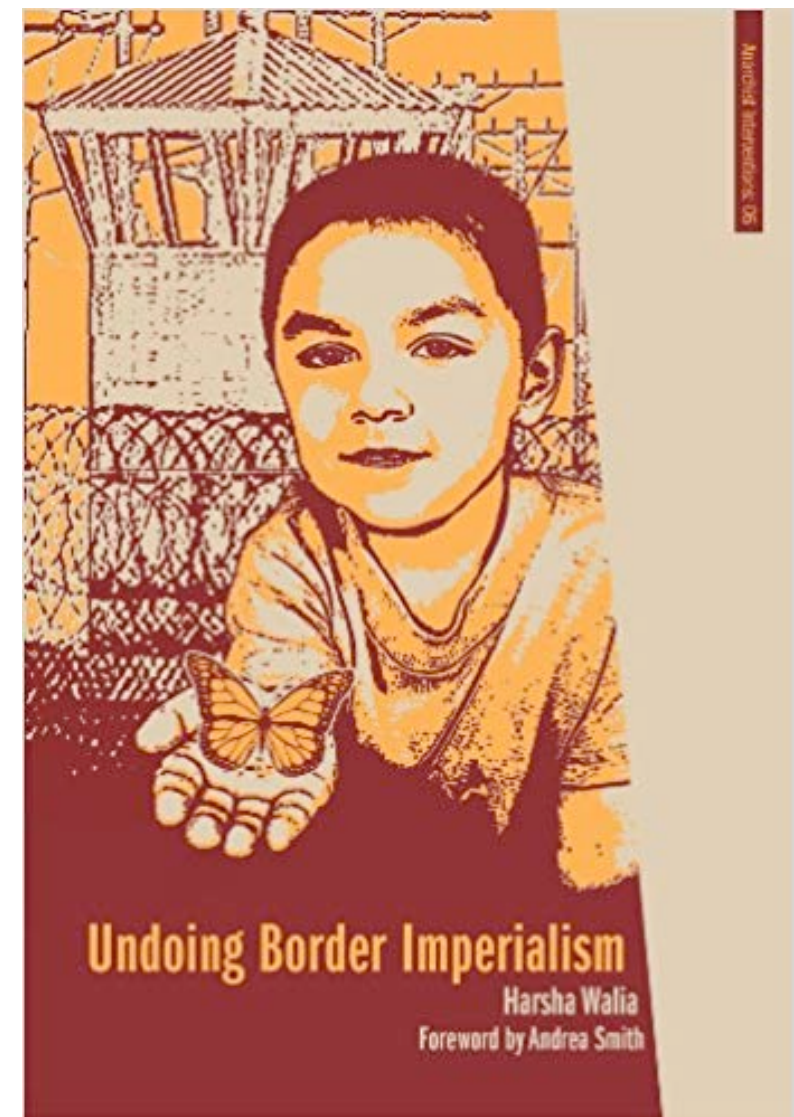


Investigation #7

Beyond Borders and Border Imperialism

Read the introduction and chapter 1 from the book, *Undoing Border Imperialism*, by Harsha Walia

Discuss - Why are borders inherently unjust? How do you feel about open borders and how would that work?



Investigation #8

How do we get Immigrant Justice?

Read the following:

The Immigrant Justice Movement in Grand Rapids Part I

<https://griid.org/2019/04/07/the-immigrant-justice-movement-in-grand-rapids-part-i/>

The Immigrant Justice Movement in Grand Rapids Part II

<https://griid.org/2019/04/10/the-immigrant-justice-movement-in-grand-rapids-part-ii/>

Discuss the difference between Immigration Reform and Immigration Justice.



"Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses
yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of
your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless,
tempest-tost to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"

#RefugeesWelcome



How is the US living up to this Message?



SI ICE ILEGA A SU CASA O
VE A ICE EN SU
COMMUNIDAD

LLAME AL 211
6 AM - 6 PM
LUNES A VIERNES

Todas la demás horas y los
fines de semana llame al
(616)238-0081



IF YOU SEE ICE IN
YOUR COMMUNITY

OR IF ICE COMES
TO YOUR HOME

CALL 211
6 AM - 6 PM M - F

or **(616)238-0081**
After Hours & Weekends



Immigration Resources

Books

American Intolerance: Our Dark History of Demonizing Immigrants, by Robert Bartholomew & Anja Reumschuessel

They Take Our Jobs! And 20 Other Myths About Immigration, by Aviva Chomsky

The End of the Myth: From the Frontier to the Border Wall in the Mind of America, by Greg Grandin

No Wall They Can Build: A Guide to borders & migration across North America, by CrimeThink

Undocumented: How Immigration Became Illegal, by Aviva Chomsky

No One is Illegal: Fighting Racism and State Violence on the US-Mexican Border, by Justin Akers Chacon & Mike Davis

We Built the Wall: How the US Keeps Out Asylum Seekers from Mexico, Central America and Beyond, by Eileen Truax

The Militarization of the US-Mexico Border 1978 - 1992, by Timothy Dunn

Undoing Border Imperialism, by Harsha Walia

Storming the Wall: Climate Change, Migration, and Homeland Security, by Todd Miller

Sand and Blood: America's Stealth War on the Mexican Border, by John Carlos Frey

Empire of Borders: The Expansion of the US Border Around the World, by Todd Miller

All-American Nativism: How the Bipartisan War on immigrants Explains Politics as We Know It, by Daniel Denvir

The Right to Stay Home: How US Policy Drives Mexican Migration, by David Bacon

No Wall They Can Build: A Guide to borders and migration across North America, by Crimethink

Drug War Capitalism, by Dawn Paley

Abolish ICE: A Passionate Plea for a More Humane Immigration System, by Natascha Elena Uhlman

Migrating to Prison: America's Obsession with Locking Up Immigrants, by Cesar Hernandez

Sanctuary: The New Underground Railroad, by Renny Golden & Michael McConnell

Sanctuary: A Resource Guide for Understanding and Participating in the Central American Refugees' Struggle, by Gary MacEoin

Online Resources

<https://www.afsc.org/key-issues/issue/defending-immigrant-rights>

<https://www.aclu.org/issues/immigrants-rights>

<https://www.wola.org/program/migration-border-security/>

<https://www.libertyellisfoundation.org/immigration-timeline>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_United_States_immigration_laws

https://www.zinnedproject.org/materials/?wpsolr_fq%5B0%5D=themes_str%3AImmigration

<http://infographic.replacenafta.org/nafta-at-25-promises-vs-reality/>

<https://fpif.org/long-road-immigration-reform/>

<https://medium.com/s/story/timeline-us-intervention-central-america-a9bea9ebc148>

http://umich.edu/~ac213/student_projects06/student_projects/usica/main.htm

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UyncOYTZfHE>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ueNWIMyUNy4>

<https://www.kcet.org/shows/link-voices/deportations-assassinations-and-dictator-nations-a-timeline-of-us-intervention-in>

https://fpif.org/a_plan_colombia_for_mexico/

https://fpif.org/plan_mexico/

<https://theintercept.com/2019/02/10/us-mexico-border-fence-history/>

<https://vimeo.com/121373551>

<https://michiganimmigrant.org/frontpage>

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

<https://unitedwedream.org/>

<https://www.immigrantjustice.org/>