

LANG 210: Language, Culture and Society
ONLINE – Winter Session 2014
(CORE: U.S. Diversity and Social Understanding)



What do these images tell us about the ways that we as U.S. citizens view, understand and interpret Latin American immigrants?

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

This course will focus on a critical analysis of the ways Latin American immigration and Latin American immigrants are constructed in the media. We will do so by addressing questions such as: Who are the immigrants? What do they look like? Why are they here? How are we, even in Massachusetts, affected by their presence? What is their ultimate goal? How do we use the ways in which the image of the immigrant is constructed in our understanding and believe of who they are? We will engage in responses to these questions in order to understand how television news reports present, represent, construct and manipulate who the immigrant is as a way to create alarmist and sensationalist propaganda. Do these images lead to uninformed and reactionary tactics void of any form of analytical support and factual evidence?

As a counter-measure to the ways in which television news reports engage in their construction of Latin American immigration and immigrants, we will read material from the perspective of the immigrants themselves. How are the images constructed in the readings different from those we see on television? How are their experiences different/similar to our own as U.S. citizens? In what ways do the stories we are exposed to about the experiences of Latin American immigration and immigrants influence/affect the ways in which we understand their presence in the United States?

Finally, we will also address the differences between Latinos and Latin American immigrants, and why it is important that we as conscious citizens of the United States avoid the use of such terms as “illegal’s” and “aliens”.