NOTE to prospective students: This syllabus is intended to provide students who are considering taking this course an idea of what they will be learning. A more detailed syllabus will be available on the course site for enrolled students and may be more current than this sample syllabus.

HST 369—
Immigration to the United States since 1880
4 credits

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Note: This course is part of the OSU Baccalaureate Core as it fulfills the requirement for Difference, Power, and Discrimination. It is also a WIC (Writing Intensive Course) that satisfies the WIC requirement for Liberal Studies (but not History) majors.

The readings and written assignments for HST 369, a fully online course, will consume about 120 hours per term for 4 credits.

Technical Requirements, Communication

This is a fully online course, so reliable access to the internet is essential to succeeding in the course. This is a demanding course that requires upper-division standing or the completion of HST 201, 202, and 203. Passing the course will require a great deal of reading, writing, and analysis and submitting, at the end of each week, a variety of written assignments. The four-credit course is designed to consume about twelve hours of work per week.

Since the course is fully online, you will require regular access to a computer with an Internet connection (preferably high speed, since the course contains some multi-media). You should also be comfortable with: navigating on the Internet; using e-mail; uploading and downloading Microsoft Word documents.

I ordinarily respond to e-mails within 12 hours and assigned work within 24 hours.
Catalogue Description:

The history of immigrants to the U.S. after 1880. This course focuses on the experience of immigrants and their children in the U.S. and on the history of U.S. immigration policy. It includes several types of writing assignments: non-graded, drafts and revisions, and a research paper using outside primary and secondary sources and scholarly notations specific to the discipline of history. HST 369 satisfies WIC requirements for Liberal Studies majors but not History majors. (Baccalaureate Core Course) (Writing Intensive Source) It is taught only via E-campus.

Required Texts:


You will also be required to read an autobiography written by an immigrant (or the child of an immigrant) to the United States since the 1870s and at least five articles. You must do your own research to locate the autobiography and one of the articles.

NOTE: For textbook accuracy, please always check the textbook list at the OSU Bookstore website. Sample syllabi may not have the most up-to-date information.

About the Books

Guarding the Golden Door focuses on immigration policy in the United States since the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. Roger Daniels is one of the most prominent historians of American immigration. This book focuses more on what immigrants faced than how they acted; it sheds a great deal of light on the changing nature of federal policies.

Workshop to Office is a specialized study, a monograph (based on primary and secondary sources) that is very well written and focused. It has a precise and nuanced thesis regarding Italian-American women’s changing commitment to their families. It shows how the nature of that commitment could change dramatically in a single generation while retaining much of its intensity.
Crossing Over is one of the most engaging and incisive books that I have read in the past couple years. Martinez is not an historian or an academic, but he did a great deal of personal research among Mexicanos on both sides of the border for this book, and he uses that experience to give readers a very personalized view of how migration to and from the United States affects people on both sides of the border.

Writing History is a brief but useful introduction to how historians go about conceiving, researching, and writing a research paper. If you have already written a major research paper for an upper-division history course, you may find this somewhat redundant. But every hour you spend reading this is likely to save you several down the road.

DPD (Difference, Power, and Discrimination) Aspects of the Course

This is a DPD (Difference, Power, and Discrimination) course in the baccalaureate core, so it meets some particular requirements. It requires students to think critically about the unequal distribution of power in the United States. This is a history course that treats the history of immigration, so it will pay considerable attention to: how the dominant society has attributed particular meanings and statuses to different immigrant groups; how various immigrant groups have had access to varying degrees of power; how immigration has intersected with ethnicity, race, gender, social class, and age to affect discrimination; how these dynamics have changed from the nineteenth century to the present;

WIC (Writing Intensive Course) Aspects of the Course

This is a WIC (Writing Intensive Course) and must therefore include some specific features and requirements. Most importantly, the course is designed to focus both on writing and its subject matter (the history of immigration). The course requires a series of essays so that students can continually write and receive feedback on their writing throughout the course. It includes ungraded (but required) writing assignments and requires students to submit early and final drafts of some assignments. There are several scholarly styles of documentation, such as MLA and APA. This course requires students to use the Chicago Manual of Style for its final assignment (that incorporates both primary and secondary sources), for that is the method of notation used most commonly by academic historians. That final
assignment requires students to locate and to utilize a major primary source and several secondary sources that consider a similar theme.

**Assignments** (due by the end of each Saturday and Sunday—discussion answers are due on Saturdays and replies on Sundays, short essays on Saturdays, critiques on Sundays, and the longer essays on Sundays, except for the final long paper, which is due the Saturday following final’s week)

**Week #1**

Read/View: Instructor’s general lecture on what history is for, weekly introductory lecture; Storey, entire.

Discussion #1: Introductions, Class Contract, Practice Question

Post on the discussion board: an introduction sharing what you would like to learn from the course; your broader educational goals; your ideas for the class contract (which is explained in detail below); an answer of roughly 300 words to this question, using your own experience and observations as evidence: Does the United States offer great opportunity to immigrants? If you don’t have much in the way of first-hand experience or observations of immigration, you should read and utilize one of the narratives from the six assigned for week #2.

See the Approaching the Assignments and rubrics in the syllabus for a fuller explanation of this sort of assignment.

Discussion #2:

After reading Storey and the requirements for the independent-research project, please answer these two questions: 1) What aspect of this project do you think will be most challenging? 2) How is doing historical research and writing different from other types of research or writing that you have done?

See the Approaching the Assignments of the syllabus for a fuller explanation of this sort of assignment.

**Week #2**

Read/View: Weekly introductory lecture; Daniels, entire; two of the immigrant (not the narratives of people born in the U.S.) narratives from *The Life Stories of Undistinguished Americans: As Told by Themselves*, published in 1906, and available at: http://books.google.com/books/about/The_life_stories_ofUndistinguished_
sections from two of these manuscript census returns (choose from Mohave County 1900 in Arizona, Stearns County 1900 in Minnesota, Wasco County 1900 in Oregon, Philadelphia County 1910 in Pennsylvania, Natrona County 1900 in Wyoming) available at: http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~cenfiles/; at least three articles from the San Francisco News and the “20 views of the Manzanar War Relocation Authority Center available at http://www.sfmuseum.org/war/evactxt.html; the video interview with Former Manzanar Committee Chair, Sui Kunitomi Embrey, available at http://blog.manzanarcommittee.org/2009/10/19/video.

Short Essays #1:

Post two 500-word essays answering these two questions: 1) Which source, the recollections, the photographs, the newspaper articles, or the manuscript census, is most useful for understanding the nature of immigrant life? Which type of primary source tells us the most about immigrants? 2) Was anti-immigrant sentiment based largely on fears of economic competition or simply racism? Put another way: What was the root fear behind the anti-immigration movement?

Post two critiques of other students’ essays.

See the Approaching the Assignments and rubrics in the syllabus for a fuller explanation of this sort of assignment.

Week #3

Read/View: Weekly introductory lecture

Early Draft of Long Essay #1; Discussion #3:

Post an essay of 2,000 to 2,500 words on this question, and use the material assigned up to this point in the course as evidence: What was the most important variable in determining immigrant success? You might consider such variables as immigrants’ attitudes and cultures as well as variations in how native-born Americans treated them as well as such variables as gender, social class, and age.

Discussion #3:

Post on the discussion board two observations and a question in response to the first set of readings.

See the Approaching the Assignments and rubrics in the syllabus for a fuller explanation of this sort of assignment.
Week #4

Read/View: Weekly introductory lecture

Final Draft of Long Essay #1

See the Approaching the Assignments and rubrics in the syllabus for a fuller explanation of this sort of assignment.

Week #5


Short Essays #2

Post two 500-word answers on each of these two questions: 1) Cohen’s study deals largely with immigrant families in the United States and Martinez’s deals largely with families who were fractured by immigration. Was that difference an important one? Did being an immigrant who was part of an intact family much matter? Why or why not? 2) Compare the arguments made by the videos and other material on the Minuteman and Sanctuary websites. How can two groups come to such radically different positions on and descriptions of immigration? For example, do they disagree on facts, or do these two sides simply have different visions for America?

Post critiques of at least two answers.

Week #6

Weekly introductory lecture

Early Draft of Long Essay #2; Discussion #4:

Post an essay of 2,000 to 2,500 words on this question, and use the material assigned up to this point in the course as evidence: Immigrants to the United States have often come from conservative cultures that stressed family obligations rather than individual achievement. The U.S. has, since early in the twentieth century, put a great deal of emphasis on personal liberty, on individualism. What have been the most successful strategies employed by immigrant groups to ensure that living in the U.S. would not bring cultural and social fragmentation? Have women and men, adults and children reacted differently to the U.S.?

Discussion #4:
Post on the discussion board two observations and a question in response to the second set of readings.

Note: By this week you must contact the instructor for approval of the autobiography that you intend to read for weeks #9 and #10.

Week #7
Weekly introductory lecture
Final Draft of Long Essay #2
Note: By this week you must contact the instructor for approval of the three or more additional articles that you intend to read for week #9.

Week #8
Weekly introductory lecture
Discussion #5:
What difficulties are you encountering in preparing for the remaining assignments?
Note: By this week you must contact the instructor if you intend to answer a question of your own choosing for the last paper.

Week #9
Weekly introductory lecture
Read/view: Weekly introductory lecture; an autobiography that describes in detail the life of an immigrant community in the United States; these two articles: (Vecoli, “Contadini in Chicago: A Critique of The Uprooted,” Journal of American History 51 (1981) and Kazal, “Revisiting Assimilation,” American Historical Review 100 (1995), both available online through the OSU Library; at least three additional articles from scholarly journals accessed through the OSU Library that relate to the immigrant community that your autobiography describes. (See the “Long Essays” section of the syllabus for more detail.)

Short Essays #3
Post two 500-word essays answering these two questions: 1) Which of the articles that you read was the most useful for helping you to understand the lives of the people described in the autobiography? 2) Did the immigrants
described in the autobiography find what they were looking for in the United States? How and how not? Did gender affect their degree of success?

Post two critiques

Week #10

Read/View: Weekly Introductory lecture

Early Draft Long Essay #3:

Post an essay of 2,000 to 2,500 words on this question (or, if you have permission from the instructor, a question of your own choosing), using the material from weeks 8 and 9 as evidence: To what extent did the immigrant group you read about in the autobiography and the articles assimilate in the U.S.? Did they retain significant elements of their culture? How and how not?

See the Approaching the Assignments and rubrics in the syllabus for a fuller explanation of this assignment.

Week 11

Final of Long Essay #3

See the Approaching the Assignments of the syllabus for a fuller explanation of this sort of assignment.

Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes

Students will increase their knowledge of the history of immigrants in the United States and learn to use historical evidence by examining a great deal of historical material (primary and secondary sources) and using it to answer a series of analytical questions. Successful essays will use sound, accurate historical evidence to substantiate their generalizations.

Students will enhance their understanding of how and why historical change occurs by examining primary and secondary sources describing such change. Several of the essay questions ask students to consider and explain historical change, and excellent essays will be sensitive to change over time.

Students will foster their understanding of and empathy for societies and people with beliefs different from their own by reading both first-hand and scholarly accounts of diverse societies and cultures and by repeatedly interacting online with fellow students, people who will have varied
understandings, beliefs, opinions, and experiences about immigration. Course essay questions require students to compare different cultures.

We shall pay particular attention to the history of racism and prejudice as it has related to immigration. The course will consider both anti-immigration policies and popular anti-immigration sentiment. We shall study both what such expressions have revealed about the dominant society and how immigrant groups have coped with and reacted to such prejudice. We shall also study how immigration has affected other social categories of difference and oppression, including gender, race, ethnicity, and social class.

Students will learn to critique scholarly arguments by reading both scholarly books and each others’ analytical essays. Course essay questions ask students to identify and assess the arguments of the historians they read and to offer feedback to each other on the quality of their own scholarly arguments.

Students will learn to make historical arguments by answering ten analytical questions that require them to formulate theses that clearly answer those questions. They must support those arguments by utilizing historical evidence gleaned from their course work.

Students will learn to write clearly and concisely by writing ten graded essays, and they will learn how to revise essays by utilizing feedback from the instructor. They will also learn how to write in the format that academic historians use. Peers will respond to seven of those essays, and the instructor will read and critique all ten. Students and the instructor alike will point out grammatical or spelling errors and suggest places where the essay could be tightened or clarified. Students will improve in their knowledge and use of standard written English. The instructor will also focus on more analytical elements of the essays.

Students will learn to work together cooperatively, to learn from each other by participating in four discussion boards in which they both post answers to analytical questions and respond to each others’ answers. We shall construct a class contract or etiquette guide which details how we will create an online environment in which people feel safe offering and receiving criticism of each others’ work.

**Critical Thinking**

The course focuses on the development skills in critical thinking. It requires students to absorb, assess, and interpret historical evidence in the service of answering questions that do not have a clear-cut or “right answer.” Indeed,
Historians who study subjects for many years routinely come to different conclusions or answers. The course is therefore concerned with the process of historical interpretation and argumentation rather than on simply memorizing or acquiring factual knowledge. The ability to be guided by what one has already learned while not being blinded to the possibility that such learning has been partial or even mistaken is critical to this process.

**Communication Responsibilities**

Each student is responsible for maintaining reliable e-mail. This is crucial for your success and for the success of the class as a whole. I recommend having a backup plan (a friend who is willing to let you use her or his e-mail in a pinch) in case yours crashes for more than a day or two.

**Grading**

93-100% A  
90-92.99 A-  
87-89.99 B+  
83-86.99 B  
80-82.99 B-  
77-79.99 C+  
73-76.99 C  
70-72.99 C-  
67-69.99 D+  
63-66.99 D  
60-62.99 D-  
Up to 60 F

**Weighting**

30% 3 sets of online essays (worth 10 points each)  
60% Three six-page essays (worth 20 points each)  
10% 5 sets of nongraded discussions (worth 2 points each)

**Grading Rubrics**

The instructor will assess your work by considering three broad sets of characteristics:
1) Argument. Your essays should have a clear thesis statement that answers the question in their first paragraph. The body of the essay should stick to that thesis. An excellent thesis will be nuanced, will demonstrate an awareness that there are multiple ways of addressing the question.

2) Evidence. Your essays should use evidence from the course assignments to support its thesis. That evidence should be drawn from multiple sources, including primary sources (sources generated by historical actors rather than by historians) if they are assigned. An excellent essay will provide context for the evidence it uses and will utilize a lot of evidence. It is acceptable to use a small amount of evidence from outside the class, but it is not required, and people should rely wholly or largely on the assigned readings for course work.

3) Style. Your essays should be clearly written and should be free from factual errors and distracting grammatical, typographical, and spelling errors. An excellent essay will use concise and direct prose and will feature well-organized paragraphs with clear topic sentences followed by evidence that supports them.

Extensions

I do not ordinarily accept late assignments unless you have requested an extension before the due date, although if you turn in one of the 6-page essays within 24 hours of the due date, I’ll penalize it by just 50%. Late early drafts will result in a 20% deduction for each day that they are late.

If you unable to complete an assignment on time due to circumstances beyond your control (illness, family emergencies) please let me know as soon as possible--certainly before the assignment is due. We shall then negotiate a revised due date. This goes for discussion deadlines as well as the six-page essays. I do not ordinarily grant more than two extensions per term.

All work must be turned in by the date and time of the final assignment.

Incompletes

Students who have completed at least 50% of the course work may request an incomplete if circumstances beyond their control arise late in the term to keep them from completing the course on time. Incompletes are not designed to bail out students who take more credits than they have time for,
and requests for incompletes must be received by the date of the final assignment.

**Class Etiquette Guide**

The etiquette guide is a list of principals or practices generated by and agreed upon by the class that we shall all try to follow.

What goes in the etiquette guide? Each one is different. Most of them are concerned primarily with spelling out what constitutes respectful communication.

At the end of the first week of class I shall synthesize everyone’s ideas for the guide into a document that I shall post as a new forum on the discussion board and will ask you to review and comment on the document.

The etiquette guide is not intended as a club with which to punish people who get “out of line.” Rather, it is a tool for us to create an online environment in which we can interact vigorously and respectfully with each others’ ideas and work.

**Approaching the Assignments**

**Discussions**

These five discussions are your chance to do a lot of writing and discussing without having to worry about getting graded. You get two points for each discussion that you complete. Please be sure to post for all the questions or topics that each discussion requires and to post at least one reply to someone else’s discussion post.

**Short Essays, Critiques**

There are three sets of these assignments. They require both brief answers (of about 500 words for each essay) and at least two critiques of other people’s answers. These critiques should point out strengths and weaknesses in the answers (do they have a clear and consistent thesis that answers the question, and do they present evidence to support those theses?) rather than using the critiques as a platform to advance your own answer to the question or to debate the question. The discussions are the place for those sorts of posts.
Long Essays

Long essays (from 2,000 to 2,500 words) are assigned every three weeks or so during the term. Students are required to submit both early and final drafts of these essays, and the early drafts must be at least 1,250 words.

With the exception of the last assignment, it is sufficient (for all the essays posted in the discussions and the first two longer essays) to provide references only after quotations, with the editor and page numbers in parentheses. It is not necessary to list your sources at the end of the paper.

The last long essay should use the standard form of references (footnotes and a bibliography) stipulated in the *Chicago Manual of Style* by Kate Turabian. This system is summarized in Storey. A fuller version can be accessed through this link: [http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html](http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html). Each paragraph that presents evidence should end with a footnote that lists the sources of the evidence used in the paragraph, and the essay should be followed by a bibliography that lists all the sources used in the essay. This last essay must use the two articles specified above and at least three others from scholarly journals (such as the *American Historical Review*, the *Journal of American History*, the *Journal of American Ethnic History*) accessed via the Oregon State Library. Here is the link to the OSU Library's page for Ecampus: [http://osulibrary.oregonstate.edu/](http://osulibrary.oregonstate.edu/). This link provides access to such resources as: information on how to borrow books from the library (and others in the Pacific Northwest) without visiting the Corvallis campus; the general catalogue (useful for finding immigrant autobiographies); finding aids such as *American History and Life* (to use in finding articles relevant to the autobiography one selects); and e-journals (so that one can access those journals electronically).

Tips on Essay Writing

All of the essays, brief and more extensive, should be interpretive and analytical. I am not looking for a book review or a summation of what you found interesting in the readings. Rather, I am looking for an engaging and convincing answer to a thorny question.

The trick to writing a strong essay is to both construct an interesting argument that answers the question and to back it up with evidence.

The evidence is of two general types: primary and secondary. Primary sources are documents (or maps, paintings, photographs) produced by the
people under study, the historical actors. Secondary texts are written by scholars, by the people doing the studying. Diaries, personal letters, or census returns are primary sources. Secondary sources are attempts to make sense out of the past, usually by people with no first-hand experience of the period they are interpreting. Your essays should use evidence from both primary and secondary sources when both are available.

I have provided an example of a brief essay at the end of this section. I wrote it many years ago in a class at Northwestern University on the colonial U.S. Notice the essay's structure: the thesis is declared clearly (I hope) at the close of the first paragraph. Each of the next several paragraphs then supports that thesis by marshaling several pieces of evidence from an historical source. Each of these paragraphs begins with a topic sentence, a sentence that links the evidence (in the body of the paragraph) to the thesis (the sentence at the close of the first paragraph). The essay closes with a brief conclusion that restates the thesis and speaks to larger ramifications. I have also pasted an example of an excellent student essay written for this class from a previous year.

It is important to be consistent--and being consistent is much harder than it looks. You will inevitably find that the body of your paper begins to drift from your thesis. Do not panic. Simply make adjustments. Revise your thesis or rework the body to fit it more closely.

I expect the essays to be clear. Brilliance is not much use if no one can understand you. Strive for clear, concise sentences.

Try to be sensitive to complexity in all of your essays. I often ask students to agree or disagree to an assertion. Take a firm stand in answering such questions, but the answer can be nuanced as well as firm, can, for example, agree in some respects and disagree in others.

I shall of course give you more detailed and particular feedback as we go along; the course is designed for that. I find that my own writing improves dramatically with critical feedback, and many students have said the same thing. Think of writing as being like marriage: an ongoing process. We never arrive at perfection, and we get closer to it by working hard, not by being innately talented. Online tutoring for writing is available at: http://ecampus.oregonstate.edu/services/student-services/online-tutoring/.

Example of an Essay
Here is a two-page essay that I wrote in 1983 for a graduate course in colonial history at Northwestern University. As you can see, it would not win any literary awards. But it is concise and, I hope, clear. It utilizes evidence from a primary source (John Hammond's 1656 tract extolling the virtues of Virginia and Maryland to potential settlers). Note the essay's structure. Each paragraph in the body (paragraphs 2, 3, 4, and 5) backs up the thesis (which is at the end of the introductory paragraph). The first sentence of each of those four paragraphs is the topic sentence. They link the evidence presented in the paragraphs’ body to the thesis.

John Hammond claimed that he had lived in Virginia and Maryland for twenty-one years. But his 1656 pamphlet on the "Two Fruitfull Sisters" should be read with skepticism. According to him, the colonies were agricultural cornucopias populated by humane and law-abiding men and women. Hammond was trying to attract settlers to the Chesapeake, and he exaggerated its strong points and glossed over its faults. A careful reading of his tract suggests that life there was in fact difficult.

Life in early Virginia had been disagreeable. According to Hammond, the first settlers had been avaricious and cruel adventurers who filled the colony with kidnapped youths, convicts, and infamous women. The early colonists had toiled constantly, lacked fair courts, and lived in fear of devastating attacks from Natives. Even the ministers roared in the taverns. The meanest and lowest elements of England founded an exploitative and precarious society in the Chesapeake.

Hammond insisted that Virginia had overcome its early disadvantages by the 1650s, but his tract should have made prospective emigrants doubtful. He cautioned indentured servants to be very careful about choosing their masters and admitted that some women worked in the fields. Hot summers made labor unpleasant. Unarmed people were vulnerable to Indian attacks. The government circumscribed the lives of the poor, for arrivals who could not pay their fares had to become indentured. No one could leave Virginia without permission. Ministers remained scarce.

Hammond did not conceal the Chesapeake's notoriety. "The country," he admitted, "is reputed to be an unhealthy place, a nest of Rogues, whores, dissolute and rooking persons; a place of intolerable labour, bad usage and hard Diet, &c." (Hammond, p. 7). He also acknowledged that the colonists had a reputation for abusing their servants. Hammond, of course, dismissed these criticisms. But popular beliefs are seldom devoid of factual foundation.

Hammond's pamphlet also provided clues about what type of people found Virginia and Maryland attractive. He addressed himself largely to the lower
classes. England's convicts, beggars, and laboring poor could improve their lots in the two colonies. They would find a pleasant climate, mild labor, and abundant food. In a few years they could own fertile land. If Hammond and other promoters like him succeeded, many of England's meanest and poorest people traveled to the Chesapeake and expected to become comfortable without expending much effort.

Corroborative evidence is needed, but Hammond's tract suggests that life in the Chesapeake was much harsher than he acknowledged. He admitted that Virginia's early years had been marred by severe hardships and exploitation and that it suffered from a low reputation in England in the 1650s. To be sure, he insisted that living conditions had improved and that the region's detractors erred. But even as Hammond praised the "Two Fruitfull Sisters" he indicated that they still contained ruthless masters and hostile Native Americans. His attempt to attract convicts and beggars to Virginia and Maryland boded ill for the Chesapeake's future prospects. Perhaps living conditions there improved, but the process must have been more gradual than Hammond asserted.

Example of an Excellent Research Paper
(From a previous class)

The Remarkable Irish Catholics: Assimilation in America
HST 369

Between 1845 and 1852, Ireland’s potato crops experienced a blight that left an already impoverished Irish Catholic population destitute. On small plots of land, they could grow nothing else that would sustain them; during this period and the years after, they would emigrate from their homeland to the United States for relief from poverty, disease, and starvation. Even up until the late 1920’s, these immigrants chanced a voyage to a new world to escape poverty brought on by the lack of land available for inheritance. Because Irish Catholics immigrated mainly to escape poverty and famine in Ireland, they assimilated in the ways that affected their socioeconomic growth, but kept some significant elements of their culture, such as their faith and other traditions that marked their ethnic identity.

Historians have defined assimilation a number of different ways. Russell Kazal differentiates between those who assimilated “on terms somewhat of their own making,” and those who “forsook that culture for ‘the single-minded culture of power, wealth, and personal gain’ associated with the middle class—the culture, presumably, of ‘capitalist America.'”\(^1\) In the case of Irish Catholics, their assimilation contains elements of both.
One way in which Irish immigrants were quick to assimilate to American culture is to give up their traditional marriage practices. Instead of having their marriages arranged for them by their parents, young couples were free to choose their own spouses. In her article titled “Come You All Courageously,” Ruth-Ann Harris said, “Many immigrants discovered they could enjoy romantic love for the first time in America, the concept having been either alien or impracticable in their natal countries.” Without financial pressure to marry, many Irish women chose to wait until later in life. Though some immigrants did ask their parents to find a suitable spouse in Ireland, most of them were older.

Kitty McInerney, who left her Ireland home in 1925, at age 17, would get to make the choice without input from family members. As Christopher Prince, her grandson, said, “She knew quite well, at age seventeen, she would not likely see her mother, father, or dearest grandparents ever again.” Ironically, Kitty’s choice subverted her freedom. Her husband, Michael, had no accountability for his alcoholism and abuse because, like Kitty, he had left most of his family in Ireland. He was another Irish Catholic who had immigrated as a young teen, and he too embraced the new marriage tradition—choosing someone he had always “yearned for: genuine, maternal and stable.”

Another cultural aspect quickly abandoned was the concept of inheritance and land ownership. Most young people who emigrated from Ireland were not the oldest siblings and therefore, didn’t stand to inherit land or dowry. Instead, they worked hard to make their own living. While heirlooms were once cherished possessions, those families experiencing mobility didn’t keep items like dishes and other artifacts handed down. Land ownership was important to this group, who’d never had a prospect in Ireland; even home renters sacrificed for the opportunity to own a grave, if they could—a “piece of ownership was prized as highly as any acre of farmland in Ireland and indeed, in many families, was as contested.” In the mid-1800’s, the opportunity to make one’s own living without an obligation to support one’s parents or be subject to their rule gave Irish immigrants a completely different perspective about inheritance than they’d had in the old country.

In Kitty’s final days, she was able to realize her long-time dream of owning land and a three-bedroom house in California. After years of living in slummy apartments, when her children grew up and her husband finally passed away, she was able to afford it. This would have been unthinkable, barring marriage to a landowner, had she stayed in Ireland.

Irish immigrants, particularly women, abandoned their culture by establishing independence from their parents. In Ireland, children were their parents’ retirement plan; adult offspring would support their parents after they could no longer work. With no expectation of supporting their parents, immigrants were free to work towards improving their station in life, instead of following Irish culture and remaining in their father’s household until marriage. Even if they never rose to middle class, their children would have a better chance of doing so, especially women. According to Ely Janis, author of “Petticoat Revolutionaries,” second generation Irish-American women in the early 1880’s “embraced occupations like teaching as careers, and these women generally experienced significantly higher occupational mobility than Irish males in the United States.” While Kitty never rose above working class status, her dedication to her seventeen children ensured that they would. As Prince wrote, “In time, Kitty’s seventeen children grew up, started their own families, and flourished throughout California and across the country.” Unlike children in Ireland, her children were free to pursue their own careers without patriarchal bounds. As Harris discovered in her collection of emigrant letters, the “primary motivation for women’s emigration to America was the desire to improve their
This ability enabled them to prosper, a stark contrast to the dowry/inheritance system in Ireland in which class mobility was almost nil. Even employed as domestic workers, Irish women tended to sacrifice in order to educate their children, so they would be able to have skilled employment. The move from working class often took only a generation for Irish immigrants in America.

Irish immigrant women also abandoned other cultural aspects of their homeland, given the chance at upward mobility. For example, they began to expect the respect that middle class American women had at the time, rather than be seen as a lesser-than domestic servant. As Janis noted, “Using the term ‘ladies’ was a conscious design by Irish American women to assert their gentility, which was often challenged in American public culture by such stereotypes as Bridget (the young, lazy, and gullible newly arrived immigrant domestic) and Biddy, (the older, oafish, and rebellious servant.)” During the early 1880’s, some Irish American women (who were considered radical) worked for their own social and economic reform while they were supporting Ireland’s fight to be free from Britain. These factors helped the Irish American immigrants, especially the second and subsequent generations, to improve their upward mobility.

In fact, the nationalism and political activism that arose in the Irish community during the late 1800’s was an effort on their part to assimilate to American culture. As David Brundage, author of “Recent Directions in the History of Irish American Nationalism” said, “the driving force behind Irish American nationalism (even its most militant varieties) was an effort to win social acceptance and personal success in the face of intense anti-Irish and anti-Catholic prejudice in the United States.” In short, it was a way to prove their worth as active contributors to society and show their mettle as people worthy of the middle class.

In fact, young Irish females who were used to being subject to a patriarchal society drastically challenged traditional Irish gender roles. Whereas, in Ireland, their families had “enforced this system of female dependence and sexual repression,” but in America, as Harris said, they enjoyed their freedom. Even before the second generation, single Irish women who worked as domestics were autonomous, not being subject to their fathers’ control. The advent of the Irish Ladies’ League in the late 1800’s gave opportunity for Irish women to be involved in politics, ironically to help free Ireland—a place where they wouldn’t have the freedom to do so—from British control. At the time, any sort of political work or other skilled labor would have been unheard of for women in Ireland.

The desire to escape poverty and climb the socioeconomic ladder was the common factor in all of the cultural changes Irish Catholics experienced. New immigrants embraced land ownership, new marriage traditions, autonomy for single women, and they sacrificed so that second and subsequent generations could pursue skilled labor careers. Kitty is the quintessential Irish-American female in that regard. However, there were some significant cultural aspects that Irish immigrants did not typically abandon.

One of the most ostensible factors of their culture, which is still evident today, is their Catholic faith. During the mid-1800’s, what Kazal terms an “anti-Catholic nativism” dominated the American mindset. As over a million Irish immigrants landed in America, most of them Catholic, Americans were hesitant to welcome them. However, they were accustomed to oppression by the Protestants in Ireland, so they did not feel compelled to reconsider their religion in order to fit into their new lifestyle. Unlike the Protestants, Irish Catholics didn’t generally marry other nationalities within Catholicism until the 1900’s. The first, second and third generations mainly married only other Irish Catholics. Even now, according to fourth generation Irish Catholic Jennifer Casey, who is married to another fourth generation Irish
Catholic, spouses don’t necessarily have to be Irish, but they do have to be Catholic. “The wedding has to be in a Catholic Church,” she said. “And you can’t get married in the Catholic Church unless you’re Catholic.” When asked what she considered the most significant Irish tradition she followed, she replied, “Being Catholic and doing Catholic things.”

Despite the hardships Kitty McInerney faced, she remained faithful to her Catholic upbringing. Prince said, “Kitty was a devout Catholic and did not believe in divorcing a man to whom she had committed her life, regardless of his sickness, nor did she believe in artificially preventing what she believed God had planned for her.” Despite leaving her beloved lifestyle in her native land, Kitty held on to the faith she had brought with her.

Though most Irish Catholics remained Catholic, as in other aspects of life, some women pushed back against the patriarchal view of gender roles. A notable exception to adhering to the Catholic faith was the women’s political movement called the Ladies’ Land League, which sought to help their compatriots in Ireland attain freedom from British rule. In Cleveland, Ohio, a bishop named Richard Gilmour forbade the League from continuing their meetings. The president, Mary Rowland, and others like her met his decree and eventual excommunication of these women with disdain. She said, “The stigma of immodesty, indelicacy, and political brawling you cast upon us, I fling it back.” Not all women opposed the Catholic Church’s teaching that she “must live within the modesty of the home” and “be the ornament of the family circle,” but enough of them did that it served as an “introduction to public participation” for Irish-American women. Despite the women’s liberation movement, which was part and parcel for Catholicism across ethnic lines, Catholic Irish immigrants remained faithful to their denominational background.

The other aspect of their culture, which has been intact but ever evolving, that they did not abandon wholly is their identity and traditions. Irish Catholics continue to identify themselves as such and remain proud of their heritage. From outside appearance, they seem to be wholly assimilated to American culture, yet they have their own subculture. As Marion Casey said in her article “Family, History, and Irish America,” “families know they are Irish but cannot articulate that much further.” In fact, Casey goes on to describe how recently genealogy has served as an income-producing endeavor for some in Ireland as Irish-Americans trace their roots back to their ancestral home. Some of them even go as far as collecting literature and other intellectual items from Ireland, Casey said, revealing “how reading habits intersect with or inform the nascent ethnic identity of the third generation.” Irish Americans aren’t distinguishable from other Anglo-Saxon Americans, except for certain traditions. Art forms, such as Irish storytelling, Ceili and Contra dancing, and folk music, coupled with traditional Irish foods, such as Irish Christmas cake, corned beef and cabbage, Guinness stout beer, and Irish whiskey all set Irish Americans apart in a subtle subculture of America.

As Irish Americans slowly assimilated to their new country, and Americans began to accept them, ethnicity existed as what Kazal termed a “new pluralistic social order.” Their presence caused a slight shift in American culture, and adapting to American culture resulted in a drastic shift from theirs. Conzen described it as “the notion that what is distinctively American has been itself a product of this synergistic encounter of multiple peoples and cultures.” Their new subculture, several generations later, is a dual ethnicity, fully American but Irish in spirit. As other cultures, it is ever-changing generation by generation, its “adaptability and fluidity of ethnic identity and traditions along with changes to the class structure.” The Irish culture in America is decidedly different from that in Ireland; generations of Irish-Americans have created their own, albeit subtle, ethnic identity.
Though the Irish Catholic immigrants abandoned some of the key traditions and values from their homeland, they kept their faith and some of their ethnic identity. In recent times, that ethnic association has been revived as Irish-Americans search for their roots. America would not be the same without the Irish traditions adopted by those who came searching for a better life. Poverty and disease brought them here, and their indomitable spirit allowed them to adapt and eventually prosper in their new land.
Notes

3 Christopher Prince, The Remarkable Life of Kitty McInerney: How a Poor Irish Immigrant Raised 17 Children in Great Depression in New York (2009).
4 Ibid., 19.
5 Harris, “Come You All Courageously”.
7 Ibid.
8 Prince, The Remarkable Life of Kitty McInerney, 107.
11 Harris, “Come You All Courageously”.
13 Ibid., 18.
15 Harris, “Come You All Courageously”.
17 Kazal, 460.
19 Jennifer Casey (fourth generation Irish Catholic) in discussion with author, March 2013.
20 Jennifer Casey (fourth generation Irish Catholic) in discussion with author, March 2013.
21 Prince, The Remarkable Life of Kitty McInerney, 37.
22 Janis, “Petticoat Revolutionaries,” 22.
23 Ibid., 21, 23.
24 Casey, “Family, History, and Irish America,” 111.
25 Ibid.
26 Ibid., 114.
27 Jennifer Casey (fourth generation Irish Catholic) in discussion with author, March 2013.
29 Ibid., 463.
Using Quotations

I encourage you to utilize quotations from the texts in your essays. It is an excellent way to utilize evidence to back up your arguments, your generalizations.

But using quotations can be tricky. I discourage quoting simply for the sake of quoting. Quotations work well for conveying the immediacy or vividness of past events and opinions. They are less useful for conveying factual information which you can sum up in your own words, the sort of material that is often presented in secondary sources. I caution against quoting any passage at great length. Pick out the phrases that are most useful for your purposes. Remember, you need to keep control of your essay, your argument. That is hard to do if you devote most of your essay to quotations.

Remember to put quotation marks (") around your quotations. Otherwise the reader will assume that you are trying to pass the material off as your own work, which is plagiarism.

It is also important to provide the context for the quotations that you use. The reference or source for the quotation should be supplied at the end of it, as discussed elsewhere in this syllabus. You should also let the reader know in the text who the speaker is--and perhaps when and where she or he spoke these words. Otherwise the reader won't
know how to put the quotation in context. Simply providing a reference doesn't solve this problem. What if the author of the text (Smith, in our example) is quoting someone else? What if Smith is the editor of a volume that includes many writers, primary and secondary sources? Help the reader out by clarifying who wrote or said these words.

Reading Efficiently and Critically

Much of the reading for this course consists of secondary sources, accounts written by scholars. It is easy to feel overwhelmed by these people's credentials--and by the sheer volume of what they have written. This course should consume about 12 hours of time per week. This means that you cannot afford to read at, say, 10 pages an hour! I urge you to try to read selectively, to become an active rather than passive reader.

A key part to being an active reader is to learn how to "gut" a book, to discern quickly its principal arguments. The best place to look for these arguments is in the introduction. Also read the conclusion closely. The same goes for chapters; introductions and conclusions are where authors introduce and summarize their arguments.

Topic sentences, the first sentences of paragraphs, tell you what the rest of the paragraph is about. Use them as guides for which paragraphs you can skim, which you should read closely.

The notion of skimming may seem sacrilegious. But bear in mind that these are not conventional textbooks that you would have in a course on, say, anatomy. I do not expect you to memorize the contents of these books. Rather, I want you to grasp and critique their main arguments--and to use them to build your own ideas. Indeed, I urge you to have the questions at your elbow as you read, to inform and guide your reading.

Taking notes helps one to read actively. It reminds the reader that she or he is in charge, that you do not simply want to get through the book, you want to learn from it. The book is only a tool. Notes record what you think is important and leave you with something to go back to after you have forgotten the details (and perhaps the main points, too) of what you have read. Notes are particularly useful when you are reading material that you will write on. Write down your ideas for the
paper as you go along, and your essay will be outlined by the time you have finished the readings.

Try to approach the books critically. Does the author have an ax to grind that distorts her or his interpretations? Is the argument clear and consistent? Does the author back it up with evidence? Might other conclusions be drawn from the same evidence?

**Approaching Primary Sources**

Many of the texts for this course are primary sources, documents or other material created by the historical actors of the period being studied. Primary sources include letters, diaries, reports, census returns, and much more, including maps and drawings. Primary sources are usually more interesting and engaging than are scholarly texts. But they must be approached cautiously.

All sources are biased. Primary sources are particularly biased. Scholars (those writing secondary sources) often have overriding political or personal agendas. But most at least try to be somewhat open minded and to give the reader the “big picture”—otherwise they risk being criticized or, even worse, ignored. But a person writing a diary or a letter is under no such constraints. Primary sources offer immediacy, the feel of touching the past and the people who inhabited it directly. But these sources usually come from people with narrow experiences (travelers describing people they have just met, for example) or axes to grind (superiors to placate, for example).

The following questions will help you to detect and take into account the biases of primary sources.

1) What is the purpose of the document (stated and implied)? Why was it created?

2) Who is the intended audience?

3) What is the writer’s relationship to that audience?

4) Has the document been translated (from one version or language to another)?

5) How familiar is the writer with the people she or he is describing?
Plagiarism

You are expected to submit your own work in all your assignments, postings to the discussion board, and other communications, and to clearly give credit to the work of others when you use it. Academic dishonesty will result in a grade of “F.” Link to Statement of Expectations for Student Conduct:
http://studentlife.oregonstate.edu/sites/studentlife.oregonstate.edu/files/student_conduct_code_1.pdf.

Students with Disabilities

Accommodations are collaborative efforts between students, faculty and Disability Access Services (DAS). Students with accommodations approved through DAS are responsible for contacting the faculty member in charge of the course prior to or during the first week of the term to discuss accommodations. Students who believe they are eligible for accommodations but who have not yet obtained approval through DAS should contact DAS immediately at 737-4098.

Course evaluation

We encourage you to engage in the course evaluation process each term – online, of course. The evaluation form will be available toward the end of each term, and you will be sent instructions by Ecampus. You will login to “Student Online Services” to respond to the online questionnaire. The results on the form are anonymous and are not tabulated until after grades are posted.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE:

If you experience computer difficulties, need help downloading a browser or plug-in, assistance logging into the course, or if you experience any errors or problems while in your online course, contact the OSU Help Desk for assistance. You can call (541) 737-3474, email osuhelpdesk@oregonstate.edu or visit the OSU Computer Helpdesk online.

- COURSE DEMO
- GETTING STARTED

COURSE SITE LOGIN INFORMATION

Information on how to login to your course site can be found HERE.

REFUND POLICY INFORMATION

Please see the Ecampus website for policy information on refunds and late fees.