

## EXPLORING IMMIGRATION

### Does History Matter?

[FIRST REVISION COPY IS FROM AUDIO FILE ONLY. TIMECODES ARE ONLY PLACED ON VERBAL PORTIONS HEREIN, SINCE CAPTIONS WERE NOT VISIBLE]

[ANY COMMENTARY IN RED WAS ADDED IN FIRST REVISION. ALSO, A FEW COMMENTS WERE MOVED AROUND IN FIRST REVISIONS.]

#### Naturalization Ceremony, Dearborn, Michigan

Video shows many people entering a large conference room, some carrying small American flags.

MUSIC PLAYING FROM 00:00:00 THROUGH 00:01:09

SPEAKER: It's a beautiful day to become a citizen. 00:01:11

Audience claps.

Speaker begins the Naturalization Oath, as follows:

Speaker: We announce and adjure.  
Audience: We announce and adjure. 00:01:19  
Speaker: Our allegiance and fidelity.  
Audience: Our allegiance and fidelity. 00:01:23  
Speaker: To any foreign Prince,  
Audience: To any foreign Prince, 00:01:26  
Speaker: potentate,  
Audience: potentate, 00:01:29  
Speaker: state or sovereignty,  
Audience: state or sovereignty, 00:01:32  
Speaker: so help me God.  
Audience: so help me God. 00:01:34

Participants taking photos with family and friends after the ceremony.

Woman

in hijab: I want to be a citizen because here I have every human right. In my country there is no such human rights there. 00:01:53

1<sup>st</sup> Man: I feel so happy to be a U.S. citizen, you know, able to vote and probably run for an office. 00:02:01

2nd Man: I've always dreamed to be - to come here and you know get a job and work and you know free from police brutality. We call this our safe home here. 00:02:11

Short video clip of top portion of Statue of Liberty.

CAPTION: EXPLORING IMMIGRATION and The American Dream

CAPTION: Dearborn, Michigan

NARRATOR You may have noticed America has been changed by immigration in the past few decades. 00:02:25

CAPTION: FORDSON HIGH SCHOOL, Dearborn, Michigan

Many people filling stadium seating area to watch a high school football game.

CAPTION: Detroit, Michigan

NARRATOR Here in Southeastern Michigan, the change is obvious in the cities of Detroit and nearby Hamtramck and Dearborn. 00:02:57

Shows various Detroit city sites like Detroit skyline from river, a mosque, the People Mover in the background, Ford World Headquarters building.

NARRATOR Change is also obvious far from the Detroit area in rural Ottawa County on Michigan's west coast. 00:03:14

Video shows migrant workers on a farm, harvesting apples and other crops.

NARRATOR And in tourist cities, like Holland. 00:03:18

Video shows downtown Holland, views of the water, the Windmill.

CAPTION: HENRY FORD MUSEUM & GREENFIELD VILLAGE, Dearborn, Michigan

NARRATOR As a nation of immigrants, we regularly honor our European ancestors and their legacies. 00:03:33

Video shows many sites within Greenfield Village.

NARRATOR In these programs we will visit Holland, Michigan, to see how one community with a strong European legacy handles the major issues associated with major cultural change. 00:03:59

Video shows merry-go-round, tulip flowers, statute of “The Immigrants,” wooden shoe dancers and the Tulip Parade.

CAPTION: “THE IMMIGRANTS”, dedicated October 3, 1947, gift from the people of the Netherlands

CAPTION: TULIP TIME FESTIVAL, Holland, Michigan

CAPTION: DEDICATION OF THE FRIENDSHIP FOUNTAIN, from Santiago de Queretaro, Mexico, May 1999

NARRATOR And now in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century, we are trying to understand better the Latino, Asian and Arab cultures, as millions of these new Americans continue to honor the traditions of their homelands. 00:04:46

CAPTION: LATIN AMERICAN UNITED FOR PROGRESS FESTIVAL, Holland, Michigan, May 1999

Video shows native dancers, people walking around in front of the Civic Center.

3<sup>rd</sup> Man It's not Marvin Gay, but it's a little more Puerto Rican man now as you can see. All you English people, they're beautiful people, \_\_\_\_\_(inaudible). Full of Latino and people, all right. 00:05:00

Video shows cultural dancers on stage.

NARRATOR Immigration is the lifeblood of our nation of immigrants. But how do we decide who these immigrants will be and how many should be allowed to come here. 00:05:18

Video shows school children singing in a Thanksgiving program. Then shows black and white photos of a ship full of immigrants, and people exiting and entering ships.

NARRATOR But since the end of the great wave of immigration in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, we have had a difficult time trying to answer these questions. 00:05:36

Prof. Lawrence H.  
Fuchs, Brandeis Univ.,  
Author of *American*

*Kaleidoscope* Our nation is distinctive because we are not held together by a tribal world, racial or blood myth. United States is a nation that is based on an idea. Its founding myth holds that this country, this nation, was established as an asylum for others to come here and to be – and to become involved in their – mastering their own lives. To be people who could take advantage of opportunities that were afforded by this vast continent, to people who be protected by a bigger idea of equality and freedom, and – and equal under the law. 00:06:22

Video shows people in what appears to be an immigration center, a photo of a large group of children possibly at a school, people harvesting apples, and then

people working at various jobs such as on a loading dock, in an automobile factory.

Fuchs (cont'd) So this founding myth that we were established for this person which took hold in the speeches of Washington and Jefferson and so on from the very beginning and is in our poetry and is in the memoirs of immigrants from the very beginning to the very – to the present time. 00:06:40

This founding myth then developed a compelling narrative, a history in which the myth was lived in reality enough; not perfectly by a long shot. But enough so that it re-energized the myth and made it an attractive place for persons all over the world. 00:07:01

#### CAPTION: ELLIS ISLAND IMMIGRATION STATION

Prof. David Reimers,  
New York University,  
Author of Unwelcome

Strangers Well, Ellis Island opened in the 1890's it – it had a fire and they had to close it for a while. And they re-opened it and it functioned during the great wave of immigration from the 1890's down to the 1920's. 00:07:12

Video shows various photos of immigrants on Ellis Island.

Reimers

(continued) And it was a receiving point for basically Europeans, so this was the centerpiece of European immigration during that period; which we sometimes call “the great wave of the first wave.” 00:07:25

About a third of the immigrants came through here total and during the peak of immigration, more than two out of three came through Ellis Island. So being the largest place, it obviously does have that significance. 00:07:37

In 1882 the federal government moved more directly into immigration and two things happened then. One, they began to set up procedures and take over the screening of immigrants. And of course they also abolished in 1882 the Chinese. And from then on the federal government exercises control over immigration, right down to the present day. 00:07:59

When the federal government began to regulate immigration in 1882, it added more and more to the restricted groups; so that if you were a pauper likely to become a public charge, you couldn't come in. 00:08:12

In 180\_ - 1903 they outlawed anarchists from coming to the United States. They added people that might be imbeciles or they added people who might have a loathsome or infectious disease; so they began to build upon that. But these particular pieces of legislation were not really a deterrent in terms of the overall gross numbers. 00:08:30

Video briefly shows images of the following men: Henry Cabot Lodge, U.S. Senator 1893-1924 (R-Mass) and President Woodrow Wilson 1913-1921 (D-NJ).

Reimers

(continued) In the 1890's Henry Cabot Lodge and others came up with the idea of a literacy test. It was passed several times. Presidents vetoed it. Finally, over Woodrow Wilson's veto in 1917, just before World War I, Congress passed the literacy test. 00:08:45

Video shows black and white photo of a group of immigrants at a center.

Reimers

(continued) Now the test goes into effect during the war and the war disrupted immigration more than any test, so they really weren't sure what its impact would be. After the war 800,000 immigrants come to the United States again, so it's becoming clear to people in Congress that in order to cut down on immigration a literacy test was not going to do it. 00:09:05

More and more people from Southern, Eastern Europe, the Mediterranean area were able to pass that test. So instead of going to these things which were not based upon one nationality, that is anarchism, health and so forth, they decided to go to the national origins system, which is a more direct way of restricting immigration. 00:09:23

Finally, the national origins system, as a - it finally went in effect in 1929, used a - a figure of roughly 150,000 and was based upon the 1920 Census; but not the census of the foreign born, but the whole white population, which meant all the generations of Germans, Irish, Scots and so - common Colonial America would get the lion's share. 00:09:46

A couple figures are in order here. Italy in some years of the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century were sending 250,000 people to the United States a year. The Italian quota was under 6,000; that's a tremendous drop. 00:10:01

And Germany, Great Britain and - and Ireland had the bulk of the slots. Whether - whether English were going to come here or not is another matter. They were given the slots, that's what Congress intended; mainly to keep out people they considered to be inferior and troublesome, meddlesome, from Southern, Eastern European countries. 00:10:22

**CAPTION: STATUE OF LIBERTY, Gift of the French People, dedicated October 28, 1886**

Prof. Otis L. Graham, Jr.,  
Univ. of California,  
Santa Barbara, author  
*Of Unguarded*

*Gates* It's like a ship, it's a mirror of America. Every ship that comes to New York Harbor, it looks exactly like the American people; just a certain percentage from England, a certain percentage from Sweden, a certain percentage from Spain. That was the national origins system.  
00:10:39

NARRATOR The idea of America has often been overwhelmed by powerful and influential myths. 00:10:44

Prof. Otis Graham

(continued) The Statue of Liberty had nothing to do with immigration, but somehow, somebody really smart put on a campaign over a series of years and now you ask anybody and there is no difference: the Statue of Liberty has to do with the golden door. Give - give me your poor masses. Well it's not true. 00:11:05

Video shows the Statue of Liberty, as well as a close up of plaque that shows famous saying starting with "Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses ..."

Graham

(continued) The Statue of Liberty was given to the American people by the French people, the French nation. And it – and it had – and they put a – a name on it, and the name on the lady is "Liberty Enlightening the World." They were – they were – they were giving the American people, in admiration, a statute which – which – which – which said this is what America means to the world. That's the way to run a society, model your society on that society. 00:11:33

And she's got a book of laws here and in one hand, and the torch in the other. It's got nothing to do with asylum. That was grafted on

later. That's just one of the myths that you can't vouch for, it's everlasting. 00:11:45

Video of various views of the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island. Video then jumps to views of President Johnson at a podium making a speech.

NARRATOR In 1965, President Johnson decided it was time for Congress to end the national origins basis of our immigration law. Since then, the number of immigrants entering legally each year has increased dramatically; and European immigrants are now far outnumbered by Latino, Asian and Middle Eastern immigrants. 00:12:09

CAPTION: Immigrants as a percentage of the population, 1830-2000 [with percentage breakdown by decades, and then again by every five years]

Dr. Steven Camarota,  
Director of Research,  
Center for Immigration

Studies The main way we let people in is if they have a relative in the United States. That makes up the bulk of the U.S. immigration. It's not based on whether you have any skills or anything like that. It's just that you've – you're related to someone here who sponsored you. 00:12:36

Just the larger the legal immigrant population in the United States, that then creates a desire or stimulates that much more immigration or a desire to come from other countries. 00:12:47

Norbert A Schlei,  
Asst. Attorney General,  
US Dept. of Justice

(1962-1966) We did believe that our bill would have a negligible impact on the population of the United States. We were talking about quota immigration of I think it was 165,000 immigrants per year, and of course the country was something like two hundred million; so the idea that – that any tinkering you did with this number of people in

the immigrant stream would affect the makeup of the population was just silly. It was just not going to happen. 00:13:20

We did try to figure out how many immigrants were going to come from where under our new system. With the help of the Immigration Service we came up with some numbers and statistics, but basically our approach to the – to the Congress was that this was a – a bill that would be fair, that would treat all people and all nations the same. 00:13:45

It would regulate quota immigration to the United States in a manner that was in the interest of our country, that would give preference to people who could help the country and who could help families and citizens of our country. And it – it really isn't going to have any effect on the population because we're only talking about 165,000 people and their immediate families. 00:14:09

CAPTION: A FAMILY RECONCILIATION, Albuquerque, New Mexico

Schlei

(continued) I'm smiling because as you know it has turned out not to be that way, but that was certainly our view at the time. But we didn't know that Congress was going to increase the numbers and do all sorts of things that later were done. 00:14:25

CAPTION: Written and Produced by George A. Colburn

CAPTION: Director of Photography, Vincent Gancie

CAPTION: Associate Producer, Ray Kahn

CAPTION: Editor, Ric Pierpont

CAPTION: Thanksgiving Pageant, Arroyo Del COSO School, Albuquerque, New Mexico

Video shows school children singing This Land Was Made for You and Me, while various film credits scroll off to the left.

END