

THE SOAPBOX

It's Time to Center War in U.S. Immigration History

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War is central to U.S. immigration history. Yet too often that fact has been obscured by folktales that rhapsodize about the feel-good Ellis Island story: lured by the American Dream, strangers come to a promised land, put down roots, and triumph over adversity through industry, resolve, and pluck.

Scholarly treatments tend to foreground admission and naturalization regulations as the drivers and measures of immigrant mobility, acceptance, and assimilation. Our narratives cling steadfastly to a timeline punctuated by legislation and the paradigm of “exclusion” versus “inclusion.”¹ “Gates” and “doors” slam shut (1882, 1917, 1924) and crack or swing open (1943, 1946, 1952, 1965, 1986, 1990) as Lady Liberty unfurls her arms or turns her back to the huddled masses yearning to breathe free. The Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 looms especially large for periodization in U.S. immigration history, and its kindred fields like Latinx Studies and Asian American Studies. Specialists usually talk in terms of “pre-1965” and “post-1965”; this temporal marker has become *the* taken-for-granted turning point.²

Always centering our narratives on the twists and turns of government immigration policies risks narrowing our vista. It downplays the significance of war and militarization as catalysts for the sprawling, varied patterns of migrant entry, exit, exclusion, and inclusion that have characterized the United States since the late nineteenth century. It obscures how much U.S. empire, among other empires, has been an important engine of cross-border transit.³ And it sidelines refugees, asylum seekers, colonial subjects, military spouses, adoptees, students, detainees,

For their invaluable help and guidance with this essay, I thank Carly Goodman, Jason McGraw, Michelle Moyd, Arissa Oh, the two anonymous reviewers, the staff of *Modern American History*, and especially Brooke Blower for her encouragement and keen editorial eye. Immense gratitude to Mae Ngai, my advisor, for teaching me the fundamentals of immigration history.

¹Julian Lim and Maddelena Marinari make the important point that “exclusion and inclusion have always occurred in tandem” in U.S. immigration policy, “sustain[ing] a nation of both nativists and immigrants.” See Lim and Marinari, “Laws for a Nation of Nativists and Immigrants,” *Modern American History* 2, no. 1 (Mar. 2019): 49–52.

²See, for instance, Erika Lee, *At America's Gates: Chinese Immigration During the Exclusion Era, 1882–1943* (Chapel Hill, NC, 2003); Mae M. Ngai, *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America* (Princeton, NJ, 2004); Aristide R. Zolberg, *A Nation By Design: Immigration Policy in the Fashioning of America* (Cambridge, MA, 2006); Kelly Lytle Hernández, *Migra! A History of the U.S. Border Patrol* (Berkeley, CA, 2010); Kunal M. Parker, *Making Foreigners: Immigration and Citizenship Law in America, 1600–2000* (New York, 2015); S. Deborah Kang, *The INS on the Line: Making Immigration Law on the US–Mexico Border, 1917–1954* (New York, 2017). One important exception is Jesse Hoffnung-Garskoff, “The Immigration Reform Act of 1965,” in Brooke Blower and Mark Philip Bradley, eds., *The Familiar Made Strange: American Icons and Artifacts after the Transnational Turn* (Ithaca, NY, 2015), 125–40, here 128–9. Hoffnung-Garskoff argues that historians “should seek to understand and represent immigration as a consequence of relationships between the United States and particular other parts of the world, and as a constituent part of some of those relationships.” He posits that the standard pre-1965/post-1965 periodization should be replaced by a more useful “Cold War/post-Cold War” divide.

³George J. Sánchez, “Race, Nation, and Culture in Recent Immigration Studies,” *Journal of American Ethnic History* 18, no. 4 (Summer 1999): 66–84. See also Paul A. Kramer, “Power and Connection: Imperial Histories of the United States in the World,” *American Historical Review* 116, no. 5 (Dec. 2011): 1348–91, and Paul A. Kramer, “Geopolitics of Mobility: Immigration Policy and American Global Power in the Long Twentieth Century,” *American Historical Review* 123, no. 2 (Apr. 2018): 393–438.

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deportees, and others who do not fit neatly into the classic profile of “immigrants” as voluntary arrivals attracted by opportunities for work, well-being, and permanent settlement.

Underlining the significance of geopolitical tensions and armed conflicts in U.S. immigration history requires the crucial step of reframing “immigration” as “migration.” As Adam Goodman explains, this conceptual renovation “enables us to incorporate the free, forced, and coerced migrations” that have shaped U.S. history into a single narrative.⁴ This consolidation, in turn, is indispensable for correcting misguided, if well-meaning, celebrations of the United States as an exceptional “nation of immigrants”—a rhetorical sleight of hand that valorizes voluntary, sanctioned entry while concealing or miscasting other forms of migration.⁵

The methodological appeal of “migration” rests on this broadness. It better captures the multi-directional and multicausal nature of human movement to, from, and within U.S. territorial boundaries. It also steers us toward remembering the contexts and contingencies that expedite or foreclose certain outcomes, and recognizing that a particular migrant’s legal status, social standing, and self-identification may also evolve as circumstances change.⁶ Thinking through “migration” allows us to generate more capacious, textured, and honest accountings about the peopling of the United States.

To direct our awareness more squarely to migration’s inextricable relationship to war, I want to suggest two stand-out avenues of inquiry. The first is *migration as both a consequence and tool of war*. The second is the *militarization of migration management*. Together, they make a strong case for the necessity, even urgency, of prioritizing war in studying, teaching, and writing about migration in U.S. history.

The analytical payoff of connecting war to migration in these ways extends far beyond this particular field. It beckons historians of all stripes to consider war as an “enduring condition” and a “way of life” in the modern United States, rather than a temporary aberration from the “normal,” to borrow Mary L. Dudziak’s and Michael Sherry’s formulations.⁷ It presses scholars toward a fuller grasp of the sweeping consequences—both intended and unintended—of the United States’s global ambitions during the “American Century” and, ultimately, brings them closer to taking up the gauntlet thrown by the late Marilyn B. Young: to shoulder the “continuous task of making war visible, vivid, an inescapable part of the country’s self-consciousness, as inescapable a subject of study as it is a reality.”⁸

⁴Adam Goodman, “Nation of Migrations, Historians of Migration,” *Journal of American Ethnic History* 34, no. 4 (Summer 2015): 7–16, here 10.

⁵For the history and critiques of the “nation of immigrants” paradigm, see Donna R. Gabaccia, “Is Everywhere Nowhere? Nomads, Nations, and the Immigrant Paradigm of United States History,” *Journal of American History* 86, no. 3 (Dec. 1999): 1115–34; Mae M. Ngai, “‘A Nation of Immigrants’: The Cold War and Civil Rights Origins of Illegal Immigration,” with an exchange between Eric S. Maskin and the Author, Occasional Papers of the School of Social Science, April 2010, Paper No. 38, <https://www.sss.ias.edu/files/papers/paper38.pdf> (accessed Feb. 18, 2019). Goodman, “Nation of Migrations, Historians of Migration,” emphasizes the multiplicity of migrations in U.S. history including European settler colonialism, African slavery, and “internal” migrations such as indigenous removals and the Great Migration of African Americans.

⁶The example of the “refugee” is illustrative. In her study of Chinese migration to Hong Kong during the Cold War, Laura Madokoro prefers “migrant” to “refugee” as a category of analysis as a way to problematize both the narrowness and the contentiousness of the category “refugee” as applied by historical actors. She cautions that a migrant’s “refugee” status does not derive from “essential traits.” It results from an “intensely subjective ... ‘refugeeing process’ involving governments and humanitarians determining who deserves assistance, as well as migrants themselves deciding whether or not to characterize themselves accordingly.” Laura Madokoro, *Elusive Refugee: Chinese Migrants in the Cold War* (Cambridge, MA, 2016), 6–7. See also Ngai, *Impossible Subjects*.

⁷Mary L. Dudziak, *War-Time: An Idea, Its History, Its Consequences* (New York, 2014), 12–3; Michael S. Sherry, “War as a Way of Life,” *Modern American History* 1, no. 1 (Mar. 2018): 93–6.

⁸Marilyn B. Young, “‘I was thinking, as I often do these days, of war’: The United States in the Twenty-First Century,” *Diplomatic History* 36, no. 1 (Jan. 2012): 1–15, here 2, cited in Sherry, “War as a Way of Life.”

Migration as a Consequence and Tool of War

Emphasizing war as central to U.S. migration history demands a studied consideration of how migrant streams from abroad have functioned as both the consequences and tools of armed hostility. Refugees (typically persons fleeing life-threatening homeland conditions, often involuntarily) and asylees (persons already present on U.S. soil requesting protection from homeland persecution) elucidate this theme most emphatically.⁹

Refugees and asylees have sought safety in the United States since the country's founding. But the magnitude of these migrations, and Americans' responses to them, took on a new importance in the aftermath of World War II and the segue into the Cold War. U.S. geopolitical ambitions, especially the overarching goal of defeating communism everywhere, spurred the exodus and entry of refugees and asylees.¹⁰

The vast devastation wrought by World War II ignited a colossal refugee emergency. The United States had previously hesitated to take in Jews fleeing the Nazi onslaught. But the changing geopolitical situation after 1945—that is, the need to rebuild the ruined European continent as part of the contest with the Soviet Union for international dominance—forced U.S. leaders to address the issue head-on. Congress approved the Displaced Persons Act of 1948, the first-ever refugee law in modern American history, which led to the resettlement of 400,000 Europeans. Legislators overcame anti-Semitism and a reluctance to relax border restrictions by pointing to the grim possibility that displaced persons might be forced to return to their communist-dominated homelands.¹¹

After 1948, federal authorities built up refugee policy in fits and starts. They continued to circumvent the tight national origins quota restrictions of the Immigration Act of 1924 with the Refugee Relief Act of 1953, which granted entry to more than 210,000 additional individuals. The 1952 McCarran-Walter Act introduced a key innovation in immigration law: the advent of “parole” power authorizing the attorney general emergency discretion to admit outsiders into the United States as needed.¹² While Congress initially intended parole power to be a last and infrequent resort, President Dwight D. Eisenhower applied it liberally to admit 38,000 Hungarian “freedom fighters” fleeing Soviet aggression in 1956.¹³

For decades, stakeholders upheld the Cold War as the major criteria for determining who counted as a “refugee” and how many of them should be admitted into the country. The United States welcomed persons fleeing Communist regimes (Chinese, Hungarians, Cubans, Southeast Asians, Soviet Jews) as “refugees” much more readily than those fleeing anti-Communist, right-wing, brutally oppressive dictatorships (Haitians, Dominicans, Chileans).¹⁴ While this

⁹Definitions of “refugee” and “asylee” are not fixed, but have shifted depending on political agendas and changing circumstances. As Carl Bon Tempo observes, “Colloquially, an immigrant is a person who chooses to leave his or her homeland, while a refugee is a person who is forced to leave the homeland for fear of persecution and cannot return without endangering himself or herself. Such a distinction, however, only goes so far. In the American historical context, refugees typically have fled political persecution, though the nature of that persecution—its ideological sources, relationship to geopolitics, and the exact definition of persecutory acts—has evolved over time and in response to circumstances.” Carl Bon Tempo, “Refugees, Asylees, and Immigrants,” in Elliott Robert Barkan, ed., *Immigrants in American History: Arrival, Adaptation, and Integration* (Santa Barbara, CA, 2012), 1528. See also Madokoro, *Chinese Migrants in the Cold War*.

¹⁰Gilbert Damian Loescher and John A. Scanlan, *Calculated Kindness: Refugees and America's Half-Open Door, 1945–Present* (New York, 1986); Carl J. Bon Tempo, *Americans at the Gate: The United States and Refugees during the Cold War* (Princeton, NJ, 2008); Stephen R. Porter, *Benevolent Empire: U.S. Power, Humanitarianism, and the World's Dispossessed* (Philadelphia, PA, 2016).

¹¹Bon Tempo, “Refugees, Asylees, and Immigrants,” 1528.

¹²Bon Tempo, *Americans at the Gate*, 70.

¹³Bon Tempo, “Refugees, Asylees, and Immigrants,” 1528; Bon Tempo, *Americans at the Gate*, 60–85.

¹⁴Notably, U.S. military bases served as way stations for Hungarians, Cubans, and Vietnamese en route to permanent resettlement in the United States. Camp Kilmer, NJ, was the first major military-run refugee camp in the United States. Jana Lipman, “U.S. military bases used to welcome foreign refugees. Now, they are being used to

prioritization did not make sense from a human rights standpoint, it fulfilled a geopolitical purpose. Such migrations could be lifted up as evidence of the superiority of democratic-capitalist societies to totalitarian-communist ones.¹⁵

Yet a closer look reveals that refugee and asylum seekers also came, not coincidentally, from the very places most marked by U.S. intervention. The United States's doomed efforts to contain the spread of communism in Southeast Asia resulted in the spectacular influx of 1.2 million Vietnamese, Cambodian, Laotian, and Hmong migrants between 1975 and 1992, comprising the largest refugee resettlement program in U.S. history. The surge impelled Congress to devise the Refugee Act of 1980. This landmark decision established for the first time an approach to refugee migrations distinct from voluntary immigrants. It brought the United States in closer alignment with the United Nations's definitions of "refugee," including all persons fleeing their homelands because of a "well-founded fear of persecution," rather than the narrow criteria of communist regimes and the Middle East. The 1980 legislation also recognized asylees (persons already present on U.S. soil seeking haven from persecution in countries of origin) as distinct from refugees.¹⁶

The intention behind the Refugee Act of 1980 was to reorient U.S. policy toward human rights imperatives. But anti-communist geopolitics continued to overshadow decision making. In the 1980s and 1990s, political repression, turmoil, and violence in Nicaragua, Guatemala, and El Salvador—instabilities exacerbated by the United States's counterinsurgency efforts against leftist guerilla movements—drove an estimated two million people to North America.¹⁷ The United States played "reluctant host" to more than one million displaced Central Americans, treating them as "economic" migrants rather than bona fide refugees.¹⁸ The Reagan administration insisted on this label to avoid acknowledging the United States's role in backing the murderous, right-wing authoritarian regimes that had created the war zones from which the migrants had fled.¹⁹

Central American arrivals found themselves trapped within a vexing intersection of domestic and foreign policy with little regard for their actual suffering. Through the 1980s, for example, most Salvadorans remained in the United States without authorization or were deported back to the war zones.²⁰ Between 1983 and 1990, U.S. officials approved just 2.6 percent of Salvadoran (and 1.8 percent of Guatemalan) asylum applications.²¹ It took the persistent pressure of migrant advocacy organizations (notably, the birth of the Sanctuary movement in the 1980s) and liberal members of Congress, alongside peace negotiations in El Salvador and the twilight of the Cold War, to overcome these hurdles.²² Finally, the Immigration Act of 1990 created a new "Temporary Protected Status" category, which allowed 200,000 unauthorized Salvadorans to stay their deportations and apply for asylum.²³

The end of the Cold War opened up the possibility for the United States to refocus its refugee and asylum policies on humanitarian priorities. Moved by the horrific scale of mass rape

scare away migrants," *Washington Post Made by History*, July 5, 2018, https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/made-by-history/wp/2018/07/05/military-bases-used-to-welcome-refugees-to-the-u-s-now-american-bases-are-being-used-to-scare-them-away/?utm_term=.7a29a4ef2a4e (accessed Feb. 18, 2019).

¹⁵Bon Tempo, *Americans at the Gate*, 3–4.

¹⁶Bon Tempo, *Americans at the Gate*, 145–79.

¹⁷Bon Tempo, "Refugees, Asylees, and Immigrants," 1534; María Cristina García, "Central American Migration and the Shaping of Refugee Policy," in Dirk Hoerder and Nora Faires, eds., *Migrants and Migration in Modern North America: Cross-Border Lives, Labor Markets, and Politics* (Durham, NC, 2011), 347–63, here 347, 356.

¹⁸García, "Central American Migration and the Shaping of Refugee Policy," 356; María Cristina García, *Seeking Refuge: Central American Migration to Mexico, the United States, and Canada* (Berkeley, CA, 2006), 70.

¹⁹García, *Seeking Refuge*, 34, 70; Leisy J. Abrego, *Sacrificing Families: Navigating Laws, Labor, and Love Across Borders* (Stanford, CA, 2014), 13; García, *Seeking Refuge*, 34.

²⁰García, *Seeking Refuge*, 70; García, "Central American Migration and the Shaping of Refugee Policy," 353.

²¹García, "Central American Migration and the Shaping of Refugee Policy," 354.

²²Stephen Macekura, "'For Fear of Persecution': Displaced Salvadorans and U.S. Refugee Policy in the 1980s," *Journal of Policy History* 23, no. 3 (July 2011): 357–80, here 375–6.

²³García, "Central American Migration and the Shaping of Refugee Policy," 356.

as a weapon of genocide in the Balkans and Rwanda, feminists successfully convinced the Immigration and Naturalization Service to recognize gender-based persecution, such as sexual violence, as a basis for claiming refugee/asylee status in 1995.²⁴ Thanks to prodding from refugee advocates and nongovernmental organizations, the United States also bumped up its allotment of annual refugee slots to African nations—Sudan, Liberia, and Somalia in particular—to almost one-third of the total allotment in the 1990s.²⁵

But following the terrorist attacks in the United States on September 11, 2001, national security roared back to eclipse humanitarianism as the guiding paradigm of refugee and asylum policy.²⁶ In the immediate aftermath, the United States suspended all refugee admissions and tightened its vetting procedures.²⁷ Echoing previous wars, U.S. military intervention in Afghanistan and Iraq generated upheavals that forced local people to run for their lives. The migrants confronted exceedingly difficult odds in their attempts to gain entrance to the United States.²⁸ Shockingly, the United States admitted just 701 refugees from Iraq out of the two million displaced between the start of the U.S. invasion in 2003 and April 2007.²⁹ Critics fretted that instead of protecting Americans from harm, such stinginess actually compounded the global refugee problem inflamed by the “War on Terror.”³⁰

Worth underscoring, then, is the history of *refusal* in the United States’s handling of refugees and asylum seekers. Today, Islamophobia coded as “national security” serves as policy makers’ compass. Perhaps the most unsparing result to date is political leaders’ enmity towards Syrians. The first five years of the Syrian civil war forced 10.8 million civilians from their homes; of these, 4.8 million sought safety outside the country.³¹ Yet by 2014, the United States had only let in a paltry 121 refugees.³² In 2016, President Barack Obama’s administration belatedly admitted 12,486 Syrians. Thirty state governors, including Indiana’s Mike Pence, then countered by attempting to thwart resettlement in their jurisdictions.³³

President Donald Trump took this inhospitableness to its most extreme conclusion with his “Muslim Ban.” Its first iteration, Executive Order 13769, issued January 2017, suspended the entry of Syrian refugees indefinitely. This part of the injunction withstood several rounds of legal challenges and was upheld by the Supreme Court of the United States in June 2018.³⁴ Denial, in short, has lurked as the evil twin of acceptance. Both are the consequences and tools of war in modern American history.

²⁴Bon Tempo, *At America’s Gates*, 200–1. Notably, the Trump administration has been trying to rescind this criterion since June 2018. See Matt Zapotosky, “Judge Strikes Down Trump Administration Effort to Deny Asylum for Migrants Fleeing Gang Violence, Domestic Abuse,” *Washington Post*, December 19, 2018, https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/judge-strikes-down-trump-administration-effort-to-deny-asylum-for-migrants-fleeing-gang-violence-domestic-abuse/2018/12/19/61687d00-03b1-11e9-b6a9-0aa5c2fcc9e4_story.html?utm_term=.776c770daf86 (accessed March 6, 2019).

²⁵Bon Tempo, *At America’s Gates*, 203–4.

²⁶Bon Tempo, *At America’s Gates*, 203; Tram Nguyen, *We Are All Suspects Now: Untold Stories from Immigrant Communities after 9/11* (Boston, MA, 2005); 203; María Cristina García, *The Refugee Challenge in Post-Cold War America* (New York, 2017), 1.

²⁷Bon Tempo, *At America’s Gates*, 203–4.

²⁸“Taking Names,” *This American Life*, June 28, 2013, <https://www.thisamericanlife.org/499/taking-names> (accessed Feb. 18, 2019).

²⁹Bon Tempo, “Refugees, Asylees, and Immigrants,” 1535; García, *The Refugee Challenge in Post-Cold War America*, 142–5.

³⁰Bon Tempo, *At America’s Gates*, 205.

³¹García, *The Refugee Challenge in Post-Cold War America*, 156.

³²*Ibid.*, 154.

³³*Ibid.*, 157.

³⁴Alicia Parlapiano, “The Travel Ban Has Been Upheld. Here are Some of Its Effects So Far.” *New York Times*, June 27, 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2018/06/27/us/politics/trump-travel-ban-effects.html> (accessed Feb. 19, 2019).

Wars and other military interventions create refugees. They also spawn labor migrations.³⁵ Overseas takeovers resulting from the Spanish-American War of 1898, for example, gave rise to new flows of colonial subjects looking to offset the economic disruptions of imperial rule. Granted unfettered movement around U.S. territory, yet ineligible to equal rights and full citizenship, they supplied steady reserves of low-paid, exploitable workers to power the markets and infrastructure of empire. Puerto Ricans and Filipinx comprised the two most prominent streams. They journeyed as hired hands to Hawai'i's sugar plantations, Alaska's fish canneries, mainland farms and factories, and the Panama Canal Zone.³⁶

Conquered peoples served as valuable labor pools for the U.S. military itself. The Jones-Shafroth Act granted citizenship rights to Puerto Ricans in 1917, and the draft soon followed. The federal government also instituted a contract-labor program to recruit Puerto Ricans to work in war industries and on military bases.³⁷ In the 1920s and 1930s, Puerto Rican marines were deployed to the "Banana Wars" in Central America and the Caribbean as part of the U.S. effort to protect its economic interests in the region.³⁸ Puerto Ricans have since served in major U.S. military engagement, as have Filipinos. The U.S. Navy began recruiting Filipino cooks and stewards in 1903, and continued to do so until 1992—46 years after the formal independence of the Philippines.³⁹ During those decades, Filipinos were the sole group of foreign nationals permitted in the ranks of the U.S. armed forces.

War has also provided the context and excuse for bringing certain groups of laborers from places not directly under American rule to the United States. The federal government piloted the *bracero* and the H2 visa programs during World War II to address workforce shortages in agriculture. Southwestern growers began to import *braceros*, or temporary Mexican farmworkers, in 1942 through bilateral government-regulated channels. Mexico consented to the initiative as part of its "good neighbor" contribution to the Allied war effort. Mexican leaders also agreed because a permit system promised decent pay and housing to buffer against employer exploitation. The reality, however, turned out to be low wages, arduous conditions, social stigmatization, and the constant threat of deportation if they shirked their obligations. Despite these hardships, 4.6 million Mexicans participated until its termination in 1964.⁴⁰ H2 visa

³⁵Outside the scope of this essay but relevant is what might be considered a parallel history of U.S. citizens who have migrated around the world to build and work in fortified U.S. settlements. Brooke L. Blower, "Nation of Outposts: Forts, Factories, Bases, and the Making of American Power," *Diplomatic History* 41, no. 3 (June 2017): 439–59.

³⁶Ngai, *Impossible Subjects*; Joanna Poblete, *Islanders in the Empire: Filipino and Puerto Rican Laborers in Hawai'i* (Urbana, IL, 2014); Julie Greene, "Moveable Empire: Labor Migration, U.S. Global Power, and the Remaking of the Americas," *Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era* 15, no. 1 (Jan. 2016): 4–20; Lilia Fernandez, "Of Migrants and Immigrants: Mexican and Puerto Rican Labor Migration in Comparative Perspective, 1942–1964," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 29, no. 3 (Spring 2010): 6–39.

³⁷Lorraine Boissoneault, "Puerto Ricans Got U.S. Citizenship 100 Years Ago—But Their Identity Remains Fraught," March 7, 2017, Smithsonian.com, <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/100-years-ago-puerto-ricans-got-us-citizenship-it-only-made-things-more-complicated-180962412/> (accessed Feb. 18, 2019).

³⁸Shannon Collins, "Puerto Ricans Represented Throughout U.S. Military History," U.S. Department of Defense, October 14, 2016, <https://www.defense.gov/News/Article/Article/974518/puerto-ricans-represented-throughout-us-military-history/> (accessed Feb. 18, 2019); Harry Franqui-Rivera and Monique Aviles, "The Puerto Rican Experience in the U.S. Military: A Century of Unheralded Service," CUNY Hunter Centro Center for Puerto Rican Studies, <https://centropr.hunter.cuny.edu/digital-humanities/pr-military/puerto-rican-experience-us-military-century-unheralded-service> (accessed Feb. 18, 2019).

³⁹Yen Le Espiritu, *Home Bound: Filipino Lives Across Cultures, Communities, and Countries* (Berkeley, CA, 2003), 27–31; H. G. Reza, "Navy to Stop Recruiting Filipino Nationals," *Los Angeles Times*, Feb. 27, 1992, http://articles.latimes.com/1992-02-27/local/me-3911_1_filipino-sailors (accessed Feb. 18, 2019).

⁴⁰On the *bracero* program see Mae M. Ngai, *Impossible Subjects*; Deborah Cohen, *Braceros: Migrant Citizens and Transnational Subjects in the Postwar United States and Mexico* (Chapel Hill, NC, 2010); Mireya Loza, *Defiant Braceros: How Migrant Workers Fought for Racial, Sexual, and Political Freedom* (Chapel Hill, NC, 2016); Kang, *The INS on the Line*.

guest workers from Jamaica, British Honduras, and Barbados, mostly recruited to work Florida's sugar cane fields, faced similar circumstances throughout the duration of the program (1943–1986).⁴¹

In leaning on the logic of wartime exigency, the *bracero* and H2 visa schemes set a precedent for the Japanese Agricultural Workers' Program of the 1950s and 1960s. In 1952, former boosters of Japanese settler colonialism in 1930s Manchukuo approached the U.S. Department of State to start up a stateside farming education program for Japan's rural youth. The U.S. would benefit from this soft power engagement, and Japan would gain by training a cohort of specialists who might then be sent elsewhere (e.g., Southeast Asia, Brazil) to assist with agricultural development and shore up Japan's influence abroad. California growers—mostly Japanese Americans—spied the potential to expand this effort into an ongoing source of short-term, low wage field hands. They tried different avenues, including “refugee” admissions, and courted the support of the Japanese government and the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service.⁴²

In 1956, the Japanese American Workers' Program formally kicked off, modeled chiefly on the British West Indian H2 visa program. This meant that employers had the prerogative to decide whom to hire with minimal government interference. State Department officials also mellowed organized labor's accusations that the scheme relied on “cheap oriental[s]” by billing it as a Cold War opportunity for “students” to learn both the latest technologies and U.S. democracy. The guest-workers soon learned, however, that such misleading marketing obscured exploitative conditions similar to those endured by Mexican *braceros*. Mired in controversy, the Japanese Agricultural Workers' Program fizzled out by 1966.⁴³

“Operation Paperclip” offers a contrasting moment of highly skilled labor migration resulting from and rationalized by warfare. At the end of World War II, the U.S. military began to funnel German and Austrian scientists, engineers, and technicians to the United States as a kind of “intellectual reparations.” The aim was to leverage their expertise in such fields as V-2 long-range rocket-building into geopolitical advantage vis-à-vis the Soviet Union. The Joint Intelligence Objectives Agency under the Joint Chiefs of Staff convincingly wielded national security arguments to fast-track the conversion of these “enemy aliens” to “resident aliens” eligible for naturalized citizenship by 1948. It downplayed or overlooked many of the specialists' previous involvement with the Nazi Party. “Our Germans” eventually became celebrated national heroes for their contributions to the Cold War space race—a telling instance of war's “enduring conditions” in the modern United States.⁴⁴

Throughout the twentieth century, war-making seeded and nurtured new human connections across borders, which in turn spurred yet more migration. The ever-expanding reach of the United States military demanded occupying forces and bases abroad, leading to “fraternization” between personnel and area civilians. Relationships between American men and local women took many forms. International marriages and multiracial children obliged the U.S.

⁴¹On the H2 visa program, see Cindy Hahamovitch, *No Man's Land: Jamaican Guestworkers in America and the Global History of Deportable Labor* (Princeton, NJ, 2011). The H2 visa program began in 1943.

⁴²Eiichiro Azuma, “Japanese Agricultural Labor Program: Temporary Worker Immigration, US-Japan Cultural Diplomacy, and Ethnic Community Making Among Japanese Americans,” in Maddalena Marinari, Madeline Y. Hsu, and María Cristina García, eds., *A Nation of Immigrants Reconsidered: U.S. Society in an Age of Restriction, 1924–1965* (Urbana, IL, 2019), 162–86; Mireya Loza, “The Japanese Agricultural Workers' Program: Race, Labor, and Cultural Diplomacy in the Fields, 1956–1965,” *Pacific Historical Review* 86, no. 4 (Nov. 2017), 661–690.

⁴³Azuma, “Japanese Agricultural Labor Program,” in Marinari, Hsu, and García, eds., *A Nation of Immigrants Reconsidered*, 162–86; Loza, “The Japanese Agricultural Workers' Program,” 661–90.

⁴⁴Monique Laney, *German Rocketeers in the Heart of Dixie: Making Sense of the Nazi Past During the Civil Rights Era* (New Haven, CT, 2015).

military, Congress, the courts, and the general public to reconsider prevailing assumptions about what constituted legitimate American families.

“War brides” first appeared on the U.S. Army’s radar with the World War I-era boomlet of “Franco-Yanko Romance.” The Europeans who wed U.S. soldiers were the first alien military spouses sanctioned by the U.S. government, and it was then that the “war bride” as a legal category materialized in U.S. immigration bureaucracy.⁴⁵

As the size and scope of U.S. forces exploded during World War II, so too did the numbers of war brides. At least 125,000 G.I. marriages resulted from the military’s global engagement.⁴⁶ To sidestep the severe national origins quotas set by the Immigration Act of 1924, especially the absolute rejection of prospective newcomers from Asia, Congress approved five bills between 1945 and 1952 allowing for the non-quota entry of military spouses and fiancées.⁴⁷

As short-term exceptional pipelines for admission, the post-World War II war brides legislation did not overturn the numerical ceilings, nor was it intended to do so. Nonetheless, the measures revealed the potential of war-making to unravel the racist “national origins” quota system. Congress rationalized loopholes for military partners as a “special and privileged category of foreigners” as a matter of veterans’ earned “entitlement.”⁴⁸ Similarly, the valorization of men-in-arms, plus the high-stakes quest for geopolitical superiority in the Cold War, also helped to garner support for the liberal provisions of the 1952 McCarran-Walter Act, eliminating racial bars to entry and citizenship.⁴⁹ Supporters underscored its symbolic significance as a reward for the “Gold Star” parents of Japanese American soldiers who had fought “heroically to defend democracy and freedom in World War II and Korea.” But most urgently, as one advocate reminded the U.S. Senate, overturning race-based restrictions in immigration and naturalization law would provide a “dramatic and concrete demonstration of our regard for our fellow freemen who are enlisted with us in the great war for survival against the Communist threat” in Asia and the Pacific.⁵⁰

The movement of adoptive and biological children from conflict zones abroad paralleled war bride migrations. The Displaced Persons Act of 1948 facilitated the placement of refugee orphans from Greece, Germany, Italy, and Poland with U.S. families.⁵¹ American parents also welcomed babies born to local women and U.S. servicemen stationed in Germany and Japan.⁵² But it was U.S. intervention in the Korean War that stimulated the rise of *organized* intercountry adoption. The export of stateless “G.I. babies” to the United States began as an emergency humanitarian response, initiated by G.I.s themselves. It was eventually systemized by faith leaders and social workers who felt called to find homes for the children relinquished

⁴⁵Susan Zeiger, *Entangling Alliances: Foreign War Brides and American Soldiers in the Twentieth Century* (New York, 2010), 11–7, 41.

⁴⁶*Ibid.*, 71.

⁴⁷*Ibid.*, 72, 131–2. The 1945 War Brides Act, a.k.a. G.I. Brides Act (Public Law 271), admitted 114,000 women outside the quotas. Public Laws 471 and 450 (1946 Fiancées Act and its 1948 extension) widened its predecessor to include the betrothed. Public Laws 213 (1947) and 717 (1950) granted temporary ingress to “racially inadmissible” (i.e., Asian) spouses.

⁴⁸*Ibid.*, 132–3. Zeiger notes the American Legion supported the loopholes for racially ineligible military brides.

⁴⁹This followed the precedence set by Congress’s repeal of the Chinese Exclusion Acts in 1943 as a goodwill gesture to China, the United States’ Pacific ally during World War II. See Meredith Oyen, *The Diplomacy of Migration: Transnational Lives and the Making of U.S.–Chinese Relations in the Cold War* (Ithaca, NY, 2015).

⁵⁰Ellen D. Wu, *The Color of Success: Asian Americans and the Origins of the Model Minority* (Princeton, NJ, 2014), 74, 97–8.

⁵¹Arissa H. Oh, *To Save the Children of Korea: The Cold War Origins of International Adoption* (Stanford, CA, 2015), 5. See also Katherine H. S. Moon, *Sex Among Allies: Military Prostitution in U.S.–Korea Relations* (New York, 1997); Ji-Yeon Yuh, *Beyond the Shadow of Camptown: Korean Military Brides in America* (New York, 2002); and Eleana J. Kim, *Adopted Territory: Transnational Korean Adoptees and the Politics of Belonging* (Durham, NC, 2010).

⁵²Oh, *To Save the Children of Korea*, 5.

by Korean women, many of whom labored as hostesses and sex workers in “camptowns” adjacent to U.S. military bases.⁵³

The remarkable willingness of white Americans to take in mixed-race (Asian/white, Asian/black) Korean babies in the 1950s can be explained as acts of Christian faith yoked to Cold War-inflected patriotism. Their sense of duty to both God and country (in this case, *countries*) encouraged them to set aside their racist reservations.⁵⁴ Parents successfully lobbied Congress to bypass race-based quota restrictions for their children through provisions of the Refugee Relief Act of 1953 and subsequent stopgap laws. The first couples to adopt Korean children laid the legal foundations, as well as institutional and cultural underpinnings, for the rise of the international adoption industry.⁵⁵

The organized passage of children from Vietnam to the United States in the 1970s and 1980s both echoed and departed from the Korean antecedent. Again, many Americans were motivated to adopt mixed-race G.I. babies, or “Amerasians.”⁵⁶ While altruism, love, and the importance of family were certainly factors, a politics of “national redemption” also came into play, just as it had after Korea.⁵⁷ With the defeat in Southeast Asia, the promise of reconciliation via family-making offered a compelling rationale for the U.S. government to take the unprecedented step of assuming official responsibility for the offspring of American military personnel.⁵⁸

By the late 1970s and early 1980s, many of these children had become young adults, and some sought their American fathers. The Reagan administration sensed this as a political opportunity to revamp the image of the United States, and the president himself, as a benevolent power. To “welcome home” the children, it threw its support behind the Amerasian Immigration Act (1982) and the Amerasian Homecoming Act (1987). This rhetoric obscured the complexities of the situation, erasing the existence of Vietnamese mothers and families and the history of sexual encounters inseparable from the deployment of U.S. forces abroad. Altogether, some 20,000 Amerasians, accompanied by an additional 54,000 Vietnamese mothers, siblings, and spouses eligible through the program, resettled in the United States by 1993. Relatively few, however, happily reunited with their biological fathers.⁵⁹

Beyond trailblazing novel family configurations, war-making in modern U.S. history also propelled the emergence of student and professional “exchanges” to win hearts and minds around the world. At the turn of the twentieth century, American officials sought ways to shore up their country’s reputation in China—a kind of damage control after the United States joined other imperial powers in 1900 to quash the Boxer Rebellion, the anti-foreign Chinese uprising. They decided to finance scholarships for Chinese students with some of the Boxer indemnity funds paid by the defeated Qing state. Concurrently, colonial Filipinx students, known as *pensionados*, began schooling in the United States in the wake of the Philippine-American War (1899–1902). Americans treated these migrations as avenues to cultivate an educated, Westernized class of Chinese and Filipinx who could serve as U.S.-friendly leaders of their respective homelands.⁶⁰

⁵³Zeiger, *Entangling Alliances*, 206–14. Arissa Oh explains that Korean law stipulated citizenship passed from father to child, so babies fathered by U.S. G.I.s were rendered “stateless nonpersons who would never find legal or social acceptance.” Oh, *To Save the Children of Korea*, 7.

⁵⁴Oh, *To Save the Children of Korea*, 8, 127–37. White Americans were more hesitant to adopt Korean-black children.

⁵⁵*Ibid.*, 2, 95–8, 203–6. The U.S. government refused to issue visas for children adopted by single parents including widows, widowers, and unmarried people.

⁵⁶Allison Varzally, *Children of Reunion: Vietnamese Adoptions and the Politics of Family Migrations* (Chapel Hill, NC, 2017). Not all Vietnamese children adopted by Americans were G.I. babies.

⁵⁷Jana Lipman, “‘The Face Is the Roadmap’: Vietnamese Amerasians in U.S. Political and Popular Culture, 1980–1988,” *Journal of Asian American Studies* 14, no. 1 (Feb. 2011): 33–68, here 34.

⁵⁸Oh, *To Save the Children of Korea*, 193.

⁵⁹Lipman, “‘The Face is the Roadmap,’” 40–1, 47–53.

⁶⁰Madeline Y. Hsu, “Chinese and American Collaborations Through Educational Exchange during the Era of Exclusion, 1872–1955,” *Pacific Historical Review* 83, no. 2 (May 2014): 314–32; Paul A. Kramer, “Is the World

The recruitment of students, trainees, and visitors from abroad peaked during the Cold War. Educators, government officials, and ordinary citizens agreed that schooling foreigners would be an effective instrument of soft power. Their hope was that face-to-face interactions in the context of higher learning would spread American ideas and legitimize the U.S. way of doing things around the globe.⁶¹ The best known of such “exchanges” remains the Fulbright Program, established by Congress in 1946 (and itself funded by the federal government’s overseas sales of “surplus properties,” or “war junk”).⁶² In the first two decades, 51,000 Fulbright scholars—intellectuals, experts, instructors, and students—traveled between the United States and other countries to research, teach, and study.⁶³

Outside universities, a range of institutions launched similar types of initiatives during the first years of the Cold War. The Mutual Defense Assistance Program, established by Congress in 1949, invested billions of dollars in molding the armed forces of emerging nation-states. More than 141,000 foreign troops from South Korea, Taiwan, South Vietnam, and other decolonizing areas circulated through the United States in the 1950s to train with the U.S. military.⁶⁴ At least seven of them refused to return home. In one well-publicized case, Taiwan’s Hsuan Wei, a first lieutenant of the Chinese Nationalist Marine Corps, filed for political asylum to avoid deportation, and ultimately made a new life for himself in Ithaca, New York.⁶⁵

The Information and Educational Exchange Act (1948), also known as the Smith-Mundt Act, supported federally funded “interchange[s]” of “persons, knowledge, and skills” activities “to increase mutual understanding” between Americans and “the people of other countries.” One such venture was the Exchange Visitor Program (EVP), which recruited participants to labor or learn with U.S. sponsoring institutions. Between 1956 and 1959, more than 11,000 nurses from the Philippines worked in U.S. hospitals under the auspices of EVP in cooperation with the American Nurses Association. For Americans, EVP did double-duty: the program furnished U.S. medical facilities with inexpensive skilled workers at a time when nurses were in short supply, while also showcasing the supposed plusses of U.S. democracy and tutelage. The women who signed up for EVP did so to benefit from the relative freedom of working abroad, and the access to material goods and wages to better their families’ socioeconomic conditions back home. Even so, they recognized its problems (such as exploitation, race and gender discrimination, culture shock).⁶⁶

Not least, the battle for hearts and minds as a critical dimension of war-making played out in successive immigration reforms at mid-century. The Pacific region stood out as particularly important. Congressman Walter Judd (R-MN), one of the leading champions of mid-century immigration reform, plainly delineated the risks and rewards in 1949: amidst the “fierce struggle ... for the minds and hearts of the billion people who live [in Asia] ... half the potential producers and consumers and soldiers of the world,” righting racist wrongs would yield

Our Campus? International Students and U.S. Global Power in the Long Twentieth Century,” *Diplomatic History* 33, no. 5 (Nov. 2009): 775–806.

⁶¹Kramer, “Is the World Our Campus?,” 780–3; Liping Bu, *Making The World Like Us: Education, Cultural Expansion, and the American Century* (Westport, CT, 2003).

⁶²Kramer critiques the notion of “exchange” as a misleading one in several ways: they were seldom two-way (with the exception of Europe, U.S. students generally did not visit the home countries of foreign exchange students); and the geopolitical power dynamics shaping them were “deeply asymmetrical.” Kramer, “Is the World Our Campus?,” 778–9.

⁶³Kramer, “Is the World Our Campus?,” 796.

⁶⁴Simeon Man, *Soldiering Through Empire: Race and the Making of the Decolonizing Pacific* (Oakland, CA, 2018), 17–48.

⁶⁵Man, *Soldiering Through Empire*, 17–19, 44–48.

⁶⁶Catherine Ceniza Choy, *Empire of Care: Nursing and Migration in Filipino American History* (Durham, NC, 2003). Choy explains that many nurses never returned to the Philippines; for them, EVP became a stepping-stone to permanent residency and citizenship and presaged an even bigger wave of 25,000 Filipina nurses between 1966 and 1985.

invaluable diplomatic dividends.⁶⁷ Between 1943 and 1952, lawmakers overturned various Asian exclusion laws to grant token quotas and rights to naturalization to Chinese, Indians, Filipinx, Koreans, and Japanese. With the Cold War still brewing, liberals, immigrant advocates, and ethnic Americans continued to press for a more complete overhaul. The Immigration and Naturalization Act of 1965, also known as the Hart-Celler Act, finally replaced the national-origins system with preferences for skilled workers, family unification, and equal numbers of admissions slots for all countries. President Lyndon Johnson and his contemporaries celebrated its passage precisely for its tremendous geopolitical value as an ideological weapon of war: evidence to show the world of U.S. democracy's ability to auto-correct its mistakes.⁶⁸

Supporters of the 1965 law did not anticipate its far-reaching impact on the demographic makeup of the nation. The swell of Asian immigration illustrates this strikingly. International students lured by Cold War training opportunities in STEM fields in the post-World War II decades ended up staying in droves. They were able to convert to permanent residency through the new skilled worker provisions. From the 1950s through the 1970s, for instance, most students from Taiwan never left. Of the 15,959 students who arrived between 1962 and 1969, only 486 (about 3 percent) returned. Other top "brain drain" countries included India, South Korea, and the Philippines. Once these students became citizens, they could then petition to sponsor their relatives as non-quota immigrants under the revamped family unification preferences. When the Hart-Celler Act passed in 1965, Asian Americans accounted for less than 1 percent of the U.S. population. Fifty years later, they made up 5.8 per cent of the country, and they remain the fastest growing U.S. racial or ethnic group today.⁶⁹

The Militarization of Migration Management

War's pervasiveness as a "habit" in modern U.S. history, especially its tangled connections with people on the move, becomes even more obvious with an examination of the *militarization of migration management*.⁷⁰

Since the colonial period and the days of the early republic, influential Americans have actively curated their population based on a slew of membership criteria.⁷¹ Migration and citizenship policy have been momentous in this regard, invoked as protection from "threats" to the nation's integrity—especially along the lines of ideology, race, and place of origin. This framing has long provided the state justification for diminishing the rights of undesirables as well as deploying excessive shows of force against them.⁷² The Alien and Sedition Acts (1798) took aim at newcomers' foreign allegiances by upping the wait time for naturalization

⁶⁷Madeline Y. Hsu and Ellen D. Wu, "'Smoke and Mirrors': Conditional Inclusion, Model Minorities, and the Pre-1965 Dismantling of Asian Exclusion," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 34, no. 4 (Summer 2015): 43–65, here 49.

⁶⁸Mary L. Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy* (Princeton, NJ, 2000), 13. On mid-twentieth century U.S. immigration policy reform, see Bill Ong Hing, *Making and Remaking Asian America Through Immigration Policy, 1850–1990* (Stanford, CA, 1993); Ngai, *Impossible Subjects*; Donna R. Gabaccia, *Foreign Relations: American Immigration in Global Perspective* (Princeton, NJ, 2012); David S. FitzGerald and David Cook-Martin, *Culling the Masses: The Democratic Origins of Racist Immigration Policy in the Americas* (Cambridge, MA, 2014); Hoffnung-Garskoff, "The Immigration Reform Act of 1965"; Jane Hong, *Opening the Gates to Asia: A Transpacific History of How America Repealed Asian Exclusion* (Chapel Hill, NC, forthcoming, fall 2019).

⁶⁹Madeline Y. Hsu, *The Good Immigrants: How the Yellow Peril Became the Model Minority* (Princeton, NJ, 2015), 198–219, 236; Gustavo López, Neil G. Ruiz, and Eileen Patten, "Key Facts About Asian Americans, a Diverse and Growing Population," Pew Research Center, September 8, 2017, <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/09/08/key-facts-about-asian-americans/> (accessed March 6, 2019).

⁷⁰Sherry, "War as a Way of Life," 4.

⁷¹Zolberg, *A Nation by Design*, 1.

⁷²Leo Chavez, *The Latino Threat: Constructing Immigrants, Citizens, and the Nation* (Stanford, CA, 2013), is a deep dive into the case of Latinx migrants.

from five to fourteen years; authorizing the president to deport any aliens believed to imperil the tranquility of the United States; and sanctioning the arrest, imprisonment, and deportation of resident aliens from enemy countries during wartime.⁷³ Amidst the Haitian Revolution, legislators in several slave states (1793–1795) and at the federal level (1803) banned the entry of enslaved and free black people from the Caribbean or South America because they might spread perilous assumptions about the universal right to liberty.⁷⁴

Arguments about national security continued to underwrite more modern migration policies. In 1889, the Supreme Court decided against Chae Chan Ping's challenge to the Chinese Exclusion Act by ruling that the United States had the sovereign power to protect its "independence" and "security against foreign aggression and encroachment." Such hazards could take the form of "vast hordes... crowding in upon us."⁷⁵ In the twentieth century, the 1917 Immigration Act listed among "excludable classes" anarchists and others who advocated the overthrow of the United States or otherwise to opposed to law and "organized government." The 1952 McCarran-Walter Act classified anarchists, communists, and supporters of totalitarianism or coups against the United States as deportable in the name of "internal security." Both the 1917 and 1952 statutes evinced nativist assumptions linking political disorder to Southern and Eastern Europeans.⁷⁶

Nonetheless, for xenophobes, white supremacists, and many powerful Americans, anti-mobility laws have not been enough. Increasingly, these actors have turned to militarization as a solution to keep migrant "threats" at bay.

What does it mean to "militarize" something? At its most concise, militarization is "the contradictory and tense social process in which civil society organizes itself for the production of violence."⁷⁷ This process is multi-dimensional. It depends on material transformations, such as devoting labor, resources, and institutions to "military purposes."⁷⁸ Just as crucially, it depends on cultural shifts—changes in ideas, beliefs, values, language, and stories. "The more militarization transforms an individual or society," political scientist Cynthia Enloe warns, "the more that individual or society comes to imagine military needs and militaristic presumptions to be not only valuable but also normal."⁷⁹

Sociologist Timothy Dunn explains that the U.S. federal government and local authorities have intentionally deployed an aggressive combination of "military rhetoric and ideology, as well as military tactics, strategy, technology, equipment, and forces" to curb unauthorized migrant entries. The organized, state-sanctioned use of deadly arms against targeted civilian populations follows the U.S. military's doctrine of "low-intensity conflict," which calls for the "coordinated and integrated efforts of police, paramilitary, and military forces" to reach its goals.⁸⁰

⁷³Gabaccia, *Foreign Relations*, 59–60.

⁷⁴Gerald L. Neuman, *Strangers to the Constitution: Immigrants, Borders, and Fundamental Law* (Princeton, NJ, 1996), 35–6. The states were Georgia (1793), South Carolina (1794), and North Carolina (1795).

⁷⁵Lucy E. Salyer, *Laws as Harsh as Tigers: Chinese Immigrants and the Shaping of Modern Immigration Law* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1995); Mae Ngai, "Why Trump Is Making Muslims the New Chinese," CNN, Jan. 30, 2017, <https://www.cnn.com/2017/01/30/opinions/muslims-are-new-chinese-ngai-opinion/index.html> (accessed Feb. 18, 2019).

⁷⁶Ngai, *Impossible Subjects*, 18–9, 59, 237–8; Maddalena Marinari, "Divided and Conquered: Immigration Reform Advocates and the Passage of the 1952 Immigration and Nationality Act," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 35, no. 3 (Spring 2016): 9–40.

⁷⁷Michael S. Sherry, *In The Shadow of War: The United States Since the 1930s* (New Haven, CT, 1995), xi, and Catherine Lutz, "Making War at Home in the United States: Militarization and the Current Crisis," *American Anthropologist* 104, no. 3 (Sept. 2002): 723–35, utilize this definition from Michael Geyer, "The Militarization of Europe, 1914–1945," in John Gillis, ed., *The Militarization of the Western World* (New Brunswick, NJ, 1989), 65–102.

⁷⁸Lutz, "Making War at Home in the United States," 723.

⁷⁹Cynthia H. Enloe, *Maneuvers: The International Politics of Militarizing Women's Lives* (Berkeley, CA, 2000), 3.

⁸⁰Timothy J. Dunn, *The Militarization of the U.S.–Mexico Border, 1978–1992: Low Intensity Conflict Doctrine Comes Home* (Austin, TX, 1996), 3–4. Dunn suggests that the state-sanctioned use of deadly arms against a targeted civilian population at the U.S.–Mexico border falls in line with the U.S. military's doctrine of "low-intensity

The U.S. Border Patrol has formed the vanguard of this militarization, with its agents adopting a “definite, consciously constructed paramilitary character” since its beginnings in 1924.⁸¹ Operation Wetback (1954), the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS)’s sweeping effort to root out and expel undocumented Mexican migrants, epitomized this disposition. The U.S. Army declined to participate in the roundup. Undaunted, the INS (headed by retired U.S. Army Lt. General Joseph Swing) organized 800 Border Patrol agents into “Special Mobile Forces,” pioneering the “first large-scale, systematic implementation of military strategy and tactics used by the INS against Mexican immigrant workers.”⁸² It was effective: Operation Wetback netted over one million deportations to Mexico by June 1955.⁸³ But perhaps more significant than its immediate returns was the long-term precedent that it set: Operation Wetback normalized extensive border enforcement by militarized means.⁸⁴

Since the late twentieth century, the state’s approach to countering migrant “threats” has become increasingly militarized in both spirit and substance. The climb in both authorized and unauthorized immigration after 1965 plus high-profile waves of refugees and asylum seekers in the 1970s and 1980s fired the reawakening of organized nativism. Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR, established 1979) and other restrictionist groups couched their position in the language of environmental conservation, population control, resource scarcity, and quality of life. In the context of economic troubles and the conservative ascendancy, their arguments gained traction among political leaders and the general public.⁸⁵ This opened the door to more military-inspired, aggressive gatekeeping.

The underrecognized role of the United States Coast Guard in policing borders makes this dramatically clear. A self-described “military, multi-mission, maritime force offering a unique blend of military, law enforcement, humanitarian, regulatory, and diplomatic capabilities,” the Coast Guard is the nation’s leading maritime law enforcement agency.⁸⁶ “Migrant interdiction” became a top priority after two surges across the Caribbean in 1980. The 130,000 Cubans who took part in the Mariel boatlift bound for Florida were blacker and poorer than previous waves of Cuban transplants. They faced a chilly reception from the U.S. media and the Cuban American community, but were eventually permitted to resettle.⁸⁷

Haitian asylum seekers fleeing Jean-Claude Duvalier’s violent regime did not fare so well. The Reagan administration treated as them “illegal aliens” after October 1980. The following year, the Coast Guard initiated an active interdiction policy to stanch the flow of Haitians. It intercepted watercraft transporting migrants and rushed through asylum hearings. The Coast Guard refused nearly every Haitian asylum seeker, allowing only eleven of the 22,940 claimants

conflict,” a method developed in the 1980s to subdue perceived threats to U.S. national security, especially the revolutionary insurgencies in Latin America.

⁸¹Hernández, *Migra!*, 17–82; Dunn, *The Militarization of the U.S.–Mexico Border*, 11–2.

⁸²Dunn, *The Militarization of the U.S.–Mexico Border*, 14–5; Kang, *The INS on the Line*, 159.

⁸³Kang, *The INS on the Line*, 161.

⁸⁴Kang, *The INS on the Line*, 164, 167.

⁸⁵Daniel J. Tichenor, *Dividing Lines: The Politics of Immigration Control in America* (Princeton, NJ, 2002), 235–9; Carly Goodman, “The Shadowy Network Shaping Trump’s Anti-Immigration Policies,” *Washington Post Made By History*, Sept. 27, 2018, https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/2018/09/27/shadowy-network-shaping-trumps-anti-immigration-policies/?utm_term=.83a00d42cb19 (accessed Feb. 18, 2019).

⁸⁶“About the Coast Guard,” and “Enforcing Immigration Laws,” <https://www.gocostguard.com> (accessed Feb. 11, 2019); Robert B. Watts, “Caribbean Maritime Migration: Challenges for the New Millennium,” *Homeland Security Affairs*, Supplement No. 2 (April 2008): 1–9; LT Katie Braynard, “225 Years of Service to the Nation: Migrant Interdiction,” *Coast Guard Compass: Official Blog of the US Coast Guard*, June 16, 2015, <http://coast-guard.dodlive.mil/2015/06/225-years-of-service-to-nation-migrant-interdiction/> (accessed Feb. 18, 2019).

⁸⁷María Cristina García, *Havana USA: Cuban Exiles and Cuban Americans in South Florida, 1959–1994* (Berkeley, CA, 1996), ch. 2; Bon Tempo, *Americans at the Gate*, 179–84; Jana K. Lipman, “War, Persecution, and Displacement: U.S. Refugee Policy Since 1945,” in David Kieran and Edwin A. Martini, eds., *At War: The Military and American Culture in the Twentieth Century and Beyond* (New Brunswick, NJ, 2018), 147–67.

to stay. The rest were sent back to Haiti with no regard for the United Nations policy of *non-refoulement* (forced return of refugees).⁸⁸ Executive Order 12807 (1992), issued by President George H. W. Bush, codified this practice by authorizing the Coast Guard to repatriate any migrants intercepted on international waters without first screening for refugee or asylee status per international human rights law.⁸⁹

The Coast Guard has continued to patrol maritime borders for “offenders at sea.” In 1994, Operation Able Manner stopped 25,177 Haitians, while Operation Able Vigil halted 30,224 Cubans. The U.S. Navy provided “vital surge capacity” for both.⁹⁰ Migrants fleeing the Dominican Republic comprised another “threat vector,” in military parlance. Between 1982 and 2004, the fleet caught 24,143 Dominicans.⁹¹ Smugglers transporting migrants from China have also been a key focus.⁹²

The United States’s reliance on the U.S. naval base in Guantánamo Bay, Cuba (GTMO) to detain migrants added another layer of militarization to this history. In 1991, the Coast Guard redirected some 20,000 Haitians fleeing the aftermath of a military coup against Haitian President Jean-Bertrand Aristide to GTMO. They waited there in limbo. The majority were blocked from moving on to the United States, and most eventually went back to their homeland when Aristide returned to power.⁹³ Of the minority granted asylum, 205 HIV-positive migrants remained in captivity until they won a lawsuit securing their admission to the United States.⁹⁴ The U.S. government also ordered the 25,000 *balseros* intercepted while fleeing Cuba’s economic crises in 1994 to GTMO to await their fate. But, in contrast to the Haitians, they were allowed entry to the United States.⁹⁵

The in-betweenness of the Coast Guard as both uniformed service and federal regulatory agency and GTMO as both naval base and migrant detention facility might serve as metaphors for U.S. migration management in recent times: an enterprise that straddles the line between military and civilian operations.

This blurring characterizes each facet of the state’s approach to “border security”: criminalizing, monitoring, apprehending, detaining, and deporting migrants-as-threats to the nation. The INS first began experimenting with electrified border fences in 1970 by installing motion detection sensor technology piloted during the Vietnam War.⁹⁶ During the Carter, Reagan, and

⁸⁸Lipman, “War, Persecution, and Displacement.”

⁸⁹United States Coast Guard, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, “Alien Migrant Interdiction,” <https://www.pacificarea.uscg.mil/Our-Organization/District-11/Response-Division/LE/Migrants1/> (accessed Feb. 18, 2019); Azadeh Dastyari, *United States Migrant Interdiction and the Detention of Refugees in Guantánamo Bay* (New York, 2015), 28–30.

⁹⁰Robert B. Watts, “Caribbean Maritime Migration: Challenges for the New Millennium,” *Homeland Security Affairs*, Supplement No. 2 (April 2008): 1–9; Ivan T. Luke, “Caribbean Mass Migration Operations: MOOTW with the Coast Guard in the Lead,” paper submitted to the faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of Joint Military Operations, May 18, 1998, 3. Thanks to Jason McGraw for these references.

⁹¹“Enforcing Immigration Laws,” *GoCoastGuard.com*; Watts, “Caribbean Maritime Migration: Challenges for the New Millennium”; Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, “Caribbean Migration,” *In Motion: The African-American Migration Experience*, <http://www.inmotionaame.org/print.cfm;jsessionid=f830319631545041105586?migration=10&bhcp=1> (accessed February 18, 2019).

⁹²United States Coast Guard, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, “Alien Migrant Interdiction.”

⁹³Jana K. Lipman, *Guantánamo: A Working-Class History Between Empire and Revolution* (Berkeley, CA, 2009), 206–7.

⁹⁴A. Naomi Paik, *Rightlessness: Testimony and Redress in U.S. Prison Camps Since World War II* (Chapel Hill, NC, 2016), 85–150; Jana Lipman, “5 Things to Know about Guantánamo Bay on Its 115th Birthday,” *The Conversation*, Dec. 10, 2018, <https://theconversation.com/5-things-to-know-about-guantanamo-bay-on-its-115th-birthday-108301> (accessed Feb. 18, 2019).

⁹⁵Lipman, *Guantánamo*, 206–7.

⁹⁶Mary E. Mendoza, “Caging Out, Caging In: Building a Carceral State at the U.S.–Mexico Divide,” *Pacific Historical Review* 88, no. 1 (Winter 2019): 86–109, here 94.

Bush Sr. administrations, Congress and the executive branch expanded the capabilities, authority, and reach of the Border Patrol, especially at the U.S.-Mexico line. Notably, this included resources for upgrading to high-tech military-issue equipment and surveillance research and development in collaboration with the Army and Air Force. The Border Patrol Tactical Unit (BORTAC) was established in 1984 as a “special forces” paramilitary unit trained to deal with riots and terrorism.⁹⁷

The War on Drugs amplified policy makers’ “siege mentality” and tightened the overlap between military and civilian policing at the U.S.-Mexico border. Beginning in 1982, Congress gradually relaxed the 1878 Posse Comitatus Act limiting the federal government’s power to use the military for domestic law enforcement purposes. Thereafter, military personnel were permitted to “assist”—rather than merely “support”—civilian agencies with the use and upkeep of military equipment. Revisions also authorized the military to lend its facilities and provide training and expertise as needed to law enforcement agencies tasked with enforcing drug, immigration, and contraband laws.⁹⁸ For example, during Operation Border Ranger II (1989), the National Guard acted as supplementary “eyes and ears” for the Border Patrol, Customs Service, and local law enforcement. While the mission was ostensibly conducted for the War on Drugs, the operation yielded arrests of several hundred undocumented immigrants. Similarly, information gathered by a Marines-operated drone near Laredo, Texas, in 1990 aided the Border Patrol in capturing 1,009 pounds of marijuana *and* 372 unsanctioned migrants. In 1991, under the guise of reducing drug smuggling, U.S. Navy Seabees constructed a ten-foot-high wall stretching seven miles inland from Pacific Ocean at San Diego/Tijuana—the busiest crossing point for undocumented immigrants at the time. Fittingly, the barrier was built from repurposed steel used during the Vietnam War as military aircraft landing mats. The California National Guard smoothed surrounding back roads to ease the Border Patrol’s access to the wall.⁹⁹

Amidst the buildup of nativist pressure, the 1993 World Trade Center bombing provoked Congress to pass the hard-nosed Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act (IIRIRA) in 1996, the harshest immigration law since 1924. IIRIRA added more than 5,000 Border Patrol agents, inflicted tougher penalties on smugglers, and upgraded certain misdemeanors committed by migrants to aggravated felonies.¹⁰⁰ Aggregated felonies now became grounds for deportation.¹⁰¹

The September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks triggered further border fortification, notably the creation of three agencies under the new Department of Homeland Security: U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), and U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP).¹⁰² Resource allocations for border control, encompassing personnel, fencing, drones, surveillance technologies, and detention facilities, paint a stark picture: between 1986 and 2017, the United States earmarked a jaw-dropping \$263 billion to advance this goal.¹⁰³ Budgets for the three new agencies have jumped. ICE’s spending shot up a colossal 85 percent from \$3.3 billion (2003) to \$6.1 billion

⁹⁷Dunn, *The Militarization of the U.S.-Mexico Border*, 43–4, 53.

⁹⁸Dunn, *The Militarization of the U.S.-Mexico Border*, 57, 106–7, 117; Hernández, *Migra!*, 230–2. As Timothy Dunn notes, the National Guard, ordinarily under control of state governors, is usually exempt from Posse Comitatus restrictions except in rare cases when presidents formally place it under federal authority.

⁹⁹Dunn, *The Militarization of the U.S.-Mexico Border*, 66, 128–9, 132; Mendoza, “Caging Out, Caging In.”

¹⁰⁰María Cristina García, “National (In)security and the Immigration Act of 1996,” *Modern American History* 1, no. 1 (Mar. 2018): 1, 233–6.

¹⁰¹Torrie Hester, “Deportability and the Carceral State,” *Journal of American History* 102, no. 1 (June 2015): 141–51, here 149.

¹⁰²Kang, *The INS on the Line*, 172–3.

¹⁰³American Immigration Council, “Fact Sheet: The Cost of Immigration Enforcement and Border Security,” Jan. 25, 2017, <https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/research/the-cost-of-immigration-enforcement-and-border-security> (accessed Feb. 18, 2019).

(2016), and staff sizes have mushroomed.¹⁰⁴ The number of Border Patrol agents nearly doubled from 10,717 (1993) to 21,370 (2016).¹⁰⁵ By 2014, CBP had become the biggest law enforcement agency in the U.S., boasting 60,000 agents and administrators on its payroll.¹⁰⁶

Arrest, detention, and deportation rates have spiked accordingly, especially after Congress mandated an increase in the number of available prison beds in 2004.¹⁰⁷ Some 2.5 million people have moved through migrant detention facilities since 2003. Incarcerating migrants is a lucrative business: about three-quarters of these jails and prisons are privately owned. The two largest contractors alone made \$4 billion in FY 2017—and to ensure continued profits, these companies actively lobby and donate to sympathetic political candidates.¹⁰⁸ Immigration control is today the *number one* feeder of offenders into the federal penal system.¹⁰⁹

Deportation has also skyrocketed as a blunt instrument of migration management. The United States deported 50 million migrants between 1882 and 2015, but nearly 95 percent of those deportations took place *since 1970*.¹¹⁰ In the 1980s, the scope of deportable offenses expanded as part of federal, state, and local government War on Crime efforts. Congress's decision in 1996 to lift the statute of limitations on deportations for criminal violations proved pivotal. Migrants who are otherwise lawfully present in the United States could thereafter be deported for post-entry offenses, regardless of how long they had lived on American soil.¹¹¹ Migrants have therefore become more and more vulnerable to forced removal, sometimes to harmful or even life-threatening circumstances.¹¹² Perversely, deportations of individuals from Southeast Asian, Central American, and other refugee communities bring the history of war and migration back full circle.¹¹³

¹⁰⁴American Immigration Council, "Fact Sheet: The Cost of Immigration Enforcement." On ICE, see Carly Goodman, "Angry that ICE is ripping families apart? Don't just blame Trump. Blame Clinton, Bush and Obama too." *Washington Post Made By History*, June 11, 2017, https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/made-by-history/wp/2018/06/11/angry-that-ice-is-ripping-families-apart-dont-just-blame-trump-blame-clinton-bush-and-obama-too/?utm_term=.c159f86c9b09 (accessed Feb. 18, 2019).

¹⁰⁵American Immigration Council, "Fact Sheet: The Cost of Immigration Enforcement."

¹⁰⁶Kang, *The INS on the Line*, 168.

¹⁰⁷U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, "Fiscal Year 2017 ICE Enforcement and Removal Operations Report," <https://www.ice.gov/sites/default/files/documents/Report/2017/iceEndOfYearFY2017.pdf> (accessed Feb. 18, 2019); Livia Luan, "Profiting from Enforcement: The Role of Private Prisons in U.S. Immigration Detention," *Migration Policy Institute*, May 2, 2018 <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/profitting-enforcement-role-private-prisons-us-immigration-detention> (accessed Feb. 18, 2019).

¹⁰⁸Luan, "Profiting from Enforcement." Luan notes that in 2018, the Supreme Court ruled in *Jennings v. Rodriguez* that detained migrants are not entitled to periodic bond hearings—in other words, that they can be held indefinitely without chances for bail.

¹⁰⁹Torrie Hester, "Deportability and the Carceral State," at 141.

¹¹⁰Torrie Hester, *Deportation: The Origins of U.S. Policy* (Philadelphia, PA, 2017), 1. On the history of deportation, see also Daniel Kanstroom, *Deportation Nation: Outsiders in American History* (Cambridge MA, 2007); and Hidetaka Hirota, *Expelling the Poor: Atlantic Seaboard States and the Nineteenth-Century Origins of American Immigration Policy* (New York, 2017).

¹¹¹Torrie Hester, "Deportability and the Carceral State," here 148–9. See also Shoba Sivaprasad Wadhia, *Beyond Deportation: The Role of Prosecutorial Discretion in Immigration Cases* (New York, 2015).

¹¹²Dara Lind, "The Disastrous, Forgotten 1996 Law that Created Today's Immigration Problem," *Vox*, Apr. 28, 2016, <https://www.vox.com/2016/4/28/11515132/iirira-clinton-immigration> (accessed Feb. 18, 2019). As Sarah Stillman explains, "soar[ing] numbers of refugees and asylum seekers (five-fold) have come to the United States over the past decade from Central America's Northern Triangle—Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador, pushed out by the violence of organized gangs. Many have turned back by U.S. authorities, doomed to lose their lives and their loved ones." Sarah Stillman, "When Deportation Is a Death Sentence," *New Yorker*, Jan. 15, 2018, <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2018/01/15/when-deportation-is-a-death-sentence> (accessed April 15, 2019).

¹¹³A starting point on Southeast Asian deportations is Southeast Asia Resource Action Center, "The Devastating Impact of Deportation on Southeast Asian Americans," April 15, 2018, <https://www.searac.org/resource-hub/immigration/resources-toolkits-immigration/the-devastating-impact-of-deportation-on-southeast-asian-americans/>

The militarized infrastructure of migration control does not take place only at the literal geolocation of the border. For the besieged, the border is already everywhere, and it keeps growing.¹¹⁴ The escalation of state power at all levels in the name of “national security” has cleared the way for a clutch of measures aimed at “clandestine transnational actors” assumed to endanger American society: persons racially profiled by authorities and ordinary citizens alike as Mexicans/illegals, Muslims/terrorists, and others presumed illicit and menacing.¹¹⁵

The expansion of the border into the interior has been facilitated by two key pieces of federal legislation. In 1996, Congress empowered local police officers and sheriffs to identify those without legal status and to enforce federal immigration policy with the Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act (AEDPA) and Section 287(g) of the IIRIRA. The effect was to realize an “expanded, ongoing, and formal relationship between federal immigration agents and local police ... a sea change in federal attitudes.”¹¹⁶ More recently, several states have enacted “attrition through enforcement” practices to encourage migrants’ “self-deportation.” Arizona took the lead in 2007 by becoming the first state to require employers to verify the status of their employees and it made it a crime to knowingly hire workers without papers. The state legislature then dogpiled further restrictions on unauthorized migrants and punishments on those who sheltered, hired, or transported them with SB 1070 (2010). In 2012, the Supreme Court struck down several of its provisions but upheld the right of local police to determine the status of those apprehended if there is “reasonable suspicion” of their illegality—a win for state-sanctioned racial profiling.¹¹⁷

The normalization of everyday surveillance, justified in terms of national security and warfare, is a critical dimension of the “thickening” border in daily life.¹¹⁸ The rise of a “virtual” border—“layered, electronic, mobile, and policed by an escalating number of public and private actors”—has intensified the power and saturation of regulation.¹¹⁹ Take, for example, the National Security Entry-Exit Registration System (NSEERS), implemented by the Department of Justice and a linchpin of the War on Terror between 2002 and 2016. NSEERS required all non-citizen men at least sixteen years of age arriving in the U.S. from one of twenty-five countries (nearly all with significant Muslim populations) to register with federal authorities. DOJ mandated each registrant to check back in periodically and also to report any changes of residence, employment, or schooling. Those who failed to register risked fines and removal. NSEERS did not produce any terror-related convictions. But more than

(accessed March 6, 2019). On the deportation of Central Americans by the United States and Mexico, see Rodrigo Dominguez-Villegas and Victoria Rietig, “Migrants Deported from the United States and Mexico to the Northern Triangle: A Statistical and Socioeconomic Profile,” Migration Policy Institute, Sept. 2015, <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/migrants-deported-united-states-and-mexico-northern-triangle-statistical-and-socioeconomic> (accessed Feb. 18, 2019). In the case of the United States, Cecilia Manjivar, Leisy J. Abrego, and Leah Schmalzbauer note that Guatemalan, Honduran, and Salvadoran immigrants (alongside Mexican immigrants) are “vastly overrepresented among detainees and deportees.” See Manjivar et al., *Immigrant Families* (Cambridge, UK, 2016).

¹¹⁴Mike Davis, *Magical Urbanism: Latinos Reinvent the U.S. City* (New York, 2001), 69–78; Laila Lalami, “The Border Is All Around Us, and It’s Growing,” *New York Times Magazine*, Apr. 25, 2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/04/25/magazine/the-border-is-all-around-us-and-its-growing.html> (accessed Feb. 18, 2019).

¹¹⁵Nguyen, *We Are All Suspects Now*; Leti Volpp, “The Citizen and the Terrorist,” *UCLA Law Review* 49 (June 2002): 1575–600, here 1580–3.

¹¹⁶Doris Marie Provine, Monica W. Varsanyi, Paul G. Lewis, and Scott H. Decker, *Policing Immigrants: Local Law Enforcement on the Front Lines* (Chicago, IL, 2016), 26–7.

¹¹⁷Kris W. Kobach, one of the key architects of “attrition through enforcement” laws in Arizona and Alabama (HB 56, passed in 2010), outlined his hardline approach in “Attrition Through Enforcement: A Rational Approach to Illegal Immigration,” *Tulsa Journal of Comparative and International Law* 15, no. 2 (2008): 153–61; *Arizona v. United States* 567 U.S. 387 (2012), <https://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/11pdf/11-182b5e1.pdf> (accessed Feb. 18, 2019).

¹¹⁸Joseph Nevins, *Operation Gatekeeper: The Rise of the “Illegal Alien” and the Making of the U.S.–Mexico Boundary* (New York, 2002), 184–5.

¹¹⁹Anil Kalhan, “Immigration Surveillance,” *Maryland Law Review* 74, no. 1 (2014): 1–78, here 9.

13,000 of the total 83,000 who complied ended up deported on charges of immigration status violations.¹²⁰

Vigilantes, organized hate groups, and domestic terrorists have also functioned as partners in the militarization of migration management.¹²¹ These extremists have eyed Mexican immigration as a *reconquistadores* “invasion” bent on usurping control of the Southwest. In the mid-2000s, the Minuteman Civil Defense Corps waged a “war on illegal immigration” through armed border stakeouts, face-to-face intimidation of migrants including citizens arrests, and media campaigns to pressure Congress.¹²² They demanded “border security first, border security only and border security now” against the infiltration of “potential terrorists, gang members, drug, arms and human traffickers and illegal migrants.”¹²³ Extremists have also preyed on other immigrant groups, especially those they “read” as Muslim terrorists. One of the bloodiest hate crimes was the massacre of six Sikh Americans at their Oak Creek, Wisconsin, gurdwara in August 2012 by a white gunman.¹²⁴

The trifecta of xenophobia, racism, and Islamophobia that has thoroughly infected migration management continues to embolden nativists and white supremacists.¹²⁵ In his crusade to “Make America Great Again,” President Donald Trump has placed migrants from so-called “shithole countries” in the crosshairs, actively destroying countless lives with little if any recourse or remorse.

The attacks have been relentless. Alongside the Muslim Ban, he has redefined “interior enforcement” priorities to target *all* undocumented immigrants for removal for the sake of “public safety” (Executive Order 13768).¹²⁶ He has attempted to abolish both the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program and Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for Hondurans, Nepalese, Salvadorans, Nicaraguans, Haitians, Sudanese, and other vulnerable groups. (Challengers have filed multiple lawsuits to protect both DACA and TPS.)¹²⁷ Through it all, he has regurgitated falsehoods about a “national emergency,” equating “chain migration” to “open borders” inviting terrorists, gang members, and drug dealers to flood into the United States. He even shut down the federal government for 35 days in December 2018 and January 2019 to pressure Congress to fund his long-cherished dream of building a southern “border wall.”¹²⁸

No migrants are safe from these assaults, although certain populations are particularly susceptible. Under “zero tolerance” policies, thousands of children have been cruelly separated from their asylum-seeking parents fleeing violence and poverty in Central America. In the

¹²⁰Deepa Iyer, *We Too Sing America: South Asian, Arab, Muslim, and Sikh Immigrants Shape Our Multiracial Future* (New York, 2015), 39–44.

¹²¹Iyer, *We Too Sing America*, 26; Volpp, “The Citizen and the Terrorist,” 1580–1; Kathleen Belew, *Bring the War Home: The White Power Movement and Paramilitary America* (Cambridge, 2018), 33–54; 78; 97–99.

¹²²Nguyen, *We Are All Suspects Now*, 91–112; Chavez, *The Latino Threat*, 23–4, 135–56. Chavez points out that the “reconquistador” narrative was widely reproduced by the mainstream media in the 1980s and 1990s. Thanks to Carly Goodman for this reference.

¹²³Minutemen Civil Defense Corps press release, June 28, 2006, reprinted in Mae M. Ngai and Jon Gjerde, eds., *Major Problems in American Immigration History*, 2nd ed. (Boston, 2013), 585–6.

¹²⁴Volpp, “The Citizen and the Terrorist”; Iyer, *We Too Sing America*, 1–8.

¹²⁵Iyer, *We Too Sing America*, xii.

¹²⁶American Immigration Council, “Summary of Executive Order ‘Enhancing Public Safety in the Interior of the United States,’” May 19, 2017, <https://americanimmigrationcouncil.org/immigration-interior-enforcement-executive-order> (accessed March 6, 2019).

¹²⁷On DACA, see National Immigration Law Center, “Status of Current DACA Legislation,” updated February 7, 2019, <https://www.nilc.org/issues/daca/status-current-daca-litigation/> (accessed March 6, 2019). For updated TPS information, see U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, “Temporary Protected Status,” <https://www.uscis.gov/humanitarian/temporary-protected-status> (accessed March 6, 2019).

¹²⁸The White House, “It’s Time to End Chain Migration,” Dec. 15, 2017, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/articles/time-end-chain-migration/> (accessed Feb. 18, 2019); Donald J. Trump, State of the Union Address, Jan. 30, 2018, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/president-donald-j-trumps-state-union-address/> (accessed Feb. 18, 2019).

hands of the state, they have suffered trauma and abuse and face uncertain futures. In December 2018, two of them—Jakelin Caal Maquín and Felipe Gómez Alonzo—died in federal custody.¹²⁹ Meanwhile, Trump’s Department of Justice has reinvigorated “Operation Janus,” introduced during the Obama administration, to denaturalize naturalized citizens charged with immigration fraud.¹³⁰ Incredibly, even birthright citizenship has been under attack.¹³¹ The Trump administration has also dusted off an older concept—the “public charge” criteria for barring migrants deemed likely to go on the government dole—to deter migrants from accessing green cards and social benefits.¹³²

Predictably, Trump has not hesitated to call on the military to back his demonization of migrants. In October 2018, he ordered 5,200 active-duty troops to the U.S.–Mexico border to guard against the purported “invasion” of Hondurans and “Middle Eastern” intruders.¹³³ The deployment recalled the optics of earlier “visible show[s] of force”—Operation Hold The Line (1993), Operation Gatekeeper (1994), Operation Safeguard (1995), and Operation Jumpstart (2006)—when federal authorities sent hundreds to thousands of Border Patrol agents and National Guard reinforcements to the U.S.–Mexico line to repel furtive crossings.¹³⁴ Trump’s decision has generated no shortage of criticism, but he persists in dispatching more troops.¹³⁵ On February 15, 2019, Trump finally declared a “National Emergency” at the U.S.–Mexico border as a means to divert funding allocated for military construction projects towards his promised wall.¹³⁶

All told, the plausible outcomes for everyone subject to militarized migration management are fearful, dangerous, and sometimes lethal.¹³⁷ In 1997, 18-year-old Esequiel Hernández died at the hands of a Marine corporal assigned to a military–Border Patrol Joint Task Force. The

¹²⁹In December 2018, the federal government identified 2,737 children who had been separated under Trump’s “zero tolerance” policy but also admitted that the total number is “unknown” due to the absence of formalized tracking mechanisms. Miriam Jordan, “Family Separation May Have Hit Thousands More Migrant Children Than Reported,” *New York Times*, Jan. 17, 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/17/us/family-separation-trump-administration-migrants.html> (accessed Feb. 18, 2019); Elizabeth Oglesby, “Another Migrant Child Death, We Need a Border Truth Commission,” *The Hill*, Dec. 27, 2018, <https://thehill.com/opinion/immigration/423057-another-migrant-child-death-we-need-a-border-truth-commission> (accessed Feb. 18, 2019).

¹³⁰Dara Lind, “Denaturalization, Explained: How Trump Can Strip Immigrants of Their Citizenship,” *Vox*, July 18, 2018, <https://www.vox.com/2018/7/18/17561538/denaturalization-citizenship-task-force-janus> (accessed Feb. 18, 2019); Masha Gessen, “In America, Naturalized Citizens No Longer Have an Assumption of Permanence,” *New Yorker*, June 18, 2018, <https://www.newyorker.com/news/our-columnists/in-america-naturalized-citizens-no-longer-have-an-assumption-of-permanence> (accessed Feb. 18, 2019).

¹³¹Michael Anton, “Citizenship Shouldn’t Be a Birthright,” *Washington Post*, July 18, 2018, https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/citizenship-shouldnt-be-a-birthright/2018/07/18/7d0e2998-8912-11e8-85ae-511bc1146b0b_story.html?noredirect=on&utm_term=.23c1e6ebc440 (accessed Feb. 18, 2019).

¹³²Torrie Hester, Mary E. Mendoza, Deirdre Moloney, and Mae Ngai, “Now the Trump Administration Is Trying to Punish Legal Immigrants for Being Poor,” *Washington Post Made By History*, Aug. 9, 2018, https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/made-by-history/wp/2018/08/09/now-the-trump-administration-is-trying-to-punish-legal-immigrants-for-being-poor/?utm_term=.58b134476dd7 (accessed Feb. 18, 2019).

¹³³Michael D. Shear and Thomas Gibbons-Neff, “Trump Sending 5,200 Troops to the Border in an Election-Season Response to Migrants,” *New York Times*, Oct. 29, 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/29/us/politics/border-security-troops-trump.html> (accessed Feb. 18, 2019).

¹³⁴Nevins, *Operation Gatekeeper and Beyond*; Kang, *The INS on the Line*, 170–1.

¹³⁵W. J. Hennigan, “Pentagon Sends Troops to Texas Border as Trump Again Raises Fears About Caravans,” *Time*, Feb. 6, 2019, <http://time.com/5523065/pentagon-sends-troops-to-texas-border-as-trump-again-raises-fears-about-caravans/> (accessed Feb. 18, 2019).

¹³⁶Lara Seligman, “U.S. Military Readies to Pay for Trump’s Border Wall,” *Foreign Policy*, Jan. 10, 2019, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/01/10/us-military-readies-to-pay-for-trump-border-wall-pentagon/> (accessed Feb. 18, 2019); Peter Baker, “Trump Declares a National Emergency, and Provokes a Constitutional Clash,” *New York Times*, February 15, 2019 <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/15/us/politics/national-emergency-trump.html> (accessed March 6, 2019).

¹³⁷Nguyen, *We Are All Suspects Now*; Stillman, “When Deportation Is a Death Sentence.”

shooting marked the first time that soldiers recruited for a War on Drugs mission killed a U.S. citizen.¹³⁸ Claudia Patricia Gómez González, a 19-year-old Guatemalan woman, was killed by a Border Patrol agent in Rio Bravo, Texas, in 2018.¹³⁹ Countless others have suffered and perished as a result of the intentional, racialized devastation of human beings on the move waged by the United States government and its collaborators in the name of “national security.” This systematic, state-manufactured violence is nothing short of a *war on migrants*.

There is one additional irony here. War mobilization has long served as a springboard to national inclusion for migrants—one of the most potent “crucibles” for converting erstwhile aliens into Americans.¹⁴⁰ Throughout U.S. history, newcomers and racial minorities have relied on military service to speed their assimilation into American society, albeit with uneven results benefiting whites the most. During World War I, Poles, Italians, and other European residents of tenuous social standing secured their citizenship by taking up arms as volunteers and draftees. Foreign-born males made up 18 percent of the U.S. Army at that time.¹⁴¹

Martial patriotism has proved to be a powerful way to claim national belonging. Even Great War veterans of Asian ancestry, otherwise subject to exclusion laws, gained rights to naturalization with the 1935 Nye-Lye Act.¹⁴² Accused en masse of disloyalty to the United States, Japanese American prisoners of World War II U.S. concentration camps effectively proved their fidelity to the nation by fighting in uniform. Their sacrifices undergirded their recasting as “model minorities” in the postwar period.¹⁴³ Mexican Americans organized the American G.I. Forum in 1948 to fight simultaneously for veterans’ rights and civil rights. (They also opposed the *bracero* program and undocumented immigration as a drag on the working conditions and social standing of Mexican Americans.)¹⁴⁴

As xenophobia continues to ratchet up, this time-honored vehicle for acceptance is now imperiled. Khizr Khan’s extraordinary monologue at the 2016 Democratic National Convention recounted his family’s journey from Pakistan. “Like many immigrants, we came to this country empty-handed. We believed in American democracy—that with hard work and the goodness of this country, we could share in and contribute to its blessings,” he avowed. The painful loss of their son Captain Humayun Khan, killed during an Iraq War suicide attack, did not dampen the elder Khans’ devotion. Instead, it only strengthened their commitment to robust citizenship as “patriotic American Muslims with undivided loyalty to our country.” Khan’s moving story, and his admonishing of then-candidate Trump’s Islamophobia (“Have you even read the U.S. Constitution? I will gladly lend you my copy”) catapulted him to instant celebrity status.¹⁴⁵ But it did not stop Trump’s presidency, the Muslim Ban, or the administration’s ongoing offensive.

¹³⁸Timothy Dunn, “Military Collaboration with the Border Patrol in the U.S.–Mexico Border Region: Inter-Organizational Relations and Human Rights Implications,” *Journal of Political and Military Sociology* 27, no. 2 (Winter 1999): 257–77.

¹³⁹Daniella Silva, “Border Patrol Changes Account of Migrant Woman’s Killing as Her Family Reels,” *NBC News Digital*, May 27, 2018, <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/border-patrol-changes-account-migrant-woman-killing-her-family-n877891> (accessed Feb. 18, 2019).

¹⁴⁰Gary Gerstle, *American Crucible: Race and Nation in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton, NJ, 2001), 6, 9.

¹⁴¹Gerstle, *American Crucible*, 84; U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, “The Immigrant Army: Immigrant Service Members in World War I,” <https://www.uscis.gov/history-and-genealogy/our-history/immigrant-army-immigrant-service-members-world-war-i> (accessed Feb. 18, 2019).

¹⁴²Lucy E. Salyer, “Baptism by Fire: Race, Military Service, and U.S. Citizenship Policy, 1918–1935” *Journal of American History* 91, no. 3 (Dec. 2004): 847–76.

¹⁴³Wu, *Color of Success*, chs. 3, 5.

¹⁴⁴Ed Idar, “Our People Were Dedicated’: Organizing with the American G.I. Forum,” oral history interview, *History Matters*, <http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/6581/> (accessed Feb. 18, 2019); David G. Gutiérrez, *Walls and Mirrors: Mexican Americans, Mexican Immigrants, and the Politics of Ethnicity* (Berkeley, CA, 1995), 153–5.

¹⁴⁵Katie Bo Williams, “Trump-Khan Feud: A Timeline,” *The Hill*, Aug. 1, 2016, <http://thehill.com/policy/national-security/290049-trump-khan-feud-a-timeline> (accessed Feb. 18, 2019).

Martial patriotism no longer seems a viable means to securing one's status. Recently, the U.S. Army quietly began discharging reservists and recruits who had hoped their service would yield a "path to citizenship."¹⁴⁶ Veterans seeking to stay deportation orders for themselves and their family members are now facing doubled odds (compared to the last fiscal year of Obama's administration) that their pleas will be rejected.¹⁴⁷

In the end, the migrant "threat" is not to the nation's integrity but to migrants themselves. As Edwidge Danticat reminds us, "We are indeed, all of us, suspects. However, as immigrants, we live with the double threat of being both possible victims and suspects, often with deadly consequences. Will America ever learn again how to protect herself without sacrificing a great number of livelihoods and lives? We can only hope that this is still possible."¹⁴⁸

As the war on migrants gains momentum, historians must decide what our role will be. Militarization depends on material stuff to happen: arms, barricades, troops. Yet it also needs discursive validation to work: words, laws, and histories that "glorify and legitimate military action."¹⁴⁹ A counter-discourse can be powerful for dismantling and defeating it. Per Marilyn Young's prompt, our research, writing, and teaching should keep striving to render war "visible, vivid, an inescapable part of the country's self-consciousness, as inescapable a subject of study as it is a reality."¹⁵⁰ Reframing U.S. immigration history to center war and militarization is one meaningful step.

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¹⁴⁶Martha Mendoza, "US Army Quietly Discharging Immigrant Recruits," *Army Times*, July 5, 2018, <https://www.armytimes.com/news/your-army/2018/07/05/us-army-quietly-discharging-immigrant-recruits/> (accessed Feb. 18, 2019); Alex Horton, "The Pentagon Promised Citizenship to Immigrants Who Served. Now It Might Help Deport Them," *Washington Post*, June 26, 2017, https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/checkpoint/wp/2017/06/26/the-pentagon-promised-citizenship-to-immigrants-who-served-now-it-might-help-deport-them/?utm_term=.d10e88ffe57f (accessed Feb. 18, 2019).

¹⁴⁷Jason Lemon, "Donald Trump Has Doubled Rejection Rate for Veterans Requesting Family Deportation Protections," *Newsweek*, July 5, 2018, <https://www.newsweek.com/trump-doubled-rejection-rate-veterans-requesting-family-deportation-1010571> (accessed Feb. 18, 2019); Horton, "The Pentagon Promised Citizenship to Immigrants Who Served"; Laignee Barron, "US Army Veteran Deported to Mexico After 2 Tours in Afghanistan," *Time*, Mar. 26, 2018, <http://time.com/5215153/army-veteran-deported-tammy-duckworth/> (accessed Feb. 18, 2019).

¹⁴⁸Edwidge Danticat, Foreword to Nguyen, *We Are All Suspects Now*, xi.

¹⁴⁹Lutz, "Making War at Home in the United States," 723.

¹⁵⁰Yulia Komska, Michelle Moyd, and David Gramling, *Linguistic Disobedience: Restoring Power to Civic Language* (Cham, Switzerland, 2019); Young, "I was thinking, as I often do these days, of war," here 2, cited in Sherry, "War as a Way of Life."