

**Immigrant Voices**  
**Sociology 294-01**  
Spring 2011  
TR 1:20-2:50  
Carnegie 204

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**Course Description:**

“Once I thought to write a history of the immigrants in America. Then I discovered that the immigrants *were* American History” (Oscar Handling, 1951:3). Over the course of the last five centuries, millions of people, young and old, male and female, married and single, left their homelands in search of new dreams. Originating in different localities, many escaped famine and hunger, war, religious persecution and intolerance, colonialism, and revolutionary turmoil. Some left following their “adventurous” spirit. While many died before reaping the benefits of their life transforming quest, others survived to build a new nation. Who were these people who, willingly or forcibly, left all they knew behind? What were they escaping from? What were their dreams and motivations? Hardships? How were they received by those who, by pure accident of history and birth, had arrived before them?

This class is an expedition into the past with an eye on the present, examining primarily firsthand accounts left by immigrants and about them. What does an 18<sup>th</sup> century Scottish indentured servant may have in common with a 21<sup>st</sup> century migrant farm worker? What does a turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Eastern European immigrant might have in common with a contemporary immigrant? What does a Japanese picture bride might share with a contemporary Russian “mail order” bride? Delving into divergent historical periods and differing groups, the goal is to develop a better understanding of parallels and variations, hopes and dreams, the ease and challenges that immigrants have experienced, and continue to face.

**Required Books:**

Gordon Hunter (1999). *Immigrant Voices*. Signet Classic Printing.  
Thomas Dublin (1993). *Immigrant Voices*. University of Chicago Press.  
Kao Kalia Yang (2008). *The Latehomcomer*. Coffee House Press.  
Peter Orner (2008). *Underground America*. Mc Sweeny’s Books.  
O.E. Rolvaag (1991). *Giants in the Earth*. Harper Perennial.

A number of book chapters on Moodle.

## **Class Dynamics and Course Requirements:**

This course is designed as a seminar. There will be weekly typed memos and questions, two exams, one analytical paper, class presentation, a book analysis, and in-class activities. Students are expected to complete the readings and memos before each class period. If you miss a class, you are responsible to get notes and an update from a classmate and to contact me regarding your absence. Contacting me with the reason for your absence does not constitute permission for an excused absence.

Actively discussing the material and respectfully listening to each other are crucial to a successful learning. You are encouraged to bring in issues that relate to the topics we discuss.

### **Grades will be based on the following criteria:**

Weekly memos/reflections/questions	10% of the grade
Attendance and Participation	10%
Two Exams	30% each
Analytical Paper	15% of the grade
Book Analysis:	15% of the grade
<i>Giants of the Earth: A Saga of the Prairie</i> by O.E. Rolvaag	

### **Attendance:**

I will be taking attendance at the beginning of each class. Attending the class will influence your participation grade.

0 class missing= A  
1 class missing= A-  
2 classes missing= B  
3 classes missing= C  
4 classes missing= D

Missing more than four classes will result in no credits for the 10% devoted to attendance. Attendance is 10% of the grade.

**Class Participation:** This class will be fairly dynamic and requires students' interaction and involvement. All students are expected to participate in class activities and discussions on a regular basis. In each class period, students will be sharing their memos designed to address important points in the readings. Come to the class prepared to discuss your memos and to incorporate your questions.

Your regular participation may take the form of sharing your memos, posing or answering questions, referring to main points in the readings, offering analysis, relating the day's readings to previous assignments or current events, and giving your informed opinion. Your discussion grade will be based on regular attendance and participation, the amount of participation and its quality. The quality of your participation is judged by demonstrating your in-depth reading of the material and the ability to relate similar themes written by different authors in different time periods. However, although you are expected to be actively involved, we need to remember that all students have something important and unique to contribute to class discussion.

Additional readings might be assigned. It is your responsibility to keep us with the changes announced in the class.

### **Analytical Memo Writing:**

You are expected to submit daily memos/reflections based on the readings. Your memos are based on the readings and will be used as a basis for class discussion. Memos written during the class, emailed reflections, or late submissions do not count. You will share your memos/questions not only with me but also with your classmates. At times, members of small groups will read each other's memos and will choose specific themes for further class discussion.

Your memo writing is a two-part activity.

- A)** Read the text with the intention of coding themes, ideological perspectives, individual perceptions and experiences, gender dynamics and variations. In a way, you are using a "textual analysis" or "textual coding." You may start with as many codes as possible. Your goal is to document the patterns that get repeated over time and across groups. Coding describes and summarizes what is in the text. Textual coding can reveal those patterns that may be difficult to discern at first and allows the reader to identify significant patterns and their frequency. Furthermore, it provides an understanding of the implicit meanings and messages in a text. Our class discussions will further enable us to compare our coding, learn from each other, and ascertain our understanding of the underlying themes and ideas.
- B)** The next part of your memo is simply recording your reflections on the readings. Record your thoughts and articulate what questions or reaction occurred to you upon reading the assigned material.

Please keep a copy of your memos; they will need them for preparing for the exam and for choosing your topic for the analytical paper. Start a file on your computer for saving all your memos.

Your memos will be graded at the end of the term on the basis of their overall quality. 10% of your final grade.

**Exams:** Exam will consist of short essay questions. Each exam will count for 30% of the final grade. Attendance at exams is mandatory. Make-up exams will be allowed only in cases of emergency or extreme conditions and will result in reduced points.

### **Presentation**

For your presentation, you are expected to read the assigned material and conduct extra research on your topic. Choose several main issues (or codes) in the readings and try to synthesize your findings with the general readings conducted over the course of the semester. **Your presentation is not a summary of the readings;** rather it should be focused on the themes you have selected. Your goal is to decipher specific themes, patterns, individual responses, and ideas discussed in the assigned readings, and relating them to the course material.

A good presentation engages the entire class in thinking and talking about the themes you have chosen as well as those issues the rest of the class has explored. Please make sure you incorporate the entire class in your presentation and invite their contributions. Prepare a handout for the class, including the main themes, ideas, and key questions. I encourage you to use videos, media, guided activities, role-playing, films, music, and web resources. Macalester Media Services has a good collection of documentary videos or movies. Furthermore, much information is available on the web. However, please be selective about your choices. You need to spend adequate time to review different sources/videos/class activities and prepare for these presentations. Not all that is available on the internet is relevant or pertinent to our topic.

In short, demonstrate your **creativity and thoughtfulness** in your presentation. Work on organization of your presentation to ensure it flows smoothly. While I will be grading the presentations, the rest of the class is also expected to grade these presentations at the end of each class. 10% of the grade.

### **Analytical Paper:**

You may choose any of the readings we cover during the term for this project. The goal is to develop an understanding of the commonalities or differences imbedded in the immigrants' experiences. Pick two or three themes that interest you. You don't need to focus on a particular group. Instead, you could choose several individuals or groups to develop a sustained analysis of your themes. Make sure you provide evidence, examples, and quotes from the readings to support your findings. Potential questions to address are: What are some continuities in immigrants' experiences over the last two or three centuries? Changes over time? What forces have contributed to such geographical mobility, i.e. the push and pull factors at work? What individual motivations the 18<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries immigrants may share? Explore the range of

issues immigrant communities or families have experienced across generations and within their own communities. What institutions or cultural resources provided support and comfort? What aspects of the host society caused cultural clash? Try to incorporate the experiences of diverse groups in different historical period and draw patterns that speak to central issues immigrants have experienced. In a way, you are developing your own theoretical framework for a better understanding of immigrant experience. Explain how your findings can be applied to larger group patterns or to specific groups. 15% of the final grade.

Your analytical paper will be graded on the basis of the following criteria:

1. Organization (For example: Is the topic adequately introduced? Are the ideas connected throughout the paper? Is there a main thesis or ideas with subheadings? Have you concluded your remarks?)
2. Creativity (Does your paper motivate the reader?)
3. Strength of the argument (Have you developed an argument? Is it convincing? Have you used adequate examples, evidence, and quotes from the readings to demonstrate the strength of your argument?)
4. Content (The content of your paper shows the depth of your engagement with the readings and the connection you make between different writers across diverse time periods; it shows an overall demonstration of the effort in writing your paper).
5. Style (Please make sure you proofread your final draft, using correct grammar, and punctuation).
6. Format (Includes correct citation and bibliographic information). For more information on correct citation of your sources, consult *ASA Style Guide* available on line at <http://www.asanet.org/apap/quickstyle.html>

5-6 pages, typed, double-spaced, stapled, including page numbers, and bibliography. **Due March 24.**

### **Book Analysis: *Giants in the Earth***

To write your book analysis, you need to summarize the book and the events throughout the story. It is important to situate the book within the larger socio/historical context. **Provide a structure for the events. What is happening at the time in the country?** Relate the story to relevant issues. Explore the diversity and the significance of the immigration and internal migration. Where do particular ethnic groups tend to concentrate? Why did they decide to leave their first point of arrival and move to a different location? What challenges did they

experience? What efforts went into creating a community, a town? What did they leave behind in order to start a new life? How does the book relate to other material we have read?

You will be graded on the clarity of your writing, evidence of original thinking, creativity, and the larger structure you provide for the story. For more evaluation guideline, please refer to the Analytical Paper section. 8-10 pages, typed, double-spaced, stapled, including page numbers, and bibliography.

Late papers will be accepted only under extreme conditions and will result in reduced points. 15% of the grade. **Due April 19.**

### **Grading:**

The following scale will be used:

A	94% and above	B	83-86%	C	73-76%
A-	90-93%	B-	80-82%	C-	70-72%
B+	87-89%	C+	77-79%	D	60-69%

Late reviews will be accepted only under extreme conditions and will result in reduced points.

### **Reading Schedule**

<b>Jan. 25</b>	Introduction
<b>Jan. 27</b>	<b>Dublin</b> , Introduction (Pages 1-26)
<b>Feb. 1</b>	<b>Dublin</b> , Chapters 1&2: "The John Harrower Diary, 1773-1776" & "The Hollingworth Family Letters." (Pages 27-87). Hunter, Chapter 3: "True Picture of Immigration," (Pages 40-55).
<b>Feb.3</b>	<b>Dublin</b> , Chapter 3: "The William and Sophie Frank Seyffardt Letters 1851-1863," (Pages 87-109). <b>Hunter</b> , Chapter 5-7: "Frontier Mother," "The Nun of Kenmare," & "A Woman's Quest," (Pages 69-103).
<b>Feb. 8</b>	<b>Hunter</b> , Chapters 10-11: "The Making of an American," & "The Promised Land," (Pages 141-167) Chapters 13-14: "A Far Journey," & "The Americanization of Edward Bok," (Pages 185-213).
<b>Feb.10</b>	<b>Dublin</b> , Chapter 4: "Rosa Cassettari: From Northern Italy to Chicago, 1884-1926." (Pages 110-145)

- Feb. 15**      **Dublin**, Chapter 5&6: “Rose Gollup: From Russia to the Lower East Side in the 1980s,” & “The Childhood of Mary Paik, 1905-1917,” (Pages 146-202).
- Hunter**, Chapters 17: “A Daughter of the Samurai,” (Pages 244-253).  
Chapter 24: “Quiet Odyssey,” (Pages 362-373).
- Feb. 17**      **Dublin**, Chapter 8: “Kazuko Ito: A Nisei Daughter’s Story, 1925-1942,” (Pages 234-259).
- Feb. 22**      **Tomoko Makabe**, Chapters 3,4,5: “Mrs. Hana Murata,” “Mrs. Yasu Ishikawa,” & “Mrs. Tami Nakamura,” (Pages 69-149). Available on Moodle.
- Feb.24**      **First Exam**
- March 1**      **Hunter**, Chapters 19-20: “The Soul of an Immigrant,” & “A Long Way From Home,” (Pages 279-311).
- March 3**      **Dublin**, Chapter 7: “The Galarza Family in the Mexican Revolution, 1910: From Mexico to Sacramento,” (Pages 203-233).  
Chapter 9: “Piri Thomas, Puerto Rican or Negro? Growing Up in East Harlem during World War II,” (260-274).
- March 8**      **Hunter**, Chapters 22-23: “America Is in the Heart,” & “Barrio Boy,” (Pages 328-361).
- March 10**      **Dublin**, Chapter 10: “The Nguyen Family: From Vietnam to Chicago, 1975-1986,” (Pages 275-298).
- March 12-20 Spring Break (Have Fun)**
- March 22**      **Orner**, (Pages 1-75).
- March 24**      **Analytical Paper and Presentation Due**
- March 29**      **Orner**, (Pages 79-133).
- March 31**      **Orner**, (Pages 155-202).
- April 5**      **Orner**, (Pages 217-280).

- April 7** Orner, (Pages 283-342).
- April 12** Yang, Chapters 1,3&5: “Seeking Refuge,” (Pages 1-4), “Refugees,” (Pages 39-52), “The Second Leaving,” (Pages 78-90).
- April 14** Yang, Chapters 6,7&8: “Phanat Nikhom Transition Camp to America,” “A Return to the Clouds,” & “Before the Babies,” (Pages 91-151).
- April 19** **Book review and analysis due**
- April 21** Constable, Chapter 1: “Making Introductions,” (Pages 13-30).  
(All Nichole Constable pieces available on Moodle).
- April 26** Constable, Chapters 4: “Fairy Tales, Family Values, and the Global Politics of Romance,” (Pages 91-115).  
Chapter 6-7: “Women’s Agency and the Gendered Geography of Marriage,”  
“Tales of Waiting: History, Immigration, and the State,” (Pages 145-175).
- April 28** Johnson, Chapter 2: “Olga: Feminism or Femininity,” (Pages 22-48).  
Johnson, Chapter 5: “Tanya: Trafficking in Dreams,” (Pages 88-106).  
Johnson, Chapter 6: “Mariana: Cultural Shock,” (Pages 107-127).  
(All Ericka Johnson pieces available on Moodle).
- May 3** **Second Exam**