

Teaching Migration

An online conversation and resource exchange with:

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This resource guide is designed to accompany the live webinar. It shares additional information about each presenter's work along with a curated collection of teaching strategies, assignments, and activities that can be used to teach these works or about im/migration in general. This document is available for viewing and sharing at

<http://bit.ly/TeachingMigrationResources>

Selected Presenters' Bibliography

Alexander-Nathani, Isabella. 2020. *Burning at Europe's Borders: An Ethnography on the African Migrant Experience in Morocco*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Publisher's description: *Burning at Europe's Borders* invites readers inside the lives of the world's largest population of migrants and refugees - the hundreds of thousands who are trapped in hidden forest camps and forgotten detention centers at Europe's southernmost borders in North Africa. "Hrig," the Arabic term for "illegal immigration," translates to "burning." It signifies a migrant's decision to burn their papers, in order to avoid identification and repatriation on their long journeys to safer shores. But it also signifies their decision to burn their past lives, sacrificing themselves in hopes of reaching a future on the other side of the Mediterranean Sea. Alexander-Nathani examines this process of "burning," traveling thousands of miles alongside those who have fled war and extreme poverty across the African continent only to find themselves trapped in Libya, Algeria, and Morocco. This book exposes the political agreements that have led to Europe's control over African borders and the illicit practices that continue to mold North African countries into brutal holding cells for our world's most vulnerable.

See this [Student Resource Guide for Burning at Europe's Borders](#) for chapter-by-chapter discussion questions, supplemental readings and films, and suggested ways to get involved with international organizations tasked with protecting refugees and migrants.

Alexander-Nathani, Isabella, dir. *The Burning: The Untold Story of Africa's Migrant Crisis*.

Small World Films.

Distributor's description: "Hrig," the Arabic term for "illegal immigration," translates to "burning." It signifies a migrant's decision to burn their papers, in order to avoid identification and repatriation on their long journeys to safer shores. But it also signifies their decision to burn their past lives, sacrificing themselves in hopes of reaching a future on the other side of the Mediterranean Sea. Over the past decade, the European Union has been working in direct violation of international law to transform North African states into brutal holding cells for the millions of men, women, and children who flee violent conflict and extreme poverty across the African continent every year. But the human cost of the EU's illicit policies has been hidden from view. **The Burning** will bring the untold story of Africa's migrant and refugee crisis to life through the incredible journeys of three families that begin thousands of miles apart and intersect as they move closer to the promise of safety on European shores.



teachinglearninganthro.org

Gomberg-Muñoz, Ruth. 2017. *Becoming Legal: Immigration Law and Mixed-Status Families*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Publisher's description: There are approximately eleven million undocumented people living in the United States, and most of them have family members who are U.S. citizens. There is a common perception that marriage to a U.S. citizen puts undocumented immigrants on a quick-and-easy path to U.S. citizenship. But for people who have entered the U.S. unlawfully and live here without papers, the line to legal status is neither short nor easy, even for those with spouses who are U.S. citizens. *Becoming Legal: Immigration Law and Mixed-Status Families* follows mixed-status couples down the long and bumpy road of immigration processing. It explores how they navigate every step along the way, from the decision to undertake legalization, to the immigration interview in Ciudad Juárez, Mexico, to the effort to put together a case of "extreme hardship" so that the undocumented family member can return. Author Ruth Gomberg-Muñoz also discusses families' efforts to rebuild their lives in the aftermath of immigration processing--both for those who are successful and those who are not.

Gomberg-Muñoz, Ruth. 2020[2011]. *Labor and Legality: An Ethnography of a Mexican Immigrant Network*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Publisher's description: *Labor and Legality: An Ethnography of a Mexican Immigrant Network* is an ethnography of undocumented immigrants who work as busboys at a Chicago-area restaurant. Ruth Gomberg-Muñoz introduces readers to the Lions, ten friends from Mexico committed to improving their fortunes and the lives of their families. Set in and around "Il Vino," a restaurant that could stand in for many places that employ undocumented workers, *Labor and Legality* reveals the faces behind the war being waged over "illegal aliens" in America. Gomberg-Muñoz focuses on how undocumented workers develop a wide range of social strategies to cultivate financial security, nurture emotional well-being, and promote their dignity and self-esteem. She also reviews the political and historical circumstances of undocumented migration, with an emphasis on post-1970 socioeconomic and political conditions in the United States and Mexico.

See this [Student Resource Guide for *Labor and Legality*](#) for chapter-by-chapter discussion questions, an outline of interview questions, and information about immigrants rights organizations.

Horton, Sarah Bronwen. 2016. *[They Leave their Kidneys in the Fields: Illness, Injury, and Illegality among US Farmworkers](#)*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Publisher's description: *They Leave Their Kidneys in the Fields* takes the reader on an ethnographic tour of the melon and corn harvesting fields of California's Central Valley to understand why farmworkers suffer heatstroke and chronic illness at rates higher than workers in any other industry. Through captivating accounts of the daily lives of a core group of farmworkers over nearly a decade, Sarah Bronwen Horton documents in startling detail how a tightly interwoven web of public policies and private interests creates exceptional and needless suffering.

See this [website for *They Leave Their Kidneys in the Fields*](#) to access supplemental information about many of the policy issues mentioned in the book, links to popular media about the book, and links to organizations that fight for farmworkers' rights.

Horton, Sarah Bronwen and Josiah Heyman, eds. 2020. *[Paper Trails: Migrants, Documents, and Legal Insecurity](#)*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Publisher's description: Across the globe, states have long aimed to control the movement of people, identify their citizens, and restrict noncitizens' rights through official identification documents. Although states are now less likely to grant permanent legal status, they are increasingly issuing new temporary and provisional legal statuses to migrants. Meanwhile, the need for migrants to apply for frequent renewals subjects them to more intensive state surveillance. The contributors to *Paper Trails* examine how these new developments change migrants' relationship to state, local, and foreign bureaucracies. The contributors analyze, among other topics, immigration policies in the United Kingdom, the issuing of driver's licenses in Arizona and New Mexico, the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, and community know-your-rights campaigns. By demonstrating how migrants are inscribed into official bureaucratic systems through the issuance of identification documents, the contributors open up new ways to understand how states exert their power and how migrants must navigate new systems of governance.

Teaching Strategies and Resources

Ethnographic Interviewing Projects

Ethnographic interviewing projects offer opportunities for students to learn from first-hand accounts of im/migration while also developing anthropological research skills. While these experiences can be very meaningful for students, they also require close attention to ethical considerations to ensure they are non-exploitative and that potentially vulnerable interviewees are protected. The following articles describe two different approaches to interview projects, one designed for students who have not had much personal contact with im/migrants before and the other designed for students who have their own im/migration stories to tell.

- Guzmán, Jennifer R., Medeiros, Melanie A., Faulkner, Gwendolyn. 2020. "[Teaching Im/migration through an Ethnographic Portrait Project](#)." *Teaching and Learning Anthropology* 3 (1): 37-45. In this term project, students interview someone who migrated to the United States and create an ethnographic portrait essay. The assignment offers students an opportunity to strengthen their interviewing and research skills and encourages them to contextualize the individual's experiences using anthropological theory and literature. This article includes a detailed overview of the ethnographic portrait assignment and a sample interview guide for students.
- Fouratt, Caitlin E. 2020. "[Telling Migration Stories](#)." *Teaching and Learning Anthropology* 3 (1): 46-51. In this assignment, students interview each other about their family migration histories and then apply course readings to analyze their partner's story. The assignment disrupts narrow assimilationist narratives of migration by highlighting the diversity of students' migration histories and, at the same time, positions students as experts and valuable members of the classroom learning community.

Role-Play Activities

Role-playing is an active learning strategy in which students apply course content by participating in simulated scenarios. Both of the activities described below are designed to be completed in a single class session. In the first, students assume the role of a judge who must interpret and apply immigration law. In the second, students assume the role of individuals with various passports to better understand issues of citizenship, mobility, and inequity.

- Cook, Jennifer. 2020. “[Judging Extreme Hardship](#).” *Teaching and Learning Anthropology* 3 (1): 22-30. This in-class activity pairs especially well with chapter 5 of Gomberg-Muñoz’s *Becoming Legal*, “Extreme Hardship.” Students assume the role of an immigration judge who is overseeing the removal hearing of an undocumented immigrant named Rebeca, a single mother who has applied for cancellation of removal due to extreme hardship. Students learn about the inner workings of the immigration system and interrogate how discursive frames shape the application of immigration law.
- Lawless, Brandi, Jimena Tejada, and Xantal Tejada. 2016. “[Where Can Your Passport Take You? Teaching Citizenship, Mobility, and Identity](#).” *Communication Teacher* 30 (3): 141-146. This role-play activity models what it is like for people with different passports to travel across national borders. The activity can be adapted to focus on different types of immigration and mobility (e.g., Gaza Strip, U.S./Mexico border, Syrian refugees, asylum seekers). After completing this single-class activity, students will gain a better understanding of how national borders and policies inequitably enable and constrain different bodies.

Making Connections

The following assignments and activities encourage students to make connections with and across course materials. In the first assignment, students write an essay connecting ethnographic material to core anthropological concepts and connecting historical perspectives to contemporary popular discourse. In the second, students connect ethnographic analyses to their own personal life experiences. In the final collection of activities, students connect processes of the racialization of migrants in two different nations.

- Rodkey, Evin. 2020. “[Designing an Assignment on Undocumented Migration: It's all about Framing](#).” *Teaching and Learning Anthropology* 3 (1): 31-36. In this assignment, students construct an essay explaining the movement of undocumented Mexican migrants to the U.S. in the framework of historical and contemporary political and economic circumstances. The article offers a detailed overview of strategies for guiding students through the process of connecting ethnographic and historical accounts from Gomberg-Muñoz’s *Labor and Legality* to introductory textbook concepts. Students apply these connections to critique popular discourse around “illegality” and discuss how anthropological analyses offer a more effective understanding of undocumented migration.
- Saxton, Dvera I., et al. 2018. “[Reading They Leave Their Kidneys in the Fields with My Fresno State Students: The Children of Farmworkers Respond to an Ethnography about Their People and Community](#).” *Anthropology of Work Review* 39 (2): 124-128. In this class activity, students collaborate to produce a book review that centers their

experiences and insights. Many of Saxton's students came from immigrant or refugee communities and some had knowledge of working conditions in the agricultural industry. The book review project offers opportunities to foreground these experiences while constructing a student-centered solidarity ethnography.

- Nelson, Katie. "[Comparative Migration and Racialization Learning Activities](#)." This document provides learning activity suggestions to accompany Isabella Alexander-Nathani's *Burning At Europe's Borders*. These activities urge students to compare the racialization and othering of sub-Saharan migrants in Morocco to that of migrants in the U.S. They also encourage reflection on the similarities and differences between how race is constructed in these countries and impact people's lives.

Action and Advocacy

One of the goals of anthropology pedagogy is to not only help students learn *about* contemporary social injustice, but to help them develop the skills necessary to *do something* about that injustice. The resources below offer assignments and activities that can be used to encourage students to develop informed positions and take action for positive social change.

- Yates-Doerr, Emily. 2020. "[Advocacy Letters: An Invitation](#)." *Somatosphere*, July 24. In this call for political and social advocacy letters, Yates-Doerr encourages anthropologists to "mobilize our knowledge in the service of political change." She describes the use of advocacy letters in teaching; in these assignments, students must draw from course materials to form an opinion, describe the change they hope to see, and identify a person with the power to act.
- Nájera, Jennifer R. 2020. "[Creating Safe Space for Undocumented Students](#)." Personal testimonies and informational workshops are some of the activities Nájera describes as "undocumented pedagogy," designed to provide a basis for activism outside the classroom in support of immigrant rights. These projects respond to [Sarah Horton's observation](#) that the current moment is one in which anthropologists must renew their commitment to public anthropology as a complement to scholarly work.
- Many general resources exist for encouraging students of all ages to take action. For example, the [Anti-Defamation League has a list of 10 ways youth can engage in activism](#) and the *New York Times* published a post by Steven Zemelman on [Ideas for Student Civic Action in a Time of Social Uncertainty](#).

Additional Resources

- The Immigration History Research Center at the University of Minnesota hosts a number of pedagogical and advocacy projects focused on immigration.
 - [Immigrant Stories](#) is a digital storytelling and archival project. Students can create their own digital stories through the portal, and a [collection of lesson plans using the stories](#) is available.
 - The [#ImmigrationSyllabus](#) gathers primary and secondary sources to “provide historical context to current debates over immigration reform, integration, and citizenship” in the United States.
- The American Anthropological Association’s new public education initiative, [World on the Move: 250,000 Years of Human Migration](#) is expected to be available in 2021. The initiative will include a traveling exhibit designed for public libraries and supporting online materials.
- [Teaching Tolerance](#), a project of the Southern Poverty Law Center, hosts a collection of lesson plans, multimedia materials, and other resources for teaching about immigration. The [UNHCR, the United Nations Refugee Agency](#), hosts a collection of materials for teaching about refugees and statelessness. Both sets of resources are primarily designed for K-12 educators, but many of the materials for upper grades are also useful in higher education.
- [Facing History and Ourselves](#) has a collection of resources, classroom materials, and lesson plans on various issues related to global immigration.
- Katie Nelson’s 2018 article, “[Viewing Migration as a Key Human Adaptive Strategy](#),” urges readers to view migration from a holistic perspective and as an important adaptive characteristic of our species. The author explores the ways that mobility has shaped human evolution, was frequent and predictable in prehistory, and is a common strategy used by people today. The article encourages readers to critically view barriers to human mobility today through a new lens.