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...With Liberty and Equality for All?

Sydney Hughes
Longwood University

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...With Liberty and Equality For All?

Sydney E. Hughes



Braceros

The following image is a picture of a group of individuals known as the *braceros*. The *braceros*, or manual laborers, were contracted to work in the United States during World War II through the signing of the Mexican Farm Labor Agreement with Mexico.



Abstract

The United States has prided itself on being a “melting pot” for different races, cultures, and ethnicities. However, Congress passed immigration policies that refute this statement. During times of war, the United States has opened its doors to immigrants to help with labor and population shortages yet passed legislation that made it harder for immigrants and refugees to survive in the United States, as shown in legislation passed and legal battles during World War II and the Vietnam War.

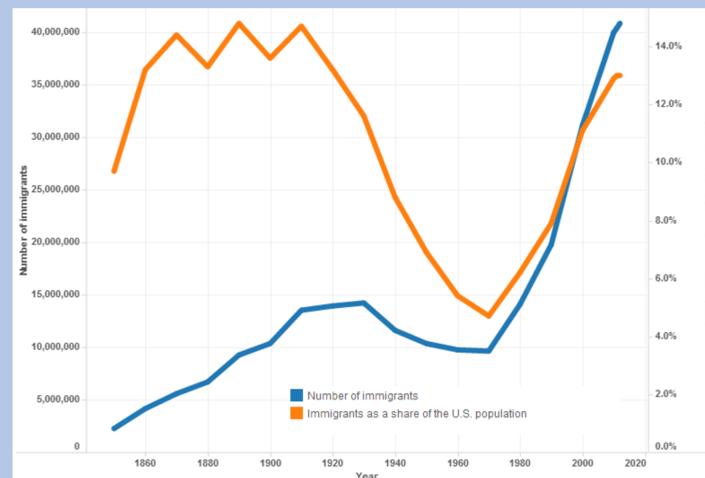
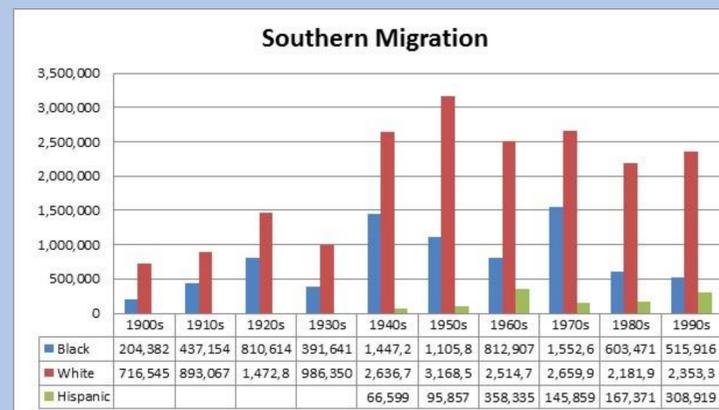
Methods

Throughout research, I studied and read several treaties, public laws, and Supreme Court decisions to learn more about immigration policies during World War II and the Vietnam War, which include (but are not limited to):

- **Mexican Farm Labor Agreement:** The legal agreement between the United States and Mexico that established the Bracero Program
- **Migrant Labor Agreement of 1951:** An amendment to the Agricultural Act of 1949, which extended the Bracero Program after World War II to cover the labor shortages due to the casualties of U.S. soldiers from war.
- **Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952:** A public law passed by Congress that established a quota system surrounding the immigration process.
- **Refugee Act of 1980:** An amendment to the Immigration and Nationality Act and Migration and Refugee Assistance Act that was created to provide a permanent and systematic procedure for the admission to the United States of refugees of special humanitarian concern to the U.S., and to provide comprehensive and uniform provisions for the effective resettlement and absorption of those refugees who are admitted.
- **Plyler v. Doe (1982):** A U.S. Supreme Court case in which the Court struck down a Texas state statute that diminished funds from schools that educated undocumented residents.

Visual Information

Since its inception, the United States has been a country of immigrants. The following charts show changing immigration patterns. The first chart shows southern migration patterns of Black, White, and Hispanic immigrants from the 1900s to the 1990s. The second chart shows immigration patterns in the United States from 1860 until 2020.



Conclusion

Despite the United States proclaiming to be acceptant of all people of all backgrounds, races, ethnicities and cultures, the legislation passed by Congress created quota systems that were later replaced by preference systems. These pieces of legislation made it harder for immigrants and refugees to live a prosperous life in the United States, despite being admitted due to labor and population shortages.

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Pictures:

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