

Document A: Colonel L. M. Maus

Colonel L. M. Maus served in the U.S. Army for over forty years.

During the past four months retired Colonel L. M. Maus has been making an educational and economical study of the American-Mexican population of the four southwest border states, New Mexico, Arizona, Texas and California.

“There are over 1,000,000 of these people, native born and foreign,” said Col. Maus today. “They are generally misunderstood by the American people, but in spite of misrepresentations they are absolutely essential to the prosperity of the great southwest.

“These Mexicans do practically all of the agricultural work in the border states, especially cotton raising and truck gardening, which form a large part of the industry of Texas, Arizona, and southern California. Contrary to the popular idea, the Mexican people are anxious to secure labor and are immigrating to the United States by the tens of thousands every year.

“They are performing all of the track work of the southern lines and besides are being shipped by hundreds to Michigan, Wyoming, and the middle west and northwestern states as far as Idaho, Oregon, and Washington for labor. . . .”

Col. Maus has been requested to address the congregation of the Presbyterian church Sunday night on this important subject, which he says is so poorly understood by the American people. The services will start at 8 p. m.

Source: The Bismarck Tribune, *North Dakota*, May 21, 1920

Document B: *The Arizona Republican*

GOOD CITIZENS MADE OF ALIENS IN MANY TOWNS

Recent Progress of Americanization Work in Arizona Is Shown in Reports

Peoria, Arizona, has a flourishing evening class in English which meets twice a week, and a class in home economics for Mexican women which meets once a week. . . .

A weekly social evening for the Mexican people is observed and an occasional program of general interest is carried out. . . .

A class in home nursing is also conducted for Mexican women. . . .

Bisbee, Arizona, reports constant growth in the English classes and maintains, in addition to the usual class in English for foreigners, two naturalization classes, one formed in the fall and one in January. The class recently graduated numbered 32. These graduates were presented with government diplomas which entitle them to their final citizenship papers after giving proof of their loyalty to and sympathy with the institutions of this country. . . .

Bisbee is to have a new Mexican school house ready for occupation within a short time. This building will contain 16 class rooms, five of which will be devoted to industrial education.

Source: *The Arizona Republican*, February 12, 1920

Document C: Ernesto Galarza

Ernesto Galarza was a Mexican American labor activist, professor, and writer. He was born in Mexico and immigrated to Sacramento with his family at the age of 8. He delivered this address at the National Conference of Social Work in 1929. He said that his purpose for presenting the paper was to offer the perspective of a Mexican immigrant.

The Mexican immigrant still feels the burden of old prejudices. . . . The sentiments which seem to be deeply rooted in the American mind are that he is unclean, **improvident**, **indolent**, and **innately** dull. Add to this the suspicion that he constitutes a **peril** to the American worker's wage scale and you have a situation with which no average Mexican can cope. . . .

I would ask for recognition of the Mexican's contribution to the agricultural and industrial expansion of western United States. . . . It is amusing to read the praises of those opposed to the restriction of immigration. From Denver to Los Angeles and from the Imperial Valley to Portland, it is said, an empire has been created largely by the **brawn** of the humble Mexican, who laid the rails and topped the beets and poured the cubic miles of cement. . . . For some obscure reason these builders of **colossal** fortunes have done their jobs and gone their ways still clothed in rags.

Source: Ernesto Galarza, "Life in the United States for Mexican People: Out of the Experience of a Mexican," National Conference of Social Work Proceedings, 1929

Vocabulary

improvident: irresponsible

indolent: lazy

innately: naturally

peril: threat

colossal: extremely large

brawn: physical strength

Document D: W. H. Knox

W. H. Knox was a representative of the Arizona Cotton Growers' Association.

W.H. KNOX: Mr. Chairman, have you ever heard, in the history of the United States, or in the history of the human race, of the white race being overrun by a class of people of the mentality of the Mexicans? I never have. . . . We are not asking for the Mexican to come in here as a permanent resident. . . . We are asking only for him to come in here as a temporary resident. Where the white man crosses with the Mexican, it is an absolute tragedy. . . .

REPRESENTATIVE FROM WASHINGTON: It has been stated here by various witnesses that they are perfectly willing to consider Mexicans as number two men; first-class labor, but number two men.

W.H. KNOX: Yes, sir. . . .

REPRESENTATIVE FROM KANSAS: What is the Mexican?

W.H. KNOX: A cross between the Spanish **buccaneer** and the Indian.

REPRESENTATIVE FROM COLORADO: With a large mixture of Negro blood.

Source: *Testimony of W.H. Knox on January 28, 1920, at the Temporary Admission of Illiterate Mexican Laborers hearings before the House of Representatives Committee on Immigration and Naturalization*

Vocabulary

buccaneer: pirate

docile: obedient; submissive

Document E: Francis H. Kinnicutt

Francis H. Kinnicutt represented the Immigration Restriction League of New York, a group that lobbied for restrictive immigration laws and promoted eugenics.

Our league is composed of an active membership of more than 20,000. . . . The league . . . would like to have the **quotas** extended to Mexico. . . .

Up to 1880 we had practically a **homogenous** race, and it is only within the last 30 years that we have been getting the widely **divergent** races through immigration. We are getting too much mixture. That does not mean that these races are inferior. While biologists agree that a certain amount of mixture of blood is all right—and we have a great deal of it already—we cannot have too much mixture of the races . . . without getting into trouble in the long run. We are getting too much of this Mexican immigration in here now. That is very different from European immigration. European immigration is much more **assimilable**. . . .

We want to protect the American people. . . . We want to have a certain reasonable adjustment of certain racial lines. . . .

The excessive newer immigration has injured or has greatly lessened our national homogeneity. I think this excessive newer immigration carries great dangers of losing our homogeneity. . . .

Source: *Testimony of Francis H. Kinnicutt on January 10, 1924, at the Restriction of Immigration hearings before the House of Representatives Committee on Immigration and Naturalization.*

Vocabulary

quotas: a fixed number; a limit
homogenous: uniform; identical

divergent: different
assimilable: able to assimilate

Document F: *Richmond Planet*

Richmond Planet was an African American newspaper published in Richmond, Virginia.

PARADE OF MASKED MEN STRIKE TERROR TO HEARTS

Breckenridge, Texas, Nov. 22—Scores of Mexicans and Negroes have left this town during the past 24 hours according to reports being sent out by local authorities. It is said that Negroes are by far in majority of those leaving.

The sudden **exodus** followed a march of a crowd of masked men, estimated at over 500 through the Negro and Mexican districts last Tuesday night and alleged threats that Mexicans and Negroes must leave Breckenridge at once or have their homes burned. Other threats of violence are alleged to have been sent to Negroes and Mexicans.

Source: *Richmond Planet, December 2, 1922.*

Vocabulary

exodus: large departure of people

Guiding Questions

ROUND 1

Document A: Colonel L. M. Maus

1. (Sourcing) Who was Colonel L. M. Maus?
2. (Contextualization) There was a strong push during World War I to Americanize immigrants in order to grow the ranks of the U.S. military. How might this have affected Maus's view on Mexicans?
3. (Close reading) According to Maus, what had Mexican laborers accomplished in the Southwest?
4. (Close reading) Maus said that Mexicans are "generally misunderstood by the American people" and that "contrary to the popular idea" Mexicans were anxious to work. What does this suggest about American attitudes towards Mexicans at this time?
5. How does this document support the argument that Mexicans were welcomed in the U.S. in the 1920s?
6. How does it support the argument that they were not welcomed?

Document B: *The Arizona Republican*

1. (Sourcing) What kind of source is this? Where is it from?
2. (Close reading) What kinds of training were offered to the Mexican students of the Americanization programs? What does this suggest about the kinds of jobs that were available to Mexicans in the United States at the time?
3. (Close reading) What does the last paragraph of the account reveal about the treatment of Mexicans in the U.S. at the time?
4. How does this document support the argument that Mexicans were welcomed in the U.S. in the 1920s?
5. How does it support the argument that they were not welcomed?

Document C: Ernesto Galarza

1. (Sourcing) Who was Ernesto Galarza?
2. (Sourcing) What was his purpose for giving this talk?

HYPOTHESIS 1

Were Mexicans welcome in the United States in the 1920s?

If so, under what conditions? If not, why not?

What evidence from Documents A, B, and C support this claim?

ROUND 2

Document D: W.H. Knox

1. (Sourcing) Who was W.H. Knox?
2. (Sourcing) How might his economic interests have influenced his account?
3. (Sourcing) What might his purpose have been for testifying before Congress?
4. Based on this document, what role do you believe race played in nativist attitudes towards Mexicans? Explain with evidence from the document.

5. (Corroboration) How does Knox's account corroborate Document A? How does it contradict it?

6. Based on this document, were Mexicans welcome in the United States in the 1920s?

Document E: Francis H. Kinnicutt

1. (Sourcing) Who was Francis H. Kinnicutt? What was his purpose in testifying before Congress?

2. (Contextualization) Kinnicutt said, "While biologists agree that a certain amount of mixture of blood is all right . . . we cannot have too much mixture of the races . . . without getting into trouble in the long run." What does this suggest about how race was understood in the 1920s?

How is this different from how scientists understand race today?

3. (Close Reading) Briefly explain why Kinnicutt wanted immigration from Mexico to be restricted by a quota.

4. Based on this document, were Mexicans welcome in the United States in the 1920s?

Document F: *Richmond Planet*

1. (Sourcing) What kind of source is this? Where is it from?
2. (Contextualization) Based on your knowledge of the 1920s, who might the masked men have been?
3. (Close reading) What does this article tell us about the tactics the masked men used?
4. Based on this document, were Mexicans welcome in the United States in the 1920s?

HYPOTHESIS 2

Were Mexicans welcome in the United States in the 1920s?

If so, under what conditions? If not, why not?

What evidence from Documents D, E, and F support this claim?