A U.S. and Mexican soldier at the border in 1915. The line is delineated only by a boundary stone that demarcates Douglas, Arizona from Agua Prieta, Mexico. Early efforts to police and patrol the border would be born from the need to contain Pancho Villa; meanwhile Mexican migrants were yet to register as a cause of concern for U.S. authorities, so they moved with freedom back-and-forth against this backdrop.

Course Description
The goal of this seminar is to introduce you to important topics and themes in the history of the Latinos in the United States, and to provide a narrative overview of the rise and maturation of this pan-ethnic group, from the U.S conquest of California to the mass migrations of the late 20th century. Primarily, you will become familiar with major events, organizations, people, and relationships that defined the history of Latinos’ incorporation or non-incorporation to the U.S. Secondarily, you will engage with excerpts from seminal works and learn how the literature on topics such as border militarization, immigrant assimilation, political activism, and the causes of
migration, have developed—spanning from local and social histories to the contemporary bent towards transnational histories. Students are expected to read and think about the materials ahead of time in order to be ready for discussion and for the two examinations.

Class requirements include:
1. Active class participation. This will count for 15% of your grade. Any student may tell me before class (one time) that he or she is not prepared to engage in discussion, and may “pass” for that class. Regular attendance is expected of all students. You are required to have a doctor’s note to have an absence excused.
2. Five-page critique of a scholarly book due Monday February 26th. You will be provided a list of approved books and an essay prompt during the first week of classes. The critique will count for 30% of your grade.
3. A mid-term examination. It will consist of an ID section and an essay section. For the first half, you will be asked to define select historical processes, events, organizations, individuals, and class readings, outlying important information about them and their significance to the course. For the essay, you will be asked to pick one of two prompts, each of which engages with a separate theme of the course. We will have an in-class review session prior to the exam. The exam is 30% of your grade.
4. A regularly scheduled three-hour final examination that will count for 35% of your grade. The same format from the midterm applies. It will only cover material from the second half of the course. We will have an in-class review session prior to the exam.

If you are a student with a documented disability on record at Brandeis University and wish to have a reasonable accommodation made for you in this class, please see me or email me right away. Also, if you have any special concerns with respect to this class, discuss these with me during the first two weeks of class. We can discuss these in person or by email, as you prefer.

Academic Integrity:
I expect all your intellectual work to be your own. Please consult Brandeis University Rights and Responsibilities for all policies and procedures related to academic integrity. Students may be required to submit work to TurnItIn.com software to verify originality. Allegations of alleged academic dishonesty will be forwarded to the Director of Academic Integrity. Sanctions for academic dishonesty can include failing Grades and/or suspension from the university. Citation and research assistance can be found at LTS – Library guide.

A note on readings:
All of the readings for the course will be available on the course website. You are welcome to purchase the books from which we will be reading excerpts, if you wish to gain a deeper understanding of the week’s topic. Where possible, excerpts will include the relevant footnotes section, so that you may ask questions about the logic and validity of each historians’ interpretation.

Week 1: January 18th - Spanish Legacies
Considering the impact of Spanish colonization on the Americas, especially in the realms of language, religiosity, and material wellbeing.


Week 2: January 22nd - The Mexican-American War
Conquest, incorporation and the choices of the earliest American Latinos

Pekka Hamalainen, The Comanche Empire, (2008), Intro and Ch. 6 “Greater Comancheria”


Week 3: January 29th - Puerto Rican Migration from La Colonia to El Barrio
The colonial core of Puerto Ricans’ migration


Week 4: February 5th - Mexicans and Dominicans, Los Transnacionales
The operation of Dominicans’ and Mexicans transnational migration – “vaiven” – prior to a heavily-policing border

Deborah Cohen, Braceros: Migrant Citizens and Transnational Subjects in the Postwar United States and Mexico, (2013), intro, chs. 1, 3, 4.

Jesse Huffnung Garskof, A Tale of Two Cities: Santo Domingo and NY After 1950 (2008), intro, chs. 1-5.

Week 5: February 12th - Central Americans, Los Migrantes Olvidados
The Central-American odyssey and its catalysts


NO CLASS - February 19th

Week 6: February 26th - Whiteness and Open-Borders
European mass migration and ‘race’ in the opening/closing of borders


Grace Peña Delgado, Making the Chinese Mexican: Global Migration, Localism, and Exclusion in the U.S.-Mexico Borderlands, intro and chs. 3, 4, 6

Week 7: March 5 - U.S. Liberalism and the Reshaping of Migration Control
The rise of the mid-20th century quota system, illegal aliens, and race-based patrolling


Week 8 - March 12th

Review Session

Mid-term Exam

Week 9: March 19th - Racial Landscape
Anti-Latino discrimination and violence within American cities and the borderlands


**Week 10: March 26th - Latinos and the Justice System**

*The predatory operation of the American penal system*


Eduardo Obregon Pagan, *Murder at the Sleepy Lagoon: Zoot Suits, Race, and Riot in Wartime L.A*, ch. 2, 4, 5, 6

**Week 11: April 9 - Labor and Civil Rights Activism**

*The pursuit of rights-based power*


**Week 12: April 16 - Assimilated/Unassimilated Peoples**

*Variance of Latino integration to the U.S. and alternative forms of living/belonging*


**Week 13: April 23 - Creating the Latino**

*Corporations, the arts, and consumers in creating the tropes and identity of the Latino*


**Week 15 – April 30 – Final Exam**

Review Session

Final Exam