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MODERATOR: Well I guess I wanted to begin well just by welcoming everyone to the official exhibit opening of *Chinese Exclusion in New Jersey Immigration Law in the Past and Present*. I guess the exhibit, if you don't know, represents the culmination of a semester long exploration of what immigration law and policy has meant to the design and creation of the United States as a nation. Since we began back in January students have been encouraged to think about how cultural

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beliefs about race, gender, labor and sexuality have informed the ways in which the United States has viewed immigrants as desirable or undesirable. Using files from the National Archives in New York, they specifically delved into what the history of Chinese exclusion legislation and laws may do to the state of New Jersey. I guess I would just like to begin by saying as an instructor, I feel truly grateful to have had such a thoughtful and engaged class of students

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who really in rich ways brought their own personal experiences and perspectives into the classroom in amazingly, constructive ways. You know it's almost an old academic cliché that professors learn from their students as much as students learn from us, but in this case it could not be more accurate. I really do feel that way. So, please join me in congratulating them on all their hard work they put in this semester.

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Real briefly in a second I'll turn over the remarks briefly to Justice Sue Yang who has joined us from the New Jersey Council for the Humanities, but there's a full list of "thank you's" on the introductory exhibit panel. I did want to specifically emphasize the class's gratitude to a couple [of] people and organizations. Just to begin with, my sister Claire Irving, who's here tonight and works as an immigration lawyer in Manhattan

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. She actually provided some really helpful feedback during the research stages of this project. Angela Tudico is here as well from the National Archives. The members of the Asian-American Studies Collective -- in particular, Rick Lee is in the middle of eating in the back -- who let us share our work at the first annual Asian-American Studies Undergraduate Symposium kind of in the middle of the process of putting these panels together and provided again, a great opportunity

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to get feedback along the way. The New Jersey Council for Humanities again was very helpful in supportive in providing a mini-grant and allowed for this exhibit to be created. Then of course, the Asian American Cultural Center itself -- in particular, Jean and Linda -- again, thank you for hosting this exhibit. All your help, your staff's help as well in setting everything up again. We're truly grateful. Last, but not least, she's actually not here tonight, but my wife, who's finishing up school

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as a landscape architecture was the primary designer of the exhibit and so hopefully some of you will get to meet her if you haven't already at some point and thank her for that sort of aesthetic quality of the work itself.

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All that said, I will Justice Yang say a couple of words and then I'll introduce the panelists and we'll get started. SUE YANG: Good afternoon.

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I'm Sue Yang. I am a worker's compensation judge in Newark. My husband is a professor here at Rutgers and used to be a former advisor to this organization. So, I am very pleased to be here. I just want to tell you a little bit about our New Jersey Council for the Humanities. It's a non-profit organization. It was established in 1972 as a state partner of the National Endowment for the Humanities and our programs

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are free and open to the public. We're very pleased to have this opportunity to fund this program. Thank you.

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MODERATOR: Great. So basically, I'm going to introduce the panelists briefly and then I have a couple questions that are relatively open-ended that I put together, which are designed to connect the history that's present in these exhibit panels with contemporary immigration issues facing the state of New Jersey today which I'll defer to the panelists as the more experts on that.

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But I'll have a couple of questions, but we'll also open this up to the audience. We hope that you'll have an opportunity to weigh in and ask questions as well.

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I want to begin by introducing a Joanna Dreby, who is an Assistant Professor of Sociology at Kent State University in Ohio. She completed her Ph.D. at CUNY Graduate Center in New York and published her book, *Divided by Borders: Mexican Migrants and Their Children*, just this year or I guess last year now in 2010. Dr. Dreby is currently conducting two research projects; one that looks at how different family migration patterns affect Mexican

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children's aspirations and school and their ideas about families in the United States. The second is an ethnographic study funded by the Foundation for Child Development and this project explores the daily lives of young children growing up in different types of Mexican immigrant households focused on New Jersey, right? JOANNA DREBY: New Jersey and Ohio. MODERATOR:

Dr. Dreby received her B.A. from Rutgers and is a native of New Jersey, so we welcome her home as well.

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Our second panelist is Dr. Robyn Rodriguez. She's an Assistant Professor of Sociology at Rutgers University.

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Her first book, *Migrants for Export: How the Philippine State Brokers Labor to the World*, which was also published in 2010 and examines the Philippines emergence as one of the top labor exporting countries in the world. The Philippine State, as she argues, deploys workers to the furthest corners of the planet and earns billions of dollars from its citizens' remittances. So tracing that process, that history.

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Currently Dr. Rodriguez is working on a second book manuscript entitled, *In Lady Liberty's Shadow: Immigration and Belonging in New Jersey After 9/11*.

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This book examines the localization of Homeland Security politics with a focus on municipal struggles over immigration across the state of New Jersey. Robyn was sharing with me just last

night actually, work that one of her students did on how this has all played out in Morristown for example. So, really fascinating stuff.

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Last, but certainly not least, Virginia Yans is the Board of Governors' Distinguished Service Professor at Rutgers and a member of the History Department.

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She is the author of, among other works, *Family and Community: Italian Immigrants in Buffalo, 1880 to 1930*, the Editor of *Immigration Reconsidered: History, Sociology, Politics*, and I can say from graduate school [it is] a very important interdisciplinary collection of essays on immigration,

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and most recently, *Ellis Island and the Peopling of America*,

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*the Official Guide*. Dr. Yans also produced and wrote a documentary film on Margaret Mead which aired nationally as a PBS television special and continues to be broadcast worldwide. She's actively involved in a number of public history projects and currently serves on the Board of Ellis Island National Museum as well.

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So the first question I just wanted to ask to the panel, and I'll give you a chance to chat, again a very sort of overarching general question, but how has immigration contributed to the identity of New Jersey as a state? I mean, contributed both politically, culturally, racially, and ethnically, economically.

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In what ways is New Jersey an immigrant state, I guess in other words? VIRGINIA YANS: What I'm going to do is show you some slides, which I think the first one actually addresses that problem. Most of these are a mapping of the 2000 Census because the 2010 census is not yet mapped to my knowledge. But this is a terrific thing because I think it sets the context for our discussion.

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What you can see here is number eight. These are national figures and here it's telling you the percent of national population. I'm going to zero in on New Jersey in a minute and here, the increase or decrease of each of these groups. Now, I got really psyched when I saw this, that you can click on the state -- see if I can get it. This is Gia (sp), my faithful assistant

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whom I couldn't function without because I become... Yeah. Isn't this fabulous? OK look here to your right and you'll see a New Jersey store. There's a decline, a change, in this column

between 2002 and 2010 and you can see [that] persons of white ancestry alone who constitute 68.6 percent of the population. There's a decline. Black

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or African-American an increase and I'm gonna stick to the big figures. Asian alone, a 51 percent increase which is really awesome. Of course the total population of the state is 8.3 percent. Then two or more races. But look down here. Percent of population: Hispanic, an increase of 39 percent.

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Not Hispanic or Latino, and then this is done by county. Now, one reason this is so important is that the way demographers discuss, in a very useful way I think, the artificial boundaries of a state to give us a good sense of

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what the demographics of the country are. They discuss states in terms of a kind of ranking or hierarchy. So that you get some states, and New Jersey is one of them, which had among a majority European population. The state was predominantly Italian as we know from the now famous *The Sopranos* and *Jersey Shore*. But if you take a look

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here, you can see our little state a you'll see that there's a high percentage of Italians here. But what's happening, if you look at the first chart I showed you, is that this is beginning to reflect national patterns of a growing Latino/Hispanic population. They don't show you in the first slide I showed you an increase

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of Asian population, but of course that's happening too. More specifically on the west coast, but there are certain states and New Jersey is one of them that are traditional European-based population states that the population is beginning to alter. What is happening in states like New Jersey and Maryland --and this may be transitional -- you are not going to get a majority

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minority population or a majority ethnic group, European ethnic group population. So, this shows also, this is a map showing the lead minority populations in the United States. Here's New Jersey of course and you can see the two lead minorities are Hispanic

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and Black. Again, it's not showing that many Asians because you have to have a fairly large percentage on a map

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like this. Let's take a look at Mexicans because I know Joanna is going to talk about this. This shows 2000 percent Mexican all over the US. Now, this doesn't surprise anyone, right? What is going on in the Southwest. I guess they're not numerous enough -- though you can talk about this Joanna -- to show up. This kind of map is not finely tuned enough. Let's

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take a look at Asians. This is a good one. I like this map. These are places where there are counties with fewer than 25 Asians. Okay. It's just. I just love it. Now guess what folks?

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Guess which way they vote? Right? In those states. It's so exciting to see this. When you go to the Census site, the map begins to fill up so it's almost interactive.

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Here's another. This shows you something different -- percent Asian 2000, and here you can begin to see the New Jersey Asian population growing. So this is, I think, a really good way to... Now here's another very important thing.

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This shows the distribution of [the] African-American population [in] 2000. Now what we know from the most recent Census is that we're seeing a return of African-Americans to the south

which is really interesting and also to, even to the Southwest. Because they're looking for jobs. They're going where employment is, but I often tell my students that the year 2000

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is one of the most important years in American history. Do you know why I say that?

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My other major important year is the year birth control pills were made widely available. Both of these important dates have to do with

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demographics. The answer to the question is that in 2000, and this is evident again with the latest Census, African-Americans are no longer the major minority. We have Hispanics surpassing African-Americans. Now, that's very interesting in itself, but the reason I call it one of the most important facts in American history is that this whole country in our history has been narrated

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as the story of North/South, Civil war, a biracial South, which is no longer going to happen. The same thing is happening in this state. It's going to be a much more complicated, racially mixed situation.

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Which I think is really exciting. The Census Bureau says that by 2040, the United States will consist of, its majority it will be people of color. So, we are in for some really interesting times in the United States and our field is going to be very

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important. We will all be famous. ROBYN RODRIGUEZ: That's actually my segue into,

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I think, the research that I'm trying to do. There is something shifting pretty dramatically demographically in the state of New Jersey. So I think one of the responses, and this is sort of the project that I'm really working through right now, is that kind of return to the local. Now to what extent this is something that's specific to this moment, or to what extent it's actually something that's true of New Jersey, is something I'm still working through. Because there is something very interesting about the state and

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I think a lot of people who live here, you may take it for granted or you know, but this the state has over 500 municipalities like 600-something. For an incredibly small state and one can argue well yeah, that partly has to do with population, but really I think that when you look at the historical record -- particularly kind of in the mid-20th century -- you see really kind of this proliferation of

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suburbs in New Jersey.

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In fact, part of that is enabled by federal legislation that sort of promotes suburbanization and mind you, federal legislation also promoted suburban suburbanization that served as segregated suburbanization. So it was precisely about creating spaces for whites

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away from blacks and so that's partly the story of New Jersey and why in part we have this kind of proliferation. So there is something about New Jersey and kind of localism. There's a way in which people have been really invested in kind of crafting belonging and citizenship in a very local way. So I think that's what's going on. Again I'm kind of working this through. I'm trying to make these connections. They are not fully clear yet, but I think there's enough to suggest that there may well be. Now you jump ahead to 2011 and we are seeing in

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fact these shifting demographics and they're shifting quite dramatically and that's layered over a kind of racial and class geography

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of suburbanization. I think that in that kind of motley, in that kind of crucible, you're seeing now this proliferation of municipalities trying to regulate immigration. So they're basically taking, in effect, tools that were sort of at the disposal of municipalities before to sort of create segregated communities and to kind of keep out certain other undesirables and those earlier undesirables were sort of working class

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and or black working class people. Using similar tools now to kind of, to either

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expel or completely prohibit the settlement of undocumented Latinos. A case in point is just housing policy. Now housing policy has always been a tool by which the suburb has sort of kind of bolstered its walls against kind of working class people. You basically make it impossible for developers to be able to bring in low cost or sort of affordable housing to communities right? That already then creates a wall. It sort of prohibits

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certain kinds of crossings of other types of people. Well this is the same kind of policy that now some municipalities in New Jersey are trying to use against undocumented immigrants in a slightly different way. So one of the things that's happening in some municipalities in New Jersey is that they're requiring, for instance, the local sort of housing to really beef up their housing code enforcement. What they're basically trying to get housing inspectors to do is to fine landlords if landlords

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lease or rent to undocumented immigrants. Right and so they've kind of built that system one-way of preventing people from settling. It's just one example, but I think it's that point of connection that I think is important and I think it's important too, from kind of a critical ethnic studies perspective, because oftentimes there's a way in which different racialized groups get pitted against one another particularly in the immigration debate. It's sort of this black/brown kind of divide that gets exploited in really troubling ways. I mean just

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as an example my husband coaches soccer. I was just at a soccer game on Sunday and many of the children on our team are Latino. We were playing a team that have typically had parents say incredibly racist things to our parents and what was most disturbing and troubling was this was the first time it was Indian parents who had said something very racist about the Mexican parents. Sort of like mocking their Spanish. This Sunday was

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an African-American family. So, I think that there is ways in which these kinds of divides can kind of erupt in particular ways that are troubling, but because oftentimes you know there is a way in which different groups get pitted in the immigration debate. But when you kind of look at how things have developed in the state of New Jersey, you in fact see some kinds of points of connection that are really important to look at. So, I guess part of my answer to this question is I think that immigration is,

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in some ways, creating kind of a bolstering of these local identities that is partly a story of New Jersey historically, but is partly kind of a response to this shift in demographics. The insecurity too that people I think are feeling as a consequence too of sort of 9/11, which I think is particular to the New Jersey given its proximity to

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New York City. So that's sort of my thinking.

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JOANNA DREBY: Well I thought I might personalize a little bit this demographic shift that the other panelists have talked about. How many of you were born and raised in New Jersey?

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This is a state university [so] I was thinking everybody might raise their hand, but I guess not. You know I was and so those of you who have been, please think about where you grew up while I'm telling you what my experience was. You know, I actually don't have a lot of immigrant stock in my family. I think most of you who have been born in New Jersey or elsewhere probably can trace it back much more closely than I. I think maybe fifth generation is as close as I can come, but that makes me really atypical because I

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think it's 17.5 percent are foreign born in New Jersey and then if you start to count the children of immigrants, I think it's more than a third of the population are kids of foreign born in New Jersey. So, it gets up there quite quickly. Where I grew up in New Jersey I think I really had a limited understanding of how immigration affected my own life. I was in one of these suburbs. I actually went to a private school though, so I did have

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two Asian-Americans in my class -- Asian Indians.

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I always laugh about this because I have a friend who's writing a book -- [aside to another panelist] do you know Pavin (sp)? Well he is writing about motel owners and of course the two boys in my class, their parents owned motels on Route 130 in South Jersey where I grew up. I always laugh about that because their last name was Patel, of course. That's what the book is about.

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There were a couple of Chinese students in my class, a couple of Filipino girls -- their parents were doctors and nurses who came to the States. Now, that of course I know about immigration, these patterns all make sense to me and I had a number of Italian students in my class. .

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Greg Masecco, Gigi Allongo. As you were talking to I was like, oh those are all those dudes, but I think I really didn't have much of an awareness. I mean now I reflect back on it. Because in South Jersey, if any of you are from South Jersey, a lot of the migrants -- if they haven't broken through this class barrier -- worked in farms

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in southern New Jersey. In fact, one of my classmates -- it is sort of a long story -- but his family was relocated after the Japanese internment. So they had a farm, they had an apple farm, an apple orchard in southern New Jersey and they actually hired Mexican migrant farm workers. I had no idea until maybe 10 years ago when I now study this topic and went back and found out. I didn't know.

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Because it was a very separate issue, right? We all went to school kind of thinking our thing and then immigration was really not a part of the way I grew up. But then I moved to New Brunswick in the 1990s and there was a huge, demographic shift going on in the city of New Brunswick at that time. French Street. I mean even now. Have you all been to French Street maybe, Little Mexico? Even between now. I mean

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even between the late 90s, when I first moved to New Brunswick to now, it's hugely different. If you know that Joyce Kilmer Avenue, there used to be a restaurant there called La Poncena (sp) and the other La Tiscalia (sp). I just drove by there. I'm new back in town since January and now

there's La Azteca or something like this next to La Oaxaquena (sp) and I don't even know if I'm La Poncena (sp) is there anymore. There's been a major demographic shift with Mexicans growing in leaps and bounds in the city of New Brunswick, but it's not only

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in New Brunswick it's throughout

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South Jersey. So even the town where I grew up, the pizzeria on Main Street has all the employees are Mexican immigrants. I went to buy a phone card a few years back to call someone in Mexico, they were all sold out at 7-Eleven. The landscaping companies; all the employees typically are Mexican in the area. So this demographic shift is something that I personally have seen and it's throughout the state. So you're finding a lot of

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municipalities like New Brunswick where you're seeing this demographic shift. I did pull out some of the numbers just to try to talk about them. So in New Brunswick, one-third of the population -- one in three people -- is foreign born in New Brunswick according to the 2000 Census. Then if you look at just the Hispanic/Latino population and where it's grown in the state, you see large shifts, and this is very interesting to me too. New Brunswick somewhat, but remember there were Dominicans and Puerto Ricans in New Brunswick so that the growth rate

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isn't quite as high as in Plainfield with a jump between 1980 and 1990 of 112 percent growth in Latino population. Atlantic City [is] another. Sayreville. Old Bridge. [I] pulled out these big Hamilton Township, Trenton, Atlantic County, Huntington County, Somerset County. These are places where Mexican populations or Latino populations -- I keep sliding into Mexicans -- didn't exist

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before and are now growing very significantly because of the growth of labor in the service sector, landscaping companies and the like. I think that this demographic shift is a challenge to everybody's identity and that's why you're seeing a lot of these localized kind of expressions that Robyn is talking about of how people confront that when what they saw as being New Jersey has changed

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dramatically. MODERTOR: Robyn, to return in particular to your idea about a lot of this is shifting to a local level. I mean, as my class hopefully can speak to at this point right, we know what the history of Chinese exclusion and obviously you know nowadays on a state, federal level, with places like Arizona and Georgia as well. But many historians argue that the history of Chinese exclusion is the Western states, California in particular, putting pressure on the federal government whether through legitimate

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means of political action or through vigilante violence against Chinese immigrants in the West. So, we can see those sort of again tensions and how policy is practiced. I think to speak to the kind of interesting demographic shifts that you articulated to these figures Jenny, I mean I think it's great as well to also

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look at the migration of African-Americans from the South to New Jersey.

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Again, as historians are increasingly doing when looking at immigration history to think about the Atlantic slave trade as potentially part of this larger history of human mobility to kind of draw those connections as well. Then Joe and I, just for those in the room who don't know, your comments about South Jersey Japanese internment; if you haven't been, we had an opportunity to go a couple of weeks ago with the Asian-American Studies Collective down to Seabrook Farms where they brought Japanese internees or they gave

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Japanese internees an option to get out of internment camps in exchange for working at this food processing facility in South Jersey.

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So again, one of these fascinating historic sites in New Jersey that often just isn't really part of our landscape when we think about this state's history. So, I guess before I go on to the next question, just to give people a chance to weigh in, are there any comments or questions from the audience before... I have additional questions, but I think this is one of these great moments when we can make this interactive as well. If not,

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we can continue. AUDIENCE MEMBER #1: Well, I would like to add a little bit about migration in the earlier part of the 20th century which was primarily manufacturing vs. the migration now which is service. To think about these waves of immigrants into New Jersey who came into New Jersey to work in certain industries earlier on and the wave of Mexican and other Latinos are coming in to work at restaurants and, as you pointed out, in many

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in the gardening industry. I think it's important that we acknowledge that these different waves of immigrants are bringing in not only a racial and an ethnic diversity, but a class diversity that's very marked. I would be interested in hearing how the wave of Asian immigrants in this day and age versus Latinos is what kind of hierarchies are

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we going to see and how are those going to be played out? Equally with African-Americans who, as Robyn rightly pointed out, are oftentimes pitted against Latinos and Asians very deliberately and they're always fighting for the few jobs that are left. So I think that there

is going to be a very interesting class warfare and it'll be interesting to see how it gets played out racially and

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nationally.

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ROBYN RODRIGUEZ: Sure. I kind of want to speak to this issue of Asian migration. I think you're absolutely right. Certainly, the Patels were of a particular class background. Certainly there's a visible, and part of these municipal campaigns, in fact although my own have tended to be especially interested in these municipal campaigns against undocumented Latinos, it's not as if there haven't also been issues around the Asian immigrant entrepreneur

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. That's kind of been raised as an issue of Asian entrepreneurs taking over the landscape right as the new "mom and pops." Like the pizzeria is not an Italian pizzeria anymore. It's something else. So that becomes an issue. That's one set of issues and then that raises some sets of -- and Joanna raised it already -- sets of racializing class tensions too when you have Asian immigrant entrepreneurs sort of hiring undocumented Latinos

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. Yet there's another layer too which is that there is a way in which entrepreneurs may also hire co-ethnics. One case in point is that there's an organization called the Chinese Staff and Employees. Wait, C. Chinese staff association...

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Wait. Chinese Staff and Workers Association and so one of the major campaigns they actually work on is organizing Chinese -- oftentimes undocumented, oftentimes smuggled -- immigrants who have been put into labor in some of these Chinese buffets throughout New Jersey or in Chinatown in New York. There's a huge campaign, a back-wage campaign in Wayne, New Jersey. Yeah I mean the landscape is both sort of ethnically, racially

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diverse, but also complicated in these other sort of class sorts of ways. So I mean I think that that's what we, but oftentimes some of these issues -- and it's good that you raise them -- get kind of invisibilized and sort of get taken in by this particular kind of vitriol that is sort of focused particularly on the undocumented Latino in the national debates and yet, what it looks like on a local level can be very, very different. Maybe that's what compelled me to want to look at

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this immigration in New Jersey in this particular way, because I think many of our studies have typically kind of either focused on ethnic groups or racial groups or maybe on a national scale. I think where the battle lines are being drawn is in towns and in fact, to speak to Arizona, we know Arizona because it hit the news when it became a state legislation. But the fact of the



matter is it started locally. It started with Maricopa County. It started with all of these county and municipal sort of action already that it eventually

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made sense to then

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pass it at the state level. Is that going to happen in New Jersey? Probably not likely, but I think that if you see any other state action from here on out we need to figure out what was going on actually locally because that's where I think the clue is. VIRGINIA YANS: But you know also. In the turn of the century, 20th century immigrant experience

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was not just manufacturing. There are also a lot of service people: landscapers. My grandfather was landscaper for example, which is,

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Italians did that, and. Now it's another group. But what's really different is this suburbanization thing. The European migrations and the early 20th century late 19th century Asian migrations where urban migrations. So when I look at today's situation, I see [that] housing opportunities are so much -- despite the housing crisis we're in -- they're

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very different from what existed before. The other thing is education. I mean one reason you have this very successful Korean "ma and pa" store, according to what I've read about Korean immigration, is some of these people -- a good percentage of them -- are college educated. When they get here and the "ma and pa" store is a transitional thing. They save money, buy their houses. It's like they're de-classed temporarily. You know.

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So you're getting populations that are coming in highly educated and you know immigration historians call it human capital. Filipina nurses for example. That's the gender thing too and that makes it very, very different from the old, European pattern. Also, professional women coming. So, it's

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complicated. In terms of the class, the human capital and education and professions that people like the Patels.

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They're not coming out of the bowels of an Indian city. They are educated, middle class people. I'm getting to sound like my father. "You kids don't know what it was like!" He may be right. JOANNA DERBY: You know one of the things I've been thinking. Just kind of, to go off of what your comment on

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class; is not

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as much the class divide, but the legal divide and I was really interested to read some of these legal cases that you all uncovered in your class because it actually points that there is a lot of legal divide that was happening at the turn of the century as well. But I think that there was, certainly in the early 1990s, when I first started working with Mexican populations, I did not see it as strong as an issue as it is today and with the changes in immigration legislation there's

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a legal divide between and even among Mexicans between those who have papers and those who don't. That legal divide is very divisive. I'll just tell you, I'm now working with kids, or I'm interviewing families and interviewing children -- some first graders through eighth grade. So a pretty young age group and I asked the children. I'm doing this study in Ohio, which has a very invisible Mexican population. They have one, but it is very invisible compared to here, which we obviously know has a very visible

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population. Think of French Street. So, I ask kids at both sites do you want other people to know that you speak Spanish at school, do you want them to know that you're Mexican, do you want them to know that your parents are immigrants? Those are sort of three things I ask. Well,

in Ohio I find that a lot of the kids don't want people to know they're Mexican or that they speak Spanish. One of the kids, I couldn't even find his teacher I went to observe him, I was like, "I'm looking for Jaime,"

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and they're like, "Who? Who is Jamie? Jamie!"

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You know, one of those typical, he had changed his name at school. In New Jersey that's not the case. A lot of the kids are very, they're like, "What do you mean do I want people to know? They all know I'm Mexican. What do you mean?" But I ask them do you want other students to know that your family are immigrant. No, they don't want them to know. Why? Because they associate immigrant with undocumented and they are afraid and they don't want anyone to know that someone in their family is an undocumented immigrant and I think that's scary

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beyond the class issue. It's a type of class issue, but it's based on legality in a way that's different maybe from times past. ROBYN RODRIGUEZ: I think that's cutting across many different groups, partly because of the ways in which immigration enforcement works. Even legality is such a tenuous...it's a tenuous status to actually be legal. One can slip out of that very easily and I think that's another issue that is important. That there's a process by which illegalization can happen very quickly in this moment

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MODERATOR: If I can just segue from some of these comments. I think a lot of us in the room know that immigrants themselves create obviously very powerful important mutual aid associations, benevolent societies, etc., to help again deal with the issues that emerge from immigration.

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But thinking of the ways in which immigrant groups, especially in New Jersey, interact with institutions -- one question I always had is for example an institution like Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey -- I know that from my conversations with various people here when somebody is quite new,

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people pride themselves on the fact that Rutgers is an immigrant university in the sense. But I'm wondering to what extent that addresses the way in which Rutgers makes itself available to immigrant youth in the state. In what ways was that the case historically again, knowing Rutgers didn't become the State University until the 1950s, but in what ways has that been an important part of Rutgers kind of civic function I guess and whether

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any of you could speak to that. ROBYN RODRIGUEZ: I have a graduate student. [Not a graduate student] an undergrad who just finished her thesis on the experiences of undocumented students at Rutgers, but

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also those trying to get to Rutgers. Not that it was actually very easy research to do. It's not very easy to be able to solicit interviewees for a project like this, but the University in effect has not taken any definitive stand. Now there are actually other... there's a big debate right now, Morris County College apparently, because Morris County College actually around 9/11 -- which is interesting -- sort of made

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some kind of citizenship or local residents status mandatory. Then all of a sudden they decided no we can't do this anymore. Now they're going to go back to their earlier policy which was New Jersey residency and having attended high school in New Jersey was sufficient now that is under debate. I mean Rutgers has never, to my knowledge and certainly this is not my area of scholarship, but this is through having learned from my own student that Rutgers hasn't necessarily been definitive at all. It's taken I mean you know McCormick was dragging his feet

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when some of the students had mobilized, but I mean the experience is that students have had to be incredibly resourceful. I mean they kind of have to tentatively find who their allies might be in the university and it's uneven and there's a real unevenness across sort of staff, faculty sort of people who are willing to support them. The difficulty is this feeling of I grew up here, I went to school here, I came here when I was really, really young, I don't know anything else.

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This is home, now what am I supposed to do? One of the really compelling stories is, several is that some of them managed somehow or other to get through Rutgers. They're going to get their college degrees and they don't know what to do now. One of them wants to be a public school teacher in New Jersey. Wants to perform a service for their state. She's uncertain that she can ever apply to be a public school teacher in the state and is sort of in this dilemma right now and literally is going to graduate in a couple of weeks. So this is sort

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of what happens and I think all of you who did this project, I read your statements this morning and I was very touched to see how you were able to connect to this human story, like this human aspect of immigration. It's one thing to talk the debate and you can have this opinion for or against it and yet you can't ignore the compelling human story behind each of these cases and I think it's true for this. You can have an opinion about whether the child of undocumented immigrants should or shouldn't

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bear some responsibility for their condition, but you can't help but be compelled that this is an awful kind of situation to be in. So that's sort of what my sense of what Rutgers is in this situation. Although now the Eagleton has started this new Citizenship Project. There's sort of these new collaborations on campus to try to provide citizenship classes for those who are eligible. So,

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I think it's hard to characterize the university as one thing, I think that there are different views in different places. VIRGINIA YANS: There is a pre-conceptualization of a public.

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university. So it takes some thinking to figure out

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the best way to do that. ROBYN RODRIGUEZ: I think that these re-thinkings of the public university maybe began really already in the civil rights movement where we were really you know, you had movements who were really trying to rethink what these public institutions mean for us. So, I think that immigrant groups now are using this space owes a debt of gratitude to early struggles particularly the free speech movement and I think [the] Civil Rights Movement and kind of creating

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the university as a site for contestation. [It] Looks to be part of -- and communities to parts of it in new kinds of ways -- not simply a student.

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JOANNA DREBY: I feel kind of funny because I'm not working at Rutgers now, but I did work in social services in New Brunswick at the Puerto Rican Action Board for a few years after I graduated and was **a part of theirs**. At the time they were putting together the Latino Leadership Alliance of New Jersey, seeking out leaders in different community groups statewide and it was surprising how many of the Puerto Rican leaders had come through Rutgers through the Puerto Rican Studies Department. So I do think there was a core time, I mean, but I feel funny saying it because I wasn't a part of

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it. But I observed that many of the leaders in the state have come through together and they know each other. There is a sort of a network and there's not a legal issue in that case of course for Puerto Ricans who came through, but I do think that Rutgers served in that capacity. VIRGINIA YANS: And the same for jews.

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ROBYN RODRIGUEZ: I think Puerto Rican Studies in particular that was born out of a real struggle for that -- as a formation within the university and a lot of these ethnic studies programs came out of not just sort of the visibility of certain kinds of areas of scholarship -- but

it was about a very different mission, a very different vision of what public education ought to do. So I think you're right. Many of these, if you were to kind of

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do this life history and track back and do these net analyses -- my department loves this stuff -- you might actually trace a lot of that to some of these struggles here at Rutgers that established these programs that are incredibly important. This is a time too, and mind you, the

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Arizona law happened around the same time that they're also trying to completely dismantle ethnic studies. I think there's a relationship there because they tend to be departments that are going to breed a kind of critical stance and people who want to engage in issues much more actively. MODERATOR: Questions from the audience? We will open it back up if there are any other?

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AUDIENCE MEMBER #2: Obviously it's really fundamental to the immigrants' [unintelligible] and something we've been talking about this semester, which is assimilation,

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which coming up. From the comments that you all were just talking about --this idea of inclusivity and exclusivity and we're talking about localism and how people kind of form

these communities within -- particularly in New Jersey -- we were having a conversation on the way to Seabrook Farms and talking about food in New Jersey. If you want to find an immigrant community, pick the food, find the community. It's just that simple here. You want to go for great Indian [food], you go to Edison. You want to go for great Portuguese, you go to the Ironbound section of Newark. We were

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talking about all of these and not thinking that the immigrant experience is so real in your life and you don't think about it in that way. You know, that there are these enclaves that are set up all the time. But I think when you're talking about assimilation I kind of hear this in this conversation that you're talking about what's the university's role in either preserving ethnic studies or in enabling assimilation. I think it's contested. Depending on which

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department you're in, some say you become completely a citizen. On the other side it's preservation of culture, preservation of your homeland, preservation of who you are when you're home versus where you are in the public. So I don't know. It's not really a question. More of a [statement]. ROBYN RODRIGUEZ: I don't know to what extent it has to be dichotomies in that way. I think part of it too is

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how can we rethink citizenship? How do we rethink the terms of inclusivity? So I think that's partly what's going on too. I think that you know people engaged in this project of

naturalization, right, citizenship. I don't know that necessarily these are people who have conventional understandings of citizenship. So I think partly what's at stake is how are we defining citizenship? What does that actually mean? What are the terms of the belonging? With the undocumented

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youth who are making -- people are campaigning for the Dream Act -- they're making a real claim to belong. They're saying it doesn't matter that we weren't born here; belonging and therefore citizenship has to do with my experience, who I am, where I was raised, my sensibility, how I move in the world. That's reshaping citizenship in really fundamental ways and that's partly why you see this whole thing about no more birthright citizenship.

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So I think that that's what's going on it's like you know... it's less about this either or. I think that what's at stake is that there's a real struggle around opening up citizenship and maybe that's what's more threatening. It's one thing actually in fact to have the preservation of ethnic identity. You leave sort of

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the conventional notions of citizenship aside. But when you're opening up that box in you're saying let's actually debate the terms of what it means to belong here, that's where the trouble begins. VIRGINIA YANS: I can't remember who said this, but whoever it was very smart. He said that

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the one thing the Right Wing has not been able to colonize is the university. This is what I think, well, but most educators are, I think, "includers", at least on the East Coast. So that most of us want our students to belong and we see that as our role; to help them understand this country. Hopefully to love it and become

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full members of society. So, that's why I'm kind of thinking. I was thinking through what you were suggesting, about the university being an instrument for this process, is going to be highly, highly contested. Highly contested. And budgeting, you know, as we see in Wisconsin is going to be one way to go after it.

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MODERATOR: I know, for many of us it's late in the semester, it's been a long day. I'll give the audience a chance if they have any additional questions or comments. If you just have a couple more seconds, I'd like to give the panelists an opportunity to share any final thoughts or words that they might have. Then we'll break. I think there's plenty of more food. If you haven't had an opportunity, I encourage you to look at the students' exhibits again and get a chance to again hear some of these very complicated narratives that Robin

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mentioned. The issues of the fact that determining who is an illegal or undocumented immigrant is certainly not an easy thing to do,

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both today, but historically as well. So, any final questions or comments and then I'll give the panelists the

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opportunity to say any final words that they haven't had a chance to share yet. ROBYN RODRIGUEZ: You guys are fantastic really. You really deserve a round of applause. Andy that was a great talk. I feel like I've learned a lot about what one can do as a teacher. Thank you for this.