

# Immigration argumentative essay



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

The United States has defined itself in part as a “ Nation Welcoming to Immigrants,” and many would agree to this. I myself do not agree with this said title/statement, for reasons that I will define. My statement to start is that, the United States is seemingly a country that welcomes immigrants, but in fact that this may be true in the beginning, but it is not the said case in the end, as it always ends the same. The ending itself is usually negative to the targeted race/group. First I will visit “ The New Colossus” by Emma Lazarus.

Her poem is the epitome of what the United States was to represent in the face of the world in regards to immigration. She speaks of the Statue of Liberty which became the symbol in which immigrants have come to know as the “ Beacon of Hope and Opportunity,” with such titles as “ Mother of Exiles. ” The lines from the poem: “ Give me your tired, your poor. Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, the wretched refuse of your teeming shore.

Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me, I lift my lamp beside the “ Golden Door!” sounds too good to be true, it sounds like a bargain, especially if I was a foreigner. I would believe these words, and set sail for the United States. This poem shows the good side of immigration in the US, but I wonder if the immigrants that set sailed for America with these hopes, dreams, and ambitions knew what truly awaited them at this said “ Golden Door? ” The first set of immigrants that were moving into America was the Irish and the German-born Jews, from around 1800 to about 1850.

These people came to the shores of America with hopes and ambitions of becoming citizens of this great land, but unbeknownst to them that 10 years prior to their arrivals, there was a law passed called “ The Naturalization Law of 1790” which stated that in order to become a naturalized citizen, you had to be a free “ white man. ” So this law here already starts some trouble in immigration because quite a few of the immigrants that came over were not free white men due to being indentured servants, and they also technically weren’t considered to be white as well (white here is considered to be Anglo-Saxon protestants).

So here we start to see some racism rear its ugly head about the subject. It was understood that at the time that there were those who opposed the integration or assimilation of “ them”(the immigrants) into American culture saying that they were “ too different,” and that they could change “ our” culture. One of the key people on this side of the argument was Owen Wister who in 1921 wrote, “ Shall We Let the Cuckoos Crowd Us of Our Nest,” which argued that though “ Uncle Sam” was welcoming and willing of immigrants, that he was too welcoming and willing.

Wister argued that because so many foreigners were coming in that America would lose its values, the foreigners would take over as the majority so everything would change to their ways, and that the whites would end up the minority and American principles would get lost in time. This propaganda though ridiculous as it sounded was not true, but this did ruffle a lot of feathers, though this was also after the settlement of the Italians, Russians, and the Eastern European Jews around 1880 to 1930.

The Asians (first the Chinese) started settling in America in the 1850s during the Gold Rush to possibly find gold and strike it rich, and they also came to help build the Transcontinental Railroad in 1869. During that time the Chinese faced serious discrimination in every aspect of their lives, though I could name a few ways, it all led to the absence of basic rights as people. Due to the severity of their treatment received, the Chinese settled into their own area known as “ Chinatown” which was in New York.

Around 1885 the Japanese started settling in America, they mainly consisted of families in agriculture and/or farmers who lost their land due to taxation laws in Japan during the Meiji Period in 1915. These immigrants (Chinese and Japanese) were looked at as “ too different,” so it was believed that because they were so different they would never be able to assimilate into our (American) culture. In 1924 the National Origins Act was passed which ended the immigration of Chinese and Japanese into America, mainly because it moved their quotas to 0, but the Europeans were excluded from this law.

It also excluded the Asians from basic rights such as owning their own property (land), and even excluded them from being able to become naturalized citizens. In 1952, after much debate the McCarran-Walter Act was passed which had given the Asians a quota once again so that they were allowed to immigrate to America once again. So we see that throughout a period of time, America and her people have opened her doors to immigration, and then singled out and attacked certain races (if not all of them) and even sent some of them back to where they came, after they suffered serious discrimination while here.

In 1965, America pass the Immigration Act, which one, ended the National Origins Act of 1924, and two, presented more equality to immigrants and to more countries, it also gave immigrants equal rights and even the ability to become naturalized citizens. In conclusion we have seen the “ hospitable nature” of America to immigrants over the course of time, and as I made references and stated facts, I reconsidered my earlier thesis, and I still feel the same way about America and her “ self-perception” of herself when it comes to immigration.

I have not changed my feelings due to the fact that all of the references made pretty much proved my theory true. If we look at immigration reform today, we see that once again history repeats itself, except this time, the targeted group or race is not the Europeans, nor the Asians, it’s the Hispanics (Mexicans), so I ask you, do you think that America is deserving of her self-imposed title? I don’t.