

Pre-Class Assignment for New Students Winter 2012

This pre-class assignment is due the first day of both your Educational Foundations and Academic Writing classes. The pre-class assignment will allow your instructors to gain a sense of your academic skills so that they can support you and maximize your success at Antioch.

Attached are two Opinion/Editorial articles from *The Los Angeles Times* on an issue. First, read the articles carefully and mark them in any way that is useful for you. Then write an approximately 400-500 word response to the reading.

Your task is to determine the central point of each article and then develop your own argument in response. Consider this your opportunity to participate in the discussion of this topic. What are your thoughts about the issues presented by the authors? Incorporate the points made in the articles to create and support a compelling argument of your own. There is no right or wrong point of view. We are interested in your argument and how it is crafted. This should be an analytical response to the material so avoid making unsubstantiated statements.

Be sure to proofread for grammatical, punctuation, and spelling errors. The paper needs to be typed, 12 pt. font, double-spaced, with your name, and page number on each page. This is to be your work and should not involve the assistance of tutors, friends, family, etc.

Your paper will be evaluated using the following rubrics:

- Effective Communication (writing)
- Critical Thinking
- Social Justice
- Global Awareness

These rubrics can be found online in the BA Student Manual and are also posted in Sakai under BA Student Center, Resources.

DUE:

Turn in your paper on the first day of class. Bring one copy for Educational Foundations – instructor will score social justice and global awareness. Bring a second copy for Academic Writing – instructor will score effective communication and critical thinking. Each instructor will assess your work and provide you with written feedback.

If you have any questions about this assignment, please e-mail Dawn A. Osborn (dosborn@antioch.edu) or call her at 962.8179 EXT 5170.

Arizona's ugly but necessary immigration law

Worries about expanding government power have to be balanced against the economic, social and environmental costs to the state.

April 27, 2010 Jonah Goldberg

On Monday morning, the "Today" show's Matt Lauer interviewed Joe Arpaio, the Maricopa County, Ariz., sheriff who's made a national name for himself cracking down on illegal immigration. Lauer noted that Arizona's new immigration bill has the support of 70% of Arizonans. "But get this," Lauer added, "53% of those same people said they worry it could lead to civil rights violations."

Lauer and other commentators seem to think that there's something of a contradiction here. I don't see it, perhaps because it describes my own position so well. I support the Arizona law, but I'm also worried that it could lead to civil rights abuses.

It seems that whenever government expands either its powers or its enforcement efforts, you should be worried that it could go too far. But such worries have to be balanced against necessity.

I agree that there's something ugly about the police, even local police, asking citizens for their "papers." There's also something ugly about American citizens being physically searched at airports. There's something ugly about IRS agents prying into nearly all of your personal financial transactions or, thanks to the passage of Obamacare, serving as health insurance enforcers.

In other words, there are many government functions that are unappealing to one extent or another. That is not in itself an argument against them. The Patriot Act was ugly -- and necessary.

Consider California's decision to "lead by example" on global warming. Environmentalists -- and this newspaper -- argued that Washington was negligent in fighting climate change at the federal level. Hence California had no choice but to tackle a national problem at the state level. California implemented standards that are considerably more strict than those required (for now) by Washington.

Arizona's law is more humble than that. While California pushed a stricter standard than the one Washington was enforcing, Arizona seeks to enforce the federal law that Washington isn't enforcing.

Now the constitutional and legal issues make the parallel less than perfect, but the principle remains the same. Indeed, I'd wager that the costs of illegal immigration -- economic, social and environmental -- on Arizona dwarf the costs on California from global warming, at least so far.

President Obama seems to get this, sort of. "Indeed, our failure to act responsibly at the federal level will only open the door to irresponsibility by others. And that includes, for example, the recent efforts in Arizona."

This is awfully tendentious since he takes it as a given that Arizona's effort to take some responsibility for a problem is best understood as "irresponsible," as if continuing to do nothing at the local level while too little is done at the federal level would be more responsible. Of course, "irresponsible" is lavish praise compared with charges of "apartheid" and "Nazi" coming from some opponents of the law, including L.A.'s Cardinal Roger Mahony.

Regardless, Obama is right insofar as Arizona's effort is the inevitable consequence of Washington's inability to take illegal immigration seriously.

Which is why the Democrats' sudden decision to push for "comprehensive" immigration reform is so disappointing. If this were a sincere effort at reform, it would be laudable. But it's almost impossible to find anyone in Washington not paid to spout Democratic talking points who believes this is anything but a naked political ploy. Even such reliably liberal bloggers as Josh Marshall and the Washington Post's Ezra Klein concede that this is first and foremost a partisan stunt and wedge issue intended to split the GOP and woo Latinos, particularly in Nevada, where Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid needs a game-changer to avoid crushing defeat in November.

Now, I don't mind wedge issues per se -- though liberals have been decrying them for decades. Still, this is beyond the pale. Ginning up a lot of anger on both sides of the issue without any serious hope of success will in all likelihood send the signal that Washington still thinks it's all a big, unserious game. And that is precisely why we will get more laws like Arizona's and make real immigration reform all the harder, if Washington ever tries to pursue it seriously.

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Los Angeles Times | ARTICLE COLLECTIONS

Arizona's un-American immigration law

The potential abuse of Latinos' civil rights is an unacceptable tradeoff for tighter immigration control.

April 28, 2010 Raul A. Reyes

As a Latino attorney, I read Jonah Goldberg's Opinion April 27 Op-Ed column ("Arizona's ugly but necessary immigration law") with a mixture of anger and sadness. Goldberg wrote that he supports the new law, the most stringent immigration measure in the country, while allowing that he is "worried that it could lead to civil rights abuses."

Goldberg mentions what he considers to be intrusive features of government — the Internal Revenue Service, airport security and the new healthcare legislation — as evidence of "necessary" evils. He fails to see what it is about Arizona's new law that is so egregious. IRS agents investigate Americans of every occupation, religion and ethnic group. Everyone stands in line for airport security. The new national healthcare program law affects everyone.

None of these government actions single out any class of people for separate treatment. Arizona's law does exactly that. It allows police to demand proof of citizenship so long as they have a "reasonable suspicion" that someone is an illegal immigrant.

When she signed this law, Gov. Jan Brewer stated that she would not tolerate racial profiling. Yet at a news conference, she was unable to answer the question "What does an illegal immigrant look like?"

If she doesn't know, how are police to know? Because Arizona's law offers no guidance as to what constitutes a "reasonable suspicion" that someone is undocumented, police will likely resort to profiling of Latinos on an unprecedented level. Isn't Goldberg outraged by these apparent violations of the 4th Amendment's protection against unreasonable search and seizure? Or of the 14th Amendment's equal protection clause? Guess not.

Goldberg reasons that, in certain situations of federal inaction, states have no choice but to lead by example and take on important issues. Here he cites California's efforts to combat global warming. While the Constitution makes no mention of climate control, it definitely offers specific guidelines for immigration. Article I of the Constitution gives Congress the power to create a "a uniform rule of naturalization." Arizona's attempt to set its own immigration policy is a usurpation of federal power. There's nothing "humble" (Goldberg's word) about that.

Constitutional issues aside, what troubled me most about Goldberg's article was his apparent willingness to sacrifice the civil rights of others in pursuit of a solution to our immigration crisis. He seems to be of the mind-set that because the new immigration law will not affect him (or his family) personally, then whatever inconvenience or hardship it causes other people is worth it.

What an appalling and selfish point of view. I happen to be Catholic, but I still care deeply about anti-Semitism and its corrosive effects on society. I am a Latino male, and I support the rights of women, gays and all people of color. In other words, just because an issue does not affect me personally does not mean that I am insensitive to its costs and consequences.

Goldberg notes that 70% of Arizonans support this new law. Fine, but I would like to remind him that this country was not founded on the principle of majority rule but on the principle of liberty and justice for all. Funny, for a conservative, Goldberg seems to have strayed awfully far from his core principle of the rights of the individual to be free from government authority.

Right now, many of Arizona's roughly 2 million Latinos are wondering about how this law will affect their personal freedom. They are concerned for their children's safety. They are searching for identification documents for older relatives. Many Latinos, no doubt, will be afraid to venture out without "papers," even if they are legal residents or U.S. citizens. This type of fear has no place in our society. It saddens me greatly to think that an educated, thoughtful person like Goldberg is only triflingly concerned with this assault on the civil rights of his fellow Americans.

I do agree with Goldberg on one thing: "There is something ugly about the government asking people for their papers." He is right. And it's not just ugly. It's unconstitutional, undemocratic and inhumane. Most of all, it's un-American.

Raul A. Reyes is an attorney living in New York.