

English 101
19 July 2006
Prof. Combest

Draft date: F July 21
Final due: T July 25
Revision: Optional

Essay Two: Contextual Analysis

Format: 3-4 pgs. Your essay should be typed, double-spaced, TNR 12pt, with 1 inch side margins and page numbers. You will also need a title that relates specifically to your argument, i.e., it should be something other than “Contextual Analysis.” And PLEASE remember to staple your paper before coming to class. Please use MLA style of documentation for incorporating quotations from the texts you are using. You may want to refer to the *Harbrace Handbook* if you have questions about MLA style.

Assignment: Now it’s time to use the research you’ve gathered so far of online resources for issues in immigration in order to construct a well-crafted essay that expands the contexts of the immigration debate. Your paper must consider and incorporate positions from Jason Lee Steorts’ “Message to Mexico” and Sonia Nazario’s “Mercy or Justice?” You must also use the contexts for illegal immigration Lalami provides in *Hope and Other Dangerous Pursuits*, which should provide you with powerful examples to develop your argument. You will need to construct a thesis that expands the contexts to consider, not one that takes a position for or against stricter immigration laws. Choose from the options listed below.

Option 1

Consider the “choice” to immigrate from an illegal immigrant’s perspective. Using Lalami’s book as your guide, explore some of the situations that contribute to illegal immigration. In what ways has choice been removed from the immigrant’s life? What kinds of options are available to them? How might legal immigration be considered impossible and unavailable? What ultimately forces them out of their countries? What are their intentions? How might successful immigration (legal or not) be considered in some ways a kind of failure? What happens to the characters in Lalami’s book who actually make it to Spain?

Option 2

In what ways might we better understand America’s immigration “crisis”? How might we feel obligated, responsible, or even sympathetic to the flood of illegal immigrants from Mexico? How has American trade policy contributed to Mexico’s economic situation? What kinds of conditions force these immigrants to leave? Is it even possible to stop illegal immigration? How might immigrating illegally be the only form of justice available?