Introducing the topic of ethics to the current national immigration debate will help U.S. society become better informed, produce greater trust in opposing viewpoints, and ideally help individuals fulfill their responsibilities as educated members of a nation governed by Republican Democratic principles. To this end I aspire to promote a framework for open, honest, and intellectual discussion free of hyperbole, the threat of offending, and trust that the discussion process will be purposeful and useful. I had a colleague once state in a faculty meeting that as a public speaker she had never lost an argument. Such a claim was disappointing because an argument should not be about winning or losing; instead it should contribute towards a mutually beneficial solution. Such misplaced principles are most common failings of the contemporary immigration debate. This is where the place of ethics becomes paramount, especially when assessing immigration public policy. We have to agree that a solution is possible and that all rational points of view can contribute to such a goal.

Mexican immigration to the United States is one of the most controversial political issues facing the United States and Mexico. Yet, it is also one of the least understood and most misrepresented by politicians, Nativists, and pundits. The modern immigration stream has its roots in the late nineteenth century development of the Mexican/U.S. border and bi-national economic ties resulting from industrial developments of mining, railroads, and commercial agriculture. Mexican immigrants have found themselves caught between the demands of a labor dependent U.S. economy and a frail Mexican economy with very few systematic protections. Furthermore, the modern immigration process has imprisoned both Mexican and U.S. societies as it has morphed into a political calamity that seemingly has no treatment. The contemporary era of twenty-four hour news and social networking has
produced a hysteria of attacks and purposeful misinformation which have led to “mob-rule” public-policies such as Arizona Senate Bill 1070 (SB1070).¹

The current state of politics is not only highly charged and controversial, but obstructive for a variety of reasons. One of the most significant problems is that society in general is both misinformed and uninformed. The average American believes that he or she is highly knowledgeable or even an expert on such issues, usually based on anecdotal evidence they have experienced. Statements such as “illegal is illegal” and “we didn’t cross the border, the border crossed us” over simplify the historical process and more importantly limit the space available for constructive argument. Adding to this crisis of misinformation are naïve statements that most Americans believe but do not understand. Our “nation of immigrants” has been described as a melting pot, a mosaic, and as a salad bowl of ethnicities, but what do such statements really mean or can they even have one overriding meaning?²

As an historian I am responsible for improving the quality of such debates, minimizing misunderstanding between opposing groups, and empowering the apathetic to become active participants. As a scholar of Mexican history, a teacher of Mexican and U.S. immigration studies, a U.S. citizen, and the son of former illegal Mexican immigrants, I have many lenses through which to examine immigration issues. Within the context of my duties as a scholar and teacher I employ these antecedents as I formulate my professional ethical responsibilities that set the parameters for my contributions to the public dialogue regarding the contemporary immigration debate especially as those issues are playing out in Arizona.

As a history professor I adamantly believe that one of the current failings of the contemporary education system within the United States results from a lack of philosophical training. As the so-called “melting pot” of the world, U.S. society celebrates itself as a bastion of racial and cultural diversity. However, during times of economic uncertainty and social transformation American ideas about national and racial identity become complicated and raise moral dilemmas concerning U.S. society’s obligations to immigrants. But how do we best prepare our students to not only understand this complexity, but also empower them to analyze its significance and find answers for the betterment of our society? One important step is to introduce them to the writings of our founding fathers and to the intellectuals who influenced them such as Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Adam Smith. As an example of perpetual misinformation,
Smith’s *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* is certainly one of the most misquoted and misunderstood texts within the sphere of U.S. political discussions and Fox News.

Another peeve is the perpetual interpretation of the U.S. style of democracy and what that means in the 21st century. Public policy that emanates out of fear, especially xenophobia, demonstrates why our nation’s founding fathers opted for a republican form of government rather than a democracy. James Madison explained the failure of democracies by writing, “[h]ence it is that such democracies have ever been spectacles of turbulence and contention; have ever been found incompatible with personal security or the rights of property; and have in general been as short in their lives as they have been violent in their deaths.”2 Alexander Hamilton during the 1787 Constitutional Convention clearly stated the founding fathers’ preference: “[w]e are now forming a republican government. Real liberty is neither found in despotism or the extremes of democracy, but in moderate governments.”3 Thus we are a nation of laws and those laws begin with the U.S. Constitution which has in place various protections for all Americans, and that includes “anchor babies.”

**THE TOPIC:**

Before a discussion about immigration can begin, the topic should be identified, which seems like a simple enough endeavor. However, although both sides agree that there is a problem, one of the most important causes of disagreement is the failure to clearly identify said problem or even agree on which topic to debate. As an immigration scholar I offer Walter Ewing’s description of the current U.S. immigration system in the following terms:

… convoluted and arbitrary numerical quotas devised in the 1960s. These quotas, and the immigration-enforcement mechanisms which the U.S. government has created in a failed attempt to enforce them, have undermined the U.S. economy, hindered family reunification, made the integration of newcomers into U.S. society far more difficult than need be, and fueled the growth of an unauthorized-immigrant population that now numbers roughly 12 million men.5
The use of the above quote is not presented as the absolute truth, but rather as the first volley for the purposes of an ongoing rational discussion.

The solution to the above quandary is commonly called “comprehensive immigration reform.” According to the Brookings Institute, any comprehensive immigration reform is unnecessary except as a method to push through an amnesty plan in Congress and more importantly will probably fail within the current political climate. Empirically, any comprehensive reform that has hopes of passing will contain incoherent and contradictory components. Consequently, comprehensive reform is so difficult to achieve because it requires its supporters to embrace policies that they not only do not prefer, but that are more or less certain to undermine those aspects of the reform they do support. This explains why comprehensive reforms are so infrequent because they tend to be made up of undesirable components that are the price of their adoption. Adding to the difficulties are the upcoming 2010 midterm elections that are polarizing this debate further and both parties are hardening their positions more as illegal immigration and border security are becoming centerpiece issues.

“The bigger problem is that Democrats and Republicans under this administration, in this Congress, haven’t figured out a way to work together,” said Tamar Jacoby, president of ImmigrationWorks USA, a national organization that supports immigration reform from a pro-business perspective. “And if they’re not working together on anything else, immigration is not going to be the one thing that they can work together on. Immigration is one that you get to after you have built up some trust on other issues. We haven’t even gotten past that threshold yet.”

I think it is significant that the U.S. District Court, District of Arizona made its initial substantive ruling in the challenges to SB 1070 in the case brought by the U.S. government, United States v. Arizona. Civil rights groups made similar federal pre-emption arguments in their challenges. However, the federal pre-emption argument is more powerfully made when the federal government asserts that a state is intruding on its power to regulate immigration than when the same arguments are made by groups representing private parties. In addition, the U.S. government prudently limited its legal challenges to the Arizona law to those sections that most directly intruded on the federal power to regulate immigration. Rather than bluntly strike down the entire law, U.S. District Court Judge Susan Bolton carefully looked at each section and
analyzed whether the specific provision of the state law intruded on the federal power to regulate immigration, which the Supreme Court in the 1976 decision of DeCanas v. Bica, 424 U.S. 351 (1976) declared to be “unquestionably exclusively a federal power.”

**The Historian’s Ethics**

Based on my background, I have two sets of ethical standards to fulfill: personal and professional. They are not necessarily contradictory as long as I am open and honest to myself and to my profession. Because of my family background I have a particularly strong personal attachment to this topic, and firmly believe that it can contribute to an improved understanding of this process. As an historian I must analyze all available information and diligently work to avoid selectively choosing facts that reinforce my own point of view. To fail to do so would undermine my professional ethics and undervalue history. Furthermore, I am always willing to engage in a historical discussion to improve clarity and test one’s hypothesis in order to refine it and maintain its relevancy. Doing so will help make the historian’s craft of studying the past truer “because they are more comprehensive, more multidimensional, more frankly tentative in tone, and more sensitive to the diversities of human cultures than our predecessors’ accounts have been.”

Since the late nineteenth-century the first duty of the historian has been to interpret things “on their own terms,” in relation to their circumstances, without submitting them to the test of some transcendental, and hence unhistorical, criterion of judgment. At this juncture Leopold von Ranke sought to explain “how it actually was” which marked the beginning of the perpetual evaluation of the historical profession’s ethics. More recently the parameters of this discussion have been set by Peter Novick’s 1988 seminal study, *That Noble Dream: The “Objectivity Question” and the American Historical Profession* where he analyzed the American historical profession’s quest for objectivity since the 1880s. As is the case with all good history, he did not lay down a foundation of new standards, but instead continued the dialogue over the historian’s purpose and role within U.S. society. I have a similar aim in writing this article, for I do not endeavor to provide answers, but instead seek to promote open and purposeful discussion about the current state of immigration to the United States.

Novick argues that within the last two generations, the historian’s standards have broken down due to a lack of consensus on the
attainability of objectivity. A decade later in his article, (The Death of) the Ethics of Historical Practice (And Why I Am Not in Mourning) Novick writes, “As a consequence of the collapse of historians’ agreement on goals and functions, the traditional professional consensus on the ethics of historical practice has collapsed as well.” Despite such misgivings, historians must continually work towards objectivity while developing an interpretation of the human past. A perfect recreation is not possible, but nonetheless meticulously reporting the past should be sought while also offering utilitarian use for society. Within this context other responsibilities are germane to the historian’s duties that will have a bearing on my contributions to the contemporary immigration debate. As an historian at a public institution of higher learning my duties include teaching, hiring, refereeing, and participating in public affairs within a professional capacity.

Historians should not only be dedicated to the truth and full disclosure, but also must value maximum dissemination of history, which in my case specifically refers to interacting with my students, my colleagues, and the general public. Rather than look down from an ivory tower, interactive communication that encourages mutual understanding is the objective. Dissemination, an historian’s external function, remains a significant responsibility that provides services for the general public. Media interviews, museum roundtables, working with public school teachers, and participating in think tanks are some of the most common examples. Within the last two months I have responded to a number of requests from the local English and Spanish language media for interviews and roundtable discussions regarding the historical relevance of SB1070. Although journalists have different priorities and less space from which to present their work, my efforts to provide historical context to their news stories has been worthwhile.

There is merit in comparing SB1070 with Operation Wetback. In 1954 the Dwight D. Eisenhower administration claimed to have “expelled over one million undocumented immigrants.” It resulted from Cold War fears that Communists were sneaking across the border and that undocumented workers were lowering wages for U.S. citizens. Such themes resonate with contemporary concerns even if there is no evidence that terrorists are sneaking across the Mexican/U.S. border today. Based on anecdotal evidence, Samuel Huntington has argued that the wages of low-income U.S. citizens would rise if the economy were rid of undocumented immigrants. But the differences between the two episodes are also important. It is doubtful that such a high number of
undocumented workers were actually deported under Operation Wetback and it is highly probable that most of those deported quickly returned. But some argue that its basic result was to cause fearful immigrants to accept the poorest working conditions and lowest paying jobs. Such points of comparison should lend insight into the possibility of deporting 11 million undocumented immigrants from the United States.

Novick’s *That Noble Dream* does not lament, but instead praises the new stage of historical evolution, which no longer makes deceptive claims of truth and authority. “The broad and deep vital center consensus, which sustained historians’ conviction of the (approximately) objective and (in the long run) convergent nature of their scholarly work, has been shattered.” I agree and believe that the historian’s craft will now better serve society without having to defend our monopoly over the truth. My work argues for historians to take on more combative points of view while still striving for objectivity. However, I do disagree with Novick on one vital point where he fears the “growing influence of identity politics taking greater influence than the shared citizenship of American historians or the fact that we are all professional historians.”

As a Mexican American I am frequently the only person of color at Arizona State University faculty meetings and it is not unusual to be the only Chicano at a Mexican or Latin American history conference. The topic of ethnic demographics should be saved for a different journal article, but my point is that my identity politics are not striving for separation but rather for inclusion as an American citizen and acceptance from my fellow historians. Our paths may be different but I am hoping to arrive at the same place as Novick. Take for example the work of Los Angeles Times reporter Hector Tobar who is the son of Guatemalan immigrants as he describes his time in Latin America.

When you write about young democracies, as I did, you learn to appreciate the comforts of old ones. I covered historic votes in Brazil, Nicaragua and other places but cast my own ballot by mail in every Los Angeles County election. I collected U.S. quarters and used them to teach my children some basic American history and geography. Illinois: Land of Lincoln; North Carolina: First Flight.

Tobar’s roots may differ from the Ellis Island interpretation of our nation of immigrants, and his reporting is heavily criticized for being
sympathetic to the plight of undocumented immigrants, but his faith in his American identity is undeniable.

Such illustrations demonstrate that multi-culturalism does not threaten American values, but instead reinforces its core values of inclusion and fairness. Instead it should be viewed as another path for obtaining and honoring American values. Furthermore it allows me to apply my own personal history alongside more orthodox narratives of the immigration experience within the greater history of the United States. Such a methodology highlights an argument from Novick’s (*The Death of*) *the Ethics of Historical Practice (And Why I Am Not in Mourning)* that “the center of that ethics would be acknowledging, to ourselves and, most crucially, to the lay public, that what we are doing is exploring and thinking about the past with as much energy and intelligence as we can muster, and then making up interesting, provocative stories for collective understanding…” 19

**THE DEBATE:**

Historically immigrants have been made scapegoats for many of society’s problems and exploited for political capital. The current public dialogue over the role of immigration, particularly Mexican immigration in the United States, is dominated by extremists who refuse to listen to opposing points of view or compromise their objectives. The anti-immigrant groups such as the Center for Immigration Studies and the Federation for American Immigration Reform argue for more security along the border and the deportation of the entire undocumented population which some estimates claim as high as 12 million people. Pro-immigrant groups such as ImmigrationWorks USA or National Council of La Raza favor an amnesty program for the current undocumented population and allowing the free market to dictate future waves of immigrant labor.

In discussions of major news stories, anti-immigrant groups have used the media to turn undocumented immigrants into boogeymen in place of substantive analysis, even when these foreign workers groups have little to do with the issue. During economic slowdowns, concerns about “job-stealing immigrants” increase. The dominant narrative becomes a job filled by an immigrant is one less job for an American citizen. But as is almost always the case with history, such circumstances are not so simplistic. For example, according to a Wall Street Journal story:
But this reasoning is based on a fundamental misunderstanding of how our labor markets operate. The U.S. job market is not a zero-sum game. The number of jobs is not static. It's fluid, which is how we want it to be. In 2006, 55 million U.S. workers either quit their jobs or were fired. Yet 57 million people were hired over the same period. In a typical year, a third of our workforce turns over.²⁰

The study of history and economics is very similar from the standpoint that most current events are not the only relevant factor; long term results must also be studied in order to comprehend both the primary and secondary consequences and impacts on society. Such an objective adds to history's value for policy makers when making decisions, comparing the costs and benefits, or alternative courses of action.

Nonetheless, this polarization has endangered the nation's well being and has led to much purposeful misinterpretation of history, data, events, ideas, and opposing view points. Such misinformation only worsens the limited understanding the average American has regarding the enormity of this subject. U.S. society in general is naïve about the complexity of this topic. One of the most significant elements of the immigration debate results from oversimplified arguments and the catchy phrases each side uses to criticize the other. Two of the most common and seemingly incontrovertible are that U.S. society is a “nation of laws” which the presence of illegal immigrants contradicts and that “illegal is illegal” meaning that there is no space for debating what the undocumented immigrant's presence means for the United States. Within the context of polarized partisan politics these slogans are simple, to the point, and have generated tremendous influence. All illegal immigrants must be criminals and consequently must be ousted at all costs. Or as stated to a Los Angeles Times reporter, “illegal immigrants are an invading criminal army bent on destroying America."²¹” Such sentiments are undoubtedly behind the tremendous support for SB1070. Polls conducted soon after its passage indicate that Americans supported the bill by as much as 60%.²² However, more relevant details are provided when a demographic breakdown is included. Support or opposition for SB 1070 is greatly influenced by political affiliation, age, income, gender and ethnicity. For example, within Arizona 88% of Republicans support the law, compared to 30% of Democrats.²³
However, it would not only be foolish, but also unethical to claim that the majority of supporters of SB1070 are bigots. Based on my experience and professional training, I would claim and have told my students that most people on both sides of the SB1070 debate are most likely equally frustrated and scared: frustrated at the federal government’s failure to pursue comprehensive immigration reform, and scared because they don’t understand the history of immigration or how it will impact our future.

One of the most important tools that historians provide is historical context. For example, most Mexican immigration patterns emerged in the late nineteenth century and flourished in the 1920s because the 1921 and 1924 Quota Acts exempted the Western Hemisphere. Consequently, the quota acts coupled with the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act and the 1907 Japanese Gentlemen’s Agreement created a near inexhaustible demand for Mexican labor in the American Southwest that for the most part has grown significantly into the 21st century. Furthermore at this early juncture Mexican and U.S. officials were even then confounded by their inability to regulate the Mexican migration process.24 Such background information provides many relevant points that are of interest in the 21st century. Chinese and Japanese immigrants and their posterity suffered from tremendous legalized bigotry during the first half of the 20th century. Consequently, their history offers an excellent point of comparison with the Mexican immigration experience and the current public policy debates. An additional point of discussion is the connection between the development of the American Southwest and Mexican labor. In 1900 the size of the Mexican-born population in the United States was 126,740, and it nearly doubled in 1910 at 228,909.25 The transcontinental railroads, especially the Southern route, and the 1902 Newlands Reclamation Act were significant milestones that fostered a growing demand for labor throughout the region. Given this relationship is it possible that Mexican immigrants have significantly contributed to the development of the U.S. economy as far back as the early 20th century?

Can we not allow for the possibility that most people who support SB1070 are not bigots, but simply afraid? Can we not agree that we are all victims in one way or another of the current broken immigration system? What should comprehensive immigration reform entail? We can neither close the border nor open it up. We can offer a path to regularize the presence of all the undocumented in this country, but how do we manage future waves of immigration? These are the questions that the nation should be asking itself and its leadership. These are the questions I asked
my students last semester in my senior level Immigration and Ethnicity course.

**TEACHING OBJECTIVES:**

Charles W. Hendrick stated that “if world historians can articulate an ethical outlook, they will have provided themselves with the means to translate their historical research into a public policy debate, and they will put some steel into their desire to provide students with a practical civic education.”26 Although, I do not teach World History, one of my most important pedagogical goals is to encourage my students to view topics within a global milieu. Such an endeavor seeks to broaden history’s relevancy and to promote dialogue rather than stereotypical rote memorization of facts and mythological claims of truth. My students are constantly reminded that, “…the task at hand for historians is not to condemn, but to understand.”27

Below I have provided the Course Description and Historical Objectives for my U.S. Immigration and Ethnicity course. Although the format was online using Blackboard, the course was organized in a very traditional chronological fashion (beginning in the late 19th century). The major assignments emphasized argumentative writing skills and class discussion. There are three small writing assignments of 3-5 pages, one research paper of 10-15 pages and weekly class discussions based on assigned reading assignments and current newspaper stories. Students were encouraged to continually analyze and compare the past, i.e. readings from their textbooks, with the present, i.e. contemporary news stories from such news sources as the New York Times, the Los Angeles Times, and the Arizona Republic.

This course reviews the development of American immigration and nationality laws, beginning with a survey of the history and current shape of immigration public policy since the 19th century. Our immigrant society has been described as a melting pot, a mosaic, a salad bowl, as well as many negative metaphors. Through lectures, class discussions, readings, and interpreting popular culture this course assesses various immigration topics and deconstructs the evolution of American ethnicity as it pertains to the experiences of immigrants and U.S. society.

The course description sets the parameters for the course topics, but also alerts the students that they will not passively study the past but
rather take an active role in this process through their own interpretations and deconstruction of seminal concepts such as American ethnicity. A frequent lively discussion surrounds the question of whether or not all Americans share one ethnicity.

The following Historical Objectives encourage students to understand that immigration does not begin the moment that the immigrant crosses the border, but rather that it is a long chronological and expansive geographical process:

• Understand the role of immigration within the Global Community
• Understand that immigration within the evolution of the United States is a complex process
• Understand that there are no simple answers for solving contemporary immigration problems
• Understand the relationship between immigration and the economy as essential symbiotic components that influence the health of North America

As a Mexican historian who coincidentally has a Master’s degree in Ancient European history (including studying Latin for seven years), I am able to provide many chronological and topical points of comparison for my students. Besides reminding them that the Ancient Greeks did not invent everything in the Western World, they are frequently surprised that there were 2,500 years of recorded history before them in the Near East. My students are also surprised to find out that there are over 180 languages spoken in Mexico and that a significant number of immigrants from Mexico do not speak Spanish. Such information offers a relevant point of comparison when discussing the English-only movement, which seeks to make English the official language of the United States. I ask students to identify when English was the only language spoken in the United States and why the founding fathers did not make it the official language when the Constitution was written.

The Class Discussion grade usually makes up one third of the student’s overall grade. I provide a four-page document that describes my expectations, a grading rubric, netiquette guidelines, and an explanation for conducting rational argumentative discussions. Below I have provided the list of Objectives for Responses to Classmates’ Posts:

• Expresses opposing or contrasting views.
• Encourages healthy skepticism and/or asks questions that encourage others to see issues and interpretations from diverging points of view.
Another important missing element within the current politics of the immigration debate is the backdrop for a rational debate. Such a virtue has more times than not remained inside Pandora’s Box. A proposition I frequently offer my students in part to gain their trust and to empower them is to maintain a healthy skepticism about all ideas and arguments that I offer them. Just as citizenship can only exist on the duality of rights and responsibilities so exists skepticism. It is supremely constructive when it advances an alternative hypothesis that allows for potential verification so that it could be accepted in lieu of the initial argument—the one which gave rise to the skeptic’s doubts. According to 19th century philosopher William James, what is most distasteful is a skepticism which brings with it nothing that can contribute constructively to investigation. Hypotheses, such as historical interpretations, can be checked against all the available evidence and subjected to the most rigorous critical tests the community of historians can devise. If they are verified provisionally, they stand. If they are disproved, new interpretations must be advanced and subjected to similar testing. The process is imperfect but not random; the results are always tentative but not worthless. As John Dewey stated, “It is this strand of pragmatic hermeneutics, which has been present in the best work of American historians since the first decade of the twentieth century…”

I also offer my own personal background as the son of former illegal immigrants and former farmworker as a means of providing another point of view that is not dependent on my institutional training. Although I post this information in the “Introduction and Welcome” discussion forum, I am careful not to include my political views. I am also mindful not to use history selectively to prove a previous assumption (a priori). Clearly laying out my personal background and point of view will help students not only understand my point of view, but hopefully empower them because I have laid out my potential biases. Through such steps I hope to minimize the influence of those barriers that interfere with a rationale discussion about contemporary immigration issues. Bias is not an idea to be avoided, but rather to be embraced with honesty.

Within the context of my teaching responsibilities, I seek to empower my students by encouraging them to take an active role in the
world around them, teaching them civic responsibility as educated members of society, and teaching them to argue constructively. Within the context of the above circumstances I took part in the Lincoln Polytechnic Ethics Fellows seminar to test out some ideas I have for the classroom in order to become a more effective teacher and better communicator. Specifically I want to train my students to be well-informed, effective speakers, good listeners, comfortable with different cultures, appreciate the necessity of compromise, and empower them to become skillful leaders. An ethical discussion regarding the parameters of the immigration debates, but especially the role of the informed citizenry, provides a focal point from which to expose my students to my objectives. The purpose for introducing Ethical parameters to my classroom setting should, I hope, contribute to a more fruitful learning process regardless of my students’ diverse points of view and knowledge on this topic.

As a history professor I am obligated to continually demonstrate the value of history to my students. I regularly use current newspaper stories as a tool for presenting the connection between the past and the present. The current controversy over SB1070 provides an excellent case study demonstrating how the study of history provides context and the value of comprehending change over time. History is a process that requires specific parameters to be used correctly and I believe ethical standards are essential within this setting. My students as historians must strive to comprehend opposing viewpoints in order to maximize their ability to contribute to not only a more enlightened discussion, but for assessing the legitimacy of potential solutions (public policy options). Such an objective empowers my students to believe that their opinions are of significant value. Professional ethics demands that historians conduct thorough research in order to justify any conclusions from such projects.

**CONCLUSION:**

I have been asked many times within the last year what does history say about the current debate over immigration. My reply has been that it is an opportunity to evaluate what it means to be an American and what paths we should take to continue our nation’s prosperity. Illegal immigration is not even the problem, but rather it is a symptom of the end of the Cold War and our nation’s standing in the era of neo liberal economic systems. A shared history marked by the Mexican/U.S. border, a significant sector of our population that is descended from Mexico, and
the North American Free Trade Agreement are just a few important factors that indicate our future is tied to the Mexican population. How we decide to deal with our neighbors and fellow North American Republic is more important.

Francis Fukuyama described the potential benefits of ethical dialogue in his assessment of the path Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel described that would lead to the modern constitutional state or liberal democracy. According to Fukuyama, “[t]he Universal History of mankind was nothing other than man’s progressive rise to full rationality, and to a self-conscious awareness of how that rationality expresses itself in a liberal self-government.” His “progression” is similar to my process that is the basis for encouraging my students to become more enlightened through open, honest, and productive class discussions. History must have a utilitarian purpose, especially in this postmodern era highlighted by the overwhelming technology that not only distracts our students, but also produces immense amounts of information and misinformation. Such features of contemporary society require that we strive to communicate with one another in a dare I say “Ethical fashion.”

ENDNOTES

1 Requires officials and agencies of the state and political subdivisions to fully comply with and assist in the enforcement of federal immigration laws and gives county attorneys subpoena power in certain investigations of employers. Establishes crimes involving trespassing by illegal aliens, stopping to hire or soliciting work under specified circumstances, and transporting, harboring or concealing unlawful aliens, and their respective penalties: <http://www.azleg.gov/legtext/49leg/2r/subsummary/s.1070pshs.doc.htm>.


4 According to anti-immigration groups, anchor babies are children born after a mother who is in the United States illegally gives birth to her child in order to exploit his/her benefits as a U.S. citizen. However, a U.S. citizen cannot sponsor his/her parents until the age of 21 and even then there is a
considerable wait time due to the bureaucratic process. For more details on the
current debate see Peter H. Schuck, “Birthright of a Nation,” August 14, 2010,
*The New York Times* and Sherry Jacobson, “Across Texas, 60,000 babies of non-


7 Ibid., 103.


16 Novick, “(The Death of) the Ethics of Historical Practice, 35.

17 Ibid., 36.


19 Novick, “(The Death of) the Ethics of Historical Practice, 39.


26 Hendrick, “The Ethics of World History,” 36.

27 Ibid., 42.

