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# The Bum Blockade: Los Angeles and the Great Depression

Hailey Giczy

"American History has been in a large degree the history of the colonization of the Great West. The existence of an area of free land, its continuous recession, and the advance of American settlement westward, explain American development."<sup>[1]</sup> Frederick Jackson Turner's "frontier thesis" explained the effects of the frontier on American History. Turner's essays described the frontier as the time and place where savagery met civilization.<sup>[2]</sup> For the citizens of Los Angeles, also known as "Angelenos," the migration to California during the Great Depression was also a meeting of the savage and the civilized. However, instead of civilization advancing westward as postulated by Turner, it was the "culturally deficient" and "savage" encroachment of the Dust Bowl migrants that now moved westward towards Los Angeles. The social upheaval and displacement brought on by the Great Depression changed the very concept of the frontier, and the defining characteristics of Americans as travelers to that frontier were no longer applicable to Dust Bowl migrants.

Protection of the civilization that existed in the West meant that all savage infringements on the newly developed utopian community of Los Angeles had to be prevented. Southern Californians, shaped by their imagined community, did not want to relate to Depression-era America, and instead "[separated] themselves and their territory from the governing state as a means for defending their separate identities."<sup>[3]</sup> In order to preserve the homogeneity of Los Angeles' "imagined community" of wealthy and culturally advanced Anglo-Saxons, tactics used to exclude racial groups were employed to attack class groups, raising exclusionist sentiment in Angelenos which fueled a fear of moral and aesthetic degradation. An embodiment of this fear was the Bum Blockade, a border patrol set up by Los Angeles Chief of Police James E. Davis at California's borders to deny those deemed undesirable from entering the state.<sup>[4]</sup>

The development of Los Angeles' imagined community rested on regional nationalism and the creation of a regional identity among Southern Californians. The imagined community is the idea that myths perpetuated through literature and other forms of communication shape the self-perception of individuals, as well as the community they are a part of. It is *imagined*, according to Benedict Anderson, "because the members of even the smallest nation," or, in this case, region, "will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion."<sup>[5]</sup> The region is imagined as a *community* because "regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail in each, the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship."<sup>[6]</sup> Anderson continues that "an American will never meet, or even know the names of more than a handful of his [...] fellow Americans. He has no idea what they are up to at any one time. But he has complete confidence

in their steady, anonymous, simultaneous activity."<sup>[7]</sup> Based on the myths perpetuated through mass communication, Los Angeles, along with the rest of Southern California, identified itself as very much separated from the rest of the nation.

The myth of Southern California's self- image was largely shaped by the early literary works of the Southland's local authors. The myth included the idea that Los Angeles was the most civilized community in the West, which made Angelenos resent future migrants who were not as refined as they perceived themselves to be. Los Angeles was the merging of traditional Protestant and pioneering frontier heritage, which made the area unique and unspoiled, while at the same time entrenched with culture. Another idea that shaped the imagined community of Angelenos was the special relationship residents of Southern California had with the beautiful natural surroundings; horizons and lands that mimicked the idyllic vistas of Europe. Angelenos considered themselves culturally advanced as compared to the rest of the nation because they had the positive traits passed down from America's colonial roots, but saw themselves as innovative and ever-changing in a new landscape that had not yet been civilized. The Angelenos were the civilizers, the settlers of the untamed and savage West, and their accomplishment in this regard made them hold themselves in high esteem. These beliefs furthered their perception that other people were inferior to those of their community.

While the myths linking Southern Californians are different from myths uniting other regional or national groups, the method in creating the myth, or identity, is the same. The imagined community of Southern California was created through the literature that characterized the region and united its inhabitants. For Anderson, the tool to create the imagined community is print-language.<sup>[8]</sup> His idea of the imagined community derives its origins from early stages of nationalism in European civilization.<sup>[9]</sup> He says of European nationalism that "the conviction that languages [...] were [...] the personal property of quite specific groups - their daily speakers and readers - and moreover that these groups, imagined as communities, were entitled to their autonomous place in a fraternity of equals," made print language the most important factor in developing an imagined community.<sup>[10]</sup> In a way, the novel and the newspaper were "the technical means for 're-presenting'" the desired imagined community of a particular nation or region.<sup>[11]</sup> The "Ramona myth" as contained in Helen Hunt Jackson's 1884 publication *Ramona*, spurred the idyllic view of Southern California and suggested that "the frontier was over, that aesthetic self-consciousness," stemming from New England ideals, "had come to *California del Sur*."<sup>[12]</sup> The notion of a virgin and untamed natural setting, with a population entrenched with the historical tradition of New England, was captured by Sarah Bixby Smith's *Adobe Days* (1925), and made Southern California represent the natural beauty and purity of the frontier but still was connected to the heritage of America's colonial roots. John Charles Fremont, author of the widely read *Report of the Exploring Expedition to Oregon and North California* (1845), correlated California beauty to a Mediterranean oasis.<sup>[13]</sup> His analogy presented California as "a land of honey and flowers."<sup>[14]</sup> These works made the foundation of the California Dream "the hope for a special relationship to nature."<sup>[15]</sup> These tomes "created unified fields of exchange and communication," between people who would never meet each other, but would always have one thing in common - the idealized view of Southern California and its inhabitants.<sup>[16]</sup>

The initial idea of promoting Southern California as a semi-tropical, Mediterranean paradise came from such advertisers as Major Benjamin Truman, a Los Angeles journalist advertising for

the railroad companies. In 1874, Truman published the promotional treatise *Semi-Tropical California*, which endorsed California as "a place for the good life," fulfilling both pastoral and urban ideals; it would be "rural but not countrified, hard-working but not too hard-working," and would appeal both to farmers and urbanites seeking a blissful change from the status quo.<sup>[17]</sup> Early advertisements like those of the late nineteenth century created Southern California's first self-image as "that of the American farm perfected, saved from loneliness and back-breaking labor, graced with some degree of aesthetic satisfaction."<sup>[18]</sup> The life of the Southern Californian was romanticized as utopian. The Southern Californian farmer would be "a middle-class horticulturalist [...] freed from the back-breaking ordeal of the New England and Midwestern farm," and would divulge into culture and leisure; "there would be books, a rose garden, a piano in the parlor."<sup>[19]</sup> Southern California became the special place for ordinary Americans.<sup>[20]</sup>

As much as national affiliation, and perhaps even more so, regional association has a strong impact on individual perceptions of self-identity. Frederick Jackson Turner argued that the "section" was just as fundamental in the development of American history as was the frontier. He stated that "the *frontier* is a moving section, or rather a form of society, determined by the reactions between the wilderness and the edge of expanding settlement; the *section* is the outcome of the deeper-seated geographical conditions interacting with the stock which settled the region."<sup>[21]</sup> The merging of tradition with the frontier created a special section in Southern California which meant the development of its communities and peoples would not conform to lines of development of other regions. Turner further emphasized that "sections are more important than states in shaping the underlying forces of American history."<sup>[22]</sup> "Regionalism," according to David B. Knight, "is taken to mean the awareness of togetherness among a people of a relatively large area. [...] A regionalism thus is recognizable only when it represents but a part of a larger territorial unit, the latter being the areal extent of a political system."<sup>[23]</sup> While the region is subordinate to the national political system in size and authority, it is not the case with individual identity. This is because, historically, communities began with "socially cohesive [groups]" defining their own territory. The community would become "politically bounded," to the territory, which in turn "came to define the people," which was epitomized in the self-identities and imagined community of Angelenos.<sup>[24]</sup>

The development of the regional identity of frontier travelers differed notably from the characterizing facets of the rest of Americans because "the West opened a refuge from the rule of established classes, from the subordination of youth to age, from the sway of established and revered institutions."<sup>[25]</sup> The West was also the amalgamation of various cultural aspects merging from individuals from other sections in America. Considering the vast differences that shaped individuals in the different regions in the territory of the United States, comparisons are drawn between the United States and the collection of nations on the European continent. These factors are evidenced in the development of Southern California's imagined community throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Therefore, Southern California was a region linked by more than territory - Southern Californians were linked by the myths perpetuated about their land.

Along with rising regional nationalism, Turner argued that "sectional self-consciousness and sensitiveness is likely to be increased as time goes on and crystallized sections feel the full influence of their geographic peculiarities, their special interests, and their developed ideals, in a

closed and static nation."<sup>[26]</sup> The increase in regional nationalism would provoke the danger that "the province or section shall think of itself naively as the nation, [...] and then proceed to denounce the sections that do not perceive the accuracy of this view as wicked or ignorant and un-American."<sup>[27]</sup> "This kind of nationalism is a sectional mirage," common among all sections whether consciously or not, and "involves the assumption of a superiority of culture [...] to which good morals require that the nation as a whole must yield."<sup>[28]</sup> This regional nationalism was quite evident during the Dust Bowl migration, in which the "Okies" migrated westward to Los Angeles during severe weather and home foreclosures.

Many Los Angeles residents perceived the so-called "Okies" to be a menace to their imagined community. The migrants were seen as culturally inferior to Angelenos and were distinguished "as a separate and alien social group."<sup>[29]</sup> John Steinbeck conveyed the negative connotation of the term 'Okie' in his *Grapes of Wrath*: "Well, Okie use'ta mean you was from Oklahoma. Now it means you're a dirty son-of-a-bitch. Okie means you're scum. Don't mean nothing itself, it's the way they say it."<sup>[30]</sup> The popularity of eugenics at the time also contributed to the stigmatized image of the Okie. The eugenic claim "that rural isolation and poverty were hallmarks of hereditary inferiority" marked the population of poor whites migrating westward.<sup>[31]</sup> Carey McWilliams, journalist and former editor of *The Nation*, in an interview with historian Studs Terkel, explained "in the second half of the Thirties, about 350,000 Dust Bowl refugees flooded the state. They were promptly stereotyped, exactly as a racial minority. They were called Okies and Arkies: they were shiftless and lazy and irresponsible and had too many children, and if we improve the labor camps and put a table in, they would chop it up and use it for kindling. Once I went into the foyer of this third-rate motion picture house in Bakersfield and I saw a sign: Negroes and Okies upstairs."<sup>[32]</sup> Californians quickly applied degenerative traits to this migrating class, and could easily distinguish themselves as culturally superior. The Okies were seen as ignorant, shiftless, and incestuous, while Angelenos considered themselves educated, progressive, and Christian.

The regional identity and territoriality of Southern Californians after the close of the frontier and the increase in its imagined community largely contributed to their xenophobia of Americans from other regions, notably the Okies. The idea that feelings of nationalism "involve myths that relate to and encourage feelings of loyalty to and identification with a group's consciousness of itself," was manifested in the peoples of the Southern California region. This nationalism and group conscious could "cause the group either to have or desire political independence under its own government in its own territory."<sup>[33]</sup>

To maintain their imagined community, Angelenos, and Californians in general, took preventative steps to curb migration and immigration of undesired populations. California has historically banned undesirable migrants from its borders, including the Chinese in the late nineteenth century, the Japanese in the early twentieth century, Mexicans at the onset of the Great Depression, and African-Americans until the early twentieth century.<sup>[34]</sup> Anti-Chinese sentiment had existed in California since the mid-eighteenth century, and the Chinese were seen as "a perpetual, unchanging, and unchangeable alien element that [could] never become homogenous," with the California community.<sup>[35]</sup> It was also believed that the Chinese were "demoralizing and [a] degradation to [California's] people[.]" and that they were "dangerous to the community."<sup>[36]</sup> The Chinese Exclusion Act, passed by the Federal government in 1882,

barred Chinese immigration and prevented the naturalization of the Chinese already in America. The Fresno *Republican* reported "Japanese coolie immigration is of the most undesirable class possible."<sup>[37]</sup> David Kearney, an earlier advocate of Chinese exclusion, said in 1892 that "Japs [are] being brought here now in countless numbers to demoralize and discourage our domestic labor market and to be educated [...] at our expense."<sup>[38]</sup> At the onset of the Great Depression "the federal government sponsored and supported the mass expulsion of [Mexican] immigrants."<sup>[39]</sup> It was reported that "a total of 3,492 Mexicans left on repatriation trains from San Bernardino between 1931 and 1933, primarily in 1931, at the height of the formal repatriation movement."<sup>[40]</sup>

The implementation of the Bum Blockade aligned with much of California history, and was a response taken to preserve the imagined community as shaped by regional identity. However, a key difference between the closing of California borders to the Japanese, Chinese, African-Americans, and Mexicans and closing its borders to the Dust Bowl migrants is that the Dust Bowl migrants were white. "Previously, Californians had generated support for excluding poor non-White residents by appealing to the racist sentiments of White Californians,"<sup>[41]</sup> so in order to make the blockade successful, the tactics used to reinforce racist attitudes toward undesirable populations were applied to the Dust Bowl migrants. During the Depression, Angelenos distinguished between desired and undesired migrants based on the premise of cultural inferiority. Angelenos perceived Okies as a different ethnic group from themselves based on their regional origin. Angelenos were then united by a common "national and ethnic consciousness" against the Okies, and their solidarity was enhanced because they were "facing *other* groups, as well as territorial and cultural ones."<sup>[42]</sup>

Attitudes based on regionalism were still strong during the Depression, but the dislocation of Dust Bowl migrants meant that "the sense of place that once existed in the 'minds of countless ordinary folk' [remained] largely unanswered for the depression decade in the United States."<sup>[43]</sup> The Okies no longer had a territory to claim as their own, and in their attempts to integrate with other regions and communities, they faced the hostility one would expect between feuding nations; this was grounds for suspicion on part of Angelenos. Hostility built toward this group because, according to Angelenos, they were identity-less, home-less, and culture-less. This hostility was epitomized by the advertisements of booster clubs in the Southland in the 1920s and 1930s.

The All-Year Club of Southern California, established in 1921 by a group of Los Angeles businessmen as a response to the lack of tourism during the summer months to Southern California, contributed to the print-language discourse which furthered the development of Los Angeles' imagined community.<sup>[44]</sup> The All-Year Club aimed to boost the economy and improve the character of Los Angeles by advertising the city's virtues only to middle and upper-class whites by "[mastering] the techniques of mass consumer marketing in its promotion of southern California."<sup>[45]</sup> The Great Depression provided a challenge for the booster clubs in Southern California. The All-Year Club knew that many tourists to Southern California generally became "inhabitants, and thus competitive job-seekers," which alarmed Southern Californians who were already living in a poor job market and were worried about the overburdened relief rolls.<sup>[46]</sup> Also, many in Southern California feared that, because of the advertisements of the great weather in the southland, the bulk of indigents would decide that "if one must starve, it's pleasanter to do



so in sunshine than in snow."<sup>[47]</sup> The All-Year Club was targeted by many angry Southern Californians who believed it was the Club's prominent and thorough advertising that caused the unemployed to flock to the West.

At a city conference on unemployment in late 1929, the All-Year Club decided to change their advertising focus from enticing tourists to dissuading people from relocating to the area.<sup>[48]</sup> In response to public concerns about undesirables getting on relief rolls and creating more competition for employment, the All-Year Club issued "warnings to potential job-seekers [...] on all advertisements."<sup>[49]</sup> A typical advertisement would say, "Come to Southern California for a glorious vacation. Advise others not to come seeking employment lest they be disappointed, but for the tourist [,] attractions are unlimited."<sup>[50]</sup> Similarly, the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce aimed to boost the economy and improve the character of Los Angeles by advertising the city's virtues only to middle and upper-class whites. With the onset of the Great Depression, the Chamber of Commerce insisted that "street beggars were 'a bad advertisement' for Los Angeles" and feared that a "[working class and non-White] presence on street corners and in other public spaces of the city [...] would compromise the environment of the community and dissuade other Whites of means from migrating to the city."<sup>[51]</sup> Los Angeles was to remain a "Peoria of Palm trees."<sup>[52]</sup> Legislation from the State Assembly and the creation of the Bum Blockade were ways of protecting this paradise for middle- and upper-class whites.

Legislation was proposed by the State Assembly as early as May 1935 which would bar some migrants from entering California. On May 16, 1935, the Jones-Redwine Bill was proposed in the California State Assembly which aimed to "prohibit all paupers, vagabonds, indigent persons and persons likely to become public charges, and all persons affected with a contagious or infectious disease from entering California until July 1, 1939."<sup>[53]</sup> The declaratory section of the Jones-Redwine Bill stated "all paupers and all persons likely to become public charges are hereby prohibited from entering the State of California."<sup>[54]</sup> The bill proposed that the Governor "call upon the city police and county Sheriff's organizations, [and] also to create a special border patrol."<sup>[55]</sup> Assemblymen Jones and Redwine declared in a statement that "California is fast being placed in a disastrous position [...] because of the influx of unemployed persons into this State."<sup>[56]</sup> The need for the action described in the Jones-Redwine Bill was reiterated when the number of migrants to California, especially Southern California, was much higher than the migration experienced by other states. In April 1935, there was a reported "drop in number of cases and in expenditures for relief in 101 of 145 cities reporting to Washington," however, "Los Angeles reported an increase of three per cent in number of cases and of nine per cent in expenditures, while San Diego had a rise of eight per cent in both."<sup>[57]</sup> These statistics exacerbated the need to prevent migrants from entering the state.

Despite some beliefs that immigration restrictions were out of the State's power, "the United States Supreme Court and the California Supreme Court [were] both on the record as declaring that a State has a right to protect itself against the spread of crime, pauperism or disturbance of the peace, by closing its borders to migrants not self-supporting."<sup>[58]</sup> Major Walter Tuller, California attorney, cited a Supreme Court decision that read "it may be admitted that the police power of a State justifies the adoption of precautionary measures against social evils."<sup>[59]</sup> The Supreme Court decision continued, "a State [...] may exclude from its limits convicts, paupers, idiots and lunatics, and persons likely to become a public charge [...] a right founded [...] in the

sacred law of self defense."<sup>[60]</sup> Regarding a State's right to self defense, the California Supreme Court stated, "it has never been doubted that a State has the power, by proper police and sanitary regulations, to exclude from its limits paupers, vagabonds and criminals, or sick, diseased, infirm or disabled persons, who were likely to become a public charge."<sup>[61]</sup> This anti-Okie law passed the State Assembly quickly, but did not pass in the State Senate until 1937.<sup>[62]</sup> Protection of the Los Angeles community was, in the interim, to fall to other authorities.

The Bum Blockade was planned and established shortly after the failed passage of the Jones-Redwine Bill in the State Senate, and developed with two lines of defense against potential migrants. The first line was in Los Angeles, and included arresting and fingerprinting vagrants and beggars. Upon arrest, vagrants were given the option of forced hard labor in a rock quarry or deportation over the State line.<sup>[63]</sup> The second line of defense was at California borders, to which one hundred thirty-six Los Angeles Police Officers were deployed to prevent undesirable migrants from entering the state. The officers conducted vehicle and train searches, and at the state line they were deputized by the local law enforcement agencies to continue the fingerprinting campaign that had begun back in the city. Treatment of migrants already in Los Angeles consisted of numerous arrests by the Los Angeles Police Department, along with jail time those arrested on vagrancy charges were often fingerprinted and deported to the state line. "Subjects taken into technical custody for violation of State laws will be fingerprinted and described, copies of the reports being sent to the Federal Bureau of Investigation in Washington, D.C., to the Sheriff's office in the county where the arrest is made, and to the Los Angeles Police Department."<sup>[64]</sup>

On December 6, 1935, in a letter to the Police Board of Commissioners, the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce suggested the idea of establishing hard labor prison camps for "undesirable indigent transients."<sup>[65]</sup> The Chamber of Commerce defined "undesirable indigent transients" as those "who are disinclined to work [...] and therefore become public charges and in many instances a problem for the Police Department."<sup>[66]</sup> The Chamber of Commerce offered that in the prison camps, the "transients who are picked up for violation of City and County ordinances can be put to labor hard, or drastic, enough to act as a deterrent to their coming into this community."<sup>[67]</sup> It was also believed that work on the rock pile would strengthen the naturally demoralized and culturally deficient character of the migrants.<sup>[68]</sup> Acknowledging that the establishment of the labor camps would require spending on behalf of the city, the Chamber of Commerce concluded, "in the long run it would be money saved if the local authorities could [...] prevent the influx of those persons who now cost the City money and become public menaces."<sup>[69]</sup>

Regarding the legal issues surrounding the establishment of the proposed hard labor camps, the City Attorney advised the City Council and Chamber of Commerce to view Section 427 of the City Charter which stated: "The Council shall prohibit enforced labor without compensation as a penalty for the commission of public offenses."<sup>[70]</sup> However, the Attorney also suggested a way for the Council and Chamber of Commerce to get around the law: "The prohibition of the above section relates to those cases in which enforced labor is required 'as a penalty' for the committing of public offenses. It may be contended that this requires a prohibition against such labor where it is prescribed as a penalty but not as a prohibition of labor accompanying imprisonment, the imprisonment being the penalty prescribed by law for the violation of municipal ordinances."<sup>[71]</sup>



This manipulation of the law only emphasizes the extreme desire of Angelenos to safely guard their imagined community.

While unable to distinctly claim Dust Bowl migrants were of a different race to deem them undesirable, and unwilling to state that economic differences were at the heart of the problem, blockade supporters instead focused on the cultural deficiencies of migrants.<sup>[72]</sup> Through the "racialization" of class, supporters of the Bum Blockade "contended that migrants lacked the work ethic and moral character to become part of the Los Angeles community."<sup>[73]</sup> This racialization of class took hold because of the already established nationalism of the Southern California region. Angelenos were able to perceive outsiders in a racial sense because of the deep-seeded regionalism that shaped their identities. Being white American citizens was not enough to travel unimpeded into California.

The Los Angeles Police Department's plan of action in implementing the Bum Blockade rested on established laws. Evading the payment of railroad fare was "punished by a fine of not more than five hundred dollars, or imprisonment not exceeding six months," or both.<sup>[74]</sup> Authorities in states en route to California allowed migrants to ride the rails free under the condition that they did not get off the trains in their locales.<sup>[75]</sup> Those arrested for evading railroad fares or vagrancy was given the choice of appearing before a local magistrate or returning to where they came from."<sup>[76]</sup> Another part of the California Penal Code utilized by the Los Angeles Police Department was the so-called vagrancy laws which declared that "every person who roams about from place to place without any lawful business is a vagrant and is punishable by a fine not exceeding five hundred dollars, or by imprisonment in the county jail not exceeding six months," or both.<sup>[77]</sup> An additional section of the Penal Code made criminals out of those who helped migrants get into California; "Every person [...] bringing into or assisting in bringing into the State of California any indigent person as described in this act, who is not a resident of the State of California, knowing him to be an indigent person, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor."<sup>[78]</sup>

The Los Angeles Police Department Annual Report for the year 1935-1936<sup>[79]</sup> detailed the causes for action, the plan of action, the results of action, and recommendations for state action regarding the migrant problem. According to the Los Angeles Police Department's Annual Report for 1935-1936, the so-called "migrant problem" was explained by reporting the winter increase in crime and by presenting the criminal records of migrants.<sup>[80]</sup> One of the causes for action by the LAPD was the seasonal winter increase in crime - by approximately twenty percent in Los Angeles - which was attributed to the transient migrants. In a chart showing the seasonal trend of specified crimes and the total of all crimes in Los Angeles from July 1933 to January 1936, there are high peaks in crime during the winter months.<sup>[81]</sup> Chief Davis claimed that these seasonal trends are a result of the migration of 'transients' to Los Angeles as a winter holiday resort, and claimed that one reason why migrants came to California was because it was better to starve in warm weather than to starve in the cold.<sup>[82]</sup> The crimes specified on the chart, attributed mostly to the migrants, were burglary, robbery, and auto theft. The numbers in correlation to the chart show that about thirty percent more crime happened in the winter months.<sup>[83]</sup>

The LAPD Annual Report contained a number of exhibits showing the need for the border patrol by relating the mass migration to increases in crime rates. In one of the exhibits (Exhibit V), showing "Persons Arrested by Los Angeles Police Department who were Sentenced to State

Prison,"<sup>[84]</sup> from the fiscal years of 1930-31 to 1934-35, shows that of the crimes robbery, theft, and burglary, about one third of the crimes were committed by nonresidents who had been in Los Angeles County for less than one year.<sup>[85]</sup> Comparing the data from Exhibit V to that of Exhibit V-A - showed the number of crimes in relation to the number of criminals who had been in the State of California for less than one year - reveals that most of those who had been in Los Angeles less than one year also had been in the State less than one year, meaning that the increase in crime among nonresidents could be attributed to the Okies. A check of the "vagrants" already in Los Angeles revealed that nearly half of them had criminal records.<sup>[86]</sup> Exhibit III in the Annual Report, 1935-1936 shows the numbers of "transients" with previous records as determined through fingerprints analyzed by both the State and Federal government. The exhibit showed that 603 of 1270 individuals had previous records, nearly one quarter of those being felonies.<sup>[87]</sup> Additional reasons for the Bum Blockade stemmed from the fact that many of those arrested on charges of vagrancy and similar crimes were not residents of California and had not been in the State for more than a year.

The Annual Report examined a preliminary check at Colton and Victorville from December 20, 1935, 8a.m. to December 22, 1935, 8 p.m., and showed that over five hundred individuals, termed "indigent alien transients," entered California on trains.<sup>[88]</sup> With hundreds of nonresidents entering the state on rails in just sixty hours, the cause for alarm intensified. This railroad check was confirmation for Chief Davis that the border patrol and deportation of migrants from Southern California was imperative for the maintenance of Los Angeles' imagined community.

In the Exhibit showing "Foreign Transient Activities," the Annual Report shows how 'transients' entered the state, and where they went from there. Most migrants attempted entry on the highways in both the Northern and Southern Areas. The popular entry route in the Central area was by railroad. The chart depicted the activities of officers and migrants on April 17, 1936, and shows that all that were found entering on both railroad and highway were sent back to the borders, many more migrants left the state voluntarily. The number of 'transients' picked up locally by the L.A. Police Department and deported out of State numbered 1194 for that day.<sup>[89]</sup>

The closure of the Federal Transient Camps in October 1935 was perhaps the most significant event in spurring the action of the border patrol because California had the most transient camps of all participating states.<sup>[90]</sup> The Federal Transient Camps, operated by the Federal Transient Program in the early 1930s, were intended as a way to help the many homeless. Its goal was "to encourage states to explore the possibility of transient camps - the cost of which would be totally reimbursed by the [federal] program."<sup>[91]</sup> Not surprisingly, California was responsible for the care of a very large number of these migrants,<sup>[92]</sup> and when the Federal Transient Camps were closed, California was left to deal with the migrants who were no longer being cared for by the government. As displayed in Exhibit I of the annual report, the total individuals under welfare care in Federal Transient Camps throughout 1934 showed that California was responsible for the care of a significant number of migrants.<sup>[93]</sup> When the Federal Transient Camps were closed, California was left to deal with the migrants who were no longer being cared for by the federal government. California, on average, was host to 1/7 of America's homeless population by the middle of the depression!<sup>[94]</sup>

In order to garner support for the Los Angeles Police Department's activities at the state borders and in the city, LAPD Chief Davis used the *Los Angeles Times* as his main source of communication to the citizens of Los Angeles about the Bum Blockade.<sup>[95]</sup> Support for the blockade was drummed up by reports of success in lowering crime, increasing employment among residents, and decreasing state relief aid to migrants. *Times* reports characterized the migrants as disease-carrying ne'er-do-wells, criminal Bolshevik bums, "won't workers," "two-legged locusts," and unpatriotic undesirables.<sup>[96]</sup> The most common statistic cited by the press during the Bum Blockade was the relation of the number of transients to the crime rate. Davis reported a 25 percent drop in crime in Los Angeles after ten days of the Blockade.<sup>[97]</sup> The LAPD's fingerprinting campaign "disclosed that 75 percent of those checked had been previously arrested in other jurisdictions and many were ex-convicts having served terms in other States."<sup>[98]</sup> Juvenile delinquency also increased in the Los Angeles area as a result of the influx of migrants, and it was claimed that "59.2 percent of the juvenile delinquency problem [originated] among children coming from other States and largely transients."<sup>[99]</sup> Early fingerprinting operations also revealed that of 1116 transients arrested for vagrancy and begging, 246 had previous felony arrests and 224 had previous misdemeanor arrests.<sup>[100]</sup>

The issue of State relief played a strong role in stimulating support for the Bum Blockade. Davis stated that "financial loss to Southern California from this class of immigration is conservatively estimated at \$1,500,000," and the expense was reported as almost four times as much to the State.<sup>[101]</sup> Davis also reiterated that "to obtain government work one must have been a resident in the State for at least a year and it can readily be seen that the hordes of indigents are not coming to California for work. They are coming with the idea of getting on relief rolls, begging, or stealing."<sup>[102]</sup> Davis also pointed out "the fact that one-seventh of all transients of the nation are on relief in California," meant that California was doing more than its share in taking care of nonresidents.<sup>[103]</sup> Citing the successes of the blockade in the mill and lumber companies of Lassen and Plumas counties, Sergeant Starkey, an LAPD Border Patrol Officer, declared that the "halting of transients at the border [...] [allowed] the bulk of those persons now unemployed in Lassen and Plumas counties to obtain work without competition from outsiders."<sup>[104]</sup> The Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce reported the monthly amount of aid as between 4 and 6 million dollars before the introduction of the Bum Blockade.<sup>[105]</sup> A month after the start of the LAPD program, the Veteran's Bureau announced the numbers of nonresidents filing for aid had dropped significantly.<sup>[106]</sup> The benefits of the Bum Blockade were noticed by more organizations than just the Los Angeles police. Other Southern California law enforcement agencies similarly reported that local relief agencies had been more successful in giving relief to California residents once the blockade began.<sup>[107]</sup>

Davis emphasized the financial burden of the migrants in order to draw up official and legal support for his blockade. Councilmen who voted on the resolution to keep the migrants out of California generally agreed with Chief Davis' concerns about undesirables getting on relief roles while California citizens were financially hard-pressed and still could not receive state or federal relief. Due to the regulations of relief, Californians who owned any equity were not eligible to receive state aid.<sup>[108]</sup> Councilman Tate stated, "it doesn't help [Californians'] hunger to go home and look at furniture after they have been denied aid," and while these residents deserved aid but could not get it, "floaters and 'box car tourists' [...] can get on the dole in a minute."<sup>[109]</sup>

Support for the Bum Blockade came from both political figures and legal precedent. Los Angeles Mayor Frank L. Shaw reiterated his approval for the Bum Blockade the day before it was to begin across the State.<sup>[110]</sup> Shaw attacked other States for "not [permitting] transients to leave the trains, preferring for their own safety that the problem should be dumped in Los Angeles."<sup>[111]</sup> He also criticized the opposition to the Bum Blockade by saying that people who did not support it "[were] content to see Los Angeles filled with a homeless, indigent array of thousands of unemployed recruits from every State in the Union, and threatening every security and hope of our own working people."<sup>[112]</sup> Among states that did not initially support the border blockade were Arizona and Nevada, which after letting the migrants travel through their land to California, "[protested] against having them tossed back at them."<sup>[113]</sup> When Oregon officials in Grant's Pass and Roseburg complained that the Bum Blockade was a disgrace "unparalleled in the history of our country," Los Angeles officials replied "Oregon taxpayers do not have to support the army of indigents that treks into California each year to live on the generosity of California taxpayers."<sup>[114]</sup>

The Los Angeles City Attorney "advised the City Council that [the] operation of the Border [Patrol] [was] legal,"<sup>[115]</sup> and Justice James Moore Wayne's opinions in the United States Supreme Court case of *Norris v. City of Boston* and *Smith v. Turner* helped the LAPD's argument for the legality of the border patrol. "Paupers, vagabonds and fugitives" were declared to have no rights of national association, and "the States may meet such persons upon their arrival in port and may put them under proper restraints. They may prevent them from entering their territories, [and] may carry them out or drive them off."<sup>[116]</sup> The imagined community of Los Angeles was thereby capable of being protected through legal statutes. The precedent set here exemplifies the negative image of the Okie, as well as the necessity of preventing these migrants from contaminating California. The language used by civic employees and newspapermen furthered the imagined community by linking Los Angeles residents in their prejudiced attitude toward the Dust Bowl migrants.

Most outcries against the Bum Blockade arose from concerns about civil liberties and the rights of American citizens. The American Civil Liberties Union criticized the LAPD's actions at the border. The Los Angeles ACLU director Ernest Besig demanded Federal criminal action against Los Angeles, claiming that policies that block interstate migration were unconstitutional in regard to the provision for equality of citizenship.<sup>[117]</sup> He said the blockade was "conspiring to take away the civil rights of United States citizens," and that the Bum Blockade policies were a "violation of the city charter and the state and federal constitutions."<sup>[118]</sup> The ACLU started a legal battle against the actions of the Los Angeles Police Department, but the LAPD "managed to thwart [this] legal challenge, [...] allegedly by intimidating the test-case plaintiff to drop the case."<sup>[119]</sup> A lawsuit filed by California resident John Langon, which was initiated after he was prevented from re-entering California after visiting Arizona, was similarly dropped due to intimidation by the LAPD.<sup>[120]</sup> The tactics employed by the LAPD to continue its border patrol and to quiet legal opposition were helped by California Governor Merriam's opinion on the blockade's legality. Governor Merriam said of the Los Angeles Police Officers patrolling the border that the blockade "is up to them, if they can get away with it."<sup>[121]</sup> The suppression of dissent through intimidation, as well as the *Los Angeles Times*' massive pro-blockade propaganda, helped to quiet criticism of the border patrol.

Print criticism of the Bum Blockade did not come from the *Times*, but other print media like *The Nation*, *The Los Angeles Herald-Express*, and smaller community newspapers, voiced opposition to the actions of the Los Angeles Police Department. In a letter to the editor of *The Nation*, Rose Marie Packard criticized the Los Angeles Border Patrol as "a stab to [...] civil liberties."<sup>[122]</sup> In her letter, Packard detailed her travels to the border cities in Arizona during the Bum Blockade and related her disappointment at the LAPD's actions. She described how a police officer stopped an Oklahoma family who had only ten dollars, and they were "turned back [...] facing two hundred miles of desert highway before reaching a town of any size where they could expect to get aid."<sup>[123]</sup> Mr. and Mrs. Packard had spoken to migrants at the California-Arizona border who claimed that "several persons who, trying to pass the border, had been beaten and badly abused."<sup>[124]</sup> In rebuttal to the claims of the *Times* and other supporters of the Bum Blockade, Packard explained that the "policemen at the border are drawing pay for full time but are given ten days out of the month to go home in police cars to see their families [which] shows what a great cost it is to the taxpayer."<sup>[125]</sup>

The *Los Angeles Evening News* criticized the border patrol, saying that the Bum Blockade "violates every principle that Americans hold dear. On the face of it, it is un-American to question the right of any citizen to go where he pleases."<sup>[126]</sup> The article continued, "the urge to travel back and forth between the cold Eastern States and the sunny warmth of Southern California is not peculiar to those who are still rich."<sup>[127]</sup> Lincoln Steffens, a muckraker famous in an earlier era, wrote in his Carmel based paper, *Pacific Weekly*, that the Bum Blockade "is the clearest Nazi and lawless act yet perpetrated by law officials in California."<sup>[128]</sup> Similarly, Los Angeles City Councilman Parley Parker Christensen called Davis the "Los Angeles edition of Mussolini."<sup>[129]</sup>

Border states voiced much opposition to the bum blockade, mostly because the migrants would be left in their territories. Governor Kirman of Nevada asked Governor Merriam of California to stop throwing the transients back into Nevada.<sup>[130]</sup> Arizona Attorney General Sullivan similarly feared that the bum blockade would result in the transients making Arizona their new place of residence, so he questioned the legality of the border patrol.<sup>[131]</sup> Animositities between Arizona and California were at their height during the Bum Blockade. Governor Merriam of California even claimed "there are stations in Arizona where chambers of commerce furnish gasoline to itinerants to help them along to California."<sup>[132]</sup> Arizona, which had been "gently shooin' and aiding indigents westward into California for years, "rose in wrath [...] and threatened to call out the State's National Guard troops because Los Angeles, with its police blockade, [had] started the tide of jobless roamers back toward the East."<sup>[133]</sup> Oregon's southern cities also criticized the Bum Blockade in letters to the Los Angeles City Council, saying that the Bum Blockade was "unparalleled in the history of our country," and that the policy of the Los Angeles Police Department "holds us up to the scorn of foreign nations."<sup>[134]</sup>

After a few weeks of the blockade, however, the border states changed their opinions regarding the Los Angeles border patrol. In a letter to Chief Davis, Yuma, Arizona Chief of Police Isaac Polhamus wrote that contrary to Arizona's expectations, the crime rates decreased in their border counties, and the transients continued eastward out of Arizona.<sup>[135]</sup> Bailie, the head of the Automotive Club in Arizona, agreed that the majority of itinerants left Arizona as a result of the border patrol. He confessed that "at first it was believed here that cities and towns in this State



would suffer because of [the Bum Blockade]," but eventually commended Chief Davis on his plan for keeping undesirables out.<sup>[136]</sup>

Many Southern California social and political groups protested the action of Chief Davis and the Bum Blockade by passing resolutions demanding that the city council declare the border patrol unconstitutional. Groups such as the Modern Pioneers of America and the Epic Democratic Club stated that it was "evident that this act was instigated by the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce for its own selfish interest at the expense of human misery."<sup>[137]</sup> The Modern Pioneers of America, a social group in Southern California, vigorously protested the campaign of Chief Davis to prevent the penniless from entering the state. In a resolution passed by the club, which was sent to the City Council, the Modern Pioneers argued that "James E. Davis [...] has taken an oath to uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States," but that the Bum Blockade was "an open violation of Article XIV Section I of the United States Constitution."<sup>[138]</sup> The group urged the Mayor and the City Council to "stop this outrage and exert all influence within their power to have the vagrancy law declared unconstitutional."<sup>[139]</sup> The Modern Pioneers of America were met with the dismal reply that "neither the Police Commission nor the Police Department have right to repeal any law of the State, and further, that the Attorney reports that the operation of the Border Patrol is legal."<sup>[140]</sup>

Political groups in the Los Angeles area also protested the Bum Blockade in letters to the City Council. The Cheremoya Epic Democratic Club, a Los Angeles based political group, urged the City Council to "make every effort to halt this high-handed infringement on the constitutional rights of American citizens."<sup>[141]</sup> Similarly, the Liberal Democratic Club in Los Angeles condemned "the action taken by Chief Davis at such measures," which attempted "to stifle freedom, and nullify the Bill of Rights of the Constitution of the United States of America."<sup>[142]</sup> This club also reiterated the fact that the State Senate had previously voted down the anti-Okie law which was designed to bar dependent migrants from the state, and urged that "the police [come] back to this city where they belong, and if possible, protect our women from continual attacks by degenerates, thereby performing a greater civic duty."<sup>[143]</sup>

In a very long and sardonic express telegram from R.R. Colby, a Los Angeles based lawyer, the actions of Chief Davis and Los Angeles were scornfully protested. Colby threatened the City of Los Angeles that he and several hundred others, including the Chicago Cubs, were aboard a train and ready to test their luck in passing the state border.<sup>[144]</sup> Colby's sarcastic and entertaining telegram asks Chief Davis and the City Council exactly who among the group would be allowed into California: "I think W. C. Durant, the former founder and president of General Motors Corporation, is not on this train. (You know he just had the misfortune to become bankrupt.) If he is among us, will you let him in? [...] Will you let in John Doe who has also just become bankrupt but who was never president of General Motors?"<sup>[145]</sup> R.R. Colby also takes a stab at the fingerprinting campaign of the LAPD, and solicited that "some one, or more, may have had legal trouble, or at least been accused of something and been fingerprinted, or may even have been convicted and paid his debt to the State or been pardoned by the President or by a Governor," and asked if they would be let in.<sup>[146]</sup> More seriously, Colby asked what section of the State or Federal Constitution gave Chief Davis "the right to be Judge, Jury and Dictator [...] for the whole county, and all of the counties bordering upon other states."<sup>[147]</sup> Colby inquired as to what gave Chief Davis "authority to not only stop immigration, but also to arrest, imprison,

and kidnap people and transport them forcibly and against their wills over the lines into other states."<sup>[148]</sup> R.R. Colby's telegram is one of the more vicious attacks on the actions of the LAPD. However, the response to his inquiries was probably less than fulfilling: the Board of Police Commissioners "[suggested] that Mr. Colby be advised of the actions of the Police Department which have been merely an attempt to stem the influx of the migratory criminal type into the State of California, and that persons of the position of Mr. Colby would suffer no inconveniences in entering this state."<sup>[149]</sup>

Criticism against the bum blockade also came from some famous migrants. The "Woody and Leftie Lou" radio show on station KVFD featured songs of protest prompted by the Los Angeles Police Department's actions at the state border. Sparked by thousands of letters from fans of their daily fifteen minute broadcast, Woody Guthrie and Maxine Crissman sang,

Thousands of folks back east they say, Leavin' home every day,  
 Beatin' a hot and dusty way, To the California line.  
 O'er the desert sands they roll, Tryin' to get out of the old dust bowl.  
 They think they're a-comin' to a sugar bowl, But here's what they find:  
 The police at the port of entry say: "You're number 14,000 for today!" Oh!  
 If you ain't got the do-re-mi, folks, If you ain't got the do-re-mi,  
 Better hang on in beautiful Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, Georgia, Tennessee.<sup>[150]</sup>

Another popular folksong among Dust Bowlers went,

I'd rather drink muddy water  
 Sleep out in a hollow log  
 Than be in California  
 Treated like a dirty dog.<sup>[151]</sup>

Guthrie also stated in his memoir, *Bound for Glory*, that "Los Angeles is too big for me. [...] I'm against the law they tell me."<sup>[152]</sup> Although the word was out that California was not a welcoming place, migrants still came.

Despite criticism and legal suits, the Bum Blockade continued until April of 1936.<sup>[153]</sup> But the Blockade did not fail because of the criticisms or as a result of lawsuits. Chief Davis had to stop the Blockade because of its costs, something he had been warned about by Florida officials who had attempted a similar blockade a few months earlier.<sup>[154]</sup> Reporting on the result of action at the border, the annual report for 1935-1936 claimed that "many migratory criminals [were] kept out of the state."<sup>[155]</sup> In an exhibit of the technical arrests made by the Los Angeles Police Department on April 17, 1936, it is shown that 1249 individuals were arrested, mostly for vagrancy and railroad fare evasion, at the entry points to the State.<sup>[156]</sup> Most of the arrests made were in the Southern Area, consisting of Imperial, Riverside, and San Bernardino Counties.<sup>[157]</sup> Most of those with previous records attempted entry to the state in the Central Area, consisting of Inyo, Mono, Nevada, and Plumas Counties, however these counties experienced the least amount of arrests compared to the Southern and Northern Areas.<sup>[158]</sup> The Exhibit also shows that forty eight per cent of individuals fingerprinted had previous records.<sup>[159]</sup>

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Another noted result of the Bum Blockade was the "nation wide publicity [that] was secured as a result of the department's action which served as a deterrent to the migration of criminal and indigents."<sup>[160]</sup> Also were the estimated millions of dollars saved to California taxpayers "in the prevention of the immigration of thousands of indigents."<sup>[161]</sup> Despite saving millions of dollars in potential relief aid to nonresidents, the Blockade cost an exorbitant amount to implement and enforce.

Noticing the large cost to the city and county of Los Angeles, the Police Department's Annual Report recommended many ideas for the State to prevent the influx of migrants. It was recommended that the State of California take action by using the Department of Motor Vehicles, the Board of Equalization, the Agricultural Department, the Health Department, the State Relief Administration, and by cooperating with authorities of other States. The Department of Motor Vehicles was urged to use "check stations at points of ingress on highways," to prevent undesirables from entering the state. The Board of Equalization was encouraged to check caravans for indigents while collecting taxes from cars entering the state. The Agricultural Department was told to use Plant Quarantine stations to check people as well as agricultural coming into the state. While the city and county of Los Angeles could no longer afford the border patrol, the LAPD and Angelenos still desired to keep undesirables from the state and made the aforementioned suggestions as an attempt to maintain the imagined community. However, more than finances prevented the bum blockade from recurring on a state government level.

The legal issues that were brought to light during the early months of 1936 and California's continued exclusion of undesirable migrants throughout the 1930s did result in a Supreme Court case, *Edwards v. California* (1941), in which it was declared that the "anti-Okie" law which made it a misdemeanor to bring any indigent nonresidents to the State was unconstitutional based on the Commerce Clause. The use of the Fourteenth Amendment as reason to deem the anti-migrant laws of California unconstitutional makes ties between race and class as motivators for States to deny rights to particular individuals. The Fourteenth Amendment was made to ensure the equal citizenship rights of those born in the United States, regardless of race. However, in Los Angeles during the Great Depression, class was racialized in order to ban undesirables from California's borders. The possession of material wealth became reason to grant or deny access to the State, which had in previous generations only sought wealthy travelers to boost industry and enterprise. The denial of rights of national citizenship based on economic status can be tied to the denial of rights to those who are of different creed or race in earlier parts of American History.

The Bum Blockade revealed the desire of Los Angeles authorities to preserve the image of Southern California as a place for affluent people, both for settlement and tourism. A fear based on class, but given a strange twist by the state's racist history, allowed the Blockade to surface at least for a short while as one of Los Angeles' responses to the Great Depression. Angelenos' desire to remain demographically homogenous led to a racialization of class and resulted in a campaign against those deemed culturally and economically deficient. The idea that those encroaching westward on Los Angeles were unfit for California, based on economic disparities, suggests that while the frontier was no longer a defining characteristic in American life, Turner's conflict between the savage and the civilized remained.

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[1] Frederick Jackson Turner. *The Significance of the Frontier in American History*, in J.M. Faragher, ed., *Rereading Frederick Jackson Turner*, (New York: Henry Holt, 1994), 31.

[2] Frederick Jackson Turner. *Frontier and Section*, ed. R.A. Billington, (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1961), 38.

[3] David B. Knight "Identity and Territory": 523.

[4] James E. Davis served as Chief of Police from 1926-1930, and was demoted to Traffic Officer after his corruption as chief was found out. The story of Chief Davis's first demotion was popularized by the recent Clint Eastwood film *The Changeling*. Davis returned to position of Chief of Police in 1933 when a new administration was elected in Los Angeles. Initiated by a united front of communist groups in Los Angeles, the recall of Mayor Shaw, Governor Merriam, and Chief of Police Davis began in 1938 (see Leader, *Los Angeles in the Great Depression*, p. 225 for more on the socialist movement in Los Angeles in 1938). Chief Davis, fearing loss of his pension if he were to be recalled, retired from post as Chief of Police and applied for retirement pension on November 17, 1938 (See *Los Angeles Times*, November 17, 1938, for Davis's resignation letter).

[5] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, (New York, NY: Verso Books, 1991), 6.

[6] Ibid, 7.

[7] Ibid, 26.

[8] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 134

[9] Ibid, 5. On his definition of nationalism, Anderson says "one tends unconsciously to hypostasize the existence of Nationalism-with-a-big-N [...] and then to classify 'it' as *an* ideology. [...] It would, I think, make things easier if one treated it as if it belonged with 'kinship' and 'religion', rather than with 'liberalism' or fascism."

[10] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 84.

[11] Ibid, 25.

[12] Kevin Starr, *Inventing the Dream*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1986), 62.

[13] Ibid, 365.

[14] Ibid, 370.

[15] Ibid, 417.

[16] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 44.

[17] Kevin Starr, *Inventing the Dream*, 45.

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[18] Kevin Starr, *Inventing the Dream*, 45.

[19] Ibid, 46.

[20] Ibid, 54.

[21] Frederick Jackson Turner, *Sections in American History* (New York, NY: Henry Hold and Company, Inc, 1932, reprinted 1950) 183. Emphasis added.

[22] Ibid, 183.

[23] David B. Knight "Identity and Territory: Geographical Perspectives on Nationalism and Regionalism" *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, Vol. 72, No. 4 (Dec., 1982): 518.

[24] David B. Knight "Identity and Territory": 516.

[25] Frederick Jackson Turner, *Sections in American History* (New York, NY: Henry Hold and Company, Inc, 1932, reprinted 1950), 25.

[26] Frederick Jackson Turner, *Sections in American History*, 45.

[27] Ibid, 46.

[28] Ibid, 46.

[29] James N. Gregory, *American Exodus: The Dust Bowl Migration and Okie Culture in California*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1989), 100.

[30] John Steinbeck, *The Grapes of Wrath* (1936), Chapter 18.

[31] Peter Lachapelle, *Proud to be an Okie: Cultural Politics, Country Music, and Migration to Southern California*, (Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 2007), 35.

[32] Studs Terkel, *Hard Times: An Oral History of the Great Depression*, (New York, NY: Pantheon Books, 1986), 243.

[33] David B. Knight "Identity and Territory": 521.

[34] H. Mark Wild, "If You Ain't Got That Do-Re-Mi": 317.

[35] Elmer Clarence Sandmeyer and Roger Daniels, *The Anti-Chinese Movement in California*, (Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1991), 25.

[36] Elmer Clarence Sandmeyer and Roger Daniels, *The Anti-Chinese Movement in California*, 25.

[37] *Fresno Republican*, April 28, 1900, as cited in Roger Daniels, *The Politics of Prejudice: The Anti-Japanese Movement in California and the Struggle for Exclusion*, (Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 1977), 24.



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[38] Roger Daniels, *The Politics of Prejudice: The Anti-Japanese Movement in California and the Struggle for Exclusion*, (Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 1977), 20.

[39] Camille Guerin-Gonzales, *Mexican Workers and the American Dreams: Immigration, Repatriation, and California Farm Labor, 1900-1939*, (Library of Congress: 1994), 77.

[40] Camille Guerin-Gonzales, *Mexican Workers and the American Dreams*, 85.

[41] H. Mark Wild, "If You Ain't Got That Do-Re-Mi": 318.

[42] David B. Knight, "Identity and Territory": 524. Emphasis added.

[43] Michael C. Steiner, "Regionalism in the Great Depression," *The Geographical Review*, Vol. 73, No. 4 (Oct., 1983): 431.

[44] Clark Davis, "From Oasis to Metropolis: Southern California and the Changing Context of American Leisure," *Pacific Historical Review* (1992): 362. For more on the All Year Club's tactics, see C G Milham, *All-Year Club of Southern California Southern California, Year 'round Vacation Land Supreme*, (Los Angeles: The Club, 1925).

[45] *Ibid*, 360.

[46] Clark Davis, "From Oasis to Metropolis": 369.

[47] *Ibid*, 369.

[48] *Los Angeles Citizen*, December 13, 1929, as cited in Leonard J. Leader, *Los Angeles and the Great Depression*, (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 1972), 197.

[49] Clark Davis, "From Oasis to Metropolis": 369.

[50] *Ibid*, 369.

[51] H. Mark Wild, "If You Ain't Got That Do-Re-Mi": 320.

[52] Joe Domanick. *To Protect and To Serve: The LAPD's Century of War in the City of Dreams*. (Figueroa Press, 2003).

[53] *Los Angeles Times*. May 17, 1935.

[54] *Los Angeles Times*. May 18, 1935.

[55] *Los Angeles Times*. May 17, 1935.

[56] *Los Angeles Times*. May 17, 1935

[57] *Los Angeles Times*. May 18, 1935.

[58] *Los Angeles Times*. May 18, 1935. For more on the Jones-Redwine Bill see also "Interstate Migration: Hearings Before the Select Committee to Investigate the Interstate Migration of Destitute Citizens, House of Representatives,

Seventy-sixth Congress, Third Session, Pursuant to H. Res. 63 and H. Res. 491, Resolutions to Inquire Into the Interstate Migration of Destitute ..." By John H Tolan, United States. Congress. House. Select Committee to Investigate the Interstate Migration of Destitute Citizens, United States, Congress, House. Published by United States Govt. print. off., 1940, p. 2961.

[59] *Los Angeles Times*. May 18, 1935.

[60] *Los Angeles Times*. May 18, 1935.

[61] *Los Angeles Times*. May 18, 1935.

[62] Section 2615 St. 1937, p. 1406 of the Welfare and Institutions Code of California, the law read: "Every person, firm or corporation, or officer or agent thereof that brings or assists in bringing into the State any indigent person who is not a resident of the State, knowing him to be an indigent person, is guilty of a misdemeanor." For debate between Assemblymen on the Jones-Redwine Bill see *Los Angeles Times*. May 30, 1935. California's Anti-Okie Law was deemed unconstitutional in *Edwards v. People of the State of California*, 314 U.S. 160 (1941). For more cases and statutes regarding interstate migration and transient laws, see also *Corfield v. Coryell*, Fed.Cas.No.3,230, 4 Wash. C.C. 371, 381; *Paul v. Virginia*, 8 Wall, 168, 180; *Ward v. Maryland*, 12 Wall. 418, 430; *United States v. Wheeler*, supra, 254 U.S. pages 298, 299, 41 S.Ct. pages 135, 136, *Baldwin v. Seelig*, 294 U.S. 511, 523, 55 S.Ct. 497, 500, 101 A.L.R. 55, Cal.Stat. 1860, p. 213; Cal.Stat. 1901, p. 636; Cal.Stat.1933, p. 2005.

[63] See correspondence of Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce and Police and Fire Committee of the City Council, Los Angeles City Records Center, Box A615, Council File 4118 (1935). See *Los Angeles Times*. March 15, 1936. The *Los Angeles Times* article suggests that a key incentive for migrants to choose to leave the state was because of a rumor that the LAPD provided a sandwich for lunch on the train ride out of the state.

[64] *Los Angeles Times*. February 4, 1936.

[65] Minutes of Board of Police Commissioners, City of Los Angeles, Special Meeting, Friday, January 3, 1936.

[66] Letter to City Council from Chamber of Commerce, December 6, 1935, Los Angeles City Records Center, Box A615, Council File 4118 (1935).

[67] Letter to City Council from Chamber of Commerce, December 6, 1935, Los Angeles City Records Center, Box A615, Council File 4118 (1935).

[68] *Los Angeles Times*. February 9, 1936.

[69] Letter to City Council from Chamber of Commerce, December 6, 1935, Los Angeles City Records Center, Box A615, Council File 4118 (1935).

[70] Correspondence of Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce and Police and Fire Committee of the City Council, Los Angeles City Records Center, Box A615, Council File 4118 (1935).

[71] Correspondence of Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce and Police and Fire Committee of the City Council, Los Angeles City Records Center, Box A615, Council File 4118 (1935).

[72] H. Mark Wild, "If You Ain't Got That Do-Re-Mi": 319.

[73] Ibid. 319.

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[74] P.C. Sec. 587c, found in Los Angeles City Records Center, LAPD Annual Report 1935-1936, Los Angeles City Records Center, 48.

[75] *Los Angeles Times*. February 6, 1936.

[76] LAPD Annual Report, 1935-1936, 40.

[77] P.C. Sec. 647, Par. 3 found in Los Angeles City Records Center, LAPD Annual Report 1935-1936, 48.

[78] The Statute 1901, page 636, section 3, found in Los Angeles City Records Center, LAPD Annual Report, 48. Also see *Edwards v. People of the State of California*, 314 U.S. 160 (1941) on the unconstitutionality of this law. For more on California's history of banning indigents from its borders, see the following penal codes: Cal.Stat. 1860, p. 213; Cal.Stat. 1901, p. 636; Cal.Stat.1933, 2005.

[79] The only Los Angeles Police Department Annual Report made during James E. Davis's term as Chief that mentions the "indigent alien transients" is for the year 1935-1936.

[80] LAPD Annual Report, 1935-1936, 40-46. The findings of this study showed that a check of the "vagrants" already in Los Angeles revealed that nearly half of them had criminal records and a preliminary check at Colton and Victorville from December 20, 1935, 8a.m. to December 22, 1935, 8 p.m. showed that over 500 individuals, termed "indigent alien transients," entered on trains. With hundreds of nonresidents entering the state on rails in just sixty hours, the cause for alarm intensified

[81] Exhibit IV, "Seasonal Trend of Specified Crimes of Burglary-Robbery-Auto Theft and Total of All Crimes Committed in the City of Los Angeles from July 1933 to January 1936 Incl." Los Angeles Police Department Annual Report, 1935-1936, 44.

[82] *Los Angeles Times*. February 4, 1936.

[83] Exhibit IV-A, "Seasonal Trend of Specified Crimes Committed in Los Angeles, July 1933 to February 1936, Inc." Los Angeles Police Department Annual Report, 1935-1936, 45.

[84] The title of the Exhibit in its entirety is "Persons Arrested by Los Angeles Police Department Who Were Sentenced to State Prison Also Showing the Number in Los Angeles County Less than One Year, Fiscal Year 1930-31 to 1934-35, Inc."

[85] Exhibit V, "Persons Arrested by Los Angeles Police Department Who Were Sentenced to State Prison Also Showing the Number in Los Angeles County Less than One Year," Los Angeles Police Department Annual Report, 1935-1936, 46.

[86] Exhibit III, "Vagrancy Arrest Bookings with Previous Records, January 8, 1936 - February 2, 1936." Los Angeles Police Department Annual Report, 1935-1936, 43.

[87] Analysis of date provided in Exhibit III, Los Angeles Police Department Annual Report, 1935-1936, 43.

[88] Exhibit II, "Survey of Transients Coming Into Los Angeles Via Various Railroads, December 20, 1935, 8 a.m.-December 22, 1935, 8 p.m." Los Angeles Police Department Annual Report, 1935-1936, 43.

[89] Exhibit XII-A, "Foreign Transient Activities, April 17, 1936," Los Angeles Police Department Annual Report, 1935-1936, 49.

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[90] Joan M. Crouse. *The Homeless Transient in the Great Depression: New York State, 1929-1941*. (SUNY Press: 1986), 153. California had 28 camps.

[91] Joan M. Crouse. *The Homeless Transient in the Great Depression*. 153.

[92] Exhibit I and I-A, "Total Individuals Under Care, As Shown in One-Day Census Reports 15<sup>th</sup> of Each Month," LAPD Annual Report, 1935-1936, 42-43.

[93] Exhibit I and I-A, "Total Individuals Under Care, As Shown in One-Day Census Reports 15<sup>th</sup> of Each Month," Los Angeles Police Department Annual Report, 1935-1936, 42-43.

[94] LAPD Annual Report, 1935-1936, 40. "306,064 in these camps; 40,530, or approximately 1/7 of this number, in California."

[95] The *Los Angeles Times* had long been a mouthpiece of government officials, which was also depicted in Clint Eastwood's film *The Changeling*.

[96] See *Los Angeles Times*. February 4, 1936; *Los Angeles Times*. February 9, 1936; *Los Angeles Times*, March 23, 1936.

[97] *Los Angeles Times*. February 16, 1936.

[98] *Los Angeles Times*. February 4, 1936.

[99] *Los Angeles Times*. March 1, 1936.

[100] *Los Angeles Times*. February 6, 1936.

[101] *Los Angeles Times*. February 5, 1936.

[102] *Los Angeles Times*. February 5, 1936. For statistics, see Exhibit V, "Persons Arrested by Los Angeles Police Department Who Were Sentenced to State Prison Also Showing the Number in Los Angeles County Less than One Year," Los Angeles City Records Center, LAPD Annual Report, 1935-1936, p.46, which shows that from the fiscal years of 1930-31 to 1934-35 of the crimes robbery, theft, and burglary, about one third of the crimes were committed by nonresidents who had been in Los Angeles County for less than one year. Comparing the data from Exhibit V to that of Exhibit V-A, showing the number of crimes in relation to the number of criminals who had been in the State of California for less than one year, reveals that most of those who had been in Los Angeles less than one year also had been in the State less than one year.

[103] *Los Angeles Times*. March 3, 1936.

[104] *Los Angeles Times*. March 10, 1936.

[105] *Los Angeles Times*. February 9, 1936

[106] *Los Angeles Times*. March 15, 1936.

[107] *Los Angeles Times*. February 16, 1936.

[108] *Los Angeles Times*. February 5, 1936.

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[109] *Los Angeles Times*. February 5, 1936.

[110] Frank L. Shaw's term as Los Angeles Mayor is seen as the most corrupt in California History, and Shaw was in fact the first mayor of Los Angeles to be recalled. For more on Shaw, see Thomas Joseph Sitton, "Urban Politics and Reform in New Deal Los Angeles: The Recall Of Mayor Frank L. Shaw (California)". Ph.D. diss., University of California, Riverside, 1983. In Dissertations & Theses: Full Text [database on-line]; available from <http://www.proquest.com.libproxy.chapman.edu:2048/>.

[111] *Los Angeles Times*. February 6, 1936.

[112] *Los Angeles Times*. February 6, 1936.

[113] *Los Angeles Times*. February 16, 1936.

[114] *Los Angeles Times*. February 27, 1936

[115] See Letter from City Clerk on behalf of Board of Police Commission to Geo. R. Funk, March 26, 1936, Los Angeles City Records Center, Box A620, Council File No. 894 (1936); Letter from City Clerk to Modern Pioneers of America, March 8, 1936, Los Angeles City Records Center, Box A620, Council File No. 627 (1936); Letter from City Clerk to 53<sup>rd</sup> Assembly District Council of Democratic Clubs, Los Angeles City Records Center, Box A620, City Council File No. 824 (1936); Minutes of Board of Police Commissioners, City of Los Angeles, Regular Meeting, Tuesday, February 25, 1936, Tuesday, March 3, 1936, Tuesday, March 10, 1936.

[115] Letter from Modern Pioneers of America to Los Angeles City Council, February 6, 1936, Los Angeles City Records Center, Box A620, Council File No. 627 (1936). The same petition was sent on behalf of the Epic Democratic Club 44 -10, February 25, 1936, Los Angeles City Records Center, Box A620, Council File No. 756 (1936).

[116] *Los Angeles Times*. February 14, 1936.

[117] *Los Angeles Times*. February 7, 1936.

[118] *Los Angeles Times*, February 14, 1936. For similar arguments regarding the constitutionality of the Border Patrol, see Letter from City Clerk to Modern Pioneers of America, March 8, 1936, Los Angeles City Records Center, Box A620, City Council File No 627 (1936); Resolution of Portland Oregon, written by Geo. R. Funk, Auditor for City of Portland, sent to Board of Supervisors, Los Angeles, February 29, 1936, Los Angeles City Records Center, Box A620, Council File No. 894 (1936); Resolution by the Liberal Democratic Club 63-11 sent to the Los Angeles City Council, February 10, 1936, Los Angeles City Records Center, Box A620, Council File 628 (1936); Letter from R.R. Colby to City of Los Angeles, February 19, 1936, Los Angeles City Records Center, Box A620, Council File 683 (1936); Resolution sent by C. R. Duer on behalf of the City Council of Grants Pass to the Los Angeles Board of Supervisors, February 20, 1936, Los Angeles City Records Center, Box A620, Council File 802 (1936); Resolution of 53<sup>rd</sup> Assembly District Council to Los Angeles City Council, March 2, 1936, Los Angeles City Records Center, Box A620, Council File 824 (1936).

[119] *Los Angeles Illustrated Daily News*, February 5, 1936, 3. See also *New York Times*, February 9, 1936, Pt. IV: 11, as cited in H. Mark Wild, "If You Ain't Got That Do-Re-Mi": 329.

[120] Leonard Leader, *Los Angeles and the Great Depression*, 214.

[121] *Los Angeles Times*, February 7, 1936.

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[122] *The Nation*, "The Los Angeles Border Patrol," Volume 142, No. 10, March 4, 1936, 295.

[123] *Ibid*, 295

[124] *Ibid*, 295. Packard mentions that the sources on police brutality at the border were not verified.

[125] *The Nation*, "The Los Angeles Border Patrol," 295.

[126] *Literary Digest*, Volume 121, No. 7, February 15, 1936, 9.

[127] *Ibid*, 9.

[128] *Literary Digest*, Volume 121, No. 7, February 15, 1936, 9.

[129] *Los Angeles Times*. February 14, 1936. See also, commending Councilman Christensen's efforts, Letter to Los Angeles City Council from Cheremoya Epic-Democratic Club, February 6, 1936, Los Angeles City Records Center, Box A620, Council File 628 (1936). Other criticism of Chief Davis as a fascist came from Wendell L. Miller, Minister, Florence Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church, in a letter to Board of Police Commissioners, February 18, 1936, Los Angeles City Records Center, Box 620, Council File No. 626 (1936). Davis was referenced as a dictator, and consistently compared to Hitler and Bolsheviks, comparing Hitler's treatment of the Jewish population in Germany to Davis's treatment of migrants in California, in Letter from R.R. Colby, Los Angeles Lawyer, to City of Los Angeles, February 19, 1936, Los Angeles City Records Center, Box A620, Council File 683 (1936).

[130] *Los Angeles Times*. February 7, 1936.

[131] *Los Angeles Times*. February 7, 1936.

[132] *Los Angeles Herald-Express*, February 6, 1936.

[133] *Los Angeles Herald-Express*, February 12, 1936.

[134] Resolution of Portland Oregon, written by Geo. R. Funk, Auditor for City of Portland, sent to Board of Supervisors, Los Angeles, February 29, 1936, Los Angeles City Records Center, Box A620, Council File No. 894 (1936). Also referenced in *Los Angeles Times*, February 27, 1936. The same resolution was passed by the cities of Roesburg and Grants Pass, Oregon, the Chamber of Commerce of Roseburg, and the Branch MacNamara, International Labor Defense of Long Beach. See Minutes of Board of Police Commissioners, City of Los Angeles, Regular Meeting, Tuesday, March 10, 1936; Letter from H.F. Kane, Educational Director at Branch MacNamara International Labor Defense of Long Beach, to Board of Supervisors of Los Angeles, February 25, 1936, Los Angeles City Records Center, Box A620, Council File 802 (1936); Resolution sent by C. R. Duer on behalf of the City Council of Grants Pass to the Los Angeles Board of Supervisors, February 20, 1936, Los Angeles City Records Center, Box A620, Council File 802 (1936). Protests from individuals, groups, and municipal governments received the same reply from the City Clerk on behalf of the Board of Police Commissioners, "Under date of February 13, 1936, the City Attorney of this city rendered an opinion to the effect that the actions of the so-called border patrol are legal," see Letter from City Clerk on behalf of Board of Police Commission to Geo. R. Funk, March 26, 1936, Los Angeles City Records Center, Box A620, Council File No. 894 (1936); Letter from City Clerk to Modern Pioneers of America, March 8, 1936, Los Angeles City Records Center, Box A620, Council File No 627 (1936); Letter from City Clerk to 53<sup>rd</sup> Assembly District Council of Democratic Clubs, Los Angeles City Records Center, Box A620, Council File No. 824 (1936).

[135] *Los Angeles Times*. March 3, 1936.

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[136] *Los Angeles Times*. February 27, 1936.

[137] Letter from Modern Pioneers of America to Los Angeles City Council, February 6, 1936, Los Angeles City Records Center, Box A620, Council File No. 627 (1936). The same petition was sent on behalf of the Epic Democratic Club 44 -10, February 25, 1936, Los Angeles City Records Center, Box A620, Council File No. 756.

[138] Letter from Modern Pioneers of America to Los Angeles City Council, February 6, 1936, Los Angeles City Records Center, Box A620, Council File No. 627 (1936). The same petition was sent on behalf of the Epic Democratic Club 44 -10.

[139] Letter from Modern Pioneers of America to Los Angeles City Council, February 6, 1936, Los Angeles City Records Center, Box A620, Council File No. 627 (1936).

[140] Letter from City Clerk to Modern Pioneers of America, March 8, 1936, City Council File No 627 (1936).

[141] Letter to Los Angeles City Council from Cheremoya Epic-Democratic Club, February 6, 1936, Los Angeles City Records Center, Box A620, Council File 628 (1936).

[142] Resolution by the Liberal Democratic Club 63-11 sent to the Los Angeles City Council, February, Los Angeles City Records Center, Box A620, Council File 628 (1936).

[143] Ibid.

[144] Letter from R.R. Colby to City of Los Angeles, February 19, 1936, Los Angeles City Records Center, Box A620, Council File 683 (1936).

[145] Ibid.

[146] Ibid.

[147] Letter from R.R. Colby to City of Los Angeles, February 19, 1936, Los Angeles City Records Center, Box A620, Council File 683 (1936).

[148] Ibid.

[149] Letter to R.R. Colby from City Clerk, March 6, 1936, Box A620, Council File No. 683, (1936).

[150] *Los Angeles Times*, "Woody Guthrie's Not-So-Golden State," by Ed Cray, January 25, 2004.

[151] *Los Angeles Times*. "LAPD Blocked Dust Bowl Migrants at State Borders," by Cecilia Rasmussen, March 9, 2003.

[152] Woody Guthrie, *Bound for Glory* (New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., 1968; reprint ed. 1943), 294.

[153] Los Angeles Police Department, *Transiency in Southern California*, (Los Angeles: LAPD, 1937).

[154] Leonard Leader, *Los Angeles and the Great Depression*, 217.

[155] Los Angeles Police Department Annual Report, 1935-1936, 40.

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[156] Los Angeles Police Department Annual Report, Exhibit XII, 49. Of the 1249 arrested, 575 were arrested with Evading Railroad Fare, 663 for Vagrancy, and 11 others which include arrests such as burglary, murder, auto theft, and theft of mail.

[157] Analysis of the numbers provided in Exhibit XII, "Technical Arrests Made by Los Angeles Police Department April 17, 1936," Los Angeles Police Department Annual Report, 1935-1936, 49.

[158] Analysis of the numbers provided in Exhibit XII, "Technical Arrests Made by Los Angeles Police Department April 17, 1936," Los Angeles Police Department Annual Report, 1935-1936, 49.

[159] Exhibit XII, "Technical Arrests Made by Los Angeles Police Department April 17, 1936," Los Angeles Police Department Annual Report, 1935-1936, 49. Of 1249 individuals arrested, 592 were found to have previous records.

[160] Los Angeles Police Department Annual Report, 1935-1936, 41.

[161] Ibid, 41.

