

### **Critique and Analysis: “Immigration and Migration,” in *Stay Solid! A Radical Handbook for Youth***

(Henaó-Castrillon, A., Savaehilaghi, S., Verdecchia, G., Rehman, B., No Borders, & Aguirre, C. (2013). Immigration & Migration. In M. Hern, & The Purple Thistle Centre, *Stay Solid! A Radical Handbook for Youth* (pp. 245-256). Oakland: AK Press Publishing & Distribution.)

Matt Hern and the people at the Purple Thistle Centre offer a radical approach to modern day issues in a format that high school students could engage with. This chapter focuses on issues surrounding immigration. It promotes a radical shift in our understanding of democratic citizenship as it challenges laws that limit the vote to people who are designated as citizens instead of allowing universal access. The chapter does this through the following points:

- Seeing the immigrant as more than “the other”
  - Students need to be challenged to see immigrants as something more than a foreign body but something similar, something human.
  - Especially considering we now live in such a globalized world.
  - Example: An agricultural worker from another country brings with them “stories, jokes, experience, adventures, knowledge, fears, likes, [and] dreams from their hometown” (p.248)
- Awareness of the things that divide us but also those that connect us
  - Issues like race, class, and gender often divide people but they can also serve as points of connection
- Taking on a political role
  - The article challenges youth to take on whatever political role suits them. This could be activist, progressive, revolutionary, or something more. The important thing for young people is to be fluid in their identity and to remain open to new perspectives.
- Critique of system that privileges the rich and hurts the poor
  - Almost universally do systems of immigration and democracy favor the wealthy instead of everyone else. The chapter has a comic that is particularly useful in teaching this point. In a democratic system, why are some people put above others?

One important take away that the article puts forth is the importance of compassion. This trait can allow students to see different perspectives, support their fellow human beings, and begin working towards equality.

In order for democracy to be effective, there needs to be universal suffrage that does not depend on where you were born or what forms you filled out. Using this thought, our system can work together to solve our problems instead of calling the foreigner a “problem.” Democracy also requires that there be a level of equality for everyone. If we fail to change a system that privileges the rich, then we are hardly living in a democratic system. Students can help point out these hypocrisies and figure out ways of addressing them. By engaging with the weaknesses of our current system, students can gain skills for working within democracy but also see the effects of their work.

### **Reference List**

Henao-Castrillon, A., Savaehilaghi, S., Verdecchia, G., Rehman, B., No Borders, & Aguirre, C. (2013). Immigration & Migration. In M. Hern, & The Purple Thistle Centre, *Stay Solid! A Radical Handbook for Youth* (pp. 245-256). Oakland: AK Press Publishing & Distribution.