

BRING THEM HOME

COLLEGE DISCUSSION GUIDE

One of the only ways a deported veteran can come back to the United States is in a body bag.

Hector Barajas wants them alive.

BRING THEM HOME



EXCUSE MY ACCENT PRESENTS BRING THEM HOME
IN ASSOCIATION WITH DREAM ROOTS CREATIVE & DREI ROS PRODUCTIONS A PRIME STUDIOS PRODUCTION
PRODUCED BY ROBERT "ROBYOUNG" WALKER EXECUTIVE PRODUCER ANDREI "DREI ROS" ROSCA PRODUCER ELAINE CARMODY
DIRECTED BY RIKE BOOMGAARDEN AND TAMARA JATCHVADZE MUSIC BY ROBERT "ROBYOUNG" WALKER & ANDREI "DREI ROS" ROSCA
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PREFACE

Bring Them Home begins by paying tribute to veterans' sacrifices and highlights the disparity between honor and deportation.

1. Reflect on how your discipline (e.g., history, sociology, law, or public health) addresses the concepts of sacrifice and national responsibility.

2. The filmmakers intertwine personal narratives with systemic analysis. How does storytelling contribute to advocacy, and why might it be an effective tool for change?



INTRODUCTION: THEMES AND QUESTIONS

1. Why do you think immigrants choose to join the U.S. military?
2. How does their service challenge stereotypes about immigrants, and how does deportation undermine their sacrifices?

Double Punishment

Hector Barajas describes deportation as a “double punishment.”

1. How does this concept intersect with discussions on criminal justice reform?
2. Should the U.S. government treat immigrant veterans differently than civilian immigrants? Why or why not?

Civic Duty and National Identity

1. In what ways does military service shape a person’s identity? How might deportation disrupt their sense of belonging?
2. How does the concept of “moral injury” from the film apply to other forms of service, such as teaching or public health work?

Intersection of Laws and Policy

In the film, Margaret Stock highlights changes in the 1990s that led to increased veteran deportations.

1. How does this legal history reflect broader trends in immigration policy?
2. How do bureaucratic failures, such as the lack of streamlined paths to citizenship for service members, reflect on structural issues in governance?



PART 1: THE HISTORICAL AND POLITICAL CONTEXT

Legislative Frameworks

1. Analyze the laws and policies from the 1990s that contributed to the rise in deportations. Consider how these laws balance national security concerns with human rights.
2. How do changes in immigration law reflect broader political and cultural shifts in America?

Immigrants in the U.S. Military

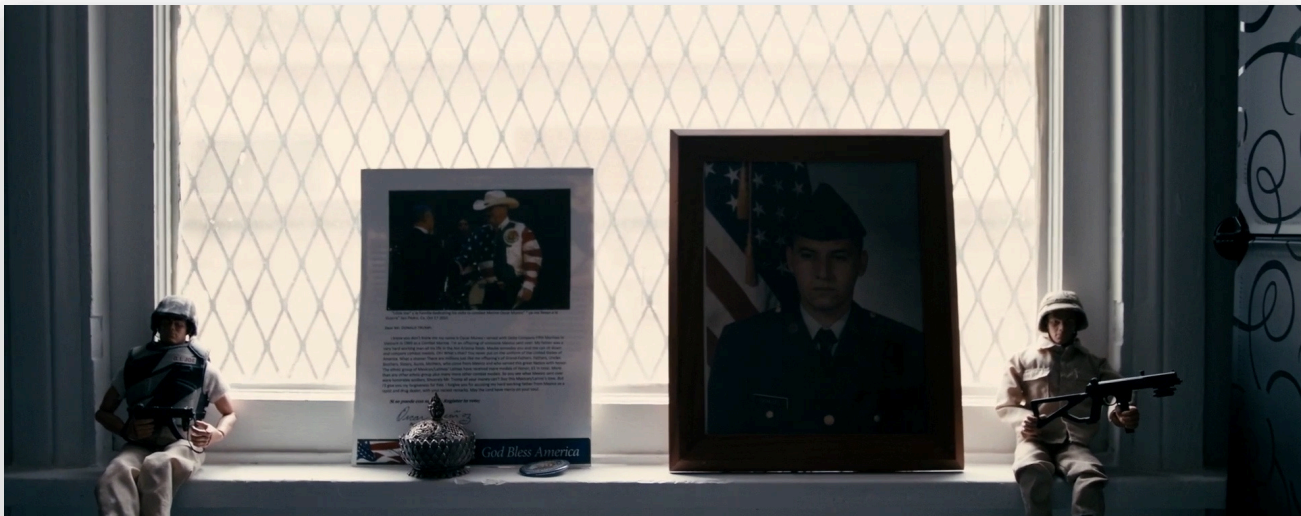
1. Explore the history of immigrant service members in U.S. conflicts.
2. How have immigrants been viewed historically in terms of their contributions versus their rights?

Veteran Advocacy

1. Examine the role of advocates like Hector Barajas in shaping public policy. What can their successes and challenges teach us about grassroots movements?

American Values and Contradictions

1. How does the deportation of veterans reflect broader inconsistencies in American values like justice, freedom, and equality?



PART 2: SOCIAL, PSYCHOLOGICAL, AND ECONOMIC IMPACTS

Family and Community

1. How does deportation affect the families of veterans, particularly children?
2. What economic and emotional burdens do communities face when veterans are deported?

Mental Health and Moral Injury

Discuss the concept of moral injury as presented in the film.

1. How does it interact with other mental health issues like PTSD in veterans?
2. What mental health resources should be prioritized for deported veterans, and how could they access them?

Social Isolation and Resilience

Deported veterans face extreme isolation from their homeland:

1. How does this isolation compare to the experience of refugees or stateless persons?
2. Analyze the role of community spaces like the Deported Veterans Support House in fostering resilience.

Intersectionality

1. How does race, socioeconomic status, and immigration status compound the challenges faced by deported veterans?





PART 3: ADVOCACY, JUSTICE, AND CHANGE

Public Awareness and Advocacy

1. What strategies does the film suggest for raising public awareness about deported veterans?
2. Analyze how public pressure, media coverage, and political advocacy intersect in creating change.

Legal and Policy Solutions

Compare the *Veteran Service Recognition Act* (H.R.4569) and the *Strengthening Citizenship Services for Veterans Act* (H.R.8851):

1. How might these bills address the issues raised in the film?
2. What are the challenges to passing legislation aimed at addressing veteran deportation?

The Role of Higher Education

1. How can universities play a role in addressing issues of deportation and reintegration for veterans?
2. Consider how different academic disciplines (e.g., law, sociology, public health) can contribute to solutions.



FURTHER DISCUSSION & ACTIONS

1. **Policy Analysis:** Research current immigration or veteran-related bills in Congress. How do these align with the issues presented in “Bring Them Home?”
2. **Comparative Case Studies:** Investigate other countries' policies toward immigrant veterans. How do these compare to U.S. policies?
3. **Community Conversations:** Organize a class or community discussion about how to support veterans, especially those at risk of deportation.
4. **Interdisciplinary Connections:** Explore how your major (e.g., psychology, political science, history), can contribute to understanding and solving the challenges faced by deported veterans.
5. **Advocacy Letters:** Draft and send letters to representatives urging support for bills like the Veteran Service Recognition Act.
6. **Digital Campaigns:** Design a social media campaign advocating for deported veterans using key themes from the film.
7. **Partner with Local Organizations:** Identify and collaborate with organizations working on immigration or veteran issues to create a service project.
8. **Reflection Journal:** Keep a weekly journal reflecting on the lessons from the film and how they connect to your studies.
9. **Book or Film Pairing:** Pair “Bring Them Home” film with other works like “American Exile” or “Soldier Girls.” Discuss how these films address overlapping themes.
10. **Public Presentation:** Create a multimedia presentation advocating for a specific policy change to prevent veteran deportations.



FURTHER DISCUSSION CONTINUED

1. Research the stories of veterans who successfully regained U.S. citizenship. What challenges did they overcome?
2. Write a letter to a legislator advocating for policies to prevent veteran deportation.
3. Organize a classroom debate on whether the U.S. government owes more to veterans than other immigrants.

ACTIVITIES

1. Policy Memo: Write a memo analyzing the implications of a specific immigration law on deported veterans.
2. Mental Health Research Paper: Explore the intersection of PTSD, moral injury, and deportation in veterans.
3. Community Engagement Plan: Develop a plan for engaging your local community to support veterans and raise awareness.
4. Media Critique: Analyze how different news outlets frame the issue of deported veterans.
5. Historical Research: Examine the role of immigrants in previous U.S. wars and their treatment post-service.
6. Legal Advocacy Project: Draft a mock legal brief arguing for the rights of deported veterans.
7. Visual Storytelling: Create a short film or digital collage inspired by the stories of deported veterans.
8. Interactive Workshop: Design and facilitate a workshop on veteran deportation for your campus or local community.
9. Role Play Debate: Simulate a debate between advocates and policymakers on deportation policies.
10. Research Roundtable: Collaborate with peers to investigate how immigration intersects with your field of study and present findings in a roundtable discussion.



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

1. Look up the [“Veteran Service and Recognition Act”](#) (H.R.4569) and the [“Strengthening Citizenship Services for Veterans Act”](#) (H.R.8851). How might these bills help deported veterans? Have your State Representatives co-sponsored either?
2. Read [“A U.S. Army Veteran, Deported Almost 20 years ago, Finds Home”](#) by the Washington Post, to learn more about the steps the Biden Administration is taking to help deported veterans (2024).
3. Watch [American Exile](#) film.
4. Read Hector Barajas’ Congressional [testimony](#) to the *Committee on the Judiciary Subcommittee on Immigration and Citizenship* on the issue of veteran deportation (2019).
5. Watch Jordan Klepper’s segment on deported veterans [here](#) (2019).
6. Read [“A deported veteran just became a US citizen. Wait ... what?”](#) by CNN Politics for more information about how Hector Barajas got his citizenship (2018).
7. Read [“Discharged, then Discarded”](#) by the ACLU of California for a comprehensive portrait of the experiences of deported veterans (2016).
8. Look up [Deported Veterans Diaspora Mural](#) project.

COURSE RUBRIC

CRITERIA	EXEMPLARY (4)	PROFICIENT (3)	DEVELOPING (2)	EMERGING (1)
CRITICAL UNDERSTANDING OF THEMES	Demonstrates a nuanced and comprehensive understanding of the film's themes, including immigration, justice, and military service. Provides well-supported arguments with references to specific scenes or quotes.	Displays a clear understanding of most themes and includes relevant references from the film.	Shows a basic understanding of key themes, but lacks depth or support.	Limited or inaccurate understanding of the film's themes and little evidence of engagement.
APPLICATION TO REAL-WORLD CONTEXTS	Reflection demonstrates personal growth, deep empathy, and meaningful connections to the content.	Applies the film's themes to real-world contexts with some examples or implications.	Attempts to apply themes to real-world contexts, but lacks clarity or specificity.	Little to no application of the film's themes to real-world contexts.
CRITICAL THINKING AND ANALYSIS	Offers deep and original analysis of the film, synthesizing multiple perspectives and challenging assumptions.	Provides thoughtful analysis, though synthesis of perspectives may be limited.	Analysis is somewhat superficial and lacks critical depth or multiple perspectives.	Minimal or no critical analysis. Ideas are underdeveloped or unclear.
ENGAGEMENT WITH ACTIVITIES	Fully participates in all activities and discussions with excellent effort, adding value through thoughtful contributions.	Participates in activities and discussions with consistent effort.	Participation is inconsistent, with minimal contributions to discussions or activities.	Little to no participation or effort in activities and discussions.

COURSE RUBRIC CONT.

CRITERIA	EXEMPLARY (4)	PROFICIENT (3)	DEVELOPING (2)	EMERGING (1)
COMMUNICATION AND ARGUMENTATION	Communicates ideas effectively and persuasively in written or oral formats. Arguments are clear, well-structured, and supported by evidence from the film and external sources.	Communicates ideas clearly, with structured arguments and some supporting evidence.	Communication is unclear or arguments lack structure and adequate support.	Communication is disorganized, with unsupported or poorly articulated arguments.
CREATIVITY AND ORIGINALITY	Demonstrates exceptional creativity in assignments, incorporating original ideas or innovative approaches (e.g., presentations, essays, projects).	Shows creativity and originality in most assignments or projects.	Creativity is basic, with limited originality in assignments or projects.	Assignments or projects lack creativity and originality.
TIMELINESS AND COMPLETENESS	All assignments and activities are submitted on time and completed with exceptional attention to detail.	Assignments and activities are mostly on time and completed with effort.	Assignments or activities are late or incomplete, with minimal effort.	Assignments or activities are incomplete or not submitted.



ORGANIZATIONS

[Defend Our Vets](#)

[Deported Veterans Support House](#)

[Immigrant Defenders Law Center](#)

[Black Deported Veterans of America](#)

[Repatriate Our Patriots](#)

[Unified US Deported Veterans](#)

[Green Card Veterans](#)

[Deported Veterans Diaspora Mural project](#)

[Excuse My Accent](#)



ABOUT THE GUIDES WRITERS

Rob Young is an award-winning filmmaker and Creative Producer with over 20 years of experience in film and event production. He is the founder of Excuse My Accent, a media company that creates impactful films and events that inspire social change. Rob's work centers around building awareness of issues like veteran deportation, as seen in his documentaries "Bring Them Home" and "Honor The Promise." He utilizes storytelling to elevate underrepresented voices and foster meaningful discussions that drive action.

Andrew Steinberg is an experienced grassroots organizer and researcher passionate about combining law, policy, and community organizing to create transformative change. Andrew has built coalitions and led advocacy campaigns for immigrant rights, economic justice, reproductive rights, and veteran dignity at the national, state, and local levels. His expertise in policy and grassroots mobilization enriches this guide, ensuring it is both a practical educational tool and an actionable resource for creating systemic change.

Additional Credits

"Bring Them Home" film published by Excuse My Accent, LLC.