

home where he remained, well, a favorite son. Mach's analysis of Pendleton's roots, his idealism and ideology, and his efforts to breathe life into anachronism in the face of daunting challenges, is complete and compelling. But even his subject's keystone accomplishment denied him ideological success. The Civil Service Reform Act was one of the most intrusive federal programs of the day, and Pendleton was its guiding light. In the end, the reader is less convinced than the Ohio author that Pendleton was a success in a Jacksonian sense. He remains a favorite son.

That does not diminish the value of the work, however. That Mach has constructed a valuable history of Pendleton and a viable account of his efforts to shape his party, without traditional sources, is a testament to his research skills and political acumen. To explain in such detail the inner struggle of a man, his party, and his country in the face of the sea change that was the post-Civil War era is a notable feat. That he fails to resurrect Pendleton as a significant figure in American political history, or even in his own party, reflects not on the author but on his subject. Mach cannot make Pendleton brilliant, but he has ensured that he will not be forgotten.

*Small Strangers: The Experiences of Immigrant Children in America, 1880–1925*, by Melissa R. Klapper. American Childhoods Series. Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2007. xix, 219 pp. Illustrations, notes, note on sources, index. \$27.50 cloth.

Reviewer Joy K. Lintelman is professor of history at Concordia College, Moorhead, Minnesota. Her book, *I Go to America*, on Swedish American women in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, will be published in early 2009.

Melissa Klapper's examination of immigrant children in the United States during the era of mass immigration is the most recent addition to publisher Ivan R. Dee's American Childhoods Series. In a brief and accessible monograph, Klapper synthesizes existing work on immigration relating to children. She also incorporates primary research of her own, although, as she states clearly in her preface, she "makes no claim to provide a theoretical outlook on the historical experiences of immigrant children" (xii). Klapper focuses on the decades from 1880 through 1920 and defines immigrant children as individuals "whose childhood and adolescence were centrally shaped by immigration and adaptation to the United States, whether they were born abroad or in America" (xi).

Klapper's study opens with a chapter outlining nineteenth-century ideas about childhood and youth as life phases distinct from adult-

hood. She considers how these ideas influenced the attitudes of reformers and broader society toward children. She continues with three carefully written and richly detailed chapters following the chronological stages of immigrant children's lives. In "Early Childhood" she addresses issues such as the challenging physical conditions in which many immigrant children lived and the ways ethnic groups' practices of infant and child care often conflicted with practices advocated by reformers or by the American middle class.

Once immigrant children were old enough for school, they were also old enough to contribute to the family economy. In a chapter titled "School, Work, Home, Play," Klapper examines how immigrant children tried to balance those elements in their young lives. Many struggled to negotiate the differing expectations placed on them: homeland traditions of child labor and family's financial needs encouraged children to find employment, while public educators and reformers encouraged children to remain in school as long as possible.

In the chapter "Adolescent Years," Klapper continues her examination of the often difficult journey from immigrant childhood to American adulthood. Although parents wanted their children to be successful—often part of their motivation for immigration in the first place—definitions of success varied. Most immigrant children saw success as "becoming American" and thus adopted the values and habits (including those regarding gender) of their non-immigrant peers. Many sought to continue their education, even if that meant attending night schools while employed. Their parents and ethnic community did not always affirm their choices.

Klapper extends her study beyond the era of mass immigration with a brief discussion of international migration trends in the 1920s and 1930s and U.S. legislation restricting immigration. This chapter lacks the detail about immigrant children's experiences that enriches the previous three chapters. Her conclusion draws some brief parallels between historical and contemporary immigrant children.

One of the reasons historians have shied away from studying immigrant children is the challenge of finding primary sources. As Klapper notes, "Because much of the historical record of childhood was actually produced by adults . . . the available documentation must be viewed with a great deal of suspicion" (xi-xii). Yet I found a critical assessment of sources sometimes lacking. Klapper relies on several immigrant autobiographies, including *Barrio Boy* by Ernesto Galarza, but does not address the degree to which these accounts may reflect remembrances significantly shaped by experiences after childhood (Galarza eventually obtained a Ph.D. from Columbia University and

was a civil rights and labor activist), or how representative these life stories may be for the author's immigrant group or for immigrant children more broadly. The book's copyediting also could have been more thorough. For example, Klapper refers to Norwegians eating a porridge called *ømmegrot* when the correct word is *rømmegrot* (106), and I noted at least one date error in the note on sources, unfortunately a reference to the *Annals of Iowa* (209).

Because the book aimed to provide an overview of immigrant children in America, readers from Iowa or other states in the upper Midwest may be disappointed by how much attention is focused on the experiences of children in large urban areas or immigrant communities in other regions of the United States, with relatively few references to rural immigrant children. Nonetheless, for a general reader or undergraduate student interested in immigrant children, this book is an excellent introduction to the field. Both its broad scope and the helpful "note on sources" should encourage further reading and research on immigrant children in specific ethnic groups or particular regions of the nation.

*Hard Work and a Good Deal: The Civilian Conservation Corps in Minnesota*, by Barbara W. Sommer. St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2008. vii, 205 pp. Illustrations, maps, appendixes, notes, bibliography, index. \$27.95 cloth.

*Nature's New Deal: The Civilian Conservation Corps and the Roots of the American Environmental Movement*, by Neil M. Maher. New York: Oxford University Press, 2007. 316 pp. Illustrations, maps, tables, notes, index. \$35.00 cloth.

Reviewer Gregg R. Narber is assistant professor of history at Luther College. His latest book, *The Impact of the New Deal on Iowa*, is scheduled for publication later this year.

At a time when the "greenness" of products is heavily promoted, and when tired and failing levees in Iowa unleash floodwaters, producing uncounted tons of lost topsoil, billions of dollars of crop and property loss, and grief to thousands of families, it seems appropriate to revisit a time when conservation's needs were addressed with action—even if not always perfect action—rather than carefully framed sales pitches, when trees were planted rather than scythed, and when a U.S. president's "Tree Army" sought to keep the nation's soil in place. Both reviewed works do so by examining the federal government's most suc-