

American Dreaming, Global Realities: Rethinking U.S. Immigration History, edited by Donna R. Gabaccia and Vicki L. Ruiz. Statue of Liberty–Ellis Island Centennial Series. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2006. x, 562 pp. Illustrations, tables, notes, index. \$75.00 cloth, \$35.00 paper.

Reviewer Terrence J. Lindell is professor of history at Wartburg College. He wrote a Ph.D. dissertation (University of Nebraska, 1987) about Swedish immigrants in Kansas and Nebraska in the late nineteenth century.

Donna Gabaccia (University of Minnesota) and Vicki Ruiz (University of California at Irvine) bring together 22 essays, all previously published, representing recent trends in immigration history. Their intent is to produce a volume useful for undergraduates.

In their introduction Gabaccia and Ruiz briefly survey the historiography of immigration and suggest “four thematic markers or buoys to guide readers. . . . These four buoys include transnationalism, community building, making home, and citizenship” (4). Immigrants lead lives that cross national borders, and historians must understand them in contexts other than just that of the receiving nation. Immigrants create communities, often shaped by boundaries determined by gender, class, and race. Immigrants construct “home,” both in terms of perceptions of their homeland and in the ways they order their lives in their country of destination. Citizenship, too, has had boundaries that admitted some and challenged others. The essays are presented in chronological order based on the time period covered, but the editors also suggest groups of essays that illuminate these themes.

Two of the essays deal primarily with immigrants from northern and western Europe. Jon Gjerde’s work, which opens with an anecdote involving Bishop Mathias Loras of Iowa’s Dubuque diocese, explores how America, especially the West, offered immigrants citizenship and opportunity without requiring them to surrender an ethnic identity often rooted in religion. Linda Schelbitzki Pickle examines how German women settling in the Midwest participated in and contributed to the migration and homemaking processes.

Four essays focus primarily on immigrants from southern and eastern Europe. Gabaccia shows how Italian men often worked outside of Italy while their wives contributed to the family economy at home. Whether or not the family emigrated often depended on the value of women’s work in Italy. Gunther Peck compares the practices of three ethnic labor brokers—an Italian, a Greek, and a Mexican American—and their success in controlling workers. Mary Patrice Erdman examines how recent Polish immigrants and the established Polish American community in Chicago viewed each other. Joyce Ant-

ler's study demonstrates how Jewish female activists created "a new kind of American cultural Jewishness . . . which fostered Jewish, feminist, and radical causes" (458).

Shirley J. Yee contributes an essay on the role of African American women in creating communities in Ontario in the middle decades of the nineteenth century. Martha A. Hodes examines the case of a native white woman in New England who, widowed and descending into poverty, married a mixed-race sailor from Grand Cayman Island. The woman's changing status from Massachusetts to the British Caribbean, from the bottom of the social ladder to the status of a lady, reveals how racial boundaries could change.

Five essays deal with Spanish-speaking peoples from Mexico and the Caribbean. Ruiz's contribution examines the responses of Mexican women immigrants to the Americanization efforts of a settlement house in El Paso and argues for a "cultural coalescence" in which women blended contributions from both cultures to suit their needs (355). Neil Foley demonstrates how Mexican Americans strove to be accepted as white rather than being categorized on the other side of the color line. Matthew García examines conflict between Mexican American communities and Mexican workers brought in under the *bracero* program as temporary agricultural workers. Nancy Raquel Mirabal argues that the Cuban American community needs to be viewed from more than the exile model that has dominated since Castro came to power. Luís León examines a Latino Pentecostal congregation as a community.

Five chapters deal with immigrants and ethnics from Asia. Karen J. Leong shows how American nativists created a gendered portrayal of Chinese immigrant men to support restriction. Erika Lee's study of Chinese laborers seeking to evade the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act reveals that concerns about border control are not new. Evelyn Nakano Glenn examines the position of Japanese workers in the plantation society of Hawaii. Judy Tzu-Chun Wu explores how Dr. Margaret Chung's portrayal of herself evolved from masculine to maternal. Yen Le Espiritu probes gender expectations among Filipinos in San Diego.

The remaining essays include studies of American immigrants to Mexico, Oglala Lakota responses to reservation day schools, the impact of returning immigrants on Lebanon, and the evolution of transnationalism.

This fine collection draws together diverse works that illuminate major themes in recent immigration scholarship. Coverage of gender and race is particularly strong. Although few of the essays deal specifically with Iowa, many provide insights into how past and present

immigrants to Iowa would view their experience. As this nation debates immigration policy, this collection can help us see how past policies developed and how they affected those peoples whose dreams included America.

Death Rode the Rails: American Railroad Accidents and Safety, 1828–1965, by Mark Aldrich. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. xvi, 446 pp. Illustrations, tables, graphs, notes, appendixes, essay on sources, index. \$59.95 cloth.

Reviewer John Williams-Searle is director of the Center for Citizenship, Race, and Ethnicity Studies (CREST), the College of Saint Rose, Albany, New York. He is the author of "Courting Risk: Disability, Masculinity, and Liability on Iowa's Railroads, 1868–1900" (*Annals of Iowa*, 1999).

Mark Aldrich has written the field-defining work on railroad safety. In so doing, he reveals how technological innovation and public perception changed the relationship between the state and industry from 1828 to 1965. Through a mix of econometrics, policy and technology research, and social and cultural analysis, Aldrich delivers a perfect balance of intellectual rigor and subtle wit to rescue material that in other hands could be both dry and downbeat.

According to Aldrich, the early years of railroad development created "a uniquely American system of railroading that was also uniquely dangerous" (10). Long distances and sparse traffic necessitated an infrastructure so lightly built that it astounded skeptical European observers. The use of cost-saving measures such as light iron strap rails, single-track mainlines, and technologically inferior cast iron wheels contributed to the financial viability of American railroads but led to increased hazards for workers and passengers. The dizzying number of railroading accidents during the early years might lead one to conclude that there was little concern with safety regulation. Massachusetts took early action in the 1830s to require crossing markers and audible signals, but state regulation was haphazard at best. Instead, railroad companies and states developed a reactive relationship that Aldrich dubs *volunteerism*: whenever state regulatory agencies or legislatures threatened to actively police railroad safety, companies would voluntarily respond by incorporating new safety technologies and implementing new policies to demonstrate their good faith efforts to keep the passengers (though not their workers) safe. This basic pattern of threats and modest response remained little changed until Congress passed the Federal Railroad Safety Act, establishing federal control over all railroad safety in 1970.