

IMMIGRATION AND ETHNICITY IN AMERICAN HISTORY COLLEGE TEXTBOOKS

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Enthusiasm for social and cultural history has worked its influence on United States history textbooks. In certain instances politics and presidencies have been deemphasized, while accounts of the contributions to American society from disparate groups have been expanded. While immigration occasionally is treated as perhaps the most distinguishing characteristic of American history, textbook discussions of ethnicity still reflect some of the stereotypic views that have been passed from generation to generation of American students. Too often in current texts, ethnicity represents little more than the survival of certain aspects of national culture.

Immigration and ethnicity are only two among many different and valuable themes for teachers of American history surveys to incorporate into their lectures and discussions. As unifying themes, immigration and its concomitant ethnicity provide certain advantages. Because immigration recurs every generation, the experiences of the immigrants themselves are comparable throughout time, as are the responses of "older" Americans to "newer" Americans. And a factor which should not be overlooked, student interest may be sustained by a subject that involves, sometimes, personal identity. It is difficult enough to persuade students that what happened before their nativity had consequence and value; once they become directly involved in the quest for understanding and the pursuit of truth, they can be coaxed into the realization that history has value--that in bringing us what Cicero called the "tidings of antiquity," history helps us to discover who we are and how we got here.

This essay provides a review of the more popular and oft-used survey texts (as compared to those popular texts we all crib from) on the basis of how they deal with the dual subjects of immigration and ethnicity. We also provide suggestions on how texts may be supplemented for those who wish to organize their courses through the unifying theme of immigration, or for those who may wish to include larger amounts of immigration history in their courses that stress social and cultural aspects of American history over the political.

Many of the more popular undergraduate surveys incorporate variations on the theme of cultural pluralism, though the term is rarely defined. Authors remind students, usually in the infrequently read prefaces, that generalizations appearing as overriding themes create certain risks. Like the siren's song that lures voyagers into hidden shoals, students will be told, generalizations hide the sharp distinctions that disturb the charted course and frequently rip the bottom of the historical arguments. Knowing this, we nevertheless lash ourselves to the mast, disregard the author's warning, plug our students' ears with caveats about the inherent selectivity of history, and sail by the troubled waters on our voyages into the present. To continue the metaphor, before leaving quayside at the beginning of the semester, it is best that we choose a worthy craft that is well-braced against the relentless pounding since most of us will be traveling steerage.

The principal question, though sometimes unasked, in many of these introductory surveys remains the one posed long ago by Crèvecoeur: "What is an American?" Certainly he, and now increasingly if inelegantly "he/she," is the sum of the parts, the person whose heritage is summarized in two volumes. Before we can begin to answer that question, another equally important question must be asked: "Who are the Americans?" The answers, it seems, are to be found in the story of immigration.

Professors Thomas A. Bailey and David M. Kennedy begin their investigation of "A Mingling of Races" by using the hoary metaphor that colonial

America, like Gilded Age America, "was a melting pot, and had been from the outset." Allen Weinstein and R. Jackson Wilson proclaim that "all Americans are immigrants or the descendants of immigrants," which quickly illumines not only the nearly five centuries of history since Columbus but also at least ten millenia of pre-history, depending on whose stone tool or fire pit are currently in vogue.¹ In the various descriptions of colonial society, many authors are content to list the groups and add a sentence or two about their contributions to American society and culture. Most omit the clichés about national character which invariably dispose of the Palatinate Germans as clannish and pious and relegate the Scots-Irish (or Scotch-Irish) to the frontier where their roistering exuberance is visited upon the Indians. Bailey, even in the revised edition of The American Pageant, retains his quaint dispensations. England's North American colonies slouching toward nationhood remain "picturesquely mottled with sizable foreign groups."² The Scots-Irish are just as "pugnacious, lawless, and individualistic" as ever, mottling the countryside not only with their squatters' cabins but also with their whiskey stills. In The American People, David Burner, Eugene Genovese, and Forrest McDonald contrast the "industrious, frugal, orderly, and peaceful" German immigrants with the Scots-Irish who "tended to work by fits and starts, to drink prodigiously, to be reckless, quick-tempered, impetuous, and likely to pick up stakes and move for no apparent reason."³

Richard Current, T. Harry Williams, and Frank Freidel adhere to the stereotypic view of the Scots-Irish in the fifth edition of their American History, explaining that they were "understandably a cantankerous and troublesome lot." The offensive phrase is omitted from the sixth edition, and the authors discuss briefly the economic and religious persecution in Ireland that engendered the allegedly quarrelsome, independent nature of these immigrants. When the Scots-Irish found a cold reception in America's cities, the authors continue, most of them pushed on to the edge of the wilderness where "they fought the Indians as earlier they had fought the Irish."⁴ Edwin Rozwenc and Thomas Bender, whose intellectual-institutional history has not been revised since 1978, follow a similar pattern citing the Scots-Irish for their ability as Indian fighters and for their contempt for the laws and customs of the coastal settlements.⁵

In contrast, Bernard Bailyn, writing in The Great Republic, explores the nature of eighteenth-century immigration in some detail, explaining that both the Scots-Irish and Germans were alienated from English civil and ecclesiastical authority. Resentment of the English establishment had long been a way of life for the Scots-Irish, and they naturally carried their animosities to America. The Germans were aliens and consequently had no natural respect for British institutions. Both groups, Bailyn argues, were "unusually free of a sense of servility, unusually independent in mind and spirit, and these attitudes were strongly reinforced by the material conditions of life they found in the prospering and swiftly growing colonies in which they settled."⁶ Eventually the Germans and Scots-Irish blended into the general population and became "simply Americans" with friends and relatives in Europe and with some special group traits and memories.

Robert Kelley, who retains the political orientation in the new edition of his survey, develops the theme of ethnicity more fully. In his introductory chapter to English colonization, he describes the complexities of English society that pit English against Scots, Welsh, and Irish--all awkwardly described as "the Negroes of English life."⁷ He also explains English dissenters, using what he calls an "ethno-cultural" analysis that incorporates philosophy, economics, class, and national origins into a discussion of community. New England congregationalism is also defined within the context of ethnic community.

A People and a Nation, a new text co-authored by Mary Beth Norton, David Katzman, Paul Escott, Howard Chudacoff, Thomas Paterson, and William Tuttle, reflects the authors' commitment to social history "broadly defined." They describe colonial immigration as "one of the most important occurrences in eighteenth-century America," noting the variety of Protestant sects among the Germans and their contributions to the religious diversity of the middle colonies. Although most immigrants assimilated readily into Anglo-American society, the authors explain that their presence aroused local fears, particularly in Pennsylvania where the "Pennsylvania Dutch" comprised one-third of the colony's residents. Benjamin Franklin, for example, wondered: "Why should the Palatine Boors be suffered to swarm into our Settlements?"⁸

Whereas only the more traditional narrative texts and some of the newer social histories devote much attention to immigration in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and, with the exception of slavery, devote lesser amounts to ethnic or minority history, all of the surveys concentrate on nineteenth-century immigration. Extensive treatment of immigration in ante-bellum America comes in descriptions of the migrations of peoples during the "hungry forties." Ethnic history, when defined as such, is usually explained within the conflicts of the 1850s and the rise of nativism. A few of the authors, while expressing regret at the ethnocentrism of "older Americans," nevertheless caution students against hasty judgments and present-mindedness. In noting the antipathy of many Americans to a large Catholic minority, Irwin Unger, lapsing into the first-person, writes, "equality, then, was a highly conditional element of ante-bellum society . . . Although we cannot condone the racism, religious bigotry, and sexism of early nineteenth century America, we should remember that equality was an even rarer commodity in the rest of the world." In the 1982 revision of his book, Unger explains that Americans had become relatively homogeneous in the fifty years following the Revolution. Consequently, native-born citizens felt overwhelmed by the "deluge of newcomers" after 1830. Unger acknowledges that Americans liked to talk about equality and boast of their country's open borders, but they "disliked the immigrants and often treated them harshly."⁹

John Garraty also editorializes about the wrongheadedness of certain anti-immigrant groups in the 1850s, especially the Know-Nothings, whose politics he labels as the "politics of impatience." Yet he is compelled to add that such political developments were far less significant than those which attended the founding of the Republican Party.¹⁰ The authors of A People and a Nation offer a similar interpretation of the era's anti-Catholicism, attributing the doctrine to anxiety--a pervasive native-born fear that Catholics would subvert American society, that unskilled workers would displace native craftsmen, and that ethnic slums would undermine the nation's values.¹¹

Bailey and Kennedy, donning the cloak of objectivity, once blamed the immigrants themselves for their problems. Their point is well taken, but it is the manner in which they treat complex problems that appears offensive. "Sad to relate," they write in the sixth edition of their text, their honesty having overcome their sorrow, "Irishmen created some of their own problems. It is true that they were traditionally agreeable, generous, witty and light-hearted. But they loved a fight, and were inclined to seek refuge in the bottle." The seventh edition of their popular work deletes the statement and provides a balanced discussion of Irish immigration in "The Emerald Isle Moves West."¹²

In America: Changing Times, the authors set aside traditional generalizations to probe the Irish ghettos in some detail. They write that "cities were not well suited to most of the Irish, who were rural people." Forced to live in a congested urban environment, they found strength in their

Catholicism and preferred to live in the shadow of the parish church. These "urban pioneers" were excluded from participating in the normal affairs of Boston and other cities, and they therefore developed an "ethnic consciousness" and preserved their culture through churches, parochial schools, Irish newspapers, and such social organizations as the Charitable Irish Society and the Shamrock Society.¹³

Rebecca Brooks Gruver explores the complexities of ethnic diversity in a "Feature Essay" that provides students with an important key to understanding the topic. She notes that German and Irish immigrants were invariably resented, admired, discriminated against, and relied upon, adding that "their eccentricities as individuals became stereotypes for their national group." Trapped in urban tenements, some of the Irish turned to heavy drinking to escape their hopeless situation, and youths engaged in crime and vice. But the majority, Gruver argues, "found consolation in their cultural resources and religious institutions and found both emotional support and cultural solidarity through participation in parish activities." Eventually, political participation in the Democratic Party aided their assimilation into American society. Indeed, for many Irish, she points out, "loyalty to the Democratic party was the secular equivalent of their commitment to the Catholic Church."¹⁴

Although most ante-bellum immigrants came from northwestern Europe, David Brion Davis explains in The Great Republic that the newcomers were far from homogeneous. Their numbers included illiterate peasants from Ireland and Germany, skilled artisans from England, Germany, Switzerland, and Belgium, political refugees from the abortive revolutions of 1830 and 1848, and Jews and other victims of religious discrimination. Not the least of their contributions, according to The National Experience, was "the richness and variety they gave to American society through the customs and amenities they brought with them from their old homes." Ante-bellum immigrants also contributed to a growing awareness of American nationalism, since their attachment to the United States as a whole was not diluted by loyalty to any particular state or region. At the same time, however, they evoked intense anti-foreign feelings and self-conscious Americanism among some native-born inhabitants. Most historians agree that the immigrants' influence on American politics was equally significant, since German and Irish Catholics found the Democratic Party willing to respect their cultural values--albeit for political expedience.¹⁵

Kelley, because of his preference for politics, attempts to explain both the politics of ethnocentrism and the politics of ethnic communities. In the process he reveals far more truth about the Irish than all the truthful asides of Bailey and Kennedy. He also writes at length on both the Whig and Democratic Parties, using again a definition of "ethno-cultural communities."¹⁶ Kelley is one of the few historians to describe aspects of southwestern, particularly native New Mexican, culture in his chapter on expansion during the 1840s. References to Hispanic cultures in survey texts are frequently limited to the first few chapters about exploration. Hispanics remain a quiet minority until historians rediscover them in the proliferation of civil rights groups in the 1960s.

Immigration is treated more fully in historians' accounts of the transformation of American industry and society in the late nineteenth century. Indeed, in the Weinstein and Gatell text, immigration is elaborated here for the first time. The authors summarize earlier waves of immigration, noting the nationalities of the participants, and then declare that in the Gilded Age and early twentieth century "the ethnic pattern changed starkly." The thirteen million new immigrants who arrived between 1890 and 1914, most of

them from southern and eastern Europe, proved less interested in adopting native-American Protestant culture, and their appearance, clothes, customs, and languages appeared strange to older Americans. Rozwenc and Bender add that the arrival of these new immigrants produced considerable anxiety among native WASPs who feared that American values might be overwhelmed by the "bewildering variety of ethnic groups, their outlandish customs, their strange foods, and their babel of unfamiliar tongues."¹⁷

In contrast, the authors of A People and a Nation are impressed with the similarities among the various waves of immigrants, arguing that differences attributed to the new immigrants "were in many ways more imagined than real." Norton and her co-authors add that among old and new immigrants, most were young (60%-80% between the ages of fifteen and forty-four) and male (about 60%). The majority of both groups settled in cities and lived in central districts vacated by those who had moved on to newer neighborhoods. Most important, the authors conclude, "all immigrants brought with them the memories of their homelands and adjusted to America in light of those memories." Between 1870 and 1920, they transformed the United States from a basically Protestant nation into a society of Protestants, Catholics, and Jews. In The American People, Burner, Genovese, and McDonald maintain that valid distinctions separated the new immigrants of the Gilded Age from those of the antebellum era. They note that the new immigrants, unlike their predecessors, came from agricultural communities in countries where industry was backward. Their native countries, moreover, were autocracies, and the newcomers had little understanding of democracy. Finally, the new immigrants were poorer than earlier arrivals and also far less likely to be Protestants.¹⁸

A number of texts include discussions of the new immigrants in the chapters that investigate industrialization and urbanization. The richness of ethnic culture is only alluded to, and descriptions of the life of the ghetto are brief. In the average text, after the new immigrants have been introduced to the Atlantic migration, degraded in the ghettos, and sweated in the shops and factories, the consciences of older Americans are suitably aroused and reformers expiate the shame of the cities. Yet for all the peddling of social history, most of the comparisons of the people are superficial. All too often the student encounters the varieties of peoples and their cultures in short descriptions of the clothing they wore and the religions they preferred.

Ghettos were never stagnant pools of humanity. Degradation of humanity was not the only story that the immigrants bore witness to. Yet in one of the newest texts, that of Richard Current and Gerald T. Goodwin, urban ghettos appear as places where "crime and vice naturally flourished." It is their use of the adverb "naturally" that requires further modification. Students are left to assume that only the immigrants indulged in crime and vice. What about those visitors to the ghetto from respectable neighborhoods? As recent specialized studies suggest, immigrants were not exclusively responsible for the nasty statistics.¹⁹

John Garraty, who otherwise has written one of the most sophisticated texts, abandons the difficult task of explaining the variegated life of the ghetto, in all its grandeur and horror, for the reassuring generalization that "although 'ethnic' neighborhoods were crowded, unhealthy, and crime ridden and many of the residents were desperately poor, they were not ghettos in the European sense" Residents, readers are assured, could and did escape. And for all their problems, they were better off in America than in Europe, or at least their children were.²⁰

It is not surprising, then, that the most quoted immigrant in the United States history texts is Mary Antin. Her life is a symbol for success, all

her trials and struggles just so many growing pains for her and for modern America. Scant attention is given to the so-called "birds of passage," those who came to the United States in search of work but had no intention of remaining. Only their numbers are mentioned. Their memories are never recalled. Except for estimating their numbers and making passing reference to the manic swings in the business cycle in the thirty years after Reconstruction, historians allow the "birds of passage" to pass on and raise not a flutter of protest to the faith that is America. There were no pogroms in America--and apparently no protests either. Complaints about the United States cannot be limited to the anarchist's infernal machine. As an example of a richer synthesis of cultural history, listen to the haunting poem of an Italian laborer recorded in Maxine Seller's ethnic history textbook:

Nothing job, nothing job
 I come back to Italy;
 Nothing job, nothing job
 Adieu, land northerly
 Nothing job, nothing job
 O! Sweet sky of my Italy
 Nothing job, nothing job
 How cold is this country²¹

Although the tendency to rely on stereotypes remains common, a few historians have examined ethnic ghettos in sufficient detail to provide students with a fuller appreciation of both the problems faced by the new immigrants and their contributions to American culture. Current, Williams, Freidel, and Brinkley, for example, explain that these newcomers "attempted to create in the New World many of the features of the Old," and ethnic communities provided them with a "sense of belonging to a coherent community." The authors incorporate Jacob Riis's description of a Fourth Ward alley in lower New York City to portray the crowded and cosmopolitan nature of that ethnic enclave. Similarly, Rozwenc and Bender note that the clannishness of immigrants was adopted as "a means of protection in a strange new world." Their account says little about vice and crime; instead, the authors analyze such topics as "Working-class Culture," "Immigration and the Industrializing Process," and "Ethnicity and the American Status System."²²

America: Changing Times discusses the immigrants' response to conditions in America by focusing on the Jewish inhabitants of New York City and other urban centers. The "most oriented to the city" of the various ethnic groups, according to the authors, Jews pioneered significant urban improvements in America. Samuel Gompers provided trade union leadership, Abraham Cahan became a prominent socialist spokesman, and Dr. Felix Adler founded New York's Society for Ethical Culture. Carl Degler in The Democratic Experience emphasizes Jewish success in public education as a vehicle for upward mobility. Jewish youngsters, he points out, graduated from high schools in much higher proportions than did the children of other ethnic groups. Their high literacy rate and skills they had acquired in eastern European villages eased their entry into urban economic and social life. By the third generation, Jews "constituted a disproportionately high percentage" of lawyers and physicians in the country's larger cities.²³

The diversity of immigrants is obvious in Rebecca Gruver's treatment of the new immigration, as she investigates such topics as mobility, family loyalties, attitudes toward education, and related characteristics. Similarly, Burner, Genovese, and McDonald caution their readers not to "lump" all new immigrants together, explaining that even among Jews there were important differences between older, settled Jewish residents and the new arrivals from eastern Europe who initially seemed to be "outlandish

folk entirely out of tune with the modern world." The authors also address the complex issue of social mobility among immigrants. Rather than repeating the standard myths about the melting pot and realization of the American dream, the authors demonstrate that social mobility varied considerably from place to place and from group to group. Boston's Italians, for example, lagged behind Jews and immigrants from the British Isles in improving their occupational positions, while in New York City both Italians and Jews found opportunity to move from the working-class to self-employed status.²⁴

The authors of The Great Republic in their discussion of the new immigrants include a sensitive analysis of the newcomers' response to America. However homogeneous their ghettos appeared to outsiders, they were actually fractured into blocks of distinct ethnic and religious experiences with neighborhoods preserving their own churches, patron saints, feast days, and civic associations. In seeking to impose an institutional order on their new surroundings, the authors write, "the new Americans mirrored the progressive search for order, but under adverse conditions and with improvised methods." Burner, Genovese, and McDonald add that the immigrants' response to their adopted home and the attempts to Americanize them were ambivalent. Many, like the fictional David Levinsky, gradually abandoned the outward signs and observances of their faith, while others, particularly children of the second generation, exhibited excruciating embarrassment at the trappings of the Old World evident in their parents' homes. And nearly all suffered from the condescension with which "Americanizers" approached their traditional cultures. Despite their sincerity, the authors state, Americanizers imposed a standard of immigrant performance that left nonconformers vulnerable to nativistic attacks such as those that arose in the 1920s.²⁵

Nearly all writers rely on photographs and illustrations to enhance their treatment of immigration and ethnicity, though in some instances both the selection of the photographs and their placement in the narrative seem incidental. Perhaps the most effective use of photographs is found in the major revision of the Hofstadter, Miller, and Aaron text, The United States, by Leon Litwack and Winthrop Jordan. The authors devote four pages to a photo essay entitled "The Immigrants," which includes several sensitive portraits by Lewis W. Hine. The traditional clothing of Hine's subjects contrasts vividly with an excerpt from a late nineteenth-century immigrants' guidebook that warned the newcomers: "Hold fast, this is important in America. Forget your past, your customs, and your ideals."²⁶

The more reflective immigrants developed a clearer assessment of the forces of cultural pluralism, despite the efforts of progressive reformers to Americanize them. The Great Republic quotes an immigrant Polish priest's statement to the genteel social worker Emily Greene Balch to illustrate the point. While Poland was a nation, according to the priest, the United States was merely a country--"an empty land open to all comers." Mary Antin, also cited in the same text, put it more succinctly when she wrote that "immigrants were just people who had missed the Mayflower and taken the next available boat." Younger progressive intellectuals embraced the concept of cultural pluralism as shaped by Randolph Bourne's theme of Trans-national America--"a cosmopolitan federation of national colonies, of foreign cultures, from whom the sting of devastating competition had been removed." Such optimism and understanding, however, were lost in the exclusionist fears of the twenties. Following World War I, the racist objections to the new immigration and workers' complaints that the newcomers were creating a pool of cheap labor in this country were reinforced by allegations that some of the recent arrivals were radicals. This fear, according to Current, Freidel, Williams, and Brinkley, finally led employers to support restrictive legislation.²⁷

Garraty's analysis of the National Origins and Quota systems is one of the best and includes tables and a mathematical formula for determining the numbers of any national group allowed in. Garraty is less willing, as are most authors in describing the xenophobia of the 1920s, to invoke pious mumblings about the regrettable but understandable attitudes of Americans during the Jazz Age. Garraty writes that "the United States had closed the gates. Instead of an open, cosmopolitan society eager to accept, in Emma Lazarus' stirring line, the 'huddled masses yearning to breathe free,' America now became committed to preserving a homogeneous 'Anglo-Saxon' population." For Rozwenc and Bender the National Origins Act represented a denial of the theory of cultural pluralism. America's commitment to preserving its WASP culture was not lost on any intelligent child of immigrant parents. "He was a second-class citizen," they conclude, "who had to make his way in American society by struggling through the horrors of social prejudice." Bailey explains that "quotas thus caused America to sacrifice something of her traditional freedom and opportunity, as well as much of her color and variety."²⁸

The restrictive legislation of the twenties clearly signaled the end of "the most extensive and successful experiment of its kind in history, carried out on a larger stage and over a longer period and with fewer convulsive reactions than any comparable enterprise," according to Morison, Commager, and Leuchtenburg. Proponents of quotas had not dimmed the beacon light of the Statue of Liberty, nor had they erased the inscription on its base. "But it was a symbol of things strange," the authors conclude, "and faintly remembered."²⁹ With the National Origins Act the unmeltable ethnics apparently melted into the urban landscape only to solidify again in paragraphs devoted to "Ethnic Pride" and "White Backlash" in the histories of the 1970s. Hispanics now appear in even larger numbers with historians concluding that the Spanish-speaking minorities will be of some consequence in the nation during the 1980s, or (one suspects) in the next revision of their respective texts.

To return to the question of "What is an American?": In a very real sense it is the student, the student as American, who is supposed to discover something of himself or herself in reviewing the nation's history. This, after all, seems to be the purpose claimed by historians in writing their books about United States history. Thankfully most authors of current surveys promise little more than illumination of the present through a study of the past. No longer forced to dance along the "utility-of-history" tight rope--in many instances the result of the patriotism of state legislatures and their general education requirements--historians now talk about technique and about unique methods of learning that each has discovered and incorporated in his book.

For too long, and especially among those teachers of history who prefer to see the subject as "social science" or "social studies," authors of textbooks and their publishers have allowed themselves to be bedazzled by newer techniques, by relevance, so that students may wrongly infer that undoctored history is dull. It is encouraging that, among those college textbooks reviewed in this essay, the authors have been resolute in their efforts at improving the art of history by writing better history. Publishers cluttering their texts with spectacular "graphics" and color reproductions cannot improve the quality of the prose. That is why it is refreshing to read in the preface of the latest edition of that trusted friend, The Growth of the American Republic, that its authors "write for young men and women of all ages, for whom economy in truth-telling is neither necessary nor appropriate."³⁰ Sadly, the cost of the present hardbound version may prove beyond the budgets of many students if not their professors.

Still its philosophy is appealing in this age in which history, that noble argument without end, is sometimes trivialized or made more tidy by appending to the end of chapters a few paragraphs on "dissenting viewpoints."

Students and their professors who wish a greater understanding of immigration and ethnicity in American history must read widely as an antidote to the "economy of truth-telling." They must consider carefully the lists of additional readings that appear at the end of chapters. Supplementary texts, of course, can be used if the professor chooses to organize the subject by greater attention to specific themes; and as most surely realize, there are literally hundreds of books that can be used. Instead of reciting here a bibliography of works that pertain to immigration and ethnicity, it is our purpose to suggest, using only a selected list, certain alternatives to reliance on survey texts themselves.

Most United States histories are divided arbitrarily at either the close of the Civil War, 1865, or at the end of Reconstruction, usually dated at 1877. There are many more supplementary readers and texts available for the second half of American history than there are for the first. For example, such works as The Huddled Masses: The Immigrant in American Society, 1880-1921 and Race, Ethnicity, and Class in American Social Thought, 1865-1919 are relatively inexpensive and can be used in courses where the professor wishes to emphasize the "New Immigration."³¹ Race and Ethnicity in Modern America and Today's Immigrants: Their Stories are likewise useful for those who may wish to emphasize twentieth-century ethnicity.³² To such books may be added works of fiction such as E.L. Doctorow's Ragtime, Ole Rolvaag's Giants in the Earth, or Upton Sinclair's The Jungle, to name only three. Non-traditional sources are also available for late nineteenth-century immigration. The Visual Education Corporation, despite its restrictive title, has made available a collection of ten cassette tape recordings entitled They Chose America: Conversations with Immigrants.³³ Students who listen to the tapes in conjunction with their regular reading often acquire a heightened sense of immediacy with the subjects. The New Immigrants, usually confined to statistical tables, gain their voices.

An edited reader like Uncertain Americans encompasses all of American history and may therefore prove inappropriate for adoption in either pre- or post- Civil War U.S. surveys.³⁴ The same is also true for certain topical histories like To Seek America, Natives and Strangers, and Ethnic Americans, though the latter devotes two chapters to immigration before the late nineteenth century and, in this instance, could be used in the second half of the survey.³⁵ Only James Stuart Olson's The Ethnic Dimension in American History appears in three versions: a combined edition and two separate volumes that parallel the basic texts divided at Reconstruction.³⁶

Another method of dealing with the quandary about suitable supplementary reading is to involve students in family history. In this way the themes of immigration and ethnicity are introduced within the context of cultural history. This is precisely the "strategy" incorporated in Generations: Your Family in Modern American History. Although its chapters deal almost exclusively with the history of the new immigration and afterwards, broader themes are nevertheless introduced. The book can be used in either half of the U.S. survey because, according to its authors, it stresses continuity and change in universal human experiences. Family history allows the student to become a participant. As the authors explain, "All of us, through our parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents or other ancestors, are a part of history stretching back into a dim and distant past." They believe that, in "doing history," the student will "gather information and . . . ask questions about yourself and your family and about the movements and events that have influenced your history."³⁷ Involvement of students in lower-division history

courses that are used as "general education" rather than as part of a major or minor programs is one way of attacking indifference. Many of these students have been the unwilling victims of "social studies" in the secondary curriculum that have frequently been taught by persons whose first love was never history but rather athletics. Indifference to history, induced at the high school, can be perpetuated at college unless the student can be persuaded that knowledge about the past is both valid and valuable.

History, unlike social science, may not be able to answer "whither we are tending"; it should, however, help to explain who we are and how we got to this place. Immigration and ethnicity are only two themes which may be used to enliven surveys of American history and at the same time provide tentative answers to the ageless questions that have haunted the imaginations of humans who, confronted with a specious present, a wild longing for clarity in their hearts, and, to paraphrase Camus, the unreasonable silence of the universe, have searched their individual and collective memories for uneconomical truth.

NOTES

¹Thomas A. Bailey and David M. Kennedy, The American Pageant: A History of the Republic, seventh ed. (Lexington, Massachusetts: D.C. Heath, 1983), I, 61; Allen Weinstein and R. Jackson Wilson, An American History: Freedom and Crisis (New York: Random House, 1974), PE 6-1. The third edition of this text by Weinstein and Frank Otto Gatell has eliminated the Pictorial Essays of the earlier edition, which included a discussion of "An Influx of Newcomers." We have not included Native Americans in our essay because they have been discussed elsewhere. See Raymond Wilson, "Native Americans in College Text-books," Wassaja/The Indian Historian, 13 (June 1980), 44-47.

²The American Pageant, I, 61.

³David Burner, Eugene D. Genovese, and Forrest McDonald, The American People (St. James, New York: Revisionary Press, 1980), 38.

⁴Richard N. Current, T. Harry Williams, Frank Freidel, American History: A Survey, fifth ed. (New York, Knopf, 1979), 62-63; Current, Williams, Freidel, and Alan Brinkley, American History: A Survey, sixth ed. (New York: Knopf, 1983), I, 65.

⁵Edwin Rozwenc and Thomas Bender, The Making of American Society: An Institutional and Intellectual History of the United States, second ed. (New York: Knopf, 1978), I, 127.

⁶Bernard Bailyn, David Brion Davis, David Hebert Donald, John L. Thomas, Robert H. Wiebe, and Gordon S. Wood, The Great Republic, second ed. (Lexington, Massachusetts: D.C. Heath, 1981), I, 123-26; first ed., I, 168.

⁷Robert Kelley, The Shaping of the American Past, third ed. (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1982), 13.

⁸Mary Beth Norton, David Katzman, Paul Escott, Howard Chudacoff, Thomas Paterson, and William Tuttle, A People and a Nation (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1982), I, 61-63.

⁹Irwin Unger, These United States: Questions of Our Past (Boston: Little, Brown, 1978), I, 287; second ed., I, 295.

¹⁰John A. Garraty, The American Nation, fifth ed., (New York: Harper and Row, 1983), I, 343.

- ¹¹ A People and a Nation, I, 289-90.
- ¹² The American Pageant, sixth ed., I, 297; seventh ed., I, 298-300.
- ¹³ Charles Dollar, Joan R. Gunderson, Ronald N. Satz, H. Viscount Nelson, Jr., and Gary Reichard, America: Changing Times (New York: Wiley, 1979), I, 309.
- ¹⁴ Rebecca Brooks Gruver, An American History, third ed. (Reading, Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley, 1981), I, 291.
- ¹⁵ The Great Republic, I, 313; John M. Blum. Edmund S. Morgan, Willie Lee Rose, Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., Kenneth Stampp, and C. Vann Woodward, The National Experience, fifth ed. (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1981), I, 312; American History: A Survey, fifth ed., I, 294-95, sixth ed., I, 323.
- ¹⁶ The Shaping of the American Past, I, 225, 239-40.
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