

reinforce their thesis that "the myth exercised a hypnotic effect so that women forgot what they did and neither discovered it nor passed it on to future generations." The feminist agenda leads them to devalue their own protagonists. More convincingly argued is Julie Cruikshank's "Myth as a Framework for Life Stories: Athapaskan Women Making Sense of Social Change in Northern Canada." She raises interesting questions about the persistence of traditional narrative, about the use of those narratives and their relation to gender, but the limited length does not allow her to explore how such stories serve an "adaptive strategy." The agenda of Rina Benmayor, Blanc Vazquez, Ana Juarbe, and Celia Alvarez mars their "Stories to Live By: Continuity and Change in Three Generations of Puerto Rican Women." They allege that "The stories of migrant Puerto Rican workers empower us." They may indeed do that. Unfortunately, the authors lack the distance to evaluate the stories critically and discard many of the caveats raised in the introduction.

That problem does not bedevil the next article in the last section, entitled "Ancient Greek Family Tradition and Democracy: From Oral History to Myth." Rosalind Thomas examines how certain Athenian family traditions were overlaid or obliterated in order to conform with the traditional view of Athenian history and how such traditions helped create the foundation myth of Athenian democracy. Paul Thompson's interview with John Byng Hall, Consultant Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist at the Tavistock Clinic in London, underscores "The Power of Family Myths" and the re-enacting of certain imageries. The article by Barbara Henkes on "Changing Images of German Maids During the Inter-War Period in the Netherlands: From Trusted Help to Traitor in the Nest" and that by Natasha Bruchardt on "Stepchildren's Memories: Myth, Understanding, and Forgiveness" illumine the role of personal memory in dispelling negative images.

The more successful and most valuable articles in this collection raise larger issues such as the telescoping and restructuring of memory, the invention of tradition, and the "mythical" elements in narratives. Contemporary oral histories with all their vagaries and inherent methodological problems can but often do not address these larger questions. This book could be assigned in a course devoted to oral history for it illustrates both the strengths and pitfalls of oral interviews. Certain sections in the book could be used effectively in a methodology class not only to discuss certain problems raised by oral history but also to examine the biases inherent in autobiography and the methodological problems of history. History, as Tonkin reminds us, "must have a face." This book could be used to discover its historiographical features and its emotive power.

University of Montana

Linda Frey

Victoria Yans-McLaughlin, ed. *Immigration Reconsidered: History, Sociology, and Politics*. New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990. pp. ix, 342. Cloth, \$39.95. Paper, \$14.95.

This book contains eleven essays by leading historians and social scientists of immigration that present new research in this area. While emphasizing an interdisciplinary approach, these scholars utilize local, global, and comparative perspectives in their work. These essays are especially useful for scholars of American history since they provide a broader context in which to teach about the American immigration experience. They help us to realize that historical questions and issues pertaining to the American immigration experience are not necessarily unique.

In short, these articles address the international aspects of migration; they question the classical assimilation model (whereby immigrant culture progresses in a linear fashion toward

a dominant American national character); and they deny American exceptionalism through references to national experiences in Asia and Latin America.

For example, the book's first two articles, those by Philip Curtin and Sucheng Chan, discuss migration patterns in world history. Both identify the evolution of world capitalism and the need for labor as well as local political conditions as forces generating global migrations. The section on ethnicity and social structure makes clear that group strategies and networks form an integral part of the assimilation process. In other words, the network-exchange theory is offered as an alternative to the classical assimilation model or "human-capital theory" (individual actions or assets, such as educational level, contribute to economic achievement, assimilation, or the inability to adapt).

While most of these scholars stress structural conditions, several make "ethnic resilience" (e.g., the persistence or adaptability of ethnic group cultural life and social organization) or "cultural hegemony" their explanatory model. Samuel Baily's work on Italian immigration to Buenos Aires and New York City from 1890 to 1914 advocates a comparative approach and proposes a comparative typology of immigrant adjustment. Only Suzanne Model's article and the editor's piece refer to gender in any depth. In fact, Virginia Yans-McLaughlin acknowledges "a joining together of immigration studies and gender studies" as an agenda for the future.

I found the editor's chapter, "Metaphors of Self in History," a most creative approach to the study of immigration. She calls upon researchers to evaluate oral histories in a non-traditional way—as "a means to establish political and cultural values as demonstrable phenomena emerging from the historical experience of groups." She examined about 100 interviews of Italian and Jewish immigrants (garment or dock workers) who labored in New York City between 1900 and 1930 in order to show how the themes of their narratives reflected their cultural outlook. Sections of her essay particularly emphasize how women's self-concepts conformed to cultural patterns and historical realities. In talking about their lives, for example, Italian women found support and identity in their families. "A search for autonomy was not one of their narrative themes," she proclaims.

This volume would be appropriate for use in upper-level history classes, especially those that focus on immigration or ethnicity, class or race in America. One or more of the articles contained within *Immigration Reconsidered* could be assigned to elicit or exemplify discussion on the historical issues of immigration. These essays should be used as a supplement to the required readings, since some background in the field is needed to fully understand each piece.

Adelphi University

Mary Jane Capozzoli