THE IMMIGRATION AND ETHNIC HISTORY NEWSLETTER
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Who Is an American? Teaching about Ethnic and Racial Hierarchy

By Paul R. Spickard

For twenty years I have used an exercise that cuts to the heart of several issues surrounding racial and ethnic hierarchy in America. I offer this exercise to my colleagues who teach about race and immigration, in the hope it will spur discussion and critical thinking among their students and other public audiences with whom they come in contact. The ideas behind the exercise will not be unfamiliar to members of the Immigration and Ethnic History Society. But the consistency of the responses I have received over the decades, and the particular exceptions to that consistency that have occurred, reveal some things about race and American identity that are worth contemplating in an era when some public figures insist that we live in a "post-ethnic" America.

The exercise originated in 1978 as a spur-of-the-moment assignment in the middle of an American history class at the University of California, where I was a teaching assistant. The subjects for the day were turn-of-the-century immigration and the Americanization movement. Trying to get students to understand racial and ethnic hierarchy, and Milton Gordon’s old ideas about the melting pot, Anglo-conformity, and cultural pluralism, I wrote the following words on the board: Polish, Black, Irish, Jewish, English, Japanese, Mexican, Indian, Arab, Swedish.

Then I asked each student to take a piece of paper and rearrange the list, ranking these American ethnic groups according to how closely they approximate the core of what it means to be an American. Then in the ensuing discussion we came closer to understanding the American hierarchy of racial and ethnic groups than we had before. We collected all the participants’ responses and tabulated them, took averages, and put on the board the consensus hierarchy. Then we talked about what it meant.

My intention was to create a manageable list of groups that was broadly representative of various structural positions in American racial and ethnic history. Thus I included blacks and American Indians, widely recognized racial groups, and Mexicans and Japanese as representatives of two other racial groups, Latinos and Asians. I listed several white ethnic groups, to get at the sense of hierarchy within the white race. I included Poles to stand for the South and East European nationalities who came to America in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (I could as easily have selected Italians). I chose Jews as the primary non-Christian group of those years. Irish were the major Catholic immigrant group of the early nineteenth century. I chose Swedes as a Northwest European Protestant group (I might have used Germans instead). I added Arabs to the list because they were a highly visible group, much in the news in those days (as in these), and historically distinct from all the others.

I chose to use specific ethnic labels as I thought common in American public discourse (Mexicans rather than Hispanics, Japanese rather than Asians) because I did not want to bias answers toward what I perceived to be the larger structural groupings; I wanted to elicit the students’ intuitive sense of things. I did not use individual African ethnicities or Native American tribal names because it was my sense that most Americans saw not Yoruba but black, not Chickasaw but Indian. I deliberately avoided terms with particular political messages (African American, Native American, Chicano) in favor of more conservative terms (black, Indian, Mexican) that seemed more likely to elicit the audience’s underlying, semiconscious images.

I have repeated this exercise more than sixty times over the intervening years, with a variety of audiences: in California, Minnesota, Massachusetts, Ohio, Hawaii, and China; with college students, church groups, people who attended public lectures, and Elderhostel participants; with groups that were all white, all black, all Asian, all Polynesian, and racially mixed, with groups as small as four and as large as three hundred. The result in every single case has been almost exactly the same.

Invariably, someone in the audience asks me to define what I

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IEHS and Balch Institute announce new syllabi collection to be available on the IEHS Web page
Get details on page 5!
Send your syllabi in now!
The Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum of the Smithsonian Institution (91st St. and 5th Avenue, New York City), has an exhibit, "El Nuevo Mundo: The Landscape of Latino Los Angeles," with photographs by documentary photographer Camillo José Vergara. Open June 29 through Sept. 5, 1999.

The Balch Institute for Ethnic Studies, Philadelphia, has established an on-line public access catalog of its library holdings, available on the World Wide Web. The Balch library's catalog was made possible by a grant from the Pew Charitable Trusts, which supported a joint effort by several libraries in the Philadelphia Area Consortium of Special Collection Libraries to establish on-line catalogs. The Balch catalog is available at: http://www.libertynet.org/balach/html/emily.html

"In Search of Gold Mountain," a photographic history of Chinese Americans in San Diego, is an ongoing exhibit at the San Diego Chinese Historical Museum, 404 2nd Ave., San Diego.

The on-line journal Jouvert: A Journal of Postcolonial Studies is seeking contributions of essays for a special issue on "Postcolonial Asian America." Information from the guest editors: Tina Y. Chen, English, Vanderbuilt Univ., Nashville TN 37203, e-mail tina.y.chen@vanderbilt.edu or Viet Thanh Nguyen, English, Univ. of Southern Calif., Los Angeles CA 90089, e-mail vnguyen@rcf.usc.edu. Submissions due Oct. 1, 1999. The journal may be seen at its website: http://152.1.96.5/jouvert

The Immigration History Research Center, 826 Berry St., St. Paul MN 55114, has published a Guide to Ukrainian American Newspapers in Microform, listing its holdings of these newspapers. Cost is $9.00 plus $3.50 postage and handling. Further information on the web at http://www.umn.edu/IHRC


The Museum of the Chinese in the Americas, 70 Mulberry St., New York City, has "Family Portraits," an exhibit with images of diverse families in New York's Chinatown.

The Mexican Migration Project is a binational research initiative co-directed by Jorge Durand at the Univ. of Guadalajara and Douglas Massey, University of Pennsylvania. It collects and analyzes social and economic information on Mexican migration to the United States. Information and an extensive database from the project are provided on-line at http://lexis.pop.upenn.edu/mexmig/

The Ellis Island National Monument web-page has been revised and extended by the National Park Service. In addition to a guide to the monument, it includes guides to the museum, archives and library. The address: http://www.nps.gov/htdocs/stli/serv02.htm

The Irish American Cultural Institute invites applications for research grants for persons from any discipline proposing to investigate the Irish experience in America. The IACI administers the Lawrence and Elizabeth O'Shaugnessy Research Fund, the Irish Institute of New York Research Fund, and the fund of the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick (Philadelphia). Grants are for research and travel costs up to a maximum of $5000. Deadline for applying is Oct. 1, 1999. For information or application forms, contact IACI, 1 Lackawanna Place, Morristown, NJ 07960. Telephone: (973) 605-1991. E-mail: irishwaynj@aol.com


The Institute for Migration and Ethnic Studies at the University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands, has set up a discussion list on the subject of immigrant entrepreneurship. To subscribe, see the form on the web site: http://home.pscw.uva.nl/rafh/listserv.htm

The Immigration History Research Center at the University of Mimeson has acquired the papers of Ostap Tarnavsky, Ukrainian-American writer and activist. From the 1960s to 1975 he was the executive director of the United Ukrainian American Relief Committee. Contact IHR, 285 Berry St., St. Paul MN 55114.

The Center for Migration Studies, Staten Island NY, now has available the records of Angelo Bartolo Chiariglione, a Scalabrinian missionary among Italian-Americans in the American South.

The "American Memory" digital archive of the Library of Congress has placed in its collection the Robert Runyon Photograph Collection. It contains some 8,000 images from the early 1900s taken by the commercial photographer Robert Runyon, showing life in the border areas of South Texas. These can be viewed on the "American Memory" web site: http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/award97/tlxhtml/runyhome.html

The Council for International Exchange of Scholars is receiving applications for the Fulbright Scholar Program for the academic year 2000-2001. Application deadline for these awards is August 1, 1999. Information and application forms are available online at http://www.cies.org or address CIES, 3007 Tilden St. NW, Suite 5L, Washington DC 20008-3009.

The IEHS Web Page address has been changed to...
http://www.balchinistitute.org/iehs
(The old address still works, but change your bookmarks now)
MINUTES OF THE EDITORIAL BOARD AND BUSINESS MEETING
THE IMMIGRATION AND ETHNIC HISTORY SOCIETY
TORONTO, ONTARIO, APRIL 24, 1997

Ron Bayor opened the meeting of the Editorial Board at 5:02 p.m. He reported that the JAEH fall and winter issues have been late but the journal will return to its established schedule with the spring and summer issues. The JAEH has 786 active subscribers (370 individuals; 416 institutional). There has been a decline in the overseas subscriptions, especially the individual memberships. In response to complaints about the high overseas mailing costs, he has been—and is still—negotiating with Transaction to get them lowered. Several suggestions were offered for how these mailing costs might be reduced; Bayor will continue to explore possibilities. A motion passed raising annual institutional subscriptions to the JAEH to $100.00. Elliott Barkan indicated that the large number of books qualifying for review in the JAEH has created time-lags, and reviewers have complained about the delay between when they submit their reviews and when they finally appear in the JAEH. After some discussion, it was suggested that a few pages of additional reviews be added to each journal issue.

Philip Gleason opened the annual business meeting at 5:20 p.m. He announced that the IEHS Executive Board had enthusiastically reappointed Ron Bayor as JAEH Editor for another five-year term. As directed by 1998 meeting, he wrote a letter to Senator Daniel Akaka indicating IEHS support for his initiative to have the National Park Service conduct studies to identify historical landmarks related to immigration history. He received no response and had nothing further to report on the subject. Gleason reported that, after encountering some initial difficulties, the process to change the society’s name was finally completed in June 1998. He noted that Roger Daniels had written a letter to the AHA president to complain that the sub-discipline categories on the membership form do not include immigration history. Gleason urged members to send similar letters calling for the AHA to add immigration and ethnic history to the sub-discipline categories. He announced that June Alexander will be retiring as IEHS secretary in April 2000, when her present term expires. In order to insure a smooth transition, he hopes a replacement can soon be identified.

June Alexander reported that Cheryl Greenberg, David Gutierrez, and David Reimers had been elected to the Executive Board for the term 1999-2002.

Nora Faires reported that currently the IEHS has $13,936.57 in its operating budget. She is still waiting for additional dues from Transaction. The Internal Revenue Service has been formally notified of the society’s name change. James Bergquist apologized for the late delivery of the fall IEHS Newsletter and had nothing else to report. Alan Kraut, Program Committee Chair, indicated that the committee had had difficulty arranging panels for some conferences. The IEHS will not have a panel at the 2000 AHA convention. He suggested that the IEHS might want to limit its efforts to organizing sessions at just the two major historical

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A Message from the President...

Our meeting in Toronto was an excellent one on a number of counts. First of all, there were five IEHS-sponsored sessions, all of which were lively, rich in content, and well attended. We also had a good turnout for Ron Bayor’s report and the IEHS business meeting (the minutes of which are found elsewhere on this page); ditto for the very fine social hour and dinner at the Megas Restaurant in Toronto’s “Greek Town.” The dinner speaker was Tim Meagher of the Catholic University of America, who gave us an insider’s report on the NEH’s “National Conversation on American Pluralism and Identity,” on which he served as a key program officer, and which is more extensively described in Sheldon Hackney’s NEH report One America Indivisible.

The mid-day Saturday walking tour on Toronto’s ethnic neighborhoods was a high point. The day was brisk, but bright and sunny, and within a few blocks of the hotel we began to encounter an intermingled diversity of peoples, languages, cuisines, and fragrances. Harold Troper of the University of Toronto and Nick Harney of York University, who jointly planned and led the tour, provided commentary, pointing out, among other things, how urban development, along with the coming of new groups, affected the pattern of ethnic succession. The overall impression was one of cosmopolitan co-existence, as Jewish areas overlapped with Chinese, the whole being interspersed with Ethiopian and other smaller enclaves, then blending almost imperceptibly in Italian, Portuguese, and eventually Indian areas. The fluidity of ethnic street-life furnished a real-life counterpart to the currently influential notions of boundary-blurring, trans-nationalism and the like.

Speaking of boundaries, another experience at Toronto impressed me with how far we have to go in breaking down the boundaries between disciplines. This came about from my meeting with a graduate student in political science from the University of Toronto, Thomas Powers, who is writing a dissertation on American-style multiculturalism. He is from the USA, and though well acquainted with Canada’s official policy of multiculturalism, he does not think it had a significant direct influence on the movement in this country.

Powers argues that American multiculturalism, which he distinguishes sharply from cultural pluralism, established itself first in the professional literature of education, particularly secondary education, and spread from there into the culture more broadly. In support of this contention, he devotes a chapter to analyzing the “multicultural ideology” of James A. Banks, a prolific contributor to the pedagogical literature. My point here is not to promote Powers’ thesis—although it seems to me quite plausible—but to note that, with few exceptions, historians of immigration/ethnicity have neglected the schools and the literature of education as areas relevant to their interests. Here, I would say, some more boundary-crossing is in order.

For me, in any case, crossing the border for the meeting in Toronto proved a very rewarding experience. Now we look toward St. Louis in April, 2000!

—Philip Gleason
Conferences and Meetings...

The Center for Research in Immigration, Integration and Citizenship, Paris, and the German Historical Institute (London), will hold a workshop in Paris, June 25-26, 1999 on “Migration Controls in 19th Century Europe and the U.S.” Information: e-mail cepict@sciences-po.fr

The University of Bristol will hold a conference Sept. 17-19, 1999 in Bristol, England: “Nationalism, Identity and Minority Rights: Sociological and Political Perspectives.” Registrations due by July 31, 1999. Information: NIMR Conference, Dept. of Sociology, Univ. of Bristol, 12 Woodland Rd., Bristol BS8 1QJ, UK. E-mail: nat-conf@bris.ac.uk

Lehigh University will sponsor a conference Sept. 17-19, 1999 in Bethlehem, PA: “One Kind of Freedom Reconsidered: African American Economic Life in the Segregation Era.” Information and registration: Wm. R. Scott, Africana Studies, Lehigh Univ., 14 E. Packer Ave., Bethlehem, PA 18015-3175. E-mail: wrs4@lehigh.edu

The Massachusetts Historical Society is sponsoring a new Immigration and Urban History Seminar series, which plans to hold half a dozen meetings during the 1999-2000 academic year. For information, contact Conrad Wright at the Society, 1154 Boylston St., Boston MA 02215. E-mail: publications@masshist.org Also on the organizing committee are Peter D’Agostino (Stonehill College), Marilyn Halter (Boston U.), Lynn Johnson (Boston College), and Reed Ueda (Tufts U.).

The Oral History Association will hold its annual meeting in Anchorage, Alaska, Oct. 7-10 1999. Theme: “Giving Voice: Oral Historians and the Shaping of Narrative.” Information: contact Susan Armitage, e-mail armitage@wsu.edu or William Schneider, e-mail ffwss@aurora.alaska.edu

The New England Historical Associa-
The Immigration and Ethnic History Society, together with the Balch Institute for Ethnic Studies, have announced the co-sponsorship of a new project to collect the syllabi of college- and graduate-level courses in immigration and ethnic studies. A web site will be created on the World Wide Web to provide access to courses in these fields taught in colleges and universities.

The new collection of syllabi on the web will follow in the model of an earlier project which collected 50 of them and published them in printed form (Teaching the History of Immigration and Ethnicity: A Syllabus Exchange ed. Donna Gabaccia and James Grossman [Chicago: Newberry Library and Immigration History Society, 1993]). Co-editors for the new project are Dr. Karl Krueger for the Balch Institute and Prof. James Bergquist (Villanova University) for the IEHS. The new electronic form will make possible frequent additions and updates, and allow the deletion of out-of-date material. It will be available without cost through the IEHS web page and the Balch library web page.

Contributions are solicited for the collection from those now giving courses relevant to the history of immigration and ethnicity in North America. Within those general parameters, the editors intend the collection to be as broad and inclusive as possible in terms of approaches, themes, and racial and ethnic groups. Syllabi may be sent in at any time; the editors will begin to compile the web-page as they are received.

General guidelines for submission of syllabi:

1. Submissions will be separated into two broad categories:
   a. general courses dealing with many ethnic groups (e.g., History of American Immigration, Ethnic Communities in Canada, Women and Ethnicity, Religion and Ethnicity in America, Minorities in Twentieth Century America, etc.).
   b. courses specific to a particular ethnic group (e.g. Asian-American history, The Irish Experience in Canada, German-American History, Latino Experience in the U.S., African-Americans in the City, the Polish-American Experience, etc.)

2. Syllabi should be from courses given within the last three years or courses which will be given within the next year (through 2000). Syllabi will be removed after this period. When a course is revised to be given anew, a new syllabus should be sent in.

3. Syllabi should be submitted in one of the following three ways:
   a. by mail on 3½ inch floppy disc formatted for IBM-type. The document itself should be in a common word-processing format—not HTML.
   b. send by mail or e-mail the address of a web-page on which your current syllabus is posted; the syllabus will be downloaded for our web-page.
   c. submit the text of your syllabus by e-mail to this address:
      kruegerk@balchinstitute.org Any attachments must be in Word 6/95 format or in Rich Text Format (RTF).
      Syllabi submitted only in hard (paper) copy cannot be accepted.

4. In addition to the syllabus, the following should accompany the submission: name of professor of the course; that person's address, phone number and e-mail address; the instructor's permission to put the syllabus on the web; number and title of the course; institution where given; whether graduate or undergraduate course.

5. The syllabus itself should have the following in a heading at the top: name of professor, name of university or college, title and number of course, whether graduate or undergraduate course, and date the course was or will be given. Beyond this heading, the format for presenting the syllabus is as you usually would present it to the class. We hope it will generally reflect all the required elements of course: reading assignments, major topics, required projects and papers, films or other visual materials used, etc.

Submissions should be sent to:
   College syllabi project
   c/o Dr. Karl Krueger
   Library, Balch Institute
   18 South 7th Street
   Philadelphia, PA 19106

E-mail: kruegerk@balchinstitute.org
Dr. Krueger's e-mail address for questions is kruegerk@balchinstitute.org
James Bergquist (History, Villanova University, Villanova PA 19085) can be reached at BERGQUIST@ucis.vill.edu.

All instructors of courses within the fields described are encouraged to submit current syllabi now.

PERSONALS

Philip Gleason, president of the Immigration and Ethnic History Society, was awarded the Laetare Medal by the University of Notre Dame at its May 1999 commencement. The award is announced annually on Laetare Sunday (the fourth Sunday of Lent), and recognizes an outstanding American Catholic "whose genius has enabled the arts and sciences, illustrated the ideals of the Church and enriched the heritage of humanity." The citation said that "as an interpreter of American ethnicity and immigration, he won the acclaim of historians throughout Europe and the U.S. for his insights into the assimilation of diverse peoples into a truly national community." Among previous recipients of the annual award since 1883 were Gen. William Rosecrans, Dorothy Day, Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan, actress Irene Dunne and novelist Walker Percy.

Russell Kazal, winner of the first George Pocetta dissertation grant from the IEHS in 1996, has completed his dissertation, "Becoming Old Stock: The Waning of German-American Identity in Philadelphia, 1900-1930." He received his doctorate from the University of Pennsylvania in August 1998 and will join the faculty of Beaver College in the fall.

The following have received research grants for summer 1999 from the Balch Institute for Ethnic Studies, Philadelphia: Martin Paeslack (Univ. of Cologne), "Unity and Democracy: The Reminiscences of Carl Schurz from his Death (1906) to the Present Time and their Relevance to (continued on p. 10)
THEODORE SALOUTOS BOOK AWARD, 1998

The annual Theodore Saloutos Award for the outstanding book of the year in American immigration and ethnic history was made to Andrew Gyory, Montclair State College, for his book Closing the Gate: Race, Politics and the Chinese Exclusion Act (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina, 1998). The award was made at the annual dinner of the Immigration and Ethnic History Society in Toronto, April 24, 1999. The citation follows:

The Saloutos prize committee presents its award this year to Andrew Gyory for Closing the Gate: Race, Politics and the Chinese Exclusion Act. Revisiting a crucial but often neglected piece of late nineteenth-century racist legislation, Gyory explores the context for the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. Scholars have generally ignored the role the Act played in laying the groundwork for other racist legislation of the era, including Jim Crow legislation; those who have considered it have generally understated its significance to other racial legislation, and misattributed its origins to Californian and national trade unionist xenophobia and fear of the “yellow peril.” Gyory challenges these views, arguing instead for the significance of debates over Chinese Exclusion for those culminating in other restrictions, and dismissing the claim that eastern unionists embraced anti-Asian or xenophobic sentiments before this period.

By returning to the sources—stump speeches, newspaper articles, legislative debates, union and exclusionist propaganda materials—and scrutinizing them closely, Gyory concludes instead that the motivation for the Act came not from eastern union members, who remained remarkably sophisticated in their analysis of the problems posed by Asian contract labor. Rather it came from the political aspirations of national leaders, especially James G. Blaine, who manipulated Californian xenophobia and claimed it as national sentiment. Doing so served two purposes: it won western adherents to Blaine’s campaign, and it served to mask other pressing labor problems by transferring the blame to race.

Eastern unionists drew careful distinctions between contract labor, which they opposed, and Asian labor, which they welcomed like any other. But ambitious politicians on the national scene brought western anxieties east and, by translating fear of economic undercutting into fear of Asian labor, managed to fundamentally alter the nature of the debate.

The clear losers here were not only Asian laborers, but also native workers whose legitimate concerns were deflected and never resolved, and those Americans whose marginality was legitimated by such xenophobic and exclusionary rhetoric. By linking the arguments over Chinese exclusion with nineteenth- and early twentieth-century racist thought, Gyory points out the ways in which the legitimization of Chinese exclusion in turn legitimated segregation laws and later immigration restrictions of European Americans and others.

Gyory’s project substantially revises the historiography of the topic, and has transformed not only our understanding of Asian immigration but also of the development of turn-of-the-century racial and ethnic exclusion and segregationist thought. His innovative reading of the sources has reminded us that the Chinese Exclusion Act was not a trivial sidelight of the Gilded Age but had profound implications for both regional and national politics, and for all levels of society from political elites to working men and women in small eastern shops. This work also makes a substantive contribution to the discussion of agency in the shaping of racial discourse, adding a political dimension to earlier works that uncovered white working class complicity. While not overturning those studies, his work adds depth and nuance to the story by filling out the picture, repositioning these debates within the framework of national policy and extending the discussion to all class levels. Gyory reminds us of how racism and racial politics are contingent and constructed, rather than fixed or predetermined. This is historical analysis at its best.

Gyory’s work will be of interest to political historians and students of immigration, but also to those concerned with race, with workers and worker organizations, and with public policy. Andrew Gyory’s meticulous scrutiny of an impressive array of primary sources, his new arguments, and his reshaping of the landscape of nineteenth-century political racial discourse, all make this an important and path-breaking work. The committee is delighted to present the 1998 Theodore Saloutos Memorial Book Award to Andrew Gyory.

Other New Publications Noted....


Connolly, James J. The Triumph of Ethnic Progressivism: Urban Political Culture in Boston, 1900-1925. Coontz, Stephanie et al., eds. American


Iranian Studies 31:1 (Winter 1998) is a special issue on Iranians in America.


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Who is an American?...
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mean by "the core of what it means to be an American." I say in response, "Rank these American ethnic groups according to how closely they approximate the core of what it means to be an American. I think you have an idea of what that means." Almost every time, some member of the audience chooses to rank all the ethnic groups equally, expressing what seems to him or her to be a democratic ideal. But when encouraged to participate, nearly every person in each of the audiences (even the three student groups in China I tried this on in 1988-89) understood that there is a common, unspoken understanding in America that certain people, on the basis of race and ethnicity, are more American than others.

In every case (with one significant exception I will address in a moment), the audiences have produced substantially the same consensus hierarchy, as follows:

1. English
2-3. Swedish and Irish
(t here is usually a gap in the arithmetic averages here)
4-5. Polish and Jewish
6-7. Black and Indian
(t here is usually a larger gap here)
8. Japanese
9. Mexican
10. Arab

Several features of this consensus list deserve comment. Members of the Immigration and Ethnic History Society will recognize the hierarchy as not far different from the preferences exhibited in the quota system set up by the Immigration Act of 1924. It is as if there were a series of concentric circles emanating from London. The closer one's ancestral roots are to the southeastern part of the British Isles, the more American everyone agrees one is. It has long been recognized that this is a product of the fact that people from England, though not a numerical majority (nor even a plurality) any longer, were historically the first ones to dominate the American polity. America is more yours if you have English ancestors, an English name, speak English, and so forth.

In this exercise, other Northwest Europeans are next, then East and South Europeans, then people of darker hues whose ancestors came from farther away. Religious distinctions make some difference, in that Protestant Swedish Americans are usually just ahead of Catholic Irish Americans, and Christian Polish Americans are usually just ahead of Jewish Americans. Again, this is much like the set of preferences enshrined in the 1924 Immigration Act and the Americanization movement that led up to it.

The rankings for blacks and Indians always fall in the middle, but their distributions are usually bimodal: some people rank them quite low (at positions 7-9, usually), others just below English and perhaps Swedes. The former, when questioned, observe that blacks and Native Americans have suffered slavery and genocide, and frequently rank near the bottom of social privilege today. Those who put African and Native Americans near the top seem to do so out of a wish to compensate: it is as if to say, these are people who have been so abused in America that they have earned a high ranking by their very suffering.

Perhaps most remarkable is what has happened to Japanese Americans over the course of the time I have been using this exercise. For the first few years, audiences invariably listed Japanese Americans at position 3 or 4, along with Swedish and Irish Americans, and not too far behind English Americans. On being questioned, participants recited the "model minority" myth of Japanese American educational and occupational success and family values as evidence that they were a lot like Anglo-Americans. Then, during the first Reagan administration, the American economy took a nosedive, and much of that problem was blamed on Japan. (Remember the vogue for Japanese management manuals? Remember the murder of Vincent Chin by two white Detroit auto workers, who said they bludgeoned Chin to death because they thought he was a Japanese American, and they blamed the loss of their jobs on the success of Japanese car makers?) At precisely that same historical moment, in the years 1981-83, the position of Japanese Americans in my exercise dropped like a stone, from near the top to the bottom. Subsequently, the U.S. economy recovered, but the same cannot be said for the image of Japanese Americans, at least in the minds of my audiences.

Mexican Americans have been at position 9, and Arab Americans have been stuck at position 10, in every single running of this exercise. When I question audiences as to how they see Mexican Americans, they invariably talk about illegal immigrants, not about natives of Los Angeles or Chicago, nor about people whose families have lived in New Mexico since before there was a United States. There is something very durable about the image of the Mexican as subject foreigner, as illegitimate non-member of American society.

When I ask audiences to describe an Arab American, they do not come up with a name like Ralph Nader or Danny Thomas. They make this person an eternal and usually hostile foreigner, either a man in a burka or with a camel, or more often a shadowy terrorist bent on blowing up an American skyscraper.

What does all this suggest? For one thing, it is worth noting the degree to which international issues can play a part in domestic ethnic affairs. The situation of two ethnic groups—Arab Americans and Japanese Americans—near the bottom of the scale, despite their high levels of education, achievement, and integration into American institutions, suggests that you never quite overcome your ancestry, at least if you are not Northwest European. International issues between the U.S. and Japan, and the U.S. and the Arab world, seem to attach strongly to Japanese and Arab Americans. They are deemed perpetual foreigners.

Consider the widely reported performance of New York Senator Alphonse D'Amato on a talk show during the trial of O. J. Simpson. Mocking Judge Lance Ito, D'Amato adopted what he imagined to be a thick Japanese accent, thoroughly unlike Ito's precise diction. D'Amato (a third-generation Italian-American) seemed to see himself as an American, but to see Ito (a third-generation Japanese American) as a foreigner.

It is also remarkable that there has been so little variation in responses to this exercise, across so many years and so many different
kinds of audiences. This suggests that there is indeed a widespread understanding in America that some people are really more American than others; that citizenship, education, social prominence, public service and other virtues really do not matter very much; that one is more or less deserving of a place in America based on where one’s ancestors came from. Whites, blacks, Asians, and others all seem to recognize that America is a place for pigment-poor people before it is a place for people who are pigment-rich. Similarly, nearly everyone recognizes a hierarchy among white ethnic groups. The hierarchy in both cases is based on our long history of domination and exclusion of various groups by Anglo-Americans, in varying degrees that are reflected in the hierarchy.

Of course there are lots of other indications around us that this is the case. It is surely no accident that we fortify our southern border against brown hordes, but not our northern border against white hordes. It is similarly no accident that there was great public worry not long ago about foreign (Japanese) ownership of the Seattle Mariners, but not about foreign (English) ownership of the Holiday-Ins. Some people, it seems, are just more American than others, and we all intuitively recognize this to be true. Though it may be contrary to many of our cherished ideals about merit and equality, it seems that racial and ethnic hierarchy is deeply etched in the American public mind. We do not live in a post-ethnic America.

I encourage my colleagues in the Immigration and Ethnic History Society to try an exercise like this in class. You may want to change the list a bit; there is nothing sacrosanct about mine. I will be interested to hear whether or not you receive similar responses from your audiences, and what other insights you may gain from the experience.

Paul R. Spickard is Professor and Chair of the Department of Asian American Studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara. He has published Japanese Americans: The Formation and Transformations of an Ethnic Group (Twayne, 1996). Readers may send comments to: spickard@alishaw.ucsb.edu

New Publications Noted...
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South Carolina Historical Magazine 100:1 (Jan. 1999) is a special issue on the Germans in Charleston.


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Personal... (Continued from p. 5)


The book Religion and State in the American Jewish Experience (Univ. of Notre Dame) edited by Jonathan D. Sarna and David G. Dalin was named an "Outstanding Academic Book of 1998" by Choice, a book review publication.

Roger Daniels (Univ. of Cincinnati), past president of the IEHS, has been appointed Eric Voegelin Visiting Professor at the University of Munich. He will be in residence there until mid-September 1999.

Marion R. Casey was named Centennial Historian of the City of New York by the Greater New York Centennial Celebration. She has recently completed her Ph.D. at New York University.

Robert Zecker, independent scholar in Philadelphia, has received a fellowship grant from the Gilder Lehman Institute of American History for research in archival sources in New York City. He will study the creation of a Slovak-American community in Philadelphia, 1890-1945.

The Republic of Lithuania has made Rev. Wm. Wolkovich-Valkavicius a member of the Order of Gediminas.

Minutes of the Annual Meeting... (continued from p. 3)

covations: the OAH and the AHA. Discussion ensued; no decisions were made.

Phil Gleason described the membership drive and recruitment activities during the past year. He designed and had an IEHS brochure printed; some IEHS members distributed this brochure at various conferences. The IEHS also had an information/recruitment table at the 1999 AHA convention. In addition, Gleason appointed an ad hoc membership committee and served as its chair. Approximately 250 letters were mailed to potential members.

Gleason suggested that the IEHS should designate a membership coordinator. After discussing ways of identifying potential new members and contacting them, it was agreed that the society needs to appoint someone to coordinate its recruitment activities. In the coming year, Gleason will continue to coordinate membership work. Alan Kraut reported that an IEHS sponsored conference is still in the planning stages. Obtaining financing presents the greatest obstacle. He requested suggestions for possible conference themes as well as for funding sources.

Rudy Vecoli reported that the Saloutos Fund has a market value of $37,790.23 and a second fund derived from its interest is valued at $5,518.10. The George E. Pizzetta Fund totals just $5,973.66; the society needs an aggressive campaign to reach the necessary $10,000.00 goal.

Donna Cabaccia reported that an IEHS sponsored round table has been accepted for the 2000 OAH convention.

The meeting adjourned at 6:46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jane Alexander
IEHS Secretary

REMINDER: NEW MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY COMING SOON

An updated IEHS membership directory is being prepared by the secretary and will be mailed to all members in late fall 1999. If you want your e-mail address included in the directory but have not yet given that address to Jane Alexander, please send it to her by 30 August 1999. You can send it either by e-mail (june.alexander@acu.edu) or by mail (3410 Bishop St., Cincinnati, OH 45220-1831).

New Publications Noted... (continued from p. 9)


**IHS News Notes...**

**THEODORE SALOUTOS BOOK AWARD**

Closing date for submissions for the annual Theodore Saloutos Book Award is December 31, 1999. To be eligible, a book must be copyrighted 1999. A book may be nominated by the author, the publisher, a member of the prize committee, or a member of the Immigration and Ethnic History Society. Inquiries and nominations should be submitted to the chair of the Saloutos Prize Committee, Prof. John McClymer, History Department, Assumption College, Worcester MA 01615-0005.

E-mail: jnmclyme@assumption.edu

Copies of the book must be received by all three members of the committee by December 31, 1999. Send books to Prof. McClymer at the address above; and also to: Prof. Cheryl Greenberg, Trinity College, Hartford CT 06106-3100; and Prof. Ewa Moraw ska, Dept. of Sociology, Univ. of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia PA 19104.

**GEORGE POZZETTA DISSERTATION AWARD**

At the annual dinner of the IEHS on April 24 in Toronto, the Immigration and Ethnic History Society named Serina Zabin, a graduate student at Rutgers University, as the recipient of the fourth annual George E. Pozzetta Dissertation Award. Ms. Zabin's proposed dissertation, "Places of Exchange: Race, Gender and New York City, 1700-1765," will investigate the fluidity of ideologies of race and gender in 18th century New York as related to the city's being a center of immigration.

The Immigration and Ethnic History Society announces competition for the 2000 George E. Pozzetta Award. It invites applications from any Ph.D. candidate who will have completed qualifying examinations by Dec. 1, 1999, and whose thesis focuses on American immigration, emigration, or ethnic history. The award provides $750 for expenses to be incurred in researching the dissertation. Applicants must submit a 3-5 page descriptive proposal in English, discussing the significance of the work, the methodology, sources, and collections to be consulted. Also included must be a proposed budget, a brief *curriculum vitae*, and a supporting letter from the major advisor. All materials must be received by each committee member by Dec. 15, 1999, which is the submission deadline. Send materials in hardcopy (no FAXes accepted) to: Josh DeWind, Social Science Research Council, 810 Seventh Ave., New York, NY 10019; Diane Vecchio, History Dept., Furman U., Greenville SC 29613; and Thos. J. Curran, History Dept., St. John's Univ., Jamaica NY 11439.

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**Activities Report for the Immigration and Ethnic History Newsletter**

Mail your information for the next Newsletter to:

James M. Bergquist, Department of History, Villanova University, Villanova PA 19085-1699

or FAX a copy to (610) 519-4450 or send information via E-Mail to: bergquist@ucis.vill.edu

Your name and affiliation:

THE IMMIGRATION AND ETHNIC HISTORY SOCIETY

...was founded in 1965 as the Immigration History Group. It was chartered in 1972 as the Immigration History Society. In 1998 the Society, which had traditionally dealt with ethnicity as well as immigration, changed its name to the Immigration and Ethnic History Society.

The purpose of the Society is to promote the study of the history of immigration to the United States and Canada from all parts of the world, including studies of the background of emigration in the countries of origin; to promote the study of ethnic groups in the United States, including regional groups, native Americans and forced immigrants; to promote understanding of the processes of acculturation and of conflict; to furnish through the *Immigration and Ethnic History Newsletter* information as to research, organizations, meetings and publications in the field of immigrant history; to help organize sessions on immigration and ethnicity at meetings of learned societies; and generally to serve the field of immigration-ethnic history with special reference to professional scholarship.

MEMBERSHIP

...in the Society includes subscriptions to the quarterly *Journal of American Ethnic History* and the semiannual *Immigration and Ethnic History Newsletter*. Dues for individuals: one year, $30; 2 years, $55; 3 years, $75. Dues for institutions: one year, $100; 2 years, $194; 3 years, $268. Students: 1 year, $15. Patron: 1 year, $100 (individuals or institutions who wish to provide more substantial financial support to the Society will have their names listed on the inside cover of the *Journal*). For domestic first-class mail, add $32 per year. For all subscriptions outside U.S.A., add $32 per year for surface mail, or $48 per year for airmail. Membership dues should be sent to *Journal of American Ethnic History*, Transaction Periodicals Consortium, Rutgers University, 35 Bernre Circle, Piscataway NJ 08854-8042.

**Visit the IEHS website at:** [http://www.balchinstiute.org/iehs](http://www.balchinstiute.org/iehs)

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Inquiries about the Society should be directed to the appropriate officer. This newsletter was edited with additional assistance and support from the staff of the Library, Balch Institute for Ethnic Studies. Newsletter submissions and questions about editorial matters should be sent to the newsletter editor at the address above. Requests for back issues should be sent to the editor; to purchase back issues, send $2.00 per copy (by check made out to Villanova University).

Subscriptions to the *Immigration and Ethnic History Newsletter* are part of membership in the Society. Members' changes of address should be sent to *Journal of American Ethnic History*, Transaction Periodicals Consortium, Rutgers University, 35 Bernre Circle, Piscataway NJ 08854-8042.

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