


John Higham, *Send These to Me: Immigrants in Urban America*. Revised Edition. Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984. 261 pages.

With this last book in the present survey we leave the more limited field of specific Nordic ethnic groups in America for the broader one of immigration and its effect on the social, cultural and political life of the United States; we go from the ethnic periphery to the central concerns of the nation of which these ethnic groups are so essential a part. John Higham's *Send These to Me: Immigrants in Urban America* is far more than the collection of articles it first appears to be and though it presents itself as a revised edition of an earlier work, the revisions and the new contributions are such that it merits the attention also of those who

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immigration and ethnicity. Although chapters were written at different times and for a variety of audiences, extensive rewriting and careful editing has not only done away with the repetitiousness that so often mars books of this kind, but resulted in a satisfying whole where each chapter is an indispensable link in Higham's argument.

I know of no better introduction to the topic than his opening essay on "The Immigrant in American History," and it would seem ideal reading for any survey course in American civilization. Three central chapters discuss the nature and extent of anti-Semitism in America. Not only do these chapters greatly expand on the treatment of this theme in his 1955 *Strangers in the Land*, but they demonstrate Higham's development as a historian since the writing of his first book. Of greatest value to the historian of Nordic immigration and ethnicity in America are Professor Higham's three concluding chapters which are all addressed to the issue of the forces of assimilation versus the abiding importance of ethnicity in America. In particular his probing discussion of the ambiguities inherent in pluralism as an ideology for a democratic America deserves our attention.

John Higham demonstrates how one important impulse for the historian should be the attempt to understand the present. Books such as his are as important reading for those who are interested in probing the past as for those who are taking part in shaping the present.

Orm Øverland

University of Bergen