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All the Nations under Heaven: An Ethnic and Racial History of New York City

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All the Nations under Heaven: An Ethnic and Racial History of New York City

Frederick M. Binder and David M. Reimers, 1995. *All the Nations under Heaven: An Ethnic and Racial History of New York City*. New York: Columbia University Press. xii + 353 pp. Notes, selected bibliography, index. \$29.50(cloth), \$16.50 (paper).

Binder and Reimers present a narrative and analytical history of ethnic and racial relations in New York from its Dutch colonial founding in 1624 through the present. The focus is on how immigrant newcomers to the city adjusted and accommodated to the city's ever-changing environment.

The authors find the great immigrations of the 19th century the most significant. Massive Irish, German, Italian, and East European immigration resulted in distinct neighborhoods in Manhattan, such as the Irish Sixth Ward. Concentration of numbers brought political, economic, and social opportunities.

After W.W. II, Puerto Ricans, European refugees, and African-Americans found generally favorable economic circumstances. However, more recently, the newest immigrants from the third world have encountered economic crises and racial and ethnic conflict.

While the social, political, and economic aspects of New York's ethnic groups are clearly presented, the treatment of the cultural experiences and contributions of these groups is much weaker. For readers of A-A A the volume's comprehensive survey of previous scholarship on ethnic groups in New York will be particularly useful.