



**WESTERN
MICHIGAN**
UNIVERSITY

The Journal of Sociology & Social Welfare

Volume 35

Issue 3 September - Special Issue: *Beyond the Numbers: How the Lived Experiences of Women Challenge the "Success" of Welfare Reform*

Article 15

2008

Review of *Citizenship and Those Who Leave: The Politics of Emigration and Expatriation*. Nancy L. Green and Francois Weil, Editors. Reviewed by Miriam Potocky.

Miriam Potocky

Florida International University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/jssw>



Part of the Social Work Commons

Recommended Citation

Potocky, Miriam (2008) "Review of *Citizenship and Those Who Leave: The Politics of Emigration and Expatriation*. Nancy L. Green and Francois Weil, Editors. Reviewed by Miriam Potocky.," *The Journal of Sociology & Social Welfare*: Vol. 35: Iss. 3, Article 15.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.15453/0191-5096.3367>

Available at: <https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/jssw/vol35/iss3/15>

This Book Review is brought to you by the Western Michigan University School of Social Work. For more information, please contact wmu-scholarworks@wmich.edu.



**WESTERN
MICHIGAN**
UNIVERSITY

Nancy L. Green & Francois Weil (Eds.). *Citizenship and Those Who Leave: The Politics of Emigration and Expatriation*. Champagne, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2007. \$60.00 hardcover, \$25.00 papercover.

Whereas freedom to leave a country is a fundamental human right, most prominently embodied in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, freedom to enter a country is not. Thus, national policies in democratic societies can certainly limit immigration, but can hardly legislate emigration. For this reason, scholarship of migration has almost exclusively focused on immigration. This edited volume sets out to reverse that perspective. The book aims to examine nations' attitudes toward their expatriates, how countries have encouraged and discouraged emigration, and what relations exist between nations and their diasporas.

The book is divided into five parts. Part I, "Freedom of Movement," describes the historical origins of the concept of the right to emigrate. The two chapters in this section focus on economic and demographic influences on emigration, primarily in Western Europe and North America. Part II, "Nation Building and the Administrative Framework," examines emigration vis-à-vis national identity in nineteenth-century Europe. Three chapters focusing on Germany, Italy, Poland, and France explore how these nations attempted to offer protections and benefits to their citizens abroad and developed administrative mechanisms for doing so. Part III, "The Costs of Emigration," analyzes both the economic costs of state subsidies for emigration as well as the economic benefits of pushing out the poor and unemployed. The cases of Britain, Holland, and Germany are examined in the three chapters in this section. Part IV, "Borders and Links" focuses on North America. Chapters in this section describe U.S. efforts to influence the emigration policies of other nations: Canadian efforts to limit emigration to the south, and Mexican efforts to both discourage emigration to the north and to influence the treatment of its citizens in the U.S. Finally, Part V, "Naming Emigrants," examines three nations' conceptions of their expatriates, namely China's "Overseas Chinese," India's "Brain Drain" emigrants, and Israel's "Yordim."

While I appreciate this volume as groundbreaking in examining the other half of the migration process, I perceived several difficulties with the book. First, the title and cover copy are misleading in that they do not convey that this is almost entirely a book about history. Save for the chapters on India and Israel, countries which both, of course, gained their present national status in the mid-twentieth century, the remaining chapters focus primarily on 18th, 19th, and early 20th century events. As a scholar of immigration but not a historian, I frankly found it a struggle to get through this material. My applied social scientist's understanding of the value of studying history is to avoid repeating its human tragedies and thus to develop implications for improved social policy in the future. Such a perspective is not manifested in this volume.

Second, the editors note that the book specifically focuses on the cases that lie between the extremes of national policies that expelled citizens for political or religious reasons on the one hand, and totalitarian regimes that have prevented their citizens from leaving, on the other. Yet, it is precisely the extremes of any phenomenon that are the most interesting and possibly the most instructive. Finally, although the book purports to focus on citizenship, several of the chapters deal also with internal migration, in which citizenship is, of course, a moot issue. In conclusion, this volume does present a new perspective on migration, one which will primarily be of interest to historians.

Miriam Potocky
Florida International University

Steve Estes. *Ask & Tell: Gay & Lesbian Veterans Speak Out*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2007. \$29.95 hardcover.

The bulk of this compelling book consists of edited interviews with lesbian and gay veterans from as far back as World War II right up to the present in Afghanistan and Iraq. The book follows each of our major wars since WWII with chronologically interlaced chapters on graduates of the