

THE WRITING OF
ENGLISH CANADIAN
IMMIGRANT HISTORY

Franca Iacovetta

THE CANADIAN
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ASSOCIATION

CANADA'S ETHNIC
GROUP SERIES
Booklet No. 22

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Introduction

Given Canada's position as an immigrant receiving society, it is not surprising that writing about immigration has long been a feature of historical scholarship. Over the decades, however, the priorities and perspectives of scholars interested in the field have changed considerably. Fresh approaches to familiar topics have emerged, especially in light of the recent challenges of scholars (and activists) who view race and ethnicity as critical categories of analysis. Such approaches demand that all Canadian historians, not just "ethnic" specialists, integrate the histories of minorities fully and rigorously into their analyses of the past. The assumption that only minorities possess racial or ethnic characteristics that simultaneously inform their class and gender identities has been exposed as narrow-minded at best and racist at worst. Historians are now being challenged to develop better frameworks for exploring how the processes of racialization and ethnicization have operated in the past to influence profound historical phenomena such as class structure, state development, and gender constructs and identities.

It seems an appropriate time to offer an assessment of the treatment of immigrants in English Canadian historical writing. I map major trends, past and present, but have not attempted a comprehensive review of what is an extensive literature. Nor will I confine myself to studies that explicitly employ a framework of analysis integrating class/gender/race-ethnicity. Despite much current talk about the efficacy of such an approach (and an already emerging backlash), there are as yet few published histories that employ this model to advantage. Rather, published works on immigrants are highlighted that use one or more of these analytical categories. In so doing, I address the difficulty of integrating ethnic history with other branches of social history and with work in other relevant disciplines. Above all, the paper provides a gendered assessment of historical work dealing with immigrants written in the last 25 years. Gender is not invoked here as a category of analysis merely to note the continuing neglect of women in much ethnic history, though that point will certainly be made. By considering the characterizations of men and women, of family and kin, and of community life as depicted by ethnic historians, I offer a gendered perspective on a literature that generally has defined the immigrant experience by assuming heterosexual male behaviour and male-dominated public activity.

The historical literature on Canada's immigrants is a fragmented body of work derived since the 1970s from various sub-categories of social history, especially the new labour history, women's history, and ethnic history. The field has also attracted writers uninformed by or disinterested in recent developments in social history. Despite significant differences these historians have shared a basic commitment to uncovering the lives of ordinary, disadvantaged or otherwise marginalized people and to documenting the activities, accomplishments and challenges of these "other" Canadians. Canada's immigration specialists have also comprised a politically diverse group, including conservatives, liberals, and Marxists, as well

as feminists and anti-feminists. Although rarely discussed in public, real difficulties confront historians working within heavily polarized ethnic communities and studying left-right or Jewish-gentile splits. They often meet with criticism or a studied neglect from colleagues on the other side of the divide. Feminist ethnic historians pursuing issues critical to women's and gender history, such as domestic violence, have provoked criticism or at least uneasiness among some male colleagues. Such tensions are not unique to ethnic history, of course, but they are certainly evident in this field.

The US revisionist literature in immigration history has had a particularly profound impact on Canadian scholarship during the past two decades. Especially revealing is the degree to which Canadian specialists have been influenced by US reaction to Oscar Handlin's influential thesis. A prominent Harvard professor, Handlin wrote epic tales in the 1950s of European immigrant uprootedness, alienation, and then eventual assimilation into the American melting pot. This vision was massively critiqued in the 1960s and 1970s by scholars such as Rudolph Vecoli who laid the basis for a revamped North American immigration history. Significantly, Canada never quite had its Oscar Handlin, but scholars were drawn to the US revisionist literature because it offered a way of reconceptualizing immigrants and evaluating their experiences: it acknowledged agency, choice, adaptation, and resistance without ignoring racism and exploitation. Canadian scholars have also borrowed from an international and multi-disciplinary literature dealing with both Old and New World contexts, including ethnography, anthropology, and folklore and peasant studies. While some historians might find in this internationalization of immigrant history another indication of the fragmentation of Canadian history, many practitioners consider it a source of enrichment. Indications are that a great deal more borrowing will occur from such areas as race, gender, and diaspora studies.

SOME PAST TRENDS: NATIONAL(IST) HISTORY AND THE "OTHER" IMMIGRANTS

In considering past historiographical trends in the treatment of immigrants, it is useful to begin with the "nation-building" school of Canadian history, popular from the 1930s to the 1960s (and now undergoing somewhat of a resurgence.) The eclectic collection of work then produced on immigrants in various regional and temporal settings in Canada was written within this colony-to-nation framework. But such writers also filled in some of the details regarding immigration policy and its implementation, the timing and pattern of settlement in specific locales, and to some extent the immigrants themselves. Much of this work dealt with the English, Scots, and Irish immigrants of the nineteenth century's Great Migration Era. Lest current ethnic historians become too smug in their claims to having entirely reshaped the field, it should be said that these early studies are not exactly Handlinesque. They characterize (voluntary) emigration, for example, as the calculated choice of people enjoying some options and track

the origins and destinations of emigrants. Still, these books are outdated and their analysis uninformed by social history. They tell us far more about policy and settlement patterns than the day-to-day world of the newcomers. Also, while containing positive evaluations of certain non-British groups, namely northwestern Europeans, this literature contains a bias in favour of the British "stock" and Anglo-Celtic mores.

The significant presence of continental Europeans and Asians in Canada by the early twentieth century also prompted studies of specific groups. The English-Canadian literature ranges widely, from the ominous warnings of "race suicide" and "mongrel" populations voiced by bigots like H. Glynn Ward to the far more sympathetic but patronizing and pro-Canadianizing views of social reformers such as J.S. Woodsworth, and to the more sophisticated sociological studies of group settlement and adaptation that began to appear in the 1920s and 1930s. Popular works meanwhile chronicled the hard-working qualities of immigrants, particularly men, and noted the contributions of ethnic groups to Canadian development. Rife with ethnic stereotypes and culturally determinist models of behaviour, such studies can also be read as primary sources documenting how contemporary Canadian perceptions of immigrants were framed by Anglo-Celtic cultural chauvinism.

Despite some differences in intent and emphasis, a pro-Canadianizing and elitist impulse similarly informed the so-called ethnic writers of the 1960s and 1970s. These Whiggish histories of "their own people" had a decidedly celebratory or filiopietistic bent expressed in several ways, including: romanticized accounts of the culture and homelands of origin, culturally determinist characterizations of their people emphasizing their proud, intelligent, and stoic qualities as well as their genius for "success" (variously defined); and catalogues of those members, usually men, who "made it" into Canada's professional, artistic, and business worlds. This literature also reflected the political agendas of writers from various immigrant and ethnic communities, especially Ukrainian, German, and Italian, who were keen to claim founding nation status for their group.

Another tradition is that of amateur genealogists and historians tracing the family tree or reconstructing the local clan or the kin networks of a village or town. A penchant for genealogy has been much in evidence among the progeny of white United Empire Loyalists, keen to establish their ancestors' position among Canada's founding "fathers" and, by extension, their own legitimacy as "true" Canadians. This work is at once valuable and problematic: valuable because of the often meticulous record-keeping involved; problematic because of its myth-making and elitism. By contrast, scholarly work on the Loyalists, including studies of the First Nations and Blacks, has helped redress a popular bias in favour of elite white men and their families. Recent studies also provide careful examinations of the escape and early experiences of the ordinary women and men who figured prominently in these migration streams.

A fourth trend concerns efforts to document newcomers' reception at the hands of the Canadian majority (English or French) and the usually hostile responses that each successive wave of immigrants encountered. Whether the focus is primarily on the adjustment patterns of specific racial-ethnic groups, the rhetoric of social reformers, the pronouncements of public figures, or deportation procedures, this is an impressive body of work that amounts to a scathing indictment of Canadians' treatment of racial and ethnic minorities. However, historians have yet to produce the equivalent of John Higham's pioneering U.S. work, *Strangers in the Land*, a national study spanning a lengthy period (1860-1920) and exploring the shifting targets of American racists, as well as patterns of commonality and difference among anti-immigration advocates. Canadian specialists have tended to focus on anti-immigrant sentiment directed at one particular group, although an exception is Howard Palmer's work on Alberta, itself influenced by Higham. Among the best studies of racism are recent additions to the literature on anti-semitism, and Kay Anderson's *Vancouver's Chinatown*, a sophisticated analysis of anti-Asian racism and racialized discourses. So far, little has been written about Asian Canadians as historical actors rather than as objects of scorn. Nor have the gendered dimensions of anti-immigrant/anti-minority discourses been fully considered. The contrast between the stiletto-wielding young Italian male punk threatening Canadian women and the shawl-draped, plump Italian mother desperate to hide her teenaged daughter from Canadian boys "on the make", is one obvious (and ironic) gender difference that emerges in anti-Italian stereotypes. A gendered perspective might well expose assumptions not readily apparent in discourses regarding the differing privileges and obligations of "ethnic" men and women.

Finally, whether primarily studies of policy-making or settlement, most Canadian ethnic history has treated immigration as a phenomenon involving adults. The slim literature on children has been dominated by scholarly and popular accounts of the British juvenile schemes, of which the best is Joy Parr's *Labouring Children*, a finely textured and gender-conscious analysis of both child-savers and child apprentices. Valuable writings on other ethnic children appear largely as studies of schooling and social reform activities. Other themes central to the social history of youth, such as life-cycle approaches to growing up, courtship rituals, and sport remain insufficiently explored.

IMMIGRANT HISTORY AS SOCIAL HISTORY: NEW TRENDS 1970S - 1990S

Notwithstanding the persistence of certain trends in the field, the character and priorities of Canadian immigration history since the 1970s have undergone profound changes. Indeed, the label, "new immigration history," has been adopted by some to distinguish it from what came before.

As with new labour and women's history, the new immigration history surfaced as a branch of the new social history, with its emphasis on "agency" and doing history "from the bottom up." In Canada, all these branches were heavily influenced by international, and especially, U.S. trends. The new immigration history took its cue from U.S. historians reacting, as we have seen, against the Handlin thesis. Primarily specialists of volunteer immigrants from European rural settings who entered the United States during the industrial years from the mid-nineteenth century to the 1920s, these historians offered several intriguing findings and conclusions. In place of abruptly dislocated rural villagers, they discovered, for instance, artisans, peasants, and labourers responding rationally to the threats that spreading industrial capitalism posed to their customary ways of work and life in the European countryside. Instead of pre-modern peoples whose encounter with the industrial and urban world remade them into modern Americans, the revisionists revealed that Europe's sending villages and towns had not been isolated from "modern" (ie., capitalist) change, and that newly arrived immigrants, rather than abandoning conventional modes of behaviour used them to adapt to urban, industrial life. The paradigmatic shift in writing about North American immigrants is illustrated by two titles typifying old and new perspectives in the field: Handlin's *The Uprooted* (1951) and Bodnar's *The Transplanted* (1985).

While US scholars took the lead in redirecting immigrant history, Canadian historians soon made critical contributions to the field, and there has been considerable exchange among scholars from both countries since the 1980s. Several general approaches have come to characterize recent historical writing. First, scholarship has shifted away from policy, policy-makers, and the views or stereotypes of the host society observers, towards documenting the immigrants' motives, strategies, and lived experiences. "Internal" histories of specific immigrant groups are now emphasized. This involves efforts at reconstructing the material, emotional, and social worlds of immigrants in the old society and the new, documenting the internal dynamics of the ethnic community, and charting the development of ethnic organizations and, for some, the rise of ethnic group identities. The written records of immigrants and ethnic institutions - such as personal letters and diaries, the minutes of mutual benefit societies and ethnic union locals, newspapers, the audit books of remittance offices, and the files of businessmen - became indispensable tools in giving voice to Canadian history's marginalized majority.

For ethnic historians working on the recent past and thus recording living subjects, oral history has become a critical research device. If some have relied too heavily on the oral recollections of their informants in an effort to give them an "authentic" voice, their impulse was decidedly democratic. Oral history did offer a more direct access to the stories of those traditionally silenced. It provided a way of moving beyond the "biased" accounts of "outsiders" into the private and public arenas of immigrants (be it household, church, or union) from the perspective of the "insider." It created the possibility of critically examining the customs,

beliefs, behaviour, and even patriarchal structures of immigrant households and communities in ways that did not “exoticize” the “foreigner.”

As with other enthusiastic advocates of this method, ethnic historians have not always been sufficiently attuned to its attendant problems, including the thorny question: whose stories do they actually “tell” when they reconstruct an oral informant’s narrative? The supposition that they can actually get at the experiences of their subjects has recently come under critical scrutiny. So, too, has the assumption that oral testimonies offer an unmediated text, the subject’s pure voice and unadulterated truth. Feminist scholarship on the rape and torture narratives of women in wartime and in refugee camps has recalled the complex role that memory, self-interest, and self-preservation play in shaping retrospective testimonies as well as the researcher’s intervention in creating the document. Marlene Epp recently observed that it is common for the narrator to relate the experience of torture in the third person, emphatically to deny that she is the victim while providing details that only a victim could know, while describing a situation from which she could not possibly have escaped.

Simply because they belong to the same racial-ethnic group and gender as those interviewed, immigration historians are not immune from these important epistemological and political questions. Still, the validity of oral history is not lessened by its limitations any more than is archival research by the fragmentary and biased character of preserved written records. Both methods require historians to proceed carefully, and humbly, with all the available sources.

As well as emphasizing agency, historians have made the daily stuff of immigrants’ lives the central concern of their project. Far from simply studying private matters and inconsequential lives, this approach asserts that agency is not exclusively the domain of the powerful. Subordinated and disadvantaged groups can also exercise choice, mount resistance (or alternatively, orchestrate their accommodation with the dominant ethos), and wield some power, even if it is local in scope and seriously circumscribed.

Not all immigration specialists would necessarily theorize the concept of agency in precisely these terms - that is, as E.P. Thompson did. Still, case studies conducted over the past twenty years have confirmed, as Roberto Perin nicely put it, that immigrants should be understood as protagonists in the transformative processes in which they were involved. They exercised agency even in exploitative contexts by escaping worsening economic conditions or class tensions in their homeland, by greasing the palms of recruiting agents and shipping captains who profited from the overseas traffic in humans, and by joining kinfolk and co-nationals in low-paid occupational clusters in the new economy. This approach rejects the immigrant-as-victim perspective and is uneasy with models that catalogue push-pull factors or offer reductionist economic explanations of migration, such as the formula that immigration equals the flow of labour to capital. Instead, attention is paid to particular contexts and to the specific motives and resources that led certain individuals and groups, but not others, to migrate or re-settle.

In the course of their work, new immigration historians have given new meaning to immigrant adaptation and adjustment. They have assessed immigrant lives not so much by externally generated and class-biased standards of success (and assimilation), such as high educational levels or entry into professional occupations, but rather, by the immigrants' own standards, including modest workplace improvements, family re-unification, political freedom, homeownership, or even the more vague but equally heartfelt notion of "a better future" for oneself and one's children. It is not that historians should ignore the sociology of immigration, especially as it concerns class stratification, as well as ethnically and racially segmented labour markets. But external standards of success capture neither the richness of ordinary life nor the capacity of disadvantaged people to carve out a niche for themselves in a hostile world.

Some individuals are identified with new and exciting fields of scholarship. They have set parameters and provided intellectual leadership at a critical juncture. The most influential figure in Canadian ethnic history was Robert F. Harney, a US-born, Harvard-trained historian of Italy who later turned to Canadian immigration history and was closely associated with such US revisionist scholars as Vecoli. Harney developed sophisticated and innovative approaches, and his work on labour agents, the commerce of migration, and sojourning is particularly noteworthy. He was successful in obtaining state funds to establish a research institute, archives, and publishing house, the Multicultural History Society of Ontario (MHSO). The MHSO gained an international reputation and became a gathering place for scholarly and educational work on racial and ethnic minorities.

Other major players include Donald Akenson, also initially a historian of Europe (in this instance Ireland). Akenson has renewed scholarly interest in nineteenth-century Irish immigration to Canada, and insisted that we recognize the impact (not merely the cultural adaptations) of the Irish on Canadian culture and society. Employing sophisticated demographic and quantitative methodologies, Irish-Canadian specialists have now punctured popular myths about Ontario's nineteenth-century Irish. As many students can now recount, more Protestants than Catholics arrived in Ontario during the nineteenth century, both Protestants and Catholics were more likely to settle in rural rather than urban areas, and the famine stream represents an aberration with respect to the more typical pattern of volunteer, well-coordinated and largely self-financed migration that came before and after. Still, we need more scholarly work on the famine Irish as well as further serious research on Irish women of any period or migration stream.

Any system of categorization is artificial, but I would suggest that recent historical writing about immigrants falls roughly into three general areas. First, a substantial literature now details immigrant working men's involvement in workplace conflicts, resistance cultures, and politics. While some scholars have written about political conservatives or ideological splits within specific racial-ethnic groups, to date most of the attention has gone to leftists and labour militants. Second, a growing number of immigration specialists have been closely examining

the everyday life of newcomers and their communities, usually by focusing on a single ethnic group. They have highlighted the stability and self-sufficiency of ethnic colonies and, in some cases, emphasized the rise of a collective "ethnic" identity that achieves hegemonic status. Third, the work on immigrant and minority women has dealt largely with issues related to women's paid work, especially as it concerns domestic service, and with labour activists and radicals.

MILITANT MEN: "FOREIGN" ACTIVISTS AND "ETHNIC" RADICALS

Although often interested in similar subjects - immigrant workers, proletarianization, and working-class communities - immigration and labour historians (including feminist labour historians) have been divided politically and intellectually. The 1970s and 1980s, for instance, witnessed animated debates over the primacy of class vs ethnicity, debates that sometimes dissolved into hopelessly dichotomized views of history. Such tensions were reinforced by a mutual distrust between the New Left historians who initiated, nurtured, and dominated the new labour history, and the non-socialist, especially anti-Marxist, conservative ethnic historians. Segregation was reinforced by parallel but separate infrastructures - journals, research centres, conferences - and the presence of charismatic scholars in each field.

Yet the commitment to recover workers' protest and activism created rich opportunities for collaboration. As a result, there emerged an impressive literature encompassing most British, European and Asian groups, individual leaders and rank-and-file workers, as well as single and mixed-ethnic working class communities. The work of internationally renowned labour historians, especially Herbert Gutman's studies of the proletarianization of American farmers and European peasants and artisans in early industrial America, and the patterns of conflict and resistance accompanying that process, has been influential. Canadian works continue to reflect this interest in how immigrants made strategic use of non-industrial culture or pre-migration traditions, including protest traditions, to resist the imposition of New World industrial discipline.

The early writings by new labour historians produced compelling social histories of the Canadian working class in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Scholars stressed the capacity of largely British and English-Canadian artisans and skilled workers - among them shoemakers, printers, and metal trades workers - to resist the industrial regime, struggle valiantly (and sometimes successfully) for workshop control, and provide leadership to an emergent labour movement. Focused on what was essentially an Anglo-Celtic labour aristocracy, these studies were rooted in a sophisticated analysis of class, culture, and, to a lesser extent, gender, yet did not problematize the racial/ethnic identity of their subjects. The new insights of immigration history and race studies, including work on the construction of whiteness in nineteenth-century Britain and

America, might help us to explore whether the image of the Canadian craftsman as a proud holder of a manly culture was as much racialized as a gendered and class-delineated process. Since many of the skills and traditions that informed the craftsman's masculinity and (vulnerable) privilege were transplanted from Britain, we might ask how such men negotiated the migration and resettlement process, what roles did their wives and children play, and whether an individual's skills and traditions underwent modification in Canada. More specifically, we might consider how race/ethnicity informed their class and gender identities: how would their Englishness or Scottishness affect our understanding of these men and their worldview? Does Irishness complicate the picture? Was their class perspective informed by notions of British manhood, the British race, imperialism, and/or jingoism? Although British and English Canadian artisans did draw upon imperialist metaphors and contrasting images of free (manly) versus slave labour, the racialized context of these and other constructs critical to the early labour movements should be further explored.

From the start, the new labour history was more diverse than is suggested by its early association with artisans. Historians of the 1970s and 1980s were particularly attracted to the nineteenth-century Irish working classes. Influenced by Clare Pentland's pioneering analysis of Irish workers as Canada's first industrial proletariat, they documented the work experiences, class conflicts, violence, and resistance cultures of Irish (male) workers. Very recent work, including Peter Way's *Common Labour*, suggests the real possibilities of applying to them a race analysis, in this instance, the construction of "Irishness," and an analysis of masculinity. The conflicts between Orange and Green have given rise to contrasting analyses, including Kealey's class perspective on the ritualized character of the violence, Houston and Smyth's depiction of the Orange Order as a fraternal lodge, and Scott See's race-based interpretation of nativist campaigns in New Brunswick.

Beginning in the 1980s, ethnic and labour historians uncovered a lively history of non-British immigrant militancy and radicalism, particularly from 1880 to 1930. Earlier, conventional stereotypes of "foreign" (non-English-speaking) workers as "unorganizable" - that is, as suffering from false consciousness on account of their commitment to ethnic rather than class loyalties, or as easily duped by employers and conservative, ethnic elites - were superseded by more complex portraits. By this time, a debate had emerged among North American scholars over the relationship between class consciousness and ethnic identity. On the one hand there were those, such as the US radical historian Gabriel Kolko, who stressed the fragmentation of the early twentieth-century working class that derived from sojourning (ie., successive waves of temporary workers) and ethnic cleavages. In response, various US and Canadian scholars pointed to the traditions of European radicalism brought by immigrants to North America. These studies showed that immigrants could simultaneously display class consciousness and a deep commitment to ethnic identity.

In tackling this theme, different approaches were adopted. Some historians focused on the militance of a single group that dominated protest and unionism

within a specific industry. Representative of this trend is Ian Radforth's study of the northern Ontario logging industry, where Finns led the union struggles from the First World War until the 1950s. As with other ethnic groups having a radical constituency, only a minority of Finns had been politicized in the home country; upon arrival in Canada they established an array of cultural, educational, and political organizations. Many apolitical immigrants were radicalized in northern Ontario, Radforth asserts, primarily as a result of two interrelated factors: a growing sense of grievance over their class exploitation and the influence of a lively network of ethnic halls, sports, newspapers, theatre, and co-operatives, run by highly motivated leftists who supplied leadership and organization to disgruntled workers.

Frager's *Sweatshop Strife* traces the rise of a strong leftist movement among Jewish needle trades workers in interwar Toronto which grew out of a vibrant Jewish working-class culture. This movement struggled to improve harsh sweatshop conditions, battle anti-semitism, and bring about a fundamental socialist transformation. Here, too, we see the interplay between highly politicized newcomers, rank-and-file workers who became radicalized as a result of their exploitation, and an immigrant community that provided leadership and support. Whereas most studies of the ethnic left either look at the men or the women, Frager considers both male and female activists, as well as class divisions among Jews in the industry and inter-ethnic tensions among workers.

In the era after 1945, I examined a set of strikes spearheaded by Toronto's Italian construction workers in the early 1960s. In this case, neither a vibrant socialist community nor leftist leaders were present. Rather, thousands of former peasants or semi-skilled village artisans with neither a trade union nor militant background stood behind two charismatic, but authoritarian and virulently anti-Communist, union leaders. The strikes provide an intriguing example of immigrant influence on business unionism: while the workers' job-centred demands fit comfortably with a tradition of bread-and-butter unionism in the building trades, the strikes were given a sharp political edge by controversial leaders, the use of mass rallies and unconventional union structures, considerable picket-line and intra-ethnic violence, defiance of post-war Ontario labour laws, the call of immigrants for rights as Canadians, and numerous jailings and threats of deportation.

Studies of multi-ethnic industries and locales have shown that in particular circumstances, immigrant and Canadian workers could overcome "difference" and launch effective class action. Donald Avery's *Dangerous Foreigners* was a major pioneering work in the history of ethnic radicals and the repressive Canadian state, despite the unduly harsh criticism it received for its heavy reliance on government records and its insufficient coverage of individual militants. Allen Seager's work on Alberta's multi-ethnic mining districts in the Crow's Nest Pass, where radical unions waged bitter union struggles between 1900 and 1945, graphically illustrates how effective cross-ethnic class solidarities could be. The militancy of the Alberta miners, he shows, was rooted in a shared class experience. It was maintained by a "dense network" of ethnic and Anglo working-class organizations,

as well as a hard core of militant trade unionists from a variety of backgrounds who negotiated effective alliances. Significantly, some of these strikes saw British and Canadian workers, not the foreigners, act as strikebreakers. Similar patterns emerge in Patrias' study of a Depression strike launched by an ethnically diverse and largely working-class, industrial community of Crowland (Welland), Ontario. The strike, begun by disgruntled relief recipients, quickly escalated into a community struggle against the Ontario government. In accounting for the remarkable degree of cross-ethnic collaboration, Patrias too stresses the common experience of workplace exploitation and ethnic prejudice, as well as a dense network of ethnic working-class and radical associations. The broad-based nature of the strike, she adds, is suggested by the involvement not only of workers whose politics were normally conservative, but of women and children.

Recently, Gillian Creese has tackled the troubled relations between Asian and Canadian workers. As is commonly known, the Canadian labour movement in the early twentieth century generally pursued a strategy of excluding Asian workers. In British Columbia, where Asians were concentrated, white-dominated workers' organizations often adopted racist positions. In Vancouver, especially those unions that claimed to face direct competition from Asian labour (ie., in garment, laundry and restaurant work) supported campaigns to boycott Chinese businesses, replace Asian with white labour, disallow the employment of white women alongside Asian men, and prohibit further Asian immigration. This behaviour has been attributed to economic factors, namely the fierce competition between higher-waged white and low-waged Asian workers, and the fears that white unionists, including British immigrants who arrived in Canada with fairly high expectations, had of Asians prepared to tolerate sub-standard wages and conditions. Creese, however, has uncovered instances of Asian workers' militancy and of solidarity between Asian and white workers in Vancouver. A strategy of racial solidarity emerged during two brief periods of heightened labour radicalism: the end of the First World War (1917-21) and the Depression. During the first era, Chinese, Japanese, and East Indian workers, usually in combination with whites, participated in a wave of strikes, mostly in the lumber and fishing industries. Such collaboration was even more pronounced during the Depression, when Asian workers were actively recruited as comrades, and some of their issues (equal pay, elimination of the "Oriental" contract labour system) were placed on the white labour movement's agenda.

Until recently, workers who did not engage in strike action, or who indeed acted as strikebreakers, were largely ignored. However, the work of Craig Heron on steelworkers and Bruno Ramirez on Italian male sojourners in resource and railway jobs provide sound structural and cultural explanations for the apparent disinterest of European workers, especially sojourners, in the mainstream Canadian labour movement. They suggest that while migrants were not entirely docile, their commitment to workers' struggles was partly determined by their limited exposure to Canadian workplaces and workers, as well as their relative absence from the better skilled and thus more protected jobs. As sojourners bent on returning home with a nest egg and as highly dispensable workers in a

constantly replenished labour market, some chose to protest exploitative conditions by leaving them behind.

Scholars have also demonstrated that workers deemed by outsiders to be unskilled possessed critical if more specialized skills from which they could derive considerable manly pride. This suggests that "manliness" was not the exclusive property of the most highly skilled. But just as the earlier work on artisans' "manliness" ignored their "Britishness," these studies make no explicit effort to link masculinity or the crisis of masculinity to ethnicity. This is true in terms of not only the labour process, but Old World cultural values, pre-migration traditions of male sojourning, male breadwinning and so on, and the way such patterns were contested, preserved and modified in the new world context. An exception is Harney's "Men Without Women", which offers an intriguing exploration of masculinity among non-British, low skilled "foreign" workers. Such men struggled to meet the requirements of heterosexual manhood as they understood them, while separated from their families and hometown folk, and while subjected to brutal and potentially brutalizing conditions of the Canadian frontier. By contrast, Anthony Chan's *Gold Mountain*, a study of Chinese workers in British Columbia, describes the bachelor cultures of lone Chinese men - crowded boarding houses, opium parlours, and gambling establishments - but leaves the whole issue of masculinity (and contemporary race stereotypes) unexamined. His work also suggests the need for more rigorous analyses of how the association of Chinese men with "female jobs" (houseboy, laundry worker) shaped their identity as men.

Gender historians have begun to examine the masculinities of immigrant and ethnic men. Parr's *Gender of Breadwinners*, a fine study of gender and work in two industrial towns in southwestern Ontario, considers the inter-play between masculinity, skill, and Germanness among the artisans of the furniture-making town of Hanover, Ontario, 1880-1950. To date, however, much of the work of gender historians interested in exploring such interconnections has yet to be published. Clearly, then, it is time to take another hard look at labouring men and manly militants - everyone from the Knights of Labour to the Wobblies, from the heroes of the nine-hour day campaigns to the conservative trade-union bureaucrats of the twentieth century - with a view to probing the interconnections between class, race-ethnicity, and gender.

FROM THE INSIDE OUT: IMMIGRANT COMMUNITY STUDIES

In recent years, scholars have rightly urged that greater attention be paid to the links between workers and families, households, and neighbourhoods. They have stressed the need to document the daily activities and struggles of workers and members of working-class families to achieve a modicum of security in a patriarchal, capitalist society. Bettina Bradbury's *Working Families* shows how

sophisticated methodologies combined with thoughtful, gendered analyses, shed much light on working people's lives. Ethnic historians have not addressed sufficiently the gendered nature of work and family life, but the community approach adopted by many has enormously increased our knowledge of immigrant workers' lives outside the workplace, especially those non-militants rarely given a face in labour histories. Recent works have focused on rural contexts, complimenting urban-based studies largely concentrated on Montreal and Toronto. The overall emphasis of these case studies has been on the community's gradual but successful adaptation to the new society and on its institutional completeness.

What earlier observers considered to be ethnic ghettos or marginalized and demoralized communities became dynamic colonies of settlement characterized by an associational life, internal class and political divisions, and a decided "ambiance." The emphasis was on the innovative ways in which immigrants recreated cherished as well as useful pre-migration rituals and structures or established altogether new ones. These works highlighted (in some instances, celebrated) the ethnic elites of the immigrant world: the shopkeepers and small businessmen applauded for offering much needed credit to newcomers and for building institutional infrastructures; the steamship agents and other "middle men" who though distrusted or despised were critical links in the commerce of migration; and middle-class intellectuals of various political persuasions who supplied critical leadership to the community's associational life.

These works showed too that within an immigrant community comprised predominantly of working-class and lower middle-class members, the smallest gradations of wealth, education (ie., English-language skills) and status took on enormous significance. Whether single or multi-generational, such studies employed a similar analysis of immigrant adjustment and accommodation: newcomers were neither completely untouched by their adopted country, nor completely remade into Canadians. Rather, a synthesis emerged in the form of the distinct racial-ethnic community. At the same time, however, the character of such studies varied according to whether the emphasis was on working or middle class constituencies, newly arrived "pioneers" or Canadian-born elites, or whether gender relations, class tensions or cross-class ethnic solidarities were stressed, and so on.

Despite its great merits, such literature has suffered from some excesses and distortions, even when we confine ourselves to the most sophisticated historical monographs. Historians have been overly zealous to celebrate agency, resiliency, and immigrant success; in short, to transform immigrants into heroes. This has resulted in a steady stream of case studies that downplay or entirely ignore the ways in which the state, class position, racism, patriarchy, and other structural and cultural barriers can seriously curb choice and, in many instances, create insurmountable barriers. In presenting respectable portraits of immigrants, comparatively little attention is paid either to the tragic casualties of the migration process - the deserted wives of the old village who "waited" for their men in "America" to return home or call them over, the men dead or permanently handicapped by

unsafe and poorly paid jobs, the women and children who lived in terror of an abusive husband, boarder, neighbour or employer - or the emotional and psychological scars born by even the more successful immigrants. The "rags-to-riches" narrative that permeates these histories, as Harney observed, also creates the false notion that Canada is the sum of all its ethnic groups (and their respective experiences) and that immigrants who genuinely exploit Canadian opportunities inevitably achieve success. The immigrant experience, however, like human behaviour generally, is really many diverse experiences and responses; it is a social phenomenon shot through with such a multiplicity of meanings that it cannot adequately be captured by the dichotomy: agent versus victim. Without wholeheartedly embracing discourse analysis or an "unholy" marriage between it and more traditional Marxist approaches, I feel that we should explore frameworks that probe dialectical tensions, and capture rather than downplay seemingly contradictory and "uneven developments," to use Mary Poovey's phrase.

Charting the rise of cohesive, self-supporting communities has led to other problems. One can detect a Whiggish and linear quality to this analysis: with time, cohesive societies and an ethnic identity inevitably develop out of clusterings of newcomers. Some studies seriously downplay political, class, gender, and other differences even while these are identified. Such approaches can take different forms. First, as Carmela Patrias has observed, much of the North American literature on ethnic associational life has suggested that immigrant mutual benefit societies, reading clubs, and so on, were autonomous institutions initiated exclusively by workers. Such a perspective ignores the often critical role played by local elites (of varying political persuasions) who helped create them, and who benefited from them. Few studies examine the nature and repercussions of such tensions, but two exceptions include Orest Martynowych's *Ukrainians in Canada: The Formative Years 1891-1924*, the best recent work in the field of Ukrainian-Canadian studies, and Patrias' *Patriots and Proletarians*, which explores the class dynamics and political tensions in Hungarian Canadian communities during the interwar period.

This tendency towards homogenizing immigrant experiences has led to the implicit or explicit assumption that male elites - the men who emerge as the ethnic community's public figures, institution-builders, and spokespeople (self-proclaimed or otherwise) - genuinely represent the community. The association of an ethnic identity with the rhetoric and actions of ethnic elites shapes the analyses of some early works, which in places become mere catalogues of ethnic organizations and their executives. But this thread also runs through more sophisticated histories, including John Zucchi's pioneering work on Toronto's Italians. Zucchi is in fact careful to identify the various constituencies that comprise the city's early Italian communities - for example, workers, clerics, small businessmen, pro- and anti-fascists. He also shows the class and cultural divide separating newly arrived immigrants from "their" clerics. Yet his stated intention is to trace the "development of a national identity." It remains unclear whose identity is being documented.

In seeking to rescue immigrant communities from ghetto or marginal status, Canadian and U.S. revisionists have in some cases also produced quite insular portraits of ethnic communities. We know that no immigrant enclave is ethnically or racially homogeneous, and that immigrants inevitably come into contact with "others." Many immigrants in fact lived outside the mainstream ethnic community, either by choice or circumstance. But few recent studies explore such patterns, and few Canadian works look at the relations between racial-ethnic groups, a notable exception being Harold Troper and Morton Weinfeld's examination of Jewish-Ukrainian relations in the context of Nazi war criminal investigations. Similarly, few studies consider the complex nature of the encounters between immigrants and members of the host society: medical and public health officials, social workers, union officials, factory managers, school teachers, family court magistrates, and neighbours (Canadian and immigrant alike). Immigrant life is made richer when the range and interplay of forces are considered. Exploring such relations can enable us to move beyond the public face of ethnic communities. As Miriam Cohen observed, historians of women and the family have persuaded us that analysing the connections and intersections between public institutions and private lives leads to a fuller understanding of everyday life. The schooling patterns of immigrant children, for example, could reflect as much the intrusion of the state into family life as the particular strategies of immigrant families, and usually reflects an interplay of these and other factors. Recent work on the impact of the welfare state in women's and workers' lives, including Linda Gordon's impressive study of family violence and child protection agencies, points to the profoundly gendered, racialized, and class-based character of these encounters.

The issue of gendering immigrant life and ethnicity represents a truly serious challenge to the new immigration history. Most recent studies offer at best a gendered approach to family only when documenting the sexual division of labour in the (usually rural) pre-migration household. That perspective is often lost once the immigrants make the ocean voyage, and the focus shifts to the public worlds inhabited by men.

This continuing neglect is particularly ironic given the emphasis that the new immigration history has placed on the role of family, household members, and kin networks in the emigration and resettlement process. Some historians have obscured women's lives even while they extolled struggling immigrant families. They talked of the family decision to emigrate, the family's work ethos, and the familialist values of immigrants without really exploring how members negotiated such decisions and values. They talked of the flexible family capable of withstanding capitalist and other pressures, but entirely ignored feminist insights regarding gender and power dynamics within families and households. The family thus becomes reified; it is presented as a unit rather than a collection of people (with differing interests and influence); it is credited with ensuring the greatest (and equal) good for all its members. Few historians have treated the family as an arena of multiple relations, usually between members with unequal power. The argument, echoed in many immigrant histories, that ethnic families

were characterized by a corporatist work ethos that bound the members of the household together does not mean that the family was necessarily an egalitarian institution. We know otherwise: the family was a contested terrain. It could be simultaneously a site of support and oppression, particularly for women.

In her review essay, "Immigrant Women: Nowhere at Home?" Donna Gabaccia has similarly observed that only a minority of ethnic community studies in US historiography treat women's lives seriously. Those that do tend to focus on those forms of public behaviour that most closely correspond to male activity, especially wage-earning patterns, workplace employment, and labour activism. The second observation applies equally to Canada. Neglected or ignored in Canadian ethnic community studies are precisely those phenomena, such as childbearing and rearing, housework and other forms of reproductive work, that are specific to women. Gabaccia suggests that in part this absence can be attributed to the assumption that such "female" behaviour had little direct impact on immigrant community life, as defined by public activities, organizations, and institution-building. Even among ethnic historians who argue that family concerns were as central to immigrant men's as women's lives, the focus remains on men and community. Without altogether abandoning the community study, which has yielded important results, historians should seek not simply to incorporate women's so-called private matters, but to examine the interplay and interconnections between private and public behaviour for both men and women. This is precisely the strength of Royden Loewen's recent book on Mennonite communities in Manitoba and Nebraska: women's reproductive lives, farm roles, religious worldview, and encounters with urban and secular forces are integrated into his multi-generational analysis of patterns of change and continuity. In short, it would prove useful to redefine our working notions of community life (ethnic or otherwise) so as to give credence to the everyday concerns and actions of women.

IMMIGRANT WOMEN: INSIDE AND OUTSIDE FAMILY CONTEXTS

In contrast to community studies, some works treat women as a separate subject of analysis, generally highlighting the distinctive features of women's lives. This literature has been dominated by two major themes related to work and working-class issues and concerning women who were in some important respects exceptional: domestic servants and labour activists. Of course, some groups, such as the interwar Finns studied by Varpu Lindstrom, were both domestics and defiant. Other themes in this scholarship include the homesteading activities of pioneer women in the Canadian west and the volunteer works of women within their respective ethnic colony. Still, immigrant maids and ethnic activists have been the subjects of the greatest attention and some of the best social history on Canadian immigrant women.

Domestic service, especially its exploitative features, has long interested Marxist, labour, and women's historians in Canada. This broad historical literature reveals several shifts in focus and approach. An earlier preoccupation with recruitment and domestic training schemes gave way to the class experiences and perspectives of the immigrant domestics, paralleling the general shift from outsider to insider perspective in immigrant history. The voluminous records of government- and company-sponsored schemes enabled scholars to examine the biases and implementation of immigration policy. The sources that were especially valuable to women's history, namely diaries, letters, and, where applicable, oral testimonies, were mined to try to get at the immigrant's perspective. Such changes in focus can be discerned in the work of Marilyn Barber, Canada's foremost historian of immigrant domestics.

A second and related shift concerns the racial-ethnic composition of Canada's immigrant female domestic workers from the nineteenth century to the present. Once concentrated on British women arriving during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the literature now relates to continental Europeans, including recruits from Displaced Persons camps after 1945, as well as more recent arrivals from the West Indies and South East Asia. Case studies have sought to uncover the ways in which immigrant domestics encountered discrimination and exploitation, how they found ways of adapting to and challenging their conditions, and, how domestics of colour have sought to challenge official restrictions on permanent settlement. The research of historically-minded social scientists and feminist race scholars, such as Agnes Calliste, Mikeda Silvera, and Roxanna Ng, has been particularly important. The contrasting and conflicting images in the literature on domestic service, ranging from unmitigated drudgery to desirable employment, reflect not so much the scholars' differing political or theoretical positions, (many of them in fact share a pro-feminist, pro-labour and anti-racist perspective), but, rather differing disciplinary concerns. Social scientists have primarily wanted to delineate the exploitative features of domestic work, while historians highlighted the (admittedly limited) agency of immigrant women as they negotiated the demands and constraints of the job.

Notwithstanding this excellent work, historical treatments of immigrant domestic workers are wanting in several respects. Scholars have tended to focus on the perceptions of the "mistress" toward her "servant", or, more commonly, the domestic's (usually grim) depiction of working conditions, exposing "hidden" class, race and sexual exploitation. A further examination of the interactions between foreign maids and the various women and people they served in a household, however, might well produce rich histories of everyday life. Barber's recent pamphlet on Canada's immigrant domestics should also encourage more comparative studies of maids, both foreign- and Canadian-born. In all this, we should not lose sight of the fact that the experiences of immigrant domestics was different from the majority of women who entered Canada under various family classification schemes (that usually regarded fathers/husbands as the bonafide immigrant) and who settled within family units. Domestic servants were targeted by the state and employers as highly desirable workers and they migrated as lone (though not

necessarily unmarried) women in the company of other women. Other female migration movements, including prostitution rings, have received less attention. Parr has studied a group English hosiery workers recruited for Ontario cotton mills. These women were even more unusual than domestics in that they were highly skilled industrial workers.

Women in radical and labour politics were also exceptional. Since the 1980s, labour and ethnic historians and sociologists writing from a socialist-feminist perspective have uncovered ethnic women involved in strikes and trade unions, as well as left-wing political parties and organizations. Most of these scholars have sought to incorporate the political views and activities of ethnic women into their general or national histories of Canadian radical women. A minority, including Frager and Lindstrom, used specific foreign-language sources to uncover the ideological underpinnings of the "woman question" and to discover the female presence on the ethnic left. Frances Swyripa's impressive *Wedded to the Cause*, a multi-generational and national study of Ukrainian-Canadian women's organizations, stands alone in its efforts to examine both left-wing and right-wing ethnic women within the paradigm of class, gender, and ethnicity. The recovery of such strong, assertive, and defiant women who dared to challenge the capitalist patriarchal order, and even their male comrades, undermines popular and erroneous stereotypes of female immigrants as necessarily more submissive than native-born women. But the specific racial and ethno-cultural context in which foreign-born women in Canada joined and critiqued the left needs more attention. Culturally determinist generalizations about the "natural" propensity of highly radical ethnic groups such as Finns for socialism and feminism may not go far enough. We need to develop frameworks that deliberately emphasize the multiplicity of influences, multi-layered meanings, and even contradictory behaviour engendered by the fact of being a leftist immigrant woman within a male-dominated movement in a foreign (and probably hostile) country.

In addition to portraits of interesting women (and, I might add, of heterosexual couples and coupling within the left), these historians also contributed to an international debate concerning the relationship between socialism and feminism. Most argued that the socialist (or communist) analysis of class relations offered the possibility of a feminist critique of women's position and a platform for women's rights including issues such as birth control, day care, and equal pay. They showed that the very process of women's political mobilization within the left facilitated, indeed required, the breaking down of traditional female roles, and they documented the discourses and actions of women, especially among the intelligentsia. Like her colleagues, Frager carefully detailed the activities of rank-and-file women, in this instance, left-wing Jewish in Toronto. But her evidence led her to support the opposing side of the debate: the preoccupation with class oppression and class struggle was so pervasive as to preclude a rigorous analysis of women's oppression as women. While this activism reflected a deep-seated pride in their assertiveness and commitment to the dual struggles against class oppression and anti-semitism, these women did not develop a significant feminist critique of their workplace, family, or the Jewish labour movement. Nevertheless,

Frager reveals that their participation in union and radical campaigns necessarily challenged traditional gender roles. She thus suggests that the concept of gender role-elasticity - the stretching of traditional gender roles - might be more useful for probing such women's lives than the desire to track socialist feminist "pioneers".

The vast majority of "unexceptional" immigrant women have been the focus of a smattering of articles and collections of essays on individual groups. (An innovation in oral history projects, such as Paula Draper's work with Holocaust survivors, includes the use of audio-video tapes.) While some authors concentrate on the domestic worlds of immigrant housewives, others have documented the cultural and educational activities of women determined to ensure the "ethnic cohesion" of their community. Historians as well as social scientists have also concentrated on the paid labour of immigrant women, especially married women, in the Canadian labour force after 1945, focusing on macro-analyses of labour force participation, workplace experiences, or women's contributions to family economies.

Like the literature on domestic servants, this work has been written by specialists employing different analytical approaches. Heavily influenced by the family strategies and community focus of the new immigration history, historians have emphasized women's varied contributions to resettlement, the cultural adjustments of families, and the connective life of the ethnic community. Thus, while women receive separate treatment, the primary concern is with family and community cohesion. That concern reflects the new immigration historians' determination to revamp earlier, depictions of immigrant families and communities as pathological and also to highlight the role of women as resourceful players in both contexts. Nevertheless, it can have the unfortunate result of reducing immigrant women to connective tissue holding together family, kin, and ethnic community, while their daily experiences and desires remain insufficiently explored.

By contrast, social scientists (writing about the period after 1945) have drawn on the more explicitly feminist, class- and race-based theories developed particularly within sociology and Women's Studies. Hence, the greater attention paid to domestic violence, illiteracy, and lack of access to industrial training programs, ghettoization in low paying, dead-end female jobs, and racism. The most graphic illustration of this approach is the triple oppression model that informs the work on immigrant and minority women here and in the United States. Attempts to discern the ways in which minority women have been oppressed as immigrants, women, and workers reveals the structural determinants of their oppression, specifically the racial and gender inequities of the labour force of advanced industrial economies. This literature and feminist theory in general serve as a valuable check on the unbridled use of the concept of agency and on naive depictions of co-operative family units in ethnic history. Yet, the almost exclusive emphasis on victimization will leave many social historians, and students of women's history in particular, unsatisfied. Such depictions of immigrant women fail to

consider whether the women themselves perceived their lives as totally bleak and preclude any discussion of agency. It will not be easy to resolve this victim versus agency conundrum, but one place to start is with more rigorous and closely textured analyses of the dialectical interplay between agency and oppression that has shaped minority women's lives. Arguments about the centrality of family to their lives, for example, need not lead to simplistic conclusions about ethnic women's truncated identities or their incapacity for emancipation. Nor should they obscure the complex power dynamics and multiple relationships that helped shape family life and women's lives in particular.

Whatever the perspective, the historical works on Canada's immigrant and ethnic women have focused on their paid and unpaid labours and their (complicated) relationship to family and the family economy. As a result, other aspects, such as their sexuality, have been ignored. In contrast to the United States, Canadian scholars have remained largely silent on the leisure and popular culture of immigrant women. Also, studies of working-class immigrant women, such as the Italians, have only awkwardly incorporated anecdotal bits about the role that visionary dreams, premonitions, folk remedies, and even gossip played in cultivating immigrant women's culture. Because of the continuing neglect of second generation ethnic women we do not know how young women (and, for that matter, young men) negotiated their sexuality in the context of two cultural worlds that could prescribe conflicting rules about sex, marriage, manhood, womanhood, and family. Gay histories of racial-ethnic men and women are sure to break new ground in this regard. Given the slim scholarship on Canada's immigrant and ethnic women, especially in contrast to the US, it seems premature to advocate synthetic overviews of immigrant women. Much more detailed analysis of specific groups of immigrant women needs to be done, but we could also benefit from comparative studies of immigrant women from differing backgrounds.

Not only is it time, then, to expand the scope of immigrant women's history, but also to rescue it from its second-class status within the larger field of Canadian women's history. To be sure, Canadian women's historians have been especially sympathetic to the field and feminist ethnic historians have found them to be critical allies. This support is crucial for feminists working in sub-fields other than women's history especially when such feminists challenge the comfortable parameters of those areas. The negative reactions of some colleagues to recent research on wife abuse and family violence in immigrant communities brought this point into sharp focus. Fears that studies of immigrant male violence and ethnic criminality might encourage age-old racist views about immigrant men is understandable. After all, ethnic historians of both sexes have spent two decades debunking myths that have unfairly branded foreign-born and minority men as more prone to violence and sexual assault than their Anglo-Celtic, North American counterparts. Furthermore, as women of colour note, feminist arguments about the necessarily oppressive character of the family ignore the supportive role that family can play for minority women braving a racist society. The answer, however, hardly lies in silencing the history of domestic violence

within immigrant households or the lives of abused immigrant women.

Support by historians of Canadian women for scholarly work in ethnic women's history, however, has not yet translated into a full integration of the two fields. On the one hand, immigrant histories of women remain largely specialized works on particular groups undertaken as projects of historical recovery. As such, they contribute much to our growing knowledge of certain immigrant women and groups, but shed little light on the relationship of racial-ethnic women to larger historical processes, events, and patterns. Also, as Ruth Pierson has observed, works on immigrant and minority women, like those on lesbians, appear in separate anthologies and are not well integrated in the work of mainstream Canadian women's historians. Critical debates that for two decades have preoccupied Canadian feminist historians - regarding gender formation, women's bodies and sexuality, life cycle approaches, politics, class etc - generally have not been directly informed by the perspectives and experiences of minority women who stood outside the mainstream of English- or French-Canadian society. Although illuminating, even the few works dealing with Native, Asian and other minority female prostitutes who came under the moral regulation of the state, do not "centre" immigrant and minority women's experiences.

However, recent work in the field, itself characterized by an increasing interest in "difference" between and among women from varied backgrounds, along with the early output of feminist gender historians, holds real promise for a more integrative women's history in Canada. As well, research conducted by women's historians on new themes such as suburbanization, consumerism, and the delivery and administration of health and welfare services, is integrating immigrant and minority women and contributing to the debate on race and ethnicity. Recent documentary collections, anthologies, and surveys in Canadian women's history have made diversity a central organizing framework for everything from work and education to politics and motherhood. As the recent work of feminist historians illustrates, court case files, trial transcripts, and other legal records have proven particularly rich not only for developing a Canadian history of sexuality, crime, and gender relations, but for uncovering the role of immigrant and minority women in these histories. Indeed, feminist historians drawing on such records have offered sophisticated considerations of race-ethnicity as a historical category of analysis in women's history. In Constance Backhouse's *Petticoats and Prejudice*, the varied legal predicaments of Black, Métis, French Canadian, and English-Canadian women who came before the law in nineteenth-century Canada are interwoven into the author's gendered analysis of criminal prosecutions. Dubinsky's important study of gender conflict in rural and small-town Ontario, similarly reveals a sensitivity to class and racial-ethnic differences, while Carolyn Strange's *Toronto's Girl Problem* expertly employs the class/race/gender paradigm in her analysis of urban wage-earning women in a turn-of-the-century industrial city.

Conclusion

Historical writing about Canada's immigrants has had a long and rich history, but there remains a considerable list of individuals, groups, and events that deserve their historians. Not only do we need more specialized studies of less known immigrants and immigrant communities, but we need comparative analyses of immigrants and rigorously gendered analyses of ethnic politics and activism, marital relations, households and family life, workplaces, and communities. This booklet is inspired by a vision (however hazy) of a more inclusive and synthetic treatment of immigrants and minorities and of race-ethnicity in Canadian history. It is a call for a more integrative approach to the study of immigrants, one in which the interconnections of class, gender, and race-ethnicity are considered not as fixed and immutable entities but as processes - processes that in some contexts might act in concert, mutually reinforcing each other, but at other times impose contradictory influences on women's and men's and girls' and boys' lives. To do so will require considerable work and certainly far more exchange between various historical sub-fields and different disciplines relating to immigrants and minorities. The paper calls for the gendering of immigrant life; it also advocates that historians of workers, women and the family take seriously the diversity of Canada's peoples. It calls for more rigorous analyses of racialized discourses and the immigration reception activities of Canadian reformers; it also advocates that our studies of racism/nativism take serious account of the hostile relations among and between immigrants and minorities.

We need to continue to enlarge the parameters of what constitutes immigrant history, to push and pull at the boundaries which in the last twenty five years have defined the field - the well-adjusted families, hardworking ethnics, and cohesive communities - and begin to include the very people, events, and processes that do not fit comfortably into the current frameworks but nevertheless belong in any synthetic history of immigrants and minorities: the criminals and the mentally anguished, the victims of crime and violence, and inter-ethnic racism. Finally, we need to explore ways of writing the history of immigrants and minorities in Canada that do not affirm immigrant status as *othered*. Canada is an immigrant nation, whose very foundations as a white settler society were forged in racism and the subjugation of native peoples and whose multi-ethnic and multi-racial reality has long been a critical factor influencing economic, social, intellectual, cultural and political developments. All Canadian historians therefore need to ask serious questions not only about the particular experiences of certain immigrants and minorities but also about how we can fully integrate race and ethnicity, majority and minority lives, into all of our analysis of the Canadian past.

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