

Kostiainen, Auvo, ed. 2014. *Finns in the United States: A History of Settlement, Dissent, and Integration*. East Lansing: Michigan State University Press. 342 pages. ISBN: 978-1-61186-106-8.

Over the past 100-plus years, Finnish-American history has been written from a variety of perspectives, whether focusing on a geographical area, a political or religious orientation, or a particular span of time. Often documented by authors from within the Finnish-American community, these histories have served over time to continue to inform academics and members of the ethnic group itself. Beginning in the 1970s, examination of Finnish-American social history reached its stride with the establishment of the FinnForum conference held every several years and resultant conference publications that covered the breadth and depth of the field at various junctures. Much as the early seminal publications of FinnForum proceedings have done, *Finns in the United States* seeks to bring Finnish-American studies up to date, providing fresh views of time-honoured subjects in the field as well as explorations of new or neglected topics.

This volume delivers a well-unified history of Finnish-American immigration and community life through the diversity of perspectives it offers. Bringing together the voices of twelve scholars of Finnish-American history, this book not only sheds fresh light on familiar subjects in the field, but it also uncovers marginalized and more recent developments within Finnish-American ethnic studies. As Jon Saari highlights in his introduction, *Finns in the United States* may be part of the last glances back to the immigrant and early ethnic generations before the entry into a “more inclusive” post-ethnic culture (11). For the senior scholars involved in this project, many of whom have retired their academic posts in recent years, this work may indeed contribute to their own last looks back. For some of the book’s contributors, however, these explorations present the possibility that Finnish-American ethnic studies will still yield interesting works at least through the course of their careers.

The book is divided into nine parts meant to organize the 21 chapters into topical themes. Introductions written by established scholars Saari and Auvo Kostiainen describe the need for this volume in particular and its placement in the continuum of Finnish-American historiography itself. Part two comprises a single chapter dedicated to the history of the New Sweden colony in present-day Delaware (1637-1655). Part three features chapters focusing on the phenomenon and history of migration to North America, the creation of recognized communities of Finnish immigrants, and Finnish-American identity with relation to racial identity politics in the twentieth century. Part four delves into the formation of institutional hallmarks of Finnish-American culture, including the development of temperance, religious, political, and consumer cooperative institutions over time. Part five explores Finnish expression of ethnicity as evidenced through

educational, cultural, and social institutions as well as through the development of a Finnish language press. Part six brings the experience of Finland-Swedish immigrants into the frame of the book, while part seven reconnects the immigrants to Finland through chapters focused on return migration, visits to Finland, humanitarian aid during the World War II era, and the deportation of Finns. Part eight turns to acculturation, including the placement of 20th-century immigrant families between two cultures, the idea of Finnish immigrants as transnational beings, and the negotiation of Finnish-American and Finnish identities today. Part nine includes a final chapter looking toward the future of the ethnic community, including discussion of the ways in which some Finnish Americans select to realign their identity as simply American and others continue to assert a Finnish or uniquely Finnish-American identity through the maintenance and transformation of expressions of ethnic culture.

This collection of works reflects a great diversity of voices in Finnish-American studies today, including established scholars such as the previously-mentioned Kostiainen and Saari, as well as Keijo Virtanen, Reino Kero, Paul George Hummasti, Arnold R. Alanen, Peter Kivisto, and Mika Roinila; and those who are more recent arrivals to the field including Hannu Heinilä, Erik Hieta, Gary Kaunonen, and Johanna Leinonen. This diversity reveals the level of dialogue within this small scholarly community, nurtured as it is through a very active network of these and other researchers in the field.

Overall, *Finns in the United States* brings the broad field of Finnish-American Studies into the 21st century, picking up where classical works in the field have left off and even re-examining aspects of the community's history and culture in light of new information, perspectives, and academic orientations. This book seeks to create unity even across the diversity of experiences it represents: Finland-Swedes, for instance, who are often separately treated in examinations of Finnish-American ethnicity are featured here. Gary Kaunonen, a researcher more commonly associated with labour history, handles the chapter on Finnish-American religious life. Erik Hieta looks at the variety of reasons for return visits to Finland through the unified lens of travel and travel narrative. Johanna Leinonen, in her examination of Finnish-American family identities in the 20th century, reveals how shifts in migration trends, the gradual disappearance of Finnish-language communities and institutions in the U.S., and even increased English-language study in Finland have influenced these identities and attitudes toward them over time.

The only lack in my opinion is in the area of expressive culture, including folklore and material cultural production, which is also still a fertile area of study with its own active cadre of researchers but which receives extremely sparse attention in this volume. Other recent published works, however, mitigate this deficiency, and, overall, this book is an excellent representation of the field as it stands today. This work is useful to many, including historical and cultural

researchers, students in this field, and even those with a personal or avocational interest in the subject, and I will certainly find it an important addition to my own arsenal of resources on the field.

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