

Alexandru Moscu (Director/Co-Producer) and Joel Geyer (Writer/Co-Producer). *In Search of Freedom: Nebraskans from Latvia*. Nebraska Educational Television Network. Steve Lenzen, GPN, P.O. Box 80669, Lincoln, NE 68501. ½" VHS videocassette, 60 minutes. 1986. Purchase price for institutional use \$50.00 plus \$2.50 shipping and handling. 800/228-4630; 402/472-2007.

Alexandru Moscu and Joel Geyer have produced a program which provides many penetrating insights into the dimensions of ethnicity in the United States. Furthermore they packaged the program in a manner which is not only instructive but also emotionally moving and aesthetically pleasing. The result is a scholarly and artistic gem.

The essential story line involves the more than two thousand Latvians who came to Nebraska in the late 1940s and 1950s. These people were part of the two hundred thousand Latvians who fled their homeland on the Baltic Sea in the face of the Russian takeover at the end of World War II. With the use of historic still shots and moving pictures, the program briefly reviews the political struggles of the Latvian people for independence in 1918.

For a brief time, Latvia was a free country with a constitution which, to a large degree, liberated women as well as religious and ethnic minorities. The Nazis, and later the Russians, brought Latvian democracy to a close, and more than ten percent of the Latvian population sought freedom elsewhere. The immigration of Latvians to Nebraska was greatly facilitated by the Evangelical Lutheran Church. Juxtaposed against the historical film clips are scenes of contemporary Latvian-Americans participating in a Kalpaks' memorial service honoring Latvian World War I heroes. As expressions of their historical heritage, the participants wear Latvian insignia and the minister preaches in his native language. These transplanted Latvians quickly integrated into the social and economic life of America as illustrated by interviews with a minister, a library special collections curator, a professor of language and history, and a weaver who were "displaced persons" following the Second World War. Very high percentages of these people and their children completed college and post-graduate degrees in the United States and pursued a variety of careers. Their old-country nationalism was translated into fierce patriotism and political involvement in the American scene.

Along with this integration, however, the Latvians did not cast off all of their ethnic traditions in religion, language, family values, and the arts. Poignant scenes in the program demonstrate this point: summer culture camps, Latvian choral and dance groups, the teaching of Latvian in Sunday school, bilingual religious services and social gatherings, the baking of specialty foods, and the weaving of fabrics with folk designs which go back centuries if not millennia. Particularly instructive are the comments of a university architecture major who is also the Vice-

President for Youth Activities of the American Latvian Association. As a third generation Latvian, he eloquently expresses the meaning of his ethnic heritage. Even more revealing are the scenes of a pair of young teenage twins at their religious confirmation. These youths articulate a feeling of ethnicity that is much clearer and more enlightened than the words of many academic scholars who pontificate on the subject. The ceremony is more than a religious ritual; it is a confirmation of the Latvian heritage of the two individuals involved, their families, and their friends. The dimensions of continuity and change are graphically illustrated as these people relate their identities across time and space from Nebraska in the 1980s to Latvia of centuries past.

So much for assimilationist theories and the myth of the American melting pot! The paradigm presented in this program is significant beyond Latvian Americans and the two centuries in which they have lived. The dynamics of ethnicity can be compared specifically with other European immigrants who came to the United States in the late nineteenth century and more generally with the recent immigrants from Southeast Asia. The processes are also comparable to ethnicity as maintained among black and American Indian groups through such boundary-maintaining mechanisms such as food, music, dance, visual arts, literature, and religion. Therein lies the great contribution of this program to those interested in the study of ethnicity. *In Search of Freedom: Nebraskans from Latvia*, therefore, is highly recommended for classroom use in ethnic studies courses as well as those in anthropology, sociology, history and allied fields.

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Richard Newman, comp. *Black Access: A Bibliography of Afro-American Bibliographies*. (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1984) xxviii, 249 pp., \$35.00.

Richard Newman, who has previously published a number of bibliographies on various subjects in Afro-American studies, has made an important contribution to that field with his compilation of *Black Access: A Bibliography of Afro-American Bibliographies*, a listing of over 13,000 bibliographies. The book also includes a pleasant and informative introductory essay, "Fifty Years of Collecting," by Dorothy B. Porter, librarian emerita at Howard University.

A topic as large as the sub-title indicates requires that the compiler establish workable and reasonable guidelines, lest the work become so general in scope that it lose its focus and that its usefulness is compro-