

Explorations in Sights and Sounds

life in other southern regions.

Amongst the sordid events which Archer shares, he skillfully intersperses humor to show how black Mississippians weathered the storm of racial injustices, poverty, and segregation during the Great Depression. Uncle Nick's clever boyish exploits included his "ghost" scheme to scare, ridicule, and diminish the effect of KKK members. Other tricks include his snake episode in church and his illegal boating incident on the "whites" only Tchula Lake.

The author revisits his ancestral past by providing accounts of numerous pivotal recollections and important historical facts. This is done through storytelling, which really distinguishes the book. Archer captures the African oral tradition and continues this tradition by using the written word. His great-grandmother told stories of white/black relationships in the south, and these are passed on to the younger generations.

This book portrays an accurate historical and social account of a society blinded by the rigid tenets of its color caste system. The victims are also white farmers and planters who were forced to use racist tactics to maintain a cadre of black workers during the Great Depression. Archer continues to dig deep to locate the sources of the violence and hatred meted out to black people and discovers the racism his ancestors grew to understand and accept, in most cases. His father, mother, and school teacher represent a new generation of black southerners who refuse to settle for less. Education became the means to the end of oppression.

Archer's book is a very introspective autobiographical work dedicated to dealing objectively with relationships in a turbulent and hateful past. This is indeed an excellent source of information for students of African-American history, women's studies, family studies, and American history.

Aloma Mendoza
National-Louis University

Anny Bakalian. *Armenian-Americans: From Being to Feeling Armenian*. (New Brunswick: Transaction, 1993) 511 pp.

Aside from work on the 1915 genocide of Armenians in Turkey and some work on ancient Armenia, there is precious little published work on the Armenian people. Even the Armenian genocide in which 1.5 million of the 2 million Armenians in Turkey were killed has been largely ignored by the world community and was named by one scholar, "the forgotten genocide (Dickran H. Boyajian, *Armenia: The Case for a Forgotten Genocide*, Westwood, NJ: Educational

Book Crafters, 1972). Particularly missing from the scholarship is work about contemporary Armenians in diaspora. Anny Bakalian's book begins to fill that void.

Based on surveys as well as in- depth interviews with Armenian Americans, Bakalian gives us a wealth of information. We learn about Armenian Americans, patterns of church attendance; involvement in politics, both ethnic and "American;" their community involvement, including participation in explicitly Armenian political parties and organizations as well as other, less formal measures of community such as social networks; and their socioeconomic status and ways in which they express their Armenian identity. She tells us that Armenian Americans are not very involved in their churches or Armenian politics, that people feel both institutions are divorced from "present day realities" (91). Armenian Americans are highly educated with 23% graduating from college and 25% with professional or graduate degrees, figures that are twice the national average (68). The resulting incomes are also high with 60% of Bakalian's sample earning \$40,000 or more annually and 18% with yearly salaries of \$100,000 or more (66).

Bakalian's interpretation of this information is, however, limited by her theoretical framework. Using Milton Gordon's "seven subprocesses" of assimilation and Herbert Gans' concept of symbolic ethnicity, Bakalian argues that Armenian Americans' ethnicity is totally voluntary. Being no longer ascripted like that of the immigrant generation, later generations of Armenian Americans like other white ethnics are symbolic ethnics; Armenians by choice—a choice that is seen as totally voluntary, and totally rational. Missing from this analysis is any sense of ethnicity as consciousness or world view; of ethnic identification as the lens through which one sees the world; as the assumptions taken as "natural" but when closely examined may be based in ethnic culture. There is no question that the experience of being an ethnic American is very different from being an immigrant, but it is a mistake to construct the immigrant generation as the "essential" ethnic against which all others are measured. My own research on Armenian Americans reveals that ethnic identification may operate in profoundly complex, often unconscious ways which though not suitable for quantitative measurement may be basic to the ethnic experience. Many of my respondents reported that being Armenian had shaped their lives profoundly even while they eschewed ethnic life. analysis. The last twenty-five years of feminist scholarship has made very clear that in most societies there exists at least some gender division of labor, and women and men consequently experience the world differently. Certainly in the Armenian community, which holds fast to patriarchal gender roles, being an Armenian woman requires something very different from being an Armenian man.

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Also absent from Bakalian's theoretical framework is a gender. Similarly, to be assimilated into the "American" world is to come into another set of gendered expectations. Yet, aside from a few pages about changing family patterns, Bakalian makes no distinction between the experiences of Armenian women and men. Many Armenian American women have told me they are not involved in the community because they feel there is no place within it for them as adult, professional women. Young Armenian women who want to marry and raise children in Armenian homes expressed enormous pain to me about their inability to find Armenian men who treat them as equals. They are consequently faced with the prospect of marrying non-Armenians and compromising their dreams for an Armenian home environment for their children. These voices are also part of the Armenian American experience and must be heard.

Despite these problems, I welcome Balakian's book and it is a must for anyone who is interested in Armenian Americans.

Arlene Avakian
University of Massachusetts

Robert Elliot Barkan. *Asian and Pacific Islander Migration to the United States: A Model of New Global Patterns.* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1992) 280 pp., \$49.95.

Migration in the late 20th century has become increasingly complex. The nature of migration has changed considerably from 1885, when E.G. Ravenstein first enumerated his laws of migration. In contrast to Ravenstein's simple "configurations of internal migration," Dr. Barkan likens modern migration to a jungle gym: If one were to picture an elaborate children's outdoor jungle gym, constructed so that it can be made to undulate gently and gyrate, the analogy would come close to the reality of global migration. As the children decide to climb, several choices confront them in terms of direction and destination, although not all may be equally appealing or accessible. The jungle gym is also made to move somewhat (the instability adding to the adventure), and some paths are blocked by obstacles, others crowded by children who got there first, and on some of the bars are friends offering assistance. One can envision different groups of children venturing on, waiting, turning back, climbing onto other bars, or seeking their goals by other directions, all the time adjusting to the uncertain movements of the whole apparatus. The individual children make their own decisions, but there is a definite collaborative aspect to the process taking place. (22) Barkan sets as a first task updating Ravenstein's laws. After describing