

PREFACE

Encyclopedia of American Immigration is a three-volume encyclopedic reference set that covers the full depth and breadth of American immigration history — from the arrival of early Native American groups, European colonialists, and enslaved peoples from Africa to a broad range of immigration issues from the nation’s founding up to the present day. In addressing all the diverse demographic, economic, legal, political, and social aspects of immigration, the set provides both a comprehensive picture of the role of immigration in American history and contemporary perspectives on modern immigration. It is presented as an accessible introduction to the topic to students of American history and other interested readers.

IMMIGRATION IN HISTORY

A commonplace of American history is the notion that the United States is a “nation of immigrants.” That notion remains accurate, despite occasional objections by anti-immigration “nativist” and white-supremacy groups. The fact is that every person in the country is either an immigrant or a descendant of immigrants. There are no exceptions. When Europeans first arrived in North America during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, they found well-established communities of Native Americans, who by dint of their millennia-long presence on the continent can legitimately be regarded as “indigenous.” Nevertheless, Native Americans were soon outnumbered by immigrants from Europe and the populations of enslaved persons they brought from Africa, and their African American descendants. A similar situation occurred in the southwestern region of North America when longstanding populations of Hispanics in Mexico (themselves the product of Colonial-era immigration) found themselves part of the expanding United States in the mid-nineteenth century as a result of wars and changing borders. As these new Americans of all stripes

spread throughout the growing expanse of the United States, their own descendants would often come to think of themselves as “native” to the country and would sometimes look upon later arrivals as unwelcome newcomers. As articles in *Encyclopedia of American Immigration* richly document, this process has continued into the twenty-first century, with each new wave of immigrants looked upon by many of their predecessors with resentment and distrust. At the same time, those who stand by the notion of a “nation of immigrants” continue to uphold the right of lawful immigrants, citizens and residents alike, to enjoy the full protection of the law and the benefits, and duties, of living in the United States.

The flow of immigrants into North America since colonial times has been continuous but has gone through many shifts — both in the numbers and in the composition of immigrant groups. The first real large waves of immigration began during the mid-nineteenth century and continued into the early twentieth century, bringing millions of Europeans into the United States. A smaller but no less significant wave of Chinese immigrants in the West, from the nineteenth century, contributed to the economy of that region, notably in the building of the railroads. These waves were followed by several decades of relatively slow immigration, but during the late twentieth century, the flow of immigrants again accelerated. The landmark Immigration and Naturalization Act of 1965 moved the nation away from a policy based on national “quotas” and toward a more flexible system based on hemispheric limits and preferences related to spouses and families already living in the United States, and the need for certain skilled workers. Additional laws enacted since then have largely concerned the issue of undocumented immigrants and debates over the economic need for migrant workers (e.g., in agriculture, processing factories, and service occupations) versus the social and legal accep-

“Immigrants in Arizona.” *American Immigration Council*, August 6, 2020, www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/research/immigrants-in-arizona.

Noel, Linda C. *Debating American Identity: Southwestern Statehood and Mexican Immigration*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2014.

Rodríguez, Havidán, Rogelio Sáenz, and Cecilia Menjivar. *Latinas/os in the United States: Changing the Face of America*. New York: Springer, 2008. Emphasizes diversity in Latino communities and assesses its effects.

Sheridan, Thomas E. *Arizona: A History*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1995. Well-researched and comprehensive treatment of Arizona’s full history.

Telles, Edward, and Vilma Ortiz. *Generations of Exclusion: Mexican Americans, Assimilation and Race*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2008. Good investigation of four decades of the Mexican American experience.

ARKANSAS

Significance: Arkansas has experienced less foreign immigration than many other states. Nevertheless, by the late nineteenth century, small groups of immigrants were leaving their cultural and economic marks on the state. During the early twenty-first century, a growing presence of undocumented Latino laborers was fueling a lively and sometimes heated public debate about illegal immigration in Arkansas.

Before the U.S. Civil War (1861-1865), Arkansas’s population was made up mostly of English, Scotch-Irish, and Scottish stock from Kentucky and Tennessee. People of African descent, mostly slaves, also arrived in significant numbers during this period; they constituted about 25 percent of the state’s total population by 1860. Immigration during the antebellum period was slow, however, and Germans—including hundreds of German Jews—constituted one of the largest immigrant groups. In 1833, a planned German colony centered in Perry and White Counties collapsed, but 140 of the Germans remained, providing a support base for postbellum immigrants. German families continued to trickle into Arkansas over the next three decades, and by 1860, 1,143 Germans resided in the state.

As happened in many southern states during the years immediately after the Civil War, many leading Arkansans feared that their state’s small population



State flag of Arkansas, via Wikimedia Commons. [Public domain.]

and lagging rates of immigration were hindering economic development. During the 1870s, the state began to circulate promotional literature abroad and dispatched agents to attract western and northern European immigrants to Arkansas. Such efforts were most successful in attracting more Germans, whose population grew to 5,971 by 1900. Although German accounted for only 0.46 percent of the state’s population, they left an enduring cultural imprint on the state’s landscapes—especially in the scattered agricultural communities they founded in the Ozarks.

Italians were also a small but notable presence in late nineteenth century Arkansas. Indeed, while several Italian agricultural communities appeared in the South during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Arkansas’s Tontitown, founded during the 1890s, was by far the most successful. Small influxes of French, Irish, Czech, Slovak, Syrian, Greek, and even a few Chinese laborers also arrived during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Some of these people were agriculturalists, but many more gravitated toward such population centers as Little Rock and Fort Smith. Overall, however, Arkansas remained a state with few immigrants.

This picture began to change during the late twentieth century. During the 1990s, Latin American—mostly Mexican—workers began rapidly replacing African Americans in the state’s farm labor sector, as well as in poultry and other agricultural product processing plants, construction trades, and light manufacturing. Indeed, Arkansas’s 337 percent rate of increase in Latino population between 1990 and 2000 was one of the nation’s highest. This growth—in large part the result

BILINGUAL EDUCATION ACT OF 1968

Identification: Federal legislation that provided funding to school districts to develop bilingual education programs

Also known as: Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965; Public Law 90-247

Date: Signed into law on January 2, 1968

Significance: The Bilingual Education Act was the first federal legislation to address the unique educational needs of students with limited English-speaking ability (later called “limited English proficient”). It set the stage for further legislation regarding equality of educational opportunity for language minorities.

From 1921 to 1965, immigration to the United States was significantly restricted by the national origin system, which placed a quota on the number of immigrants from any given country. Due to the specifications of the system, immigration from non-European nations was particularly restricted. In 1965, these restrictions were lifted with the passage of the Immigration and Nationality Act. As a result of this new legislation, there was a significant increase in the number of immigrants from non-European countries, which had a profound impact on the face of the nation. The effects of increased numbers were felt in many societal institutions, and new issues arose with regard to integrating this diverse population into society. The education system in particular experienced a significant shift in immigrant composition. Schools were faced with large numbers of immigrant children who did not speak English as their first language.

In 1967, concerned about the academic performance and attainment of Spanish-speaking children, Senator Ralph Yarborough of Texas proposed a bill that would provide assistance to schools serving large populations of Spanish-speaking children. The bill would eventually be passed as an amendment to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 and became officially known as the Bilingual Education Act of 1968. The act in its final form addressed the needs of any child of “limited English-speaking ability” (section 702). Through federal grants, assistance would be

provided to school districts that wished to develop bilingual education programs. Funds could be used for program development and research, staff training, and educational resources. Schools serving high populations of low-income children were to be the primary beneficiaries. The goal was to encourage school districts to incorporate native-language instruction. Participation was voluntary, and the government refrained from providing specific guidelines with regard to the types of programs to be developed.

Although the Bilingual Education Act has been amended several times since its passage in 1968, some of the most substantial amendments were enacted in 1974. These amendments were influenced by a Supreme Court ruling that year in *Lau v. Nichols*, a case initiated on behalf of Chinese students in San Francisco’s schools. Because they had limited skills in English, the students were performing poorly in school. It was argued that they were therefore receiving an unequal education. The Supreme Court agreed, stating that equal educational opportunity consisted of more than just equal educational treatment. The Bilingual Education Act was amended to address these concerns. The 1974 amendments clarified program goals, more clearly defined bilingual education programs, helped to establish regional support centers, and provided funding for efforts to develop the programs (curricula, staff, and research). The amended act provided new grants for technical assistance, special training programs, and a clearinghouse to disseminate information. The criterion that only low-income students could be beneficiaries was removed.

—Amy J. Orr

Further Reading

- Anderson, Theodore. “Bilingual Education: The American Experience.” *The Modern Language Journal* 55 no. 7 (1971): 427-40.
- García, Ofelia. *Bilingual Education in the 21st Century: A Global Perspective*. Hoboken: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008.
- Lyons, James J. “The Past and Future Directions of Federal Bilingual-Education Policy.” *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*. 508 (1990): 66-80.
- Moreno, Jesica. “Benefits of Bilingual Education Programs for Elementary School Students.” *Capstone Projects and Master’s Theses*. Monterey Bay: California State University, 2019.
- Wiese, Ann-Marie, and Eugene E. Garcia. “The Bilingual Education Act: Language Minority Students and U.S.

cause anti-Chinese sentiment was growing within the United States, American participation in the agreement proved politically challenging.

The treaty is named after Anson Burlingame, an American diplomat who served as U.S. minister to China during the 1860s. Because of the respect he earned from the Chinese government, they asked him to lead their own diplomatic mission to the West. The agreement contained a reciprocal provision, which meant that Chinese immigration to the United States would not be heavily regulated. Industrial interests within the United States were strongly supportive of the treaty. The treaty's clause regarding immunities and privileges was strongly endorsed by China in order to prevent discrimination and violence against Chinese living in the United States.

The growing opposition to Chinese immigration was strongest in the western part of the country. American-born workers vehemently objected to the presence of and further immigration by Chinese, whom they perceived as competitors for their jobs. Indeed, anti-Chinese riots occurred in San Francisco in the latter part of the 1870s. In the 1876 national elections, both Democrat and Republican candidates took anti-Chinese immigration stances in their platforms. However, in 1879, when both houses of the U.S. Congress passed a bill to regulate Chinese immigration, President Rutherford B. Hayes vetoed it because it would violate the Burlingame Treaty.

The Burlingame Treaty was eventually annulled by subsequent American legislation. Pressure from various interest groups within the United States led to the



Racist cartoon from *The Wasp*: Chinese immigrants, depicted as pigs, bursting through a gate labeled "Burlingame Treaty" and ravaging a field of crops while Uncle Sam and Columbia watch. A tattered scarecrow represents anti-Chinese labor leader Denis Kearney. Image via Wikimedia Commons. [Public domain.]

ANTI-CHINESE SENTIMENTS AND EXCLUSION LAWS

The anti-Chinese movement, compounded by the economic depression on the West Coast in the last decades of the nineteenth century, contributed to the redistribution of Chinese immigrants. Economic discrimination in the form of special taxes and levies targeted the Chinese. For example, California's foreign miner taxes discouraged Chinese in particular, and an 1870 San Francisco ordinance taxed laundrymen without horses for their delivery wagon. (The Chinese did not use horses, so the law effectively discriminated against them.) Furthermore, anti-Chinese sentiment subjected immigrants and their businesses to violent physical attacks and abuse. The anti-Chinese violence generally took three forms: murder, spontaneous attacks and destruction of Chinatowns, and organized effort to drive Asians out of certain towns and cities.

The series of Chinese exclusion laws effectively banned the entry of Chinese into the United States. The passage of the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act suspended the entry of all Chinese laborers for ten years. Merchants, diplomats, teachers, students, and travelers were exempt, but they still needed documentation. The ban was extended in 1892 and 1902, and made indefinite in 1904. The 1892 Geary Act required all Chinese laborers to register for a certificate of residence. Those who did not register could be arrested or deported. A storm of protest followed, but a test case brought before the U.S. Supreme Court confirmed the constitutionality of the law.

LIVELIHOOD OF CHINESE IMMIGRANTS

During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the laundering business had been a predominant occupation of the Chinese in the United States. After the 1870s, prejudice against Chinese immigrants from American society effectively cut them out of the rest of the labor market. Persecuted and harassed, the Chinese could not find jobs, and they were forced to rely on their own resources. When they were excluded from the gold mines in the hills, they found an equally lucrative gold mine in the city. In setting up laundries, they did not have to seek out jobs in established industries or incur the risk of heavy capital investment. All they needed for the business were scrub boards, soap, irons, and ironing boards. They would canvass a neighborhood, seek out a low-rent location, and open up a business.

Like laundries, restaurants were one of the most important businesses for the Chinese in the United States. Initially, Chinese restaurants started as a service for the bachelor communities of Chinese immigrants in isolated ranches, logging camps, mining towns, and other areas where Chinese men and women were willing to cook. When the eating places that the Chinese had set up for themselves soon attracted a number of outsiders, the Chinese realized that restaurants were profitable business enterprises well suited to their temperament. During the 1890s, Chinese restaurants sprouted in the United States in many places. Most small Chinese restaurants were run as husband-and-wife businesses; the husband served as cook and dishwasher in the kitchen, while the wife worked as waitress, barmaid, and cashier in the front.

The grocery business ranked as a distant third occupation for Chinese immigrants before the 1940s, although it was one of the major enterprises of the Chinese in some southern and western states. Chinese grocery stores provided Chinese ingredients for cooking and other goods for Chinese communities. Unlike the Chinese restaurants, the Chinese grocery stores found their clientele primarily among Chinese and other Asian immigrants. The stores were mostly located in Chinatowns and Asian communities.

POSTWAR CHINESE IMMIGRATION

Anti-Chinese sentiment abated during World War II, when China became a member of the Grand Alliance and public images of the Chinese gradually changed. A more favorable attitude in America toward China and Chinese Americans continued after the war. Facing pressures from the public and other interest groups, Congress repealed a large number of exclusion laws, which for years had denied Chinese Americans fundamental civil rights and legal protection. On December 17, 1943, Congress passed the Immigration Act of 1943 (also known as the Magnuson Act), which repealed all Chinese exclusion laws that had been passed since 1882, permitted Chinese aliens in the United States to apply for naturalization, and allowed 105 Chinese to immigrate annually.

In spite of the repeal of the Chinese exclusion laws, the Chinese immigrant quota designated by the American government was quite low. This figure was one-sixth of 1 percent of the number of Chinese in the United States in 1920 as determined by the census of

1880 until 1920. The two branches of Dutch Calvinist-based New World church denominations were later joined by two more, the Protestant Reformed Church and the Netherlands Reformed Congregations.

By the early twenty-first century, the Reformed Church in America had adopted such typical American Protestant traits as membership in the National Council of Churches and the World Council of Churches, while the Christian Reformed Church continued to emphasize its loyalty to somewhat more conservative practices. One of its distinguishing characteristics is its emphasis on Christian elementary and secondary schooling, rather than public schooling. Its generally conservative position is also exemplified by the fact that well into the twentieth century, Dutch-owned stores in western Michigan closed on Sundays. Moreover, it was not until 2008 that purchasing beer and wine was legal in Ottawa County, Michigan, the home of Holland and Zeeland.

TWENTIETH CENTURY

During the twentieth century, all immigration to the United States was limited by new federal national origin-based quota legislation. Nevertheless, World War II prompted a third and final wave of Dutch arrivals in the United States. Because the population of the Netherlands had suffered so greatly during the war, the Dutch government actively encouraged its own citizens to emigrate. In 1949, it even began offering travel subsidies. That same year, the former Dutch colony of Indonesia won its independence, forcing tens of thousands of Netherlanders who lived there to flee. Of these, about 80,000 refugees came to the United States with assistance of the Refugee Relief Act (1953).

DUTCH IMMIGRANTS TO CANADA

Dutch immigration to Canada has historically been closely tied to Dutch immigration to the United States. A trickle of Dutch immigrants began arriving in Canada during the late eighteenth century. Some of the immigrants simply moved north across the U.S. border because they had been Loyalists fighting on the side of the British during the American War of Independence. By the late nineteenth century, much of the farmland in the United States was either unavailable or expensive, while at the same time the Canadian government was offering free or inexpensive land to new immigrants.

The volume of Dutch immigration to Canada rose after the end of World War II. The Dutch and Canadian governments cooperated to encourage this post-war immigration. Canada was having a labor shortage, while there was surplus labor in the Netherlands. Many new arrivals landed in Canada in family groups, sponsored by relatives who were already settled. Strong Dutch-Canadian communities grew around church membership.

SUMMARY

Historically, the Dutch in North America have focused on theological rather than political disputes, despite the paradoxical fact that three U.S. presidents are direct descendants of the first wave of Dutch immigrants (Martin Van Buren, Theodore Roosevelt, and Franklin D. Roosevelt). The sole exception to this relative lack of political organizing was an effort of Dutch Americans to support the Afrikaner (Boer) republics against Great Britain during the South African (Boer) War of 1899-1902.

A cohesive subculture has continued to exist among some geographically localized descendants of immigrants from the Netherlands. Although the majority of Americans of Dutch extraction have assimilated completely into mainstream Anglo-American culture, some residents of these local communities have preserved and built upon institutions that to a greater or lesser extent relate to the tenets and practices of their Calvinist-inspired religion. A variety of other kinds of ties to the Netherlands continue as well, especially in the form of such tools of communication as newspapers and publishing houses, and even television and radio programming. For example, a western Michigan Public Broadcasting System television station aired a long-running series titled *Thinking of Holland*. Another kind of continuity is represented by the Dutch Immigrant Society, based in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Familiarly known by its initials as "the DIS," it operates charter flights to Amsterdam that are filled with Dutch Americans hoping to rediscover their roots or to visit relatives in the homeland.

The term "Hollander" brings to the foreground a rare example of the negative stereotyping of Dutch Americans. In some contexts "Hollander" has the pejorative meaning of "cheapskate" as exemplified in a phrase such as "Dutch treat." Far more often, stereotypes that refer to the Dutch heritage of some North

Further Reading

- Donalson, Daniel G. *The Espionage and Sedition Acts of World War I: Using Wartime Loyalty Laws for Revenge and Profit*. El Paso, TX: LFB Scholarly Publishing, 2012.
- Kohn, Stephen M. *American Political Prisoners: Prosecutions Under the Espionage and Sedition Acts*. Westport, CT: Praeger, 1994.
- Manz, William H., ed. *Civil Liberties in Wartime: Legislative Histories of the Espionage Act of 1917 and the Sedition Act of 1918*. Buffalo, NY: W. S. Hein, 2007.
- Stone, Geoffrey R. *Perilous Times: Free Speech in Wartime from the Sedition Act of 1798 to the War on Terrorism*. New York: W. W. Norton, 2004.

See also: Alien and Sedition Acts of 1798; Constitution, U.S.; History of immigration after 1891; Immigration Act of 1903; Immigration Act of 1917; Loyalty oaths; Red Scare; World War I

ETHIOPIAN IMMIGRANTS

Significance: After passage of the 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act, Ethiopians became the third-largest national group of African immigrants to immigrate to the United States. Most arrived in the United States after Congress passed the Refugee Act of 1980.

Ethiopia and its people have long held a special meaning in America. Once known as Abyssinia, Ethiopia stood for black pride and black independence as far back as the 1760s. Already possessing strong biblical associations, the name “Ethiopia” became an iconic symbol of African independence throughout Europe’s twentieth-century colonization of Africa. Some educated African American slaves such as the poets Phillis Wheatley and Jupiter Hammon occasionally identified themselves as “Ethiopians” during the era of the American Revolution. The tendency of black intellectuals to describe themselves as “Ethiopians” stems from the European custom—derived from biblical usage—of applying “Ethiopian” to all peoples from the African interior. This usage, which dates back to the ancient Greeks, can make it difficult to separate immigrants from the actual Northeast African nation of Ethiopia from the masses of African Americans.

The first Ethiopian immigrants to reach North America probably arrived as slaves sometime during

the seventeenth century. However, the bulk of voluntary immigrants to the United States came after 1974, when a repressive regime toppled the ancient monarchy and took control of the Ethiopian government. The ensuing exodus from Ethiopia, a landlocked nation on the northeastern Horn of Africa, resulted from political turmoil as well as famine and drought. Many refugees fled initially to settlement camps in the neighboring Sudan before moving on to the United States. Impoverished, the Sudan offered few economic opportunities, while the United States held out the hope of a prosperous future. Until Somalis surpassed them in 1994, Ethiopians were the largest group of Africans to immigrate under the provisions of the Refugee Act of 1980.

Ethiopian immigrants to the United States have differed from many other immigrant ethnic groups in that they typically arrived with a basic command of British English and tended to settle in disparate neighborhoods, instead of gathering in ethnic enclaves. The consequent lack of cohesive immigrant communities has complicated their efforts to maintain language and cultural ties to their homeland. Also, racism has been a new experience, with many exposed to the color line for the first time in the United States.

Most Ethiopian immigrants are Coptic Christians and Muslims, and their religions have served as sources of comfort in the New World, with churches and mosques serving as community centers, health centers, and social services providers. During the early twenty-first century, the population of Ethiopia was almost evenly divided between Christians and Muslims, a split that is reflected among the immigrants to America. Ethiopia has also long had a significant Jewish population, but most of its Jews emigrated to Israel, while the bulk of other refugees fled to the United



Flag of Ethiopia, via Wikimedia Commons. [Public domain.]

scuttled. Some of the Filipino workers also became involved in union organizing, which provoked some agricultural enterprises and other employers to call for their expulsion. In the meantime, some U.S. cities, notably in California, became home to sizable communities, with dance halls, restaurants, Roman Catholic churches, grocery stores, churches, clothing stores, and other shops.

The Filipino Repatriation Act of 1935 followed the Tydings-McDuffie Act (known officially as the Philippine Independence Act), which was enacted on March 24, 1934. The Tydings-McDuffie Act established the Philippines as a commonwealth and provided for self-government, to be followed by Filipino independence after ten years. Actual independence was delayed two years by World War II. The law was passed after Philippine political activist Manuel L. Quezon (after whom the Philippines' former capital city was named) led a Philippine Independence Mission to Washington, DC, to advocate for his country's independence.

In a bow to the nativist lobby, the Tydings-McDuffie Act also reclassified all Filipinos living in the United States as aliens under immigration law. Filipinos thus no longer were allowed to freely immigrate into the United States. As aliens, Filipinos also were barred from owning land or businesses in the United States. In 1943, however, they were allowed to lease land, much of which had been owned by Japanese Americans before they were sent to internment camps in 1942. The act also imposed a fifty-person-per-year limit on Filipino immigration to the United States. The quota was unrealistically low, and immigration continued at levels much higher than the legal quota.

RESULTS OF THE LAW

The Filipino Repatriation Act provided free one-way transportation only for single adults. Such grants were supplemented in some instances by private fund-raising (such as that of the California Emergency Relief Association) that paid passage for Filipino children who had been born in the United States so that they could return with their parents. Both the Tydings-McDuffie and the Filipino Repatriation acts halted reunification of families under U.S. immigration law, forcing many to remain separate for a number of years.

The Filipino Repatriation Act was declared unconstitutional by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1940, after 2,190 Filipinos had been returned to the Philippines.

Filipino immigration to the United States continued, with a resurgence in the late 1960s. The large number of Filipino workers outside the country has even helped to spawn an acronym, OFWs (overseas Filipino workers), and a political movement, Gawad Kalinga, which has provided a sense of community and basic services to millions of expatriate Filipinos worldwide. Many Filipino immigrants have worked with the U.S. military in war zones, from World War II to the Iraq War of 2003, earning broad-based support for their continued immigration to the United States.

—Bruce E. Johansen

Further Reading

- Baloz, Rick. *The Third Asiatic Invasion: Empire and Migration in Filipino America, 1898-1946*. New York: New York University Press, 2011.
- Martinez, Eric V. "The Anti-Filipino Watsonville Race Riots: 1930." *Filipino American National Historical Journal*, 4, (1996).
- "Philippine Flop." *Time*, October 3, 1938. Reporting on the Filipino Repatriation Act of 1935 indicating that 1,900 Filipinos had returned to the Philippines in three years

FILMS

Definition: Motion pictures depicting immigrant experiences in America

Significance: The images of ethnic immigrants in Hollywood feature films change with changing attitudes and also help in producing changes in their audience's attitudes. For the most part, ethnic images early on were used for comic effect, but over the years the immigrants' images and their plights have been more realistically and sympathetically portrayed on the screen.

Of the films made during the early silent era only a few dealt explicitly with immigration. One of the first was *The Italian* (1915), which offered a realistic portrayal of Italian immigrants pursuing the American Dream. In the film, Beppo Donnetti travels to America to make enough money to satisfy his fiancée's father and have her join him in New York. They have a son, who becomes ill, and Beppo does not have enough money for medicine. After he fails to get money and support from