At the Crossroads: Mexico and U.S. Immigration Policy, edited by Frank D. Bean, Rodolfo O. de la Garza, Bryan R. Roberts, Sidney Wientraub Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield (1997) viii, 322 pp.

Reviewed by James Loucky, Department of Anthropology, Western Washington University.

Immigration has become one of the more controversial contemporary issues at precisely the same time that Mexico is emerging as perhaps the most critical country for United States' interests. The synchronism and intersection of these two developments is the subject of At the Crossroads: Mexico and U.S. Immigration Policy. With editors and contributors who rank among the most notable experts in migration research, this book is an essential resource for understanding how and why immigration has become such a critical problem in bilateral relations between Mexico and the United States. While solutions are neither easy nor imminent, the authors provide considerable background and treatment of key issues that determine the variety and viability of policy options available to both countries.

At the Crossroads incorporates historical, political and economic analyses to explain the prominence of both legal and undocumented migration from Mexico as current public policy concerns. The twelve chapters, along with valuable introduction and conclusion sections, encompass prominent themes not often considered conjointly.

How the tenuous and sometimes antagonistic nature of U.S.-Mexico relations has become further strained by inherent contradictions in national immigration policies is addressed in the editors' introduction and the first chapter, "Mexico and U.S. Worldwide Immigration Policy," by Gary Freeman and Frank Bean. While the role played by Mexican migration to the United States has been significant historically, the editors note that its high profile and perception as being problematic are relatively new phenomena. Much Mexican migration was temporary, as workers returned regularly to Mexico to sustain rural-based households at the same time that seasonal agricultural labor was encouraged in the United States. Isolated spatially and socially from native-born populations, Mexican migrant communities met hostility mainly when competing with U.S. workers for the same jobs, such as during depression and post-war years. As job opportunities have become year-round rather than seasonal, and as absolute numbers have increased, antipathy is again rising. Freeman and Bean argue that workable immigration policies have been and will continue to be undermined by persistent policy tensions, including between purported universalism of treatment and public perception that immigration is a "Mexican problem," demand for cheap labor and desire for control of borders, and national sovereignty claims and multinational realities. They cite the surge in immigrant flows a few years after major immigration reform (Immigration Reform and Control Act) was instituted by the U.S. Congress in 1986 as evidence that reduction in anxiety and rumor is perhaps more effective than employer sanctions or other policy mechanisms in influencing migration levels.

Two chapters focus on how social, economic and labor market changes on both sides of the border affect the nature and levels of Mexican migration to the United States. In "Mexican Social and Economic Policy and Emigration," Bryan Roberts and Agustin Escobar examine how both internal and international migration has been strongly shaped by Mexican policies. From the 1930s onwards, labor and price support policies promoting rapid transition to an urban industrialized society, accompanied by neglect and impoverishment of rural areas, resulted in sustained rural to urban migration. With the financial crises of the 1980s, the centralized urban system became less able to employ the growing population, and fiscal austerity measures and

privatization severely reduced state subsidies to both urban and rural economies. Inter-urban migration grew, particularly to border cities, while international migration shifted from being a temporary strategy to becoming more permanent. The authors further argue that growth of emigration is not the result of social conditions, since overall education, health, and income levels have not worsened, although their rate of improvement has slowed. However, the recent economic opening has greatly increased income inequalities and substantially benefited many urban dwellers, for whom intermittent and informal sector work has become standard. Continuing differentiation and destabilization of labor markets will likely continue to encourage cross-border migration as the most effective option for accumulating savings and bettering long-term prospects.

Addressing the question, "Do Mexican Agricultural Policies Stimulate Emigration?" Philip Martin outlines how the Mexican government has increasingly withdrawn from agriculture through reductions in subsidies for water, credit and fertilizers, as well as the 1992 constitutional change permitting communal (ejido) land to be sold. In addition to undercutting traditional peasant agriculture and ending further land distribution, these changes are likely to result in further rural displacement and migration to the United States, where there are openings for at least 250,000 new agricultural workers each year. Recognizing the migration consequences of shifting agricultural policies is, Martin argues, a necessary first step toward developing any effective bi-national guest-worker or border control programs.

Three chapters address the contentious matter of impacts of Mexican immigration on the United States. In "Mexican Immigration and the U.S. Population," Alene Gelbard and Marian Carter provide a reasoned demographic profile, backed by valuable figures and tables. Half of U.S. population growth is now accounted for by immigrants and their children, and Mexicans have become the largest national immigrant group, approaching 30% of total U.S. foreign born. They are relatively less educated, poorer, and younger when compared with the total U.S. population. Worrisome trends include shrinking economic gains compared to other groups and growing percentages of children in single-parent households, suggesting some erosion in long-noted family stability. Particularly useful is a demographic snapshot of Mexico's population as well as data revealing significant impacts of Mexican migration on California, where 50% of school-age children are projected to be Hispanic by the year 2003, with 80% of this Mexican in origin.

In "Fiscal Impacts of Mexican Migration to the United States," Susan Baker, Robert Cushing, and Charles Haynes wisely report on "what we think we know" from 15 studies that vary widely in geographic scope, costs and benefits examined, and means of assigning monetary values. Citing a $70 billion disparity between two eminent researchers examining the same 1992 data, they urge caution in over-relying on econometric analyses based on extrapolation, aggregates, and reification. While none of the studies considered specifically focused on Mexican immigration, they suggest that models take into account legal status, levels of analysis (individual vs. household), a life course perspective, and level of government (metropolitan, state, and national). In addition to shifting the financial burden, which currently falls disproportionately on localities and states, the authors recommend investing in workers (whether U.S. or foreign-born) to improve employability and productivity and thus the overall benefits generated by immigrants.

For a different look at economic impacts, "Labor Market Implications of Mexican Migration," by Michael Rosenfeld and Marta Tienda, reveals how growth in knowledge, creativity and job creation accompany immigration. Drawing on a case study of 330 mostly Mexican households in Chicago, the authors show that entrepreneurial ventures drive other economic activity. In large part because immigrants are self-selected for innovativeness and motivation, their overall contribution (including fiscal) becomes more substantial as their economic involvement becomes increasingly formalized.

The political implications of Mexican migration is the fourth major theme of this book. In "Policy, Politics and Emigration," Rodolfo de la Garza and Gabriel Szekely examine how the Mexican government has long promoted Mexican migration as a political and economic safety valve, at least unofficially. In addition to refugees (including perhaps 1 million uprooted by the

Revolution and lingering political upheaval between 1910-30) and economic migrants (including more millions for whom land reform was more symbol than substance during 1930-70), the authors focus on the neglected category of political migrants: those displaced by a system which denies access and participation. Countering the view that virtually all Mexicans are driven out by economics, they review how failed development policies, corruption, and an entrenched political structure have triggered escalating public discontent since about 1970, along with substantial emigration, including by frustrated professionals. The significance of political emigrants relates not only to growing numbers but also to their involvement as political actors in the United States, demanding rights and reforms in Mexico as well as north of the border.

The politics of migration are further examined by Thomas Espenshade and Maryann Belanger, in "U.S. Public Perceptions and Reactions to Mexican Migration." People are rarely enthusiastic about newcomers, and present generations are no exception. Reviewing nine recent public opinion polls, the authors confirm an overall anti-immigrant sentiment. Mexicans are perceived particularly unfavorably. The public closely links Mexican and illegal immigration, significantly over-estimates the illegal component of total contemporary immigration to the U.S., and presumes that immigration substantially lowers wages and employment opportunities. Nonetheless, fewer people advocate the kind of draconian control mechanisms (such as national ID cards, border fees, denial of all health and education to children) that might achieve the "control" they desire.

The final theme addressed in this book relates to implications for U.S.-Mexico relations and for U.S. foreign policy. "NAFTA and Mexican Migration," by Peter Smith, focuses on the hyperbole surrounding and impact of the hotly debated North American Free Trade Agreement. Proponents argued it would significantly reduce illegal immigration from Mexico, while opponents argued that devastation of small- and medium-sized firms in Mexico would result in displaced laborers who would have little choice but to head north. Ironically NAFTA itself made no reference to labor migration, indicative of the contradictions between U.S. trade policy with Mexico and its immigration policy. Where economic integration was being encouraged, there was little harmonization of views or action regarding labor. Smith admits that migration is likely to continue as long as wages are far lower in Mexico than in the U.S. and as long as immigrants are willing to accept cut-rate wages of U.S. employers taking advantage of that willingness. While premature to fully assess NAFTA-related impacts on migration and difficult to disentangle NAFTA from the full range of complex U.S.-Mexico political economic relations, he sees NAFTA as a vehicle for increasing bilateral resolution of migration issues, including through continuing consultation and investing in sending areas. He also argues that reconciling immigration and trade policies will require confronting the contradiction entailed in vociferously endorsing an economic policy while trying to curtail the correlates (cultural interaction, social integration, and labor migration) of that policy.

In "U.S. Foreign Policy and Mexican Immigration," Sidney Weintraub succinctly places Mexican migration into reasonable foreign/domestic policy context. He points to repetitive themes in U.S. immigration policy (consciously keeping open some access to the U.S. by unauthorized immigrants, basing entry eligibility on domestic regional and sectoral interests, and frequent policy turnabouts) as well as repetitive Mexican responses (that migration meets legitimate needs in the U.S., that it obeys basic market forces, and that the Mexican government has the highest obligation of protecting its nationals abroad). However, whereas Mexican posture has been primarily reactive, there is now increasing willingness to jointly examine issues involved in undocumented migration. Given that long-term solutions relate to tangible economic development, however, Weintraub concludes that it remains impossible for Mexico to forcibly prevent people from emigrating until Mexican economic performance substantially improves.

At the Crossroads represents a timely, comprehensive, and insightful treatment of the complex circumstances and controversial issues relating to Mexican migration to the United States. As summarized in the editors' conclusion, immigration policy must consider labor market

fluctuations, processes of settlement and integration, trade and economic development pressures, and foreign policy considerations, along with interpretations of immigration studies and border management schemes. This book provides considerable foundation for understanding such interrelated phenomena and issues as the increase of permanent and family-based migration, whether market-oriented trends exacerbate poverty and inequality for many, the basis for current dual citizenship proposals, alternatives to border enforcement, and rationale for better incorporating immigrants into educational and social systems.

Further investigation into the political ecology of U.S.-Mexico relations, the history of government influences on migration on both sides of border, attention to the Mexican border region as well as to traditional central and rural Mexican sending areas, and micro as well as macro-level studies are needed. As educators and decision makers use the information and insights At the Crossroads offers, the book has the potential to encourage greater cooperative integration between two countries indeterminably linked through their geography and history.

Tobacco Culture. Farming Kentucky's Burley Belt, by John van Willigen and Susan Eastwood, Louisville: University Press of Kentucky, (1998), x, 213 pp.

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Tobacco and its impacts on human health and the environment are well documented, but less has been written about the lives of tobacco producers. In Tobacco Culture, van Willigen and Eastwood help fill this void by providing a rich local history of tobacco growing, starting with the early producers in the New World and leading up to the contemporary battles of global competition for tobacco, but focusing mainly on the impact of these changes on the remaining Kentucky producers.

Burley tobacco, a variety known for its low sugar content, is unique to central Kentucky. Burley tobacco is harvested plant by plant, and slowly air-cured. These harvest and curing techniques, among many production practices described in Tobacco Culture, distinguish burley tobacco from other varieties found in the southern United States. What makes this book so enjoyable is the producers' direct and extensive commentary on their circumstances. From these producers we learn about current problems in tobacco production and marketing, as well as their stories from the remembered past.

For several centuries tobacco has contributed significantly to local, national and international economic development. Tobacco Culture provides a detailed history illustrating how producers relied first on the plantation-slave production system and how, when slavery was ended, they turned to family members and neighbors to aid in production. Gradually, sharecroppers and tenant farmers came to work alongside landowners in local production. However, while some sharecroppers and tenant farmers began their own growing operations, others have moved out of