

Situating his narrative of the conquest in a discussion of legal and moral issues, MacLachlan explores the establishment of governance in New Spain—also conceptualized as a frontier in which Cortés and other settlers, the crown, and missionaries vied for power and control over the wealth, labor, and souls of the indigenous population. In contrast to much ethnohistorical scholarship that emphasizes cultural survival and vitality even amid demographic collapse, the author stresses *congregación*—the relocation of native communities—as destructive to indigenous connections to land and communities, although the effect of the policy was at best ambivalent. He argues, more convincingly, that strong connections to land “embod[ied] the tribal spirit of a village” and influenced the emergence of a dual economic system with external and internal sectors (p. 237).

The complex hybrid culture that emerged from the fusion of Spanish and indigenous elements created both social and psychological rootlessness, according to the author. The political and economic incentives of the imperial system encouraged native elites to become cultural mestizos who benefitted from a new, more dynamic economy. Moving between an emphasis on the cultural rootlessness and losses inherent in the creation of a frontier society and the survival of Mesoamerican indigenous peoples, spiritual practices, and economic production, this chapter represents a wide-ranging synthetic discussion of the establishment of Spanish rule in New Spain and illuminates the region’s integration into the emerging global economy.

The author’s decades of reading and thinking about Mexican history and culture emerge across the chapters. This comparative study of imperialism has much to offer informed general readers, the upper division and graduate classroom, and, more broadly, colonial specialists. Perhaps the ambiguity embedded in the book’s interpretation reflects the limits of a cultural evolutionary framework, but its themes demonstrate both the ambitious nature of the Spanish colonial project in the Americas and the colonial basis for the contemporary cultural complexity of Mexico.

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We Are Left without a Father Here: Masculinity, Domesticity, and Migration in Postwar Puerto Rico. By Eileen J. Suárez Findlay. Durham: Duke University Press, 2014. Pp. 300. Notes. Bibliography. Index. \$89.95 cloth; \$24.95 paper.
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In June 1950, 5,000 working-class Puerto Rican men boarded airplanes and travelled from the island to the sugar beet fields of east central Michigan. Initially, many considered this a great opportunity. However, Operation Farmlift was a tragic disaster.

The fathers who travelled to the United States were fulfilling their responsibility as heads of households: in the sugar beet fields they meant to earn their family's "daily bread" (p. 171). The representatives of Puerto Rico's Department of Labor and the island's new governor, Luis Muñoz Marín, were hopeful that many more men would join them to work in Michigan or in other locations throughout the United States. Indeed, the success of the island's Popular Democratic Party's (PPD) economic project depended on the emigration of working-class men and women. The owners of the private sugar beet farms in east central Michigan, fearing that without migrant laborers their crops would be lost, welcomed the Puerto Rican workers, who, together with seasonal Tejano migrant laborers, would save the harvest. In theory, Operation Farmlift promised to benefit workers, their families, the PPD's new economic project, Michigan farmers, and the rural economy of the Midwest.

In practice, the labor contracts were a cruel farce. Puerto Rican men on the sugar beet farms faced working and living conditions worse than those in Caribbean sugarcane fields. Their US citizenship did not protect them from the inhumane labor practices, "structural exploitation and capricious abuses" of Michigan's agricultural economy (p. 142). The men and their wives on the island called on Puerto Rico's Department of Labor and the island's governor to intervene, demanding that farm contractors honor their promises and that Muñoz Marín defend the Puerto Rican workers and fathers, if necessary, by bringing the men back home. Operation Farmlift became an embarrassment to PPD representatives, who by 1950 were working with the US Congress to reform Puerto Rico's colonial relationship with the United States. In the end, the PPD's failed response to the workers' appeals broke the social contract between working families and Muñoz Marín, the "Father of the Poor".

Findlay's history of Operation Farmlift is a study of the state, colonial populism, domesticity, labor, and transnationalism. Engaging Latin American and Caribbean scholarship on 1940s and 1950s populist states and leaders, Findlay examines how working-class families interpreted discourses of domesticity and modernity. The Puerto Rican populist project was "deeply masculinist" and "constructed by both working people and political elites" (p. 5). Working parents understood their responsibilities to each other, their children, and their households. Popular definitions of manhood and fatherhood informed the men's decision to travel to the United States as migrant workers seeking to fulfill their duty to their families. The fathers' labor and wages promised to secure new homes and a modern form of domesticity. "The power of the ideal of the family man and his benevolently patriarchal reign over an idealized domesticity... was key to the development of the PPD's colonial populism" (p. 182).

Chapter one examines the emergence of Puerto Rico's colonial populism and highlights the island's long history of working-class activism and mobilization. In chapter two, Findlay analyzes ideals of domesticity and modernity, including the challenges that popular sectors posed to elite visions. Chapter three examines the Puerto Rican state

strategies for exporting workers, making it clear that mass emigration formed a necessary and integral part of the PPD economic project. Chapter four follows rural migrants to Michigan and examines the Midwest farming industry's long history of dependence on "exploitable foreigners" (p. 139).

The Puerto Rican workers, however, brought with them a long tradition of labor activism and rejected abuse and exploitation. In Michigan, they workers created alliances with Tejanos, church organizers, and labor leaders (chapter 5). They took their stories of exploitation to the local Michigan press. Meanwhile, in Puerto Rico, their wives publicized the scandalous abuses—through personal letters addressed to Puerto Rico's Department of Labor, Governor Muñoz Marín, and the island newspapers. At the same time, the PPD government struggled to appease the beet workers and suppress media coverage. Although the Puerto Rican legislature passed a bill to aid the Michigan migrants and their families, the island's department of labor and Muñoz Marín refused to budge on one demand: helping the men return to Puerto Rico. Instead, the Department of Labor renegotiated contracts with sugar beet farmers and tried—unsuccessfully—to recruit more migrant laborers to the Michigan fields. The Puerto Rican workers, however, walked away. In her conclusion, Findlay examines how workers—who found themselves "left without a father here," betrayed by the "Father of the Poor," and abandoned to their fate on the mainland by Muñoz Marín and the PPD—persisted. They struggled to claim their rights, recover their wages, and reconstitute their families.

The book provides many opportunities for discussion and debate among historians and graduate students. First, students of transnational labor migration can learn from Findlay's methodology: follow the workers. Centering the migrant worker requires analysis that moves beyond neatly bounded nationalist histories. The story of Operation Farmlift challenges historians of Puerto Rico and of Puerto Ricans in the United States to expand their methods. Like Jesse Hoffnung-Garskoff in the Dominican case, Juan Flores and Gina Pérez in Puerto Rican examples, and Jorge Duany for the broader Hispanic Caribbean, Findlay follows migrant workers to different locations and examines how the tools they brought with them (a history of labor organizing; ideals about domesticity and modernity) informed their new local *bregas* (negotiations).

Second, historians of Latin America, the Caribbean, and the United States will appreciate Findlay's extensive archival work and intensive use of sources. Findlay collected letters written by migrant workers and their spouses, newspaper reports from Puerto Rico and Michigan, government reports and memos from the sugar beet fields, police records, and written and oral histories. She also reflects on how Puerto Rico's archives both reveal and conceal histories. Findlay frankly discusses the difficulties of securing oral testimonies of painful or "failed" stories; the struggle to identify women's voices in a story shaped by masculinity and manhood; and the need to revisit the relationships between race and class in each historical instance. Third, scholars of populism in Latin America and the Caribbean will benefit from Findlay's examination of popular understandings of gender and the state. Moving beyond discursive analysis of

elite actors, Findlay examines how promises of domesticity and modernity also informed the actions of working-class actors. Fourth, labor historians and scholars of the Midwest and of the Puerto Rican diasporas will be stimulated by Findlay's uncovering of new "origin stories." When these Puerto Rican men were denied justice in the beet fields of east central Michigan, they left. Unable to return to the island, the men traveled to other industrial centers, joining the labor forces of Detroit, Milwaukee, Chicago, Gary, New York, and Cleveland, Youngstown, and Lorrain, Ohio (p. 190). When possible, their wives and families met them at the new locations.

These sugar beet workers became founding members of multiple diasporic communities throughout the mainland, and brought with them an important history of labor militancy. Operation Farmlift was a tragic disaster. But the men and families who were transformed by that disastrous experiment carried its history and lessons to new locations, where they rebuilt homes, families, and communities.

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The Work of Recognition: Caribbean Colombia and the Postemancipation Struggle for Citizenship. By Jason McGraw. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014. Pp. xiii, 328. Acknowledgments. Notes. Bibliography. Index. \$34.95 paper. doi:[10.1017/tam.2016.52](https://doi.org/10.1017/tam.2016.52)

The Work of Recognition is about the free and equal citizenship for which people of African descent persisted in struggling on the Caribbean mainland of Colombia. It covers the period from the moment "Congress passed the final emancipation act, which went into effect 1 January 1852," to the early 1900s. Jason McGraw introduces his subject by quoting black intellectual Candelario Obeso (1849–1884), whose poems were characterized by "a dual vision of citizenship as multiracial belonging and black freedom" that was hard for lettered elites to accept (p. 2). The stubbornness that the book depicts was responsible for the fact that only 17,000 people were still enslaved in the region by 1850. The runaways and the slaves who fought in favor of self-manumission since colonial times were responsible for those numbers and for the prestige that the republic of New Granada earned as a haven for liberty.

McGraw brings forth little-known facts concerning Colombian history, telling, for example, the story of black Brazilians who found refuge in the Caribbean port of Cartagena. However, he also stresses the contradictory nature of those positive moments. While unrelenting injustice and racism continued to force black and indigenous people to flee from the urban centers to the hinterland, where they formed *rochelas* or autonomous settlements, the educated elites applied the abolition law at a "glacial pace," manumitting each year only four percent of the remaining slave force.