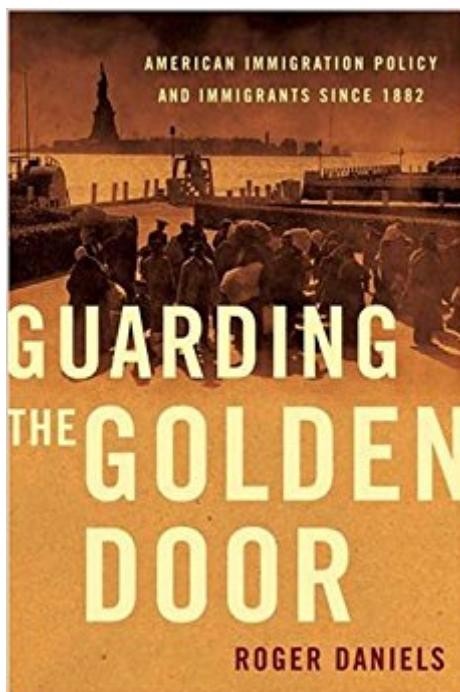


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# Guarding The Golden Door: American Immigration Policy And Immigrants Since 1882



## **Synopsis**

As renowned historian Roger Daniels shows in this brilliant new work, America's inconsistent, often illogical, and always cumbersome immigration policy has profoundly affected our recent past. The federal government's efforts to pick and choose among the multitude of immigrants seeking to enter the United States began with the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. Conceived in ignorance and falsely presented to the public, it had undreamt of consequences, and this pattern has been rarely deviated from since. Immigration policy in Daniels' skilled hands shows Americans at their best and worst, from the nativist violence that forced Theodore Roosevelt's 1907 "gentlemen's agreement" with Japan to the generous refugee policies adopted after World War Two and throughout the Cold War. And in a conclusion drawn from today's headlines, Daniels makes clear how far ignorance, partisan politics, and unintended consequences have overtaken immigration policy during the current administration's War on Terror. Irreverent, deeply informed, and authoritative, *Guarding the Golden Door* presents an unforgettable interpretation of modern American history.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

Immigration-perhaps no other subject so contentiously touches on both our collective idealism and our capacity for irrational fear. Nostalgic about past immigrants, we magnify the threat of newly arriving hordes of outsiders. Daniels, author of several books about the Japanese-American experience, judiciously avoids a sweeping narrative in favor of an immersion in the messy details of legislation and demography, although accurate assessments are elusive. Reflecting the lack of

overarching plot, the book's first half is chronological to 1965, after which it switches to an ethnic breakdown. As Daniels shows, the subject yields hyperbolic rhetoric and misleading statistics, which rarely lead to coherent or effective legislation. Congress rarely grasp the real ramifications of its immigration policy as it underfunds its nominally ambitious measures. Despite his deeply academic cast of mind, Daniels keeps his prose engaging and lively, as he displays his evident love of accuracy and impatience with obfuscation. Those who read closely will unearth arresting tidbits, such as the central role of the Chinese as targets in virtually all early anti-immigration measures and the brief but virulent anti-Filipino hysteria of the early 1930s. Perhaps most interesting is the final section, in which Daniels tackles broader questions about the debate, including the surprisingly little-changed status of immigration in the post-9/11, post-INS landscape. Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Farm laborers from Mexico, computer programmers from Taiwan, political refugees from Vietnam--recent immigrants to the U.S. perpetuate a national tradition stretching back to America's colonial beginnings. But in this carefully researched study, historian Daniels traces an erratic fever chart of changing attitudes among the American lawmakers who have set the conditions for legal entry into the country. Beginning his chronicle with the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, Daniels probes the convoluted politics behind immigration law, exposing the unexpected emergence of new immigration opportunities from policymaking suffused with racist logic and deceitful rhetoric. Daniels identifies, for instance, the often-overlooked liberalizing provisions of a cold war immigration reform that struck ethnic discrimination from immigration law at a time when American-born blacks were still struggling to achieve their full rights. Similarly, Daniels shows how a 1965 immigration law that its architects supposed would favor Europeans actually opened doors for Asians and Latinos. As Americans continue to debate immigration in a world divided by international terrorism, few books offer a fuller context for the key issues. Bryce ChristensenCopyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

As we watch our government continue to look for ways to limit immigration in an attempt to "protect" our lowest skilled voters, it is interesting to see where we have been and what we have tried before. Since 1882, we have been trying to limit the number of "undesirables," but has it worked? Daniels does a good job of covering the law and history and how it plays into the American ethos. Many native born Americans would benefit from even a brief read through of some actual immigration facts.

Great for learning about US immigration policies. I came to it as a radical environmentalist concerned more with population issues related to immigration than legal and ethnic rivalries. It didn't do much for my environmental concerns, but it does inform on the nature of US policies related to who gets through Golden Door.

Excellent and readable review of the history of immigration since 1880s. Because the book was published in the early 2000s, it doesn't cover some of the most recent developments in the field.

This is a pretty good chronological survey of a very complex subject. You could spend your adult life trying to learn all the legislation, both proposed and enacted, but this book gives you the essentials. The writing could have been more concise and to the point in many areas. Also, what is not emphasized is the total failure of our current immigration system. I found I had to supplement several subjects by going online, because they were not well covered in this book. This book is more about legislation than practicalities.

Excellent!

A good book on the history of immigrants coming to America only to have them turn around and keep others out. Great history book to say the least!

Full of statistics and facts about immigration law and the changes since 1790. I found it very helpful in my study of genealogy.

Book looked awful but can't complain to use for studies.

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