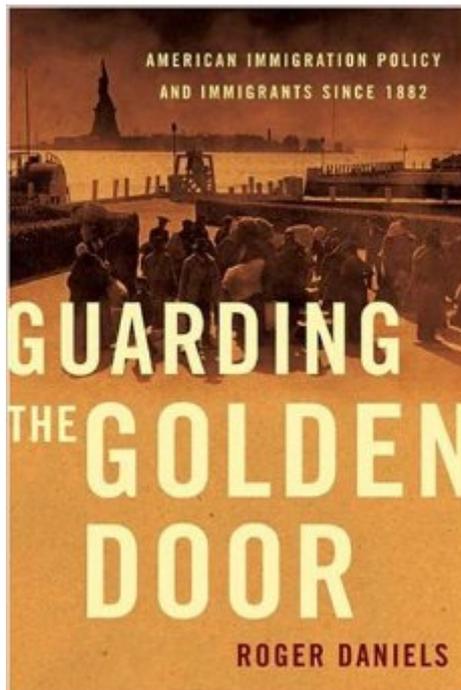


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# Guarding The Golden Door: American Immigration Policy And Immigrants Since 1882



## 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

Paperback: 344 pages

Publisher: Hill and Wang; Fourth Printing edition (January 12, 2005)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0809053446

ISBN-13: 978-0809053445

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 0.8 x 8.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 10.4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (11 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #103,292 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #43 in [Books > History > Americas > United States > Immigrants](#) #104 in [Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Social Sciences > Emigration & Immigration](#) #112 in [Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Politics & Government > Public Affairs & Policy > Social Policy](#)

## Customer Reviews

Ask the average American where the words "the Golden Door" comes from and I suspect you'd be met with a blank state. It comes from the Statue of Liberty: "Give me your tired, your poor, Your huddled masses yearning to be free, The wretched refuse of your teeming shore, Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me, I lift my lamp beside the golden Door!" Roger Daniels' well researched and carefully nuance view of immigration to America since 1882 is a refreshingly

even-handed assessment of America's immigration policies. For those that wish to shut and lock the "golden door" it would be well to remember this wonderful sentiment from George Washington: "The bosom of America is open to receive not only the opulent and respectable stranger, but the oppressed and persecuted of all nations and religions, whom we shall welcome to participate in all of our rights and privileges, if by decency and propriety of conduct they appear to merit the enjoyment." The immigration issue is a divisive one in which more often than not we are faced with editorials stipulating that immigrant labor reduces the standard of living and opportunities of employment for all workers. But is this true? Are we not a nation of immigrants? If you want a better understanding of our policies and what this means to America please read this book.

I just finished reading "Guarding the Golden Door: American Immigration Policy and Immigrants since 1882" by Roger Daniels. It focuses most of its attention on the expanding network of contradictory, unenforceable, political and often blatantly racist immigration laws passed in the United States since the first Chinese Exclusion Act in 1882. It is the best book on the history of US immigration policy that I have read to date. By looking at the history of immigration chronologically by period and then at the effects on groups within each period it makes it possible for the reader to grasp the flow of policy and events. Two areas that aren't well treated in the book are the effects of the various policies on those excluded and other than statistically how immigrant groups melded into the mainstream. The book therefore reads more as a textbook than as a compelling story. But it presents the data well and puts it in one place. The footnotes and the bibliography are both very complete and useful. Daniels does have a few very interesting graphs. One on page 233 shows the changing attitude of Americans toward immigration over time. According to the Gallup Poll data negative attitudes toward immigration peaked in 1995 and attitudes have been improving since then. Of course the politicians and the bureaucrats have not yet adjusted their actions to this change of attitude.

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!

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.

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

in my study of genealogy.

Excellent!

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