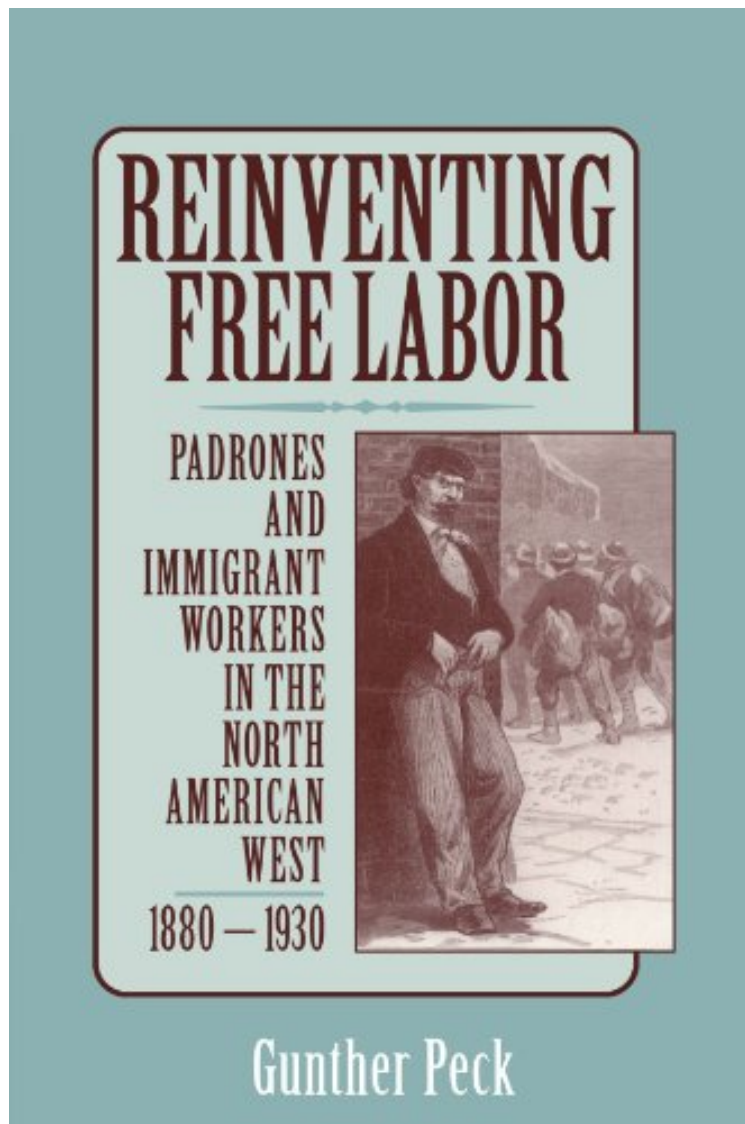


(Get free) Reinventing Free Labor: Padrones and Immigrant Workers in the North American West, 1880-1930

Reinventing Free Labor: Padrones and Immigrant Workers in the North American West, 1880-1930

Gunther Peck

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does an excellent job of analyzing the relationship between Padrones and immigrants in the early 1900s.² of 2 people found the following review helpful. Manhood recastBy A CustomerA must-read for anyone interested in immigration history, the history of labor in America (God Bless!) and those fascinated by the real history of organized crime.

One of the most infamous villains in North America during the Progressive Era was the padrone, a mafia-like immigrant boss who allegedly enslaved his compatriots and kept them uncivilized, unmanly, and unfree. In this first-ever history of the padrone, Gunther Peck argues that they were not primitive men but rather thoroughly modern entrepreneurs who used corporations, the labor contract, and the right to quit to create far-flung coercive networks. Drawing on Greek, Spanish, and Italian language sources, Peck analyzes how immigrant workers emancipated themselves using the tools of padrone power to their own advantage.

"Selecting three dramatically different case studies of padrone-immigrant worker relationships--encompassing Italians in Canada, Greeks in Utah, and Mexicans on both sides of the Rio Grande--Peck manages at once to convey the specificity of each of these three contexts while at the same time making a larger case for the meaning of such examples of coerced labor within a society self-consciously dedicated to the principles of 'free labor.' Altogether, this is a work of stunning originality, prodigious research, and well-ordered prose." Leon Fink, University of North Carolina

"Gunther Peck writes a fascinating book...Among the bonuses a reader will find in this book are the numerous maps, charts, tables that make it a valuable reference tool. In addition, Peck has gone to great effort to compile an extensive bibliography and detailed index. The book's several photographs are useful...Far better than most dissertations, this one, originating at Yale, makes the transition to a book that should speak to a broad audience of readers." *Journal of American Ethnic History*"...highly original investigation...Ranging freely across borders and ethnic groups, this seminal study is bound to influence the inquiries of historians of labor and immigration for years to come. For collections serving advanced undergraduates and above." *Choice*"Reinventing Free Labor is a rich work of research and interpretation, illustrating beautifully the rewards of writing an internationalized history of the U.S...While comparative, continental, and global perspectives also generate important challenges to national 'exceptionalisms'...few will grab the attention of U.S. historians as does Reinventing Free Labor, a book that directly argues with rather than decentering main themes of their own national historiography." *Labor History*"In this rigorous and readable study, Gunther Peck provides a new perspective on an archetype of immigration history." *Jrnl of Social History*"This beautifully conceived work is framed transnationally, encompassing "the borders of the North American west" through studies of Italians, Greek, and Mexican padrones in western Canada, the American West, and the U.S.-Mexico border...The result is a rich and complex work that rarely falls short of its ambitions...His work is an extremely impressive range of secondary sources." *The Journal of American History*"In six beautifully written and deeply researched chapters, the author has turned the 'Turner Thesis' on its head...As Mexican and U.S. policymakers work to regulate today's 'birds of passage,' they would do well to read Reinventing Free Labor...This rich and intelligent book will be interesting to all teachers and upper-level students of labor, immigration, and Western history." *The Historian*"...transient workers are among the most elusive of historical quarry. Peck has pulled together a remarkable amount of information about their travails in the North American West; he has interpreted it with flair and attention to cultural nuance; and he has set the whole story in a new geographical frame." David T. Courtwright, *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*"Peck has covered new ground with his research and raised some intriguing issues...this is a well-written and heavily researched study of the padrone system in the American and Canadian West. Peck easily demolishes a long-standing stereotype that the padrone was merely an urban phenomenon and an atavistic remnant of feudal agrarianism." *Western Historical Quarterly*