

In January I am traveling to Atlanta to present at the Annual Conference of the American Historical Society. My paper, "*This Is Not the America I Belong to*": *Irish- and German-American Responses to Immigration Restriction*, is concerned with the years of debates about citizenship which culminated in the 1924 Johnson-Reed Act. These years represented a potentially dangerous time for all ethnic immigrants, not just those newly arrived. I examine how Irish-and German-Americans, mindful of their recent experiences of discrimination as well as the ongoing prevalence of anti-Catholicism, fought restriction ideologically as well as at the legislative level. Inevitably, controversy abounded concerning the postwar issues of national identity and "Americanization," heated by the growing support for eugenics and racial-purity theories. Against this hostile backdrop, the response of these immigrant groups to restriction reveals their confidence that they could help rejuvenate America, even if they were not "native-born."

By 1900, partly in response to a massive influx of immigrants, the Americanization movement, stressing the assimilation and naturalization of foreign-born individuals, was gaining ground. Social Darwinism, theories of racial fitness and eugenics, all impacted on the process of becoming an "American" and the response of the two largest immigrant groups to the movement gives us an insight into how they viewed citizenship. By opposing Prohibition, immigration restriction and the Ku Klux Klan, Irish- and German-American politicians could claim they represented a multi-ethnic community, and their support for social reforms were supported by their working-class, urban constituents. Using the experiences of ethnic New Yorkers as the basis for comparison, the paper offers a new perspective on the traditional story of integration and Americanization in the build up to and immediate aftermath of World War I.

The American Historical Association's annual meeting is the largest gathering of historians from all fields and professions and represents an unparalleled opportunity to discover the latest trends in all areas of history. I am presenting as part of a panel entitled *Contested Citizenship, Overlapping Authorities: New York's Immigrant Catholics in Political, Religious, and Progressive Spheres* and will benefit from framing my work as part of the larger theme of the panel, and from the questions posed by the audience. I am presenting a chapter from my dissertation, so the feedback will help me revise that and encourage me to think about other issues in the rest of the dissertation. I am presenting with two people from the University of Florida and the College of William and Mary, and our moderator is a renowned Irish-American historian from the College of the Holy Cross. Attendance at the presentations, panel discussions, roundtables, receptions, and other informal social events will ensure that I learn about current trends in my own fields as well as network with other historians to exchange ideas. The exchange of ideas with these experts will highlight the originality and depth of my work, and introduce my research to a knowledgeable audience who can give specific and pertinent feedback to me.

As a graduate student, I will also be attending the Career Fair and hope to have some interviews scheduled so that I can begin the task of securing a job! Many presses will have editors attending who are keen to discuss new projects. Not only will I be increasing my own network and standing, but as a representative of Fordham, I will contribute to its profile within the history community. I have presented at several conferences in this past, but this Annual Meeting of the international association is the largest conference historians have, and I am excited to be a presenter in Atlanta. Being able to discuss my work, in an informal setting with other academics will expose me to new ways of thinking about my work and my career goals.