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## Review of *Come to Texas: Enticing Immigrants, 1865-1915* By Barbara J. Rozek

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**Come to Texas: Enticing Immigrants, 1865-1915.** By Barbara J. Rozek. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2003. xi + 250 pp. Photographs, maps, illustrations, tables, notes, bibliography, index. \$39.95 cloth.

Citizens in the southernmost reaches of the Great Plains, as Barbara J. Rozek demonstrates in her exhaustively researched study, strove to convince all able-bodied individuals from other states and Europe to "Come to Texas." Rozek

examines a fifty-year period, from the end of the Civil War to the beginning of World War I, in which energetic Texans produced a stunning collection of almanacs, brochures, letters, newspapers, and pamphlets, trusting in the power of the written word to entice migration into the state. "Committed Texans did this," she asserts, "with a vigor, a persistence, and a creativity not always found in other states or United States territories." That the population of Texas increased 671 percent between 1860 and 1920 convinced many of those involved in the production of enticement literature that their efforts produced tangible results.

What is perhaps most impressive about these endeavors is that after 1876 there was no state immigration agency to act as a clearinghouse for information and resources. The 1869 constitution authorized establishment of a state Bureau of Immigration, which from 1871 to 1876 disseminated information about Texas via railroad companies and an official brochure. The fading of Reconstruction and redemption of state government by more cost-conscious Democrats brought a new constitution in 1876, which barred the use of state funds to encourage immigration. Thereafter, immigrants were lured to Texas through surreptitious work within state agencies and by private booster organizations, such as the Texas Commercial Secretaries' Association. One of Rozek's most interesting chapters concerns the enticement programs of railroad companies, which, in addition to reduced fares, emigrant excursions, and publicity departments, included the innovative use of "immigrant houses" at which prospective settlers could stay while scouting home sites. The development of Galveston as a deep-water port and immigrant distribution point also stands out as one of the most significant immigration enticement projects of the early twentieth century.

As the most "western" of southern states and the most "southern" of western Plains states, Texas inhabits a unique region, both in terms of geography and perspective. In her careful analysis of rhetorical methods and documenting of the myriad means by which Texans sought to encourage immigration, Barbara Rozek has made a welcome contribution to our understanding of the peopling of this dynamic region. **Frank Van Nuys**, *Department of Social Sciences, South Dakota School of Mines and Technology*.