

# Job Growth and Displacement in Immigrant Brooklyn

Making A Global Immigrant Neighborhood: Brooklyn’s Sunset Park, by Tarry Hum

I

for immigrant workers and local development. Then the author turns to closely examine the area’s seemingly paradoxical pattern of attracting high volumes of capital and bank investment yet remaining a largely working- poor community. The fifth chapter documents the community’s concerns over gentrification and rezoning and local people’s largely frustrated attempts to seriously influence these policies. Hum’s concluding chapter considers the prospects for a postindustrial urban revival in Sunset Park.

The book opens with a history of how globalization has created and reshaped immigrant communities. Up through the 1950s, manufacturing and related port businesses still dominated New York City’s labor market. The city boasted nearly a million jobs in the garment trades, printing, food production, longshoring and the like, more than any other place in the country. And it was through these jobs and their strong unions that the largely White-European immigrant working class of the time earned the higher wages and benefits that dramatically lowered postwar inequality. However, in the 1960s the U.S. economy began the historic industrial shift from manufacturing to services. As global competition intensified, our

investment flowing into Brooklyn’s Sunset Park, without much evident impacts on its high level of local poverty. Hum usefully spotlights the effeiel

tight focus on a single neighborhood in western Brooklyn makes a reader far more aware of the wide-ranging forces shaping current immigration and urban development. The book raises troubling questions about the ongoing impacts of globalization and neo-liberal economic policies that disadvantage low-income immigrant communities. She shows how the forces sweeping through communities like Sunset Park are widening already large income gaps between rich, middle income and poor residents. How such affected communities respond to these mounting pressures will determine the contours of 21st Century urban development.

Anthony Ferrufino is a senior Political Science major at Hofstra University.

REGIONAL LABOR REVIEW, vol. 18, no. 1 (Fall 2015).  
© 2015 Center for the Study of Labor and Democracy, Hofstra University