

Hahamovitch, Cindy. *No Man's Land: Jamaican Guestworkers in America and the Global History of Deportable Labor*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011.

In *No Man's Land*, Cindy Hahamovitch explores the history of guestworkers in the United States through in depth analysis of Jamaican guestworkers, while at the same time placing this history in its broader global context. "Guestworkers," Hahamovitch argues, "exist on the spectrum between slavery and freedom," (p. 3). The purpose of *No Man's Land*, then, is to delineate the experiences of Jamaican guest workers in an effort to shed some light on precisely where on the spectrum guestworkers have lived throughout the program's existence.

Chapter one begins *No Man's Land* by outlining the beginnings of guestworker programs worldwide, what Hahamovitch calls the first phase. This chapter reveals that the use of guestworkers replaced the use of indentured servants—the main difference being that indentured servants were allowed to remain in the country at the end of their contract—more out of governments responding to nativist sentiments rather than a lack of labor.

Chapter two goes on to details the origins of the second phase of guestworker programs. Guestworkers in the United States were imported primarily to drive down labor prices during World War Two, growers having managed to bypass the immigration restrictions through intensive lobbying.

Chapter three goes on to detail the arrival of Jamaican guestworkers and their initial assignment to farms in the North. Jamaican workers in the North were able to utilize their British citizenship to garner respect from white Americans, but chapter four shows that when Jamaicans were assigned to work in the South, it was clear that their deportability as guestworkers was utilized to

its full effect in preventing workers from organizing to increase wages—the federal government having gone from protecting workers during their time in the North to undermining their ability to strike for better wages while in the South.

Chapter five explains that the continuation of guestworker programs following the Second World War allowed growers to continue to pit groups of immigrants against each other and domestic workers to drive down labor prices and focus and prevent collective action.

Chapter six continues by explaining that illegal immigration served to perpetuate guestworker programs as an alternative to illegal immigration.

Chapter seven explains the stresses placed upon this system in the nineteen sixties as Jamaican workers began to strike regularly for better working conditions despite continuous deportations while

Chapter eight details the legal battles that followed the militancy of farmworkers in the sixties and seventies. It argues that these court cases effectively did nothing to alleviate guestworkers work conditions as undocumented labor began to gain prominence.

In chapter nine, the legal struggles of guestworkers continue into the eighties where they finally won cases against the sugar companies but lost appeals, access to legal immigration status, and jobs in the sugar fields—at the same time as the H2 program continued to expand.

Chapter ten closes *No Man's Land* by placing modern guestworker programs in their current global context, where increasingly female domestic workers continue to face adverse work conditions.

*No Man's Land* serves to demonstrate that guestworker programs were conceived as exploitative programs that were meant to give workers as few rights as possible. This book provides significant insight into the

history of migrant labor that most people likely believe they already know. That is what makes *No Man's Land* useful to both labor and race studies.

Nicholas Langer