



REVEALING THE PAST. CHALLENGING THE FUTURE.

Top 10 Books About the Lower East Side Dave Favaloro, Curatorial and Research Director

1. [*Selling the Lower East Side*](#)
A scholarly treatment of gentrification on the Lower East Side from the 1930s to the present.
2. [*Immigrant Women in the Land of Dollars*](#)
A rich and readable look at the impact of immigration on Italian and East European Jewish mothers and daughters
3. [*Bread Givers*](#)
A vivid account of Jewish immigrant life on the Lower East Side at the turn of the last century.
4. [*Ship Ablaze: The Tragedy of the General Slocum*](#)
Edward O'Donnell's gripping narrative of one of New York's worst but least-known disasters.
5. [*Lower East Side Memories: A Jewish Place in America*](#)
An academic exploration of why the Lower East Side has become associated with Jewish immigrants in the popular imagination.
6. [*Jews Without Money \(1935\)*](#)
Writer and political activist Michael Gold's semiautobiographical novel about growing up on the Lower East Side.
7. [*How the Other Half Lives*](#)
Jacob Riis' classic expose of tenement living conditions on the Lower East Side during the late 19th century.
8. [*Biography of a Tenement House in New York City*](#)
Architectural historian Andrew Dolkart traces the architectural and social history of 97 Orchard Street.
9. *World of Our Fathers*
A rich evocation of Jewish immigrant life on New York's Lower East Side from 1880 to 1920.
10. *The House on Henry Street*
Lillian Wald's autobiographical account of how she set up one of the nation's first settlement houses.

Bibliography

Below is a select bibliography containing a small sampling of the many scholarly books that the Tenement Museum has found helpful in its research about the history of immigration, the Lower East Side, and New York City.

All the Nations Under Heaven: An Ethnic and Racial History of New York City, Frederick Binders and David Reimers, Columbia University Press, 1995.

The American Irish: A History, Kevin Kenny, Pearson Education Inc., 2000

Becoming American: An Ethnic History, Thomas J. Archdeacon, Free Press, 1983.

Biography of a Tenement House in New York City: An Architectural History of 97 Orchard Street, Andrew Dolkart, University of Virginia Press, 2007.

Cheap Amusements: Working Women and Leisure In Turn-Of-The-Century New York., Kathy Peiss, Temple University Press, 1985.

Coming to America: A History of Immigration and Ethnicity in American Life, Roger Daniels, Harper Collins, 1990.

[*Daughters of the Shtetl: Life and Labor in the Immigrant Generation*](#), Susan Glenn, Cornell University Press, 1990..

Emigrants and Exiles: Ireland and the Irish Exodus to America, Kirby Miller, Oxford University Press, 1985.

[*Erin's Daughters in America: Irish Immigrant Women in the 19th Century*](#), Hasia Diner., Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983.

Faces Along the Bar: Lore and Order in the Workingman's Saloon, 1970-1920, Madelon Powers, University of Chicago Press, 1999.

[*Five Points: The 19th Century New York City Neighborhood that Invented Tap Dance, Stole Elections, and Became the World's Most Notorious Slum*](#), Tyler Annbinder

From Colonia to Community: the History of Puerto Ricans in New York City, 1917-1948, Virginia Sanchez Korrol

From Ellis Island to JFK: New York's Two Great Waves of Immigration, Nancy Foner, Yale University Press, 2000

From Sicily to Elizabeth Street: Housing and Social Change among Italian Immigrants, 1880-1930., Donna Gabaccia, State University of New York Press, 1984.

Germans in the Civil War: The Letters They Wrote Home, Walter D. Kamphoefner and Wolfgang Helbich, eds., University of North Carolina Press, 2006.

Going to America, Going to School: The Jewish Immigrant Public School Encounter in turn-of-the-century New York City., Stephan Brumberg, Praeger, 1986.

The Golden Door: Italian and Jewish Immigrant Mobility in New York City, 1880-1915, Thomas Kessner, Oxford University Press, 1977.

A History of Housing in New York, Richard Plunz, Columbia University Press, 1990.

History of a Jewish Burial Society: An examination Secularization, Marilyn Schneider, Edward Mellen Press, 1991

Hungering for America: Italian Jewish Food Ways in the Age of Migration, Hasia Diner, Harvard University Press, 2001

The Immigrant Church: New York's Irish and German Catholics
Jay Dolan, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1975.

Immigrant Women in the Land of Dollars: Life and Culture on the Lower East Side, 1890-1925, Elizabeth Ewen, Monthly Review Press, 1985.

Little Germany: Ethnicity, Religion, and Class in New York City, 1845-1880, University of Illinois Press, 1990.

Lower East Side Memories: A Jewish Place in America, Hasia Diner, Princeton University Press, 2002.

Making the Irish American: History and Heritage of the Irish in the United States, Marion Casey and J.J. Lee, eds., New York University Press, 2006.

Neighbors in Conflict: The Irish, Germans, Jews and Italians of New York City, 1929-1941, Ronald Bayor, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978.

The New Chinatown, Peter Kwong, Hill and Wang, 1987.

New Immigrants in New York, Nancy Foner (Editor), Columbia University Press, 2001

News from the Land of Freedom: German Immigrants Write Home, Walter D. Kamphoefner and Wolfgang Helbich, eds., Cornell University Press, 1993.

The New York Irish, Ronald H. Bayor and Timothy J. Meagher (Editors), Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996

The Promised City: New York's Jews, 1870-1914, Moses Rischin, Harvard University Press, 1962.

Selling the Lower East Side: Culture, Real Estate, and Resistance in New York City, Christopher Mele, University of Minnesota Press, 2000.

Sephardim in 20th Century America: In Search of Unity, Joseph Papo, Pele Yoetz, 1987

Silent Travelers: Germs, Genes, and the "Immigrant Menace", Alan Kraut, Basic Books, 1994.

Still the Golden Door: The Third World comes to America, David Reimers, Columbia University Press, 1985

Strangers in the Land: American Nativism, 1860-1925, John Higham, Atheneum, 1955.

The Transplanted: A History of Immigrants in Urban America, John Bodnar, University of Indiana Press, 1985.

Urban Masses and Moral Order in America, 1820-1920, Paul Boyer, Harvard University Press, 1978

U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Laws and Issues: a Documentary History, Michael LeMay and Elliott Robert Barkan, Greenwood Press, 1999

Workers in the Metropolis: Class, Ethnicity, and Youth in Antebellum New York City, Richard B. Stott, Cornell University Press, 1990

A World of our Fathers, Irving Howe, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1976.

Top 5 Links

[American Memory from the Library of Congress](#)

Drawn from the collections of the Library of Congress, American Memory features over 9 million items that document U.S. history and culture. The materials chronicle historical events, people, places, and ideas, and is organized into more than 100 thematic collections.

[City Sites: Multimedia Essays on New York and Chicago, 1870s-1930s](#)

An "electronic book," composed of 10 multimedia essays by European and American scholars on modern urban culture in New York and Chicago. Topics on New York City include Times Square as represented in New Year's celebrations, and tensions between turn-of-the-century representations of the Lower east Side by reformers and others. Topics on Chicago include Maxwell Street as an urban crucible and birthplace of electric blues, and the ways that Chicago has been represented as a "gateway."

[New Deal Network](#)

A research and teaching resource dedicated to the public works and arts projects of the New Deal. It features a database of over 20,000 primary source materials including photographs, political cartoons, and texts (speeches, letters, and other historical documents).

[New York City Housing and Neighborhood Information System](#)

Find information concerning housing, demographics, income, public assistance and education in New York City's neighborhoods.

[New York Public Library: Digital Collections](#)

Images of African-Americans in the nineteenth century, Hudson River views, small-town America stereoscopic views, maps of the middle Atlantic region to 1850, treasures of the American Performing Arts, 1875- 1923 and the Mid-Manhattan Picture Collection are just some of the NYPL collections available in digital format

Links

[Contemporary New York City](#)

[NYCData](#)

Created by The Weissman Center for International Business NYCData features extensive statistical information about New York City and each of its boroughs.

[Center for an Urban Future](#)

A NYC-based policy institute that releases studies about issues that are important to New York City, particularly economic development, education, child welfare, and workforce development.

[New York City Housing and Neighborhood Information System](#)

Find information concerning housing, demographics, income, public assistance and education in New York City's neighborhoods.

[Genealogy Resources](#)

[Association of Professional Genealogists](#)

Includes a directory of members as well as a "How to Hire a Professional" section. Board for Certification of Genealogists List of certified genealogists; also genealogy resources, including online articles on such topics as "Analyzing City Directories."

[Cyndi's List of Genealogy Sites on the Internet](#)

A large genealogy site with information on genealogical resources, including ships, ports of departure and arrival (including NYC), and others.

[Ellis Island Records: American Family Immigration History Center](#)

The official site of the Ellis Island Immigration Museum. Search passenger records, create family scrapbooks, and learn about the history of immigration to the United States through text, photos, and interactive features.

[Hispanic Genealogy Center](#)

This website of the Hispanic Genealogical Society of New York is a non-profit organization, dedicated to bringing genealogy to Hispanic Americans. Headquartered in New York City, the organization helps researchers discover their histories while bringing together a common heritage.

[Municipal Archives](#)

The Municipal Archives has records of births reported in the five Boroughs of New York City (Manhattan, Brooklyn, Bronx, Queens and Staten Island), prior to 1910; deaths reported prior to 1949, and marriages reported prior to 1930. Go to [New York City's Department of Health & Vital Records](#) for births after 1910 and deaths after 1949.

Also among the municipal archives' many holdings are : records of the coroner and office of chief medical examiner, 1823-1939, docket books from Manhattan's department of buildings, 1866 to 1959, ledgers records for the city cemetery on Hart's Island (aka "Potter's Field"), and New York City court records 1684-1966. Information about these and other collections is available on this site.

[National Archives and Records Administration](#)

Find information about U.S. census, immigration and naturalization records in the National Archives' extensive collection.

[New York Genealogical & Biographical Society](#)

One of the principal genealogical reference libraries in the country. Numerous online research guides available.

[Museums, Archives, and Historical Societies](#)

[Brooklyn Historical Society](#)

The Brooklyn Historical Society website offers information about museum and library collections. Includes a searchable database of over 33,000 Brooklyn-related photographs.

[Center for Jewish History](#)

Housing five institutions-American Jewish Historical Society, American, Sephardi Federation, Leo Baeck Institute, Yeshiva University Museum, and YIVO Institute for Jewish Research-the Center holds the largest collection outside of Israel documenting the historical and cultural legacy of the Jewish people. The Center's website offers information about its collections as well as several searchable online databases of specific holdings, including those of the Hebrew Orphan Asylum of the City of New York, the Industrial Removal Office, and the Jewish Immigration Information Bureau.

[Jewish Women's Archives](#)

Presents two exhibits and a multitude of resources for the study of American Jewish women's contributions to their communities and the wider world.

[La Guardia and Wagner Archives](#)

A repository for 20th century New York City political and social history covering the mayoralities of LaGuardia, Wagner, Beame, Koch, and more...

[The Museum of the City of New York](#)

Offers information about the Museum's collections, exhibits, and programs. The website also provides online access to some of their most significant prints and photographs, including those of Currier and Ives, Bernice Abbott, and Jacob Riis.

[National Park Service Parks of New York Harbor](#)

Offers information about each of the National Park Service's sites located in New York Harbor, including the Statue of Liberty, Ellis Island Immigration Museum, Castle Clinton, and Jacob Riis Park, among others.

[New-York Historical Society](#)

The New-York Historical Society Website provides information about both the museum and library collections. Includes a searchable database of the Society's museum collections.

[Online Exhibits](#)

[City Sites: Multimedia Essays on New York and Chicago, 1870s-1930s](#)

An "electronic book," composed of 10 multimedia essays by European and American scholars on modern urban culture in New York and Chicago. Topics on New York City include Times Square as represented in New Year's celebrations, and tensions between turn-of-the-century representations of the Lower east Side by reformers and others. Topics on Chicago include Maxwell Street as an urban crucible and birthplace of electric blues, and the ways that Chicago has been represented as a "gateway."

[Five Points Site](#)

Learn what archaeologists and historians uncovered about this infamous 19th century New York City neighborhood.

[Journey Through Chinatown](#)

Documents the constant growth and change of New York City's several Chinatowns. Features photographs, maps, newspaper articles, a directory of restaurants and shops, and links to additional resources.

[Pluralism and Unity](#)

Pluralism and Unity explores the problem of American identity and the nature of political and cultural pluralism in the early 20th century. Presents a wide array of materials that explore "the struggle between these two visions" of pluralism and unity in early 20th-century American thought and life.

[Tangled Roots: A Project Exploring the Histories of Americans of Irish Heritage and Americans of African Heritage](#)

This site explores the cultural connections between the history of African Americans and Irish immigrants in America. Sponsored by the Gilder Lehrman Center for the Study of Slavery, Resistance, and Abolition, the project offers more than 200 documents related to individual leaders, historical events, economic, political, and social factors, and cultural achievements of African Americans and Irish Americans

[Views of the Irish Famine](#)

Images and articles on the famine in Ireland between 1845 and 1851, including some pre-famine material on related events.

[Women and Social Movements in the United States, 1600-2000](#)

Organized around the history of women's role social movements in the U.S. between 1600 and 2000, the site addresses specific questions about the women's activism through mini-monographs and over 1400 primary sources.

[100 Years of New York City History](#)

Created by the New York Times, this site contains an overview of the past hundred years in NYC, decade by decade, including both narrative text and images.

[Photography](#)

[Child Labor in America, 1908-1912: Photographs of Lewis Hine](#)

Furnishes 64 photographs taken by Lewis W. Hine (1874-1940) between 1908 and 1912 that document American children working in mills, mines, streets, and factories, and as "newsies," seafood workers, fruit pickers, and salesmen. Also includes photos of immigrant families and children's "pastimes and vices."

[Mid-Manhattan Library Picture Collection Online](#)

The online counterpart to the illustrious Mid-Manhattan Library's Picture Collection, this resource is a collection of 30,000 digitized images from books, magazines and newspapers as well as original photographs, prints and postcards, mostly created before 1923.

Primary Sources for Historical Research

[American Memory from the Library of Congress](#)

Drawn from the collections of the Library of Congress, American Memory features over 9 million items that document U.S. history and culture. The materials chronicle historical events, people, places, and ideas, and is organized into more than 100 thematic collections.

[Brooklyn Daily Eagle](#)

Brooklyn's historic paper of record, the Brooklyn Daily Eagle, 1841-1902, available through the Brooklyn Public Library.

[Harp Week: Explore History](#)

Within the larger HarpWeek site-which for a hefty subscription fee allows full-text searching of all Harper's Weekly issues from 1857-1912-this collection of 13 exhibits presents free access to a wealth of texts and images taken primarily from Harper's on a variety of subjects dealing with 19th-century American political and social history.

[Living City](#)

Living City is a digital library concerned with the urban transformation of New York from the Civil War to the end of World War One. The information is centered around health issues, the urban infrastructure and environment, and how these relate to one another. The most important source used to generate the information for Living City is the collection of Annual Reports of the New York City Department of Health, which date from 1866.

[How the Other Half Lives](#)

The full-text, complete with original illustrations, of the original, 1890 edition of Jacob A. Riis' How the Other Half Lives: Studies among the Tenements of New York.

[Making of America: Cornell University](#)

Cornell University's contributions to the digital library of primary sources in American social history. The MOA is a collaborative effort of Cornell University and the University of Michigan to preserve and provide electronic access to historical texts covering the period from the antebellum through reconstruction. This site provides access to 267 monograph volumes and over 100,000 journal articles with 19th century imprints from Cornell's collections.

[Making of America: University of Michigan](#)

The University of Michigan's contributions to MOA. This site provides access to approximately 8,500 books and 50,000 journal articles with 19th century imprints from the university's collections.

[New Deal Network](#)

A research and teaching resource dedicated to the public works and arts projects of the New Deal. It features a database of over 20,000 primary source materials including photographs, political cartoons, and texts (speeches, letters, and other historical documents).

[New Netherlands Project](#)

Dedicated to providing access to materials related to the 17th Century colony of New Netherland. Features a virtual tour of New Netherland and transcriptions of significant documents.

[New York Public Library: Digital Collections](#)

Images of African-Americans in the nineteenth century, Hudson River views, small-town America stereoscopic views, maps of the middle Atlantic region to 1850, treasures of the American Performing Arts, 1875- 1923 and the Mid-Manhattan Picture Collection are just some of the NYPL collections available in digital format

[The Battle with the Slum](#)

Jacob Riis' 1902 Battle with the Slum published on the internet with some illustrations and footnotes.

[The Tenant Movement in New York City](#)

Extensive overviews of tenant groups, rent resistance, rent control and the fluctuating balance of power between renters and landlords over the course of the 20th century.

[United States Historical Census Data Browser](#)

Provides access to data from the U.S. Census between 1790-1970. For each census, users can browse extensive demographic and economic information at the state and county levels, organized in a variety of categories including birth, age, gender, marital status, race, ethnicity, education, illiteracy, salary levels, housing, and specifics dealing with agriculture, labor and manufacturing.

[Vintage City Maps](#)

Historical maps of NYC from several perspectives and time periods

Miscellaneous

[American Social History Project](#)

Aimed at making the latest in social history scholarship available to a wider public, the American Social History Project produces award-winning print, visual, and multimedia materials about the working men and women whose actions and beliefs have shaped American history.

[Center for History and New Media](#)

Based at George Mason University, The Center for History and New Media uses digital media and computer technology to democratize history-to incorporate multiple voices, reach diverse audiences, and encourage popular participation in presenting and preserving the past. The Center sponsors more than a dozen digital history projects, and offers free tools and resources for historians.

Gotham Center for New York City History (www.gothamcenter.org)

Based at the City University of New York's Graduate Center, the Gotham Center for New York City History seeks to examine and explore the rich and diverse history of New York City through high-quality, relevant, and cutting-edge programs, and through its website, which offers an extensive virtual guide to history-related resources.

[History Matters: The U.S. Survey Course on the Web](#)

Developed by American Social History Project/Center for Media & Learning, City University of New York, and the Center for History and New Media, George Mason University, History Matters offers primary documents, guides to evaluating historical evidence, articles and resources that link the past with current ideas and events, and other resources.

[Lewis Mumford Center for Comparative Urban and Regional Research](#)

A site promoting global and interdisciplinary urban research. Features resources for teachers and scholars, including data and maps from the 2000 U.S. census.

[The General Slocum Disaster](#)

A website devoted to Edward T. O'Donnell's recent book, [*Ship Ablaze: The Tragedy of the Steamboat General Slocum*](#), about the story of the burning of the General Slocum.