giving placed in a broader perspective — seeing the matter as might national leaders or sociologists — would be useful to church leaders.

Overall, the research reported in this book was expertly done. The quantitative results may be more interesting for what they disprove. The material on motivations I found fascinating; it would be stimulating reading to anyone interested in fund raising and especially to anyone trying to understand contemporary American religion.

Gatherings in the Diaspora: Religious Communities and the New Immigration. *Edited by R. Stephen Warner and Judith G. Wittner.* Temple University Press, 1998. 416 pp. Cloth, $59.95; paper, 24.95.

Reviewer: STEVEN J. GOLD, *Michigan State University*

The topic of migration has been most commonly studied from the perspective of economics, and even scholars who are not part of the discipline of economics have frequently focused upon economic concerns when examining the experience of migrants. Admittedly, economic matters are of great importance in bringing about migration and shaping immigrant adjustment. However, the heavy emphasis on economic affairs has resulted in an incomplete understanding of contemporary migration.

First, in centering on economic matters, scholars often buy into the neo-classical model, which sees migrants as profit-maximizing individuals. This model is essentially unsociological, discounting group life and the various structured inequalities of gender, race, class, generation, and legal status that shape the experience of migrants. Moreover, the neo-classical approach imposes a single, culturally-specific form of cost/reward analysis as the only kind of rationality. As such, it is incapable of understanding the diverse, complex, moralistic, contentious and group-based realities that are central to the social lives of many migrant communities. Third, and somewhat paradoxically, the economistic approach ignores many economic benefits (as well as costs) that groups encounter as a consequence of their collective strategies.

Gatherings in the Diasporas offers a useful corrective to the over-emphasis on economism, individualism and rationalism in understanding the nature of immigrant life. While the book focuses on contemporary immigration, its scholarly tradition is long established, drawing on the insights of classical sociological theory, Chicago school ethnographies, feminism and social history.

Contributors to *Gatherings in the Diaspora* were selected and funded by the New Ethnic and Immigrant Congregations Project. R. Stephen Warner, a leading scholar in religious studies, organized the program while Judith Wittner contributed methodological guidance. In addition to offering introductory and methodological

essays by the co-editors, the collection addresses Muslim, Christian, Catholic, Vodou, Jewish, Hindu, and Rastafarian congregations established by Iranians, Yemenis, Chinese, Koreans, African Americans and Afro-Caribbeans, Indians, Mexicans, Guatemalans, and Haitians in locations throughout the U.S.

These congregations are occupied by vital questions that go beyond the economic realm. Their members creatively explore the morals and meanings of their lives. They question group traditions and the process of adaptation. Their collective activities address issues of inequality both within the religious community and between the community and the larger society. Finally, the book instructs us that participating in these congregations shapes immigrants' social and economic fates, sometimes for the better, sometimes for the worse; sometimes intentionally, and sometimes in unforeseen ways.

Drawing on the richness and complexity of several case studies, *Gatherings in the Diaspora* offers a valuable corrective to the simplistic dichotomy suggested in many discussions of immigrant adaptation and multiculturalism — that groups adapt to a new setting either by retaining their traditional culture or by assimilating into dominant American cultural forms. Instead, in constructing new lives in the U.S., these groups combine social and cultural forms from their country of origin, the host society and from other ethnic groups and traditions.

In total, these essays reveal the diversity that exists within migrant congregations — in terms of cohort, ideology, class, religion, generation, language and gender. For several communities, these social features are the bases of contested inequalities. For some, internal conflicts are far more pertinent and absorbing than those involving the host society.

Gatherings in the Diaspora shows the need for and value of ethnographic research on face-to-face assemblies within migrant communities. The book demonstrates that the "objective" and "policy oriented" survey research on immigrants or refugees, concerned with economic status, health, and performance of religious rituals, offers only a very limited peephole into what immigrants actually do.

For example, the book illustrates a surprising puzzle about migrants' relations with "proximal hosts" (the co-ethnic or co-religious communities who often oversee their resettlement). On one hand, despite the availability of high quality services from established co-religionists, many immigrant groups prefer to assist themselves, and in so doing, carve out their own niche in American society. On the other hand, immigrant congregations may develop unexpected relations with native-born religious leaders and communities. Fenggang Yang documents one such case, that of a Chinese parish which employed a monolingual American pastor, while Elizabeth McCalister discusses another, involving the joint Haitian/Italian-American (and Catholic/Vodou) Celebration of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel at a Catholic church in Harlem.

Gatherings In the Diaspora shows that religion survives as a vital force in immigrant life and that migrants continue to accomplish practical, social and

spiritual goals in religious environments. The book suggests that religious settings offer an especially attractive location for the creation of immigrant solidarity. As the province of uprooted exiles, immigrant and refugee communities are often marked by suspicion, distrust, confusion and atomization. Accordingly, while immigrants and refugees feel the need for the creation of organizations to achieve economic or political goals, they find such groups especially difficult to form. Religious appeals and leaders appear credible and do attract followers. Once solidarity is established in a religious setting, the social unity may then be directed towards political and economic goals, as was the case among the religious fraternal organizations created by immigrants in the U.S. early this century.

I commend the editors and authors of *Gatherings in the Diaspora.* It is a strong, valuable and well written contribution to our understanding of ethnic and immigrant communities and the role of religion within them. The book offers an exemplary guide on how to study immigrant life without relying on individualism, narrow rationalism, and economic reduction.

Jewish Choices: American Jewish Denominationalism.
By Bernard Lazerwitz, J. Alan Winter, Arnold Dashefsky, and Ephraim Tabory. SUNY Press, Albany, 1998. 215 pp.

Reviewer: ELLEN J. KENNEDY, *University of St. Thomas*

This book assesses the major changes and trends in modern Jewish American life based on a National Jewish Population Survey done in 1971 and on its update in 1990. The new survey provides an opportunity for longitudinal analysis of shifts and patterns in American Jewry.

The authors contend that religion is the prime idiom by which Americans define themselves, and the choice of a denomination means having a specific communal identification. Jewish denominationalism is based on responses to two essential questions: religious versus ethnic identity, that is, whether people define themselves as synagogue members or are unaffiliated; and whether people choose modern Western models of Judaism or traditional Judaic models.

The survey responses indicate that fully two-thirds of America's Jews have been or are synagogue members, thus answering the "religious or ethnic" question; the "modern versus traditional" issue is answered with only 7% of Jews adhering to Orthodoxy, or halachic Jewish law; 40% following American or modern ways when those ways are justified by halacha, which is the central tenet of Conservative Judaism; and 38% choosing Reform Judaism, in which halacha is not binding.

During the twenty years between the surveys, the percentage preferring Orthodox Judaism has declined, Conservative has remained fairly stable, and Reform has grown by the percentage that Orthodox has declined. The percentage of adults who