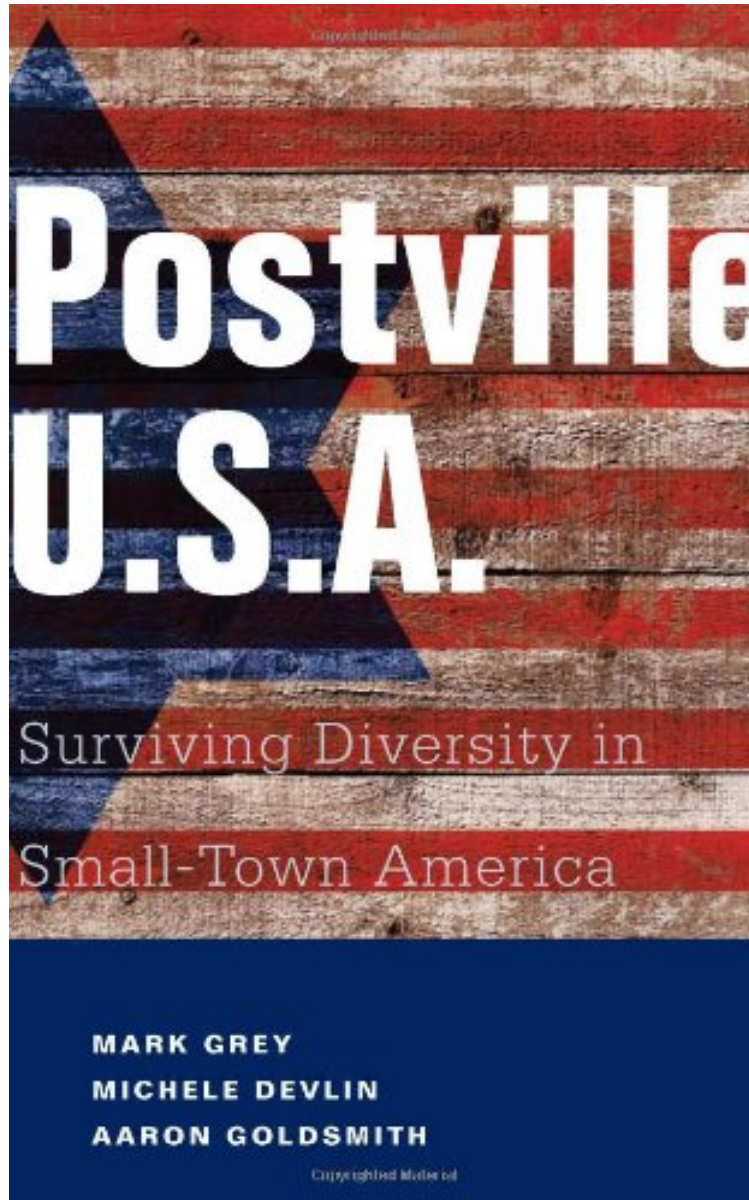


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## Postville: USA: Surviving Diversity in Small-Town America

*Mark A Grey, Michele Devlin, Aaron Goldsmith*  
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**Mark A Grey, Michele Devlin, Aaron Goldsmith : Postville: USA: Surviving Diversity in Small-Town America**  
before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Postville: USA:  
Surviving Diversity in Small-Town America:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Fluffy to say the least!By Phyllis Antebi Ph.DReading Postville

USA was like taking a walk in the clouds. A lot of fluff and very little substance. I gave this book three stars because the "fluff" was well articulated and coherent. Not included in this summary were insights gleaned by the raid of the US government concerning the numerous irregularities of the Rubashkins financial improprieties. In addition, the charges for their violations carried a criminal sentence, a very severe one. While Postville was pictured as a town in transition, no citizens of either Postville or of the Orthodox Jewish community were interviewed in depth. Interviews by those whose lives were transformed would have given their story more weight. I will concede that the emphasis of this book was simply about diversity of cultures in a rural town. This subject was nicely discussed especially for the readers who were unfamiliar with the Jewish Orthodox traditions. I personally picked this book because I wanted to understand better who the major players were in this drama. I learned nothing about the character and motivations of the Rubashkins or of their employees who ran the daily activities of the plant. There were so many improprieties that the raid ultimately led to many arrests. I never could understand how observant religious leaders could sanction so many violations. They knew they were violating important immigration and employment laws yet they planned elaborate schemes to maintain their business. In addition, financial mismanagement was the primary reason that one of the Rubashkin Rabbis was sentenced to prison. How this intricate drama actually got played out is undoubtedly a task for other interested authors.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. PerspectiveBy Mary JaneInteresting book about the development of a diverse community in Iowa. A Hasidic Jew moved his family from Brooklyn, NY, to Postville, Iowa, to open a Kosher meat packing plant. This had been a small rural community of white, European descended farmers, now confronted with a totally different culture of people who preferred to remain separate, to not assimilate. They brought more Hasidics from Brooklyn, and eventually other areas like CA. They began to hire illegal aliens from Central America to work in the factory. Things seemed to be working along until a 2008 ICE raid took down the town, the authors contend. The Hispanics who did not flee were arrested, held, and eventually deported, severely depleting the work force. This rendered the plant unworkable without laborers. With the plant shut down, the town neared bankruptcy. The only thing that seemingly kept the Postville residents afloat was a Catholic Church which got a charitable fund going to pay rents and other expenses of those who were left. The book ends before the major trials of the plant owner and managers. This book presents a different perspective on this much studied clash of cultures and the immigration issue, which is very much alive in this year (2015-16) of the run up to the Presidential election in 2016, as the three authors, all college professors, one a trained rabbi, attempt to discuss the results of this "experiment" in rural America. It would be of interest to anyone who has lived and/or worked near a Hasidic community, as well as anyone who is involved in the discussion about undocumented workers in the American labor force.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Expecting more from University ProfessorsBy GemmaThis was a "historical" book about the difficulties in Postville Iowa, however, I feel the history played back burner to the many grammar and typing errors littered throughout this book. Not to mention you can tell, OBVIOUSLY, when the writers changed. The voices between the different authors was vastly different and wrenches the reader from the point of the book.

Postville is an obscure meatpacking town in the northeast corner of Iowa. Here, in the most unlikely of places, unparalleled diversity drew international media. Now people declare the town's experiment in multiculturalism dead. It was not native Iowans, or the newly-arrived Orthodox Jews, or the immigrant workers who made Postville fail. Postville was stopped in its tracks by a massive raid by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) on May 12th 2008. 20% of the population was arrested, forcing the closure of the town's kosher meatpacking plant. The raid exposed the disastrous enforcement of immigration policy, the exploitation of Postville by activists, and disturbing questions about the packing house's operators.

From Publishers WeeklyOne of the effects of globalization is to bring vast numbers of diverse peoples to traditionally homogenous small towns almost as easily as urban centers. Postville, Iowa, is such a town, attracting newcomers from 50 nations looking for work. Until 2008, when government immigration enforcement moved in, the town seemed to be a successful, harmonious experiment in social adaptation. Postville's financial and social success stemmed largely from a bond with Agriprocessors, the Kosher meatpacking plant that employed much of the town. The powerful sense of unity common to factory towns overcame differences in the population, even among its white residents. In May, 2008, for the sake of political points, the government made an example of Agriprocessors, arresting every undocumented worker-a full 20 percent of the town's population-and dismantling its business. In the process, it unmade the town. The authors build their case study around interviews with residents, putting together a picture of multiculturalism at work; tellingly, however, the authors (an anthropologist, a public health professor, and a city councilman) avoid the question of immigrant exploitation and corporate greed-indeed, the lack of testimony from undocumented laborers themselves speak volumes. Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.