

for K–12 civic schooling. She cites several national organizations that do sponsor civic education in schools, but gives them only passing reference (p. 246). Admittedly, there are many differences between K–12 and higher education, but I think that lessons could be learned from organizations like The American Democracy Project of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities and Campus Compact.

To regret that Levinson is not able to offer strategies for effectively implementing her sound ideas for “action civics” is not to diminish the major strengths of this fine work. She charts a way forward for those who care about future generations learning to be responsible citizens of our democracy. That is a great gift.

The Politics of Race and Ethnicity in the United States: Americanization, De-Americanization, and Racialized Ethnic Groups. By Sherrow O. Pinder. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010. 258p. \$89.00.
doi:10.1017/S1537592712003817

— Matthew Wright, *American University*

In this book, Sherrow O. Pinder tackles race relations past, present, and future, with emphasis on the role of multiculturalism in fostering a mutual respect for America’s long-standing cultural “manyness.” The theoretical core of her argument taps Frantz Fanon’s notion of “cultural hierarchy” and to make her case she draws on a broad swath of normative theory, historical accounts, and empirical studies. Pinder’s account of US political culture is critical and pessimistic. While I have questions about her approach, there can be no doubt that the themes she presses are important ones.

Pinder’s largely pessimistic story contains three main arguments: First, America’s core identity is premised on “whiteness,” with racialized minority groups “de-Americanized” from the outset (Chapters 2 and 3). Second, multiculturalism is a flawed coping strategy (Chapter 4), as it “does not resolve assumptions about identities that are formulated from racialized differences, and thus it remains limited as a racially charged strategy” (p. 5). Finally, the only redress involves the complete renunciation of whiteness as a key element of “Americanness,” with “post-multicultural” America celebrating cultural inclusiveness rather than “otherness” (Chapter 5).

The author’s case rests on the synthesis of an eclectic body of source material: sociological and anthropological theory, the founding documents and court cases, popular culture and political/social commentary, research on public opinion, and so on. While the analysis centers for the most part on secondary rather than primary sources, the scope of the evidence—both in terms of substantive range and historical breadth—is impressive. Using this as a foundation, Pinder lays out her argument in a logical progression: first demonstrating America’s whiteness, leading to

the propagation of multiculturalism as a political ideology, then criticizing the multicultural idea on a number of fronts, and finally attempting to point forward to a post-multicultural future.

Each of these provocative arguments merits some criticism. First, is America really a “white” nation? To Pinder, “[a]ll documents that defined America, including the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights, contributed to promote a white America” (p. 40) and her account ably links white ethnocentrism to slavery, Jim Crow, socially Darwinist immigration policies, and other examples of institutional racism tracing back to the founding. The conclusion? Gunnar Myrdal’s “American Dilemma” is no dilemma at all: Whites are comfortable being racist because it is in their interest as societal hegemons (pp. 50–51).

This is oversimplified; “white” America is real, but it has always butted against more liberal, egalitarian, and communitarian ideals (e.g., Rogers Smith, *Civic Ideals*, 1997) and these have fueled the expansion of civil rights, the liberalization of immigration policy post-1965, and multiculturalism. As such, political institutions have also constrained the behavior of racist elites and empowered the better angels of America’s nature. Justice Stephen Field, here serving as an exemplar of racist views against the Chinese (p. 58), also struck down the “Pigtail Ordinance” in *Ho Ah Kow v. Nunan* because its discriminatory intent violated the Fourteenth Amendment. In public opinion, too, US identity (even among whites) is not as ethnocentric as Pinder would have us believe (e.g., Deborah Schildkraut, *Americanism in the 21st Century*, 2011). While racial prejudice still exists in the wake of the Civil Rights movement and its aftermath, social desirability has drastically undercut its outward manifestations (Paul Sniderman, Gretchen C. Crosby, and William G. Howell, “The Politics of Race,” in David O. Sears, James Sidanius, and Lawrence Bobo, eds., *Racialized Politics: The Debate About Racism in America*, 2000).

One can question whether outward behavior reflects private belief (Abigail Thernstrom and Stephan Thernstrom, *America in Black and White*, 1999), but the extent to which discourse has changed over the past half-century is unmistakable. In short, the America Pinder envisions, where “the prevailing assumption is that nonwhites are invested with essential characteristics and blemishes that contaminate the public culture [and are] perceived as a threat to the public culture” (p. 126), is one unfairly shorn of its most inclusive elements.

From Pinder’s vantage point, multiculturalism is just another tool by which whites keep racialized minorities de-Americanized. At best, it sanctions a regime of tolerance vis-à-vis minorities, but this is not enough because “in the end, tolerance cannot exist without intolerance” (p. 102). Conceptual muddiness surrounding the term makes multiculturalism’s putative chauvinism contestable. Some

versions seek to place minority cultural rights within the broader framework of liberalism (e.g., Will Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship*, 1995), but many critics view even this as an unfair burden on minority identities. Pinder falls into the latter camp: “[O]ne of multiculturalism’s goals is to maintain and strengthen the very cultural hierarchy that it seems to reject” (p. 94). This argument is unpersuasive, at least as far as it is taken here: It is one thing to say that multiculturalism unfairly privileges liberalism and quite another that “the state, by homogenizing and essentializing the cultures of the ‘other’ through stereotypical expectations, decides when, where, and how to exhibit nondominant cultures in their so-called purest forms” (p. 127). But it is a debate worth having.

More problematically, however, this critique swims alongside the reactionary broadsides that multiculturalism has endured from Samuel Huntington, Arthur Schlesinger Jr. and others, repeatedly invoked as foils throughout the book. It is difficult to have it both ways convincingly: Surely, the existence of such a powerful reactionary strand could serve as evidence that multiculturalism is a threat to, rather than a bulwark of, the white power structure. If the latter is true, why are Huntington and his ilk so bothered? It is hard to believe that they are simply mistaken about what multiculturalism really is (p. 155). Casting multiculturalism as an ideology, whereby “cultural differences become the enemy of democracy . . . creat[ing] a cultural hierarchy based on the ideology of white superiority” (pp. 91, 92), does both it and its proponents a disservice. Do we really want to put Kymlicka and Smith on the same side as Huntington and Allan Bloom? This represents exactly the kind of essentialization that Pinder is at pains to disabuse when the victims are racialized minorities.

Finally, is the author’s concept of “post-multiculturalism” old wine in new bottles? Her prescription seems little more than what she decries. Indeed, the very foundation of her argument is Kymlicka’s own, sans the reference to “dominant” versus “nondominant” cultures (p. 132). And, at any rate, Kymlicka only uses this language to frankly acknowledge that a power asymmetry exists (as Pinder does), while at the same time arguing for a less hierarchical reconceptualization (as Pinder does). Both argue for a level cultural playing field, based on a more inclusive sense of “we.” Viewed in this light, the claim that post-multiculturalism represents something new rings hollow. Moreover, how to achieve the criteria that do set Pinder’s account apart from Kymlicka’s—key among them the racialization and subsequent “de-normalization” of whiteness—is left frustratingly vague. If whiteness is indeed a “political commitment to white supremacy” and “white supremacy is pathological” (p. 147), it is difficult to see how Pinder’s hopes could ever be convincingly realized.

Despite its shortcomings, *The Politics of Race and Ethnicity in the United States* is a trenchant palliative to those

who blindly dismiss institutional racism in America, past and present. But it falls somewhat short alongside more nuanced work that tries to come to grips with the *totality* of Americanness (e.g., Lawrence Fuchs, *The American Kaleidoscope*, 1990; Rogers Smith, *Civic Ideals*, 1997; Aristide Zolberg, *A Nation By Design*, 2006). Thoughtful intellectuals of every race have increasingly come to grips with America’s checkered past and our naive (or willfully blinded) understanding of it. This corpus is not without flaws, but lack of sensitivity to the race issue is not among them. As to the broader argument about multiculturalism, one could rejoin that racial disharmony exists in America because it has not been properly tried and, on this note, Pinder would have been on firmer footing. But, even if her story is not always persuasive, it is a valuable addition to a most important conversation.

Rallying for Immigrant Rights: The Fight for Inclusion in 21st Century America.

Edited by Kim Voss and Irene Bloemraad. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011. 336p. \$60.00 cloth, \$27.95 paper. doi:10.1017/S1537592712003829

— Doris Marie Provine, *Arizona State University*

The always-contentious politics of immigration policy erupted in 2006 into street demonstrations that were among the largest in American history. The size of these marches, numbering in the hundreds of thousands in some cities, surprised even the organizers. The precipitating event was the approval by the House of Representatives of H.R. 4437, a proposal by Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner (R-WI) that would have criminalized illegal presence in the United States and punished anyone who aided these immigrants. In the spring following the December 2005 House vote on H.R. 4437, as many as 260 separate demonstrations occurred in cities large and small across the United States. The protests were distinctive, not only in their size and scope but also in their peacefulness and almost festive quality. Demonstrators brought their families, with some pushing strollers. The marches succeeded in derailing Sensenbrenner’s legislation; the Senate refused to consider the House bill. Prospects for comprehensive immigration reform hospitable to immigrants, however, remain uncertain.

The sudden manifestation of political force by masses of people not accustomed to collective political action deserves our attention. What organizational network underlay these events? Are marches like this likely to occur again? With what political effect? Kim Voss and Irene Bloemraad set out to answer these questions with a team of investigators focused on setting immigrant activism within the larger frame of American politics. With Taeku Lee, Voss and Bloemraad provide a helpful introductory chapter that situates the more specifically directed chapters that follow. They draw upon two relevant literatures: studies of political behavior within mainstream politics and research on