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Book Review: Molina, How Race is Made in America: Immigration, Citizenship, and the Historical Power of Racial Scripts, by Michael Omi

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*How Race Is Made in America: Immigration, Citizenship, and the Historical Power of Racial Scripts.* By Natalia Molina. (Berkeley, University of California Press, 2014. xv + 207 pp. \$65 cloth, \$27.95 paper, \$27.95 digital)

While the title of the book suggests a sweeping and definitive account of the social construction of race, the specific focus of this study is Mexican immigration from 1924 to 1965. Bookended by major immigration acts, the historical period is characterized by shifting *immigration regimes* that constructed, and reconstructed, Mexicans as a race. Examining extensive Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) archives at both the national and regional branch levels, Molina argues and convincingly demonstrates that “Immigration laws are perhaps the most powerful and effective means of constructing and reordering the social order in the United States” (p. 11).

Molina insists on what she calls a *relational* approach to studying race and citizenship. A *comparative* approach to the study of different racial/ethnic groups, by contrast, often fails to recognize that racialization is a mutually constitutive process. Throughout the book, Molina illustrates how the racial category of Mexican is constructed, situated, and hierarchically positioned in relation to groups such as Indian, Asian American, and African American. Such an emphasis considerably broadens the scope of her study and is central to the core concept of *racial scripts* that she compellingly advances. Shaping cultural representations as well as institutional structures and practices, racial scripts highlight the connections among racialized groups across time and space. Molina notes that “once attitudes, practices, customs, policies, and laws are directed at one group, they are more readily available and hence easily applied to other groups” (p. 7). While such scripts are usually imposed from “above” by dominant institutions and social actors, racialized groups themselves often advance their own scripts and counterscripts that enable seemingly unlikely alliances and expressions of solidarity among different groups.

The book is divided into two parts with Part I examining efforts to exclude Mexicans from citizenship in the 1920s and 1930s, and Part II focusing on policies and practices in the 1940s and 1950s to render Mexicans subject to deportation. While much of the material in Part I, including attempts to nullify Mexican eligibility for citizenship through racial reclassification or the suspension of birthright citizenship, has been covered in other studies, Molina makes us think about this material in new and generative ways. Through the

conceptual lens of racial scripts, we come to appreciate how contingent any racial classification (along with its corresponding rights) is on the status and location of other groups. Part II provides rich case studies of both racial scripts and counterscripts in debates and struggles over deportation policies and practices. Particularly engaging is Molina's discussion of the medical racialization of the Mexican immigrant and the selective evocation of the label of "likely to become a public charge" (LPC) to legitimate deportation sweeps.

In detailing the racialization of Mexican Americans through immigration and naturalization laws, Molina provides an apt illustration of the enduring persistence of racial scripts, the ways they are strategically recycled and employed, and how they comprehensively link the experience of all racialized groups. While groups may share a linked fate, Molina is also careful to emphasize differences in responding to prevailing racial scripts. Japanese Americans, for example, did not challenge Operation Round-Up in Los Angeles to the same degree that African Americans did. Molina reminds us that interracial solidarity is not a given, but that counterscripts to the prevailing dominant racial discourse are always possible.

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*The Red and the White: A Family Saga of the American West.* By Andrew R. Graybill. (New York, W. W. Norton, 2013. xxii + 338 pp. \$28.95 cloth, \$17.95 paper)

In 1844, the white fur trader Malcolm Clarke married a Piegan woman, Coth-co-co-na, at Fort McKenzie in north-central Montana. With this mundane domestic event, Andrew Graybill begins his exploration of the world of mixed-race families in the Upper Missouri region. Following the Clarke family through three generations, Graybill demonstrates that people of mixed ancestry played critical roles both as cultural brokers between white and Native American societies, and as cultural caretakers of Native life. The Clarke family boasted some fascinating characters, from its patriarch, Malcolm, who abandoned a not-so-promising military career to live among the Blackfeet on the Upper Missouri, to his grandson John Clarke, a deaf sculptor who skillfully rendered breathtaking scenes of Piegan life in wood. The Clarke family history is a fascinating story on its own, but Graybill uses that narrative to depict the successive phases of Blackfeet history and the role played by families of mixed ancestry. Malcolm Clarke's marriage to a Native woman was not at all