

Labour

Journal of Canadian Labour Studies

Le Travail

Revue d'Études Ouvrières Canadiennes



Crossing Borders

National and Theoretical

Racism, Class and the Racialized Outsider

How Race is Made in America: Immigration, Citizenship, and the Historical Power of Racial Scripts

Culling the Masses: The Democratic Origins of Racist Immigration Policy in the Americas

David Goutor

Volume 76, automne 2015

URI : <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/1034479ar>

[Aller au sommaire du numéro](#)

Éditeur(s)

Canadian Committee on Labour History

ISSN

0700-3862 (imprimé)

1911-4842 (numérique)

[Découvrir la revue](#)

Citer ce document

Goutor, D. (2015). Crossing Borders: National and Theoretical / Racism, Class and the Racialized Outsider / How Race is Made in America: Immigration, Citizenship, and the Historical Power of Racial Scripts / Culling the Masses: The Democratic Origins of Racist Immigration Policy in the Americas. *Labour / Le Travail*, 76, 199–212.

All Rights Reserved © Canadian Committee on Labour History,

Ce document est protégé par la loi sur le droit d'auteur. L'utilisation des services d'Érudit (y compris la reproduction) est assujettie à sa politique d'utilisation que vous pouvez consulter en ligne.

<https://apropos.erudit.org/fr/usagers/politique-dutilisation/>

érudit

Cet article est diffusé et préservé par Érudit.

Érudit est un consortium interuniversitaire sans but lucratif composé de l'Université de Montréal, l'Université Laval et l'Université du Québec à Montréal. Il a pour mission la promotion et la valorisation de la recherche.

<https://www.erudit.org/fr/>

REVIEW ESSAY / NOTE CRITIQUE

Crossing Borders: National and Theoretical

David Goutor

Satnam Virdee, *Racism, Class and the Racialized Outsider* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014)

Natalia Molina, *How Race is Made in America: Immigration, Citizenship, and the Historical Power of Racial Scripts* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014)

David FitzGerald and David Cook-Martin, *Culling the Masses: The Democratic Origins of Racist Immigration Policy in the Americas* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2014)

WE ARE LIVING THROUGH ANOTHER PERIOD when immigration and race relations have pushed to the very top of the public agenda in much of the western world. They are likely to stay on the front pages for some time, given developments such as the rampant xenophobia in the contest for the Republican Presidential nomination in the United States, the anti-immigrant backlash in Europe, the crisis created by refugees coming across the Mediterranean, and police aggression against racialized peoples in a number of countries. It is reassuring therefore that the historical scholarship on immigration and race is still going strong, yielding fresh interpretations of the past and valuable insights on the current crises.

The three new books reviewed in this essay offer strong evidence of the vibrancy of the field. Although these books are very different in their areas of focus and their theoretical approaches, they all provide valuable perspective on contemporary controversies around race and immigration. Another characteristic they have in common is their eagerness to broaden the analytical frameworks that scholars use to approach these issues, and to relate race and immigration to other questions in a given time and place. Indeed, a reader of these three books will learn a great deal about not only race relations and

immigration, but also labour, business history, institutional behaviours, international affairs, the role of the media, and above all, politics.

This relates to another shared trait of these works: they are all ambitious projects. In *Racism, Class and the Racialized Outsider* Satnam Virdee's goal is to put race and racism at centre stage in the writing of the history of working-class struggle in England in the 19th and 20th centuries. By so doing, he aims to "contribute further to unsettling the academic consensus which equates the history and making of the working class in England with the white male worker."¹ The scope of Natalia Molina's *How Race is Made in America* is narrower – she explores Mexican immigration to the United States over about four decades from 1924 to 1965. But Molina's broader aim is to use a "relational approach" to bring new insights into the study of immigration. Molina contends that most studies of immigration history focus on the experience of one group, but such a "traditional" approach "tend[s] to miss the extent to which immigration debates took into consideration the presence or absence of multiple immigrant groups and of African Americans. In other words, immigration debates were (and still are) about comparisons."² Molina also offers a new theoretical model, what she calls the "racial scripts approach" to understanding immigration, particularly by showing how scripts applied to one group of immigrants could be applied to others. The scope and ambition of David Scott FitzGerald and David Cook-Martin's *Culling the Masses* can only be described as awesome: they review the immigration policies of 22 countries in the western hemisphere, with especially detailed analyses of the United States, Canada, Cuba, Mexico, Brazil, and Argentina. They also aim to develop a more complex and structured analytical framework to understand the development of immigration policy-making; they call it a three-dimensional model that incorporates the temporal dimension (change over time), the vertical dimension (the interplay of different interests within a state), and the horizontal dimension (international affairs, geopolitics and cultural emulation of other countries). Small wonder that *Culling the Masses* has already made a major impact on the scholarship on immigration; for instance, a recent edition of the journal *Ethnic and Racial Studies* included a discussion forum – with six contributions – of FitzGerald and Cook-Martin's book.³ This review essay will outline some of the main arguments of each study, before assessing some strengths and weaknesses they have in common.

Virdee's book is neatly organized around three main arguments. The first addresses the long-standing "origins" question: what drove the emergence and eventually the pervasiveness of racism? Much of Virdee's answer will sound

1. Satnam Virdee, *Racism, Class and the Racialized Outsider* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 1.

2. Natalia Molina, *How Race is Made in America: Immigration, Citizenship, and the Historical Power of Racial Scripts* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014), 4.

3. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 38 (June 2015): 1285–1327.

familiar to scholars of race, particularly in the United States. He contends that during the initial stages of industrial development and the intense class conflict that came with it, notions of white supremacy gained little traction among working people in England. (Virdee states at the outset that he views the situations in Scotland and Wales to be substantially different, hence he brings them into the picture only intermittently, especially at key moments such as the major strike waves on Clydeside after World War I.)⁴ During the “heroic age of the proletariat” in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, “what is striking ... is the scale and scope of solidarity among the English, African, and Irish Catholic strata of the working class.”⁵ But according to Virdee, a key part of the upper class’ effort to defeat working-class activism was developing a racist conception of the British nation, especially as a world imperial power, and to offer workers a place within it.

The strategy worked, and after the defeats of working-class movements – particularly Chartism – racist ideologies took off among white English workers who increasingly identified themselves in opposition to a racialized outsider. Virdee argues that the first targets of this racist ideology were Irish Catholics in the 1830s and 1840s. Indeed, a keystone of Virdee’s argument is that the Irish were “a clearly demarcated racialized minority” and, moreover, in the British context “the nature of racialization of Irish Catholics was remarkably similar to that of ‘visible’ racialized minorities.”⁶ White workers were not passive in this formation of a racist national identity, but rather came to embrace it – and enjoy the privileges that came with citizenship status. In particular, Virdee insists that most labour and socialist organizations in the late 19th and early 20th centuries did not reject these racist conceptions of the nation; they only made efforts to expand the boundaries of the national community. This “limited political imagination”⁷ made room for women and the unskilled, but it explicitly – often viciously – excluded others, especially Black workers and Jews fleeing persecution in Eastern Europe.

These limitations connect to Virdee’s second thesis, which is that there were important instances of working-class resistance to racist ideologies – but after the elite’s triumphs in the 1830s and 1840s, such instances were rare. In the “heroic age of the proletariat” working-class movements readily connected racialized oppression and class oppression, and easily identified with “outsiders” who were victims of persecution in other countries. For instance, freed slaves in Britain, while small in number, “intellectually and politically nourished” the anti-slavery movement, while the Chartists counted scores of Irish people in the movement, especially in its northern strongholds such as

4. Virdee, *Racism, Class and the Racialized Outsider*, 4.

5. Virdee, *Racism, Class and the Racialized Outsider*, 25.

6. Virdee, *Racism, Class and the Racialized Outsider*, 4.

7. Virdee, *Racism, Class and the Racialized Outsider*, 5.

Bradford.⁸ But from the end of the 1840s to the end of the 1960s, there were only a couple of cases of working-class organizations breaking out of established racial divides: during the new unionism of the 1880s and 1890s and during the Communist Party of Great Britain's efforts to forge a broad-based class movement in the interwar period. Stark manifestations of the racial divide were more common, such as the upheaval that followed Enoch Powell's notorious 1968 "rivers of blood" speech condemning Black and Asian immigration.⁹ Virdee insists that it was only in the 1970s, when capitalism headed into a new period of crisis and the welfare state faltered that British labour began to make more sustained efforts to organize racialized workers.

Virdee's third argument is that a key factor determining the strength of working-class resistance to racism was the struggle within British socialism between internationalists and nationalists. He contends that internationalists were usually in the minority, but moments of crisis could give them opportunities to take the lead in the movement. He also claims that with some important exceptions most internationalists were from racialized groups, including Irish Catholics, Jews, Blacks, and Asians – "social groups against whom the dominant conception of British nationalism had been constructed at various points in history."¹⁰ When they were able to gain prominence, these internationalists "acted as a leavening agent" for broad-based working-class struggle. Since the 1970s, he argues, socialists coming from racialized communities were the "conduit" through which anti-racism finally got into the mainstream of British unions.¹¹

Molina's *How Race is Made in America* explores an era dominated by what she calls an "immigration regime" that restricted immigration in the United States. The "capstone" law of the regime, the Johnson-Reed Immigration Act of 1924, placed quotas on the number of immigrants coming from different countries; it particularly targeted European groups that were seen as inferior "breeds" and stopped the (already limited) admission of Asians almost entirely.¹² This harsh "immigration regime" remained in place until the Immigration and Nationality Act (also known as the Hart-Cellar Act) of 1965 brought an end to the quota system.

Immigration from Mexico (and indeed all of the western hemisphere) was not put under quotas by the 1924 Immigration Act. However, Mexican immigrants were hardly unaffected by the xenophobic impulses of the time. In Part I of her book, Molina explores how nativists constantly agitated for restrictive measures against Mexicans. Chapter 1 examines the attempts to impose limits

8. Virdee, *Racism, Class and the Racialized Outsider*, 18, 29.

9. Virdee, *Racism, Class and the Racialized Outsider*, 113–119.

10. Virdee, *Racism, Class and the Racialized Outsider*, 7.

11. Virdee, *Racism, Class and the Racialized Outsider*, 7.

12. Molina, *How Race is Made in America*, 1.

on new influxes from Mexico during what she calls “the long immigration debate era”¹³ from 1924 to 1930. Molina particularly focuses on the debates around almost two dozen exclusionary bills brought forward in the House and Senate in these years. Chapter 2 explores the series of legal cases initiated by restrictionists in their drive to have Mexican immigrants ruled ineligible for citizenship. These exclusionary campaigns did not end once new influxes from Mexico were severely reduced after the onset of the Great Depression, mostly by visa restrictions and beefed-up border control systems. Calls for quotas on admissions of Mexicans continued, as did legal challenges to Mexican immigrants’ ability to get naturalized as citizens.

Although these restrictionist efforts were mostly unsuccessful in forcing legal or policy changes, they did serve to underline the insecure status of Mexicans living in the United States. This insecurity was strikingly evident in debates over birthright citizenship, which Molina explores in Chapter 3. This chapter moves the focus to a group often neglected in the scholarship on immigration: the children of new immigrants who were born in the United States or born to parents who were naturalized citizens. Molina shows how this second generation became the predominant one in many immigrant communities by the 1930s – of all people deemed Mexican living in America in 1930, over 56 per cent were US born.¹⁴ Members of this second generation were granted citizenship at birth, yet they were still resented when they sought to exercise those rights and cast as outsiders who took jobs from white Americans in the Depression. Nativists were especially opposed to two 1933 federal bills that sought to expand the rights of second generation immigrants to pass on citizenship to children they had outside of the United States. This opposition especially focused on the bills’ attempt to expand the rights of another group often neglected in immigration history: women. The rights of white women to transfer citizenship to their children elicited few complaints, but as Molina shows, nativists “argued not only that Mexican women had too many children but also that both mothers and their offspring were likely to end up needing charity.” In fact, nativists “identified Mexican women’s reproductive capacity as another reason to end immigration.”¹⁵ They evoked images of Mexican women leaving the US, having extremely large families, and in turn creating new waves of immigrants – in the form of their children, who would be entitled to enter the country.

Molina argues that using a “racial scripts approach” is essential to understanding these restrictionist campaigns. The stereotypes, policy structures, institutional practices, and legal precedents that make up a racial script about other groups were regularly applied to Mexicans. In particular, scripts created in the setting of quotas on some immigrants were also used to justify imposing

13. Molina, *How Race is Made in America*, 22.

14. Molina, *How Race is Made in America*, 75.

15. Molina, *How Race is Made in America*, 82.

a quota on Mexicans. “Employing the concept of racial scripts,” she writes in Chapter 1, “I widen my perspective to look at various other groups that were discussed in the hearings, debates, correspondences and newspaper articles on Mexican immigration to argue that blacks, Indians, Asians, and colonial subjects had a strong presence in these forums to cue people on how to think about Mexican immigration, as if giving them a racial script.”¹⁶ Similarly, racial scripts used to deny Japanese and South Asian immigrants the right to naturalize – which were particularly established in court rulings denying they were white and thus eligible for citizenship – were deployed against Mexicans. She uses racial scripts regarding birthright citizenship for African Americans, women, and US-born people of Chinese extraction to analyse the scripts about the rights of second generation Mexican immigrants. She also shows how Mexicans developed their own racial scripts in order to resist these exclusionary efforts. She contends that “well encoded egalitarian counterscripts” could also draw on counterscripts developed by other racialized communities. This in turn could enable “seemingly unlikely anti-racist alliances to form based on similar, but not identical, experiences of racialization when groups recognize the similarity of their stories in the collective experiences of others.”¹⁷

In Part II, Molina explores another way in which Mexican status in the US was insecure – they were continually “made deportable.”¹⁸ Chapter 4 focuses on the 1940s, particularly the deportation of Mexican immigrants, including a prominent labour activist from Imperial Valley, a major agricultural area near the border. The authorities had discovered that the migrants were being treated for syphilis; they charged that the immigrants were “afflicted with a loathsome and dangerous contagious disease” and invoked clauses in immigration laws that they were “likely to become a public charge.”¹⁹ A number of unions and Mexican community organizations protested against the deportations, especially complaining about the authorities’ use of medical records from government-run clinics to support the charges. The Immigration and Naturalization Services (INS) responded primarily by trying to undermine the credibility of those who questioned the deportations. Molina contends that in the end, the Imperial Valley case showed the force of racial scripts of Mexicans “as diseased, dependent, and deportable.”²⁰

Chapter 5 explores the astonishing story of the INS’s massive 1954 campaign – with an especially astonishing name, Operation Wetback – to deport one million undocumented Mexican immigrants from Arizona and California. Molina focuses on the Los Angeles component of the initiative and highlights

16. Molina, *How Race is Made in America*, 23.

17. Molina, *How Race is Made in America*, 10.

18. Molina, *How Race is Made in America*, 111.

19. Molina, *How Race is Made in America*, 91–93.

20. Molina, *How Race is Made in America*, 111.

how the Operation depended on racial scripts that cast Mexicans as illegal and unwanted intruders in the United States. She notes how the terms *Wetback* and the derogatory name “Pancho,” which the media regularly used when describing Mexicans, were infused with associations with illegality. There were significant protest campaigns against the operations, led in particular by the Los Angeles Committee for the Protection of the Foreign Born. Molina contends these campaigns led to the formation of “diverse and progressive coalitions that appear light-years ahead of their time, even today.”²¹ In addition to arousing such community resistance, Operation *Wetback* failed utterly to meet its goals – fewer than 34,000 were deported.

In a stimulating final chapter, Molina draws out how racial scripts developed in the 1924 to 1965 era continue to be applied to Mexican immigrants. She shows how historic restrictionist campaigns – particularly the deportations and the attacks on naturalization and birthright citizenship – may not have succeeded as their advocates had hoped, but they did generate many of the racial scripts that would endure, especially scripts casting Mexicans as outsiders, their immigration as illegitimate, and state action against them as justified and indeed necessary.

Although FitzGerald and Cook-Martin’s *Culling the Masses* covers the whole western hemisphere and (in Chapter 2) a wide array of international institutions where immigration was debated, a few key arguments are developed throughout. The first is announced in the subtitle of the book: *The Democratic Origins of Racist Immigration Policy in the Americas*. FitzGerald and Cook-Martin reject liberal theories of the state that suggest that racism is incompatible with the principles of liberal democracy; they argue that the main democratic states in the hemisphere – the United States and Canada – adopted harsh exclusionary policies first and maintained them longest.

Moreover, it was the development of liberal democracy that allowed factors in the “vertical plane” (i.e. domestic factors such as contests between capital and labour, actions by state officials, agitation by other interests, and the diffusion of racist ideology) to align in favour of exclusionary immigration policies. It was often a bottom-up process. For instance, FitzGerald and Cook-Martin argue about the case of Canada in the late 19th and early 20th centuries that “although most scholars claim that racism is anti-democratic, we argue that democracy was a channel for the rise of racist policy from below.”²² International forces on “the horizontal plane” could also push nations to impose restrictive measures. FitzGerald and Cook-Martin contend this was especially the case in Canada, where the government was influenced by American pressure and the examples of exclusionary policies in the US and white British Dominions such as Australia.

21. Molina, *How Race is Made in America*, 138.

22. David FitzGerald and David Cook-Martin, *Culling the Masses: The Democratic Origins of Racist Immigration Policy in the Americas* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2014), 144.

When exclusionary policies were finally repealed starting in the mid-20th century, the forces driving the change did not come from within western democracies. Indeed, FitzGerald and Cook-Martin adamantly reject the argument that the opening up of immigration policies occurred because democracies finally resolved some inherent conflict between racism and the principles of liberalism. Racism was not simply “an anomaly” in a liberal democracy that was eventually “worked out of the body politic.”²³ In particular, FitzGerald and Cook-Martin contend that forces in the “vertical dimension” including revulsion against Nazi racism and the Holocaust and the emergence of new social movements should not be given the most credit for the policy shift. Regarding the US case in particular, they insist that “the principle of anti-racism bleeding over from the Civil Rights movement and ethnic lobbying were secondary factors that influenced immigration policy.”²⁴

They argue instead that it was international – or horizontal – forces that led to the change. Starting in the late 1920s and increasingly in the 1930s, opposition to the US’s racist immigration policies emerged among populist but non-democratic Latin American countries. Latin American governments were hardly consistent in their commitment to anti-racism. In fact FitzGerald and Cook-Martin call it “racist anti-racism”: even as Latin American governments built up mythologies of racial harmony (in Cuba and Brazil) or a “crucible of races” (in Argentina) or the development of a “cosmic race” (in Mexico) immigration policies that gave preference to “white” Europeans but excluded Asians, Blacks and Jews abounded in the region.²⁵ Nevertheless, the pressure that Latin American governments put on the United States to change its policies was significant.

Particularly important in these protests was what FitzGerald and Cook-Martin call the “politics of international humiliation.”²⁶ Latin American governments rallied against the stigmatization and exclusion of their nationals (“their people”) in the United States. After World War II, the outcry against exclusionary policies only grew, as decolonization occurred on a dramatic scale, and “forty countries with a quarter of the world’s population gained their independence between 1945 and 1960.”²⁷ Asian, African, and Latin American countries gained a forum to air their grievances and agitate for change thanks to the creation of international bodies, which had started after World War I and expanded seriously in the 1940s. “The United States and its allies designed the international architecture of the post-war era” FitzGerald and Cook-Martin write, “but in doing so, they unwittingly created

23. FitzGerald and Cook-Martin, *Culling the Masses*, 4.

24. FitzGerald and Cook-Martin, *Culling the Masses*, 116.

25. FitzGerald and Cook-Martin, *Culling the Masses*, 19.

26. FitzGerald and Cook-Martin, *Culling the Masses*, 27.

27. FitzGerald and Cook-Martin, *Culling the Masses*, 28.

institutions through which governments of much weaker countries were able to band together to delegitimize racism.”²⁸ FitzGerald and Cook-Martin claim that “it was particularly clear” that Canada’s main motivation for dropping its restrictive policies was concern over its international image, especially once anti-racist viewpoints started to prevail within the British Commonwealth and the United Nations.²⁹ For all western democracies, but especially the US, the Cold War generated still more horizontal pressures against exclusionary policies, especially given the need to forge alliances with immigrant-sending countries in the Third World against the Soviet Union and to avoid embarrassing charges of bourgeois hypocrisy over racial issues.

As much as the immigration policy changes may have been driven by cynical geo-political calculations, FitzGerald and Cook-Martin insist that their impact has been profound and lasting. They contend that starting in the 1960s there was “a fundamental break” with previous racist policies, and the shift continued to the point that racist immigration policies were “discredited;” by the 21st century “overt ethnic discrimination appears to be off the policy menu.”³⁰ They reject many complaints from other scholars that policies that appear neutral actually have had a discriminatory effect. For instance, they are notably dismissive of claims that the high value placed on education in Canada’s Points System disadvantages applicants from many Asian, African and Caribbean countries: “in the absence of stronger evidence of racial discrimination, to define policies that select immigrants based on education as racist is to strip the term of its historical specificity and analytical utility.”³¹

FitzGerald and Cook-Martin therefore also reject claims by critical race theorists that one of the foundations of liberal democracies is the exclusion of racialized “others” – that racism and democracy are inherently linked. Indeed, to them it is abundantly evident that democracies were capable of breaking this link, because that is just what they did in the late 20th century. FitzGerald and Cook-Martin cite specific initiatives as proof that policies became inclusive in ways that critical race theorists simply cannot explain. They cite the 1986 reforms that legalized 2.7 million undocumented workers in the US, about three-quarters of them Mexican, as a good example.³² Hence for FitzGerald and Cook-Martin, liberal democracy was neither fundamentally incompatible with racism, nor was it inextricably linked to it. Rather, FitzGerald and Cook-Martin argue that democracies had an “elective affinity” for racist policies.³³ It

28. FitzGerald and Cook-Martin, *Culling the Masses*, 112.

29. FitzGerald and Cook-Martin, *Culling the Masses*, 29.

30. FitzGerald and Cook-Martin, *Culling the Masses*, 123, 131.

31. FitzGerald and Cook-Martin, *Culling the Masses*, 180.

32. FitzGerald and Cook-Martin, *Culling the Masses*, 129.

33. FitzGerald and Cook-Martin, *Culling the Masses*, 7.

was a strong affinity early on to be sure, but they insist it was one that could be broken eventually by international pressure.



ALL THREE BOOKS ARE EFFECTIVE in pushing readers to rethink not only particular points in the history of race and immigration, but also our broader conception of the origins and impact of racism and discrimination. Virdee succeeds at showing the stark limits of class solidarity in the English working class – and highlighting the consequences, especially for racialized workers. Molina succeeds in showing the “relational” character of debates about immigration, and her chapters on the second generation in the Mexican community and deportations in the 1940s and 1950s yield many insights on the unique character of Mexican immigrants’ experience. Finally, any scholar interested in immigration and policy formation will find a vast amount of fresh material in FitzGerald and Cook-Martin’s book. They deserve particular praise for the command they show of policy formation in different settings in the hemisphere. Although it is far from my areas of expertise, I was especially engaged by the chapter on Argentina, in which they argued that the country was able to avoid the stark racial hierarchies seen elsewhere in the region – but only thanks to a unique (and accidental) set of circumstances in the 19th century, including not being part of the slave trade, receiving scant immigration from China, and getting most of the population from Europe.

However, the books also have a number of notable weaknesses in common. The first relates to each of the authors’ approach to some theoretical questions. In general, all three books feature a strong command of the theoretical questions related to their subjects – which in turn makes the problem areas more glaring. For instance, Virdee’s use of the concept of racialization raises concerns, especially as it applies to Irish Catholics. Virdee makes a strong case that Irish Catholics were racialized in England in a more lasting way than they were in the United States, where they went through a process (extensively explored in the literature) of eventually being considered white. He also claims that some US scholars would likely fail to recognize these stark differences because they tend to see race as a black and white issue, and to equate colour with race. Virdee contends that just because the Irish had white skin does not mean they could not be brutally racialized.³⁴ While his complaint may be true of some US scholars, plenty of others have extensively and thoughtfully debated the distinctions between colour and race. One especially important component of this debate is change over the long term: the racial status of some marginalized groups was transformed over the passage of years (and over generations), while for other groups – especially Blacks and Aborigines – stark racial divides endured unbroken for centuries. It is on this issue of change over time in the

34. Virdee, *Racism, Class and the Racialized Outsider*, 3–4.

British context that Virdee is open to question. After drawing in detail how the Irish were racialized through the 19th century, he does not give the status of the Irish in the social order much attention. Virdee does discuss the roles of Irish socialists in broad based organizing in later periods,³⁵ and he notes briefly that discrimination continued in labour markets in centres such as Glasgow, Liverpool and Manchester. But he also describes the Irish experience in terms that suggest that aspects of their status did indeed change, especially in the late 20th century. For instance, the Irish and the Jewish populations both pop up in Virdee's discussion of the formation of the anti-Nazi League in the 1970s. Virdee describes activists coming from these communities as "white' socialists who re-discovered their own histories of racial oppression over the course of events in the 1970s."³⁶ He argues that many Jewish and Irish activists joined the league in part because there was still "some degree of anti-Semitism and anti-Irish racism in 1970s Britain."³⁷ He also notes that some young Irish skinheads were deeply racist against Blacks and joined neo-Nazi organizations – but he insists that in contrast to the situation in the United States, Irish Catholic "incorporation into a racializing British nationalism underpinned by a shared whiteness was always more problematic because of the ongoing troubles in Northern Ireland and the longer history of colonial subjugation." Altogether, the conditions Virdee describes for Irish and Jewish populations in the 1970s – "rediscovering" past discrimination, facing "some degree of oppression" and an "always more problematic" integration into the dominant white society – sound like a far cry from the Virdee's description of earlier periods, let alone from a rigid colour line such as the one drawn – and maintained – for Blacks in the United States.³⁸

In Molina's work, her coining of the term "racial scripts" was original, but at times it caused confusion. In much of the body of her analysis, the meaning of the term seems clear enough, and it definitely helped to illuminate her key argument about the relational aspect of debates about immigration – how "scripts" about one group could get applied to another. However, Molina's explanation of "scripts" in her Introduction left a number of questions unanswered. It particularly remains unclear just how racial "scripts" differ from other concepts used in the literature about race. The term "discourse" often seems similar in meaning to Molina's "scripts," as does the broad term "racialization" which many scholars currently use, as well other terms such as "social construction" or even "stereotyping."

FitzGerald and Cook-Martin's attempt to create a new theoretical model in *Culling the Masses* also creates problems. Some scholars have rightly

35. Virdee, *Racism, Class and the Racialized Outsider*, 66–71 for example.

36. Virdee, *Racism, Class and the Racialized Outsider*, 124.

37. Virdee, *Racism, Class and the Racialized Outsider*, 142.

38. Virdee, *Racism, Class and the Racialized Outsider*, 142–143.

complained that Cook-Martin and FitzGerald try to mark clear lines of division between particular theoretical categories – but then the lines often blur in parts of the analysis.³⁹ In particular, the divide between horizontal and vertical factors could often become unclear. Vertical (domestic) factors could often play a role in foreign policy (on the horizontal plane) to a greater degree than FitzGerald and Cook-Martin acknowledge. Readers of this journal may especially notice the need for a bigger consideration of *class* interests – the drive to find trade markets and investment opportunities for instance – in US and Canadian foreign policy.

Another area of concern was the amount of attention the books paid to gender. To be sure, Molina's treatment of gender is a strength of her study – mostly. In particular, she puts gender at centre stage in her excellent chapter on birthright citizenship. Yet in other parts of the book, gender issues fell into the background. Virdee's book includes sections on efforts to mobilize and uphold the rights of female workers in England, particularly in the late 19th century, and notes the contributions of women activists such as Eleanor Marx. Still, Virdee neglects gender to an extent that is often noticeable, especially in his accounts of how activists built awareness of the connections between racial oppression and class oppression – was gender oppression not included here as well? For instance, Virdee argues that activists in the National and Local Government Officers' Association (NALGO) played key roles in bringing anti-racism into the mainstream of British labour.⁴⁰ But in reading his account of the activities of NALGO – a public sector union that organized sectors with large female labour forces, such as nursing, social work, and office work – it was hard not to wonder about the contributions of feminist activists and the effort to raise gender consciousness in labour's shift towards inclusiveness in the late 20th century. *Culling the Masses* ignores gender almost entirely. Just one example is the book's index, which is impressive in its thoroughness and covers both names and themes, yet has no entries under either "Gender" or "Women."

The final shared problem is a common one among works that develop broad-ranging analyses: they can develop serious blind-spots, underplaying important factors that do not fit the pattern they are drawing. In *Racism, Class and the Racialized Outsider*, this is an evident problem in Virdee's surprisingly upbeat assessment of the neoliberal age, especially the Thatcher years. To be sure, he duly notes the severe defeat British labour has suffered under neoliberalism, but he insists that "there are dangers in flattening history"⁴¹ by overlooking the scale of resistance and new organizing of marginalized groups

39. See for instance Christian Joppke, "Liberalism and Racism: A Elective Affinity?" *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 38 (June 2015): 1298–1304; Peter Wade, "Racism and Liberalism: The Dynamics of Exclusion and Inclusion" *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 38 (June 2015): 1292–1297.

40. Virdee, *Racism, Class and the Racialized Outsider*, 155–161.

41. Virdee, *Racism, Class and the Racialized Outsider*, 145.

in the late 20th century. Virdee makes a good case that there were some important advances in labour's attitudes towards race that have been overlooked. Indeed, his explorations of these new developments, such as the emergence of Rock Against Racism in the 1970s and the "municipal anti-racism" starting in the 1980s, are some of the most engaging parts of the book.⁴² Nevertheless, his heavy emphasis on this new progress reads like a case of overcorrection, especially given how he also shows (in a shorter section) how racialized workers bore the brunt of neoliberal policies.

An important blind spot in Molina's work regards the tension – typical of many communities – between recent immigrants and those who are well established in the US. In Molina's account, the Mexican community in the US appears united by a shared experience of oppression and stigmatization. But as Patrick Lukens points out in his review of *How Race is Made in America*, the Mexican community has not been monolithic in the way Molina suggests. Many Mexican Americans were convinced that their social and legal status in the US was different than the status of more recent immigrants. Many were – and remain – unsympathetic to the plight of recent immigrants, especially the undocumented.⁴³

In *Culling the Masses*, FitzGerald and Cook-Martin tend to underplay the extent to which racism continues to be a problem. To be sure, they do not ignore the persistence of discrimination quite as much as some of the scholars reviewing the book in *Ethnic and Racial Studies* suggest.⁴⁴ They do in fact note many upsurges in racist sentiment in recent years, yet they remain confident in arguing that inclusive immigration policies are well entrenched, and overtly racist immigration policies have been delegitimized. Perhaps it is because recently I have spent considerable time (for my sins) watching Donald Trump speaking to massive audiences, demonizing Mexican immigrants and leading the race for the Republican Presidential nomination, but I do not share FitzGerald and Cook-Martin's certainty that racism has been discredited. FitzGerald and Cook-Martin would certainly argue that this is another instance of a backlash that has yet to lead to serious policy changes. Moreover, Trump may prove to be another of what FitzGerald and Cook-Martin call "political entrepreneurs" who use xenophobia to gain the spotlight but accomplish little more. Perhaps. But business for these entrepreneurs has been frighteningly good lately.

42. Virdee, *Racism, Class and the Racialized Outsider*, Chapters 7 and 8.

43. Patrick Lukens, review of *How Race is Made in America*, by Natalia Molina, *American Historical Review* 120 (February 2015): 274–5.

44. See Wade, "Racism and Liberalism"; Cybelle Fox, "What Counts as Racist Immigration Policy?" *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 38 (June 2015): 1286–1291; David Cook-Martin and David FitzGerald, "Culling the Masses: A Rejoinder," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 38 (June 2015): 1319–1327.

Moreover, in the Canadian context, there *is* a policy field where ongoing discrimination seems quite evident – the Temporary Foreign Worker Programs (TFWPs). FitzGerald and Cook-Martin’s treatment of the massive expansion of TFWPs since the late 1960s is one of the most confusing sections of their book. They readily acknowledge the scale of the expansion of these programs, some of which “openly select on ethnic grounds” in a process that is “in some ways the opposite of the selection of permanent immigrants.”⁴⁵ They agree that Canadian unions are justified in their complaints that TFWPs have quietly created a large group of easily exploitable labour. And they even grant that Nandita Sharma “compellingly argues” that the use of TFWPs expanded in recent decades “precisely because permanent immigration policy was deethnicized at the same time.”⁴⁶ Yet remarkably, FitzGerald and Cook-Martin do little to address how the growth of TFWPs challenges their broader thesis about the removal of overt discrimination from immigration policy. In both their closing section of their chapter on Canada and their conclusion of the book, they return the focus to the permanent streams of immigration – noting only the ethnic preferences in “some temporary worker programs” as an “exception” to the rule of non-discriminatory policies.⁴⁷ But it amounts to more than that, and surely the TFWPs – and the racism that informs them – cannot be so neatly sectioned off from the rest of the discussion of Canada’s immigration policy.

On the whole, however, all of these books make important contributions to the literature. It is also worth noting that all of the books are written in an approachable style. Given that literature about immigration and especially race has been blighted in the past (thankfully only at times) by excessive jargon and post-modernist wordplay, these authors deserve praise for (mostly) using accessible prose while examining complex and tricky issues. These books also provide scholars new opportunities to use a wider lens when examining social and political issues, and in particular to develop analyses that weigh a broader range of factors involved in debates about immigration and race. It is to be hoped that scholars take up these opportunities. It is to be hoped even more that our current political leaders start to listen.

45. FitzGerald and Cook-Martin, *Culling the Masses*, 182.

46. FitzGerald and Cook-Martin, *Culling the Masses*, 183.

47. FitzGerald and Cook-Martin, *Culling the Masses*, 337.