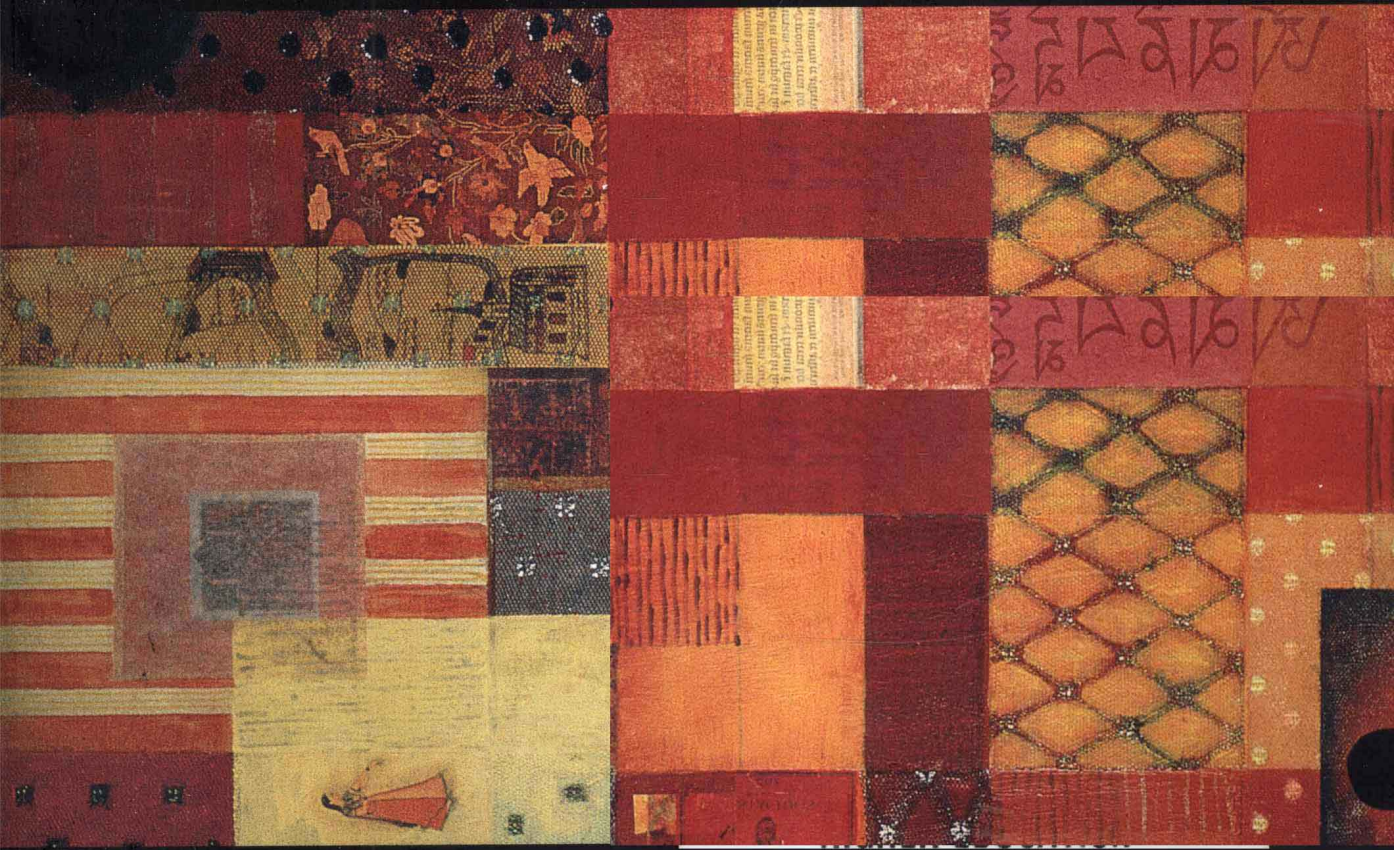
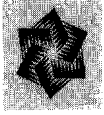


RETHINKING THE COLOR LINE

READINGS IN RACE AND ETHNICITY



CHARLES A. GALLAGHER



RETHINKING THE COLOR LINE

Readings in Race and Ethnicity

Second Edition

Charles A. Gallagher
Georgia State University



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Preface

It is difficult to think about life in America without directly confronting issues of race and ethnicity. Reflect for a moment on how recent events and trends both dominate and alter American social and cultural life: a black Texan is tied to the back of a pick-up truck and dragged to his death by racist whites while white rapper Eminem wins three Grammy awards; challenges to the University of Michigan's affirmative action program move up to the Supreme Court, creating a national dialogue on the extent to which the racial "playing field" is level while blacks are twice as likely to be unemployed than whites; after 9/11, tougher immigration laws are called for by politicians, while U.S. farmers and agribusiness organizations discuss institution of a new *bracero* farm-labor program that would ease restrictions on seasonal immigrant farm workers; Oprah Winfrey has a net worth of over one billion dollars while almost a quarter of the total black population lives below the poverty line; racial profiling results in a new term, "DWB" (driving while black), while Colin Powell, Denzel Washington, Michael Jordan, and Tiger Woods are consistently voted among America's most celebrated and respected people; white suburban teenagers continue to be the largest consumers of rap and hip-hop, yet racially motivated hate crimes continue to happen on campuses throughout the country; Latinos now make up a larger part of the U.S. population than blacks, yet each group is significantly underrepresented in Congress and in corporate America. The readings in *Rethinking the Color Line* examine such contradictions of race and ethnicity and help prepare students to live in an increasingly racially and ethnically diverse society.

The media has seized on the implications of a U.S. Census Bureau figure that predicts that by the year 2060 whites will be outnumbered by Asians, blacks, Hispanics, and American Indians, but this rather simplistic demographic forecast misses the conflicts, contradictions, and cultural convergences that currently define race and ethnic relations in the United States. *Rethinking the Color Line* is designed to help make sense of how race and ethnicity influence aspects of social life in ways that are often made invisible by culture, politics, and economics. This theoretically informed, empirically grounded reader uses a social constructionist perspective to frame and define the concept of race and ethnicity in the United States. The selections should stimulate conversation in the classroom and allow students to think through solutions to what often seem to be intractable problems. As a pedagogical strategy, this text raises a number of questions in the part introductions that guide students through the readings by providing an overview of how each reading is conceptually linked to the others. Each chapter starts with a section called "Questions to Consider," which asks students to focus their attention on specific themes, issues, or questions raised in the reading.

It was important to me that my students be exposed to the classic paradigms in the study of race and ethnic relations in the United States. However, just as important was my desire that students be exposed to and explore new theories and paradigms that were challenging, supplanting, and redefining the classic race and ethnicity "canon," which itself changes over time. The biologically based, pseudoscientific

assumptions that defined and guided race and ethnicity scholarship for much of the past century have been debunked, discredited, and discarded. What has emerged in the last thirty years are competing narratives of what race and ethnic identity mean and what the social pressures are that shape those meanings. Postcolonial, postmodern, postethnic, class-based, or primordialist perspectives each claim to elucidate how race and ethnicity shape identity construction, gender, political economy, and geopolitics. The modern idea of race and ethnicity has been and continues to be, thoroughly rethought.

The readings in the first part of this text provide students with the theoretical framework and analytical tools they will use throughout the book. Students come to understand what race and ethnicity as a social construction means. The news, situation comedies, MTV, the racial topography of neighborhoods—each become subjects for sociological scrutiny. *Rethinking the Color Line* allows students to learn how race and ethnicity influence life in ways that many students routinely take for granted. It has been my experience that a majority of students who read these articles internalize a version of the “sociological imagination” that forever changes how they understand race and ethnic relations. Raising consciousness about how each of us influence, and in turn are influenced by, race and ethnic relations is an explicit goal of this book.

Over the last decade, I have had the luxury of testing a large and varied number of readings on hundreds of students in dozens of race and ethnic relations classes at large public universities as well as at small, elite liberal arts colleges. The readings in this book represent the final outcome of classroom “hits and misses.” I have used classroom experiences, the results of examinations, and how easily students were able to integrate

the readings into research papers to gauge: (1) the extent to which the reading contributed to students’ understanding of a particular theory or concept, (2) if the reading was intellectually engaging, and (3) if it lent itself to active learning in the classroom. If a reading could pass these hurdles in at least three of my classes, then it made it into this book. Teaching at both public universities and private colleges also provided me with the opportunity to observe how students from different regions, class backgrounds, and racial and ethnic identities reacted to the assigned readings. The articles speak to, challenge, and find common ground among students from racially, ethnically, culturally, and economically diverse backgrounds. *Rethinking the Color Line* is a response to my students’ calls for a book that was user-friendly but did not sacrifice intellectual or theoretical rigor.

This book has been designed to be personally relevant for students while also helping them understand that race and ethnic relations are embedded in the institutions that structure their lives. The readings require students to constantly negotiate the tensions between individual agency and the often determining constraints of social structure. The common thread that links these readings is the ongoing debate about the relationship between agency and structure. It is this conceptual framework that will allow students to think about race and ethnicity in fluid rather than static terms.

Changes to the Second Edition

Race and ethnic relations are never static. The twenty-two new readings in this second edition reflect this fact. New articles such as Rebecca Blank’s provide the most up-to-date information on the social and economic well-being of racial and ethnic groups in the

United States. Readings by George Lipsitz and Eduardo Bonilla-Silva on how racial privilege is reproduced, Herbert Gans's discussion of how social systems are racialized, and Robert Bullard's outline of recent developments in environmental justice, provide readers the most current perspectives on these important topics. In keeping with identifying those trends that are currently emerging as social issues, two new sections have been added to this edition. The first explores the interplay of race and the criminal justice system. The prison industrial complex as examined by Angela Davis, David Cole's explanation of racial disparities in sentencing, and the intersection of race, class, and social justice as told by Jeffrey Reiman, provide important sociological insight into how race and crime collide in the United States. The new section "Race and Romance" draws on research articles by Heather Dalmage, Maria Root, and Frank Wu to examine how trends in interracial marriage will challenge our thinking of race relations and the ways in which we currently define racial categories. Articles on the media, sports, immigration, and residential segregation have been updated to better reflect changes that have taken place since the first edition. The second edition ends with ten activities students can engage in as a way to address race relations and racism at the individual, interpersonal, and community level.

Instructor's Resource CD

My colleague Kristin Wilson has designed an instructor's resource CD to accompany the second edition. This resource provides instructors with relevant questions, theoretical overviews, interactive exercises, glossary terms, Internet resources, discussion points, multiple choice questions and essay questions about each reading.

Race, Class, and Gender Supersite

A Web site has been designed to accompany the second edition. The Web site contains flashcard exercises, Web and U.S. Census links, practice test questions, and other material which focus on race and ethnic relations in the United States. **Visit the Supersite at www.mhhe.com/raceclassgender**

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The selections in this reader and the questions that frame each chapter reflect thousands of conversations I've had with friends and family about race in America. I have benefited greatly from the research and insights of the following people: Jim Ainsworth, Richard Alba, Robert Adelman, Eli Anderson, Maggie Anderson, Amy Ansell, Kathy Blee, Eduardo Bonilla-Silva, Sam and Linda Chororos, Francesca Coin, Heather Dalmage, Kevin Delaney, James Dievler, Woody Doane, Mitch Duneier, Abby Ferber, Joe Feagin, Tyrone Foreman, Ruth Frankenberg, Tommy Gallagher, Behrooz Ghamari, Charlie Jaret, Kathleen Odell Korgan, Jung Ha Kim, Karyn Lacy, Michael Landau, Ralph LaRossa, Magali Larson, Amanda Lewis, Bob Moore, Joane Nagel, Pam Perry, Dave Roediger, Mary Romero, Daniel and Marianne Siegal, Wendy Simonds, Steve Steinberg, Eric Stewart, Michele and Kenneth Taylor, France Winddance Twine, Sarah Willie, Frank Whittington, Howie Winant, Caroline Woods, and George Yancey.

This book is dedicated to my parents Tom and Marie Gallagher, my partner Alexia Chororos, and my daughters Sophia and Talia. Their sociological imagination and their love knows no bounds.

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Alba, State University of New York at Albany; Marcia L. Bellas, University of Cincinnati; Eduardo Bonilla-Silva, Texas A&M; Ashley Doane, University of Hartford; Jennifer L. Eichstedt, Humboldt State University; Emily Noelle Ignacio, Loyola University of Chicago; Marcia Marx, California State University at San Bernardino; Samuel M. Richards, Pennsylvania State University; Garry L. Rolison, California State University at San Marcos; Deidre A. Royster, University of Massachusetts at Amherst; Gary Sandefur, University of Wisconsin at Madison; Anna M. Santiago, Wayne State University; and Scott Semau, Indiana University at South Bend. The second edition benefited from the insight of these reviewers: Paulina Ruf, St. Cloud State University; Daniel J. Monti, Boston University; Tri V. Nguyen, La Salle University; Wanda Rushing, University of Memphis; Edward D. Emerson, Rice University; Dorothy Graber, Washington State University; Michelle Harris-Reed, University of Michigan; Eileen O'Brien, SUNY Brockport; Ann Herda-Rapp, University of Wisconsin, Marathon.

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I welcome any comments, suggestions, or criticism concerning this reader. Please feel free to contact me about which readings work, or which do not, or to suggest readings I might include in future editions. Please send any comments directly to me. I look forward to your feedback.

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Rebecca M. Blank (Reading 4) is dean of the Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy, Henry Carter Adams Collegiate Professor of Public Policy, and professor of economics at the University of Michigan. Prior to going to Michigan, she served as a member of the President's Council of Economic Advisers from 1997–1999. Blank's research has focused on the interaction between the macro-economy, government antipoverty programs, and the behavior and well-being of low-income families. She is the author of *It Takes a Nation: A New Agenda for Fighting Poverty* (1997), *Finding Jobs: Work and Welfare Reform* (2000), and *The New World of Welfare* (2001).

Herbert Blumer (Reading 10) spent most of his professional career at the University of Chicago and the University of California, Berkeley. Blumer established symbolic interactionism as a major sociological perspective in American sociology.

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David Cole (Reading 20) was named one of the forty-five outstanding lawyers under the age of forty-five by *The American Lawyer*. He is a professor at Georgetown University Law Center, an attorney with the Center for Constitutional Rights, the chief litigator for *Karen Finley v. National Endowment for the Arts*, and a regular contributor to NPR's *All Things Considered*, *The Nation*, and op-ed pages in major newspapers nationwide. He is the author of *No Equal Justice* (1999).

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Angela Y. Davis (Reading 21) is professor of history of consciousness at the University of California, Santa Cruz. During the last twenty-five years, she has lectured in all fifty states, as well as in Africa, Europe, the Caribbean, and the former Soviet Union. Her articles and essays have appeared in numerous journals and anthologies, and she is the author of five books, including *Angela Davis: An Autobiography*; *Women, Race & Class*; and the recently published *Blues Legacies and Black Feminism: Gertrude "Ma" Rainey, Bessie Smith, and Billie Holiday*. The *Angela Y. Davis Reader*, a collection of Davis's writings that spans nearly three decades, was published in 1998.

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Howard Winant (Reading 2) is a professor of sociology at the University of California, Santa Barbara. He is the author of numerous

books and articles, including *Racial Formation in the United States from the 1960s to the 1990s* (1994) (with Michael Omi), *Racial Conditions: Politics, Theory, Comparisons* (1994), and *Stalemate: Political Economic Origins of Supply-Side Policy* (1988). Winant states: "My abiding interests are in the sociology of race, particularly in the dynamics of racial politics and the theoretical logic of race. I have conducted research and taught in Brazil and Mexico. My current research focuses on the global dynamics of race at the end of the twentieth century."

Frank H. Wu (Reading 40) is the first Asian American to serve as a law professor at Howard University Law School. He has written for a range of publications, including the *Washington Post*, *L.A. Times*, *Chicago Tribune*, and *The Nation*, and writes a regular column for *Asian Week*. Wu participated in a major debate against Dinesh D'Souza on affirmative action that was televised by C-Span and was the host of the syndicated talk show *Asian America* on PBS. His most recent book is *Yellow: Race in America Beyond Black and White* (2002).

Min Zhou (Reading 34) is professor of sociology and chair of the Asian American Studies Interdepartmental Degree Program at the University of California, Los Angeles. Her main areas of research are immigration and immigrant adaptation, ethnic and racial studies, Asian Americans, entrepreneurship and ethnic economies, and the community and urban sociology. She is the author of *Chinatown: The Socioeconomic Potential of an Urban Enclave* (1992), co-author of *Growing Up American: How Vietnamese Children Adapt to Life in the United States* (1997), and co-editor of *Contemporary Asian American: A Multidisciplinary Reader* (2000).

Howard Zinn (Reading 5), professor, activist, and author, has dedicated his life to

the notion that the knowledge of history is important to people's everyday lives and can be a powerful force for social change. Zinn is a champion of the idea that historical change occurs more through mass movements of or-

dinary people than through the wisdom and insight of so-called Great Men. His best-known book, *A People's History of the United States*, was one of the first major looks at American history from such a perspective.

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