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with an impressive number of informants, including Obama himself. Two that are of particular interest were with Robert Putnam and Laurence Tribe, a pair of Harvard professors who saw a great deal of Obama during his time as a Harvard Law School student. Putnam was impressed by Obama's gift for taking in the seemingly contradictory assertions made by the participants in public forums and identifying points of agreement (p. 306). Tribe was struck by his pragmatic mind-set, freedom from rigid assumptions, and "problem-solving orientation" (p. 196). These are qualities that should serve Obama well in the period of divided government ushered in by the 2010 elections.

David Remnick's focus, however, is not only on the matters referred to in his book's subtitle. He also seeks to relate the life and rise of Obama to the larger black experience. This aim is captured in the symbolism of his title, which links the site of a 1965 police assault on black freedom marchers in Alabama to civil rights icon John Lewis's Inauguration Day 2009 remark that "Obama is what comes at the end of that bridge at Selma." Remnick's interest in situating his protagonist in the sweep of black history leads him to devote much of *The Bridge* to matters as diverse as the history of the Civil Rights movement, Chicago's south side, and the relationship between Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln. The inevitable effect is to dilute the book's account of Obama.

Taken as a meditation on race in American history, *The Bridge* is an informative and moving work. Taken as an account of Obama himself, however, it is less instructive than such more-focused works as *Chicago Tribune* reporter David Mendell's 2007 *Obama: From Promise to Power.*

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Newcomers, Outsiders and Insiders: Immigrants and American Racial Politics in the Early Twenty-First Century *by Ronald Schmidt Sr., Yvette M. Alex-Assensoh, Andrew L. Aoki, and Rodney Hero. Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, 2009. 336 pp. Paper, $24.95.*

The nation's demographics have dramatically changed since its founding. Since the 1960s, immigration has transformed a society almost completely populated by Europeans into a multi-religious, polyglot, majority-minority nation. Political science, except for notable exceptions, such as Lawrence Fuch's encyclopedic *The American Kaleidoscope*, is new to the study of how these immigrants have transformed the polity. Rather than target immigration's effects directly, political analyses have targeted the impact of immigration via studies of Latino and Asian ethnic politics. This work, however, has not tested or produced theoretical insights into how immigration affects the nation's racial political processes, which is the goal of *Newcomers, Outsiders and Insiders*.

Newcomers links immigration to the nation's historical and current racial politics. It focuses on Asians and Latinos, groups that have long been victimized

by social and governmental institutions, and uses the prism of historical discrimination to show that these two groups enter a racialized environment that they will influence and which will simultaneously affect their political lives. Although black immigrants also find themselves in a similar, if more extreme, position, their numbers are so low and black history is so distinct that this study pays little attention to them.

The study's primary objective is to evaluate competing theoretical explanations of the nation's racial politics, given recent and future immigration. Unlike prior work such as Mario Barrera's *Race and Class in the Southwest: A Theory of Racial Inequality* and Michael Omi and Howard Winant's *Racial Formation in the United States*, which utilized a singular theoretical approach, *Newcomers* is in the tradition of Chris Garcia and Rodolfo de la Garza's *The Chicano Political Experience*, Rodney Hero's *Latinos and the U. S. Political System*, and Rufus Browning, Dale Rogers, and David Tabb's *Racial Politics in American Cities*, which evaluate the utility of competing theoretical approaches used to explain the relationship between ethnic/racial minorities and the polity. It differs from the latter three because it incorporates immigration, an issue that was not salient when these studies were completed.

The volume's primary achievement is that it so comprehensive. This makes it invaluable as a text for upper-division classes on minority politics, immigration, and general American politics. However, it contains no original research. Specialists may find references with which they are unfamiliar, but substantively, they will find nothing new. Instead, the text invites questions that should have been asked. For example, what impact does immigration have on the growth of Latino and Asian national membership organizations? Given that the paucity of such organizations has long weakened Latino mobilization, this is a significant question.

Its contributions to theory are even more problematic. Theoretical issues related to naturalization are never raised; for example, what are the theoretical implications for racial politics, given that naturalization has become increasingly costly and difficult? Can such changes be conceptualized as impediments to Latino and Asian access to the polls and challenged based on the Voting Rights Act (VRA)? What about requiring voters to be citizens? Another major theoretical issue is the impact of transnational behaviors on political incorporation. I agree that there is little evidence that this impedes immigrant incorporation, but the authors should have engaged it more fully, given its increasing political salience.

Despite these limitations, *Newcomers* will be a most useful addition to the growing literature on minority politics. While it will be especially valuable to upper-division students, anyone interested in immigration and ethnic/racial politics will find it valuable.

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