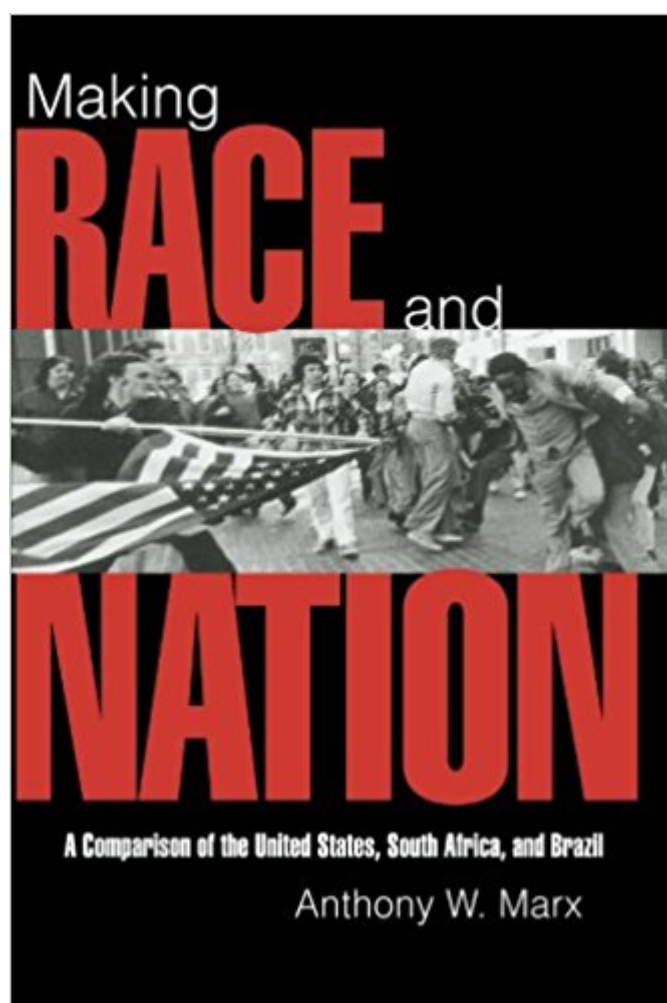


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Making Race And Nation: A Comparison Of South Africa, The United States, And Brazil (Cambridge Studies In Comparative Politics)



Synopsis

In this bold, original and persuasive book, Anthony W. Marx provocatively links the construction of nations to the construction of racial identity. Using a comparative historical approach, Marx analyzes the connection between race as a cultural and political category rooted in the history of slavery and colonialism, and the development of three nation states. He shows how each country's differing efforts to establish national unity and other institutional impediments have served, through the nation-building process and into their present systems of state power, to shape and often crystallize categories and divisions of race. Focusing on South Africa, Brazil and the United States, Marx illustrates and elucidates the historical dynamics and institutional relationships by which the construction of race and the development of these nations have informed one another. Deftly combining comparative history, political science and sociological interpretation, sharpened by over three-hundred interviews with key informants from each country, he follows this dialogue into the present to discuss recent political mobilization, popular protest and the current salience of race issues. Anthony W. Marx is Associate Professor of Political Science at Columbia University and has been a Visiting Professor at Yale University

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"In Making Race and Nation Anthony Marx draws out distinctions that have not been captured by other scholars who have examined race relations in the United States, South Africa and Brazil. This remarkable and original book will certainly influence theory building in race and ethnic relations. It

will also be widely cited by social scientists who are interested in the social, economic and political conditions that enhance racial antagonisms." William Julius Wilson, Harvard University"Through strategic juxtaposition of three racially divided societies, Marx is able to blow apart many popular myths about the causes and consequences of racial domination. For Marx, states make race, albeit not precisely the way their governing elites envisioned. This compelling treatise not only makes a significant contribution to the social theory of race, but due to its clear and lively style, should be of great interest to the general public." David Laitin, University of Chicago"Anthony Marx has brought off a bold comparison among South Africa, Brazil, and the United States, showing how state policy and racial categorization interact....He offers a remarkable combination of comparative history, political theory, and sociological interpretation...To cover so much intellectual and geographic space so coherently amounts to a tour de force." Charles Tilly, Columbia University"...Marx has done an extraordinary job of buttressing his analysis with good history....A rich body of footnotes is included. Of interest to general readers and all academic libraries." Choice"This book will profoundly change how we understand state and race. It will launch many progeny and imitations but few, I expect, with its largeness of conception or with the sweep of its historical comparison." James C. Scott, Yale University"Making Race and Nation is a superb book: stunning in its sweep, remarkable in its documentation, masterful in its theoretical statement. The elegant interweaving of the contingent concept of race, the nature of the state, and the form assumed by the text of nationhood in these three polities is rich in insight and persuasive in argument. No one interested in racial formation, identity politics, or state theory can afford to ignore this major contribution." M. Crawford Young, University of Wisconsin"The argument is intriguing, and the evidence persuasively marshaled." Robert H. Bates, Harvard University"This is a carefully constructed and lucidly argued work of scholarship." Donald L. Horowitz, Duke University"...impressive...." Robert M. Levine"This comparative study of racial politics in three nations and of the links between the political production of 'race' and nation building is an intriguing and thought-provoking read. Anthony Marx has made an important contribution to our understanding of the complexities of racism and raised new questions about the work that needs to be done to dismantle these systems. He writes in a clear, accessible, and compelling style and documents his work exhaustively." Jennifer J. Yanco, Int Jnl of African Hist Soc

Ideas, policies, conflicts about race and images of nationalism have been major themes of politics for more than a century. By comparing three prominent cases, this book illuminates the particular experiences of South Africa, the United States, and Brazil, but also uses comparisons to reveal

patterns and linkages between race, nation, state and class dynamics not otherwise apparent. This provides a basis for more informed thinking about how these issues will play out in the future. No other study has provided as comprehensive an analysis of these pressing issues in these three major countries.

I use this book every year to teach my graduate course in Race Theory. Not only does one learn about race and how it operates politically to shore up nationalism, but you read this and you get a full course in the histories of Brazil, South Africa, and the USA. This brilliant man now heads our NY (City) Public Libraries - kudos to him!

In looking at race it's necessary to get perspective. Travel opens up new vistas. We perceive ourselves one way, others around the world see things differently. What countries come to mind when you think about racism? South Africa definitely; but now that the country has majority rule, it's immediately less racist. Austria, Japan and Yugoslavia also come to mind, but they're not multiracial societies. That Anthony Marx has chosen to compare racial policy in Brazil, South Africa and the US, seems to confirm the widely held world view that the US is one of the most racist nations in the world. Is this true? What do these three nations have in common in their history of segregation? Marx states that the US and South Africa practiced policies of segregation principally for the purpose of "state and nation building". He argues that in both cases the ruling white elite were faced with crises; problems of prosperity and national order. In South Africa, following the Boer War of 1899-1902 there was no chance of unity among Afrikaners and British settlers. In the US, the experience of Radical Reconstruction following the Civil War, was, for some, akin to rubbing salt into fresh wounds. Marx states that in order to achieve accommodation among whites, blacks were made scapegoats. It's not surprising then to learn that the 1870's were when the first Jim Crow laws were passed in the US and the early 1900's saw the first South African Apartheid acts. Where does Brazil fit in? Marx says that racism is as prevalent there as it is here but it's characteristics are different. There is a pervasive preference for 'whiteness', seen in attempts to 'Europeanize' the country through encouragement of immigration from the continent. Brazil however did not institutionalize racism as South Africa and the US did; interracial marriages were never illegal in Brazil. Also, because of multiple color categories of Brazilian citizens there was no possibility of the emergence of rigid, 'caste-like', color classifications that developed here. South Africa had 'coloreds' but they were caught in political 'no-mans-land' in the battle between the bantu majority and white minority. It's an interesting and thoroughly reasoned proposition that Marx develops and expounds

on in his book. The comparisons between the US and South Africa are nothing new, but the addition of Brazil as a counterpoint to the others is rather unique.

Anthony Marx's comparative study on the construction of race in the United States, Brazil and South Africa is promising if one wants a general historical overview about how race was constructed in each setting. Marx emphasizes how each state, in its own process of state building, constructed racial/racist ideologies to unify the white power structure at the expense of Blacks. He explores the institutions of colonialism, slavery and apartheid to make his case. He also explores how the ideology of black nationalism emerged as unifying response among Blacks to resist white domination. The book is a good read, however his historical account is completely male biased. Marx fails to consider the role gender played in the construction of these racial ideologies. His account is state-centered, which effectively excludes other important social and political factors in the formation of race identity. This becomes painfully clear in the chapter on Black racial identity, mobilization and reform in the U.S. Also, Marx relies too heavily on secondary sources, which dampens the reliability of his analysis.

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