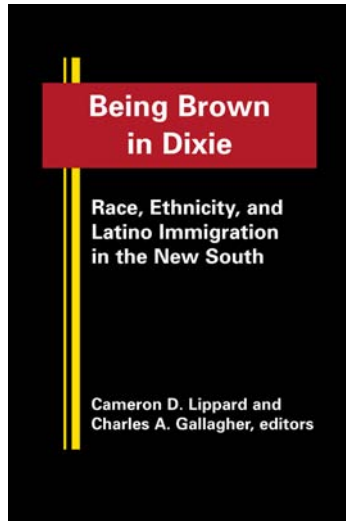


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Being Brown in Dixie:
Race, Ethnicity, and
Latino Immigration
in the New South

edited by
Cameron D. Lippard
and Charles A. Gallagher

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ISBN: 978-1-935049-28-9 hc



FIRSTFORUMPRESS

A DIVISION OF LYNNE RIENNER PUBLISHERS, INC.

1800 30th Street, Ste. 314
Boulder, CO 80301
USA
telephone 303.444.6684
fax 303.444.0824

This excerpt was downloaded from the
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Contents

<i>List of Tables and Figures</i>	<i>ix</i>
1 Introduction: Immigration, the New South, and the Color of Backlash <i>Cameron D. Lippard and Charles A. Gallagher</i>	1
2 The Shifting Nature of Racism <i>Regine O. Jackson</i>	25
3 Intergroup Relations: Reconceptualizing Discrimination and Hierarchy <i>Helen B. Marrow</i>	53
4 Racialized Histories and Contemporary Population Dynamics in the New South <i>Eileen Diaz McConnell</i>	77
5 The Myth of Millions: Socially Constructing “Illegal Immigration” <i>Stephanie Bohon and Heather Macpherson Parrott</i>	99
6 Integrating into New Communities: The Latino Perspective <i>Elaine C. Lacy</i>	115
7 Unfair Housing Practices in Black and Brown <i>Stephen J. Sills and Elizabeth Blake</i>	133
8 The Public Schools’ Response to the Immigration Boom <i>Andrew Wainer</i>	157

9	Southern Crime and Juvenile Justice <i>Orlando Rodriguez</i>	183
10	Racializing Hiring Practices for “Dirty” Jobs <i>Cameron D. Lippard</i>	201
11	Organizing Labor in a Right-to-Work State <i>Francesca Coin</i>	237
12	Anti-Immigrant Mobilization in a Southern State <i>Paul Luebke</i>	261
13	The Rise of Latino/a Political Influence <i>Lisa M. Martinez</i>	279
14	Success Stories: Proactive Community Responses to Immigration <i>William E. Baker and Paul A. Harris</i>	297
15	Conclusion: Southern Location, National Implications <i>Cameron D. Lippard and Charles A. Gallagher</i>	313
	<i>References</i>	337
	<i>Contributors</i>	379
	<i>Index</i>	383

1

Introduction: Immigration, the New South, and the Color of Backlash

Cameron D. Lippard and Charles A. Gallagher

Social protests have the unique ability to provide visual, often jarring, snapshots of those core antagonisms which motivate groups to demonstrate. Such was the case in Atlanta on April 10, 2006 when some 60,000 Latino women, men, children, and sympathizers participated in a mass demonstration in the streets of Atlanta and around Georgia's state capitol building, demanding that the state provide greater civil rights protections for Latinos. One image at this demonstration captures both the tensions and competing narratives around the current debate concerning Latino immigration. As angry White and Black protesters yelled, "Mexicans go home," Orlando, a Mexican immigrant and resident of Atlanta accompanied by his wife and brother responded, "We have a dream too. I want to live the American dream." All this happened behind the backdrop of thousands of individuals chanting, "*¡Si se puede!*" (Yes we can!) (Lippard, field notes, 2006).

In ways reminiscent of the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s, cities like Atlanta, Columbia, Nashville, and Charlotte saw Latinos taking to the streets for equal rights. Even remote, small towns such as rural Albertville, Alabama saw 5,000 Latinos demonstrate (Jubera 2006), while in secondary cities like Tifton, Georgia and Winston-Salem, North Carolina an estimated 1,500 Latinos engaged in non-violent civil right demonstrations. As Adelina Nicholls, the President of the Coordinating Council of Latino Community Leaders, said to news reporters at the Atlanta rally, "We want to stop being invisible... we are here to stay. Brown is in town!" (Lippard, field notes, 2006).

The demonstrations and remarks in Atlanta not only generally represented the growing frustrations and tensions surrounding the issue of immigration in the U.S. but also demonstrated the clash between

immigration and race relations in the South. Well before the demonstrations occurred, many southerners were already keenly aware of the large influx of Latinos, specifically Mexican immigrants, to their communities. As of 2006, the Latino population, both native- and foreign-born, had reached 44 million members in the U.S., becoming the largest minority group in the country. In the South, the Latino population growth was especially rapid. As can be seen in Table 1.1, all of the southern states, except for Louisiana, saw significant increases in the resident Latino population. This is especially true in states like North Carolina, Arkansas, and Georgia, which saw at least a 300% increase in their Latino populations while in Tennessee, South Carolina, and Alabama, Latinos increased by more than 200%. And, even though the Asian, Black, and White populations have also significantly increased in the South (see Frey 2006), these groups' growths are no match for the rapid and concentrated pace of Latino migration to the South.

Table 1.1: Latino Population Totals and Percent Changes for Selected Southern States, 1990-2006/08

States	1990	2000	2006/08	% 90-2000	% 00-06/08
Alabama	24,629 (.6%)	75,830 (1.7%)	122,924 (2.7%)	207%	62%
Arkansas	19,876 (.8%)	86,866 (3.2%)	148,755 (5.3%)	337%	71%
Florida	157,413 (12.2%)	2,682,715 (16.8%)	3,725,173 (20.5%)	1604%	39%
Georgia	108,922 (1.7%)	435,227 (5.3%)	729,604 (7.7%)	300%	68%
Kentucky	21,984 (.6%)	59,939 (1.5%)	94,176 (2.2%)	173%	57%
Louisiana	93,0454 (2.2%)	107,738 (2.4%)	140,640 (3.2%)	16%	31%
Mississippi	15,931 (.6%)	39,569 (1.4%)	56,577 (1.9%)	148%	43%
North Carolina	76,726 (1.2%)	378,963 (4.7%)	636,786 (7%)	394%	68%
South Carolina	30,551 (.9%)	95,076 (2.4%)	169,239 (3.8%)	211%	78%
Tennessee	32,741 (.7%)	123,838 (2.2%)	215,760 (3.5%)	278%	74%
Virginia	160,288 (2.6%)	329,540 (4.7%)	506,843 (6.6%)	106%	54%

Source: U.S. Census American FactFinder for 1990 and 2000 decennial census results and 2006-2008 American Community Survey population estimates. (<http://factfinder.census.gov/>).

Notes: Percent of the total population that is Hispanic is in parentheses.

Even more surprising as the unusually high concentrations of Latinos in some rural areas of the South, where there were virtually no racial or ethnic minorities to be found. Wainer (2004) reports that in some eastern counties of North Carolina one in five people are Latino. As reported in Table 1.2, places like Dalton and Gainesville, Georgia, and Siler City, North Carolina have Latino populations that represent close to 40% of the total population, with the majority being White, and Blacks representing only about 8 to 9%. Within these communities, Latinos, not Blacks, are becoming the racial reference point for Whites. Still, as seen in the previous table, southern urban centers have seen the most growth of populations, especially for Latinos.

Table 1.2: Latino Population Totals and Percent Changes for Selected Southern Towns, 1990-2006/08

Towns	1990	2000	2006-2008	% 90-2000	% 00-06/08
	1,422	11,219	14,469		
Dalton, GA	(6.5%)	(40.2%)	(48%)	689%	29%
	184	2,740			
Siler City, NC	(.8%)	(39.3%) ^a	1389%
	77	2,773			
Albertville, AL	(.5%)	(16.1%)	3501%

Source: U.S. Census American FactFinder for 1990 and 2000 decennial census results and 2006-2008 American Community Survey population estimates . (<http://factfinder.census.gov/>).

Notes: Percent of the total population that is Hispanic is in parentheses.

a. denotes missing data for the 2006/08 for the selected towns not estimated by the American Community Survey.

Table 1.3 shows how the Latino population swelled in several major southern city, except New Orleans, saw at least a 100% increase in the percentage of Latinos from 1990 to 2000 (Frey 2006; Mohl 2003; Suro and Singer 2002). Suro and Singer (2002) identified many southern cities like Atlanta, Charlotte, Columbia, Nashville, and Raleigh as “Hispanic Hypergrowth” metropolitan areas where the quantity and speed in which Latino populations grew outpaced most other cities in the U.S.

Until recently, however, immigration and migration in the U.S. overwhelmingly occurred in a small set of booming metropolises and states in which pull factors included: physical accessibility (i.e., proximity to borders and transportation hubs), dynamic labor markets, and well-established immigrant communities to support migration (Frey 2006; Portes and Rumbaut 2006; Hirschman and Massey 2008). However, in the 1980s, an overabundance of low wage laborers,

tightening labor markets, and restrictive immigration laws in California, Texas, and other traditional immigrant gateways (Light 2006) persuaded new immigrants and foreign-born citizens to find work and homes elsewhere (Massey and Capoferro 2008).

Table 1.3: Latino Population Totals and Percent Changes for Selected Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs), 1990-2006/08

MSAs	1990	2000	2006-2008	% 90-2000	% 00-06/08
Atlanta, GA	57,169 (2%)	268,851 (6.5%)	1,487,984 (9.3%)	370%	82%
Birmingham, AL	3,989 (.4%)	16,598 (1.8%)	34,144 (3.1%)	316%	106%
Charlotte, NC	10,671 (.9%)	77,092 (5.1%)	137,936 (8.4%)	622%	79%
Columbia, SC	5,949 (1.3%)	12,859 (2.4%)	26,026 (3.6%)	112%	102%
Knoxville, TN	3,232 (.5%)	8,628 (1.3%)	14,968 (2.2%)	167%	73%
Lexington, KY	3,117 (.9%)	11,880 (2.5%)	19,894 (4.5%)	281%	67%
Nashville, TN	7,665 (.8%)	40,139 (3.3%)	80,018 (5.3%)	424%	99%
Raleigh, NC	9,019 (1.2%)	72,580 (6.1%)	90,290 (8.7%)	705%	24%
Richmond, VA	9,327 (1/1%)	23,283 (2.3%)	45,950 (3.8%)	150%	97%
Atlanta, GA	57,169 (2%)	268,851 (6.5%)	1,487,984 (9.3%)	370%	82%
Birmingham, AL	3,989 (.4%)	16,598 (1.8%)	34,144 (3.1%)	316%	106%

Source: U.S. Census American FactFinder for 1990 and 2000 decennial census results and 2006-2008 American Community Survey population estimates . (<http://factfinder.census.gov/>).

Notes: Percent of the total population that is Hispanic is in parentheses.

The most prominent pull factor bringing Latinos to the South has been its economic boom. In what has been an exodus out of the industrial North or oversaturated labor markets of the West, the South is now home to a large share of the nation's commerce, manufacturing, and informational and technology centers. It also has seen more job growth than any other U.S. region over the last 20 years. As for Latino immigrants and working-class natives, there has been a steady increase of "hard-labor" industries, such as meatpacking, carpet (textile), and construction. As LeDuff (2000) and Parrado and Kandel (2008) find, the high demand for cheap labor in meatpacking brought many Latinos to rural towns in North Carolina and Georgia. Mohl (2003) points out that

the 120 carpet factories in Dalton, Georgia turned specifically to Latino labor to avoid paying higher wages and unionization by native-born citizens. Parrado and Kandel (2008) also find that threats of unionization, higher wages, as well as the lack of native-born interest in “dirty” jobs, brought Latinos to the meatpacking and construction trades. With the increase of economic prosperity and more people, new construction of residential and commercial properties became a serious incentive for Latinos to move to every major metropolitan area in the South (Lippard 2008a; Parrado and Kandel 2008). For instance, in 2006, Latinos represented about 25% (roughly 2.2 million workers) of all reported construction workers (11 million) in the U.S. (Pew Hispanic Center 2007a). In the South, Latinos in construction represent between 18% and 22%, with higher concentrations in Atlanta, Charlotte, and New Orleans (Kochhar, Suro, and Tafoya 2005).

Another pull was a supposed climate of tolerance in the South. As many suggest, business owners and politicians have sold Atlanta as a city “too busy to hate” (Bayer 1996, 2000:42; Keating 2001; Sjoquist 2000). As Furuseth and Smith (2006:2) suggest, the New South slogan suggested above helped in “glossing over the inequality, injustices, and racial discrimination that continued to thrive despite the region’s movement towards modernization and industrialization...” This was true for Latino immigrants in which labor-intensive industries and farms in the South greeted them with open arms at first. As some researchers find (Griffith 1993; Fink 2003; Lippard 2008a; Mohl 2003; Parrado and Kandel 2008; Torres, Popke, and Hapke 2006), new southern industries actively recruited Latino women and men to come and work. As Jesus, a Mexican immigrant who came to work in a Georgia poultry factory stated, “Yeah, man. They gave me a bus ticket and \$500 dollars just to come here and work for \$15 an hour and even told me where I could get a place to live. I felt welcomed and wanted.” Even in rural areas, like West Jefferson, North Carolina, where farmers need a steady stream of H-2A workers to harvest Christmas trees, farmer’s associations held “Bienvenidos” parties and attempted to help Latino immigrants, especially families, transition into their new homes and lives (Brock 2000). Churches, both Protestant and Catholic, also used their community resources to help establish Latino families and introduce them to vital public services (Griffith 2008).

However, regardless of the perception of welcome, Latinos, like Blacks in the 1950s and 1960s, went to the streets because they saw a clear “racialized” backlash against their community. For instance, six southern state legislators and several municipalities proposed and enacted their own immigration laws (Stateline 2008). These laws

specifically targeted Latinos to stem the tide of illegal and legal immigration, as can be seen with the Georgia State Senate's Bill 529 in 2005, which sought to restrict Latino driving privileges, require mandatory documentation screenings for all industries that hired Latinos, and to prohibit the use of state monies to provide health care and education to undocumented Latinos.

In addition, several new anti-immigrant hate groups, as well as a new fervor among Klu Klux Klan chapters, now litter the South to stop illegal immigration, citing Mexicans as the source of all economic and social ills of late (SPLC 2008). We also see new law enforcement partnerships between local law officials and the Immigration and Customs Enforcement federal agency, which have conducted raids of southern towns and communities to extract undocumented workers and send them back to their home countries or incarcerate them on felony charges. In short, the South has become the battleground once again for race and ethnic relations because now, as Mohl (2003:56) identified, the New South became the "Nuevo New South... Ready or not, Dixie appears to be on the cusp of a long-term process of Latinization...."

The main thrust of this collection of original research and theoretical writings is to principally question whether the newly-arriving Latino population will actually challenge or change the complexities of race and ethnic relations within the New South. By drawing on ethnographies, interviews, survey research, and secondary data analysis, the authors in this edited volume provide a snapshot of how the Black-White dichotomy of the South has undoubtedly been disrupted, challenged, and possibly changed.

Race Matters: The Racialization of an Immigrant Nation

Up to this point, we have merely described the dramatic demographic and economic changes within the last twenty-five years that has ushered in a new era in which there are three prominent racial and ethnic groups to consider in the bustling New South: Black, White, and Latino. However, there is more to it than just population swells. As Furuseth and Smith (2006:2) state, "In a region where social status, economic relations, and public consciousness have been framed by the bi-racial constructs of 'White' and 'Black,' the arrival of a growing number of culturally different and linguistically alien immigrants has had far reaching effects."

This seems to be true since, as we pointed out with the April 10th, 2006 demonstrations, Latinos want local, state, and federal governments to recognize their concerns about immigration policy and, more broadly,

equal treatment as human beings. Some scholars and commentators would argue that the Latino demonstrations and the arrival of so many to the South, in particular, only describe the current “immigration problem,” not necessarily a “race problem” because the majority of Latinos are immigrants. Clearly, the antagonistic response towards Latino immigrants is not new to American history.

In the mid-1700s, Benjamin Franklin had this to say about the waves of German immigrants that were thought to be taking over the country: “I have great misgivings about their clannishness, their little knowledge of English, their press, and the increasing need of interpreters” (Yzaguirre 2004:4). Our “enlightened” founding father believed that recently arrived German immigrants could and would never assimilate. Not only had this group rejected embracing “American” culture through assimilation, but there was the concern that this group was trying to “Germanize” our fledgling “Anglo-Saxon” republic. Speaking only in German, setting up schools where the German language was often spoken in place of English, building and settling in German “ghettos” (Germantown, USA) was proof positive that a separate pluralism, rather than cultural and structural assimilation, was the path this group had chosen to follow. There would be no American Dream for this group because they quite simply did not see themselves as, nor did they want to be, “Americans.”

Fast forward almost three hundred years and we are told by Harvard political scientist Samuel Huntington that Latinos today, much like the Germans in colonial America, wish to construct a separate nation here in the United States. Reflecting on the need for Latinos to learn, think and even dream in the idioms of the United States, Huntington declares, “There is no Americano Dream. There is only the American Dream created by an Anglo-Protestant society. Mexican Americans will share in the Dream and in that society only if they dream in English” (Huntington 2004:45). Huntington's Franklinesque predictions that the United States will soon Latino-ize reminds us that history, in this case the history and treatment of ethnic groups by the majority, does repeat itself.

However, there is something more afoot than just anti-immigrant or nativist rhetoric and actions. In very obvious ways, Latinos in the South, and across the U.S., have been racialized systematically as a minority group with problems. Through words and rhetoric, they are seen as lawbreakers, job-stealers, welfare queens, and anti-American. Politicians, police officers, and civilian soldiers hunt them down as illegal “border-jumpers” and “reconquistadors.” While it is so obvious that many Latinos understand that they are not necessarily counted in the

U.S. today as White or Black but something else. They also cannot solely exist as a nationality or ethnicity such as Mexican or Guatemalan in a country that pushes all of its immigrant populations into the melting pot to produce the “typical” American. As with the rest of this introduction and the main premise of this collection of research, we strive to point out that race matters more than ever in describing the “immigration problem” currently because these immigrants are “brown” and they have moved to the racialized American South.

We recognize, however, that the issues of race relations and immigration can be two separate entities—having very different foci, consequences, and challenges. We are also in no way equating the racial experiences of Latinos in recent years to the hardships African Americans; although, there are certainly correlations to examine and emphasize. We also do not ignore the past treatment of Hispanics in the South because, as recent scholarship has pointed out (e.g., Macias 2006; Orozco 2009; Suárez-Orozco and Pérez 2002), Mexican Americans and immigrants alike have endured the violence and degradation of white racism when facing the same lynching parties and *de jure* segregation that afflicted African Americans throughout America and the South. Moreover, Hispanics have struggled in finding their place within racialized America, where they are not seen as quite “white” or “black” enough. Obviously, though, Hispanics and Blacks exist within different contexts when it comes to race. As Rodriguez (2004:131) noted, “For all the segregation that Mexican-Americans suffered in the Southwest, that region was never the Deep South.” However, this does not mean that white racism does not target Latino citizens or immigrants in the same ways it does African Americans. If the social conditions in the American South and the U.S. at-large suggest that they are socially, politically, and economically inferior, then in many ways, Blacks and Latinos find themselves in the same struggle.

What set these two groups apart; however, are the recent fears of an “immigration problem.” While viewed and treated in very similar ways as past immigration waves in the early twentieth century, recent immigration from Latin American countries is different because this wave is more intertwined with race relations than past surges, especially since Latino immigrants have effectively spread across America. First, as Jaret (1999) points out, this particular era of immigration has seen a high number of immigrants entering the country illegally (without proper documentation) or staying after their visas have expired. Recent estimates suggest that there are about 12 million undocumented immigrants in the U.S., and Latinos represent about 78% of this estimate (Passel 2006:ii). During the first waves of immigrants from Europe in

the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the U.S. was able to document and track most newcomers but this was easier because they arrived in areas that had established immigrant processing centers, such as Ellis Island, New York. There were also temporary work programs, such as the *Bracero* Program, that helped document even Hispanic arrivals. The issue of documentation has spurred several debates about whether “illegals” should be given equal access to public resources, such as public schools, or afforded protections under U.S. laws.

The attacks of 9/11 has also fueled fears about an invasion of hostiles or “reconquistadors,” which were here to take and not give back (Salins 2004). In addition, 9/11 helped to push Latino immigrants into the American mindset as yet another group threatening the American way of life. As the comedian, Chris Rock craftily pointed out America's views of race and racism were tweaked after 9/11 to include other new and existing groups into the racial hatred that plagues America. Impersonating a White American screaming in protest after 9/11, Chris Rock recites,

'I'm American, man! I'm American! Fuck all these fucking foreigners!
'I'm American, I'm American.'

And you are like, 'hey, like calm the fuck down!' There was a lot of accepted racism when the war started....

'I'm American! I'm American, man! Fuck the French!' That was cool!
'I'm American, man! I'm American, man! Fuck the Arabs!' And, that was cool. I'm American! I'm American! Fuck all the illegal aliens.'

Then, I started listening because I know niggers and Jews is next. I was like, any day now! That train is never late (Chris Rock, *Never Scared*, 2004)!

This fear, coupled with the inactivity of the federal government to pass new immigration legislation, has sparked many states to enact their own immigration laws to stem the tide of illegal immigration.

Second, and most important to this book's discussion, is that these immigrants are “brown.” U.S. immigration policy has always preferred more White, Western European immigrants over other groups (Bean and Bell-Rose 1999). However, after the passage of the Hart-Cellar Act in 1965, which emphasized family reunification and the need for individuals with special or economy-driven occupational skills, the Asian and Latino populations have exploded. These immigrants, particularly those from Central and South America, are often poorer and

less educated than previous waves of immigrants, even those arriving ten to twenty years ago (Alba and Nee 2003; Bean and Bell-Rose 1999; Portes and Rumbaut 2006). Also, due to their recent arrival, many Asian and Latino immigrants do not speak English very well, making them seem less likely to assimilate into the American culture, even though recent research suggests otherwise (see Alba and Nee 2003; Portes and Rumbaut 2006; Rodriguez 2004).

As for the “Hispanic” or “Latino” view of American racial classifications, research suggests that these individuals are not necessarily ready or willing to identify themselves as a particular race, nor do they completely understand the U.S.’s rigid and bifurcated racial system (e.g., Jones-Correa 2008; Montero-Sieburth and Meléndez 2007; Rodriguez 2000; Waldinger and Feliciano 2004). In fact, calling all Mexicans, Colombians, Puerto Ricans, Cubans, and Guatemalans “Hispanic” or “Latino” does not capture the variety of cultures and lifestyles associated with these groups. Some argue that these groups do share a common language (which is a way to describe ethnicity but not race), but this is not necessarily true when Brazilians speak Portuguese and several native dialects are used by Mexican immigrants who cannot speak Spanish. Personal accounts from “Latinos” also suggest that they have a hard time fitting into the “White” and “Black” racial designators because they do not see themselves in this manner, so people around them decide their racial categories for them (see Macias 2006; Suárez-Orozco and Pérez 2002; Rodriguez 2000). For instance, Rodriguez (2000) pointed that she, as a light-skinned Latina, found that people waffled on whether to call her White or Black based on the context, particularly when they wanted to separate her out as a “minority.”

Hispanic or Latino groups, however, clearly understand based on past and present interactions with Americans that there is privilege and oppression associated with racial classification, where privileges typically accrue for those who fall into the White or at least “White-ish” end of the racial spectrum. Thus, many Hispanics in Southern California, living near poor African Americans, identify as racially Black because they live near and have similar social experiences (e.g., poverty, drug problems, police harassment) (Macias 2006). In addition, Hispanics or Latinos tend to view race somewhat differently than most Americans. As suggested by Sonya Tafoya’s (2004) research with Latinos in the U.S., “Whiteness” and “Blackness” represent higher social status that is not necessarily associated with skin color. Thus, one could be seen as “White” but still have dark skin because of his/her economic status or civic enfranchisement. In addition, language fluency, cultural separation, and immigration status (i.e., years in the U.S.,

documented or undocumented, generations), which are all measures of acculturation, change Hispanics' or Latinos' conceptions of race.

Recent scholarship examining how the American racial classification and stratification system will change because of the overwhelming presence of Latinos proposes varying possibilities. One possibility is that Latinos, as well as Asians, will fall in line with America's already well-established racial dichotomy but will change it slightly from a Black/White system to a Black/non-Black system (see Gans 1999; Yancey 2003). Certainly, in the past, other immigrant groups like the Irish and Italians who were not "White" when they arrived eventually were accepted into the American racial system as "Whites." This possibility recognizes that some Latinos who already identify as "White" and look and act the part will end up being accepted as "non-Black." Other parts of the Latino population will be pushed into the "Black" category based on darker skin color and social positions (i.e., education, income). This possibility supports the age-old melting pot theory for some Latinos because they will assimilate into the (White) mainstream American culture (see Alba and Nee 2003; Portes 2004; Rodriguez 2004). Or, in a more nuanced way, Latinos will help shift the color line to accommodate Latinos and Asians as non-Blacks, but continue to leave African Americans behind (see Lee et al. 2003).

Another possibility takes into account a more globalized and complex explanation of racial categorization after the recent surge in Latino immigration to the U.S. Bonilla-Silva and Embrick (2003:34) argue that there will be a "Latin Americanization" to race in the U.S., placing even more emphasis on skin color or "pigmentocracy" in conjunction with other socially accepted cultural qualities and expectations. In other words, not only will skin color matter but also levels of education, income, and rates of assimilation, which puts every "ethnic" group into a race, regardless of their willingness to do so. Bonilla-Silva and Embrick (2003) identify three racial categories for the future: "Whites," made up of native- and foreign-born Whites, as well as light-skinned assimilated Latinos and Asians; "Honorary Whites," consist of those immigrants that assimilate and are socio-economically successful but do not fit neatly into the phenotype "White," and the remaining category of collective "Blacks" are those newly-arriving, non-assimilated immigrants and African Americans who are dark skinned. As Rodriguez (2002:35) points out in his book, *Brown: The Last Discovery of America*, "The future is brown,' or, more likely, not just Black and White."

The final possibility is, as Bonilla-Silva and Embrick (2003:35) state, "... racial diversity in the United States will lead to balkanization

and cultural bastardization.” Tinged with anti-immigrant rhetoric likened to the “Know Nothing” campaigns against Irish Catholics in the 1800s, many conservative commentators and political activists view the “Latino invasion” as a significant blow to what it means to be American, regardless of the divisions between Blacks and Whites. In fact, they also suggest a clear dichotomous division based on nationality or ethnicity, Americans versus Latinos. As Samuel Huntington (2004:30) wrote in a piece entitled, *The Hispanic Challenge*, “The persistent inflow of Hispanic immigrants threatens to divide the United States into two peoples, two cultures, and two languages.... The United States ignores this challenge at its peril.”

Undoubtedly, scholars have already begun to contemplate the inclusion of Latinos, whether as immigrants or citizens, as a test of America's racial stratification system (see Gallagher 2008; Orozco 2009). It also seems that, in spite of Latinos and other groups wanting to self-identify their race and ethnicity, Americans have already begun to classify these heterogeneous ethnic groups into a clear racial category of “Hispanic” or “Latino.” Lee et al. (2003) agree that how Americans treat Latinos and Asians highly depends on their racial classification. As Rodriguez (2000) found when examining the U.S. Census, America has already spent decades attempting to “racialize” Spanish-speaking groups to set them certainly apart from Whites. However, this categorization goes well beyond labels because being a certain race, not necessarily an ethnicity (except in a global context), assigns privilege in America. Within the context of immigration, race is central as an emergent identity because the racial lines which mark one group from the next are shifting. What is taking place currently with Latinos in the South lends itself to a reformulation of how we conceptualize racial categories.

In the context of this book, Omi and Winant's (1994) racial formation theory frames how an “immigrant problem” structurally becomes a “race problem.” As Omi and Winant (1994) suggest, the categories of race are socially constructed and contextual; proposing that any racial category has flexible meaning and varied weight to determine human value of any group and the division of power, privilege, and resources. Omi and Winant (1994) point out that within the U.S., the social construction of racial categories of “White” and “not-White” helped to assure that whichever groups were White were seen as superior and continued to gain advantages from their “Whiteness” despite resistance from non-Whites. More importantly, White America uses its institutions to make sure that their privilege is sustained and

maintained, letting in “new members” when necessary to secure or stabilize the status quo.

However, what is important is that there is a “racialization process for any group who enters America who seems to have racial ambiguity or an uncertain classification. Omi and Winant (1994) suggest that in the context of meshing immigration with race, racial meaning is extended to either secure White domination or to hinder these groups from gobbling up resources needed by Whites. For instance, Irish immigrants were often identified as “Blacks” when they refused to assimilate or took jobs that some Whites valued during economic depressions. However, participation in the American Civil War and the avid rejection of Blacks helped the same Irish immigrants be accepted as Whites (Roediger 1991).

Today, this can be applied to Latinos. At the present moment, hostile anti-immigrant sentiment has helped to “racialize” Mexicans, Guatemalans, and Colombians, etc., as one distinct group—Hispanics or Latinos. Undoubtedly, racializing all Mexicans, Columbians, and Puerto Ricans as a homogeneous group is not new, especially when we recognize that these groups have historically lived in a tri-apartheid system in many places like Texas, and have had specific laws and policies passed to hamper their abilities to be considered equals (e.g., Mexican Repatriation Movement of the 1930s). Also, we can see this within recent research on hiring practices in the construction industry where White employers often racialize Latinos as allies when they provide cheap, docile, and efficient workforces. However, once Latinos become too “Americanized” by wanting raises, time off, or wanting to start their own construction businesses, White contractors often categorize them with Blacks as worthless, lazy, and untrustworthy (Lippard 2008a).

Omi and Winant's (1994) discussion becomes even more critical when we consider how racialization is the precursor to the development of “racial projects,” which are ways in which the meaning of race becomes embedded within social institutions to dictate benefits or oppression. For instance, while the Federal Housing Administration was created to assist all homeowners in purchasing their first homes, Omi and Winant (1994), as well as others (see Shapiro 2004), find that it helps Whites more than Blacks obtain mortgages because of underwriting policies that exclude Blacks due to their supposed inability to manage money or to be responsible. Identified as a racial project, these institutionalized issues of racial stereotypes become powerful mechanisms of discrimination and ways to solidify racial classifications and to create barriers that keep out unwanted competition.

A second way to understand how immigration becomes a race issue is through Herbert Blumer's (1958) prejudice or group-position theory. Blumer theory links racially-based social status and the belief in resource entitlement to racial hierarchy. He suggests that individuals in every group have a perception of where the particular group "ought" to stand in the American racial pecking order. Groups also, over time, develop strong prejudiced feelings toward other groups that threaten their sense of group position. In essence, any act of racial prejudice comes from a groups' concerns for protecting their perceived privileges or entitlements (Bobo and Johnson 2000). These threats include challenges to valuable resources that stabilize a group's position, such as jobs, self-employment, housing opportunities, and education.

Therefore, using Blumer's arguments as a theoretical link makes it possible to see how even nativist sentiments toward Latino immigrants can lead to racial prejudice because they are created by the same fears: one group taking another group's privileges and resources. Moreover, White fears, prejudice feelings, and discriminatory actions match when looking at their rhetoric or actions toward Blacks and Latinos side-by-side. For instance, most U.S. individuals polled suggest that their biggest fear is that Latino immigrants are taking needed jobs and receiving social benefits they do not pay for or deserve, like public education and social welfare (Pew Hispanic Center 2006b). In the same way, recent immigration legislation, passed in several states and attempted at the federal level, provides examples of how America, especially White America, feels a proprietary claim to the rights, jobs, and space within America and, more importantly, feels that its way is threatened.

Juan Crow and the Color of Backlash

Now, take the notions of race-making and race-protecting presented above and apply them to the South where large numbers of "brown" immigrants are entering a place that has dealt with race, literally and figuratively, in Black and White. As some suggest (e.g., Hirschman and Massey 2008, Marrow 2008; Smith and Furuseth 2006; Winger 2006, 2008), most American citizens have rarely had any personal day-to-day contact with the immigrant populations. As Hirschman and Massey (2008:11) stated, "Although immigration may have been viewed as a 'crisis,' for many citizens it was a crisis in the abstract."

However, in the South, the rapid increase and saturation of the Latino population into the small homogeneous White towns, cities, and suburbs have made the crisis real for many Southerners. And, even though there is a façade of economic progress that often covers up race

issues, the newest evidence of racial discrimination and conflict has emerged in the South with the arrival of Latino immigrants. More importantly, while Latino immigrants may arrive as just “immigrants” and face anti-immigrant sentiment akin to past immigrant waves (see Lee et al. 2003), there are already blatant responses and mechanisms being used to “racialize” Latinos into a minority group that threatens the well-being of both Black and White Americans.

In a compelling article, Robert Lovato (2008) suggests that much of what Latinos face in the South could be analogous with the racist laws and actions of Jim Crow before desegregation and the Civil Rights era. Lovato (2008:1) states, “[Latino children] are growing up in a racial and political climate in which Latinos' subordinate status in Georgia and in the Deep South bears more than a passing resemblance to that of African Americans who were living under Jim Crow. Call it Juan Crow...” While it is certainly not slavery or *de jure* segregation, the hostility apparent in local sentiment, state action, and the resurgence of hate groups has stigmatized Latinos, regardless of their immigrant status, as a second-class minority group. As Reverend Joseph Lowery, a lieutenant to Martin Luther King Jr., stated after seeing how Latinos were being treated in Georgia, “... though we [Blacks and Latinos] may have come over on different ships, we're all in the same damn boat now” (Lovato 2008:3).

There are several ways to see how Latinos are being racialized and prosecuted similar to African Americans in the South. In one way, many Southerners, as well as the much of America, attempt to label Latino groups into one of two “other” categories: “Mexicans,” and/or “illegals.” This can be seen in newspaper accounts across the South, as well as in the wordage of recent state legislation (see Bohon 2006a). For example, one Latino respondent in Lippard's (2008a:102) book on the Atlanta construction industry, stated this about the stigmatized label:

You know, I'm a Mexican American, and everyone always puts Mexicans down it seems. One way, they say we are great workers and another, they say we're nasty and spreading like roaches. It is so bad that even Mexicans don't want to be called Mexicans because it carries a bad position. You know, no one wants to be a dirty Mexican, and Americans don't understand that we all didn't come through Texas. The only ways that we are the same is that we are all human, just like Blacks and Whites. If they don't want us to call them names, then they shouldn't either.

In other words, “Mexican” becomes a racialized word, distinguishing this group from anything White or Black. Or, as another

Latino respondent, who is a U.S. citizen, said to a reporter, "People look at me, and they just assume I'm illegal" (Collins 2007:2).

Comments from local citizens also help identify Latinos as a new racialized group based on their competition with others. For instance, nationally, most Americans have been split as to whether the new immigrant population "hurts" (45%) or "helps" (45%) the U.S. (Pew Hispanic Center 2006b). The Pew Hispanic Center also found that a majority of Americans feel that illegal immigrants only take unwanted jobs and will eventually assimilate, causing minimal damage to the economy and culture of America. But, when researchers ask Southerners these questions, they get stronger responses. For example, in North Carolina, research suggests that 70% of Blacks and Whites felt that Latino immigrants were a problem in the state because they used up public services (i.e., education and healthcare), as well as took away needed jobs (McClain 2006). In addition, while Whites were more adamant than Blacks in suggesting Latino immigrants were a problem, Blacks were more likely to report direct economic competition. As one Black respondent quoted by McClain (2006:16) stated, "Latinos seem to get all the benefits, and it seems like they are taking all of the good benefits from low-income Blacks. They seem to come and go in and out of the country and not pay taxes. They seem to be getting too much."

Other researchers have found these same sentiments all over the South, especially in places with high concentrations of Latinos in jobs that had a large number of Whites and Blacks participating (see Lippard 2008a; Marrow 2008; Mohl 2003; Parrado and Kandal 2008; Winders 2006). Moreover, some of the explanations of why Latinos are a problem echo the old Black-White divide. For instance, in the Atlanta construction industry, one White subcontractor said this about Latino subcontractors: "They are a damn menace to society just like the Blacks are. Bitch and complain even though they've got it made because now, like Niggers, they can get all the good jobs and still get welfare while I have to work hard to feed my kids. It's the same damn thing, different day" (Lippard 2008a:234).

Blumer's theory of group status and the perceived loss of social and material resources suggests that competition over resources leads to prejudice and ultimately racist actions. Interestingly, much of this sentiment is due to the persistent recruitment of Latinos by new industries in the South. As several researchers have found when studying labor in the New South (see LeDuff 2000; Mohr 2003; Parrado and Kandel 2008), Latinos have replaced almost entire Black and White labor forces. For instance, in the Smithfield packing plant in North Carolina, LeDuff (2000) suggested that almost 60% of the labor force

was Latino when it used to be all Black and White. The same is true for construction industries in places like Atlanta, Charlotte, Raleigh, and Nashville, where 60% to 80% of the manual laborers are Latino, which has happened in the last twenty years (Lippard 2008a; Parrado and Kandel 2008). As Borjas (2004) had predicted, undereducated and less-skilled Latinos receiving the new industry jobs would soon lead to competition with American citizens who had the same education and skill levels, although it has been the case for decades that filling these low wage, menial jobs has been more than a challenge for the poultry and farm industries.

Many Southerners believe Latinos consume more in social service than they contribute in taxes for those services. Researchers have documented that in many new destination towns, public schools saw dramatic increases in Spanish-speaking students to schools that had little or no Spanish-speaking teachers, staff, or money to accommodate the change (Mohl 2003; Kandel and Parrado 2006; Wainer 2004). In these new destination points, businesses, from *McDonald's* to hospitals, had to provide translators, signs, handouts, and phone answering services to Spanish-speaking people. These acts of accommodation served to make Latinos more visible to the rest of the community and also to raise concern that such action would impede assimilation. As one White protester asked while seeing Latinos march by on April of 2006, "Shouldn't you learn our language!?" As for paying taxes, since most Americans, including Southerners, believe that most of the Latino population resides in America illegally (see Pew Hispanic Center 2006b), then they probably do not pay any taxes. However, as Kasarda and Johnson (2006) found when examining the economic impact of Hispanics on North Carolina, Hispanics or Latinos do pay their fair share of taxes through sales tax, which offsets the state's expenditures on public services.

Of course, these responses could be seen as just anti-immigrant rhetoric but, on the contrary, this public outcry helped fuel more political and institutional actions that surely resemble the racial projects of isolation and degradation of Jim Crow. While other "new destination" states have also enacted their own state immigration policies (see Anrig and Wang 2006), southern states were some of the first to enact comprehensive immigration policies. In fact, much of the policies proposed or enacted were similar to California's *Proposition 187* that attempted to bar access to public services for undocumented immigrants.

For instance, in Georgia, State Senator Chip Rogers introduced Senate Bill 529 that represented an effort to curtail "Latino" illegal immigration to Georgia and disallow undocumented immigrants from

using public services, including public schools. While Senator Rogers' initial draft did not pass, the Georgia Security and Immigration Compliance Act, signed into law in 2006, represented the toughest state laws against undocumented immigrants up to that point. This legislation now restricts undocumented immigrants from obtaining Georgia driver's licenses, fines businesses for hiring immigrants without appropriate documentation, and requires local law enforcement to detain any immigrant suspected of being in the state illegally. Along with Georgia, five other southern states, including Alabama, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia, have attempted or enacted similar legislation that has exclusively focused on Latino immigrants, especially those who are undocumented.

In addition, many local and state governments have teamed up with the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to curtail the influx of Latino immigrants. As part of Homeland Security, ICE is a federal agency responsible for enforcing federal immigration and customs laws to protect the United States from terrorist attacks. It specifically targets illegal immigrants to reduce the threat of terrorism in America (see www.ice.gov). In 2007, ICE removed over 276,000 "illegal aliens" from the U.S. (ICE 2007). Much of this removal was in the South because of a new partnership program called the Agreements of Cooperation in Communities to Enhance Safety and Security program (ACCESS). This program is designed to encourage federal and local law enforcement partnerships to aid in training and deputizing local law enforcement to help ICE chase, detain, arrest, and jail illegal immigrants. As of 2008, ICE has trained over 700 local and state law enforcement officers and has 55 active partnerships. 52% (29 partnerships) are in seven Southern states (Alabama, Georgia, Florida, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia). The most partnerships are in North Carolina (8) and Virginia (9) (ICE 2008).

While ICE raids have happened all over the country, some of the more brutal ones have occurred in many of the industrialized towns in Georgia that have large numbers of Latinos working in poultry and textiles. Most of these raids focus on groups of Latino immigrants suspected of being undocumented and often take any immigrant present, regardless of their immigration status. Lovato (2008) quotes what one Latino girl, Mancha, who is a documented immigrant, said about her experience with an ICE raid early one morning in Reidsville, Georgia:

I was getting ready for school, getting dressed, when I heard this noise. I thought it was my mother coming back.... Some people were slamming car doors outside the trailer. I heard footsteps and then a loud boom and then somebody screaming, asking if we were 'illegals,' 'Mexicans.' These big men were standing in my living room holding guns, one man blocked my doorway. Another guy grabbed a gun on his side. I was freaked out. 'Oh, my God!' I yelled.

There has also been a resurgence in Klu Klux Klan activity. Several Klan rallies have been held in Alabama, Georgia, and North Carolina using the frustration locals have towards Latinos to again swell the ranks of the Klan. In 2000, David Duke, an ex-Klansman from Louisiana, spoke in Siler City, North Carolina at an anti-immigration rally outside of the poultry plant where many Latinos worked. Duke stated, "To get a few chickens plucked, is it worth losing your heritage" (Mohl 2003: 53)? Another rally occurred in Gainesville, Georgia in 2002 to help lobby state lawmakers to pursue stiff laws to curb immigration because, as Chester Doles, the head of the Georgia State Unit of the neo-Nazi National Alliance complained, "Hispanics in Gainesville have completely taken over" (Mohl 2003: 53).

Intertwined with the recent presence of the KKK, there has also been the rapid growth of nativist hate groups in the South and across the country. Lovato (2008) suggested that there were 144 new "extreme nativist" groups and 300 anti-immigration groups in the country. These include groups identifying themselves as "minutemen" and "civilian border patrol agents," which can be found in Jim Gilchrist's *Minutemen Project* or the *Minutemen Civil Defense Corps*. Both of these organizations have active chapters throughout the South, as well as other support organizations that include the *American Freedom Riders*, *American Resistance* (Georgia), and *Americans for Legal Immigration* (North Carolina).

Certainly, Latinos have felt the heat of hostility and the chilled welcome within the last decade. Nationally, the Pew Hispanic Center (2007b) found that 53% of all Latinos surveyed feared deportation of themselves or their family, regardless of their legal status. In fact, one-in-three surveyed suggested that the social climate had worsened and the hostility portrayed in the media and by locals makes them stay home. Fifty-four percent of Latinos in the Nation also feel that discrimination is a major problem that keeps them from succeeding and acculturating in America.

Researchers have noted similar reports of discrimination in the South. Lacy (2007) found that within South Carolina at least 40% of the

Mexican immigrants surveyed said they had faced some sort of discrimination while living in the state. Many reported harassment by police and public health agencies, as well as being treated as “invisible.” Lyubansky, Harris, Baker, and Lippard (2008) found that 70% of Latinos interviewed throughout Georgia felt they had faced discrimination through their employment or by local law enforcement. Both of the studies in South Carolina and Georgia also found that many of their respondents were afraid of deportation or that their children might be harmed by angry locals. Even in the isolated communities of the Blue Ridge Mountains of North Carolina, where there are significantly smaller numbers of Latinos, 52% of Latinos report facing discrimination within the area's public services, as well as by the police (Lippard 2008b). As one Latino woman reported when discussing her treatment at an emergency room, “It hurts. They look at me and judge me and put me off. I had blood gushing from my head and they didn't want to treat me because I was illegal... I was a minority” (Lippard 2008b:23).

The Scope of the Volume

The title of this book, *Being Brown in Dixie*, serves as a metaphor for the monumental social, political, and economic transformations and challenges resulting from the millions of Latinos now residing in the American South. Up until recently, the South has viewed its issues with race and ethnicity as a biracial phenomenon in which the problems and hardships of other racial and ethnic minorities were either ignored or overshadowed. The purpose of this volume is to specifically point out the shifting nature of race and ethnic relations in the South at the beginning of the 21st century. More important, the scholarly works included in this book highlight the challenges Latinos face as a racialized group in the South where the discussions of race have been bitter and difficult. As suggested by several scholars (e.g., Falk, Talley, and Rankin 1993; Falk and Rankin 1994; Glaser 1994; Johnson 1941; Wimberley 2008; Wimberley and Morris 1996), Blacks have been subjected to incredible amounts of violence, extreme poverty, and discrimination, which are distinctive to the racist values and beliefs of the old South or Dixie that most of America remembers. While the treatment of Latinos does not fully compare to the hardships and atrocities African Americans have faced in the South, this region continues to be a place that has always played a unique role in shaping the discussions of race and racism in America. Moreover, identifying this area as a place in which “brown people” reside and struggle

suggests a new chapter to this very old and sometimes painful story of race in the South.

More importantly, the title, as well as the content of this book, puts into play the notion that race matters when discussing an ethnic group that has considered themselves White until arriving in a place that cannot accept them as White. This book tackles the very complex question of how race still matters, especially when the history of race relations has historically used skin color as the proxy of acceptance, privilege, and power. These chapters point out how the South views Hispanics as a race, as a color that is less than "White," by chronicling the unethical, discriminatory and illegal mistreatment Latinos have been subjected to, in which Blacks in the American South know about all too well.

While each author approaches this topic in their own unique way, they all address three major questions posed by this volume. First, how will the sudden increase of Hispanic/Latino populations in the South transform the U.S. conceptions of race, ethnicity, and racism? More specifically, with most of these changes occurring in the traditional South, could this change our understanding of the Black-White dichotomy that has dominated this region's racial history? Second, how will these changes affect the various social institutions within the South based on racialized lines? And finally, are the responses and actions Latinos face as they move into the South qualitatively different than what Whites or Blacks have faced, especially concerning issues of prejudice and discrimination?

The authors also tackle these questions in three distinctive ways. First, many authors attack the theoretical explanations of the reconceptualization of race, ethnicity, and racism in the South. Regine Jackson's, "The Shifting Nature of Racism," theoretically examines how the entrance of Latinos into the South will challenge the bifurcated nature of America's racial hierarchy, and how African Americans, as well as other racial and ethnic groups in the South, will fare in this new racial climate. In tandem, Helen Marrow provides examples through the analysis of intergroup relations between Hispanic newcomers' and Whites and Blacks in eastern North Carolina. She finds that Latinos experience both prejudice and discrimination based on racist and anti-immigrant sentiment posed by Whites and Blacks. Eileen Diaz McConnell's, "Racialized Histories and Contemporary Population Dynamics," links James Loewen's notion of sundown towns to the recent immigration phenomenon by examining the past practices of Georgia to remove Black residents and the apparent segregation of Whites and Latinos today in these areas. McConnell argues that there is

some possible correlations between the treatment of Blacks and Latinos in this area based on past sundown town policies and current segregation rates. In “The Myth of Millions,” Stephanie Bohon and Heather MacPherson take a look at the conceptualization and perception of “unauthorized immigration” in Georgia based on media accounts. They find that news reports often overestimate and overemphasize the illegal immigrant issue and only report negative issues when discussing Latinos in Georgia. Finally, Elaine Lacy's, “Integrating into New Communities,” provides the Latino perspective concerning their arrival and acceptance in South Carolina, reporting what Latino families find most important in acculturating into their new communities, and how they view their newly acquired racialized positions.

Second, many of the chapters examine the institutional shifts and policy changes that have occurred across key areas of the South. Stephen Sills and Elizabeth Blake tackle the issue of unfair housing practices for Latinos in North Carolina in “Unfair Housing Practices in Black and Brown.” By providing an overview of residential segregation, these authors find that Latinos perceive and face serious issues of discrimination in housing and they often mirror the experiences of African Americans and not Whites. In “The Public School's Response,” Andrew Wainer provides an analysis of the impact of the immigration boom on the public education system in the American South. He presents case studies of schools in Arkansas, Georgia, and North Carolina to explain the concerns, challenges, and programs implemented to address the increase in Latino students, especially those that speak only Spanish. Orlando Rodriguez's, “Southern Crime and Juvenile Justice,” delves into an assessment of juvenile justice custody rates between old and new immigrant gateway states to determine if there is a significant difference between states in adjudicating Hispanic juveniles. He finds that while Southern states have recently seen higher Hispanic juvenile custody rates it is not that much different from other areas because the strict policy of juvenile custody is the same and the rates of increase are due to increases in Latino juveniles in these areas.

Finally, four chapters focus on the issues of Latino integration into labor and politics. In “Racializing Hiring Practices in Dirty Jobs,” Cameron Lippard provides an in-depth analysis of Black, Latino, and White hiring practices in the Atlanta construction industry, pointing out how the need for cheap labor sways hiring practices to only want new Latino immigrants in a booming industry. Francesca Coin's “Organizing Labor in a 'Right-to-Work State’” takes up the issue of migrant farm work in the South and points out the problems, contradictions, and deteriorating conditions Latino H-2A workers face in North Carolina.

She also discusses ways in which the farm-labor movement has failed and needs to be repaired.

Focusing more specifically on politics, Paul Luebke's, "Anti-Immigrant Mobilization in a Southern State," chronicles the experiences and issues he faced as a legislator in North Carolina when dealing with anti-immigrant legislation. In "The Rise of the Southern Tier," Lisa Martinez examines the political mobilization of Latinos in three states with large Latino populations. Using Census data and the National Survey of Latinos in America, she suggests that the diversity of the Latino population presents some potential challenges for political elites to mobilize them, as well as more concern on how Latinos in the South (including southern California) may be politically influential. In last chapter, "Success Stories," Bill Baker and Paul Harris report on Dalton, Georgia's proactive response to the extreme influx of Latino workers and families to an area that has been traditionally all-White. They find a cache of creative ways to integrate and welcome the influx of newcomers, and they suggest that Dalton can serve as a model for positive public policy and community action.

Overall, research and discussions in this volume should demonstrate the growing complexity of discussing race and ethnic relations for the American South with the significant arrival of Latinos. It should also act a cursory barometer to the waves of challenges and changes for Blacks, Latinos, and Whites in this area, presenting the possible events unfolding today that will shape ideology, public policy, and the lives of all these racialized groups tomorrow. Finally, we contend that the volume pushes scholarship to merge the notions of immigration and race relations in the U.S. into a cogent discussion about group-positioning and the fluidity of power, privilege, and wealth based on skin color in the New South.