

at best, incomplete (pp. 95-96). It begs the question of what is experienced emotionally by persons who must confess sin publicly in order to remain members. What, if any, personal struggles are involved in coming before the community in such a way? The authors, like the Amish themselves, downplay issues of *personal* variability and subjective experience, focusing instead upon *community* harmony, adaptation, struggle, and variability—topics that are much more amenable to study in the Amish cultural context. The book would have been strengthened by adding a chapter on “those who leave,” exploring the lives of the ten to twenty percent of Amish who abandon the faith community. Perhaps the authors have this in mind for a subsequent book.

Such limitations notwithstanding, *The Amish* is an impressive work

that stands alone as a comprehensive study of twenty-first century Amish cultures. The authors have done both the scholarly community and the Amish themselves an invaluable service by presenting Amish life in all of its complexity, and doing so in such a clear and organized fashion. This book will become a benchmark; one cannot commend a study more highly than that. Kraybill, Johnson-Weiner, and Nolt are to be heartily commended for this, the latest in their ongoing contribution to Amish and Anabaptist studies.

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Seeing Race in Modern America

By Matthew Pratt Guterl

(Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013. Pp. 224. Illustrations, notes, index. \$34.95.)

Stephen Colbert frequently uncovers the “truthiness” of American politics, and his riff on race relations is no exception. Colbert professes to being colorblind. “I just pretend everybody is white and it’s all good,” he explains. Cleverly exposing the fiction of post-racialism, Colbert pretends to deny what is presumably evident to anyone who looks, while simultaneously challenging our collective desire to

get over racism by looking the other way. But is race really a matter of plain sight, and how have we come to view certain physical features and mannerisms as ciphers of race?

These are questions that historian Matthew Pratt Guterl tackles in his excellent new book. With great force, erudition, and insight, he demonstrates how certain ways of seeing produce, shape, and buttress race and

racism. "Sightlines" structure what and how we see it: "We see what we want to see, what we've been built to see, what we have to see, and not what actually is" (p. 12). He scrutinizes the mechanics of "the discriminating gaze" in contexts ranging from policing strategies and legal decisions to popular culture, advertising, and routine interpersonal encounters.

The book opens with a "close up," examining those sightlines that visually dissect the shapes and textures of an individual's bodily parts. Though not chronologically structured, Guterl's analysis of racial profiling, silhouetting, and racial commodification documents how the frames of the racial gaze established by early nineteenth-century ethnographic taxonomies and, later, by eugenicists' silhouetting, repeat and proliferate with persistent consistency. From the old archetypes of "John Chinaman" and "the Negro" to the recent anti-terrorist campaign (where Americans are enjoined to "see something"), we continue to interpret the same physical traits as evidence of individual character as well as to deploy this common sight to protect the nation-state from dangerous aliens.

Of course, the ocularity of race is not solely about Othering, and it does not occur only in black and white. In chapters on various inter-racial assemblages—racially polyglot families and mixed platoons—we learn how Technicolor becomes "a strategic domestic asset" (p. 113), expressing our aspiration for a utopic harmony, at home and globally. The diversity

celebrated in these polychromatic images serves to absorb and reinscribe racial contrast, "challeng[ing] racism without revealing the falseness of race" (p. 85).

The final chapters of the book turn to the blurring of sightlines, when the technologies of racial assessment are more difficult to use because of hybridity (which requires performance), masquerade (where race must be seen twice), passing (visualized through testimony or forensic accounting), and ambiguity ("easy to see but hard to pin down") (p. 183). With vivid descriptions and scrupulous analyses of a rich range of political and cultural texts, Guterl illustrates how our eyes have been trained to discern "evidence only at the bare edge of perception" (p. 199). These are among the most powerful chapters of the book, for it is here that Guterl also addresses how gender, sexuality, and especially class, enter visual politics as well.

Seeing Race in Modern America forces us to see that our eyes have been wide shut, that racial sight is a shared practice and an enduring foundation of discrimination. Without fully exploring the relationship between the discursive and visual, Guterl shows that racial profiling is "deeper, flatter and more ubiquitous" than the much-contested practice of law enforcement. As the recent deaths of Trayvon Martin and Michael Brown remind us, more than interpellation is at stake in how we are seen, especially when "the person looking over you, and trying to

place you in the logical flow of racial sight, is holding a gun” (p. 209).

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