

find himself a master" (177). Chapter 7, "Life in the Shadow of the Slave Market," takes a glimpse into the lives of slaves and slaveholders after the completion of the transaction.

*Soul by Soul* persuasively argues that the slave market was "everywhere in the antebellum South" (115), a constant presence in the slaveholders' minds. Slaves were used as living collateral for various financial transactions, and the fact that their bodies could be transformed into currency in the economic system powerfully affected not only the financial but also the social imagination of the slaveholding class, influencing the way in which the slaveholders viewed themselves, their peers, and, of course, their slaves. Johnson's argumentation concerning the constant psychological presence of the slave market in the minds of both black and white Southerners, supported by individual stories drawn from various documentary sources, is convincing. The verbal portraits that he ably paints are thought-provoking and, in the case of the slaves, moving. A carefully researched and compellingly written study, Johnson's book is an important addition to the existing work on the history of slavery in the antebellum South.

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Melissa Nobles, *Shades of Citizenship: Race and the Census in Modern Politics*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2000; 256 pages; ISBN: 0804740593 paperback; \$19.95.

A comparative study, Melissa Nobles's *Shades of Citizenship* explores the intricate interplay of censuses, racial politics, and citizenship in the United States and Brazil. Wryly pointing out that in the United States the allegedly inherent and immutable racial categories have "changed from nearly one census to the next" (x), Nobles sets out to explore how census bureau officials in the two countries have thought about race – that is, what is actually being classified and counted in censuses, and why. In addition, she investigates the ways in which racial categorizations, as expressed in census forms, have affected political, intellectual, and social life in the two national settings. Nobles's method is that of systematic doubt: in her words, she "first examined the assumptions that characterize most scholarly and popular treatments of censuses and census bureaus, and then assumed the opposite" (x). Questioning what tends to be taken for granted, Nobles asks the critical – and crucial – question of why race is a category in census forms at all. Ultimately, she wishes to "advance theorizing about race and its political significance" (xi).

Nobles argues that censuses significantly contribute to and sustain racial discourse, which in turn "affects the public policies that either vitiate or protect the rights, privileges, and experiences commonly associated with citizenship" (1). In other words, Nobles affirms, first, that race should not be viewed as an objective category that censuses study and impartially tabulate, but as "a fluid and internally contradicting dis-

course" (1) that is both created by and embedded in the census as an institutional process. Second, she stresses that rather than being politically neutral or methodologically impartial, census bureaus are political actors that view censuses as instruments of state and federal governance. Third, Nobles emphasizes that given the ideological links that governments have always established between race and citizenship, the racial views and discourses embedded in census operations inevitably influence public policy. Fourth, she shows that because current Brazilian and American census formats help to sustain racial discourse, they have been heavily criticized by various individuals and interest groups.

The examples Nobles offers of individuals' and movements' critical approaches to censuses are the U.S. multiracial movement's effort to have a multiracial category added to the U.S. census and the Brazilian black movement's (*movimento negro*) effort to have a black category included in the Brazilian census. The objective of the U.S. multicultural movement is to promote the idea of multiraciality and to gain official recognition for the concept of multiracial identity. The black activists of Brazil, in turn, wish to "disrupt the commensurability between images of whiteness, national identity, and racial harmony by advocating the idea of distinct races instead of one mixed Brazilian race" (22). In this view, Brazilian rulers have suppressed the discourse of blackness for political purposes, ignoring the social and economic needs of black Brazilians. Although these two projects may, at first sight, seem different and almost contradictory, they are similar, argues Nobles, in that both have identified the census "as a vehicle for their larger political ambition: to refigure and reconstitute racial identities through [census] categorization" (21).

Chapter 1 is an introduction to the book's purpose and approach. Chapter 2, looking at the history of racial categorization in U.S. censuses from 1790 to 2000, supports and illuminates Nobles's overarching argument that census categories have been a significant factor in racial formation throughout the history of the United States. Nobles uses the *Congressional Globe* and other congressional documents as her primary sources for the nineteenth century, and internal Census Bureau documents for the twentieth century. Shifting geographical grounds, Chapter 3 explores the politics and policies of "color classification" in Brazilian census data from 1872 to the late twentieth century. Nobles's discussion of twentieth-century census-taking in Brazil draws on IBGE documents (Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística), but her investigation of the nineteenth century inevitably relies on secondary sources, primary ones being unavailable. Chapter 4 addresses the respective attempts of the U.S. multiracial movement and the Brazilian black movement to reform the racial/color categorization expressed in each country's census forms. Here, Nobles's sources consist of U.S. multiracial organizations' publications and Internet sites, the Brazilian *movimento negro*'s internal campaign documents, and the interviews she conducted with the organizers of the Brazilian movement while doing fieldwork. Chapter 5 scrutinizes the latest developments in American and Brazilian census bureaus' policy-making, particularly focusing on such decisions' larger political implications.

Nobles's project is ambitious. Because the history of racial categorizations in the two countries is very different, the comparison of American and Brazilian census-taking is no easy task. However, Nobles not only recognizes but also clearly explains the relevant differences between the two racial histories and census models. Brief as it is, her initial discussion of Brazilian racial history, in particular, serves as an excellent introduction to the topic (see pages 6–11). She then proceeds to emphasize that the crucial similarity between the two systems that is her focus lies in the role of census bureaus as institutions which both maintain and shape the way in which citizens view racial categories. Indeed, *Shades of Citizenship* does an excellent job in deconstructing the “obvious,” that is, the often-assumed political “neutrality” or “objectivity” of racial categorization on censuses. Nobles is correct in claiming that “census bureaus are typically overlooked as participants in the creation and perpetuation of race,” and she successfully removes this “cloak or neutrality” (2). Finally, her Brazilian example of a grassroots movement that wants to include blackness in the racial categorization of a national census system introduces a critical aspect to the current academic debate on race and racial thought, which presently evaluates the desire to abolish, rather than just relativize, the concept of race. Nobles does not fall into the trap of drawing rushed or simplistic “universal” conclusions from the existence of the Brazilian movement, but her introduction of this phenomenon to the current debate is an interesting reminder of the vastly complex interrelations between contemporary racial discourse and acute issues of social justice.

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