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opinion has been moving much more rapidly toward multiracialism than toward a last stand for apartheid." In short, when the reality of power shifts, racism declines rapidly because it no longer serves self-interest. This suggests that it is not deeply rooted in our psyche, at least not for most of us. The history of decolonization in Africa, for instance, has shown repeatedly how quickly societies can become deracialized after a transfer of power to a black government, but how equally quickly and easily hitherto dormant ethnic conflicts can emerge. All this suggests that discrimination bears little relationship to psychological needs, but is quickly responsive to changed power and economic relations. Discrimination, in short, serves individual interests, both genetic and economic, not psychic needs, save perhaps for a few pathologically disturbed individuals.

As the above comments make clear, I disagree with many of Yinger's premises. Nonetheless, I read him with pleasure and profit. He often makes astute comments about the societies he knows best: the U.S., the ex-USSR, Israel, South Africa, the ex-Yugoslavia, Great Britain, and Western Europe. His chapters 3 and 4 on the four elements of assimilation — integration, acculturation, identification, and amalgamation — constitute a real analytic advance, although, there, too, he underplays the biological element — amalgamation. For example, Yinger makes little of the rapid rise of white-black marriages. Yet there is a vocal new movement of people who reject the categories "black" and "white," and who agitate for the creation of a new "mixed race" category in the U.S. census. Surely, if millions of people reject racial categories (as almost ten million, mostly "Hispanics," did in the 1990 census), this will change the "reality" of race in America. A rapidly growing rate of amalgamation is likely to bring about such an outcome.

Perhaps Yinger's overall optimism is sustained by his relative lack of African experience. On page 2, he pictures African states as caught between the "jaws of a crocodile" and "claws of a tiger." Sorry, Milton, there are no tigers in Africa!

The Illusion of Difference: Realities of Ethnicity in Canada and the United States.
By Jeffrey G. Reitz and Raymond Breton. C.D. Howe Institute, Observation 37, 1994. 154 pp. Paper, \$12.95.

Reviewer: J. MILTON YINGER, Oberlin College

Are two democratic industrial societies with large and diverse immigrant populations likely to have similar patterns of ethnic relations? Or do different histories and cultural influences have the major impact, creating important differences?

Professors Reitz and Breton are primarily concerned with minority groups of immigrants and their descendants. Drawing on General Social Surveys, surveys by Decima Research Ltd., Gallup polls, census reports, and other data sources, they examine attitudes, government policies, levels of discrimination, levels of cultural retention, the extent of economic incorporation of minorities, and the trends on these and other topics.

The authors start out by asking: "Is multiculturalism in Canada a reality, or is it largely a myth? The idea that Canada is a "cultural mosaic" and, as such, fundamentally different from the American "melting pot," is one of the beliefs about Canada most widely held among Canadians." This belief, when carefully examined, has a large mythic element — as does the belief in an American melting pot — but

it is sustained, the authors observe, as a way of reaffirming Canadian independence from its southern neighbor, ten times as populous.

In fact, judging by opinion polls, the U.S. population is somewhat more favorable to cultural retention than the Canadian population. The two societies have rather similar rates of decline in the more obvious expressions of prejudice, similar slow reductions in discrimination, and — more recently — similar increases in opposition to the high levels of immigration. (The Canadian rate, on a per capita basis, is one-and-a half times that of the U.S.)

Reitz and Breton develop a number of subtle interaction effects among cultural, demographic, political, and attitudinal factors, although the discussions are rather informal, reflecting, I believe, their belief that the answer to both of the questions with which I started this review is “yes.”

Although there are some references to African Americans and French Canadians — two minority groups with sharply differing relationships to their countries — the ways in which these vastly important ethnic groups affect the whole system of ethnic relations in their respective lands is not explored, with one exception: French Canadians are less supportive of cultural diversity (within Quebec) than are other Canadians. This reflects the urgent desire, in the authors' view, to protect the language and culture of the three-quarters of the Quebecois who are French Canadian. The experience and responses of the 30 million Americans of African ancestry are also of great importance for the whole structure of ethnic relations in the U.S. Levels of prejudice and discrimination are examined in *Illusions of Difference*, but it would equally be of value to discuss their effects on American politics, on the treatment and responses of other minorities, and on the ideology of the melting pot.

The Case for Transracial Adoption.

By Rita J. Simon, Howard Alstein, and Marygold S. Melli. The American University Press, 1994. 150 pp. Cloth, \$41.00; paper, \$14.50.

Reviewer: PETER UHLENBERG, *University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill*

As the title of this short book suggests, there are competing views on whether or not transracial adoption should be encouraged. Since 1971 the National Association of Black Social Workers (NABSW) has consistently opposed the placement of black children in white families, and it has lobbied Congress to forbid by statute the adoption of black children by white parents. Arguments used to support this position are two-fold: black children growing up in white families suffer identity problems; black children growing up in white families do not develop the coping skills needed to survive in a racist society. On the other side are the Child Welfare League of America and the NAACP, arguing that transracial adoption should be accepted when same racial or ethnic adoptive families cannot be found. The argument supporting this position is that it is in the best interest of black children to be placed in good white families when the only alternative is placement in foster families. Rita Simon and her colleagues approach this hotly debated issue by arguing that the right answer can be found by conducting empirical studies of the outcome of children involved in transracial adoption.

Rita Simon has been coauthor of four other books on this subject, and more than half of this book is a repetition of material from the earlier books. The new material