

AMERICAN CREED: READING LIST

1. DEFINING THE AMERICAN CREED

The *American Creed* PBS program and public engagement initiative gets its title from a phrase in Nobel Prize-winning economist Gunnar Myrdal's *An American Dilemma: The Negro Problem and Modern Democracy* (1944), a landmark study of American attitudes and beliefs during the Great Depression. Myrdal wrote:

"Americans of all national origins, classes, regions, creeds, and colors, have something in common: a social ethos, a political creed. It is difficult to avoid the judgment that this 'American Creed' is the cement in the structure of this great and disparate nation."

Myrdal defined that creed as an abiding sense that every individual, regardless of circumstances, deserves fairness and the opportunity to realize unlimited potential.

Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King was among Myrdal's most attentive readers. In his most famous speech, Dr. King said:

"...even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream. I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed..."

Like Myrdal, Dr. King placed the American creed at the center of an American dilemma.

"When the architects of our republic wrote the magnificent words of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, they were signing a promissory note to which every American was to fall heir."

The American Creed documentary, and the accompanying public engagement campaign and education plan, are based on the premise that in every generation, a recommitment to that 'promissory note' is urgently needed.

Suggested Reading and Viewing:

- *American Creed* 2-minute trailer: <https://vimeo.com/191090561> (password: equalopportunity)
- "The Lasting Legacy of An American Dilemma," by The Carnegie Corporation (2004)
https://www.carnegie.org/media/filer_public/98/65/9865c794-39d9-4659-862e-aae1583278a8/ccny_cresults_2004_americanilemma.pdf
- "I Have A Dream," speech by Martin Luther King, Jr. (1963)
<http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/mlkihaveadream.htm>
- *Freedom From Fear*, by David M. Kennedy, Chapter 8, "The Cauldron of the Home Front"
- *Democracy: Stories from the Long Road to Freedom*, by Condoleezza Rice
 - Read an excerpt from this book here:
<https://medium.com/freeman-spagli-institute-for-international-studies/americas-second-democratic-opening-d790c6356151>

Additional Reading and Viewing:

- *An American Dilemma: The Negro Problem and Modern Democracy*, by Gunnar Myrdal (1944)
- “American Denial” (documentary), a cinematic response to *An American Dilemma*:
<http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/films/american-denial/>
- “An American Dilemma: A Review,” by Ralph Ellison (1944)
<http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/document/an-american-dilemma-a-review/>

2. AMERICAN STUDIES TEXTS

Suggested Reading:

- **E Pluribus Unum: A Digest/Anthology of Key American Studies Texts**
<http://www1.assumption.edu/ahe/Intros/whoistheamerican.html#>
 - On this page, you will find excerpts from an assortment of writers, from James Baldwin to Walt Whitman, who have tried to identify characteristics that define Americans. To read the complete work from which an excerpt was taken, click on each link.

Additional Texts:

- Cullen, Jim. *The American Dream: A Short History of an Idea That Shaped a Nation* (2003)
- de Crèvecoeur, Hector St John. *Letters from an American Farmer*
- Douglass, Frederick. *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave* (1845).
- Ehrenreich, Barbara. *Bait and Switch: The (Futile) Pursuit of the American Dream* (2006)
- Foner, Eric. *Reconstruction* (1988)
 - David Kennedy writes: “Foner argues that Reconstruction was a truly radical and noble attempt to establish an interracial democracy. Drawing upon the work of Du Bois, Foner has emphasized the comparative approach to American Reconstruction [...] Many of the benefits of Reconstruction were erased by whites in the South during the Gilded Age, but in the twentieth century, the constitutional principles and organizations developed during Reconstruction provided the focus and foundation for the post–World War II civil rights movement—which some have called the second Reconstruction.”
- Goodwyn, Lawrence. *Democratic Promise: The Populist Movement in America* (1976).
 - “Goodwyn depicted the Populists as reasonable radicals who were justifiably resentful of their eclipse by urban industrialism and finance capitalism. He also portrayed Populism as the last gasp of popular political participation, a democratic “moment” in American history that expired with the Populists’ absorption into the Democratic party.” (David Kennedy)
- Hahn, Steve. *A Nation Under Our Feet: Black Political Struggles in the Rural South from Slavery to the Great Migration* (2003)
 - David Kennedy writes: “The latest contribution to the literature on Reconstruction. Hahn emphasizes the assertiveness and ingenuity of African Americans in creating new political opportunities for themselves after emancipation.”
- Harrington, Michael. *The Other America* (1962)
 - “revealed that even in affluent America 20 percent of the population—and over 40 percent of the black population—suffered in poverty.” (David Kennedy)
- Hicks, John D. *The Populist Revolt* (1931)

- David Kennedy describes it as “the classic portrayal of the Populists as embattled farmers hurling defiance at Wall Street and the robber barons in a last-ditch defense of their simple, honest way of life.”
- Hofstadter, Richard. *The Age of Reform* (1955)
 - “Hofstadter charged that the progressive historians had romanticized the Populists, who were best understood not as picturesque protesters but as “harassed little country businessmen” bristling with provincial prejudices. The city-born-and-bred Hofstadter argued that the Populist revolt was aimed not just at big business and the money power but also somewhat irrationally at urbanism, immigrants, the East, and modernity itself. Hofstadter thus exposed a “dark side” of Populism, which contained elements of backwoods anti-intellectualism, paranoia, and even anti-Semitism.”
- Locke, John. *First Treatise of Civil Government*, §§1, 3, 23, 33, 40-48, 56, 58, 66, 86-87, 89-94; *Second Treatise of Civil Government; A Letter Concerning Toleration*.
- Murray, Charles. *Coming Apart: The State of White America, 1960–2010* (2012)
- Putnam, Robert. *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. (2001) chs. 1 -3, 10-15, 21
 - "Many Americans continue to claim that we are 'members' of various organizations,' but most Americans no longer spend much time in community organizations -- we've stopped doing committee work, stopped serving as officers and stopped going to meetings. And all this despite rapid increases in education that have given more of us than ever before the skills, the resources and the interests that once fostered civic engagement." (Robert Putnam)
- Smith, Adam. *The Wealth of Nations*, Bk I chs. 1-3; Bk III chs. 1,4; Bk IV, chs.1-3, 5 (including the "Digression"), 7 (Part 3); Bk V chs. 1, 2 (Part I); *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*
- Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, Intro.; Vol. 1: Part I, chs 3-5; Part II, chs 1-4, 6-10; Vol. II: Part I, chs 1-4, 8, 10, 13, 17, 20; Part II, chs 1-8, 11-15, 18, 20; Part III, chs 8, 9, 11. -13, 17, 19, 21, 22; Part IV, chs 1-8
- Washington, Booker T. *Up from Slavery* (1901)

If you are inspired to do even further additional reading on these subjects, we recommend the following:

- Allen, Danielle, *Our Declaration: A Reading of the Declaration of Independence in Defense of Equality* (2014)
 - Already regarded as a seminal work that reinterprets the promise of American democracy through our founding text. Combining a personal account of teaching the Declaration with a vivid evocation of the colonial world between 1774 and 1777, Allen, a political philosopher renowned for her work on justice and citizenship reveals our nation's founding text to be an animating force that not only changed the world more than two-hundred years ago, but also still can. Challenging conventional wisdom, she boldly makes the case that the Declaration is a document as much about political equality as about individual liberty. Beautifully illustrated throughout, *Our Declaration* is an “uncommonly elegant, incisive, and often poetic primer on America's cardinal text” (David M. Kennedy).
- Brafman, Ori/Beckstrom, Rod. A., *The Starfish and the Spider*
 - Admired by Mark Meckler, it explores the “unstoppable power” of decentralized and leaderless organizations.

- Gorski, Philip. *American Covenant: A History of Civil Religion from the Puritans to the Present* (2017)
 - Was the United States founded as a Christian nation or a secular democracy? Neither, argues Philip Gorski in *American Covenant*. What the founders actually envisioned was a prophetic republic that would weave together the ethical vision of the Hebrew prophets and the Western political heritage of civic republicanism. In this ambitious book, Gorski shows why this civil religious tradition is now in peril—and with it the American experiment.
- Hartz, Louis. *The Liberal Tradition in America* (1955)
 - Hartz's influential interpretation of American political thought since the Revolution. He contends that Americana gave rise to a new concept of a liberal society, a "liberal tradition" that has been central to our experience of events both at home and abroad.
- Huntington, Samuel. *American Politics: Promise of Disharmony* (1981)
 - "This is an important contribution to American political thought. The disharmony results from what Huntington calls the "IvI" gap—the gap between American ideals of moral perfection and the inevitable imperfections of institutions. American ideals, he says, are ultimately at war with all government. Like Reinhold Niebuhr, who said much the same thing in *Moral Man and Immoral Society* (1932), Huntington believes that a nation which refuses to understand this gap will destroy itself." (Gaddis Smith, *Foreign Affairs*)
- Postel, Charles. *The Populist Vision* (2007)
 - "Made the strongest argument yet for the movement's forward-looking, modernizing elements." (David Kennedy)
- Rauchway, Eric. *Blessed Among Nations* (2006)
 - "Argued that Populism was a reaction to America's increased reliance on foreign investment. Although Hofstadter had made a similar point about resentment of foreign economic control, the impact of the international economy on domestic politics is reemerging as a direction for new research." (David Kennedy)
- Reed Amar, Akhil. *The Constitution Today: Timeless Lessons for the Issues of Our Era*
 - Time.com, Top 10 nonfiction books of 2016 "*Kirkus Reviews*, Starred Review "Bringing an unusually informed and cool head to the tumult accompanying unfolding events, Amar performs a valuable service for his fellow citizens."
- Wood, Gordon. *The Creation of the American Republic, 1776-1787* (1969)
 - Between 1776 and 1787, American political thinking underwent a fundamental transformation. Shows how the founders of the Republic rethought the political attitudes that had led them into the Revolution and came to grips with the basic issues of government to create a distinctly American system.

3. THE AMERICAN DREAM

Suggested Reading:

- *Why do we believe so fervently in the American Dream?*
<https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/psychology-yesterday/201610/the-psychology-the-american-dream>
 - In *American Creed*, historian David Kennedy points out that every society needs "myths that people believe in common." This article explores how the American Dream functions as a complex product of our collective imagination.

- *Is the American dream really dead?*
<https://www.theguardian.com/inequality/2017/jun/20/is-the-american-dream-really-dead>
 - This article argues that low income people in the US are losing the belief that hard work will get them ahead. Americans of European descent are particularly pessimistic. What's driving their despair?
- *Defending the Dream: Why Income Inequality Doesn't Threaten Opportunity*
<http://www.heritage.org/poverty-and-inequality/report/defending-the-dream-why-income-inequality-doesnt-threaten-opportunity>
 - To protect the American Dream, critics on the left call for greater government involvement to make things more equal. But is the American dream about equality, or opportunity?
- *We Must Continue to Fight for the American Dream*
http://www.huffingtonpost.com/steve-iannelli/we-must-continue-to-fight_b_12879312.html

3. WORKS BY OR ABOUT DAVID M. KENNEDY, CONDOLEEZZA RICE & AMERICAN CREED CAST MEMBERS

Suggested Reading and Viewing:

- Short video: *What forces have shaped America most?* Historian David Kennedy discusses the peculiar relationship between political and civil societies in the U.S., a topic relevant to American Creed's overall focus on civic space:
<http://bigthink.com/videos/re-what-forces-have-shaped-america-most>
- *The American Pageant: A History of the Republic*, by David M. Kennedy, Thomas A. Bailey and Lizabeth Cohen (1979; 14th ed. 2010).
 - Salient passages from *The American Pageant*, one of the bestselling American History textbooks today, as it has been for many years, include:

“The Chinese Exclusion Act in 1882, prohibiting nearly all further immigration from China. The door stayed shut until 1943. Some exclusionists even tried to strip native-born Chinese Americans of their citizenship, but the Supreme Court ruled in *U.S. v. Wong Kim Ark* in 1898 that the Fourteenth Amendment guaranteed citizenship to all persons born in the United States. This doctrine of “birthright citizenship” (or *jus soli*, the “right of the soil,” as contrasted with *jus sanguinis*, the “right of blood-tie,” which based citizenship on the parents’ nationality) provided important protections to Chinese Americans as well as to other immigrant communities.” (Page 498. Cengage Learning. Kindle Edition.)

“Antiforeignism, or “nativism,” earlier touched off by the Irish and German arrivals in the 1840s and 1850s, bared its ugly face in the 1880s with fresh ferocity. The New Immigrants had come for much the same reasons as the Old—to escape the poverty and squalor of Europe and to seek new opportunities in America. But “nativists” worried that America was becoming not a melting pot but a dumping ground. They viewed the eastern and southern Europeans as culturally and religiously exotic hordes and often gave them a rude reception. The newest newcomers aroused widespread alarm. Their high birthrate, common among people with a low standard of living and sufficient youth and vigor to

pull up stakes, raised worries that the original Anglo-Saxon stock would soon be outbred and outvoted. Still more horrifying was the prospect that it would be mongrelized by a mixture of “inferior” southern European blood and that the fairer AngloSaxon types would disappear.”

“Nearly 76 million Americans greeted the new century in 1900. Almost one in seven of them was foreign-born. In the fourteen years of peace that remained before the Great War of 1914 engulfed the globe, 13 million more migrants would carry their bundles down the gangplanks to the land of promise. Hardly had the twentieth century dawned on the ethnically and racially mixed American people than they were convulsed by a reform movement, the likes of which the nation had not seen since the 1840s. The new crusaders, who called themselves “progressives,” waged war on many evils, notably monopoly, corruption, inefficiency, and social injustice. The progressive army was large, diverse, and widely deployed, but it had a single battle cry: “Strengthen the State.” The “real heart of the movement,” explained one of the progressive reformers, was “to use government as an agency of human welfare.” (Page 638. Cengage Learning. Kindle Edition.)

“One Chinese observer of America, No-Yong Park (1899–1976), born in Manchuria and educated in the United States, remained optimistic about America even in the depths of the Great Depression. He wrote in *An Oriental View of American Civilization* (1934), “Of all the peoples of the world, Americans, to my mind, are the most progressive. They are the ones who live in the future tense. Their mind and soul are always bent for the future. They never move backward and always march forward.” (Page 745. Cengage Learning. Kindle Edition.)

“Controversial issues of color and culture pervaded the realm of ideas in the late twentieth century. Echoing early-twentieth-century “cultural pluralists” like Horace Kallen and Randolph Bourne, many intellectuals after 1970 embraced the creed of “multiculturalism.” The new mantra celebrated diversity for its own sake and stressed the need to preserve and promote, rather than squash, a variety of distinct ethnic and racial cultures in the United States. The nation’s classrooms became battlegrounds for the debate over America’s commitment to pluralism. Multiculturalists attacked the traditional curriculum as “Eurocentric” and advocated greater focus on the achievements of African Americans, Latinos, Asian Americans, and Native Americans. In response, critics charged that too much stress on ethnic difference would come at the expense of national cohesion and an appreciation of common American values. The Census Bureau further enlivened the debate when in 2000 it allowed respondents to identify themselves with more than one of the six standard racial categories (black, white, Latino, American Indian, Asian, and Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander). Signifying a mounting revolution in attitudes toward race, nearly 7 million Americans chose to describe themselves as biracial or multiracial. As recently as the 1960s, interracial marriage was still illegal in sixteen states. But by the early twenty-first century, many Americans, including such celebrities as golfer Tiger Woods and actress Rosario Dawson, were proclaiming their mixed heritage as a point of pride. One notable American, an ambitious son of a Kenyan father and white Kansan mother named Barack Obama, wrote thoughtfully about navigating the complex waters of racial identity in his 1995 memoir,

Dreams from My Father, a decade prior to launching himself on the national political stage.” (Page 975. Cengage Learning. Kindle Edition.)

“Small farmers, squeezed by debt and foreign competition, rallied behind the People’s, or “Populist,” party, a radical movement of the 1880s and 1890s that attacked the power of Wall Street, big business, and the banks. Anti-immigrant sentiment swelled. Bitter disputes over tariffs and monetary policy deeply divided the country, setting debtors against lenders, farmers against manufacturers, the West and South against the Northeast. And in this unfamiliar era of big money and expanding government, corruption flourished, from town hall to Congress, fueling loud cries for political reform.” (Page 487, Cengage Learning, Kindle Edition.)

“What caused the widening income gap? Some critics pointed to the tax and fiscal policies of the Reagan and both Bush (father and son) presidencies, which favored the wealthy (see Table 41.3). But deeper running historical currents probably played a more powerful role, as suggested by the similar trend lines in other industrialized societies. Among the most conspicuous causes were intensifying global economic competition; the shrinkage in high-paying manufacturing jobs for semiskilled and unskilled workers; the greater economic rewards commanded by educated workers in high-tech industries; the rise of the financial sector as a percentage of national GDP; the decline of unions; the growth of part-time and temporary work; the rising tide of relatively low-skill immigrants; and the increasing tendency of educated men and women to marry one another and both work, creating households with very high incomes. Educational opportunities also had a way of perpetuating inequality, starting with the underfunding of many schools in poor urban areas and the soaring cost of higher education. A 2004 study revealed that at the 146 most selective colleges, two-thirds of the students came from families with incomes in the top 25 percent, compared to just 6 percent of the students from the bottom income quartile.” (Page 999. Cengage Learning. Kindle Edition.)

- *Democracy: Stories from the Long Road to Freedom*, Condoleezza Rice (2017), pp. 25-67, 431-443.

- Salient passages from this recent New York Times bestseller, include:

“The American government was designed to require constant engagement, not just by officials but by citizens at multiple levels—local, state, and national. Americans were thus given peaceful means to contest political questions. That battleground was and has always been to lay claims before an American Constitution that has by any standard enjoyed a remarkable run. The Founders presciently built in mechanisms for revision, litigation, and evolution. In a sense, the struggle to make America’s democracy a bit better and inclusive—little by little—is the story at the core of its stability and success.” (Page 47. Twelve Books. Print Edition.)

“We the people” is not an exclusive concept. It is not a religious, a national, or an ethnic designation. It is, in reality, based on an idea: equality under the law and equality of opportunity. Americans and their ancestors have come from every corner of the globe and enriched their new country with their energy and determination. And Americans do not see themselves as prisoners of the class into which they were born. They are united by a

creed—a belief. I have often summed it up in this way: It does not matter where you came from; it matters where you are going.

Americans have remarkable institutions to help them achieve that dream. The history of the United States is in some sense a story of a long democratic transition to make “We the people” as inclusive as possible. Citizens have petitioned the government and appealed to the Constitution to be included—female, black, gay . . . It is a remarkable story of democratic stability born of an openness to change.” (Page 435. Twelve Books. Print Edition.)

Additional Reading and Viewing:

Condoleezza Rice:

- *Extraordinary, Ordinary People: A Memoir of Family*, Condoleezza Rice (2010), pp. 49-69, 88-109.

David M. Kennedy:

- *Freedom from Fear: The American People in Depression and War, 1929-1945* by David M. Kennedy (winner of the 2000 Pulitzer Prize)
- *The Modern American Military*, ed. David M. Kennedy (2013)

Eric Liu

- *You're More Powerful Than You Think: A Citizen's Guide to Making Change Happen*, Eric Liu (2017)
- *A Chinaman's Chance: One Family's Journey and the Chinese American Dream*, Eric Liu (2014)
- “How Donald Trump Is Reviving American Democracy” by Eric Liu, March 8, 2017
<https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2017/03/how-donald-trump-is-reviving-our-democracy/518928/>

Junot Diaz

- *Drown*, Junot Diaz (1996)
- *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*, Junot Diaz (2007)

Leila Janah

- “The Microwork Revolution,” Leila Janah at TEDxBruussels (2011)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=319sQ9s-lyQ>

Mark Meckler & Joan Blades

- *Tea Party Patriots: The Second American Revolution*, Mark Meckler (2012)
- *MoveOn, Tea Party members gather, find common ground*, SF Chronicle, January 17, 2013
<http://www.sfgate.com/politics/joegarofoli/article/MoveOn-founder-Tea-Party-figure-me-et-4204384.php>

5. NOVELS & MEMOIRS FROM HIGH SCHOOL READING LISTS

You, and some of your students, will have already encountered books on school reading lists that relate thematically to some of the themes and characters in *American Creed*. We encourage you to revisit these works as they relate to the themes in *American Creed*. We encourage you to come to the meeting with a list of your favorite works to add to this section.

- Adichie, Chimamanda Ngozi. *Americanah*.
- Alexie, Sherman. *Reservation Blues*
- Anaya, Rudolfo. *Bless Me, Ultima*
- Anderson, Sherwood. *Winesburg, Ohio*.
- Cather, Willa. *O Pioneers!*
- Castillo, Ana. *So Far From God*
- Cisneros, Sandra. *The House on Mango Street*
- Dreiser, Theodore. *Sister Carrie*.
- Ellison, Ralph. *Invisible Man*.
- Fitzgerald, F. Scott. *The Great Gatsby*.
- Haley, Alex. *Roots: The Saga of an American Family*.
- Hernandez, Tim Z. *Mañana Means Heaven*
- Hurston, Zora Neale. *Their Eyes Were Watching God*.
- Melville, Herman. *Moby Dick*.
- Morrison, Toni. *Beloved*.
- Silko, Leslie Marmon. *Ceremony*.
- Steinbeck, John. *The Grapes of Wrath*
- Tan, Amy. *The Joy Luck Club*.
- Tingle, Tim. *House of Purple Cedar*
- Tingle, Tim. *How I Became a Ghost*
- Twain, Mark. *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.
- Viramontes, Helena Maria. *Under the Feet of Jesus*
- Wilder, Thornton. *Our Town*.
- Wright, Richard. *Black Boy*.
- Wright, Richard. *Native Son*.

6. RECENT BESTSELLERS THAT RELATE TO THE THEMES OF *AMERICAN CREED*

- Alexie, Sherman. *You Don't Have To Say You Love Me* (2017)
- Boles, John B. *Jefferson: Architect of American Liberty* (2017)
- Capó Crucet, Jennine. *Make Your Home Among Strangers* (2015)
- Coates, Ta-Nehisi. *Between The World And Me* (2015)
- Hochschild, Arlie Russell. *Strangers in Their Own Land: Anger and Mourning on the American Right* (2016)
- Packer, George. *The Unwinding: An Inner History of the New America* (2014)
- Powell Watts, Stephanie. *No One is Coming to Save Us* (2017)
- Putnam, Robert. *Our Kids: The American Dream in Crisis* (2016)
- Vance, J.D. *Hillbilly Elegy: A Memoir of a Family and Culture in Crisis* (2016)
- Woodward, Colin. *American Character: A History of the Epic Struggle Between Individual Liberty and the Common Good* (2016)

7. BOOKS AND ARTICLES ABOUT BRIDGING DIVIDES IN CONTEMPORARY AMERICA

Suggested Reading:

- Allen, Danielle. *Talking to Strangers: Anxieties of Citizenship since Brown v. Board of Education* (2004)
 - Don't talk to strangers" is the advice long given to children by parents of all classes and races. Today it has blossomed into a fundamental precept of civic education, reflecting interracial distrust, personal and political alienation, and a profound suspicion of others. In this powerful and eloquent essay, Danielle Allen, a 2002 MacArthur Fellow, takes this maxim back to Little Rock, rooting out the seeds of distrust to replace them with "a citizenship of political friendship."
- "Empathy, respect for one another critical to ease political polarization, Stanford sociologist says"
<http://news.stanford.edu/2017/01/20/empathy-respect-critical-ease-political-polarization-sociologist-says/>
 - An article about overcoming the ideological divide through empathy by Sociology Professor Robb Willer. This will help get curriculum designers thinking about the overall purpose of the American Creed film's outreach. The tagline of the article is: "The key to bridging the broad ideological division in the United States is for both sides to work on understanding the core values that the other holds dear." Willer writes: "I believe a whole new set of arguments will be needed to create effective political coalitions on issues like climate change, immigration and inequality. To come up with those arguments, liberals and conservatives must take the time to really listen to one another, to understand one another's values and to think creatively about why someone with very different political and moral commitments from their own should nonetheless come to agree with them. Empathy and respect will be critical if we are going to sew our country back together."
- Cramer, Katherine. J. *The Politics of Resentment: Rural Consciousness in Wisconsin and the Rise of Scott Walker* (Chicago Studies in American Politics) (2016)
 - "Through her repeated interviews with the people of rural Wisconsin, she shows how politics have increasingly become a matter of personal identity. Just about all of her subjects felt a deep sense of bitterness toward elites and city dwellers; just about all of them felt tread on, disrespected and cheated out of what they felt they deserved. Cramer argues that this "rural consciousness" is key to understanding which political arguments ring true to her subjects. For instance, she says, most rural Wisconsinites supported the tea party's quest to shrink government not out of any belief in the virtues of small government but because they did not trust the government to help "people like them." "Support for less government among lower-income people is often derided as the opinions of people who have been duped," she writes. However, she continues: "Listening in on these conversations, it is hard to conclude that the people I studied believe what they do because they have been hoodwinked. Their views are rooted in identities and values, as well as in economic perceptions; and these things are all intertwined." (Jeff Guo, *A new theory for why Trump voters are so angry — that actually makes sense*, Washington Post)

- How to Escape Your Political Bubble for a Clearer View
https://www.nytimes.com/2017/03/03/arts/the-battle-over-your-political-bubble.html?mcubz=2&_r=0
- Molina, Natalia. *How Race Is Made in America: Immigration, Citizenship, and the Historical Power of Racial Scripts* (2014)
 - *How Race Is Made in America* examines Mexican Americans from 1924, when American law drastically reduced immigration into the United States, to 1965, when many quotas were abolished to understand how broad themes of race and citizenship are constructed. These years shaped the emergence of what Natalia Molina describes as an *immigration regime*, which defined the racial categories that continue to influence perceptions in the United States about Mexican Americans, race, and ethnicity.
- Smith, Rogers M. *Civic Ideals Conflicting Visions of Citizenship in U.S. History* (1997)
 - Is civic identity in the United States really defined by liberal, democratic political principles? Or is U.S. citizenship the product of multiple traditions -- not only liberalism and republicanism but also white supremacy, Anglo-Saxon supremacy, Protestant supremacy, and male Supremacy? In this powerful and disturbing book, Rogers Smith traces political struggles over U.S. citizenship laws from the colonial period through the Progressive era and shows that throughout this time, most adults were legally denied access to full citizenship, including political rights, solely because of their race, ethnicity, or gender.