

of not acknowledging the importance of economic power in determining what groups form and are available to link or be linked to political parties. The essays in this book don't pay enough attention to who gets linked and who gets ignored and how the skills of linking are not equally distributed. That said, variation in the forms of linkage across regime types is the study of what might be possible and what needs to be exposed as undemocratic and corrupt. Lawson writes that "linkage is a clever tool for seeing the presence or absence of democracy. It is a lens that forces into open view the connections on which power depends, and the connections that power builds to extend its domain" (164). That could be a worthy purpose for all political science.

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### **Discourses of Denial: Mediations of Race, Gender, and Violence**

Yasmin Jiwani

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At first glance many political scientists may not see *Discourse of Denial* as an intervention that speaks to their discipline. After all, Jiwani's examination of racism, sexism and violence in Canada is explicitly directed to those who traverse multiple and interdisciplinary boundaries, racialized young women and immigrant women, front-line feminist anti-violence, anti-racist and anti-poverty activists, as well as policy makers. However, political scientists can gain much from this persuasively argued, methodologically diverse, innovative and well-researched book. Jiwani addresses how certain institutions—in particular, the dominant media—serve to "mediate" violence. Mediations involve discursive strategies that give recognition to certain expressions of violence and completely erase others, especially racism. Since political scientists frequently rely on the media in their research and teaching, and serve as media commentators as part of their community service, there is much here that is thought-provoking.

Comprising four sections (with seven chapters and a conclusion) the book demonstrates how racism has deep and enduring roots in Canada. The first section, "Laying the Terrain," theorizes how common sense understandings of violence obscure structural inequalities and violence based on gender, class and race (chap. 1), and how the dominant media not only shapes public opinion but also legitimizes continued inequalities (chap. 2).

In the second section, "Sensationalized Cases," three high-profile British Columbia news stories are recounted, analyzed and contrasted: Virk, Gakhal and Velisek. Chapter 3 covers the print media portrayal of the 1997 murder of fourteen-year-old Reena Virk, a girl of South Asian origin, by a group of seven teen-age girls and one boy. The print media's fixation on "girl-on-girl violence" effectively served to mask the profound ways, convincingly detailed by Jiwani, that this brutal murder was motivated by racism (and racialized sexism). Strikingly, Jiwani shows as well how racism was also erased in the judicial system's handling of the murder trials that followed Virk's death.

While race was not part of the media frame in the Virk case, it was front and centre in the 1996 murder-suicide involving Mark Chahal and his estranged wife Rajwar Gakhal, considered in chapter 4. Before killing himself, Chahal murdered Gakhal and eight members of her family. Much focus in the print media laid the "cause" in the purported immigrant origins of the victims, their culture (especially arranged marriages) and their Sikh faith. In contrast, less than two weeks after this murder-suicide in the city of Vernon, the attempted murder of Sharon Velisek by her ex-boyfriend Larry Scott in the same city drew no commentary about culture, ethnic-

ity or religion. Instead, the print media interviewed Scott's friends and drew a portrait of individual pathology. As argued by Jiwani, absent from both these frames was a systematic analysis of gender-based violence and the lack of adequate response by the RCMP.

The third section, "Voicing the Violence," shifts ground to address how racialized girls navigate the school system and everyday interactions (chap. 5) as well as how immigrant women of colour who have experienced domestic violence navigate the health care system (chap. 6). Based upon extensive interviews and focus groups in British Columbia, both these chapters offer rich detail of the lived experience of sexism and racism. By beginning to name these forms of violence, Jiwani offers ways that the media, education and health care systems may begin to dismantle, rather than perpetuate, inequalities.

The fourth section, "Mediations of Terror," brings together a chapter dealing with post-September 11, 2001, media coverage and a detailed conclusion. Chapter 7 draws from international and domestic coverage in *The Gazette* (Montreal) in the weeks just following September 11. Jiwani effectively demonstrates how contemporary forms of Orientalism pervaded the international coverage of the Middle East, working to render Muslim women (particularly those that veil) as primitive and oppressed, and Muslim men as brutal (towards women), envious of the West, irrational, untrustworthy and simultaneously childlike and effeminate. The "voices of authority" in much of this coverage came from non-Muslim men living in the West. Likewise, stories involving issues relating to the backlash against Muslim minorities in the West and Canada also subordinated the voices of Muslims, especially Muslim women. Backlash stories also frequently fed into accounts justifying profiling or immigration restrictions. Jiwani argues that combined the post-September 11 coverage worked to legitimize war internationally and to make racism invisible domestically. In her conclusion, Jiwani outlines how her findings show the power of discourses of denial, but also points of resistance.

Jiwani's excellent book will be of interest and accessible to a potentially diverse audience in and outside the academy. Within political science specifically, the book's relevance is amplified for those who do research and teaching in the area of the media and wish to go beyond the traditional study of elections, as well as those in the areas of gender and race/ethnicity and those addressing the fallout from September 11, 2001.

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### **La comparaison dans les sciences sociales : pratiques et méthodes**

Vigour, Cécile

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Cet ouvrage, rédigé par une sociologue française rattachée à l'Institut des sciences sociales du politique (une unité du CNRS), se présente comme un « guide repère » sur la comparaison en sciences sociales.

Cécile Vigour part du constat paradoxal que, quoiqu'un très grand nombre de travaux se disent comparatifs, un nombre relativement modeste de recherches procèdent à de véritables comparaisons systématiques. Pourquoi ? Peut-être parce qu'il y a « singulièrement [...] peu de réflexion sur l'usage et l'élaboration de la comparaison » (p. 5). L'auteure vise à combler cette lacune et l'on doit saluer la publication de son ouvrage, même s'il ne contient pas de percée méthodologique.

L'objectif est donc d'établir « une synthèse des acquis de la littérature sur la comparaison, en termes de méthodes, de concepts heuristiques [...] et de mises en