

## The Myth of the Model Minority: Asian Americans Facing Racism

**Joe R. Feagin**

**Rosalind S. Chou**

Paradigm (Jun 24, 2008)

\$23.95 (251pp)

978-1-59451-587-3

Rights and Racism: Even as Supreme Court Justice John Marshall Harlan was defending *Plessy vs. Ferguson*, he couldn't stomach extending civil rights for everyone. "There is a race so different from our own," he wrote in the landmark decision, "that we do not permit those belonging to it to become citizens of the United States. Persons belonging to it are, with few exceptions, absolutely excluded from our country. I allude to the Chinese race."

From adjectives of ignorance like "inscrutable" and "submissive" to inflammatory tags like "yellow peril" and "gook," from the bucktoothed farce perpetuated by Jerry Lewis to the high-achiever model found on sitcoms, the Asian immigrant has been subjected to discrimination both subtle and blatant.

Rosalind S. Chou and Joe R. Feagin try to get to the bottom of it in *The Myth of the Model Minority: Asian Americans Facing Racism*. Dozens of interviews with Asian Americans who have encountered racism in their daily lives fill out this detailed critique of a society "framed" by white people to exclude those of color. Any color.

HEATHER SHAW (November 17, 2008)

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