Introduction

Government and Citizenship

When I moved from Massachusetts to California in the early 1980s, at a time in which the American public saw Asian Americans as people largely of Chinese, Japanese, or Korean ancestry, I was struck by the range of peoples from the Asia Pacific who lived here. Geopolitical conflicts and economic globalization made the 1980s an especially turbulent era for global population flows, as rising tides of immigrants from Latin America and Asia flocked to urbanized countries. In the San Francisco Bay Area, *people of color* took on new dimensions of meaning and entangled possibilities. Taiwanese computer programmers and Indian engineers were becoming the norm in the computer companies that had already begun to change aspects of the global economy. But what struck me even more forcibly were the Mayan Indians, still wrapped in their colorful clothes, working in English gardens, and the sarong-clad and turban-wearing Laotians shopping at the neighborhood market. Amid the orchards and fields of California's Central Valley, where Mexican farmworkers predominated, Southeast Asian refugees tended pockets of onions and herbs. Gujeratis from India had begun to control the motel business, Asian-operated restaurants were hiring Hispanic busboys, and electronics factories were becoming dependent on Bengali and Vietnamese workers.

As someone who came from Southeast Asia, I tend to consider the Vietnam War as the actual and symbolic starting point for the reshaping of America as a Pacific nation. The withdrawal of U.S. troops from mainland Southeast Asia was in a sense the beginning of the end of the cold war. Streams of war refugees from the region escaped over land and sea, many perishing along the way. Those who survived were ultimately sent, by way of border camps, to Australia, Western Europe, and the United States. Wars in Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, Ethiopia, and Central America sent more waves of refugees to the same destinations. The flow of Asian newcomers to the American West Coast and the Southwest was exceeded only by the influx of Central American refugees and migrant workers.[1] Coincidentally, the electronics revolution in California intensified demands for Asian capital and expertise.

The eighties thus witnessed diverse streams of Asian immigrants—war refugees and business managers, technology workers and investors, mountain people and university graduates. Asian Americans now represent more than 11 percent of the population in California. The San Francisco Bay Area is home to more than a million Asian Americans.[2] Newspapers have pointed to the increasing number of wealthy and skilled immigrants from Taiwan, China, India, and South Korea who constitute an upwardly mobile or upper-class fraction of Asian Americans. The media also cover those "other Asians"—Cambodians, Laotians, and Mien—not so much identified with their high-tech expertise as with their "high fertility rates."[3] This book focuses on those other Asians.

CITIZENSHIP VIA EXCLUSION, SUCCESSION, AND DIFFERENCE

For some time now, American citizenship has been a subject of intense debate. Scholars have moved inevitably beyond a narrow focus on citizenship as a set of legal rights—either you have it or you don't—to a consideration of group membership that includes a variety of citizens and noncitizens. There are citizens (native and naturalized), and there are holders of green cards and legal refugees who will probably eventually apply for naturalization. Then there is a growing category of holders of temporary visas—skilled workers on H-1B visas, students, and contract migrant laborers. Finally, there are illegal residents, foreigners without papers who nevertheless live and work as part of U.S. society. Great waves of migrations from Latin America and Asia, the mobility of business travelers and students, and the ever-growing number of individuals with dual citizenship add up to a society of astonishing flux and diversity. The substance—the marrow, the soul, and the ethics—of American citizenship is in a prolonged crisis. As the model of adherence to a single cultural nationality wanes, a steady "desacralization" of state membership takes place.[4] Concomitantly, there has been a shift in the focus of discussions about citizenship from concerns with political practice based on shared civic rights and responsibilities to an insistence on the protection of minority rights. Prominent liberal political theorists argue that liberalism needs to protect minorities as a matter of both justice and self-interest.[5]

But the current debate about multiculturalism cannot ignore the persistence of problematic, partial concepts of American citizenship that have been a source of struggle for earlier generations of American immigrants. Alexis de Tocqueville, whose point of view has influenced generations of thinkers, explored the contradiction between the grand visions and practices of democracy, on the one hand, and the threat posed by the "tyranny of the majority" to the rights and freedoms of minorities on the other.[6] Max Weber worried about the effects of Puritanism and rationalized capitalism (which, he argued, found its highest expression in America) on the poor and on social altruism.[7] Concerns about majority rule and discrimination against the poor are basic themes in this tradition, and there is also an array of studies on the effects of racial exclusion, class inequality, and gender discrimination on equal access to social status, jobs, political representation, and human dignity. Reginald Horsman argues that the formation of the concept of an Anglo-Saxon race was historically the central impetus to the nation's emergence, and that national myths about American exceptionalism—progress, prosperity, and freedom—cannot be disentangled from exclusions and marginalizations based on race.[8] In *American Citizenship,* Judith Shklar remarks, "The tension between an acknowledged ideology of equal political rights and a deep and common desire to exclude and reject large groups of human beings from citizenship has marked every stage of history of American democracy."[9] The extensive scholarship on exclusions based on race, class, and gender has defined and configured contemporary thinking about the deep inequalities at the heart of American democracy. Historians have studied how the racial logic that originated in the exclusion of Native Americans was used to marginalize generations of African Americans and came to shape their race and class positions on a grid of citizenship.[10] Similarly, feminists have argued that poor women have long been excluded from social citizenship because of unequal treatment under the law, and even by the inadequate protection afforded by the modern welfare state.[11]

For minorities and immigrants, the meaning of achieving citizenship has long rested on a set of expectations that scholars refer to as ethnic succession. More a structure of beliefs than an empirical reality, ethnic succession is a set of expectations that in a just and moral world, ethnic minorities will attain entry to the mainstream of American society through gains achieved in successive generations. According to this concept, the legacy of having been exploited and the desire that future generations be able to build on their achievements, especially in defending the meaning of free labor, are what encouraged earlier workers to lay claim to communal or ethnic identification. Both African American and first and second generations of immigrants were forced to work in dangerous and poorly paid jobs in growing cities and industrial settings. Their periodic protests and eventual union organization changed the quality and conditions of work in these locales.[12] Having made important contributions across generations, and thus being owed a moral debt by society, minorities and ethnic immigrants believed that they had earned the right to become full citizens.[13] The model of ethnic succession holds that as the moral capital of suffering and contribution is built up from generation to generation, each minority or immigrant group should be absorbed into a higher social rank. As members of that group also improve materially in class terms, they should become equal citizens with mainstream whites.[14] The idealism associated with ethnic succession thus celebrates the promise of American citizenship, while also critiquing the failure of society to meet that egalitarian democratic vision. Achieving citizenship is an unending process of struggle against undemocratic exclusions based on ethnicity and race, with the assumption that the social status of a particular minority group will improve over time with cumulative increases in experiences of adversity and material gains, and will in turn lift up the individuals belonging to that group.

The recent book *Immigrant America* by Alejandro Portes and Ruben G. Rumbaut is a prime example of applying this model, of exclusion gradually yielding to acceptance, to the rate of naturalization and political incorporation of various types of immigrant groups. According to Portes and Rumbaut, the moral project of citizenship is threatened by the very groups who once were immigrants: "The political debate about immigration in the United States has always been marked by vigorous calls for restriction. The most ardent advocates of this policy are often children of immigrants who wear their second-generation patriotism outwardly and aggressively. This position forgets that it was the labor and efforts of immigrants—often the parents and grandparents of today's restrictionists—that made much of the prosperity of the nation possible."[15] The anti-immigrant ideological position seeks to deny ethnic succession to later waves of immigrants, foreign-born people who could otherwise claim to deserve citizenship for the same reason, the suffering of earlier generations. The periodic "nativist movements" against allowing certain categories of foreign-born individuals to qualify for ethnic-succession opportunities have motivated the formation of panethnic coalitions based on broader demographic characteristics of class, labor, and lifestyle orientation.[16]

In recent decades, then, the denial of the symbolics of suffering to certain groups has shifted minority struggles away from assimilation and toward an insistence on cultural difference, and the full inclusion of difference in our notion of American citizenship. For instance, in the late 1980s, the very visible politicized street theater of gay activism demanded public acceptance of difference in sexual orientation as a moral right. In an increasingly open and multicultural America constantly replenished by immigrants, the view of America as a single cultural nation—white Anglo-Saxon, (Judeo-)Christian, and heterosexual—could no longer be sustained. Inspired as well by African American civil rights struggles since the 1960s, gay proponents of what has been called "the politics of recognition" demanded public acknowledgment of cultural diversity. Building on the notion that contribution earns worthy citizenship, one early tactic was that of closeted gay individuals "coming out"; the intention was to expose to society examples of "worthy" persons who had suffered as a result of social discrimination, bias, and ignorance of their complex role in society. The gay rights movement also stressed the middle-class notions of self-realization and accomplishment as criteria for inclusion in the full benefits of citizenship. Charles Taylor's seminal essay argues that equal rights are realized only when there is mutual respect for cultural difference, putting into practice the promise of liberalism for nurturing the modern, authentic self.[17]

A parallel battle for inclusion is being waged by low-skilled and poor newcomers whose cultural differences do not quite fit middle-class forms or norms. In California, activist Chicano scholar-advocates such as Renato Rosaldo define cultural citizenship as "the right to be different" (in terms of race, ethnicity, or native language) with respect to the norms of the dominant national community, without compromising one's right to belong, in the sense of participating in the nation-state's democratic processes. The enduring exclusions of the color line often deny full citizenship to Latinos and other peoples of color. From the point of view of subordinate communities, cultural citizenship offers the possibility of legitimizing demands made in the struggle to enfranchise themselves. These demands can range from legal, political, and economic issues to "matters of human dignity, well-being, and respect."[18] Rosaldo and others point to the political and economic constraints underpinning claims to cultural citizenship. For instance, laws controlling the "normal" timing and use of public spaces conform to middle-class norms but undermine the civil rights of immigrant workers who cannot avail themselves of the public spaces in the same way because of work-schedule constraints and noise-level concerns. There is a sense that dominant norms discriminate against the cultural difference of new immigrants, whose cultural expressions are at variance with those norms and with middle-class sensibilities. Indeed, middle-class Americans seek to maintain their comfort level by encoding white–black oppositions in behavioral and discursive strategies that draw lines against those perceived to be culturally deviant.[19] These semiconscious codes are exquisitely clear to newcomers and are part of the everyday experience of minorities and immigrants as they learn to negotiate rules of belonging that are taken for granted by the mainstream.

These lines of inquiry—exclusion on the basis of race, culture, and class; ethnic-succession beliefs that shape the minoritization process; and the valorization of cultural difference among minority groups—have dominated recent studies of American citizenship. Given that analytical categories of culture have been insufficiently problematized, claims about the cultural difference of minorities seem to suggest that "culture" has remained the same despite experiences of dislocation, generational fractures, and upward mobility over time in the American nation. Furthermore, calls by minority groups for a unilateral claim of cultural citizenship seem informed by the view that cultural difference is only a bottom-up construction, and somehow free of regulation from above. That naïveté can end up supporting dominant ideologies that rank individuals on the basis of culture, race, and ethnicity, thereby facilitating the cultural or ethno-racial inscription of individual achievements and failures. While the prevailing pluralist discourse accepts "difference" as an object of analysis, I argue that "culture" (or "race," "ethnicity," or "gender") is not the automatic or even the most important analytical domain in which to understand how citizenship is constituted. Rather, what matters is to identify the various domains in which these preexisting racial, ethnic, gender, and cultural forms are problematized, and become absorbed and recast by social technologies of government that define the modern subject.

In this book, I examine the technologies of government—that is, the policies, programs, codes, and practices (unbounded by the concept of culture) that attempt to instill in citizen-subjects particular values (self-reliance, freedom, individualism, calculation, or flexibility) in a variety of domains. What is at stake is the definition of the modern *anthropos* or human being by rational forms and techniques that converge in an identifiable problem-space. My questions include: What are the effects of everyday techniques of government in various settings—Pol Pot's labor camps, refugee sanctuaries, the American welfare state, community hospitals, and so on? What preformed racial and cultural categories are mobilized and deployed, and how are they encoded and recast in the service of producing normative values and behaviors among target populations? What are the counterstrategies and ethical reflections of citizen-subjects who evade, subvert, or criticize such rationalities (i.e., instrumental actions or reasonings) and practices of regulation? Finally, what are the effects of neoliberal borderless rationality in transforming the symbol and substance of American citizenship?

At a broad level, I have followed Cambodian refugees in their transitions through different modalities of government—the Buddhist absolutism of modern Cambodia, the policing state of the Khmer Rouge, the mediating world of refugee camps, and the advanced liberal democracy of the United States. Each context calls for a different modality of what it means to be human and of how life is valued and classified in relation to political calculations about labor, ethics, and the economy. I examine the practical problems of government in each domain in turn (welfare state, community hospital, court system, and so on), following Cambodian Americans as they make their way through the institutional contexts that teach them the values and technical competence expected in America. I investigate how human technologies regarding ethics, the body, race, religion, gender, and labor converge and function in constituting particular categories of citizen-subjects. I identify as well the everyday practices of subjects who are acted upon and who act on their own behalf in pursuing values and assets that may contradict the ones assigned to them by the prevailing norms. For the refugees in this study, the tension between the American stress on individualism, pragmatism, and materialism on the one hand, and the Khmer-Buddhist ethos of compassionate hierarchy, collectivism, and otherworldliness on the other, is a central dynamic in the ethical project of becoming citizens.

American notions of the ideal citizen are linked to the concept of the bourgeois individual—an observation made by Max Weber[20]—and these notions are embedded in a variety of official programs and unofficial practices that participate in governing subjects. Michel Foucault's work on the social technologies of governmentality—which he defines as "the conduct of conduct"—provides an analytical basis for examining the everyday techniques of being-made and of self-making in a variety of regulatory environments.[21] He argues that advanced liberal societies tend to depend on regulation rather than discipline; they rely on human-science policy and techniques to "govern through freedom," thereby inducing citizen-subjects to become self-motivated, self-reliant, and entrepreneurial.[22] For Cambodian immigrants, as it was for earlier generations of American urban migrants, the transition from a religion-inflected ethos of hierarchy and dependency to an ethics of individualistic striving and wealth making is a profoundly unsettling experience, and one they are ambivalent about. A study of the human technologies of citizen-making thus reveals the religious and ethical underpinnings of political calculations about bodies and humanity, and shows how the processes of freedom often depend on means of subjection. My intention is to bring into focus the ambiguities and the ambivalence about losses and gains that suffuse the practices whereby individuals both produce and shape their lives as particular kinds of American citizens.

FROM CHAIN OF BEING TO THE GOVERNMENT OF LIFE

Concepts of political identity from the earliest times have almost all been based on religious continuums of greater or less moral privilege or worthiness. In feudal Europe, the great chain of being linked the lowliest serf, through his lord, to the king, who embodied the supreme Christian power.[23] In the Middle Ages, the institutions of the state were closely identified with religious values and structures. In premodern China, a Confucian ethics-regulated society was presided over by a Son of Heaven (the emperor) who might lose the mandate of heaven if the multitude of his subjects, perceiving that he had lost his virtue, instigated rebellion.[24] In premodern mainland Southeast Asia, the Theravada-Buddhist law of karma defined the social tiers of king, aristocrats, the monastic order *(sangha),* and peasants. The spiritual hierarchy was based on different rates of embodiment of religious merit; the king by definition had accumulated the most meritorious acts in previous lives.[25] Thus, in many parts of the premodern world, religious beliefs and practices determined political schemes of enchained beings.

The modern period signaled a reworking of such religiously based notions of political subjection, as the rise of the secular state incorporated many of the key legal and political features of Christian ethics. A new concept of individualism based on natural law came to stress the interiorization of this-worldly freedom by self-sufficient and individual men of reason.[26] In a model of popular sovereignty, every member of civil society was held to be an equal partner, sharing the same universal rights in the political state.[27] Of course, such rights were illusory for many because the practical application of liberty was to hold private property, thus excluding those who did not own commodities (including, for some, ownership of themselves). Marx observed that the modern state gave rise to "an independent and egoistic individual" in isolated pursuit of economic self-interest.[28] The property-owning bourgeois individual *(burgher)* became conflated with the "civil society" *(burgerliche Gesellschaft)* model of a citizen capable of rational-consensual agreement.[29] Marx claims that the threshold of humanity is set at property ownership. Because of this conflation of property ownership and rational subjectivity, the bourgeois individual became the modern ethical figure of citizenship—ethical in the sense of enacting the accepted social norms of meaningful conduct in a civil society.[30]

The liberal, free-market subject as the model of citizenship thus presupposes a form of economic action that, Weber famously argues, is underwritten by Protestant religious ethics.[31] The link between the ideal or model citizen and the bourgeois individual / homo economicus bolsters the connection between the bourgeois individual and Protestant ethics, a now-unconscious association that is made operational by governmentality and its various agencies. I argue, therefore, that the American idea of the free subject (the individual of liberalism) is in fact the product of governmentality and its hidden religious and cultural presuppositions. This study focuses on the tension between this individualistic ethics as it is exercised through modern biopolitical techniques (discussed further below), on the one hand, and the cultural and religious ethics (Buddhism, American feminism, and so on) of the new immigrants being examined, on the other.

Michel Foucault identifies "bio-power" as the central concern of the modern liberal state in the fostering of life, growth, and care of the population. The biopolitical rationality makes strategic use of bodies of knowledge that invest bodies and populations with properties that make them amenable to various technologies of control.[32] This power over life is exercised with the purpose of producing subjects who are healthy and productive, goals that redound to the security and strength of the state. But the state itself has no essence: "the state is nothing more than the mobile effect of a multiple regime of governmentality."[33] Studying the government of a population thus entails a study of the diverse techniques arising from multiple sources that act on the body, the mind, and the will, dedicated to making individuals, families, and collectivities "governable."[34] A repertoire of techniques of power, informed by the human sciences, comes to constitute "the social," defining categories of sexual deviants, criminals, and troublesome workers, in opposition to what is thereby considered "normal" society. Such social norms define which category of subjects is more or less valued as citizens of the nation.

In Foucault's terms, this exercise of government, "a rationalization that obeys—and this is its specificity—the internal rule of maximum economy," is called liberalism. The United States is the most liberal society in this regard, because its government starts not from the reason of the state itself, but from the existence of society, and its self-limiting measure of "governing too much."[35] And in this country, biopolitical calculations intertwine deeply with neoliberal considerations to extend the logic of the market. Economistic methods and calculations infiltrate areas of social life not primarily economic, regulating behavior to maximize activities that are profitable and marginalize those that are not. Especially since the 1970s, the norms of good citizenship in advanced liberal democracies have shifted from an emphasis on duties and obligations to the nation to a stress on becoming autonomous, responsible choice-making subjects who can serve the nation best by becoming "entrepreneurs of the self."[36] Extensive inroads by market-driven logic have shaped family and welfare policy, refugee and immigration politics, public law, penal law, health politics, and church practice. The most worthy citizen is a flexible homo economicus. In our age of globalization, the figure of entrepreneurial prowess is increasingly multiracial, multicultural, and transnational.[37] As immigration has expanded the diversity of subjects who can be assigned to American ethno-racial categories, the rationality of such racial classification increasingly intersects with the logic of the mobile homo economicus.

Sovereign power in this country is diffused through a network of welfare offices, vocational training schools, hospitals, and the workplace, where bureaucrats and their minions mobilize a variety of knowledge that can be used to shape the conduct of subjects, in order to maximize certain capabilities and minimize certain risks. Professionals and bureaucrats endeavor in a multiplicity of ways to instill appropriate norms of self-reliance and autonomy that will "empower" individuals, thus making the unsuccessful into good citizen-subjects. Every day, celebrations of market freedom and progress, with their underlying assumptions about the relative moral worthiness of different categories of subjects, influence and shape social practices and the possibilities of citizenship. These social technologies can be conceptualized as a mode not of ruling through oppression, but of "governing through the freedom and aspirations of subjects rather than in spite of them."[38]

There is no uniformity in the effects of these multiple regimes of control that would enable one to say that a single totalizing form of citizenship is thereby produced. It is perhaps much more useful to talk about the "concrete assemblages"[39] produced by converging rationalities that function in connection with other assemblages, and about what effects such divergent mixes have on the citizenship forms in different social milieus. Biopolitics, racial schemes, democratic values, feminist principles, and ethics intersect in the specific assemblages of refugee camp, welfare program, nonprofit organization, courthouse, marketplace, and church. These assemblages integrate people and functions through modes of surveillance, regulation, punishment, and reward. For poor people and at-risk newcomers, these administrative, economic, and social realms are where bureaucrats and service workers guide and act upon their conduct, seeking to avert so-called personal failures and to achieve desirable qualities in their subjects such as health, employability, wealth, and social integration. As I argue later, such problematizing modes of government, geared simultaneously toward the normalizing and the empowering of citizens, are regularly critiqued, deflected, manipulated, and transformed by newcomers as they learn to become self-governing subjects in ways not fully intended by the programs.[40] Sovereignty in America is sustained by negotiating the diverse micropolitics of being governed and learning the techniques of self-government in various social milieus traversed by multiple flows of rationality.

WORTHY CITIZENS: RACIAL BIPOLARISM AND GENDER DIFFERENTIATION

The interpenetration of the disparate forms that come to shape conduct results in social integration being realized through the differentiation of citizen-subjects. Besides neoliberal biopolitical considerations, two other major classificatory logics—racial bipolarism and engendering discourses—interpenetrate to shape unequal and differentiated types of belonging for minority populations. Judith Shklar has stated that "[f]rom the first the most radical claims for freedom and political equality were played out in counterpoint to chattel slavery, the consequences of which still haunt us. The equality of political rights, which is the first mark of American citizenship, was proclaimed in the accepted presence of its absolute denial. Its second mark, the overt rejection of hereditary privileges, was no easier to achieve in practice, and for the same reason. Slavery is an inherited condition."[41] Racial logic has always lain like a serpent in the sacred ideal of American citizenship.

Indeed, from its inception, the American nation was imagined as an implicitly racial and class formation, one governed by an Anglo-Saxon hegemony that projected white race and class interests as universal for the entire nation.[42] The concept of the American nation as a specific, racially homogeneous identity has been and continues to be the measure by which all potential citizens are situated as either integral or marginal to the nation. In their theory of racial formation in the United States, Michael Omi and

Howard Winant insist that race is a key "organizing principle" of social action, both at the "macro level" of economics, politics, and ideological practices and at the "micro level" of individual action.[43] Historically, the intertwining of race and economic performance has shaped the ways in which different immigrant groups have attained status and dignity, within a national ideology that projects worthy citizens as inherently white.

The tendency to frame ideas about immigrants in terms of a bipolar racial order has persisted, and newcomers are located along the continuum from black to white. It is obvious that these racial categories are fundamentally about degrees of undeserving or deserving citizenship. Such relative positioning in the national moral order is not state policy, but rather part of the political unconscious that variously informs official action and public perception. As Brackette Williams has pointed out, there is a black–white continuum of status and dignity, and the relative positioning of a (sub)ethnic group determines its perceived moral claim to certain areas of privilege and advantage, as well as conditioning fear of threats to these prerogatives from subordinated races.[44] These processes of relative positioning, group status competition, and group status envy result in cultures becoming race-based traditions.

Racial bipolarism has historically been part of a classificatory system for differentiating among successive waves of immigrants, who were assigned different stations along the path toward whiteness. Historical studies show that by the late nineteenth century, citizens originating from England, the Netherlands, and to a lesser extent Scotland and Italy had forged financial and kinship networks within and beyond the United States. The consolidation of this white American elite with transnational connections has been celebrated in novels by Henry James and Edith Wharton, among others. At the same time, there was a structure of expectations (in the idealized construct of ethnic succession) for how things ought to work out in a just and moral world of citizenship acquisition for less-fortunate immigrants such as Poles, Italians, Germans, and Slavs, referred to by the derogatory term PIGS (as opposed to WASPs, the originary-raced components). The succession model was about constructing a racial identity that transcended the component nationalities of the immigrants to become, ideally, generic white.

One legacy of white–black relations under slavery and Emancipation aimed at legitimizing the social order as a natural order was the use of "the Negro" as a "contrast conception" or "counter-race."[45] The free working man came to embody republican citizenship, and any immigrant who failed to gain independent livelihood was in danger of sinking to the status of wage slave, the antithesis of the independent citizen. In the nineteenth century, this logic of racial classification situated poor Irish immigrants on the East Coast and "Negroized" Chinese immigrants on the West Coast close to the black end of the continuum, because their working conditions were similar to those of unfree black labor.[46] Later non-Christian European immigrants such as Jews did not until the mid-twentieth century ascend to white status through the euphemized process of ethnic succession.[47] More recently, certain segments of African American, Spanish-speaking, and Asian immigrants have become whitened.

The racializing processes that define worthy and unworthy citizens have infused the government of poverty, especially the classification and regulation of new immigrants and migrants to the cities. The ideology of the work ethic, historically developed in contradistinction to slavery, denied full social citizenship to those who did not independently attain material citizenship, namely, the unemployed and the welfare-dependent. Of course, the effects of implicit racial and cultural ranking do not exhaust all of the conditions that go into processes of subjectification—or processes by which citizens are made and induced to be self-making. Neoliberal ideas about human capital have somewhat complicated the links between concepts of race and deserving citizenship.

The interweaving of ideologies of racial difference with liberal conceptions of citizenship entered a new phase after World War II, when debates about who belonged came to be framed in business-economic terms of balancing the provision of security against the productivity of citizens. Economistic calculation, statistics, and categorization based on time expenditure and self-discipline gave rise to the assessment of citizens as human capital, weighing those who could pull themselves up by the bootstraps against those who were economically dependent.[48] The grounding of postwar citizenship in a human-capital model put pressure on minority groups to perform economically and contributed to the stigmatization of those who make claims on the welfare state. Ideological discourses contrasting the contributions to the nation of different races often conflated race and class, as for example in the polarizing contrast between the "underclass" and the "model minority," two key categories for thinking about minoritization in postwar America.[49] The framing of racial difference in terms of differential economic contribution and performance constructed long-term residents and newcomers as the contrasting embodiments of what Williams calls "ethnicized citizenship."[50]

Increasingly, citizenship is defined as the civic duty of the individual to reduce his or her burden on society, and instead to build up his or her own human capital—in other words, to "be an entrepreneur of her/himself."[51] Indeed, by the 1960s, liberal economics came to evaluate nonwhite groups explicitly according to their claims on, or independence of, the state. Minorities who scale the pinnacles of society often have to justify themselves in such entrepreneurial terms. An apt example was the 1991 nomination of Clarence Thomas to the Supreme Court of the United States, a move widely viewed as a token appointment of an African American to the powerful white-dominated institution. In his confirmation hearings, Judge Thomas painted