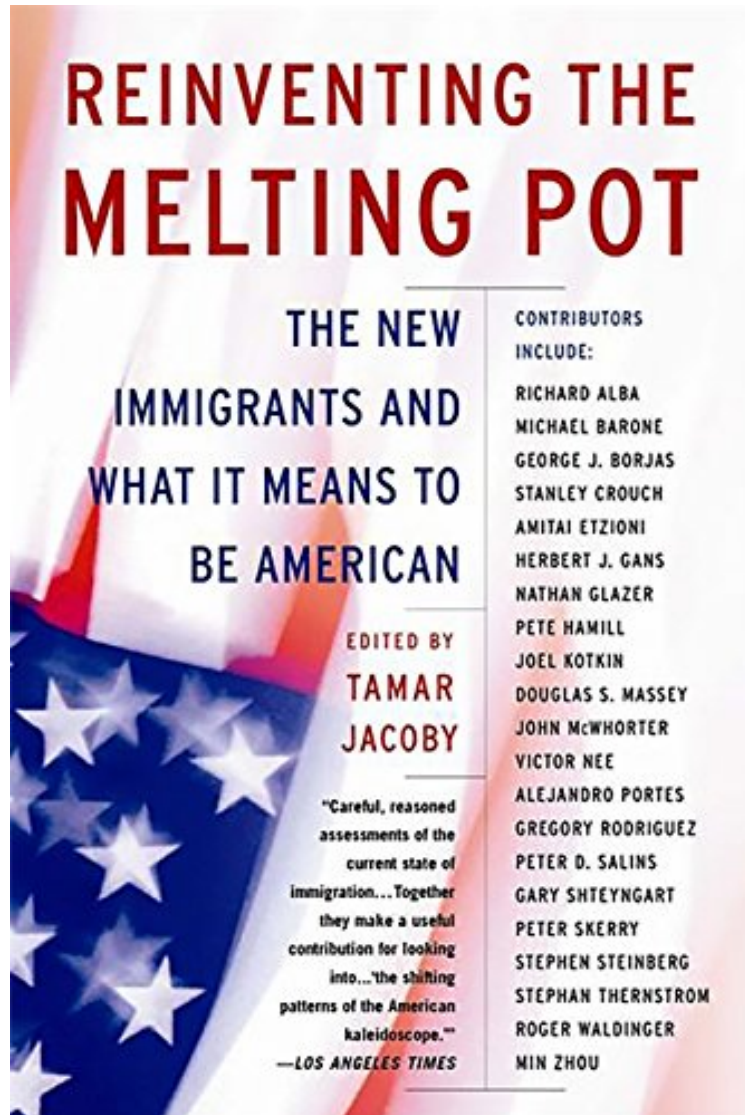


# Reinventing the Melting Pot: The New Immigrants and What It Means To Be American

Tamar Jacoby

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#1779450 in Books Tamar Jacoby 2004-12-01 2004-11-30 Format: International Edition Original language: English PDF # 1 9.00 x .87 x 6.00l, 1.15 #File Name: 046503635X352 pages Reinventing the Melting Pot The New Immigrants and What It Means to Be American | File size: 18.Mb

**Tamar Jacoby : Reinventing the Melting Pot: The New Immigrants and What It Means To Be American** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Reinventing the Melting Pot: The New Immigrants and What It Means To Be American:

6 of 7 people found the following review helpful. Good effort. By A Customer Overall, not a bad effort and worth the

time to read for anyone interested in immigration and assimilation. However, the book lacks any real cohesion (perhaps because it is a collection of essays by many authors) and the first third of the book is extremely repetitive to the point that I felt I was reading the same essay over and over. Also, a few factual errors seem to jump out and detract from the book. For instance, Peter D. Salins refers to the U.S. Constitution as "the new country's first formal government" - it wasn't; and John McWhorter states that modern English is two thousand years old - it isn't. 17 of 24 people found the following review helpful. The melting pot...By Skeptic...was used in the original quote to describe "all the races of Europe," and not all cultures and national origins as suggested by Ms. Jacoby's synopsis. In any event, current waves are radically different for many reasons, articulated by Victor Davis Hansen, Samuel Huntington and others. Time will tell whether remaking this country, soon to be permanently multicultural for the first time since its inception, will be an improvement or not. But if we are to choose the current Bush No-Borders Status Quo, we had better be certain that a nation of 500 million and growing, and increasingly unable and unwilling to communicate and interact, will be a better America than the one we have today. Will our environment, our schools, our wages, our security, our cities be better or worse? If the latter, we may look back on Polyannas such as Ms. Jacoby and lament. Look to California for a sneak peek. 5 of 13 people found the following review helpful. What it Means to Be an American By A Customer This collection of essays is about assimilation in two senses. First, the subject concerns the process, so commonplace in this country that we forget how unique it is in the entire world, where people from other countries become citizens of America. This process involves not only the formal steps of naturalization, but the changes immigrants make to become part of American society, and the way their assimilation, in turn, changes American society. This subject is that rare topic that is both important and interesting. Open this book to any page and you'll learn something you didn't know about America's social history, and something you'll welcome adding to your knowledge of this country. The book is about assimilation in a second sense: 21 essayists from different professions and viewpoints put forward a sense of how assimilation works in the 21st century that hangs together, and gives hope that America will cohere and endure.

In *Reinventing the Melting Pot*, twenty-one of the writers who have thought longest and hardest about immigration come together around a surprising consensus: yes, immigrant absorption still works—and given the number of newcomers arriving today, the nation's future depends on it. But it need not be incompatible with ethnic identity—and we as a nation need to find new ways to talk about and encourage becoming American. In the wake of 9/11 it couldn't be more important to help these newcomers find a way to fit in. Running through these essays is a single common theme: Although ethnicity plays a more important role now than ever before, today's newcomers can and will become Americans and enrich our national life—reinventing the melting pot and reminding us all what we have in common.

From *Publishers Weekly* In 1908, English immigrant Israel Zangwill coined the term "melting pot" as a title for his newest play, a vision of America as an Eden where all races and ethnicities melted happily into a harmonious whole. One of the most enduring catchphrases in our lexicon, the "melting pot," as both ideal and reality is discussed and dissected in this collection of 22 essays from an appropriately diverse assortment of writers. Divided into five sections, the book examines the process of assimilation through historical, political, economic and racial lenses, and scrutinizes the impact of immigration on contemporary American society. This variety of perspectives makes the book an engaging and enlightening look at a phenomenon that has often been plagued by misunderstanding. With contributions from journalists like Pete Hamill and Michael Barone who examines the acute challenges faced by immigrants after September 11 the book achieves a deep richness. Brimming with statistics (e.g. second-generation Latinos earn 50% more than first-generation Latinos; more than half of Asians and Hispanics now marry whites), the collection offers fresh viewpoints on modern immigration trends. Most of the writers agree that the words "melting pot" do not accurately describe the process of assimilation, or of Americans national identity. With tempered optimism, contributor Herbert J. Gans offers a new metaphor, comparing the ethnic makeup of the country to a kaleidoscope "in constant flux" that creates "the overall pattern of the nation." Much at issue among the writers is the idea of assimilation, which can be seen as either a positive force or as a threat to the cultural identity. Most concur, however, on its inevitability. Editor Jacoby concludes that "we are a unique nation: defined not by blood or ancestry, but by a set of shared ideas." The acclimation to these ideas is an ongoing and difficult process, at once changing the countenance of the country and confirming the notion of yet another noteworthy catchphrase, *e pluribus unum* from many, one. Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From *Booklist* Jacoby has assembled a thoughtful, provocative collection of essays that reconsiders and ultimately attempts to reinvent the traditional myth of the American melting pot. With the immigrant population continuing to increase and the demographic landscape of the nation rapidly altering—one in nine Americans is now foreign-born, and blacks, Hispanics, and Asians now constitute more than 30 percent of the population—it seems to be an appropriate time to challenge an outmoded set of beliefs and values. These 21 essays endeavor to provide unique and often unorthodox answers to conventional immigration and citizenship questions. As the various social scientists, journalists, and writers included discuss the nature and the practicality of twenty-first-century assimilation and cultural identity, the reader is

treated to an exciting new vision of what it means to be an American in an increasingly global and richly diverse society. Margaret Flanagan Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved "An exciting new vision of what it means to be American in an increasingly global and richly diverse society." -- - Booklist "Careful, reasoned assessments of the current state of immigration and immigrants in a nation that constantly renews itself with newcomers." -- - Los Angeles Times