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# TENSIONS IN THE AMERICAN DREAM

Rhetoric, Reverie, or Reality

Melanie E. L. Bush  
AND Roderick D. Bush

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# Tensions in the American Dream

*Rhetoric, Reverie, or Reality*

**MELANIE E. L. BUSH AND RODERICK D. BUSH**

Could the promise of upward mobility have a dark side? In *Tensions in the American Dream*, Melanie and Roderick Bush ask, how does a “nation of immigrants” pledge inclusion, yet marginalize so many citizens based on race, class, and gender? The authors consider the origins and development of the U.S. nation and empire; the founding principles of belonging, nationalism, and exceptionalism; and their lived reality.

*Tensions in the American Dream* also addresses the relevancy of nation to empire in the context of the historical world capitalist system. The authors ask, is the American Dream a reality only questioned by those unwilling or unable to achieve it? What is the “good life” and how is it particularly “American”?

**MELANIE E. L. BUSH** is Associate Professor in the Department of Anthropology and Sociology at Adelphi University and author of *Everyday Forms of Whiteness: Understanding Race in a “Post-Racial” World*, the second edition of *Breaking the Code of Good Intentions: Everyday Forms of Whiteness*.

**RODERICK D. BUSH** (1945—2013) was a Professor in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at St. John’s University, and the author of *The End of White World Supremacy: Black Internationalism and the Problem of the Color Line* (Temple), which won the Paul Sweezy Marxist Sociology Book Award from the American Sociological Association, and *We Are Not What We Seem: Black Nationalism and Class Struggle in the American Century*.

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