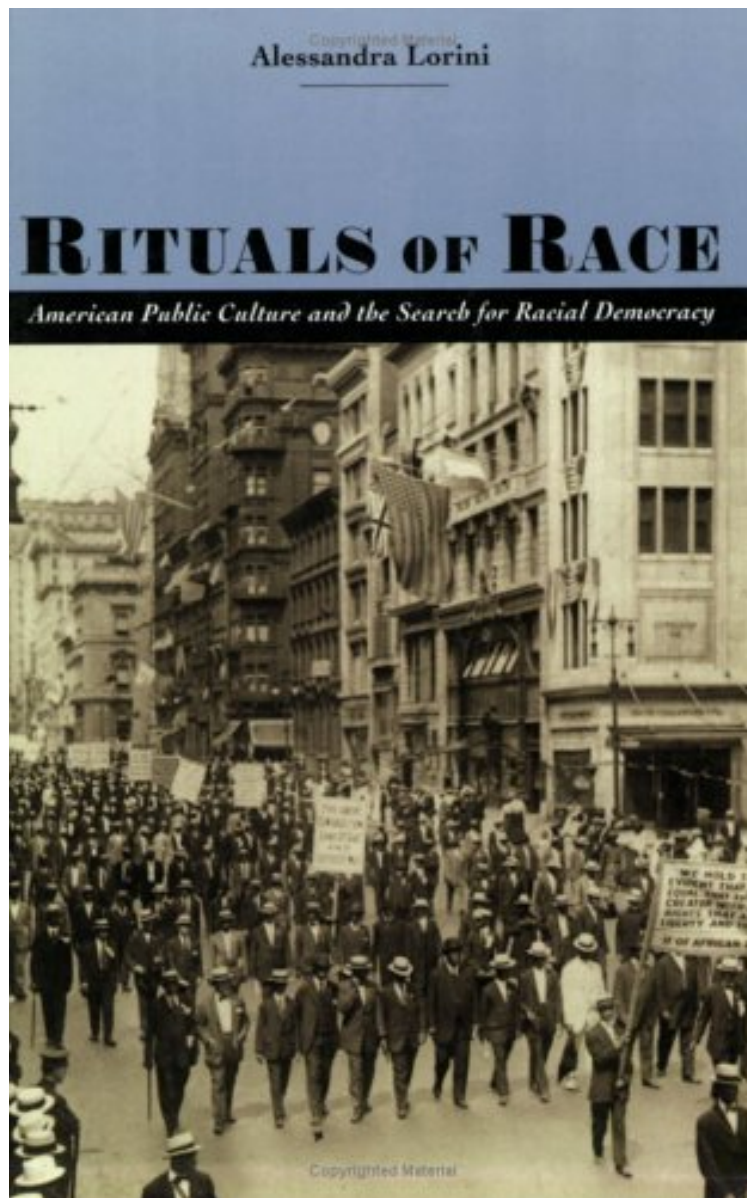


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Rituals of Race: American Public Culture and the Search for Racial Democracy (Carter G. Woodson Institute Series)

Alessandra Lorini

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Alessandra Lorini : Rituals of Race: American Public Culture and the Search for Racial Democracy (Carter G. Woodson Institute Series) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Rituals of Race: American Public Culture and the Search for Racial Democracy (Carter G. Woodson Institute

Series):

In this sophisticated study of the struggle for African American human rights in America, Alessandra Lorini examines public events in New York City from the end of the Civil War through World War I, demonstrating how ritualized elements of black processions, parades, riots, and festivals made visible the inherent paradox of the "separate but equal" doctrine of the time. By examining these public events, Lorini dramatizes the quest for liberty and equality as a story of living forces, not abstract principles and legal maneuvers. Lorini defines public culture as a conflictual space in which gender, race, and class alliances are made and remade in the ongoing battle for expanded democracy. She then explores how public rituals directly confronted the demeaning representations of blacks prevalent in America's civic and national culture—particularly the idea of black racial inferiority outlined in theories of "racial science." Through rituals, blacks constructed collective memories and identities, which ultimately served as the basis for their assertion of what Lorini calls "participatory democracy," a movement created by ordinary citizens in which activists such as W. E. B. Du Bois, Ida Wells-Barnett, Mary White Ovington, and Booker T. Washington could attempt to effect social change.

About the Author Alessandra Lorini teaches American history at the universities of Florence and Pisa.