

Volume 44 Issue 1 March

Article 14

2017

Review of Making Immigrant Rights Real: Non-Profits and the Politics of Integration in San Francisco. Els de Graauw. Reviewed by Sizhe Liu.

Sizhe Liu University of Hawaii at Manoa, liusizhe@hawaii.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/jssw



Part of the Social Work Commons

Recommended Citation

Liu, Sizhe (2017) "Review of Making Immigrant Rights Real: Non-Profits and the Politics of Integration in San Francisco. Els de Graauw. Reviewed by Sizhe Liu.," The Journal of Sociology & Social Welfare: Vol. 44: Iss. 1, Article 14.

DOI: https://doi.org/10.15453/0191-5096.4080

Available at: https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/jssw/vol44/iss1/14

This Book Review is brought to you by the Western Michigan University School of Social Work. For more information, please contact wmuscholarworks@wmich.edu.



Book Reviews 177

discussions on whiteness and racism within a specific context and helps improve one's understanding of how and why whites react to desegregation efforts differently than others. This book moves from the past to the present and weaves in archival and qualitative data. The use of historical examples and individual narratives demonstrate the changing meaning of whiteness. Discussion on intersectionality between race, gender, and social class is supported by rich data. This book helps inspire one to learn more about the racial changes in American society over time and to search for a solution to end the endemic racism.

There is also evidence to support methodological rigor for the qualitative approach such as triangulation of data, consistency between data and findings, recognition of the potential influences of the thinking and theoretical perspectives of the researcher on the researched, and concrete action plans to minimize such influences. It would have been good if excerpts or highlights were provided at the beginning of each chapter to facilitate the understanding of the dense chapters. Additionally, there are places in which intersectionality of the subject matter could have been highlighted more explicitly.

, Weiyu Mao, University of Nevada, Reno

Els de Graauw, *Making Immigrant Rights Real: Non-Profits and the Politics of Integration in San Francisco*. Cornell University Press (2016), 238 pages, \$22.95 (paperback).

Immigrant rights have received unprecedented attention during the recent presidential campaign. In this book, Els De Graauw cuts through this topic by focusing on the roles and strategies adopted by those immigrants serving nonprofits organizations in order to facilitate immigrant integration in San Francisco. Literature on nonprofits has well recognized the disadvantages that restrict their bargaining power to promote the integration policies that benefit immigrants and challenge the status quo. These disadvantages include the restrictions on lobbying and electioneering, limited political resources and dependence on government funding. The author innovatively demonstrates a tripartite model of advocacy strategies that nonprofits in San Francisco have used to tackle these

limitations and explains how they benefit immigrants through enactment and implementation of immigrant-friendly policies. These strategies include administrative advocacy, cross-sectoral and cross-organizational collaborations, and strategic issue framing. Three case studies are presented in this book to elaborate further how these strategies have been applied by nonprofits to benefit the promotion of immigrant advancement.

First, through the case of the enactment, implementation and enforcement of Equal Access to Service Ordinance, the author shows how nonprofits interact with legislative and administrative city officials despite their lobbying restrictions. In this case, nonprofits and city officials choose to embrace a collaborative and mutually beneficial style. On one hand, city officials need the help of nonprofits, who have deep understanding of the needs of immigrant groups, to engage and serve with immigrant communities. On the other hand, such collaboration made the advocacy activities of nonprofits less likely to be criticized as lobbying.

The next advocate strategy that nonprofits have adopted is the coalition with organizations that have more political resources, such as labor unions. The case of raising living and minimum wage in San Francisco was presented to explain this strategy, as immigrant-serving nonprofits and unions both "shared a progressive ideology and were interested in economic justice for all low-wage workers in the city" (p. 140). With shared interests and mutual trust, as well as the disparity of organizational structure and resources, a division of labor emerged during this collaboration. Labor unions, which have more freedom and resources in political activities, engaged more in pushing for ordinances that raise the living standards and minimum wage in San Francisco. The nonprofits, on the other hand, played more active roles in the enforcement and implementation of these ordinances.

Lastly, in the case of Municipal ID ordinance, nonprofits serving immigrant communities employed an advocate strategy that downplayed the benefits going to undocumented immigrants, but featured the ordinance as a policy benefitting all citizens in San Francisco. Thus they framed their advocacy as making the ordinance more like a universal program that promotes the advancement of all disadvantaged groups. As

Book Reviews 179

the author argued, the best strategy to help undocumented immigrants is "not talking about them" and remaining "silent on the fact that undocumented immigrants are among the key beneficiaries" (pp. 164-165). By adopting these strategies, immigrant-serving nonprofits continue to play an important role in shaping current discourse on the common image of disadvantaged immigrants and greatly enhance their civic integration through the enactment, implementation and enforcement of related ordinances.

A significant body of literature exists on the integration of immigrants, yet most of it reflects an approach that is focused on immigrant groups, or a macro-level approach mainly focused on policies and political and institutional structures. This book is unique in employing an approach that emphasizes the mediating role of immigrant-serving nonprofits, and in offering three typical case studies that demonstrate how nonprofits can function to bridge the gap between immigrants and legislative officials. The author seems downplay the conflicts among nonprofits, labor unions and city officials in the process of collaboration. This book perhaps places excessive emphasis on the successful cases. Perhaps another chapter could have at least briefly discussed cases of unsuccessful advocacy strategies that nonprofits have adopted. In that way, the reader would able to grasp more clearly the larger picture of nonprofit advocacy activities. Nonetheless, this book is a must read for those who are interested in immigrant rights and the process of integration of immigrants into the larger social environment.

Sizhe Liu, University of Hawaii at Manoa

Janice Wood Wetzel, *Sorrows and Songs: One Lifetime–Many Lives.* Fullarton Press (2015), 255 pages, \$14.95 (paperback).

I was intrigued to learn of Jan Wetzel's memoir, *Sorrows and Songs*, as I have long considered Wetzel, former Dean and Professor Emeritus of my MSW and PhD alma mater, a revered mentor. I suspected *Sorrows and Songs* would offer a unique contribution to understanding the human condition, and most surely, in its chronicling of her life journey through