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God's Heart has No Borders: How Religious Activists are Working for Immigrant Rights. Pierrette Hondagneu-Sotelo. Reviewed by Jennifer Morazes.

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Pierrette Hondagneu-Sotelo, *God's Heart has no Borders: How Religious Activists are Working for Immigrant Rights*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2008. \$21.95 papercover.

The role of religion in American public life has been debated since this country's founding. Despite the explicit separation of church and state in the United States, religious movements have historically fueled social engagement. Recently, much attention has been paid to the role of compassionate conservatism and the focus upon issues such as marriage, family and reproductive issues. However, religion has also sparked and sustained progressive efforts over the years for abolition, civil rights, labor movements and economic rights, and more recently, global poverty alleviation.

Immigrant rights have long been a social welfare concern, as evidenced through the historic work of Jane Addams and Hull House. It has become a current social welfare issue because of the passage of the USA Patriot Act of 2001 as well as protests and debates about legal avenues for citizenship for undocumented residents. As Hondagneu-Sotelo rightly shows through the case examples in her book, this topic should also be understood in terms of how religious activists and theological lenses have contributed to social movements for immigrant rights.

This book begins by first considering the historical, as well as contemporary, socio-political context of the immigrant-rights movement in the United States, with attention to the role of religious support for these movements. The author argues that religious texts and institutions lend moral authority, social networks, legitimacy, and shared practices that support these efforts. She then provides three case studies to illustrate how faith-based persons and their organizations promote these rights: Muslim American immigrant organizing after 9/11; current immigrant worker justice movements centered in service-industries; and efforts protesting policies along the United States-Mexican border. Finally, she considers the defining characteristics of religious-based activism in these movements.

Hondagneu-Sotelo makes a significant contribution to the

literature with her account of post-9/11 organizing within and in support of Muslim American communities. The account of interfaith work in this area, as well as how Muslim Americans viewed both their faith and their patriotism at this time, is an important historical story, and the narrative is well-told by the author through her account of the Council of American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) and the Muslim Public Affairs Council (MPAC) in Southern California. In the second case study, she continues to document and interpret the history of Christian social engagement—again in terms of immigrant rights—with an account of the work of Clergy and Laity United for Economic Justice (CLUE) and the larger Interfaith Worker Justice (IWJ) network, which encouraged immigrant service workers and their allies to “Take their Good Friday to the Streets!” in support of low-wage workers. The third story documents another form of faith-fueled immigrant activism through her account of Posada sin Fronteras, a Christian group which provides witness to the dangers confronting border-crossers with current United States border policy. An overall strength of the author’s narratives is her reliance on middle-level organizers rather than marquee names, which provides a richer and more nuanced account of the opportunities and challenges facing these efforts.

Hondagneu-Sotelo provides a thorough analysis of religious-based activism in support of immigrant rights. Although the book uses a sociological lens and focuses on social movements, it might have been strengthened through a more thorough account of historical and current theological approaches to social engagement. However, this observation aside, Hondagneu-Sotelo provides a compelling account underlining the importance of the religious perspective in recent immigration activism. The author achieves her goals in exploring, identifying and interpreting how faith functions within these efforts.

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