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**Review of *Fragile Families: Foster Care, Immigration, and
Citizenship*. Naomi Glenn-Levin Rodriguez. Reviewed by Yue Xu.**

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this topic. The contents are extremely useful for those new to the field or who may not have a strong foundation in the history behind the current state of homelessness issues, or in federal guidelines and intervention strategies that have been developed in recent years geared to end homelessness. Each chapter can be read alone, and in any order. While a strength of this book, it also bears noting that some chapters repeat prior presented information in order to set the context for their work. This is easily forgiven and is not uncommon in edited books. Overall, this excellent edited book makes the valuable contribution of educating anybody who has an interest in what actions are being taken in order to “move the needle” towards ending homelessness, and that is extremely valuable.

Sondra J. Fogel, Stephanie Duncan, and Heather Larkin
School of Social Work
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Naomi Glenn-Levin Rodriguez, *Fragile Families: Foster Care, Immigration, and Citizenship*. University of Pennsylvania Press (2017), 222 pages, \$59.95 (hardcover).

The nationalist narrative of anti-immigration rhetoric has been heightened in the past few years, especially during the 2016 presidential election. Depicted among this narrative are Central American children crossing borders to gain economic advantage in achieving a brighter future. Latino unaccompanied minors and U.S. citizen children whose undocumented parents have been deported experience the immigration system and child welfare system in a drastically different way than the general child population within the child protection system. Rodriguez’s book reflects the complex systems in which key players, such as social workers, legal advocates, and the court, shape the trajectories of immigrant Latino children who have experienced maltreatment in the border space between San Diego and Tijuana.

This book addresses an important issue that crosses geographical borders as well as different legal systems. Rodriguez explores how Latino immigrant families embody experiences of both the child protection and immigration systems in this

unique cross-border space, in the course of which she exposes social workers' assumptions on race, gender, class, and nationality through their actions under systems that were not established to best serve these families. Specifically, social workers in the child protection system are often not aware of the legal options under immigration law that may benefit immigrant families. At the same time, child protection courts and the Immigration and Custom Enforcement (ICE) agency lack communication that facilitates family reunification and stable placement. Without sufficient information and effective communication across these systems, social workers interpret and translate situations like a deportable foster parent or relatives across the border into categories of either "fit or unfit" for child placement, without the proper knowledge or time to weigh the long-term benefits for these children.

Though kinship placement is often preferred for better outcomes, Latino immigrant children whose relatives are across borders often face challenges such as cross-border jurisdiction, social workers' suspicions of the Mexican social service system, and an assumed preference for U.S. citizenship and benefits. Therefore, social workers tend to impose their own ideals on children within foster care. When navigating the immigration system, these ideals often result in failures to weigh options prior to the child aging out of state care, and may result in a child aging out without an official legal status. Though it is not impossible for "smart maneuvering" over the systems to occur, as is showcased by examples in the book, this requires the unrecognized and oftentimes underfunded additional effort to navigate both systems, not to mention the unmarked streets of Tijuana.

Rodriguez further explores the intimacy between foster parents, biological parents, and children under scrutiny by the child welfare system as well as the immigration systems. She focuses on parents and foster parents who spend the most time with the child. Yet often these parents are left out of the decision-making process for the child's reunification and placement plan. Intimacy developed under such circumstances is constantly on the edge of being cut off. In most circumstances, social workers make final decisions regarding placement plans.

This book also provides critical insights into how social workers and other key actors seek an ambiguous norm of family

life, all the while struggling to reach agreement on the best interests of the child. The 'norm' of family in the space of borders where culture, language, and relationships are complicated by nationality exposes the intersectional oppression of race, class, nationality, disability, and geography under the child protection and the immigration systems.

While criticizing social workers for actions leading to tragic stories, Rodriguez acknowledges the challenges they face under a system established to objectify children as 'cases,' and 'placements,' while at the same time scrutinizing marginalized families through a normative Western white middle class standard of good parenting.

Based on in-depth field work and literature review, this book provides immeasurable value in our understanding of the experiences of key actors, including social workers, biological parents, and foster parents, under the systems whose establishment is based on narratives surrounding 'worthiness' and a Westernized norm of family life. The fragility of these families as illustrated in the stories throughout the book also reveals the fragility of the systems that do not guarantee safety and protection, let alone the best interests of the child. Rodriguez's book also provides insightful implications for social workers, legal advocates within the systems of child welfare, as well as the issue of immigration as a whole, through the engrossing stories of the families entangled within these convoluted systems.

Yue Xu
University of Illinois at Chicago

Xiaoyuan Shang and Karen R. Fisher, *Young People Leaving State Care in China*. Policy Press at the University of Bristol (2017), 264 pages, \$120.00 (hardcover).

There are many circumstances that lead children to living in state care, such as losing parents, being abandoned, or experiencing maltreatment. A United Nations Children's Fund report for 2012 estimates that about 153 million orphans lived in state care worldwide in 2009, and even this large number does not include children living in state care for other reasons. Due to limited social and family supports, children in state care usually