



2011

Remaking Citizenship: Latina Immigrants and New American Politics. Kathleen M. Coll. Reviewed by Lirio K. Negroni.

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Recommended Citation

Negroni, Lirio K. (2011) "*Remaking Citizenship: Latina Immigrants and New American Politics.* Kathleen M. Coll. Reviewed by Lirio K. Negroni.," *The Journal of Sociology & Social Welfare*: Vol. 38 : Iss. 3 , Article 12.
Available at: <https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/jssw/vol38/iss3/12>

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created tensions and contributed to the turnover of organizers hired by the groups. In addition, mounting a cross-school, district-level campaign that focused attention on building relationships with the “top”—the UFT and the DOE—while also needing to renew and expand the parent base at the “bottom” strained the organizers’ capacity. Fabricant recounts the personal transformation of many parent leaders and the deep loyalty and trust that formed among parents and with organizers, but he also tells that despite the constant work the organizers committed to developing parent leaders, sometimes experienced staff needed to intervene when parents did not seem able to fully represent the campaign.

It is impossible to read this book without having tremendous admiration for all those who participated in the Campaign—their intelligence, their caring, their perseverance, their commitment to public education. In an era where public institutions are under attack, CC9 had a vision for public spaces where ordinary citizens could exercise their essential democratic rights and responsibilities. In carving out that space, South Bronx parents were able to make schools a little more accountable to their dreams for their children.

Eva Gold, Research for Action, Philadelphia, PA

Kathleen M. Coll, *Remaking Citizenship: Latina Immigrants and New American Politics*. Stanford University Press, 2010. \$22.95, paperback.

This book, based on a qualitative study conducted with thirty Latina immigrants and active members of *Mujeres Unidas y Activas* (MUA), a community organization founded in California in the early 1990s, contributes to the knowledge base on Latinas in the United States. The study participants were between their 20s and 40s, non-English speaking and of diverse migratory statuses. Many of them were single mothers receiving some type of public assistance, and most had migrated to the U.S. in the early 1990s.

MUA’s creation was a response to the specific social and political conditions of California in the 80s and 90s. The author was the coordinator of the Committee for Health Rights in Central America, and she joined MUA as a research

collaborator. By the time she began her study, MUA had five staff and over 200 members. MUA women were involved in political actions such as marches, civic debate and action, education and training, development of micro-entrepreneurships, job development efforts, lobbying, coalition building, advocacy efforts, and leadership development.

Coll, an anthropologist and lecturer in Feminist Studies at Stanford University, describes and analyzes MUA women's processes of personal and political transformation and the ways in which they claimed their rights and met their daily life responsibilities, processes that culminated in their development of citizenship. For the author, citizenship is much more than a fixed ascribed legal status. It is a right and a process that must be viewed from the perspective of individuals' cultural foundations and practices. These women became citizens through their individual and collective actions and reflections and as they developed a sense of belonging and entitlement and a positive vision of themselves and their children as members of U.S. society.

The book consists of an introduction, seven chapters and an appendix. In the introduction the author discusses her theoretical standpoints, the concept of citizenship, the political and social history of San Francisco, her own trajectory and connections to this city, and MUA and the socioeconomic and political contexts that led to the creation of pro-immigrant advocacy movements like MUA. Each chapter addresses a different component that comprises the process of developing citizenship.

The book provides examples of MUA's strategies to promote political education and collective action such as providing *buena informacion* (good information) and facilitating civic activism. Grassroots immigrant organizing is an underlying component of these women's citizenship development process. Change for these women came as a result of their public participation, the support from other Latinas and the changes in their family relationships. Their thoughts about their rights and social position in the U.S. also changed. They faced laws and policies that forced them to be silent socially and politically. But, through their community participation, they challenged those obstacles and developed valuable social practices and a political identity. Motherhood and citizenship

are mutually constituted as Latinas navigate and seek the help of public institutions. While learning the ropes, these women not only developed as mothers but also as political subjects engaged in participatory citizenship.

Another relevant component of Latinas' citizenship development relates to their *autoestima* (self-esteem), a resource that helped women stand up for themselves and a collective process through which they fully articulated their claims for respect, a voice in their community, and their full rights. It was through the MUA's *autoestima* meetings that they developed political skills and addressed their pressing personal and emotional issues. Latinas regained their voices, changed and developed citizenship as they were able to *desahogarse* (speak up) and *aprender a hablar* (learned to talk) about their realities and challenges. Their narratives provided new and different visions of domestic violence, child rearing, self-esteem and immigrant and worker's rights.

Citizenship emerged as they *convivieron* (passed time) with other women. *Convivencia* (passing time) through workshops and community efforts led them to reformulate citizenship transnationally. In learning about immigration, history, legislation, and the similarities that united them with other non-Latina women, their claim for belonging and membership in the U.S. strengthened.

This book shows an inspiring view of Latinas and the power of community organizing and political action. It is a good educational tool for courses that focus on Latinas, community organizing, leadership development, immigration/migration issues, and human rights. Latina readers may find the book empowering. One possible limitation of the book is the lack of a section specifically devoted to discuss the methodology. Also, other considerations may be necessary when reflecting and analyzing what citizenship means to Puerto Rican women. Because Puerto Ricans are born U.S. citizens, their process of developing a sense of belonging to the U.S. may be influenced by colonialism.

Coll's narratives occur at a time when anti-immigrant sentiment is high, and amidst debate about who belongs in the U.S. In a nation that remains undecided and divided regarding the rights to be granted to our undocumented immigrant

population, Coll's work reminds us that among those undocumented immigrants are leaders and contributors to a new American reality who have gained a right to be called citizens.

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Daniel Rasmussen, *American Uprising: The Untold Story of America's Largest Slave Revolt.* Harper Collins, 2011. \$26.99, hardcover.

American Uprising tells the story of the massive 1811 New Orleans slave rebellion, and is one of several highly readable, well-researched new books that chronicle events and lives in African-American history—American history, really—from the perspective of participants themselves. Emphasizing agency, books like Isabel Wilkerson's *The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America's Great Migration* (2010) (reviewed separately in this issue) and Dan Biddle and Murry Rubin's *Tasting Freedom: Octavius Catto and the Battle for Equality in Civil War America* (2010) provide inspiration and substance from the lives of Africans and African descendents who courageously challenged the limits imposed upon them by white America. Like the others, *American Uprising* is written in narrative form and is directed to the popular market, and it is enjoying substantial sales—an indicator that black and white audiences are eager to learn about flesh and blood people who made choices, took risks, accepted rewards with joy, and consequences with dignity.

Adapted from Rasmussen's Harvard senior thesis, the book charts New Orleans' commercial growth as center for slavery and details the violence of the sugar plantation owners determined to control their chattel. This back-breaking work resulted in high mortality among the enslaved, and new workers were purchased rather than born because parents didn't live long enough to reproduce and raise children. In this violent context, Rasmussen traces the development of a conspiratorial ideology among the enslaved that drew on the American, French and Haitian revolutions, and the gathering of a small