



Barrios to Burbs: The Making of the Mexican American Middle Class

Jody Vallejo

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Too frequently, the media and politicians cast Mexican immigrants as a threat to American society. Given America's increasing ethnic diversity and the large size of the Mexican-origin population, an investigation of how Mexican immigrants and their descendants achieve upward mobility and enter the middle class is long overdue. *Barrios to Burbs* offers a new understanding of the Mexican American experience.

Vallejo explores the challenges that accompany rapid social mobility and examines a new indicator of incorporation, a familial obligation to "give back" in social and financial support. She investigates the salience of middle-class Mexican Americans' ethnic identification and details how relationships with poorer coethnics and affluent whites evolve as immigrants and their descendants move into traditionally white middle-class occupations. Disputing the argument that Mexican communities lack high quality resources and social capital that can help Mexican Americans incorporate into the middle class, Vallejo also examines civic participation in ethnic professional associations embedded in ethnic communities.

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