



Latina Politics, Latino Politics: Gender, Culture, and Political Participation in Boston

Carol Hardy-Fanta

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Through an in-depth study of the Latino community in Boston, Carol Hardy-Fanta addresses three key debates in American politics: how to look at the ways in which women and men envision the meaning of politics and political participation; how to understand culture and the political life of expanding immigrant populations; and how to create a more participatory America. The author's interviews with Latinos from Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic, and Central and South America and her participation in community events in North Dorchester, Jamaica Plain, and the South End document the often ignored contribution of Latina women as candidates, political mobilizers, and community organizers. Hardy-Fanta examines critical gender differences in how politics is defined, what strategies Latina women and Latino men use to generate political participation, and how culture and gender interact in the political empowerment of the ethnic communities.

Hardy-Fanta challenges the notion of political apathy among Latinos and presents factors that stimulate political participation. She finds that the vision of politics promoted by Latina women—one based on connectedness, collectivity, community, and consciousness-raising—contrasts sharply with a male political concern for status, hierarchy, and personal opportunity.

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