



# Between Two Nations: The Political Predicament of Latinos in New York City

*Michael Jones-Correa*

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Immigrants come to the United States from all over Latin America in search of better lives. They obtain residency status, find jobs, pay taxes, and they have children who are American citizens by birth; yet decades may go by before they seek citizenship for themselves or become active participants in the American political process. *Between Two Nations* examines the lack of political participation among Latin American immigrants in the United States to determine why so many remain outside the electoral process. Michael Jones-Correa studied the political practices of first-generation immigrants in New York City's multiethnic borough of Queens. Through intensive interviews and participant observation, he found that immigrant participation was stymied both by lack of encouragement to participate and by the requirement to renounce former citizenship, which raised the fear of never being able to return to the country of origin. The hesitation to naturalize as American citizens can extend over decades, leaving immigrants adrift in a political limbo. *Between Two Nations* is the first qualitative study of how new immigrants assimilate into American political life. Jones-Correa reexamines assumptions about Latino politics and the diversity of Latino populations in the United States, about the role of informal politics in immigrant communities, and about gender differences in approaches to political activity.

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