



PROJECT MUSE®

6. Mediating Belonging, Inclusion, and Death

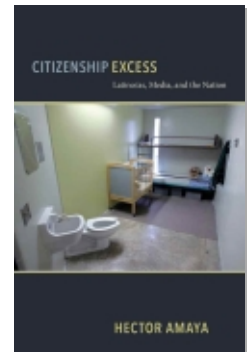
Published by

Amaya, Hector.

Citizenship Excess: Latino/as, Media, and the Nation.

NYU Press, 2013.

Project MUSE. <https://muse.jhu.edu/book/23412>.



➔ For additional information about this book

<https://muse.jhu.edu/book/23412>

Mediating Belonging, Inclusion, and Death

In chapter 5, I engaged with the problem of inclusion and explored it in relation to media industries and labor. As that chapter shows, the inclusion of noncitizen Latinas/os in English-language media is possible only if the fictional narrative rendering of Latinas/os is profitable. As I showed in other chapters, it is much harder for noncitizen Latinas/os to be represented positively in news and political speech. It is, in fact, quite extraordinary. The mainstreaming of nativism of the past two decades has meant that noncitizen Latinas/os can be part of news and political speech only as problems, as threats, and, of course, as foreigners (Ono and Sloop 2002; Santa Ana 2002). This chapter investigates some of the only cases in recent memory in which noncitizen Latinas/os became the positive focus of news media among conservative and moderate media and political speech. The chapter concerns soldiers killed in action during the Iraq War and examines closely the way these soldiers and their deaths were described by journalists and politicians. These descriptions, I show, paved

the way for extraordinary changes to immigration law supported by both parties in Congress. Yet the discourse of politics and citizenship found in these descriptions and in the congressional debates that followed are sobering reminders of the trade-offs required of minorities if they are to be protagonists in narratives of nation.

The invasion of Iraq began the evening of March 20, 2003. Four of the first coalition soldiers to die in Iraq were noncitizens. Marine Lance Corporal José Gutiérrez (killed March 21, 2003, and reported as the first U.S. Army soldier killed) was a native of Guatemala; Marine Lance Corporal Jesús Suárez del Solar (March 27, 2003) and Corporal José Angel Garibay (March 28, 2003) were from Mexico; and Army Private First Class Diego Rincon (March 29, 2003) was from Colombia. Although U.S. public law existed that could eventually give these soldiers posthumous citizenship (8 USC Sec. 1440-1), new bills that would expedite or make automatic the naturalization processes were quickly written.¹ Attesting to the extraordinary times, the new bills were introduced only days after the Iraq invasion had begun, by politicians of the states where these young men had lived. For instance, eleven House representatives from Georgia, home to Diego Rincon, introduced House Resolution 1691 within days of Rincon's death. The same happened at the Senate level, where U.S. Senators Zell Miller (D-GA) and Saxby Chambliss (R-GA) advocated for bill S. 783 on April 3. Legislation giving citizenship to Gutiérrez, Suárez, Garibay, Rincon, and others killed in battle was both bipartisan and backed by enormous public support, including the support of the executive office. This is not surprising because public discussion hailed these Latinas/os as national heroes and civic examples and, thus, as deserving the honor of posthumous citizenship. The key elements of these bills were written into H.R. 1954, also known as the Armed Forces Naturalization Act of 2003.² Besides granting posthumous citizenship to armed forces personnel killed in battle, H.R. 1954 also reduced the qualifying time to apply for citizenship from three years to one year for those nonresidents serving in the military.

This chapter engages with political/juridical illiberalism by presenting and evaluating the political and legal processes surrounding the death of these Latino soldiers. It wrestles with the liberal principle of consent and investigates the political, legal, and discursive reasons for giving posthumous citizenship to the deceased soldiers. Then I use the framework of coloniality to examine how media presented the issue of consent in relationship to American history and armed forces practices. The armed forces are here presented as institutions that inherit the colonial practices

of drafting noncitizens into armed conflicts. Because of this, the armed forces become instruments of illiberalism designed to extract desire, energy, and life from marginalized populations. The concluding section synthesizes findings and proposes that only through a framework of citizenship excess that engages mediation can these events be illuminated.

Governing with Citizenship and Consent

When I have given talks about the research presented in this chapter, I invariably get the question, “Why did these noncitizen Latinas/os enlist?” The question comes from a good place, the assumption that joining the armed forces is the most intimate ritual of national belonging. To most people, it is puzzling that noncitizens would do something that it is often described as an act of love for the nation. Because, most imagine, only love can explain the sacrifices of serving in the military. But our history shows otherwise: First, the majority of those who have risked their lives in war have done so because they have been drafted, and a significant portion of them have been noncitizens. Second, love for the nation is a traditional way of explaining social realities that would otherwise be unseemly. When drafted, individuals are obliged to kill or die for the nation. Calling it sacrifice or love for the nation is simply sweetening the harsh reality of subjection (Alonso 1994, 386). Third, though many people have indeed volunteered to serve, loving the nation is not the exclusive purview of citizens. I believe that coloniality can partly explain these three issues and help us understand first why these noncitizens enlisted and whether enlistment in the armed forces meant that they wished to become citizens.

Coloniality is a type of social and political analysis that places social facts such as legal decisions or historical events into the long frame of modernity (see chapter 2 and 3). Hence, coloniality forces us to do a sort of double-take on research objects, analyzing them against the diachronic backdrop of colonialism’s remnants and against the synchronic pertinent contexts and processes of hegemony. A diachronic glance at non-citizen participation in the U.S. armed forces shows that citizenship has traditionally been a political technology used for the reproduction of the nation-state. As a political technology, citizenship connects immigrants to the armed forces for the simple reason that traditionally the U.S. government has used citizenship (including naturalization) as a political tool to fatten the military. During the Revolutionary War, five thousand blacks

were fighting alongside the Revolutionary forces in the North, with the understanding that freedom from slavery was near (Zinn 2003, 89). During the Texas War, not only Irish immigrants but also Mexican nationals fought on the side of the seceding army (seceding from Mexico). Noncitizen African Americans and Latinas/os fought on both sides of the Civil War (Lopez 1998). Puerto Rico was ceded by Spain on December 10, 1898. Though not yet citizens, the first company of native-born Puerto Ricans was organized in 1899 to join the American Colonial Army. In 1917, during World War I, the needs of the U.S. Army were such that the draft went on targeting immigrant populations. As Nancy Gentile Ford (1997) has argued, in 1918, noncitizens accounted for some 18 percent of the U.S. Army (almost two hundred thousand troops). European nations protested the drafting of their citizens; to calm these nations, the U.S. government quickened the pace of naturalization. In all these cases, the noncitizens were fighting either because they were drafted (Puerto Ricans in World War I, Chinese Americans in the Civil War) or because they voluntarily enlisted to gain citizenship rights (blacks in the Revolutionary War, Irish and Mexicans in the Texas War).

Drafting noncitizens (or giving citizenship to people so that they can be drafted) can easily be argued to be coloniality in practice.³ However, volunteering to join the army, as in the case of these soldiers, adds complexity to the issue because volunteering would seem to be a classic example of liberalism. If liberalism is understood as governance that gives primacy to personal freedom, the best examples of liberalism become those consensual relations between state and subject, such as voluntarism. But voluntarism and consent are not transparent social facts that demonstrate the free will of a subject and her or his willingness to participate in a state-building project. Voluntarism and consent need to be scrutinized, particularly when they are associated with noncitizen Latinas/os, immigrants whose juridical subjectivities have been shaped by transnationalism and marginalization (Pérez 2004, 138, 191, 199). Although clearly they were not coerced into volunteering, the question of why the Latino immigrants enlisted remains open. I propose that the first element of the answer relates to the type of technology of governance that citizenship is vis-à-vis Latino immigrant subjectivities.

As stated in previous chapters, citizenship is governance that relies on the interiorization of legal and political imaginaries. Toby Miller (1993) observes that contemporary societies characteristically use this interiorization, making citizenship an instrument of self-government. He adroitly

writes, “Citizenship is an open technology, a means of transformation ready for definition and disposal in dispersed ways at dispersed sites. . . . It produces a ‘disposition’ on [citizens’] part not to accept the imposition of a particular form of government passively, but to embrace it actively as a collective expression of themselves” (12). Described in this way, besides being a set of political mechanisms affecting Latinas/os, citizenship is an internalized set of dispositions that legitimize and reconstitute broad social structures.

Because this internalized set of dispositions must legitimize, or at least make bearable, ongoing stratifications, they do different work on different communities. In general, Miller proposes, citizenship is a technology of governance that works via the perception of incompleteness (1993, 12). That is, individuals contrast their lives with standards of citizenship and perceive a gap between themselves and the ideal. This gap signals incompleteness and insufficiency and is the subjective motivation for self-improvement and the psychic foundation for the internalization of the law. This general mechanism is at play in immigrant subjectivities, and one of its particular manifestations is the desire to assimilate (when that desire is present) or, as I have argued elsewhere, to perform assimilation (Amaya 2007). The impetus is the ongoing marginalization of Latinas/os in the United States, which questions the civic worth of Latina/o values and lives, producing a large gap between the individual’s self-image and civic ideals. Latina/o immigrants in particular are constantly bullied by legal and cultural norms to occupy subject positions from which the need and desire to assimilate seems logical (Pérez 2004, 48). Marginalized in popular culture, politics, and civic narratives (e.g., U.S. history), Latinas/os may find few incentives to construct public identities that defy assimilation. Citizenship ideals compel immigrant Latinas/os not only to confront their social devaluation but also to legitimize the legal and social prescriptions that predispose immigrants to embracing legal and social norms often deleterious to their well-being. As George Mariscal (1999) writes of his father and generations of Latinas/os, military service has been one such social norm that, he opines, has taken the lives and plundered the psyches of many in our communities.

Miller’s idea of incompleteness gives us a clue as to why noncitizen Latinas/os enlisted, but the issue remains regarding whether their voluntary enlistment should be read as the desire to become U.S. citizens. At stake is whether posthumous citizenship was a way of granting a wish to the deceased Latinas/os or whether it was imposed citizenship. To explore this

question, it is necessary to understand the relationship of naturalization to consent as a legal process and then to evaluate the noncitizens' behaviors in terms of the legal standard of naturalization.

Consent has been central to liberalism from its origins. Early liberalism, linked to the revolutionary decades of France and the United States, emphasized individual freedom (Isin and Wood 1999, viii) and engendered ideas of citizenship that included the individual's free association with the state (Schuck 1998, 20). In "advanced liberalism," citizenship continues to be associated with consent, but the consent of the state to protect the subject is understood as something that can be withdrawn and is thus conditional (*ibid.*, 21). The ideal of consensus has been codified in naturalization law, which polices the process whereby individuals born outside the nation acquire citizenship willingly and only if they fulfill the requirements set by government (U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, USCIS, formerly the Immigration and Naturalization Services, INS). As is implied, naturalization is one of the most clearly contractual processes of the liberal state because the individual willing to be naturalized swears allegiance to the state and the Constitution and undergoes a long, difficult, and expensive (often in the thousands of dollars) legal process. In exchange, the state is to protect and grant rights and privileges to the individual (Tienda 2002, 588).

The legal procedures initiated by members of Congress after the deaths of Gutiérrez, Garibay, and Rincon had the goal of modifying immigration law and producing a simpler (even automatic) postmortem naturalization process for noncitizens killed in battle. With this in mind, Republican House Representative for Georgia John H. Isakson and others introduced bill H.R. 1691 on April 9, 2003. The bill's goal was "to expedite the granting of posthumous citizenship to members of the United States Armed Forces." News media positively reported the introduction of the bill in the House and its quick passage in both the Senate and House on the evening of April 10 (Chu 2003; Fagan 2003; Goldstein and Moreno 2003).⁴ Other bills also were written to address similar issues. For instance, bill H.R. 1850, introduced on April 29 after the death of another Latino (Marine Staff Sergeant Riayan Tejeda) and referred to as the Fairness for America's Heroes Act, was designed to provide immigration benefits to the immediate surviving family (children, wife, parents).⁵ H.R. 1685, introduced in the House on April 9, 2003, also aimed at granting posthumous citizenship and added an amendment to the Immigration and Nationality Act that provided citizenship rights for those military personnel killed by

illness or in combat, as well as their families. In addition, it made this amendment retroactive to September 11, 2001.

Typically, citizenship is given to those (Latina/o) immigrants who have lived in the United States within the boundaries of legality and who have shown not only a respect for U.S. law but also an awareness of the economic and cultural imperatives governing this society as well as the ability to live by them (Glenn 2002, 144–190).⁶ These imperatives are protected by American institutions such as the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS) that have the goal of sustaining a cultural, legal, and economic national constancy or identity. USCIS states that one of the key objectives is to enhance “the educational opportunities in English, Civics, and History for all immigrants of all ages to assist their integration into U.S. society and foster participation in civic activities.”⁷ As a result, naturalization can be seen as a reward for previous actions and also as a leap of faith regarding the quality, legality, and productivity of the individual’s future actions. To most people, these are reasonable provisions, for they try to protect the viability of a society reshaped by new members. At stake is the future of the nation, at least as is imagined by members of government and some interested publics.⁸

However, the cases at hand differ from these legal and theoretical uses of naturalization. The core of H.R. 1691 (as of 8 U.S.C. Sec. 1440-1) is Section 1.d, written as follows: “Documentation of Posthumous Citizenship. If the Director of the Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services approves the request referred to in subsection (c), the Director shall send to the next-of-kin of the person who is *granted citizenship*, a suitable document which states that *the United States considers the person to have been a citizen of the United States at the time of the person’s death*” (emphasis added).⁹ Two things have to be mentioned. First, this bill grants one very peculiar type of citizenship. It is posthumous, thus retroactive (“to have been a citizen of the United States at the time of the person’s death”), but very real citizenship. It is posthumous and retroactive because the legal status of citizenship has to be given to a “person.” The dead cannot enter into the contractual aspects of naturalization. Thus, citizenship needs to be given just before death occurs. It is a very real citizenship (“granted citizenship”) because it occupies a legal location within the range of legal citizenships currently existing in the United States. This range includes two large categories—citizenship by birth and naturalized citizenship—and several important subcategories: felons and ex-felons often lose legal and political rights, including the rights to privacy, movement, and

voting rights; minors belong to a category of citizenship with a limited set of legal, political, and civil rights (Bhabha 2003, 53–59); residents of Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands have a complex set of rights and legal prescriptions tailored for their extraordinary situations (Malavet 2002, 390; Nieto-Phillips 1999, 65; Hoover 2004, 503). Also a tailored category, posthumous citizenship exists in a very peculiar state, one that precludes its bearers from enjoying any personal benefits but that allows them to extend some of the benefits of naturalization to their families, as in the cases analyzed here.

Granting posthumous citizenship to deceased legal residents because of their role in serving the nation may seem to be an exception to the contractual understanding of citizenship. However, it is not. The contractual aspect of citizenship was considered during the debates regarding these bills, particularly when the House and Senate forced deliberations on the type of benefits the families of the dead would enjoy.¹⁰ These deliberations aimed to clarify the details of the naturalization to be given to the war casualties. In general, naturalization is a contract that includes clauses that make the naturalization process of the spouse and parents of the subject being naturalized, for instance, a priority to the USCIS. Simply put, it is easier to get naturalization if you are the parent or spouse of a naturalized citizen. If you are an unmarried, underage offspring of a naturalized citizen, your naturalization is even easier. On June 4, 2003, Congress debated whether these same benefits would be extended to the families and children of the dead soldiers. Although Congress eventually granted benefits to these families, the existence of the debates evidences the state's contractual understanding of *all* naturalization, even posthumous citizenship. Congress, in this case, represents the state and the nation, and Congress's actions legally signify consent. In sum, the state's consent to entering into the contract with these men and their families was important and was treated with legal thoroughness. Given that the subjects were dead, we know that the Latinas/os' consent was not treated legally; however, consent could have been ascertained based on other arguments. With this in mind, I ask, did actions of these noncitizens before their deaths amount to consent? And, if they did not, why is it that so many believed so?

Did They Consent?

Two arguments have to be considered here: First, an argument can be made that the Latinas/os' Oath of Enlistment, required to sign into the

army, constituted a type of consent that signaled that they were agreeing to become citizens. A second argument can be made that the Latinas/os stated that they wanted citizenship and thus the government is simply fulfilling their wishes or their stated wills (with the awareness that an “oral will” is simply not legally binding). The basis for the first argument is that the Oath of Enlistment conveys some important ideas of citizenship. The current oath, written in Title 10 of the U.S. Code and amended on May 5, 1960, reads,

I, _____, do solemnly swear that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; and that I will obey the orders of the President of the United States and the orders of the officers appointed over me, according to regulations and the Uniform Code of Military Justice. So help me God.

With this oath, the enlistee consensually embraces important elements of citizenship, including civic duties such as supporting and defending the Constitution and obeying the president and military officers. As important as these elements of civic conduct are, I argue, they are not equivalent to a citizenship oath. The great majority of green-card holders consensually embrace elements of citizenship (they pay taxes, abide by the law, participate in politics), but this does not mean they want to become citizens. A large percentage of Latino immigrants never become citizens, although they legally could (according to Schuck [1998, 168–169], by 1990, 56 percent of Latinas/os had failed to naturalize). Moreover, the Oath of Enlistment does not require the enlistee to renounce allegiance to other nations, states, or laws or to renounce a foreign citizenship. By contrast, compare the Oath of Enlistment with the Naturalization Oath that military members have to read in order to become citizens. This Naturalization Oath begins with the following: “I hereby declare, on oath, that I absolutely and entirely renounce and abjure all allegiance and fidelity to any foreign prince, potentate, state, or sovereignty, of whom or which I have heretofore been a subject or citizen.”¹¹ When read side by side, these two oaths may resemble each other and signal a strong and willful relationship to the army, but they do not signal the same relationship to the American nation. In the United States, naturalization is a dramatic change of legal identity that means renouncing your past, your previous national allegiances, and the citizenship of your place of origin (Schuck 1998, 169).

Although the Oath of Enlistment cannot be considered a citizenship oath, it is possible that the soldiers had stated their wishes to become citizens and that the state was, in a sense, fulfilling their will. This is a harder issue to clarify. There is evidence that Rincon may have wanted to become a citizen, at least that is what his father told reporters (McMurray 2003). This may indeed be considered an expression of his will, and so perhaps in his case, posthumous citizenship should have been granted. However, there is nothing to suggest that the other soldiers wanted to become citizens. In fact, there are facts that negate the idea that these Latinos/os wanted to become citizens. First, in the cases analyzed here, all of these noncitizens (including Rincon) were green-card holders for more than five years (five years is the amount of time that individuals are required to hold green cards by the INS and USCIS before applying for citizenship) and thus had the option of applying for citizenship before their deaths. Rincon was five years old when his parents came from Colombia and settled in Georgia. Gutiérrez was fourteen when he arrived in California and twenty-two when he was killed. Garibay was only two months old when he arrived to the United States.¹² Suárez was fourteen and was killed at twenty.¹³ What is more, his father, Fernando Suárez del Solar, had repeatedly stated that his son did not want to become a citizen and wished to remain a Mexican citizen. Posthumous citizenship was accepted in the case of Suárez by his next of kin, his wife, to access naturalization rights (Suarez's son was born on U.S. territory and thus was already a citizen by birth).

Although these soldiers' desire for citizenship was legally questionable, elected officials and others interpreted Gutiérrez's, Garibay's, Suarez's, and Rincon's actions as evidence of their wanting citizenship in order to justify their posthumous naturalization. Senators Miller and Cornyn, to name two strong supporters of the posthumous citizenship bills, believed that these soldiers' heroism was related to their wish to become citizens. Other individuals and politicians held similar beliefs, as is evidenced in the June 4, 2003, discussion in Congress.¹⁴ For instance, Rincon's father repeated several times that Diego always wanted to become a citizen. Similarly, M. D. Harmon, writing in a news piece about all the immigrants who were killed, stated that these Marines "hoped to secure their citizenship by their service" (Harmon 2003; Washington Heights family 2003). Guillermo Martínez (2003, 76), writing for *Hispanic* magazine, also interpreted enlistment as evidence of these soldiers' desire to become citizens. This public discussion gave *meaning* to the soldiers' rationale for enlisting

and fighting and interpreted their actions prior to their deaths as signaling that they wanted citizenship. Instead of consent, voluntary enlistment became evidence of desire to be citizens. This was a mistake. As shown earlier, there are no legal reasons to believe that enlisting in the army is equal to consenting to be naturalized (see the discussion on the Oath of Enlistment). Moreover, even if these interpretations were correct in some cases (maybe in Rincon's case), they cannot stand in for legal consent (an oral will is not a legal will). However, these interpretations clue us in to an ideology that reproduces existing racial and national fantasies about the military. In these fantasies, the military is an honorable liberal institution populated by volunteers wishing to serve the nation. What most of the interpretations of these soldiers' actions left out sheds light on what was left in: they failed to locate posthumous citizenship within the overall strategy by the state to secure ongoing voluntary enlistment by noncitizens.¹⁵ Moreover, they failed to address the social, cultural, economic, and political reasons that make voluntary enlistment an important life choice for noncitizen Latinas/os in America.

The Armed Forces Naturalization Act of 2003 did more than grant posthumous citizenship to noncitizen Latino war casualties. It also allowed for the expedited naturalization of noncitizens serving in the military. Both modifications to immigration law are part of the overall strategy post-9/11 to secure military enlistment. The idea of expedited naturalization came from an initiative by President George W. Bush, who, on July 3, 2002, signed an executive order to this effect. This order allowed noncitizens serving in the armed forces to apply for citizenship more quickly. The waiting time (typically five years) was reduced to one year. This law has the goal, openly discussed by the enlistment services of the armed forces, of making the military more attractive to noncitizens at times when reaching enlistment goals is a challenge (the military seems less attractive since the Iraq invasion and occupation). According to the latest estimates, forty-two thousand noncitizens (roughly 2 percent of the armed forces) currently serve in different branches of the Army, Navy, Air Force and Civil Guard, (Gamboa 2003). Since July 3, 2002, more than ten thousand of these service members have applied for expedited citizenship. An irony and a deep contradiction that still prevails is that if they were to die in combat, these noncitizen soldiers would be awarded posthumous citizenship immediately.

There is evidence that expedited naturalization succeeded at bringing noncitizens to the armed forces. Sergeant First Class Rodolfo Abalos,

who recruits for the armed forces, comments on the point: "That's another thing we can offer, especially to Asians who want to become citizens." Abalos, born in the Philippines, continues: "I tell them about how they can get their citizenship a lot faster joining the Army, compared to being a civilian and waiting for five years." Joseph Macaraeg, a Filipino resident who enlisted in 2003, hoped that his daughter would grow up as a citizen. In consonance with Abalos, Macaraeg said, "I'm always thinking about my daughter" (Kong 2003). Moreover, many Mexicans, hearing about President Bush's resolution, made inquiries to the American embassy in Mexico City regarding this quick method of acquiring citizenship. The embassy was forced to place a notice on its webpage stating that it was false that the United States was offering citizenship in exchange for enlistment (Ferriss 2003). All these legal redefinitions of immigration policy have allowed the armed forces to offer potential recruits an extra incentive to join up.

In spite of the clearly utilitarian way that naturalization has been used by the U.S. government to attract noncitizens, public discussions of the military continue to reproduce the suspicious notion that volunteers populate the armed forces. Voluntarism here is a reworking of the consensus principle at the level of the military, a notion central to the idea of the citizen-soldier and to the argument that soldiering is a type of civics. Leo Braudy (2003) has observed that, in a time of war, when the sovereignty of the nation is at stake, the ideal citizen often becomes discursively linked to the soldier, an ideal character that inhabits military narratives in which his civic qualities of heroism, sacrifice, and love for the nation are displayed.¹⁶ However, for the idea of the citizen-soldier to work as a model of ethical behavior, it is required that we imagine the individual's actions as voluntary. Political liberalism, after all, sits atop humanist liberalism and its emphasis on individualism, freedom, and the power of the will to guide the self toward betterment.

Since 1973, the U.S. armed forces have relied on volunteers; because of this, the targeting of the poor and nonwhite communities can more easily be hidden from public scrutiny. *Voluntarism obscures the illiberal, racialized, and classed ways the American military works*; voluntarism veils the institutional practices that have secured the military's ability to attract personnel, such as the locations for recruitment offices in our middle- and lower-class neighborhoods (see Palaima 2004; Seeley 2004; Lovato 2005)¹⁷ or the targeting of some populations or geographical areas over others (Crawley 2003). The Department of Defense recognizes the South,

which is home to a huge minority population, as a great enlistment source and preferred target of recruiters and military advertisers (Sackett and Mavor 2004, 64). Enlistment, in short, is all about targeting some, not all.

In spite of the relevance of nationalism in media and politics, most Americans embrace discourses and practices of privilege that ignore enlistment practices and the unfair connection between enlistment, race, and class. Nathaniel Fick enacted this privilege in July 20, 2004, by publishing an article in the *New York Times* in which he criticized the draft proposal. In it, he argues against the notion that racial minorities and the poor constitute the bulk of the volunteer army. Fick, a former Marine captain who served in Afghanistan and Iraq, proudly remarks that his soldiers came “from virtually every part of the socio-economic spectrum.” Though he observes that blacks make up 19 percent of the armed forces, compared to 13 percent of the population, Latinas/os, he misinforms us, are underrepresented in the military. To support his argument, he points out that Latinas/os make up 11 percent of the armed forces, compared to 13.3 percent of the population. Regardless of the merits of Fick’s arguments, his “socio-economic” analysis is faulty (I show why shortly) but publishable, partly because Fick has an educational and class background that allows him media access. He graduated from Dartmouth, one of the most selective and expensive liberal arts universities in the United States, and now he can exercise his privilege by having some control over the discourse of honor, citizenship, military service, and race.

Fick’s is a common defense of voluntarism that in the same breath romanticizes the civic attributes of the citizen-soldier while highlighting the liberal value of choice. Although this position may be correct in imagining that choice is at play in the enlistment of people like Fick, to whom privilege lends choice, in America, choices are stratified. Because of this, the armed forces have mostly been the “choice” of poor whites, racial and ethnic minorities, and increasingly, noncitizens. Let us briefly consider data on Latinas/os in the military. Given the growth of the Latino population, the Department of Defense is becoming more interested in learning to target Latina/o recruits (Hattiangadi, Lee, and Quester 2004). This includes noncitizen Latinas/os, who, according to the 2000 census, numbered 10.2 million. Already Latinas/os account for 11 percent of the armed forces in general, but they compose 13.6 percent of the Marines (the most risky of the branches) and 17.7 percent of all personnel that handle weapons. Considering that Latinas/os amount only to 9.6 percent of the U.S. population with the educational and legal credentials to enlist (only citizens and

green-card holders with high school diplomas can serve), it is clear that Latinas/os are overrepresented in the armed forces in general and hugely overrepresented in risk positions. In fact, since 2000, Latinas/os have exceeded the proportion of black recruits in the Marines (Hattiangadi, Lee, and Quester 2004, 19). This trend seems likely to continue if we consider that according to a report by the CNA Corporation (a nonprofit research organization used by the Department of Defense to investigate a variety of issues in the military), Latinas/os have the highest active-duty propensity of any racial group or ethnicity. That is, Latinas/os are more likely to see enlistment as attractive than others: "For example, male high school senior propensities were 44 percent for Hispanics, 36 percent for blacks, and 24 percent for whites. For male high school graduates who had not gone on to college, propensities were 21 percent for Hispanics, 18 percent for blacks, and 7 percent for whites" (*ibid.*, 20). Those who were more likely to enlist cited money for education and job training as the two most important reasons to enlist. Aware of these motivations, recruiters aggressively target Latino communities, and the Army's advertising, in a concerted effort to maintain the number of military enlistees, does the same (Moniz 1999; Leyva 2003). Duty propensity numbers are hardly surprising considering the poverty levels among Latinas/os in comparison to the poverty levels among whites. According to the U.S. Census, in 2000, 22.8 percent of Latinas/os and 8 percent of whites lived under the poverty line. Although it is not my intention to make a sociological correlation between poverty and duty propensity, it is hard not to notice the following: duty propensity for Latino males who do not go to college is 21 percent. The poverty level among Latinas/os is 22.8 percent. Duty propensity for white males who do not go to college is 7 percent. The poverty level among whites is 8 percent. The similarity in both sets of numbers opens the possibility for arguing that duty propensity is directly proportional to poverty levels. Finally, green-card holders can serve in the military and currently account for 2.6 percent of the armed forces, numbering sixty-five hundred in the Marines (Hattiangadi, Lee, and Quester 2004, 16).

These data force us to consider the fact that the armed forces are structured in a racialized and classed fashion and that the notion of a volunteer army is, at best, a lazy idea, if not an outright fantasy. This notion fails to acknowledge the social, economic, and cultural pressures that the poor and nonwhites disproportionately face and that make palatable the risks of service. In light of this, it is important to reconsider the validity of the belief in the United States' volunteer army. The idea of voluntarism is a

cornerstone of illiberalism in America that fools most people into believing that we have an army of choice; it propagates the idea of the citizen-soldier while hiding the racist and classist way in which such ideology operates. As it stands, the “majority” is able to obscure the racialization of military service, much in the same way that it has been able to make granting of naturalization to dead Latinas/os seem perfectly logical. In both cases, citizenship and naturalization are used as tools for governance embedded in the ongoing project of securing the state.

The actions of these noncitizens before their deaths did not amount to consent to becoming American citizens. This lack of consent, I argue, should be relevant to Latinas/os because of our history in this nation as colonial subjects and, later, as subjects of immigration forced by asymmetrical capitalistic relations to exist between the nation’s center and its periphery. Questioning the uses of citizenship and naturalization regarding Latinas/os also forces us to understand the gap existing between citizenship as an idealized political category deployed within liberalism to justify the state and the historical applications of citizenship law and its effects on Latina/o lives. Moreover, this gap is salient for Latinas/os because it shapes what Raymond Rocco calls the “articulation between [Latina/o] communities and the major institutions of power” (2002, 7), in this case, the armed forces and Congress.

As important as is detailing the legal and political processes surrounding the granting of posthumous citizenship, these political and legal events gained popular recognition and legitimacy because of the way they were mediated. In the following section, I examine the news coverage of these issues and find that majoritarian news media relied on problematic characterizations of the soldiers’ lives, a discursive tactic that illustrates synchronic and diachronic evidence of coloniality in discourse.

Mediating War and Death

The reporting of the noncitizen Latino soldiers killed in Iraq coincided with the beginning of the war, and their heavy mediation was a structural push for consensus. The deaths became politically profitable when Congress introduced new bills that would grant the deceased soldiers posthumous citizenship.¹⁸ The press loved this move by Congress and reported extensively and positively on it, praising the quick passage of the bills in both the Senate and the House. In less than three weeks (Gutiérrez was killed on March 21, and the bills were approved on April 10), the

deceased soldiers had become American heroes. In this section, I want first to analyze the mainstream coverage that helped define these events to the American people and second to analyze these congressional moves as performances of gender and nationalism. Both mainstream news coverage and the performance of Congress had a similar political and discursive basis, and together, these institutions worked toward securing support for the invasion of Iraq.

An analysis of news reports and speeches by politicians quickly reveals patterns worth mentioning that shed light on the type of political capital that the events could yield. Take Senator Miller, who stated, “These non-citizen soldiers have given the ultimate sacrifice to their adopted country, and we are free today because of their bravery and their loyalty” (qtd. in Fagan 2003). Or consider Vernardette Ramirez Broyles, who stated in the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* (2003), “Many were moved to tears by Diego’s earnest vitality, by his father’s humble dignity and, most of all, by the fact that this young man gave his life for a country of which he had only dreamed of becoming a citizen.” Besides giving their lives for the nation, these Latinas/os are examples of patriotism and citizenship. As Michael Buchelew (2003) wrote, “When I think of patriotism, I think of people who don’t tell us how patriotic they are. They just do it without trying to shove it in our faces as some sort of bragging-rights contest. People such as Diego Rincon. . . . If everybody lived up to their brand of patriotism, I think the United States would be a better place.” Similarly, Rick Harvill (2003) described Rincon in patriotic terms: “You understood that being an American is a matter of the heart; and you [Rincon], our friend, our brother and our son, had an American’s heart when you died. You died not in vain, but with courage and commitment and honor. As an American.” Taken as a whole, the texts that appeared in the wake of these soldiers’ deaths constructed a metanarrative of nationalism that communicated the following: these noncitizen Latinas/os have shown their “love” for their “adopted country” by “serving” the armed forces and “sacrificing” their lives for our “freedom” and for the “nation.” Moreover, others should learn from these soldiers, for they have taught us the hard lesson that citizenship means service and sacrifice. Taken as a whole, these mediated texts were also invested in giving meaning to the deaths of these Latinas/os in ways that could preserve the nation and make American citizens the beneficiaries of the discourse surrounding their deaths.

Nationalism here works as a space of identification where personal narratives mediate identity and where biographies (as well as eulogies)

become perfect vehicles for enumerating the characteristics of the national and ideal citizen. Within this framework, the preferred narrative used to describe U.S. subjects is not unusual; it replicates those narratives used to describe almost every killed soldier, regardless of national origin, race, or gender. What is particular to the Latino cases is the fact that the nationalistic narrative severely simplified the complexity of the immigrant experience with regard to nation and the particularity of these soldiers' lives, which unfolded both abroad and in America.

This simplification of social events and realities, a requirement of the linguistic market, allows for the use of immigrant voices for radical purposes, such as support of the war. It is thus not surprising that two of the most conservative voices that wrote about these Latinas/os used their stories to shame pro-peace American citizens. M. D. Harmon (*Portland Press Herald*, April 7, 2003), after a long argument against those who opposed the war, ends his piece as follows: "It is not strange that the first two casualties in Gulf War II were foreigners serving in the Marines who hoped to secure their citizenship by their service. They have it now, and it is no less honorable for being posthumous. Indeed, such men honor us. Perhaps we will even begin to comprehend 'honor' again, as well." Ramirez Broyles (2003) emphatically argued that Rincon "has put to shame many native-born U.S. citizens," especially those who have opposed the war and used their rights against the nation. Such uses of immigrant experiences contradict Latino reality. According to 2003 polls before the war, 51 percent of foreign-born Latinas/os opposed the war in Iraq without the support of the UN. By 2004, in California, 69 percent of Latinas/os opposed the war (Field Research Corporation 2004).

Besides the radical uses of Latino experience, the simplification of these soldiers' lives to a narrative of military heroics constituted a discursive space constructed at the expense of silencing critical aspects of the immigrant experience. For instance, even in the instances when reporters and politicians addressed the lives of poverty and struggle that these immigrants had to endure, this address reconstituted the fantasy of America as an immigrant nation where everyone has a chance at fulfilling the American dream.¹⁹ The *San Diego Union-Tribune* published on the Opinion page one such example:

Consider Jose Gutierrez [*sic*], one of the Marines from San Diego who died in combat in the first days of the fighting. A 22-year-old lance corporal, Gutierrez was assigned to the 1st Marine Division headquartered

at Camp Pendleton. Like many others in San Diego's large Latino population, Gutierrez was penniless when he arrived here from Guatemala as a teenager. For him, the military provided an opportunity for a better life—and an opportunity to serve his newfound country. The public memorial service for him will be only one of several planned in Southern California to pay tribute to the sacrifices of local service personnel. (War's bitter taste 2003)

The reader learns Gutiérrez's age, his origin, and his economic situation. More important, the reader learns that the military was the institutional vehicle for him to reach "a better life." Here, the military stands for the American dream, allowing Gutiérrez to express his desire to achieve the "dream" while "serving" his "newfound" country. Nowhere does the reader learn that Gutiérrez grew up as an orphan, that he was raised in several foster homes, and that it is more likely that his state of economic and racial destitution forced him into the military, killing him at the age of twenty-two.

Gutiérrez's brief biography is not unique, nor is the way the military was depicted in these narratives as a savior institution. According to Farah Stockman (*Boston Globe*, April 6, 2003), for Gutiérrez, "the military was a way to gain respect and to show gratitude to the United States." Even Amy Goldstein and Sylvia Moreno (*Washington Post*, April 7, 2003), who have the distinction of writing one of the most comprehensive pieces on the matter, write of the soldiers, "As they explained it to their families, the attraction is a blend of wanderlust, economic aspirations and adoptive patriotism. . . . This cadre of immigrants, now missing or dead, talked of an indelible pride in the armed services, in the nation's elemental values." Though Goldstein and Moreno more critically analyze the economic and patriotic factors that contribute to a decision to enlist and provide lengthier biographies of the soldiers, they retain the basic metanarrative of nationalism that flattens the diverse and complex immigrant experience into an ethnocentric fantasy in which the nation (the military here serves metonymically as the nation) is the object of devotion, well deserving of the sacrifice of all its subjects.

Judging by the frequency of this ethnocentric fantasy (practically every news item that presented a biography of one of the soldiers presented a version of this ideological metanarrative), it rang true with many Americans. In this fantasy, Latino immigrants seek the armed forces for subjective reasons, to "gain respect and to show gratitude," or for "wanderlust,"

“patriotism,” and “pride.” Even when economic need is insinuated, it is framed as a subjective need or “aspiration.”

To function, these narratives must strip away important parts of the soldiers’ histories and fit biographical data to a nationalistic script. This script is burdened with an intrinsic paradox of nation: as Benedict Anderson (1991) suggests, while the nation is built on the idea of a horizontal community, society is not. In America, although the semantic structure of the nation has always pushed forward the idea of equality, foundational economic and political structures have deferred this reality from existing.

This paradox has definite textual characteristics that, I argue, shed light on the type of “ideal citizen” Latinas/os can play in the American narrative of nation today. According to Lauren Berlant, simplifying the understanding of citizenship has a structural function, which is to make citizenship usable for nationalism. Berlant’s (1997) work provides a psychoanalytic and feminist approach to citizenship amenable to theorizing gender, sexual, and racial marginalities in the national semiotic landscape. She sees citizenship as a legal and cultural category that in the United States has been used to construct a national identity that can help the process of governance. Her scathing critique of contemporary America is based on the understanding that our “knowledge cultures,” which include mass media, have constructed mythologies of citizenship in which the ideal citizen is often depicted as what she calls the “infantile citizen.” This discursive and narrative construct, which Berlant finds in popular films such as *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington* and television shows such as *The Simpsons*, teaches the viewer to embrace a way of being civic that is potentially prejudicial to society. Berlant notices that this infantile citizen, devoid of history and opposed to critical engagement with reality, is a common figure of political writing in U.S. history:

The infantile citizen of the United States has appeared in political writing about the nation at least since Tocqueville wrote, in *Democracy in America*, that while citizens should be encouraged to love the nation the way they do their families and their fathers, democracies can also produce a special form of tyranny that makes citizens like children, infantilized, passive, and overdependent on the “immense tutelary power” of the state. (1997, 27)

The infantile citizen is a popular representation of civics for it allows individuals to define their affective and intellectual relationship to the

nation in terms of simplistic nationalism, mainstream social identity, and normalized behavior, much in the same way that the metanarrative of citizenship constructed the dead Latino soldiers as ideal patriotic citizens. Let us remember that most media described the deceased as Latino and American heroes who “sacrificed” their lives for their adopted nation. And similar to the way that most reporters and legislators admired these soldiers, Berlant notices that “adult citizens” nostalgically admire infantile citizenship, for it reminds them of a time when they were also “‘unknowing’ and believed in the capacity of the nation to be practically utopian” (1997, 29). While the reality of the nation may challenge any utopian vision of the present or of history, the infantile citizen is one who still believes, regardless of life experiences that should have taught him or her better. In the case of the Latino soldiers, these experiences include living as members of an economically challenged and culturally marginalized racial minority. Nevertheless, these immigrants are narrativized as embracing patriotism and naively trusting in the metanarratives of development, justice, and modernity advertised in political discourse and the national imaginary. The type of citizen produced by such narratives is no longer Latino or immigrant, for he or she is without history or a critical understanding of reality; the infantile citizen is moved only by emotion and intellectual simplicity.

Berlant identifies infantile citizenship in popular narratives; however, narratives about immigrants play a similar role in American society, for, as Berlant reminds us, they help constitute nationalism by providing an opportunity for mainstream America, in its classed, gendered, and racialized constitution, to gaze at a romantic rendition of the American myth. In this myth, immigrants come to the United States seeking and finding opportunities; this makes them love the nation and renders them willing to make the “ultimate sacrifice” for it. Commenting on similar uses of the immigrant experience for a nationalist agenda, Berlant writes, “immigrant discourse is a central technology for the reproduction of patriotic nationalism . . . because the immigrant is defined as *someone who desires America*” (1997, 195). As Berlant suggests, infantile citizenship also fosters consensus, because it is a model of citizenship that limits our critical engagement with reality and history, although this happens, in our case, at the expense of publicly discussing the immigrant experience as one of destitution.

I argue that the media’s systematic simplifications and naive biographies of the soldiers’ lives are renditions of the narrative of the infantile

citizen, and this fact helps explain the interpretive and historiographical consensus reached thanks to their deployment. In the instances of discourse I have analyzed, the Latinas/os were treated like “ideal citizens” and as “adopted” children of the nation. Harrivell, quoted earlier, describes Rincon as “our brother” who “had an American’s heart.” New York City mayor Michael Bloomberg spoke of Marine Staff Sergeant Tejada, a Dominican citizen who also died in Iraq, as giving his life “for his adopted nation” (Bloomberg, at funeral, praises marine sergeant 2003). Tejada and the other noncitizens, construed as adopted children, become exemplars because of their behavior but also because they can help the nation “raise” the nation’s real children. Ramirez Broyles (2003) brings up this more dramatic description of the American family when she writes that Rincon “has put to shame many native-born U.S. citizens. Like the spoiled offspring of parents who have given them too much and demanded too little in return, some Americans used their First Amendment rights to express contempt for our leaders and our country during the war in Iraq.”

The infantilization of these Latinas/os explains the structuring of the narratives, biographies, and discourses regarding these soldiers. More explicitly, it explains why the life histories of the noncitizen soldiers were stripped of all critical content and were fitted into narratives of nationalism, in which an ethnocentric fantasy of the nation as the object of love and devotion was central. The sharing of this ethnocentric fantasy built a sphere of intimacy, an imagined community based on feeling, that was mediated by narratives of Latino immigrants as ideal objects to be gazed at and admired. Functioning as objects of admiration, the Latinas/os provided a service to the nation that far exceeded their military service and their sacrificial deaths. They became “heroes” in a narrative of patriotism and “others” that could be gazed at from afar; they are adopted children born out of displacement, whose destitution and uprooting must be hidden, just one more secret that the family must keep quiet in order to remain united.

To make matters worse, these particularly troubling mediations had the effect of legitimizing the nonconsensual naturalization of the soldiers. This effect painfully echoes the beginning of Latino history in the United States, which is characterized by the imposition of citizenship. The two most obvious cases, and the ones that underscore the legal or illegal status of most Latinas/os in America, are the histories of Mexicans and Puerto Ricans, who first became American citizens via U.S. imperial expansion.

Mexicans were “assimilated” into the American polis during the war of 1846–1848 after Mexico was forced to sign the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. This treaty also gave U.S. citizenship to everyone living in the territories of New Mexico, Nevada, Colorado, California, Arizona, and Texas.

Puerto Rico was annexed by the United States in 1898. Drawing on arguments about the racial and educational composition of Puerto Ricans, the U.S. government denied American citizenship to Puerto Ricans, giving them Puerto Rican citizenship in 1900. This did not mean that Puerto Rico was independent; it was more a reflection of the conflicting ideas that the U.S. government had regarding these new subjects (Nieto-Phillips 1999, 58–64). In 1909, President Theodore Roosevelt ran on a platform that included the proposal of giving Puerto Ricans American citizenship. This only spurred new debates about the racial and educational character of Puerto Ricans. Representative Atterson Walden Rucker of Colorado stated, “The English language was scarcely known in the island [in 1898], and . . . 87 percent of the million people could neither read nor write their own language; . . . and it can be furthermore fairly said that 60 percent of these native voters are colored people” (qtd. in Nieto-Phillips 1999, 63). Echoing debates regarding Mexicans in the Southwest, Congress assessed the right of Puerto Ricans to become citizens on the basis of race and culture. Citizenship was again denied. In 1917, President Woodrow Wilson and Congress made the decision to naturalize Puerto Ricans through the Jones Act, quickly drafting sixty thousand to fight on the European front. As many Puerto Ricans had feared, the citizenship they got was a second-class citizenship that did not allow them to participate in federal politics or to receive the economic benefits of statehood (Nieto-Phillips 1999, 64; De Genova and Ramos-Zayas 2003, 8).

The cases of Mexicans and Puerto Ricans shed light on the historical impact of citizenship law on Latina/o communities, particularly when related to naturalization and consent. Naturalization cannot be seen as simply a privilege or an honor. Consent is important, particularly for Latinas/os, many of whom choose not to become citizens, not to enter into the contract, even though they may qualify. What is more, when imposed, as the history of American imperialism shows, naturalization is a more complex process. It does not only signal the accessing of citizenship rights; in fact, in the cases reviewed, most political rights are not available to the naturalized citizen for a long time. Without irony, I must remark that the same was true for the Iraq War soldiers who received posthumous citizenship. Moreover, in the cases of Mexicans and Puerto Ricans,

imposed naturalization was part of processes of territorial, economic, and labor appropriations by the racial, cultural, and class majorities. Again, without irony, I must remark the obvious. The U.S. government, as well as the great majority of Americans (the fraternity of raced and classed individuals), have appropriated not only the physical bodies of these non-citizens, their lives, but also their cultural memories, which are now recast in a national history structured by race, gender, and class in which Latino immigrants are often defined as opposite from the economic and cultural ideals of the ethno-racially white majority. Imposed naturalization is an illiberal practice of citizenship that, I argue, should be rejected by Latinas/os.²⁰

The discourse that gives way to the equation “immigrant = infantile citizen” is rooted in the same system of coloniality that has engendered citizenship laws and enlistment practices. This discourse engenders and energizes ethnocentric fantasies that occlude actual legal and enlistment practices, which can then be reproduced generation after generation without political fallout. As I argued earlier, the Latino soldiers did not consent to citizenship, and the assumption of consent could only be supported by an ethnocentric fantasy.

The Discourse of Nationalism and Administration

The metanarratives of nationalism and the ethnocentric fantasy are bound together and produce truths that hail an imagined community of definite racial and political filiations. In this section, I address this community and the urgency of its actions, including instances of speech, which is social practice (Bourdieu 1991, 37), and governance, particularly legislative practices. Urgency of action, particularly in acts of institutions, hint at the particular type of performance that Congress may use to reconstitute its power. By urgency I mean to suggest an organization of priorities that give individuals immediate courses of action. Besides establishing priorities, urgency relates to self-definition because things become urgent when their absence is perceived to challenge self-understanding. In this case, Congress’s performance of the discourses of nationalism and citizenship involved “looking at” Latinas/os; it was highly public; it was discussed in local and national media by highly ranked officials; and it had the goal of creating law. The central characters of this performance were members of Congress who, with little or no direct pressure from publics or activists, volunteered to sponsor bills that would change immigration law. This is

historically extraordinary, as the rest of this book demonstrates. But these were extraordinary times, and Americans' self-understanding was challenged by these unusual events. That the first soldier killed in battle was Gutiérrez was perhaps a historical improbability, but it became a social fact and a news item. The actions that ensued after his death can be read as attempts to restabilize America's identity by following discursive and procedural tactics that had the effect of regaining the virility of American nationalism while reconstituting racial differences.

Leo Braudy has pointed out that the citizen and the soldier are mutually constituted historical constructs, particularly relevant during the republican revolutions of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries but also meaningful today, as our cases show (2003, 246–255). The idea of the citizen-soldier proposed that military masculinity, which emphasized self-sacrifice and responsibility to the nation, could serve as a general model for citizenship. Beyond the transference of values from soldiering to civics, the citizen-soldier model also served as an early model for community. Much in the way soldiers established a fraternity based on common enemies and the necessity to survive, early citizenship was made possible by the need to form coalitions against designated racial others. Class differences between the wealthy aristocracy and the rest of the white population in eighteenth-century America, for instance, were “negotiated” so that the lower and middle white classes would help the aristocracy to police and subdue native and black communities and their ongoing insurrections. These negotiations were complex and required the constitution, on the one hand, of the discourses of racism and, on the other, of the structuring of ideas of whiteness, nationality, and citizenship that could serve as a basis for community.

Dana Nelson (1998) observes that establishing a fraternity of citizens during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was quite challenging. Individuals, in this case, white men, had to interact as citizens and as competitors and members of different classes. In spite of the antagonistic nature of these interactions, they constructed a community centered mostly on the abstract idea of nation. As extraordinary as nationalism's ability to unite individuals under the single aegis of the nation is, it is equally remarkable that this fraternity was built between commercial, political, and class competitors, as well as between ethnic others (Dutch, British, Scottish, etc.). These differences, Nelson posits, were sublimated in the category of “white manhood,” which became coterminous in early America with citizenship. White manhood was a useful category for unity, for it

abstracted men from their local specificities and bound them to a general identity that could foster capitalism. Other benefits accrued in whiteness. Because of its abstraction and placelessness, whiteness was the perfect invisible standpoint from which to wield “objectivity,” “reason,” and “justice,” central elements in the idealized view of democracy. Whiteness, a placeless category of which members have no spontaneous awareness, became associated with valuefree, objective, and equitable rationality and government: the ideal Law. “When white, there is no sense of belonging to a specific group, so the group itself always remains outside the frame of reference, is never referred to as a group” (Nelson 1998, 10).

The abstract category of white manhood secured fraternity when its members turned their warring, legislative, and epistemological impulses toward others. By fighting racial others (chiefly natives, blacks, and Mexicans), controlling sexual others (through sciences such as gynecology and psychology), and producing institutions for administering and knowing others, the community of white men found kinship and belonging (Nelson 1998, 17). Nelson defines “altero-referentiality” as the process of looking at the Other in order to establish fraternity with people who occupy the same standpoint, in this case white men. Military (and terrorist) campaigns, popular culture, administration, and scientific enterprises (ethnology and gynecology) converged in the goal of government to produce a community of equals, with enough room for class, gender, and racial exploitation. Altero-referentiality is then a historical manifestation of a power schema invested in carving out locations from which it is possible to “truthfully” legitimate the stratification of races and sexes.

Although Nelson only briefly discusses recent examples of altero-referentiality, there are good reasons to believe that her basic observations are applicable to our analysis, particularly when we consider the permanence of the racial and sexual systems that give meaning and structure to Congress. Briefly, I want to bring to your attention the elements of our case that are homologous to Nelson’s insights and that can help bridge the distance between our case and her ideas: masculinity and race.

An easy lesson to be learned from the popularity of war genres in America is that the soldier is one of the preferred ways of imagining citizenship. Since the invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq, and thanks to our media system, this preference has become hegemonic and has reenergized the link between nationalism and masculinity. In times of war, the fantasy of nationalism relies on a process of narrative identification whereby the actions of soldiers are understood as actions of the community of citizens.

In the grammar of nation, the soldier becomes a synecdoche that stands for the fraternity of citizens, who fancy themselves heroic, patriotic, and courageous through the sinister identification with the soldier. In the cases we are examining, this synecdoche is complicated by the legal and ethnic status of the soldiers. Their nationality and race hinders easy identification unless the granting of posthumous citizenship is placed within the narrative. This narrative tactic was widely used and successful, for people were able to imagine these soldiers “Americans at heart” and true patriots. The other option is unsavory. In the American mythology of citizenship, it would be hard to acknowledge that these Mexicans, Salvadorians, Dominicans, and Puerto Ricans were standing for American citizens; this figure of speech, of course, is too close to the grammar of imperialism, which contradicts the regime of the nation. Beyond that, because the soldier also stands for masculine citizenship, this synecdoche carries gender connotations: what type of manliness can America have if those who are performing its masculinity are foreigners?

To make sense of these questions, I want to point out that masculinity is not a monolithic category. As R. W. Connell reminds us, masculinity exists in a system and a hierarchy that is composed, at the very least, of the following four typologies: hegemonic masculinity, which acts as a cultural ideal that exemplifies all the qualities required to preserve patriarchy; subordinating masculinity, exemplified by homosexual masculinities, which is low in the hierarchy and thus subjugated; complicit masculinity, which is the broadest category and comprises a multitude of styles of being masculine, all of which reconstitute hegemonic cultural ideals of the masculine; lastly, marginalized masculinity, which is exemplified by race and plays the role of reconstituting social hierarchies and of supporting hegemonic masculinities (Connell 1995, 76–81). Given the context of our discussion, it is easy to recognize that most of the Congresspeople and journalists who advocated the posthumous naturalization of the Latino soldiers were enacting complicit masculinities (as they have for the most part since the beginning of the war) that glorified the traits of hegemonic masculinity, presently associated with the military, violence, sacrifice, gun culture, imperialism, oppression, body toughness, and unilateralism. Patriarchy, closely bound here to racial supremacy and imperial design, depends on this glorification, which happened to have Latino noncitizens at its center.

What makes complicit the writings and words of politicians and journalists is the way a racial patriarchy is reconstituted through textuality

and institutional actions. For instance, reporting on Rincon's burial, Nora Achrati, a woman and the performer of complicit masculinity, writes in the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* (April 11, 2003), "[Rincon's] brother, Fabian, told the 500 mourners packed into the Conyers Seventh-day Adventist Church that the suicide bomber was a 'coward' who should 'burn in hell for what he did.'" At a time of high emotion and pain, Achrati chooses to use Fabian Rincon's gendered description of the enemy ("coward") to inform readers of the hierarchy of masculinity that she values, and with the religious inflection, she also communicates the hierarchy of peoples that she values. Although this example may be subtle, practically every report and political speech on these men highlighted their affiliation to hegemonic masculinity by way of their military behavior, their honorable lives, their sacrifice, their willingness to sacrifice, and their toughness.

But do not think that because Latinas/os were used to reconstitute hegemonic masculinity these men were invited into the hegemonic winners' circle. They were "tools" that conveyed nationalistic values, while sustaining racial and economic hierarchies. Valerie Alvord, writing for *USA Today* (April 9, 2003) exemplifies this when she writes,

Some of the families of these servicemen killed in the war in Iraq want them buried as citizens, which they can become if their families apply for it. "My son is dead, and I'm broken inside," says Jorge Rincon of Conyers, Ga. His son, Army Pfc. Diego Rincon, came to the USA from Colombia as a youngster. He was killed March 29 in a suicide bombing attack. His funeral is Thursday.

"The only thing that keeps me going now is to make sure that he's buried as an American," says Rincon. "That will be my dream come true." Other families feel the same and are taking advantage of a presidential order last year that allows relatives of slain troops to apply for posthumous citizenship. The gesture carries no additional financial benefits for surviving relatives.

Notice Alvord's quick dismissal of Rincon's father's state of despair ("I'm broken inside") in exchange for the ethnocentric fantasy in which citizenship for his slain son is the father's "dream." She continues this bizarre representation of absolute pain (through the lens of infantile citizenship) by suggesting that other families have the same dream, a dream that comes without social and economic benefits. It is an altruistic dream that places

the immigrants as naive givers and not as structurally dispossessed. In addition, Alvord portrays these Latino families as looking forward to “taking advantage” of a government decree, thereby shifting attention away from the pain these families are enduring and away from the fact that, to many people including myself, the government seems responsible for taking advantage of social and class disparities to enlist these men and place them in the line of fire. Later Alvord writes, “Patriotism is sustaining Jorge Rincon.” Again, in a reversal, the institutional cause for Rincon’s death is portrayed as savior and source of consolatory feelings. In this, as in other writings, hegemonic masculinity (e.g., patriotism, the presidency, the army, the nation’s values) is a powerful benefactor, and the Latino soldiers and their immigrant families benefit from masculinity’s gracious generosity.

In addition to the textual actions that rendered visible a system of masculinities, other evidence hints at the centrality of masculinity in the events that followed the Latinas/os’ deaths. I see the frenzied discursive and legislative activity of the media and Congress as an attempt to maintain what Nelson calls America’s National Manhood. Consider the way politicians performed their duties in this instance: they publicly led; they quickly brought justice; they aggressively created laws; they caringly protected the weak (immigrants); they effectively administered; they governed. Each instance marks a reassertion of Congress’s power to make objective meaning out of “history” and to assert control over peoples and signification. An exercise of manly governance, Congress’s actions, with the help of the media, were also able to construct masculine-citizen fraternity by hailing a racialized community of citizens and inviting them to look, to gaze at these noncitizens’ actions. Considering that black and foreign-born Latino populations opposed the war (Field Research Corporation 2003), I see the hail of Congress as a hail to whiteness, its base of support, and a hail for self-identification and imperialistic self-adulation. Notice the curious phrasing of the praise of Latino soldier Tejada by Steve Farquason (USCIS): “We’re honored to be able to recognize the sacrifice of your son and tell you how proud you should be of him” (Santos 2003). Harmon (2003) also wrote about Rincon, Gutiérrez, and Garibay, “Such men honor us.” Narcissistically, the linguistic tropes used by these speakers perform a reversal where not only does the granting of posthumous citizenship honor the soldiers, but the soldiers’ sacrifice also honors the fraternity of citizens. Placed against the background of the ethnocentric fantasy discussed earlier, this traditional way of talking about soldiers

becomes an instance of reversal that must be understood within the fantasy of nationalism and whiteness. This is not far from the fantasies of slaveholders who imagined that the fact that slaves sang meant that they were happy. Notice that the fantasy does not work without the belief that the Latinas/os enlisted for love of the nation.

If the posthumous naturalization of Latino soldiers served to give manliness back to the nation, to remedy the crisis of American masculinity, and to create a fraternity of citizens, the racial connotations of these cases solidify the idea that altero-referentiality was at play. On the legislative side, you have a community composed of mostly white males producing legislation for nonwhites. Though the House currently has a small minority of nonwhite and nonmale representatives (roughly 15 percent), the Senate has traditionally been a white domain. Only five African Americans, five Latinas/os, five Asian Americans, and three Native Americans have ever served in the Senate's two-century-plus history. Currently, the Senate has only two Latinas/os (who were not yet elected when these events happened), one black member (who was not yet elected when these events happened), and fourteen women (U.S. Senate 2012). The practically monoracial (and monosexual) composition of this legislative enclave contrasts with the multiracial composition of the armed forces, in which whites are slightly underrepresented in combat positions and blacks and Latinas/os are, logically, overrepresented.²¹ The contrast between the racial composition of these institutions reproduces the American racial hierarchy, with whites (the Senate, the executive branch, and the Supreme Court) at the top and in control of the discourses associated with race and citizenship. From this perspective, the politicians' quick praise of the valor of Garibay, Rincon, and Gutiérrez become racialized administrative actions designed to control by rewarding sacrifice without questioning current racial hierarchies of citizenship and military service.

The way in which legislative and media communities came together to honor these dead soldiers by giving them citizenship can be seen as altero-referential processes when analyzed in relationship to publicity, administration, and control. For, as heartwarming as it is to hear the praise that such important citizens gave to these immigrants, it is important to recognize the role that Congress and the mainstream media played in validating the invasion of Iraq and reproducing American militarism. Such bellicose patriotism re-creates the army's need for more military personnel and compels army recruiters to actively seek the enlistment of noncitizens, poor whites, and racial minorities.

Consent and Voluntarism Revisited

Citizenship's consistent role in American politics is governance. Citizenship has been a central part of the legal and rhetorical arsenal used by hegemonic racial, economic, and political classes to reconstitute the grounds of their domestic and foreign dominance. The granting of posthumous citizenship to noncitizen Latinas/os killed during combat in Iraq reveals the hegemonic cultural impetus to use citizenship as governance. On the one hand, this impetus elides the fact that naturalization was given without the individuals' consent, and on the other, it serves to obscure, yet again, the way in which the armed forces are structured as a racialized and classed institution. Both practices contradict liberal ideas of governance. Nonconsensual naturalization goes against the notion that, in a liberal state, naturalization is a contract that secures the legitimization of the relationship of governor and subject. The rhetoric surrounding these cases also demonstrates that military practices presented to the American people as liberal (the idea of the "volunteer" army) actually rely on persistent economic, cultural, and educational stratifications.

The power of liberalism as a political theory (or system) depends on how governments under its rubric distribute rights and responsibilities. Ideally, these rights and responsibilities ought to be equal for all citizens. Not surprisingly, liberalism can be a radical and powerful force against social injustices. As it exists in American society, it can also be the basis for further oppression and inequality. The U.S. volunteer army illustrates the contradictions of liberalism. Sought out by Latinas/os as an avenue toward education, prosperity, and social respect, the U.S. armed forces do require a certain amount of enlistee consent. But the armed forces also falsely legitimize liberalism by propagating the fantasy that, because the U.S. military is composed of volunteers, it *equally* doles out the civic responsibility to defend the nation. The impossible contradiction behind the ideal of the liberal, voluntary army is that enlistment can be at once self-serving (in the Latino cases, politicians and news people believed that the soldiers sought citizenship) and civic minded (the Latinas/os "loved" the nation). The Latino soldiers who return to the nation as citizens and heroes in body bags symbolize the limits of liberalism in America; they demonstrate how the articulation of ethnicity and militarism are made possible by the contradictions of liberalism.

In light of the history of race and militarism in America, I have argued here that giving posthumous citizenship to these Latinas/os is another way

of giving legal form to illiberalism. For, as a category for the living, with consent, citizenship is a portfolio of rights and an invitation to fraternity; as a category for the dead, citizenship is reduced to a cultural frame for memory, an invitation to self-centeredness. I say this because our traditional narratives of heroism have a racial inertia that will likely erase these Latinas/os from memory, much in the same way that it erased the patriotic service of noncitizen Native Americans, Chinese, Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, blacks, and Filipinos. Briefly, Congress and mainstream news praised these soldiers' service, and with this praise, they added support to the invasion of Iraq and recentered militarism in immigrant life. The seventy-fifth annual League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) national convention was held in San Antonio, Texas, from July 6 to 11, 2004. In a surreal fashion, like any other year, the convention was teeming with armed forces members, representing all branches of the military, in full recruiting mode.