Semi-Citizenship in Democratic Politics

In every democratic polity there exist individuals and groups who hold some but not all of the essential elements of citizenship. Scholars who study citizenship routinely reach for shared concepts and language to identify forms of political membership held by migrants, children, the disabled, and other groups of individuals who, for various reasons, are neither full citizens nor non-citizens.

This book introduces the concept of *semi-citizenship* as a means of dramatically advancing debates about individuals who hold some, but not all, elements of full democratic citizenship. By analytically classifying the rights of citizenship and their various combinations, scholars can typologize semi-citizens and produce comparisons of different kinds of semi-citizenships and of semi-citizenships in different states. The book uses theoretical analysis, historical examples, and contemporary cases of semi-citizenship to illustrate how normative and governmental doctrines of citizenship converge and conflict, making semi-citizenship an enduring and inevitable part of democratic politics.

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For Reggie Feiner Cohen and Ira J. Cohen, who bequeathed to me the ideas that families can be democratic, children are citizens, and acting like grown-ups isn’t necessarily the best way to live.
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