

Respect Yourself, Protect Yourself: Latina Girls and Sexual Identity (Intersections)

Lorena Garcia



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Respect Yourself, Protect Yourself: Latina Girls and Sexual Identity (Intersections) Lorena Garcia 2013 Winner of the ASA Race, Gender and Class Section's Distinguished Book Award

While Latina girls have high teen birth rates and are at increasing risk for contracting sexually transmitted infections, their sexual lives are much more complex than the negative stereotypes of them as "helpless" or "risky" (or worse) suggest. *In Respect Yourself, Protect Yourself,* Lorena Garcia examines how Latina girls negotiate their emerging sexual identities and attempt to create positive sexual experiences for themselves. Through a focus on their sexual agency, Garcia demonstrates that Latina girls' experiences with sexism, racism, homophobia and socioeconomic marginality inform how they engage and begin to rework their meanings and processes of gender and sexuality, emphasizing how Latina youth themselves understand their sexuality, particularly how they conceptualize and approach sexual safety and pleasure. At a time of controversy over the appropriate role of sex education in schools, *Respect Yourself, Protect Yourself,* provides a rare look and an important understanding of the sexual lives of a traditionally marginalized group.

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