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The Sovereign Citizen: Denaturalization and the Origins of the American Republic (Democracy, Citizenship, and Constitutionalism)

By Patrick Weil

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The Sovereign Citizen: Denaturalization and the Origins of the American Republic (Democracy, Citizenship, and Constitutionalism) By Patrick Weil

Present-day Americans feel secure in their citizenship: they are free to speak up for any cause, oppose their government, marry a person of any background, and live where they choose—at home or abroad. Denaturalization and denationalization are more often associated with twentieth-century authoritarian regimes. But there was a time when American-born and naturalized foreign-born individuals in the United States could be deprived of their citizenship and its associated rights. Patrick Weil examines the twentieth-century legal procedures, causes, and enforcement of denaturalization to illuminate an important but neglected dimension of Americans' understanding of sovereignty and federal authority: a citizen is defined, in part, by the parameters that could be used to revoke that same citizenship.

The Sovereign Citizen begins with the Naturalization Act of 1906, which was intended to prevent realization of citizenship through fraudulent or illegal means. Denaturalization—a process provided for by one clause of the act—became the main instrument for the transfer of naturalization authority from states and local courts to the federal government. Alongside the federalization of naturalization, a conditionality of citizenship emerged: for the first half of the twentieth century, naturalized individuals could be stripped of their citizenship not only for fraud but also for affiliations with activities or organizations that were perceived as un-American. (Emma Goldman's case was the first and perhaps best-known denaturalization on political grounds, in 1909.) By midcentury the Supreme Court was fiercely debating cases and challenged the constitutionality of denaturalization and denationalization. This internal battle lasted almost thirty years. The Warren Court's eventual decision to uphold the sovereignty of the *citizen*—not the state—secures our national order to this day. Weil's account of this transformation, and the political battles fought by its advocates and critics, reshapes our understanding of American citizenship.

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The Sovereign Citizen: Denaturalization and the Origins of the American Republic (Democracy, Citizenship, and Constitutionalism) By Patrick Weil Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #733269 in Books
- Brand: University of Pennsylvania Press
- Published on: 2012-10-26
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.02" h x .67" w x 5.98" l, 1.00 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 296 pages

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Editorial Review

Review

"In vividly depicting the long struggle to secure the citizenship rights of Americans, Weil treats us to striking insights as well as delicious tidbits of newly discovered data."—Norman Dorsen, former President of the American Civil Liberties Union

"One of the world's leading experts on nationality brilliantly explores past campaigns to strip Americans of their citizenship. Patrick Weil reveals how both bureaucratic rigor and national security zeal threatened citizenship rights, and points to important lessons for twenty-first century debates."—Gerald Neuman, Harvard Law School

"An important, exhaustive, and meticulously researched work"—*Dissent*

"In this masterful and timely book, Patrick Weil plunges deep into rarely used archives to write a new history of the shaping of American identity in the twentieth century, all the more important as we now debate the reform of immigration law. This story of belonging and exile has its heroes—defenders of civil liberties who deserve to be better known—and its scoundrels. Unlike many histories, it has a heartening conclusion."—Linda K. Kerber, author of *No Constitutional Right to Be Ladies: Women and the Obligations of Citizenship*

About the Author

Patrick Weil is Senior Research Fellow at the French National Center for Scientific Research (CNRS) and Professor at the Paris School of Economics. He is author of numerous books, including *How to Be French: Nationality in the Making Since 1789*.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Doris Williams:

The reason? Because this *The Sovereign Citizen: Denaturalization and the Origins of the American Republic (Democracy, Citizenship, and Constitutionalism)* is an unordinary book that the inside of the guide waiting for you to snap this but latter it will distress you with the secret the idea inside. Reading this book beside it was fantastic author who all write the book in such amazing way makes the content inside easier to

understand, entertaining approach but still convey the meaning totally. So , it is good for you for not hesitating having this anymore or you going to regret it. This amazing book will give you a lot of gains than the other book possess such as help improving your talent and your critical thinking means. So , still want to hold off having that book? If I ended up you I will go to the publication store hurriedly.

Craig Chivers:

The book untitled The Sovereign Citizen: Denaturalization and the Origins of the American Republic (Democracy, Citizenship, and Constitutionalism) contain a lot of information on the item. The writer explains the girl idea with easy way. The language is very simple to implement all the people, so do not worry, you can easy to read that. The book was authored by famous author. The author will bring you in the new time of literary works. You can easily read this book because you can continue reading your smart phone, or device, so you can read the book within anywhere and anytime. In a situation you wish to purchase the e-book, you can open their official web-site in addition to order it. Have a nice learn.

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In this particular era which is the greater particular person or who has ability to do something more are more treasured than other. Do you want to become one among it? It is just simple approach to have that. What you should do is just spending your time almost no but quite enough to have a look at some books. One of many books in the top listing in your reading list will be The Sovereign Citizen: Denaturalization and the Origins of the American Republic (Democracy, Citizenship, and Constitutionalism). This book which is qualified as The Hungry Slopes can get you closer in becoming precious person. By looking up and review this guide you can get many advantages.

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