



# Genealogies of Citizenship: Markets, Statelessness, and the Right to Have Rights (Cambridge Cultural Social Studies)

By Margaret R. Somers

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Genealogies of Citizenship is a remarkable rethinking of human rights and social justice. As global governance is increasingly driven by market fundamentalism, growing numbers of citizens have become socially excluded and internally stateless. Against this movement to organize society exclusively by market principles, Margaret Somers argues that socially inclusive democratic rights must be counter-balanced by the powers of a social state, a robust public sphere and a relationally-sturdy civil society. Through epistemologies of history and naturalism, contested narratives of social capital, and Hurricane Katrina's racial apartheid, she warns that the growing authority of the market is distorting the non-contractualism of citizenship; rights, inclusion and moral worth are increasingly dependent on contractual market value. In this pathbreaking work, Somers advances an innovative view of rights as public goods rooted in an alliance of public power, political membership, and social practices of equal moral recognition - the right to have rights.

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## **Genealogies of Citizenship: Markets, Statelessness, and the Right to Have Rights (Cambridge Cultural Social Studies) By Margaret R. Somers Bibliography**

- Sales Rank: #1200397 in Books
- Published on: 2008-09-01
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 8.98" h x .79" w x 5.98" l, 1.25 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 362 pages

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**Editorial Review**

Review

"In eloquent essays Margaret Somers sheds new light on citizenship as a central concern of modern political life. She shows the tensions, aporias, repressed possibilities, and potential vitality in everyday usage and scholarly conceptualization alike. This is a book scholars have been waiting for and one that should be widely read."

-Craig Calhoun, University Professor of Social Science, NYU

"Genealogies of Citizenship might well provide the definitive sociological and political critique of the era of market fundamentalism. Building on the insights of Karl Polanyi, T.H. Marshall, and Hannah Arendt, Margaret Somers demonstrates that civil society rests on the 'right to have rights'. But this right has been swept away by three decades of market-dominated discourse and policies. Somers brilliantly shows how Hurricane Katrina's devastating impact on New Orleans' African American community was the culmination of this dynamic."

-Fred Block, Professor of Sociology, University of California at Davis

"Margaret Somers has an astonishing variety of disciplinary competences and constantly poses new questions and working on parallel fields in order to build a network of concepts and arguments. The strong connection that she establishes between conceptual analysis and a practical commitment to the emergence of new democratic forms and republican citizenship is an essential aspect of the creative character of her work."

-Etienne Balibar, Emeritus Professor of Moral and Political Philosophy, Université de Paris X Nanterre, and Distinguished Professor of Humanities, University of California, Irvine

"In these wide-ranging essays, glistening with brilliant turns of phrase about our contemporary social condition, Margaret Somers brings together normative citizenship theory, sociological analysis, history and political economy at the highest level of synthesis. Citizenship is not only a boundary-marker between polities; the loss of 'the right to have rights' does not only mark the refugee, the asylum seeker and the undocumented worker, it also stigmatizes the others within societies by social exclusion. Focusing on the events surrounding Hurricane Katrina, Somers shows how 'statelessness' became the condition of citizens of the USA at the beginning of the twenty-first century. To retrieve 'the right to have rights' for all means going beyond the 'romance of the market' and 'reviling the state.'"

-Seyla Benhabib, Eugene Meyer Professor of Political Science and Philosophy, Yale University

"Genealogies of Citizenship offers many intellectual rewards. Somers provides, at once, an incisive analytic for approaching the internal exclusions of liberal democratic societies, a sophisticated meditation on the career and meanings of the citizenship concept in social theory, and an eloquent indictment of a 'market fundamentalism' which, she shows, ultimately subverts citizenship's highest aspirations."

-Linda Bosniak, Professor, Rutgers University School of Law

"Margaret Somers is a renowned polymath, and in Genealogies of Citizenship she obliterates common divisions among sociology, history, moral philosophy, and politics to fashion an exhilarating new form of social inquiry that simultaneously advances core debates long-standing in social theory and offers a searching mediation on contemporary citizenship in extremis."

-Charles Camic, Professor of Sociology, Northwestern University

"Genealogies of Citizenship is a stunning achievement that confirms what we have long known - Margaret Somers is a brilliant social theorist of extraordinary distinction, one of the best thinkers of her generation. The originality and ambition of her commitment to rebuilding social theory grows from the most careful and searching of contextual knowledge. Likewise, she challenges historians of citizenship, democracy, and political economy to think their projects anew. Individually the chapters are a dazzling series of interventions; together they compose an extraordinary corpus."

-Geoff Eley, Karl Pohrt Distinguished University Professor of Contemporary History, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

"With extraordinary erudition and theoretical acuity, Margaret Somers examines the dominant ideas that link many of us together as a community, and marginalize others of us. She argues that the rise of the ideology of market fundamentalism is an assault on democratic rights. Nor is the assault a mere abstraction. Political ideas are embedded in legal practices and economic and social relations. Market fundamentalism is thus a profound threat to democratic possibilities."

-Frances Fox Piven, Distinguished Professor of Political Science and Sociology, Graduate Center of the City University of New York

"The contributions Margaret Somers has made to our understanding of citizenship and rights are legion. Written with a sense of urgency, and directed to publics beyond her discipline, Genealogies of Citizenship continues her quest to build knowledge that is historical and analytical, empirical and ethical. Concerned with current threats to the standing of citizens, the book offers a timely plea to appreciate and defend the public sphere against depoliticization and market pressures, lest democratic institutions and human dignity erode."

-Ira Katznelson, Ruggles Professor of Political Science and History, Columbia University.

"We don't need to rush to Tibet to find a socially-excluded citizenry struggling for basic human rights. Margaret Somers reveals many examples right here in the U.S. Gulf Coast after Katrina, in the dismantling of the welfare state, in the complicity of capital and public policy. A brilliant work of theory and history, Genealogies of Citizenship re-examines the shifting relationship between state, civil society, the market, and ideology through the analytic of race, gender, and class to produce the most provocative, comprehensive, and original contribution to a social theory of citizenship and rights since Hannah Arendt."

-Robin D. G. Kelley, Author of Freedom Dreams: The Black Radical Imagination

"Margaret Somers has written a profoundly important book. One of the great achievements of the past two centuries is the expansion of democratic citizenship. Apologists for market fundamentalism treat its erosion as a minor detail and even a benefit. Somers' book is a brilliant corrective."

-Robert Kuttner, Co-Editor, The American Prospect and author of Everything for Sale.

"This book is required reading for anyone interested in the consequences of neo-liberalism for the redefinition of social boundaries. With characteristic elegance, breadth, and theoretical mastery, Somers develops a detailed and complex analysis of processes of social exclusion and inclusion. Knowledge cultures, narratives and the law figure prominently in this new account of the redefinition of social citizenship. A tour de force that will be long remembered..."

-Michele Lamont, Robert I. Goldman Professor of European Studies, Professor of Sociology and African and African-American Studies, Author of The Dignity of Working Men: Morality and the Boundaries of Race, Class, and Immigration.

"Disinterring histories of the market-fundamentalist present, this is a devastatingly trenchant, yet profoundly creative, critique of privatized citizenship. Reclaiming the right to have rights, Somers puts critical social

theory to work in what amounts to a radical new vision for social justice and progressive politics."  
-Jamie Peck, Canada Research Chair in Urban & Regional Political Economy, University of British Columbia

"Margaret Somers' Genealogies of Citizenship is a profound and original defense of the moral ideal of socially inclusive democratic citizenship. It combines a sophisticated theoretical and philosophical defense of the normative foundations of this ideal with a range of compelling sociological explorations of the conditions for its robust sustainability. The book's central provocative thesis - that under-regulated, expansionary markets constitute a deep threat to this form of citizenship - is powerfully and convincingly argued. It deserves to be widely read and debated by anyone worried about the future of democratic society."  
-Erik Olin Wright, Professor, Department of Sociology, University of Wisconsin-Madison

"...it's a stellar analysis and one can only hope that in book it will circulate more widely than journal articles tend to. She provides a complex theoretical apparatus that can deal with political economy and citizenship, ontology and epistemology, and the present as well as the past. In our current state of crisis, Somers reminds us there is more to worry about than the state and the government - that any economic fix needs to stimulate a robust civil society built on substantive citizenship rights." - Accounts: American Sociological Association Economic Sociology Section Newsletter

"This book is an exhaustive history of Anglo-American citizenship theory. It should be stressed that this is very much a theory work. Alongside the more traditional sources of political philosophy she interweaves the work of Karl Polanyi, Hannah Arendt, and T.H. Marshall to provide an genealogical history of the diverse forms of citizenship theory." - Alan Hunt, Carleton College, Canadian Journal of Sociology

In Genealogies of Citizenship Margaret Somers provides a vigorous and passionate defence of citizenship as the necessary foundation of democracy and our best hope of sustaining social solidarity, equality and mutual trust. Through a series of brilliant expositions of classical liberalism, Hannah Arendt, T.H Marshall, Jürgen Habermas and Robert Putnam, she unpacks the genealogies of the concept to develop a critical understanding of the modern crisis of citizenship." - Bryan S. Turner, Wellesley College, Cultural Sociology

"....one of the most thoughtful and incisive critiques of American democracy to have appeared in recent years." -Erik Olin Wright, Trajectories

"There is much to appreciate in Margaret Somers's Genealogies of Citizenship. As she rightly notes, sociologists have been reluctant to theorize citizenship and rights, seeing normative political theory as the domain of political scientists and philosophers." -Irene Bloemraad, International Journal of Comparative Sociology

#### About the Author

Margaret R. Somers is Professor of Sociology and History at the University of Michigan. A leading figure in historical, political, economic, and cultural sociology and social theory, she recently received the Inaugural Lewis A. Coser Award for Innovation and Theoretical Agenda-Setting in Sociology.

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