

WHAT IT MEANS TO BECOME A UNITED STATES AMERICAN: AFRO-CARIBBEAN IMMIGRANTS' CONSTRUCTIONS OF AMERICAN CITIZENSHIP AND EXPERIENCE OF CULTURAL TRANSITION

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With a goal to better understand what it means to become a United States citizen, the present qualitative study uncovered the narratives of 11 Afro-Caribbean immigrants living in Phoenix, Arizona, and included the investigator as a research participant. Grounded theory analysis of the combined auto-ethnographic and interview data yielded narratives that support 3 conclusions: (1) Afro-Caribbean immigrants in the study stated that becoming a United States citizen is an act of transgression; (2) Afro-Caribbean immigrants constructed security within a philosophy of mobility in an effort to recapture their agency and humanity in racialized contexts; and (3) the Afro-Caribbean participant used code-switching as a central strategy in the presentation of self in everyday life in the United States.