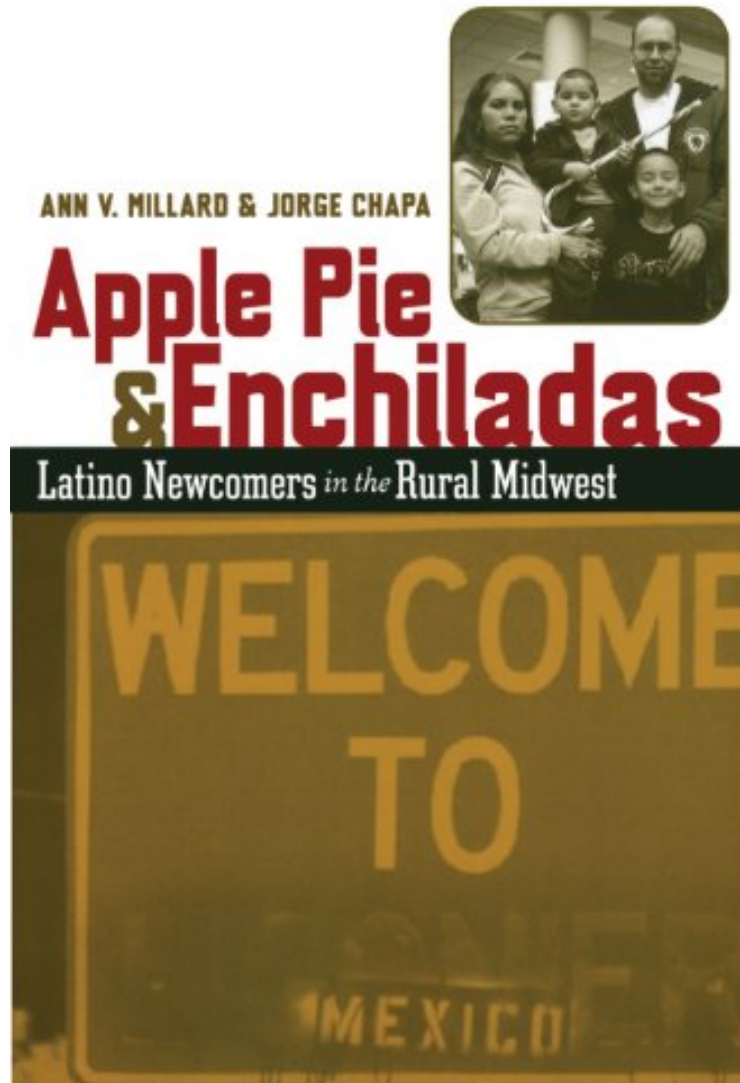


## Apple Pie and Enchiladas: Latino Newcomers in the Rural Midwest

*Ann V. Millard, Jorge Chapa*

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**Ann V. Millard, Jorge Chapa : Apple Pie and Enchiladas: Latino Newcomers in the Rural Midwest** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Apple Pie and Enchiladas: Latino Newcomers in the Rural Midwest:

6 of 8 people found the following review helpful. "The Human Face of Latino Migration En Pocos Palabras" By Kellie J. Hogue Truth, it has been said, can set a person free. But can such truth, once brought to light, change (or in this case, reaffirm) our perception of a region or a nation? The stark reality of life for Latino immigrants in the mythological American Heartland is revealed, in all of its too often mischaracterized and unromantic glory, in Apple Pie and Enchiladas: Latino Newcomers in the Rural Midwest (2004) by Ann V. Millard and Jorge Chapa. Featuring

collaborations among and between a large team of authors including Millard, Chapa, Eileen Diaz McConnell, Catalina Burillo, Rogelio Saenz, Refugio I. Roqui, Mariacuta, alena D. Jefferds, Ken R. Crane, and Isidore Flores, this sobering text presents a historical and contemporary examination of the lives and experiences of Latinos in the region known as the Middle West. An opening photo essay allows the reader to visually locate Latinos in rural, rather than urban, spaces; openly and unabashedly suggesting the importance, relevance, and existence of Latino individuals and communities within areas believed to be one-hundred percent "white" in four Midwestern states: Ohio, Michigan, Indiana and Nebraska. The essays that follow are interdisciplinary snapshots of Latino life; topics include history, demographics, qualitative methodologies, prejudice, institutional discrimination, jobs in food processing, high school students, churches, policy and community studies. We have access to survey questions, an interview guide used during the study, and an essay on community studies methodologies. Millard and Chapas choice of a food metaphor, "apple pie and enchiladas," to describe what they see as "a new combination in the dynamic contemporary encounter of peoples and cultures," is apt as well as accurate. (p. 1) Latino life, we come to learn, does not begin and end at the Mexican restaurant (a frequent, yet stereotypical, point of access for "anglos" into the vibrant nuances of Latino culture). The text successfully weaves quantitative and qualitative data together in a rich fabric; texturally dense yet vibrantly illuminated with the lived experiences, and more importantly, the voices themselves, of a group that occupies a liminal space within the larger demographic that populates the Midwest. Easily the greatest strength of this text is its reliance upon Latino voice and the way it uses this voice to document and exemplify the life experiences of people like "Sofia, a Latina working in a food processing plant in Fall County, Michigan," or "Ruben, a Latino newcomer in Wheelerton, Indiana." (pp. 125, 111). By merging the voices of their informants with small offerings from their field notes, this text represents what is exceptional about ethnography from the inside; this is insiders studying insiders and the results are remarkably fabulous. Nor is the text limited in terms of age, social class or gender; women and men are equally represented, social class, networks, and relations are discussed, and emphasis is placed upon experiences of young newcomers as well as old timers. Concluding that "Anglos in the rural Midwest disapprove of the Latino newcomers to their communities," Millard and Chapa successfully put words to a sentiment all too often ignored in the homogeneity of Midwestern discourse, but their revelation that some communities (Ligonier, Indiana is the one mentioned) are devoting time and effort "to improve conditions for Latinos" provides a small measure of hope that this group, so instrumental to the success of their communities, will one day no longer experience prejudice and discrimination. (pp. 204-206). Their insistence upon, and joint desire for, "the whole enchilada," that is, "changes in immigration policy" and "actions by local governments, schools, landlords, employers, service providers, and others to accommodate Midwestern communities to Latino newcomers and vice versa," is amplified by the wealth of evidence presented mandating that change, as well as acceptance, must be considered or "the consequences will be a furthering of the racism currently shaping much of Anglo-Latino relations and the creation of a low-income stratum of Latinos in rural areas who are disenfranchised and denied a chance for the American dream." (p. 221) Regardless of the contributions of their culture, labor, and lives, there are still those who come to American in search of the dream, only to find themselves locked out. By juxtaposing the experience of Latinos against the backdrop of a region known for one-hundred percent Americanism, this is an appropriate and useful text for Ethnic Studies, Latino Studies, American Studies, Labor Studies, Anthropology, and Sociology. Kellie Hogue Indiana University

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Great for class discussion! By Eve I used this book in a course on Latinos and it sparked great discussion since the experience in the Midwest for Latinos is so different than other parts of the country. I found this text works very well with the movie "Fast Food Nation." 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By Elizabeth Excellent condition

The sudden influx of significant numbers of Latinos to the rural Midwest stems from the recruitment of workers by food processing plants and small factories springing up in rural areas. Mostly they work at back-breaking jobs that local residents are not willing to take because of the low wages and few benefits. The region has become the scene of dramatic change involving major issues facing our country—the intertwining of ethnic differences, prejudice, and poverty; the social impact of a low-wage workforce resulting from corporate transformations; and public policy questions dealing with economic development, taxation, and welfare payments. In this thorough multidisciplinary study, the authors explore both sides of this ethnic divide and provide the first volume to focus comprehensively on Latinos in the region by linking demographic and qualitative analysis to describe what brings Latinos to the area and how they are being accommodated in their new communities. The fact is that many Midwestern communities would be losing population and facing a dearth of workers if not for Latino newcomers. This finding adds another layer of social and economic complexity to the region's changing place in the global economy. The authors look at how Latinos fit into an already fractured social landscape with tensions among townspeople, farmers, and others. The authors also reveal the optimism that lies in the opposition of many Anglos to ethnic prejudice and racism.

About the Author Ann V. Millard is Associate Professor at the South Texas Center in McAllen, Texas, a site of the School of Rural Public Health, Texas AM University System Health Science Center. Jorge Chapa (1953–2015)

was Professor and Director of the Latino Studies Program at Indiana University, Bloomington.