



Naturalizing Mexican Immigrants

Martha Menchaca

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During the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, a majority of the Mexican immigrant population in the United States resided in Texas, making the state a flashpoint in debates over whether to deny naturalization rights. As Texas federal courts grappled with the issue, policies pertaining to Mexican immigrants came to reflect evolving political ideologies on both sides of the border. Drawing on unprecedented historical analysis of state archives, U.S. Congressional records, and other sources of overlooked data, *Naturalizing Mexican Immigrants* provides a rich understanding of the realities and rhetoric that have led to present-day immigration controversies. Martha Menchaca's groundbreaking research examines such facets as U.S.-Mexico relations following the U.S. Civil War and the schisms created by Mexican abolitionists; the anti-immigration stance that marked many suffragist appeals; the effects of the Spanish American War; distinctions made for mestizo, Afromexicano, and Native American populations; the erosion of means for U.S. citizens to legalize their relatives; and the ways in which U.S. corporations have caused the political conditions that stimulated emigration from Mexico. The first historical study of its kind, *Naturalizing Mexican Immigrants* delivers a clear-eyed view of provocative issues.

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