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Defiant Braceros: How Migrant Workers Fought For Racial, Sexual, And Political Freedom (The David J. Weber Series In The New Borderlands History)



Synopsis

In this book, Mireya Loza sheds new light on the private lives of migrant men who participated in the Bracero Program (1942–1964), a binational agreement between the United States and Mexico that allowed hundreds of thousands of Mexican workers to enter this country on temporary work permits. While this program and the issue of temporary workers has long been politicized on both sides of the border, Loza argues that the prevailing romanticized image of braceros as a family-oriented, productive, legal workforce has obscured the real, diverse experiences of the workers themselves. Focusing on underexplored aspects of workers' lives--such as their transnational union-organizing efforts, the sexual economies of both hetero and queer workers, and the ethno-racial boundaries among Mexican indigenous braceros--Loza reveals how these men defied perceived political, sexual, and racial norms. Basing her work on an archive of more than 800 oral histories from the United States and Mexico, Loza is the first scholar to carefully differentiate between the experiences of mestizo guest workers and the many Mixtec, Zapotec, Purhepecha, and Mayan laborers. In doing so, she captures the myriad ways these defiant workers responded to the intense discrimination and exploitation of an unjust system that still persists today.

Book Information

Series: The David J. Weber Series in the New Borderlands History

Paperback: 254 pages

Publisher: The University of North Carolina Press; 1 edition (September 6, 2016)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1469629763

ISBN-13: 978-1469629766

Product Dimensions: 6.1 x 0.7 x 9.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 13.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

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