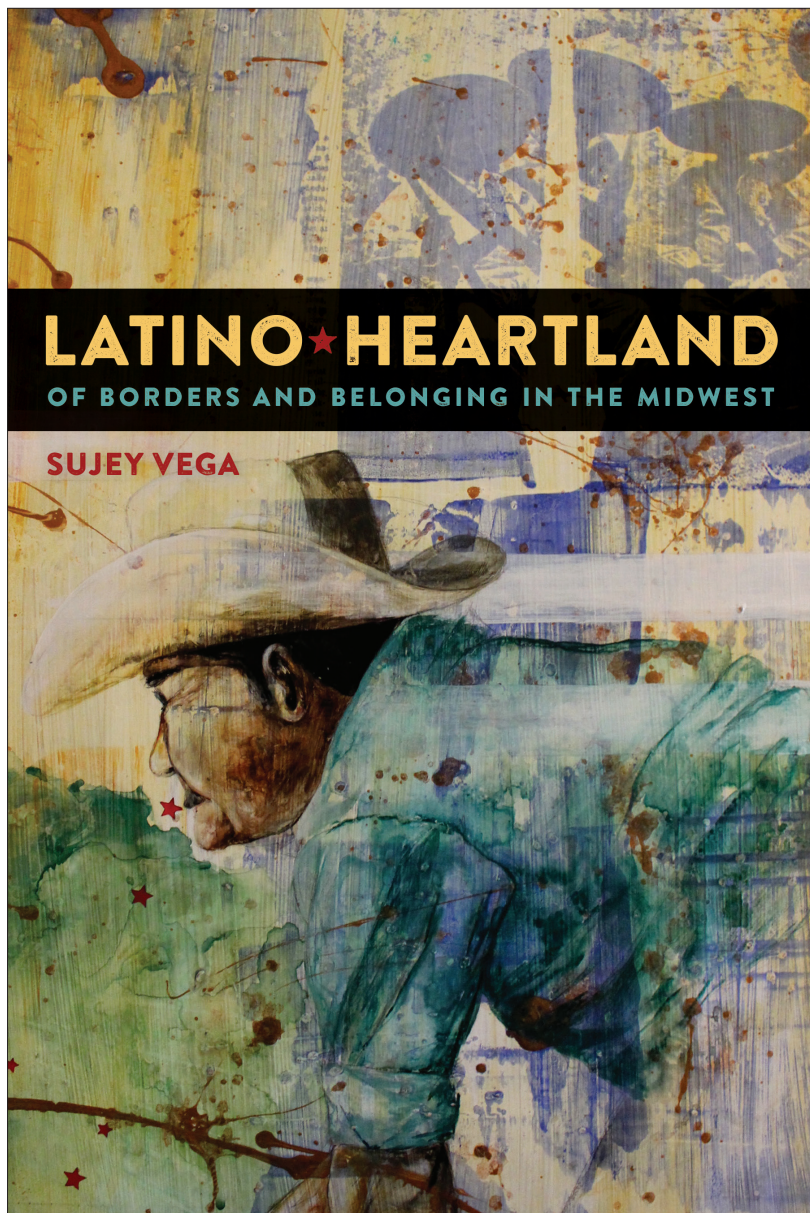


# LATINO HEARTLAND

## INSTRUCTOR'S GUIDE



"With grace and compassion... [*Latino Heartland*] makes a passionate call for justice and the urgent need to rethink U.S. immigration policy on humanistic terms."

— RUTH BEHAR, AUTHOR OF *TRAVEL HEAVY*

*Latino Heartland* is an ethnographic entry into the world of immigration. Through rich narratives and approachable analysis, scholars and students will gain a unique perspective into the lives of Latinos in the twenty-first century. Woven with inspiring stories of resiliency, *Latino Heartland* provides an engaging look at the rise of Latinos in "new" Midwestern areas. Importantly, the book includes both Latino and non-Latino (mostly White) voices to provide critical dialogue on contemporary immigration issues. Beginning with a chapter on history, *Latino Heartland* chronicles the past of this Midwestern environment to create parallels with today's Latino populations. Moving to more contemporary experiences, readers will appreciate the role religion plays in the settlement process and how Latino community-building becomes necessary for survival and feelings of belonging. Latinos reveal moments of fear, verbal attacks, and felt rejections to illustrate what they encountered during the 2006 national immigration debate. Moreover, readers will also engage with the rhetoric used against Latinos and undocumented immigrants. Sometimes hopeful, sometimes infuriating, the experiences related in *Latino Heartland* will provide a sense of both Latino and non-Latino positions on immigration and contribute to a more complicated understanding of this often politicized topic.

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## PIONEERING OWNERSHIP OF GREATER LAFAYETTE

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### SUMMARY

The prologue introduces readers to a Latina resident whose grandfather first settled in Indiana over 50 years ago. As she holds her son, the 4th generation of Latinos in Lafayette, she proudly declares ownership and belonging to the town. Her proclamation sets the stage for the exploring belonging throughout the entire book. This brief vignette helps situate for readers why Latinos first moved to Central Indiana, how long they have actually been there, and what this community has encountered in claiming their belonging across decades. There is a brief exploration of methods, subject-position, and critical ethnography that advocates on behalf of marginalized groups. Finally, the prologue introduces the importance of understanding the lived impact of the politics of immigration – how does the rhetoric filter down into lived reality.

### QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- What is the importance of belonging?
- How does belonging matter for newly arrived immigrants and their children?
- What is the impact of the ethnographer's subject-position – can anyone truly ever be unbiased?
- Does political rhetoric truly have an impact on the way people live or is it just "politics"?

# BIENVENIDOS A HOSSIERLANDIA

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## SUMMARY

The Introduction opens with the Immigration rallies of 2006 and places the reader directly in the Indianapolis marches. Evoking the songs, sounds, and details of the march, the reader is pulled into what it was like to participate in those rallies and what the marches meant for those who pleaded for just reform to immigration policies. The reader is then drawn to the popular imagery of Indiana to disrupt these notions of the Midwest with a Latino presence. By exploring the border as a theme for understanding the Midwest experience, readers are asked to imagine how a geopolitical border zone has an impact on people's thoughts about each other further inland. Finally, the concept of ethnic belonging is introduced to explore the ways in which Latinos respond to their bordering. Ethnic belonging provides an alternative way to make home and belonging without completely severing ties with ethnic identity. The introduction ends with a summary of the chapters to follow.

## QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- What was intended with the Indianapolis protest rally?
- How do we imagine popular American landscapes like the Midwest, the South, New England and how does a Latino presence disrupt that imagery? Is it a comfortable disruption or does it challenge what is thought to be the norm — how do we define the “norm” and can Latinos participate in the “norm” of an American identity?
- What is a borderland and do they exist only at the meeting of two nations? What is the difference between a geopolitical border and its metaphorical borderlands?
- What is ethnic belonging and how does it explain the way Latino families respond to pressures to assimilate? Can you describe the ways in which perhaps other communities also practiced ethnic belonging?

## ASSIGNMENTS AND CLASS EXERCISES

- Identify borderlands throughout the places you live (racial, classed, gendered, religious, etc). Are there geographical markers separating people (a river, a street, railroad tracks) and how do people on both sides feel about each other. Are there opportunities for people to live at the crossroads, or intermingle with each other?

## *RECUERDOS DE LAFAYETTE*

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### **SUMMARY**

This chapter focuses on history and the making and forgetting about the past. It opens with a present-day Virgin of Guadalupe celebration and tracks the historical meaning of this site as a space where German immigrants once celebrated their Catholicism. The chapter explains the importance of history in marking the way people are imagined as belonging or not in a particular space. Using Trouillot, the chapter makes important distinction between what happened and what is said to have happened. Thus history situates how a particular White Hoosier identity is constructed against images of people of color who lived in the state. In other words, it is not just how Hoosiers of color get constructed in the memory of the past, but how that memory actually has an impact on White identity in Indiana – creating an image of honorable pioneer settlement or White abolitionists that rescues White identity against that of second-class Hoosiers of color. Beginning with the history of Latino settlement re-centers Latinos as part of the history of this town. There is also a sub-section on female migrants and the loneliness that they felt in these initial moments. Moving onto the Indian history of Indiana, this section explores the way Native American history is problematically recalled in the contemporary memorialization of Tippecanoe County. This follows with the popular renderings of Indiana as free of slavery and the issues with romantically recalling abolitionists of this moment. Moving onto the German immigrant presence, this section speaks to the “spiral of illegality” that includes unsanctioned European immigrant arrival through extra-legal means. Once more, a deeper understanding of European immigrant history is read against the way history is said to have happened in popular retellings of the past. Lastly, the chapter recognizes the problematic presence of the Ku Klux Klan to acknowledge how this organization had an impact locally and the way their rhetoric of “100 percent Americanism” was recycled in contemporary politics against immigrants.

### **QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION**

- ➔ What is the difference between what happened and what is said to have happened? How does what is said to have happened change the way people think of each other across time?
- ➔ When and how did Mexican residents arrive to Lafayette? What was unique about the experience of female migrants in this Midwestern town?
- ➔ What is settler colonialism? How did the next generation of children learn about the Indiana population and how was this problematic?
- ➔ What is the spiral of illegality and how does it complicate the myth of the ideal European immigrant?

## RECUERDOS DE LAFAYETTE

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➤ What parallels exist between early German immigrants and contemporary Latinos arrivals?

### ASSIGNMENTS AND CLASS EXERCISES

➤ How has history been distorted in your home town – what are the popular narratives of the past and what pasts do you think have been lost to time or hidden because they are not worthy of celebration or there is public shame in the remembering? Write about how hate crimes and terrorist attacks might be remembered 80 years from now, what will be recalled and what conveniently veiled?

➤ Trace your own genealogical arrival to the United States – how far do your ties go in the United States, can you be certain that everyone (I mean everyone) came the “legal” way? What does that mean, the “legal” way – was arrival to the United States different for immigrants in the past. Visit the PBS page on The New Americans and describe the laws that your ancestors may have encountered and how those differ from present-day immigrants: [http://www.pbs.org/independents/newamericans/foreducators\\_lesson\\_plan\\_03.html](http://www.pbs.org/independents/newamericans/foreducators_lesson_plan_03.html).

## KNEADING HOME

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### SUMMARY

Beginning with the evening procession for the Virgin of Guadalupe, Chapter 2 explores the importance of space and meaningful places for creating feelings of home in immigrant communities. Here the notion of the borderlands is revisited to delve into the way geopolitical spaces are crisscrossed and places become infused with meaning. Religion and faith communities once more take on important roles for immigrants and their children who locate ways to alleviate their displacement. For women in particular, *comadrazgo*, or a religious sisterhood, became that much more critical to their emotional survival. Though the narratives document the importance of ethnic belonging in religion and public space, the chapter ends by critically exposing how the Catholic Church restricted or held back the Latino community. Detailing the obstacles between dwindling English-dominant Catholics and the new majority Latino congregation, this final section speaks to faith groups that encounter intolerance and damage collective progress.

### QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- Explore the meaning of sacred places and how a right to exist in space mattered to Latinos of Lafayette during the 2006 national immigration debate.
- How does religion frame the social networks for Latinos who may not otherwise have family in the area?
- What is the importance of *comadrazgo* for female immigrants?
- The inability of the Catholic Church to address the needs of its Latino congregation created tensions and even deterred leadership opportunities, discuss ways in which churches or other organizations in cities can better address the needs of its growing Latino residents? What would you have done differently?

### ASSIGNMENTS AND CLASS EXERCISES

- Identify the “sacred places” of your university, school, or neighborhood. Remember, sacred places do not have to be related to religion. Explore what makes these spaces meaningful places, what do they symbolize to people, what purpose do they serve in society. Are they temporary places, given meaning only during certain times (like a religious procession) or are they permanently imbued with importance?



## WRITTEN OTHERINGS

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### SUMMARY

In this chapter, readers delve into the rhetoric, discourse, and communicative acts that devalued immigrants. An analysis of interviews, letters to the editor, and political campaigns illustrates how common tropes against immigrants in general, and Latinos in particular, shifted the way Latinos were tied to negative qualities. These tropes formed the basis of racist talk that cemented prejudice against Latinos. Prior to engaging the rhetoric, readers are introduced to Veronica and Efrain – two undocumented immigrants. Their family personalizes the debate surrounding immigration and asks the reader to think about the people directly injured through the rhetoric. The chapter continues by looking at the vitriol language that increased in the local newspaper against undocumented immigrants and Latinos more generally. A key discussion regarding the word “illegal” as a racial epithet brings to surface how words can wound. In addition, an analysis of the language used against Mexican males directs the reader to the ways gender and race were simultaneously used against particular individuals. Looking to the common tropes represented in the letters to the editor, the chapter surveys how the newspaper participated in half-truths, misconceptions, and damaging rhetoric. Importantly, claims that these statements had nothing to do with race fell apart when individuals slipped and made reference to cultural influences that had nothing to do with legal residency. Thus, this chapter helps the reader to unpack common arguments against undocumented immigrants by exploring the racialized undertones that often go unnoticed.

### QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- Discuss the options that Veronica and Efrain had and the reality of what it takes to migrate legally into the United States. Though no one is advocating undocumented entry, how do Veronica and Efrain personalize the debate?
- What are the dangers of arguing that immigrants should come “legally” without any knowledge of the process of legality? Going back to Chapter 1, place today’s legal immigration process in comparison with that of previous generations of immigrants, is it fair to compare immigrants from 60 years ago with that of today?
- How do the arguments in the 2006 letters-to-the-editor reflect the arguments for “100 percent Americanism” displayed in the history of Indiana from Chapter 1?

### ASSIGNMENTS AND EXERCISES

- Look up the current restrictions and wait time for entry into the United States, the process and information on visa backlogs: <http://www.migrationpolicy.org/>

## WRITTEN OTHERINGS

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article/frequently-requested-statistics-immigrants-and-immigration-united-states/  
What are the difference based on national origin, educational background, financial stability that restrict some individuals and streamline others for entry? How could this disproportionately create multiple systems of entry so that there is no one line or one manner of entering? Now imagine how you might navigate this system if you were trying to enter the country – what would your wait time be? How would you fare in the great game of immigration entry? In class, you can form a line and have those who meet certain requirements for entry step forward and see how many individuals in the class would actually get denied entry or have to wait a decade or longer to enter.

➤ Look up the video of the song Ice El Hielo by the group La Santa Cecilia on youtube and place the video in dialogue with the experiences that Efrain and Veronica narrate. How do these narratives, the video and the stories in this chapter, complicate the immigrate debate beyond the rhetoric that is otherwise recycled in the letters-to-the-editor.

➤ Create your own rhetorical analysis of the letters-to-the-editor and interviews in this chapter: Tally the time the authors/participants make reference to the negative impact of someone entering “illegally” versus the times they mention something more related to cultural influence that has nothing to do with someone’s immigrant status. How often do these individuals slip from making a “legal” argument to making a cultural/racial argument?



# CLASHING AT THE CROSSROADS

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## SUMMARY

This chapter places the previous chapter about language in dialogue with the way people actually acted. In other words, how did the rhetoric alter the way people interacted with one another, how did the negativity influence day-to-day encounters between Latino and non-Latino residents of Lafayette. This chapter explores what Latinos had to endure in 2006 and how they internalized the negativity swirling around the nation and their town. Opening with spaces in Wal-Mart, the chapter allows readers to consider otherwise banal spaces as important to informing the way we understand people's lives. In the twenty-first century outward manifestation of racism gave way to subtle microaggressions of feeling ignored, dismissed, or made to seem insignificant. Indeed, white supremacy did not just evaporate after the slavery or the civil rights era, it evolved and metastasized into microaggressions. Subtle things, such as associating the word immigrant only with Latinos, perpetuated the notion of Latinos as forever foreign. In addition, remarks about speaking Spanish, the family size of Latinos, or affordability of products cut at the ways society viewed Latinos, not just undocumented immigrants, as inferior. The chapter depicts the way men and women perceived these insults differently given their varied history of exposure to slurs in the past. The workplace provides illustrations of how daily snubs and felt distances were absorbed by Latino men and women. Moreover, these hurtful acts were not limited to the immigrant generation. Second generation Latinos, those born and raised in the United States, also felt attacks on their belonging.

## QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- ➔ Though not the same as angry men parading in white pointy hats, how has a system of White supremacy metastasized in today's society?
- ➔ What are the shared experiences of discrimination between the Black and Latino community and what does this tell us about an underlined system of racism that positions communities of color as somehow less worthy of human consideration?
- ➔ How does intersectionality, or the experience of being raced, gendered, and classed simultaneously, influence the different ways some Latinos perceived the way they were treated?

## ASSIGNMENTS AND EXERCISES

- ➔ Identify the three types of microaggressions and explore how each could be illustrated through the narratives in this book.

## UNITED WE ARE STRONGER

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### SUMMARY

Opening with recognizing my own cynicism, the chapter returns to the Virgin of Guadalupe procession to provide lessons for me, the researcher, in recognizing moments of connection between Latino and non-Latino members of community. As the previous chapters related, there is much that separated people in this town. Still, this chapter accounts for the complex ways that belonging can be re-imagined in these spaces and co-existence can flourish. The voices of White residents in this chapter begin by exploring well-intentioned, but still problematic, assumptions that continue to halt complete understanding. Though not as intense as the letters-to-the-editor or damaging as negative encounters in the workplace, these thought-barriers are subtle reminders that Latino residents still may not fully belong. Assumptions about language acquisition or accusations of illegality continued to stop the possibility of seeing Latinos as working, contributing members of society. Perceived as always at a deficit, Latinos had to continuously prove their worth in community. Even progressive residents wanted so badly to believe that antagonism was but a fraction of the experience that they may not have actively fought to dissuade the wave of misconceptions about Latinos. Alternatively, the chapter recognizes how some non-Latino individuals actively participated in creating a better, more welcoming community. These individuals serve as possible models for ways to deal with a community in transition. The chapter also includes detailed descriptions of ethnic belonging and how Latinos created their own unique sense of belonging. Engaging readers with a notion that *E Pluribus Unum* means united through difference, not in spite of it, the chapter portrays how ethnic belonging operates for Latinos whose belonging in the United States did not mean complete assimilation. Community organizations and sporting events provide readers with ways to understand the resiliency of these individuals and appreciate how Latinos created a complicated sense of belonging.

### QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- ➔ We want to believe that all it takes is more information to discourage racism or xenophobia, but beliefs of supremacy are so ingrained that mere details cannot dislodge people's mind from what they believe to be true. Discuss possible direct actions besides just providing more information that can combat the imbedded mental obstructions that keep people apart.
- ➔ Some sociologists believe ethnic identity is temporary and will taper off in generations of successful assimilation, but what does this chapter tell us about ethnic belonging and the enduring importance of a positive connection to ethnic identity? Moreover, has ethnic identity been severed completely in immigrant communities of the past? Can we see traces of ethnic belonging remaining in even other communities of the United States?

# UNITED WE ARE STRONGER

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## QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

➤ Discuss the Nuestro Himno debate – what does it mean to change the national anthem to Spanish? Will it destroy or enrich the experience of an American identity?

## ASSIGNMENTS AND CLASS EXERCISES

➤ As a class, collectively think about pockets of communities on your campus that don't normally come together. What can be done to bring these individuals into the same room and have them have meaningful conversations with one another? What are some potential set-backs that might get in the way of engaging both communities with each other? What has stopped these communities from coming together in the past and what might it take to bring them together now?

➤ At times people within the same ethnic group might want to sever ties to marginalized groups and disassociate themselves from being tied to negatively positioned communities. See Allyson Hobbs' TED Talk on racial passing on youtube: *The Chosen Exile of Racial Passing*. Compare the history of racial passing to the continued efforts of Carlos and Gloria to advocate on behalf of Latinos. Discuss how Carlos and Gloria both sought ways to "make [non-Latinos] understand" instead of distancing themselves from undocumented immigrants.

## THE POLITICS OF BELONGING WAGES ON

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### SUMMARY

The concluding chapter moves the discussion to present-day immigration politics. In states like Indiana, Arizona, and Oklahoma, state-based legislation took over where the national immigration debate left off. The conclusion details how these policies and their continued use of negative associations with undocumented immigrants continued to negatively impact Latinos in Indiana. Moreover, it explores the problems with these laws that on the one hand proclaim they do not have discrimination as their aim, but in practice certainly blur the line on racial profiling and unfair targeting of certain individuals.

### QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- What are the material consequences of the political rhetoric? How does one's political pandering to immigration influence real lived reality on the ground for the people living in someone's state or district?
- What are the unintended consequences of this state-based legislation and how do discriminatory practice become part of implementation of these laws?
- Looking to Beth Ann's evolution on the topic of immigration, can people change? Has this book given you a new perspective? It is a complicated issue, but does it deserve more discussion than the "thirty-second sound bite" that Pastor Walker warned about earlier in the book?
- If someone of your gender, race, or class-background committed a crime, what might it feel like if you were implicated in that crime even though you had nothing to do with those actions? We see in today's news that this wide brush of illegality has condemned some populations to stop and frisk measures by police (like the driving while Mexican experience of some in Indiana) and led to cases of horrible police brutality. What can we glean from these conflation of crime with an entire population and more to the point, how do we combat these irrational speculations against whole communities?

### ASSIGNMENTS AND CLASS EXERCISES

- Look up Class C misdemeanor's in your state, what "illegalities" have you participated in? Do these warrant being kicked out of your state, country, or university for that matter? Be able to place in context the times one might forget your driver's license in another other handbag, come to a rolling stop at a stop sign, or smoked an illegal substance – do these offenses warrant a dismissal of your human qualities or shunning in public political debates?

## THE POLITICS OF BELONGING WAGES ON

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➤ Look at media stories over the last 5 years on criminal activity of White males, do their crimes become the catalyst for further policing of White male bodies, are they representative of the “inherit” nature of White male violence, or are they treated as a lone gunman whose crimes are individual isolated incidents? How might this compare with Muslim, Black, or Latino offenders? What does this difference illustrate in terms of legislative and political attempts to mark notions of superiority/inferiority against certain raced bodies in our society? Is this a kind of “spirit murder” that uses legal means to continuously degrade a particular population as contributing members of society?