



# Scratching Out a Living: Latinos, Race, and Work in the Deep South (California Series in Public Anthropology)

*Angela Stuesse*

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How has Latino immigration transformed the South? In what ways is the presence of these newcomers complicating efforts to organize for workplace justice? *Scratching Out a Living* takes readers deep into Mississippi's chicken processing plants and communities, where large numbers of Latin American migrants were recruited in the mid-1990s to labor alongside an established African American workforce in some of the most dangerous and lowest-paid jobs in the country. As America's voracious appetite for chicken has grown, so has the industry's reliance on immigrant workers, whose structural position makes them particularly vulnerable to exploitation.

Based on the author's six years of collaboration with a local workers' center, this book explores how Black, white, and new Latino Mississippians have lived and understood these transformations. Activist anthropologist Angela Stuesse argues that people's racial identifications and relationships to the poultry industry prove vital to their interpretations of the changes they are experiencing. Illuminating connections between the area's long history of racial inequality, the industry's growth and drive to lower labor costs, immigrants' contested place in contemporary social relations, and workers' prospects for political mobilization, *Scratching Out a Living* paints a compelling ethnographic portrait of neoliberal globalization and calls for organizing strategies that bring diverse working communities together in mutual construction of a more just future.



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