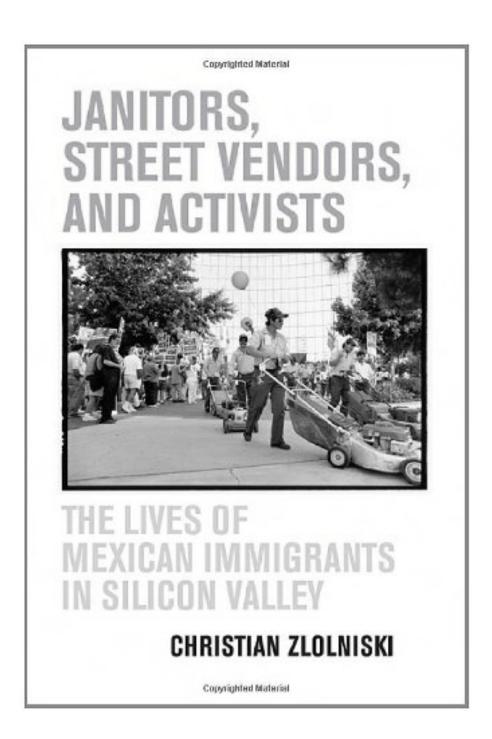


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This highly accessible, engagingly written book exposes the underbelly of California's Silicon Valley, the most successful high-technology region in the world, in a vivid ethnographic study of Mexican immigrants employed in Silicon Valley's low-wage jobs. Christian Zlolniski's on-the-ground investigation demonstrates how global forces have incorporated these workers as an integral part of the economy through subcontracting and other flexible labor practices and explores how these labor practices have in turn affected working conditions and workers' daily lives. In Zlolniski's analysis, these immigrants do not emerge merely as victims of a harsh economy; despite the obstacles they face, they are transforming labor and community politics, infusing new blood into labor unions, and challenging exclusionary notions of civic and political membership. This richly textured and complex portrait of one community opens a window onto the future of Mexican and other Latino immigrants in the new U.S. economy.

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United States - Janitors, Street Vendors, and Activists is an excellent book because it gives a look into what some of their experience is actually like, and of course many of the things people think of are way off mark. I am sure that just like with any group of people, there are some Mexican immigrants who will be lazy or stupid. But those two words also describe a large number of US citizens, so I'm not really sure how "lazy" came to be associated with the immigrants from Mexico. After reading this book, I was even more confused on that point, because the people whose stories were featured work harder than most people I know - certainly they work harder than I do! They struggle to make ends meet (and make do when they cannot make ends meet). They put up with a lot while at work - things that any of us would be going to Human Resources to file a complaint about. Many immigrants were trained professionals in Mexico, but cannot find jobs in their fields in the United States because their credentials aren't recognized - so they take work in lower-wage jobs that we tend to look down on in a way (fast food, janitorial services, street vending, etc.). ..."

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