

Corazón de Dixie: Mexicanos in the U.S. South since 1910. By Julie M. Weise. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015. Introduction, illustrations, maps, tables, acknowledgments, appendix, notes, bibliography, index. Pp. 344. \$32.50, paper.)

In 2003, historian Leon Fink's *The Maya of Morganton* sparked a growing interest in what Fink termed the "Nuevo New South"—an American South that was rapidly becoming home to Mexican and Central American immigrants. In subsequent years, the South's "Latinization" became a hot-button topic for scholars and journalists, who produced a slew of books and articles, many specifically on North Carolina. Nearly all of these studies characterized Latino migration to the South as a recent phenomenon, rooted in the late twentieth century.

Julie M. Weise's groundbreaking *Corazón de Dixie: Mexicanos in the U.S. South since 1910* is the most recent and important addition to this growing body of scholarship. Weise convincingly demonstrates that the 1980s were hardly the first moment when Spanish-speaking migrants claimed their place in the urban and rural South. Hundreds of thousands of "Mexicanos"—both foreign-born Mexican nationals and U.S.-born Mexican Americans—lived and worked in the former Confederate states many decades before the more familiar migrations of the past generation. Highlighting questions of race, labor, citizenship, and gender, the book examines five places in time: New Orleans and the Mississippi Delta during the first third of the twentieth century; the Arkansas Delta during the middle third of the twentieth century; rural Georgia after the 1960s; and exurban Charlotte since the 1990s.

Readers expecting a familiar tale of southern exceptionalism on questions of racial exclusion and white supremacy will be thoroughly surprised. Weise demonstrates that for most of the twentieth century, Mexicanos encountered less discrimination and greater social and economic opportunities in the South than in other regions of the United States. In early twentieth-century New Orleans, Mexicanos both humble and middling successfully claimed access to legal and cultural whiteness at the very moment Jim Crow was institutionalized. In 1940s Arkansas, mobilized *braceros* and their allies in the Mexican government scored rare victories for better pay and treatment. And in 1970s and 1980s south Georgia, Mexicanos encountered a white "pro-immigrant conservatism" (p. 120) that embraced their hard work and religiosity as an alternative to politicized black laborers. It was only at the turn of the twenty-first century, when suburban Sunbelt cities like Charlotte and Atlanta embraced a fiercely anti-immigrant ethos, that the South truly fostered a pervasively toxic racial climate for Mexicanos. Yet that shift was not born from regional peculiarities. Instead, it represented a southern adoption of national trends, notably California's Proposition 187 of 1994. As Weise writes, bucking a long trend of thinking on regional race relations, "the South's integration into the nation resulted in greater, not lesser, exclusion and subjugation" (p. 220).

At its core, *Corazón de Dixie* is a fine-grained social history of a population long neglected by southern historians. Weise draws upon a mind-boggling diversity of

primary sources that will impress and inspire readers. The book weaves census data, oral history, school records, English- and Spanish-language newspapers, family photo albums, and consular records from Mexico City into a historical quilt of immeasurable richness. A digitized source base of many of the book's primary documents (available online at <http://corazonedixie.org>) serves as a fantastic classroom companion should the book be adopted for undergraduate courses.

Corazón de Dixie is an unusually ambitious work of scholarship, and as such, some disappointments are inevitable. The book is aggressively transnational in its scope, making frequent use of Mexican archives and evincing Weise's close familiarity with Mexican national historiography. Readers learn about how Mexican revolutionary racial ideologies such as *indigenismo* echoed across national borders, and how Mexican bureaucrats intervened on behalf of their compatriots abroad. Yet frustratingly, in a book where three of five chapters are rural histories of agricultural life and labor, we learn very little about the agrarian doctrines of the Mexican Revolution. Emiliano Zapata in the 1910s and Lázaro Cárdenas in the 1930s embodied these creeds. Particularly in the South, a plantation society where landlessness and tenancy were as ubiquitous as in revolutionary Mexico, it is hard to imagine that the popular politics of agrarian revolt and redistribution would find no fertile ground. Still, readers receive little context for this transformative Mexican social movement or its potential impact in the United States.

This is but a mere quibble, and it hardly detracts from a book that will instantly become required reading for scholars of Latino/a, southern, and North Carolina history. Each of these specialists would learn volumes from this beautifully written, exhaustively researched, and deeply convincing book.

Tore C. Olsson

University of Tennessee

Unlikely Dissenters: White Southern Women in the Fight for Racial Justice, 1920–1970. By Anne Stefani. (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2015. Acknowledgments, introduction, illustrations, appendix, notes, bibliography, index. Pp. xiv, 335. \$74.95.)

Anne Stefani's cogently argued work focuses on white southern women who fought for racial justice. What she highlights most profoundly is the fact that these women were a minority of white southerners who lived in and were shaped by a white supremacist society. Yet they consciously rejected segregation and through their civil rights activism contributed to its decline between the 1920s and 1960s.

Southern white women activists were informed by their position as members of the "oppressor" group, even as they grappled with being the "victims" of patriarchal society. Stefani argues that they consciously and at times stealthily challenged their native culture and ultimately emancipated themselves from white supremacist ideology by deploying their uniquely honed racial activism. Because