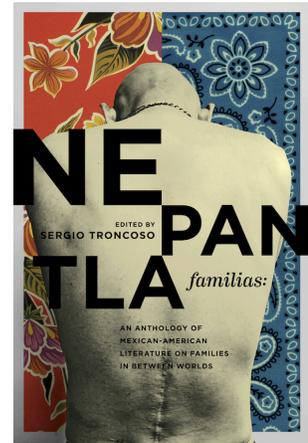


Nepantla Familias, edited by Sergio Troncoso
Nepantla Familias: An Anthology of Mexican American Literature on Families in between Worlds, edited by Sergio Troncoso
 Texas A&M University Press
 ISBN-10 : 1648432689
 ISBN-13 : 978-1648432682
 Orders Toll Free (U.S. Only): 1-800-826-8911
 Main Press Phone: (979) 845-1436



Starred review from *Kirkus Reviews

***Bronze Medal for Anthologies from Independent Publisher Book Awards**

Top Five 2021 Books on Race and Ethnicity by *Diverse Voices Book Review

***Silver Medal for Best Culturally Themed Academic Book from International Latino Book Awards**

***Da Vinci Eye Award for superior cover artwork from Eric Hoffer Book Awards**

Nepantla Familias brings together Mexican American narratives that explore and negotiate the many permutations of living in between different worlds—how the authors or their characters create, or fail to create, a cohesive identity amid the contradictions in their lives. *Nepantla*—or living in the in-between space of the borderland—is the focus of this anthology. The essays, poems, and short stories explore the in-between moments in Mexican American life—the family dynamics of living between traditional and contemporary worlds, between Spanish and English, between cultures with traditional and shifting identities. In times of change, family values are either adapted or discarded in the quest for self-discovery, part of the process of selecting and composing elements of a changing identity.

Edited by award-winning writer and scholar Sergio Troncoso, this anthology includes works from familiar and acclaimed voices such as David Dorado Romo, Sandra Cisneros, Alex Espinoza, Reyna Grande, and Francisco Cantú, as well as from important new voices, such as Stephanie Li, David Dominguez, and ire'ne lara silva. These are writers who open and expose the in-between places: through or at borders; among the past, present, and future; from tradition to innovation; between languages; in gender; about the wounds of the past and the victories of the present; of life and death.

Nepantla Familias shows the quintessential American experience that revives important foundational values through immigrants and the children of immigrants. Here readers will find a glimpse of contemporary Mexican American experience; here, also, readers will experience complexities of the geographic, linguistic, and cultural borders common to us all.

Check website for the most current information on Appearances:
<http://www.sergiotroncoso.com/guides/appearances/index.htm>

Join Sergio Troncoso's Email List:
<https://form.jotform.com/sergiotroncoso/sergio-troncoso-email-list>

Introduction / Sergio Troncoso --

Nonfiction:

Here, there / David Dorado Romo --
Life as Crossing Borders / Sergio Troncoso --
Losing my Mother Tongue / Reyna Grande --
Día de Muertos / Stephanie Elizondo Griest --
Calle Martín de Zavala / Francisco Cantú --
The Wonder Woman T-Shirt / Rigoberto González --
In(toxic)ated Masculinity / Alex Espinoza --
Piacularis / Domingo Martínez --
All the Pretty Ponies / Oscar Cásares --
Nobody's Favorite / Lorraine M. López --
Elote Man / David Dominguez --
Paco / Stephanie Li --
The Hole in the House / Sheryl Luna --
Letter to the Student Who Asks Me How I Managed to Do It / José Antonio Rodríguez --

Poetry:

The Last Time I Went to Church / José Antonio Rodríguez --
Duty / Sheryl Luna --
Self-Portrait in the Year of the Dog / Deborah Paredez --
Why You Never Get in a Fight in Elementary School / Octavio Quintanilla --
Jarcería Shop / Sandra Cisneros --
Garden of Gethsemane / Diana Marie Delgado --
You're tired of your life / Octavio Quintanilla --
The Soul / Diana Marie Delgado --

Fiction:

Dutiful Daughter / Diana López --
Melancholy Baby / Severo Perez --
Mundo Means World / Octavio Solis --
Border as Womb Emptied of Night and Swallows / ire'ne lara silva --
Family Unit / Rubén Degollado --
The Surprise Trancazo / Helena María Viramontes --
Mujeres Matadas / Daniel Chacón --
The Astronaut / Matt Mendez --

About the Editor.

About the Contributors.

Praise for *Nepantla Familias*:

“Such a window, such an ax, into the hard, human struggles of writers, sisters and brothers here — resolving, harmonizing and perhaps, simply just telling their *Nepantlas*. These lives in-between bridges of culture, of gender, of memory and presence, invisibility and courage, of raped bodies on the precipice of healing and wholeness, of speaking versus silence, of shame in-between wholeness, of big time university life then riding back to Segundo Barrio DNA. And of mothers drifting and daughters blazing in the Now. Each page, a revelation. Each story, a valley of tears and a mountain of triumph. This *Nepantla Familia* will tear your heart open. You will finally get to feel like a human being. You will have humanity in your hands. One of a kind, I thank Troncoso for this anthology — I bow before these writers of truth and love. A mega-ground-crackling and life expanding house of diamonds.”

—**Juan Felipe Herrera, Poet Laureate of the USA, Emeritus**

“Anthologies are snapshots of specific cultural moments and this one by Sergio Troncoso comes at a time of anti-immigrant sentiment and ideological polarization. As is clear from these rewarding pages, we Mexican-Americans have ancestral knowledge about that fracture. But we don’t panic. Instead, we first build bridges and then cross them because we know that a life divided is, in fact, incommensurably rewarding. Kudos to the contributors for their courage to put the pieces of the bridge together.”

—**Ilan Stavans, author of *Popol Vuh: A Retelling* and *The Seventh Heaven: Travels through Jewish Latin America***

“Bursting with a broad range of high-quality essays, poems and short stories, *Nepantla Familias* offers the reader a full banquet of modern Mexican American writings on spiritual, psychological, and international borderland experiences. These award-winning writers explore the Aztec concept of *Nepantla*, life on a philosophical borderland that describes not only the mestizo conundrum but the reality of every human being open to the contradictions and conflicts of their own uniqueness.”

—**Carmen Tafolla, State Poet Laureate of Texas**

“Open this book, trace the seam with your fingertips, caress the page, and let the words linger on your lips; let them lead you to *Nepantla*, where we dare and dance and delight and dream and wait as we always have. What a beautiful collection! I loved it.”

—**Guadalupe Garcia McCall, Pura Belpré Author Award Winner**

Book reviews for *Nepantla Familias*:

“A deeply meaningful collection that navigates important nuances of identity.”

—**Kirkus Reviews, starred review**

“A fantastic new anthology of Mexican American literature, *Nepantla Familias*, plunges into the memories of writers who have experienced a culture that hovers between cultures. Not all the writers are Texans, but it belongs on any up-to-date Texan’s bookshelf.”

—**Michael Barnes, *Austin American-Statesman***

“In his introduction to the anthology, Sergio Troncoso says he believes the feeling of *nepantla* is a universal one. “Anyone who has left their home and tried to find a new one in a strange

place—at times welcoming and at times hostile—they should find themselves in these pages . . . And anyone who has crossed any border to create who they are . . . and suffered the consequences for it—they will find their fellow travelers, their kindred spirits, in these pages.” I think he is absolutely correct. Monoculture is a myth, and one of many fictions I hope to see dismantled in my lifetime. And I believe embracing nepantla, the in-between, as well as the people who exist in in-between worlds, who will live and die in that liminal space, is the key toward healing lifetimes of division.”

—**Elizabeth Gonzalez James in *Ploughshares Blog***

“Currently reading *Nepantla Familias: a phenomenal anthology of Mexican American literature on families in between worlds* by [@SergioTroncoso](#). Super recommended!!”

—**Pati Jinich of *Pati’s Mexican Table* on Twitter**

“Surviving in two worlds is difficult. That experience was brilliantly captured in a new book titled *Nepantla Familias: An Anthology of Mexican American families in between Worlds*. Edited by Sergio Troncoso and enriched with contributions from 22 Mexican American authors who have lived the nepantla experience, this book is both a sociological study and an ethnographic model of lives for Mexican Americans in the United States. It is particularly poignant for those who live in borderlands, like we do in Texas, with Mexico on the south of the Rio Grande and the U.S. and Texas to the north.”

—**Corpus Christi Caller-Times**

“*Nepantla Familias: An Anthology of Mexican American Literature on Families in Between Worlds* edited by Sergio Troncoso is a beautiful collection of essays, poems, and short stories that explores lives of Mexican Americans grappling with ever-shifting identities, cultures, and languages.”

—**Vesna Jaksic Lowe in *Immigrant Strong***

“In writing our stories, we create meaning and beauty, but also identity. The same thing happens when we read them and see our own reflections, even in storytellers who seem so different from us on the surface.

This, I think, is why Sergio Troncoso, the editor of *Nepantla Familias*, writes in the introduction that nepantla is “a deeply universal experience.” In the U.S. and across the world, we seem intent on reinforcing man-made borders, physical or otherwise. The voices in this book, speaking from the liminal spaces between them, bear witness to the pain and loss these boundaries inflict. But they also prove that borders, no matter the height of their walls, are fragile and impermanent. In the end, the fight to keep them up is futile.”

—**Josh Cook, *Medium*, Book Review: *Nepantla Familias* and the Power of Storytelling**

“With almost 250 pages of joy—that’s what readers take away in the end—readers of *Nepantla Familias: An Anthology of Mexican American Literature on Families in between Worlds* are certain to find themselves mirrored, cautioned, advised, thrilled, disappointed, deeply moved many times over.”

—**Michael Sedano in *La Bloga***

“People in the borderland see clearly two worlds- the U.S. and Mexico. Now, award-winning author Sergio Troncoso has given readers a groundbreaking book that explores the invisible but very real world of *nepantla*, a place ‘in-between.’”

—**Bill Clark in *El Paso Inc. Magazine***

SERGIO TRONCOSO is the author of *The Last Tortilla and Other Stories*, *A Peculiar Kind of Immigrant's Son*, *Crossing Borders: Personal Essays*, the novels *The Nature of Truth*, *From This Wicked Patch of Dust*, *Nobody's Pilgrims*; and as editor, *Nepantla Familias: An Anthology of Mexican American Literature on Families in between Worlds* and *Our Lost Border: Essays on Life Amid the Narco-Violence*.

He has taught fiction and nonfiction at the Yale Writers' Workshop since 2013. A Fulbright scholar and past president of the Texas Institute of Letters, Troncoso was inducted into the Hispanic Scholarship Fund's Alumni Hall of Fame, Texas Institute of Letters, and Texas Literary Hall of Fame. A native of El Paso, Texas, Troncoso graduated *magna cum laude* from Harvard College and received two graduate degrees in international relations and philosophy from Yale University.

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