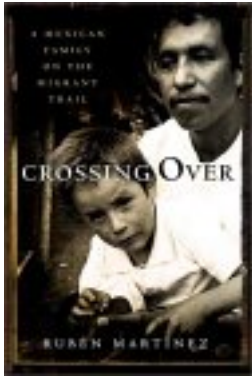


Crossing Over: A Mexican Family on the Migrant Trail by Ruben Martinez

Written by Trisha Ziff



Crossing Over, the recently published book by Ruben Martinez, from Metropolitan Books (Henry Holt and Company New York), is perhaps now a more relevant read than ever as the events of September 11th have spawned a new fervour of U.S. Jingoism. Its fall out can be seen everywhere, as Mexican trucks in California and beyond switch home country flags and their "I love" stickers for the stars and stripes, in a desire to blend in. America's new security only heightens the plight of Mexican and Latin American immigrants who continue to cross into the United States, but their position as undocumented workers is today all the more perilous with the present border controls and INS crack down.

Martinez's book reflects a warmth and humanity, to those he depicts without putting them on a pedestal of alternative heroism, on the contrary their humanity is precisely imbedded in their contradictions. Ruben follows the exodus of one extended family, the Chavez clan from Cherán, Michoacan to California and Missouri and Wisconsin. The family are Purépecha, the very word meaning people who travelled. While many American's still remain wedded to the fantasy notion of the melting pot, Martinez argues a very different position, that these migrants far from fitting in, are engaged in changing two worlds, that of Mexico and the United States simultaneously, creating new complex highbred cultures which affect all aspects of life both north and south of the border.

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This book is a must for those interested in border culture, immigration and beyond that great reportage writing!

Extracts from this project were made in conjunction with ZoneZero, as Martinez and Joseph Rodriguez documented together for ZoneZero the migration trail see: [The New Americans](#)

<http://www.zonezero.com/magazine/articles/ziff/ruben.html>
