



# Jalos, USA: Transnational Community and Identity

*Alfredo Mirandé*

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In *Jalos, USA*, Alfredo Mirandé explores migration between the Mexican town of Jalostotitlán, Jalisco, and Turlock, California, and shows how migrants retain a primal identity with their community of origin. The study examines how family, gender, courtship, religion, and culture promote a Mexicanized version of the “American Dream” for *la gente de Jalos*.

After introducing traditional theories of migration and describing a distinctly circular migration pattern between Jalos and Turlock, Mirandé introduces a model of transnationalism. Residents move freely back and forth across the border, often at great risk, adopting a transnational village identity that transcends both the border and conventional national or state identities. Mirandé’s findings are based on participant observation, ethnographic field research, and captivating in-depth personal interviews conducted on both sides of the border with a wide range of respondents. To include multiple perspectives, Mirandé conducts focus group interviews with youth in Jalos and Turlock, as well as interviews with priests and social service providers. Together, these data provide both a rich account of experiences as well as assessments of courtship practices and problems faced by contemporary migrants. *Jalos, USA* is written in an accessible style that will appeal to students and scholars of Latino and migration studies, policy makers, and laypersons interested in immigration, the border, and transnational migration.

"Weaving together historical material and ethnographic family accounts, Alfredo Mirandé's *Jalos, USA* examines the culture and identity of families in Turlock, California, with roots in Jalos, Mexico, and with family members who remain in or return to Mexico. These family stories capture the complexities of transnational lives on both sides of the border and highlight contested gender, class, and generational issues. Whether the family members live in Mexico or the USA, they claim a strong Jalos identity." —**Mary Romero, author of *The Maid's Daughter: Living Inside and Outside the American Dream***

"Alfredo Mirandé is an established scholar. The strength of this book lies in its rich, fascinating interviews of individuals on both sides of the border. The reader comes away with a strong sense that Mirandé really got to know the persons interviewed because of the incredible detail and honesty recorded in their stories." —**Bill Ong Hing, University of San Francisco School of Law**

"Community studies have a long history in modern Mexican research. This book by Alfredo Mirandé adds a new dimension to that tradition. The study of international migration today requires that we look at the binational, bilingual, and bicultural nature of the movement of large bodies of people. Mirandé adds a new theoretical perspective when he also examines the bi-community effects of living and raising families in two countries." —**Diego Vigil, University of California, Irvine**

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