FOREWORD REVIEWS THE INDIE WE LOVE.

FOREWORD REVIEW ♥♥♥♥♥ EDUCATION

Empowering Spanish Speakers: Answers for Educators, Business People, and Friends of Mexicans

Dr. Jacqueline Zaleski Mackenzie
Summerland Corp. ATC (March 2011)
Softcover $29.95 (320pp)
978-1-936425-00-6

America is changing.

According to the 2010 census data, the growth of the Hispanic population made up more than half of the US's total population growth over the last decade. At the time of the census, Hispanics were the largest minority in the country, accounting for sixteen percent of the population. This number is only expected to grow.

This "brown wave," as sociologists have dubbed it, is novel only in scale. The end of the nineteenth century, for example, saw over four million immigrants arrive from Southern Italy. Although the time was rife with xenophobia, the end results were beautiful. The blending of cultures created new culinary and literary traditions and added to the rich tapestry of the American story.

For Jacqueline Zaleski Mackenzie, the growing Hispanic population, specifically Mexicans in the US, also brings many treasures with it. She recognizes, however, the challenges inherent in overcoming cultural differences and her *Empowering Spanish Speakers: Answers for Educators, Business People, and Friends of Mexicans* is a much-needed translator for those with little experience regarding the Mexican community.

Combining a masters in business systems management and a doctorate in special education, bilingual education, and sociocultural studies with the experience of permanent relocation to an impoverished Central Mexican village, Mackenzie effortlessly blends empirical data and statistics to describe her subject before drawing her own conclusions. Writing about the value of education to Mexicans, she notes: "Most rural residents of Central Mexico over the age of 50 were not taught to read as children," and, "In the 24 months of living in the campo, I observed only one person over 50 reading a book at home. He was the town mayor and was reading a bible."

This kind of proximity allows her to reach conclusions not readily afforded to other researchers: "Each multigenerational person is likely to have *community literacy* or *cultural literacy* stemming from the funds of knowledge gained by understanding the rituals and acceptable behaviors of his campo (community) and comprehending its norms."

Empowering Spanish Speakers covers all aspects the Mexican culture from childrearing to gender roles in the extended family and workplace. It includes a Q&A section, appendices of nutrition and developmental challenges for educators and caregivers, and a thorough works cited list.

Although this book should be read straight through, Mackenzie adopts a standard how-to format. By using a series of symbols highlighting key areas regarding differences in learning styles, educators and business trainers will find this book invaluable for both detailed study and as a quick reference guide. And casual readers will discover new depths when savoring the literary traditions that gave the world Ignacio Padilla and Octavio Paz.
JOSEPH THOMPSON (July 8, 2011)

Disclosure: This article is not an endorsement, but a review. The author of this book provided free copies of the book and paid a small fee to have his/her book reviewed by a professional reviewer. Foreword Reviews and Clarion Review make no guarantee that the author will receive a positive review. Foreword Magazine, Inc. is disclosing this in accordance with the Federal Trade Commission's 16 CFR, Part 255.