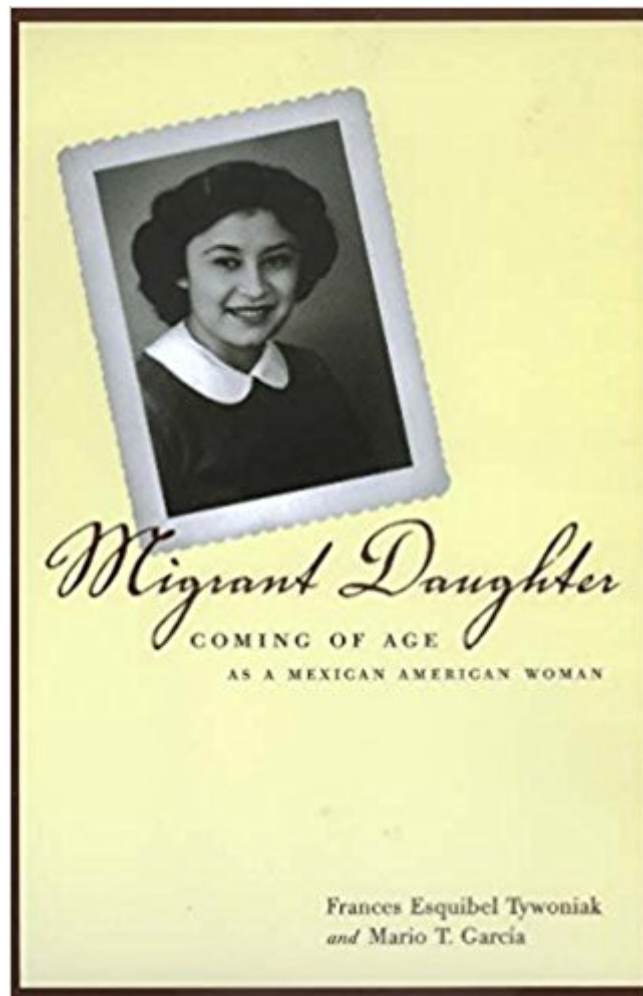




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Migrant Daughter: Coming Of Age As A Mexican American Woman



Synopsis

Taking us from the open spaces of rural New Mexico and the fields of California's Great Central Valley to the intellectual milieu of student life in Berkeley during the 1950s, this memoir, based on an oral history by Mario T. Garc  a, is the powerful and moving testimonio of a young Mexican American woman's struggle to rise out of poverty. *Migrant Daughter* is the coming-of-age story of Frances Esquibel Tywoniak, who was born in Spanish-speaking New Mexico, moved with her family to California during the Depression to attend school and work as a farm laborer, and subsequently won a university scholarship, becoming one of the few Mexican Americans to attend the University of California, Berkeley, at that time. Giving a personal perspective on the conflicts of living in and between cultures, this eloquent story provides a rare glimpse into the life of a young Mexican American woman who achieved her dreams of obtaining a university education. In addition to the many fascinating details of everyday life the narrative provides, Mario T. Garc  a's introduction contextualizes the place and importance of Tywoniak's life. Both introduction and narrative illustrate the process by which Tywoniak negotiated her relation to ethnic identity and cultural allegiances, the ways in which she came to find education as a channel for breaking with fieldwork patterns of life, and the effect of migration on family and culture. This deeply personal memoir portrays a courageous Mexican American woman moving between many cultural worlds, a life story that at times parallels, and at times diverges from, the real life experiences of thousands of other, unnamed women.

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Customer Reviews

"An important historical document. . . . A wonderful tool for the analyses of a variety of theories relating to border cultural studies and the politics of identity."--"Arizona Journal of Hispanic Cultural Studies

Taking us from the open spaces of rural New Mexico and the fields of California's Great Central Valley to the intellectual milieu of student life in Berkeley during the fifties, this memoir, based on an oral history by Mario T. Garcia, is the powerful and moving testimonio of a young Mexican American woman's struggle to rise out of poverty. *Migrant Daughter* is the coming-of-age story of Frances Esquibel Tywoniak, who was born in Spanish-speaking New Mexico, moved with her family to California during the depression to attend school and work as a farm laborer, and subsequently won a university scholarship, becoming one of the few Mexican Americans to attend the University of California, Berkeley, at that time. In addition to the fascinating details of everyday life the narrative provides, Mario Garcia's introduction contextualizes the importance of Tywoniak's life. Both introduction and narrative illustrate the process by which Tywoniak negotiated her relation to ethnic identity and cultural allegiances, the ways in which she came to find education as a means of breaking with fieldwork patterns of life, and the effect of migration on family and culture. This deeply personal memoir portrays a courageous Mexican American woman moving among many cultural worlds, a life story that at times parallels, and at times diverges from, the experiences of thousands of other, unnamed women.

Hard to read at times due to grammar issues, but Frances' story is an amazing one and I found this book very interesting! This was assigned in my U.S Women's History class, but it felt like something I would read in my own time. Very thought provoking and it shows a lot of insight into the time period and culture of the migrant women then. Must read!

Frances Esquibel Tywoniak's memoir about her youth in New Mexico, migrating to California's central valley in the 1940's, and navigating the Anglo vs. Mexican American culture, adolescence, discrimination against females in education in general and Mexican American students specifically, and her drive and fortitude to make it through high school and UC Berkeley were inspiring and sadly a little familiar. Enjoyed the read.

The story of Frances E. Tywoniak is a very interesting and inspiring one, yet the writing of the book fails to meet the level of the story behind it. The writing is mediocre but I still believe Tywoniak's

story is one that should be read.

At several points throughout *Migrant Daughter*, I found myself asking aloud, 'Was this book even edited?' The writing is unsophisticated to say the least. Choppy sentences, incoherent recollections, unnecessary tangents, and childish descriptions fill the pages of this never-ending autobiography. The poor writing even makes this book somewhat uninteresting. If you appreciate quality of writing at all, do not read *Migrant Daughter*. This book was required reading for a course in American autobiography and I questioned the professor's decision to include this.

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