



Homegirls: Language and Cultural Practice Among Latina Youth Gangs

Norma Mendoza-Denton

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In this ground-breaking new book on the Norteña and Sureña (North/South) youth gang dynamic, cultural anthropologist and linguist Norma Mendoza-Denton looks at the daily lives of young Latinas and their innovative use of speech, bodily practices, and symbolic exchanges that signal their gang affiliations and ideologies. Her engrossing ethnographic and sociolinguistic study reveals the connection of language behavior and other symbolic practices among Latina gang girls in California, and their connections to larger social processes of nationalism, racial/ethnic consciousness, and gender identity.

- An engrossing account of the Norte and Sur girl gangs - the largest Latino gangs in California
- Traces how elements of speech, bodily practices, and symbolic exchanges are used to signal social affiliation and come together to form youth gang styles
- Explores the relationship between language and the body: one of the most striking aspects of the tattoos, make-up, and clothing of the gang members
- Unlike other studies – which focus on violence, fighting and drugs – Mendoza-Denton delves into the commonly-overlooked cultural and linguistic aspects of youth gangs

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