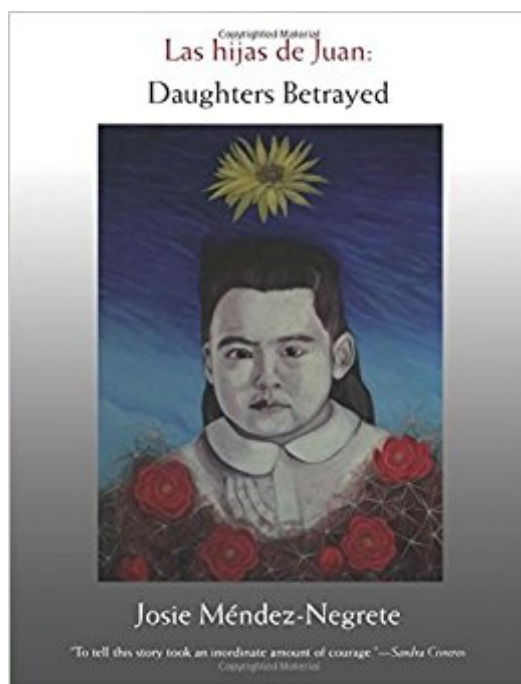


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# Las Hijas De Juan: Daughters Betrayed (Latin America Otherwise)



## Synopsis

*Las hijas de Juan* shatters the silence surrounding experiences of incest within a working-class Mexican American family. Both a feminist memoir and a hopeful meditation on healing, it is Josie MÃ¡fÃ©ndez-Negrete's story of how she and her siblings and mother survived years of violence and sexual abuse at the hands of her father. MÃ¡fÃ©ndez-Negrete was born in Mexico, in the state of Zacatecas. She recalls a joyous childhood growing up in the midst of Tabasco, a vibrant town filled with extended family. Her father, though, had dreams of acquiring wealth in el norte. He worked sun-up to sun-down in the fields of south Texas. Returning home to Mexico, his pockets full of dollars, he spent evenings drinking and womanizing. When MÃ¡fÃ©ndez-Negrete was eleven, her father moved the family to the United States, where they eventually settled in California's Santa Clara Valley. There her father began molesting his daughters, viciously beating them and their mother. Within the impoverished immigrant family, the abuse continued for years, until a family friend brought it to the attention of child welfare authorities. MÃ¡fÃ©ndez-Negrete's father was tried, convicted, and imprisoned. *Las hijas de Juan* is told chronologically, from the time MÃ¡fÃ©ndez-Negrete was a child until she was a young adult trying, along with the rest of her family, to come to terms with her father's brutal legacy. It is a harrowing story of abuse and shame compounded by cultural and linguistic isolation and a system of patriarchy that devalues the experiences of women and girls. At the same time, *Las hijas de Juan* is an inspiring tale, filled with strong women and hard-won solace found in traditional Mexican cooking, songs, and storytelling.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Las hijas de Juan breaks new ground in the literature of Chicano/a autobiography by taking on the shameful issue of paternal incest at the same time that it demonstrates the process of healing through speaking, writing, and remembering. This book is the genuine song of the survivor, and the narrator's personal story is also a political reality of the Chicano/a and Latino/a community, an ugly beast fed on silence that must be both contained and confronted. More than anything, Las hijas de Juan shows us the imperative need to speak the secrets that, unfortunately, bind and damage so many mujeres in our communities."

•Alicia Gaspar de Alba, Latino Studies

"Las hijas de Juan is a searching and searingly honest portrayal of struggle, survival, and corage! This is a woman's story that has lessons for the entire community."

•Louis Gerard Mendoza, author of Historia: The Literary Making of Chicana and Chicano History

"To tell this story took an inordinate amount of courage; to have survived it makes me marvel at the power of the human spirit. As a reader, one feels deeply grateful for the privilege of being granted into its confidence. Josie Mendez-Negrete writes that the healing is not in the telling, but perhaps it resides in us, the listeners. May this story, then, travel far."

•Sandra Cisneros

"Las Hijas de Juan is a tale of female triumph, justice and hope. . . . To its great merit this true story, written in the tone of a novel, exposes unflinchingly some of the tragic realities faced by many children worldwide who end up living as illegal immigrants and unaccounted for. It breaks the silence about incest within a poor Mexican-American family with such brutal candor that it has been hailed as a feminist survival story. By depicting the deep prejudices that persist in so many Mexican males, it candidly lays bare the cruelty and discrimination faced by their women, especially those who remain in limbo on both sides of the border picking up the pieces for their errant men." (Georgina Jimenez Latin American Review of Books)

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*Las hijas de Juan* is a testimonio narrative that provides a window into the writer's experiences and pain. Knowing that the story is based on real life events creates more of an impression than reading a book of pure fiction. We see the world through someone else's eyes with the realization that the events and experiences really happened. By using this approach the author was able to tell her story of oppression.

Excellent Read. This was part of my reading list for a Chicano Literature class and had a few reservations about it. It tugs on your heart strings and at times can be difficult to read because of the content but overall very well written.

I found Josie's retelling of her early childhood boring but also needed, she let everyone know the security she and her sister felt growing up which helps the reader understand the difficulty she and her sisters had during transition into the United States. The book is written as Josie would speak it which at times makes it difficult to understand, but adds to understanding her thought process in the moment.

Well worth the read!

I would recommend the book to my sisters, brings back many secret memories, but it is the will to survive and live life the best way we can with forgiveness and faith and strength.

very interesting book

It took quite some time for the product to reach my front doorstep; which, was really irritating to wait so long. But as for the product itself it was in magnificent condition. Not one dent nor anything else that would indicate that it was used. The only problem was that it took so long to arrive.

I took a class of Josie's and that class totally changed my way of thinking. It was totally an awesome experience. *Las hijas*, is like Josie telling you her story as a best friend or comadre in which she truly confides in you. She brings you into her world and shows you the joys the pains and the personal triumphs. I was able to hear her read a couple excerpts from this book in class and at a reading. I took some friends and family, and they were all balling. It really hits home to people who have been abused or know people who have suffered in such ways. It's good to have someone strong enough to speak up for the ones who cannot.

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