



# Black-Brown Solidarity: Racial Politics in the New Gulf South

*John D. Márquez*

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Houston is the largest city in the Gulf South, a region sometimes referred to as the “black belt” because of its sizeable African American population. Yet, over the last thirty years, Latinos have become the largest ethnic minority in Houston, which is surpassed only by Los Angeles and New York in the number of Latino residents. Examining the history and effects of this phenomenon, *Black-Brown Solidarity* describes the outcomes of unexpected coalitions that have formed between the rapidly growing Latino populations and the long-held black enclaves in the region.

Together, minority residents have put the spotlight on prominent Old South issues such as racial profiling and police brutality. Expressions of solidarity, John D. Márquez argues, have manifested themselves in expressive forms such as hip-hop music, youth gang cultural traits, and the storytelling of ordinary residents in working-class communities. Contrary to a growing discourse regarding black-brown conflict across the United States, the blurring of racial boundaries reflects broader arguments regarding hybrid cultures that unsettle the orders established by centuries-old colonial formations. Accentuating what the author defines as a racial state of expendability—the lynchpin of vigilante violence and police brutality—the new hybridization has resulted in shared wariness of a linked fate. *Black-Brown Solidarity* also explores the ways in which the significance of African American history in the South has influenced the structures through which Latinos have endured and responded to expendability. Mining data from historical archives, oral histories, legal documents, popular media, and other sources, this work is a major contribution to urban studies, ethnic studies, and critical race theory.

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