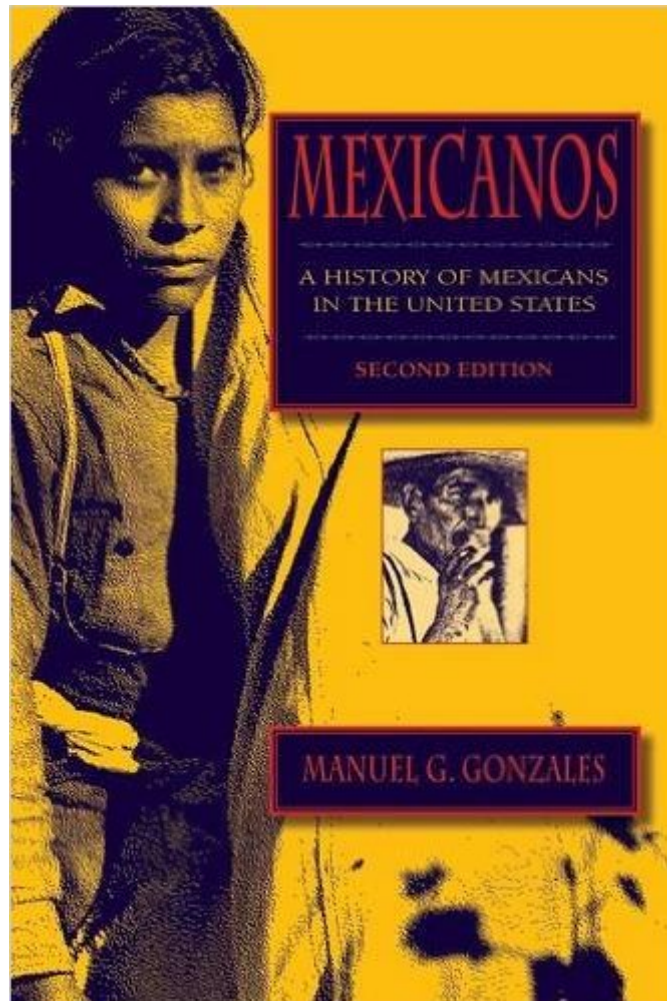


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Mexicanos, Second Edition: A History Of Mexicans In The United States



Synopsis

Newly revised and updated, *Mexicanos* tells the rich and vibrant story of Mexicans in the United States. Emerging from the ruins of Aztec civilization and from centuries of Spanish contact with indigenous people, Mexican culture followed the Spanish colonial frontier northward and put its distinctive mark on what became the southwestern United States. Shaped by their Indian and Spanish ancestors, deeply influenced by Catholicism, and tempered by an often difficult existence, Mexicans continue to play an important role in U.S. society, even as the dominant Anglo culture strives to assimilate them. Thorough and balanced, *Mexicanos* makes a valuable contribution to the understanding of the Mexican population of the United States—a growing minority who are a vital presence in 21st-century America.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Finally, a long awaited balanced, and factually well-researched story of mexican-american history, migration and assimilation. It was very impressive to me the thoughtful, scholarly approach to what has recently become mostly an politically biased field. I was quite impressed and captivated by Professor Gonzales' extensive research, as well as his determination to not be swayed by the "politically correct" versions of this important American story, so often told in a cynical manner. In one segment, Professor Gonzales describes the courage with which Mexicanos fought during world war II to defend a country (the U.S.) that while not always gracious, has afforded Mexicanos, including my entire family, their greatest opportunity ever to advance economically, culturally and educationally. He describes how even though the new immigrants faced many hardships and

racism, life in America has always been better than the neglect and corruption they faced in Mexico, throughout history. His approach to the subject beginning with the Spanish exploration in the New World, and extending to modern times has been very helpful indeed. His weakest chapter was the last, when he departs from his disciplined scholarly approach to offer weakly supported opinions. Highly recommended historical work for all interested in American history; and certainly for those looking to research their own historical roots.

The book was required for a History Class. I would have never read it by myself especially because it has a slow pace to it and never gets exciting. Offers great details about the Mexican and Latino migration and lives before the 20th century, but I would not recommend it as a fun read.

I have, over the years, grown accustomed to the tedious, tortured analysis of Mexican participation in American life as presented by "scholars" in the field. Here, in an unapologetic and well-documented format, is a work of history portraying a people in their real lives, coping with and struggling through the exigencies of colonial violence, the rise of their own culture as a "mestizo" people, national identity and recognition, and ethnic divisions that result in oppression and injustice. All the while, Manuel Gonzales steers his intellectual helm mightily to avoid the victimization tools so handily employed by most other authors who write on this subject. This is not to say that Gonzales scrapes his pages of any speck of subjectivity, but rather that he admits his own biases (i.e., Indian vs. European influences during Mesitzaje) and bows to them accordingly. The intro and background material point up the tendency of historians to include the preponderant movements of their times (often thought of as "historiography") in their thoughts, observations, and ultimate writings on matters such as the history of Mexican people in their many contexts. Gleaning honest, thoughtful history from more modern works written in the era of the awakening of "La Raza" is in many ways as difficult as finding like veracity in the countervailing writings of Spaniards of the earlier period of conquest. Gonzales seems to master a more clinical, objective strategy, and combined with excellent, creative writing skills, provides a most useful survey indeed.

Eh, don't get me wrong, I learned a lot from this book, and there are some great ideas and stories in here. However, I feel that it does not do well enough at connecting influences to effects. It's hard to explain, but basically, it describes many things that happened to Mexicanos in the South-west of the U.S., but does not discuss the global, or even national, influences on these events and happenings. To provide a simplistic example, "Anglos from the former confederate states migrated west, and

brought with them racial intolerance." And that's it. Nothing about why they went west, nothing about them going to Mexico to fight for Maximilian, nothing about former Unionists... See what I mean? It's like the whole history of Mexicanos is taken out of context.

Mexicanos is a very well explained book, covers all the process and progress of how Mexico came to be and gives day by day moments of a "Mexicano", it's an overall interesting matter

This is a good well researched history of Mexicans in the U.S. For too long their history was ignored. Now the academic community is starting to catch up to what the Mexicans have accomplished in the U.S. The author did a good job of reviewing available info., and the book is now 20 yrs old, so there's more new info to be used. But this is a good viewpoint. He gets away from the simplistic narrow minded socialist view that Mexicans were persecuted. Although they were, as all people were at one time or another. He tries to keep it in perspective and be more realistic. He points out how some problems are created by Mexicans themselves. At the time he wrote this book the huge illegal migration to the U.S. was just starting, so he can't be faulted, but he does refuse to say illegal means illegal, and just calls them undocumented. So he does side with illegal immigration, and promoting illegal immigration is a federal crime. But at the time the book was written he worked to make an effort to be as fair and comprehensive as possible.

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