



SPAN322: “North of the Río Grande” US Latino/Chicano Literature

Introductions (cont.)

January 9, 2020

PROLOGUE

Tato Laviera, "My Graduation Speech"

i think in spanish
i write in english

i want to go back to puerto rico,
but i wonder if my kink could live
in ponce, mayagüez and carolina

tengo las venas aculturadas
escribo en spanglish
abraham in español
abraham in english
tato in spanish
"taro" in english
tonto in both languages

how are you?
¿cómo estás?
i don't know if I'm coming
or si me fui ya

si me dicen barranquitas, yo reply,
"¿con qué se come eso?"
si me dicen caviar, i digo,
"a new pair of converse sneakers."

ahí supe que estoy jodío
ahí supe que estamos jodíos

english or spanish
spanish or english
spanenglish
now, dig this:

hablo lo inglés matao
hablo lo español matao
no sé leer ninguno bien

so it is, spanglish to matao
what i digo

¡ay, virgen, yo no sé hablar!

Kink (from *OED*)

1a. A short twist or curl in a rope, thread, hair, wire, or the like, at which it is bent upon itself; esp. when stiff so as to catch or cause obstruction.

(Originally nautical.) Also transferred of a 'crick' or stiffness in the neck, etc.

1b. A sudden bend in a line, course, or the like that is otherwise straight or smoothly curved.

2a. A mental twist; an odd or fantastic notion; a crotchet, whim. In recent use also = a state of madness; an instance of, the practice of, or suffering resulting from sexual abnormality.

2b. An odd but clever method of doing something; a 'dodge', 'wrinkle'.

3. U.S. A human being in various slang applications.

a. A black person. Obsolete.

b. A criminal.

c. A sexually abnormal person; one who practises sexual perversions; loosely, an eccentric, a person wearing noticeably unusual clothes, behaving in a startling manner, etc.

Kink (from *Mirriam-Webster*)

1. A short tight twist or curl caused by a doubling or winding of something upon itself

2a. a mental or physical peculiarity: eccentricity, quirk

2b. whim

3. a clever unusual way of doing something

4. a cramp in some part of the body

5. an imperfection likely to cause difficulties in the operation of something

6. unconventional sexual taste or behavior

Kink (from Google)

A sharp twist or curve in something that is otherwise straight.

- Curl, crimp, twist, twirl, ringlet, wave, frizz, knot, tangle, entanglement, coil, loop, crinkle, wrinkle, warp, distortion, irregularity, bend, corner, angle, dogleg, crook, turn, curve, zigzag, hairpin bend

A flaw or obstacle in a plan, operation, etc.

- Flaw, defect, imperfection, problem, difficulty, complication, hitch, snag, shortcoming, weak point/spot, weakness, catch, hiccup, glitch

A quirk of character or behavior.

- Peculiarity, quirk, idiosyncrasy, eccentricity, oddity, foible, whim, whimsy, caprice, vagary, twist, crotchet, mannerism, fad, aberration, irregularity, deviation, perversion, fetish, hang-up, thing. singularity

A person's unusual sexual preference.

Kink (from *OED*)

Scottish and northern dialect.

A fit or paroxysm, as of laughter or coughing, that for the moment catches the breath.

Tato Laviera, “My Graduation Speech”

- What is this “kink”?
- A difference, a twist, a defect, a deviation from the norm
- Twisted, folded, bent, warped, crooked, queer, perverse
- Something that doesn’t fit
- Language: disassociated; unfixed; corrupted; free
- Naming becomes uncertain and inconstant
- In between languages, identity is forged and lost
- Laviera is warning us against reading him “straight.”
- He’s warning that his words may not mean what we think they mean.
- He’s pointing to a rupture between signifier and signified.
- Perhaps too often Latino/Chicano literature has been read “straight,” as documentation or reality.
- If so, it will always betray us.
- How else could we read it?

AGENDA

- Definitions
- Objectives and Skills
- Key Texts
- Concepts and Questions
- Geo / Demography
- Administratrivia
- Next Steps

DEFINITIONS

All the terms in this course's title are contested and uncertain...

What, for instance, *is* the United States? What are its characteristics, and who gets to decide? Who belongs there and who should get to enter and live there? Is it a place or is it as much an idea (a dream)? Why would “building a wall” make it “great” again?

As we will see, even the country's borders have changed over time, with consequences that linger into the present.

US (United States) (from *OED*)

2a. With the. More fully, United States of America. The North American states collectively forming a federal republic or (formerly) a confederation; the country consisting of such states; the government or inhabitants of this country.

Latino (from *OED*)

A Latin-American inhabitant of the United States.

Chicano (from *OED*)

A. *n.* A person of Mexican origin or descent living in the United States (particularly in those areas annexed from Mexico in 1848); esp. one who is proud of his or her Mexican heritage and concerned with improving the position of Mexicans in the United States; a Mexican-American. In the singular form the word Chicano is chiefly applied to men; cf. Chicana *n.* In plural, the word is applied to both men and women. Although in early use frequently derogatory (and still sometimes considered offensive), from the late 1960s Chicano began to be used as a neutral or positive term, and was used as a self-designation by people of Mexican origin involved in the U.S. civil rights movement in the 1960s and 1970s; see Chicano movement *n.*

B. *adj.* Of, relating to, or designating Mexican-Americans or the varieties of English and Spanish spoken by them.

Latin@ (from *OED*)

“Latina and / or Latino” when spoken aloud. The pronunciations ending with /aʊ/ seek to combine the sounds of the -o and -a endings into one diphthong. Origin: Formed within English, by compounding. Etymology: < Latin- (in Latino *n.* or Latina *n.*) + @, the at sign (see at sign *n.*), used because of its resemblance to a combination of the lower-case letters a and o. Compare Latinx *n.*, Latinx *adj.*

A. *n.* A person of Latin American origin or descent. Cf. Latinx *n.* Used to refer to a person or group without specifying a gender. Cf. Latina *n.*, Latino *n.*

B. *adj.* Of or relating to people of Latin American origin or descent; designating a person of Latin American origin or descent.

Latinx (from *OED*)

A. *n.* A person of Latin American origin or descent. Cf. Latin@ *n.* Latinx was originally used as a gender-neutral alternative to using Latino or Latina, but in later use has also been adopted by or for individuals who do not identify themselves as either male or female, but rather as another or no gender, or as a combination of genders.

B. *adj.* Designating a person from Latin America; of or relating to Latinxs (see sense A.) collectively.

Hispanic A. *adj.* 1. Pertaining to Spain or its people; esp. pertaining to ancient Spain. 2. Spanish-speaking, esp. applied to someone of Latin-American descent living in the United States. B. *n.* A Spanish-speaking person, esp. one of Latin-American descent, living in the U.S. Chiefly in plural.

Mexican-American *n.* and *adj.* (a) *n.* a Mexican settler or person of Mexican descent in the United States; (b) *adj.* of or relating to Mexican settlers or their descendants in the United States.

Dominican-American

Cuban-American etc.

Newyorican, *n.* and *adj.* Forms: New Yorican, Newyorican, New Yorrican, Newyorrican, Nu Yorican, Nuyorican. Etymology: Blend of the name of New York (see New York *n.*) and Puerto Rican, perhaps partly after Spanish *neoyorquino* New Yorker. A. *n.* = Neorican *n.* B. *adj.* = Neorican *adj.*

Neorican A. *n.* A Puerto Rican native to or inhabiting the U.S., esp. New York City; (also) a Puerto Rican inhabitant formerly resident in the United States. Cf. Newyorican *n.* B. *adj.* Of or relating to Neoricans; that is a Neorican.

Literature (from *OED*)

Etymology: < classical Latin *litterātūra* (also *literātūra*) use of letters, writing, system of letters, alphabet, instruction in reading and writing, writings, scholarship.

1. Familiarity with letters or books; knowledge acquired from reading or studying books. *Now historical.*
2. The action or process of writing a book or literary work; literary ability or output; the activity or profession of an author or scholar; the realm of letters or books.
- 3a. The result or product of literary activity; written works considered collectively; a body of literary works produced in a particular country or period, or of a particular genre. Also: such a body of works as a subject of study or examination (frequently with modifying word specifying the language, period, etc., of literature studied).
- 3b. Without defining word: written work valued for superior or lasting artistic merit.
4. (A body of) non-fictional books and writings published on a particular subject.
5. Printed matter of any kind; esp. leaflets, brochures, etc., used to advertise products or provide information and advice.

OBJECTIVES AND SKILLS

Objectives

- Read and discuss key texts of US Latino and Chicano fiction
- Study the US Latino / Chicano literary canon
- Consider its relationship to the mainstream canon
- Contextualize literature in C20th and C21st political history
- Address core issues of identity politics and culture
- Theorize the notion of representation in its multiple meanings
- Rethink the role of the author in literature and politics

Transferable Skills

- Close reading
- Literary analysis and reflection
- Literary history
- Literary, cultural, and political theory
- Critical thinking
- Research
- Writing for the public

CONCEPTS AND QUESTIONS

Concepts

- Identity
- Community
- Belonging
- Difference
- Fold
- Race
- Gender
- Language
- Canon
- Value
- Autobiography
- Memory
- History
- Time / temporality
- Childhood
- Trauma
- Fantasy
- Fiction
- Performance / appearance

Concepts

- Representation
- The Law
- The State
- Crime
- Deviance
- Violence
- Territory
- Space / spatiality
- Affect
- Shame
- Pride
- The Particular
- The Universal
- The Singular
- Minor Literature

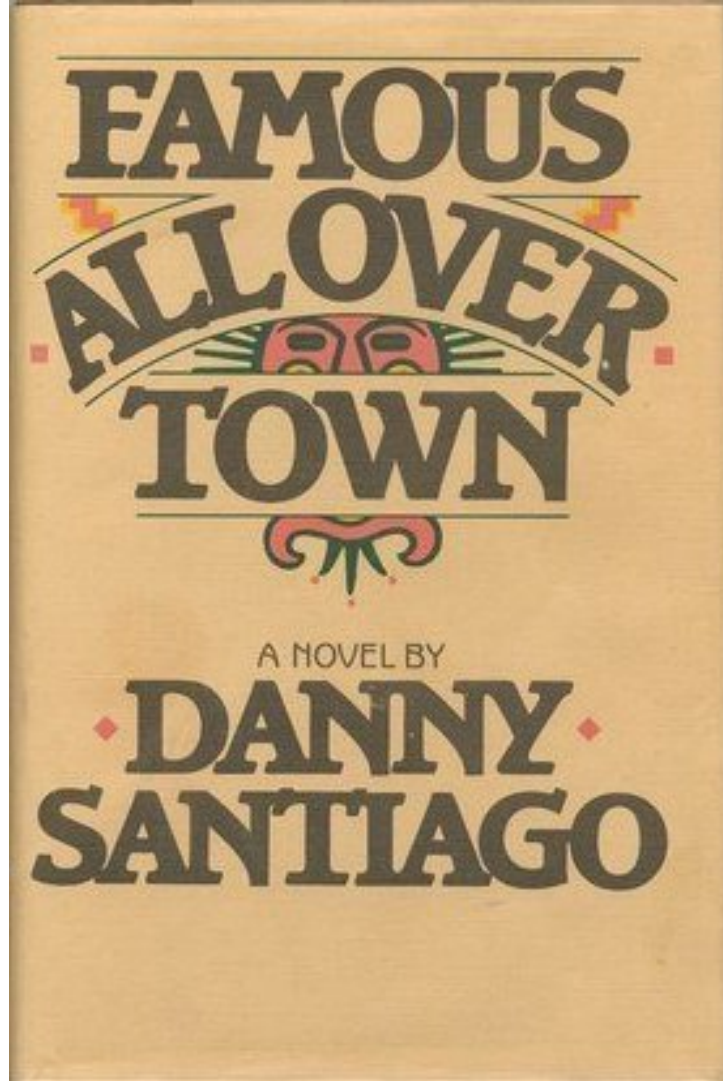
Questions

- What overlaps or patterns do we see in the books we are reading?
- Is there sufficient commonality to talk of “Latino literature” or should we refer to “Latino literatures” in the plural?
- Does “Latino” constitute an identity, and to what extent does literature help to produce that sense of identity?
- If the role of literature is to help construct an idea of group identity, does autobiography play a special role?
- Does autobiography negate or enhance a work’s literariness?
- Does it matter who writes Latino literature, or what they write about? What is the role of style as well as genre?
- Should Latino literature be part of the US canon? Is this category a “cultural ghetto” and/or special pleading?

Questions

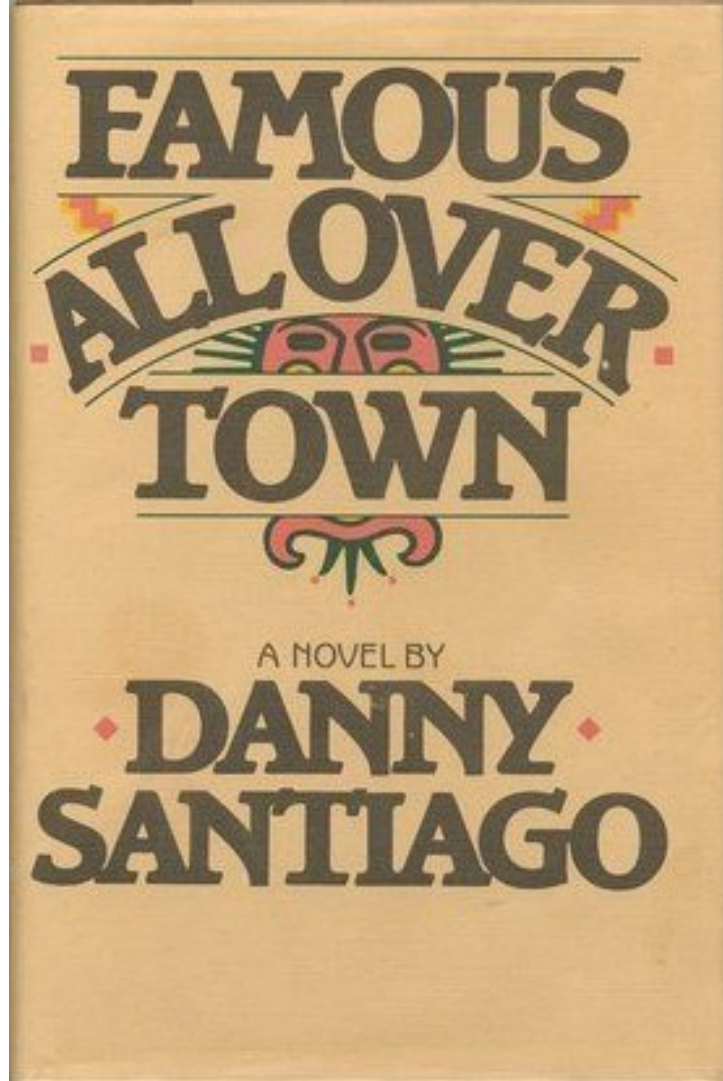
- How do we do justice to (not flatten out or ignore) the “kink” at the heart of Latino / Chicano literature?
- What are that kink’s effects on its environments?

Famous All Over Town



- By Danny Santiago
- Published in 1983 as “a highly regarded contribution to Chicano literature”; won awards, but author did not show up.
- “Episodic memories of growing up Mexican-American in the Los Angeles barrio [. . .] brash but wistful, streetwise but genial, selectively broken-Englished”
- Author later revealed to be Daniel Lewis James, of Kansas City, of prestigious Andover school and major in Ancient Greek at Yale.

Famous All Over Town



- *Famous All Over Town* is a “fake” or a “forgery.”
- Why does this matter? Does it in fact matter?
- What’s the relationship between fakery and fiction?
- What’s the relationship between forgery and identity?

GEO/DEMOGRAPHY



Spanish America c. 1794

- Much of this is wishful thinking, and relies on a more modern conception of territory and territorial possession.
- But there was certainly Spanish colonial presence in much of North America and what is now the United States.
- Spanish exploration stretched from Florida in the Southeast to California in the West, and sporadically even as far north as what is now British Columbia and Vancouver Island.

- The Hispanic presence in what is now the United States precedes that of the Anglo presence by more than a century. (Spanish Florida was established in 1513)
- This presence is reflected in numerous placenames: Florida, California, Colorado, Texas... Even in British Columbia, the Spanish expeditions of 1774 to 1794 have left us Quadra, Galiano, Cortez, Tofino, Port Alberni (and Alberni Street), the Juan de Fuca Strait, Spanish Banks, Cardero and Haro Streets, Langara College...
- But the longest and most consistent Hispanic influence in what is now the USA is in the Southwest, where there are populations (perhaps 10% of US Chicanos) who could say “I didn’t cross the border, the border crossed me.”

Spanish California

- In California, for instance, Spain established permanent settlements up the coast as far north as what is now San Francisco and the Bay Area.
- Each mission was the center of an ecosystem; a node of power and authority and part of a longer chain.



Mexico in 1824

- Newly independent, Mexico inherited the territorial claims of what has previously been “New Spain,” including much of what is now the US Southwest.



The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo

- After the Mexican-American War (1846-48), the subsequent Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo gave much of Northern Mexico to the USA.
- The Gadsden Purchase of 1854 added an additional 76,800 km² of what is now Arizona and New Mexico



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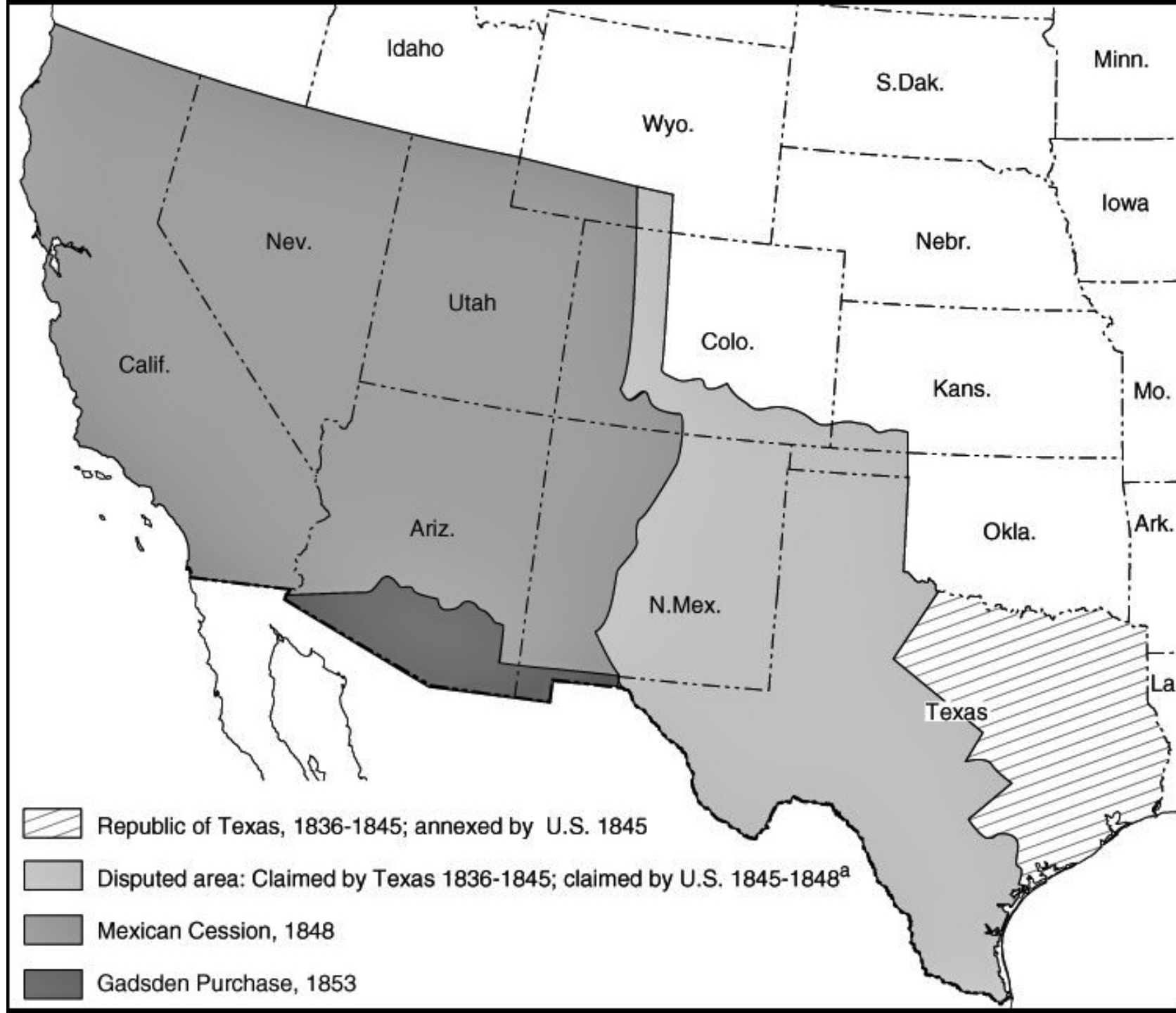
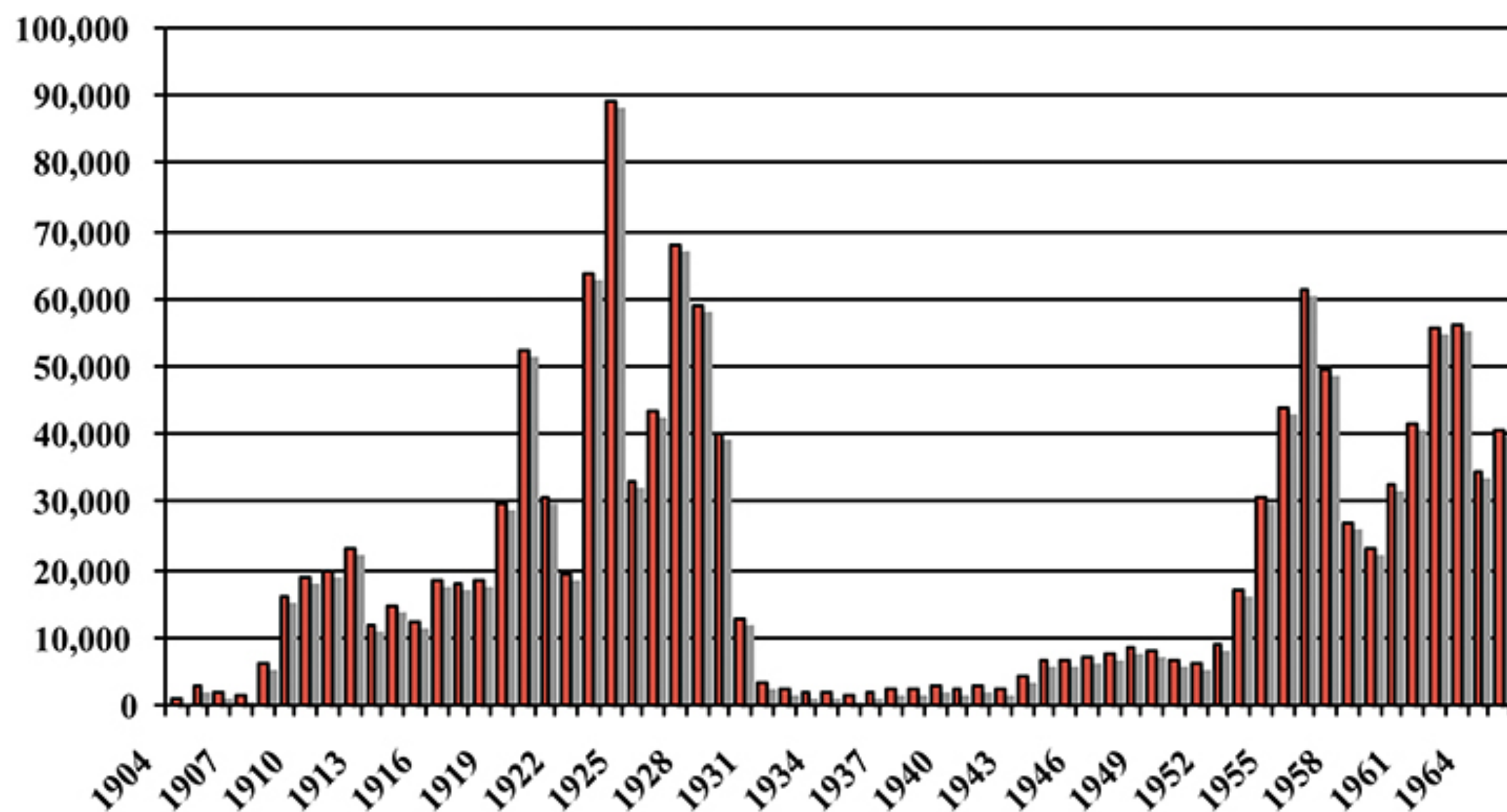


Table 1. Mexican Immigrants to the United States, 1904–1967

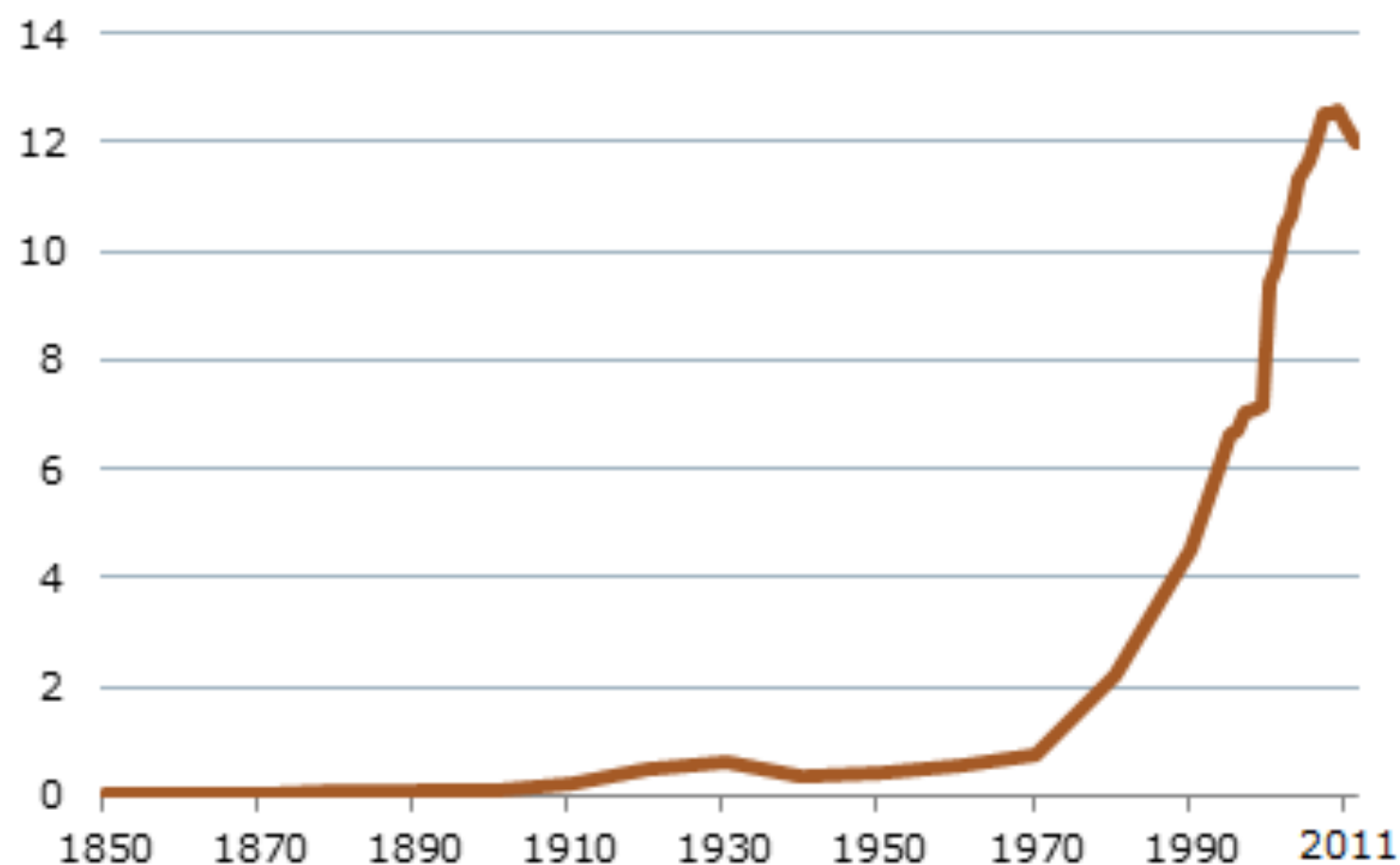


Source: *Historical Statistics of the United States*, 2006.

Figure 1.1

Mexican-Born Population in the U.S., 1850-2011

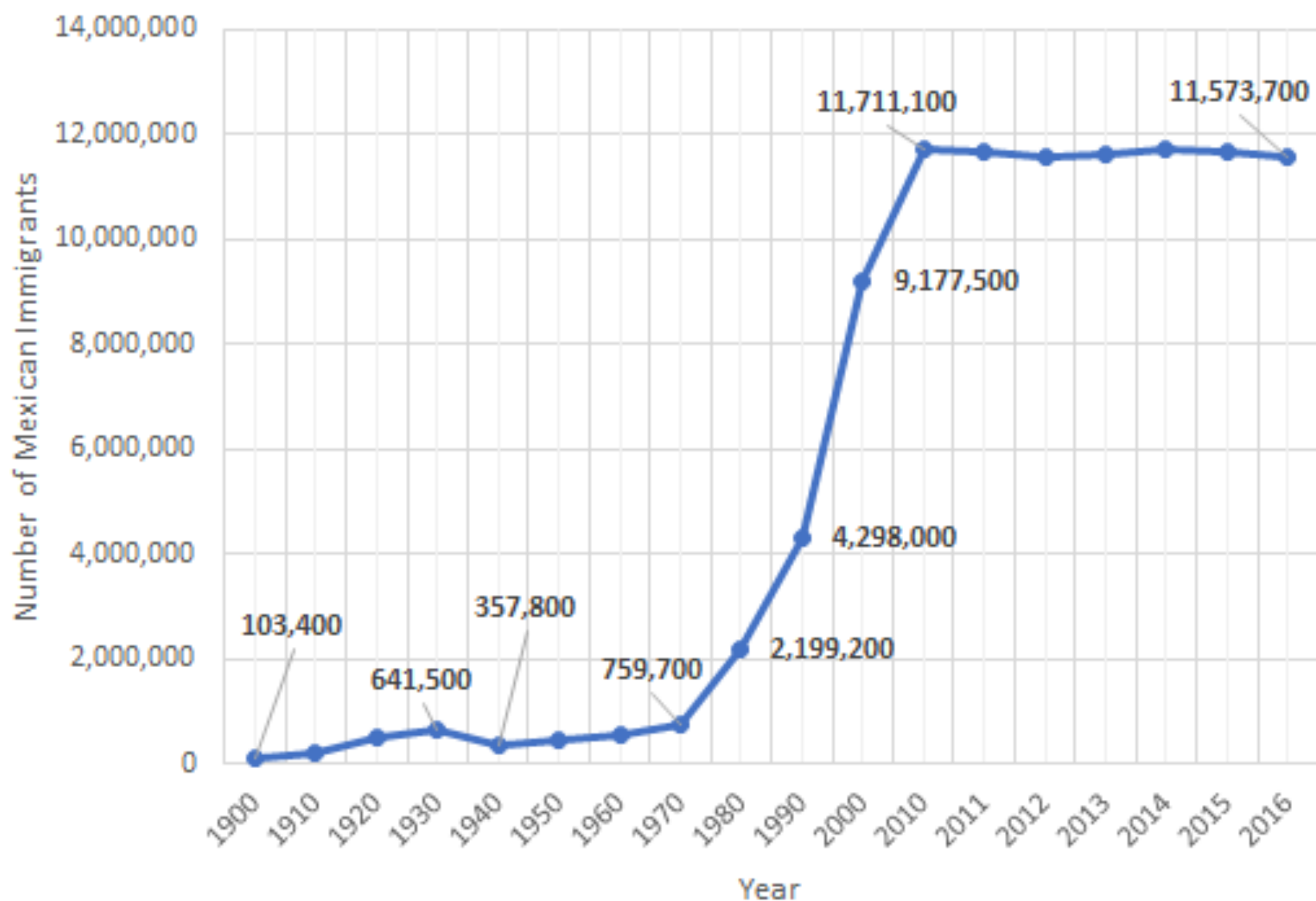
(in millions)



Source: 1850-1930, 1960-1980: Gibson and Jung (2006); 1940-1950, U.S. Census Bureau (1975), Series C228-295, white foreign-born; 1990-2011: Pew Hispanic Center estimates from augmented March Current Population Surveys and Decennial Censuses adjusted for undercount

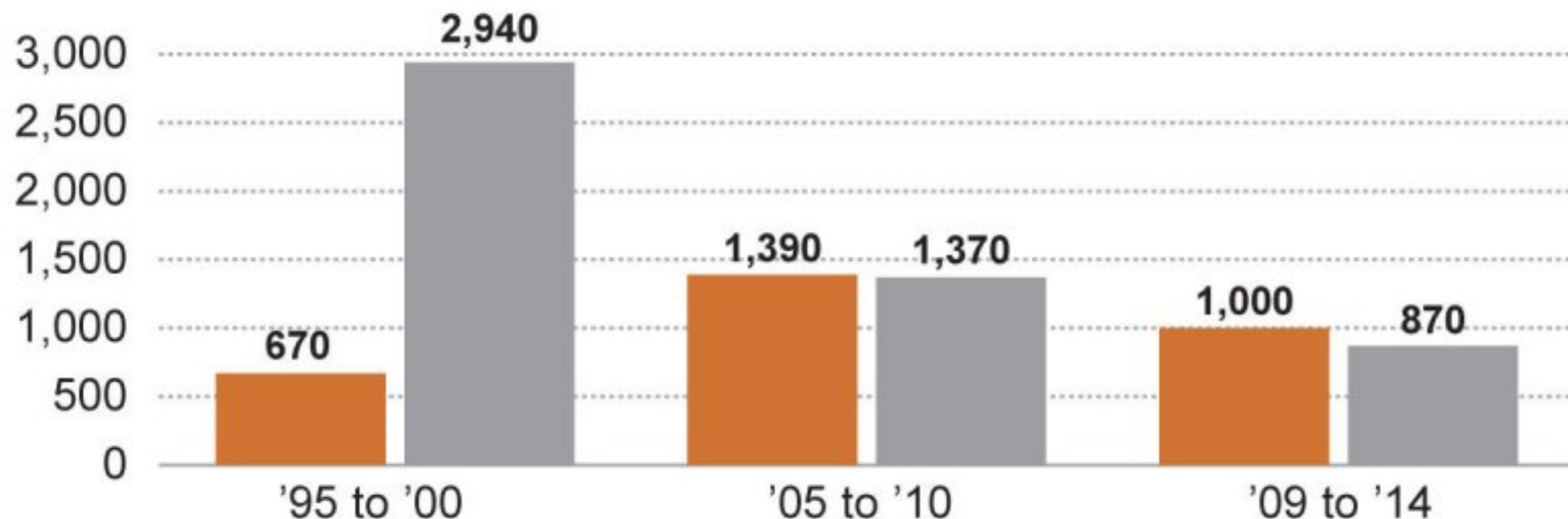
PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Number of Mexican Immigrants in the United States 1900- 2016



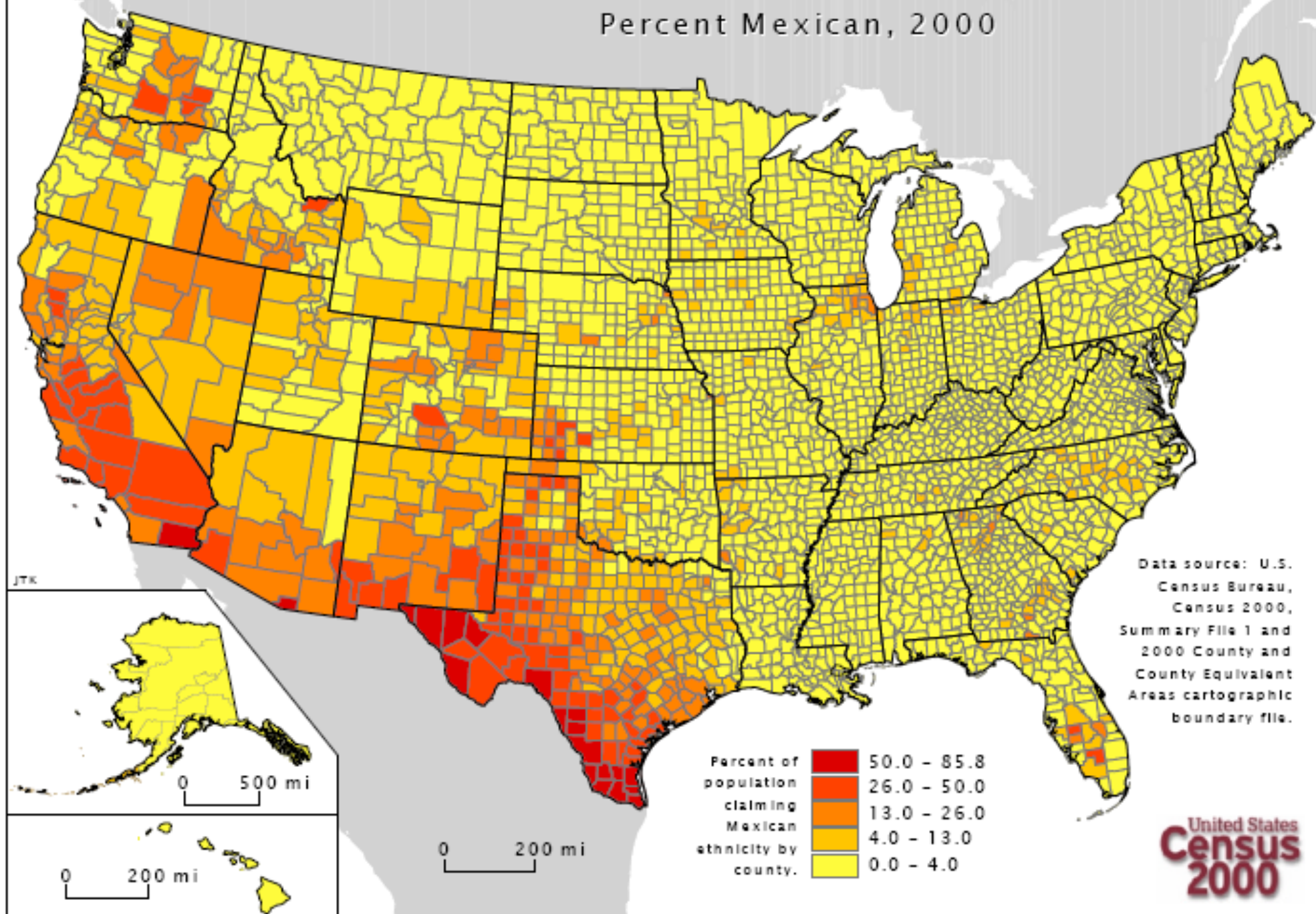
Net migration from Mexico (In thousands)

■ U.S. to Mexico ■ Mexico to U.S.



Note: Estimates are for February 1995 through February 2000, June 2005 through June 2010, and August 2009 through August 2014. Migration from the U.S. to Mexico includes people born in Mexico, the U.S. and elsewhere; Mexico to U.S. includes Mexican-born people only.

Percent Mexican, 2000

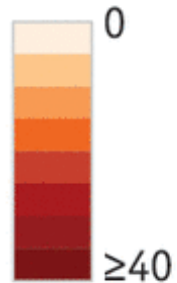


- The 37 million Mexican-Americans (or Chicanos) are the largest Latino population in the USA: over 60% of the total. They constitute c. 11% of the US population, and this proportion is growing.
- Chicanos have lived in what is now US territory since the colonial era, or even before: the story of Aztlán locates the origin of the Aztec peoples in what is now the Southwest USA.
- Numbers have grown historically through immigration, driven mostly by economic factors, though this has varied over time and has recently tapered off (Net Mexico to US migration is currently negative). But relative numbers continue to increase because of high birthrate. This is a young population, vital to the US economy.
- Though concentrated in the Southwest, there are also Mexican-Americans in major cities across the USA: Houston, Chicago, New York, Atlanta, etc.
- But the East Coast is also home to many other Latino communities, while increasingly those crossing the US/Mexico border come from elsewhere, especially Central America.

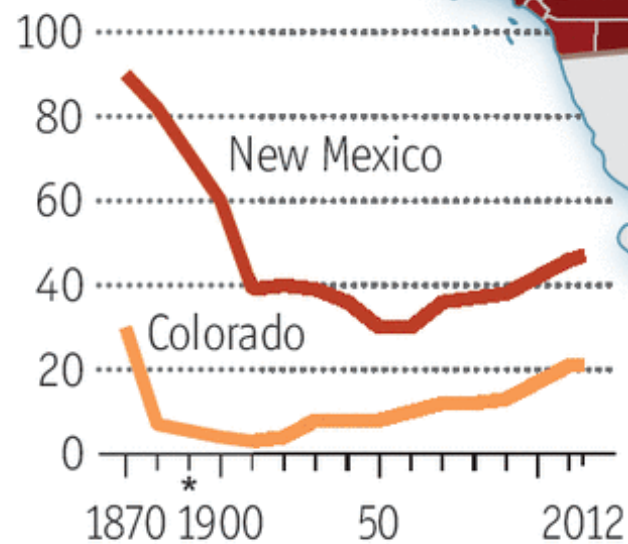
- **Puerto Ricans.** C. 5 million living in the continental USA (compared to less than 4 million in Puerto Rico itself). Around 10% of the US Latino population. Following the Spanish-American war (1898), the US annexed the island, and while it is not a state, Puerto Ricans are US citizens, can vote in presidential elections, and can travel freely to and from the mainland. They are concentrated particularly in the New York area—traditionally “Spanish Harlem,” but now also New Jersey—but with significant numbers also in Florida (Orlando, Miami), Pennsylvania (Philadelphia), Massachusetts, Chicago.
- **Central Americans.** C. 2.5 million living in the USA. Many fled north during the civil wars of the 1980s: Salvadorans and Guatemalans mostly to the Southwest, around Los Angeles; middle-class Nicaraguans to Miami; but there are populations in Texas (especially Houston), New York, Virginia, North Carolina. Natural disasters (e.g. Hurricane Mitch) have also driven migration, and today thousands risk the dangerous journey through Mexico to escape both violence and poverty, and to send money (remittances) back to families still in the region.

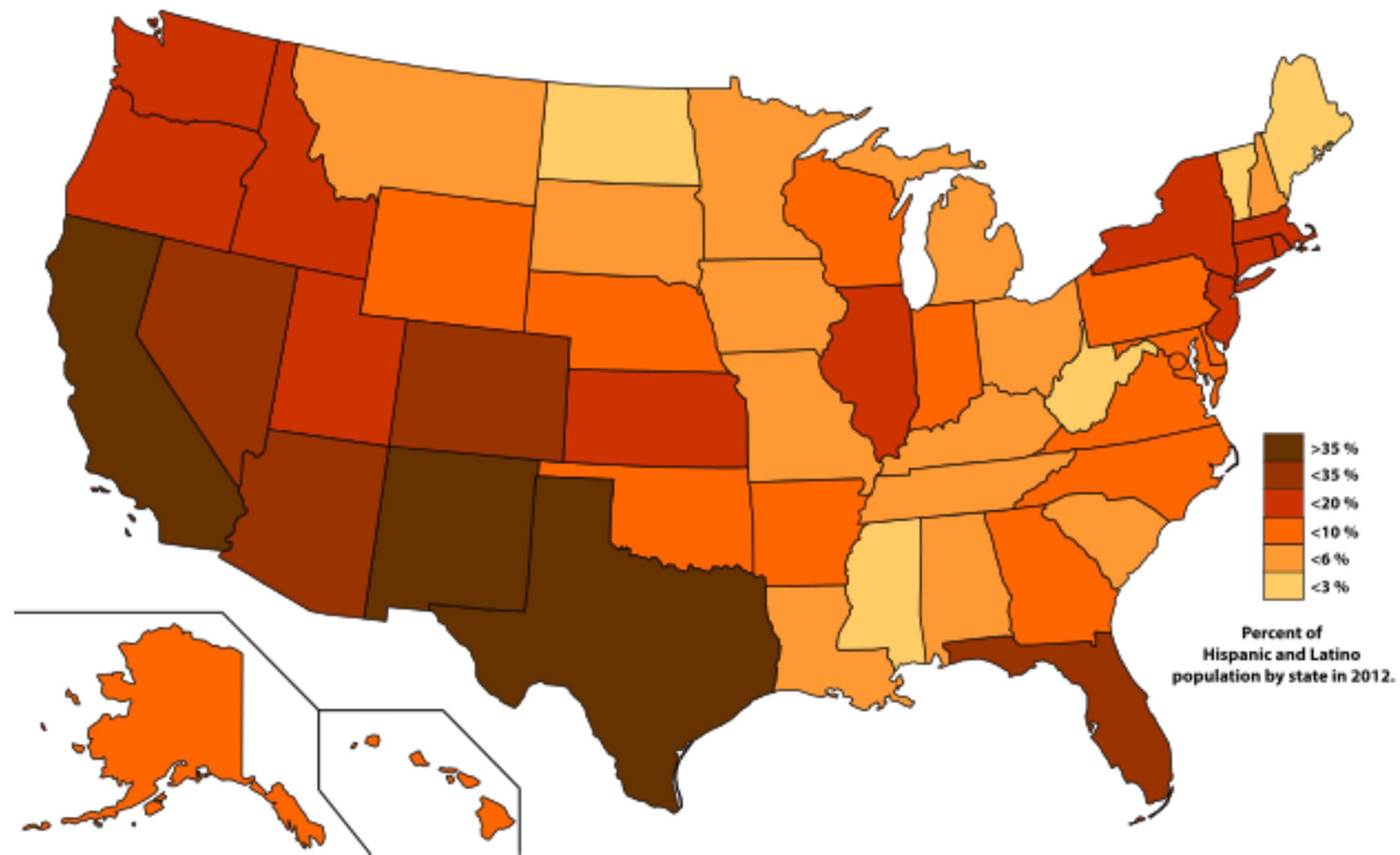
- **Cubans.** C. 2.3 million living in the USA, overwhelmingly (if not solely) in Florida and above all Miami. Following the 1959 Cuban revolution, political migrants and exiles were welcomed by the US government. Though immigration policy was tightened in the 1990s (“wet foot, dry foot”), it is still vastly easier for Cubans to enter the USA than it is for almost any other would-be immigrants. At times, e.g. the “Mariel” boatlift, the Castro regime also encouraged migration. Unlike other Latinos, Cuban-Americans are more likely to be middle-class and Republican. Their votes are seen as vital in most presidential elections.
- **Dominicans.** C. 1.8 million in the USA, the fourth-largest group (after Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, Cubans, and Salvadorans), with a long-standing presence on the East Coast. Many sought refuge from political violence under dictator Rafael Trujillo from the 1940s to the 1960s. Later, migration mainly had economic causes, but was facilitated by the presence of family members and friends who had migrated earlier. Like other Caribbean Hispanics, many Dominicans are black rather than white or mestizo.
- Also **Colombians, Venezuelans, Ecuadorians, Argentines...** from South America, migration patterns tend to reflect political violence or instability.

Hispanic
population,
2011,
% of total
















Hispanic population
% of total


















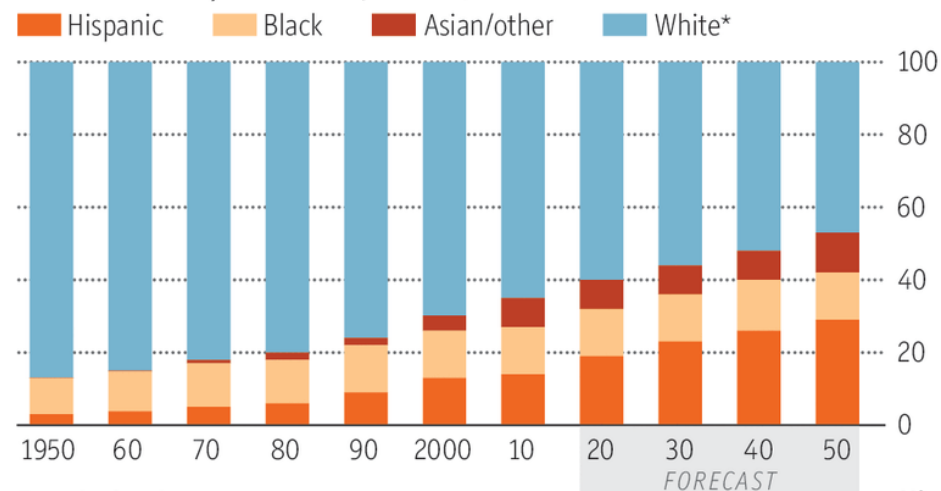
Hispanic and Latino Population by state or territory (2000–2010)^{[1][2]}

State/Territory	Pop 2000	% pop 2000	Pop 2010	% pop 2010	% growth 2000-2010	%pop 2012	%pop 2015 ^[3]	%pop 2016 ^[4]	%pop 2017 ^[5]
 <i>Puerto Rico</i>	3,762,746	98.8%	3,688,455	99.0%	-2.0%	99.5%		98.7%	99.1%
 New Mexico	765,386	42.1%	953,403	46.3%	+24.6%	47.0%	48.0%	48.5%	48.8%
 Texas	6,669,666	32.0%	9,460,921	37.6%	+41.8%	38.2%	38.8%	39.1%	39.4%
 California	10,966,556	32.4%	14,013,719	37.6%	+27.8%	38.2%	38.8%	38.9%	39.1%
 Arizona	1,295,617	25.3%	1,895,149	29.6%	+46.3%	30.2%	30.7%	30.9%	31.4%
 Nevada	393,970	19.7%	716,501	26.5%	+81.9%	27.3%	28.1%	28.5%	28.8%
 Florida	2,682,715	16.8%	4,223,806	22.5%	+57.4%	23.2%	24.5%	24.9%	25.6%
 Colorado	735,801	17.1%	1,038,687	20.7%	+41.2%	21.0%	21.3%	21.3%	21.5%
 New Jersey	1,117,191	13.3%	1,555,144	17.7%	+39.2%	18.5%	19.7%	20.0%	20.4%
 New York	2,867,583	15.1%	3,416,922	17.6%	+19.2%	18.2%	18.8%	19.0%	19.2%
 Illinois	1,530,262	12.3%	2,027,578	15.8%	+32.5%	16.3%	16.9%	17.0%	17.2%
 Connecticut	320,323	9.4%	479,087	13.4%	+49.6%	14.2%	15.4%	15.7%	16.1%
 Rhode Island	90,820	8.7%	130,655	12.4%	+43.9%	13.2%	14.4%	14.9%	15.4%

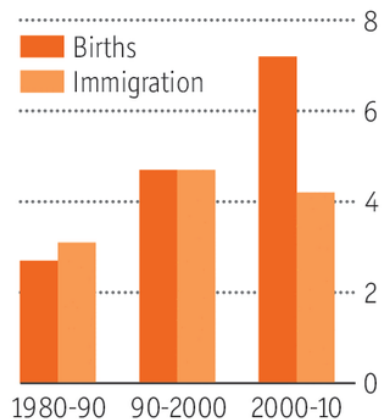
Hispanic and Latino Population by state or territory (2000–2010)^{[1][2]}

State/Territory	Pop 2000	% pop 2000	Pop 2010	% pop 2010	% growth 2000-2010	%pop 2012	%pop 2015 ^[3]	%pop 2016 ^[4]	%pop 2017 ^[5]
 South Carolina	95,076	2.4%	235,682	5.1%	+147.9%	5.3%	5.5%	5.5%	5.7%
 Alabama	75,830	1.7%	185,602	3.9%	+144.8%	4.1%	4.2%	4.1%	4.1%
 Tennessee	123,838	2.2%	290,059	4.6%	+134.2%	4.8%	5.2%	5.2%	5.4%
 Kentucky	59,939	1.5%	132,836	3.1%	+121.6%	3.2%	3.4%	3.4%	3.5%
 Arkansas	86,866	3.2%	186,050	6.4%	+114.2%	6.8%	7.2%	7.2%	7.4%
 North Carolina	378,963	4.7%	800,120	8.4%	+111.1%	8.7%	9.1%	9.2%	9.4%
 Maryland	227,916	4.3%	470,632	8.2%	+106.5%	8.7%	9.5%	9.8%	10.1%
 Mississippi	39,569	1.4%	81,481	2.7%	+105.9%	2.9%	3.1%	2.9%	2.9%
 South Dakota	10,903	1.4%	22,119	2.7%	+102.9%	3.1%	3.6%	3.7%	3.6%
 Delaware	37,277	4.8%	73,221	8.2%	+96.4%	8.6%	9.0%	9.2%	9.3%
 Georgia	435,227	5.3%	853,689	8.8%	+96.1%	9.2%	9.3%	9.3%	9.6%
 Virginia	329,540	4.7%	631,825	7.9%	+91.7%	8.4%	9.0%	9.0%	9.3%
 Oklahoma	179,304	5.2%	332,007	8.9%	+85.2%	9.3%	10.1%	10.3%	10.6%

America's racial/ethnic composition, %

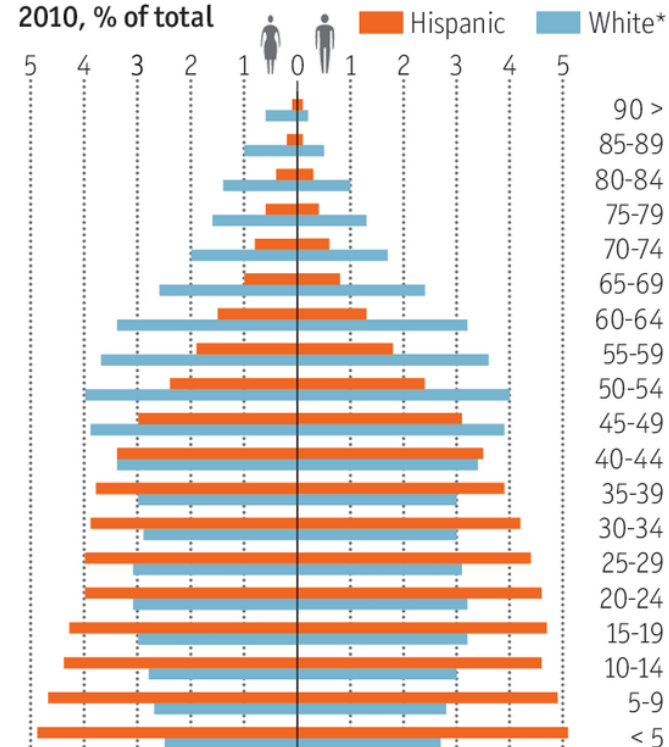


Growth of Mexican-American population, m

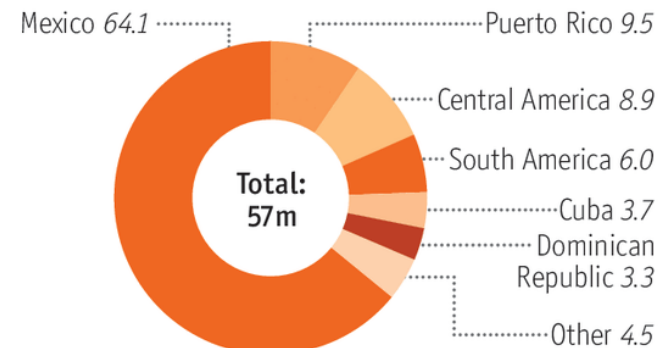


Population by age group

2010, % of total



Hispanic population by origin, 2013, %



Hispanic-American purchasing power is equivalent to the world's **16th** largest country

Nearly **1m** US-born Hispanics reach voting age annually

Median wealth† of households

Hispanic **\$7,683**



White* households **\$110,500**



*Non-Hispanic

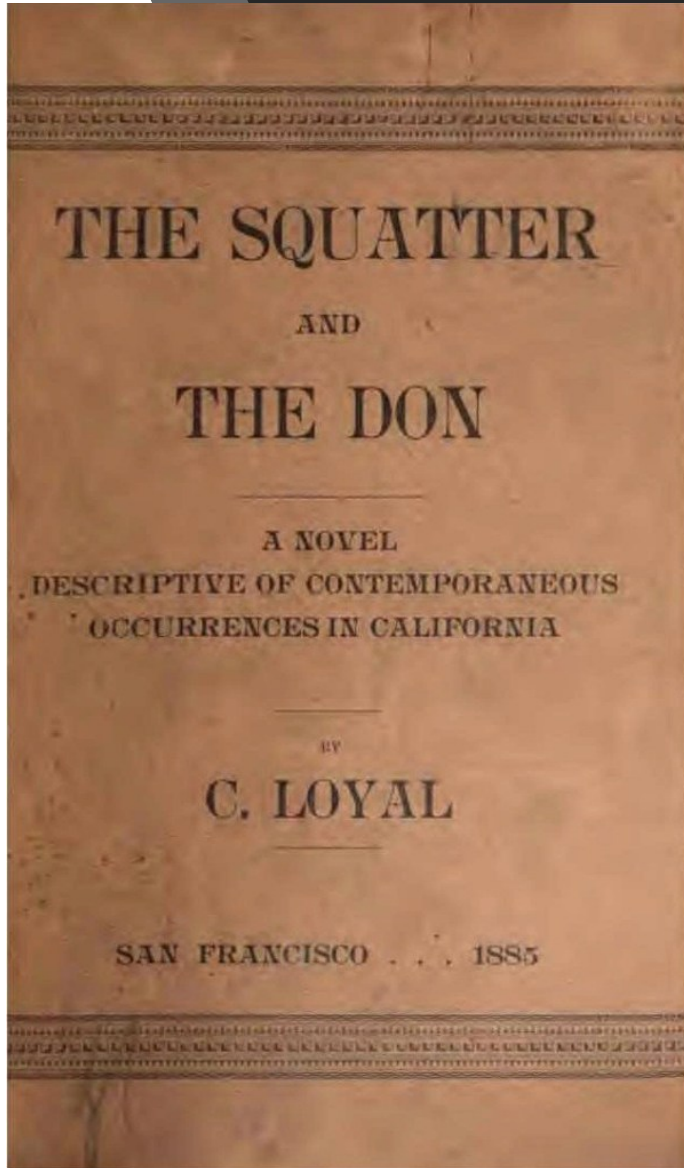
†2011

- Latinos are an increasingly important influence in the USA: politically, economically, culturally.
- The US is now the second-largest Spanish-speaking country in the world, with 41 million native speakers and 12 million bilinguals, ahead of Colombia and Spain, but behind Mexico.
- But this is a diverse population: people of Mexican, Cuban, Puerto Rican, Dominican, or Central American descent have often come to the US in different circumstances, differ by class and legal status, and may not share attitudes or opinions, which can be shaped by context.
- The Latino population is also racially diverse. Note that (unlike other census categories) “Hispanic” is not a racial classification: Hispanics can be white, mestizo, indigenous, or black.
- Not even language necessarily unites US Latinos: second-generation immigrants may not speak Spanish at home, and may be more comfortable in English.
- If Latino is an “identity,” it is a complex and contested one.

ADMINISTRATRIA

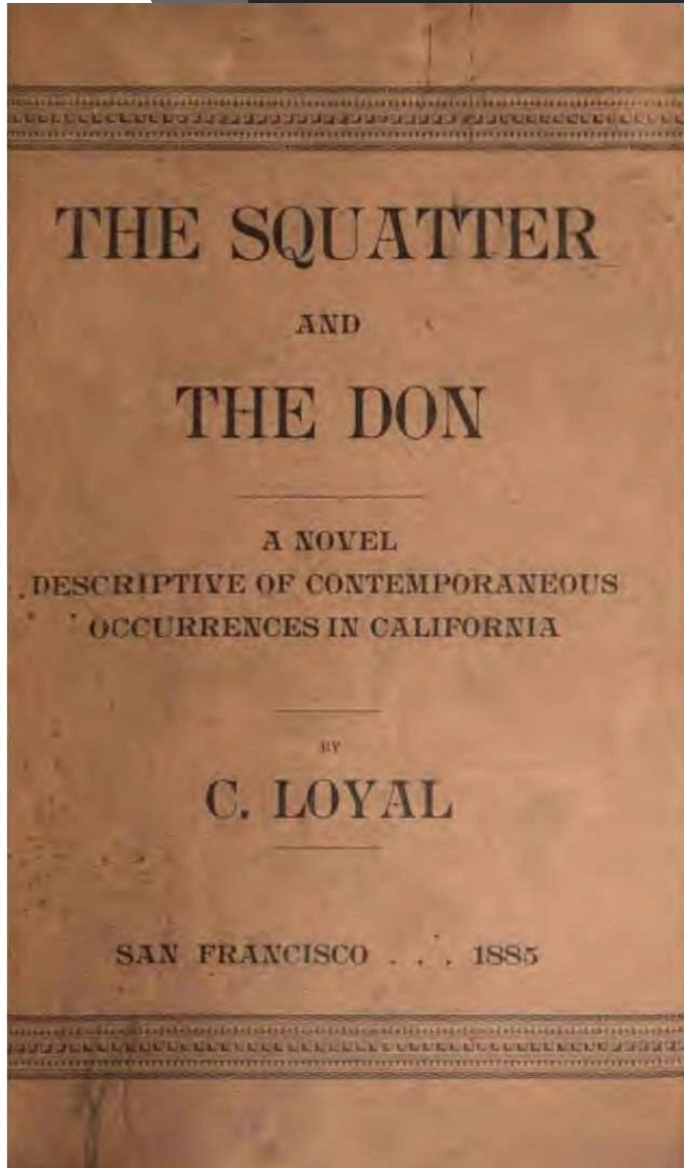
- Course website: <http://blogs.ubc.ca/latino/>
- Attendance is vital. Miss more than three classes, and your grade will be affected.
- Participation is key. No phones. Laptops only on Wikipedia days.
- Assessment: One mid-term examination (25%) and one 4-6 page paper near the end of the semester (25%). Your Wikipedia article will count for 30%, and blog entries and comments, plus attendance and participation, will constitute the final 20% of your grade.

NEXT STEPS



The Squatter and the Don

- By María Amparo Ruiz de Burton (1832-1895), under pen-name C Loyal
- First Mexican-American writer published in English
- Her second novel (1885)
- Narrates the consequences of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (1848)
- “A book all 21st century Americans should read”



The Squatter and the Don

- In what sense is Ruiz de Burton a “Ciudadano Loyal”?
- What does the book have to say about the role of the law and the legal system?
- What does the book say about the state, politics, and political representation?
- How does the love story mesh with the story about land and territory?
- How does affect interact with reason?

For Tuesday

- Send me your Wikipedia account name and blog address if you have not already done so.
- Order *Lost City Archive* if you have not already done so.
- Read the first half of *The Squatter and the Don* (to chapter XX).
- Write a 400-word blog post with your thoughts, reactions, questions, comments.
- Before the following Thursday, you will write brief comments on two of your classmates' blog posts.