

**TIMELINE OF MEXICAN AMERICAN LITERATURE, HISTORY AND CULTURE  
PART III (1930 – 1960)**

- 1930 Repatriation (sometimes voluntary, often illegal) of 400,000 Mexicans and Mexican Americans begins  
Mexican anthropologist Manuel Gamio writes his classic *Mexican Immigration to the United States* and *The Life story of the Mexican Immigrant*
- 1932 Singer Lydia Mendoza begins performing publicly in San Antonio
- 1933 The El Monte Strike, possibly the largest agricultural strike up to that point in history, led by Mexican unions in California  
Mexican and Mexican American workers in Texas organized one of the broadest unions in the history of Hispanic labor in the United States: *La Asociación de Jornaleros*, which represented everyone from hat-makers to farm workers  
College students form the Mexican American Movement and create a monthly newspaper, *La Voz Mexicana*
- 1934 Jorge Ainslie writes *Los pochos*, which sets a precedent in the structure and themes of later Chicano novels (such as Villarreal's *Pocho*, below)  
San Antonio community leader Eleuterio Escobar forms *La Liga Pro-Defensa Escolar* in response to the gross inequity in spending he discovered between Mexican American and Anglo public schools
- 1935 The New Deal's Federal Writers Project sent agents into the Southwest to collect folklore and stories from Mexican American communities; see Tey Diana Rebolledo and María Teresa Márquez's *Women's Tales from the New Mexico WPA*  
John Steinbeck writes *Tortilla Flat*, about the Mexican community of Monterey, California  
Elena Zamora O'Shea writes *El Mesquite*
- 1936 Américo Paredes writes *George Washington Gómez*
- 1937 Jovita González, with Eve Raleigh, co-authors *Caballero* (unpublished until 1996)  
Many Mexican workers join the United Cannery, Agricultural, Packing and Allied Workers of America
- 1938 San Antonio Pecan Shellers' Strike, the largest Mexican workers' strike of the decade
- 1941 Through 1945, approximately 350,000 Mexican Americans serve in World War II, suffering casualties far above their proportion in the population; they become the most decorated ethnic group, winning seventeen medals of honor
- 1942 Bracero program begins, providing for Mexican laborers to enter the United States as short-term contract workers (program ends in 1964)  
Sleepy Lagoon incident in Los Angeles
- 1943 Zoot Suit Riots take place in Los Angeles (case continues through 1944)  
Bracero Program begins
- 1945 Josefina Niggli writes *Mexican Village*

- 1947 *Mendez v. Westminster* decision prohibits school segregation on the basis of Mexican descent, setting an important precedent for *Brown v. Board of Education* (1955)
- Mario Suárez publishes his first “Chicano Sketches” in the *Arizona Quarterly*
- 1948 Mexican American veterans of WWII found the American GI Forum in Corpus Christi, TX
- 1950 Between now and 1955, Operation Wetback deports 3.8 million Mexicans and Mexican Americans
- 1952 Actor Anthony Quinn is the first Mexican American to win the Academy Award for Best Actor  
Marlon Brando stars in *Viva Zapata!* as the Mexican revolutionary war hero
- 1954 The film *Salt of the Earth* (blacklisted in Hollywood) is heralded by many as a true representation of Mexican Americans and their struggle  
In *Hernández v. Texas*, the Supreme Court recognizes that Mexican Americans have equal protection under the Fourteenth Amendment
- 1956 Paredes writes the classic *With His Pistol in His Hand: A Border Ballad and its Hero*
- 1958 Ritchie Valens becomes first Mexican American rock star  
Charlton Heston portrays a Mexican American lawyer in Orson Welle’s film noir, *Touch of Evil*
- 1959 José Antonio Villarreal writes *Pocho*, considered the first “Chicano” novel