LATINO AMERICANS is a landmark three-part, six-hour documentary series that aired nationally on PBS in the fall of 2013.

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LATINO AMERICANS: A Series Guide

About the Series

Latino Americans is the first major documentary series for television to chronicle the rich and varied history and experiences of Latinos, who have helped shape the United States over the last five hundred years. With approximately fifty-four million people of Hispanic origin living in the United States, Latinos currently comprise the largest minority group in the country. By the year 2060, the U.S. Hispanic population is expected to reach 129 million, constituting 31 percent of the U.S. population.

Immigration is at the heart of the American experience, and a central part of the long-running democratic experiment that is the United States. Our series intersects much that is central to U.S. history. The story includes expansionism, Manifest Destiny, the Wild West, multiple wars (the Mexican-American War, the Spanish-American War, World War II), the rise of organized labor, the Great Depression, the post-WWII boom, the Cold War, the Civil Rights movement, globalization, and the effects of multiple kinds of technologies—from the railroad and barbed wire to the internet and satellite television. Despite such familiar landmarks, our history goes to places where standard U.S. histories do not tend to tread. The series is driven by the human dramas of our characters’ struggles and triumphs, successes and disappointments, both historical personages and living ones. They are people whose stories tell us much about their times.

The films chronicle Latinos in the United States from the sixteenth century to present day. It is a story of people, politics, and culture, large in scale and deep in its reach. The changing and yet repeating context of American history provides a backdrop for the drama of individual lives. It is a story of immigration and redemption, of anguish and celebration, of the gradual construction of a new American identity that connects and empowers millions of people today. Latino Americans features interviews with an array of individuals, including entertainer Rita Moreno, the Puerto Rican star of West Side Story and a winner of Academy, Tony, Grammy, and Emmy awards; labor leader and 2012 Presidential Medal of Freedom recipient Dolores Huerta, who in the 1960s co-founded with César Chávez the National Farm Workers Association, which later became United Farm Workers of America; Mexican-American author and commentator Linda Chavez, who became the highest-ranking woman in the Reagan White House; and Cuban singer and entrepreneur Gloria Estefan, who has sold more than one hundred million solo and Miami Sound Machine albums globally.

Episode One: Foreigners in Our Own Land (1565–1880)

Episode Description

One hundred years after Columbus' arrival in the Caribbean, Spanish conquistadors and priests push into North America in search of gold and to spread Catholicism. With the arrival of the British in North America, the two colonial systems produce contrasting societies that come into conflict as Manifest Destiny pushes the United States into the Mexican territories of the South West.

Apolinaria Lorenzana provides a window to the Spanish Mission System, while Mariano Vallejo personifies the era of the Californio rancheros, an elite class who thrive after Mexico gains its independence from Spain. Juan Seguín, a third-generation Tejano, or Texan, is caught between two worlds: his commitment to an independent Texas and his identity as a Mexican. Through the Mexican-American War, the United States takes a full half of Mexico's territory by 1848. More than 70,000 Mexicans are trapped in a strange land; many become American citizens.

As the Gold Rush floods California with settlers, complex and vital communities are overwhelmed. The elites, including Mariano Vallejo and Apolinaria Lorenzana, lose their land. Mexicans and Mexican-Americans are treated as second-class citizens, facing discrimination and racial violence. Resistance to this injustice appears in New Mexico as Las Gorras Blancas (the White Caps) burn Anglo ranches and cut through barbed wire to prevent Anglo encroachment. At the same time, New Mexicans manage to transform themselves through education, preserving Hispano culture in New Mexico and their standing in the midst of an era of conquest and dispossession.

Section 1: Episode Tease
The Earliest Latinos in America

01:00:00–01:02:10:00

Introduction to Juan Seguín, Apolinaria Lorenzana, Mariano Vallejo, Las Gorras Blancas.
Section 2: Apolinaria Lorenzana
Orphan Child of the Missions: Apolinaria Lorenzana

Near the end of her life, Apolinaria Lorenzana recounts to an Anglo-American historian her journey when, at the age of seven and as an orphan, she was sent by the Spanish government in Mexico to populate the Spanish territory of Californio (later to become California). Spanish missionaries were tasked with establishing societies in the northern reaches of New Spain to secure claim to the land. Apolinaria was brought to Mission San Diego, the first mission founded by Spanish priests as they moved north through Californio. What are now the great coastal cities of California—San Diego, Santa Cruz, San Francisco—all started out as mission towns.

Redistribution of Land

After Mexico wins its independence from Spain in 1821, the Mexican government secularizes the missions in Californio and redistributes its land in the form of land grants to some of the elite families in the new Mexican territory. But some land is given to those who the Padres trust, one being Apolinaria. She receives two ranchos and buys a third with her savings.

Section 3: Juan Seguín
A Man of Two Lands: Juan Seguín

In efforts to populate land, Mexico grants Americans the opportunity to settle in its territories, including Tejas, or Texas. Settlers are allowed into Texas as long as they pledge their allegiance to Mexico and abide by Mexican law. Three hundred families from the American South come to Texas, some with the hope of starting a cotton business. Juan Seguín, a third-generation Tejano, works closely with the Anglo settlers. Seguín and other Tejanos see Anglo-American settlement in Texas as important to the development of this frontier, an outlying part of Mexico. After the new Mexican President, Antonio López Santa Anna, dissolves the Mexican Congress, establishing himself as the sole power of the country, Anglo-Settlers and Tejanos join forces in open rebellion. Santa Anna then leads an army of thousands to put down the revolt, taking possession of San Antonio on February 23, 1836. Two hundred Texans and Tejanos fall back into an old Spanish mission, El Alamo. Among them are David Crocket, James Bowie, and Juan Seguín. Seguín, one of the sole survivors of El Alamo, goes on to become
a hero of the Texas Revolution only to face a backlash against Mexicans by incoming Anglo settlers.

Section 4: Vallejo
The Californio: Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo

01:22:00:00–01:40:20:00

In the Mexican province of Californio, the secularization of the missions has transformed the landscape. A few hundred Californio families now own the vast mission lands. And much like the Tejanos, in the years to come, the Californios would struggle to hold onto their land. For prominent Californio Mariano Vallejo, that struggle would last a lifetime. Pitted against the United States, which defeats Mexico in 1848, Vallejo sees his land and title taken from him.

A Conquered People
01:40:20:00–01:42:07:00

Californio is taken over by Anglo settlers. Californios are seen as a conquered people. Cheated out of her land by an American colonel, Apolinaria, the orphan girl who devoted her life to the missions, could not hold onto her hard-earned wealth.

Section 5: Las Gorras Blancas
“Con el Alambre vino el Hambre”—The Story of Las Gorras Blancas

01:42:07:00–01:49:25:00

Settled in 1598, New Mexico is the largest and oldest Spanish settlement in the Southwest. With a strong Hispano community, Spanish cultures and traditions endure even after Californio and Tejas are overrun by Americans. But then, in 1878, the Atchison-Topeka and Santa Fe railroads steam across the American plains into New Mexico. The railroad brings with it economic progress, connecting the territory to Kansas and Chicago. But for many Nuevo Mexicanos, it also brings Anglo cattle ranchers. The ranchers divide lands once held in common by Nuevo-Mexicanos with barbed wire. Three brothers—Pablo, Nicanor, and Juan Jose Herrera—organize a resistance movement to protect half a million acres of land from encroachment by Anglo cattle ranchers. They wear hoods to mask their identity and call themselves Las Gorras Blancas, or the White Caps.
Section 6: Conclusion
Vallejo and Seguín

01:49:25:00–01:50:37:00

In Sonoma, California, Mariano Vallejo spends his last years. He makes a modest living selling water from a reservoir behind his home. Vallejo dies in 1890 after completing a five-volume history to uphold the legacy of Californios and his own place as one of California’s founding fathers.

The survivor of El Alamo, Juan Seguín, retires to Mexico, where he dies forgotten in 1890. Eighty years later, his remains are brought to Texas and buried with honors. In his memoir, Seguín calls himself “a foreigner in my own land,” speaking for tens of thousands of Latinos, now second-class citizens in a land that had once been theirs.

Episode Two:
Empire of Dreams (1880–1942)

Episode Description

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, widespread immigration to the United States from Latin and Central American countries begins. First, a small group of Cuban revolutionaries come to Florida and New York, escaping Spanish rule in their homeland. The Spanish-American War erupts in 1898, with the United States taking over Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines from Spain. While Cuba is eventually set free, Puerto Rico and the Philippines are made colonies of the United States. This triggers mass migration of Puerto Ricans to the United States. Then, in 1910, Mexico erupts in civil war, prompting more than one million Mexicans to escape the violence and come to the United States. The first Puerto Rican arrivals (made U.S. citizens in 1917) establish a community in New York City, while Mexicans emigrate primarily through El Paso, Texas, traveling to the southwest and west coast for economic opportunities.

Juan Salvador Villaseñor, whose story is told by his son, Victor, flees the violence of the Mexican revolution along with his mother and two sisters. We follow Juan Salvador’s story, first through a grueling journey in poverty, then as a bootlegger, and finally as a successful businessman with his wife and children in the United States.

With an expanding U.S. economy in the 1920s, immigration of cheap labor is encouraged to help build the railroads, expand new urban populations, and farm America’s crops. Mexicans and Mexican-Americans build a thriving community in Los Angeles and look forward to a bright future. But when the
economic boom of the 1920s ends with the catastrophic Depression of the 1930s, the pendulum swings. Mexicans are repatriated or deported en masse back to Mexico. Emilia Castaneda loses her home and her family when she, her father, and her brother are deported to Mexico, despite the fact that Emilia and her brother are U.S. citizens. Puerto Ricans, also caught in the depths of the Depression, rebel against U.S. rule on the island, and eventually gain commonwealth status from the U.S. Government.

Section 1: Episode Tease
Coming to America
01:00:00:00–01:02:35:00

Introduction to José Martí, Juan Salvador Villaseñor, Emilia Castaneda.

Section 2: José Martí
A Poet, An Exile, A Revolutionary: José Martí

01:02:35:00–01:09:47:00

Half a century after other Latin American countries achieve their independence from Spain, all that is left of its vast American empire are the islands of Cuba and Puerto Rico. The year is 1868, and Cubans had been under Spanish rule for three hundred years. But inspired by the writings of the young Cuban poet José Martí, Cubans start to rise in revolt.

Martí’s revolutionary writing eventually leads to his forced exile from his homeland. Drawn to the United States and its promise of equality and freedom, Martí arrives in New York in 1880 and starts work as a correspondent for leading South American newspapers.

Martí helps to create the Cuban Revolutionary Party and publishes a newspaper, *Patria*, which warns of the threat of America’s growing power and ambitions. Today Martí is venerated as the father of Cuban independence and a towering figure of Cuban history.

From Sea to Shining Sea:
The Spanish American War and Expansionism

01:09:47:00–01:19:42:00

Between 1896 to 1898, Cuban insurgents fight a fierce war of attrition with Spanish soldiers. But U.S. expansionists see economic opportunity to take over
Cuba, a strategic island at the gateway of the Gulf of Mexico, where Americans had $50 million invested in sugar production.

With war fever running high, all that is needed is a pretext. On February 15, 1898, in Havana Harbor, an explosion destroys an American battleship, the USS Maine, killing 266 men on board. Although it is unclear whether the ship was attacked or blew up from a faulty boiler, President William McKinley asks the U.S. Congress to declare war. After thirteen weeks, the U.S. Navy destroys the Spanish fleet and Spain surrenders. Though the United States eventually leaves its Cuban occupation, Puerto Rico and the Philippines later become U.S. colonies.

Section 3: Juan Salvador Villaseñor

Escaping the Violence of Revolution
01:19:42:00–01:22:04:00

Juan Salvador and his family live in a small village in the mountain region of Jalisco, Mexico, where they till the land and raise cattle. With the outbreak of the Mexican Revolution of 1910, war disrupts the lives of all Mexicans, and many members of Juan Salvador’s family are killed. Forced to leave, Juan Salvador, his mother, and two sisters join more than a million other refugees on a journey of survival and opportunity toward the United States.

The Cost of Modernizing Mexico
01:22:04:00–01:23:58:00

The Mexican Revolution begins in 1910, when the peasant class and revolutionaries revolt against President Porfirio Díaz, who has ruled Mexico for thirty-five years. Relying on foreign investment to transform the nation, Diaz and his cronies profit with nearly $2 billion invested in Mexican mining, commercial agriculture, the railroads, silver, coffee, and oil by foreign companies and governments. In the south rises Emiliano Zapata and his army of landless peasants; in the north, the dashing Pancho Villa becomes the face of the rebellion.

The trains that once linked the Mexican economy to the United States now carry the armies of the Mexican Revolution. As the fighting engulfs Mexico, the tracks running north also provide the only means of escape for those fleeing the violence. Thousands of Mexicans walk for miles, sometimes waiting weeks, for the occasional empty train. Among the one million people to escape to the United States are the Villaseñors.
Juan Salvador: Becoming a Man

01:23:58:00–01:32:06:00

The Villaseñors arrive in the United States after countless life-and-death encounters. After finding work in Arizona, Juan Salvador eventually makes his way to Butte, Montana, where he learns to become a bootlegger.

Section 4: Los Angeles and the Depression
A Cultural Revival

01:32:06:00–01:38:15:00

Los Angeles in the 1920s is a boomtown. Pulled by plentiful work in agriculture, factories, and construction, Mexican immigrants head to the city in ever-increasing numbers. They provide the labor to build Los Angeles from a rural town to an industrial city. Yet Mexicans are treated as second-class citizens. Mexicans and Mexican-Americans build a thriving cultural and economic community whose influence begins to influence American art, culture, and food. Mexican celebrities such as Lupe Vélez, Ramón Navarro, and Dolores Del Rio are featured Hollywood movie stars, influencing mainstream teenagers and giving the Mexican immigrants and Mexican Americans a newfound sense of pride and identity.

Emilia Castaneda

01:38:15:00–01:48:58:00

Emilia Castaneda, along with her brother, is born in Los Angeles to Mexican parents. Her father is a laborer and her mother, a maid. Emilia has a perfectly wonderful life: going to school, the movies, and growing up in a safe and caring environment. When the Great Depression of the 1930s hits, her father loses his job. The Hoover administration blames Mexicans for the lack of jobs in California, which motivates the government to deport thousands of Mexicans back to Mexico. Many American-born Mexicans are also caught up in the deportations. In 1934, Emilia and her family are forced to move to Mexico, despite the fact that they are American citizens.

The Depression hits all areas of the United States, including Puerto Rico. The island’s economy becomes dependent on the exportation of sugar. But when the U.S. sugar market crumbles, the Puerto Rican economy collapses with it. Puerto Ricans are divided over their relationship to the United States, between those who want their island to become a state and those who want independence. A compromise is eventually reached: Puerto Rico will become a commonwealth, still a U.S. territory, but with significant political autonomy.
Section 5: Conclusion

Juan Salvador

01:48:58:00–01:51:22:00

In the years of the Depression, Juan Salvador Villaseñor has a second shot at the American dream. In Butte, Montana, “Sal,” as he is now known, becomes a bootlegger. After becoming moderately wealthy, Sal moves to San Diego to join his mother and sisters. His pockets lined with money and his head full of dreams, Juan Salvador marries Lupe, buys a local pool hall, and, at the end of prohibition, a series of liquor stores. In time the Villaseñors build their dream house overlooking the Pacific Ocean.

Emilia Castaneda

01:51:22:00–01:52:31:00

Seventeen-year-old Emilia Castaneda returns home to Los Angeles in 1944 after nine years in Mexico. The first thing she does is brush up on her English—at the very school she had attended up to the fourth grade. However, Emilia has lost it all: her home, her childhood, and her family.

Episode Three:
War and Peace (1942–1954)

Episode Description

World War II is a watershed event for Latino Americans. Hundreds of thousands of Mexican-Americans fight side by side with Anglos, while Puerto Ricans are assigned to segregated units. East L.A.’s Guy Gabaldon becomes a Marine Corp legend when he single-handedly captures more enemy soldiers than anyone in U.S. military history. But on the home front, discrimination is not dead: in 1943, Anglo servicemen battle hip young “Zoot suiters” in racially charged riots in southern California.

After the war, Macario Garcia becomes the first Mexican National to earn the Medal of Honor for his exploits fighting in Europe, only to be refused service in a Texas diner. The experience during the war pushes Latinos to fight for civil rights back home. A doctor from South Texas, Hector García, organizes the American G.I. Forum, transforming himself into a tireless advocate for civil rights and the friend of a future president. Although Latinos make significant gains, the journey for equality is far from over.
Section 1: Episode Tease
Latino Americans in World War II

http://www.pbs.org/latinoamericans/en/watchvideos/#2365003920
01:00:00–01:02:35:00

Introduction to Ensign Manuel Gonzalez, Rosita the Riveter, Hector Garcia, Guy Gabaldon, Marcario Garcia.

Section 2: Hector García and the 65th Infantry
Hector García, M.D.

01:03:45–01:08:12:00

Hector García’s family emigrated from Mexico to the small Texan town of Mercedes during the Mexican Revolution. He was brought up in a household that valued education, and he went on to receive a medical degree from the University of Texas in Galveston and then completed his residency in Nebraska.

At the outbreak of war, García feels the call to join the armed forces and offers his medical services. In late 1942, Hector serves in North Africa as the battalion surgeon for an engineering group and also serves in Italy. By the war's end he is promoted to captain.

The 65th: Puerto Ricans in World War II

01:08:12:00–01:11:19:00

While more than 500,000 Mexicans and Mexican-Americans serve in the armed forces, more than 65,000 Puerto Ricans serve as well. As U.S. citizens, Puerto Ricans are subject to the draft. Others volunteer or enter the military before the attack on Pearl Harbor as a way of escaping poverty. In 1939, Marcos Melendez’s father encourages him to join the military for the steady pay. Like many islanders in World War II, Melendez ends up in the 65th Infantry Regiment, segregated as an all–Puerto Rican unit.

The 65th sees action in Italy, Central Europe, and Germany. With the exception of those from Puerto Rico, there are few all-Latino units in the U.S. military in World War II. In contrast to the segregation of African-Americans and Asian-Americans, most Mexicans and Mexican-Americans fight along side Anglo soldiers and sailors, experiencing the same terrors, boredom, brotherhood, and death. For many Latinos, World War II provides them with a taste of full citizenship, treated equally to Anglos.
Section 3: Marcario Garcia, Rosita the Riveter, and the Home Front

Hurtgen Forest

Raised in Sugarland, Texas, Macario Garcia enlists in the Army and is assigned to a post in Normandy with the 22nd Infantry Regiment. By fall 1944, the Allies’ rapid advance has grounded to a halt at the German border and the Hurtgen Forest. On November 27, Garcia’s Baker Company is pinned down as they attempt to take a hill overlooking the town of Grosshau. Wounded, Garcia single-handedly takes out two tactical German machine gun posts, allowing his company to advance. Reports of his heroism rise through the chain of command.

The Home Front, Part 1: Rosita the Riveter

With thousands of Latino men and women serving overseas, labor shortages are created back home. The U.S. government decides to bring rural Mexicans across the border in a guest worker Bracero program. In the cities, the rapidly expanding defense industries ignore tradition and actively recruit women and minorities.

A young teenager, Carmen Gurrola, quits her job in a sewing factory to work at a Goodyear plant manufacturing rubberized gas tanks for fighters and bombers. Carmen is one of many Latinas who would do their part in supporting the war effort.

The Home Front, Part 2: Zoot Suit Riots

Efforts on the homefront bring new opportunities and changes for Latino communities. Anglo soldiers are often assigned to urban areas, where they would encounter different ethnic minorities for the first time. In Los Angeles, tension between Anglos and Latinos boil over. On the evening of June 4, 1943, those tensions explode into what came to be known as the Zoot Suit Riots. About two hundred white Anglo sailors and Marines armed with sticks and bats hit the streets seeking revenge for recent scuffles. Many Latinos wearing Zoot suits, a popular style at the time, become targets.
Section 4: Guy Gabaldon, The End of World War II, and Discrimination
Guy Gabaldon

01:22:40:00–01:32:09:00

Born in 1926, Guy Gabaldon grows up in East Los Angeles, a diverse neighborhood of Mexican, Japanese, Jewish, and Armenian families. He is a street-smart kid who tends to get into trouble. Gabaldon’s bravado masks a deep curiosity about the world. In school he becomes close to some of his Japanese classmates and their families. But that comes to end in the months following Pearl Harbor, when the U.S. government interns more than a hundred thousand Japanese, more than half of them U.S. citizens. With his friends interned, Guy celebrates his seventeenth birthday by joining the Marines.

Though too short and having a perforated eardrum, Ganaldon talks his way into the Marines, claiming to be fluent in Japanese when, in reality, he only knows a few Japanese words. But this leads him to a job as a scout for an intelligence unit during the attack on Saipan, an island located just south of Japan. The day after the invasion, while others set up an observation post, he slips out beyond the front lines to the North to try and capture enemy soldiers. Guy Gabaldon is credited with killing thirty-three enemy soldiers and single-handedly capturing an unprecedented fifteen hundred enemy soldiers.

A Hero’s Welcome: Macario Garcia, Part 2

01:32:09:00–01:36:28:00

On August 23, 1945, in Washington, D.C., Macario Garcia becomes the first Mexican National to receive the Medal of Honor for his actions in the Hurtgen Forest. Macario returns home to a hero’s welcome. Just two-and-a-half weeks after President Truman has placed the Medal of Honor around his neck, Macario Garcia enters a restaurant near his home in Sugarland, Texas, and is refused service. A fight breaks out, and Garcia is arrested and eventually charged. The incident is picked up by the national press, which raises the question: How can a country that feels an enormous debt toward its veterans treat some as second-class citizens?
Section 5: From Veterans Rights to Civil Rights

The American GI Forum and the Longoria Affair

01:36:28:00–01:48:32:00

After the war, Hector Garcia marries and settles in Corpus Christi with his wife, Wanda. Garcia starts up a medical practice, and soon has a steady stream of patients, including Mexican-American veterans and their families. Many live in the barrio of Mercedes, one of the poorest areas in Texas. As a boy growing up in Mercedes, Garcia knew rural poverty. He also witnessed disease and poverty in worn-torn Africa and Europe. But the urban poverty in his hometown disturbs him even more.

At the time, the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944, or GI Bill, included low-cost mortgages that move millions from urban apartments to suburban homes, and educational loans that put more than two million veterans into colleges and universities, and another six million into training programs. But the Mexican-American veterans Garcia is helping in his practice have trouble getting these and other benefits they’d earned through their service. Fed up by the discrimination against Mexican-American veterans, Garcia found the American GI Forum in March of 1948. The Forum would attract national attention with the controversy surrounding the burial of Pvt. Felix Z. Longoria, Jr., killed in action in the Philippines.

In 1948, after Longoria’s remains finally make it back to the States, his widow Beatrice tries to make funeral arrangements in his hometown of Three Rivers, Texas. The funeral director refuses, because Longoria was a “Mexican,” later telling a reporter the “whites wouldn’t like it.” Word of the refusal reaches Hector Garcia, and he springs into action, calling newspapers and sending telegrams to elected officials from the state and federal government, even President Truman. Garcia calls members of the GI Forum together to plan a protest. More than one thousand people fill an elementary school auditorium in Corpus Christi. Longoria is finally buried at Arlington National Cemetery with full military honors.

Garcia also develops a close but at times contentious friendship with Lyndon Johnson, which gives the doctor unusual access to a Washington power broker and future president. It also permanently changes the focus of the American GI Forum from veterans’ rights to civil rights, with Hector Garcia leading the way.

Section 6: Conclusion

Viva Kennedy

01:48:32:00–01:52:30:00

Hector Garcia quickly becomes the most prominent Mexican-American civil rights leader of his era. Under his direction, the American GI Forum grows
across Texas and the Southwest, challenging segregation in its many forms, from disparities in health services, to segregation in schools, to the poll taxes that kept Mexican-Americans and other minorities from voting. Garcia wants Mexican-Americans to follow the same path as other ethnic groups who have overcome prejudice to become part of the fabric of the United States, such as the Irish and the Italians. With Puerto Rican veterans in the Northeast also joining up, by the end of the 1950s there are more than thirty chapters across the country. This network provides the leverage Garcia needs to change the lives of Latinos everywhere through the power of the ballot box.

The 1960 U.S. presidential race is going to be close, and the Democratic candidate John Kennedy has chosen an old friend of Hector’s, Lyndon Johnson, to be his running mate. Rather than politicize the forum, Garcia creates a new association, the Viva Kennedy Clubs. They hold rallies, fundraisers, and voter registration drives, all to roll out the Mexican-American vote on Election Day. Kennedy wins by less than 1 percent of the popular vote, with many states captured by very small margins. However, the initiatives and appointments that Garcia feels Mexican-Americans have earned are never forthcoming.

But Kennedy’s successor Lyndon Johnson does come through. He appoints more Mexican-Americans to positions in government than any president before. And he passes landmark legislation making the forms of discrimination Hector Garcia has battled for years illegal; from segregation in restaurants and schools to poll taxes. While many see the new laws only in the context of the Black Civil Rights Movement, when Johnson addresses Congress he invokes his own experience as a teacher in a small Mexican-American school in Texas. The struggle for true equality is just beginning.

**Episode Four:**
**The New Latinos (1946–1965)**

**Episode Description**

Until World War II, Latino immigration to the United States is overwhelmingly Mexican-American. Now three new waves bring large-scale immigration from Puerto Rico, Cuba, and the Dominican Republic. As the Puerto Rican government implements a historic overhaul of its economy, more than a million Puerto Ricans are encouraged to leave for the U.S. mainland to alleviate the economic pressure. A young Juanita Sanabria arrives in New York, works hard in the garment district, but encounters hostility and discrimination from white New Yorkers. Ethnic tensions explode in youth gang warfare depicted in films like *West Side Story*, reinforcing the stereotype of the dangerous, knife-wielding Puerto Rican in the American consciousness.
While achieving the American dream remains elusive for many new immigrants, Rita Moreno breaks out of the barrio by acting and singing in movies and in the theater. She achieves worldwide recognition through the role of Anita in the film version of *West Side Story*, and wins an Academy Award. Also, Herman Badillo immigrates to New York as an orphan, puts himself through law school, and then takes on the political establishment by becoming the first Puerto Rican elected to the U.S. Congress.

In the early 1960s, Cubans flee the Communist regime of Fidel Castro to eventually settle in Miami. Maria de los Angeles Torres is only six years old when she leaves Havana without her parents, one of 14,000 children who are smuggled out through an underground network. Unable to leave legally, Manuel Capo and his two sons make a dramatic journey to the United States. With skills honed in the family furniture business in Cuba, the Capos build a thriving business marketing to the growing Cuban population.

In 1965, fearing another Communist takeover in the Caribbean, President Johnson sends Marines to the Dominican Republic, triggering a third wave of immigration. With a U.S. visa in hand, Eligio Peña, a twenty-year-old student, flees to New York to escape the violence. Eventually he builds a thriving business and brings his family, settling with other Dominicans in Washington Heights. Julia Alvarez would take the immigrant experience—hers and that of her fellow Dominicans—to unprecedented literary heights in her book *How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents*. In the work, she explores the hybrid identity taking shape in a new generation of Latinos, who are now building a new Latino American identity.

**Section 1: Episode Tease**  
**Leaving Dictators and Depression**

01:00:00–01:02:56:00

Introduction to Julia Alvarez, Rita Moreno, Herman Badillo, the Capo family, Juanita Sonabria.

**Section 2: The Puerto Rican Pilgrimage**

**Rita Moreno**

01:02:56:00–01:04:54:00

Rita Moreno comes to the United States with her mother in the 1930s, where they settle in New York’s Spanish Harlem. Rita’s mother works at a sweatshop where many of the new immigrants are able to find jobs for a meager wage. At the young age of six, Rita makes her debut at a Greenwich Village nightclub.
After receiving applause, Rita realizes that performing is what she wants to do for the rest of her life.

**Operation Bootstrap**

01:04:54:00–01:12:37:00

In the early years of the Great Depression, New York offers, for Puerto Ricans, a way out of the misery of the island. Puerto Rico is hit hard by the Great Depression. Sugar—grown mostly by American companies for the American market—is the island’s main crop. When sugar prices collapse during the Great Depression, Puerto Rico’s economy is devastated. In 1947, the Puerto Rican government takes action, implementing a historic economic overhaul, Operation Bootstrap, that transforms centuries of agricultural dependence into a modern industrial economy. A U.S. government study estimates that at least one million Puerto Ricans have to leave the island for Operation Bootstrap to succeed.

Among those who leave is Juanita Ortiz, who grew up on a farm, the sixth of twelve siblings. She is part of the first airlift, the largest in history, that transports thousands of Puerto Ricans to the United States. American citizens since 1917, Puerto Ricans have no barriers traveling to the mainland, only a limited idea of what they would encounter. The Puerto Rican colony, established with fewer than 20,000 people in 1917, swells to more than 300,000 by the time Juanita arrives in 1952. Most settle in east Harlem, “El Barrio”: the cultural and commercial center of Latino life in New York.

Juanita meets her future husband Joe, and together they build a new life and a family. With their two young children, Juanita and Joe move from their cramped tenement apartment into a more spacious one in the Bronx. Far from the Puerto Rican countryside of their childhood, they finally feel at home in the United States. Even so, they still face discrimination.

**Tragedy in Hell’s Kitchen**

01:12:37:00–01:15:35:00

As the Puerto Rican population doubles, they push against the edges of east Harlem, spreading out to other parts of Manhattan, Brooklyn, and the south Bronx. The Jews, Irish, and Italians who have settled there first push back. Turf—sometimes a mere two-block stretch—is fiercely defended by adolescent boys in gangs such as the Latin Crowns, the Scorpions, the Dragons, and the Vampires in Harlem, Hell's Kitchen, and the Lower East Side.

The New York press becomes obsessed with the gang story, and in the public’s mind, Puerto Ricans are at the center of it. Then, a tragic incident occurs. Sixteen-year-old Salvador Agron is accused of murdering two teenagers in a Hell’s Kitchen playground while wearing a long, black cape. He becomes the face of the threatening Puerto Rican community.
West Side Story
01:15:35:00–01:19:01:00

A few blocks from where the Capeman struck, a musical is opening on Broadway: West Side Story. It features a white Anglo Romeo and a Puerto Rican Juliet. It is set in New York City, where ethnic hatred surges through neighborhoods and gangs lurk in defense of turf. The film version etches the image of the knife-wielding Puerto Rican in the American consciousness.

Only one Puerto Rican, Rita Moreno, is cast in a speaking role, playing the spirited Anita. From age thirteen, Rita is cast on Broadway and is soon tapped by Hollywood. Moreno becomes typecast in roles that require an accent, playing Latina stereotypes. But the role of Anita is different. Rita is playing a character that she feels she knows, and in 1962 she is honored with the Academy Award.

Section 3: The Cuban Revolution
Castro Takes Over
01:19:01:00–01:28:14:00

In 1959, Fidel Castro and his band of Communist revolutionaries march into Havana following an armed revolt that ends in the overthrow of the government of Fulgencio Batista. Cuban support for the revolution is overwhelming—from the poorest to the professional and middle classes. But not all Cubans back Fidel Castro. The first to leave are the close associates of the ousted dictator and members of Cuba’s upper class. Over the next three years, more than 200,000 Cubans flee to Miami. At first, they are welcomed. At the height of the Cold War, Cubans are refugees from a communist regime and, most importantly, they feel like they will not be staying for long. The buzz is that exiled fathers, uncles, and sons have gone off to train in the jungles of Central America. An invasion is in the making and could happen any day now.

April 17, 1961: 1,400 U.S.–trained Cuban exiles invade Cuba. For the next three days, the lives of Cubans in Miami hang in the balance. Hundreds crowd in churches or meet in parks for candlelight prayer vigils. Within seventy-two hours, Castro's forces easily defeat the exile invasion. The failure of the Bay of Pigs invasion is a devastating blow to Cubans' hopes of return. In Miami, it is not just Cubans who are unhappy about their prolonged stay. Non-Cuban locals air their grievances in a Miami television report. In the wake of the Bay of Pigs failure, many Cubans scramble to join their countrymen in exile. Manuel Capo travels with his two eldest sons (leaving his wife and smaller children behind), in order to escape to the United States. Gustavo Perez-Firmat has a similar story. But instead of returning to Cuba, they are forced to adapt to a new country, while still clinging to the hope of returning home.
Operation Peter Pan

01:28:14:00–01:33:00:00

A clandestine network involving Cubans and Americans, the Catholic Church, and the CIA plans to transport thousands of children to the United States to escape Castro’s Cuba. Between December 1960 and October 1962, in what will become known as Operation Peter Pan, 14,000 unaccompanied minors are transported to Miami until they can be reunited with their parents.

Half of the children go to live with relatives and friends, while the rest go to a refugee camp under the care of the Catholic Church. In 1962, U.S. reconnaissance planes discover Soviet missiles in Cuba, and travel to and from Cuba ceases. Thousands of Peter Pan children are left stranded. The world has been brought to the brink of nuclear war. While the Soviets remove the missiles, Castro becomes entrenched. No one in Miami is going home just yet.

Section 4: Herman Badillo
A Young Puerto Rican Lawyer

01:33:00:00–01:39:54:00

Herman Badillo arrives in New York Harbor in 1941, an orphan sent from Puerto Rico to live with close relatives after both of his parents died of tuberculosis. As a student in high school, he first is encouraged to enroll in technical classes, a track for students of color. Eventually, Herman defies the school’s practice of race-based tracking, and switches to a college track. He graduates from City College and Brooklyn Law with top honors. Now Herman Badillo sets his sights on breaking up the exclusive club of New York City politics.

In 1960, Herman Badillo is tapped by presidential candidate John F. Kennedy to run his campaign for Latino voters in New York. Badillo rounds up his community and urges Puerto Ricans to register to vote. Herman Badillo becomes Bronx Borough President, then goes on to Washington as the first Puerto Rican U.S. Congressman, where he helps create and pass landmark legislation to support bilingual education and guarantee voting rights for all Americans.

The Capo Family Business

01:39:54:00–01:44:40:00

In 1966, when Manuel Capo and his two teenage sons Luis and Carlos finally reach Miami from Cuba, they are greeted by the sights, sounds, and people from home. In less than a week, they are earning minimum wage, $1.25 an hour, working fifty to sixty hours a week doing what they know best—making
furniture. The furniture business has been a family trade for generations, and they set out to establish their own furniture shop: El Dorado.

Their store is on Calle Ocho in Little Havana, the heart of the Cuban enclave in Miami. In less than a year of opening, the Capos increase their annual earnings from $8,000 to $250,000, selling furniture to Cubans now arriving in Miami at a rate of a thousand a week. In time, El Dorado grows to become one of the largest businesses in Miami. The Capos help transform the city of Miami into an international center of tourism and commerce.

Section 5: Leaving the Dominican Republic

U.S. Invasion

01:44:40:00–01:49:41:00

In April 1965, at the height of the Cold War, 42,000 U.S. troops invade the Dominican Republic. Events leading to the U.S. invasion date back to 1961, to the unrest triggered by the assassination of dictator Rafael Leonidas Trujillo, gunned down by the opposition in a CIA-backed plot. In the three years following the assassination of Trujillo, the country's political crisis escalates into civil war. A young Dominican student, Eligio Peña, is among those who decide to flee.

Eligio has no problem getting a visa—the United States is using immigration as a safety valve to prevent further unrest by getting rid of the opposition. Most Dominicans come to New York. The twenty-year-old Eligio starts out working at a Puerto Rican bodega, and then, with the help of his uncle, he buys it. In the decade following the U.S. occupation, 150,000 Dominicans immigrate to New York. They build their own community on the banks of the Hudson River—a new cultural home on the north end of Manhattan Island.

Julia Alvarez


01:49:41:00–01:52:12:00

After the Alvarez family settles in New York, thirteen-year-old Julia Alvarez is sent to boarding school in northern Massachusetts. Lonely at the school, Julia begins to write about her past. The stories of Juliá's Dominican childhood fill the pages of her notebooks. The tug of war between her Dominican and American selves play out on the pages of her first best-selling novel, How The Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents. Juliá's first novel launches her career as an important literary voice of her generation.

Episode Description

In the 1960s and 1970s, a generation of Mexican-Americans, frustrated by persistent discrimination and poverty, find a new way forward through social action and the building of a new “Chicano” identity. The movement is ignited when farm workers in the fields of California, led by César Chavez and Dolores Huerta, strike against agriculture growers in California, demanding equitable pay and humane working conditions. The strike culminates in a march to Sacramento, the capital of California, where thousands of demonstrators join along the way. Through plays, poetry, and film, Luis Valdez and activist Corky Gonzáles create a new appreciation of the long history of Mexicans in the South West and the Mestizo roots of Mexican-Americans. In Los Angeles, Sal Castro, a schoolteacher, leads the largest high school student walkout in American history, demanding that Chicano students be given the same educational opportunities as Anglos. In Texas, activists such as José Ángel Gutiérrez create a new political party and changes the rules of the electoral game by registering Latinos to vote. By the end of the 1970s, Chicano activism and identity have transformed the Mexican-American identity. Chicano and Latino studies are incorporated into school curriculum; Latinos begin to be included in the political process.

Section 1: Episode Tease

Rise of the Huelga

01:00:00–01:03:16:00

Introduction to César Chavez, Dolores Huerta, Chicano Movement, Sal Castro, José Ángel Gutiérrez, Willie Velásquez.

Section 2: Cesar Chavez

Migrant Farmers

01:03:16:00–01:11:47:00

California’s Central Valley contains twenty-three thousand acres of some of the most productive farmland in the world. In the 1960s, while the agricultural companies that own the land become wealthy, tens of thousands of farm laborers who work the land remain desperately poor. Most are Mexicans or Mexican-Americans who can neither read nor write; many die by the age of forty-nine, and to most Americans, they are invisible.
César Chavez is the second of six children, born into a devout Catholic family on a modest ranch in Yuma, Arizona. They lose the ranch during the Great Depression, and are soon forced to enter the backbreaking world of migrant labor. Traveling across California, taking whatever work they could find, the Chavez children pass through thirty-seven schools in three years. César drops out at the age of fourteen to work full-time in the fields.

After a stint in the Navy, Chavez works for the CSO, the Community Service Organization, a group that is dedicated to improving the lives of Mexican-Americans. There he meets a twenty-eight-year-old school teacher from Stockton, California, Dolores Huerta. Committed to social change, Huerta quits her teaching job to join the CSO. At a meeting in San Francisco in 1962, César Chavez approaches her with an idea that would alter the course of their lives: to form a union for farm workers. For Huerta, a divorced mother with seven children, committing herself to the farm worker cause is an agonizing decision. But soon, they join forces to create a powerful movement.

**Huelga and the March to Sacramento**


01:11:47:00–01:20:16:00

For three years, Chavez and Huerta sign up farm workers, gradually building their union. But in September 1965, they are caught off guard when Filipino grape workers near Delano, California, go on strike for higher wages. Chavez and Huerta join the strike. Growers bus in non-union workers to pick the grapes and break the strike. As the harvest winds down, the union is almost broke, and Chavez is losing hope. He is beginning to believe the strike can never be won in the fields. Chavez desperately wants to bring the movement into the national spotlight. In the manner of Martin Luther King, Jr., who garnered media attention leading a march through Alabama in 1965, Chavez decides to lead a three-hundred-mile pilgrimage from Delano to the state capital of Sacramento, passing through farm workers’ towns along the way. Chavez sets out, along with one hundred farm workers, to begin his journey through California’s San Joaquin Valley. As they travel, their numbers grow. They fly the union eagle, a symbol of Mexican pride. They also carry a flag featuring the Virgin of Guadalupe, the Virgin Mary depicted as a brown-skinned, Mexican Indian. The power of the march signifies, for many, the righteousness of what is now being called La Causa: the cause. After twenty-five days, their numbers have swelled from a few dozen to an army of thousands. On Easter Sunday, 1966, they arrive at the state capital.

With public sympathy mounting, and the spring growing season upon them, growers finally agree to meet with union representatives. It takes years of negotiations and a national boycott for Huerta and Chavez to secure higher wages, safer working conditions, and an end to child labor. But the march to
Sacramento is a turning point, leading to the first farm worker contracts in American history.

Section 3: L.A. School Walkouts

Mexicano=Chicano

01:20:16:00–01:24:56:00

In the mid-1960s, 130,000 Mexican-Americans are attending Los Angeles County public schools. But the graduation rate for Latinos is one of the lowest in the country. Every year, about half of all Mexican-American students in Los Angeles schools drop out, and barely one in a thousand attains a college degree. It has been that way for generations.

At Belmont High, Sal Castro—an East L.A. native—lands a job teaching social studies. After only a few weeks, Castro realizes that even Mexican-American students are treated as second-class citizens. Most Mexican-American students are directed away from academic classes and into vocational training. The majority of teachers and the administration are white Anglos.

Castro sets out to transform the public schools by instilling in his students a sense of pride. As students begin to learn about Mexican-American history and the indigenous roots of their culture, many begin adopting a new name for themselves: Chicano. With this new awareness of identity comes a heightened sense of self-worth, which Sal Castro reinforces.

Walkout


01:24:56:00–01:30:27:00

By 1967, with Martin Luther King, Jr., organizing in the South and César Chavez organizing in California, Sal Castro begins looking for ways to organize students in East L.A. Castro is determined to organize a huelga, a student strike of as many schools as possible, in order to change the public school system. He wants to include more Latino teachers and administrators, create a curricula focusing on Latino studies, and open up pathways for Latino students to succeed. By the end of the day on March 6, 1968, some ten thousand students peacefully walk out of four East Los Angeles high schools. But tensions are high in the city. Police officers are sent in to maintain order, and soon things get out of hand. Despite the pushback, the student strike continues for weeks. The walkouts eventually lead to meetings with parents and administrators, and many of the students’ demands are met. The decade of the 1970s sees more Latinos attending colleges and universities across the country than ever before. Eventually, Chicano and Latino studies departments are established at more than 160 universities. All across the country, Chicanos are taking ownership of their future.
Section 4: La Raza Unida and Willie Velásquez
José Angel Gutiérrez

01:30:27:00–01:47:27:00

In San Antonio, Texas, young Chicanos, frustrated with the slow pace of social change, challenge the political status quo. To them, Congressman Henry Barbosa González is not doing enough for social change. Back in 1956, González—known to all as Henry B.—had become a beacon of hope and change. Elected to the all-Anglo Texas state senate in 1960, González soon takes on the Texas establishment in a crucial battle over school integration. In 1961, González breaks another barrier, becoming the first Mexican-American from Texas to win a seat in the U.S. House of Representatives. But González’s efforts to boost the local economy are not trickling down to the barrio, where many of San Antonio’s 350,000 Mexican-Americans live in some of the worst slums in the nation. By 1968, some Chicanos see González as out of touch, more connected to Washington power brokers than to San Antonio’s poor.

Frustrated, Chicano high school students—like their Los Angeles counterparts—stage walkouts demanding change, first in San Antonio, then in thirty-nine towns across Texas. Eventually the strikes spread to nearly one hundred high schools in ten states. The mastermind behind much of this activism is José Ángel Gutiérrez. A native of Crystal City, Texas, Gutiérrez feels that the true way to enact change is through the political system, and he is determined to help Chicanos gain political power. Unsatisfied with walkouts and other demonstrations, Gutiérrez creates a political party called La Raza Unida, the United People. Gutiérrez spends weeks going door-to-door, encouraging Mexican-Americans—who make up 80 percent of the population—to run candidates in the upcoming elections. The elections in April 1970 see an unprecedented victory for Chicanos. Gutiérrez is elected county judge, and La Raza Unida now controls not only the school board, but city and county government in Crystal City, Texas, as well. La Raza Unida grows into a national party, running candidates from California to Michigan as Chicanos begin flexing their political muscle.

Willie Velásquez

01:47:27:00–01:52:16:00

In Texas, Chicano activist Willie Velásquez, frustrated with both Henry González’s politics of gradualism and the militancy of José Ángel Gutiérrez, is looking for another way for Latinos to enter the political mainstream. Willie Velásquez grew up on San Antonio’s west side, in the heart of the barrio. There were no sidewalks or drainage for the winter downpours that regularly flooded the Mexican part of town, including the Velásquez home. In 1966, Velásquez becomes the first in his family to graduate from college. While volunteering with
the farm workers that summer, he realizes nothing would change in the barrio until Chicanos harness the power of their numbers. By 1974, Velásquez has found his calling, organizing thousands of voter registration drives across the Southwest.

**Episode Six:**

**Episode Description**

In the 1980s, the nature of the Latino diaspora changes again. From Cuba, a second wave of refugees to United States—the Mariel exodus—floods Miami. The same decade sees the sudden arrival of hundreds of thousands of Central Americans (Salvadorans, Guatemalans, and Nicaraguans) fleeing from right wing death squads and yearning for economic opportunity.

By the early 1990s, a political debate over undocumented immigration begins to take root. Globalization, empowered by NAFTA, allows U.S. manufacturers to move south while Mexican workers head north in record numbers. A backlash against undocumented immigrants ensues, including demands for tightening the nation's borders and passing laws to declare all undocumented immigrants felons. In Florida, an anti-bilingual movement is created that spreads to other states across the country.

At the same time, a sea change is underway, as second- and third-generation Latinos begin to gain political and economic power. Their influence is felt throughout the country, in music, sports, politics, business, and education. Gloria Estefan leads the Miami Sound Machine, creating crossover hits in Spanish and English; Oscar de la Hoya, a Mexican-American boxer from L.A., becomes an Olympic gold medalist and the nation's Golden Boy; Mexican Americans, Cuban Americans, and Puerto Ricans begin to win local and national political seats of power. Puerto Rican Sonia Sotomayor is sworn in as the first Latina Supreme Court Justice. The transformation of the United States is underway, with Latinos representing a new majority minority in major urban areas across the country. America's largest and youngest growing sector of the population presents what project advisor Professor Marta Tienda calls “The Hispanic Moment.” Their success could determine the successful growth of the United States in the twenty-first century, and the key to success, according to Tienda and Eduardo J. Padron, Ph.D., President of Miami Dade Community College, is education.
Section 1: Episode Tease
A Sea of Change: Anti-Bilingualism and a Shift in the Latino Diaspora

01:00:00:00–01:03:55:00

Introduction to the Anti-Bilingualism movement, the influx of immigrants from Cuba, Central America.

Section 2: Bilingualism
English Only
01:03:55:00–01:12:18:00

In spring 1980, an unexpected event gives new impetus to Miami’s anti-bilingualism movement. Ten thousand Cubans, desperate to leave a country that has become more and more repressive, have occupied the Peruvian embassy in Havana. Within days, a defiant President Fidel Castro announces that any Cuban who wishes to leave can do so. Soon a ramshackle armada sails from south Florida to the port of Mariel, just miles from Havana, where they wait for the refugees. It is called the Mariel boatlift.

Over a period of five months, beginning in April 1980, more than 125,000 Cubans arrive in south Florida. The Marielitos, as they are called, are placed in churches, recreation centers, armories, even the Orange Bowl; all awaiting asylum. President Jimmy Carter urges Americans to receive the refugees with open arms, but soon finds himself the victim of a political ploy.

The Cuban government also sends criminals and patients from psychiatric hospitals along with the other exiles. The story makes the headlines, and soon the refugees are branded as undesirables.

Emmy Schafer, a Russian-born immigrant who had to learn English upon her arrival, leads the campaign to end bilingualism and turn Miami into an English-only county. In the 1980 elections, voters overwhelmingly approve an ordinance to end official bilingualism in Dade County. Over the next years, the fight against bilingualism goes national. In 1986, a California congressman proposes a constitutional amendment to declare English the official language of the United States. Voters in Florida and Colorado are the first to pass English-only referendums, and by the end of the 1980s nine other states pass similar amendments. Over the last two decades of the 20th century, the largest wave of immigration, not seen since the beginning of the century, enters the United States.
By the late 1970s, Central America has become a bloody battleground of the Cold War. It begins in Nicaragua with the overthrow of dictator Anastasio Samoza, then spreads to Guatemala and El Salvador, where Cuban-backed guerrilla armies rise up against repressive governments—some of which are supported by the United States seeking to halt communist expansion. Fear and terror spread throughout the region. Carlos Vaquerano, from El Salvador, is one of the many victims of war who leave his country for fear of losing his life. The death toll mounts: 30,000 in Nicaragua; 75,000 in El Salvador; 140,000 in Guatemala. Nearly a million people flee, with many heading to the United States. By 1984, Vaquerano is working full time helping fellow Central American refugees survive underground in the United States.

Even though most Guatemalans and Salvadorans are denied asylum, the population of Central American and Mexican immigrants more than doubles during the 1980s. A network of undocumented immigrants from gardeners, day laborers, cleaning ladies, cooks, and nannies emerge in Los Angeles, San Francisco, New York, and the suburbs of Washington, D.C. Seeking to bring illegal immigration under control while maintaining a stable agricultural labor force, in 1986 President Ronald Reagan signs the Immigration Control and Reform Act (ICRA), intended to toughen U.S. immigration law and border security while creating a path to citizenship for many undocumented immigrants. While the enforcement of IRCA is at best spotty, the 1986 amnesty does open the path to citizenship for undocumented immigrants living in the United States. Carlos Vaquerano and many other Latinos become U.S. citizens because of IRCA.

By the early 1990s, the United States is home to more than 22 million people from Central America, Mexico, South America, and the Caribbean. Latinos are emerging as a vital force in American culture in sports, business, and politics as well as in music and entertainment. Gloria Estefan comes to Miami with her parents in 1959 as part of the first wave of Cuban exiles. Estefan says, “The first music I sang ever in my life was in Spanish for my mom and my grandma. It was old Cuban music, old like my grandma’s time. And then the songs that I sang in high school for my friends were Carole King, James Taylor, and Elton John. These were the people that were influencing me. So growing up in the states with pop music and having my Cuban culture; it was very easy to blend it.”
of that fusion comes the hit song that launches the Latin explosion—“Conga.” Latin music and Latin style has crossed over into mainstream American culture. Gloria and the Miami Sound Machine go on to play at the Super Bowl, a sign that they have truly arrived!

**Maria Elena Salinas**


Since 1988, María Elena Salinas has co-anchored the evening news for Univision, the largest Spanish-language network in the U.S. market. Born in Los Angeles to Mexican parents, Salinas is the embodiment of the American dream. She begins her career as a reporter in 1981 at KMEX-TV in Los Angeles. Over the course of her career, Salinas covers all the major stories of the day. In 1994, Salinas interviews California’s republican governor, Pete Wilson, whose re-election campaign targets undocumented immigrants. Salinas says, “At some point, Pete Wilson’s grandparents or great-grandparents were either immigrants or come from an immigrant family, and I remember asking him how his grandparents or great-grandparents would feel when they hear him blaming what he called these illegal aliens for the breakdown in the economy, a breakdown in the culture.” Wilson throws his weight behind Proposition 187, a California ballot initiative that severely restricts health care and other government services for the undocumented. The proposition passes with 59 percent of the vote.

**Section 4: Propositions, Bills, and Minutemen**

**Eliseo Medina and Fighting Back**

http://video.pbs.org/partnerplayer/dFoh87vVNOR6VU9YgalAUQ==/?w=512&h=288

Eliseo Medina begins his career as a labor organizer at age nineteen, when he joins the United Farmworkers Union strike in Delano, California. Over the next thirteen years he hones his skills alongside labor leaders César Chavez and Dolores Huerta. In 1996, Medina eventually becomes the first Mexican-American vice president of the Service Employee’s International Union. Over the ensuing months, only a few provisions of Proposition 187 are enforced, and in 1996 the law is ruled unconstitutional on the grounds that only the federal government has the authority to regulate immigration. But for hundreds of thousands of undocumented immigrants, an alarm has been sounded. Still, the flow of immigrants, especially from Mexico, increases, feeding the demands of the booming U.S. economy. Immigration agents apprehend nearly ten thousand undocumented immigrants a week at the Mexican border. By 2004, anti-immigrant sentiment reaches a tipping point. Disturbances break out across the country. Former kindergarten teacher Chris Simcox organizes a militia called
the Minuteman Project. By the end of 2005, anti-immigrant rhetoric turns into legislation when the House of Representatives passes a far-reaching bill, H.R. 4437, introduced by Congressman Jim Sensenbrenner of Wisconsin.

If the Senate goes along, twelve million undocumented Latino immigrants would become felons. Medina says, “When that amendment got introduced in the U.S. Congress, we all rose together and started fighting against it. There was something in that community that finally said we’ve had enough.” The protests of 2006 echo the Civil Rights marches of the 1960s. In the weeks that follow, marchers turn out in cities across the nation, from Portland, Oregon, to Omaha, New York, and Boston. Some of the largest demonstrations are in Chicago, Los Angeles, and Washington, D.C. Nearly 500,000 rally in each city. HR 4437—the Sensenbrenner Bill—dies in the Senate. The massive response worked.

**Deportation**

01:37:32:00–01:45:35:00

Without comprehensive federal immigration policy—and only haphazard enforcement of existing laws—some states act on their own. In April 2010, Governor Jan Brewer of Arizona signs the broadest and toughest anti-illegal immigrant law in U.S. history. Known as SB-1070, it cracks down on anyone harboring or hiring undocumented immigrants and gives local police unprecedented powers. Over the next two years, other states begin to follow suit. The battleground of the immigration war is starting to spread. And many Latinos begin moving away from border states.

Jorge Salaices has followed his two brothers out of Mexico, first to Texas, and then, in 1987, to Dalton, Georgia, deep in southern Appalachia. Georgia has become attractive to Mexican immigrants with the economic boom that began in the late 1980s. Thousands move to Dalton, known as the carpet capital of the world. By the mid-1990s, 80 percent of the wall-to-wall carpet produced in the United States is made in Dalton by a workforce that becomes increasingly Latino. Salaices easily lands a job in a carpet mill. Jorge Salaices marries a woman from his home state of Zacatecas. They are able to buy a house in Dalton and soon start a family. And in 1998, Salaices becomes a U.S. citizen. But his wife, caught once entering the country illegally, is ineligible for citizenship.

By 2000, the population of Dalton has become 40 percent Mexican—more than 11,000 people. Jorge Salaices’s family grows to include six children, all born in Dalton; all U.S. citizens. But the boom times that drew so many immigrant families to Dalton does not last. A decline in housing construction, coupled with the national economic slump in 2008, deeply affects the carpet industry. The mills begin to cut back. Hundreds are laid off. In spring 2011, the state of Georgia enacts its own version of Arizona’s SB-1070. Anyone who is stopped without a driver’s license or proof of legal residency can be handed over to the immigration authorities. Mrs. Salaices is eventually deported back to Mexico. Since 2005, an unstable economy has slowed the migrant flow. The number of
Mexicans entering the United States roughly equals the number of those who have returned to Mexico. Yet there are more than 11 million undocumented Latinos still living in the United States, and their future is uncertain.

**Section 4: A New Hope**

**Latinos Transforming the Nation**

01:45:35:00–01:50:29:00

Even as immigration issues dominate the headlines in recent years, Latinos are transforming the nation … making their mark in every sphere of public life. In 2005, Antonio Villaraigosa becomes the first Mexican-American mayor of Los Angeles in more than a century. In 2010, Marco Rubio, a second-generation Cuban-American, is elected U.S. Senator from Florida. And a year earlier, the first Latina Justice of the Supreme Court has been sworn in. Born in the Bronx to a humble Puerto Rican family, Justice Sonia Sotomayor has made her way through Princeton, Yale, and series of judicial appointments to reach the pinnacle of her profession.

But there are millions of young Latinos—the children and grandchildren of immigrants—who are in danger of being left behind by society and can easily slide into the underclass. In south Florida, Miami Dade College is the largest of many institutions around the country focused on what project scholar Professor Marta Tienda calls “The Hispanic Moment.” The college is led by an alumnus, Dr. Eduardo Padrón, who himself has emigrated from Cuba at the age of fifteen. Today, Hispanics make up about one-sixth of the U.S. population—nearly 54 million people. By the middle of the century, the Latino population is expected to reach 127 million—nearly 30 percent of the projected population of the country.

Ray Suarez says, “There’s a lot at stake for the Latino community in the next ten or twenty years, but there’s so much at stake for all Americans in how Latinos in the United States do.” Marta Tienda says, “Our future growth and momentum depend on the children who are born here to immigrants and to the second generation. And if we don’t use that foundation to rebuild our country, then we’re missing an opportunity.” And Gloria Estefan says, “I see it as this amazing quilt with all these different colored threads weaving this common story. And I think it’s very crucial that we know who we are, where we come from, and what it’s been like. I think that’s important for generations to come.”

**Series Song: “Pastures of Plenty” by Lila Downs**


01:50:29:00–01:52:06:00

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01:50:29:00–01:52:06:00
Timeline

1565  Saint Augustine brings the first European settlement to the United States, introducing Catholicism and the Spanish language in Florida.

1598  New Mexico is settled by the Spanish, making it the largest and oldest Spanish settlement in the Southwest.

1607  The colony of Jamestown is founded in Virginia.

1691  Texas is made a separate Spanish province, with Don Domingo de Terán as its governor.

1692  Explorer Diego de Vargas leads an expedition in search of salt deposits in and around the Guadalupe Mountains, becoming the first non-Indian visitor to this area.

1718  The mission at San Antonio is founded—it becomes one of the most prosperous and most important missions.

1776  While the American colonies in the East declare their independence from Great Britain, the Spanish celebrate the founding of San Francisco in the West.

1789  The Bill of Rights is adopted.

1810  Separatist movements begin in Latin America.

1821  The first Anglo settlers arrive in the Mexican state of Texas after being invited by the government of Mexico, which had recently declared its independence.

1829  Slavery in Mexico is abolished by the new republican government that emerged after independence from Spain (1821).

1833  The government of the Republic of Mexico challenges the power of the Catholic Church, ordering its missions secularized and land holdings broken up. Antonio López Santa Anna is named President of Mexico.

1834  Mexico's President, Antonio López Santa Anna, dissolves the Congress to rule all Mexico with an iron hand. Texans and Tejanos unite in opposition.

1835  In autumn 1835, Texans and Tejanos rise in rebellion against the oppressive Mexican government.

1836  On February 23, Mexico's Antonio López Santa Anna takes possession of San Antonio. On March 6, day thirteen of the siege, Santa Anna's forces breach the Alamo defenses. All of the Alamo's defenders, 189 men, are killed. On April 21,
after joining forces with Sam Houston’s army,Juan Seguíndefeats the Mexican army in the Battle of San Jacinto—a battle that lasted all of eighteen minutes.

1837
Seguín is named Military Commander of West Texas, Senator, and later Mayor.

1842
Seguínfleets to Mexico, escaping Anglo threats.

1845
Texas is officially annexed to the United States, which angers the Mexican government. Conflict over the official borderline arises.

1846
In April, Mexico and the United States go to war over disputed territory. On June 14, Military Commander of California Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo is awakened by an angry mob of Anglo settlers and forced to sign the Articles of Capitulation to make California an independent republic.

1848
Mexico surrenders.

1853
Antonio López Santa Anna returns to power as President of Mexico, and during his time in office sells the land between Yuma, Arizona, and the Mesilla Valley, New Mexico, to the United States.

1859
Cigar factories are built in Florida, Louisiana, and New York, bringing an influx of working-class Cubans to the growing industry in the United States.

1862
The Homestead Act is passed in Congress, allowing squatters in the West to settle and claim vacant lands—many of which were owned by Mexicans.

1868
Angered by three hundred years of Spanish rule, Cubans rise up in revolt. Many leave for Europe and the United States, and the 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution is adopted, declaring all people of Hispanic origin born in the United States as U.S. citizens.

1870
The Spanish government frees the slaves it owns in Cuba and Puerto Rico.

1872
Puerto Rican representatives in Spain win equal civil rights for the colony.

1873
Slavery is abolished in Puerto Rico.

1890
Juan Seguín, the lone survivor of the Alamo, dies. Eighty years later, his body would be returned to Texas and buried with honors.

1892
The Partido Revolucionario Cubano is created to organize the independence movements in Cuba and Puerto Rico.

1895
Cuban rebels stage an insurrection, led by the poet José Martí.

1897
Spain grants Cuba and Puerto Rico autonomy and home rule.
On February 15, in Havana Harbor, Cuba, an explosion destroys a U.S. battleship—killing 266 men aboard. The United States subsequently declares war on Spain. The war lasts thirteen weeks. The Cuban Revolutionary Party (Partido Revolucionario Cubano) strikes a deal with the U.S. Congress; in exchange for the rebels’ cooperation with U.S. military intervention, the United States promises to leave Cuba at the end of the war. The United States acquires Puerto Rico through war and claims it as a territory.

Under the Platt Amendment, the United States limits Cuban independence as written into the Cuban Constitution. The United States reserves the right to build a naval base on Cuba and enforces that Cuba cannot sign treaties with other countries or borrow money unless it is deemed agreeable to the United States. With these parameters in place, the U.S. government hands the government of Cuba over to the Cuban people. The Federación Libre de los Trabajadores (Workers Labor Federation) becomes affiliated with the American Federation of Labor, which in turn breaks from its prior policy of excluding non-whites.

The Reclamation Act is passed, dispossessing many Hispanic Americans of their lands. Cuba declares its independence from the United States.

The Mexican Revolution begins as a revolt against President Porfirio Díaz. The railroads that had once served as a means for trade and development now serve as the main escape from the violence of the revolution.

Puerto Ricans are granted U.S. citizenship. In February, Congress passes the Immigration Act of 1917, which enforces a literacy requirement on all immigrants. On April 6, the United States declares war against Germany, joining WWI. With many able-bodied American men off to war, “temporary” Mexican workers are encouraged and permitted to enter the United States to work. In May, the Selective Service Act becomes law, obligating Mexican immigrants in the United States to register for the draft even though they are not eligible.

Limits on the number of immigrants allowed in the United States are imposed for the first time in the country’s history.

Congress creates the “Border Patrol.”

The United States government begins to deport Mexicans. Between 300,000 and 500,000 Mexican-Americans would be forced out of the United States in the 1930s.

The Roosevelt Administration reverses the policy of English as the official language in Puerto Rico. Cuban dictator Gerardo Machado is overthrown.

The Platt Amendment, which restricted the Cuban government, is annulled.
1940s As WWII sets in, many Latinos enlist in the U.S. military—proportionally the largest ethnic group serving in the war. The Fair Employment Practices Act is passed, eliminating discrimination in employment.

1943 On August 23, Macario Garcia becomes the first Mexican national to receive a U.S. Congressional Medal of Honor, yet is refused service at the Oasis Café near his home in Texas. Prompted by the WWII labor shortage, the U.S. government launches an agreement with Mexico to import temporary workers (braceros), to fill the void in agricultural work.

1944 D-Day invasion of Europe on June 6. The Servicemen’s Readjustment Act of 1944 is passed, providing settlements for veterans. Mexican-American veterans, however, have trouble receiving these benefits. Operation Bootstrap, a program initiated by Puerto Rico to encourage industrialization and to meet U.S. labor demands, fuels a large wave of migrant workers to the United States.

1947 Puerto Rico gains political autonomy when it becomes a commonwealth.

1948 Dr. Hector García, a witness to racial injustice, begins holding meetings for Mexican-Americans to voice their concerns, and in March they establish a new Mexican-American movement: the American GI Forum. This group gets national attention after a Latino soldier killed in action, Pvt. Felix Z. Longoria, is refused burial in Texas. Then-Senator Lyndon B. Johnson, appalled by this blatant bigotry, makes arrangements for Longoria to be buried at the prestigious Arlington National Cemetery.

1950 The U.S. Congress advances Puerto Rico’s political status from protectorate to commonwealth.

1951 The Bracero Program is formalized as the Mexican Farm Labor Supply Program and the Mexican Labor Agreement, and will bring an annual average of 350,000 Mexican workers into the United States until its end in 1964.

1954 In the case Hernandez v. The State of Texas, the Supreme Court recognizes that Latinos are suffering inequality and profound discrimination, paving the way for Hispanic Americans to use legal means to fight for their equality. This is the first Supreme Court case briefed and argued by Mexican-American attorneys.

1954–1958 Operation Wetback is put into place by the U.S. government. The initiative is a government effort to locate and deport undocumented workers, and over the four-year period, 3.8 million people of Mexican descent are deported.

1956 Nearly a dozen bills are introduced into the Senate to preserve segregation. Henry B. González, determined to stop them, stages an effective filibuster, speaking for twenty-two straight hours. He would later represent San Antonio in Congress.
1958 The landmark production of *West Side Story* premieres on Broadway, chronicling the racial tensions of the ’40s and ’50s.

1959 Fidel Castro and his band of revolutionaries march into Havana, following an armed revolt that ends in the overthrow of military dictator Fulgencio Batista.

1960 John F. Kennedy runs for President, with Lyndon B. Johnson as his running mate. Johnson enlists the help of Dr. Hector García to help carry the Latino vote. Garcia forms Viva Kennedy clubs, greatly aiding Kennedy’s narrow victory. On October 24, a ship called the *City of Havana* ferries Cubans fleeing Fidel Castro’s reign. Over the next three years, more than 200,000 Cubans flee to Miami.

1961 On April 17, 1,400 U.S.–trained Cuban exiles invade Cuba. Within seventy-two hours, Fidel Castro’s forces easily defeat the Bay of Pigs Invasion. Aspira (Aspire) is founded to promote the education of Hispanic youth and acquires a national following, serving Puerto Ricans wherever they live in large numbers. *West Side Story* is made into a film; the role of Anita goes to a Puerto Rican, Rita Moreno, who takes home an Academy Award for her performance. Rafael Leónidas Trujillo, dictator of the Dominican Republic, is assassinated in a C.I.A.-backed plot.

1962 U.S. reconnaissance planes discover Soviet missiles in Cuba. Travel to and from Cuba is prohibited. The United States blocks a Soviet plan to establish missile bases in Cuba. The Soviet Premier withdraws the missiles on the condition that the United States publicly declares it will not invade Cuba. After the Community Service Organization (CSO) turns down César Chavez’s request, as their President, to organize farm workers, César and Dolores Huerta resign from the CSO. They form the National Farm Workers Association.

1963 On November 22, President John F. Kennedy is assassinated, leaving Lyndon B. Johnson as successor. President Johnson appoints more Mexican-Americans to positions in government than any previous president; he passes landmark legislation advocating desegregation.

1964 Congress passes the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The act establishes affirmative action programs, prohibiting discrimination on the basis of gender, creed, race, or ethnic background: “to achieve equality of employment opportunities and remove barriers that have operated in the past” (Title VII). The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) is also established through Title VII to prevent job discrimination. The Bracero Program, the government program initially put in place during WWII, ends. It brought Mexican laborers into the country to replace the American men who were fighting overseas. When the war ended, the program continued.

1966 Striking workers are subjected to physical and verbal attacks throughout their peaceful demonstrations, and on March 16, the Senate Sub-Committee on Migratory Labor held hearings in Delano. On March 17, the morning following the hearings, César Chavez sets out with one hundred farm workers to begin his
pilgrimage to the San Joaquin Valley. After twenty-five days, their numbers swell from hundreds to an army of thousands. On Easter Sunday, the state capital is finally in sight. With public sympathy mounting and the spring growing season upon them, growers finally agree to meet with union representatives.

1967

With Martin Luther King, Jr., organizing in the South, and César Chavez organizing in California, East L.A. high school teacher Sal Castro begins looking for ways to organize students.

1968

On March 6, a walkout is planned and coordinated among East L.A. high schools. Approximately ten thousand students peacefully walk out of four schools and are joined by parents and supporters. Police are sent to maintain order, and things get out of hand. Following the police riot, on March 7 the students walk out again. The walkouts continue for two weeks until the demands are met. Just days after the opening of the HemisFair in San Antonio, Chicano high school students stage walkouts—first in San Antonio, then in thirty-nine towns across Texas, eventually spreading to nearly one hundred high schools in ten states. José Angel Gutiérrez is the mastermind behind much of this activism.

1970

Herman Badillo is elected into the U.S. House of Representatives, making him the first Puerto Rican to serve in Congress. In Crystal City, Texas, José Angel Gutiérrez forms a political party, La Raza Unida (“The United Race”). Elections in April see an unprecedented victory for Chicanos. Gutiérrez is elected county judge, and La Raza Unida controls not only the school board, but city and county government as well.

1973

Miami officially becomes bilingual, following a referendum sponsored by its growing Cuban community. Maurice Ferré becomes mayor of Miami, making him the first Puerto Rican to lead a major city in the mainland United States.

1974

Willie Velásquez of San Antonio organizes thousands of voter registration drives across the Southwest, encouraging the Latino population to vote. He notices, however, that the problem is not the number of Latino voters, but the electoral system. He later would file voting rights lawsuits—never losing a case. Congress passes the Equal Educational Opportunity Act to create equality in public schools by offering bilingual education to Hispanic students.

1978

Russian-born immigrant Emmy Shafer spearheads a campaign to put an end to bilingualism and make English the official language of Miami. Her push for an English-only Miami is a harbinger of broader anti-immigrant sentiment that would spread across the country in the late 20th and early 21st century.

1980

In the spring, Fidel Castro announces that any Cuban who wishes to leave may do so. Shortly after this declaration, a ramshackle armada sails from South Florida to the port of Mariel. Over a period of five months, more than 125,000 Cubans arrive in South Florida. The newly arrived Cubans are quickly branded as mentally ill or criminal, following a CBS News story. Although only 4 percent
are from mental hospitals, more than 25,000 have criminal records. The media perpetuates the stereotype of mentally ill or criminal in shows and movies such as *Miami Vice* and *Scarface*. The English-only campaign comes roaring back, with Emmy Shafer again at the helm. In the 1980 election, voters approve the ordinance to end official bilingualism.

1986
Seeking to bring illegal immigration under control while maintaining a stable agricultural labor force, President Ronald Reagan signs the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA). It is intended to toughen U.S. immigration law; border security is to be enforced, and employers are now required to monitor the immigration status of their employees. It also, however, grants amnesty to nearly three million immigrants—mostly Mexicans—who had quietly slipped across the border during the 1970s and ’80s.

1987
The National Hispanic Leadership Institute addresses the underrepresentation of Latinas in the corporate, nonprofit, and political arena.

1988
Voter rights advocate Willie Velásquez dies in May, and is posthumously honored with the Presidential Medal of Freedom—the highest civilian peacetime award.

1990
President George Bush appoints the first female and first Hispanic surgeon general of the United States, Antonia C. Novello.

1991
The proposed North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) between Canada, the United States, and Mexico expands and exploits the maquiladora concept, offering potential tax reductions to U.S. businesses.

1992
A series of peace agreements finally ends the bloodshed in El Salvador.

1993
Ellen Ochoa becomes the first Hispanic woman to go to space aboard the space shuttle *Discovery*. President Bill Clinton names Federico Peña as Secretary of Transportation and Henry Cisneros as Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, making them both the first Hispanics to hold those positions. He also appoints Norma Cantú, former Director of the Mexican-American Legal Defense and Education Fund, to the position of Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights within the Department of Education. Twenty-five other Hispanics are appointed to positions needing Senate confirmation under this presidency.

1994
NAFTA takes effect, eliminating all tariffs between Canada, Mexico, and the United States within fifteen years. Imports from the maquiladoras become duty-free. On November 8, Californians pass Proposition 187 with 59 percent of the vote. This bans undocumented immigrants from receiving public education and benefits such as welfare and subsidized health care (with the exception of emergency services); makes it a felony to manufacture, distribute, sell, or use false citizenship or residence documents; and requires any city, county, or state officials to report any suspected or apparent illegal aliens.
1996  Proposition 187 is ruled unconstitutional on the grounds that only the federal government has the authority to regulate immigration. Eliseo Medina spearheads the movement to file lawsuits against Proposition 187. Medina becomes the first Mexican-American Vice President of the Service Employees International Union.

2003  Hispanics are pronounced the nation’s largest minority group—surpassing African Americans. The Congressional Hispanic Leadership Institute (CHLI) is the premier organization founded by members of Congress to advance the Hispanic community’s economic progress, with a focus on social responsibility and global competitiveness.

2004  Anti-immigrant sentiment reaches a tipping point when Arizonans organize a group of volunteers known as the Minutemen to patrol the border.

2005  In April, the Minutemen begin patrolling the border. They report unauthorized border crossings or other illegal activity to the U.S. Border Patrol. Antonio Villaraigosa becomes the first Mexican-American mayor of Los Angeles in more than a century.

2008  The Freedom Tower is designated a National Historic Landmark, considered the “Ellis Island of the South” for its role as the Cuban Assistance Center in Miami during 1962–1974, offering nationally sanctioned relief to Cuban refugees.

2009  Puerto Rican Sonia Sotomayor is sworn in as the first Latina Supreme Court Justice.

2010  With no new comprehensive federal immigration policy in place, states begin to enact their own. In April, Arizona Governor Jan Brewer signs the broadest and toughest anti–illegal immigrant law in U.S. history. The legislation, SB-1070, cracks down on anyone harboring or hiring undocumented immigrants and gives local police unprecedented powers. Marco Rubio, a second-generation Cuban American, is elected U.S. Senator from Florida.

2011  Georgia enacts its own version of Arizona’s SB-1070—anyone stopped without a driver’s license or proof of residency can be handed over to the immigration authorities.

2013  Hispanics make up about one-sixth of the U.S. population—nearly 51 million people. By the middle of the century, the Latino population is expected to reach 127 million—nearly 30 percent of the projected population of the country.
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