Selected Films of Interest for Chicana/o and Latino Studies
In the SDSU Library Media Center

Check the library catalog (the PAC) for complete information and availability of individual films.

"Focuses on the history of Mexican-American/Chicana women. The major themes, organizations and personalities are introduced chronologically in a tribute to the strengths and resilience of women at the center of their families, as activists in their communities and as contributors to American history." VTC-245


Barrio Logan : Youth Voices, Community Stories.  Media Arts Center San Diego, 2006
"... a storytelling project that helps sustain, support, celebrate and maintain community identity and pride in an area that is widely regarded as a center for Latino civic engagement. This project is a partnership between the City of San Diego Public Library and Media Arts Center San Diego." DVD-2667


"... with tenderness and beauty, follows the immigrant experience with Marcelo Ayala, who leaves his family on a risky journey to the United States. Beyond the Border rounds out the immigration's effect on family in Marcelo's home town of Michoacan, Mexico." VTC-2085

"The first segment focuses on the bilingual education program at San Antonio's De Zavala Elementary school. Segment two focuses on Hispanic American college students who were raised as English speakers but are rediscovering the cultural and economic benefits of bilingualism. Segment three is an interview with Hispanic American entertainer Cheech Marin."
VTC-1944

The Blending of Culture : Latino Influence on America.  Films for the Humanities & Sciences, 2002. VTC-2434

Birthwrite : Growing up Hispanic.  Cinema Guild, 2006,
"Takes a look at the work of several Hispanic-American writers and how their poems, short stories, and novels reflect what it means and what it is like to grow up Hispanic in America."
DVD-2184

"Filmed in Nuevo Leon, Mexico, in Mission, Texas and Shafter, California, this movie follows the life of a migrant community, primarily through the eyes of Elizabeth, whose wedding to Artemio concludes the documentary." VTC-3143
“Part 6 of a series on how the globalized world economy affects ordinary people. This film follows Luis Rodriguez, who lives in a remote peasant village in southern Mexico, who hopes to become a boxing champion in the United States. This film follows him as he travels north to the US-Mexican border, joining other migrants determined to outwit the U.S. border guards. Eventually he succeeds in crossing the border and finds work as an illegal alien.” VTC-3276

“A documentary on the only all-Hispanic Puerto Rican 65th Infantry Regiment.” DVD-3539

“Based on the life story of Pedro J. Gonzalez who championed the cause of Mexican-Americans in California during the Depression years and who worked for the reform of the California penal system.” VTC-270

“The Bronze screen honors the past, illuminates the present, and opens a window to the future of Latinos in motion pictures. From silent movies to urban gang films, stereotypes of the Greaser, the Lazy Mexican, the Latin lover and the Dark lady are examined. Rare and extensive footage traces the progression of this distorted screen image to the increased prominence of today's Latino actors, writers and directors.” VTC-2412

“Moyers and Madrid discuss the controversy surrounding bilingual education and the state of education, in general, for Hispanic people.” DVD-2187

“This documentary captures how a community was betrayed by greed, political hypocrisy, and good intentions gone astray. Don Normark's haunting photographs evoke a lost Mexican-American village in the heart of downtown LA, razed in the 1950's to build an enormous low-income housing project. Instead, the federally purchased land was used for Dodger Stadium.” DVD-1428

Chicana. Women Make Movies, 2005?
“Chicana traces the history of Chicana and Mexican women from pre-Columbian times to the present. It covers women's role in Aztec society, their participation in the 1810 struggle for Mexican independence, their involvement in the US labor strikes in 1872, their contributions to the 1910 Mexican revolution and their leadership in contemporary civil rights causes. Using murals, engravings and historical footage, Chicana shows how women, despite their poverty, have become an active and vocal part of the political and work life in both Mexico and the United States.” DVD-2228


Counseling Latina/Latino clients. American Psychological Association, 2005
“…demonstrates the cultural issues of the Latina/Latino community in counseling.” DVD-1828
Crosses = Cruces. Maruvilla Productions, 2002. VTC-2930

“Examines the border crisis as seen through the eyes of Arizona ranchers, border patrol agents, politicians, farmers, humanitarians, and Mexican migrants.” DVD-2248

Day of the Dead. Films for the Humanities & Sciences, 1999
“Presents the annual commemoration of the Day of the Dead as it is celebrated on the island of La Picanda.” VTC-2546


“This documentary examines the struggles of Hispanic gays and lesbians coming out to their parents, especially in a culture that places value on "family tradition" above all else. Through interviews and commentaries, the stories of this largely ignored community are contrasted against similar experiences by Anglo-Americans.” VTC-3162

“The border that runs between Tijuana and San Diego is the most heavily militarized border between "friendly" countries anywhere in the world under the U.S. Border Patrol's "Operation Gatekeeper" policy.” VTC-2320

Dying to Live: A Migrant's Journey
A profound look at the human face of the migrant, this film explores who these people are, why they leave their homes and what they face in their journey. It also explores the places of conflict, pain and hope along the U.S.-Mexico border. 2005. 33 min. DVD-3154

El Dia la noche y los muertos. Calavera Productions, 1998?
“Filmed in the village of Patzcuaro, this is a dramatization of a pilgrimage on October 31, All Souls' Day in Mexico, when people celebrate their ancestors and communicate with long dead loved ones. DVD-2379

“This film documents the experiences of the children of Hispanic migrant farm workers in trying to complete their education.” Filmed in California, Texas, and Mexico, VTC-3144

“Documentary film about the next group of immigrants, the Mexicans, that are following in our long history of immigration. It looks at the people of Farmingville, New York, and at how they are dealing with the influx of about 1,500 Mexican workers.” DVD-1641

“A documentary by Los Angeles teacher Laura Angelica Simón, exploring the impact of California's Proposition 187 on the immigrant community. The subject is Hoover Street Elementary School, where Simón candidly explores the attitudes and emotions of teachers, students and parents, focusing on a ten year old Salvadorian girl.” DVD-1988


The Guestworker.  Filmakers Library, 2006
“Documents the story of Mexican farm workers who enter the United States legally as part of the H-2A guest worker program, and looks at the issues surrounding the program. Focuses on a 66-year-old man who has worked on North Carolina farms for forty years, both legally and illegally, and on his employer, who is dependent upon foreign laborers to sustain his farm.” DVD-2836

Hispanic Americans : One or Many Cultures. Films for the Humanities & Sciences, 2002.
“Examines what unites and divides various cultural groups comprising Hispanic Americans. Three Hispanic Americans are spotlighted: a Puerto Rican American, New York Justice Frank Torres, a Cuban American, former Miami mayor Xavier Suarez, and a Mexican American restauranteur, Gordino Velesco. Also, journalist Felipe Luciano discusses the importance of voting by the Hispanic American community as the means for achieving common political goals.” DVD-2391

“Examines how the second generation Hispanics are adapting to American society, and how they are maintaining their Latino roots while assimilating into the American cultural mainstream. A variety of Hispanic Americans are interviewed, including pop film director Robert Rodriguez. The program explores how they view themselves and how they view each other.” VTC-1937

‘Unsung Heroes explores an important aspect of America's military past. They have served in conflicts dating back to the 19th century, and they are an increasingly important and growing part of the U.S. military. But the role of Hispanics in the armed services is largely overlooked, despite the fact that many Hispanic soldiers have won the highest military award the nation bestows, the Medal of Honor.” DVD-2456

“Explores the current role of Hispanics in the media including interviews with Geraldo Rivera, Moctesuma Esparza, David Valdez, Rita Moreno, Elizabeth Peña, Jimmy Smits and Isiah Morales.” VTC-1939


In search of Aztlan.  Cinema Guild, 2002. VTC-3468

“Documentary follows Mexican migrant agricultural laborers in the strawberry fields of Watsonville, California. With lively music and an appreciation of border culture, this video provides a human portrait of workers at the mercy of a greedy system.” VTC-2322

Issues of Latino Identity : The Yearning to be ... Films for the Humanities & Sciences, 2002.
“A detailed look at the fastest-growing minority in the United States, and what it means to be Latino and American. The film contrasts the experience of being a Latino in a flourishing ethnic neighborhood of a big city with living in a small town, where many Latinos feel isolated.” VTC-2433

“Shows both the changes in and the endurance of traditional Latino families. Follows the paths of three generations of one Mexican-American family. Shows how the traditional roles of the elderly are being altered by their families' needs.” DVD-1327

“An investigative report on the working conditions of migrant farm laborers in the United States. Interviews farmers, workers, attorneys, and government officials about housing conditions, government regulations, working conditions, and pesticide hazards and poisonings. Also interviews owners of Duda Farms which has an exemplary reputation and provides benefits to its migrant farm workers.” VTC-201

**Legacy of the Mexican Revolution.** Films for the Humanities & Sciences, 1995. VTC-2504

**The Lemon Grove Incident.** Cinema Guild, 2005. DVD-2011


Pros and cons of the maquiladora program established by the Mexican Government in the 1960's are presented in a documentary film style, VTC-1776

**Maquilapolis = City of Factories.** California Newsreel, 2006.

“Explores the environmental devastation and urban chaos of Tijuana’s assembly factories and the female laborers who have organized themselves for social action.” DVD-2298

**Mexico: Back Door to the Promised Land.** Films for the Humanities and Sciences, 2000.

“In this program, children of desperately poor families share stories of their hardships and the choices they have made. For some, childhood means heavy labor as migrant workers in northern Mexico, while for others it means gang life on the streets of Tijuana. Yet for all-economic refugees for whom dollars are more valuable than education- the dream of life in America is like a vision of the promised land.” VTC-2128

**Mexico City : The Impossible City.** Films for the Humanities & Sciences, 2005.

“Defines Mexico City's globalization in terms of winners and losers, examining how, in the world's largest metropolis, immigration challenges are linked to poverty and population influx from surrounding rural areas. Contrasting the high-facilities and fashionable neighborhoods with its sprawling slums and struggling inhabitants, the program outlines the relationship between foreign investment and the worldwide need for cheap labor, which Mexico and its indigenous readily supply. Glimpses into a tech-savvy youth culture and the persistent Zapatista movement reinforce the capital's nickname: City of Contrasts. DVD-1646

**Miracle on the Border.** Habitat for Humanity International, 199-? VTC-86

**Mojados : Through the Night = Wetbacks : Through the Night.** Vanguard Cinema, 2005.

“Filmed over the course of ten days, this follows four men into the world of illegal border-crossing from Mexico to the United States. Guapo, Oso, Tigre, Viejo take the 120 mile cross-desert journey that has been traveled innumerable times by nameless immigrants who like these four from Michoacan, Mexico all had a simple dream for a better life. DVD-2550


“A portrait of Mexican immigration to the Midwest that examines issues of assimilation, class structure, language, and ethics on both sides of the border.” VTC-2632

**New Audiences for Mexican Music.** Films for the Humanities & Sciences, 1995. DVD-2365

**New World Border.** Peek Media, 2001

“Documents the rise in human rights abuses along the U.S./Mexico border since the implementation of border blockades (Operation Gatekeeper), which have been erected in populated areas throughout the border region during the last decade. Includes interviews with
immigrant rights organizers, testimony from immigrants, analysis of "free trade" policies and current efforts to build a vibrant movement for immigrant rights." VTC-1600


"Examines the Latino population explosion in North Carolina. Several Hispanic Americans introduce themselves, tell where they are from and why they came to North Carolina. Many describe monetary hardships in their native countries as well as financial difficulties they experienced when they came to the United States, and others recount their success stories as residents of North Carolina." DVD-2227


"Examines the devastating impact of Mexican-United States migration. The families and communities left behind are disabled, and their languages and cultures are being destroyed. This program looks at villagers who strive to ensure that their children will no longer have to migrate to have a better life." DVD-1444

**Páginas de la historia de Tijuana.** Tijuana : Instituto Municipal de Arte y Cultura, 2005. DVD-2020


"This ABC News program studies the connections between 9/11, the American economy, and the workforce of undocumented labor on which that economy increasingly depends. Interviews with Arizona border patrol agents evoke their frustrations and reveal the perils faced by many Mexicans who attempt desperate wilderness crossings. Contrasts between President Bush's proposed guest worker program and the Department of Homeland Security's efforts to crack down on the influx of illegal aliens highlight the complexity of the situation." DVD-2390

**Rancho California (por favor).** Berkeley Media, 2003.

"This document is a two-year field study (1999-2001) on migrant farmworkers in northern San Diego County." DVD-2510

**Recalling Orange County.** Produced in association with the Independent Television Service ; a co-presentation of Latino Public Broadcasting ; produced by Souvenir Pictures, Inc. ; Corporation for Public Broadcasting. Cinema Guild, 2006.

"Once regarded as a wealthy, white, conservative enclave, Orange County has become less predictable, less tidy, more diverse, more interesting. In a word, Mexican. Filmmaker Mylène Moreno, whose family moved there in the seventies, returned to reflect on her youth as a daughter of immigrants and to see how much things have changed. She discovered Orange County was in the midst of a furious battle, a divisive campaign to recall school district trustee Nativo Lopez from the Santa Ana Unified Board of Education." DVD-2244


"This documentary shows the men behind the Minuteman Project and the continuum between official border militarization and vigilante action. It tells the story of border tensions from the point of view of those affected and reveals the underlying motivations of the vigilantes through interviews and footage of their nighttime patrols." DVD-1975

**Salt of the Earth.** MPI Home Video, 1987?

VTC-609


"...tells the moving story of a one-time street kid from Guatemala, who headed north along the Pan-American Highway full of hopes and desires for a better future, ultimately to die an American hero far from home. One of the 32,000 non-U.S. citizens, or "green-card soldiers", sent to Iraq in
March 2003, Marine Lance Cpl, Jose Antonio Gutierrez's picture was broadcast all over the world a few hours after the war began: he was the first American soldier to be killed in Iraq, and he was killed by friendly fire." DVD-3150

**Songs of the Homeland.**  Galan Productions, 1996. VTC-3080

**The Status of Latina Women.**  Films for the Humanities and Sciences, 1993. Program looks at the differences between the U.S. Latina and her Latin American and American counterparts. Examines how Latino men regard successful Latina women, and the myths and mystique of machismo. VTC-1611

**Through Walls.**  Regents of the University of California ; UCLA Wight Art Gallery, 1990. VTC-68


**Tijuana Jews.**  National Center for Jewish Film, 2005. "A documentary and a personal exploration of this community [Tijuana] that blended Jewish and Mexican cultures and customs in an unlikely place and time ..." VTC-3171

**Visiones : Latino Art and Culture.**  Galan, Inc., 2004. DVD-1015

**Viva La Causa! : 500 Years of Chicano History.**  Collision Course Video Productions, 1995. VTC-1647

**Voices from the fields Voces del Campo**
Documentary follows farmworkers from California's Salinas Valley back to their roots in the fields of rural Mexico, where they recount their everyday struggle to cope in the midst of the globalization of agriculture and the impact of NAFTA. 1995. VTC-3968

**Walking the Line.**  Filmmakers Library, 2006. “...offers a harrowing view of the chaos, absurdity and senseless deaths of Mexican illegals along the U.S. - Mexico border because some American citizens are taking the law into their own hands.” DVD-2835

**Walkout.**  HBO Video, 2006. “The inspiring true story of the 1968 East LA student walkout, where one courageous young woman and thousands of followers stood up against academic prejudices and forever changed their world.” DVD-3046


**Yo soy Chicano.**  Cinema Guild, 2005. DVD-2249

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Spring 2007
Updated March 2009