Brown Quarterly - Vol. 2, No. 1 (Fall 1997) - Hispanic.American.Heritage. Issue

Vol. 2, No. 1 (Fall 1997) is not available in a newsletter format, but you can read the articles on the following pages.

The Brown Foundation would like to express its appreciation **Payless ShoeSource** for their contribution toward the publication of this newsletter.

Coronado National Memorial

By Barbara Alberti

Students discover native foods stored in baskets woven from bear grass.

"I did not wish that they (the Zunis) should be attacked, and enjoined my men, who were begging me for permission, from doing so, telling them that they ought not to molest them, and that the enemy was doing us no harm, and it was not proper to fight such a small number of people." -- Coronado to Viceroy Mendoza, August 3, 1540

Interpreting cultural history at Coronado National Memorial can be both complex and controversial. Some People consider the arrival of the Spanish conquistadors in the Southwest to be the beginning of a tragic story of European dominance over Native American peoples and cultures. Others are proud to point out that Spaniards had explored and established villages and trade routes in the southwestern part of the country long before the Pilgrims arrived on the east coast. Was Juan Vasquez de Coronado a heartless mercenary, or just an ambitious young man seeking fame and fortune in the "New World?" The goals of the expedition were to claim new lands for the king of Spain, spread the word of God and find gold (of course). Were the tactics used by Coronado and his captains any different from those used today by many military organizations around the world?

The largest of 27 memorials in the National Park system, most visitors come to Coronado National Memorial to enjoy the scenic beauty of the area. It is a Memorial, not a

Monument; there is no statue of Coronado, nor do we display his sword or his campsite or any other tangible object relating to the expedition. In fact we do not even believe that Coronado ever set foot on the land within the Memorial's boundaries. So why are we here? Our location provides spectacular views overlooking the San Pedro Valley, believed to have been the expedition route as it crossed into what is now the United States. Our legislative mandate is to interpret and symbolize the Coronado Entrada (entry); to memorialize the ties that bind the U.S. to Mexico and Spain; to strengthen international amity and cultural understanding; and to protect unique natural and cultural resources.

Students dressed as Zuni children in front of adobe pueblo model.

To fulfill that mandate and the more general mission of the National Park Service, the Memorial must become and integral part of the community. Therefore, we made a decision several years ago to ask the local school system how we could help their teachers. The teachers decided that a program based on the history of the Coronado Expedition would fit right into the fourth grade curriculum requirements for students to learn local history. We also decided that the Expedition should be viewed not just as a cultural history story but also as a natural history experience.

Each spring Coronado National Memorial presents a Cultural and Natural History Program for fourth grade students. Classes spend about three hours at the memorial participating in a series of hands-on activities guided by park volunteers and rangers. This program began in 1994 with funding provided by grants from the National Park Foundation's Parks as Classrooms program and the Southwest Parks and Monuments Association. About 600-700 students from public, private and home schools in southern Cochise County participate in the program annually.

The first year, we gave each fourth grade teacher in the schools within the local area a packet of materials containing: an Activities Guide with classroom activities for each chapter of the Children's book Gonzalo (a historical fiction written from the point of view of a shepherd boy who accompanies his father on the Expedition), videos to acquaint students with the history of the Coronado Expedition and the National Park Service, brochures, maps, posters and books used as reference material, and a Teacher's Guide with the logistics of the field trip and useful information about the Memorial. Post-visit

Fourth grader dressed as Coronado.

activities and evaluations were also provided for students to use in the classroom as a wrap-up after their visit to the Memorial.

The goals of the program are to: give students an overview of the expedition and its objectives; develop students' appreciation for the cultural diversity of the area by emphasizing both the Spanish and Native American cultures and lifestyles during the period of first contact; familiarize students with the clothing, weapons and tools of both the Spanish conquistadors and the Pueblo Indians; and acquaint students with the native flora and fauna used by the Indians for food, textiles and utility items at the time of Coronado's arrival.

For the cultural history activities, half of the class learns about the Expedition from the Spaniards' point of view. Using reproductions of 16th century clothing, armor and weapons to enliven the discussion, the students learn about the goals of the expedition, the hardships of the soldier's everyday life and what motivated them.

Simultaneously, the other half of the class learns about the lifestyle of the Zuni Indians before the Spaniards arrived. By combining storytelling with replicas of clothing and tools, students learn about the various tasks children and adults might have performed in the pueblos. They also discuss what natural materials the Indians used to make their tools and weapons and where those materials were found.

Following their discussions, the two groups, dressed as Spaniards and Zunis, meet to reenact the encounter between the Zunis and Coronado when he first arrived at Hawikuh pueblo. During the reenactment, the two groups use only sign language to communicate. (Teachers are expected to have familiarized their students with a short list of essential signs before the field trip.) Although adults are on hand to act as advisors, the students are encouraged to make their own decisions, not necessarily based on what actually happened over 450 years ago.

After the encounter, students examine what affected their decisions during the reenactment. They also discuss how the different beliefs, customs and languages of the Spaniards and Zunis in 1540 may have influenced the outcome of the actual confrontation. Finally, the importance of the Coronado Expedition and its effects on modern life (religion,

architecture, food, language, etc.) are reviewed to develop student's appreciation for the cultural diversity of Arizona.


Pounding yucca leaves to make rope.

Besides learning about cultural history, the classes also participate in hands-on demonstrations to acquaint students with the native flora and fauna used in the 16th century for food, textiles and utility items. Volunteers guide students through three activities.

At the "Zuni Snack Bar" students try their hand at grinding corn with a mano and metate, drink prickly pear cactus fruit juice, and taste the cactus pads, or nopales, both raw and cooked in salsa and served on blue corn tortilla chips. They also learn how edible with nuts, berries and flowers were cooked and eaten.

Another activity demonstrated the use of traditional methods for spinning, weaving and dying natural fibers into clothing and blankets. A volunteer presents a history of the fibers used in textiles, beginning with the early use of plant fibers, dog fur and rabbit skins, and proceeding to cultivated native cotton and finally wool, used after the introduction of sheep by the Spaniards. A dye chart vividly illustrates the wide array of colors obtained from various native plant parts. Students test their skills by carding and spinning native cotton. Finally, a loom made from native plant stalks and fibers is used to show the fine art of weaving both simple and intricate designs.

Perhaps the most popular activity of the day is making rope from yucca leaves. First, students are introduced to a variety of plants in the agave family. They learn to characteristics of each plant which make them particularly suitable for processing into thread, twine or rope. They also are shown other examples of the uses of native plant fibers such as paintbrushes and scrubbers. Students are each given a yucca leaf that they enthusiastically pound with wooden sticks. Once the fibers are exposed, they twist them into a short section of rope that they can take home to finish.

Most of the activities are presented by a staff of trained volunteers who give generously of their time to make this program a success. In addition, many local experts have been called upon to make the costume, weapons, tools and displays and to provide specialized training for our volunteers. For more information, contact Coronado National Memorial, 4101 East Montezuma Canyon Road, Hereford, AZ 85615.

Hernando De Soto Expedition

By Brian Loadholtz and Susan Sernaker

Spain's New World dominion already extended across the West Indies and Central and South America, yet her foot hold was tenuous. Having few industries or resources at home to rely on, she was dependent on colonial commodities, both natural and human, to maintain her grasp in the Caribbean. The conquests of the Aztecs of Mexico (1519-21) and the Incas of Peru (1531-35) had opened fabulous veins of wealth. These conquests also alerted other European nations to the untapped profits across the Atlantic Ocean. To secure her position unquestionably, Spain sought to control all lands surrounding the Caribbean Basin. La Florida was important strategically was also a possible source of undiscovered gold and riches.

Hernando de Soto was about 14 years old when he first sailed from Spain, probably in 1514, bound for a conquistador's life in the New World. Over the next 15 years, he participated in military actions against Indians and Spanish land poachers in modern-day Panama and Nicaragua, using his rewards to fund profitable private ventures. His valor during the conquest of the Incas of Peru earned him greater wealth, which he used to finance his expedition to La Florida.

Hernando DeSoto brought with him 600 conquistadors and their weapons including the crossbow and the arquebus. Photo NPS.

Hernando de Soto's agreement with Charles V of Spain was simple. He was to explore, exploit and colonize La Florida while bearing all costs. This would be the first major exploration of the interior of North America. In return, he would become Governor of Cuba and the new colony. De Soto and the Crown would divide the spoils. De Soto and his 622 soldiers arrived in Havana in June 1538. He filled the expedition's ranks with slave carriers, camp followers (including several women), artisans, priests, an engineer, 200 horses, a herd of pigs, and fierce fighting dogs for punishing Indians. Landing near Tampa Bay on May 30, 1539, he left a temporary colony of 100 men captained by Pedro Calderon and led his army inland.

At the beginning of the expedition, a patrol met with a small party of Indians. After a brief skirmish on "Indian" was spared because he spoke Spanish. Though tanned, painted and nearly naked, the man was Juan Ortiz, a member of an earlier expedition who lived among the Indians and knew their language. He became the mission's interpreter. Very early in the

march, De Soto's army became dependent on the Indians for food. Hungry and impatient for gold, they threw to the dogs native guides who deceived them. Many were ready to stop and settle in this new, lush land, but De Soto insisted they keep searching for gold. At Cofitachequi, De Soto was given food, shelter and fresh water pearls by an Indian princess who welcomed them. He still pushed on, taking the Lady of Cofitachequi hostage and using her as a guide. After the battle at Mabila, where 22 Spanish and 2,000 Indians were killed, most of the supples were lost, but De Soto refused to meet a supply fleet at present-day Mobile Bay, because he was afraid of mass desertion.

Indians inflicted even greater damage at Chicasa; more dead, horses and pigs lost, clothes and weapons destroyed in the fire. By spring 1542, it was over. Driving his army relentlessly, De Soto had killed and enslaved large numbers of Indians and lost half of his soldiers to sickness and Indian retaliation. He had found no gold, established no colonies. After his death from fever in May 1542, De Soto was buried in the Mississippi River. His second-in-command, Luis de Moscoso, made an abortive overland attempt to reach Mexico, then spent one more winter on the Mississippi.


Men dressed as conquistadors.

They built several boats and started down the Mississippi River, abandoning 500 Indian slaves in alien country. Hostile tribes fought the Spanish for every mile of river to the Gulf of Mexico. From there the ships followed the coastline to the settlement at Tampico in Mexico in September 1543. Out of the original 622 soldiers, approximately 300 had survived.

Although valuable geographical and cultural data were recorded, the expedition was a failure. No colonies or trade routes were established; no gold or riches were found. These were the measures of success. De Soto and half of his men did not survive; thousands of Indians were killed in battle. Nevertheless, the mission had an overwhelming impact on North American history. The survivors brought back to Europe memories of the abundance of fish and game and the fertility of the land. These tales spurred on the opening of the southeastern United States to European expansion. The expedition also affected American Indian tribes directly by introducing diseases against which they had no immunity. The diseases decimated populations and traumatized traditional social and cultural patterns among the survivors. De Soto's invasion and its aftermath permanently ravaged the life-ways of the southeastern Indians.

De Soto National Memorial in Bradenton, Florida, commemorates the first major European penetration of the southeastern United States by the De Soto expedition. The park was established in 1949 on the south shore of Tampa Bay. A movie about the De Soto expedition is shown throughout the day at the visitor center which is open every day except Thanksgiving, Christmas Day and New Year's day. The visitor center also contains a small museum with Spanish and Indian artifacts on display. From mid-December through mid-April Camp Ucita is open. This model encampment, where reproductions of Spanish armor and weapons are displayed, represents the Indian village captured by De Soto for use as his first base camp. Rangers and volunteers dressed in period costume demonstrate how the weapons were used and food was prepared. They also talk about the expedition and the world view of the 16th century Spaniard.

De Soto National Memorial is administered by the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. For information write: Superintendent, De Soto National Memorial, P.O. Box 15390, Bradenton, FL 34280-5390, Phone: (941) 792-0458.

The Original Settlers of Big Bend

By Park Ranger Gus Sanchez

The history and culture of Big Bend is intertwined with the history and culture of Mexico. This land was part of Mexico until the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo was signed in 1848. The earliest settlers were Mexicans who established residence here in the early 1800s. Yet the traditional history of Bid Bend overlooks these settlers of Mexican origins; it focuses mainly on Anglo-American settlement that took place mostly in the late 1800s.

Adobe ruins

Many details of the history of Mexican settlement here have been lost with time. Most people of Mexican origins in Big Bend had few opportunities for formal education; therefore few historical records were kept. Available historical records show that by the time that Anglo-American settlers moved into this region in the late 1800s, Mexican and Mexican American families were already living here.

Goat herders

Mexican vaqueros --Spanish for cowboys-- were renowned for their horsemanship and knowledge of cattle and began raising cattle along the Rio Grande in the 1830s. The Mexican stockmen were familiar with the dry climate of the Chihuahuan Desert and they raised a rugged thin-blooded variety of longhorn that was well adapted to desert conditions. Attracted to the grazing lands and abundant spring water of the Big Bend, Mexican vaqueros drove their herds north across the Rio Grande where some established successful ranching operations. In 1855 Manual Muzquiz settled in a canyon which still bears his name near Fort Davis, Texas. Muzquiz contracted with the commander of Fort Davis to supply beef to the military post.

Many think of immigration as a new issue in the U.S.-Mexico border region. But the movement of people from Mexico into what is now the U.S. has been a part of Big Bend's history from the time when this region was still part of Mexico. The late 1800s saw the arrival of many Anglo-American settlers to the Big Bend region. Then settlers of Mexican cultural origin were forced to live under a system that was foreign to them and often discriminated against them. Although history has focused on the Anglo settlers, their

endeavors could not have succeeded without the skills and labor of the Mexicans and Mexican Americans who had lived in the region for years and knew the Chihuahuan Desert. Cresencio Sanchez and Liberato Gamboa of San Vicente, Texas, became permanent employees of Fred Rice, who ranched at Grapevine Hills. Fred Rice Jr. often noted what outstanding horsemen these Mexican American cowboys were. Viviano Castillo, known for his skill in masonry, built a large water tank near Chilicotal spring for John Rice. Simon Celaya, originally from San Luis, Potosi, Mexico, worked for many years as a ranch hand for Coleman Babb at the K-Bar ranch.


Yucca. Photos NPS.

Other Big Bend residents of Mexican descent chose not to work for local ranchers. They established homesteads and survived by subsistence farming and raising sheep and goats. These settlers developed ingenious methods for farming in the desert. Armed with an intimate knowledge of which plants could succeed in the desert climate, those who homesteaded near the Rio Grande or desert springs would use these water sources to irrigate their crops. Others, located far from water, farmed seasonally by locating their farms near washed and diverting water from flash floods during the rainy season. Many supplemented their incomes by harvesting candelilla, a desert plant from which they would render a fine wax; by baling hay and selling it at the local military and mining camps; by cutting and hauling wood to nearby settlements; or by trapping and trading furs at local trading posts.


Utilizing Mexican and Mexican-American labor, [a group of Texas investors] constructed a cable tram across the Rio Grande that spanned six miles of desert terrain. The tramway was successful until the mine closed shortly before World War I.

By 1883 mining activities in Mexico's Sierra del Carmen led to the settlement of Boquilllas, Mexico. A group of daring Texas investors worked with the Puerto Rico Mining Company in Mexico to move large quantities of lead, zinc and silver ore to the railroad in Marathon, Texas. Utilizing Mexican and Mexican-American labor, they constructed a cable tram across the Rio Grande that spanned six miles of desert terrain. The tramway was successful until the mine closed shortly before World War I.

Some settlers of Mexican cultural origin profited as independent freighters, hauling ore, supplies, water, wood, mail and passengers to and from the mining towns. Mexican mules were considered superior in strength to American breeds and their drivers were familiar with their animals and the desert. In the Boquillas area, the Gonzalez brothers of Saltillo, Coahuila, Mexico, and the Ben Gallego family of Alpine Texas dominated the industry.

The original settlers of the Big Bend region, although almost forgotten by history, lived and died on this land. They maintained their unique culture in spite of changes to the region's government, economy and language.

After some of the mines in the Boquillas area closed in 1919, farming along the river floodplain became the major activity of the area. Martin Solis and his son Benito were among the most prominent farmers in the area. Farming along the Rio Grande was also an important way of life in the Castolon area. Mexican families began moving to the area in the mid-1800s, and in the early 1900s Cipriano Hernandez was among the first to farm there. When other farming settlements appeared near Castolon, Hernandez opened a small store where he sold supplies to his neighbors. Today, the store building is known as the Alvino House, is the oldest known adobe structure standing in the park.

Stockmen, homesteaders, farmers, candelilla wax makers, haybalers, trappers, goatherds, miners and freighters, the settlers of the Big Bend whose ancestors came from Mexico transformed their dedicated labor into a way of life that sustained them through the generations. The original settlers of the Big Bend region, although almost forgotten by history, lived and died on this land. They maintained their unique culture in spite of changes to the region's government, economy and language. The culture of the settlers of Mexican origin still plays a major role in the Big Bend region. Today we find the descendants of the original settlers of Big Bend taking their rightful place in society. Heirs to a culture that emphasizes the importance of family, hard work and the spirit of survival, they continue to exemplify the values that are their cultural legacy.

Mexic-Arte Museum: At the Heart of Austin Culture

By Beatriz de la Garza

Who says artists are impractical? Back in 1983, three Latino artists in Austin, Texas, bartered their talents and their labor for a four-year lease on a 300-square-foot studio and gallery. Sylvia Orozco, Pío Pulido, and Sam Coronado designed and proposed to paint an exterior mural at the Austin Arts Warehouse. Unfortunately the owners could not decide on the design and the mural was never painted; however, the artists were still able to acquire a venue for their work and that of fellow artists. From such mustard-seed beginnings thus grew what has become one of the most far-reaching artistic institutions in Austin: Mexic-Arte Museum.

Since 1984 the Mexic-Arte Museum has organized an exhibition in observance of the Mexican holiday of the Day of the Dead, which follows Halloween, and both celebrations have become traditions in Austin.

From the earliest days, however, the three artists had a greater vision for their Galeria Mexico, the name they first gave their studio. In July of 1984 they incorporated Mexic-Arte Museum and in 1985 the museum obtained the non-profit status that facilitated fund-raising. The mid to late 1980's though were difficult economic times for Austin, particularly in the real estate area. Many buildings, including those downtown where the Arts Warehouse was located were foreclosed on or left vacant. The Arts Warehouse, too, became a casualty of the economic downturn, and it closed in late 1987.

The founders of Mexic-Arte museum turned this setback into a new opportunity, and later in 1988 they moved to larger quarters on Congress Avenue, the city's main artery which ascends imposingly from the Colorado River to the pink granite State Capitol. The Mexic-Arte Museum opened officially in September of 1988 at 419 Congress Avenue with the Austin Annual Exhibition and it has remained there since.

The mission that the Mexic-Arte Museum set for itself from its inception was to preserve culture and tradition while at the same time promoting new and contemporary art through high quality, multi-disciplinary programming, and it has remained faithful to its goal. Throughout the years, Mexic-Arte has acquired its own permanent collection which remains on exhibit, including photographs documenting the history of the Mexican people in Austin; etchings and prints by Mexican artist such as José Guadalupe Posada; masks

made by the indigenous people of the state of Guerrero in Mexico; photographs of the Great Plains tribes and those taken by the renowned Mexican photographer Agustín Casasola which document the Mexican Revolution.

Since 1984 the Mexic-Arte Museum has organized an exhibition in observance of the Mexican holiday of the Day of the Dead, which follows Halloween, and both celebrations have become traditions in Austin. Emerging artists, as well as established ones, find a venue for their work at the Mexic-Arte Museum, and concerts, poetry readings and performing arts events can be found there at various times of the year. The Mexic-Arte Museum also houses a research library and a museum store that sells books and folk art on Latin America. In addition, its education programs bring school children into the museum, generating enthusiastic responses from both teachers and students.

The Mexic-Arte Museum, now under the direction of Sylvia Orozco, continues to serve an eclectic and rich feast of cultural experiences to the diverse Austin community. As a matter of fact, that is the title and theme of one of Mexic-Arte's main fund-raising projects, "Frida's Fiestas," a veritable banquet composed from Frida Kahlo's favorite recipes. The meal, prepared each year under the supervision of one of Austin's premier chefs, is held in September to coincide with the Mexican Independence festivities. (Austinites, ever ready to embrace celebrations, recall that at the time of Mexico's independence from Spain, Texas was part of Mexico; consequently, they include all Texans in on the fun of the September 16 celebration.)

Fund-raising is something that the Mexic-Arte Museum, along with most arts organizations, must engage in nowadays when funding for the arts from traditional sources has been curtailed. Just as in 1988, when as economic downturn in the Austin economy served to spur the founders to seek a larger, more visible venue, so, too, today Mexic-Arte is seeking to strengthen its presence in the Austin arts community by purchasing the building in which it is located. In attempting to purchase the four-story building in the heart of Austin which has been its home for almost ten years, the Mexic-Arte Museum would also be undertaking the preservation of a landmark that is rich in Austin history.

The building, which was completed in 1869, became the Headquarters for the Fifth Military District of the U.S. Army for part of the Reconstruction era. In the latter years of the nineteenth century, the structure became first a saloon and hotel and subsequently housed a saddle and harness business. If the success of the Museum's earlier efforts is anything to go by, then the closing years of the twentieth century will see the building at 419 Congress Avenue become the permanent home of Mexic-Arte, right in the heart of the Austin cultural scene.

*Beatriz de la Garza is the author of "The Candy Vendor's Boy and Other Stories," a collection of short stories, and "Pillars of Gold and Silver," a novel, published by Arte Público Press. Diego Rivera and the Revolution, Mexic-Arte Museum . 1993

San Juan National Historic Site: Guardian of Hispanic Heritage

By Milagros Flores

San Juan National Historic Site is located in Puerto Rico, a self-governing Caribbean island that is freely associated with the United States of America. The historic site consists of the main fortifications associated with the city of Old San Juan. All of the fortifications are on the island except for one detached unit on Cabras Island on the west side of San Juan Bay. The city of Old San Juan is located on the western side of the 615-acre San Juan Island, which is connected by causeways to the greater metropolitan area. Old San Juan serves as both the capital of Puerto Rico and the headquarters for the municipal government. The city today is an extremely congested urban center, consisting predominantly of mixed commercial and high-density historic residential areas with little open space. Most of the public areas are administered by the National Park Service and the grounds make up the Cultural Landscape of Fort El Morro.

The fortifications of San Juan have evolved over more than four centuries. The National Park Service (NPS) administers and owns the cultural resources which now comprise the 75-acre national historic site. It spans approximately 2.5 miles of massive stone walls which literally enclose the old city.

Castillo San Cristobal

It houses two of the world's most impressive fortifications--El Morro, which guarded the western approach and provided ocean defense and access control to the bay of San Juan, and San Cristobal, which guarded the eastern approach and provided land defense. A third fortification is located on a 3.4 acre detached unit of the historic site. The site contains a small fort, call El Cañuelo which was constructed across the bay from EL Morro to provide cross fire across the mouth of the bay and to prevent enemy landings on the western side of the harbor.

Although San Juan National Historic Site was established by the secretary of the Interior in 1949, it remained under the control of the Department of the Army as part of Fort Brooke Military Reservation until September 1961, when a major portion of the fortifications were transferred to the Department of the Interior.

In 1984, San Juan National Historic Site was officially accepted into the World Heritage List of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organizations (UNESCO) because of its outstanding universal significance.

Educational Programs

The publication entitled Forts of Old San Juan: Guardian of the Caribbean, is the park's lesson plan from the NPS Educational Program Teaching with Historic Places, and it is available in both English and Spanish. This lesson about the forts of Old San Juan is based on National Register of Historic Places nomination files, World Heritage Site nomination and designation files, and the handbook of the park. Materials for students include (1) readings which explore life in Spanish forts and the impact of this system of defense on Puerto Rico's Caribbean culture, (2) maps and sketches of the fortifications and their locations, (3) photographs of El Morro, San Cristobal, El Cañuelo, San Juan and Santiago Gate.

The lesson could be used in teaching units of Spanish Conquests in the Americas or the early colonization of the United States. It could also be used in a geography unit to illustrate the movement and settlement of peoples. Students will explore the role of Puerto Rico's fortifications at San Felipe del Morro and San Cristobal as well as their supporting units, in the Spanish quest to expand and defend its empire in the Americas during the 16th through the 19th centuries. The objectives are:

- To explain the importance of Puerto Rico as part of the system of defense of the Spanish Empire in its master plan for the Caribbean.
- To explain the evolution of Spanish strongholds in terms of men, materials and money.
- To describe the evolution of San Juan's system of defense from a primitive outpost to a stronghold.
- To investigate the consequences for Puerto Rico of the treaty of Paris and the American occupation after the Cuban Revolution.

Copies of this text are available through the Interpretive Division at San Juan National Historic Site.

Available Educational Materials

San Juan National Historic Site Official Brochure is the park's official map and information guide. Its sections include "El Morro: from Tower to Fortress," "San Cristobal: Defense in Depth," "Guardian of the Spanish Main," and "A Defense of the First Order."

The Military Archives located at Fort San Cristobal are probably the best Educational resource the park has available. They were established to support the interpretive mission of the park and to serve as an international information center on Spanish colonial military history. Along with concentrating of the military aspects of Spanish colonial history, this collection specializes in the history of Puerto Rico and the Caribbean and of the establishment of Fort Brook Military Base in San Juan after the U.S. occupation of Puerto Rico in 1898. Hence the collection covers a period ranging from the sixteenth to the twentieth century.

These collections make the Military Archives the only facility of its kind in the NPS System. They include maps and plans, photographs, microfilm, rare books, a library, audiovisual resources, periodicals, and miscellaneous graphics.

Research consulting is available through the park historian at: San Juan National Historic Site, Military Archives, Fort San Cristobal, Norzagaray St. #501, San Juan Puerto Rico 00901, (787)729-6777 or FAX: (787) 729-6665. Other educational publications available through the military archives include: Lectures, First International Symposium of Historic Preservation on Puerto Rico and the Caribbean, 1989; Lectures, Second International Symposium of Historic Preservation on Puerto Rico and the Caribbean, 1991 and Lectures, Third International Symposium of Historic Preservation on Puerto Rico and the Caribbean, 1994. All are available in English and Spanish.

The most recent publication of the park in commemoration of the bicentennial of the last British attack on Puerto Rico is available under the title The Eighteenth Century Caribbean and the British Attack on Puerto Rico in 1797 by Milagros Flores and Maria Alonso .(ISBN: 1-881713-20-2).

Book Nook

Too Many Tamales

by Gary Soto
Illustrated by Ed Martinez
G.P. Putnam's Sons

Maria loved helping her mother on Christmas Eve. They were making masa for tamales. Maria also loved her mother's wedding ring. She loved how it sparkled and twinkled on her mother's finger.

Mother set the ring aside as she and Maria worked on perfecting the masa. Then the chance came for Maria to try on the ring when her mother was called away from the kitchen.

You won't believe what happened! She thought that the ring became a part of a batch of tamales. Maria became so desperate that she persuaded the cousins who had come over for Christmas Eve to help eat the entire batch of tamales in an attempt to find it.

With stomachs stuffed with tamales, they learn that the ring is where it should be, on mother's finger. So the search ends on a note of humor, with everyone bubbling over with laughter at Maria and the cousins.

Everything turns out fine when the entire family gets together to make another batch of tamales for Christmas celebration.

The mystery is solved!
The tamales are made!
Let the celebration begin!

Gracias The Thanksgiving Turkey

by Joy Cowley
Illustrated by Joe Cepeda
Scholastic Press

Wouldn't it be nice to have a turkey for a friend? That's just what happened to Miguel. His father, who worked out of town, sent a turkey to Miguel to keep for Thanksgiving dinner. But

there was one problem, Miguel and the turkey became the best of friends. Miguel named her "Gracias." She followed Miguel everywhere, even to church. What a sight that was, a turkey strutting right up the aisle.

The rest of the family knew there would be problems in keeping a turkey in an apartment. Abuelo (grandfather) didn't like bathing with the turkey in the bathroom. Abuela (grandmother) wanted the turkey to be part of the Thanksgiving meal. Tía Rosa (Aunt Rosa) said they live in an apartment and there would be no room for a turkey. But Miguel loved his turkey and he was determined to keep her.

In this book, you will find a Puerto Rican family that exemplifies the community they live in with love and caring. You will be inspired by this book not only about Thanksgiving, but also about the way the Spanish language weaves it's way throughout the story.

If you want colorful humor sprinkled with warmth and love, read Gracias The Thanksgiving Turkey.

Teachers Talk

We Are All Americans

Effectively communicating with and respecting students are probably the primary goals of all educators. Is there a better way to communicate with Latino students while developing more respect for their cultures?

It may be time for us to reconsider our society's philosophy when it comes to education and the way we interact with and perceive one another in today's troubling political environment of "English Only" laws, funding cutbacks in education programs, lessened commitment to Affirmative Action and other current issues. For all disproportionately affect people of color in the United States.

Given this fact, I would like to offer teachers the following challenging question, to help them promote critical thinking among students: "What is an American?" Most text books have given the definition, "Anyone who is from America." Although I would agree with this definition, I would place it in broader terms.

The word America, according to its etymological origins, is derived from the name of Amerigo Vespucci, an early European explorer of the Western Hemisphere. The label America was put on the entire Western Hemisphere or the New World as it was called by Europeans during Vespucci's time. Shortly after the arrival of European explorers to America, the term American, meaning one from or residing in American emerged. At that time there were millions of Americans: the majority of whom were the indigenous, non-European populations of Central, South and North America.

In Latin America, these concepts are very widely accepted. Furthermore, many Latin Americans think in this same mode today. Not only do people in Latin America refer to all of the Western Hemisphere as Las Américas (the Americas), but they refer to the people from this region of the world as Americanos (Americans).

On the other hand, American according to popular definition in the United States, is taken as synonymous with possession of U.S. citizenship. To citizens of Hispanic descent and to Latin Americans, this usage is exclusionary. In Spanish, the proper translation of this usage of the word American is estadounidense (for which there is no equivalent English term other than U.S. citizen). It would be improper to translate the word as Americano because such a term would include Mexicans, Nicaraguans, Brazilians and anyone else from the Americas. Others in the Americas realize that when U.S. residents say Americans they actually mean U.S. residents.

When teachers pose the question to students, "What is an American?" to Latinos the answer would be clear: "someone from the Americas." For an American from the United States, after hearing the aforementioned description, the answer would hopefully be broadened. These differences in perception and language are very important to keep in mind when educating Latino children.

In terms of understanding students, keep in mind that cultural norms can lead to misperceptions on our part as well. I was faced with this situation when a student of mine was absent from class for two weeks in a row. When I asked what the cause of her absence was she was hesitant to respond. After assuring her of my concern, she did explain that there had been a family emergency to which she had to attend.

In this case, I was not only reminded that for most Latino students the family takes precedence over studies, but that a cultural "taboo" about sharing family problems with strangers caused my student's silence. I could have written off the absences as a lack of commitment. However, it turned out that her absences truly proved her commitment to a higher priority--her family. By understanding this, I made arrangements for the student to make up her work and her commitment to the class was proven as a result. Such are the cultural "obstacles" between our students and their goals.

As we educate, if we can remove one obstacle at a time then we can gradually retain more Latino students in school. Today we can begin by changing our definition of American. Tomorrow maybe we can begin to address other concerns such as mentoring, bilingual education, and others. However incremental the step, a change which encourages respect, retention, graduation, and hopefully matriculation in higher education is a change for the better.

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Kansas Advisory Committee on Hispanic Affairs

Hispanic American Heritage

The purpose of this editorial is to write about the importance of teaching Hispanic American heritage in our schools and to offer some ideas for doing so. As such, I believe it is important for my audience to see where this specific topic fits within the overall picture of multiculturalism, or equity in education. Therefore, a brief history recap lesson is in order.

Since the early 1960s, there has been a dynamic trend towards the integration of multiculturalism in the curriculum of our schools, both public and private. The purpose of

multiculturalism has been primarily to gain more equity in education. In other words groups of people whose history and culture had not been included or had been stereotyped began to push for more fair representation in the curriculum. These not only included traditional ethnic minority groups, but later, other groups such as women, religious, and white ethnic groups to reflect the growing sense of pluralism in our country.

Prior to the 1960s and still today, to a large extent, education has served to re-enforce the notion of a "melting pot," where everyone sheds his or her ethnic heritage and dons a new "American" skin. However, in his book, Affirming Equity, Dr. Fred Rodriguez asserts that many educators believe that schooling has promoted more of an Anglo-conformity perspective.

From a personal perspective, I agree with Dr. Rodriguez. Growing up, I was as fascinated and interested as the other kids in my class in learning of the great early leaders of our country. I understood then as I do now that if this is what really happened, then every child regardless of his or her background should learn about the major events that have made our country what it is today. But something very subtle yet persistent resided in me. These men that we're learning about are great people indeed, but they're white and I'm not . . . so where did I come from and how did I get here? Also, how did people from my culture contribute to this country to make it what it is today? Looking back, I also remember the look in the eyes of every other child who was not a white male in my class and they had the same expression.

It's similar to being on a basketball team as a youngster and being told over and over by your coach how great the Jones family has been in making your team the success that it is today. You feel proud of your team's history and admire the Jones family but you also want to know what your past relatives did to contribute to the team's success, especially if you know that they played on the team. At this point, you can go in a few directions. You can either go all out to make a name for you and your family or you can give in to the feeling that you'll just play an insignificant role on the team just as your family apparently did. Or, you can ask your coach about the contributions of your family to set the record straight in from of your teammates.

Using this simple analogy, it's easier to understand why members from non-white male groups have chosen their paths. Numerous individuals have decided to work hard to make a name for themselves and their families. Many have given into the mind-set that they'll just be another nobody in society to be lost forever in history, and this has partially led to the various maladaptive behaviors of addictions, violence, and apathy. Others have decided to set the record straight in an effort to erase the myths and stereotypes that have become

prevalent and replace them with the awareness, understanding, and pride that result from knowing a more accurate account of our nation's history.

I hope that what I've written has convinced you (if you weren't already convinced) of the need for a more equitable education. I say this because I firmly believe that if more of you were convinced, there would be a vast amount of mainstream ideas and resources for teaching subjects such as Hispanic American heritage in our classrooms. As it stands, there are pockets of resources scattered throughout the country. One practical idea is to use all methods of research to obtain the resources you seek. Find out if someone in your district is teaching Hispanic American heritage; look to local community centers and churches that serve a Hispanic population; ask the librarian for assistance; use the internet.

In just two days of research, I came up with the following resources listed below, including Rebecca Oropeza, a high school English instructor who teaches in the Kansas City Kansas school district and has a long list of recommended books. Another good resource person is Dr. Gene Chavez who authored Understanding Latino Diversity from a Historical Perspective, a comprehensive booklet on Hispanic heritage. One good central resource is the National Council of La Raza, the largest organization advocating for Hispanic rights. The information is out there if the commitment is there to look for it. Teaching Hispanic American heritage may be a small part of the solution in reconstructing our educational system toward a more equitable one, but it's a good start!

List of Resources

Dr. Gene Chavez, President, Chavez and Associates, 913-962-7780/913-722-7300 ext. 18

David Chavez, National Council of La Raza, 816-471-4383

National Association for Bilingual Education, 202-898-1829

Rebecca Oropeza, Language Arts Teacher J.C. Harmon High School, 913-722-7300 (w)

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