



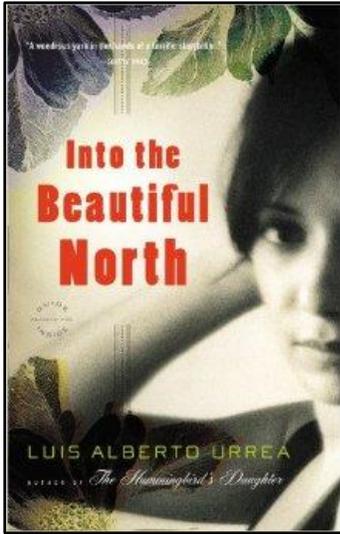
***Into the Beautiful North***  
**Study Guide**  
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## INTO THE BEAUTIFUL NORTH

The book highlights the importance of bringing comedic elements into border crossing stories through an analysis of class, race, and gender. It considers the ways in which *Breaking Bad* uses Western genre conventions to mythologize and exaggerate Mexico and the border for a U.S.-based audience.



This book is an important addition to novels about border crossings because of its comical approach. Through the use of humor, Urrea encourages readers to empathize with characters who may come from much different social, cultural, and economic contexts than their own. By making readers laugh, Urrea locates commonalities between a variety of audiences at the same time as celebrating differences. For Urrea, the border does not have to be a symbol of division; instead, it can act as a seam that unifies two nations. Through this depiction, he offers hope to readers that it is possible for relationships between both sides of the border to transform.

Readers are invited to laugh out loud with Urrea as his four young protagonists make their way from their small town in Sinaloa into the United States for the purpose of recruiting seven men to bring home to their village. They go in search of these men both to help defend their town against the drug traffickers who have recently arrived, and to repopulate the town, which is currently inhabited almost exclusively by women. The characterization and details of their journey are quirky and often feel over the top. It is the kind of novel that would make a plane ride go by quickly. Despite the fast-pace and jovial tone of the novel, *Into the Beautiful North* is also filled with overt racism and dangerous characters who lurk in the background. Reviews are split on this novel. Some reviewers appreciate the novel's whimsy and light-hearted take on a difficult topic. Others believe that Urrea's approach trivializes the subject matter.

In an interview included in the Reading Group Guide published in the novel's paperback edition, Urrea explains some of his motivations for writing the novel, stating: "I was sick of immigration/border writing. It started to feel like it was all the same, making all the same points, by all the same writers...I wanted to write something that made me laugh out loud everyday". *Into the Beautiful North* offers a different tone to the standard border-crossing narratives, and it also offers a new premise. These are characters who want to reclaim Mexico by bringing its people, specifically its men, home. They do not want a materially better life. They want a return to an old one—one that does not split families because of economic worries. Though the novel's protagonists are young and their actions can certainly be read as idealistic, their approach is revolutionary. They are ostensibly fighting the drug traffickers who invade their town, but their real fight attacks the dependent, paternalistic relationship that Mexico has with the United States as the result of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). Perhaps the rebellion against this relationship is what has landed it on a banned book list in the Tucson Unified School District in Arizona.

On the surface, *Into the Beautiful North* does not seem to do any of these things. To a xenophobic reader, the group's goal should actually be a welcome one. After all, they want to help Mexican men *leave* the United States, and their plan does not involve a government overthrow or any other violence that would take place on the U.S. side of the border. It does, however, disrupt the power structure that makes so many poor Mexican citizens dependent on the U.S. economy, and it suggests that anyone—even a nineteen-year-old girl like the novel's protagonist—can fight against this power structure.

In an interview available through the NEA Art Works Podcast, Urrea explains that he believes the humor and structure of the story works to disarm readers: "If I made it really entertaining, if I made it an adventure, then it would be a subversive act in that it would make the general American reader not only read about but maybe root for people that they either don't think about or actually look down on." While encouraging empathy does not seem like it should be called a "subversive act," it most definitely would be from the Tucson Unified School District's point of view in that it would give voice to an entire group of people who they would rather silence in order to continue replicating power dynamics that privilege Anglo-American narratives.

Sources:

Linares, G. V. (2013). *"This World Must Touch the Other": Crossing the U.S.-Mexico Border in American Novels and Television* (Order No. 3568493). Available from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (1418271867).

## PLAYWRIGHT



Karen Zacarías' sold-out world premiere drama *Just like Us* (adapted from the book by Helen Thorpe) at Denver Theater Center, the Steinberg –citation award play *Legacy of Light*, the Francesca Primus Award winning play *Mariela in the Desert*, the Helen Hayes Award winning play *The Sins of Sor Juana*, the adaptation of Julia Alvarez's *How the Garcia Girls Lost their Accents*. Karen also has a piece in the Arena Stage premiere of *Our War*. Her TYA musicals with composer Debbie Wicks la Puma include *Jane of the Jungle*, *Einstein is a Dummy*, *Looking for Roberto Clemente*, *Cinderella Eats Rice and Beans*, *Ferdinand The Bull* and *Frida Libre*. Her musical *Chasing George Washington* premiered at The Kennedy Center for Performing Arts and went on a National Tour. Her script was then adapted into a book by Scholastic with a foreword by First Lady Michelle Obama. Karen is currently working on the adaptation of Edith Wharton's *The Age of Innocence*, a drama for Oregon Shakespeare Festival, and a Brazilian themed Oliver Twist musical: *Oliverio: A Brazilian Twist on Dickens* for the Kennedy Center. Her libretto of *The Sun Also Rises* for the Washington Ballet received accolades in the New York Times and she is currently writing the libretto for *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* with Washington Ballet artistic Director Septime Webre. She is proud to be currently commissioned to write new plays for Arena Stage, Cincinnati Playhouse, Ford's Theater, Adventure Theater, and First Stage. Her plays have been produced at The John F. Kennedy Center for Performing Arts, Arena Stage, The Goodman Theater, Round House Theater, The Denver Center, Alliance Theater, Imagination Stage, GALA

Hispanic Theater, Berkshire Theater Festival, South Coast Rep, La Jolla Playhouse, Cleveland Playhouse, San Jose Repertory Theater, GEVA Theater, Horizon's Theater, People's Light and Theater, Walnut Street Theater, Arden Theater, Milagro Theater, Teatro Vista, Aurora Theater, and many more.

Her awards include: New Voices Award, 2010 Steinberg Citation-Best New Play, Paul Aneillo Award, National Francesca Primus Prize, New Voices Award, National Latino Play Award, Finalist Susan Blackburn, Helen Hayes for Outstanding New Play.

Karen is the first playwright-in-residence at Arena Stage in Washington, DC and has taught playwriting at Georgetown University. She is the founder of Young Playwrights' Theater, an award-winning theater company that teaches playwriting in local public schools in Washington, DC. YPT won the 2010 National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Award from the White House as one of the most innovative arts programs in the nation. The YPT curriculum is currently being used in public schools in DC, VA, MD, New Orleans, Detroit, and Texas and is published on Amazon as "WRITE TO DREAM."

Karen is represented by the Graham Agency and published by Dramatic Publishing. Karen is fluent in English and Spanish and highly proficient in Danish and French. She has a BA with distinction from Stanford University and a Masters in Creative Writing from Boston University. Born in Mexico, Karen now lives in Washington D.C. with her husband and three children.

Source:

<http://www.karenzacarias.com/bio/>

## BOOK AUTHOR



**Luis Alberto Urrea**, 2005 Pulitzer Prize finalist for nonfiction and member of the Latino Literature Hall of Fame, is a prolific and acclaimed writer who uses his dual-culture — Mexico and the U.S. — life experiences to explore greater themes of love, loss, and triumph. Born in Tijuana, Mexico to a Mexican father and an American mother, Urrea has published extensively in all the major genres. The critically acclaimed and best-selling author of 13 books, Urrea has won numerous awards for his poetry, fiction, and essays. *The Devil's Highway*, his 2004 non-fiction account of a group of Mexican immigrants lost in the Arizona desert, won the Lannan Literary Award and was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize and the Pacific Rim Kiriayama Prize. An historical novel, *The Hummingbird's Daughter* tells the story of Teresa Urrea, sometimes known as the Saint of Cabora and the Mexican Joan of Arc. The book, which involved 20 years of research and writing, won the Kiriayama Prize in fiction and, along with *The*

*Devil's Highway*, was named a best book of the year by many publications. It has been optioned by acclaimed Mexican director Luis Mandoki for a film to star Antonio Banderas.

Urrea's most recent novel, *Into the Beautiful North*, imagines a small town in Mexico where all the men have immigrated to the U.S. A group of young women, after seeing the film *The Magnificent Seven*, decide to follow the men north and persuade them to return to their beloved village. A national

best-seller, *Into the Beautiful North*, earned a citation of excellence from the American Library Association Rainbow's Project. A short story from Urrea's collection, *Six Kinds of Sky*, was recently released as a stunning graphic novel by Cinco Puntos Press. *Mr. Mendoza's Paintbrush*, illustrated by artist Christopher Cardinale, has already garnered rave reviews and serves as a perfect companion to *Into the Beautiful North* as it depicts the same village in the novel.

*Into the Beautiful North*, *The Devil's Highway* and *The Hummingbird's Daughter* have been chosen by more than 30 different cities and colleges for One Book community read programs.

Urrea has also won an Edgar award from the Mystery Writers of America for best short story (2009, "Amapola" in *Phoenix Noir*). His first book, *Across the Wire*, was named a New York Times Notable Book and won the Christopher Award. Urrea also won a 1999 American Book Award for his memoir, *Nobody's Son: Notes from an American Life* and in 2000, he was voted into the Latino Literature Hall of Fame following the publication of *Vatos*. His book of short stories, *Six Kinds of Sky*, was named the 2002 small-press Book of the Year in fiction by the editors of *ForeWord* magazine. He has also won a Western States Book Award in poetry for *The Fever of Being* and was in *The 1996 Best American Poetry* collection. Urrea's other titles include *By the Lake of Sleeping Children*, *In Search of Snow*, *Ghost Sickness* and *Wandering Time*.

Urrea attended the University of California at San Diego, earning an undergraduate degree in writing, and did his graduate studies at the University of Colorado-Boulder.

After serving as a relief worker in Tijuana, a film extra, and columnist-editor-cartoonist for several publications, Urrea moved to Boston where he taught expository writing and fiction workshops at Harvard. He has also taught at Massachusetts Bay Community College and the University of Colorado and he was the writer in residence at the University of Louisiana-Lafayette.

Urrea lives with his family in Naperville, IL, where he is a professor of creative writing at the University of Illinois-Chicago.

#### Sources:

Luis Alberto Urrea's biography: <http://www.luisurrea.com/about-luis>

The author talks about how his own search for identity provided fuel for his writing in this interview with host Dean Nelson, as part of the 2009 Writers Symposium by the Sea: <https://youtu.be/Ejxw-oRHjQQ>  
Latimer, C. (2011, Mar 07). University of Chicago's Luis Alberto Urrea: From despair to acclaim. *The Hispanic Outlook in Higher Education*, 21, 34-35.

#### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR THE PLAY**

1. How is the theme of Latina or female empowerment present in the play? In what scenes or conversations is it most evident?
2. *Into the Beautiful North* is known as a 'coming of age story.' When in the play does this happen for the main characters?
3. Describe the influence of film and American pop culture on the overall play/production and in the characters' daily lives.

4. What misconceptions do the characters have about life in the United States? What misconceptions do people have about life in Mexico?
5. What parts of the play could happen in real life? What parts are unrealistic or hyper-realistic?

### **REVERSE MIGRATION (Mexico)**

More Mexican immigrants have returned to Mexico from the U.S. than have migrated here since the end of the Great Recession, according to a new Pew Research Center analysis of newly available government data from both countries. The same data sources also show the overall flow of Mexican immigrants between the two countries is at its smallest since the 1990s, mostly due to a drop in the number of Mexican immigrants coming to the U.S.

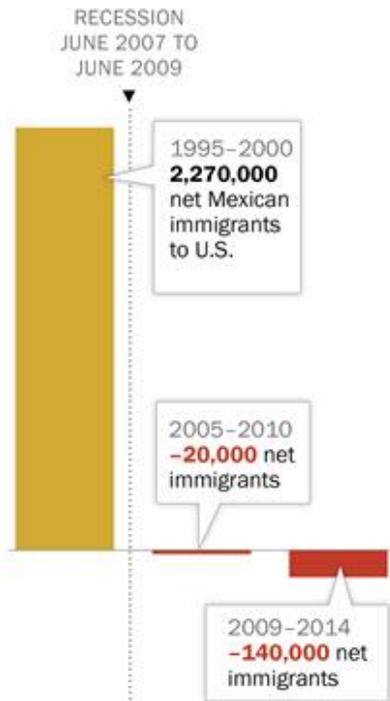
From 2009 to 2014, 1 million Mexicans and their families (including U.S.-born children) left the U.S. for Mexico, according to data from the 2014 Mexican National Survey of Demographic Dynamics (ENADID). U.S. census data for the same period show an estimated 870,000 Mexican nationals left Mexico to come to the U.S., a smaller number than the flow of families from the U.S. to Mexico.

A majority of the 1 million who left the U.S. for Mexico between 2009 and 2014 left of their own accord, according to the Mexican government's ENADID survey data. The Mexican survey also showed that six in ten (61%) return migrants – those who reported they had been living in the U.S. five years earlier but as of 2014 were back in Mexico – cited family reunification as the main reason for their return. By comparison, 14% of Mexico's return migrants said the reason for their return was deportation from the U.S.

Mexicans have been at the center of one of the largest mass migrations in modern history. Between 1965 and 2015 more than 16 million Mexican immigrants migrated to the United States – more than from any other country (Pew Research Center, 2015). In 1970, fewer than 1 million Mexican immigrants lived in the U.S. By 2000, that number had grown to 9.4 million, and by 2007 it reached a peak at 12.8 million. Since then, the Mexican-born population has declined, falling to 11.7 million in 2014, as the number of new arrivals to the U.S. from Mexico declined significantly (Passel et al., 2012); meanwhile the reverse flow to Mexico from the U.S. is now higher.

Figure 1

## Net Migration to the U.S. From Mexico Below Zero After the Great Recession



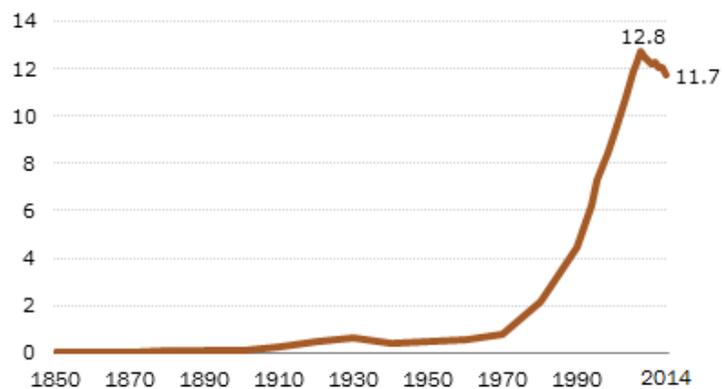
Source: 1995-2000 and 2005-2010: Passel, Cohn and Gonzalez-Barrera (2012); 2009-2014 U.S. to Mexico: Pew Research Center estimates from population, household and migrant microdata samples of 2014 ENADID; Mexico to the U.S.: based on Pew Research Center estimates from augmented March supplement to the 2014 Current Population Survey and augmented 2012 American Community Survey; see Methodology for further details.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Figure 2

## Mexican Immigrant Population in the U.S. in Decline

*In millions*



Source: For 1850 to 1980: Gibson, Campbell and Kay Jung, "Historical Census Statistics on the Foreign-Born Population of the United States: 1850-2000," U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division, Working Paper No. 81, 2006; for Mexican born 1980 and 1990: Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS-USA); for 2005 to 2012: Pew Research Center estimates based on augmented American Community Surveys; for 1995-2000 and 2013-2014 Pew Research Center estimates based on augmented March supplements to the Current Population Survey and 2000 Decennial Census.

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For many decades now, studies of international migration have uncovered structural factors that spur people to migrate from country to country, but the widespread view that migration is exclusively based on individuals' cost-benefit calculations continues to persist. According to this simplistic interpretation,

people migrate because they are guided by their own economic interests. The problem with this type of interpretation is that it neglects some of the deeper causes that lead to migration.

A holistic understanding of international migration must at least account for (1) the structural forces that promote emigration from developing countries; (2) the structural forces that attract immigrants into developed nations; (3) the motivations, goals, and aspirations of people who respond to these structural forces; and (4) the social and economic structures that arise to connect areas of out and in-migrations.

Source:

<http://immigrationimpact.com/2014/01/14/new-study-highlights-causes-of-return-migration-to-mexico/#sthash.QEtz7Bdy.dpuf>

<http://www.pewhispanic.org/2015/11/19/more-mexicans-leaving-than-coming-to-the-u-s/> .Web. 6 April 2016.

## PLACES

### Small Towns in Mexico

Chametla, Mexico – Like the fictional town of Tres Camarones in *Into the Beautiful North*, this town is located in the district of Rosario and is known for its Pre-Hispanic archeological sites. Chametla currently has a population of about 1800 citizens, with records showing about 51% of them are male, but like other small towns in Mexico, a lot of them migrated north.





Rosario, Sinaloa

Photo Source: <http://sipse.com/imgs/122012/011212f591f7d52med.jpg>

Source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Rosario\\_en\\_Sinaloa.svg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Rosario_en_Sinaloa.svg)

<http://www.en.nuestro-mexico.com/Sinaloa/Rosario/Chametla/> .Web. 6 April 2016.

Tamaula, Mexico -- In another small town in Mexico Tamaula, Guanajuato, there's still no running water. Most of the men migrate north, to work in U.S. factories or tobacco fields.

But Adriana Cortes believes they can help curb migration here and in rural towns like it throughout the country. Her plan: create small cooperative enterprises to make communities self-sustaining.

In Tamaula, she is helping residents turn a small cheese-making outfit into a factory and supporting efforts to build a job-training center to keep teenagers from leaving and lure the men back home. Nearly 500,000 Mexicans head to the US each year, and an estimated 7 million now live there illegally. As U.S. and Mexican lawmakers butt heads over control measures, small communities in Mexico are looking at their own strategies of plugging the labor drain.

"Our politicians are always talking about how migrants are treated in the US, but no one focuses on how they live in their own communities," says Ms. Cortes, the director of the not-for-profit Bajio Community Foundation. "Something is missing in our country. We need people to say, 'This is my country, this is my home, this is my land.' Tamaula can be a model." After studying accounting in college, Cortes says she began working with drug addicts and the handicapped. She eventually opened 12 organizations in the city of Irapuato.

Through her work, Cortes says she realized how many social problems were the result of migration, and how little government policies were doing to reverse the migratory trend that has widened so considerably in the past decade.

Tamaula is one of a handful of communities that Cortes chose for her programs based on its demonstrated commitment to reducing its labor drain.

Whether these communities will be successful in keeping their labor local remains unclear, but they are receiving the support of some local officials.

"I cannot say 'no' to a local community, especially to young people who want to help themselves," says the mayor of Irapuato, Mario Turrent Anton, who adds that migration is among his municipality's gravest problems. Family disintegration, he says, can lead to a host of other social issues such as depression and a spike in school dropouts.

"This is their land, and they should stay in their land; we could not do this work without people like Adriana," he says. Mr. Anton has promised Tamaula's residents that his administration will give them resources to help build a community training center to help teens gain practical job training and finish their high school degrees. Cortes always believed it was possible - and vital for Mexico's future growth.

(c) Copyright 2007. The Christian Science Monitor

By Sara Miller Llana Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor

**Source:**

"Anti-emigration strategy: Small Mexican towns try to create jobs at home." *Christian Science Monitor* 29 Oct. 2007: 1. *General OneFile*. Web. 12 Aug. 2015.

<http://www.tourbymexico.com/sinaloa/rosario/rosario.htm>. Web. 6 April 2016.

**Description from the book:** "Nobody was quite sure if Tres Camarones was in Sinaloa or Nayarit, since the state line wavered in and out of the mangrove swamps and lagoons thereabouts. There was no major highway going through; there was no local police station, no hotel or tourist trap. No harbor, no television or radio station, no police station, no supermarket. The high school was in Villauni3n, a long sweaty bus trip away. The church was a small Carta Blanca beer distributor, but come to think of it, the office had shut down when the men went north to find work. It was easier to float a boat down the tributaries of the Baluarte River than it was to drive the dirt road spur that angled south-west off the highway to Rosario. At any rate, nobody had ever worried about maps -on the official Pemex highway guides, Tres Camarones didn't even exist." (p. 12) " [...] The picturesque beaches belied a brutal drop-off, and the waves hammered against a nearly vertical wall of underwater mud. The nearest popular beach was called Caimanero because big alligators lurked in the foul freshwater swamps behind the shore -not a spot for frolic. The safest salt water in that whole region was in the shallow turquoise lagoons where the women went crabbing with floating straw baskets full of scabbling jaibas, the big crabs taking their last little sea cruise before landing in the cooking pot. But you couldn't surf a tranquil lagoon." (p. 13)

## SINALOA



### FACTS & FIGURES

- **Capital:** Culiacán
- **Major Cities (population):** Culiacán (793,730) Mazatlán (403,888) Ahome (388,344) Guasave (270,260) Navolato (135,681)
- **Size/Area:** 22,486 square miles
- **Population:** 2,608,442 (2005 Census)
- **Year of Statehood:** 1830

## FUN FACTS

- Sinaloa's coat of arms is an oval shield resting upon a base of rocks and surmounted by the national emblem: an eagle devouring a serpent atop a Nopal cactus. Four sections on the shield depict a reptile, a castle, an anchor and chain and an anchor with a deer head. Around the shield's edge is a trail of footprints.
- The word Sinaloa, which originated with the indigenous Cahita Indians, means *rounded pitaya*, a common local fruit.
- The small villages of Sinaloa still play a variation of Ulama, an ancient Mesoamerican ballgame played nowhere else in the Americas.
- The region has become famous for *banda*, a traditional form of music performed using brass, woodwind and percussion instruments. The instrument most often identified with this type of music is the tambora, a drum covered with animal hide. La Banda Sinaloense (the Sinaloan Band) is one of Mexico's best-known banda groups.
- *Damiana*, an herb-based liquor from Baja and Sinaloa, has maintained its popularity in the region since Mayan times. Originally, the leaves were used for medicinal purposes by the indigenous cultures.
- Sinaloa is the home of five-time world champion boxer Julio Cesar Chavez. Chavez, perhaps the most beloved Hispanic boxer, is widely regarded as one of the best Hispanic athletes. Another prominent Sinaloan athlete is soccer player Angel Eduardo Ochoa Uriarte, a member of the UAS Tercera Fuerza in Mexico.
- The actor and singer José Pedro Infante Cruz, better known as Pedro Infante, was born in Mazatlán, Sinaloa, on November 18, 1917. He is considered one of the finest entertainers of the Golden Age of Mexican cinema. Between 1948 and 1954, Infante received six nominations for Best Actor from the Mexican Academy of Arts and Cinematographic Sciences, and in 1956 he won the award. In 1957 he also was honored with the Silver Bear for Best Actor by the Berlin International Film Festival.
- One of Mexico's most popular norteño bands, Los Tigres del Norte, got its start in Rosa Morada, Sinaloa.

## Landmarks

### Mazatlán

Located on the Pacific coast, the city of Mazatlán, which means *place of the deer*, was founded in the 1820s. By mid-century, a large population of German immigrants had settled in the city and helped it become a successful seaport. Mazatlán served as the capital of Sinaloa from 1859 to 1873. The lighthouse in Mazatlán is the world's second-tallest lighthouse on a natural base. Each year, the city's gleaming beaches attract throngs of tourists.

**El Fuerte**, a city founded by the Spaniards in 1563, was later destroyed by the Indians. In 1610, the Viceroy of Montesclaros ordered the city's reconstruction, and El Fuerte became the state's first capital in 1824. Many colonial-era buildings are still in use, including City Hall, the main Plaza de Armas, the House of Culture, the Church of the Sacred Heart and the Home of Congress.

**Topolobampo**, with its commercial seaport and railway connections to northern Mexico, has become a vital economic hub on the Pacific coast. The area is renowned for its great fishing, and tourists can watch seals and sea lions at the nearby Farallón de San Ignacio, a towering rock formation that is also home to a large population of brown and blue-footed boobies, seabirds related to the pelican.

## Early History

Before the arrival of the Spaniards, Sinaloa was inhabited by six major tribes of hunters and gathers: the Cahita, Tahue, Totorame, Pacaxee, Acaxee and Xixime. The Acaxees lived in *rancherías* (settlements) dispersed throughout the gorges and canyons of the Sierra Madre Occidental mountain range. Along with the Xiximes, Pacaxee and Tahue, the Acaxees were nonaggressive agricultural gatherers who took no part in human sacrifice rituals. The Cahita, on the other hand, were ferocious warriors who practiced cannibalism in the belief that they could acquire the strength of their most valiant enemies. Little is known of Sinaloa's early history. Prior to 1529, the region was part of the unexplored Spanish province called Nueva Vizcaya, which also included present-day Chihuahua, [Durango](#), [Sonora](#) and [Coahuila](#).

## Middle History

The first Spanish foray into Sinaloa took place in 1529. The Spanish conquistador Nuño Beltrán de Guzmán battled his way through central [Mexico](#) to the Pacific coast with an army of 300 Spaniards and 10,000 indigenous fighters. When they reached the vicinity of the Culiacán River, they met and defeated a force of 30,000 Cahita warriors. At that time the Cahita constituted the largest single language group in northern Mexico, numbering about 115,000 in Sinaloa and Sonora. Many of Guzmán's troops succumbed to an epidemic while in Sinaloa, but he still managed to establish the city of San Miguel de Culiacán before continuing his exploration. When the army journeyed north several years later, they encountered diverse indigenous groups that the Spaniards referred to as *ranchería* people, whose settlements were scattered over large areas.

The Sinaloan city of El Fuerte was founded by Francisco de Ibarra in 1563. Despite frequent battles with Zuaque and Tehueco Indians, El Fuerte prospered and became a vital economic link to Mexico's vast northwestern region.

Like much of the region, in the early 17th century, Sinaloa was organized into *encomiendas* which subjugated the native people to Spanish rule and required them to work land that did not belong to them. Consequently, the 17th and 18th centuries saw several indigenous uprisings. One in 1740 was particularly violent, costing the lives of several thousand Spaniards and more than 5,000 Indians. Following the 1740 rebellion, the Spaniards became slightly more cautious of the native population and, by the end of the 18th century, the rebellions had largely come to an end.

## Recent History

After Mexican independence in 1824, Sonora and Sinaloa were combined to form the Estado de Occidente (Western State), with El Fuerte serving as the capital. In 1830 the state was split into present-day Sonora and Sinaloa.

During the second half of the 19th century, Sinaloa experienced dramatic economic expansion under the rule of President Porfirio Díaz (1830-1915). However, the state's small population limited its ability to continue growing.

In the late 1800s, partly because of the recent influx of Chinese settlers, Sinaloa became a significant source of opium derived from the cultivation of poppies. Sinaloa's proximity to the United States provided a large market for the drug, which was legal at that time.

Throughout the [Mexican Revolution](#) (1910-1917), Sinaloans were divided in their loyalties to the various factions. Many in Sinaloa supported the revolutionary party led by [Pancho Villa](#) and by 1917 the state of Sinaloa was ultimately controlled by the newly established constitutional government of Mexico.

Meanwhile, Sinaloa continued to be a major producer of opium in spite of the United States' Harrison Narcotics Tax Act of 1914, which tightly regulated the sale of opium in that country. Opium production rose further as a result of [World War II](#), which increased the demand for morphine, an opium extract.

Since Japan controlled most of the world's opium supply, the United States turned to Mexico—specifically Sinaloa—for assistance. Although the morphine supply was a benefit to the military, the legal market for opium opened the door for more widespread illegal distribution.

### **Sinaloa Today**

Each January the city of Culiacán hosts an agricultural exhibition called the Expo Agro Sinaloa. This premier agricultural trade show is the largest of its kind in Mexico, allowing exhibitors to demonstrate their products, equipment, machinery and technology.

Agriculture accounts for about 21 percent of the state's economy. Service-based companies account for another 21 percent, followed by trade activities at 19 percent, finance and insurance at 16 percent, transportation and communications at 11 percent, manufacturing at 8 percent, construction at 3 percent and mining at 1 percent.

Source:

<http://www.history.com/topics/mexico/sinaloa>

### **THEME OF AMERICAN POP CULTURE IN MEXICO**

One student's account of his study abroad experience in Cuernavaca:

"It might be expected for a small, weak country to fall prey to an economic powerhouse, but Mexico is home to the largest city in the world. I thought Mexico City's 16 million people would surely be strong enough to resist the invasion of American pop culture, but I recognized the U.S. influence moments after getting off the plane.

The food court in the airport sold American food, the billboards on the highway advertised American products and the radio station we listened to during our drive home featured American artists.

. . . I had been told that a great way to improve my Spanish listening skills would be to watch movies in the language. . . Not one Mexican film or even Spanish-language film was playing at the two theaters I visited.

The cinema isn't the only form of American entertainment overtaking Mexico; music from the states booms from car stereos and fills dance clubs. When 'Born in the USA' began playing in a club one night, I was amazed at the energy with which the Mexican youth sang along. Granted, the song was famous all over the globe, but enough is enough. I had come to Mexico to learn about the rich Mexican heritage. Instead, I found the American pop culture which I had tried to escape invading the nation.

Still, with all the American hype, there's a certain laid-back atmosphere about Mexico that the United States will never know. Time doesn't matter, family comes first and enjoying life takes precedence over making money.

Although I did have the chance to visit the mountains and the beach and listen to some authentic mariachis, I also shopped at the Gap, ate at KFC and McDonald's, and cruised around in the Chevy my host family owns."

Source:

<http://www.baylor.edu/lariatarchives/news.php?action=story&story=10910>

## THEME OF YOUNG LATINA HEROES AND LEADERS:

### Notable Hispanic Women

The following list was compiled by Biography.com. There are many more leaders in different fields of work and influence. These stand out as they have served as role models for many young Latinas in the United States.

<b>Dolores Huerta</b> (1930–) CHILDREN'S ACTIVIST, CIVIL RIGHTS ACTIVIST	<b>Christina Aguilera</b> (1980–) SONGWRITER, SINGER, TELEVISION PERSONALITY
<b>Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz</b> (C. 1651–1695) NUN, WOMEN'S RIGHTS ACTIVIST, WRITER	<b>Salma Hayek</b> (1966–) FILM ACTRESS
<b>Eva Perón</b> (1919–1952) ACTRESS, POLITICIAN	<b>Rosie Perez</b> (1964–) DIRECTOR, FILM ACTRESS
<b>Sonia Sotomayor</b> (1954–) SUPREME COURT JUSTICE, LAWYER	<b>Cameron Diaz</b> (1972–) ACTRESS
<b>Jennifer Lopez</b> (1969–) ACTRESS, REALITY TELEVISION STAR, DANCER, SINGER	<b>Frida Kahlo</b> (1907–1954) PAINTER
<b>Shakira</b> (1977–) SINGER	<b>Selena</b> (1971–1995) SINGER
<b>Linda Ronstadt</b> (1946–) SINGER	<b>Nancy Lopez</b> (1957–) GOLFER, ATHLETE
<b>Gloria Estefan</b> (1957–) SINGER	<b>Isabel Allende</b> (1942–) AUTHOR, JOURNALIST
<b>Cristina Saralegui</b> (1948–) RADIO TALK SHOW HOST, PHILANTHROPIST, TELEVISION ACTRESS, JOURNALIST	<b>Laura Esquivel</b> (1950–) AUTHOR, SCREENWRITER, EDUCATOR, JOURNALIST
<b>Sandra Cisneros</b> (1954–) AUTHOR	<b>Julia Alvarez</b> (1950–) AUTHOR, POET

Source: <http://www.biography.com/people/groups/notable-hispanic-women>

### SPECIAL EVENTS AT MILAGRO

On May 8<sup>th</sup>, there will be a talk-back with the cast and creative team of *Into the Beautiful North* immediately following the 2PM performance.

*Nayeli's Journey* conversations will be held on Sunday afternoons after the 2pm matinee performances Sundays, May 1, 15, & 22 2016. They will be offered free to the public. Our intention is to cultivate an open forum conversation rather than a lecture, and to invite guests to share their experiences!



Join Milagro for *Into the Beautiful North: Nayeli's Journey*, a series of three post-play conversations with audiences, scholars, and local experts to talk about ideas about the status and future of (Latina) female empowerment and leadership, the situation around migration/displacement so crucial in today's world, and the role of popular-culture media as social change in our society and beyond. Sponsored by Oregon Humanities.

**SUNDAY MAY 1<sup>st</sup> ~ Young Latina Power ~ Panelists: Luis Alberto Urrea, novelist; Olga Sanchez, Artistic Director Emerita; Gloria Pinzon Marin, Las Mujeres, PSU**

In the play, a young girl, Nayeli, journeys into the US and leads a group of unlikely champions.

- What obstacles do Latinas encounter when trying to become leaders?
- Why is it important to allow these young female voices to be heard?
- What can the future generation learn from these voices?

**SUNDAY MAY 15<sup>th</sup> ~ Displacement and its Consequences ~ Panelists: Marc Rodriguez, Chicano/Latino Studies, PSU; Toni Kelich, Immigration Attorney; Ronault (Polo) Catalani of NW Communities Counsel**

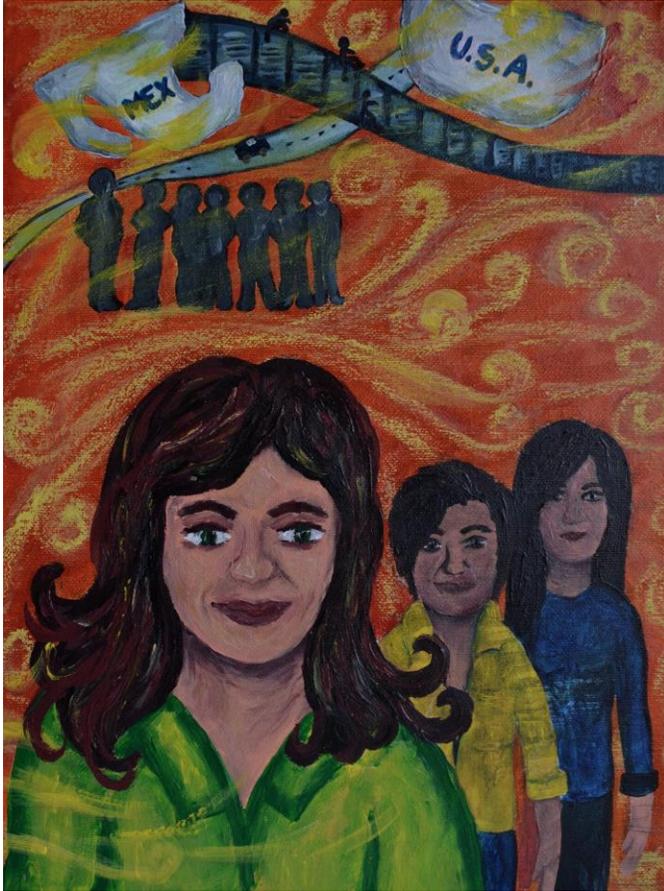
Nayeli goes to the US to find the men that abandoned her town and bring them back.

- What causes the Exodus of men in Latin-American towns? And why in recent years are men returning to Latin America?
- Why are unaccompanied children undertaking treacherous journeys?
- Why has this become a global phenomenon?
- How should we begin to think about it and act on it as a global society?

**SUNDAY MAY 22<sup>th</sup> ~ Movies as Catalyst for Change ~ Enie Vaisburd, Media Arts, Pacific University; Maria Osterroth, Portland Latin American Film Festival**

Nayeli gets inspired by the film *The Magnificent Seven* to undertake her journey north.

- What movies or other channels of pop-culture have influenced social change?
- What movies deal a positive Latina protagonists?



***Into the Beautiful North***

by Karen Zacarías

Based on the novel by Luis Alberto Urrea  
Directed by Olga Sanchez and Daniel Jáquez  
A National New Play Network Rolling World  
Premiere | English

**April 28 – May 28, 2015**

Thursdays, Fridays & Saturdays at 7:30pm  
Sunday matinees at 2pm

at

**Milagro Theatre**

525 SE Stark Street, Portland, OR 97214

Tickets are \$25, \$30 at the door  
Student, Senior & Veterans discounts available  
For Group Sales, please contact Melissa  
Schmitz, Marketing and Communications  
Manager: 503-236-7253 ext. 117

Tickets may be purchased at [www.milagro.org](http://www.milagro.org)  
or by calling 503-236-7253



**The NW's premier Latino arts and culture organization**  
**425 SE 6th Avenue, Portland OR 97214**  
**503-236-7253 / [www.milagro.org](http://www.milagro.org)**

*As the premier Latino arts and culture center of the Pacific Northwest, Milagro has provided extraordinary Latino theatre, culture, and arts education for the enrichment of all communities since 1985. Teatro Milagro, Milagro's touring & arts education program, presents its original bilingual plays and educational residencies to diverse and underserved communities across the nation. On the MainStage, Milagro produces a full season of regional or world premieres, including one Spanish-language play each year, as well as our long-running Día de los Muertos signature production. We entertain our audiences; we give them pause to think, feel and imagine; and, through the cultural lens of latinidad, we reflect the full spectrum of humanity. For more information about Milagro, visit [www.milagro.org](http://www.milagro.org) or call 503-236-7253.*