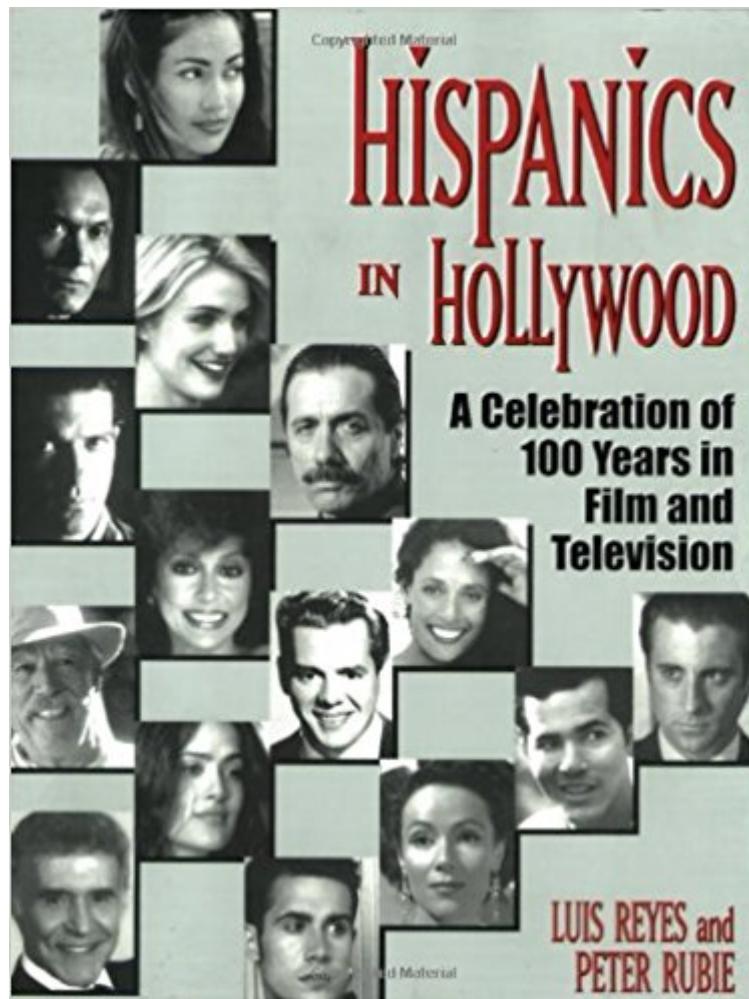


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Hispanics In Hollywood



Synopsis

From the early passions of the Latin lover of the silver screen' to the adventures of modern day keroes such as Antonio Banderas, Hispanics in Hollywood is an illuminating voyage into the careers and contributions of some of film history's most legendary performers.

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Customer Reviews

This large-format one-volume encyclopedia covers popular Hollywood films (chiefly those of the sound era) and television programs featuring Hispanic actors or addressing Hispanic themes. The work is divided into two main sections, plot summaries and biographies, with a good index that leads to information on people and films not listed separately in the main sections. Though covering much of the material included in George Hadley-Garcia's Hispanic Hollywood (Carol Pub. Group, 1990), this new work is much better suited for reference use. Many handsome black-and-white stills from film publicist Reyes's personal collection will provide hours of entertaining browsing. A drawback is the lack of attention to correctly written Spanish; for names of actors known primarily for Spanish-language films and particularly in citing titles of Spanish-language films, accents marks are generally left out (e.g., Luis Bunuel instead of Luis Bun~uel). At least the authors are consistent in ignoring correct usage. Recommended for larger film collections and for libraries with a need for popular material on Hispanic films.James E. Ross, Seattle P.L.Copyright 1995 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

Although Hispanic Americans have been involved in many aspects of the American film industry,

there has been little note taken of this fact in standard film-reference works. In addition to the biographical sketches and descriptions of films and television programs that make up the bulk of this work, there are also essays on the role of the Hispanic American in American film and television. The book begins with an essay on movies, followed by alphabetically arranged entries on films that had a Hispanic character, setting, or subject or in which a Hispanic actor starred. Each entry includes producer, director, writer, cast, and a brief summary of the plot. Individuals whose names appear in boldface type are the subject of biographical sketches later in the book. The next section begins with an essay on television followed by entries on individual programs, which include network, cast, and a brief plot summary. Again, boldface type is used to indicate persons who are the subject of biographies. This section is followed by brief essays on Zorro and the Cisco Kid, with complete chronologies of their movie and television incarnations. Finally, there is the biographical section, which lists Hispanic American performers and behind-the-scenes personnel. The authors indicate that they have "also included . . . a number of non-Hispanic individuals who are nevertheless identified in the public mind as Hispanic, on the basis of the roles they played or their Hispanic-sounding names." There is a separate section of "profiles of selected non-Hispanic filmmakers who have contributed substantially to shaping the cinematic image of Hispanic Americans through classic films they made." These include such directors as John Ford and John Huston. An index completes the work; a selected bibliography precedes the front matter. There are throughout the book black-and-white photographs of very good quality. Studio portraits, movie posters, and stills of many familiar (and some unfamiliar) faces and scenes complement the text. Since there is currently little on this increasingly popular subject, it is recommended for film and Hispanic-culture collections alike. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

My copy of this invaluable book is dog-eared and so covered in sticky-notes it looks like it has feathers. Anyone interested in the history of Latinos in Hollywood should own this book. It is thoroughly researched and packed with little known facts, wonderful information and photos. Sadly, it is out of print. "Hispanics in Hollywood" should be reprinted and revised to include the approximately twenty years of notable Hispanics who have impacted the entertainment industry since its publication. Jan Pippins, author "Henry Darrow: Lightning in the Bottle"

This is a must-read for students of and experts in Spanish and Latin American Studies. I used it as a primary source in my doctoral dissertation in the field.

Bravo Mr. Reyes for such a deeply researched, sensitively written, book blooming with photographs of Hispanics in Hollywood celebrated over 100 years. Indeed, this was needed many years ago, especially in my start as a high school teacher in a predominantly Latino/Latina high school for 28 years. Zoot Suit was culturally affirming for East Los Angeles. The unique style and political statements opened up new worlds of research re Latino/a film. And look at the power of Teatro Campesino, and its earlier form in La Carpa, in making political statements regarding exploitation of the Mexican worker. And now, in your book, we get to look back at the contributions made in earlier times we did not know of, and contemporary times. The world of prejudice and stereotyping is so complex and being examined now in organizations such as Facing History and Ourselves, and college texts that reveal an array of a variety of cultures in America, especially of the tension between adapting and keeping two cultural worlds within and without. Alas, there are intracultural prejudices too. Sometimes more established Latinos/as make fun of the recently arrived as wetbacks. In Jewish society, those who were in the US longer than the recently arrived Jews--called them "greenhorns". I loved so much of this book and have given it five stars. I also liked the preface tremendously. I too had the experience of watching films for content and style, and pausing for the film to permeate me as long as it could. At that time, I was particularly interested in the psychological depth, and the unique style of filming of the unconscious as well as the conscious world in Fellini, Truffaut, Bergman, and many others perhaps forgotten now, and of course Bunuel. I was lucky to see and read "The Boom". "The Boom" exploded with new styles as Mexican and Latin American writers were celebrated for literary, artistic, and cinematic innovations, such as "Magical Realism, that weaves around history and political realities. Now, I would like to gently approach one line (what writer doesn't have one or many) that troubled me. You mention that "Most" of early Hollywood was controlled by Eastern European Jews. This is not really true in light of all cultures who contributed to Hollywood's start, and it itself is a stereotype that a number of books are now discussing. This belief about Jews dominating the film world actually fueled more anti-semitism than already existed severely in this country, where most Jewish immigrants were severely poor. You question why these "predominantly" Jewish promoters did not discuss their own culture. First of all--in diaspora, there were the German Jews who were more assimilated in Germany, and hence probably could have the skills and education denied Jews in Poland and Russia, and alas, Mediterranean Jews were often denied the right (many self taught while enduring backbreaking work only allowed them.) And yet, they did forge a cultural works such as Yiddish theatre, books, and poetry, in America. They created while working 14 hour jobs and striking in times that treated them far more violently than strikers are treated today. These people demonstrated for All workers.

This paved the way for our own work worlds to have the right to breaks, sick time, health benefits, vacation time, an 8 hour day, and unions to protect those rights. They were joined by other oppressed cultures who worked along side them such as Italians and others, forming a multi-cultural comraderie that is so needed in our world today. Actually, it is seen that there was much imitation of elitist European culture in early films. American themes came later. And alas--how complicated this was in our forging and reforging this country's identity. America was steeped in anti-semitism (and of course--hatred of all considered "the other"). Early German immigrants in America faced disdain. The Irish, when looking for work, saw signs that read "Irish Need Not Apply. Later on, some people of these backgrounds forgot that they were scorned as new immigrants arrived. So you see, so many groups in this country have not had their stories told. If there was a pitch for a movie about pogroms, it would not have sold--maybe if Errol Flynn flew in to swashbuckle those killing and raping sprees. Or, what would have saved a pitch about a Jewish family headed for a beach where the sign read "No Jews or Dogs allowed"? An exhibition from a few years ago called Degenerate Art (art that Nazi's banned) showed a big nosed and walleted series of series of movie and music producers, for Monkey like looking African-Americans (inferior to the Nazis also) playing jazz (banned in Nazi Germany). Actually, true art in film has been noted to have been brought in by German emigre artists both non-Jewish and Jewish, who were not free to do their form of art, especially abstraction, in Nazi Germany. Also, they left a regime they knew was appalling.

Therefore, in the term "most" (re Jews), there needs to be a bit more study. The truth is, if one filmed about life in Mexico, it would be very different in Jalisco and Oaxaca--because the cultures are different. Gabriel Garcia's Columbian world and Carlos Fuentes' world in Mexico would be different. At my school, the Goths and the Rockers live in different universes. Does this read as a bash? No!!! The book is fantastic and a must read for all cultures! Prejudice of the "other" we do not know needs to be perpetually unbound. And wow--what an incredible array of Latino/a film history. All should grab it as a must read!! I am so glad, at this time in film, we see Chinese Americans, films from Bombay, Syria, Armenian themes--and many previously unsung cultures in our theaters. We are now seeing the truth told about many atrocities such as the treatment of Native-Americans (here first)--for instance, the smallpox virus placed in American Indian blankets, as a form of genocide. There is knowledge imparted of exploitation of other immigrants--for instance, the shooting of some Chinese American railroad workers for "pay". As for all the new styles and representations of all cultures (look at this year's (2009) many awards for Slum-dog Millionaire), filmed in India. These are added cultural fabrics, with textures and threads of expression that expand our global awareness. In this sense, we grow in cultural understanding and the culture of ourselves (I believe each person is

a singular identity of many cultural influences). As long as this review is, I think I could write a book because cultural pride, and intra-cultural love and understanding are so important to me. And Do know I am savoring every page of Hispanics in Hollywood. No one will eat Fritos thinking of The Frito Bandito, or drool over the Tijuana stereotype of loose women easy to pay for "a moment"! Let's cover those on Hollywood Blvd or all over instead...yes? Thank God there are no more of those snoozing Mexican sobreros hiding the sleeping Mexican, denoting the Mexican as comical and lazy (and if anyone has one--bash it)! Though I may speak of objects or books not filmed--they were certainly influences. I must also say that I know Mr. Reyes as eclectic, a wordsmith, an activist, and an educator. When Zoot Suit came out, Mr. Reyes spoke about the field of publicity, while imparting information about the production of Zoot Suit to my the students, who were given tickets and other fun items. We were all ecstatic with the "prep" for the film! Our students were also given free tickets to a film called Triumph of the Spirit (not "of the will") the Nazi propaganda film. A number of my students, predominantly Latino, came to see the film about a Greek Jewish boxer survivor in Auschwitz. This is not named in the credits of the films Mr. Reyes has publicized, listed in Hispanics in Hollywood. I saw my students sobbing while watching Triumph of the Spirit, even some big guys sitting next to me. This is what we want--to break through and feel all of our pains and triumphs in this diverse country. In your talk at our school, Mr. Reyes said: look at us--all different cultures, colors (class is another issue)--"Beautiful!" When I also taught at a State College, where I had a real United Nations of students, it was so great that at the end, they spoke of misconceptions of each other at the beginning, and how they changed. Do know I am celebrating this book as a contribution to Global understanding. I did want Mr. Reyes to know that a single stereotypical line we can All make, can hurt. As one student of mine in a Facing History and Ourselves class said, you can remove a bullet, but you cannot remove a hurtful misunderstanding. And I know you are one who believes in the same thing. Incidentally, I would really like to see a film about a kid growing up loving film on the upper West Side of New York, who is from Puerto Rico. Plus, I applaud your work in probing Hawaii in film. I loved seeing photos of Robert Louis Stevenson visiting and merging in Hawaiian culture. When I went to a hotel where a lot of stars went, it saddened me to see Queen Liliokalani and family in stiff Victorian attire they felt they had to wear. I am looking forward to more of your works (and films?). The cinema permeates so much of the psyche, letting us venture into other worlds, and the worlds of others, as both of us experienced in our youth and later. Oh--just a little bit of history to end you may be interested in. Max Factor, who came from an Orthodox Jewish family in the old world and had made the wigs Jewish married women wore, introduced wigs to Hollywood! Also, he changed the world of the pancake make-up. In fact, he invented the science of make-up

that inspired all women to wear it. My students saw the Max Factor Museum that had the red haired room, blonde, brunette, etc. Guess where his original house is? It is in Boyle Heights (East LA) and inhabited by the parents of some friends of mine. Boyle Heights started out as a Jewish neighborhood--actually you might say "to keep Them with their own." Then came Russians, and Latinos, African Americans, and Japanese (sadly ripped away later by the Japanese interment camps)...and others. The community was mainly very radical. There is a wonderful documentary called *Meet Me at Brooklyn and Soto*. A woman recalls that the high school I taught in, Roosevelt High, had true cultural harmony--and pride days. In fact, many Jewish families watched over the Japanese homes to make sure there was no hateful pillaging! As an afterthought regarding Jews not telling their stories, what about the first Talkie, *The Jazz Singer* with Al Jolson? In it, he is a Cantor's son (singer in synagogue) whose father wants him to follow in his footsteps. But Jolson is torn, because in his character, he wants to be a jazz musician...which he pursues instead. This was filmed at the largest and probably most exquisite Jewish temple in Boyle Heights, now (or the last time I saw it) full of pigeons and Graffiti. So, there you go re Jewish themes in film. (Just look away when you see Jolson's "blackface" make-up as he sings "Mammy"). Once again--here is the tension and triumph all of us face in our multi-cultural country and world. Rochmanna Miller

By JONATHAN KIRSCH, Special to The LA Times "...An illuminating and entertaining survey of films and television programs in which Latino actors, settings or themes figure prominently, "Hispanics in Hollywood" is full of such surprises. Anthony Quinn, perhaps best known as *Zorba the Greek*, is only one of many actors whose Mexican origins were once concealed, and there are many others whose Latino roots have only recently come to public attention, ranging from Rita Hayworth (born Margarita Cansino) to John Gavin (born John Anthony Golenar) to Raquel Welch (born Raquel Tejada). And it was a young Emilio Estevez who boldly reclaimed his own Latino family history and thus revealed to the world that the real name of his father, Charlie Sheen, is Ramon. More often Latino actors found themselves in an awkward dilemma in Hollywood, as the authors of "Hispanics in Hollywood" point out--if their Latino identities were not concealed, they were put to use in depicting stereotyped Latino characters: "maids, slum dwellers, drug addicts and gang members," co-author Luis Reyes reminds us, or "cruel dictators, mustachioed bandits and beautiful señoritas." Only in the last couple of decades have Latino actors and directors enjoyed the opportunity to tell stories about their own heritage in a more open, honest and affirming voice in movies such as "Zoot Suit," "La Bamba," "Stand and Deliver," "Selena" and "A Walk in the Clouds." Reyes, a movie publicist who is also a chronicler of Hollywood's Latin American heritage, describes

the book as "an attempt to show the way Hollywood has depicted Hispanic Americans and Latin America, while also pointing out the contributions to Hollywood movies and television made by unsung Hispanic Americans as well as those more famous." Thus, his book can be approached as a serious effort to ponder the issues of race and ethnicity in American pop culture and, at the same time, as one of those useful reference works that can be pulled down from the shelf when puzzling over some old and obscure movie on cable.

Is a great book...it tells you mostly all about the hispanic efforts throughout the year and it give you plenty of history.Anibal O. Lleras

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