Mexican Americans & the Great Depression

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The Great Depression, which lasted from 1929 to 1939, was a period of American history characterized by high unemployment rates, widespread poverty, and significant hardships. These factors led to widespread job displacements, nationalist movements, government programs, etc. The Great Depression negatively impacted Mexican Americans due to economic hardships and discrimination. This paper will analyze how Mexican Americans lived during the Depression in states of California, Texas, and Arizona to better understand the negative impacts they faced during this period.

In order to understand the Great Depression, let us discuss the state of the United States before the Great Depression and how world events led to the Depression. Prior to the Great Depression between 1920 and 1929, various ethnic groups, including Mexicans, migrated to the United States and were granted permanent visas.[1] However, after the market crash of 1929, many Mexican American workers were among the first groups to lose their jobs.[2] During the first year of the Great Depression, many Mexican Americans were forced to evaluate their current predicament and decide how to approach these new and uncertain times. Many had the options of either cutting their losses and moving back to Mexico or staying in the U.S. and dealing with the problems of the Depression. Those who decided to stay were limited in their employment opportunities.[3] Their most prominent and limited option for work was to work in the agricultural fields for long hours with little to no pay. Since most Mexican Americans worked in agriculture during this time, this line of work was limited to seasonal work. Anglo American landowners generally hired Mexican Americans to work ten hours a day as land laborers. Even in jobs

[1] Wayne Moquin, *A Documentary History of the Mexican Americans*, (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1971): 294.
[2] Abraham Hoffman, *Unwanted Mexican Americans in the Great Depression: Repatriation Pressures, 1929-1939*, (Arizona: The University of Arizona Press, 1974): 33.
[3] Moquin, *A Documentary* 294-295.

unrelated to agriculture, Mexican Americans worked for low wages and sometimes faced hostility from labor unions and farmers.[4]

To better understand the number of Mexican Americans affected by the Depression, Bogardu's book, *The Mexican in the United States,* presents data on Mexican American immigrants who arrived in the United States between 1820 and 1930.[5] Table I shows that between 1820 and 1890, there was a consistent rate of Mexicans immigrating to the United States.[6] However, between 1891 and 1900, there was a sharp decline in Mexican immigrants, only to see a significant jump in the number of immigrants going into the ten thousand range again. This rise of immigrants only kept rising into the hundred thousand range from 1901 to 1930.[7] In Table II of the data, we can observe a more detailed breakdown of the percentage of Mexican immigrants arriving in the U.S. between 1911 and 1933. Between 1911 and 1928, there was a significant increase in the percentage of Mexican immigration. However, between 1929 and 1933, the percentage of immigrants gradually decreased.[8] This was due to a variety of reasons, one of those being the discriminatory practices and anti-Mexican sentiment in the 1920s, combined with the 1929 market crash and the Dust Bowl that affected areas in the South, Midwest, and West, which will all be addressed later in the essay.

One of the outcomes of the Great Depression was the Dust Bowl, which affected many American lives in the Southern, Midwestern, and Western parts of America during the 1930s. Between 1929 and 1933, farm income fell by two-thirds. Additionally, droughts combined with windstorms created oversized red dusk bowls that decimated livestock as well as destroyed

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[4] Hoffman, *Unwanted Mexican Americans in the Great Depression,* 33.
[5] Emory S. Bogardus, *The Mexican in the United States,* (Illinois: Arno Press Inc, 1970): 10.
[6] Bogardus, *The Mexican in the United States* 13.
[7] Bogardus, *The Mexican in the United States* 13.
[8] Bogardus, *The Mexican in the United States,* 14.

American homes across the country. To put into perspective, on May 11th, 1934, a dusk storm "carried away some 300,000 tons of topsoil from the plains states. Thousands of destitute families were forced to abandon their homes."[9] he Dusk Bowl claimed more than thousands of lives during this decade; some people were even forced to leave their lives and move up to the North, though work was also challenging to find.

Moreover, during World War I, the United States underwent a growth of economic production to support its allies against Nazi Germany. Following World War I, American factories switched gears. U.S. factories began producing new products for everyday Americans to use and having its citizens borrow cash and pay it back later to use these new commodities.[10] At the same time, in the countryside, farmers were having trouble with overproduction of crops, causing these cash crops to fall in price in the 1920s. Many Americans celebrated the roaring 20s in the cities with jazz music in their hidden speakeasies.[11] With people ignoring the food crisis while also spending more than they could pay back, these elements would create widespread financial instability, which would lead to the infamous Market Crash of 1929, causing many banks to go bankrupt across the country.[12] All of these factors amalgamated to create the Great Depression.

In the late 1920s and early '30s, most Americans were at their lowest, with widespread unemployment across the country. President Hoover even attempted to aid the country with public works like the Hoover dam, voluntary action programs to create more jobs, as well as reconstruction finance, National Credit, etc. Unfortunately, his efforts were not enough to help

[9] Manuel G. Gonzales, *Mexicanos: A History of Mexicans in the United States,* (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1999): 149.
[10] Joseph L. Locke, and Ben Wright, *The American Yawp,* (California: Stanford University Press, 2019), chap. 23.
[11] Locke, and Wright, *The American Yawp*, chap. 22.
[12] Locke, and Wright, *The American Yawp*, chap. 23.

rid of the Depression.[13] By the start of the 1930s, many Mexican Americans already called the "Yunaites Estaites" (a phonetic pronunciation of "United States" in Spanish.) their home.[14] In order to survive, many joined the labor movement for workers' rights, and fair wages. Unfortunately, most of these labor unions were crushed by powerful companies/the government.[15] Following their migration to urban areas, Mexican Americans encountered a new set of obstacles and difficulties. One of these challenges was obtaining resources, but being in the city also allowed them to earn a steady income. Likewise, President Roosevelt's New Deal plan aimed to aid economic despair through welfare programs aimed to help people in urban areas. However, thanks to already-established anti-immigrant sentiments from the previous decade, many Mexicans were unable to benefit from the welfare programs due to not meeting specific criteria. However, those who did fit the criteria managed to aid them during harsh winters and challenging times.[16]

In Mexican Americans faced many economic hardships due to the lack of opportunities and jobs during the Great Depression. Due to the high unemployment rate, Mexican Americans were seen as a burden on the welfare system.[17] This caused many Mexican Americans who were considered legal residents, and even immigrants who were brought in a century before for cheap labor, to become scapegoats of the Great Depression. To specify, there were several nationalist groups and leaders who believed that deporting a large number of Mexicans could help in the renewal of capitalist prosperity. Which, in turn, led to many Mexican Americans being deported

[13] Gonzales, *Mexicanos: A History of Mexicans* 140.
[14] Gonzales, *Mexicanos: A History of Mexicans,* 139.
[15] Gonzales, *Mexicanos: A History of Mexicans,* 139.
[16] Gonzales, *Mexicanos: A History of Mexicans,* 140-141.
[17] Julian Samora and Patricia Simon V., *The History of the Mexican-American people,* (Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1977): 182.

to Mexico.[18] Although many were unfortunately deported to Mexico, there were those who either were lucky enough not to be deported or chose to stick around.

There were many Mexican Americans were negatively economically impacted in areas like California, Texas, and Arizona. Beginning with California, where many Mexican American families were affected during the Great Depression, one of them being Manuela Baquera's family. At the onset of the Great Depression, Manuela's father was one of many Mexican Americans to lose his job.[19] This led her parents to smoke as a coping mechanism. She would often find cigarettes scattered all around the house. A group of women would visit to see what her family owned, only to find nothing of value. These were difficult times for her family, especially when they would travel far and wide in search of everyday commodities like flour for cooking. Although the government offered some aid to those in need, such as free shoes, Baquera's family was skeptical of taking handouts. However, they did survive on those donations until her father managed to get a new job, which enabled him to provide for the family. It is uncertain when her father got this new job during the middle of the Depression, but it can be inferred that it was between the middle and late 1930s. Her father also provided his family with medicine, even saving his two daughters from tuberculosis. He also provided them with school materials. When Manuela was eight years old, the Great Depression transpired, but even so, her father encouraged both his daughters to keep attending school. While at the same time, other fathers in her neighborhood forced their daughters to work to support their families. Parents used to walk their kids to school for miles, but blue buses were also available. Students

[18] Samora and Simon, *The History of the Mexican-American people*, 182.
[19] Richard and Manuela Baquera, "Manuela Baquera." interview by Richard Baquera, Bracero History Archive, February 2, 2003, Audio, https://braceroarchive.org/items/show/74.

could buy food at school or from a blue truck.[20] This would be the family's financial situation until the end of the decade when World War II kicked off in Europe.

Another example of a Mexican American family that was negatively economically impacted Dolores Huerta and her family. Dolores Huerta was born in Dawson, New Mexico, on April 10, 1930.[21] When she was born, Dolores's father, *Juan Huerta*, and her relatives worked in the Dawson coal mines. Juan took a second job as a bracero to supplement the family income and picked vegetables. At the age of five, she and her family migrated from New Mexico to Wyoming and Nebraska to find better-paying jobs to support their family.[22] During this time, they also lived in tar paper shacks (small, makeshift houses that were typically constructed using wooden frames and covered with layers of tar paper). While in Nebraska, Huerta experienced her first taste of Racism for her being a Mexican American. After a while, Dolores's mother created a disdain for her living situation, leading to her parents' divorce at the age of five. Once divorced, her mother, Alicia, eventually moved her children to Stockton, California, where she had her family living there.[23] After Dolores moved to California, her mother took on two jobs. Her first was waiting tables at a restaurant, and her second was canning cans at a factory to support her family.[24] As Dolores grew up, her brothers worked as braceros, picking up tomatoes on nearby farms. For Mexicans working on farms during the Depression, picking up fruits and vegetables was difficult labor.[25] A Bracero's work started at dawn and ended at sundown. Regarding their

[20] Baquera, interview.
[21] Marlene Targ Brill, Dolores Huerta Stands Strong: The Woman Who Demanded Justice. (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2018), 7.
[22] Brill, Dolores Huerta, 8.
[23] Brill, Dolores Huerta, 8.
[24] Brill, Dolores Huerta, 10-11.
[25] Brill, Dolores Huerta, 11.

working conditions, they were almost non-existent.[26] They worked under the hot sun with little to no breaks in fields stretching twenty-plus miles. Also, because most Braceros knew little to no English, most would not organize or complain about working conditions or fair pay. Similarly, they could be threatened with wrongful deportation if the workers fell out of line.[27]

On October 18th, 1933, a local newspaper called *Imperial Valley Press* published a news story titled "Brawley Lettuce Strike Settled" in El Centro, California, a small town by the border of Mexico.[28] This report was published on the third page of the newspaper. The news story reported the results of an ongoing strike between the Brawley lettuce growers (farmers from Brawley, California) and the Mexican Labor Union. According to this news report, Joaquin Terrazas was the spokesperson of the Mexican consul, while the growers were represented by George Swink, Elton Jack, and Martin Wahl. Although this newspaper does not state how long this strike lasted, but it has lasted long enough to yield results for the union. According to the newspaper, the Mexican Labor Union demanded a minimum wage of $2 daily. In contrast, thinners (workers who remove excess plants from a crop) demanded $5 an acre.[29]

Likewise, this next article was written about four years after the previous one, in 1937 in California. Similar to the previous article, it is also about the Mexican Labor Union, telling us that the union that won the *Brawley Lettuce Strike* in 1933 is still going strong, supporting Mexican Americans to maintain jobs throughout the Depression. The article states how the Mexican Labor Union is disputing a company referred to as "the Compania" (company), where it is guaranteed that the Compania will raise its wages to its workers.[30] Based on the article, it can

[26] Brill, Dolores Huerta, 9.
[27] Brill, Dolores Huerta, 9-10.
[28] "Brawlet Lettuce Strike Settled," Imperial Valley press, Oct. 18, 1933, 3.
[29] "Brawlet Lettuce Strike Settled," 3.
[30] "Rush Work On The All American Canal," Imperial Valley Press, Sep 12, 1937, 4.

be assumed that the Mexican Labor Union managed to wage wages for Mexicans to sustain themselves during the Depression.

Looking at another newspaper from the *Imperial Valley Press*, published in July 1932, the headline we will be looking at is called "Clarke Searchers for Mexican in Shooting Scrape."[31] This article details a murder where the suspect is a Mexican American named Pablo Mendez, who shot Enrique Camarco in the chest. According to the paper, it was caused by an argument over nine cents of overdue wages [32] During a time of low employment, every cent makes a difference. This newspaper is one example of Mexican Americans willing to go to the extreme to earn as much money as possible to avoid poverty and survive.[33]

In the state of Texas, the Mexican American population also faced multiple hardships due to the lack of proper housing. In the late 30s, President Roosevelt set up the New Deal, which ran from 1933 to 1338, and it set up government programs to help balance the harms of the Depression. One of these programs was centered around San Antonio, where The Alazan-Apache Courts had allowed the creation of a housing project to commence. This housing project would reconstruct the horrible housing conditions that the Mexican American community in San Antonio was facing.[34] According to the records, before this project, many Mexican American families living in the San Antonio area lived in huts, shacks, and small structures in the Mexican districts of San Antonio.[35] Furthermore, Mexican Americans in San Antonio were making low incomes, held inconsistent employment, and many of them lived with large families, and in small

[31] Clarke Searchers for Mexican in Shooting Scrape," Imperial Valley Press, July 1932, 1.
[32] Clarke Searchers for Mexican in Shooting Scrape," Imperial Valley Press, July 1932, 1.
[33] Clarke Searchers for Mexican in Shooting Scrape," Imperial Valley Press, July 1932, 1.
[34] Donald L. Zelman, "Alazan-Apache Courts: A New Deal Response to Mexican American Housing Conditions in San Antonio," The Southwestern Historical Quarterly 87, no. 2, (1983): 134.
[35] Zelman, "Alazan-Apache Courts," 142-144.

spaces.[36] As a result, the project created relief and aid by offering improved living conditions and raising awareness of housing needs for Mexican Americans.

The following image is a description of a photograph by Dorothea Lange, a documentary photographer and photojournalist. In February 1936, while on the road, Lange encountered a Mexican American family. According to the description, the family was experiencing tire trouble while traveling in search of better work.[37] It can be inferred that the family was moving from city to city in search of job opportunities, and their car broke down, leaving them stranded where the photograph was taken. Though not much info is given, this is how most families travel from city to city for work. While less fortunate families may have a husband traveling alone and sending money back to the family, who awaits his safe return. Overall, this serves as a prime example of the Mexican American financial situation during this era.

A journal article by Jean Reynolds, *MEXICAN AMERICAN WOMEN IN 1930s' PHOENIX: Coming of Age During the Great Depression*, describes Mexican American Women in 1930s Phoenix, Arizona. This journal highlights the challenges Mexican women faced, economic hardships, social expectations, and family dynamics. This journal features women like Mary López Garcia, Erminia "Minnie" Rangel Martinez, Ernestina "Tina" Ruiz Saldate, and Esther Ramirez Diaz, who were interviewed to share their life experiences with others who are interested in her stories. This journal article focuses on Mary López Garcia due to being more featured. Offering Garcia some background, she was born in 1915 in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Her mother, Lucia, died in 1922 when she was seven years old, and four years later, in 1927, her family migrated from Albuquerque to Colorado so her father could work in beet fields. That

[36] Zelman, "Alazan-Apache Courts," 126.
[37] Dorothea Lange, photographer, *Migrants, family of Mexicans, on road with tire trouble. Looking for work in the peas. California.* Photograph. Library of Congress. February 1936.

same year, her family then moved to the farm worker camps near the outskirts of Phoenix, Arizona.[38] Growing up, Garcia's responsibilities were significant. At age 14, she took on a job as a maid to support her family. At the same time, working as a maid exposed her to the realities of adulthood and the need to balance a work-life relationship while also exposing her to society's expectations of women and racial prejudices and discrimination.[39] Mary's story also highlights the importance of community support and organizations through the Friendly House, an area where it provided services for individuals and families impacted by the Great Depression. Thanks to Friendly House, Mary was able to quickly find a safe and paying job to support her family when her father was unable to support them.[40]

As previously stated, due to the economic hardships of the Great Depression, many Mexican Americans faced the option of either going back to Mexico or staying and facing whatever the 1930s America would throw at them. Throughout the 1930s, there were many deportation programs made by the government, and Mexican Americans were one of the targets of these programs. An example of these groups that contributed hate towards them was during the 1920s, many anti-immigrant groups like the Ku Klux Klan, which had more than one million members at the time, posed a significant challenge for Mexican Americans. One of the major claims that came from these anti-immigrant groups was the slogan "Mexican Problem", which referred to a widespread belief that Mexicans were the cause of the Great Depression.[41] They have radical prejudice against not just Mexicans but any minority group. This hatred of foreigners resulted in the commission of anti-immigration laws in the 1920s, such as in 1921-

[38] Jean Reynolds, "MEXICAN AMERICAN WOMEN IN 1930s' PHOENIX: Coming of Age During the Great Depression." The Journal of Arizona History 47, no. 3, (2006): 214.
[39] Reynolds, "MEXICAN AMERICAN WOMEN," 213.
[40] Reynolds, "MEXICAN AMERICAN WOMEN," 213-214.
[41] Alma Garcia, *The Mexican Americans (The New Americans),* (Connecticut, Greenwood Press, 2002): 28-29.

24, when the United States had a quota of meeting a certain amount of Mexican Immigrants before denying entry to the rest. Due to mass immigration in the 1920s, many states by the Mexican-American border had an increase of Mexicans moving into these states and settling into local Mexican communities. Notable cities like Los Angeles soon began to have large Mexican American communities, which in turn, led to unforeseen effects for these communities. One of these effects for Mexican Americans living in Los Angeles were discriminatory labeling. While at the same time, the Mexican American communities also faced oppressive treatment.[42] Likewise, the public officials, social workers, and law enforcement agencies in Los Angeles also committed oppressive measures to enforce harsh deportation policies, as well as intimidation tactics against those who attempted to resist.[43] These actions had a negative impact on the Mexican communities. These actions by the government had a negative impact on the Mexican community in Los Angeles. It resulted in a setting of fear and uncertainty among the community. At the same time, those who wanted change created an organized resistance called the Mexican Chamber of Commerce, which aimed to counter the immigration raids.[44] Fortunately, the formation of community organizations that aimed to provide support and protection for those affected by deportation raids showcased a collective effort to resist unjust policies.[45]

It has been noted that within the first four years of the 1930s, over four hundred thousand Mexicans were deported to Mexico. Most were American citizens and legal residents who lived in the United States for almost fifty years. These unjustifiable deportations caused a split in families, including instances of mothers and daughters, fathers and sons, fathers and daughters,

[42] Tadeo Weiner Davis, Mexican Communities in the Great Depression," (In *Advocates' Forum*, 2017), 46.
[43] Davis, "Mexican Communities," 47.
[44] Davis, "Mexican Communities," 48.
[45] Davis, "Mexican Communities," 48-49.

and mothers and sons being torn apart.[46] The Mexican American population remained relatively small until the start of World War II. Although there were also local relief programs that attempted to provide jobs for Mexican Americans, these programs fell short due to pressure and harassment from nationalist leaders and groups.[47]

A newspaper headline called *Youngsters Returning Home After Attending American School*, written by the *Imperial Valley Press* in June 1931.[48] This headline addresses how the U.S. government is under pressure to deport immigrants, including those involved in organized labor movements like the Mexican Labor Movement we previously read about. It goes on to further state that in 1930, there were 16,631 forced deportations of Mexican American workers. Additionally, in 1931, an estimated 6,500 jobless Mexicans in the United States had been working in the Southwestern states of Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and California until they were not needed anymore, where they were transported to the Rio Grande and then back to Mexico. The author later states how the number of deportations in 1930 doubled in 1931.[49] Later that year, the same newspaper wrote another article called, "Dollar Imperialism Means Deportation for 100,000 Workers."[50] This headline talks about how the U.S. government is under pressure to deport immigrants, including those involved in organized labor movements like the Mexican Labor Movement we previously read about. The article states that the United States government plans to deport 100,000 "aliens" as a campaign against labor unions. Later in the reading, it stated that they plan to extend the number to 400,000 immigrants. This is a large jump

[46] Samora and Simon, *The History of the Mexican-American people*, 10.
[47] Julian Nava, *Mexican Americans: A Brief Look at Their History,* (New York: Anti-Defamation, League Publisher): 1975, 34
[48] "Youngsters Returning Home After Attending American School," Imperial Valley press., Jun. 8, 1931, 1.
[49] "Youngsters Returning Home," Imperial Valley press., Jun. 8, 1931, 1.
[50] "Dollar Imperialism Means Deportation for 100,000 Workers" The Daily Worker, Jan. 22, 1931, 4.

of people being deported.[51] This is one of the many reports of mass forced deportation of Mexican Americans who were deported due to the Depression.

While reading any newspapers, it is important to remember to note what sources you are reading and what type of narratives the source is attempting to display. During the Great Depression, there were newspapers in San Antonio, Texas, that reported on deportations from the Roosevelt immigration policies. Specifically, three newspapers called *La Prensa*, the *San Antonio Express* (*the Express*), and the *San Antonio Light (the Light)*.[52] *La Prensa* is a Latin American-owned newspaper. The San Antonio Express was founded by Frank Granger Huntress, son of a wealthy businessman. As for the Light, the owner William Randolph Hearst, and editor William McKay McIntosh was the newspaper's publisher.[53] Each of these newspapers conveyed a different narrative regarding reporting on the topic of deportation. Spanish-language newspapers like *La Prensa* displayed sympathetic coverage towards immigration, while English-language newspapers like the San Antonio Express and the San Antonio Light sometimes supported Mexican workers but often portrayed them negatively. For example, when the United States began deporting mass amounts of Mexican Americans in 1930, both the *Express* and the *Light*, although hesitant, also advocated for stricter deportation in their newspapers.[54] While at the same time, *La Prensa* supported Mexican labor.[55] However, as the Depression continued, people became less optimistic about the country's state. Newspapers like the Prensa reported on the ongoing struggles faced by Mexican Americans, which continued to highlight their hardships. One of these hardships is a new story from 1932 to 1933 from Karnes County,

[51] "Deportation for 100,000 Workers," 4.
[52] Melita M. Garza, *They Came to Toil: Newspaper Representations of Mexicans and Immigrants in the Great Depression*, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2018), 23-24.
[53] Garza, *They Came to Toil*, 19-22.
[54] Garza, *They Came to Toil*, 72-81.
[55] Garza, *They Came to Toil*, 76.

Texas. La *Prensa* documented the whole repatriation process, from preparation to the repatriates' arrival at the border and entry into Mexico. This publication depicted the repatriates positively, emphasizing their problems as victims of the cotton market collapse. At the same time, the *Express* covered the logistics of the repatriation by documenting the repatriates' feelings and situations. They also described the scenario as a collection of families with little to no possessions, thus emphasizing the hardship and desperation of the situation. Meanwhile, the *Light* downplayed the situation of the repatriates. The paper focused on immigration policies and advocated for stricter immigration control, reflecting a more anti-immigrant stance.[56]

Additionally, looking at a dissertation written by Nikki Donofrio, from State University of New York at New Paltz. Donofrio's journal, *A Re-evaluation on racism: how a strong U.S. tradition of anti-Mexican sentiment was responsible for the 1930s Mexican repatriation crisis*, a dissertation journal article in which it explores the 1930s Mexican reparation crisis in the United States.[57] To summarize, this article highlights the mistreatment and unjustified deportations faced by Mexican Americans. According to Donofrio, about 46.3% of Mexicans were unconstitutionally deported from the U.S.[58] Further details show how these unlawful deportations also managed to split up families.[59]Another point was how Mexican Americans were being used as scapegoats for the depression.[60] These actions resulted in newspapers portraying Mexican Americans as violent, contributing to more hate towards them.[61]

Overall, the Great Depression was a difficult period in American history. The Depression

[56] Garza, *They Came to Toil*, 110-114.
[57] Nikki Donofrio, *"A Re-evaluation on racism: how a strong U.S. tradition of anti Mexican sentiment was responsible for the 1930s Mexican repatriation crisis,"* (PhD diss., 2018), 1.
[58] Donofrio, *"A Re-evaluation on racism,"* 3.
[59] Donofrio, *"A Re-evaluation on racism,"* 22.
[60] Donofrio, *"A Re-evaluation on racism,"* 22.
[61] Donofrio, *"A Re-evaluation on racism,"* 3.

significantly impacted the Mexican American community as they dealt with losing their jobs, economic hardships, and discrimination from patriotic groups.

Moreover, the discriminatory practices and oppressive actions experienced by Mexican American communities during this era further compounded their struggles. Nationalist groups and leaders viewed Mexican Americans as burdens on the welfare system, leading to deportation campaigns aimed at renewing capitalist prosperity. The deportation raids and reparation campaigns targeted Mexican Americans, portraying them as scapegoats for the economic downturn. This oppressive treatment extended to public officials, social workers, and law enforcement agencies in Los Angeles, who enforced harsh deportation policies and intimidation tactics, instilling fear and uncertainty within the Mexican community. Despite these adversities, Mexican Americans demonstrated resilience and solidarity in the face of adversity. Community organizations like the Mexican Chamber of Commerce emerged as a form of organized resistance against unjust policies, providing support and protection for those affected by deportation raids. The collective efforts of these organizations underscored the strength and unity within the Mexican American community during a time of hardship and discrimination. In reflecting on the experiences of Mexican Americans during the Great Depression, it is essential to recognize the enduring impact of this period on their lives and the broader narrative of American history. By delving into these narratives, we not only acknowledge the challenges faced by Mexican Americans but also celebrate their resilience, determination, and community spirit in overcoming adversity. The stories of struggle and perseverance serve as a poignant reminder of the strength and resilience of marginalized communities in the face of adversity, resonating with themes of social justice and equity that remain relevant in contemporary society.

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