

## Regional Landscapes of the United States and Canada

### The Southwest Border Areas

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## DATES TO REMEMBER

- **COURSE EVALUATION PERIOD NOW OPEN**  
Go to [www.hunter.cuny.edu/te](http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/te)
- **MAY 7-14:** Period to hand in **OPTIONAL EXTRA CREDIT PROJECT** listed on syllabus. Short research paper on a pre-approved topic.
- **May 16:** Last day to hand in **REQUIRED LANDSCAPE EXERCISE** without penalty
  - Last class lecture.
  - Last day of Spring 2013 course evaluation period
- **May 21:** Exam III: **The Final Exam**
  - From 5:20 PM to 7:20 PM. Same format and length as exams I and II.
  - **Last day** to hand in extra credit exercise for Ex. III and "Geography in the News" extra credit option.

## The Southwest Border Area

Extends along the Mexican border from the Gulf of Mexico to the Pacific Ocean.

The **Colorado R.** (with the Green and Gila) and the **Rio Grande** (with the Pecos) are the major rivers flowing through the region.



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## The Four Corners



A unique political geography!

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## OVERVIEW

- ❖ **Climatic aridity** is a physical unifier and human adaptation to aridity is the cultural unifier.
- **Distinct cultural region with unique Tri-cultural characteristics and acculturation:**
  - **Spanish with roots in Mexico:** settlement and colonial heritage are chief regional identifiers.
  - **Native American:** historic settlement and culture is a secondary unifier.
  - **European-American:** late arriving dominant population.
- **International regional economy:** integrated with that of northern Mexico but a politically tense closely monitored border area.

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## Physiography of the Southwest Border Area


**Mountains** of W Texas and E New Mexico: **SOUTHERN ROCKIES**.  
**Plateau** region of NW New Mexico and northern Arizona: **COLORADO PLATEAU**.  
**N-S trending ridges** in S. California: **PACIFIC COAST RANGES**.  
**San Andreas Fault** passes through S. Calif.: from the mouth of Colorado River to SF Bay.



See handout from Empty Interior.

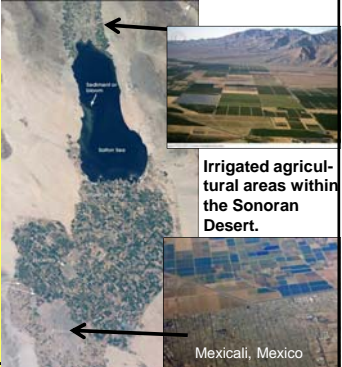
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### Salton Basin Geology



- Occupies a fault block depression that is below sea level.
- Once was the northern tip of the Gulf of California.
- Cut off from the gulf as the delta of the Colorado grew.
- The basin was dry until 1905.

### Salton Sea



In 1905 during normal spring floods, the Colorado River broke its banks and flowed down hill via an irrigation ditch into the below-sea-level Salton Basin.

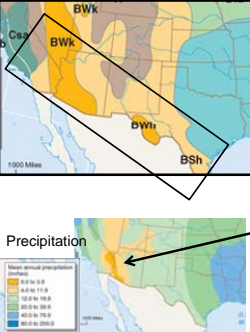
Over the years the lake's water has become salty.

The **All-American Canal** provides the area with fresh water for irrigation.

Irrigated agricultural areas within the Sonoran Desert.

Mexicali, Mexico

### Climate



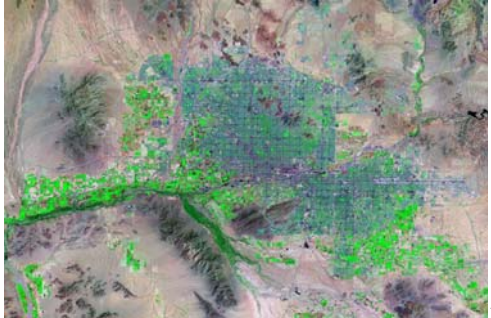
- Area of semi-arid (BS) and desert (BW) climate conditions. Hot and dry most of the year.
- Mediterranean climate (Cs; summer dry, winter wet) is found in So. California.
- Arizona-California-Nevada border region is the driest area. The "monsoon" that occurs in July/August is actually just thunderstorms.

### The Central Arizona Project



Water is diverted from the Gila river system and moved to the Phoenix and Tucson areas.

### Phoenix, Arizona

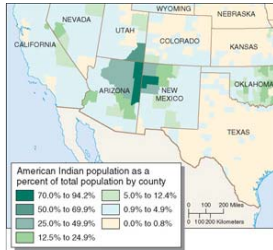


### Population Make-up

- ❖ A sizable **native population** (1% of total population) that has a long history in the region.
  - Ruins are scattered throughout the area.
  - The **Navajo** are the largest of many tribes in the area.
- ❖ An **Hispanic population** that dates back more than 400 years with arrival of Spanish explorers and missionaries.
  - Today's population (25% of total population) is mainly of **Mexican heritage** and experiencing rapid growth.
- ❖ **European-Americans** are the largest group (74% of total population).
  - They arrived in mid-1800s with the American westward expansion.
  - Population is mainly **northern European heritage**.

## American Indians of the Southwest

- Earliest inhabitants but least integrated into U.S. society. (In part to preserve their culture.)
- They are located in areas that Anglo settlers rejected because of dryness.
- Many different tribes live in the area.



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## American Indian Reservations

### Largest groups

- Navaho
- Apache
- Pueblo
- Papago
- Hopi
- Utes



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## Chaco Culture

The **Four Corners area** is the center of **Chaco Culture**, an advanced Native American society that thrived between **AD 900 and 1200**.

Numerous national and state parks preserve the ruins, culture and memory of these ancient people.



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## Chaco Culture National Historic Park



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## Mesa Verde Nat'l Park



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## Canyon de Chelly Nat'l Mon.



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## Taos Pueblo, New Mexico

Built c.1,000 AD and was designated a World Heritage Site in 1992.



Currently about 150 people live within the pueblo.

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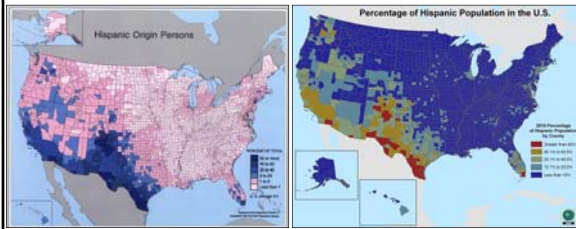
## The Acoma Pueblo, New Mexico

First settled c.1,100 AD, it is called "**Sky City**" because it sits atop a mesa.



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## U.S. Hispanic Population 2010 US Census



People of Mexican heritage are predominant in the southwest border region.

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## Spanish America Timeline

❖ Spanish exploration occurred in the mid-1500s. Claimed the territory as part of Mexico.

- Unsuccessful quest for **gold** and **silver**.
- **Little settlement** in (or attention paid to) the region.
  - **Lack of valuable resources**
  - **Far from Mexico City**, core of Spanish Empire
  - Came to view it as a **buffer zone** against French and English colonial expansion.
  - Became a **missionary area** to convert Indians to Christianity.

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## Spanish in America

- **Settlement sequence**
  - **Upper Rio Grande Valley** (present day New Mexico; before 1700)
  - **Arizona** (around 1700)
  - **Texas** (around 1700)
  - **California** (beginning 1769 with a string of missions)

### ❖ Local terminology

- **mission**: religious outpost
- **presidio**: military outpost or fort
- **pueblo**: town or village
- **hacienda**: an estate or plantation or ranch (*rancho*)
- **adobe**: a structure made from sun-dried bricks (also called adobe).

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## Spanish in America

### Spanish Colonial Settlement

- Consisted of a **church** and **houses** for the priests and their support staff, usually within a walled compound.
- **Haciendas** were established (ranching and vineyards) in surrounding areas. Livestock and plantings were bought from Spain.
- A **presidio** was built nearby to garrison troops to protect the missions, haciendas, settlements, mines and trade routes.

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## La Hacienda de los Martinez Taos, N.Mex (c.1800)



## Spanish Missions

Missions became the focus of settlement and now form the core of the "Old Town" of the region's modern cities.

- San Antonio
- El Paso
- Santa Fe
- Albuquerque
- Tucson
- San Diego
- Los Angeles
- Santa Barbara



## Spanish in America

### Missionary Aftermath

- Missionaries were more successful gaining converts from the sedentary Indians than from the nomadic tribes.
- Missionary system destroyed much of the native culture and tended to exploit Indians as a cheap labor force.
- Close living and daily interaction exposed the Indians to European diseases for which they had little immunity.
- Epidemics greatly reduced the native population.

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## Spanish Missions



## Santa Fe, New Mexico

**Santa Fe is the 3rd oldest European-founded city in the US** (after St. Augustine, FL and Jamestown, VA), **and is the oldest continuous capital city in N. America.** All Spanish towns in the Southwest were built around a **church** and **plaza**.



## Catholic Predominance



## Political Geography Terms Cession vs. Annexation

- ❖ **Cession:** land that is **given or sold** through treaty.
- ❖ **Annexation:** land within a political unit that is **seized and held** by an outside entity.
  - It is made legitimate by the recognition of an appropriate agency within that entity and/or by an international body.

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## American Expansion

See pp. 28, 40, 42, 46 and Section 4 in historical atlas

- **1821:** After its independence from Spain, **Mexico** allowed the “Anglos” from the U.S. to settle in its northern area (1820s-1830s now the Southwest).
- **1836:** **Texas** (which was settled by Americans who were given land grants by Mexico) **declares its independence from Mexico.**
- By treaty, **Texas is awarded most of northeast Mexico** (present-day TX, NM, OK, KS, CO and WY).
- **1845:** **U.S. annexes Texas** and admits it as a state, leading to the Mexican War.
- **1848:** Mexican War ends with the **Mexican Cession.** Mexico loses its northwestern land holdings -- land north of today's border except southern Arizona and N.Mex.

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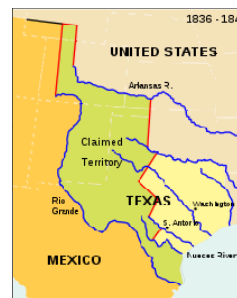
## U.S. Territorial Growth



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## Republic of Texas

1836-1845



- The Republic of Texas was created in 1836.
- The Battle of the Alamo is an historic event.
- Most Texas residents were American by birth.
- Texas was annexed as the 28th State in 1845.
- This led to war with Mexico (1846-1848).

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## Mexican Cession 1848



NW Mexico was formally transferred to the U.S. by the **Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo** following the Mexican War.

Technically it was **purchased** for \$15 million (\$300+ million today) but written off to settle pre-existing Mexican debts so no money was exchanged.

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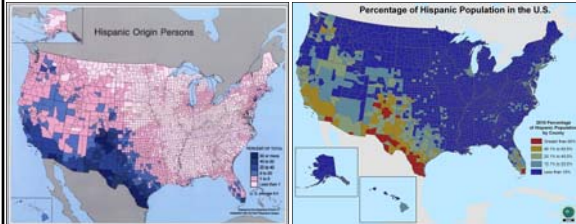
## Gadsden Purchase 1853



- An area of NW Mexico purchased in 1853 for **\$10 million.** (now southern Arizona and southwest New Mexico)
- The idea of **James Gadsden**, a railroad tycoon, who wanted to build a **southern trans-continental railroad** to make the West *dependent* on the South.
- Opens up the area to Anglo-Americans and **leads to the growth of Southern California**, esp. Los Angeles.

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## U.S. Hispanic Population 2010 US Census

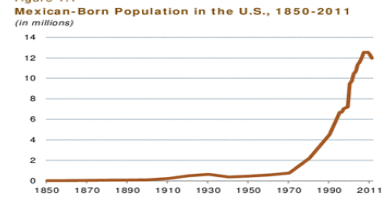


People of Mexican heritage are predominant in the southwest border region.

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## Mexican-born Population in U.S.

Mexicans make up the largest single national group to migrate to the U.S.



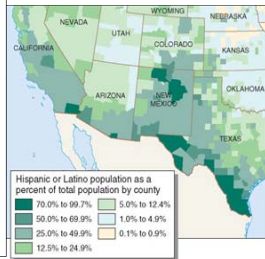
Source: For 1850 to 1980: Gibson and Jung (2006); For 1980 to 2010: Pew Hispanic Center, estimations from augmented March Current Population Surveys and Decennial Censuses adjusted for undercount

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Source: Pew Research Center "Net Migration from Mexico Falls to Zero – perhaps less", April, 2012 38

- **Immigration to U.S.**
  - 1900-2010: 4.6 million people
  - Late 1980s: 75-90,000/yr
  - 2000 to 2010: c.171,000/yr
- **Much of it illegal** - crossing the border without documentation
  - Estimated 6 million illegal Mexican residents in 2011; rate is slowing.
- **Push factors**
  - Mexican population growth
  - Widespread unemployment
- **Historic Pull factors**
  - Ease of crossing
  - Available jobs

## Mexican Migration



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## The Border

El Paso-Juarez Crossing



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## Cross-Border Economy

- **Mexican Migration**
  - 1910s-1920s: Mexican immigration to fill labor needs in U.S.
  - World War II
    - U.S. labor shortage (workers in armed forces)
    - **Mexican Labor Program** (Bracero Program) to 1964
- **Maquiladoras**
  - Border Industrialization Program (1965) initiated by Mexico
  - U.S. labor-intensive manufacturing industry
    - Import of raw materials, semi-finished parts from U.S.
    - Manufactured products to be re-exported (since 1989, 50% can be sold in Mexico)
  - Mexican wage-rates are cheaper than U.S. rates.

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## North America Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), 2001

- **Loss of special tariff status** for *maquiladoras*
- **Increased integration** of border area as a region as more people cross it daily.
  - Income differential between U.S. and Mexico.
  - Mexican workers legally enter U.S. daily for higher paying jobs.
  - Tourists/retirees from U.S. go to Mexico for lower costs.
  - Mexican shoppers go to U.S. stores for goods not available at home.
  - Cross-border travel to visit friends and family.
  - **"Twin cities" exist along border from the Gulf of Mexico to Pacific Ocean.**

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