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Review of *Our Treasures/Nuestros Tesoros: A Celebration of Nebraska's Mexican Heritage/Una celebración de la herencia mexicana de Nebraska* By Ralph F. Grajeda, et al

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Our Treasures/Nuestros Tesoros: A Celebration of Nebraska's Mexican Heritage/Una celebración de la herencia mexicana de Nebraska. By Ralph F. Grajeda, et al. Lincoln: Nebraska State Historical Society and the Nebraska Mexican American Commission, 1998. Photographs. 79 pp.

Our Treasures/Nuestros Tesoros is part of a grant funded project designed to collect and preserve the cultural heritage of Mexican Americans in Nebraska. The information presented is largely drawn from oral histories and interviews of residents living in Grand Island, Lincoln, Omaha, and Scottsbluff.

The published volume consists of five parts. "Mexicans in Nebraska," by Ralph Grajeda, provides a general survey of Mexican immigration into the state. Much of the information covers the period before World War II and focuses on the first two waves of immigration of Mexicans into the US and Nebraska. Although those familiar with the history of this migration will find little new, the chapter dispels the idea that Mexicans and Mexican Americans are recent arrivals to Nebraska and the Midwest. "The Story of the Mexican Traditions in Nebraska Project" describes how the project began, who was involved in collecting the information, the reasons for focusing on the communities selected, and the project's results. The third section describes and discusses some of the major cultural traditions that have been carried on by people of Mexican descent in Nebraska, the effects of acculturation on those traditions, and expressions of cultural values and

their meanings. Several, such as "Las Posadas," that date back centuries, are not as commonly observed as they once were. Others, such as music and dance, have experienced revitalization as Mexican Americans seek to preserve their identity and culture. Still others, such as military service, sports programs, and murals, continue to serve as major expressions of culture for Mexican Americans. Also discussed is the newer tradition involving *low riders*, a practice, often misunderstood by non-Mexican Americans, of customizing automobiles and bicycles. Much of the information is based on interviews with "tradition bearers."

The fourth section contains profiles and photographs of "tradition bearers" from the four communities the project focused on; the final section offers an annotated "Resource Guide" listing organizations, publications, and media about Mexican Americans in Nebraska.

This very brief volume about the people of Mexican descent in Nebraska provides a flavor of the group's diversity and heterogeneity. And it documents the processes of change and continuity that have shaped Mexican and Mexican American culture in Nebraska. Published in Spanish and English, it is a sincere effort to preserve the cultural heritage, present a historical and social survey to the general public, and celebrate the rich traditions that help define people of Mexican descent in the state.

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