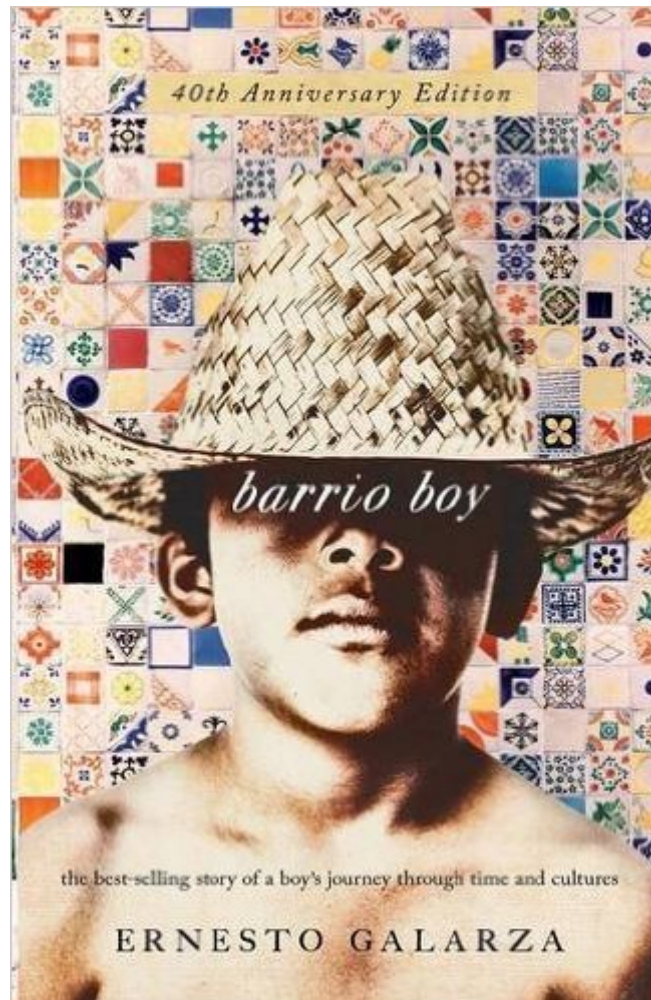


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Holt McDougal Library: Barrio Boy



Synopsis

About the Book Since it was first published in 1971, Galarza's classic work has been assigned in high school and undergraduate classrooms across the country, profoundly affecting thousands of students who read this true story of acculturation into American life. To celebrate the 40th anniversary of the publication of *Barrio Boy*, the University of Notre Dame Press is proud to reissue this best-selling book with a new text design and cover, as well an introduction--by Ilan Stavans, the distinguished cultural critic and editor of the Norton Anthology of Latino Literature--which places Ernesto Galarza and *Barrio Boy* in historical context.

About the Author Ernesto Galarza (1905-1984) was a labor organizer, historian, professor, and community activist. When he was eight, he migrated from Jalcocotan, Nayarit, Mexico, to Sacramento, California, where he worked as a farm laborer. He received a Ph.D. in history from Columbia University. In addition to *Barrio Boy*, he is the author of a number of books, including *Strangers in Our Fields* (1956), *Merchants of Labor* (1964), and *Spiders in the House and Workers in the Fields* (1970). In 1979, Dr. Galarza was nominated for the Nobel Prize in Literature.

"Unlike people who are born in hospitals, in an ambulance, or in a taxicab I showed up in an adobe cottage with a thatched roof that stood at one end of the only street of Jalcocotan, which everybody called Jalco for short. Like many other small villages in the wild, majestic mountains of the Sierra Madre de Nayarit, my pueblo was a hideaway. Even though you lived there, arriving in Jalco was always a surprise." --from Chapter 1

Reviews of the original edition: ". . . An illuminating record of the forebodings of ordinary rural Mexicans at the beginning of the revolution." -- The New York Review of Books "With its suspense, humor, and occasional sadness, *Barrio Boy* is splendid reading." -- American Anthropologist "Galarza's proud and moving book is a testament to who he is, where he came from, and to the country which received him and in which he has devoted his life fighting for both la justicia and justice." -- Social Education Journal

Barrio Boy is the remarkable story of one boy's journey from a Mexican village so small its main street didn't have a name, to the barrio of Sacramento, California, bustling and thriving in the early decades of the twentieth century. With vivid imagery and a rare gift for re-creating a child's sense of time and place, Ernesto Galarza gives an account of the early experiences of his extraordinary life--from revolution in Mexico to segregation in the United States--that will continue to delight readers for generations to come.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I liked reading BARRIO BOY 32 years ago, but having forgotten it completely, I recently re-read it and enjoyed it as much the second time. It's a humorous story of a kid growing up in a remote Mexican mountain village, moving to town, then to a city, while Mexico thrashed in the throes of the great revolution that lasted for ten bloody years. Eventually the eight year old Ernesto arrives at the American border, then goes to live with his mother and uncle in the working class section of Sacramento, California. The story leaves off as he is about to enter high school, so the recollections are of early childhood and boyhood only. The detail of everything is fantastic. Galarza must have had an amazing memory, or else he filled in the gaps by talking with his older relatives. The story moves along, never getting boring. More than anything else, this book gives you the feel of life in the Mexico of those times from the point of view of one who lived it, not just observed it. As it is the point of view of a kid, naturally there is little introspection or thinking about deeper meanings, overall trends, or the wider picture. You don't ever find out what happened to him, but if you look into it, you'll find that he was one of the first Chicanos to graduate from Stanford and got a Ph.D from Columbia too, becoming active in the labor movement. This guy was a bright spark all right. Bright colors as in a child's life, animals, sounds, special effects, unusual neighbors----these are marvelously portrayed, as are his observations of the differences between Mexicans and `gringos', not to mention other nationalities he met in California. His uncles, his mother, his feelings about his absent father---these hardly surface at all.

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