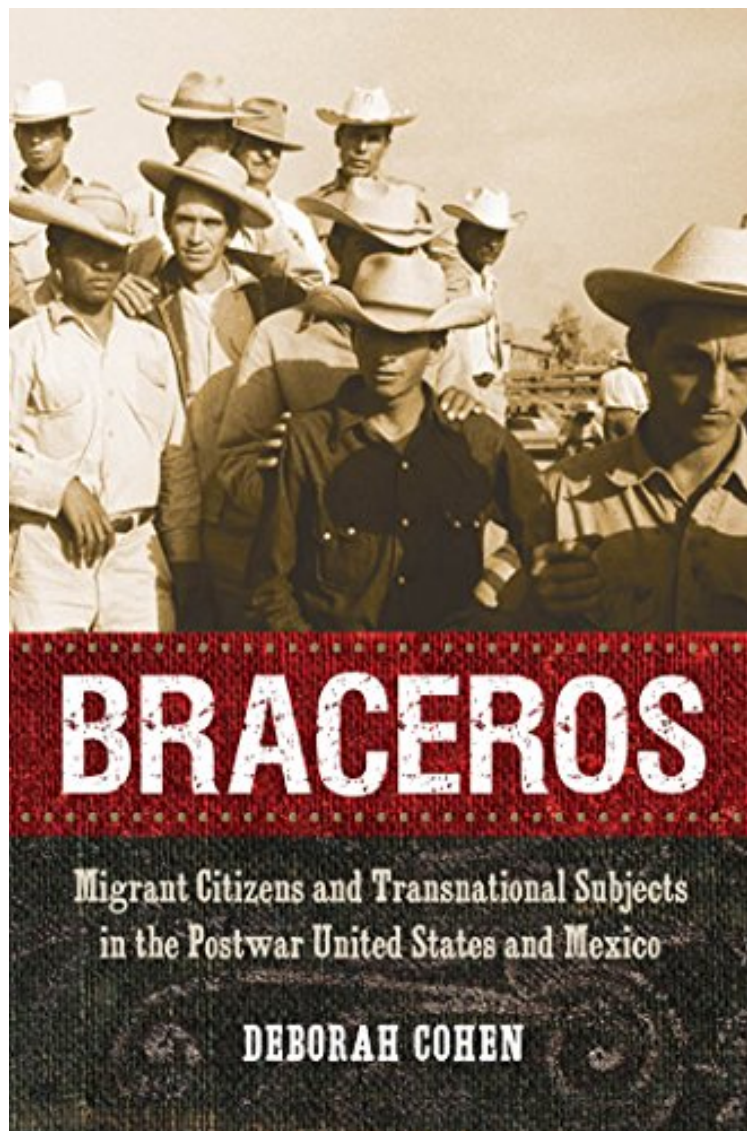


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## Braceros: Migrant Citizens and Transnational Subjects in the Postwar United States and Mexico

*Deborah Cohen*

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**Deborah Cohen : Braceros: Migrant Citizens and Transnational Subjects in the Postwar United States and Mexico** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Braceros: Migrant Citizens and Transnational Subjects in the Postwar United States and Mexico:

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you need it and easy to manage on phone or computer! Cheaper than other places as well once taking into consideration shipping and book costs. 2 of 10 people found the following review helpful. Author Overreaches Ignores Quite a Bit By Alexander C. Nowrasteh This book is an interesting history of the Bracero program, the guest worker program that existed between Mexico and the United States from 1942-1964. But the author takes it upon herself to give evidence for some misplaced (and sometime properly placed) theories of gender, racial, and other sorts of prejudice. Her theories added little to the historical narrative and often obstructed it. The author very critically analyzed the statements of growers, as she should, but had very odd interpretations based on the perceived racism or sexism of the speakers. Sometimes there was justification for her opinions but often times she read into them what she wanted to read. Most of the time she denounced somebody or some group as racist and the reader has to be in a position to take her word for it. The author's commentary on the economics of mobility were also full of contradictions. She took at face value claims that Braceros had terrible working conditions. But if the work conditions in the U.S. were so dreadful, why did thousands of Braceros congregate eagerly to enter the U.S. like before the El Paso incident? Acknowledging working conditions that few of us would be willing to labor in is worthless without an adequate comparison to the worker's opportunity cost - subsistence agriculture. My biggest criticism has to do with how the author's selective display of facts to describe how the Bracero program ended. The author did an excellent job tracing the end of the program with changing DOL personnel and ideologies in the Eisenhower and then Kennedy administrations but she left out one crucial lobbying component: Cesar Chavez. Any history of the end of the Bracero Program that excludes the violence and vigorous lobbying of Chavez's UFW tells an incomplete and impartial story of the end of the program. Overall, interesting history if you can ignore the author's thesis, poor understanding of economics, and selective justifications for complex historical events.

At the beginning of World War II, the United States and Mexico launched the bracero program, a series of labor agreements that brought Mexican men to work temporarily in U.S. agricultural fields. In *Braceros*, Deborah Cohen asks why these migrants provoked so much concern and anxiety in the United States and what the Mexican government expected to gain in participating in the program. Cohen creatively links the often-unconnected themes of exploitation, development, the rise of consumer cultures, and gendered class and race formation to show why those with connections beyond the nation have historically provoked suspicion, anxiety, and retaliatory political policies.