Descriptive Summary
Title: Chávez Esparza family letters
Inclusive Dates: 1962-1999
Bulk Dates: 1962-1973
Collection Number: mssChávez
Creator OR Collector: Chávez Esparza (Family)
Extent: 319 items in two boxes.
Repository: The Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens. Manuscripts Department
1151 Oxford Road
San Marino, California 91108
Phone: (626) 405-2191
Email: reference@huntington.org
URL: http://www.huntington.org
Abstract: The correspondence between different branches of the Chávez Esparza family, in Mexico and California.
Language of Material: The material is in Spanish and English.
Access
Open to qualified researchers by prior application through the Reader Services Department. For more information, contact Reader Services.
Publication Rights
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Preferred Citation
[Identification of item], Chávez Esparza family letters, The Huntington Library, San Marino, California.
Acquisition Information
Gift of Miroslava Chávez-García and Ebers García, June 2017.
Arrangement
The original order was preserved.
Biographical Note
José Chávez Esparza (1933-1981) and María Concepción Alvarado (1945-1981) were both born in Calvillo, Aguascalientes, Mexico. José had desired to study agricultural engineering after graduating from sixth grade at the age of sixteen. The realities of poverty meant otherwise, and he moved to the capital of Aguascalientes, obtaining work in a tailor shop and later driving a delivery truck. In 1954 José came to the United States as part of the bracero program, specifically to the Imperial Valley of California, where he lived in Brawley. Working for J. C. Reeves Ranches, he obtained his green card in the late 1950s and stayed in the valley until 1972, when he (with his wife María Concepción Alvarado and two children) moved to San José, California. He obtained work as an industrial worker, his profession until his death in 1981.
María Concepción Alvarado finished ninth grade in Calvillo in 1963 and held a sales position in Aguascalientes after her family’s move to this state capital city. She also worked as a traveling saleswoman in cosmetics. After a three year (mostly) epistolary courtship with José Chávez Esparza, María and José married in 1966. The couple endured a hard two-year wait at Mexicali for María’s green card, and after receiving it, she and José returned to Brawley. By this time the family numbered two children, who had also received their residency cards. This included Miroslava Chávez-García, the donor of the Chávez Esparza family letters. In 1972, the family moved to San José in José’s pursuit of a better job. Here, María was the family’s homemaker and worked seasonally as a cannery worker.
The brother of José Chávez Esparza, Jose Guadalupe Francisco "Paco" Chávez Esparza was born in Calvillo, Aguascalientes, Mexico in 1940. He worked as a clerk in city government there until 1962, when he moved to Mexicali, Baja California. After obtaining U.S. residency at Mexicali, Paco Chávez became a farmworker in Brawley, California, in 1963 and one year later moved to San José, California where he still lives. He was a laborer and paint maker in the Bay Area.
Other names in the collection: Antonio Lozano (Box 1, Folder 1), the second cousin of María Concepción Alvarado and Paco Chávez’s friend. Asunción Alvarado (Box 1, Folder 2), older sister of María Concepción Alvarado. Rogelio Martínez and Pedro Sánchez, friends of Paco Chávez Esparza (Box 1, Folder 3 and Box 1, Folder 9). Leovijilda Esparza (Box 2, Folder 1), José and Paco Chávez’s mother and wife of José Chávez Torres (Box 1, Folder 13).

Scope and Content
The letters document the lives and activities of different branches of the Chávez Esparza family, both in Mexico and California. This includes the search for jobs, working conditions, recreation, economic status, and transnational relations with relatives, especially courtship and the sending of money. The letters also document the education and professional career of María Concepción Alvarado in Mexico. The majority of the letters are in Spanish (a few are in English).

Personal Names
Chávez Esparza family
Concepción Alvarado, María

Subjects
Mexican Americans -- California -- History -- 20th century -- Sources
Mexicans -- California -- History -- 20th century -- Sources
Transnationalism -- History
Women -- California
Women -- Mexico

Geographic Areas
Aguascalientes (Mexico)
California -- History -- 20th century -- Sources

Genre
Letters (correspondence) -- California -- 20th century
Letters (correspondence) -- Mexico -- 20th century

Box 1
Family Letters

Folder 1  Antonio Lozano to Paco Chávez (1962-1967)
Folder 2  Asunción Alvarado to Paco Chávez (1962-1963)
Folder 3  [Paco Chávez Esparza] to Miscellaneous (1962-1966)
Folder 4  Rogelio Martínez to Paco Chávez (1962-1965)
Folder 5  María Concepción Alvarado to José Chávez Esparza (1964-1971)
Folder 6  José Chávez Esparza to María Concepción Alvarado (1963-1966)
Folder 7  Juan Chávez to Paco Chávez (1962-1964)
Folder 8  Father [José Chávez Esparza] to Paco Chávez (1962-1973)
Folder 9  Pedro Sánchez to Paco Chávez (1962-1964)
Folder 11 Paco Chávez to Father/Brothers (1963)
Folder 12 J. Jesús Chávez to Paco Chávez (1962-1966)
Folder 13 Letters José Chávez Torres (1962-1965)

Box 2
Family Letters

Folder 1  Letters Leovililda Esparza (1963-1967)
Folder 2  Ildefonso Hernádez to [Paco Chávez Esparza] (1964)
Folder 3  María del Socorro Salazar to Paco Chávez Esparza (1963-1964)
Folder 4  Rafael Martínez to Paco Chávez Esparza (1964)
Folder 5  Jesús Lozano to Paco Chávez Esparza (1963-1965)
Folder 6  Miscellaneous Letters (1962-1972)
Folder 7  Letters from relatives to Beatriz Chávez (1971-1990)
Folder 8  Letters from relatives to Paco Chávez Esparza (1973)
Folder 9  Antonio Lozano to Paco Chávez Esparza (1998-1999)
Folder 10 María Concepción Chávez Esparza to María Dolores Salazar (1976)