

Chicano Movement (Chc/Lat 166 and PPD 177)

Instructor: Rodolfo D. Torres

Winter 2017

Location: ICS 174

Thursday 7-9:50pm

Email: rodolfo@uci.edu

Office Hours: 4-5pm Thursday and by appointment

Room 218D SE1

Teaching Assistant

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PhD student in Planning, Policy, and Design

I'm a pessimist because of intelligence, but an optimist because of will."

Antonio Gramsci--Prison Notebooks

Course Description:

The tumultuous 1960's and early 70's produced changes in how Mexicans in the United States saw themselves and expected others to see them. The Chicano movement marked an important development in recent United States history. Many date the modern Chicano movement to the 1968 student walkouts in East Los Angeles nearly 50 years ago. More on the 50th anniversary commemoration of the 1968 student Walkouts later in the term.

On the first evening we will screen the award-winning documentary film *The Black Power Mixtape 1967-1975* to offer students an overview of the Black Power Movement—a movement that had a major political and cultural impact on *el movimiento*. In the following weeks the course examines the Chicana(o) Movement(s) also called by some scholars the Mexican American Civil Rights Movement with its ideological, regional, generational, and class differences in both its dominant male-centered form and its feminist challenge. The course will devote most of its attention to the period from 1968 to the mid-late 1970's. Although the course will focus on Mexican Americans, we will have a comparative component. In the past, the instructor has made selected comparisons with the Young Lords, a Puerto Rican liberation youth group formed in Spanish Harlem along with a chapter in Chicago in the late 60's. This term will instead focus attention to the African Americans. The class will conclude with a focus on the contemporary *movimiento*—prospects for change under (Yikes) a Trump administration and a growing anti-Mexican (and anti-immigrant) sentiment in the United States. The final question the Instructor will ask at the end of the term: Is it possible to build a new and better society beyond the failed systems of the past and present? Instructor will screen several films/documentaries. These films are an integral part of the class and are meant not to be considered entertainment. The films are to be intellectually engaged as if they were scholarly written material. No more – no less! Final exam will cover material in films. An underlying theme of this course will bring us back several times to possibility of building a movement for democratic change during the Trump years.

Many critical scholars have posited that liberal and mainstream notions of the politics and power drove the “movement(s)” leadership with its focus on electoral politics and school

reform to ignore the structural nature of problems in the wider political economy facing the Chicano and Chicana population(s). However, there were a small number of competing socialist organizations that appeared on the political scene to challenge the mainstream leadership and ideology of the movement. Students will be introduced to selected radical and socialist organizations through the reading of original documents produced by these groups.

Another unique aspect of the course is that it will be taught by a Chicano Movement veteran of the late 60's and early 70's. Torres attended Lincoln High School, one of the schools of the famous and celebrated "high school walkouts" of 1968. Torres dropped out of high school three months before the blowouts and reluctantly joined the Army at the age of 17. As soon as he was discharged in the summer of 1970 he became active in the anti-war movement and later a member of the UC Irvine's MEChA chapter (Movimiento Estudiantial Chicano de Aztlan) in the early 70's, Torres was also a member of the East Los Angeles (City Terrace) chapter of La Raza Unida Party (RUP) in Los Angeles. Torres remains active in local, national and global social and economic justice movements. He holds a PhD in Political Economy from Claremont Graduate School and has written and edited 16 books and over 50 articles and book chapters including, but not limited to the Chicano Movement, urban theory, Marxist social theory, and US politics. He plans to retire in four years to devote time to writing and drinking scotch on the beach ☺ You're all welcome!

Optional Readings students might find informative on the Chicano Movement:

1. *The Struggle in Black and Brown* Edited by Brian Behnken (University of Nebraska, 2011)
2. *The Chicano Movement* edited by Mario Garcia (Routledge, 2014) Excellent collection of writings by young scholars
3. *Making Aztlan: Ideology and Culture of the Chicana and Chicano Movement, 1966-1977* by Juan Gomez-Quinones and Irene Vasquez (University of New Mexico Press, 2014)
4. *Chicana Power!: Contested Histories of Feminism in the Chicano Movement* by Maylei Blackwell (University of Texas Press, 2011)
5. *Quixote's Solders: A Local History of the Chicano Movement, 1966-1981* by David Montejano (University of Texas Press, 2010)
6. *Brown-Eyed Children of the Sun: Lessons from the Chicano Movement, 1965-1975* (University of New Mexico Press, 2005) One of my favorite movement books
7. *Rethinking the Chicano Movement* by Marc S. Rodriguez (Routledge, 2015)
8. *The New York Young Lords and the Struggle for Liberation* by Darrel Wanzer-Serrano (Temple University Press, 2015)
9. *Man of Fire Selected Writings Ernesto Galarza* edited by Aramano Ibarra and Rodolfo D. Torres (University of Illinois, 2013)
10. *Social Justice Journal: Elizabeth "Betita" Sutherland Martinez: A life in Struggle* (Vol.39.No.2-3 (issues 128-129) 2013)

Instructor has a massive library of books for students to

Among the primary documents to be read include the following:

The Struggle for Chicano Liberation by the League of Revolutionary Struggle (Forward, No.2 August 1979)

Toward Chicano Liberation by the Communist Party USA (CPUSA)

Communist Labor Party (CLP) literature on Regional Autonomy (political economy of the Southwest)

Fan the Flames document produced by August 29th Movement (ATM)

Requirements:

With nearly 25 years of teaching, grading is still a struggle for me. Why? Because I do not believe in the conventional system of grading. In an upper-division class of more than 100, I find grading an extremely aggravating task. I want the sessions and discussions to be a stimulating and exciting as possible, with a collegial and supportive atmosphere, and yet in the end I have to evaluate your work and assign a grade. This reinforces the ultimate power that is lurking behind the social relations of the class. Social relations that instructors cannot alter without a structural change of the university and wider society. The instructor will do everything in his power to demystify the social relations of the classroom. Unlike traditional disciplines Chicana/o studies grew out of a movement for social and economic change. This course will provide only an overview of this movement. The UC Irvine Department of Chicano and Latino Studies offers many courses on a range of topics and the instructor urges students to take additional courses in the Department of Chicano and Latino Studies. The faculty members are award-winning authors and top scholars in their respective fields of study.

1. Mid-term and Final (multiple choice questions) 25 questions per exam
2. Students will also be required to write two multiple choice questions per reading assignment. Selected students will be asked to share their question with class. Instructor will select several to be included on exam. Important note: Syllabus is subject to change

Course Outline

Topic: What did you students get yourself into? ☺

January 12 Introduction

Film: The Black Power Mixtape: 1967-1975

Topic: Introduction to el Movimiento

January 19 Required Reading:

Required Reading: Origins

“Introduction to Brown-Eyed Children of the Sun” by George Mariscal From Brown-Eyed Children from the Sun (university of New Mexico Press, 2005)

“Chicano Movement” by Carlos Munoz Jr. (April 2003)

Film: Yo Soy Chicano

Topic: Toward Theory

January 26 Required Reading:

Required Reading: “Theoretical and Historical Foundations”

Chapters 1-2 from Making Aztlán by Juan Gomez-Quinones and Irene Vasquez (University of New Mexico Press, 2014)

Film: TBA

Topic: From Black and Brown Power to Black Lives Matter and Beyond

February 2

Required Reading:

“Black, Brown, and Poor: Civil Rights and the Making of the Chicano Movement” in The Struggle in Black and Brown edited by Brian D. Behnken (University of Nebraska Press, 2011)

“Always connecting the Struggles: by ChudePam Allen (Social Justice special issue, Vol.39,Nos. 2-3))

Topic: Classroom Exam

February 9

Mid-term Exam

No Required Reading:

Film: TBA

Topic: The Chicano Generation: A Chicana Profile

February 16

Required Reading:

“Chicano Movement by Mario Garcia , in Chicano Generation (UC Press, 2015)

“Gloria Arellanes from The Chicano Generation by Mario Garcia (UC Press, 2015)

Film: TBA

Topic: Political Empowerment during the 60’ and 70’s : A Critique of the Chicano Movement

February 23

Required Reading

“The Road to Political Empowerment” From Chicano! By F. Arturo Rosales (Arte Publico, 1996)

Topic: March 2 The Movement in Retrospect

Required Reading:

“Legacy of the Chicano Movement: From Chicano! (Arte Publico, 1996)

Topic: Political Left in the 60’ and 70’s : Successes and Failures

March 9

Required Reading:

I am hoping to organize a panel of the Chicano and Chicana left.

Topic: Prospects for the Future: the 21st: Yikes, Looking Back and the Road Again

March 16

Required Readings

TBA

March 23 Final Exam