

Chicano Movement

PPD 177 and CHC/LAT 166

Humanities Gateway 1800

Spring 2018

Thursday 7-9:50pm

Instructor: Rodolfo D. Torres

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Office Hours: 4-5pm Thursday and by appointment.

TA: Ashley Hernandez

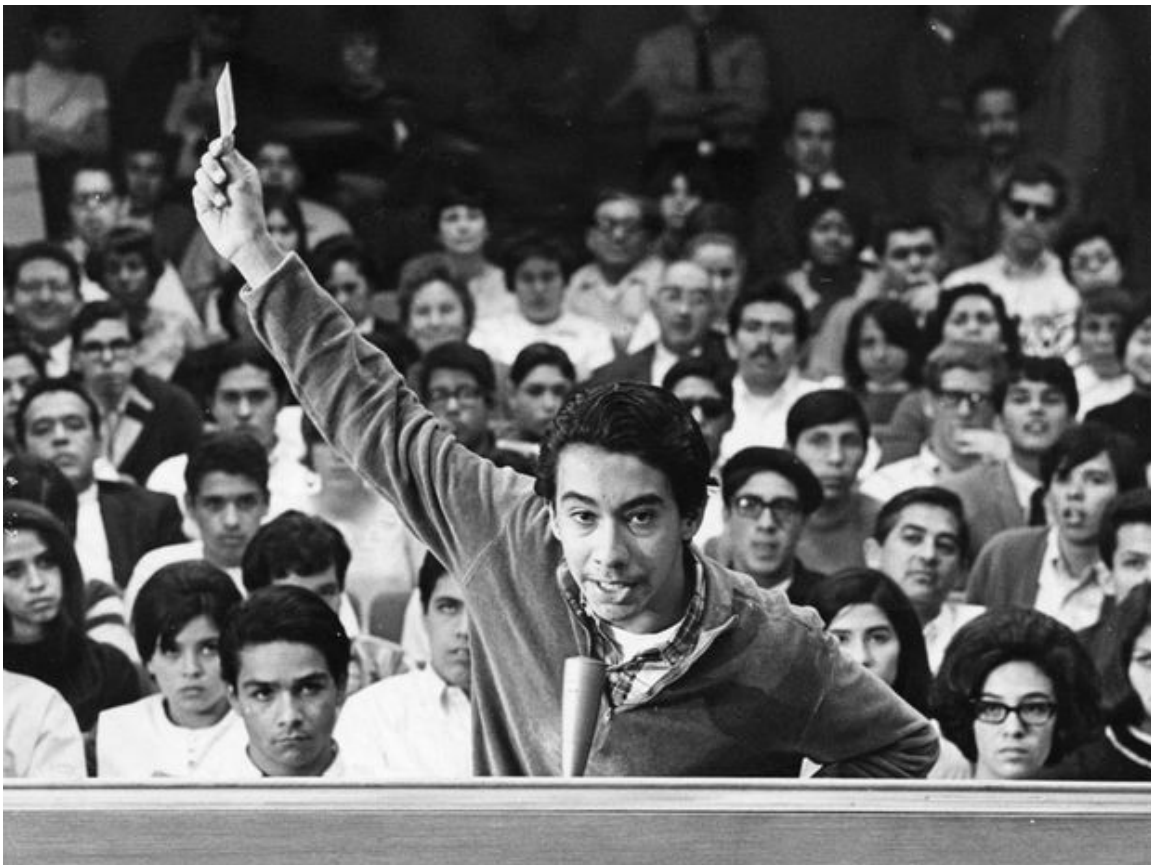
Office Hours: Monday 12-1:00pm & Thursday 5:30-6:30pm

Office Location: Social Ecology I, Rm. 320

***Please email all questions to TA**

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

Antonio Gramsci--Prison Notebooks



Students Demand School Reforms at LAUSD Board Meeting:1968

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

(syllabus is subject to change)

It was exactly fifty years ago last month when thousands of East Los Angeles Chicano and Chicana students walked out of their high schools to protest the poor quality of education. Your instructor, had just dropped out of Lincoln High School in 1967. One of the schools that participated in the Walkouts.

A unique aspect of this course is that it will be taught by a veteran of the Chicano movement. Thus, your instructor's personal life is a narrative of *El Movimiento*, thus this course will offer a unique personal, political, and intellectual perspective and critique of the Movement and the wider civil rights movement of Torres' generation. Your instructor feels both honored and humbled to have an opportunity to teach this course for the 18th time since his UC Irvine faculty appointment. This feeling is especially meaningful on this 50th anniversary of the East LA blow-outs. In two years we will be commemorating another historic moment in recent movement history—the Chicano Moratorium of August 29th 1970---the anti-war demonstration that took place in East Los Angeles. Torres was discharged from military service two months before the demonstration and participated and arrested at the protest (charges were later dropped).

On the same day, a LA Times reporter, Ruben Salazar who had written several critical articles of law enforcement was murdered under mysterious circumstances by an officer of the LA County Sheriff's Department at the Silver Dollar Bar---a "cantina" in ELA. The bar was located on Whittier Boulevard not far from the demonstration. We will also screen a new documentary on his life and his transformation from a mainstream journalist to a supporter of the Chicano movement to his mysterious death at the hands of LA County law enforcement.

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 scholars date the modern Chicano movement to the 1968 student walkouts in East Los Angeles. However, they recognize that prior to the 1960's Mexicans living in the United States were politically active in what could be called a period of Mexican American mainstream civil rights activities. Especially around issues such as political participation and challenging Jim Crow-style discrimination against Mexican Americans.

The class will begin with the screening of the award-winning documentary *Yo Soy Chicano*, produced by Jesus Trevino. *Yo Soy* has several clips of iconic figures of the Chicano Movement including, but not limited to Dolores Huerta, Reies Lopez Tijerina and Corky Gonzales.

In our second session, we will screen another 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 political and intellectual impact on El Movimiento.

In the following weeks the course examines the Chicano Movement(s) with its ideological, regional, generational, and class differences in both its dominant male-centered form and its feminist challenges. 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 one session that focuses on the Young Lords, a Puerto Rican liberation youth group formed in Spanish Harlem in the late 60's. Chapters of a new book on the Young Lords has been assigned for this part of one session of the class. The class will conclude with a focus on the contemporary *movimiento*---prospects for change in the 21st century.

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.

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). As we will learn there were a number of competing socialist organizations that appeared on the Chicano 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.

The screening of a new documentary (released only last month) fills a major gap in this course--a film on Oscar Zeta Acosta the so-called “Brown Buffalo.” *The Rise and Fall of the Brown Buffalo* chronicles his early years in Jim Crow-era California to his mysterious disappearance off the coast of Mexico in 1974 at the age of 39, this film explores the life of lawyer, writer, and Chicano activist Oscar Zeta Acosta, one of the most enigmatic figures in U.S. counterculture and Movement history. From attorney and spokesman for L.A.'s Chicano Movement to his collaboration and volatile friendship with journalist Hunter S. Thompson, from his days as a Baptist preacher in the jungles of Panama to the prisons and courtrooms of East L.A., from radical chic cocktail parties in the Hollywood Hills to narco trafficking in a coastal Mexican town, Acosta's life is a fascinating untold story. He also had

his critics of being a pot smoking, arrogant and especially misogynist “son of a bitch.” The evening of the screening of the film, I have invited a personal friend and an activist Chicano lawyer from Tucson Arizona. Richard Martinez who recently won a major civil rights case in Tucson. Mr. Martinez will speak on what it means to be an activist lawyer in these unsettling times.

COURSE READINGS:

Selected chapters/sections from the following publications. All readings will be posted on EEE at no cost to students.

1. The Chicano Generation: Testimonios of the Movement by Mario T. Garcia (UC Press, 2015)
2. The Young Lords: A Reader Edited by Darrel Enck-Wanzer
3. De Colores Means All of Us: Latina Views for a Multicolored Century by Elizabeth Martinez (2018, Verso)
4. Eyewitness: A Filmmaker’s Memoir of the Chicano Movement (Arte Publico Press, 2001)
5. The Spirit of a New People: The Cultural Politics of the Chicano Movement by Randy J. Ontiveros (2014, NYU Press)
6. The Chicano Movement edited by Mario Garcia (2014, Routledge)
7. Starving for Justice by Ralph Armbruster-Sandoval (UA Press, 2017)
8. Rethinking the Chicano Movement by Marc Simon Rodriguez (Routledge, 2015)
9. Raza Si, Migra No: Chicano Movement Struggles for Immigrant Rights in San Diego by Jimmy Patino (UNC Press, 2017)

Optional Readings: On Library Reserve

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)

7. Sancho's Journal: Exploring the Political Edge with the Brown Berets by David Montejano (University of Texas Press, 2012) Book deals with the Berets in Texas. Excellent!

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 the political economy of the Southwest (National question and class location of Chicanos in the USA)

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

COURSE REQUIRMENTS:

With more than 30 years of teaching, the instructor is still struggling with grading. Why? Because he does not believe in the conventional system of grading. In an upper-division class of more than 100, he finds grading an extremely aggravating task. The instructor wants the sessions and discussions to be as stimulating and exciting as possible, with a collegial and supportive atmosphere, and yet in the end he has 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. The faculty members are first-rate scholars in their respective fields of study.

As for required readings, the instructor will not pile on the readings. There will be sessions when the readings are very light and other sessions the readings will take a bit more time to read. Overall, the readings will NOT BE AN ARDIOUS TASK. Professor Torres suggests that students read ahead to determine whether future readings might require more time and attention. If the readings prove to be too heavy, students are urged to inform the instructor and revisions will be considered.

1. Weekly interrogations
Weekly interrogations should be between 750-1000 words per assigned reading. These will be due via online submission on EEE before class and a typed hard copy must also be turned in at the end of class. Late

assignments will not be accepted. This is not meant to be an arduous task. These assignment must be typed.

2. In-Class Midterm Exam (20 multiple choice questions—very low stress exam) 50%
3. In-Class Final Exam (30 multiple question) A few questions will be taken from the Mid-term 50%

The idea for the so-called interrogations is not to write elaborate reading notes, but to interrogate the central issues or strands of the assigned readings and if pertinent relate to previous readings, lectures, and films. The expectation is that you will write no more than 750-1000 words per assigned reading. This can include a narrative and questions that you may have from the readings or for Dr. Torres.

Interrogations must be submitted both online at EEE and in class. Interrogations submitted in class must be stapled, typed, and given to the TA at the end of class for attendance purposes. Again, this is not meant to be an arduous task—it's designed to help facilitate and move our discussion along in a structured and timely manner. This assignment will be assessed as a pass or fail. Instructor will ask students (drawing from their interrogations) to comment of the readings. Fail interrogations will be returned to students with comments to improve future interrogations.

The Course Outline

Week 1:

April 5th

Topic: Introduction

Required Reading: None

Film: Yo Soy Chicano

Week 2:

April 12th

Topic: Black and Chicano Power

Required Reading:

“The Social Context of Black Power” in Black Awakening in Capitalist America by Robert Allen (1969, Anchor Books).

“Does Anyone Care about What Happened 45 Years Ago? By Jorge Mariscal in The Chicano Movement edited by Mario Garcia (2014, Routledge)

Film: The Black Power Mixtape 1967-1975

Week 3:

April 19th

Topic: El Movimiento: From the Fields to the Cities:

Required Reading:

“Immigrant Actos: Citizenship and Performance in El Teatro Campesino” in In The Spirit of a New People: The Cultural Politics of the Chicano Movement by Randy J. Ontiveros (2014, NYU Press)

El Teatro Compesino in Eyewitness: A Filmmaker’s Memoir of the Chicano Movement by Jesus Salvador Trevino (2001, Arte Publico Press) **This reading is not required**

Film: El Teatro Compesino

Week 4:

April 26th

Topic: The ELA Walkouts: A Fifty-Year Reflection

Required Reading:

“Parkland student activists should study the East L.A. Blowouts that launched a movement in California” by Gustavo Arellano (LA Times August 28, 2018)

“Blowouts Part 1” in Blowouts! Sal Castro & the Chicano Struggle for Educational Justice by Mario T. Garcia and Sal Castro

Film: PBS Documentary “Taking Back the Schools”

Week 5:

May 3rd

Topic: The “Brown Buffalo” ----the Movement’s Countercultural Icon

Required Reading:

Collection of articles on Oscar Acosta to be posted.

Film: The Rise and Fall of the Brown Buffalo

Guest Speaker: Richard Martinez, lawyer and civil rights activist

Week 6:

May 10th

(Low-Stress) MID TERM EXAM & CLASS

Topic: Puerto Ricans and the Young Lords

Required Reading:

“The Origins and History of the Young Lords” in *The Young Lords: A Reader*
Edited by Darrel Enck-Wanzer

Film: ¡Palante, Siempre Palante! The Young Lords

Week 7:

May 17th

Topic: The Movement, the state, and Immigrant Rights in 60's and 70's

Required Reading

“Delivering the Mexican Vote, Immigration, and La Raza Unida Party By Jimmy Patino in *Raza Si, Migra No* by Jimmy Patino (UNC Press, 2017)

“For Those Families Who Are Deported and Have No Place to Land by Jimmy Patino in *Raza Si, Migra No* by Jimmy Patino (UNC Press, 2017) **Optional**

“The First Time I met Cesar Chavez, I Got into an Argument with Him” in *Raza Si, Migra No* by Jimmy Patino (UNC Press, 2017)

Week 8:

May 24th

Topic: The Movement: The Feminist (and Marxist) Challenge

Required Reading:

“Gloria Arellanes” in *The Chicano Generation: Testimonios of the Movement* by Mario T. Garcia (*UC Press, 2015*)

“¡La Lucha Continua! Gloria Arellanes and Women in the Chicano Movement” by Juan Herrera (2015, KCET Website)

“Listen Up. Anglo Sisters” by Elizabeth Martinez in *De Colores Means All of Us* (Verso, 2018)

“The Chicana Woman: A Historical Materialist Perspective” by Linda Apodaca
Latin American Perspective, Vol 4, Issue 1-2, 1977

Week 9:

May 31st

Topic: The Chicano “Socialist Left” and the Movement

Required Reading:

“The Struggle for Chicano Liberation” in *The Politics of Chicano Liberation* edited by Olga Rodriguez (The resolution adopted by 24th National Convention of Socialist Workers Party in August 1972)

“The Betrayal of the “Communist” Party U.S.A. on the Chicano National Question”
By August 29th Movement in *The Red Banner*, Vol. 1, No. 1, Winter 1976-77.

Toward Chicano Liberation by the Communist Party USA (CPUSA)

Fan the Flames by August 29th Movement (ATM)

Week 10:

June 7th

Topic: The Movement’s Legacy: How to be an anti-capitalist in the 21st Century and build Economic Democracy in the 21st Century

Required Reading:

“Conclusion: Rethinking to Move Forward by Marc Simon Rodriguez in Rethinking the Chicano Movement (Routledge, 2015)

Reversing Inequality by Chuck Collins (Institute for Policy Studies, 2017)

“How to be an Anti-capitalist in the 21st Century” unpublished paper by Erik Olin Wright (Optional)

Week 11:

June 14th FINAL EXAM

TA’s will make arrangements with students attending Chicana/o (Raza) Graduation. Graduating seniors please inform TA’s as soon as possible if you plan to attend the event. Instructor and TA’s will accommodate students.

