

El Grito

winter 1970

\$1.25



El Grito

A JOURNAL OF CONTEMPORARY MEXICAN-AMERICAN THOUGHT

Volume III, No. 2

Winter 1970

Editors: OCTAVIO I. ROMANO—V.
NICK C. VACA
ANDRES YBARRA

Contributing Editor: GUSTAVO SEGADE
(San Diego State College)

El Grito is published quarterly — November, February, May, August —
by Quinto Sol Publications, Inc.
2168 Shattuck Ave., Room 208, Berkeley, California 94704

Address all correspondence to
P. O. Box 9275, Berkeley, California 94709

Subscription Price — one year, \$4.00
All single and back issues — \$1.25 each, prepaid
Foreign subscriptions, \$5.00

Copyright © 1969 by QUINTO SOL PUBLICATIONS, INC. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced in any manner without permission in writing, except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical articles and reviews.

Second Class Postage Paid at Berkeley, California 94701

Contents

	EDITORIAL	2
ARMANDO MORALES	MENTAL AND PUBLIC HEALTH ISSUES	3
OSCAR ZETA ACOSTA	THE EAST L. A. 13	12
RUDY ESPINOSA	MI CASA ES SU CASA	19
RICARDO SANCHEZ	POETRY	28
HÉCTOR LÓPEZ	TIBIA INCERTIDUMBRE	35
BERNIE CALDERÓN	TE LO ADVERTI	37
JAVIER RAMIREZ	EL VIAJE	39
DIANA LÓPEZ	LA SOCIEDAD	40
JORGE ALVAREZ	POETRY	42
MIGUEL PONCE	POETRY	47
OCTAVIO I. ROMANO—V.	MUGRE DE LA CANCION	50
RICARDO CUADRA	PORTFOLIO	56

Cover: Ricardo Cuadra

Editorial

In 1923 there appeared one of the earliest psychological studies of Mexican-Americans. Thomas R. Garth published "*A Comparison of the Intelligence of Mexican and Mixed and Full Blood Indian Children*" in the *Psychological Review*. In this article, Garth strongly suggested that the "poor" academic performance of Mexicans and full-blooded Indians was somehow caused by biological heritage. Although Garth did not entirely discard environmental characteristics, he did neglect to consider the *language* of Mexican and Indian children. Instead, he advanced the definite notion that Mexican and Indian children suffered from a severe case of "bad blood" that manifested itself in poor academic achievement. This notion of "bad blood" was to underlie subsequent studies of Mexican-Americans up to 1930.

In 1930, H. T. Manuel's work, "*The Education of the Mexican and Spanish-Speaking Children in Texas*," proposed that language played a major part in academic performance. Then, Dr. George I. Sanchez wrote two major articles, in which, along with Manuel, he severely criticized previous studies of Mexican-American intelligence. In these pioneer articles, Sanchez attacked the prevalent notions of racial (today read cultural) inferiority as the basis for poor academic showing and limited intelligence. Sanchez and Manuel found that the linguistic nature of the Mexican-American child should be considered a strong and predominant variable in intelligence testing.

Forty years have passed since these works appeared. Psychologists have largely ignored them and abuses continue. For generations the intelligence testing of Mexican-American children has caused untold harm. Spanish-speaking children are tested in English, and then labeled as mentally retarded because of poor performance.

Now, in 1970, a Federal Court in San Francisco has ruled that Spanish-speaking children must be tested in their own language to avoid being labeled and stigmatized for the rest of their lives.

Note well. Legal action, not the ethics of the American Psychological Association, has been necessary to halt these abuses. But much harm has been done. Thousands and thousands of children have been labeled as mentally retarded for the crime of speaking Spanish.

Who knows how many Mexican-Americans are presently committed to mental institutions for the same reasons?

Legal action is needed to curb this "scientific" abuse. For over three generations, now, the American Psychological Association has been mutely silent, indifferent, and cruelly culture-bound when dealing with Mexican-Americans. This, surely, is not science. In truth, the profession of psychology has allowed itself to be used as a tool for the oppression of minorities. The profession, by its immutable silence, has therefore surrendered its right to be called either scientific or socially responsible. Thousands of ruined lives are ample empirical evidence to support this contention.

/ / /

Note: The next issue of *EL GRITO* (Volume III, number 3) will have more to say about the profession of psychology and the Mexican-Americans.

Mental and Public Health Issues

THE CASE OF THE MEXICAN AMERICANS IN LOS ANGELES

ARMANDO MORALES

Mental health programs are not “new” to people of Mexican descent when one considers that the first hospitals for the mentally ill in North America were built in Mexico. However, mental health programs for people of Mexican descent residing in the United States are a very new phenomenon – with the first mental health service with bilingual staff being established in East Los Angeles* in 1967. The following will review earlier notions and assumptions about Mexican Americans and mental health, and compare these with current experiences. While focusing on a specific urban Mexican American community the information contained herein may have general interpretive and application value.

Mental Health Issues

Generally, there has been at best limited to moderate success in the treatment of alcoholism and drug addiction problems in the United States. There has been by far, even less interest and effort to solve these problems as it affects Mexican Americans. There are

* The East Los Angeles area is usually defined as including El Sereno, Boyle Heights, Commerce, Lincoln Heights, City Terrace, Montebello, Belvedere, Highland Park, and unincorporated East Los Angeles. These areas comprise the Northeast and East Health Districts of Los Angeles county. The area has a population of 375,000 with 50.3% bearing Spanish surnames. Of this group, 76.6% were born in the U.S. with 22.2% having been born in Mexico. The median family income in the area is \$4,820. (See Note 1)

from 30,000 to 40,000 alcoholics and illegal narcotics users in East Los Angeles. These symptoms are being defined by society as criminal acts, hence, thousands of Mexican Americans are placed in prison and jail for these "offenses."

There has been a general belief that Mexican Americans have had few problems with mental health because of their small representation in state hospitals. A number of reasons have been proposed to account for this phenomenon. Some have advanced the notion that the structure of the family helps prevent mental illness, that Mexican Americans prefer "curanderos" (folk healers), and that having mental health problems is viewed with stigma. Some have said that Mexican Americans do not avail themselves of existing services and facilities because they belong to a "culture" which views mental health problems negatively and, as such, tend to tolerate them rather than seek assistance.^{2(a-d)}

Contrary to the belief that Mexican Americans would be hesitant in utilizing mental health services because of cultural factors, recent statistics reveal that while "whites" had 23% self and family referrals and "Negroes" 30%, "Mexican Americans" accounted for 50%.³ (See Table I below)

TABLE I
Ethnic Origin

Source of Referral	Ethnic Origin		
	White	Negro	Mexican American
Self	10%	10%	19%
Family	13%	20%	31%
TOTAL	23%	30%	50%

With regard to the existing notion that mental health problems are not as severe in the Mexican American community as in the dominant society, direct psychiatric clinical experience in the East

† During the development of the East Los Angeles Mental Health Service the Department of Mental Health was successful in recruiting staff in which twenty-one out of twenty-two were bilingual personnel. The staff consisted of four psychiatrists, four psychiatric social workers, three senior public health nurses, one Ph.D. community mental health psychologist, one community coordinator, one vocational rehabilitation counselor, and seven clerical persons.

Los Angeles Mental Health Service† is clearly disproving this notion. While the major diagnosis reported by twenty-five county health districts is 18% “schizophrenic” and “other psychoses,”⁴ East Los Angeles Mental Health Service staff estimated thirty to forty percent in this category. This significant factor alone magnifies the severity of psychiatric problems and makes it very clear that in future planning, great effort has to be made in recruiting psychiatrists rather than paraprofessionals and mental health aides for patient treatment. Paraprofessionals and mental health aides can be utilized in carefully defined complimentary supportive roles with patients *once* there are sufficient psychiatrists available. Clinical experience at ELAMHS has also revealed a significant number of patients with primary physiological disorders producing psychological symptoms. This again stresses the importance of careful, skilled psychiatric diagnosis and treatment.

The use of paraprofessionals and mental health aides as psychotherapists is often suggested as a possible solution for the shortage of mental health professionals (psychiatrists, psychologists, psychiatric social workers) in poor communities such as East Los Angeles. These “progressive” concepts can have a seductive effect in the poor communities because of the shortage of jobs. However, there may exist certain inherent risks as follows:

(1) The development of a *dual standard* of psychiatric service, one for the poor and one for the affluent. This already exists in psychoanalysis, where socio-economic considerations are of utmost importance when this treatment is indicated.

(2) Aggravation of a growing social gap between the mental health professional and the lower socio-economic Mexican American patient. This would be consistent with the growing repolarization in this country between the poor and the affluent.

(3) Generally it is accepted that there is a shortage of mental health professionals but the more serious problem is that there is a *maldistribution of these professionals*. For example, in the greater East Los Angeles area, which numbers close to one-half million people in population, there are only three psychiatrists in private practice. In the Westwood Village-Beverly Hills areas with half the population of East Los Angeles, there are 275 psychiatrists in private practice.⁵ Planners should give the highest priority to increasing drastically the enrollment of the professional schools with students from the Mexican American community having bilingual

abilities. Private contracting for professional mental health services for East Los Angeles should be a temporary second priority.

(4) The use of paraprofessional and mental health aides as a *substitute* for quality mental health treatment will have the result of perpetuating sub-standard mental health service and consequently, a chronicity of mental health problems in an already socio-economically deprived community. This, perhaps, is the biggest risk to consider.

Police Arrest Patterns of Alcoholics and Addicts

While Mexican Americans are underrepresented in state hospital statistics (3.3%), they are vastly overrepresented in prisons and jails. Of 40,000 adult parolees and prisoners in California, 20% or 8,000 are Mexican American, primarily for offenses related to narcotics. At the California Rehabilitation Center, a state prison facility for narcotic users in Corona which has 2,700 prisoners, 44% or 1,188 of the inmates are Mexican Americans.⁶ Does this mean that Mexican Americans utilize narcotics more than other groups? It has been known for several years that physicians and nurses comprise the largest single group of narcotic addicts in the country but the record shows this group to be grossly underrepresented in the arrest and conviction columns.⁷ It has been pointed out that "in the United States those addicts who have been medically addicted and continue to receive drugs from physicians retain their economic status, working and living normally with their neighbors. The wealthy addict is rarely hauled into the courts. The larger majority of addicts in this country are, however, forced into social deterioration. Because of the exorbitant cost of illegal narcotics, addicts must rob, steal, prostitute, pimp, or peddle drugs. Social, not pharmacological factors, produce this type of criminality."⁸

The most time-consuming task for all law enforcement is the handling of public drunks who, though hardly a serious menace to society, account for one-third of all arrests in the United States.⁹ In 1967, the Los Angeles Police Department alone accounted for 91,140 persons arrested for drunk and drunk driving out of a total of 167,020 arrests.¹⁰ Drunk and drunk driving arrests account for a little over 50% of all offenses in East Los Angeles — a significantly higher ratio than other communities. See Table II for a comparison of East Los Angeles and West Valley populations with regards to numbers of police and frequency of drunk and drunk driving arrests.

TABLE II
DRUNK AND DRUNK DRIVING
ARRESTS PER AREA AND POPULATION

1968	LAPD Hollenbeck Area & ELA Sheriff's Station*	LAPD West Valley Area**
Total Population	259,275	260,832
Square Miles	26.44	54.81
Ethnicity	50-60% White, Spanish Surname	95% White, Non- Spanish Surname
Drunk and Drunk Driving Arrests	Per Month: 800 Per Year: 9,676 Per Sq. Mi: 372	125 1,552 28.5
Law Enforcement Agencies	CHP, LAPD, Sheriff	LAPD***
Total Number of Officers	375	151
Number of Officers per Square Mile	13.5	3.5
Major Crime per ratio of Population	1.4%	1.3%

Table II reveals dramatic differences in arrests related to drinking. From its information one must conclude that more police are present to observe infractions of the law in the East Los Angeles

* "Total Population" and "Square Miles" includes Bell Gardens, 29,491 people, 2.40 sq. miles; and City of Commerce, 10,763 people, 6.56 sq. miles. Bell Gardens and Commerce accounted for 1,168 of the drunk and drunk driving arrests.

** As defined by LAPD.

*** CHP statistics in the West Valley area were not available but even when CHP arrests are subtracted from the ELA area (approximately 3,000 arrests), there still is a significantly higher ratio of arrests for those offenses in the ELA area as compared to the West Valley area.

LAPD = Los Angeles Police Department.

CHP = California Highway Patrol.

Sheriff = Los Angeles County Sheriff's office.

area, and that drunk driving arrests increase as the number of police per square mile increase. It is *not* that Mexican Americans are drinking more than their affluent neighbors. For example, in the West Valley LAPD area in 1967, with 1.8 officers per square mile, there was an average of seventeen drunk and drunk driving arrests per square mile. A second police station was established by the LAPD in 1968 in the area increasing the number of officers to 3.5 per square mile. Drunk and drunk driving arrests increased to 28.5 per square mile from the previous 17 per square mile rate. Was it that the people began to drink more in 1968, or was it related to the increase in police personnel?

According to Roche Laboratories, California leads all states in the number of alcoholics — 6,600 per 100,000 population.¹¹ They also point out that alcoholics are found in all socio-economic levels. Yet, the affluent users of alcohol seem to be very much underrepresented in criminal statistics. Jack W. Bishop, Director of the U.S.C. Research Project on the Drinking Driver and Traffic Safety, found that most convicted drunken drivers are between 31 and 40 years of age, of minority group status, and that most of those convicted are laborers or unskilled workers.¹²

The head administrator of the Los Angeles County Jail, Chief Kramer, informed, on August 2, 1968, that they did not keep racial or ethnic statistical data on prisoners. There are 12,000 prisoners in the county jail. During 1967, 153,221 persons were booked into the County Jail, with a third of these being arrested for offenses related to drinking.¹³ Since Mexican Americans comprised 20% of state adult inmates and parolees, and 25% of California Youth Authority wards, there would be reason to believe that Mexican Americans represented 20% (2,400) to 25% (3,000) of the County Jail inmates in Los Angeles. This is not difficult to conclude when one considers the large numbers of people in East Los Angeles being arrested for drunk and drunk driving offenses. Better statistics regarding ethnic arrest patterns are needed in this area for exact documentation.

In a preliminary survey of seven private and public alcoholic rehabilitative services closest to East Los Angeles, inquiry was made as to (1) how many Spanish-speaking professionals were on their staffs, and (2) how many Spanish surname clients they were servicing. All services reported that they did not have Spanish-speaking professionals and — with the exception of three services — they did not have Spanish surname clients. Those services reporting they

were treating Spanish surname clients made it clear that even these were few in number.

With the exception of three or four Alcoholic Anonymous groups in East Los Angeles, there are no detoxification or professional services available for Mexican Americans with drinking problems. Apparently the only treatment facility continues to be the Los Angeles County Jail. The same can be said for the narcotics user and addict.

It seems that if one is affluent and has the misfortune of having a drinking or drug problem, there are many resources and alternatives available and one is less likely to be detected by light police patrols. However, if one is poor, and subject to especially intense police observation, as is the case with the East Los Angeles Mexican American, the treatment usually consists of jail for the drunk and state prison for the one with the drug problem. One receives punishment for his symptoms, the other treatment for his "illness."

Financing of Community Mental Health Services

The National Institute of Mental Health is authorized by the Community Mental Health Centers Act to provide federal funds for the establishment of community mental health centers in areas of need.¹⁴ Under the same Act, grants are made available to help pay the salaries of professional and technical personnel employed in community mental health centers. However, the funds are awarded on a decreasing percentage basis for the center's first fifty-one months of operation.¹⁵ Grants may cover 75% of eligible staff costs the first fifteen months, decreasing to "0%" by the 51st month. A poor community such as East Los Angeles, with no financial-industrial resources, can hardly afford such a needed service. Affluent areas which are not as needy as East Los Angeles have been able to establish 16 of these related programs throughout Los Angeles.

New Federal legislation has provided for ten year funding grants for problems of drug addiction and alcoholism. The important stipulation, however, is that these programs be attached to *existing* federal community mental health centers. Interested residents and professionals, including this writer, have repeatedly asked for a waiver of all these requirements in order to obtain these acutely needed services. According to a Washington, D.C. NIMH representative, the waiver continues to be "in committee," where it has been for over a year.

Summary

Mexican Americans do have mental health problems. Patients seen at ELAMHS have more severe psychiatric diagnoses. They desire mental health services and had clearly the highest source of self and family referrals in Los Angeles County when compared to Negroes and Whites.

There is a paucity of psychiatric facilities in East Los Angeles, and a severe shortage of mental health professionals, particularly Spanish-speaking. There is a risk in using paraprofessionals and mental health aides as a *substitute* for mental health professionals. This could lead to a double standard of delivery of psychiatric services to the poor, widen further the gap between the poor and the affluent, and possibly perpetuate a chronicity of mental health problems among the poor.

Some remedial measures to consider include 1) recruiting mental health aides from the minority community and placing them in affluent areas for training and learning where there are large numbers of mental health professionals; 2) greatly expanding the professional schools for minority community bilingual students; and 3) temporary private contracting for psychiatric services to be provided in East Los Angeles.

Mexican Americans are grossly overrepresented in prisons and jails for offenses related to narcotics and alcohol. This is due to 1) significantly more police present to observe infractions of the law; 2) the many complex factors, including lack of resources and alternatives available to the poor, and 3) the definition of symptoms as criminal acts which serves to punish the poor for their illness.

East Los Angeles does not qualify for assistance under the National Institute of Mental Health's Community Mental Health Centers Act because its limited resources make it impossible to become self supporting. Legislative proposals to alleviate this problem are still pending. Additionally, new ten year NIMH treatment programs for drug addiction and alcoholism are being denied East Los Angeles because they have to be attached to an *existing* NIMH community mental health center.

A modest satellite alcoholic rehabilitation service proposed for East Los Angeles only scratches the surface. As has been the case with the East Los Angeles Mental Health Service, it is expected that the demand for treatment will far exceed that which is being offered. In addition, professional programs for the drug addict are severely lacking in East Los Angeles.

NOTES

1. Mental Health Catchment Areas of Los Angeles County. Population and Health Care Resources, U.C.L.A. School of Public Health, Division of Behavioral Sciences. April 1968, p. 79.
2. (a) Jaco, E. Gartley, *Mental Health of the Spanish-American in Texas*. In *Culture and Mental Health*, ed. Marvin K. Opler. New York, The Macmillan Co., 1959, p. 467-488.
- (b) Coogan, Joseph P., *Clinic in the Valley*. SK&F Psychiatric Reporter, 14:18-20, May-June, 1964.
- (c) Lukens, Eleanor, *Factors Affecting Utilization of Mental Health Services by Mexican Americans*. Los Angeles, Welfare Planning Council, June 1963.
- (d) Derbyshire, Robert L., Feldman, Albert G., Petersen, John, *Mental Health Needs and the Mexican American Community*. Welfare Planning Council, Los Angeles Region, April 1969.
3. Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health, Evaluation and Research Division, "Patient and Service Statistics," January, 1969, Report No. 7, p. 38.
4. Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health Evaluation and Research Division, "Patient and Service Statistics," July, 1968, Report No. 6, p. 59.
5. Southern California Psychiatric Society, Directory of Members, 1969, pp. 24, 73, 74, 75, and 76.
6. As reported by C.R.C. Board member Martin Ortiz at a "Correctional Reforms" conference held at Lincoln High School, 3501 North Broadway, East Los Angeles, held on Saturday, June 28, 1969.
7. Cited in "Historical and Attitudinal Factors Related to Current Mexican American Law Enforcement Concerns in Los Angeles," Armando Morales, p. 27. Original citation taken from M. Nyswander, M.D., "Narcotic Addiction," *American Handbook of Psychiatry*. (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1959), p. 616.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 617.
9. Time, "The Police and the Ghetto," July 19, 1968, p. 21.
10. Statistical Digest, 1967, Los Angeles Police Department, p. 24.
11. *Aspects of Alcoholism*, Roche Laboratories, J. B. Lippincott Company, Philadelphia-Montreal, p. 10.
12. Los Angeles Times, Section C, p. 1, June 1, 1969.
13. Los Angeles County Sheriff's *Biennial Report*, 1965-1967.
14. National Institute of Mental Health Support Programs, United States Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. Public Health Service, p. 9.
15. *Ibid.*

ARMANDO MORALES was born and raised in East Los Angeles. He was formerly employed (from January 1966 to August 1969) with the County Department of Mental Health, East Los Angeles Health Region, as supervising psychiatric social worker and the director of mental health consultation services. He is now a full-time doctoral student at the University of Southern California School of Social Work.

The East L. A. 13 VS. The L. A. Superior Court

OSCAR ZETA ACOSTA

One million Mexicans live in Los Angeles County. As thirteen percent of the population, they constitute the largest minority in America's numerically largest county. This is also a county whose government ostentatiously celebrates their traditions and ostensibly perpetuates their ancient Hispanic/Indio culture. But, according to recent arguments before a three-judge California Court of Appeal, this is the same county that does not protect and provide these people with equality under law in the selection of county grand jurors. In the past ten years, for example, a mere token three persons of Mexican descent have been selected for such duty. This exclusion is now being challenged.

Because a successful challenge to the actual composition of a Grand Jury can result in a reversal or a "quashing" of an indictment, and because the issue has never been successfully litigated in a California Court (it was denied in both the Huey Newton and the Sirhan cases), the legal ramifications of such a challenge are enormous. And when the issue of racial discrimination in the Grand Jury selection process is attributed to the Superior Court judges who make these selections, the legislative reactions could be extreme. Add to this several defendants who are militantly nationalistic Mexican Americans (Chicanos) accused of conspiring to organize and participate in the disruption of segregated Mexican American high schools — a felony — in protest of an emasculating acculturation, and the potential political consequences simply boggle the mind of a metropolis recently inflamed by a "racial" campaign for the office of mayor.

Today, "Spanish surnamed" peoples throughout the entire Southwest continue to increase at twice the rate of the Anglo majority. In

their continuing struggle for *justicia social* they have adopted a nationalistically militant posture all their own with a zeal and cry the Anglo assumed had died if not with the grant of citizenship under the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, at least with Zapata. And, whatever their elders and the more affluent may have thought, many young Mexican Americans (13-25) and pre-Viet Nam veterans (26-40) are now adding a chapter to the long history of Mexican American social protest. While living in the burgeoning barrios collectively known as East L. A., and dropping out of their dilapidated, segregated high schools at a fifty-percent rate, in March 1968 thousands of Chicanos organized and boycotted their schools.

The myth of the passive Mexican blew up again in this anxious city's poisonous air. Waves of mini-skirted, brown-skinned and black-haired girls were echoing the angry, clenched fist cry of the new machos in the barrios: Viva la Raza! Chicano Power! Education – not Eradication! The young Chicano radicals (brown berets and khaki field jackets) were exhorting their poverty ridden comrades to yell these gritos at the *gabacho-gringo* as they marched to the school board with their demands. The demands had been hammered out at countless community meetings over a preceding six month period. Throughout the Spring and early Summer of 1968 their demands were made orally and in writing to a school board already "burdened" with "Black" demands and an apathetic constituency rapidly becoming increasingly hostile to any demands which required an increase in taxation or a loss of power, or both.

The list of grievances were angrily stated both in generalities and in specifics. But ultimately, what they asked for was a new system, a new recognition. What they were asserting was simply that the Chicano wanted no more of a society inspired, oriented, and dominated by the Anglo whom they accused of denying them their culture and language, of distorting their history, of distorting their identity, and then failing to provide neither a viable nor an acceptable substitute.

While the anxious school board negotiated publicly, as well as in private with various committees and members of power elites, the Chicano militants changed tactics and called off their activist demonstrations. Instead, they plugged into orthodox political activity and supported a Mexican American candidate for the state legislature. While the hot-smog summer taunted the *batos locos* in East Los Angeles into fantacizing their own "Watts," and with the crucial California law-and-order primary but a fortnight away, the seem-

ingly cool prosecutorial offices of this bombastically flamboyant city of seven million transplants got up tight and nearly blew it.

District Attorney Younger and Police Chief Reddin (both rumored to be in line for the Nixon administration at the time) singled out thirteen of the Chicano "leaders" and went for broke. Despite the school board's grant of amnesty to all students and teachers involved in the Walk Outs, on May 27 of 1968, the Grand Jury returned shotgun indictments against The East L. A. 13. They were charged with fifteen separate counts of conspiracies to disrupt the public schools, felonies which are punishable by up to forty-five years in the state penitentiary . . . in effect, a life sentence!

With the Grand Jury's recommendation of ten-thousand dollars bail for each of the thirteen defendants, and with the dramatic, coordinated roundup in their own homes and in their organizational offices during the last weekend of the primary, the fight was on. Immediately the traditional political activity ceased. The issue was no longer discriminatory education. Now it was abusive and excessive prosecutorial power by an unrepresentative government.

Cognizant of the political significance and potential consequences of their actions, the East L. A. 13 challenged the jurisdictional power of the indicting body (the Grand Jury) on the grounds of discrimination in its very selection by the Superior Court judges. Laying the groundwork for appeals to the Supreme Court, they retained expert witnesses and collected cardboard boxes filled with documentary and statistical evidence in order to legally establish their identity as a people separate and distinct from the majority, thereby meeting the constitutional requirement of "classification" which is a pre-condition to a demand for consideration and representation for their group on the Grand Jury.

An expert urban sociologist lectured to a silent court and counsel that the defendants did indeed belong to a separate and distinct group of persons despite their governmental classification as Caucasians and their legal recognition as citizens. As a heterogeneous group, Mexican Americans still meet all accepted criteria for ethnic classification, including both internal and external identification. They retain, for example, a communality of values and behavior patterns even more amply than the Anglo-Caucasian majority and the unquestioned "Negro" minority. Furthermore, while today Mexican Americans comprise the vast majority in this self-identifying group, increasingly more and more members of other Hispanic-Indio cultures link themselves with the general "Spanish surnamed"

identity because they, too, have been victimized in education, employment and housing, in addition to victimization in the judicial process. All of these peoples, together, call themselves La Raza, connoting a sense of peoplehood — much as the Jews identify themselves as The Chosen People — binding together the meanest with the most virtuous, the richest with the most humble.

Still they remain basically unrepresented in the Grand Jury system. For example, over a ten year period 178 Superior Court judges in Los Angeles nominated 1,501 individuals for Grand Jury duty, and a mere twenty of these nominees were Spanish surnamed persons. Following nomination, Grand Jurors are then selected at random from the total list. Not surprisingly, the result has been a mere token representation of *all* the minorities. Specifically, only four from a total of 210 Grand Jurors, or 1.9%, has been a person with a Spanish Surname. And one of the four was, in fact, a Negro.

From the testimony of the thirty-three judges subpoenaed to testify, at times vague if not downright hostile, a reasonable composite of the 1959-1969 “grand juror” was constructed: (1) He is comparatively advanced in years. (2) He is wealthy, of independent financial means. (3) He is, or was, a business owner, executive, or professional — or married to one. (4) He is a close personal friend, occasionally once removed, of a Superior Court Judge. (5) He is White . . . In a word, as characterized by an appellate Judge: WASP.

With but one or two exceptions, each of the witness-judges stated under oath that he neither asked nor nominated a Mexican because he knew none who were qualified and/or able to accept the nomination and further, that he did not feel personally obligated to affirmatively seek out and consider potential nominees from the various identifiable minority groups within the community.

The trial court denied the motion to quash because in its opinion there was no showing of intentional discrimination, since in each of the ten years *at least one Mexican was nominated*.

Racial exclusion was prohibited in jury selection as early as the Civil Rights Act of 1875. Five years later, the United States Supreme Court held that racial exclusion in the selection process violated the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. This constitutional prohibition is not limited to discrimination against Negroes, although the defendant in nearly every important case has been of that class; it applies to any reasonably distinct classification of persons which may be excluded *from consideration*

solely on the basis of race or any other irrelevant factor. Obviously it does not prohibit the state from setting reasonable standards for qualification, nor does it require that any *particular* jury contain a specific or proportional representation. No individual citizen has a *right* to consideration for jury serving, on the contrary, one has a *duty* to respond if summoned. And, finally, no criminal defendant may demand that the particular Grand Jury which indicts him, or the specific trial jury which tries him, have even one member of his class thereon. The rule of law is simply a practical and logical recognition that these fact-finding bodies should be democratically-constituted institutions, selected from a representative grouping, drawn from a cross-section of the community — not an elitist, stacked body summoned to protect the interest of the most wealthy, the most intelligent, the most successful or the most . . .

But, as in every constitutional principle, the problem is that of proof. Where, by governmental edict, a class is peremptorily excluded or where a class is *admittedly* denied consideration, the rule is violated *per se*, and no further proof is required for reversal.

But what of token or symbolic representation? And what is the constitutional significance of patent or admitted *proportional* representation? Most significantly, what if the selection process whatever its result, was admittedly carried out innocently and in good faith?

For nearly a hundred years now, the rule of law has remained constant. Equal protection of the laws is more than an abstract principle. It is a legal right which every citizen may demand and which each state must provide. The Supreme Court has consistently declared that limitation of a class no less than its exclusion is an evil to be condemned, whatever its form or whatever its motivation.

To reiterate, the problem is that of *proof!* — the *raison d'être* of the legal profession. As direct evidence of discrimination almost universally exists in the minds or in the exclusive possession of the court official whose very conduct is being publicly challenged, the Supreme Court has relied heavily on expert opinion and statistical data as circumstantial evidence of class discrimination. A long-standing and significant disparity between the proportion of the defendant's class in the community as compared with the percentage nominated for jury duty, will of itself *raise a presumption* of the class discrimination prohibited by the federal constitution. But it is only a presumption; i.e., a rational deduction from an observable fact. The burden is then cast upon the jury selector to explain, contradict or disprove the assumed fact of discrimination by other

facts. He may, for example, show that he in fact considered the “excluded” class, or that the class does not exist, or that the class refused the nomination, or that none within the class are qualified.

But none of these “explanations” may simply be assumed or merely asserted, they must be proven. Specifically, protestations of innocence and/or good faith will not suffice. The constitutional imperative requires the official to affirmatively seek out and familiarize himself with the qualifications of all the recognizable classes within the community with the goal of reasonable and rational *consideration*; for “if there has been discrimination, whether accomplished ingeniously or ingenuously, the conviction cannot stand.” (Justice Black, *Smith v. Texas*, [1940] 311 U.S. 128)

In the recent case of *The East L.A. 13*, (*Salvador Castro v. Superior Court*, [April, 1969] 2d App Dist No. 34178) the district attorney presented no proof whatsoever to rebut the asserted presumption. Instead he merely argued to the three-judge court, that the statistics and the judges’ testimony did not show any intentional discrimination against the Mexican and that the seeming disparity could be attributed to the fact that eligibility depends upon qualification and availability. He argued that since the Mexican population was disproportionately young, alien, non-English speaking, economically disadvantaged and educationally inferior “the raw population-figures and percentages [would be] utterly meaningless.”

While numerous Mexican partisans listened, the district attorney reminded the appellate judges that the modern grand jury’s function included “highly sophisticated duties, such as accounting and business transactions.” In response, counsel for the defense quoted Justice Brown of the Fifth Circuit Court – the court most frequently confronted with the issue – speaking in *Brooks v. Beto*, [1966] 366 F2d 1:

“. . . the courts have consistently held that statistics speak louder than the Jury Commissioners . . . the law has never contented itself with any such hollow, shallow ignorance. . . . It is not enough to choose from those they see. . . Innocent ignorance is no excuse. It neither shields the jury’s action from scrutiny, nor does it justify the half-hearted, obviously incomplete performance of duty by the officials. . . . The court has long been aware of this see-no-evil-hear-no-evil approach.”

Neither side to the controversy was unaware of the potential significance of the case. Studies made by California Rural Legal

Assistance indicate that nearly all California counties contain the same statistical racial disparity in their Grand Juries as does Los Angeles. Equally important is the fact that the issue may be raised by defendants other than racial minority group members, as it was in the recent trial of Sirhan B. Sirhan, whose attorneys used the evidence and arguments produced by the Chicano defendants. Why this defense has not been previously raised, either by Mexicans or any other excluded class, unfortunately, reflects upon the legal profession. That it requires imagination and hard work is understandably a contributing factor; but perhaps the most compelling reason for their failure to raise the issue is that ultimately what the lawyer says in such a motion is an indictment of the profession which he professes and a castigation of the society to which he belongs.

True or not, the Chicano militants interpreted the District Attorney's argument to say that the Mexican was perhaps too stupid and too poor for service on the Grand Jury of Los Angeles. This "explanation" can simply serve as further evidence of the racist society which compels him to seek his destiny in an identity and a rage that this society can ill afford. Presently the court has enjoined the trial. It may be months before the decision is pronounced.

But what of the Chicano radicals-becoming-revolutionaries? It is much too early to say what direction their nationalism will travel; too soon to even suggest that their actions will be governed by the society's response to their claims for equality.

The concepts of integration, assimilation and acculturation describe historical relationships between Africans, Orientals, and Europeans, persons all foreign to this land. But the Mexican Americans ultimately rest their claims on the right of prior possession and ancestry. And, whether we speak of historical or Einsteinian time, it was but a few moons ago that his Southwest was inhabited exclusively by Indians.

OSCAR ZETA ACOSTA is a Chicano Lawyer working in Los Angeles.



SAN QUENTIN

Tamal, California 94964

Mi Casa es su Casa

RUDY ESPINOSA

The hands on your wrist watch read 6:20, the headlights of your car hit the gate at San Quentin and the officer approaches. He stares at you. You sound your name.

“Ah, yeh, you’re with EMPLEO.” “Well,” he pauses and sets the clipboard of gate clearances at his side and looks inside for other faces. He speaks through the corner of his mouth. “Got any contraband?”

“No.”

“Well, park your car down on that lot and walk over to that door next to the place that looks like a hamburger stand. And wait till an officer comes over. Then he’ll grab you and take you to the meeting.”

“Thank you.”

You drive your car to the lot. Yeh, you remember, for some reason, your father, he was a Chicano, you remember his favorite radio program, Duffy was warden, “The San Quentin Hour,” you can even remember the theme song – “Time On My Hands.”

Wow, those walls look cold. For a moment you forgot, it’s the first time you are going to an EMPLEO meeting. What are you going to say? You say to yourself, “I’ll know when I get there.” You glance over and feel the bay waters and see far lights that dot land.

The waters look chilly. Again, "What can I offer?" "Man, I don't have nada." You find yourself in front of another officer. You speak, "I'm here for the EMPLEO meeting and I would like to see Mr. Manriquez."

The officer moves and you notice over his head above the cold iron doors a horseshoe. He speaks, "What's your name?" You tell him. He speaks directly, "Sign over in that book," he points as he turns to the phone. The officer speaks into the phone, "Sir, a guest for EMPLEO. Right, sir."

The officer's face turns and speaks. You listen. "Mister, Mr. Manriquez will be here. So just wait a bit."

You still look at his face. He looks like a cowboy you used to see at the old Cameo Theater on 16th Street. Was he the bad guy or the good guy? Anyway, you look at your watch — 6:45. What can I offer? You think, how about an idea for a cartoon book done by pintos. Now, man, what's got into you? Face it man, you don't have anything. Well, what am I going to say? Introduce yourself, pendejo. Naw, man, open yourself up to questions. Put yourself on the hot seat. All of a sudden you start to feel your insides move. You glance out through the mesh wire covered glass door and you can feel yourself. You hear voices, "Hello, Mr. Manriquez." For the first time you meet. And later you are to realize that through the portals of the old parole building many men have passed into cool shadows, inmates, officers, and prison personnel of every description. And since the year 1859, when the inscription on the block of granite in front of the Dentist's Office was made, men from all walks of life have left behind resolute energies that now seem to vibrate the very foundations of that granite-supported building. Manriquez shakes your hand. It's not a fish shake. You know and feel he's there. You notice his crew cut and boyish features. He's güero. Mr. Manriquez does not look Chicano. Yet, later you are to realize he is one of the men who has made his energies felt to the core of that old building — a young Mexican-American by the name of Phillip J. Manriquez: Inmate Activities Coordinator, C111 and Co-Sponsor of the EMPLEO Organization. His role is but a part of the EMPLEO story at San Quentin. The members of the other inmate activities groups and the EMPLEO carnals know what the young dedicated individual has done for himself, the inmates, and most of all, the pintos.

Mr. Manriquez then leads you through the iron doors and under that horseshoe for the first time. You see for the first time a pinto. You just feel his pupils as they seem to see through you as he opens

a second iron door that leads to an open yard and Chapel. The pinto recognizes you with a slight dip of his chin. Mr. Manriquez speaks, "Dave Huerta is here and waiting in my office." You realize it is Dave's first time. You think, "Yeh, Huerta meant what he said." Mr. Manriquez seems to move with confidence. You feel your strides jerky.

Huerta greets you inside the office. The pintos have not arrived. They are still in lock-up. You look at Dave Huerta. He's brown like you, you also notice his moustache. He peers at you through his glasses and you realize you are both jumpy. You know he's a Parole Officer. What's his thing for being here? Then you think — what's my thing — man, what can I offer? "Yeh, Dave, how are you?" He answers back, but you don't really listen. Man, this place is cold. Mr. Manriquez starts to talk, but you begin to hear faint voices in the background. The pintos have arrived. You don't see them. You hear them. Mr. Manriquez puts his cigarette out in the ash tray and speaks, "Well, we'd better get in the meeting." You feel your toes inside your shoes move, as you walk out of Mr. Manriquez' office and now you not only see the pintos, you feel spirit, even though they sit silent. The pintos are dressed in azul, you notice no long hair, all are dressed neatly, clean pants, clean-shaven, and even highly polished shoes. You sit in the second row next to a brother. You see Huerta. He sits on the other side. It's 7:00 and the quorum is 47. President Herman Vasquez stands before us between the Mexican Flag and the American Flag. And in front of the wooden stand is the EMPLEO emblem. The pinto that sits in front of you is Roberto Eduardo (Blackie) Padilla, from Santa Fe Springs — *Canta Ranas*, who says there is nothing special about him that he can point out, just that through incarceration, he has learned a hell of a lot, not only about life, but about other people. Blackie is the creator and artist of the EMPLEO emblem. Padilla's entry received the highest membership approval. You see the eagle perched on an iron ball which is set on a foundation of the letters EMPLEO, and in the eagle's mouth is a piece of broken chain and around the emblem the palabras en español "El Mexicano Preparado Listo Educado y Organizado, Viva La Raza, Viva La Causa." The insignia bears many pure cultural values to all Mexicans. The eagle, brown in color, represents freedom; the ball and chain is symbolic of captivity (prison); the green, white and red are the colors of the Mexican flag, and are also the EMPLEO lettering colors. The EM is green, PL, white, and EO, red. EMPLEO was founded in San Quentin and is a convict and ex-convict organization. By the end

of the meeting you realize that by reaching the objectives of EMPLEO, we will break the chain and be free, to show the Mexican people on the other side of the walls the importance of EMPLEO and the pintos' contributions to La Causa, even though time had once forgotten them.

Vasquez stands before the carnales. He speaks in Español. And you try to listen. You speak to yourself. "Hablas poquito español, pero por lo menos entiendes." You listen with your eyes and notice Herman. Man, he looks like one of your familia. He wears shades that are tinted, you notice his poise. You understand enough Español to know he acknowledges the large membership turnout. In English, Herman asks Ernesto Borbon to read the minutes. Ernesto stands, dressed in blue, with blue levi coat and reads the minutes from the previous EMPLEO meeting with no corrections. Ernesto Borbon sits down. Herman Vasquez then sounds the presence of Sr. Huerta and you hear your name and Sr. Manriquez'. Herman informs us we will be called to the microphone shortly. You suddenly realize you have never spoken into a mike, as a matter of fact you never have spoken in front of any group. You look over at Huerta and he looks back. You turn your head and look at the packet they give you as you pass back the guest book and pen. You open the packet and you read the EMPLEO Preamble:

Section 2. The purpose of EMPLEO shall be to get Mexican-Americans a job upon release from prison and to keep them from returning to any penal institution. It shall be to increase their job opportunities; to develop, maintain and better their communications and education; to improve their relations with administration; to help them acquire confidence, knowledge and understanding of different job problems inside and outside of prison; to further dedicate them to the purpose of becoming better citizens; to at all times place their minds and bodies to this dedication of EMPLEO and reach their hands in friendship and in honesty to all persons, regardless of race, color or creed. In so doing they may find a better life; a life more suitable to their talents. The constitution of EMPLEO is written to guide its members in the furtherance of their aims and desires.

A pinto's voice behind you states his business and sits down. Another pinto raises his hand, and Vasquez recognizes him. The pinto speaks sharply, "Señor Presidente, I make a motion that our

brother shut up." He then sits down and then another brown hand is recognized. "Señor Presidente, how can any men tell me to shut up when he doesn't know what in the hell he's talking about?" Member Gonzales, Sgt.-at-Arms, peers out among the membership and politely speaks, "Orden, por favor." President Vasquez asks if there is any old business. No old business. He lays the wooden gavel down and speaks, "On to new business."

Member Abel Rodriguez, from Corpus Christi, Tejas, stands. He attends high school in "Q" and will graduate. Abel says, "I've been a Chicano all my life and I got involved with EMPLEO last year because I feel that it is the responsibility of all Chicanos to contribute to La Causa." Member Abel is recognized by President Vasquez. Member Rodriguez expresses concern in reference to changing the Constitution: in lieu of Rule (2), our Constitution doesn't have to be revised; let the By-laws meet the definition that Mr. Manriquez wants of our objectives. Member Tiny Hidalgo says that we should stick by our present Constitution. Member Verdugo inquires if possibly our civil rights were somehow violated. A motion is made by Member Tiny to form a committee to investigate for possible violations. Member Rodriguez objects to the consideration of the motion in that a committee would be unnecessary for this. Member Amado C. (Snooker) Bernal stands to be recognized. Snooker is the fifth son of an Arizona-born father and a Texas mother. Bernal says, "The most valuable things I've done for myself are to earn a high school diploma, learn to play handball and tennis, and to identify with the aims and goals of the EMPLEO Organization. And the little time that I've spent outside has given me an appreciation of 'hefty' women, good Mexican food, such as Chorizo Con Huevos, Chiles Rellenos, Ox-tails Con Chile Colorado and good liquor." Snooker now has the floor. He clarifies why it is unnecessary. These are no rules to merit this action. Member Tiny withdraws the motion. Member Walter Quintero makes a special report on the inquiry held by the Executive Body. The inquiry is about the conduct of a member on an issue reflecting on the survival of the EMPLEO Organization. No charges are brought before the Executive Body against the member. The member is exonerated of all misconduct at that meeting. Member Buckwheat Molano informs members that he is delegated to better communications with all EMPLEO Sponsors so a better understanding can be established. Later you are to realize Buckwheat chummed with your uncles who boxed in Jeffries' Barn in Los Angeles.

President Vasquez introduces Brother Baca who walks before you with black shining hair. Armelino Baca reads every word with a strain. You listen to him and you listen for soul. He speaks out: "In explanation to the definition of what La Causa stands to represent. I can only assure you that if you walk over to the closest mirror and in the reflection of this mirror, you happen to gaze at the face of a proud and handsome Mexican face. Then you know that there's no other, or further need to continue with the explanation. Except, that the darkness of our hair is the shadow of your ancestors' dream. La Causa has many faces. It can be defined to any extreme, or by anyone who is in possession of its sincerity. There's positively no question. As there is no question of you being my brother and Mexican by birth. You are the Causa. She is the Causa. We are the Causa. It is the Causa that attracts our attention to focus on the identity of our Bandera Mexicana. It is the Causa that does not allow me to forget you. You can make me do anything. I shall do anything for the Causa. The Causa can travel anywhere. It can see anything. The Causa can do anything it wants to do. The Causa are doctors, lawyers, judges, philosophers and anyone you care to mention. There's no end to all this, unless you wish to exclude yourself from mankind." Baca turns and look up and continues. "Don't stop to judge and analyze my work, before you can adjust your own. If you have the answer, then why are you keeping it to yourself? Why didn't I hear from you before this time? Why do you get disgusted with the way that I speak or do things, when you can very easily teach me at the same breath. Stop someone, if you see them going about it the wrong way. Or you are just as much of a fool. There are going to be a lot of hermanos y hermanas that need help. And it's up to you to offer your services."

President Herman Vasquez thanks Baca, your heart beats faster. Herman then asks Ernesto if there was any more business. Ernesto reports that in view of the time left that other business be tabled until next week. Vasquez speaks softly into the mike: "And now I would like to introduce our first guest, Sr. David Huerta, United States Parole and Probation Officer."

Dave reaches inside his coat pocket and smooths out some papers. You hear his voice, "On July 24, 1969 I was born a Chicano, and I realized that my spiritual birth had taken place almost 33 years after my physical birth." The pintos listen. Dave speaks on, "One day I walked three miles from the Federal Building and the U. S. Court House in San Francisco to my home. Walking is very good for the soul and the mind as it gives one time to think, and you

know, thinking is very good – it is the salvation of mankind. On my way home I met a wino (he wasn't Chicano) who was first a human being and then a wino, at Church and Market Streets, and he asked me for a match. I stopped and talked to him. (I didn't have a match.) I waited for him to ask me for some money as I wanted to relate to him. He asked me for a nickel, and all I had was about nine cents in change. I offered it to him, but he refused to take it believing that was all the money I had, but I had more, and I insisted he take the change. (I made a practice of never giving winos any money for some very upright moral reasons.) Then I went into a grocery store and got a book of matches and then walked back to the wino and gave him the matches. I walked away, leaving the wino, probably never to see him again in my life, but that was o.k. as I would see other human beings for the rest of my life and relate to them. I thought that when I got home I would write on the back of one of my business cards: On July 24, 1969 I committed myself to change and human justice and to trying to become a little more human." There's a long pause of silence and the pintos sit silent still. Huerta looks at you. He sounds your name. And introducing you, he says that he will answer questions later after you talk. Your ears feel warm, you straighten yourself out, and in a moment you are standing face to faces, a brown face in front of brown faces, you run the back of a finger under your nose, and somewhere inside you start to move your lips, but you speak from the pit of your stomach and the words come out in English. You say, "I do a little writing and I was born in the Mission District of San Francisco." You stop, mumble something, you know it sounds jerky. You stop and look around at the brothers and think . . . what can I offer? You start again. "If any of you guys got any questions, I will be glad to try to answer." Un carnal, Tiny Hidalgo, who speaks through the side of his mouth, "Yeh, I got one. Are you getting paid for coming over here?"

You answer, "As a matter of fact, I was on the streets yesterday, peddling books."

Another carnal raises a brown chubby hand. You recognize Sr. Gonzales. He asks, "Is Sr. Huerta your parole officer?"

You answer, "No."

There's that quiet again. You feel you have to speak. You don't know what to offer . . . then you speak. "I had a thought that maybe you guys could draw up some cartoons. And I would get them published for you."

Blackie Padilla speaks, "Hey, man, there's nothing funny in here."

You feel your ears. You speak: "Well, humor, man, it can come in different ways. I worked in a funeral home in Marysville. One night we get a call to pick up a dead woman. We go over, me and my pardner, and pick her up. We put a sheet over her and put her on the stretcher. We drive back, carry her into the embalming room and put her on the slab. I looked at her and then I drop the sheet over her face. Then I get myself ready for some sleep. It was around one in the morning. I just took off my shoes. And then the bell up front rings. I answer it. This guy stands there looking at me. I thought he was drunk. He asks me if his wife is there. I say yea. He then asks me if he can see her. I tell him he can't because she is not ready for display, but he can see her tomorrow. He then asks me if I could do him a favor. I say, sure. Do you know what he asks me? Would you tell her that I dropped by." A pinto laughs.

Member Garza asks you if you are a teacher who is competent and who will be willing to come and teach them. The class to be taught is communications problems and the teacher will be needed in September. You answer, "If you guys could make a roster of all positions, I'll see what I can do."

Dave steps up and stands next to you. Now you are both standing in front of the brothers. All of a sudden out from the back a salt and pepper-haired Chicano stands and it's then you see his face, then his eyes, and then Baca's valley. He moves his fingers as he speaks. "Sr. Huerta, *you* should get involved. So that we all may help to get equal treatment for the Chicano. Sr. Huerta, we struggle to get an even chance by having meeting after meeting after meeting, etc. etc., and we need help. Member Cipriano Montoya looks at both of us. Then from the bowels of his soul, he speaks, "And if anyone knows how to respect authority, we do . . . 150 years worth. And in the history of San Quentin we have managed to awaken the Chicanos too, in large numbers, but Chicano teachers aren't applying to teach here."

As Huerta commits himself to coming to all meetings till August you feel something like a plum in your throat that's ready to burst and you feel your eyes moist.

Member Mendez stands, and faces you and Dave. And you hear. "Hermanos, Mi Casa es su Casa."

As you sit and fold your legs under your chair, you feel your fingers move slowly on your knee.

President Herman Vasquez calls Mr. Manriquez to the floor. He stands to the side of the stand and speaks clearly and slowly in English. "I have given EMPLEO a hard row to hoe, but don't lose

sight of your goals. I didn't hear of EMPLEO until I came here; now I see that this organization does mean something. And it is important enough to bring the people at tonight's meeting out of their cells. I remember President Vasquez thanking me for making this meeting possible. Well, it's you, the membership that deserve the credit for all this." The pintos applaud. Member Rodriguez stands and acknowledges the new members present, Sr. Fernandez, Sr. Castillo, Sr. Aragon, Sr. Mata, Sr. Flores, Sr. Uribes and Sr. Contreras. You applaud. President Herman Vasquez thanks the membership for their support and participation. He turns, looks at you and then Huerta and speaks, "We extend to our guests, deep appreciation for you taking the time to come and visit us." And as you listen, you know you'll be back.

You blink your eyes. The EMPLEO meeting is over. You blink again and turn on the windshield wipers to wash off the mist, It's windy. The tiny reddish amber lights outline the Golden Gate Bridge. It's 10:45. Your fingers tighten around the steering wheel, you are on your way, your own way to your Causa. You hear your Brother's voice — yeh, it's Baca. He speaks to you, "When the call for unity is in demand, when the call for unity is out, will you respond? Are we all working for the same purpose? When we can have answers to all these questions, only then can we expect the advancement to our goal. And together, we'll enter the doorway of the valley where our ancestors left us their wisdom, to our trust of life. Some of us may not see it done. But it must be done, and it shall be done." Viva la Causa . . .

/ / /

A Note: I wish to acknowledge that all the people are true in this piece and that I extend my appreciation in sharing their experiences, in soul, the pintos, who do not tell truth merely, but who breathe with clear hearts; and in spirit my brothers, Baca, Vasquez, Montoya, Borbon, Quintero, Verdugo, Snooker, Rodriguez, Tiny, Mendez, Buckwheat, Gonzales, Garza, Blackie, Sr. Manriquez and Sr. Huerta.

RUDY ESPINOSA is a native San Franciscan. He is presently studying toward an A.B. degree in Anthropology at UC Berkeley and working in the Mission District Barrio of San Francisco, Calif.

Ricardo Sanchez

Poetry

“TIME: AN ECLIPSE”

oh,
lord,
my amelia
do I remember
years ago I wrote of
you as my darling dearest
(in basic training)
only
to be scorned
and laughed at;
I was too mushy.

now
a millenia
has elapsed.
you're
still a goddess,
I'm, a convict
with only a tainted
heart
to offer.

your breath – warm –
your lips – soft –
are absent
from my
bed in the early
morning hours;

I comb my
hair like a
beatnik
in protest
to no love.

I waste my body
&
the world
calls me weird,
but safe . . . it
is our love
only
that matters,
see?

death
came tonight
for the final
time.
I heard sweetness.
no sorrow,
and thought
amelia
still cares.
I ran my hands
desperately
under, over
dresses in fashion
magazines . . . to
find you never were there

“MUDDY SQUIGGLES: NIGHT IN
PRISON – A MOOD”

Thus it is that people must ever look toward the future;
perhaps it comes about

because of the need to escape
the idiocy that today is . . .

along with the many imponderable queries that we form in our
day-to-day
existences, we always carry forth the banners of conformism –
if only to avert responsibility for creative effort or duty . . .

a long time ago, dearest,
(it really happen'd!)
ginko-tree symbolism

(from the poetry of w. benton)

inspired me . . . without & within;

it was a time of moonlight
and midnight sonatas . . .

ah, how beatifically beautiful
you were then
in the sanctity of our love.

now life looks and feels different –
mayhaps
it is just the aloneness of now,

a world of empty beds
and flavorless foods . . .

an acute sensitivity
to nothingness.

“DUELOS!

IT MAKES NO DIFFERENCE
IF THE SUN IS PURPLE”

I.

I listened
last night
to Chicano
songs,
your face appeared
contorted amid
my blankets,
I, so scared, looked
out
for the guard
not to see us;
and after count
I made a cup
of instant nescafe,
you waited not
and hurried
to the dream
of your streets lover.

II.

my heart is beating, bleating
scaredly;
I go to the board
tomorrow;
heads I go home,
tails . . . I stay here.

III.

will it be another year of agony,
another year of self-caressment,
another year of touch-love in an
empty cell with only me and me?

IV.

will it be another year
of agony?
answer, oh, life —
A REPRIEVE!

V.

say,
honey,
where are you?
got denied . . .
can't go home —
12 more months,
and then
 one more try.

I held your picture;
your love was showing
& I spent two
hours of
imagined love making —
last night.

It makes no difference
if the sun
is purple . . .

VI.

the newspaper came today, and I
read of your marriage . . . why?
wait, you promised . . . and you didn't!

I can't kill myself, for I'm
already dead.

two years of self-negation, of
rotten food, and sleepless nights.
two years of birds
chirping at window with the bars,
two years and you . . .

no I can't die or kill . . . anymore.

MI UNICA MANERA DE VIVIR

as visualized
 by ever being
 mexi-colored moods
 vis-a-vis
 america the
 hurt-in-full,

and brother,
 i can tell you
 picking cotton
 in texas
 is as rotten
 as picking it
 in alabam . . .

and
 i can tell,
 my brothers,
 how it is
 you also hurt

when
 it
 is
 the
 same
 for
 me . . .

i am
 the
 sum
 and
 total
 of
 social brutalization,

I AM CHICANO

and

thus
 this
 is
 my
 reflection/internalization
 of all that you have shown me . . .

my words
 merely delineate
 the conflicts we have had . . .

MELO

SOMOS

borracheras infantiles –
suenos enloquecidos –
trastornos buscando alivio –
una semilla obfuscada . . .

FUIMOS

esclavitud angustiosa –
duelo y labor del sol –
un pasado asqueroso –
el ojo del dios de Lalo . . .

SEREMOS

el pasaporte a lo real,
el nivel de la libertad,
orgullo dignidad, y vida,
y el destino humanizado . . .

MELO

despierta –
no busques vidas enbotelladas,
mirate en el espejo de mi mente,
todo puede ser tal como tu quieras . . .

Mel, amigo,
casi hermano,
ya basta!

“MIND SHOPPING . . .”

soft hues and shadows browse;
 multi-colored rings reel out
 and often muted expectation . . .
 and
 even idle chatter
 shatters yesterday's splintered remembrances
 forcing me to recant:
 “yes, you are beautiful,
 and i love you!”

mental carts careen —
 thought registers register —
 erotic signs supplant —
 and
 gift-wrapped packages of love
 get sacked, stacked, and loaded
 onto the automatic response parked
 near the self-operating eyelids
 that morse code out
 “i love you”
 in this our modern sense
 of hedonia . . .

CASHIER, DO YOU GIVE
 GREEN KISSES?

RICARDO SANCHEZ was raised in El Paso, Texas and is presently a Fellow in the Frederick Douglass Journalism Program in Richmond, Virginia.

The following pieces by H. López, Calderón, Ramirez, and L. López were written in a class in Advanced Composition for Native Speakers at San Diego State College, San Diego, California. — Editor

Tibia Incertidumbre

HÉCTOR LÓPEZ

Al encontrarme acostado me sentí como un niño que apenas comienza a darse cuenta de sus alrededores. Eran las tres de la madrugada y pensé, cómo un pobre infeliz puede vivir la mayor parte de su vida sin darse cuenta de la naturaleza. Y cómo uno puede alcanzar la felicidad sin ni siquiera tratar de detener su paso acelerado y tratar de disfrutar todas las cosas que tomamos por hechas.

Era una noche agradable, me encontraba tirado boca arriba mirando hacia lo infinito. Me preguntaba a mí mismo ¿Qué habrá en el más allá? Estaba seguro de que sí había vida en algunos de esos puntitos luminosos en el espacio. ¿Serán más felices que nosotros aquí en la tierra o también llevan una vida apresurada sin motivo alguno?

Al concentrarme en lo del más allá la vista me fallaba, sentí como si fuera a desmallarme. Pude sentir como la sangre caminaba por todo mi cuerpo llenando de vida todo mi organismo. Era como si hubiera estado dentro de mi propio cuerpo y poder ver y examinar como mis órganos funcionaban. Podía ver como cada célula luchaba para mantener mi cuerpo lleno de vida.

Tenía un sueño profundo, apenas podía mantener mis ojos abiertos. Era un sueño tan pesado que mi alma luchaba con toda su fuerza para mantenerme despierto. Nunca en la vida había luchado en combatir algo tan estenuoso. Era como si los cuerpos celestes en el espacio trataran de decirme que no podía yo dejarme atraer por el sueño invitador y entregarme en sus manos. En el entresueño pensaba ¿por qué no? este sueño descansará mi cuerpo y me permitirá pensar en muchas cosas. Pero había algo, algo que me daba

temor, algo como si me llamara el más allá y de nunca poder despertar jamás en la vida.

Pasé como tres horas combatiendo el sueño. La mañana era clara. Podía ver a lo lejos, detrás de las montañas, como los rayos del sol luchaban contra el tiempo para llegar hacia mi y acobijarme con sus rayos acogedores. Al ver hacia mis alrededores, hasta donde alcanzaba mi vista, podía ver las flores y árboles llenos de vida. Los pájaros cantaban una melodía apropiada al escenario del amanecer. Yo sabía que todo esto me mantuvo despierto durante la noche alegrando mi alma. Me hicieron apreciar cosas nunca antes vistas por mis ojos.

Me sentí feliz y pensé, ¿por qué nunca había hecho esto antes? Pero no esperaba estar ahí esa noche. ¿Entonces que hacía en ese lugar desconocido? Trataba de figurar si era un sueño o verdaderamente me encontraba acostado ahí comunicando con la naturaleza.

De pronto al volver mi cabeza hacia la derecha, vi dos luces que se acercaban hacia mi con gran rapidéz. Sentí un miedo terrible. El sudor de mi frente entraba en mis ojos y quemaba mis pupilas. Las luces me cegaban. Varias de ellas se acumulaban alrededor de mí. Podía ver bultos frente de ellas y alcanzaba a oír voces pero no podía entender lo que decían. De pronto los bultos se acercaban hacia mí. Algo me decía que se encontraban ahí para robarme el oxígeno que respiraba. Mi corazón latió cobardemente, la sangre me hervía y no podía hacer nada. Sentí las piernas y los brazos como de plomo sin ni siquiera poder abrir los labios y gritarles que se alejaran y me dejaran en paz. Derrepente uno de los bultos se acerco hacia mi cuerpo. Vagamente pude distinguirlo. Era una bella anciana arrodillandose a acariciar mi frente y secar el sudor ardiente que brotaba de mi cara. Mi alma se llenó de alegría, mi corazón volvía a su paso normal, mi sangre tenía otra vez más. Los rayos del sol penetraban mi cuerpo y me llenaban de felicidad.

A mi lado izquierdo había un árbol. Sus hojas caían sobre mi rostro y refrescaban todo mi cuerpo. Sentí como si el árbol me mandara mensajeros para invitarme a penetrar su vientre. En el tronco había un nido de hormigas. Se dirigían hacia mí con pasitos apresurados como un grupo de soldados en la marcha. Mi cuerpo fue lentamente cubierto por ellas sintiendo una sensación agradable. Toda mi vida tuve horror a esos pequeños animalitos. Pero esta vez sabía perfectamente que solamente trataban de mantenerme despierto y acariciar mi cuerpo.

Más y más el sueño era mas profundo, sentí como si nada ni nadie en este mundo pudiera parar el sueño invitador que me es-

peraba. Los bultos horrorosos me rodeaban con movimientos de indecisión, sin atacar. Sin ayudar. Esta vez no sentí pavor porque sabía que la humilde anciana estaba ahí para protegerme de ellos.

Por fin este sueño encantador venció todos los obstáculos que me impedían acompañarlo y llegó hacia mí. Me sentí feliz porque al fin podría descansar mis ardientes ojos.

Cuando de pronto un ruido undulante me despertaba una vez más. Mi mente podía darse cuenta que se dirigía rápidamente hacia el lugar donde me encontraba. El sonido era tan intenso que despertó una tormenta en mi cuerpo. Podía sentir como los tejidos de mi cerebro se estiraban y se encogían buscando escape alguno. Veía todo nublado, la anciana se había alejado de mí, el terror se apoderó de mi alma otra vez y lloraba abiertamente con ganas de gritar a pecho abierto. Cuando de pronto pude escuchar una voz ronca, llena de firmeza y certidumbre diciéndole a los horripilantes bultos: dejen a este pobre infeliz en paz. Ya nadie puede hacer nada por él. Él ya se encuentra feliz en el cielo.

Mi alma descansa otra vez más. Con una certeza afirmativa le aseguré a mi alma que no podía haber objeto alguno en la tierra o en el cielo que pudiera interrumpir nuestras relaciones con el sueño. Ese sueño primoroso se acercó a mí y me arrojó entre sus brazos diciendome con una voz dulce y agradable; esta vez te aseguro que nada ni nadie podrá separarnos.

ˆ ˆ ˆ

Te lo Adverti

BERNIE CALDERÓN

Hacia pocas semanas que había nacido dentro de la oscuridad profunda de dos paredes de yeso, cuando empecé a darme cuenta de todo lo que me rodeaba. Nuestra casa era bastante cómoda porque vivíamos debajo de un conducto de agua caliente. Teniendo muchos hermanos y hermanas me di cuenta que era necesario ir en busca de comida. ¡Ay! Qué sorpresa fue cuando mi madre me llevó por medio de un laberinto de pasajes y agujeros hasta que llegamos al comedor. Allí encontré lo que para mí era un cuerno de abun-

dancia. Había compartimientos llenos de comida, algunos tenían pan otros nueces y cereales y casi toda clase de delicias que un ratoncito pudiera gozar.

Un día le pregunté a mamá: “¿De qué mundo vino toda esta comida?” Ella entonces me contó de otra forma de criatura que existía. En los días que siguieron más y más nos dimos a conocer las criaturas y yo.

Mi primer experiencia espantosa con los seres humanos fue cuando estaba frívolamente procurando entrar a una bolsa de plástico que contenía granos de maíz. Era en el abismo de la noche cuando a mi sorpresa llegó la mañana. Me retiré rápidamente. Pero luego tomé valor, fuí a una grieta donde había una luz y ví una criatura colosal. Nunca había visto algo tan extraño y feo en mi vida. Era blanco, sin pelo, andaba con dos piernas y no tenía cola. Me apresuré a mi casa y le conté a mi madre de la experiencia que tuve. Ella me advirtió que tomara toda precaución posible y que no me acercara a esas criaturas porque ellos no nos querían.

Varias semanas pasaron durante las cuales aprendí mucho más sobre los seres humanos. No pensaba que fueran tan malos como mi madre me había dicho. Aunque ellos no me querían, siempre me surtían con comida y un lugar para dormir. Me di cuenta que la mujer era más horrorosa que el hombre. Una madrugada estuve agrimensurando el piso pos algunas migas de pan. Cuando de repente oí un grito chocante que me hizo saltar por el aire. Corrí de prisa hasta llegar a algún resguardo que era el horno. Estuve temblando de susto. Todavía podía oír el grito rebotando sobre las paredes de mi cráneo. La próxima noche gané confianza y volví al piso. No pasó mucho tiempo hasta que mi nariz pudo coger el olor de mi comida favorita — queso. Allí cerca de la estufa sobre un pedazo de madera estaba una enorme rebanada gruesa de queso. Después de tomar el primer corte me puse a pensar cómo la criatura humana era tan generosa y amable que me había dejado un pedazo de queso. Durante mi siguiente cortada pense sobre lo que mi madre me había dicho . . . ¡¡Tras!!

El Viaje

JAVIER RAMIREZ

Carlos miraba el reflejo de su cara en la ventanilla; el ruido de las ruedas que lo arrallaba producía pensamientos. No podía explicar que fuerza lo llevaba hacia esta ciudad que tanto odiaba. Esta ciudad en la que había pasado su niñez y juventud. Esa ciudad cruel en la que cada ser lucha como animal para sobrevivir. Recordaba con odio el apartamento en que había vivido con sus padres y seis hermanos. Recordaba la miseria y hambre que habían pasado sin que nadie extendiera un mano para ayudarles.

Al llegar a una estación abrió la ventanilla para tomar aire; el calor era insoportable y el aire caliente no remedió nada. Por fin el tren empezó a moverse. Al pasar por las afueras de la ciudad se fijó que todas las ciudades que pasaba eran la misma lo único que cambiaba era el nombre. Recordó su miserable niñez en que su único pasa tiempo había sido corretear y matar ratas, de menos a esa edad no había sufrido hambre como era el niño siempre se la daba de comer primero. Esa costumbre solo duró hasta que cumplió siete años, entonces entró a la competencia entre sus hermanos. Recordó los pleitos que había a la hora de comer, todos corrían como animales, y como no había bastante para todos alguien siempre quedaba sin comer. Le dió risa al recordar que se tenía que pelear con perros y gatos para sacar un pedaso de pan o algo comestible de los tambos de basura, y con que desesperación buzcaba, ¡y con qué hambre devoraba cualquier morsa que encontraba!

Todo esto terminó cuando se dió cuenta que podía robar, y a veces comida y a veces algo que vender, para comprarla. Por fin lo venció el sueño, ¡un sueño profundo, en el que todo se olvida!

Sintió que una mano lo sacudía y le decía, ¡Ya es hora Carlos! No quería despertar. Volvió a oír. ¡Ya es hora Carlos! Despertó envuelto en un sudor frío y lo primero que vio al abrir los ojos fueron las rejas. Volteó la cara lentamente y vió al padre y al guardia que le decían. ¡Ya es hora Carlos! ¡Si!, Ya recuerdo. Ya sé que es la hora. Se levantó lentamente y salió de su celda precedido por el capellan y entre cuatro guardias.

La Sociedad

DIANA LÓPEZ

Ira Parte

Todo apacible
el sol sale lentamente
poco a poco se empieza a distinguir el pueblo.

La gente aún duerme
María despierta, despierta Juan también.
Ambos ven la salida del sol

Descanso, música,
amor que lento enardece, amor palpitante
que nunca llega al clímax.

pero hay satisfacción

— ¡vida!

Se bebe, se ríe, se plática.
El sol brilla en lo alto,
aún apacible,
vida en su normalidad.
Gente caminando, hablando.

El día sigue.

Vida costumbrista, pacible, amena.

2da Parte

Los hombres se empiezan a juntar
Ahora hay cigarros de espera

MARCHA

Se van.

Juan se adjunta
María está orgullosa

— ¡Qué bello ver el desfile!
— ¡Qué bello el patriotismo!

Los parientes se juntan.
Marchan los hombres.

Marcha interminable
Soledad de mujeres orgullosas.

Caminan, caminan.
Sentimientos imborrables
La marcha continua casi amable.

La caminata sigue,
acercándose más y más.

Los nervios se empiezan a exaltar,
a crispár.
Se advierte conflicto.

— No hay ¿Por qué?

Los ánimos se alebrestan
Hay emoción
Se acercan, ya casi llegan

— ¿A donde?

Muy cerca.

— ¡Demaciado cerca!

3ra Parte

Se enfrentan
Hay pleito
Hay luchas
Matanzas estupidas
Hombres que mueren

— ¡¿Por que?!

4ta Parte

Ahora sólo soledad
Sólo Soledad

— ¿No hay caridad?

¡Todo desierto!

Mujeres que lloran
Huerfanos inocentes
Hombres desperdiciados

G U E R R A S A B S U R D A S

¡Locura!

¡Huerfanos!
¡Mujeres que enloquecen!

— ¿Eutopia? ¡¡¿CUANDO?!!

J A M Á S
D I O S N O E X I S T E
M U R I Ó

antes de nacer.

M A L D I T O S E A

Soledad Profana

L A S O C I E D A D

Jorge Alvarez

Poetry

MI PAPA – FOURTH CANTO

he was my father
and plays me when i sleep
the cantilevered bellow
of his sunday beer
and monday wine
and everyday the hod
was what killed him
everyone likes to say
but work is innocent
i think he understood
why the heaven of concrete
is only for the rider
and not the old dusty boots
like those of my brother
who is still in normandy
i think my father understood
of all he had
of sons who would
not bend under the roman lash
who would take the empire
to many lands
my father
with his funny tin hat
and his poet's hands

WOMAN

You are the lizard I wrestle with
In the green fires of the Sunday;

You are the rose where gardeners kneel
To lick the petal frown;

You are the slippery noise I hear
With my fingers deep in the orifice
Of the early morning falcon;

You are the steps that — pat, pat, patting —
Fall asleep with warm flesh
On the nylon carpets I have known;

You are the gasp, singing in the contrail
Of a lone pigeon;

You are the oven where red-hot pistons
Bake the thousand other poems
That are never read.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY IN MAIZE

I am a Quetzal
Who wakes up green
With wings of gold
And cannot fly;

I am the parachute
Painted
On the Aztec risers
Leading to the sky;

I am the ear
Of Epictetus
Written on the Roman lash,
While the Sundays bring
The black-shawled hundreds
To the fore;

I am the book
Torn sideways in despair
To drop the image
Of an old man
Dancing in the square;

I am the stiff volcano
Sitting on grey hair,
And mangled hands
Pull up the hod
To start another day;

I am the eye
Of a small child
With stains of corn
Upon his teeth;

I am the candle
Under images in empty rooms
Where bare feet
Paint mosaics
On the moon;

I am the dark horizon
Of old homes
And the Quetzal
He will someday see.

REMINISCENCE #729

The pat-pat-pat-pat-patting
 Of my mother's hands
 Against the hard corn
 And *comal* harder for the stone

Was ever like the windblown sand,
 Was ever in the holes,
 Dark passageways of youth
 Connecting the eyes and ear
 With what is called the soul.

The smells were of gold
 In those days:
 Gleaming, dust-covered,
 Through the open window
 Where no curtain stood
 To guard against the sun
 That was not a stranger
 In my mother's home.

But then I grew
 To push against the door
 And the years lent weight
 Until I tumbled through
 Into the chasm
 Where nothing is remembered;

It is only when
 My sweat
 No longer runs
 Into the ground
 That I can sit
 To sing of tortillas
 Baking in the sun.

ON WHAT I KNOW OF THE DELANO GRAPE STRIKE

Ernesto went to war
 Together with Artie Smith
 They were standing
 Next to themselves
 And to the world
 In line. Ernesto
 Who worked at Smith
 Incorporated and cannery.
 So you see, Ernesto
 And Artie were
 Not friends; only neighbors

Separated by a mile
 That Ernesto could not cross
 But at Munsani
 They were side by side
 When a mortar round
 Dropped on old Felipe
 Carrying grapes
 And Mr. Smith
 Calling out the price.

Miguel Ponce

Poetry

AFTER MY FATHER

“To the distant memory of José Ponce, dead
of wounds inflicted by the days.”

POEM

1. After my father,
 memory seeks,
 burrowing deeper and deeper
 into the rind of Tijuana.
2. He is dead now,
 having died
 one leg at a time
 from that cancer, indefatigable
3. As a day closes,
 wounded
 by a purple omniscience
 scraping across the hills.
4. So much to say,
 it would take
 a poem written by a living Son
 I only leave things to the air and soil.

AFTERPOEM

And so it goes child;
Such are poems made:
You grab at piles of things
And catch what doesn't slide
Through the fingers.
We cast out meaning
To the grave of shadows
(There in the hills of Tijuana)
Where memory comes to you
Like a breath of decay.

CANCIÓN A LA COMIDA MEXICANA

Comida mexicana,
 hecha por una mujer indígena
 de manos míticas,
 y de movimientos enmojados
 de oregano y canela:

Tus dedos preparan
 la comida tumultuosa
 de colores:

El colorado deleitoso
 de salsa picante
 cubre toda la vida
 con sus hojas
 aromáticas de amores
 irrigados por aguas
 rojos de ríos elementales.

Verde májico
 del espíritu
 que se envuelve
 en la ritual preparación
 de la comida
 de gente animada.
 Alma pululante,
 que enseña a todos
 los ingredientes
 del poder entusiasmado
 del crecimiento.

Y sobre todo,
 el color
 de tierra chocolate,
 fundación básica
 que sugestiona
 el ritmo hambriento
 de nuestros pasos
 y de nuestra pasada.
 Bastión café
 en que reposa
 toda la comida humana

¡Atención, aliados!
 ¡Maíz, Atención!
 chile,
 frijol,
 mezcal;
 ¡todos, atención!

Marchemos
 en formación de deseos
 hasta la isla fecunda
 del alimento
 cultivada por manos
 de mujer.

a Nora Hickman

AARON, A BIRTH

Through the glass that informs our first
separation, I see his fingers clawing and claw-
ing at the immense distances between each
breath.

How I struggle with this diminutive form!
This gentle inflection from the tongue of the universe.
What once was just myself,
Or only her,
Or only in her,
Is now apart from us both.
(Although it is true that we need it
Absolutely more than it needs us.)

While I stand in one center of the room,
They share the only corner;
Vying with the distances
That separate all of us.
Cautiously, at first, and full of fear,
I see them rush headlong through space,
Propelled by their contact, a single current
Filled with blood straight from the heart.
They speak a secret language, in quiet murmurs,
Of symbols lost to the mind.

In that embrace that cancels absolution
There is no breach.
They brave the streams of eloquence.
Each to each, they shape a single life;
Obscure in origins, obscure in destination;
While I look on content to sight
The occasional glimmer of a pale mystery.

Mugre de la Cancion

— A Play (Sin Fin) En Tres Actos —

by

OCTAVIO IGNACIO ROMANO—V.

‘ ‘ ‘

Los caracteres que aparecen en esta comedia son *purely fictitious*. Cualquier semejanza que tengan con personas vivas o muertas es pura coincidencia como las que vemos todos los dias.

‘ ‘ ‘

ACT I - SCENE 1: The living room of a small apartment on the Jersey side of New York. On the coffee table is a bottle of medium-priced wine. On the mantelpiece is a bottle of inexpensive domestic brandy. From these two symbols it is obvious that the inhabitants have fallen on hard times — actually they are between grants. During this period they have to “make do” (pobrecitos). With such abject poverty facing them they have to scrimp and save, keep their nose to the grindstone, pull themselves up by their own bootstraps, get up and go, and, of course, suffer. They have to settle for meat only twice daily until such time as they get another juicy grant from some foundation. Meanwhile, they enjoy their “suffering.” Otherwise, they wouldn’t have anything to talk about when they have company.

This apartment is temporary living quarters for Handlee (Handy) Andee and Eric Macha. Eric is the girl. Her name reflects the progressive and enlightened trends of a contemporary, modern, complex, industrial, urbanized, scientific society. Her name also reflects her personality.

Someday Handlee (Handy) Andee hopes to marry Eric. Living with Eric now is nice, but to marry Eric would be wonderful. They love each other very much, and that is why they call each other by the same name. He calls her Honey. She calls him Honey. This is known as unisex.

But wait! Handlee (Handy) Andee puts off his marriage with Eric. Secretly he is afraid! He's afraid that Eric will somehow find out that his real name is not Andee! It is really Portnoy. However, a long time before, as a very handy boy, he had discovered that no Portnoy was ever a match for a Macha. So he had changed his name to Andee. Now he was happy with Eric Macha (for him it was a victory). And Eric, as a true Macha, was rather disgusted and nauseated with her lot in life.

(Curtain rises) The audience sees Handlee (Handy) setting the dinner table. Every now and then he glances at the clock, as if expecting someone. He arranges the silver. With a fatalistically resigned sigh he pours the medium-priced wine, wrinkling his nose as he does so. Then he says aloud, "If only I could get a grant to study wines." Suddenly he hears a noise and dashes to the mirror above the divan, brushes his shirt and smoothes his hair down with his hands. Just as he is finishing this traditional custom the door opens and Eric Macha walks in. Immediately the audience notices that Eric and Handlee (Handy) are both dressed exactly alike. However, the audience should not be confused, for she is a garbage collector and he is a grantsman, two very different trades indeed.

Eric: (taking the initiative) "Hi, Honey."

Handlee (Handy): "Hi, Honey."

For some time they stand there, wondering what to do next. Finally, Eric crosses the room and takes Handlee (Handy) brusquely into her arms and kisses him on the lips. As she releases him he sinks down into the divan.

Handly (Handy): "I love you, Macha."

Eric: "Call me Eric."

Handlee (Handy): "Alright, Honey. I love you, Eric, Honey."

(Curtain falls as Eric places her hand over her mouth and rushes toward the bathroom.)

↑ ↑ ↑

SCENE 2: Handlee (Handy) is clearing the table. Eric is picking her teeth with a toothpick. She speaks, through the toothpick.

Eric: "Honey, you were very quiet during dinner. Is something wrong, Honey? Honey, I'm talking to you."

Handlee (Handy): "I got a letter from the Frig Foundation. (As he says Frig Foundation they both turn and bow low toward the East.) They turned down my proposal for a \$500,000 grant to help all the CHAI-CAY-NOSE help themselves to help others by helping me get my grant so they can volunteer to help themselves to help others to help me renew my grant once I get my first \$500,000 from the Frig Foundation. (They both turn and bow low toward the East. Handlee's tongue is hanging out.)"

Eric: "You don't pronounce it right, Honey."

Handlee (Handy): "What do you mean, Honey? Frig is Frig."

Eric: "I don't mean that, Honey. It's that other word. You don't make it sound authentic. You got to sound like you were practically a Mexican. It's like Chicago. Now say after me — CHI-CAW-NOSE."

Handlee (Handy): "CHI-CAW-NOSE."

Eric: "That's it, Honey. You got it. You're practically a Mexican now."

Handlee (Handy): "Thanks, Honey. I even sort of feel Mexican, now that I can say CHI-CAW-NOSE. (Pause) Say, Honey, maybe I can get a big grant to save people by teaching them how to pronounce these strange words — sort of like salvation through pronunciation."

Eric: "Write it up, Honey."

Handlee (Handy): "Would you type it up for me, Honey?"

Eric: "Aw, Honey, you know I'm around garbage all day long. When I get home I like to rest."

(Handlee (Handy) Andee looks like he's going to cry as — The Curtain Falls.)

/ / /

ACT II - SCENE 1: Same room. Company arrives, three Spanish surnamed people. It is a fairly young man and woman with an elderly lady. During the entire scene the elderly lady doesn't say a thing — she just moves meekly to the back of the room, kneels, and starts to nervously finger a Rosary. Since she has a language barrier, every now and then she takes out a tortilla and nibbles on it. This shows the audience that she's really an authentic Mexican.

The young man's name is Jorge (pronounced Hor-Hay). The girl with him is named Jorgia (pronounced Hor-Hecah).

Hor-Hay: (To Hor-Heeah) "Honey, I want you to meet . . ."

Handlee (Handy): (Interrupting) "Hey, you people call each other Honey, too, doncha."

Hor-Hay: "Yes. It is part of our traditional culture. The Aztecs used honey to sweeten things. That's where that custom comes from among my people. I'm not so acculturated that I have forgotten my people's past."

Handlee (Handy): (writing in a notebook and saying aloud) "Aztecs – Honey. Hmmm. Write proposal for cross-cultural universals focusing on honey as a source of salvation. (pause) Hor-Hay, I'm putting in for this big grant. The way I see it, you're an expert on your people. (Hor-Hay nods in agreement.) I'd like you to be a consultant on this project for at least two days. It's a project to help the CHI-CAW-NOSE. (He moves to the adding machine on the coffee table and punches \$200 on it) See? That shows you I really mean it."

Eric: "Honey, why don't you just take that project you did on helping the Eskimos – all you have to do is take out the word Eskimos and just write in Mexican instead. After all, both words have the same number of letters, and this would save you an awful lot of typing."

Handlee (Handy): "Hey, Honey, that's a real great idea – real great! And in the Eskimo proposal there is all I need, about how the Eskimos have a language barrier, how their traditional culture holds them back, and how they are too emotional and irrational to save themselves, sort of disadvantaged."

Hor-Heeah: "It won't work, Handlee. Times have changed since you brought salvation to the Eskimos with that \$400,000 grant."

Handlee (Handy): "What do you mean by that, Hor-Heeah?"

Hor-Heeah: "Well, for one thing, the Eskimos are worse off now, and they have lost a lot more of their lands."

Handlee (Handy): (Irritably) "That's not what I'm asking."

Hor-Hay: "She means that today you have to have some ethnic surnames under you, to make it look legitimate – same ideas, same proposal, same project, only now you make it look like the community is saying it instead of you. This will work for you, especially if you call it educational and show it on TV."

Eric: (Yawning) "I'm going to bed. I've got a full day of garbage collecting tomorrow."

As she exits Handlee is saying to Hor-Hay, "I love your people — they're so friendly and, and — and — and, well — they're so traditional, just like the Eskimos. If only I get my grant I just know deep inside that I can help them to help themselves — but first I have to get my grant." (Curtain Falls.)

/ / /

ACT III - SCENE 1: Same setting as First Act. Handlee (Handy) is heard whistling *South of the Border, Down Mexico Way* as he happily sets the dinner table and gingerly lights two candles. Eric enters, arriving home from work.

Eric: "Well, what's the occasion? Don't tell me, Honey, you got your grant from the Frig Foundation! (They turn and bow low toward the East.)

Handlee (Handy): "Every Penny! Two hundred fifty thousand dollars! It's to make a series of films that we'll call documentary and educational. The Eskimo proposal worked. It worked. It worked!"

Eric: "What's your salary, Honey?"

Handlee (Handy): "I wrote myself in for \$22,500 a year plus benefits and cost of living increases."

Eric: "And how about Hor-Hay and Hor-Heeah?"

Handlee (Handy): (Suddenly getting very serious, almost gloomy)
"Boy, Honey, let me tell you, those two are real slick operators, real slick. Why did you know they finally forced me to write them in for \$500 each as community consultants? Oh, well, I guess their names on each film will make it all look good. But — you know, Honey (pause) — that kind really don't care about their people. All they care about is money."

Eric: "Yeah, I know the type. They won't volunteer for anything. Not even to help their people help themselves. Tell me, why was this proposal accepted and your last one rejected?"

Handlee (Handy): "Partly because I used Hor-Hay and Hor-Heeah's names, but mainly because I talked KUAT-TV at the University of Arizona into showing the whole series. That TV station will show anything, just so it is called educational. And besides, they don't even have a single Mexican on their permanent staff, so they'll never know the difference!" (They both laugh loudly)

Eric: "Well, Honey, I've got to hand it to you. We got us another grant. It was really rough not to have one for five months."

Handlee (Handy): (Exclaiming loudly) "Rough? Rough, did you say? It was HELL. Sheer rotten HELL. Boy, I never want to go through that again."

Eric: "Well, I'm going to put on a clean pair of pants to celebrate the occasion." (She exits to bedroom)

Handlee (Handy): (Yells toward bedroom) "Hey, Honey, get out my khakis and my old T-shirts. I've got to start looking earthy and sincere again when I go to talk to the CHI-CAW-NOSE."

Eric: (From bedroom) "Where are they? I can't find them."

Handlee (Handy): "They're way down at the bottom of the big trunk, Honey, where I put them when I stopped helping Eskimos last year. Oh, never mind, Honey. I'll just go down to the Goodwill across town and buy some used clothes for my trip out West."

(Sin Fin)

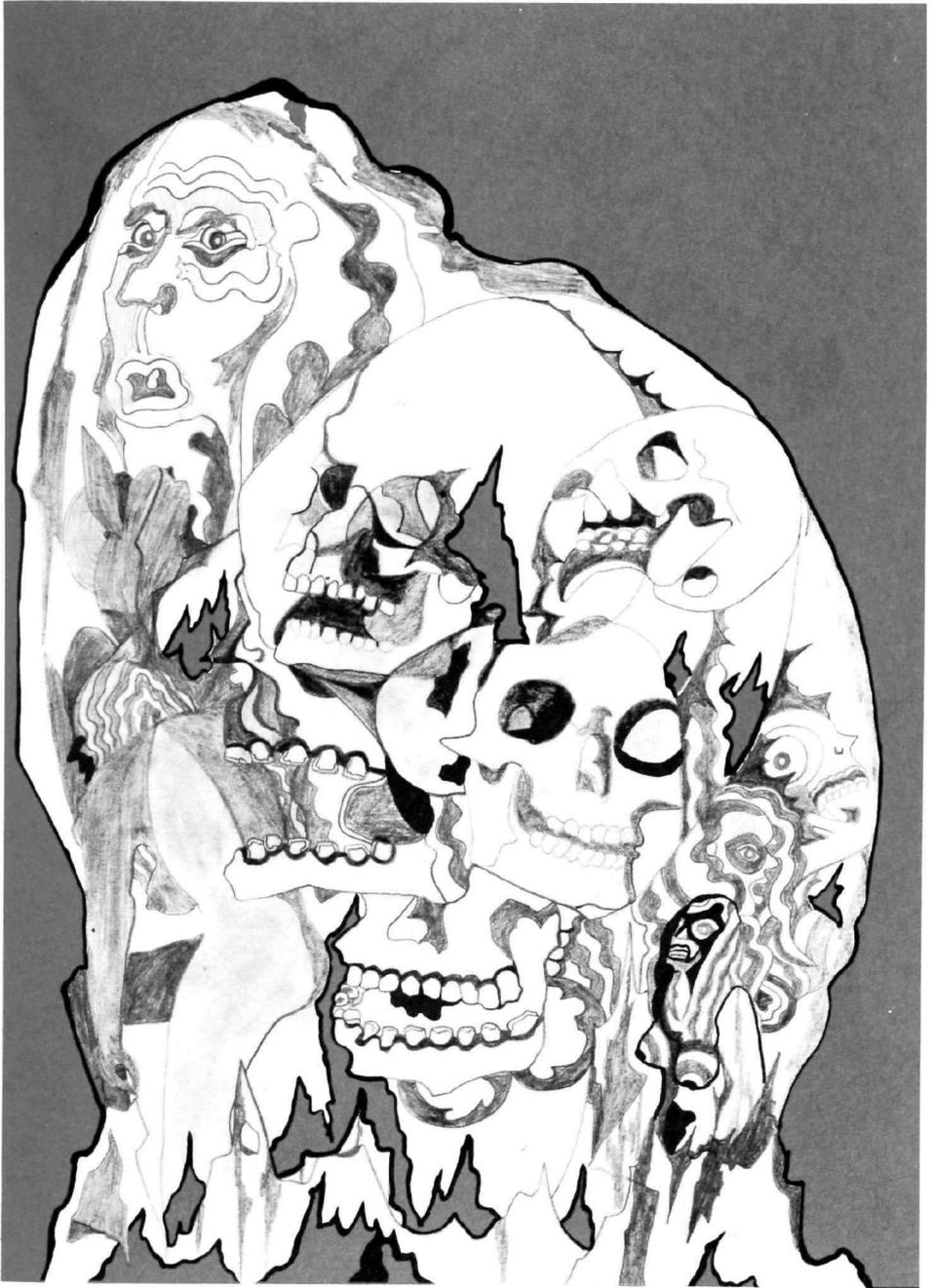
✓ ✓ ✓

This play first appeared in ¡CORAJE!, the CPA newspaper in Tucson, Arizona, in July, 1969.

OCTAVIO IGNACIO ROMANO-V., born in Mexico City, obtained his B.A., and M.A., at the University of New Mexico and his Ph.D. in anthropology at the University of California at Berkeley in 1962.

Ricardo Cuadra

Portfolio

















From **QUINTO SOL PUBLICATIONS, INC.**, publishers of *El Gato*
 the first in a series of books



CORAJE — Tucson, Arizona (Member of the Chicano Press Association)

"This anthology is highly recommended for all Chicanos who will readily appreciate its hard hitting social message as well as feel and understand the artistry of many of the authors whose works are included in this collection."

CESAR E. CHAVEZ

"I really admire the fact that you published **EL ESPEJO**, and continue to publish, without any outside support. I see that mode of operation as the basis for achieving real independence. This kind of independence is of vital importance in all of the arts, but, I think, of the utmost importance in literature."

THE NATION

Several of the stories in **EL ESPEJO** display "... binary phenomenon at its best, that is, where the linguistic symbols of two languages are mixed in utterances using either language's syntactic structure."

A partial listing of the Colleges and Universities presently using EL ESPEJO

California State College at: San Fernando Sonoma Sacramento Fresno San Diego San Bernardino	Hayward San Francisco San Jose Chico Long Beach	Whittier College Scripps College Claremont College Stanford University University of San Francisco University of Southern California California State Polytechnic College	University of California at: Berkeley Santa Barbara Riverside Los Angeles State University of New York at Buffalo Utah College	Davis San Francisco Irvine Davis Pomona	University of New Mexico University of Texas University of Colorado Arizona State University University of Wisconsin University of Oregon Oregon State University Pomona College
---	---	---	--	---	---

EL ESPEJO is also used extensively in numerous junior colleges and public school systems.

241 pages — Paperback \$2.95 — Hardbound \$5.95
 (Plus 50 cents for sales tax, postage and handling)

Octavio I. Romano-V., Ph.D., Editor

SOLE DISTRIBUTION BY

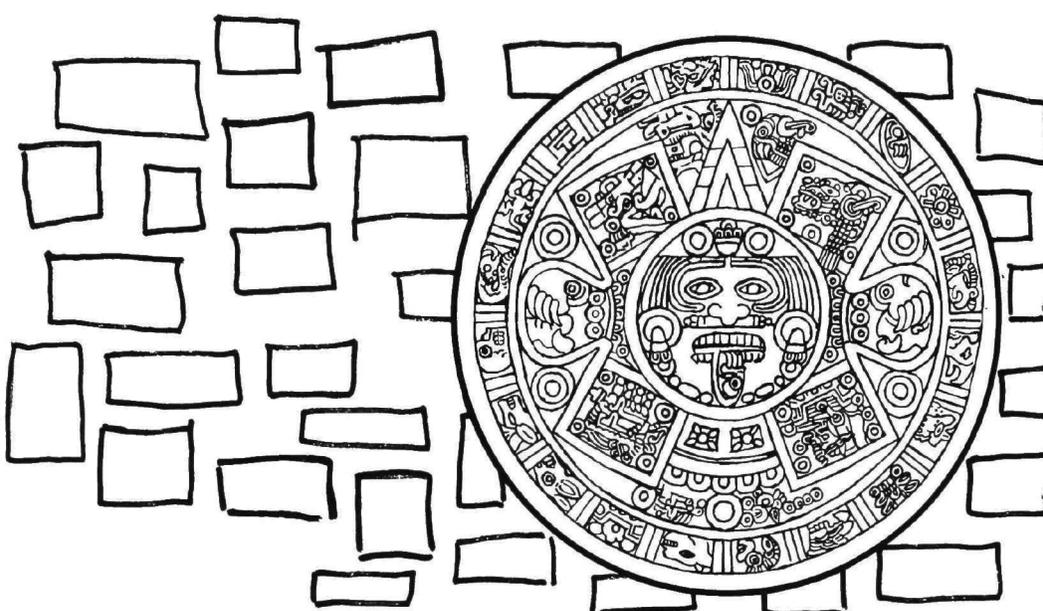
Quinto Sol Publications, Inc.
 P.O. Box 9275 Berkeley, California 94709

Please send me _____ copy (copies) of **EL ESPEJO** at \$2.95 Paperback; \$5.95 Hardbound.....
 (plus 50 cents for sales tax, postage and handling)

Enclosed is \$ _____ . (Check or money order must accompany each order).

Name _____ Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Make checks payable to: **QUINTO SOL PUBLICATIONS, INC.**
 P.O. Box 9275 Berkeley, California 94709



PREMIO QUINTO SOL \$1,000

QUINTO SOL PUBLICATIONS announces a one-thousand dollar award for best literary work of 1970 — novel, collection of short stories, book-length essay or experimental writing — written by a person of Mexican descent who is a resident of the United States.

Deadline for submitting manuscripts
November 30, 1970

Announcement of Award
December 31, 1970

The literary selection receiving the award will be published by Quinto Sol Publications, Inc., in Spring, 1971

For complete information write to

PREMIO QUINTO SOL, QUINTO SOL PUBLICATIONS, INC. P.O. BOX 9275, BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA 94709

QUINTO SOL PUBLICATIONS anuncia un premio de mil dolares para la mejor obra literaria — novela, colección de cuentos, ensayo, obra experimental — escrita por persona de ascendencia Mexicana residente de Los Estados Unidos de Norte-América.

Fecha final para entregar su obra
30 de noviembre, 1970

Anuncio del premio
31 de diciembre, 1970

La obra premiada la publicará Quinto Sol Publications, Inc., durante los primeros meses de 1971.

Para recibir información completa diríjase a

PREMIO QUINTO SOL, QUINTO SOL PUBLICATIONS, INC. P.O. BOX 9275, BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA 94709

ORALE

QUINTO SOL PUBLICATIONS esta regando lana (mil bolas) por el mejor jale literario—novela, ensayo, cuentos, o vatosismos—escrito por vato que cantonea en el U.S.A.

Línea muerta para mandar su jale
30 noviembre 1970

Canto del premio
31 diciembre 1970

El jale literario que se gane la lana se va a publicar por Quinto Sol en los primeros de 1971.

No se raje. Para información completa escriba

PREMIO QUINTO SOL, QUINTO SOL PUBLICATIONS, INC. P.O. BOX 9275, BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA 94709

Please begin my subscription to EL GRITO with the next issue, Vol. III, No.

1 year \$4.00

Payment enclosed

Bill me later

Back issues available — \$1.25 each

Vol. I, Nos. 1__ 2__ 3__ 4__ Vol. II, Nos. 1__ 2__ 3__ 4__

Vol. III, No. 1__ 2__

(A check or money order must accompany each order for back issues)

Print Name _____

Street & No. _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Make checks payable to and send to: **Quinto Sol Publications, Inc.**
P. O. Box 9275
Berkeley, California 94709

Please cut along dotted line.

Please begin my subscription to EL GRITO with the next issue, Vol. III, No.

1 year \$4.00

Payment enclosed

Bill me later

Back issues available — \$1.25 each

Vol. I, Nos. 1__ 2__ 3__ 4__ Vol. II, Nos. 1__ 2__ 3__ 4__

Vol. III, No. 1__ 2__

(A check or money order must accompany each order for back issues)

Print Name _____

Street & No. _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Make checks payable to and send to: **Quinto Sol Publications, Inc.**
P. O. Box 9275
Berkeley, California 94709

Please cut along dotted line.

Please begin my subscription to EL GRITO with the next issue, Vol. III, No.

1 year \$4.00

Payment enclosed

Bill me later

Back issues available — \$1.25 each

Vol. I, Nos. 1__ 2__ 3__ 4__ Vol. II, Nos. 1__ 2__ 3__ 4__

Vol. III, No. 1__ 2__

(A check or money order must accompany each order for back issues)

Print Name _____

Street & No. _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Make checks payable to and send to: **Quinto Sol Publications, Inc.**
P. O. Box 9275
Berkeley, California 94709

Please cut along dotted line.

If *EL GRITO* is truly to function as a forum for contemporary Mexican-American thought, it must have the active participation of its Mexican-American readers. We invite contributions in both written and graphic form—academic papers, book reviews, short stories, poetry, satire, drawings, photographs, and cartoons. Relevance of topic and quality of work are the only editorial standards.

To insure return, manuscripts and materials must be accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Address all contributions to:

EL GRITO
P. O. Box 9275
Berkeley, California 94709

Fee schedule: Payment to contributors to *EL GRITO*

Major article (4500 or more words)	\$50.00
Short article (less than 4500 words)	25.00
Short story	35.00
Poetry	25.00
Satire	25.00
Art	25.00
Photography	25.00

QUINTO SOL PUBLICATIONS, INC., is an unaffiliated, non-funded, self-supporting Mexican-American publishing house that also publishes books dealing with the contemporary nature of Mexican-Americans.

