

11-1-1974

¿Qué Tal! November 1974

Mexican American Graduate Studies, San Jose State College

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.sjsu.edu/que_tal



Part of the [Chicana/o Studies Commons](#), [Ethnic Studies Commons](#), [Latina/o Studies Commons](#), and the [Politics and Social Change Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Mexican American Graduate Studies, San Jose State College, "¿Qué Tal! November 1974" (1974). *¿Qué Tal!*. 14.

https://scholarworks.sjsu.edu/que_tal/14

This Magazine is brought to you for free and open access by the Chicana and Chicano Studies at SJSU ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in ¿Qué Tal! by an authorized administrator of SJSU ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact scholarworks@sjsu.edu.

CHICANO LIBRARY RESOURCE CENTER

¡QUÉ TAL!

NOVEMBER NO.21



Solo

San Jose, CA. 95192
State University
Library
Library Resource Center



EL ABUELO

¡Ola Chiquitos! How are all of you? Bueno, I bet everybody has had at least one midterm exam, am I right? I thought so! Well, how are my hijitos doing? . . . Que Bueno.

Here we are con otro Que Tal! Esta gente me va poner loco. Puro trabajar y nada de play. But, we gotta nather fantastic Que Tal to entertain and inform you.

En este Que Tal, there are articulos de las mujeres. Sabes que la mujer has played a big role in our history, if not from one side on the other. You've all heard of the folkloric Adelitas, whom without them the Revolution may have never been won! Then on the other side of the coin there was "La Malinche" who helped the Spaniards conquer the Aztecs by giving them valuable information.

Also in this issue there are short stories and poemas that are very interesting, so you go ahead y deja le cai unas stories antes que comiense your next class.

Buenos chiquitos, that's about all for this time, don't forget your studies, all A's this time!

Be good y Dios me los cuide.

AMOR POR MI RAZA

Abuelo

Table of Content

Editorial Plicy	Survival
Editorial	Pawned
La Chicana	Dawn #264
Perspective on La Chicana	Hijos de Bronze
Dos Hermanitos	The Mothers Prayer

EDITORIAL POLICY

The staff of Que Tal, in an effort to maximize the literary contributions of the Chicano community, has set forth the following policy statement as representative of the objectives to be met in this and future publications:

1. Any article or story that is in any way detrimental or offensive to the Chicano community will not be printed.
2. The editor reserves the right to delete emotively loaded rhetoric from any article or work of non-fiction that does not add to the content of the work...Letters to the editor will be exempt from this policy.
3. In the event that more than one article dealing with the same subject matter is submitted for publication, the article judged to be the more meritorious will be printed.
4. Unless specifically requested, all articles, poems, letters, short stories, etc., will be printed with the authors name and become the property of Que Tal.
5. Que Tal is non-partisan, non-profit, and in no way affiliated with any political group.

E D I T O R I A L

Que Tal is currently making an attempt to encourage more Chicana student input in literature (creative or factual) to be submitted for publication. Que Tal feels that the Chicana has just as much literary talent as her male counterpart, but this feeling has not been reinforced due to the lack of literature submitted by Chicanas.

In hopes that Chicanas will eventually reinforce this feeling, Que Tal has printed various articles dealing with "La Chicana". Some of these articles have strong feminine connotations, others are creative literature. It is not Que Tal's intent to only encourage writings dealing with how the Chicana has been exploited by the "macho", but instead to encourage her to expose and expand her overall literary talents.

Writings have little value when stored away in a closet, desk drawer, or in a folder; exposed to no one except the author. It is like a thought, no one hears it until it is spoken. Que Tal would like Chicanas to put these unspoken thoughts on paper; dig-out writings that they have stored away and submit them to be considered for publication. We know that there are a hell-of-a-lot of Chicanas that have literary talents, so let us hear from you.

J. T.

TO WOMEN

Companeras:

Revolution approaches! With angered eyes, and flaming hair, her trembling hands knock anxiously on the doors of our nation. Let us welcome her with serenity, for although she carries death in her breast, she is the announcement of life, the herald of hope. She will destroy and create at the same time; she will raze and build. Her fists are the invincible fists of a people in rebellion. She does not offer roses or caresses; she offers an axe and a torch.

Interrupting the millennial feast of the content, sedition raises her head, and the prophecy of Baltasar has with time become a clenched fist hanging over the heads of the so-called ruling class. Revolution approaches! Her mission will ignite the flames in which privilege and injustice will burn. Companeras, do not fear the revolution. You constitute one-half of the human species and what affects humanity affects you as an integral part of it. If men are slaves you are too. Bondage does not recognize sex; the infamy that degrades men equally degrades you. You cannot escape the shame of oppression. The same forces which conquer men strangle you.

We must stand in solidarity in the grand contest for freedom and happiness. Are you mothers? Are you wives? Are you sisters? Are you daughters? Your duty is to help man; to side when he suffers; to lighten his sorrow; to laugh and to be there to encourage him when he vacillates; stand by his side when he suffers; to lighten his sorrow; to laugh and to sing with him when victory smiles. You don't understand politics? This is not a question of politics; this is a matter of life or death. Man's bondage is yours and perhaps yours is more sorrowful, more sinister, and more infamous.

Are you a worker? Because you are a woman you are paid less than men, and made to work harder. You must suffer the impertinence of the foreman or proprietor; and if you are attractive, the bosses will make advances. Should you weaken, they would rob you of your virtue in the same cowardly manner as you are robbed of the product of your labor.

Under this regime of social injustice which corrupts humanity, the existence of women wavers in the wretchedness of a destiny which fades away either in the blackness of fatigue and hunger or in the obscurity of marriage and prostitution.

In order to fully appreciate women's part in universal suffering, it is necessary to study page by page this somber book called Life, which like so many thorns strips away the flesh of humanity.

So ancient is women's misfortune that its origins are lost in the obscurity of legend. In the infancy of mankind, the birth of a female child was considered a disgrace to the tribe. Women toiled the land, carried firewood from the forest and water from the stream, tended the livestock, constructed shelters, wove cloth, cooked food, and cared for the sick and the young. The filthiest work was done by women. Should an ox die of fatigue, the women took its place pulling the plow, and when war broke out between rivaling tribes, the women merely changed masters, and continued under the lash of the new owners, carrying out their tasks as beasts of burden.

Later, under the influence of Greek civilization, women were elevated one step in the esteem of men. No longer were they beasts of burden as in the primitive clan, nor did they lead secluded lives as in Oriental societies. If they belonged to a free class, their role was one of procreators of citizens for the state; if they were slaves, they provided workers for the fields.

Christianity aggravated the situation of women with its contempts for the flesh. The founding fathers of the Church vented their outbursts of rage against feminine qualities. St. Augustine, St. Thomas and other saints, before whose statues women now kneel, referred to women as daughters of the devil, vessels of impurity, and condemned them to the tortures of hell.

Women's position in this century varies according to their social status; but in spite of the refinements of customs and the progress of philosophy, women

continue subordinated to men by tradition and laws. Women are perpetually treated as minors when the law places the wife under the custody of the husband. She cannot vote or be elected, and to enter into civil contracts she must own a sizable fortune.

Throughout history women have been considered inferior to men, not only by law but also by custom. From this erroneous and unjust concept derives the misfortune which she has suffered since humanity differentiated itself from lower animal forms by the use of fire and tools.

Humiliated, degraded, bound by the chains of tradition to an irrational inferiority, indoctrinated in the affairs of heaven by clerics, but totally ignorant of world problems, she is suddenly caught in the whirlwind of industrial production which above all requires cheap labor to sustain the competition created by the voracious "prices of capital" who exploit her circumstances. She is not as prepared as men for the industrial struggle, nor is she organized with the women of her class to fight alongside her brother workers against the rapacity of capitalism.

For this reason, though women work more than men, they are paid less, and misery, mistreatment, and insult are today as yesterday the bitter harvest for a whole existence of sacrifice. So meager are women's salaries that frequently they must prostitute themselves to meet their families' basic needs, especially when in the marketplace of marriage they do not find a husband. When it is motivated by economic security instead of love, marriage is but another form of prostitution, sanctioned by the law and authorized by public officials. That is, a wife sells her body for food exactly as does a prostitute; this occurs in the majority of marriages. And what could be said of the vast army of women who do not succeed in finding a husband? The increasing cost of life's basic necessities; the displacement of human labor by the perfection of machinery; the ever-decreasing price of human labor - all contribute to the burden of supporting a family. The compulsory draft tears strong and healthy

young men from the bosom of a society and lessens the number eligible for marriage. Migration of workers, caused by economic and political phenomena, also reduces the number of men capable of marriage. Alcoholism, gambling and others ills of society further reduce the number of available men. Consequently, the number of single women grows alarmingly. Since their situation is so precarious, they swell the ranks of prostitution, accelerating the degeneration of the human race by this debasement of body and spirit.

Compañeras: This is the frightful picture offered by modern society. In it you see men and women alike suffering the tyranny of political and social environment in complete discord with the progress of civilization and the advances of philosophy. In times of anguish, however, do not look up to the heavens for solutions and explanations because in that lies the greatest contribution to your eternal bondage. The solution is here on earth! That solution is rebellion.

Demand that your husband, brothers, fathers, sons and friends pick up the gun. Spit in the face of those who refuse to pick up weapons against oppression.

Revolution approaches! Jimenez and Acayucan, Palomas, Viesca, Las Vacas and Valladolid are the first gust of the inevitable wind. A tragic paradox: freedom, which is life, is gained by imparting death!

Ricardo Flores Magon
(From Regeneracion, September 24, 1910)

*A reference to the insurrections led by the Partido Liberal Mexicano in 1908 and 1910. Too premature, they failed in their intent. Still, they gave the signal for the later general insurrection, the Revolution of 1919.

This article "A La Mujer" was made possible for Que Tal, thanks to the efforts of the members of Prensa Sembradora.

LA CHICANA

Historical Background

The post-Revolutionary period in Mexico saw women emerging with a new sense of values and a higher level of consciousness. As a result of the war, male hierarchy was seriously challenged for the first time. The static, rigid male-oriented pre-Revolutionary society underwent tremendous change. War dramatically altered female roles. Feminine participation in Mexican society was augmented to a massive scale. Consequently, la mujer Mexicana became more vocal and more militant in her struggle for emancipation.¹

Mexican women began demanding the right to vote since the early days of the Mexican Revolution. Enfranchisement for women was in fact a formalized goal of the Revolucion. Some of the more active women organized the feminist league-Hijas de Cuauhtemoc, which advocated suffrage and emancipation for women in all areas ranging from politics to intellectual development. Occasionally, their activities were met with violence such as a suffrage demonstration held in Santa Julia on June 5, 1911. Here nine people lost their lives and many more wounded. Because women were generally considered conservative, religious, and submissive, opponents charged that if women were given the vote the political system would regress to a reactionary pro-clerical one.²

The Mexican Revolution of 1910 not only created a more democratic Mexico, but unintentionally contributed to the emancipation of the Mexicana. Up until this time, the woman's role was a traditional one,

¹Vera Carreon, editor. "La Historia". Chicana Service Action Center Newsletter: 2. Los Angeles, California. 1973

²Ibid

concerned mainly with her family and the Church. Isolated from civic affairs because the Mexicana lacked education, an extremely low proportion of the women were employed outside of the home--as few as 9%.

With the impact of the Revolution, the Mexicana was forced into a new situation--a change in her environment and her role. Hunger, loneliness, and abuse--all characteristics of war--made it impossible for the Mexicana to go on living in isolation. When their men left to fight, the women had no alternative but to fill the vacant positions. They became train dispatchers, telegraphers, druggists, nurses, office clerks, reporters, newspaper editors, teachers, businesswomen, and factory workers. The Mexicana also provided supportive services for the Revolution, such as delivering medicine, ammunition, clothing, food, mail, and military equipment to the men in the front lines. Through her active participation, the Mexicana developed a new insight--a third dimension, meeting for the first time on an equal basis with her mate. Thus began the suffrage movement of 1910 in Mexico. Both Revolutionary forces and Federalistas appealed to the women to support their causes, and even went so far as to enact legislative measures to ensure greater equal rights. In May, 1911, a petition was submitted to the interim President Lic. Francisco Leon de la Barra, requesting the woman's right to vote. Since the Constitution made no mention of sex, the state of Chicapas, after a series of conferences, finally acquired the right to vote in May of 1925.³

However, sincere, dedicated, revolutionary leaders attempted to carry out promises made to women during the war. In attempts to elevate the status of women, General Salvador Alvarado, incorporated in his reconstruction plan for Yucatan, an educational program for women. Moreover, he encouraged feminist congresses in his state.

³Ibid, Vol. 1.

Legislation favoring women was enacted during Carranza's term in office. Divorce laws were liberalized, making it easier for women to obtain a divorce on several grounds. Statutes protecting working women and unwed mothers were also passed. It was during this decade (1910-1919) that feminist literature sprang up in Mexico. [↑] *Mujer Moderna* and *Revista de Revistas*) were two very popular magazines among literate Mexicanas. Novels and short stories romanticized the mujer's role in the Revolution. Music and art, too, followed the trend and depicted women as heroic, without whose aid the revolutionary cause would have been defeated. Such praise served in upgrading the woman's image. Among the most widely acclaimed heroines include La Adelita and Sra. Hermilia Galindo de Topete. Even though the new more open society became sensitized to the needs of the Mexican women, women still encountered many obstacles in achieving greater political and social rights. Full suffrage wasn't granted to women in Mexico until 1953.

La Chicana Problem in the United States

A review of existing scholarly social science research reveals the almost total lack of a true and accurate image of the Chicana. Historically, the small body of research in the areas of History, Sociology and Literature on the Chicano has been done by Anglos who have lacked sufficient understanding and sensitivity to the total culture of Mexicans living in the United States.

This research has had directly dysfunctional consequences for the Chicano due to the perpetuation of false and stereotypical images of the role and function of women within the Chicano community. In large measure, these unfortunate consequences flow from the activities of Anglo social institutions which, lacking counter-images of the Chicana, tend towards unquestioning acceptance of prevailing myths. For instance, institutions in the fields of education, health, welfare, law enforcement, etc.;

utilize this distorted picture in serving the needs of Chicanas in the barrios, schools, hospitals and in correctional institutions. By relying on these incorrect stereotypes these institutions and service organizations inevitably are misguided and misinformed. Acted upon in such a manner, Chicanas have been forced to assume an unnatural position of passivity and subservience and have thus far been effectively barred from a full and creative role in our society.

A very influential and typical example of a well-respected book which has contributed in the perpetuation of false and negative stereotypes of the Chicano is William Madsen's anthropological work Mexican Americans of South Texas which portrays the Chicana as weak, submissive, and overly respectful towards her husband and male-dominated society in general. He writes that "...the Mexican American wife who irritates her husband may be beaten... Some wives assert that they are grateful for punishment at the hands of their husbands for such concern with shortcomings indicates profound love." This study, used in many colleges and universities as an authoritative source, advances a number of totally erroneous concepts-- Chicanas are drastically under-represented in policy-making positions in public and private institutions. This situation is especially crucial in regards to politics, governmental agencies, and in all levels of the educational system.

The above description of the role and image of the Chicana in American life should make it plainly obvious that if any useful and accurate contributions in scholarly research or media are to be expected in the future, it must be done by or with the assistance of Chicanas.

Sylvia Gonzales

PERSPECTIVE ON LA CHICANA

Chicana growth is greatly dependent upon original, innovative and insightful research into the everyday experiences of Chicanas whether it be in the barrio, colleges and universities, or in their relations with public service agencies and institutions including schools, welfare, immigration, law enforcement and legislation. They must be aware of the contributions of women such as Maria Urquides, Graciela Olivarez, Deluvina Hernandez, Julie Ruiz, Polly Baca Barragan, Gracia Molina de Pick, Mari Luci Jaramillo, Marta Bernal, Marta Sotomayor, Priscilla Salazar, Marta Cortero, Lilia Aceves, Rosie Castro, and so many more. They must look to the efforts of these women in understanding the intricacies of the social system in which they must function as individuals and as members of the Chicano cultural pattern. For a broader and more personal understanding of the obstacles, experiences and feelings of Chicanas in reaching their self-awareness as women and as members of a unique cultural group, the following selected perspectives are included in this description.

Dr. Blandina Cardenas, Rockefeller Fellow, Office of Senator Walter Mondale, Washington, D. C. - Whether Chicanos survive as a people in the United States will ultimately depend, in my opinion, on the sensitivity and vision which we bring to the formulation of a new social contract between Chicano men and women. Chicanas have long known the difference between giving and submitting and the understanding of that difference allowed our grandmothers and our mothers to emerge as strong, positive human beings, carrying on rich and satisfying relationships as human beings.

Today many of us are engaged in a multiplicity of additional concerns. I would hope that the wisdom of our "abuelas" would prevail and that we would continue to know the difference between giving and submitting.

Chicanas, too, must approach the task with both the sensitivity and wisdom of our past and a clear vision of our future. My own professional development could never have progressed as rapidly and as positively had not the models provided by my family and community been strong, positive women, and had not many men of personal and professional excellence provided a support system filled with "respecto y carino". Clearly that support has not been extended to enough women of our culture.

I believe that it is that "respecto y carino" between Chicanos of both sexes that will make the difference in developing the climate in which Chicanas are free to realize their own professional potential as the full range of options for realizing the cultural and feminine dimension of their identity remains substantially intact.

Ruth Corona, Student, San Jose State University, San Jose, California - A Chicana is truly a mixture of love and hate: the love the Indian woman gave and the hate by which it was taken away. From our Indian mother, our people were blessed with a beautiful bronze skin and dark raven hair. Our dark, piercing eyes were lost unto the souls of the Anglo. From the Indians we were also given a quiet strength and determination that cannot be ignored.

From our arrogant, Spanish father, we received a stubborn pride that demands respect. He also gave us his language which we interpret in our own distinct style.

From these two traditions emerges a beautiful people. We are a people which will endure, while others become extinct. We are the product; we will endure.

Elvia Castillo, Student, San Jose State University, San Jose, California - A Chicana is someone like myself. Someone who can't be called a Mejjicana because my values are different. I am no longer accepted as a Mejjicana just like I've never been accepted as an American because of my differences. I'm caught between two cultures and rejected by both. I can't completely fit into either group. So, I call myself a Chicana, a new breed of awareness.

I feel the Chicana knows what is going on. We are no longer going to stand around and pray that things will be better for us than they were for our mothers. Now we are organizing and demanding what is rightfully ours alongside our Chicano men. We are going to school, reaching higher goals in education so that we might earn a better living. Our parents are now too old and too broken to do the great task of improving our lives. But, they look upon us for this great change because they realize that we are different. We are young and have been made strong by the many injustices incurred upon us. By uniting la Raza, we will be even stronger in demanding what we want.

A Chicana is not just someone who has been born in the United States. We are women who have inner feelings about la Raza. We help each other; we get involved with events that effect us. These are feelings which are hard to describe, but we know they are there. So, to me, Chicana describes the way we feel. It has nothing to do with our appearance because we look basically the same as any Mejjicana or Mexican-American. I am Chicana because of the way I feel.

Cecilia Preciado Burciaga, Assistant to the President for Chicano Students, Stanford University, Palo Alto, California - At the age of 17, I made my first trip to Guadalajara, Jalisco. My parents had been born there, and they wanted their daughters to understand their world. I, in my naivete, thought that because I spoke Spanish fluently, I would finally find total acceptance and be warmly received by relatives eager to welcome me "home". I found instead, a subtle form of rejection from uncles, aunts, and cousins who perceived me as "too independent, too modern; not the quiet and reserved young woman considered 'proper' by Mexican standards". Ironically, I had just graduated from high school in southern California and had been told by counselors that I seemed "too attached to my family and that I should not be so timid about expressing my own ideas". Socially, I was seen as the classic wall-flower that never fit into the popular clique or campus crowd. It was a crushing blow to discover that I was treated as an "Americana" in Mexico and a "Mexican" in the United States.

The rejection was difficult to overcome. I came back from Guadalajara a very angry, confused and disillusioned "pocha". I then made a conscious effort to develop an identity with this country and throughout my college

years I assumed some of the outer vestiges of an "American co-ed". There was, however, a feeling of emptiness that prevailed during those four years of make-belief. I felt an underlying alienation that I couldn't define.

Because of these experiences, I began to critically search for my own identity and ask the fundamental question of how I perceived myself. It became clear that as a Chicana I was neither Mexican nor American, but, in fact, a mosaic and product of both worlds. The fact that I had only identified, or tried to identify, with the one world had been the very source of my resentment and disillusionment. For 17 years, I had been operating under the delusion that only in Mexico would I finally feel at "home" and that someday I would be considered equally as Mexican as my parents. I needed to believe that, in order to survive society's bombardment of the melting-pot ethic, especially in school.

By the end of my college years, however, I graduated with more than an academic degree. I emerged from a level of alienation to an awareness of "being" and identity. The feeling of disassociation experienced on both fronts was the catalyst for my identity as a Chicana. I recognized the importance of my ability to function in two worlds, two languages and two battle fronts. More and more, each of us as Chicanas must struggle to reach this dimension in order to be of value to our total society as well as to ourselves.

As to my present, as a wife and mother, I would like to discuss "machismo". Machismo has been a much maligned concept that we Chicanas have failed to define in our own terms. For too long it has been a term used as the catch-all phrase for anyone who wants to superficially express the connotations of male dominance and male superiority. It's time that we Chicanas, begin a critical assessment of what exactly we mean and perceive the term "machismo" to be. We must recognize the complexity of the term which reveals not only the negative, but the positives. There is a sense of strength, dignity, self-determination, protection, perseverance, sustenance, and self-worth that we must also talk about when we use the term machismo. As hembras, we must not let society think that it understands the problems of Chicanas merely because they can pronounce a cliché that happens to be "in". We must begin to articulate that just as a macho defends his family honor and his country, an hembra defends her children and culture. Together, they find strength to survive and it is a concept that defies total acculturation or total "melting", but strives toward exactly the opposite; that of psychological, spiritual and physical survival.

Dr. Bertha Perez, Professor of Elementary Education, San Jose State University, San Jose, California - In analyzing the influences which have provided me the courage and commitment to participate in the struggle for the rights of Chicanos and Chicanas in particular, the most outstanding would be that of my grandmother.

Ama Andrea was what we called her. As a child I remember hearing stories recited by relatives about life's struggles. But the most moving was that of the true experience of my grandmother as a young girl. The story, as told to me, was that in her youth, a young handsome, wealthy son of a prominent, Mexican landowner fell in love with her. The entire family was thrilled at the prospect of a union between the two. However, although his family thought her attractive, they felt she required refinement and education to be socially acceptable. An agreement was reached and my grandmother went to live with the family of the young man. She was exposed to social graces, wealth and comfort. But she soon learned that all of this was meant for her alone and her future would not include her family.

A decision was made. Ama Andrea loved her family and decided to commit herself to them and their struggles rather than the luxuries of life.

And a struggle it was. She worked hard at everything from breaking horses, tilling the soil, harvesting, to taking in washing and ironing after her marriage. The men in her life, her husband and brothers, rather than giving her strength looked to her for support in the aftermath of many adventurous escapades. Yet, all of her energies produced only the mere necessities of life. But she continued to grow strong. She was patient and understanding, warm and enduring. She actively sought and assisted in the development of the lives of those around her. She was the support, confident, and counselor of her family and the entire "vecindad". She was always willing to lend her ear and sometimes an occasional "yerba" for those who needed more than spiritual curing. The profession of community "curandera" brought her no additional income, however, as her clientele consistently looked to the Lord for the resources to pay my grandmother's services. And the Lord responded only through my grandmother's continued dedication.

In my youth, I always sought the strength and understanding of this independent woman who had diplomatically established a matriarchal line of communication between generations. My father respected her and always conceded to her advice. This courageous woman laughed with spirit and cried with tenderness. She was involved with life and life was involved with her. Life demanded from her and she was always willing to give. She sacrificed her own comfort out of love and committed herself to her family. It is my hope to follow her example and demonstrate an equal love and commitment to "mi familia de la raza" and especially to "mis hermanas Chicanas".

* * * * *

DOS HERMANITOS

Dos hermanitos toddling along
The oldest delivering two bottle of milk
The smaller tagging beside him.
"Pepe", commanded the oldest,
"ten las botellas porque estoy cansado",
Handing them to his brother.
It's burden was heavy, he quickly grew tired.
But the older was angered, refusing to help,
He never wanted the task.
Oh, God. Why doesn't he help his brother?
The door approaches, three steps to claim.

The first is easy, the second he
slips, the cry is loud - - -
His face is scarred in three places.
The eldest, scared, stands profound.
Oh, God. Why is he so helpless?
As the years go by, I still stand
watching my brother, wondering , why
Why must I remember my brother's fall?
Why must I suffer for his fall?

Rogelio Cardenas

A QUESTION OF SURVIVAL

My story is not a long one; not is it complicated. It does not tell of the great political, social or sexual revolutions of today. But, it does tell of a revolution, a movement -- a movement deep within. A movement which touches the depths of our very souls as if the tentacles of the senses were real and our souls had an outer wall of cells and tissues.

I hardly know where to begin my story because stories have no beginning. They are past, present and future interacting at one time. Stories have only points of departure. Therefore, let us decide on a point of departure for this story.

My account is abstract. My story is not one of time and place, but of assurances and reassurances, feelings and lack of feelings, and attracting and rejecting forces. But it is a story and one which only the protagonists can decide to prolong. What is the purpose of this written account of an abstract experience? It takes the form of a pact, a commitment to this story.

Writing is a pause. A pause in the fervor of rushing emotions -- anger, fear, frustration, joy, and love. Our minds are floods of ideas and doubts. To sit down and put them on paper is to construct a dam to contain the flood. I am angry that the pen does not automatically follow my train of thought but waits patiently to transcribe these thoughts into the written word.

So, this story is one of interacting forces. Forces of family, friends, and society. How is one person an outcast of society if people make up society? What determines the privileged from the underprivileged? Who determines survival and what is survival?

My city of birth was not large. It was a fairly ordinary city with houses, churches, a city hall and the public library where I held my first job. The streets were average size. Some had trees decorating their outer edges, but the majority did not. I was but a child in this multitude of structures. A lonely,

moving structure amongst the brick of concrete and clay. I played, I laughed, I cried. Was I different than any other child? Only that I cried a little more. For what reason? Well, my name had a different sound to it. At home my family spoke a foreign tongue than that of my playmates and schoolteacher. Did this make me different? In Anytown, U. S. A. it did. I was Chicana in an Anglo world.

So what does that mean -- Chicana? I guess it meant the enormous timidity I felt when my name was called in class. I stood with pride. Pride, the prize of my internal hands reaching, groping, and finally crushing it within palms which never quite surfaced. I suppose it was walking down main street and hearing the traditional Mexican ballads crying with perseverance from trashy, decrepid department stores while Gringos waltzed among the luxurious notes of Musac melodies. Maybe it was bringing Mary or Jane or Tom or Billy home to a plate of beans, or spending summer vacations in dusty, sleepy Mexican villages amongst family who called me "Pocha". My Gringo friends travelled to the Grand Canyon or San Francisco. Perhaps it was stacking books on a library shelf to work my way through college, a college which existed in fantasy only, in the minds of my loved ones. My peers journeyed to different worlds facing greater horizons financed by monthly tokens of parental affection.

Then, there are those who can describe it more fiercely than I. To them, it was picking cotton in the fields at the age of nine or ten so that their families might have the beans to eat. It was not standing up in class coping with that impatient search for pride because they never went to school. It was never knowing what Musac was because they never even entered into the trashy, decrepid department stores but clothed themselves with the generous whims of benefactors. And what was college but some strange paradisiwhere those who are chosen to mingle amongst the treasures of golden letters and silver tongues are dieties above their less fortunate subjects.

When I first came to recognize my real presence in this world and what this presence meant, my first reaction was to challenge it. Why should I live amongst

strangers without the freedom of choice. In this challenge, I sought out the world and that tremendous force which causes it to revolve and revolve like a lottery wheel with the ticket stubs flying about in air with a chosen few to be lifted from its cage. So, I decided to seek out life rather than wait for life to seek me out. I decided that my life must be different from those around me. I wandered, I explored, I loved, I hated, I cried, I laughed, and I suffered. Oh, how I suffered. My feelings became selective. Feelings of great intensity became valued, but also fewer and further in between. People became pawns as in a chess game. So few shared my intense concern or need for concern. When you have gone through a long, introspective process, the identifying of the problems becomes more acute. Selectivity is a necessity. Loneliness is a constant companion of this selective process because the majority of individuals on this earth accept the mundane boundaries of society which have been imposed on them rather than to reach out and construct boundaries of their own.

There can be no wonder why I felt it necessary to step out and challenge the world; to find a place in a world which felt it not worthwhile to challenge me. It was then when I found the number upon number of Chicanos in my same predicament. There was a movement in the making -- the self-realization of a people. I joined this movement and in it sought the answers to my distorted self-image. The oppressor of all oppressors, the Federal Government, sought my favor. They offered my money and position to satisfy their conscience. They offered their most valued of values, all except one -- the one which is the source of their very existence. The battery which charges the energies of greed, avarice, and oppression. POWER. Power they did not offer. I enjoyed the position and ensuing compensation until I realized I was lost in a sojourn of superficial needs and expectations. Condescending strangers issuing passports into a society where Chicanos could only be tourists, but never residents. A society which has rejected us in the most subtle fashion and continues to reject our brothers in more overt fashions can never be the answer.

What can one do under these circumstances but to face the world and challenge it? Does that make the person exceptional? Perhaps in other societies, but not in this society. Here it is called survival. One struggles and struggles to have clothes on their backs, food in their mouths, a roof over their heads, and suddenly -- the basic needs are satisfied. And what is left, the needs of the mind, the soul and the heart.

The confusion of the mind. Defragmentized brain cells. Identity lost somewhere in the dungeons of intermingling thought processes. A world of isolated motions, reactions, defenses. An island surrounded by waters of doubt where if one dares venture out they can only drown. If they survive the violent waves, the current, the storm, and reach the shore; the sand on which they stand is not solid enough so they sink.

A world where the soul seeks paradise and eternity after death. But what of the eternity of compassion and brotherly love? Souls which laugh and cry and share. Yet, souls hide from each other. They crucify their fellowmen in their impatient wait of self-crucifixion.

And what about the heart? The heart which loves. Did no one love us in our youth? If we had been loved, would I have stood in the nakedness of shame and timidity at the very pronounciation of my name? How lonely were my hands in their internal search for pride, or was it my own self-love?

What determines survival? Do we survive in this world which we fear and therefore hate? To learn to survive according to what society has taught us, we must turn oppressor and reject our most inner being. What conflict life places on our shoulders. We are Chicanos, we are mind, we are soul, we are heart. Are there really forces in this world greater than the demands of society? Can I join hands with my brother and together be the catalyst which moves the world? Can we rewrite the history of mankind?

My story is not long although it has been centuries in the making. My story is not complicated although thousands upon thousands of young minds are being lost

daily to its theme. My story has no beginning, but is continuing. And only you, the reader, can decide its end.

But what can the Gringo do in this order of events? It is in the selective process where their story begins. It is an innate attraction of forces. A challenge to construct new boundaries in order to share experiences. These need not be experiences of fact, but experiences of the mind. But time cannot be a factor. Life is too short, the world too big and our needs too demanding. There need not be a growing period in this experience, our senses tell us that. The decision is short and the decision is final. The decision is to face this burden of exploration into the mind, soul, and heart; an adventure with individuals. The decision is to be consorting companions in life's safari of fear and courage, an entire commitment to the forces within us or withdrawal into the bosom of security and compromise.

But one may again ask, how is this a story? Every exchange of ideas, every intimate contact with the emotions is not only a story, but a legend and a history. A history of man coping with his environment and with the world around us. A man who is an island of ideas and sentiments gives nothing to the world until he communicates these ideas and sentiments to another. Then there is motion. Then there is force. This is the force which keeps the world a living vehicle of endeavors. But the forces coming together must be of the correct formula to act as the catalyst for greater activities. This is where we have the story. The story of the proper forces coming together to form the base of creativity for the entire universe. And thus, we have the writers of history, whether it be the history of nations or people; or simply the history of intense emotions and feelings shared by individuals. This love, this intensity, these emotions, are the core of human existence. They are the protoplasm of the human soul. Without them, the soul will die and man will only live as a vegetable surviving on the clear waters of a colorless existence.

FIN

"PAWNED"

It was ten-thirty at night. I awoke from one of my recurring daydreams to the steady shrill hum of the jet engines that were flying us to Vietnam.

We had been in the air for about thirty minutes when I started to think of back home and all the good times I had. Now, after playing soldier in my childhood, the beautiful times I had in the past and six months of training in the Marine Corps, I was on my way to face the supreme test of my life, combat duty in Vietnam. I kept saying to myself that I was tough and I was. You don't come from a large and poor family, survive "bootcamp" and emerge as a Marine without being tough. But it wasn't enough, at nineteen years of age and six months training, it wasn't enough! I wanted to go but I didn't want to go. To think of my parents, brothers, sisters, good times with the women and friends back home. To think that I may never see them again . . . God, please help me. Please help me come back safe. Why do we have to go? God, . . . after all these years . . . war after war . . . why?

I began to feel like a number, like beef on a hook waiting in the locker to be decimated, I felt like nothing . . . empty . . . dead, a nobody, just another pawn.

I kept recalling the Animals' hit song, "Sky Pilot" . . . "How high can you fly . . . you'll never reach the sky . . . the soldiers all wait for the forthcoming fight . . . he knows of their fear in the forthcoming fight . . . soon there will be blood and many will die . . . and back home they will cry . . . how high can you fly . . . the order is given and they move out in a line . . . the young men move out into the battle zone . . . but with God, you're never alone . . ."

So you see lord, why I need you. You're the only one I can talk to, anyone else will think I'm chicken. I plead with you now lord, that if it's your will, please make it quick. I've lived and felt life, so please don't make me wait.

It's my turn now, I'm ready . . . The enemy doesn't stand a chance against me. I'm a professional U.S. Marine, the best fighting machine in the world. The enemy is nothing, literally and physically nothing. Hell, who are they? Hell, I

dunno . . .they're the enemy! And the enemy is nothing . . .but I'm me, I'm somebody. I have relatives who care, friends, plans and social life to live . . . I'm somebody!

I'm sorry lord for thinking this way, but I've been trained to think this way and I don't want to get into any trouble. . .they do say we're doing the right thing . . .we're the good guys . . .that's what they say.

As I emerged from my daydreams I heard the words, "Please fasten your safety belts, we will be landing soon." I thought of myself, "This might be the last time I'll see a commercial jet-plane and the stewardesses keep smiling, don't they know that some of us won't make it back? What the fuck are they smiling for? I dunno . . .bitches."

The plane rolled to a stop, doors flew open, the beat of feet began out the plane, and the cool, stuffy, humid air engulfed me as I emerged.

As I advanced from the plane, I felt nothing thought nothing, just felt empty. I searched myself and found a comical and amusing statement given to me by a career sergeant who himself had been to Vietnam and who also was a Mexican. His words lifted me when I low and so now I just kept repeating them, his words were, "Don't be a-scared . . . don't be a-scared."

Hector Salazar

* * * * *

DAWN # 264

The cool winds of past,
drew me into a mournful path,
of fields and orchards of our
pre-destined ancestors.

The nigh grew long
playing with minds of men
who could only speculate,
and hope for a better fate.

Yet, the endless moon of antiquities
was their only light of hope,
their only meaning for life.
To these warriors of the setting sun.

To us they are but memories.
They have never seen the beautiful horizon
enjoyed the splendor and warmth
of the Dawn which has finally come.

Jose Gaytan

HIJOS DE BRONZE

Esta concion que you canto es muy cierta,

Si senores.

Ya se canso este Chicano de esperar y no ganar.

No nos dan lo que pedemos que es respecto y dignidad.

Nos tienen muy aprimidos con promesas sin verdad.

Lo que pedemos, senores, es justicia y libertad,

Pero a nuestros hijos mandan a peliar en Vietnam.

Alertense, Mexicans! Que no miran a sus hijos?

Buscan ayuda de ustedes! No ignoren su clemor!

Juntensen, Raza de Bronze! Que la fuerza ganara para que

el hijo de bronze viva con equalidad!

Yo no cruse estos mares a venir a estas tierras.

Fuimos productos de ellas desde que Dios las formo.

Esta tierra que you piso fue muy propia,

Si senores.

Se apoderaron de ella con triacion a la amistad.

Alertense, Mexicans! Que no miran a sus hijos?

Buscan ayuda de ustedes! No ingoren su clemor!

Juntense, Raza de Bronze! Que la fuerza ganara para que

el hijo de bronze viva con equalidad!

Mary C. Ramirez

(I dedicated this poem to my brother Julian Camacho)

THE MOTHERS' PRAYER

You tell us all we've wrecked the world.
We started from your cradle.
You look at us straight in the eyes and hurtle at us a label.
It wasn't all of us, my dear, that gave you this impression.
It was the greedy, selfish lords that started this destruction.
We were too busy raising you
to notice their deception.
Yet, you blame us for all this,
And don't reproach your actions.
Who knows what future you will have if things don't change to better?
Our lives are standing on a string
for nothing seems to matter.
But, darling, just remember this
Wherever you may go
That God is watching from above
arranging your life's goal.

Mary C. Ramirez

* * * * *

The Business Minority Program in room 264 B.T. has daytime and evening
tutors available in the following subjects:

- | | |
|--------------------|--------------------------|
| (1) Statistics | (5) Calculus |
| (2) Economics | (6) Algebra |
| (3) Computer Lang. | (7) Finite Math |
| (4) Math 12 | (8) Accounting 20a & 20b |

We also have an excellent counseling staff and provide members with some of
their books.

LA RAZA

Chicano

Revolution

Muy hombre

Yesterday, today

Fight, work, sing

*

Fight, kill, death

We don't give up

*

Angry, sad, tears

MACHO

*

Strength!

Written by a fourth grade class of migrant children

Jovita Madrigal Jesus Olide
Sylvia Jurado Marcos Madrid
Hild Rodriguez Javier Flores
Jose Herrera

submitted by Daniel Pimentel

* * * * *

Announcements!

Announcements!

Announcements!

Nuestra Familia with its Mambo Machine, is a community oriented media group with contacts in San Francisco, Oakland, Alviso, San Jo and throughout Aztlan. It may be heard Tue. 8-12 p.m. Thr. 8-9 p.m. on KSJS 90.7 FM San Jo and KRUE 95.3 FM Sun & Mon. 8 p.m.

* * * * *

E. O. P. Students

C. A. R. : Registration for Spring semester is to run from Nov. 4th to Nov. 20th. If you have not already done so please make an appointment with an E. O. P. Counselor or your major advisor, so that you can work out classes you may need for Spring Semester.

NOVEMBER

(Past Historical events)

- November - 9 - 1969, New Mexico - Seventh annual Alianza Convention calls for creation of new nation of Aztlan from New Mexico, California, Arizona, Colorado, and Texas.
- 11 - 1922, Weslaco, Texas - Elias Zarate is lynched after he is arrested for fist fighting with an Anglo.
- 12 - 1882, Tucson - The Teatro Cervantes, a theatre built to house Mexican performing companies, opens with a Spanish-language play performed by the de Molla Company.
- 14 - 1970, Los Angeles - National Chicano Moritorium office is raided and three Chicanos are severely beaten on grounds that a man accousted the police. The man later confessed to being a paid government provacature.
- 20 - 1910, Francisco Maderos crosses into Mexico from Texas beginning the revolution against the Diaz regime.
- 1968, United Mexican American Students (UMAS) in Los Angeles picket the Mexican Consulate in a solidarity march for Mexican Students protesting the Olympics in Mexico City.
- 28 - 1911, Zapata proclaims El Plan de Ayala, his plan for land reform.
- 30 - 1969, Austin, Over 3,500 persons rally at Texas state capital to celebrate first anniversary of strike and boycott for decent wages and working conditions at Economy Furniture.

Noviembre - 2 - Día de los Difuntos

Noviembre - 20 - Día de la Revolución

Noviembre - 23 - Día de dar Gracias