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# University Libraries Three Million Volume Celebration

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## Three Million and Counting

*The authentic story of a rare book, library donors, famous authors, university faculty, staff and students, and how they built a research library collection at the University of New Mexico*

EDITED BY STEVEN R. HARRIS



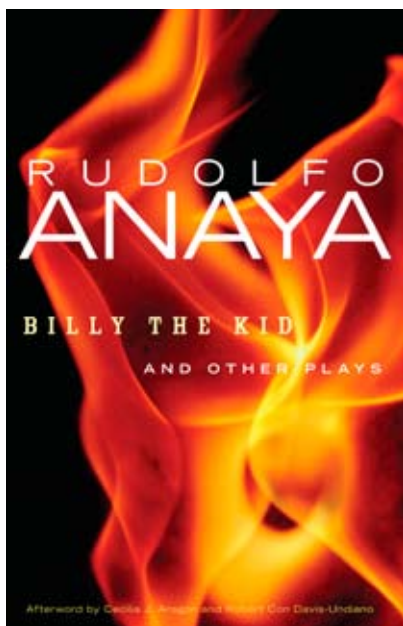
# Oasis on the Mesa

Rudolfo Anaya

Professor Emeritus of English, author of *Bless Me, Ultima* (1972)

In the 1880s, statehood was the most pressing issue on the minds of New Mexicans. Equal in importance were the concerns of the citizenry for a reformed educational system. The territory was becoming an important player in national economic and political affairs, and it needed a trophy. As the twentieth century approached, many realized a university was a necessity, which dove-tailed perfectly with convincing the U.S. Congress that New Mexico was ready for statehood.

Today my thoughts turn to those years when the University of New Mexico came into being. Specifically, how did the early library begin and what role has it played, and continues to play, in the lives of so many students and teachers. This year we celebrate the acquisition of three million volumes by Zimmerman Library—a prestigious bookmark in the history of the university. There are so many themes that revolve around the growth of the library. I have chosen to look at Zimmerman Library as an oasis, a place where we come to drink the sweet water of wisdom.



Anaya, Rudolfo A. *Billy the Kid and Other Plays*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2011. Courtesy of the University of Oklahoma Press. The University Libraries extensively collects New Mexico authors, both famous and lesser known.

I enrolled here at the university in the late fifties, and I spent countless hours in Zimmerman Library. As a neophyte reading into the world of ideas, I learned to love this building. Here is where I met Patricia, who later became my wife. One summer we took the same class, and we spent time researching and writing papers in the library. Suffice it to say, love springs eternal in the stacks.

Recently I returned to Zimmerman for an event, and as I walked through campus I was captivated by the beauty of the trees and grass that grace the Library Grove. I paused to breathe in the pine-laden air and felt renewed. On this campus so many years ago I acquired a new set of wings, the love of books and all they contain, and here is where my spirit still soars.

Many years later after I retired from teaching, Patricia and I used to visit campus every spring. We loved the flourishing green of bushes and flowers, the pond, old strands of ponderosa pines, different varieties of trees, the very air filled with romance and expectation. For us the springtime wonder of the university gardens was uplifting, I dare say spiritual.

Many brag about the university's architecture, and rightly so. The Pueblo Revival style that reflects our cultures is unique and truly magnificent. We are extremely proud of our Medical School, Law School, Education College, the sciences and humanities, and programs that are known worldwide. We thank the countless students and teachers who have walked through these halls and who have enriched the university.

Today I want to honor the campus landscape, the gardens that grow from this precious earth and reflect the greater natural world. I feel fulfilled when I stop and admire areas where green flourishes, places I call the university gardens. Most New Mexicans grow up with *jardines*, gardens next to an acequia or just a vegetable plot in the backyard. The love of *jardines* is part of our nature, I suggest, because in our dry desert landscape the green of a garden soothes the soul. For us high desert dwellers the smallest spot of green becomes an oasis.

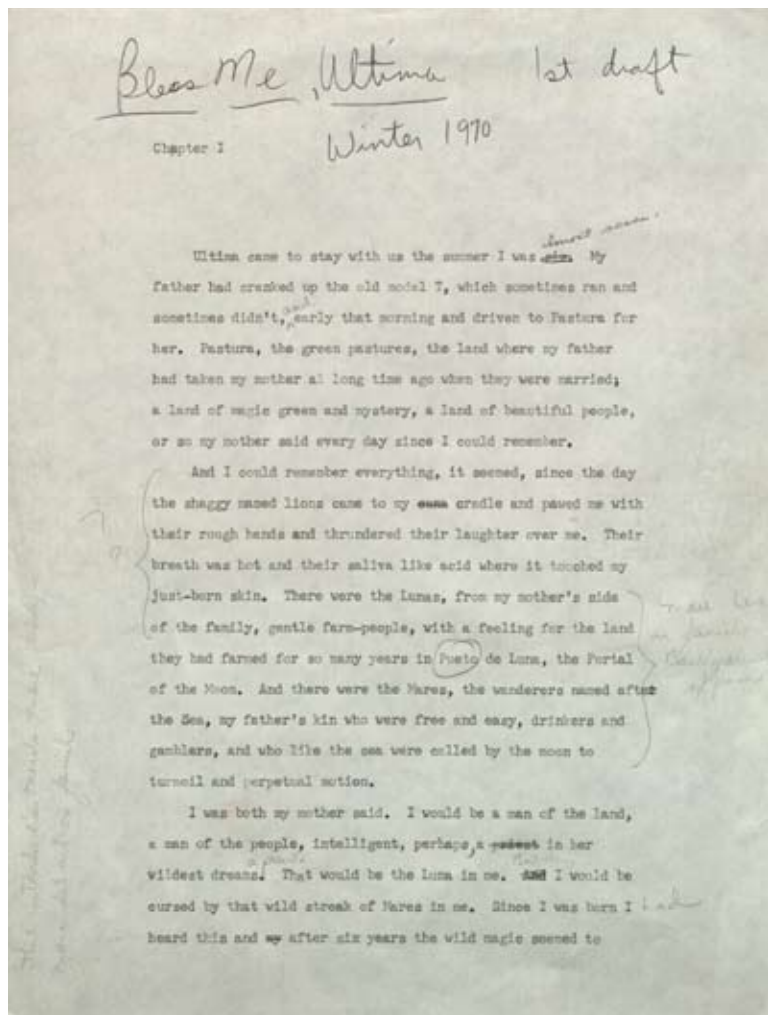
That important summer in my life, love flourished in the garden. Patricia and I often shared a sack lunch in the shade of the stately ponderosa pines

in Library Grove. What love and gratitude I have for those towering trees. Trees like people need love to grow. A small seed becomes a towering pine tree; a book in the hands of a young man sparks the imagination. He dreams of writing books and begins by writing love poems. Such were the summers of our youth.

Somewhere I wrote that trees are my grandfathers. Pause under the shade of a New Mexico cottonwood and feel the protection of embracing arms. Rest under a mountain pine or gold aspen in October and feel renewed. Stand in awe in front of a flowering spring orchard and become one with the resurrection of the season. Our campus trees have this power to connect us to the vitality of earth, the promise of renewal. Today, let us praise our green, refreshing gardens.

How did this oasis on the mesa come to be? Whose vision planted the first trees and grass on this sandy landscape? Who had a hand in establishing this Garden of Eden where knowledge came to bloom? Did the early university founders look at this east mesa desert and see an oasis? Or did they see a mirage? That is the tension we Rio Grande people live with, the struggle between oasis and mirage, the miracle of water that can make sand green.

The university's landscape is a unique, aesthetic feature. We can brag about buildings, colleges, programs, students, and teachers, but today I come to praise the land and its diverse history. Years ago when workers were digging foundations for the first university buildings, they found evidence of Pueblo prayer pot shards and some religious artifacts. We know that long ago Pueblo people called this place home. This earth is part of their



Manuscript first draft of *Bless Me, Ultima*.  
Rudolfo A. Anaya Papers (MSS 321 BC),  
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heritage. Let us remember that when we the newcomers call the University of New Mexico home.

Today campus nourishes many areas of thriving green, not too many to be sure, but enough to satisfy. Our gardens do not resemble the thick, lush green of the East or Midwest or coastal West, our region and weather don't allow that. Our green areas are well-placed plots of trees and grass that defy desert heat and sand. Perhaps we admire our gardens all the more because they are small and intimate in their flourishing. They remind us that we can create an oasis to escape the dearth of mirage. We can arrive in our own way and in our own time at the acquisition of three million volumes in our library.

Many who first visit campus are often shocked by our dry desert air, the wide sky, and searing sun. All the more reason why they should pause near a garden or by the pond. A few moments of rest under a tree provides relief from the immense sky. Our summer green complements the sky with its gathering clouds. Parts of campus are cast in concrete, and once cement is set it requires little upkeep. On the other hand, gardens require daily toil, sheer plod creates beauty, and beauty and truth underlie all the learning that takes place here. In the green shining of summer we feel renewed and remember to thank the groundskeepers who care for the blooming. The glare and heat of concrete doesn't satisfy, body and soul need the soothing beauty of grass and trees!

How did this oasis on the mesa come to be?

It began with New Mexican Territorial delegate Bernard Rodey, a visionary writing the legislation in 1889 that would establish the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque. Other legislators fought to have the supposedly more lucrative state prison or the insane asylum in their districts. Perhaps they thought there would always be more crooks and lunatics than college students.

Remember, the university's founding was a time replete with cultural prejudices and fears. New waves of Anglo Americans migrating into the state were mostly Protestant, and they generally vilified the Hispanic population as illiterate pawns of the Catholic Church. The church schools taught a parochial curriculum. The newly arrived Anglo entrepreneurs and home-

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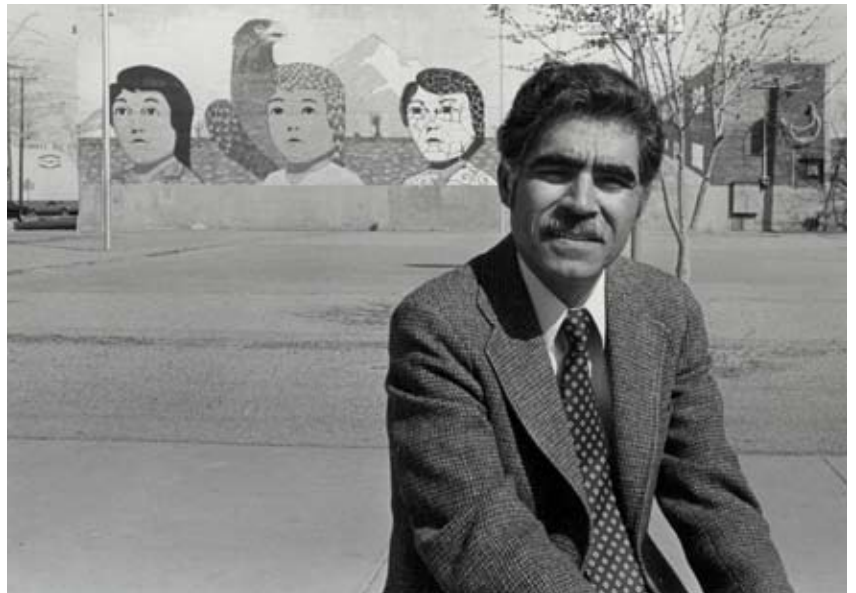
The people of the Albuquerque Rio Grande Valley argued the university should be built in Old Town or Baretas where it would be accessible to the Nuevo Mexicano population. Rodey decided it should be built on donated land three miles east of the river on the dry, sandy mesa.

Was there method to his madness? Or just madness? Many an easterner arriving in our desert Southwest sees mirages in the heat of summer days. Mirages entice newcomers, only to leave them high and dry, thirsty and busted on desert sand. The natives of the valley know there is no pool of refreshing water in a mirage, no shade trees for the weary. For the people of the valley the life-giving water flows from the river into acequias that irrigate orchards, fields of corn and chile.

Did Rodey see a mirage? Could an oasis of learning be created in a desert landscape? It helped that the land on the mesa had been donated. University presidents don't turn down donations of land.

History moved on and the university regents set aside money so trees could be planted, and so began the greening of the mesa. In 1904, university president William George Tight recruited a few students to dig ponderosa pine saplings in the Sandia Mountains to plant on campus. Oral tradition from the Atrisco area suggests the president borrowed teams and wagons from the valley farmers. A few husky Atrisqueños went to help.

These farmers had been going up the mountain to collect firewood for ages. They knew how to dig out trees, wrap the roots in wet burlap, and get



Farah, Cynthia. "Rudolfo Anaya." Cynthia Farah Writers of the Southwest Photograph Collection (PICT 986-008), Center for Southwest Research and Special Collections, University Libraries.



them back down quickly to prevent shock. Some students did go along to help, but I suspect their hands were soft from too much book learning. For them the day was a picnic.

More research needs to be done on the relationship between the people of the valley and the establishment of the university. My father was born in 1889, heir to the Atrisco Land Grant. Suppose as a child he looked up at the first university buildings and wondered their meaning. He certainly had no idea that seventy years later one of his sons would matriculate in the campus on the mesa.

There are oral traditions we haven't recorded. Did African Americans who came to work on the railroad also dream that someday their sons and daughters might attend the university? As far as I can ascertain, there was little done to bring black students on campus. We study history to help us correct the sins of our fathers.

University leaders must constantly ask if there are other communities not being served. And are resources spent in the right programs? In this era of technology are the humanities being served? At the very beginning, the people of the valley asked if a classical curriculum could serve their needs. The argument today may be cast in different terms, but the underlying issues remain. Only by being open to a variety of voices can we construct the democratic university of tomorrow.

President Tigh had other hardy trees planted in observance of Arbor Day. Some of the early cottonwoods on campus were dying from lack of water. A well was dug. Along with the pine trees, he brought in hemlocks, elms, cedars, black locusts, white ashes, roses, tamarisks, and yuccas.

The university should celebrate Arbor Day. Give the staff time off to enjoy the grounds, or just to have lunch away from the confines of their offices. Let them enjoy the fresh air of the gardens. Zimmerman Library can provide lemonade and cookies for all the groundskeepers in appreciation of those who keep our campus beautiful. Graduates should carry sprigs of green or bouquets of flowers to place around the pond, as prior cultures placed prayer sticks at sacred places. So many things we could do to remind us that this oasis of learning is to be honored.

Thanks to Tight and others, the oasis on the mesa took shape. The flourishing trees and grass made campus more attractive and conducive to learning. The early regents wondered if there was enough water on the mesa to keep the sprouting oasis green. Today we wonder how long our aquifer will last. Water is what differentiates an oasis from a mirage. We must not lapse into the illusion of mirage, but find environmentally friendly ways to keep our oasis green. Green is the force of knowledge.

Our campus landscaping is a prize jewel. As we celebrate the acquisition of three million volumes we should also celebrate trees. Trees and books go hand-in-hand. From a tree an apple dropped and gravity was born. By sitting under a tree with the one you love, the future blooms. So it is with love in our hearts that we come to celebrate the world of knowledge stored here at Zimmerman Library.

The Tree of Life adorns every Mexican home. This iconic sculpture of a tree with birds and flowers gracing the branches can be bought in any *mercado*. Some are simple, brightly painted plaster sculptures. Some are regal enough to grace presidential palaces. The University of New Mexico is a Tree of Knowledge, its colleges, schools, and programs are its branches. The roots of the tree are nourished by Zimmerman Library, the heart of the university, here where books are the sweet water of an oasis.

Today we celebrate the tree's growth, three million volumes hanging on its branches. Let's hire a local artist to build a sculpture of our library tree and paint it bright enough for the world to see! Books and birds fluttering in the branches!



"Zimmerman Library and Meditating Student." Courtesy of Gregory Peterson.

The library continues to acquire the knowledge of the world. Here teachers, students, and the community come to drink. We must continue to nourish the roots of the tree so from its branches there sprouts a greening of wisdom. Our university will be a safe haven for the wisdom and reason the world desperately needs.

Sometimes it helps to step back in history and look through the veil of time. The nineteenth century was coming to a close, the railroad had arrived in Albuquerque, New Town was being built, and Billy the Kid was dead. The time was ripe for President William Howard Taft to push through Congress

statehood for the territory. Poor old Taft, his efforts are hardly remembered. The tide of time washes over everything, and as we gather to commemorate past deeds let us also celebrate a more inclusive history.

The veil of time parts, we see the first trees have taken root around the first university buildings. Two young Nuevo Mexicanos grazing sheep on the mesa stop to rest in the shade. Up to now, the only trees they've seen on the mesa are mirages caused by summer heat and swirling dustdevils. They ask themselves: Is this school an oasis of learning only for others? If so, it's a mirage. Or will the day come when we, too, can be students here?

The paisanos living in the valley, from Isleta, Los Padillas, Atrisco, Barelás, Old Town, to Alameda, asked

the same question. Would the sons and daughters of the people of the valley someday walk on campus and sit in classes? Would the classical curriculum serve the practical farmers of the valley? Five Hispanos, the first from their community to test the reality of the oasis on the mesa, were enrolled in the first class. But throughout the university's history the percentage of Nuevo Mexicanos and other minorities remained very low. Things have changed, but are there communities out there that still see the university as a mirage?

The 1892 catalog announced the university had a library with books, periodicals, and the leading encyclopedias. Today, Zimmerman Library gathers



“Zimmerman Library Anderson Reading Room with Students.” Courtesy of Gregory Peterson. The Anderson Reading Room, named in honor of Senator Clinton P. Anderson, is the public space for users of the Center for Southwest Research and Special Collections.

information from around the world; so much of it is now digital. Recently, *Encyclopaedia Britannica* dropped its print version to go all-digital. Print books are morphing into e-books. The center we knew is cracking, growing into something new as the world goes digital.

In this time of transition new mirages may appear, false directions, petty squabbling, and neurosis in the wake of change. There are signs of troubled souls. We look around for a center, a foundation that will allow us to process information in a sane way. Zimmerman Library can be that center, but we need to get to work. The garden of learning needs weeding and nourishing.

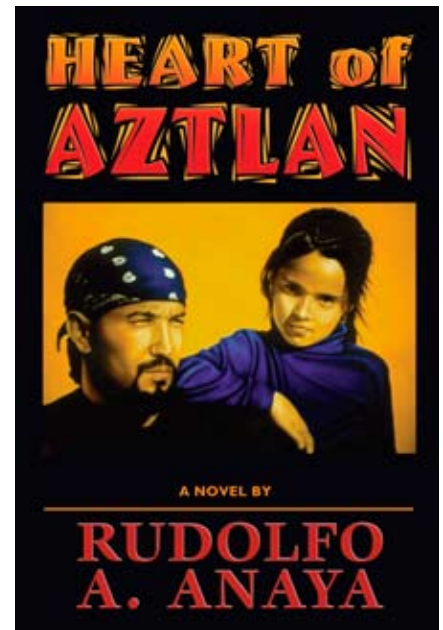
I dream three million volumes, I sing three million volumes. But in this age of information overload what does it mean to take pride in abundance? Why do I sense an epic struggle taking place?

Do three million volumes increase exponentially in the digital age? Is there a real number we can use to count three million? Zimmerman librarians used to be able to count books because they could hold them in their hands. Now, if a book goes digital it can be duplicated a million times on the internet? What happens to a book when it no longer enjoys the ownership of its author? Authors used to make a living selling their books to bookstores and libraries. Copyrights were protected. Will libraries protect author copyrights and thus the wages of those who write for a living?

We live in the age of information overload. A time of transition that requires an information theory. As libraries process information they transform knowledge. Will librarians become only computer wizards and information theorists? I remember librarians who nourished my love of learning. I remember those who winked knowingly when Patricia and I checked out books and headed for the stacks. Will such summers of love ever be again?

Do we embrace this new era or shirk from it? Zimmerman Library has already entered the digital age. Information produced in the world is only a key tap away on our computers. Everything we always wanted to know is at our fingertips. A small screen is our passage to wonderland.

I'm one of those who worries about information overload. I know some worried when Johannes Gutenberg invented moveable type and books began to proliferate. A brave new world evolved. There were worriers when the



Anaya, Rudolfo A. *Heart of Aztlan: A Novel*. 1976. Repr., Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1988. Courtesy of the University of New Mexico Press.

telephone entered our lives, then television, now the internet, and the digital age. Change is constant and much of it has come to improve the quality of our lives, but we need all of this information to have meaning in our lives. The human psyche needs the stability of a core of values if we are to thrive in this new information age. Zimmerman Library, and all libraries, must play a stabilizing role for those who come through its doors in these tempestuous times.

Modes of communication constantly change, and for the good of all who come to study here we must know how the psyche reacts to information overload. Students come seeking knowledge, and before they can assimilate it, some may drown in a sea of information. More than ever, we need mentors who will help our students on their passage through learning. The library can be a helping guide. Can the university gardens I've been praising also help? What does earth's blooming have to do with education?

Body and spirit need a center in order to engage life thoughtfully and positively. The psyche needs not only to manipulate but also to understand its environment. The brain not only acquires information, it needs to relate what is acquired to its inner values that provide its stability. The mind craves to be in harmony with its environment or it might crash. We all have seen tumbleweeds rolling down the road without purpose, the young lost in the mirage of too much information. We must know how this era of information overload affects those who come seeking knowledge?

Perhaps libraries should have a psychologist on staff, a counselor available to students thrown off balance by the sudden impact of too much information. I have written about *los viejitos*, the grandfathers and grandmothers of our quickly fading Nuevo Mexicano culture. They taught to distinguish truth from wispy mirage and false ideas. The *curandera* whose story I told taught her young apprentice to see beauty and truth in the windswept llano. Counselors here at the library can help guide our students as they search for that same beauty and truth in their lives. Information overload need not cause our downfall.

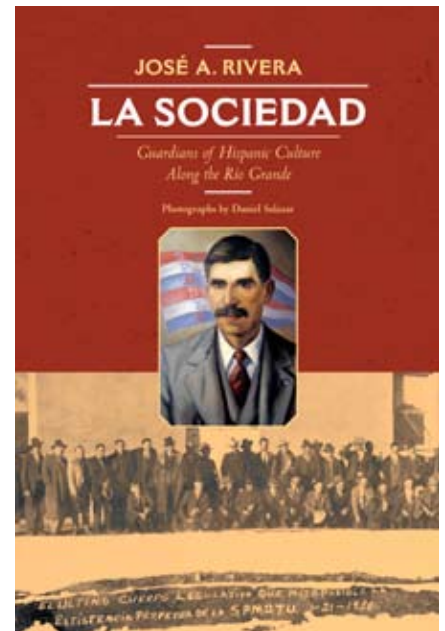
I remember my immersion into the world of learning many years ago when I entered the brand new world of university studies. I learned that with

knowledge comes great joy and liberation, but also a sense of sorrow. So it must have been when our ancestors ate the fruits from trees of knowledge. So it has been throughout history as each generation adds to the world of knowledge. Our species has entered new ages with great jubilation as the conquering of nature progresses. Poets tell that as we enter a new era we are also saddened by what we leave behind. Knowledge changes the person, the psyche grows, but if it cannot adapt then just surviving can overwhelm body and soul.

Today the students who enter university studies live in a post-modern world, they're hip, and they've been connected to the new technologies since childhood. Still, the human psyche does not change as fast as the multifarious inventions of our time. The acquisition of knowledge can come with a price. As students progress in their search for beauty and truth, their mental and spiritual wellbeing must also be the university's concern.

What do these questions have to do with pine trees and the gardens on campus? If we agree information overload can also unbalance the psyche, I believe there is redeeming value in our campus landscape. In the gardens we are closer to the earth's energies where the pressures of too much learning can be released. The psyche needs balance and harmony, it needs love. In gardens we find not only temporary respite but also renewed spiritual energy. The age of information need not overwhelm us if we live in the oasis and not the mirage.

We should celebrate Tight and all those who came after him and have had a hand in beautifying the campus. Celebrate the men and women who work on the grounds nurturing our oasis on the mesa. After the sleep of winter, the soul seeks green, and we are fortunate this campus comes alive in spring, pleasing the senses and lifting our spirits. Today paisanos from the valley still come to work on the grounds. Under the hot sun of summer they keep the oasis green and flowering. Today, sons and daughters of the people of the valley are part of the legacy of those first five Hispanos who enrolled a century ago. More and more, the student body reflects a diversity of cultures, including students and teachers from around the world. The once, sun-baked mesa has taken on an aspect of reality. The oasis thrives.



Rivera, José A. *La Sociedad: Guardians of Hispanic Culture along the Rio Grande*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2010. Courtesy of the University of New Mexico Press.



Zimmerman Library computers. Courtesy of Patricia Campbell. With so much of the library collection online, computers are at a premium in the library.





# Oasis on the Mesa

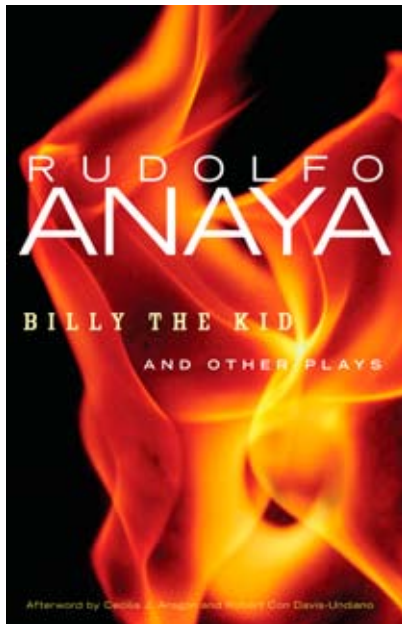
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*Opposite* “Zimmerman in Fall.” Courtesy of Steven R. Harris.



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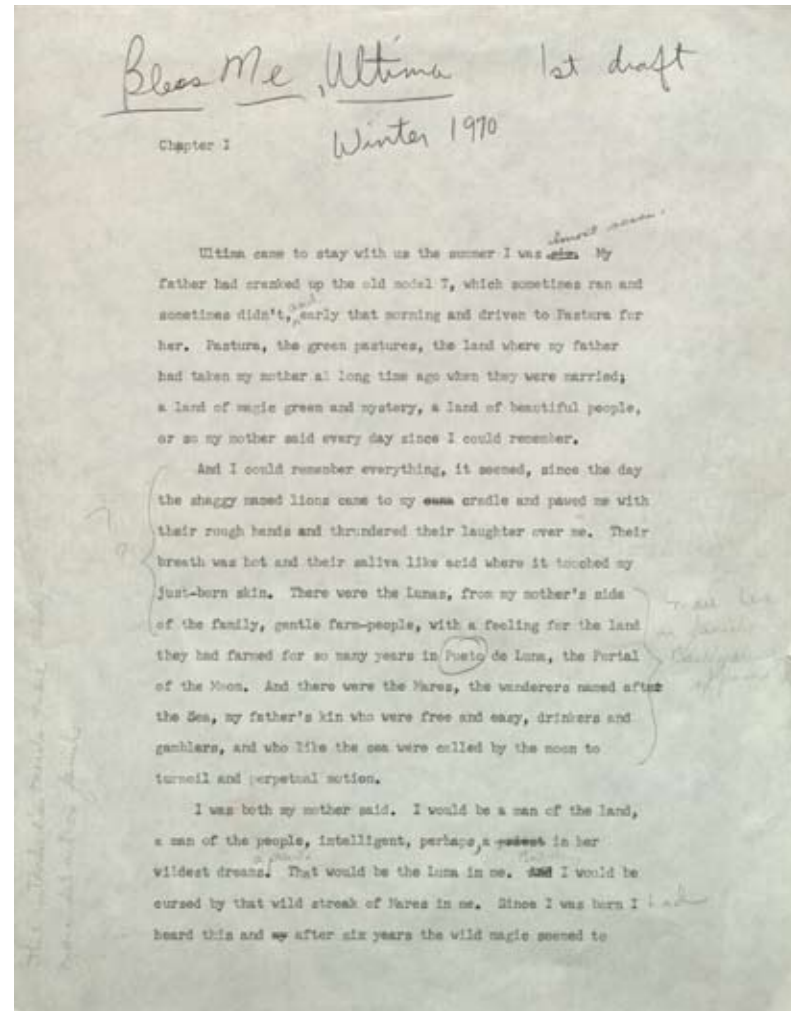
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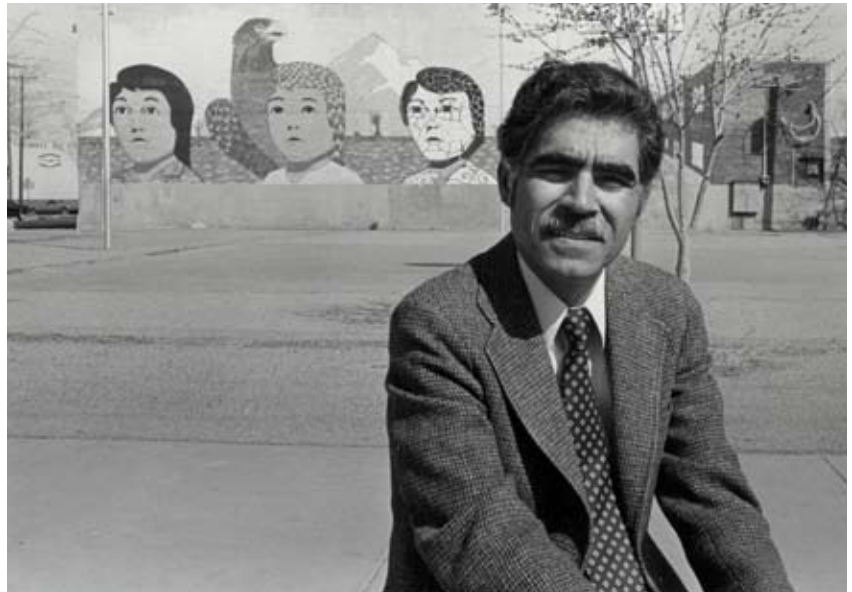
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History moved on and the university regents set aside money so trees could be planted, and so began the greening of the mesa. In 1904, university president William George Tight recruited a few students to dig ponderosa pine saplings in the Sandia Mountains to plant on campus. Oral tradition from the Atrisco area suggests the president borrowed teams and wagons from the valley farmers. A few husky Atrisqueños went to help.

These farmers had been going up the mountain to collect firewood for ages. They knew how to dig out trees, wrap the roots in wet burlap, and get



Farah, Cynthia. "Rudolfo Anaya." Cynthia Farah Writers of the Southwest Photograph Collection (PICT 986-008), Center for Southwest Research and Special Collections, University Libraries.

them back down quickly to prevent shock. Some students did go along to help, but I suspect their hands were soft from too much book learning. For them the day was a picnic.

More research needs to be done on the relationship between the people of the valley and the establishment of the university. My father was born in 1889, heir to the Atrisco Land Grant. Suppose as a child he looked up at the first university buildings and wondered their meaning. He certainly had no idea that seventy years later one of his sons would matriculate in the campus on the mesa.

There are oral traditions we haven't recorded. Did African Americans who came to work on the railroad also dream that someday their sons and daughters might attend the university? As far as I can ascertain, there was little done to bring black students on campus. We study history to help us correct the sins of our fathers.

University leaders must constantly ask if there are other communities not being served. And are resources spent in the right programs? In this era of technology are the humanities being served? At the very beginning, the people of the valley asked if a classical curriculum could serve their needs. The argument today may be cast in different terms, but the underlying issues remain. Only by being open to a variety of voices can we construct the democratic university of tomorrow.

President Tigh had other hardy trees planted in observance of Arbor Day. Some of the early cottonwoods on campus were dying from lack of water. A well was dug. Along with the pine trees, he brought in hemlocks, elms, cedars, black locusts, white ashes, roses, tamarisks, and yuccas.

The university should celebrate Arbor Day. Give the staff time off to enjoy the grounds, or just to have lunch away from the confines of their offices. Let them enjoy the fresh air of the gardens. Zimmerman Library can provide lemonade and cookies for all the groundskeepers in appreciation of those who keep our campus beautiful. Graduates should carry sprigs of green or bouquets of flowers to place around the pond, as prior cultures placed prayer sticks at sacred places. So many things we could do to remind us that this oasis of learning is to be honored.

Thanks to Tight and others, the oasis on the mesa took shape. The flourishing trees and grass made campus more attractive and conducive to learning. The early regents wondered if there was enough water on the mesa to keep the sprouting oasis green. Today we wonder how long our aquifer will last. Water is what differentiates an oasis from a mirage. We must not lapse into the illusion of mirage, but find environmentally friendly ways to keep our oasis green. Green is the force of knowledge.

Our campus landscaping is a prize jewel. As we celebrate the acquisition of three million volumes we should also celebrate trees. Trees and books go hand-in-hand. From a tree an apple dropped and gravity was born. By sitting under a tree with the one you love, the future blooms. So it is with love in our hearts that we come to celebrate the world of knowledge stored here at Zimmerman Library.

The Tree of Life adorns every Mexican home. This iconic sculpture of a tree with birds and flowers gracing the branches can be bought in any *mercado*. Some are simple, brightly painted plaster sculptures. Some are regal enough to grace presidential palaces. The University of New Mexico is a Tree of Knowledge, its colleges, schools, and programs are its branches. The roots of the tree are nourished by Zimmerman Library, the heart of the university, here where books are the sweet water of an oasis.

Today we celebrate the tree's growth, three million volumes hanging on its branches. Let's hire a local artist to build a sculpture of our library tree and paint it bright enough for the world to see! Books and birds fluttering in the branches!



"Zimmerman Library and Meditating Student." Courtesy of Gregory Peterson.

The library continues to acquire the knowledge of the world. Here teachers, students, and the community come to drink. We must continue to nourish the roots of the tree so from its branches there sprouts a greening of wisdom. Our university will be a safe haven for the wisdom and reason the world desperately needs.

Sometimes it helps to step back in history and look through the veil of time. The nineteenth century was coming to a close, the railroad had arrived in Albuquerque, New Town was being built, and Billy the Kid was dead. The time was ripe for President William Howard Taft to push through Congress

statehood for the territory. Poor old Taft, his efforts are hardly remembered. The tide of time washes over everything, and as we gather to commemorate past deeds let us also celebrate a more inclusive history.

The veil of time parts, we see the first trees have taken root around the first university buildings. Two young Nuevo Mexicanos grazing sheep on the mesa stop to rest in the shade. Up to now, the only trees they've seen on the mesa are mirages caused by summer heat and swirling dustdevils. They ask themselves: Is this school an oasis of learning only for others? If so, it's a mirage. Or will the day come when we, too, can be students here?

The paisanos living in the valley, from Isleta, Los Padillas, Atrisco, Barelás, Old Town, to Alameda, asked

the same question. Would the sons and daughters of the people of the valley someday walk on campus and sit in classes? Would the classical curriculum serve the practical farmers of the valley? Five Hispanos, the first from their community to test the reality of the oasis on the mesa, were enrolled in the first class. But throughout the university's history the percentage of Nuevo Mexicanos and other minorities remained very low. Things have changed, but are there communities out there that still see the university as a mirage?

The 1892 catalog announced the university had a library with books, periodicals, and the leading encyclopedias. Today, Zimmerman Library gathers



"Zimmerman Library Anderson Reading Room with Students." Courtesy of Gregory Peterson. The Anderson Reading Room, named in honor of Senator Clinton P. Anderson, is the public space for users of the Center for Southwest Research and Special Collections.



information from around the world; so much of it is now digital. Recently, *Encyclopaedia Britannica* dropped its print version to go all-digital. Print books are morphing into e-books. The center we knew is cracking, growing into something new as the world goes digital.

In this time of transition new mirages may appear, false directions, petty squabbling, and neurosis in the wake of change. There are signs of troubled souls. We look around for a center, a foundation that will allow us to process information in a sane way. Zimmerman Library can be that center, but we need to get to work. The garden of learning needs weeding and nourishing.

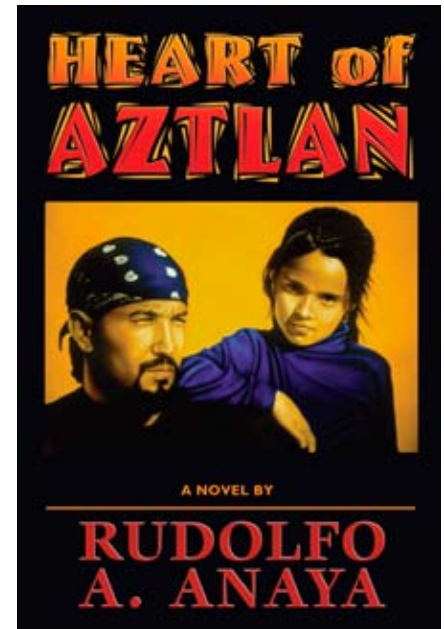
I dream three million volumes, I sing three million volumes. But in this age of information overload what does it mean to take pride in abundance? Why do I sense an epic struggle taking place?

Do three million volumes increase exponentially in the digital age? Is there a real number we can use to count three million? Zimmerman librarians used to be able to count books because they could hold them in their hands. Now, if a book goes digital it can be duplicated a million times on the internet? What happens to a book when it no longer enjoys the ownership of its author? Authors used to make a living selling their books to bookstores and libraries. Copyrights were protected. Will libraries protect author copyrights and thus the wages of those who write for a living?

We live in the age of information overload. A time of transition that requires an information theory. As libraries process information they transform knowledge. Will librarians become only computer wizards and information theorists? I remember librarians who nourished my love of learning. I remember those who winked knowingly when Patricia and I checked out books and headed for the stacks. Will such summers of love ever be again?

Do we embrace this new era or shirk from it? Zimmerman Library has already entered the digital age. Information produced in the world is only a key tap away on our computers. Everything we always wanted to know is at our fingertips. A small screen is our passage to wonderland.

I'm one of those who worries about information overload. I know some worried when Johannes Gutenberg invented moveable type and books began to proliferate. A brave new world evolved. There were worriers when the



Anaya, Rudolfo A. *Heart of Aztlan: A Novel*. 1976. Repr., Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1988. Courtesy of the University of New Mexico Press.

telephone entered our lives, then television, now the internet, and the digital age. Change is constant and much of it has come to improve the quality of our lives, but we need all of this information to have meaning in our lives. The human psyche needs the stability of a core of values if we are to thrive in this new information age. Zimmerman Library, and all libraries, must play a stabilizing role for those who come through its doors in these tempestuous times.

Modes of communication constantly change, and for the good of all who come to study here we must know how the psyche reacts to information overload. Students come seeking knowledge, and before they can assimilate it, some may drown in a sea of information. More than ever, we need mentors who will help our students on their passage through learning. The library can be a helping guide. Can the university gardens I've been praising also help? What does earth's blooming have to do with education?

Body and spirit need a center in order to engage life thoughtfully and positively. The psyche needs not only to manipulate but also to understand its environment. The brain not only acquires information, it needs to relate what is acquired to its inner values that provide its stability. The mind craves to be in harmony with its environment or it might crash. We all have seen tumbleweeds rolling down the road without purpose, the young lost in the mirage of too much information. We must know how this era of information overload affects those who come seeking knowledge?

Perhaps libraries should have a psychologist on staff, a counselor available to students thrown off balance by the sudden impact of too much information. I have written about *los viejitos*, the grandfathers and grandmothers of our quickly fading Nuevo Mexicano culture. They taught to distinguish truth from wispy mirage and false ideas. The *curandera* whose story I told taught her young apprentice to see beauty and truth in the windswept llano. Counselors here at the library can help guide our students as they search for that same beauty and truth in their lives. Information overload need not cause our downfall.

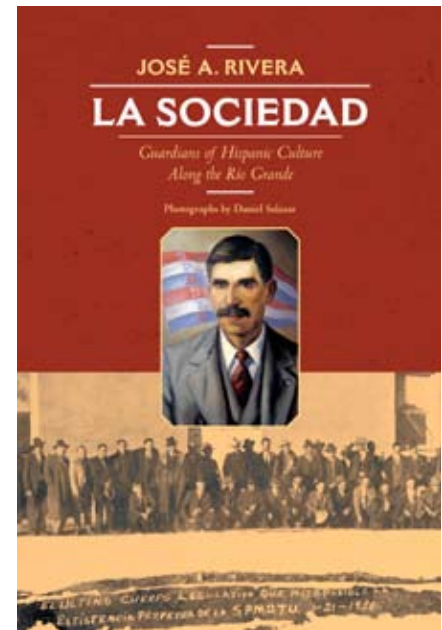
I remember my immersion into the world of learning many years ago when I entered the brand new world of university studies. I learned that with

knowledge comes great joy and liberation, but also a sense of sorrow. So it must have been when our ancestors ate the fruits from trees of knowledge. So it has been throughout history as each generation adds to the world of knowledge. Our species has entered new ages with great jubilation as the conquering of nature progresses. Poets tell that as we enter a new era we are also saddened by what we leave behind. Knowledge changes the person, the psyche grows, but if it cannot adapt then just surviving can overwhelm body and soul.

Today the students who enter university studies live in a post-modern world, they're hip, and they've been connected to the new technologies since childhood. Still, the human psyche does not change as fast as the multifarious inventions of our time. The acquisition of knowledge can come with a price. As students progress in their search for beauty and truth, their mental and spiritual wellbeing must also be the university's concern.

What do these questions have to do with pine trees and the gardens on campus? If we agree information overload can also unbalance the psyche, I believe there is redeeming value in our campus landscape. In the gardens we are closer to the earth's energies where the pressures of too much learning can be released. The psyche needs balance and harmony, it needs love. In gardens we find not only temporary respite but also renewed spiritual energy. The age of information need not overwhelm us if we live in the oasis and not the mirage.

We should celebrate Tight and all those who came after him and have had a hand in beautifying the campus. Celebrate the men and women who work on the grounds nurturing our oasis on the mesa. After the sleep of winter, the soul seeks green, and we are fortunate this campus comes alive in spring, pleasing the senses and lifting our spirits. Today paisanos from the valley still come to work on the grounds. Under the hot sun of summer they keep the oasis green and flowering. Today, sons and daughters of the people of the valley are part of the legacy of those first five Hispanos who enrolled a century ago. More and more, the student body reflects a diversity of cultures, including students and teachers from around the world. The once, sun-baked mesa has taken on an aspect of reality. The oasis thrives.



Rivera, José A. *La Sociedad: Guardians of Hispanic Culture along the Rio Grande*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2010. Courtesy of the University of New Mexico Press.



Davis, Wyatt. "Zimmerman Library interior." University of New Mexico Archives (UNMA 028, box 69), Center for Southwest Research and Special Collections, University Libraries. Meem's architecture for the Zimmerman Library integrated elements of Pueblo Revival and Art Deco styles.