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## Spring 2011 Newsletter

Luis Chacon  
*San Jose State University*

Robert Unzueta  
*San Jose State University*

Juan Pablo Mercado  
*San Jose State University*

Victor Vasquez  
*San Jose State University*

Saul Donate  
*San Jose State University*

*See next page for additional authors*

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**Authors**

Luis Chacon, Robert Unzueta, Juan Pablo Mercado, Victor Vasquez, Saul Donate, Ana Angel, Aloisses Rodriguez, Felipe Ponce, Ricardo Agredano, and Deborah Godinez

# XICANA/O GRADUATE COUNCIL

San José State University

Spring 2011 Newsletter

LETRAS Y MACANAS Spring 2011



Luis Isi, Ana, Alicia, Felipe, Debbie, Victor and Ricardo prepare to hit the road to the 38th annual NACCS Conference in Pasadena, CA

## Nourishing our Intellectualism through Revolutionary Spaces and Knowledge Production

By Luis Chacon

The Mexican American Studies program at San José State University has been more than a program of study but a collective learning process. The collective learning process happens inside and outside the classroom and through every aspect of our lives. The learning has come from a new and exciting cohort collaborating with faculty, current graduate students, alumni, and other community members. Collaboration and sharing ideas has allowed us to feed our passion, intellectualism, knowledge production, and aspirations. This newsletter is not the culmination or peak of our work but rather an insight into our experiences, ideas, and thoughts about what it means to be a member of our community. It's important to recognize that without the collaboration of the MAS program, our professors, our peers and nontraditional learning spaces, our stories would not be what they are.

Luis Chacon and  
Ricardo Agredano at  
the NACCS Awards  
Luncheon.  
April 1, 2011  
Pasadena, CA



## Richmond and the 2011 NACCS Conference: Pride & Purpose

By Luis Chacon

I'm not a very prideful person, but one thing I am proud of is saying that I come from Richmond, California. "City of Pride and Purpose" is Richmond's mantra and one that I have internalized with the work that I do, the goals that I have, and the communities that I work with. Part of my pride coming from Richmond is that the media has created an image of it that says it produces nothing but social deviants that are a threat to society. Well I'm proud to say that yes, I am a threat to society. I am a threat to the maintenance of the status quo that's produced: massive military recruitment in our schools, negative portrayals of the city and its people by the media, poor funding for social services (hospitals, schools, youth programs, etc) and the mislabeling and mistreatment of our youth as criminals.

Not only am I proud to say that I am from Richmond, but I am proud to say that I will never "leave Richmond," as some would expect or recommend. Instead, I will go back and make it better than what it is, and my intent to make it better becomes my "purpose." My eyes and mind have been significantly opened as a first year graduate student in the Mexican American Studies program at

San Jose State. I have grown to learn, from my professors and peers, just how deep issues are in cities like Richmond, and how they are affected by different institutions, policies, and people in society.

After attending the 2011 NACCS conference in Pasadena, my pride and purpose has been further enhanced. I gained extensive inspiration, knowledge, and experience in being surrounded by people of color that are not only in higher education, but are also working towards the success of our people, particularly through education. At the NACCS conference, I not only gained academic knowledge, but I also gained an increased passion for working with youth in cities like Richmond and an increased motivation to never give up. My experience, however, would be nothing without my peers in the MAS program. They all know who they are, and they should know that they are the most intelligent and passionate people that I have met in my life. I am proud to say that I am part of MAS at SJSU not only because of what I am studying, but also because of the knowledge, passion, inspiration, pride, and purpose that I have gained through my newfound family at MAS de SJSU.



**“The laws of the land have perpetuated, reinforced, and normalized the suffering of my community and probably have done the same to yours.”**



## The War on Terror

By Robert Unzueta

USA!, USA!, USA!, USA!, USA!, are the cheers that we’ve all heard nationwide as president Obama announced the death of infamous public enemy number one, Osama Bin Laden. For ten years the United States of America has been on a global quest that sought to bring Osama to justice for his crimes against humanity. Now that the single man who has supposedly brought terror to the United States as a nation is dead, can we refocus on domestic terrorism?

During this great hunt for “justice” we, as a marginalized community, have been told that our brutalization and terror by the nation state of the US was second to that of the global war on terror we are fighting today, as a result of 9/11. For those of us who continued to struggle for our civil liberties and right to life on our native land, have been labeled as enemies of the state. As a criminalized body we have found ourselves subject to fascist acts of governmental oppression like the Patriot act, which has resulted in my personal favorite full body searches every flight I take. Or other laws aimed at my community in the name of securing the borders from potential terrorist like law SB 1070, which has been deemed okay to racially profile brown bodies.

What about the threat of us having a space in history books and the ability to have access to institutions of knowledge production, with the further whitening of the curriculum in Texas, or the banning of

Raza studies in Arizona, or the threat of the consolidation of departments like Mexican American Studies at San Jose State University. Or what about homophobic laws like Proposition 8 in California that denies our LGBTQ community the right to the unhappiness of marriage, or the economic terrorism that we all have faced in the name of profit. Or the heavy policing of our communities, which have lead to the militarization of our streets, that has fed an ever-growing industrial prison complex. Let us not to forget to mention the terrorism black, brown, red, and yellow bodies have faced internationally due to US imperialism. Our right to love and live has been in threat far before Osama and will be in threat far after his death...

Now that the wicked witch of the East is gone, can we move past the ideology of a post racial society in which our terror has been labeled passé and go back to the villain who has brought terror to my community for the past 500 years? The laws of the land have perpetuated, reinforced, and normalized the suffering of my community and probably have done the same to yours. So before we go out and celebrate the death of today’s super villain scapegoat, Osama, like the West has done with Nazi Germany’s Hitler, let us reflect and recognize who has caused domestic terrorism on *nuestra gente’s* right to love and live! Love, Rob

# Cultural Continuity

By Juan Pablo Mercado

One of my first classes in the Mexican American Studies graduate program at San José State was Chicana/o History with Dr. Gregorio Mora Torres. In his course he introduced me to the idea of cultural continuity. This basic idea referred to a transfer of knowledge from one generation to another. He brought up this idea when he discussed the various indigenous groups that made up the Meso American region, “pre-conquest.” At first the term helped me understand how generations of people taught each other the skills, traditions and knowledge of their ancestors. It helped me unpack the meaning and significance of the customs and knowledge elders transferred to the new generation. It helped me see just how vital this continuity was in ensuring that their culture and their way of life would be honored and continue on for future generations. As I progressed through the graduate program at San José University it became more and more evident that this was not a just a basic idea, it was a profoundly important concept that Chicana and Chicano Studies deeply relies on.

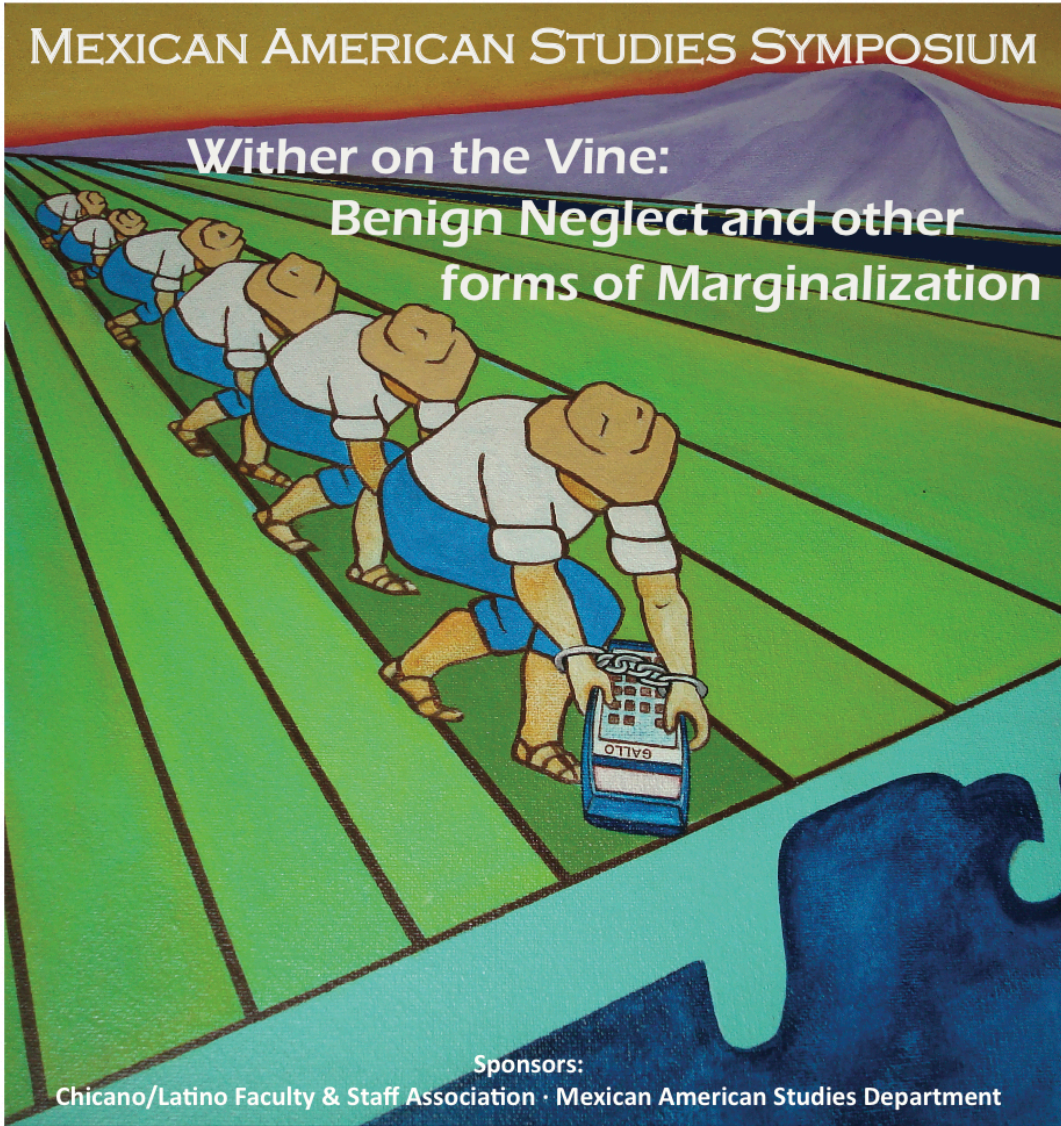
While attending the 38th Annual NACCS conference in Pasadena I had the opportunity to meet, learn and share with many significant Chicana/o scholars. One particular memory that I have was a conversation between Dr. Julia Curry-Rodríguez and Dr. Rodolfo Acuña. The conversation centered on how Dr. Acuña influenced and mentored Dr. Curry-Rodríguez. It was this influence and belief that Dr.

Acuña shared with Dr. Curry-Rodríguez that was a contributing factor for her to pursue her PhD. Just as Dr. Acuña shared this knowledge with Dr. Curry-Rodríguez, she too has shared this knowledge and influence with my classmates and me. She continues to be a constant source of motivation and inspiration, and relentlessly fights for the ability of future generations to have the space and resources to learn about our skills, our traditions and our knowledge.

My time here in San José has been no different than that of my *antepasdos*: it has been a time of listening, learning and working. Because of the generosity, patience and commitment to see their culture continue and thrive, professors like Dr. Mora Torres and Dr. Curry Rodriguez have not only shared their knowledge and traditions with my classmates and me, they have also challenged us. They have placed the responsibility and charge onto us as the next generation of Chicanas/os to transfer this knowledge and culture to future generations. I view this as a tremendous challenge but also as a tremendous opportunity. Chicana and Chicano Studies have prospered because of the contributions of Dr. Mora Torres and Dr. Curry-Rodríguez. It is my sincerest hope that it will continue to prosper because of the contributions of my classmates and me. And it will be our collective responsibility to ensure that Chicana and Chicano Studies will have the opportunity to prosper because of the contributions of future Chicana and Chicano scholars.

Juan Pablo, Robert, Dr. Curry Rodríguez and Dr. Acuña at the 38th Annual NACCS conference in Pasadena.



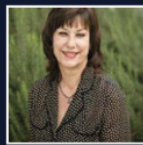


Saturday, April 23, 2011

**Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Library, San José State University**  
2nd Floor – Room 225/229 · 12:00 – 2:00 p.m.



**Dr. Devon Peña**  
Professor of Anthropology,  
University of Washington  
Former Chair of the National Association  
for Chicana and Chicano Studies



**Dr. Mary S. Pardo**  
Professor of Chicana and Chicano  
Studies,  
California State University, Northridge



**Assemblymember Luis A. Alejo**  
Represents the 28th Assembly District, which  
consists of San Benito County, the Salinas Valley,  
North Monterey County, South Santa Clara



**Dr. Julia E. Curry Rodríguez**  
Assistant Professor of Mexican American Studies,  
San José State University  
President, Chicano/Latino



Image from 3 panel mural in the Cultural Heritage Center, MLK Library, SJSU. Part of the Chicano Resource Center Art Collection.  
Painted by Etta Mascareños, Marta Delgado, Lupe Carranza, Rosalinda Najera, and Mamie Paz. 1980.

# Defending and Protecting Chicana/o Studies: Reflection, Acción & Thank You's

By Victor Vasquez

Pasadena, CA- After attending the National Association of Chicana and Chicano Studies and watching the documentary "Precious Knowledge," which focuses on the struggle to defend Ethnic Studies in Arizona, a few San José State students felt the need to become even more involved in our campus and community. During our drive back to San José, we talked about creating a space where we could organize in a proactive manner beyond the normative rallies and protests. We wanted to renew our community and project a culture of resistance. Consequently, like many students around the nation, we felt the need to protect and defend Chicana/o Studies and Ethnic Studies. We acknowledge that it is our responsibility to leave our communities with a space to create our knowledge and wisdom, which will aid the struggles of future generations.

Inspired by the actions to defend Ethnic Studies in Arizona, San José community members, including undergraduates and graduate students from San José State University and San José City College, united under the name San José *Colectiva*. The San José *Colectiva* was born out the need for students and non-students to work together outside institutions, beyond campus politics, and with the intention of focusing our energy towards building a culture of resistance in the San José area. As *Colectiva*, we decided to undertake two simple projects: 1) begin the dialogue around Protecting and Defending Mexican-American Studies (MAS) and 2) further engage ourselves with community-based struggles surrounding Chicana/o youth in San Jose.

Now you might ask, is the Mexican-American Studies program at San José State under attack? The answer is yes and no! From what we know, there have been "conversations" and possible plans to consolidate our MAS department under the Department of Social Science. Under such move, the Department of Social Science would provide more resources to MAS, but the MAS department will most likely lose its autonomy. We cannot allow MAS to become a program under the control and management of the Department of Social Science. We feel that becoming a program will only result in competition for funding with other programs in the same department. Ultimately, to merge as a program is a de-evolutionary step for our Department, a step

further towards marginalization/elimination, and a disgrace to all those whom struggled to establish MAS as an autonomous space of learning.

After only a week of circulation, our petition to "Defend, Protect, and Expand Mexican American, African American, Asian American Studies at SJSU" gathered over 580 signatures from local, national, and international supporters! The overwhelming display of support included the signatures of all adjunct MAS faculty along with one full-time faculty, *Profesora* Julia Curry-Rodríguez. We presented our signatures to the Dean of Social Science at the "Wither on the Vine: Benign Neglect and other forms of Marginalization" symposium for Mexican-American Studies organized by the Chicano/Latino Faculty and Staff Association. Even though we recognize the verbal support from Dean of Social Sciences, Sheila Bienenfeld, in our petition, we encouraged her to read and sign our petition as a courageous stand in solidarity but she refused to sign. For the San José *Colectiva*, taking a stand for Mexican-American Studies is not a demand or a request but more like a pre-emptive peace treaty. Our petition's goal is to begin the conversation about protecting the MAS department and other Ethnic Studies programs that might come under attack. The *Colectiva*, however, will be at peace with any institution as long as our Chicana/o Departments, colleges, programs, and professors are not downsized, consolidated, eliminated, and/or fired.

Throughout this experience I have found an overall appreciation of everyone that supports the struggle to Defend and Protect Chicana/o and Ethnic Studies. I would like to thank all the students involved in this struggle on and off campus. I would like to encourage everyone to please take a second to thank any faculty member on your campus that courageously has chosen to engage in struggle with students in any shape or form. Thank you to all of you who stand in solidarity with students, not just in times of comfort and convenience, but also in times of challenge, controversy, and struggle. Gracias! You are appreciated!

To sign or view the SJSU petition "Defend and Protect Chicana/o Studies..." please visit:

<https://spreadsheets.google.com/viewform?hl=en&pli=1&formkey=dFpVMY00aGl1V2h3UzhSWDdyNXBHdX>





**“What stuck with me most, was the definition of dehumanization and the understanding of how my gente are viewed as animals, rather than humans by mainstream society.”**



## My Struggle is Our Struggle

By Saul Donate

I had the privilege of attending the 38th annual NACCS conference. I am a first generation college student from Salinas, California who has not had the opportunity to be exposed to professional academia. At NACCS I was able to talk to different college professors, authors, and students who are active in Chicana/o Studies. I attended different panels where my *gente* presented different forms of knowledge in Chicana/o Studies like music, theater, history, and even advice on how to prepare to transfer to a University of California. The most memorable panel for me was how Chicana/o Studies started in the universities. I got to hear personal experiences from the originators. They shared about how it all started and the different types of struggles they had to go through, for me!

This conference was very important to me

because I learned about the struggles these important individuals faced for me. What stuck with me most was the definition of dehumanization and the understanding of how my *gente* are viewed as animals, rather than humans by mainstream society. Mainstream society has accomplished this dehumanization of my *gente* with simple acts like labeling us in derogatory terms such as aliens, lazy, gangbangers, felons, fags, etcetera.

My personal struggles are the same struggles of those who started Chicana/o Studies. Like me they have suffered the dehumanization of their bodies. From this conference I was able to identify all the different ways we have been attacked by mainstream society. This conference has shown me that I need to continue to fight with all who struggle for the betterment of all our *gente*.

## OPINION EDITORIAL THE LATINA BODY AS A THREAT

By Ana Angel

I am 5'4," brown skin with "child bearing hips "and "J.Lo booty." I am Latina and, therefore, my body makes me part of the "Latina threat."

Mexican pop musician, *Kalimba*, who has been accused of raping a 17-year-old young woman he met at a club, has caused a hype with people everywhere that places blame on the young woman for being "caliente." It was her fault for being young, it was her fault for being over-sexual, and it was her fault for being at the club. She was to blame for being a brown skinned body. She lured him into the hotel and, therefore, "had it coming." The same thing went for the 11 year-old Latina who was raped in Texas by a group of men. People argued that it was her fault because she dressed "inappropriate," was flirty with the men and acted like "she wanted it."

Theorist Leo Chavez offers the idea that "[t]he Latino Threat Narrative posits that Latinos are not like previous immigrant groups, who ultimately become part of the nation. Latinos are

*unwilling or incapable of integrating, of becoming part of the national community. Rather, they are part of an invading force from south of the border that is bent on reconquering land that was formerly theirs and destroying the American way of life."*

The media is to blame for these negative and stereotypical depictions of Latinas because these images become the reality of what people believe are true and accurate representations of Latinas. The Latina body, for example, is over-sexualized and often portrayed as something for pleasure—beer commercials, movies, and music videos. Is this the only thing worthy of a Latina, her body? The Latina body has become an object that is not to be respected or taken seriously. Why?

The media has portrayed our bodies as erotic objects and our eroticization makes us incapable of integrating into mainstream American society. Our bodies are not normal and, therefore, "un-American." We are un-assimilable because our bodies do not conform to the "ideal American body type"—think Barbie. The Latina body is destroying the "American way of life," the American white body is not. The Latina body is luring our men, the

white body is not. Yes one can argue that all women are objectified, simply because of their gender, but we as Latinas struggle as women of color. Our Struggle as women, as women of color, and as women of a working class is a struggle of our entire being.

The media's depiction of the Latina body as a threat is a way to control our reproductive system and to oppress us as women of color. What the media has created is the normalization of violence against women. The sexualization of the Latina body has made it acceptable for violence to occur, as we saw with the young ladies that got raped. We must call for a more accurate and diverse representation of Latinas and women of color in the media. Instead of reinforcing negative portrayal and stereotypes of women, we must hold media accountable to highlight positive representations and work towards ending negative stereotyping. The media should be able to teach others about justice in ways that challenge the dominant ideology through education, like social activist films. The media should also educate the audience about the ways we can work towards ending oppression instead of reinforcing it.

Ana Angel

MA Candidate in Mexican American Studies,  
San José State University  
San José, CA

[Xicana09@gmail.com](mailto:Xicana09@gmail.com)

[www.amorcalordador.blogspot.com](http://www.amorcalordador.blogspot.com)

As a graduate student I study the media's representation of women of color through feminist theory and cultural theories on identity. My graduate thesis project looks at social labor films, their portrayal of women activists, and the formation of identity. I am specifically interested in the objectification of women in film and how women reach a subjective consciousness through activism. In addition, I seek to understand the media's role in the construction of a mainstream identity and its effect on women's identity formation.

My piece is important because it highlights the normalization of violence against women and contributes to discussions of young women in the media. With the recent controversy of young women being raped and being blamed for it, my opinion is that the media's depiction of Latinas leads to the sexualization of the body.



**“What I am taking with me to Salinas and my work is ways to improve and help my community.”**



## Full Circle

By Aloisses Rodriguez

NACCS was a great and eye-opening experience due to the fact that I was unaware of the passion and dedication my people have for social justice. During NACCS I attended a couple of different presentations in hopes of getting a better understanding of the issues we face outside my comfort zone. Some of the most impactful presentations to me were the ones by the San José State University students that created the 50/50 Crew. The 50/50 Crew is important to me because it hit close to home. Being raised in a low-income community with a lack of activities for youth to engage in, organizations like the 50/50 Crew were critical to me being where I am at today. The Bread Box in Salinas was my 50/50 Crew.

What I am taking with me to Salinas and my work is ways to improve and help my community. The idea of providing young Chicanos extensive information on things they like as a way of engaging them in activities in the community brings out the best interest and attention of the youth. This approach to working with youth can be something that will lead to bigger and better things in the future. The presenters said that the youth have really accepted the idea of working on community based projects and anxiously wait for their upcoming meetings, in hope of indulging themselves into new and interesting information. Overall I was unaware of how far my *Raza* has come

in the fight for social justice, but in the same breath we still have a big hill to overcome. The biggest challenge I have identified in Salinas has been the hate of self.

In my ethnic studies class we have talked about self-hate due to a direct result of White supremacy, Eurocentric knowledge. These techniques have been used in working with Chicano youth and have been damaging. The poison of White supremacy that has been injected into us at an early age has influenced our people to oppress each other, ignite hate and envy within our own people. So what I am taking away from this experiences is the need for all of us to start loving our community, family, and selves, because brown is beautiful. So when the opportunity comes to help your brother or sister out, reconsider putting him down or ignoring them and instead create an opportunity to help like the 50/50 Crew has helped youth in San José, or like the Bread Box has helped me in Salinas. It is important that we ask ourself “WHY?” Why can’t I be at Yale or Harvard? Why can’t I be a lawyer or doctor? Why can’t I be more than what society has planned for me?

Thank you to all those who have paved the way before us and who have sacrificed for us before they even knew us. The passion that you have left for Chicanos like me to keep moving forward has been transformative. Thank you NACCS for providing me the space to remind me of my obligations to my *RAZA* and our quest for social justice.

## The Search for Don Pancho

By Felipe Ponce

"As the lights go down in the city, and the sun shines on the bay, I want to be there in my city..." As dawn comes upon us, our *compañera* James goes about her morning ritual of waking us up with her rendition of different songs, this time she chose Journey's ode to San Francisco. It is a bit before 5 a.m., and we all arise to beat the Arizona heat, which in mid-August can hit upwards of 115 degrees. Yesterday wasn't that bad, it only hit 106 in the shade. James' choice of song reminds me of the long hikes I took along the 'Frisco Bay in order to prepare myself physically for the adventure I was to embark upon in the Arizona desert. But there is nothing the Bay Area can do to prepare you for the arduous heat and terrain that the desert has to offer. I step out of my tent, the sky still full of stars, and in my dreariness I almost step on a tarantula that I swear was bigger than my face! The coyotes howling last night had me defecating in my drawers, and the scorpions a *compañero* found amongst the abandoned articles of clothing folks left behind in their desperate attempt to cross the perilous desert, had me back-peddling as if I were at basketball practice. For a Bay Cat like myself, who had absolutely no experience in the outdoors, I am thrown aback by the creatures I had only seen in the Coyote Point Museum. I sip my coffee, eat a few granola bars and begin to load "La Paloma", the big, white Ford truck we use to transport water to different migrant trails that meander throughout the Arizona desert. We fill "La Paloma" with over 90 gallons of water and stuff our backpacks with cans of tuna, beans, granola bars, socks, and first-aid kits, incase we run into *compañeros* in need of such supplies.

We have set up a search party for a man named Francisco from Jalisco, who was with two other *compañeros* when they were left abandoned two days prior by an uncaring *pollero* (human smuggler). His two friends were lucky enough to



**“¡DON PANCHO!  
¡REGRESAMOS  
MANANA!  
¡NO SE ME  
AGUITE!”**

perambulate into our campground yesterday afternoon, for if they had not, all three would probably be decomposing in the pitiless sun. Hungry, dehydrated, sunburned and weak, they had told us of their journey, which began with what we in the Bay call "rabbit ears"; being robbed and forcibly emptying out pockets of all your goods. They then followed the *pollero* for two merciless days on a trek that only brought them 7 miles north from the border. On the second day, tired and weary, they began to fall behind the group, and when they could no longer *aguantar* the painful blisters collecting on their feet, the *pollero* abandoned them. They were now in god spirits for they had ran into a few caring Arizonians, as well as folks from around the country, Wisconsin, New Jersey, Washington, some from as far as Alaska, who had decided to help save the lives of migrants by setting gallons of water along the most utilized migrant trails. Their feelings of graciousness quickly turned into concern over their lost *compañero*, Don Francisco, who was too weak to continue walking with the abandoned group. They had explained to us the terrain where they had left *Don Pancho*, and with the expertise only attainable by months of trekking the trails, we get a general idea of where to look for the abandoned man.

We set out in groups of four, and the next twelve hours are spent trying to find the needle in the haystack. "DON PANCHO! DON

PANCHO!" My voice bounces off the mountains and echoes through canyons, but no answer. An ICE helicopter hovers above on the same mission as us, to try to find a man in the vast wilderness that spans until the eye can see, and beyond. After spending the entire day looking for *Don Pancho* with no avail, we call it a night. We begin to load La Paloma and in a last desperate attempt to locate the man I yell, "¡DON PANCHO! ¡REGRESAMOS MANANA! ¡NO SE ME AGUITE!" My loud proclamation left me *bien aguitado* for I knew that *Don Pancho's* chances of survival, with no water or no food, were very slim. A *compañero* found a backpack, which one of the other migrants identified as *Don Panchos*, the only remnant of the missing man. If *Don Pancho* made it alive out of the desert it was only *por la gracia de Dios*. But odds are that *Don Pancho* ended up among the other 300+ souls lost in the desert in 2009. The only sign of his presence will be his name emblazoned on the back of a No *Mas Muertes* t-shirt, which list the names of the various bodies found in the desert that year. For me, I am imbued with indelible memory of a man I never met. A man I will never know. A man that could have escaped the brutality of the desert, but most likely perished amongst the beautiful saguaros and Sonoran Palos Verdes that dot the desert. To Volunteer please visit [www.nomoredeaths.org](http://www.nomoredeaths.org)

# Remembering LA, Connecting Dots of Struggle

By Ricardo Agredano



The I-710 corridor runs from the Long Beach docks all the way to I-101, about a twenty-five mile stretch of highway that is high-traffic and carries high-volumes of goods from the shipyards. It's one part of the beast that has been brutally destroying black and brown communities, including my own family, and a beast that has followed me to this day. While at NACCS, I remember an LA left behind and come round to connect dots of struggle.

A group of us, including some from XGC, headed out from Pasadena to Huntington Park because we were going to meet with a Communities for a Better Environment (CBE), which is a non-profit organization working on environmental issues in the I-710 to I-101 Basin area. They invited us to come have a conversation with some of their youth volunteers interested in pursuing higher education, but we received a lot more than just a conversation about education. Youth talked about their struggles in school, mean teachers and racist administrators, as well as their struggles outside of school, excessive pollution and environmental racism. The amount of adversity young people deal with in this area is astounding, but the work they do to make their community the one they want is much more powerful.

The work CBE does is save lives by organizing in neighborhoods, putting shady politicians and business owners on blast, and shutting down dangerous polluters. One success story they told us was about a concrete grinding operation: shady white business guy collects concrete from 1994 earthquake, sets up a grinding operation next to Mexican neighborhoods, bags up the product, sells it for profit. The particles of concrete from this operation filled the air and pretty soon everyone was getting sick. People organized to get rid of it and it was shut down after a local politician with a weak lung visited and fell ill. Then they pointed to a wall behind us that had an old picture of a few families who were posing. They all lived in front of the grinders and then they told us all those people in that picture have since passed

away so some shady white business guy could make some money. A big success for the future, but a somber reminder of its the cost to our family and community.

As they explained about the other factories and shady operations that pollute and kill black and brown neighborhoods, I realized that most of my family still live in these areas. I thought about my grandmother's death and grandfather's stroke. And I thought about how my older sister and I have asthma. They explained that pollutants and stressors in the environment will put bodies into stress mode (our bodies will react to threats by storing sugars and fats which leads to diabetes and heart conditions), that contamination can cause mutations (breast, brain, bone cancer or birth defects) or developmental issues (ADHD, retardation, speech disorders), and that particles in the air takes our breathe and recesses. My grandmother dealt with diabetes and eventually died of breast cancer. My grandfather had a stroke and is permanently in a wheelchair. My mother has dealt with several types of cancer. My older sister and I both struggle with asthma to this day. How are these things related? We all lived in this Basin, which is the most polluted in the Los Angeles Area, and we're dying prematurely or unnecessarily sick because of white profiteers. The dots of struggle connected between the young people we just met, my family, and my life.

How many of our families are adversely affected by the process of profit-making? We should answer "ALL OF US!" Think about refineries, high-tech industry, train lines, shipyards, and industrial agriculture. Who lives near them? Who does the dangerous work? Whose health is wasted at the end of the day? NACCS' extra-conference activity this year hit my family and my life in a real hard way but it also pushed me to realize that our struggle is shared. I hope you join me in refusing to let profit-making continue killing our families and communities, and commit to working towards regenerating life and reproducing our communities.

# Colonized

Paralyzed delight  
dysfunction  
colonized aftermath  
Den of danger exposed  
slowed anticipation  
vulnerable net  
spoon-fed weapons  
trying to conquer me  
trying to keep conquests  
    alive

I get caught slipping...

"Pero no me quiero hogar  
en un vaso de agua"

RESISTO, y RESISTO, y  
RESISTO!!!

And I don't even really like  
protesting

Pues para mi--la repuesta  
es facil...

COMMUNIDAD

the duality in me  
---meh

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