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MEChA (Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán)

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# La ONDA

M.E.Ch.A.  
University of Wisconsin-  
Madison  
March 3, 2004  
Volume 16, Issue 2

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## Editors Note

**QUE ONDA!**

Ya era tiempo! I hope that this Newsletter can further feed your vast hunger for Chicano flavor. First and foremost M.E.Ch.A. is dedicated in presenting the UW-Madison campus with critical issues affecting the Chicano community and educating the campus. LA ONDA, creates a place to voice concerns and exhibit all sorts of artistic outlets. It is my pleasure to present you with some of today's most talented writers, artists and activist.... ENJOY!



**ADELANTE**  
Vanessa Ferniza

COLUMN OF THE AMERICAS  
by Patrisia Gonzales and Roberto Rodriguez  
**CUAUHTEMOC HAS LANDED**

~IF YOU HAVE ANY COMMENTS ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER AND OR WOULD LIKE TO SUBMIT ARTICLES, SEND THEM TO :  
mechistasyque@yahoo.com

Shortly after Cuauhtemoc was put to death by Cortez in 1525, the body of the last "tlatoni," or speaker of the Mexica, was surreptitiously spirited to his birthplace of Ixcateopan, Guerrero, Mexico. For more than 400 years, the people of Ixcateopan held on to this closely guarded secret, finally revealing it in 1949.

Today, his bones are on display there inside a 17th-century church, a humble resting place and a site of pilgrimage to Mexico's greatest symbol of indigenous resistance. Cuauhtemoc, or "descending eagle," is to Mexico what Sitting Bull is to many native peoples of the north, what Pope is to the Pueblos of the Southwest, and what Tupac Amaru is to South America.

Archaeologists and anthropologists dispute the authenticity of the bones. Yet his annual honoring there (and throughout Mexico and the United States) on his birth date, Feb. 23, 1520, represents not a battle over authenticity, but over the right of indigenous peoples to define their own peoplehood and write their own narratives. A similar dynamic is playing out across the continent. Governments traditionally have taken it upon themselves to define who is native and who isn't. In some countries, anthropologists and archaeologists answer these questions.

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## Unos Momentos de Ternura...

Primero, más que nada, tengo que darles las gracias a mis hermanos y hermanas que han decidido ser parte de una organización política. Basada en una cultura y gente que aunque ha existido y ha trabajado en esta tierra desde el principio, aun no nos conocen ni nos escuchan todavía. Es difícil cuidar esta lumbre, especialmente cuando estamos tan lejos y tan al norte de nuestras familias. La soledad siempre nos toca la puerta, queriendo entrar a nuestros hogares y apagar la luz de todos nuestros sueños, pero seguimos, juntos, peleando porque nuestra raza no sabe "quitar." Me da bastante orgullo ser parte de una comunidad como ésta y espero tener la oportunidad de formar amistades que



MEChISTAS

me duren toda la vida con todos ustedes. En caso que todavía no lo sepan, conmigo ya tienen una persona que les da esquina y si se les ofrezca algo en cualquier momento, sea consejo, conversación, un chiste, lo que sea . . . aquí estoy para servirles mis hermanos.

Escribiéndoles humildemente,

Su hermao, Cornelio Aguilera

*con o sin safos*

COLUMN OF THE AMERICAS  
by **Patrisia Gonzales and Roberto Rodriguez**  
CUAUHTEMOC HAS LANDED

In the United States, a similar dynamic has been taking place for decades regarding people of Mexican, Central and South American heritage. Here, census officials have simultaneously "converted" these primarily indigenous populations into Caucasians and aliens.

Yet a movement has arisen here that challenges this "demographic genocide." Part of this movement includes viewing these populations as aboriginal and part of an indigenous continent. This is not a negation of mixture. Quite the contrary. It's an affirmation that despite mixture, they and the continent remain indigenous.

Jack Forbes, one of the nation's foremost native scholars (Rappahannock-Powhatan), has long argued that Mexican Americans are indigenous. In his groundbreaking work "Aztecas del Norte: The Chicanos of Aztlan," he affirms that mixture does not disqualify a person from being indigenous. If that were the case, no one could claim to be anything, as virtually everyone is mixed, or "mestizo."

Despite this, the census has long insisted that these populations are not native, but white. At the same time, society has insisted that they're also alien (as evidenced by the periodic anti-Mexican and anti-immigrant movements). Both of these notions have created an unwanted population.

**Continued Page 3**

## CUAUHTEMOC HAS LANDED...

For example, the extreme right wing has recently taken to picking on MEChA (Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlan), claiming that the student organization is a hate group (UCLA is the latest battleground). However, a quick check of the Southern Poverty Law Center's Web site, which tracks hate groups, reveals not MEChA on its list, but instead the very same organizations

doing the pointing. Additionally, these organizations question the indigenous character of people of Mexican/Central American heritage -- claiming that they've invented their heritage to a supposed mythical homeland located in today's Southwest.

Yet Chicanos did no such inventing, nor did they invent divisive Western geography. Hundreds of maps, chronicles and codices prior to 1848 point in this direction. So do oral traditions, as well as linguistic (Uto-Azteca) and cultural evidence that firmly plant people of Mexican/Central American heritage not in one but all directions. Truthfully, all the evidence points to maize

as the only legitimate "map" needed to prove indigenoussness to this continent or, as Yaqui scholar Vivian Delgado terms it, to one single Turtle Nation. For those who question this, Forbes' "Aztecas del Norte" is a good place to start. Though published in 1973, he had been writing on this topic since 1961, when he was part of the Movimiento Nativo Americano -- which recognized people of Mexican origin as "Anishinabe," or indigenous. Not everyone accepts this. Some believe the indigenous category should not apply to peoples of the south. Others invoke some form of blood quantum purity (which is actually a formula for extermination). Yet despite these protestations, all peoples have the inherent right to determine their own identity. †

## A Call for Teatrosistas

There is a farmworker right now who's not earning a living wage for the sixty-hour work week he has just put in so that Taco Bell, a multi-million dollar corporation, can save a couple of bucks and give Jim his chalupa with extra tomatoes. Right now there is a group of students gossiping about how "Mexican" their friend Gloria was acting at their social last night. Right now there is a group of frustrated students who wish people would stop confusing Mexico's 5 de Mayo with September 16, and then go on to celebrate both by getting really drunk, not even feeling one bit guilty about their actions.

Getting a little tired of the present? Wish you could do something that would really get people's atten-

tion? Tired of turning on the television, or going to a play, and only seeing Anglo American and African American actors and stories being shown?

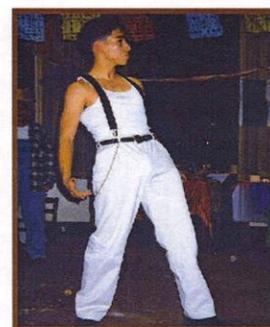
The time to reawaken teatro's sleeping head has come. My name is Cornelio Aguilera and I am a Xicano, last-year theatre major specializing in acting. If you are at all interested in tackling Xicano issues one performance at a time, I invite you to become part of Teatro Olin, a political arm of MEChA, Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán.

We hold rehearsals every Sunday afternoon and are always looking for volunteers interested in creating social change through art. Requirements: A big heart, a big imagination,

and the ability to stand alone in front of a group of people and speak the truth. Think you got what it takes? Drop me a line so you can check out one of our rehearsals. I hope to hear from you soon!

If interested, please express yourself and write to:

[cornelioaguilera@hotmail.com](mailto:cornelioaguilera@hotmail.com)



Cornelio Aguilera as Pachuco"



## LORI ELIAS : You have never heard of SKA! Dios

Ska is a type of music with upbeat rhythms and driving horn lines. It is by no means a brand new genre of music: it first came about in the 60's with such bands as Toots and the Maytals, The Skatalites and Desmond Dekker. I would also like to add that reggae music came from ska, not the other way around!

Today the music is still somewhat popular yet still underground. It has gained worldwide popularity and there are ska bands all over the world, from the United States to Japan. This article is going to focus on bilingual ska heroes, LOS SKARNALES.

I hail from San Antonio, Tejas, so I've had the honor of seeing this wonderful ska band from Houston several times over. This band plays a wonderful mix of Spanglish ska.

The line up consists of: Felipe Galvan - vocals, Beans Wheeler - drums, Nick Gaitan - upright bass, Chris LaForge - guitar, Ryan Scroggins - Robert Rodriguez - accordion. The band has been together a decade and is still going strong.

is one of the best musical experiences you'll ever have. They get the crowd dancing and singing and it's just like a big party. The band gets into it just as much as the crowd does and you never know what can happen. I've witnessed many a sight at their shows, from a fire starting in a bass amp to Felipe crowd surfing. You'll always have a good time when you're at a Skarnales show.

Their sound is definitely different but awesome nonetheless: think ska, punk, reggae, rockabilly, and tejano all carefully and wonderfully woven together. Ryan Scroggins adds the perfect ska beats on his organ while Robert Rodriguez adds the touch of tejano with his accordion. Felipe's vocals are wonderful and his energy is through the roof. Beans Wheeler's drumming is driving and powerful. Chris LaForge's ska guitar riffs are a force to be reckoned with and you can't overlook Nick Gaitan's superb upright bass skills. They are just all over wonderful musicians.

If you should be so lucky to find one of their albums, it won't leave your cd player for a good long while. Los Skarnales have released 3 full length albums on...

**Continued on Page 5**

**Lori Elias: continued ...**

*Pinche Flojo Records* so far: *No Mas Desorden!* (1994), *Vatos Rudos* (1997), and *Suavecito* (2000). Fans are eagerly awaiting the band's release of their 4<sup>th</sup> album *Pachuco Boogie Sound System*, which is expected to debut later this year. With such a catchy sound, excellent musicians, awesome lyrics, explosive live shows, and some of the nicest men you'll ever meet, it's easy to see why Los Skarnales are underground ska legends not only among bilingual and Mexican ska fans, but also among fans the world over. With any luck, one day we may have the honor of having the Skarnales up in Madison to show the Midwest what Texas bilingual ska is all about. For more info, visit [www.losskarnales.com](http://www.losskarnales.com).http://



**LOS SKARNALES**

**Week of Action**



So as many of you may already know the National Labor Week of Action is coming up soon! The dates are March 26-April 4, 2004. The labor week of action is very important and as students we should all get involved. But we all know that... Right! The labor week of action consists of the very famous Martin Luther King and Cesar Chavez. Both important activist for workers rights! Recognizing the work and impact of these two individuals and many others whom have fought for civil rights is crucial. Students and workers every year unite in solidarity for justice. Organizations on our campus such as MEChA, SLAC,BSU,WUNKSHEEK and others are organizing for this

As of now what MEChA has on its agenda for the week is a Taco bell action, women of Juarez, a speaker from workers right center to come and talk on the importance of workers and students uniting, how students can get involved, movement within our community and campus. Movie night on Cesar Chavez/ and we cannot forget the big action at the capitol with workers and students. As well as a film called *At the River I stand*, documenting Martin Luther King Jr. advocacy for workers rights. If anyone would like to help for the week of action or have any other ideas please email me at [pislas@wisc.edu](mailto:pislas@wisc.edu), Vanessa Ferniza or Vanessa Solis at [mechistasy-que@yahoo.com](mailto:mechistasy-que@yahoo.com)

### Indigenous Geography Class

By: Patrisia Gonzales and Roberto Rodriguez

We are happy to report that UW-Madison has accepted our proposal to teach our Indigenous Geography class this summer—June 7-July 4. Though still many months away, we wanted to invite everyone to consider planning to stick around for this part of the summer.

This unique class—to be offered by The Life Science Communications Department—examines the ancient connections between peoples of north, center and the south—the Eagle, the Quetzal, and the Condor. Some of these connections to be examined are related to origins/migrations, influence, and trade. They include ancient MesoAmerican presence in what is today the United States. This is done through an examination of maps, chronicles, codices, and oral traditions.

Students will be expected to locate and track these maps, chronicles, codices (most can be located on campus) and oral traditions that speak to these ancient connections. Students will also examine and discuss why this theme remained consistent in maps & chronicles throughout several centuries.

The class will also examine the concept of sacred geography, story telling, and the relationship between humans, and the earth itself—understanding of herbs, natural medicines, plants and foods.

The objective of the class is not to prove that there were ancient connections between the north and the south, but simply to examine the evidence and to enable students to learn research and writing skills and understanding the importance of oral traditions while investigating this subject.

We are making the class available to all—both undergraduate and graduate students. Plans call for cross-listing the class with American Indian, Chicano, and Latin American Studies and possibly with Journalism & the Folklore Department.

As we taught this class this past spring for the Cesar Chavez Center at UCLA, we are excited that what we have learned will result in an enhanced learning experience. There will be several projects and a paper but no final.

For more information on the class, please reach us at

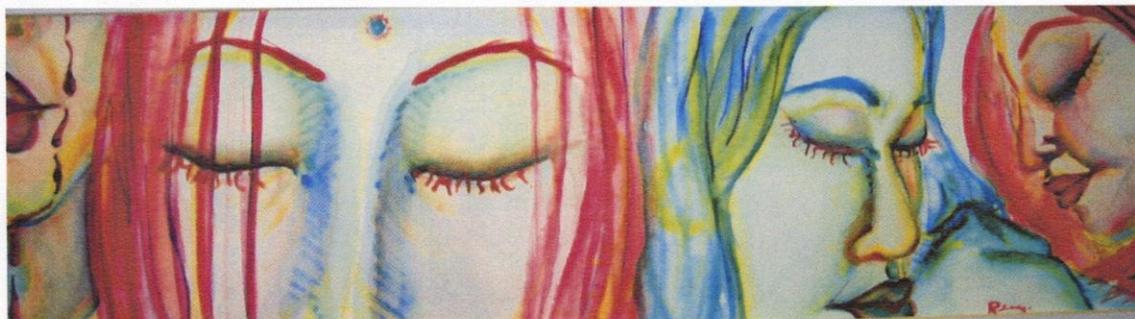
Xcolumn@aol.com contact the LSC departmental office directly at dmwhite@wisc.edu

You are welcome to visit our UCLA class website to see some of the material we covered there at:

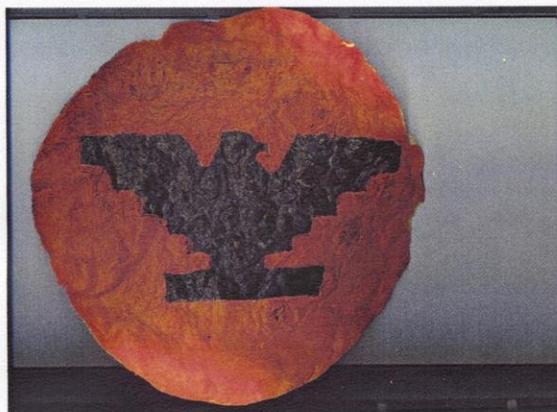
## TORTILLA ART



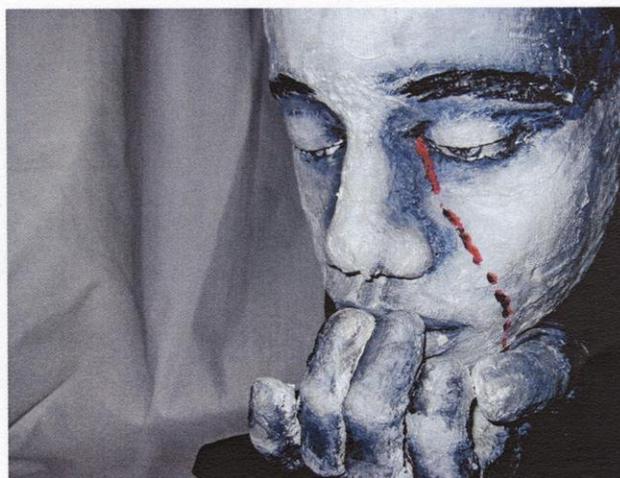
CHICANO/A ARTÉ



LORENZO EDWARDS



VANESSA FERNIZA



LORENZO EDWARDS

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