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LA ONDA



M.E.Ch.A. UW-Madison Volume 17 Issue 3 May 2005



MEChA's Educational and Team Bonding Weekend



Regional Meeting...on Kites on Ice



Regional MEChistas at the National MEChA Conference

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Lack of Activism?

ADRIANA BARBOZA

Have you ever felt frustrated at the lack of activism in your campus? Lately there has been a lot of frustration amongst the Chicano youth especially those who identify themselves as “activist”, (whatever that may mean). A feeling of desperation and loss of hope has plagued our college campuses. We live daily wishing that we had been alive in the 60s and early 70’s, that we had marched with Chavez, that we had been a part of the sit-ins, walk-outs and in general a part of all of the activity that occurred during this time of change and positive upheaval. You see shirts of El Che everywhere on campus but you become perturbed to see the lack of activism on campuses and communities. We have all in some way, shape, or form come across this feeling whether through personal experience or through our organizational involvement. We often question why we haven’t been as active and if we had why we haven’t been as productive. We question whether we are doing a good job in continuing the movement and what our elders had already be-

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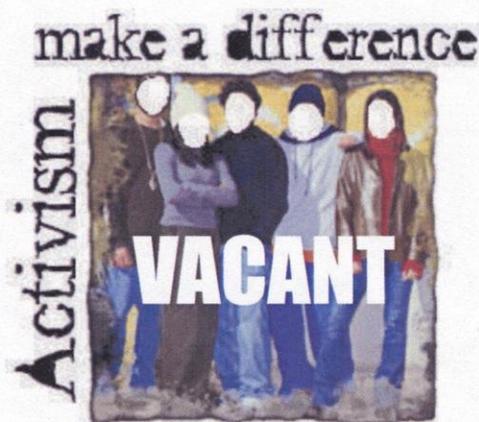
gun by risking their lives for us—the younger Raza generation.

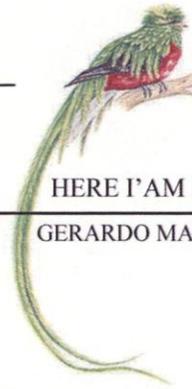
I want to bring some attention to the way we perceive the Chicano movement and the way that this shapes our definition of activism. Lets look at the way in which we perceive at the Chicano Movement the period from 1963-1975 (the length of the movement if one that is highly debated, since many believe that the movement is still on going till this day. For the purpose of my argument I would like to refer to the Chicano Movement as the time period noted above.) Many feel that this time period is glorified to a significant degree. Now don't get me wrong, this period was of extreme importance for La Raza and had the ability to set a foundation of ideals and believes that have allowed us to define ourselves today. It is necessary however, to be able to critically look at the movement and learn that everything was not all peaches and cream. There was a lot of sexism, homophobia and many other kinds of exclusion from members of our own community. Today, we continue to blindly worship the Chicano movement without ever challenging some of the actions taken throughout the movement. Acknowledging the strengths and weaknesses of the movement is only one step that will allow us to become fully aware activist.

What we really need to take a look at however, are the methods of organizing that existed during this time. By methods I am referring to sit-ins, walk outs, strikes and others. These methods proved to be very successful. We see this in the Farm workers' movement for example, when people would boycott the consumption and often production of grapes because that was the most effective way to get to the oppressing institution, in the case of the poverty movement, poor unemployed people couldn't boycott because there was nothing to boycott (they had no job) so instead they would strike. Realizing what methods of resistance one chooses to undertake and clearly identifying the effect or goal of this action is crucial. It seems to me that a lot of the frustration that we experience today as quote on quote activist is that we continue to search for those same techniques and

methods used by our elder in the 60's. When we think of revolutionary acts we think of resisting oppression through the performance of the actions noted above. One expects to see large walk outs, sit ins and even hunger strikes. When anything falls short of that we feel that we have failed. We need to be aware of how these institutions of power have shifted since the 60's and become the pioneers of our own methods of activism. Again, I think this time was extremely significant in setting a foundation for issues, concerns and ideals of the Chicano people but I feel that we need to take what continues to work today and what no longer works should be seen as a sign that we – the youth- need to come up with new ways of retaliation, resistance and mobilizing our communities

Ultimately what we need to do is value the importance of the movement and never for forget about those who put their life in the line for future generations such as our selves. But we also need to take some responsibility as Chicano youth to be the pioneers who find ways of continuing this movement. Until Chicanos receive equal treatment, recognition for our cultura, equal access into institutions, and fair wages amongst more, it is up to us to not get discouraged by the lack of activism because we all know that the fire for activism is within all of us. We never will be revolutionaries until we stop trying to do everything like it was done in the 60's. That is not what revolution is about. True revolutionaries are pioneers of their own movement.





HERE I'AM FROM ...

GERARDO MANCILLA

I am from a Great Civilization
From pyramids, mathematics, astrology, and faith.
From a strong sense of culture and community
From a maternal society where people didn't discriminate
From an extinct society that exist in the books
From the indigenous roots

I am from the City of Angels
Where I learn the English language
Where I used to swim in the pool after school
Where the movies are created
Where life was simple yet complex
Where I rode the bus to school

I am from the Windy City
From school achievements
From owning a house
From living with my family
From going out at night
From true friends

I am from Here
Where discrimination still exists
Where people continue to struggle
Where immigrant are isolated
Where everything depends on money
Where the 'American Dream' is only a dream

I am from here and there...



Power Dynamics of White Privilege

GERARDO MANCILLA

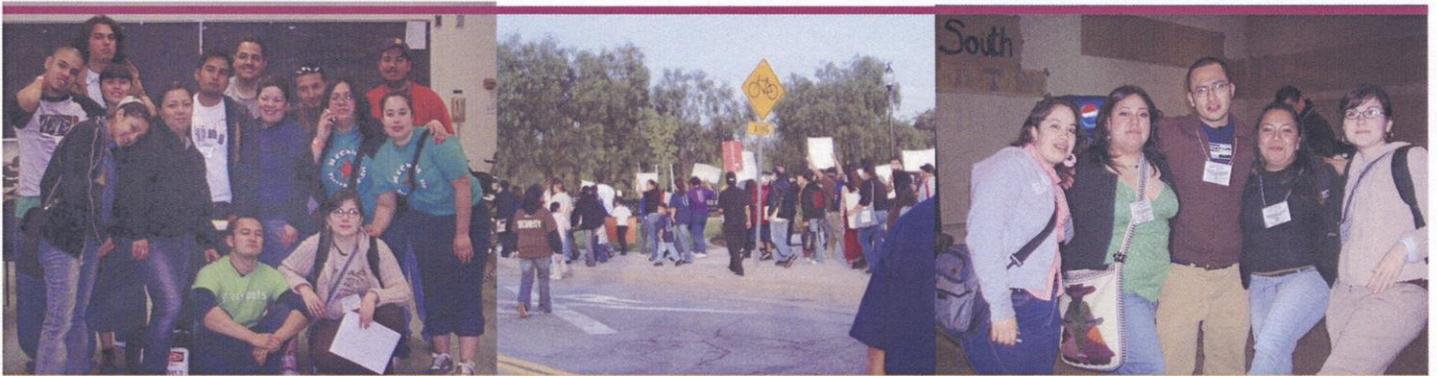
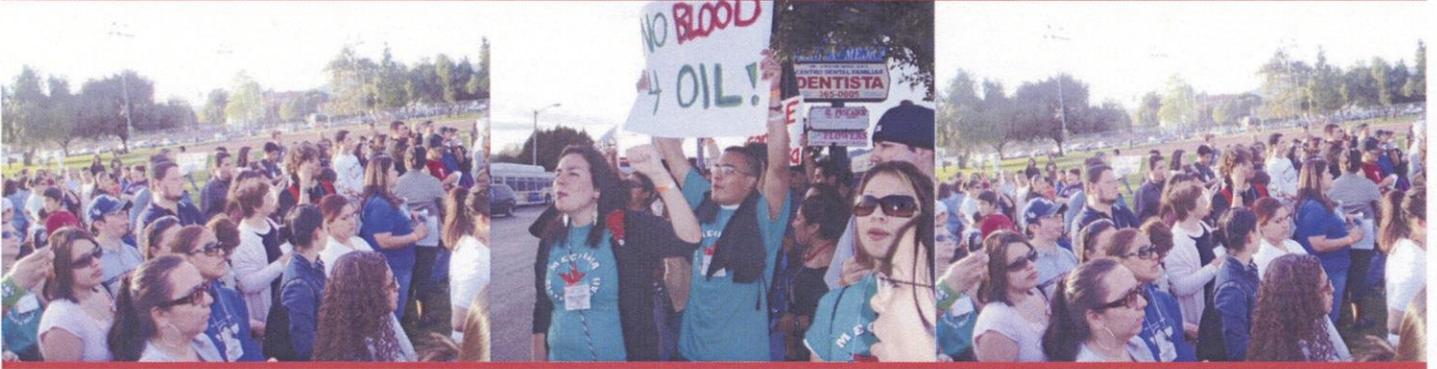
Power Dynamics of White Privilege. After we were discussing Peggy Macintosh's white privilege in my education class, my TA send a mass e-mail as follows: Write a one-page reflection on how "white privilege" has impacted you at your [volunteer] site. Gerardo, can you share with us your experience of being a "privileged educated" Latino or something related to how you are privileged form other Latino's having been called "acting white" or something else that you think of? I am going to participate also. I am going to share how having "white privilege" has impacted my experience working with Latino community centers. (you may think of this to be strange, but I am considered white by my fellow Latinos a majority of the time. I'll share this with you next week). – Puerto Rican Teacher Assistant

The next week in class, I told her that I didn't appreciate being tokenized in a mass e-mail. However, she didn't believe that she was tokenizing me. She taught the she was doing me a favor because according to her, I would not be able to talk about white privilege at my volunteer site. I then went into explaining how white privilege affects me even if I don't have it and I explained that I was going into a white female dominated career. I then proceeded to explain how I would have been able to responded to the assignment had she not tokenized me. She still believed that she was doing me a favor; can you believe it? It gets better. I then continue to argue that my privilege as a college student was earned thus is hard to call it privilege. According to Macintosh's article (like we were supposed to be discussing) privilege is something that you can be born with, such as being white or being a male. In the context of the discussion, being Latino (Chicano or Mexi-

cano) and being in college was not related to what we were talking about. However, my teacher wanted to related by talking about her experience as a light skinned Puerto Rican. She was talking about racial discrimination within a race, however, she was ignorant to that reality and was trying to compare it to being born white. In my opinion she did not understand the power dynamics of being white versus being light skinned Puerto Rican. As a Puerto Rican (or any other minority) you cannot have an equal life unless you are rich. Maybe her social status was making the difference yet she was claiming it was the color of her skin. I just feel like by downplaying your own race, you are loosing part of your identity in order to fit into a society that is unequal. However, this society is, has been, and will continue to discriminate in various ways against student of color. My teacher's action was yet one more example of how this society tries to and continues to oppress us. Not only was I the only minority in the classroom (aside from her), but I am always asked to conform to society's 'norms'. After 25 minutes of discussion, the teacher continued to argue with me that I wasn't being tokenized. Later she send an 'apology' e-mail yet within the e-mail, she re-assured / re-claimed / re-emphasized her opinion/judgment. Whether this teacher intended wrong or not, her actions still offended me. In a way this event was a slap to the face. For a long time I was trying to understand how inequalities were affecting me as I was a student at the University. Most of the obvious were clear, but not until this happened, did I realized that I need to pay attention to people actions more. For this event, I had the courage to call her out in the classroom, but how many other statements have I let go by?



National MEChA Conference 2005 – California State University - Northridge





New York, New York

MEGAN FLORES

This Spring Break I visited the Big Apple, New York. To this day I still have no clue why New York is called the Big Apple, but I do know that New York is unlike any other city I've ever been to. Joining me on my adventure was my faithful side kick Amanda Lee "Ace" Rivas Cantu, and my leading desi love interest, Sajid Shabbir. Our trip to New York was full of love, loathing, intrigue, boredom, irritation, but most of all bliss.

The trip started off terribly. Our voyage started off with the three of us having to pay for an 80 dollar cab ride to our hotel from Newark Airport to Queens New York. Eventually, we arrived at the Howard Johnson hotel which I referred to as the "Ho Jo's" throughout the duration of our trip. Once there, we showered (separately of course), napped and tried to forget about the ridiculous amount of money we had spent on the cab ride over. That night we didn't really do much. We walked around Queens looking for a decent place to eat, and settled on a Chinese restaurant that served chicken and waffles. After dinner we headed back to the Ho Jo's and watched T.V. At this point my dear friend Amanda had become annoyed by the constant mushy displays of affection between Sajid and I. After the mushy displays we all turned in and called it a night.

The next day was a bit more action packed. We rode the subway for the very first time (and believe me we got lost a fair share of times), and walked around the streets of New York trying to find where everything was. Basically, we were just trying to get a feel for the city. We spent the entire day wandering around, going in and out of stores and eating hot dogs which are a very cheap and filling source of food in New York. Later in the day when it started to get cold we head back to the Ho Jo's for some much needed rest. That night we decided that we needed a little more structure in our days. So, we rifled through the travel guides I had bought, mapped out our journey for the next few days and decided that we would hit the city hard the next day. That night we went to a Cuban restaurant where Sajid had his first experience with flan. Needless to say it was love at first bite for him. It was this very experience with flan that led Sajid to form the now famous "Flan is Fuckin' Awesome" group on, The Facebook. The Cuban food was good, and after eating we walked back to our hotel. Once there, Sajid and I cuddled as he read to me from the Hindi version of the bible. Sajid and Amanda argued about religion, and I laid there on the bed not really caring since I was the only agnostic on the trip. Eventually,

the two tired of arguing when I told them both to, "shut up the hell up!" Sajid and I then returned to cuddling as Amanda rolled her eyes and quoted bible scriptures to the both of us. After a long night of arguing, we all fell asleep ready and eager for the morning to come.

The following morning I was the first to wake up. It was about 9am and Sajid and Amanda refused to wake up. Frustrated, I jumped onto Amanda's bed to try and wake her. My efforts were useless; she was out cold and had no intention of waking up anytime soon. So, still determined to get an early start on the day, I went back to my bed to try and wake up Sajid. Annoyed by my attempts to wake him, Sajid pulled me under the covers with him and commenced cuddling me until I gave up all hope of getting an early start on the day. Around 11, everyone was awake and annoyed that we had wasted so much of the day away. I rolled my eyes and explained how I had woken up at 9 but no one else was willing to get there asses out of bed. No one really said anything after that. We all got dressed, did our hair and hit up the subway. That day we went to Chinatown, a Buddhist Temple, a Jewish Synagogue, the Brooklyn Bridge, Central Park and Little India which is where we bought our dinner for that night.

The next day was very busy for us. That morning we woke up at 8 got dressed hoped on the subway and spent nearly half a day at the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island. Later that day we went to Wall Street, Ground Zero, the Native American Museum and then we went for a night time stroll through Central Park. That was an exhausting day. The next day was even more hectic. That day we went to the Empire State Building, the Museum of Natural History, the Plaza Hotel, Trump Tower, Rockefeller Plaza, Madame Tusaudes Wax Museum and a bunch of other place that I can't even recall at this point. The remainder of the night we walked around Times Square in awe of all the lights and ads that illuminated the streets.

As our journey came to a close, I became increasingly more disheartened at the thought of having to leave New York and Sajid, but that's another story for another day. Overall, I had an amazing time in New York and I've accumulated nothing but wonderful memories from my time spent in the Big Apple. More than likely, I'll be going back to New York to spend time with Sajid this summer (like I said that's another story) and I'll finally get to take my time and see everything the city has to offer. I guess it's true what they say, "There's New York, and there's every other state."





National Student Labor "Week of Action" March 29th to April 4th



Flags in Bascom- commemorating Cesar Chavez



Women of Juarez's Vigil in Library Mall



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