

HCOM 345: Chicano Life and Culture

Midterm

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In the Chicano culture, there were a lot of outcomes and setbacks. In those outcomes, the Chicano life really grew in the economic aspect of things. When the Chicanos were going through the growth during the time period of 1510 and they grew more in the aspect of the Chicano movement helping them get a better way involved in the politics of the Mexican American culture and how they would be able to get more into the movement where they would be able to get more involved in the political views of what they would be able to get. Not only would they be growing in the economic and political aspects but they would be growing in the social things as well. All the aspects that were covered within the first weeks of this Chicano course have been eye opener with getting to know more about my background and the cultural background of my family which I see later that this can be something that I could be using as a teaching topic for those who want to get to know more about it whether it is in a classroom setting in my future career choice or just sitting around the table with my family members on a day where we would just be lounging around.

A way that the Chicanos were growing the social aspect of things that really caught my attention throughout this course was the documentary that was shown to us about Chicano Park located in Barrio Logan. For me it was an eye opener was how much people can really get involved and they can make a difference. In this being a social aspect it was powerful to see how when they were trying to take that part of the barrio that belong to the people to put a junk yard and how the Chicanos that lived in Barrio Logan that is located near Chula Vista, California were so dedicated into making sure that the city officials did not make that part of the city into something that would be pointless for them to have in the barrio. The way I see it is that they must have had a lot of courage and love for their Barrio for them to stay there for hours and even days just for them not to take their beloved place away. It really shows the drive of the people that live in the barrio with them showing the appreciation that they have for that area under the Coronado bridge. With the fact that the residents of Barrio Logan worked so hard to get what they wanted and made a man made park with the help of all the residents to make a beautiful park where many people to this day enjoy going and on April 22nd of each year they make the effort to celebrate the anniversary of the day that the park was founded was just astonishing and how they manage to keep the park alive and well taken care of where families from all over can go and enjoy to relax under the Coronado bridge in the nice southern California weather all year round. Since I am within an hour and a half radius of the beautiful Chicano park I hope to be able to one day go and see the beauty of this park for myself.

The Chicano movement began in the year 1960 when they started to get more involved in the American history which was a big year for civil rights overall. When the movement started it was considered to be one of the movements that was least studied one out of all the movement that went on in those years of the 1960 era. This movement was geared more toward the getting the land grants restored as well as helping the farm workers to get rights as well as attaining the right to vote and the politic aspect of the movement and getting them to be able to get the education that the Chicanos deserve. In the Chicano movement, they had the quest of the homeland which was geared more towards the beginning of the movement when one of the leaders in the movement Lopez Tijerina was working to get the land grant starting in the state of

New Mexico in the years 1966 and 1967. Tijerina was also fighting for the government to have them still use and honor the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo which would gavelize the Mexican Americans that were living in the southwest.

In the Chicano movement Cesar Chavez played a big part in the trying to get the fields to how they should be. He made sure that the farm workers that were in the central valley of the state of California. When Chavez was around he made sure that they would have boycotts, strikes, fasts, etc. for those who the farm workers were working for would know that they did not like the way that they were being treated wrong and that they wanted better rights with the work that they were doing. not only was Chavez encouraging all these acts he also had the goal of committing to the nonviolence in the fields and how important it was to have faith through all those days of fasting and strikes.

Throughout the time of the Chicano Movement they had students that were attending high schools in the city of Los Angeles all get up in the middle of class and walk out because they were being discriminated against because of their skin color, which personally I think it something that no one should ever be discriminated against being this is not something that we asked to be born with, the skin color doesn't have to do with what type of education that they should be receiving. In the time where the movement was taking place they also had that schools were being separated due to the skin color off the student that was attending which one was getting less of education than the other students because of the skin color. Although this is something that Martin Luther King Jr. had fought and died for they were still going and discriminating what he was about and how they were still separating the students due to color.

Something that was a real eye opener to me during one of the documentaries that was shown in class was when the students that were like us one say were having to change all of a sudden for their race. Something that was surprising was how high the drop-out rate was in the schools because of all the troubles that they were facing because they were not a lot of teachers that wants to teach at the school for the Mexican American students. During these times not only was Cesar Chavez moving for the education for the Chicano they had a political figure show the support for the education of the Chicano based students which was Robert Kennedy. Kennedy had agreed to meet with the student leaders and show them that he was with them every step of the way. Today there are still groups around all college campuses that still focus on the Chicano students which we have one that there are students who are active on the California State University Monterey Bay campus with the organization called MeCHA.

Another aspect that the Chicano movement really helped was in the politics sides of things and that was through the political group known as La Raza Unida. La Raza Unida was a group that was centered more around the Chicano nationalism which was found in the year 1970 and they had supporters that were found more in Texas and Southern California. La Raza Unida had a major goal with was to look at social, economic, and political determination of those with Mexican American descent as well as other minorities.

In terms of all this that I have learned I believe that this will help me in the long run because I will be able to use this to help me better explain things to my family what I have learned because before taking this course I was not aware of what the people that have a similar historical background as me had to go through. When I was in high school I had to write and deliver a speech on a rights movement and I had picked the Mexican-American Civil Rights movement so when it came to learning about this I have already had some previous knowledge

of the movement but taking this course has really helped me develop my understanding more and what the people that took a part of this great movement had to go through in order for us to have the education rights that we currently have and that we are able to go to a school or any school in general that we are able to have professors that are Mexican American and that we are able to have people of other ethnicity and backgrounds combined in our classrooms.

I am thankful that these types of courses are offered because not only do those who are of Mexican American descent are able to learn about our culture of the Chicano life is allowed to take these course but other are taking this course get to learn about what our ancestors had to go through to get us where we are today as we growing up in grade school get to learn what their ancestors did for the country where we get to live in because we get to expand more in our culture being known by more people because although there might be students that are just taking this course for a requirement but for a requirement or not they are still being able to get enlightened with the Chicano Life and Culture an whether they decide to share this information with other or not they will still be able to have had the chance to get to learn all this as well because it is all interesting material to those who really want to keep learning about the Chicanos.

As the course progresses and the more we read Chicanismo and From Indios to Chicanos we get some understanding of what went on and we get to share that with our family and friends for example I was sitting one day with my dad when I went home for a weekend we were talking about what he knew about La Malinche and all the other Chicano history and we realized although he grew up in Mexico he didn't get to learn any of these topics that we are able to learn about in class because he wasn't able to finish school, I was able to pull out my notes that I have from this course so I can show him what I have learned while being in this course and I was able to give him a quick run down about the history of Aztlan and more about the Chicano Movement. My dad was thankful that I am able to be learning the history of my culture because he thought that I wasn't really ever going to be able to want to learn about the history if my culture. He was also happy to know that I was able to give him and his friend that later came over while I was telling my dad about the history because I was telling him things that not even he knew although my grandfather would tell him when he was younger.

As for how I will want to relate this to my future career goals was that I would still want to continue being a teacher I would still want to be able to have a section in my lessons plans where I would be able to teach my students about the Chicano Movement although it would just be one lesson for now depending on what I want to do with my major since I am now not really sure in which direction I am leaning towards. If I were to end up going with that route of teaching I would want teach my students about the importance about the Movement although I want to be a Spanish teacher I am sure that I would be able to find an article about the Chicano Movement that is in Spanish and they would have a whole chapter on this subject so they can learn more on the background on what happened in the country that they are living in and not just getting to know what they teach them in the regular high school United States History classes because it is all based on what happened with them and not about the other cultures because when I was in high school we never touched the subject of the Chicano Movement in a deeper level that we are learning now in this course. As for in high school we just touched base on what it was and it was not explained more.

For me and being a Mexican that identifies as a Chicana I am proud and glad that I am taking this course on Chicano culture so I can keep learning about my people and what they had to do what struggles they had to go through in all the aspects of life whether it was the social, economic, or the political part. All these topics have been interesting and I want to share what I learn with the family and friends so they know what every little part of history is important no matter if it effects them or not, it is still ideal that they know what types of struggles the people had to go through to get us where we are because if the movement hadn't taken place who knows what type of life my family would be living because they would still be treated different because of our skin color and they would think that because we are a minority we are not able to have a voice in this country but it is for people like Cesar Chavez that helped get the Mexican-American voice heard. I am ready to learn more about my cultural background so I can go out and spread the word about what I had learned about in the next following weeks.