

Main Features

Underground Tren al Sur

Letter from the Editors

Quick on the Drawl

New Almaden Quicksilver Mines

A message from our President

Welcome to 2023. As we embark on the new year, we continue our quest to define the legacy and history of our people.

The various aspects of projects include preserving the historical documents and photos we have become entrusted with.

History is not absolute; it reflects those who have written their reflection on life events. We see our charge not only to collect historical documents but also to research and report on history from our perspective.

Growing up, Francisco “Pancho” Villa (José Doroteo Arango Arámbula) was a bandit, a terrible invader of the lands of the United States. At home, listening to my jefe, he was a hero of the Mexican Revolution and stood up for our rights as human beings.

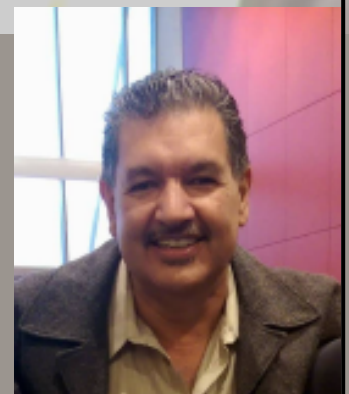
The difference between the two interpretations initially needed to be clarified; Who do you believe, the system that was charged with educating you or the man who played a part in giving you life? Listening to my Abuela and mamá singing along with corridos adding their voices to “Viva Pancho Villa.”

Those around me held the name with pride, yet while walking the streets of Oakland, others would joke that I was a “Bandido” like that Pancho guy.

We shall reinterpret history from our perspective; it is our charge and the importance of our existence.

Feliz Año Nuevo, juntos adelante!

Jesús Orosco



Underground Tren al Sur

by SUSAN RIGMAIDEN

In 2015, the Mexican government conducted an interim census that incorporated African descendants into the categories of race and ethnicity, which had not been done since the 1830s. Almost two million people identified as African descendant.



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Mexico and the Slave Trade

Mexico was a slave trading country in the 16th century, having a population of around 200,000 principally West African slaves that outnumbered the Spanish colonialists for decades and was for some time the largest in the Americas. Black slaves were typically used by the Spanish to act as foremen, overseeing the Indigenous populations, and many of the mostly male slave population went on to marry Indigenous women. Therefore, due to the many resulting mixed-race offspring, Black Mexicans were all but forgotten about for centuries, as their bloodlines mixed with other Indigenous communities and Mestizo peoples of Mexico. 1

A Revolutionary General's Dream of Independence for All

Vicente Guerrero was born in the small village of Tixla in the state of Guerrero. His parents were Pedro Guerrero, an African Mexican and Guadalupe Saldana, an Indian. Vicente was of humble origins. In his youth he worked as a mule driver on his father's mule run. His travels took him to different parts of Mexico where he heard of the ideas of independence. During one of his trips, he met rebel General Jose Maria Morelos y Pavon. In November 1810, Guerrero decided to join Morelos. Upon the assassination of Morelos by the Spaniards, Guerrero became Commander in Chief, and while in that position, he made a deal with Spanish General Agustin de Iturbide.

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Iturbide joined the independence movement and agreed with a series of measures Guerrero created, known as “El plan de Iguala.” This plan gave civil rights to Indians but not to African Mexicans. Guerrero refused to sign the plan unless equal rights were also given to African Mexicans and mulattos. Clause 12 was then incorporated into the plan. It read: *“All inhabitants . . . without distinction of their European, African or Indian origins are citizens . . . with full freedom to pursue their livelihoods according to their merits and virtues.”*

Subsequently, Guerrero served in a three person “Junta” that governed the then independent Mexico from 1823-24, until the election that brought into power the first president of Mexico Guadalupe Victoria. Guerrero, as head of the “People’s Party,” called for public schools, land title reforms, and other programs of a liberal nature. Guerrero was elected the second president of Mexico in 1829. As president, Guerrero went on to champion the cause not only of the racially oppressed but also of the economically oppressed.

President Vicente Guerrero formally abolished slavery on September 16, 1829. Guerrero’s political discourse was one of civil rights for all, but especially for African Mexicans. Mexicans with hearts full of pride call him the “greatest man of color.”

In 1829, Texas was still part of Mexico, in part prompting white, slave-holding immigrants to fight for independence in the Texas Revolution. Once the Republic of Texas was formed in 1836, slavery became legal again and it continued to be legal when Texas joined the U.S as a state in 1845.

The Underground Railroad’s Southern Route

Many people are unaware that the Underground Railroad ran south as well as north. For people enslaved in Texas and Louisiana, refuge in Canada must have seemed impossible to reach. Fortunately, slavery was also illegal in Mexico. 2



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Mexico's laws granted enslaved people access to freedom as soon as they set foot on Mexican soil and Mexican officials also refused to return runaways under the US Fugitive Slave act.

Enslaved people in Texas and Louisiana were aware that there was a country to the south where they could find different levels of freedom (though indentured debt servitude existed in Mexico, it was not the same as chattel slavery). Passport records of New Orleans from 1830 to 1840 combined with Mexican importation logs reveal a significant number of enslaved and free African Americans who moved to Mexico. Many of the African Americans remained in the port cities and found employment in the shipping arena and marketplaces, joining the African descendant communities already present in Mexico. 3

Fugitive enslaved people got to Mexico in many different ways. Some went on foot, while others rode horses or snuck aboard ferries bound for Mexican ports. Stories spread about enslaved people who crossed the Rio Grande river dividing Texas from Mexico by floating on bales of cotton, even if this wasn't logistically possible, the imagery of floating to freedom on a symbol of slavery was strong. 4

Although enslaved people faced racism, discrimination, and indentured servitude in Mexico, they also found allies in Mexicans who embraced them as neighbors, coworkers and even family through marriage



Afro-Mexicans: 2020 Mexico Census

The 2020 census was the first time in Mexico's history that Afro-Mexicans have been acknowledged and counted based on their specific heritage, by answering this question: "By your customs and traditions, do you consider yourself Afro-Mexican, Black, or Afro-descendant?"

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According to the 2020 Mexico Census there are over 2.5 million people, or 2 percent of the population in Mexico, that identify as Afro-Mexicans or of African descent. Afro-Mexicans have been living in the Costa Chica area on the Pacific coast of Oaxaca since their ancestors were brought from Africa as slaves in the 16th century, mainly by the Colonial Spanish to Cuajinicuilapa, off the Costa Chica region, one of several regions in Mexico with the highest population of people of African descent, with an estimated 229,661 Afro-Mexicans.



*

Other Sources:

Mareite, Thomas PhD. Abolitionists, Smugglers and Scapegoats: Assistance Networks for Fugitive Slave in the Texas-Mexico Borderlands, 1836 – 1861. <https://journals.openedition.org/mimmoc/2731>

Burnett, John (2021). 'A Chapter in U.S. History Often Ignored: The Flight Of Runaway Slaves to Mexico. <https://www.npr.org/2021/02/28/971325620/a-chapter-in-u-s-history-often-ignored-the-flight-of-runaway-slaves-to-mexico>

- * Dalton, Scott. "South to the Promised Land." SmithsonianMagazine, 2022, <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/southbound-underground-railroad-brought-thousands-enslaved-americans-mexico-180980328/>. Accessed 3 Jan. 2023.



History San José
Preserving Our Heritage

EVERY THURSDAY (JAN & FEB)
5:30 PM - 7:30 PM

EMPIRE FIREHOUSE,
HISTORY PARK
635 PHELAN AVE.

FREE WORKSHOP

THE BRIDGE
8-WEEK WORKSHOP
THAT USES MENTAL HEALTH
TECHNIQUES TO EXPLORE
BLACK HISTORY AND CULTURE

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE AFRICAN AMERICAN HERITAGE HOUSE
AND COUNTY OF SANTA CLARA MENTAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Everyone is welcome to one or all of the workshops at History Park. Please reserve your spot ahead of time.

Link to learn more: <https://historysanjose.org/programs-events/>

Letter from the Editors

The e-newsletter has primarily consisted of the collaboration between Karl Soltero and Cesar Gamboa, alongside contributions from other board members. The scope of study takes on the literal, historical, and figurative landscapes which have affected the development of our culture. The e-newsletter contains and analyzes narratives, alongside subtleties pertaining to la raza which are often inherited without consideration.



-Karl Soltero with Tony Oliva,
Hall of Fame Winner
for the Minnesota Twins

People seek to give meaning to their lives and subsequently history is the collective assessment a society develops to understand itself. A purpose of this project is to contemplate the current impulses which influence our society. A notable challenge however is the vantage point we'll adopt as individuals, spiritual beings, community members, consumers, or global and historical citizens. A current balance must therefore be placed in being both idealistic and practical.

The e-newsletter showcases history and its relevance to contemporary life and issues presently found amidst nuestra gente. It also serves as a venue for stakeholders to offer perspectives to a brighter future.

-Cesar Gamboa

Find Cesar
on Instagram
[@Cesars_Palace_21](#)



This issue's cover art has been sourced from
Aztec Social Pyramid Readings - Folsom Cordova Unified School District. Folsom Cordova
Unified School District,
<https://www.fcusd.org/cms/lib/CA01001934/Centricity/Domain/1168/Aztec%20social%20pyramid%20readings.pdf>.

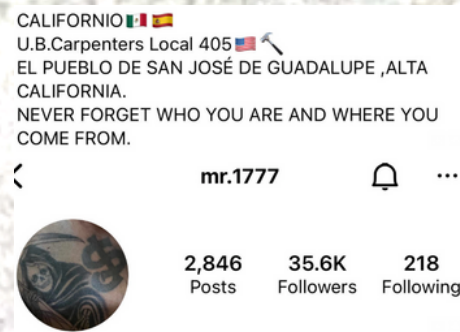
and or Instagram @Iztac Coatl

QUICK ON THE DRAWL

In today's information age, efficiency and engagement are key in delivering an ongoing message. At the forefront of the digital frontier are individuals and organizations dedicated to sharing and analyzing Raza history. One of these individuals can be found on Instagram, where his exemplary journalism is pioneering new grounds in spreading the word.

Ricardo Montenegro, better known as MR.1777 (for the year that El Pueblo de San José de Guadalupe was as founded), Takes pride in his heritage, which includes how this land was the first civilian settlement of Alta California during Spanish rule. His interest in history grew to an enriching study which has now led to a notable online presence. "As I got older, I realized that there was no history covered on the struggle of raza in this country in textbooks...a two page spread on Cesar Chavez and the UFW is all we got...I knew it went way deeper than that..In my later years ,I started researching our History from the Mexica Empire to the Coors Beer boycotts in Denver, Colorado during the Chicano Movement. I dedicate my social media page to my community-to help Raza learn and better understand our history and what have contributed to American Society.."

Ricardo's page for the most part serves as an educational tool for all, to gain fundamental knowledge and catalyze deeper research. In such a quickly paced era, bite size pieces of information on the go, have proven optimal for most.



A 10 min break at work and a quick scroll on Instagram has led others to learn something about themselves and their history which they otherwise would have never known.

"Messages from followers make it all worthwhile and further compel me in growing my account. I do want to emphasize that I am no way a teacher or educator of any sort but a Chicano with a lot of passion in giving a helping hand to our people. I encourage others to do their own research on topics I post and make their own conclusions."

RICARDO'S PAGE CAN BE FOUND ON INSTAGRAM

@MR.1777

FOLLOW UP

We celebrated el 16 de septiembre with an awards ceremony recognizing 5 individuals who've had a significant and positive impact in our Local Community;

Assemblyman : Joe Coto

Shirley Trevino, Founder of Mujeres of Aztlan

Bea Mendez Robinson, Founder of *Woman's Alliance* now *Next Door Solutions to Domestic Violence*

Maria Fuentes, A Healthcare Advocate

& Herman Gallegos, Who helped form the *Community Service Organization* as well as the *National Council of the Raza*

**CONSIDER GETTING INVOLVED IN LOCAL HISTORY,
YOU'D BE AMAZED HOW INTERCONNECTED WE ALL ARE!**

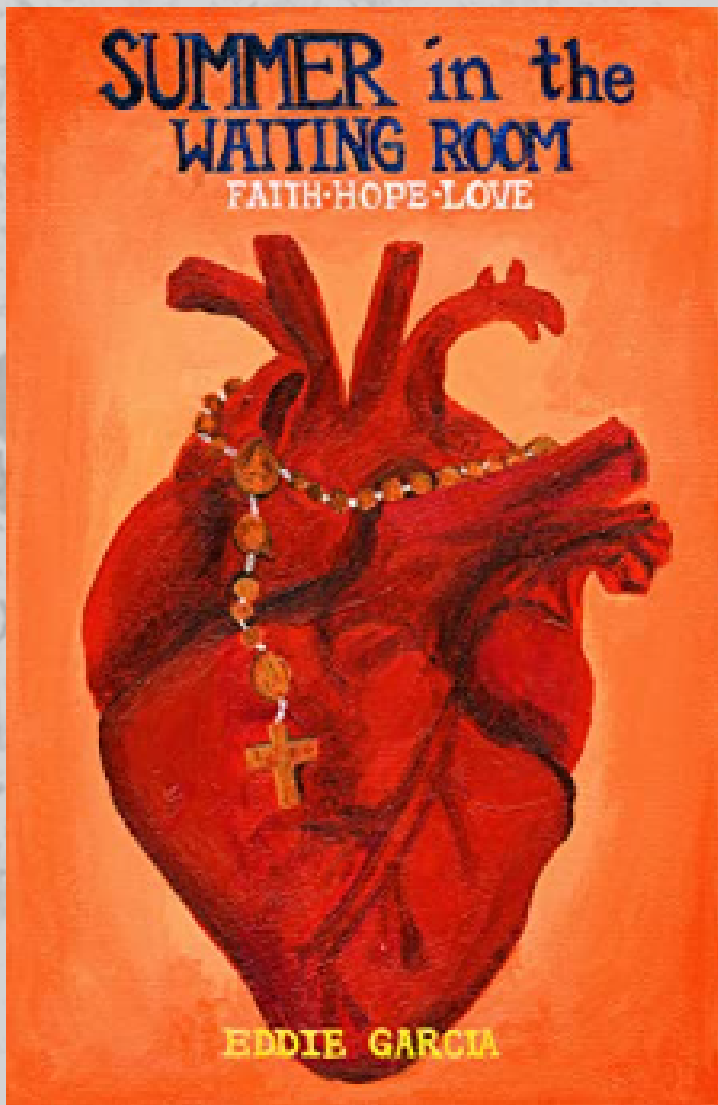


Summer in the Waiting Room

by **Eddie García**

Book Review

Summer in the Waiting Room is Eddie Garcia's true story about youthful promise, unfulfilled potential, temporary success, catastrophic illness, and spiritual awakening. After flunking out of college, he goes on a frenetic quest to vanquish failure demons and achieves short-lived vindication through career accomplishments.



A sudden heart attack and rare lung complication lead to a hopeless summer clinging to life in the ICU. In the end, he goes on a spiritual journey that leads to a remarkable recovery and long-lasting redemption. Eddie's experience as an ICU patient gives readers a firsthand account of what it takes to survive a life-threatening health crisis. He uses medical records and personal interviews to create a fast-paced narrative about how his life story led to a frightening and ultimately uplifting summer.

Eddie brings to life his idyllic youth, personal struggles, professional success, and daily fight for life in the hospital. Summer in the Waiting Room is sure to bring smiles and hope to those who feel hopeless.



Order on Amazon

https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B09ZFC5HFX/ref=dbs_a_def_rwt_hsch_vapi_tkin_p1_i0

NEW ALMADEN QUICKSILVER MINES

SOUTHWEST LABOR STUDIES ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE SAN JOSE STATE UNIVERSITY

APRIL 10, 1983

Talk by Professor Antonio Soto

New Almaden was a microcosm of the emerging Capitalism of the 19th century. There was also confrontation between two vastly different cultures and economies. We have Mexico, which was California, Arizona, and the Southwest, a feudal society, that is mostly based on land, great landed estates.

Land was not that valuable — you couldn't sell it, you couldn't buy it — money was not used very much. Life was led on a barter basis in a rather stable society. There was no investment, no capital of any kind, so to speak, in pre-American California and so we have a pre-industrial society moving along on a feudal economy and land that is suddenly confronted with an industrial, capitalist society. That was the United States. Coming out of the East were people who had already experienced the industrial revolution. The machine had revolutionized their life. They had already developed financial structures. There was a stock market, the New York Stock Market. The New Almaden stock was traded on the New York Stock Market.



The New York Quicksilver Mining Corporation that took over the mines was able to raise huge amounts of capital through Eastern investors. They had the know-how of how corporations run. There was no way that Mexican workers coming out of a feudal economy or a rural economy in Northern Mexico could think about competing with this highly structured and powerful financial structure that came in and took over the mine. So, when you ask, "Well, how is it that the Mexican workers ended up subordinated on the lower rungs of the social ladder" — it's rather easy to understand. Power, knowledge, technology, all the same things that in a sense are still happening today.



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The other thing has to do with numbers. Between 1848 and 1900, there was very little immigration from Mexico. There was the resident population that was here when it was Mexico and some people that came for the gold mines, though a lot of them went back, but basically there wasn't a great deal of immigration from Mexico.

But the overwhelming numbers of Anglo Americans that did come after 1848 was the overpowering thing. 100,000 Anglo Americans came from the Midwest, from the East, and from the deep South in one year alone. 100,000. The total population of California in 1848 was only about 13,000 Mexican people. Suddenly 100,000 come in, and there's very little coming in from Mexico. So you see the imbalance right away in how the Mexican worker became the subordinated, bottom of the rung — some notches above the Indian — in the society of the 19th century.



It was actually not until the end of this period, 1910, when the Civil War broke out in Mexico, and the tremendous pool of agriculture in the United States and factories and mining and canneries and the need for low-paid labor that great numbers came, geographers tell us, the thing was pretty well frozen. By frozen I mean the corporations had already taken over the great land grants of the San Joaquin Valley and converted them into corporate farms.

The canneries had already come in and established their hold on Santa Clara Valley and other parts of California. The land patterns were set. There's almost no way that the new Mexican immigration coming in 1910 could hope to acquire land other than a few small farms. It was all there. All they could come into in 1900 and following was a highly stratified society, and they were locked in at the bottom. They were locked in before they came in. That was where New Almaden comes in...

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...As a postscript, when the New Almaden Mines closed down, or began to close down in the 1900's, the Mexican miners, of course, left. Many of them came down the hill to San Jose, and I have this, and here's where I got some oral history that was priceless. I interviewed an old man... he's probably dead now ... Espinosa, he was born up there — who said, "We came to San Jose and we were told by the police and the sheriff 'keep moving folks to Milpitas.'"



I mean they would even take them to the edge of town. Keep moving. So as a result of that, they settled outside in the muddy, swampy areas east of San Jose, which is what became Sal Si Puedes, Get Out If You Can, which is where a few years later, in the 1930's, Cesar Chavez was born. Right there, just a few miles from where we're sitting. He came out of that Exodus, not that his folks came from up there, but the same people. Cesar Chavez was born out there. So we now have a connection between the Mexican worker in the New Almaden Mines, the urban cannery worker, and the farm worker. And it's a history that's continued to today, on and on. It's not different. Thank you.

EL EXCENTRICO MAGAZINE / BLASTS FROM THE PAST



The former miss Amanda Garza Cantu "Bride of the month"

Año Nuevo en Hollister

Para celebrar el AÑO NUEVO el CLUB " LAS DAMAS " de la vecina cd. de Hollister, Cal.

Organizaron un alegre baile contratando los servicios de la popular Orquesta LOS MARCIANOS con el dueto ELENA y NANDO.

Los esposos Sr. y Sra. Ramon Valles (de la mano) fueron los triunfadores del concurso de WALTZ.

El Sr. Valles es mecanico de autos y en compañía de su esposa y tres hijos radican en Hollister.

(foto RICHARD DIAZ)'



The former Zoot-Suiters did not perceive themselves as juvenile delinquents. One of them contested: "I saw myself as battling tremendous forces to survive in a hostile environment."

They saw themselves as men committed to defend their neighborhoods against attacks or intrusion by non-Mexican-Americans.



STAY TUNED FOR OUR UPCOMING BOOK FEATURING THE MAGAZINE