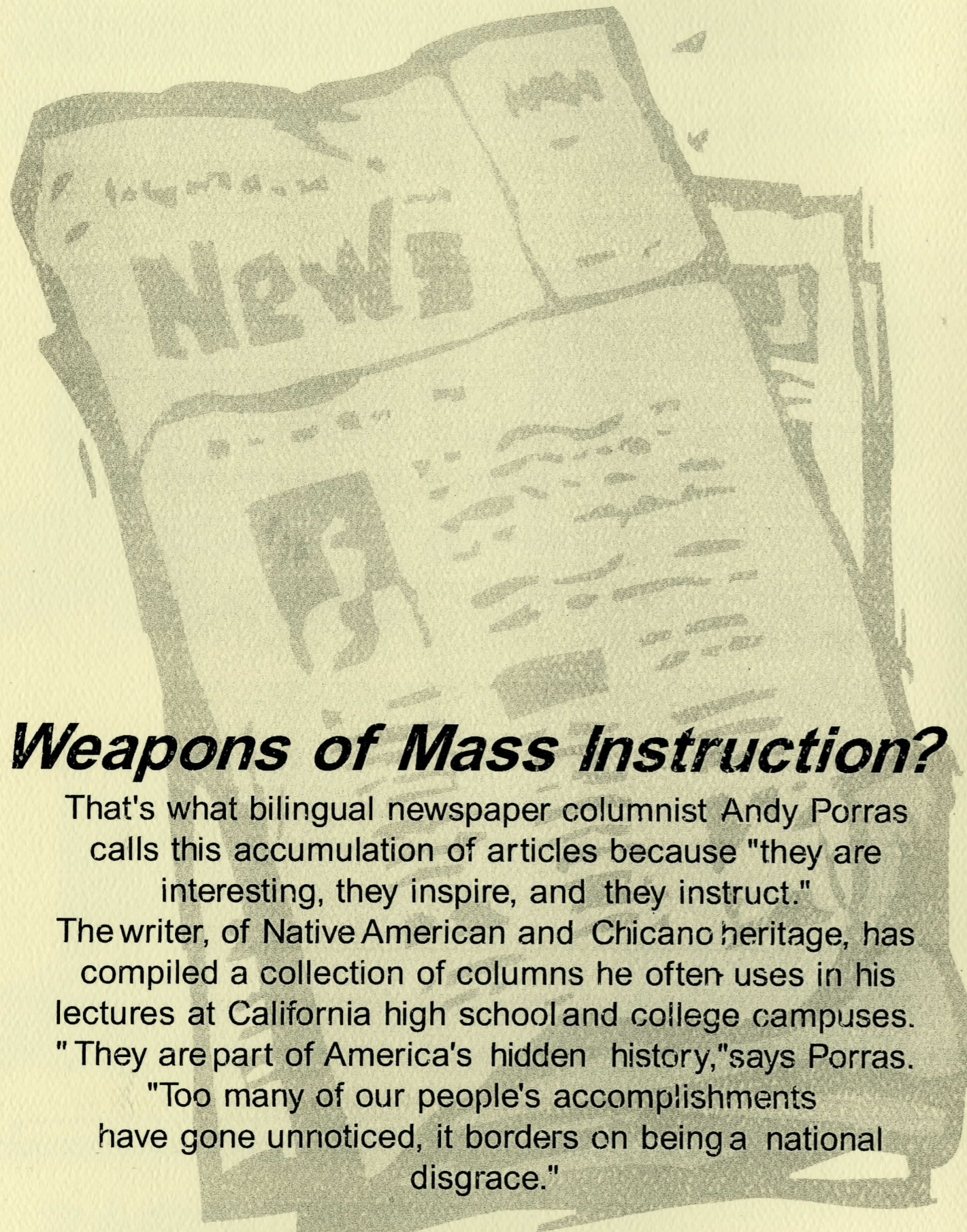


A collection of selected columns

WEAPONS
OF
MASS
INSTRUCTION

By ANDY PORRAS



Weapons of Mass Instruction?

That's what bilingual newspaper columnist Andy Porras calls this accumulation of articles because "they are interesting, they inspire, and they instruct."

The writer, of Native American and Chicano heritage, has compiled a collection of columns he often uses in his lectures at California high school and college campuses.

"They are part of America's hidden history," says Porras.

"Too many of our people's accomplishments have gone unnoticed, it borders on being a national disgrace."

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WEAPONS OF MASS INSTRUCTION

**A selection of columns
previously published in
numerous newspapers.**

By Andy Porras

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California history began in Spanish

Like U.S. history, the history of California began in Spanish.

In the beginning, when Anglos first arrived here, they were welcomed by the native population.

The native population being, of course, non-Anglo, but of Mexican, Spanish and Native American descent.

Today, most people have either forgotten or never learned that Native Americans, Mexicans and the Spanish were the first peoples to settle, farm, mine, educate, and populate the Golden State.

The mere name, California, was taken from a mythical story in Spanish that told of a paradise-like fertile land with great weather and beautiful people.

The early non-Native American settlers of our state were Caucasians of Spanish descent or "Mestizos," a blend of Mexican, Indian and Spanish, known as Los Californios.

Within these groups were farmers, ranchers, miners and missionaries. Joining them were the "Mulattos," partly Caucasian and partly of African descent. These darker Californios were the byproduct of the slave trade the Spanish had introduced into the Americas between the 16th and 19th centuries, particularly in the Caribbean.

In 1769, the first Franciscan mission was founded at San Diego de Alcalá by Father Junipero Sierra and during the next 54 years, a string of 21 such missions were built. The missions, which still exist as both religious sites and tourist attractions, were constructed from San Diego to Sonoma with native labor that bordered on another form of slavery.

The Californios at first welcomed the latest arrivals to their lands, and granted the Anglo-Americans large sections of land. However, when Spanish colonialism ended in 1821, California became part of the new Mexican republic. Thereafter, the number of foreigners entering California increased. These trappers and traders were tired of wandering and began intermarrying with Mexican women, settling down to live in peace and comfort. Never did the early Californios view the Anglos as enemies. They never expected nor were prepared for the violence that ultimately was heaved upon them.

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Early California history . . .

Around 1846, some of those ugly episodes took place near Solano County when a scouting party under Kit Carson came upon Jose de los Reyes Berryessa and his twin nephews, Francisco and Ramon de Haro, all of them unarmed.

Carson's men shot and killed Ramon, whereupon Francisco "threw himself upon his brother's body." Upon viewing this act of brotherly love, one of Carson's friends cried, "Kill the other SOB!"

Señor Berryessa, upon seeing the killing of his two relatives, cried out, "Is it possible that you kill these young men for no reason at all?"

Carson's angry mob responded with gunfire, killing the old man, too.

Meanwhile, up in Gen. Mariano Vallejo's ranch, the newly organized Bear Flaggers, stuck and made Vallejo a "prisoner of war." It was an ironic twist in the state's early history, because Vallejo had been sympathetic to the Anglo-Americans and their dream of an independent state.

In reality, the Bear Flag Rebellion was a pre-U.S.-Mexican War excuse by Anglos to spread a reign of terror among Californios and Native Americans. Often caught by surprise and with limited arms, the Californios manage to offer light resistance.

These particular conflicts typified the expansionistic fervor of President James K. Polk's administration in the 1840s. Polk had offered Mexico \$25 million for the land above the Rio Grande, all the way to the Pacific Ocean, but was turned down. Almost immediately, the full zeal of Manifest Destiny was activated along the Texas-Mexican border. The Polk Posse could not resist expanding into such a lucrative territory so U.S. soldiers provoked Mexico into war. Like the Texas War before, this confrontation also left a legacy of hate among the people involved.

When it was all over, a formal agreement turned over Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, Nevada, Utah, half of Colorado, and California to the United States.

Mexico lost 50 percent of its national territory with the single stroke

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Early California history . . .

of a pen upon the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. Supposedly, Article IX of the Treaty, provided that Mexican-Americans living in the new U.S. territories the right of worship and that their property rights would be fully protected.

As in previous treaties designed by the early U.S. legislators, Native Americans and their rights were excluded. No mention was made of the civil or political rights of the native peoples living in their ancient lands. Under Mexican law, however, they had previously been granted full rights.

The treaty also stipulated that the U.S. government would guarantee that the Mexican-Americans would retain their titles to all property, together with rights of disposal and inheritance. To this day, such provisions were never honored.

This act, plus the discovery of gold and the greed that followed, helped boost resentment between the Californios and the arrival of more Anglos to the future Golden State.

Juan Bandini lamented the loss of his piece of heaven when he wrote these lines: "Our inheritance is turned to strangers - our houses to aliens; We have drunken our water for money - our wood is sold unto us; Our necks are under persecution - we labor and have no rest."

Thus began the western version of "Paradise Lost."

Honor Hispanic Revolutionary War heroes

America is not terribly fond of losers.

Take the losers in the Revolutionary War, for example. No, not the Redcoats, but America's "loyalists."

As we celebrate the Fourth of July this year, let us do something we have seldom done in the last 200-plus years - bethink the British loyalists.

Like in the Civil War, this earlier conflict actually pitted American against American. Even Founding Father Ben Franklin and his father were on opposite sides.

Historians write that only a minority of the early U.S. residents supported the revolution. John Adams himself estimated that about one third of the entire population was actually hostile to the idea and another third plain indifferent. The latter straddled the proverbial political fence, if you will.

Some 8,000 colonists joined the British forces. As many Americans fought for the red, white, and blue British banner as did for the red, white and blue flag of the young nation.

Gen. George Washington only commanded about 9,000 colonists. So how exactly did our infant country carve out a victory despite all these odds? We had help from several sources. One of them, however, is seldom mentioned - Gen. Bernardo de Galvez.

At the time of the Colonial conflict, Galvez was the governor of Louisiana and ruled most of the southern part of the South for Spain. Under a royal command he was ordered to assist Gen. Washington in whatever means necessary. He obliged and, unfortunately, the rest is not the history taught in schools.

Here was an authentic hero that historians would later honor as "the best friend America ever had."

Galvez organized an army of Mexican Mestizos, Native Americans, Black Cubans and Spaniards. He tempered the troopers into an elite fighting force. In one historic swoop, Galvez and his gallant men captured five English forts along the Mississippi Valley and what is now Mobile Bay. They also seized a dozen British ships and relieved them of their cargo, shipping most of it to Gen. Washington on the Mississippi River.

The Galvez group went on to annihilate England's army at Pensacola, insuring Washington a victory.

On the Fourth of July, let us not forget to toast true loyalty.

The Civil War heroes history forgot

In spring, many a young person's fancy is pointed by history teachers toward research and re-enactments of the U.S. Civil War.

And, once again, some educators will miss a great opportunity to bridge an ever-widening gap among Hispanic students.

If only they would uncover relevant history.

Ask former high school students if they were exposed to the Civil War and you may get a "yes." Ask the same youngster if he ever heard of Hispanics in the same war and you draw an empty stare. So much for the education of the masses.

Speaking before college audiences is great for the soul. On such occasions I share with the young minds a simple process I utilize in hammering out hidden Hispanic history pieces. I tell them it's a basic 3-R's approach: research, research and research.

There is great satisfaction in locating bits and pieces that illustrate the total picture of our great land. But when we've been brainwashed with whitewashed versions of U.S. history, it's going to take some doing to scrape off that coat of ignorance that veils our vision of said image.

Take the Civil War lessons we never heard of in school. I'll give 10-to-1 that not even our instructors themselves had an inkling of these other Americans involved in this war.

As a point of reference, Hispanic Americans have tangled with every foe this country has ever had, beginning with the Revolutionary War. The Civil War yielded numerous Hispanic heroes and heroines. One would think that by now both educators and parents would finally get it. Not so.

How sad that Hispanic youngsters are still not being told about one of the greatest Civil War heroes, David Farragut. In one year, he was offered the U.S. Republican Party's presidential candidacy, then returning to his motherland, Spain, was asked to be their king.

And if that were not enough relevant history, remember Admiral Farragut's patriotic phrase, "Damn the torpedoes. Full steam ahead"? It's about time more Americans know that he was among the Hispanic Civil War heroes history often forgets.

Remember the Alamo's Tejano heroes

Opie (aka Ron Howard), can we talk?

Who will play José Toribio Losoya in your new film about the Alamo? His story is beautiful too. You see, Toribio was born in what early Tejanos (Texans of Mexican descent) called El Barrio del Alamo in San Antonio de Bexar. You could say he was a home boy.

By 1830, Toribio was a private serving in the Alamo de Parras, a Mexican military company. In 1832, four years before the famous battle, Toribio and his wife and three children, returned to the Alamo City.

Be aware that these Tejanos had revolutionary roots. There was a pattern of resistance to the rule of central government from Mexico City since the Spanish period of the 1770s, thus predating the dissatisfaction with the Anglo settlers who brought along their slaves, by a half century.

You may want to check out the slavery issue too. Kids in Texas history classes are never told about Mexico's stern warnings regarding slaves in what was then Tejas, and part of northern Mexico. By the fall of 1835, Toribio, along with many of his fellow Mexican soldiers who opposed despot Gen. Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna, bolted from the brigade and joined forces with Juan Seguin's company of Tejanos.

Seguin, by the way, is another character you need to look at carefully. When Santa Anna's troops converged around the chapel, Seguin rode away to seek more defenders. He left seven of his men behind as reinforcements. Among them was Toribio. All died in the Alamo. None of them has ever been exposed to movie audiences.

These Tejanos wanted to be independent from everybody, Mexico and the United States. Unlike their counterparts, the Tejanos were loyal to a real freedom cause.

Opie, you have a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to create a cinematic wonder, if you choose. An Alamo movie that will no longer stigmatize Latinos as insignificant, evil people. History textbooks may be forced to present a balanced look at early Texas and all its peoples.

One last thing, maybe some day you can make a special movie based on just these men alone. These magnificent seven.

Maybe if it relates, it educates

By George, I think they finally may get it.

A recent national story tells of 85 million greenbacks going to a few privileged consultants, plastic surgeons, forensic scientists and regression technicians. Their mission: Make George Washington younger, hip and exciting.

The Mount Vernon Ladies Association, God bless 'em, who own and operate George Washington's Virginia plantation - sans slaves - have raised the capital for a facelift for one of the great Founding Fathers. And you thought the man who recently was re-elected California's governor (remember the debate with simple-interest Simon?) could raise moola.

Hey, I'm all for revising U.S. history, but why mess with good ol' George? If he looked good to Martha, so be it. Why not invest the money as reparation funds towards educating more Black doctors or teachers. Come on, show some class, won't you?

OK, so the R-word may scare these women. How about earmarking some of the funds for research and publication of new and improved history textbooks for junior high schools and middle schools. Some day school administrators will figure out that a major reason Latino kids drop out is because few things taught in history actually pertain to them.

Every year I speak before hundreds of high school, community college and university students where I conduct minipolls among my listeners, and ask them why they think some of their classmates left school. Their answer is simply, "If it does not relate, it does not educate."

Imagine the look on a Latino kid's face when he reads that Gen. Washington had a Hispanic compadre - Juan de Miralles. Don Juan, a very successful merchant from Cuba, even gave Martha two Spanish burros for the Washington farm at Mount Vernon!

While most historians tend to ignore the Hispanic contribution to the American Revolution in the same manner that many educators ignore their Latino students, this could be a start. Throw in the Gen. Bernardo Galvez story, the one that most, if not all U.S. history instructors know beans about, and you will gradually grab a Latino students' attention.

Listen up, ladies of Mount Vernon, you have a fantastic opportunity to change history with your funding and by showing your concerns about the Hispanic connection to your hero.

Make both George and his Hispanic buddy proud, ¿ si?

A March tribute to 'marianismo'

It's time to put women in their place.

It's time to focus our undivided attention on the many contributions American women have made to the world. It's time to celebrate Women's History Month.

Because of the country's good ol' boy mentality, too many U.S. women have moved through the decades without the recognition they richly deserve. Even in 2002, there is no such thing as southern comfort in America's Southwest. Especially for women of color.

For that matter, women's comfort zones are not that easy to come by anywhere. Each generation contributes to their special time each March, many because, collectively, they have dared to stand on the shoulders of their mothers and grandmothers.

Hispanic history places women as the backbone of its culture. Mama makes critical decisions, not Papa. Forget machismo, it's more hype than fact. Kids should learn about another word marianismo, or the essence of womanhood in the Hispanic world.

Good Catholics may recognize the word, since it is derived from the almost fanatic worship of the Virgin Mary that flourished during the Middle Ages. It was a time when both men and women experienced the horrors of war and pestilence and they needed a mother figure to mediate between the misery of man and the wrath of God.

Men may fight wars, supply muscle in the fields; or even brainpower in urban jobs, but it's up to the woman to do the consolation and consolidation when unforeseen events threaten to break up families.

Today, modern marianas implement a different type of mediating in Chicano-Latino families. They are no longer outwardly dependent, submissive nor subservient. Instead, they help guide their husbands' and children's lives.

Hispanic women, like their other sisters, are finding their respective places in life. ¡ Viva la mujer!

A Mexican 'Evita'? Maybe mañana

Somebody put in a call to Madonna. Tell her she may be playing another "Evita" role again. This time she may be playing Mexican first lady, Marta Sahagn de Fox.

Señora Fox was the subject of a recent cover story in the Mexican weekly news magazine Proceso. In fact, the leading headline of the weekly screamed, "Marta Accumulates Power."

Once President Fox's press secretary and main squeeze, she married the bachelor bilingual leader last summer. This act removed her from public office, but not the public eye.

"Marta was criticized for capitalizing on her intimate relationship with the president to accumulate power," said the report. Now as Mrs. Fox, she is being accused of using her matrimonial ties to help fund a private foundation she has established and calls, Vamos Mexico - Let's Go, Mexico.

According to other news sources, the foundation has an enormous budget and an array of programs offering help to millions of people. Some even call the operation a quasigovernmental agency.

Vamos Mexico, said the news magazine, has distributed 78 million brochures to parents throughout Mexico. The printed matter speaks to parents and offers help that may instill good values in their children. The national teachers union, which has always enjoyed close ties to the government, is footing the printing bill. Teacher union leader, Elba Ester Gordillo, just happens to be one of Mrs. Fox's closest and most trusted amigas.

A brochure titled, "How to protect your children from drugs," was published by the Ministry of Education with public funds - 3 million copies have been distributed. Mrs. Fox and her Vamos Mexico program, of course, claimed all the credit when the media came calling.

The foundation has also donated \$2 million to hospitals throughout Mexico, and has received \$15 million from the Telmex Foundation, which is headed by Mexico's most powerful tycoon, Carlos Slim.

No one is really questioning that the foundation is doing good work, and it may well be doing so with greater efficiency than government agencies, which are often plagued by corruption. Nevertheless, all of this is happening outside the usual channels of public oversight, and the Mexican Congress is launching an investigation of the entire matter.

Don't cry for Marta, Mexico. Not yet.

Giving thanks to a special woman

Many Americans may not be aware that the author of "Mary Had a Little Lamb," occupies an important position in U.S. history.

Sarah Josepha Hale was born in 1788, the daughter of a Revolutionary War captain. She was widowed in 1822 and left to raise five children.

She became a poet and then published her first novel in 1827, later becoming an editress - she served as editor of Ladies Magazine and later, Godeys Ladys Book. These early publications were the forerunners of todays Cosmo, Ladies Home Journal, and others.

Back in her day, women had no rights and no power, especially in education and government.

Ms. Hale, however, received a Darmouth College education in spite of the fact that she never even set foot on the university campus. Brother Horatio, after coming home each day after class, would teach his sister what he had learned. After receiving his degree, he conferred one on his sis, summa cum laude, of course.

Ms. Hale continued upsetting apple carts by founding a private school and teaching there. While women were not accepted as teachers, she still continued her quest for equality, all this at the ripe age of 18.

After publishing "Northwood: A Tale of New England," myriad of criticism followed. No author before her, you see, had utilized slavery in a plot.

Following this, she was offered an editor position for a new publication that was born in Boston, the Ladies Magazine.

Ms. Hale begin to promote American writers over English ones. The magazine later became the American Ladies magazine, reflecting her editorial policies.

Although Ms. Hale did not feel women should be in politics, she backed women's rights by pushing for women to be granted the same educational opportunities as men.

When one of her friends founded a university and she persuaded him to hire a woman administrator and several women teachers. Her friend, Matthew Vassar, gave the new institution his family's last name.

Ms. Hale's name seldom comes up in a history class. But if the origins of certain holidays are ever discussed factually, it will be learned that for 40 years she wrote to congressmen, lobbied five presidents, and wrote countless editorials in her campaign to create an official day of gratitude for her nation.

Thanks to her, America has an official Thanksgiving Day.

Students have help being clueless

The way we teach history to our students should be history.

"Fifty-four percent of those teaching history in American high schools neither majored nor minored in history in college," an article by Richard Lee Colvin states.

In many high schools the way you spell history teacher, is "c-o-a-c-h."

We are not talking about a foreign language here, nor a sissy course like floral arrangement for jocks.

No señor, U.S. history is the name of the subject that 43 percent of seniors tested could barely demonstrate a basic knowledge level, according to the National Assessment of Educational Progress.

And now the worst of the story.

Teachers have had help in screwing up history for us. Among the worst offenders are our state-issued textbooks.

The textbook industry is like any other American enterprise with the same goal in mind - profit.

As students we are taught to think of history books as the Bible. Seldom does it occur to anybody to question them.

We are talking about the typical U.S. history being taught throughout the land, the history you and I learned, the one full of half-truths and slanted, never acknowledge accomplishments by people of color. Why wave flags when there is no knowledge of unquestionable, genuine patriotism?

If we are to stand united or promote love of country, shouldn't we first learn about the land we supposedly love and are willing to send our loved ones to die for?

Educators themselves blame the nation's focus on raising reading and math scores has led many teachers to give short shrift to history.

Others insist many history teachers' knowledge of the subject matter is weak. Few resources are devoted to professional development for such educators.

What we need is an educational Paul Revere.

Maybe this time he'll really finish his ride.

Unfurl the truth about U.S. Flag

Why aren't school children celebrating the life of Francis Hopkinson?

June 14 marked the 225th birthday of the U.S. flag, the banner countless people wave, but don't know enough about, especially its history. Take Mr. Hopkinson, for instance.

Perhaps our history books should let kids know he was the first graduate of the College of Philadelphia (now University of Pennsylvania), became an attorney, signed the Declaration of Independence, then in 1777, designed our first flag - one with six white pointed stars in a blue background and the well known red and white stripes. Yep, red, white, and blue. The same colors as the British banner.

Hey, we had a real war going on at the time. There was no time to look around for a Cloth World and purchase velvet or flannel.

The charming story which credits Betsy Ross as the creator of our national emblem was challenged in 1870, writes Earl P. Williams Jr., a lecturer and authority on the U.S. flag. Letters between Hopkinson and the Continental Congress points to Hopkinson as the flag's creator. The letters are in the National Archives.

What's wrong with giving credit where credit is due? Well, for one, children are still being fed the Ross rhetoric, along with the Thanksgiving tale, the Columbus canard. You can see why many of our kids are challenged in history.

Surprisingly, the U.S. Postal Service, on June 14, 1992, honored Hopkinson as the father of the Stars and Stripes with a commemorative pictorial postmark showing a copy of the original flag. If the Postal Service can put a stamp of approval on the Hopkinson fact, why cannot the rest of the nation? Especially our education profession.

Patriotism has responsibilities; don't waive them.

Some, like stars, can dance forever

"We're stars, we dance forever," heavenly bodies tell a meddling coyote in an ancient Native American tale as they lure him to join them.

At the a California Association of Bilingual Educators gathering in San José recently, more than 10,000 educators, parents, students and speakers - like Dr. Terry Tafoya, a Taos Pueblo-Warm Springs storyteller who told stories about Coyote - honored their best and sought stronger allies in their quest to continue their noble efforts, despite almost ridiculous assaults claiming that bilingual education hinders, not helps non-English speaking children.

Classroom proof, not politicians nor pollsters, correctly determine the quality and effectiveness of our education programs. Once under severe attacks from monolingual language experts, many of California's bilingual education projects are dancing circles around their opponents. Statistics, based on facts like the Stanford 9 Test, not political spin, may not be highly visible in the media, but the winning numbers are there.

"The gap between English-immersed and English-fluent students has increased since Ron Unz's anti-bilingual education proposition came into effect," said María Quesada, former president of the bilingual educators association.

Some 88 percent of our state's non-English-fluent students have been placed into English immersion classes that were designed not to exceed one year, and the results are tragic.

Nearly 1 million limited-English immigrant students in grades two to 11 have failed to become mainstreamed in English-only classes. Restrictive immersion laws allow certain administrators to oppose parental rights to choose bilingual instruction and have even forced students to repeat the immersion curriculum two, three or even four years.

"Anti-bilingual education proponents are falsely proclaiming success in a deliberate publicity ploy," said Quesada. "What's worse is that this English-immersion failure is being spinned in other states as a victory for English-only in other states."

Bilingual educators are not new to the educational dance floor. Their resiliency was quite visible and audible in San José-like stars. They too can dance forever.

Many not aware of diversity's emergence

Another year, another National Hispanic Heritage Month (Sept. 15 to Oct. 15) and one more ho-hum for some.

Never mind that as of June 1, 1997, Hispanics (that's government talk for Chicanos, Latinos, Mexican-Americans, Spaniards, La Raza, etc.) numbered 29.2 million, or about 11 percent of the total U.S. population. In many facets, this numerical majority in California remains almost invisible.

You still will not see many brown faces on TV, for example, unless you watch "Cops." Stereotypical characters, however, are more than visible. Even in the barrio, not-very-bright folks show off lazy Mexican clay figures or pottery. If such people are lazy, explain this information:

- Businesses owned by Hispanics in the United States total 2.2 million firms. These small and large companies employ more than 1.3 million and generated \$186.3 billion in revenue in 1997, the U.S. Census reported.

- As far as purchasing power goes, the Census crowd tells us that we spent \$452.4 billion last year. Dollars, amigos, not pesos.

- There is more. As almost any red-blooded Americano knows, besides the officially documented American with a Spanish surname, there are many more who work in jobs most non-Hispanics refuse to do. This hidden Hispanic market, some conservative figures put it, 2.1 million strong. They spend dinero here and send another chunk back to their old countries.

Just take a look at all of the Hispanic-related enterprises in Solano County alone. You can purchase almost everything Latino without even crossing county lines. From tortilla and taqueria tycoons to tienditas - storefronts - to great-tasting pan dulce from several panaderias. Outfitting an entire quinceañera party would pose no great problem either.

Most locals find these additions to their shopping sprees to be more than adequate. Many times fiestas replace parties in invitations; salsa and tortilla chips, for sure, has replaced ordinary dips at these gatherings.

Hispanic Month is a good time to learn more about this emerging majority of fellow residents, many of them direct descendants of the original Americans.

Perhaps a visit to a bookstore or a friendly library will challenge you to read more about Hispanics. There are also several Web sites you can visit for more information on this specific month.

Lots more where Lott came from

Condemned novelist Salman Rushdie wrote, "Children are the vessels into which adults pour their poisons."

The best thing that happened in the United States in 2002 was U.S. Sen. Trent Lott. His inherited poison helped awaken many an American from a complacency siesta.

It was a giant leap for integrity and a minute step for imposture. Hopefully, some of the men and women charged with the awesome task of imparting U.S. history to our children were paying attention. If not, those in the Party of Lincoln have prolonged reality once more.

Add to this indoctrination situation the power of the printed word, in official public school texts, no less. Mr. Lott is no more to blame for what he said than the Southern preachers, who during the civil rights movement, reminded their flocks that if God had really wanted everybody to be equal He would have made everybody white.

Mr. Lott and those like him were schooled in educational institutions, from primary school to private universities, preached these ideologies.

It was found even in "Mississippi Through Four Centuries," by Richard Aubry McLemore, the official state history textbook at one time: "The life the Negro lived as a slave was much better than that which he lived in Africa. ... His condition would continue to improve more rapidly in slavery than as a free man."

The racist rhetoric takes students through the South's reconstruction period, "to deal with the new Negro, a number of 'secret organizations,' grew up ... the most important was the Ku Klux Klan."

Quite a plan, on one white hand, the children were being brainwashed by religious leaders and, on the other, they were being prepared for the future by torpid teachers.

Mr. Lott, an Ole Miss graduate, was a Democrat at the time he joined the staff of Congressman William M. Colmer. The congressman was an unyielding segregationist who used his power to thwart civil rights.

Eventually, Mr. Lott would replace his boss, become a Republican and carry the same apartheid message to Washington, D.C., where he vowed to "fight against the ever increasing efforts of the so-called liberals."

Perhaps our poisoned minds will seek truth as an antidote.

Papal visit resurrects native prejudice

It marked the return of the "gachupines" for many of Mexico's real natives.

And again, many of them are draped in Catholic cloaks. But they are still gachupines to the indigenous millions.

Not satisfied with shoving civilized (corporate and organized) religion down the native throats, now the Spanish are desecrating another Mexican tradition, "El Indio" Juan Diego, which celebrates the native to whom the Holy Virgin appeared to in 1531.

We must add another insult to the natives: The phony evolution of Juan Diego, a sparsely whiskered, dark-skinned native, into a Spanish-looking senor, complete with a full beard and light skin.

Hey, it is bad enough that Mexicans are put down daily in a country where tourists consider Spanish traits superior, where television novellas feature blonde, blue-eyed señorita starlets instead of native and dark Mexicans. It does not take a conquistador brain to realize why many of these poor souls end up as alcoholics and commit suicide at a record number.

Now, Pope John Paul II pays Mexico a visit to canonize Juan Diego. The country thought his holiness had visited their country to honor Mexico's natives, not the Spanish invaders. They were angered by the depiction of their humble hero. Some went as far as formally protest by stating that the church was distorting their history.

A California Catholic Chicano, in town for the papal event, carried a placard stating, "If the Virgin had wanted to choose a European, she would have done so."

Imagine how the poor religious artifact vendors must feel right about now. Who will buy their politically incorrect Juan Diego images now? Post-papal visit sales are more than likely in the works as we speak.

Mexico's natives are being denied their part in their own country's history.

Again.

God foils bigots' parade in Georgia

Bigotry, like beauty, is in the eye of the beholder.

One day this summer, in a small Georgia town, about 60 miles north of Atlanta, a handful of hate-spewing white supremacists suffered a setback.

Their plan to bring shame to the South again by showing intolerance to a large concentration of immigrants went up in flames, like a gasoline-soaked white wood cross set on fire.

At the head of the skinheads and Nazi-art tattooed bunch was some protester named Chester. He had targeted Gainesville for an all-out demonstration because the town is home to the highest concentration of Latino immigrants in the South.

Its 26,000 residents refer to their small city as the "poultry capital of the world." The city fathers estimate that thousands of former Mexican citizens have been coming for years to work in the numerous chicken plants.

"These folks come to Gainesville and take the minimum wage jobs offered by the chicken industry," said a local. "This is work our own residents eschew."

The prejudice party was a total flop. The Gainesville area was once known for violent Ku Klux Klan marches and road signs telling blacks not to be around after sundown. Today lethargic locals and other neighboring nuts try to pull off such demonstrations targeting Spanish-speaking workers and their families.

"Yeah, looks like these guys need to get their hate and ignorance off their chests," said Greg Bautista, a Latino activist in Georgia. "Then they really show their colors; they'll pull in front of a taqueria and haul their respective behinds into the place to pig-out on burritos and tacos."

When it came time for the demonstration, there were fewer than 75 supremacists, with cops outnumbering them 2-to-1.

"I've lived here my whole life," said Gainesville Police Capt. Jane Nichols. "And it's not like we're going downhill. These immigrants come to Gainesville to work their tails off. They're good for the community."

The racists were waiting to wave their Nazi and Confederate flags. Then something else happened. It rained.

It rained on the bigots' parade.

Like they say, timing is everything.

U.S. Armed Forces: Corporate security guards?

Liar, liar, your pants are on fire.

A childish - but befitting - chant for the other Americans who take issue with the warmongering masses our government has spawned. When will American leaders come clean?

Look, when was the last time common folk were given the straight skinny on our country's interventions abroad, cogent or unfair? Some of them, you may recall, have cost never-ending anguish for families that you may even know. In some cases, our own family members have been maimed or killed. All under the pretense of "protecting our country."

Liar, liar, your pants are on fire. Protecting one's country covers an army of ideals if you apply the under-an-umbrella theory. Oil interests, corporation properties, and investment concerns are some of the financial fields that come to mind. Are our men and women in uniform simply security guards for American corporations?

Quick, think back to Vietnam and all the body bags never accounted for. Or the inflated number of enemy casualties. Then think hard as to what military and foreign affair experts divulged in the '80s and '90s about the conflict - that it was both unjust and unnecessary.

Can President George W. Bush or any of the military head honchos honestly look at an entire family and give them an explanation of the need for their kids to be sent to war as cannon fodder?

Liar, liar, your pants are on fire.

Look around you, America. Progress, promises a corporate slogan, is our most important product. We have virtually mastered the duplication of a human life. Obviously, brainpower is not on any endangered species list. Cannot the powers that be put together a think tank to save humanity, not destroy it?

All of this rhetoric is useless and futile if our leaders cannot come up with better plans, plans that do not include blanket bombing of other lands, snuffing innocent lives.

Liar, liar, your pants are on fire

This George is no Washington

'Let George do it' used to be an honorable phrase back in the day.

Gen. George Washington became an honorable man after he led the 13 colonies to victory.

George W. Bush, however, is a whole new ball game. He may lead American into war because an evildoer tried to kill his Dad. Well, sir. Have you forgotten your boots have Texas roots? Yeah, where real men carry concealed weapons legally. Where most pickups have rear window rifle racks.

South Texas hamlets are famous for easy game wardens who accept dinero from hunters who do their thing at any hour anywhere, hunting season or not. Walk into a Texas home and you will see a display of firearms that would make a Banana Republic comandante smile.

Welcome to the real wild, wild West. Talk to some of these Tejanos and you will hear stories of ongoing feuds or accounts of how their ancestors settled arguments. Hollywood producers have gotten rich retelling these same Texas tales on film.

So, while some Americans may find the fact that the president's Dad was once threatened appalling, it is not a big deal to Texans who are aware of how its citizens conduct intrastate business.

Except if you are commander in chief, that is. Now we have a serious situation. And we will not even play the oil card.

Will the Bush twins volunteer to do battle or will they opt to join the Texas National Guard like Daddy did? Maybe they will end up protecting the Alamo in San Antonio or the Enron Building in Houston. Whatever.

Our modern George's presidential mission evokes an apocalyptic scene featuring God and Satan getting it on for the world title. God, of course, being on our side. Therefore, anything we do to win this one for George the first is justifiable.

Hold it right there. When did George W. morph Osama into Saddam and when did the 9/11-inspired self-defense assignment become a pre-emptive war? Most importantly, will this be a just war?

The fight for America's independence was indeed a just war, making Washington a good George. Today's George, however, does not have all of America, nor even half of the world, on his side. There is something dreadfully wrong with this picture.

Maybe this time letting George do it is not in our best interest.

Latino voters must not be taken for granted

California's Latino voters are giving new meaning to that patriotic phrase, "United We Stand."

Just ask Gov. Gray Davis, who probably wishes ol' Pete Wilson's misguided initiative Proposition 187 had scared Spanish-speaking immigrants back to Mexico. Or maybe other states.

Our state's rapidly growing Latino electorate, which was once considered a safe and solid base of support for Mr. Davis, is now prime for alienation. Just check out the numbers: Against his Republican foe in 1998, Gov. Davis garnered more than 70 percent of the Latino vote. In any language, that translates to mucho votes.

It also meant that many Latinos rejected Proposition 187-backing Republicans. It was backlash time in the barrio. The governor became one to benefit among the Democrats. A long time ago, politically speaking.

The United Farm Workers, without their charismatic and celebrated leader, César Chávez, may be small, but it is a symbolically significant labor union. The last time Gov. Davis offered his services to California, he had the backing of the UFW. Countless union members and volunteers pounded the pavement for him.

Aging, but articulate as ever, UFW co-founder Dolores Huerta reminded 5,000 supporters of that during a Capitol rally last month.

At last count, most of the 28 Latino legislators under the dome were pretty upset with their party leader. Even Republican Assemblyman Robert Pacheco, from Walnut, voted in favor of Senate Bill 1156, legislation that allows binding arbitration when farmer-union negotiations are deadlocked.

Meanwhile, another piece of legislation is lingering on the governor's desk, one proposed by Los Angeles' Democratic Assemblyman Gil Cedillo. It could allow thousands of undocumented workers the right to obtain driving privileges. This bill, like the one the UFW favors, was watered down to make it more palatable to the politicians. As of Monday, Davis had signed neither.

It will be interesting to watch the politically savvy and risk-averse governor tackle this particular situation. It may not be the only dark spot on his re-election horizon, but it's sure casting a long shadow.

No matter which way Davis turns, not even a Hollywood-created Mexican Standoff, where neither side wins, will protect his political pelt.

Lest we forget the business of America

Close your eyes and you can see it.

The gap-toothed skyline of Lower Manhattan in New York City, a tragic wake-up call for national seriousness.

On the eve of the first anniversary of America's modern day of infamy, many pause to reflect. Some to pay their respects. Others respectfully planning ways to make it pay.

Yes, my fellow Americans, our mourning masks are off and it's time to make a buck. From Franklin Mint plates to TV specials hawking their time to the highest bidder, down to peddling benefit barbecue plates on Sept. 11, there is an eerie resemblance to Super Bowl advertising blitzes.

What resembled a sacramental mood prevailed over the land in the weeks that followed the attack. Major sporting events, new movies, regular TV shows, and even the most innocent of events - children's birthdays - were put on hold. The editorial mantra was, "9-11, it changes everything."

When national leaders, from the president to local mayors, encouraged everyone to return to normal as best we could, they probably did not envision the country to overdo it. Somehow the somber sincerity that took over immediately, did not last too long.

A fear of further attacks was still palpable in the days following the tragedy. But even a catalyst of this magnitude failed to make our nation shed its entrenched sensibilities. Simply, nothing has really changed.

Following the tragedy, TVland went on record to tell us that it was time to be serious in its coverage of America. Producers of newscasts declared their staffs would avoid overreacting to Lewinsky- and Condit-type scandals. Liars.

Barely half a year went by when trailer-park queens, Tonya Harding and Paula Jones, made their boxing debut. This month, so-called "reality TV" really became a boob-tube as Anna Nicole barely fit into the miniscreen.

Electronic media will commemorate the death of thousands of Americans caught in the crossfire of terrorists and greed with commercial-laden specials. The preview campaign has begun on every network.

Print media is also joining in the sell-a-bration. Some magazines are publishing their biggest September issues ever. They are calling it a September to remember.

Media have added a new meaning to the phrase, "lest we forget."

Dreaming of a 'brown' Christmas

December is both a joyous and serious month for Latinos.

Aside from typical office parties with the boss playing a bilingual Santa and piñatas being pelted by children at home celebrations, the last month of the year is one of reflection, reverence and renewed hope.

December, being the last month of the year, offers all people one final opportunity to perform good deeds. You know, like dump all the items you couldn't sell during your summer garage sales at a nearby Goodwill site.

For historical purposes, way back in the day, December was a 29 day month until Numa Pompilius started messing around with it. Decem means "10" in Latin.

Almost all of the world's Hispanic population pays homage to a dark-skinned version of Jesus Christ's mother on Dec. 12. That's the annual Feast of the Virgen de Guadalupe, patron saint of the Americas and champion of Mexico. It was in 1531 that a Mexican native, Juan Diego, reported an apparition of the Virgen Mary on a hillside near what is now Mexico City.

In official Hispanicdom, this day signals the beginning of Las Fiestas Navideñas - the Christmas season.

During these 12 nights leading up to Christmas, Chicanos and Latinos in the Southwest re-enact the holy family's search for a posada - an inn. Las Posadas have been performed in the Americas since the arrival of the Spanish.

La Nochebuena - Christmas Eve - is when good Catholics flock to their parishes to participate in La Misa de Gallo - rooster's mass - for many the most important church service of the entire year. It's also when many families come together for a massive meal. Navidad or Christmas Day is usually spent relatively quiet visiting family or friends. It is not the official gift-exchanging day for Latinos.

The day for giving gifts to each other is on Jan. 6, the day The Magi arrived in Bethlehem. This fact alone, it has been reported in the national media, has saved Latinos a pretty penny because they take advantage of the after-Christmas sales.

Lately, on the East Coast, Three Kings Day is enjoying a resurgence in popularity. Even the schools shut down and in cities like Hartford, Conn., where there is even a parade with an official visit by the three wise men to distribute gifts to some lucky youngsters.

Similar celebrations are planned this year for several cities.

People of color can look inward for answers

The woman behind me at a food store checkout said, "I hope I don't insult you, but I'd like to ask what kind of Indian are you?"

I turned, expecting to find a WASPish woman, but instead she looked like me, except I had longer hair.

"Oh," I replied, trying not to look surprised, "probably your kind."

Her question and her looks reminded me of last summer when I was lecturing at California State University, Chico, before some 200 Chicanos and Latinos attending a leadership conference. During the usual Q&A time that follows a spiel by speakers, a young man posed this question: "If we're supposed to be related to the Indians, how come we have names like Garcia and Martinez and not Galloping Mustang or Falling Rock?"

Many people with Spanish surnames have traditionally rejected their entire antecedent cultural identification, which for many is both Mexican and Indian. Part of this rejection is the result of the Mexican-Americans struggle to assimilate themselves into the hostile environment of the United States.

This same cultural climate has stressed conforming into an Anglo society with its use of the English language and different values. Simply, becoming American has meant rejecting one's own cultural background.

Striving to overcome pernicious, cruel and misleading stereotypes, created by the Anglo society via Hollywood and the mass media, has not been a walk in the park. You know the images: the dirty Mexican, greaser, el bandido; or the complacent, placid, fun-loving quaint character usually with an oversized sombrero. On their Indian side are savage, mean and treacherous personalities.

My advice for both the woman in the store and the lad at the university was one the same: Don't rely on U.S. history books alone. Do individual research; search your own family background.

One more thing. Before you go to bed, take a long look at yourself in a mirror.

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Everybody learns during Black History Month

What great American botanist was kidnapped, almost died, then ransomed back for a race horse?

If you know your black history, you can probably guess the answer. I'll give it to you later.

February may be the year's shortest month, but it's long on the history of a particular group of Americans. It was Harvard-educated Dr. Carter G. Woodson who first created Negro History Week in 1926. Today, as Black History Month, most of our country observes it.

On any given day, our national calendar celebrates anything from daisies to hot dogs and cucumbers. Black History Month makes almost everybody aware of the depth and richness of the black experience. It offers many an opportunity to learn about contributions in science, education, entertainment and sports by these Americans. However, in the Golden State, schools may be the last place to place emphasis on Black History Month.

Currently, as a middle school teacher said, we are too busy aligning benchmarks to grade-level standards mandated by the state.

Investigate Black History Month yourself in a city or college library. Attend a university campus rally. Read a black newspaper; there are several published in this area.

You will be amazed, perhaps, to discover that during this month in 1944 Harry S. McAlpin became the first black reporter to be admitted to White House press conferences. Or that in March 1846 the country's oldest continually published black newspaper was born.

Black History Month helps to point out the strength of a people who, despite denial of their intelligence and repression of their ingenuity, continued to develop some of humanity's greatest gifts.

Take the innate capabilities of one George Washington Carver, the answer to our question at the top of the column. Born into bondage in 1860 on German immigrant Moses Carver's plantation, he and his mother were kidnapped by slave raiders. The youngster almost died before he was ransomed back to his owner.

He became an agricultural genius, developing 300 different products from the peanut, 100 from sweet potatoes and some 75 from the pecan, for starters.

Celebrate Black History Month with pride, America. Make it part of all of us.

Unvieling a 'third-root' for La Raza

Mexico's second president, if he were alive, could help celebrate National Black History Month this month. He was an Afro-Mexican.

Mexico, much like its northern neighbor, has not been genuinely truthful about its ancestral roots, especially with respect to some of its most noble figures of the 20th century.

Go south to discover a "third root" for Latinos. Maybe those concerned will best understand the everlasting hit tune "La Bamba," the celebrated revolutionary Zapata, as well as the phrase, "fulano-mangano."

A few years ago, University of California, Berkeley, history professor, columnist, and author, Ted Vincent, called this Mexican history omission, "racial amnesia." Very few Americans of any color, and just as many Mexican citizens also of various skin shades, have never ascertained that a significant proportion of the early Mexican population seemed to have been African in origin.

Consider this: 200,000 Africans were imported to Mexico as slaves. Consequently, by 1810, African residents in Mexico numbered more than a half million, or more than 10 percent of the country's total population.

What most people assume is that the Chicano-Latino population is mostly derived from two roots, Spanish and native Mexican, with the result labeled as "mestizos."

It is this mestizaje that is the official ideology that defines Mexico's culture as a blend of European and indigenous influences and completely ignores the nation's third root.

These black descendants, to this day invisible in the historical chronicles of the colonial period, continue to receive little attention or assistance from their own government. Is it any surprise then that these "Black Mexicans," who live primarily in poor, rural areas, where the level of education is extremely low, lack even the most minute details of their African heritage?

The song "La Bamba," made famous first by Richie Valens and then Los Lobos, has deep roots in West Africa. Anthropologists have traced it all the way back to Angola, where there is a district called, Bamba.

Mexican revolutionary hero Emiliano Zapata was born in the Cuautla

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Raza's third root . . .

Valley, an area some 70 miles south of Mexico City. The village where the hero was born, Anenecuilco, had a population of 101 Afro-Mexican families. Going by these and other figures of the area's early ethnic make-up, Zapata comes from a family that was part African. Check out some photos of Zapata without his sombrero.

The phrase "fulano" or "fulando-mangano," in Spanish, is the English equivalent of "what's-his-name," or "what's-her-face," but is actually African. There are many more words and phrases that can be traced back to African dialects.

African contributions to the Americas have also gone unnoticed in history books. While the Spanish took advantage of African technology in fishing, agriculture, ranching and textile making, in Mexico these contributions remain unknown and, sadly, unappreciated.

Vicente Guerrero, a courageous and gallant general in the Mexican War of Independence, became Mexico's second president. Even though graphic artists have altered his looks, his features remain at least half African. It was Guerrero, called "El Negro Guerrero," who officially abolished slavery in Mexico in 1829.

Some historians are calling him the George Washington and Abraham Lincoln of Mexico. Perhaps details like these will assist both Mexico and the United States snap out of their cultural coma.

What would César Chávez say?

They've abandoned the UFW for a BMW.

That's what die-hard United Farm Worker volunteers say about some of their former bosom buddies today. They feel their soul brothers and sisters are living vicariously through their huelga - strike - buttons or by making monetary contributions to the union. Not that helping the UFW financially is immoral nor unwelcome.

It's the principle of the thing.

What would founder César Chávez say? That his volunteers have merely romanticized the past? Maybe, but the money is on Chavez's concerns still being for the farm workers, whose issues have disappeared from the national stage.

Presently, thousands of farm laborers suffer disabling injuries every year. The death rate for these national resources is more than twice the fatality rate in other workplaces. Farm-worker housing, in many areas, is still non-existent. Even portable toilets and drinking water are still not assured in many fields.

Worse, health care is almost invisible to the poorest of field hands. Their average annual salary is a mere \$6,000.

It's no secret that once Chávez died, too many people stopped paying attention to the farm workers' plight. This month California and other states in the Southwest celebrate his life. It's a perfect time for rekindling the spirit of La Causa that he ignited back in his day.

It's also no secret that the majority of successful Chicano-Latino professionals have done their share of stoop labor. Maybe what we need is a day fashioned like the take-your-daughter-or-son-to-work day, like the ones popularized in the general work force.

Why not take the whole family out to a field somewhere and kind of volunteer to do something that resembles actual farm labor? Take the laborers some bottled water or perhaps clothing you've outgrown. You may even take care of their little ones for a couple of hours. They're probably in the cars or trucks parked at the end of the fields, you know.

And don't worry about breaking any labor laws. Out in the fields they seldom exist. Or have you forgotten that too?

Migrant camp atrocities continue

There is no Amber Alert System for missing migrant children.

About 700,000 people, most of them women and children, are trafficked across international borders in a single year. Of those, more than 50,000 pour into California.

And now the worst of the story: Thousands of these unfortunate souls, byproducts of globalization, end up as prostitutes, especially teenage boys and girls.

At a two-day conference held in San Diego, law enforcement officers, social workers and human rights activists from both sides of the border, hammered out plans to combat the international trade of women and children.

We have to get together and stop their exploitation, urged Marisa Ugarte, a counselor and chairwoman of the Safety Corridor Coalition, which organized the sessions.

Ms. Ugarte knew what she was talking about. She told of a 15-year-old teen who was promised a good job in the United States and ended up an unwilling prostitute serving as many as 50 men a day in a rural labor camp in Southern California.

Along with her, said Ugarte. There were other young girls, some barely 12 years old.

Young boys, called pollitos - baby chicks - are also available in the camps for the homosexuals working the harvests. According to the conference report, it is quite easy to go into Mexican and Central American communities, promise youngsters jobs as maids or housekeepers. then bring them into the United States illegally.

When the human smugglers get them here, they are forced into prostitution, said Liz Pleitez, of Planned Parenthood.

She met 12- and 13-year-old girls who had worked the sex camps. They said if they threatened to leave, they in turn would be threatened with death, or told their families and friends will be told what they were really doing here.

It is a no-win situation for the youngsters. If they manage to tell local authorities of their plight, they are more than likely to be deported. Often, when they do break the cycle, the girls and boys are so intimidated that federal prosecutors have trouble building their cases.

Meanwhile, sexually transmitted diseases, including AIDS, and teen pregnancy creep into the migrant lifestyle. It is a hell hole with no light in sight.

An enduring spirit creates unique museum

One of my elders passed recently. Bob "La Güera" Rodriguez, missed dying on Cinco de Mayo by four days. I honestly believe he was hoping for that.

Of the 75 years he spent on Mother Earth, many were utilized in pursuing an impossible dream. Rodriguez once asked me, "Who ever heard of a high school having its own museum?"

And to top it off, a school from the poorest side of Del Rio, from the San Felipe barrio, a school built by Chicanos, and in Texas. Are you crazy or what? Crazy about his Texas alma mater and all the contributions it had made to society through its many gifted students.

"People don't believe me when I tell them our school once graduated a class that sent all but two kids to college," said Rodriguez, who like many Chicanos migrated to California in search of a better life.

"Nor will they acknowledge the fact that we have had athletes in both the NFL and Major League Baseball and that we have countless lawyers, doctors, teachers, journalists and even a gal who was on the U.S. Civil Rights Commission," he said. "We need to leave a San Felipe High School legacy, for others to be inspired also."

Rodriguez attended San José City College before joining Graham and Reed, a well-known construction firm. His business savvy and bilingual abilities made him a top exec and a board member of several civic committees. He founded the San Felipe Ex-Student Association of Northern California and put on fund-raisers to pump money into his school's athletic programs.

The ex-students soon caught the attention of the Bay Area media when their banquet dances honoring former San Felipians of note would draw nearly a thousand or more to some of the city's elite hotel ballrooms.

"How can former students from a school campus nearly 2,000 miles away have this much following?" a reporter in the San José Mercury News once asked. "Their town must be like an unofficial sister city of San José."

Eventually, Rodriguez and his high school sweetheart-wife, Elsa, returned to their beloved neighborhood they had known as children. Everybody in town knew of his vision. Soon thereafter the museum was a reality.

"Some things go on forever," he said long ago. "Like the wind, the sea and the spirit of San Felipe."

Just like you, Bob Rodriguez.

Home for the holidays with the homies

Like a traditional tune says, "I'll be home for Christmas, if only in my dreams."

For all its faults, Texas provided me with an enviable education complete with a glorious high school past.

I recall two of my friends at this time of the year. One went on to play professional football in the NFL and missed becoming rookie of the year by a few yards, and the other has been honored nationally for unselfishness.

Sid Blanks, who was inducted into a Texas college football conference hall of fame, and I were teammates in high school. Washington State and other major schools sought Sid back then. He chose to attend a Texas college, Texas A&I.

Growing up Chicano or black back in Texas in that day wasn't exactly a stroll in the plaza. Sid became the first black to play for A&I. He became the first sports team captain of color in the South. He also had to endure the bigotry that ate away at America's soul during those tumultuous times.

One of Sid's younger teammates was Gene Upshaw, now executive director of the NFL Players Association and a member of the Pro Football Hall of Fame.

Sid was the right guy for what he did, the right guy for that time, said Upshaw recently. He was really mature for his age and had great character.

Ruben Pollo Barragan is the other amigo of the past. He has received recognition for his 20 years as an unofficial Barrio Santa.

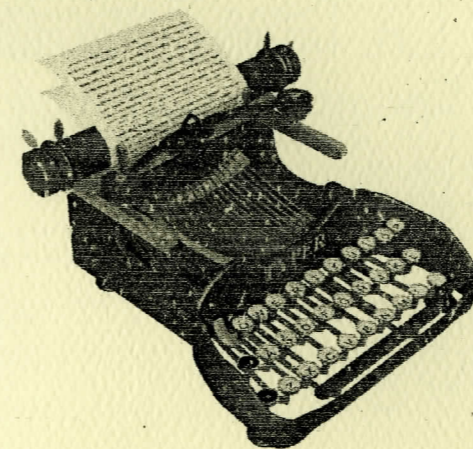
Realizing that the many migrant and Kickapoo native children in the area seldom celebrate Christmas with gifts, Barragan decided to change that.

He has made sure that as many as 2,500 of the town's poorest children receive a toy, a goodie-bag, and some food on Christmas Day in the barrio's plaza. In some good years, up to 100 lucky kids may receive bicycles.

With no federal, state or city government assistance, Barragan generates as much as \$35,000 a year for the project's budget, which now includes donations of shoes and school supplies to the kids.

TV weatherman Willard Scott presented Barragan with a national award as a humanitarian in Washington, D.C., a few years ago, calling him a truly generous and unselfish human being.

With friends like these and memories to match, it's good to go home for the holidays. Even if it's only in my dreams.



WEAPONS OF MASS INSTRUCTION

Andy Porras

**" If it
doesn't
relate . . .
it
doesn't
educate!"**

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