

# THE DEATH OF RODOLFO “CORKY” GONZALES AN HISTORICAL ERA COMING TO AN END

April 12, 2005

By: Herman Baca, President  
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Chicano leader Rodolfo “Corky” Gonzales’ death and the reality that he is no longer with us is another devastating blow to this nation’s Chicanos whose dreams, hopes, and aspirations for social, economic and political change for which he passionately fought.

Corky Gonzales, preceded in death by Humberto “Bert” Corona, Cesar Chavez, and many others from the 1960’s, signals that an era in Chicano history is slowly but surely coming to an end.

History will record that Rodolfo “Corky” Gonzales (whom I knew since 1970) was a leader, organizer, fighter, warrior, and poet. He fought a life-long militant struggle for self determination, respect, dignity, freedom, justice, and the human/civil rights of this nation’s 30 million Chicanos/Mexicanos/Latinos.

If history records the historical contributions to Chicanos as followed:

- Cesar Chavez awakening our social and political consciousness and giving us social, economic, and political identification,
- Humberto “Bert” Corona leaving us the political concept of NO ILLEGAL ALIENS y NO FRONTERAS,
- Reis Lopez Tijerina leaving us the concept that the land of our ancestors was stolen and historically belongs to us . . .

THEN,

Rodolfo’s “Corky” Gonzales’ historical contribution to Chicanos is:

- The political concept of nationhood... Aztlan,
- The political principal of economic, social, cultural and political self determination, and
- The political principal of nationalism rooted in the historical struggle of the Chicano/Mexicano people.

If Cesar Chavez represented the rural campesino; Bert Corona, the undocumented Mexican worker; and Reis Lopez Tijernia, descendants of landowners in New Mexico, then Corky represented the urban Chicano, especially the youth, with all of their issues and problems who today comprise the majority of our people in the U.S.

All of us –activists, immigrants, campesinos, students, young people, politicians, union leaders, or every day working people – owe another great historical debt to Rodolfo “Corky” Gonzales for the time and sacrifices that he gave to his people in our historical struggle to live with dignity and respect. This debt can only be repaid by continuing the unfinished struggle that Rodolfo “Corky” Gonzales lived and died for.

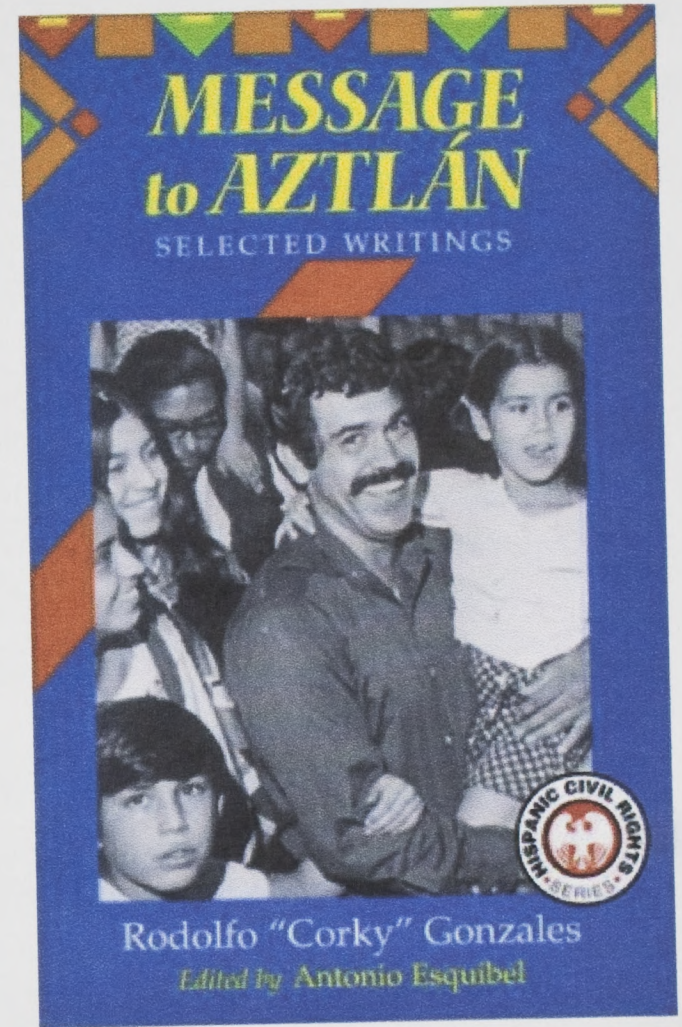
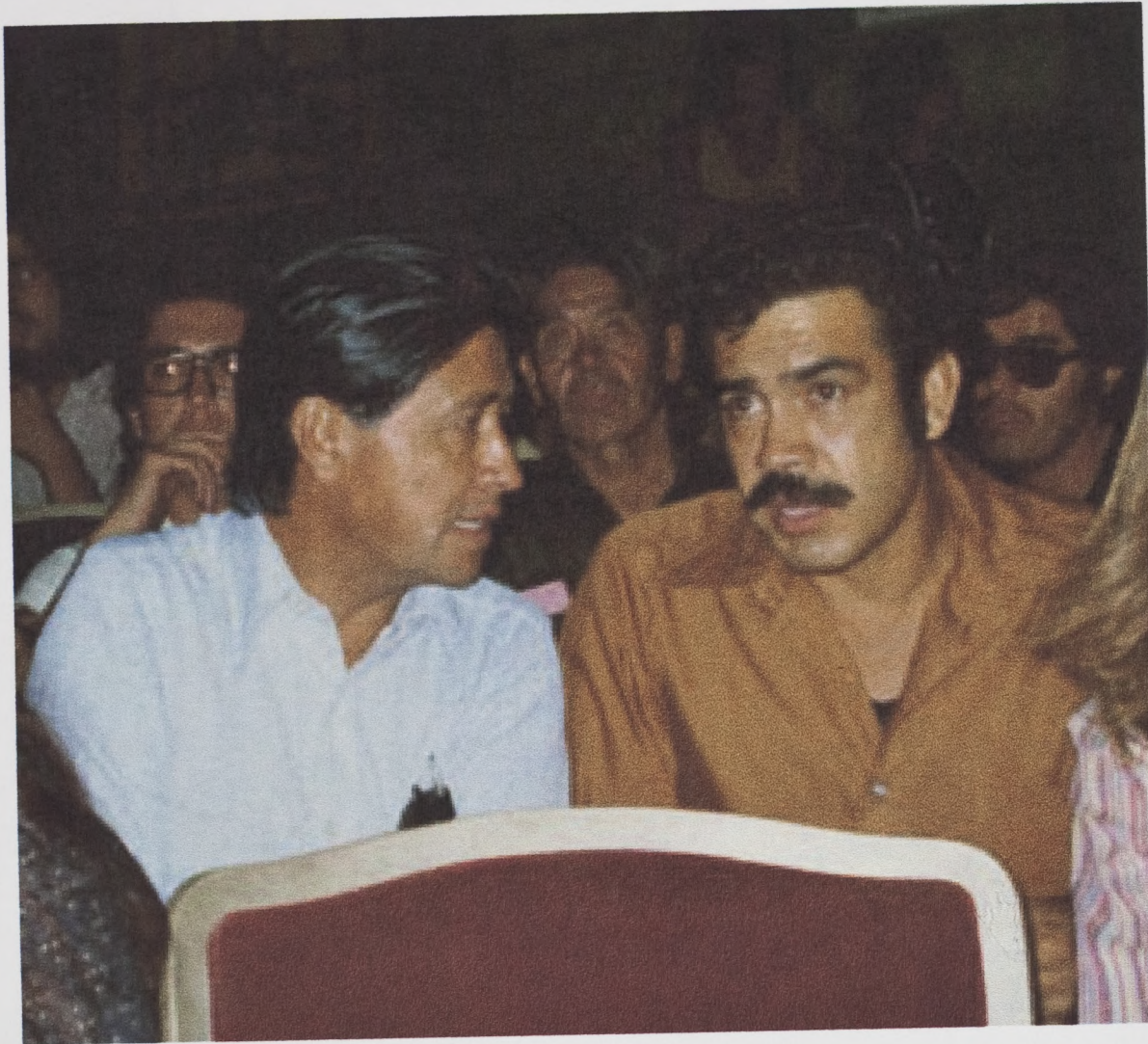
Today, even though we as a people are sad because of Rodolfo “Corky” Gonzales’ passing, his spirit – like Cuahtemoc, Hidalgo, Morales, Juarez, Villa, Zapata, Magon brothers, Corona, Chavez, and many others who died in the service of our people – he will not be forgotten and will live in our hearts and minds.

As all the *veterano* movement workers begin to pass away, young people will face and continue to see increased attacks on our people struggle for respect and dignity, must remember Corky’s words from his epic poem ***“I am Joaquin:”***

*“I must fight and win this struggle for my sons, and they must know from me who I am... I am Joaquin, lost in a world of confusion, caught up in the whirl of a gringo society, confused by the rules, scorned by attitudes, suppressed by manipulation, and destroyed by modern society. My fathers have lost the economic battle and won the struggle of cultural survival. And now! I must choose between the paradox of victory of the spirit, despite physical hunger, or to exist in the grasp of American social neurosis, sterilization of the soul and a full stomach.”*

Rodolfo “Corky” Gonzales philosophical, ideological, political perspectives and leadership will be missed by all who knew, walked, marched, protested, fought, organized, and struggled with him in the Chicano Movement.

***REST IN PEACE - DESCANSA EN PAZ!***



Corky Gonzales, Chicano movement activist

# HOMAGE TO CORKY GONZALES

## "A MESSAGE TO OUR YOUTH"

PRESENTED APRIL 17, 2005, AT MESTIZO PARK, DENVER, COLORADO

BY: HERMAN BACA, PRESIDENT COMMITTEE ON CHICANO RIGHTS

**VIVA CORKY!** AS IS THE CUSTOM OF OUR PEOPLE I WANT TO EXPRESS ON BEHALF OF OUR PEOPLE FROM CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO AND NATIONAL CITY OUR DEEPEST AND MOST SINCERE CONDOLENCES TO THE GONALES FAMILY, ESPECIALLY TO HIS WIFE GERI WHO HAS SACRIFICED SO MUCH FOR THEIR IRREPLACABLE LOSS.

TO OUR PEOPLE EVERYWHERE I WANT TO SAY THAT THERE IS AN OLD MEXICAN SAYING THAT STATES, "**THE REASON WE ARE ABLE TO STAND SO PROUD AND TALL IS BECAUSE WE ARE STANDING ON THE SHOULDERS OF THOSE WHO HAVE COME BEFORE US.**"

HISTORY WILL RECORD TODAY THAT WE STAND TALL AND PROUD AND HAVE GATHERED HERE TO WALK THE LAST FEW MILES TO HONOR AND REMEMBER A UNIQUE INDIVIDUAL IN OUR PEOPLE'S HISTORY ...**RODOLFO "CORKY" GONZALES.** AN INDIVIDUAL WHO WAS A LEADER, ORGANIZER, FIGHTER, WARRIOR AND POET; WHO FOUGHT A LIFE LONG MILITANT STRUGGLE FOR SELF DETERMINATION, RESPECT, DIGNITY, FREEDOM, JUSTICE AND THE HUMAN/CIVIL RIGHTS OF THE NATIONS CHICANOS/MEXICANOS/LATINOS/NATIVE AMERICANS.

TO OUR YOUNG PEOPLE WHO COMPRISE THE MAJORITY OF OUR PEOPLE AND WHO CORKY ALWAYS SPOKE TO I SAY; YOU MUST UNDERSTAND THAT AN ERA IN CHICANO HISTORY IS SLOWLY BUT SURELY COMING TO AN END.

- **BERT CORONA, CESAR CHAVEZ AND NOW CORKY GONZALES ARE GONE, REIS LOPEZ TIJERNIA IS AN A WHEEL CHAIR, AND UNFORTUNATELY THE REST OF US AREN'T GETTING ANY YOUNGER.**

THIS LEADERS ALONG WITH MANY GREAT WOMAN WHO SERVED THEIR PEOPLE AND CARRIED FORTH THE HISTORICALLY STRUGGLE TO PROTECT THE LAND AND FIGHT SO THAT WE CAN LIVE IN DIGNITY AND RESPECT WOULD STATE THAT THE TOURCH WILL SOON BE PASSED ON TO YOU.

I SAY TO YOU, LOOK AT YOUR HISTORY. BECAUSE OF **CORKY** AND MANY OTHERS WHO STRUGGLED, YOU NO LONGER HAVE TO LIVE UNDER SIGNS THAT PROCLAIMED, "NO MEXICANS, NIGGERS OR DOGS ALLOWED," LIKE SO MANY OF US HAD TO.

BECAUSE OF THE STRUGGLE WAGED YOU ARE NO LONGER, "**THE SILENT, INVISIBVLE, AND FORGOTTEN MINORITY.**" IN FACT IN 2005 YOU HAVE WHAT CORKY, BERT, CESAR, REIS AND THE OTHER OF US FROM THE 60'S DIDN'T HAVE... THE NUMBERS OR A THEY SAY IN POLITICS THE "CRITICAL MASS," TO MAKE THE NECESSARY SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL CHANGES FOR OUR PEOPLE.

YOUR GENERATION WILL SOON BE THE MAJORITY IN THE SOUTHWEST, IN STATES LIKE NEW MEXICO, CALIFORNIA, ARIZONA AND TEXAS, **OR HISTORICALLY SPEAKING....AZTLAN.**

YES PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE AND CHANGE HAS COME BUT LIKE THE OLD SAYING STATES, "THE MORE THINGS CHANGE, THE MORE THEY REMAIN THE SAME." I SAY TO YOU TODAY THAT SOMETHING IS DASTARDLY WRONG WHEN,

- WE HAVE MORE OF OUR YOUNG PEOPLE IN PRISONS THAN IN COLLEGES,
- WE HAVE A MEDIAN EDUCATION OF 9 YEARS,

- WE ARE LABELED BY SOCIETY AS ‘HISPANICS,’ DENYING OUR HISTORICAL INDIAN MOTHER OR HALF OF WHO WE ARE,
- WE ARE, THE POOREST PEOPLE IN THIS SOCIETY, OUTSIDE OF OUR NATIVE AMERICAN BROTHERS AND SISTERS,
- WE ARE TREATED LIKE STRANGERS AND FOREIGNERS IN OUR FOREFATHERS LANDS AND RIGHT-WING RACIST TERRORIST VIGILANTES ANNOUNCE THEIR INTENTIONS TO HUNT DOWN MEXICANOS IN ARIZONA AND OTHER SOUTHWESTERN STATES.

I SAY TO YOU THAT WHAT IS HAPPENING IN ARIZONA IS NOTHING BUT HISTORY REPEATING ITSELF, LIKE IN 1977 WHEN THE KKK OR SHOULD I SAY THE CACA-CACA CLOWNS ANNOUNCED THEIR INTENTIONS TO STOP AND APREHEND MEXICANOS AT THE U.S./MEXICO BORDER AT SAN SYIDRO, CALIFORNIA. IN THAT YEAR CORKY HIS WIFE GERI, BERT CORONA, ABE TAPIA, ARMANDO NAVARRO AND A UNITED CHICANO COMMUNITY OF THOUSANDS DECLARED,

- ***THAT CHICANOS WOULD NOT STAND BY MEEKLY WHILE RACIST TERRORIST VIGILANTES PATROLED AND APPREHENDRD MEXICANOS AT THE U.S./MEXICO BORDER AND,***
- ***THAT ANY VIOLENCE DIRECTED BY THEM AGAINST ANY MEXICANO/CHICANO WOULD BRING AND IN KIND RESPONSE FROM THE CHICANO COMMUNITY.***

WHAT YOU ARE WITNESSING HISTORICALLY IN ARIZONA IS NOT A PATROL TO STOP ANYONE; BUT THE LAST GASPS OF WHITE SUPREMACY. WHY, BECAUSE NO ONE CAN STOP THE RIO GRANDE FROM FLOWING. IN OTHER WORDS U.S. SOCIETY HAS BETTER WAKE UP AND SMELL THE MUENDO BECAUSE WE ARE HERE TO STAY!

IN CLOSING, I WANT TO SAY THAT ALL OF US - ACTIVISTS, IMMIGRANTS, CAMPESINOS, STUDENTS, YOUNG PEOPLE, POLITICIANS, UNION LEADERS, OR EVERYDAY WORKING PEOPLE - OWE A GREAT DEBT TO RODOLFO “CORKY” GONZALES FOR THE TIME AND SACRIFICES THAT HE GAVE TO HIS PEOPLE IN OUR HISTORICAL STRUGGLE TO LIVE WITH DIGNITY AND RESPECT. THIS DEBT CAN ONLY BE REPAID BY CONTINUING THE UNFINISHED STRUGGLE THAT RODOLFO “CORKY” GONZALES LIVED AND DIED FOR.

FINALLY IN REMEMBRANCE AND HOMAGE TO RODOLFO “CORKY” GONZALES I LEAVE YOU ONE OF MY FAVORITE READINGS FROM FREDRICK DOUGLAS AN EX-SLAVE WHO STATED:

***“THOSE WHO PROFESS TO FAVOR FREEDOM, YET DEPRECATE AGITATION ARE MEN WHO WANT CROPS WITHOUT PLOWING UP THE GROUND; THEY WANT RAIN WITHOUT THUNDER AND LIGHTING; THEY WANT THE OCEAN WITHOUT ITS ALFUL ROAR OF IT MANY WATERS.***

***POWER CONCEDES NOTHING WITHOUT DEMANDS - IT NEVER DID AND IT NEVER WILL. FIND OUT JUST WHAT ANY PEOPLE WILL SUBMIT TO AND YOU HAVE FOUND THE EXACT AMOUNT OF INJUSTICE AND WRONG WHICH WILL BE IMPOSED UPON THEM; AND THIS WILL CONTINUE TIL THEY HAVE RESISTED WITH EITHER WORDS OR BLOWS OR WITH BOTH. THE LIMIT OF TYRANTS ARE PRESCRIBED BY THE ENDURANCE OF THOSE WHOM THEY SUPRESS.”***

QUE VIVA CORKY!  
 WE ARE AZTEC PRINCE AND CHRISTAN CHRIST!  
 WE SHALL ENDURE, AND WE WILL ENDURE!  
 QUE VIVA LA RAZA!  
 GRACIAS.

May 26, 2005

Estimado Herman y Carlos

The thanks is to you for putting your trust in us

The Gonzales familia is taking one day at a time may thanks to all of the support from friends

We are so sorry that we could not put you up at our house,  
After you left I got very sick and had to stay in bed for 3 days  
But there can be a next time

Thank you again and the Board for the beautiful Certificate of Appreciation we were not expecting, we have so much to be thankful for

WE HAVE "YOU"

Con Carino

Al Cardenas  
Kathleen Lucero  
4590 Quay Street  
Wheat Ridge, Colorado 80033  
1-303-467-3430 home  
1-303-877-5688 cell



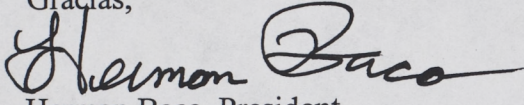
**Committee on Chicano Rights**  
**710 East Third Street • National City, CA 91950 • (619) 477-3800**

June 06, 2005

To:

A belated thanks to you for your donation, help and assistance that allowed me to attend Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales funeral and tribute in Denver Colorado on April 17, 2005. For your records, I am including copies of Corky's epic poem "I am Joaquin" and my tribute given to Corky at the event.. Without your donation, help and assistance I would not have been able to attend.

Gracias,

  
Herman Baca, President

# “I am Joaquin”



By Rodolfo “Corky” Gonzales

I am Joaquin,  
Lost in a world of confusion,  
Caught up in a whirl of a gringo society,  
Confused by the rules, Scorned by attitudes,  
Suppressed by manipulations, and destroyed by modern society.  
My fathers have lost the economic battle and won the struggle of cultural survival.  
And now! I must choose between the paradox of  
Victory of the spirit, despite physical hunger or  
to exist in the grasp of American social neurosis,  
sterilization of the soul, and a full stomach.

YES,  
I have come a long way to nowhere, Unwillingly dragged by that  
monstrous, technical industrial giant called  
progress and Anglo success...  
I look at myself, I watch my brothers.  
I shed tears of sorrow.  
I sow seeds of hate.  
I withdraw to the safety within the  
Circle of life . . .

MY OWN PEOPLE,  
I am Cuauhtemoc,  
Proud and Noble Leader of men, King of an empire,  
civilized beyond the dreams of the Gachupin Cortez,  
Who also is the blood, the image of myself.  
I am the Maya Prince.  
I am Netzahualcoyotl,  
Great leader of the Chichimecas.  
I am the sword and flame of Cortez the despot.

And



I am the Eagle and Serpent of the Aztec civilization.  
I owned the land as far as the eye could see under the crown of Spain  
and I toiled on my earth and gave my Indian sweat and blood for the Spanish master,  
who ruled with tyranny over man and beast and all that he could trample but . . .

### THE GROUND WAS MINE.

I was both tyrant and slave.  
As Christian church took its place in God's good name  
to take and use my Virgin strength and trusting faith,  
The priests both good and bad, took

But.....

gave a lasting truth that  
Spaniard, Indian, Mestizo  
Were all God's children  
And from these words grew men who prayed and fought  
for their own worth as human beings, for that

### GOLDEN MOMENT OF FREEDOM

I was part in blood and spirit of that courageous village priest  
Hidalgo in the year eighteen hundred and ten  
who rang the bell of independence  
and gave out that lasting cry:  
El Grito de Dolores,  
"Que mueran los Gachupines y que viva la Virgin de Guadalupe"  
I sentenced him who was me.  
I excommunicated him my blood.  
I drove him from the Pulpit to lead a bloody revolution for him and me, I killed him.  
His head, which is mine and all of those who have conic this way,  
I placed on that fortress wall to wall for Independence.  
Morelos!  
Matamoros!  
Guerrero!  
All Compañeros in the act,  
STOOD AGAINST THAT WALL OF INFAMY  
to feel the hot gouge of lead which my hands made.  
I died with them . . . I lived with them  
I lived to see our country free.  
Free from Spanish rule in eighteen -hundred- twenty-one.  
Mexico was Free  
The crown was gone but,

all his parasites remained and ruled and taught with gun and flame and mystic power.

I worked, I sweated, I bled, I prayed and  
waited silently for life to again commence.  
I fought and died for Don Benito Juarez Guardian of the Constitution.  
I was him on clusty roads on barren land  
as he protected his archives as Moses did his sacraments.

He held his Mexico in his hand on  
the most desolate and remote ground  
which was his country and this Giant  
Little Zapotec gave not one palm's breadth  
of his country's land to Kings or Monarchs or Presidents of foreign powers.

I am Joaquin.  
I rode with Pancho Villa, crude and warm.  
A tornado at full strength nourished and inspired by the passion and the fire of all his earth, people.

I am Emillano Zapata.  
"This Land This Earth Is OURS"  
The Villages  
The Mountains  
The Streams  
belong to Zapatistas.

Our life

Or yours is the only trade for soft brown earth and maiz.  
All of which is our reward, A creed that formed a constitution for all who dare live free!

"This land is ours . . . Father, I give it back to you.

Mexico must be free . . .'  
I ride with Revolutionists  
against myself.

I am Rural course and brutal,  
I am the mountain Indian, superior over all.  
The thundering hoof beats are my horses.  
The chattering of machine guns'  
are death to all of me:

Yaqui  
Tarahumara  
Chamula  
Zapotec  
Mestizo  
Español

I have been the Bloody Revolution,  
The Victor,  
The Vanquished,  
I have killed and been killed.  
I am despots Diaz and Huerta and the apostle of democracy  
Francisco Madero.  
I am the black shawled faithful women who die with me  
or live depending on the time and place.  
I am faithful, humble, Juan Diego, the Virgen de Guadalupe,  
Tonatzin, Aztec Goddess too.

I rode the mountains of San Joaquin. I rode as far East and North as the Rocky Mountains  
And all men feared the guns of Joaquin Murrietta.  
I killed those men who dared to steal my mine,  
who raped and Killed my Love my Wife

Then

I killed to stay alive.  
I was Elfego Baca, living my nine lives fully.  
I was the Espinoza brothers of the Valle de San Luis.  
All were added to the number of heads that in the name of civilization  
were placed on the wall of independence.

Heads of brave men who died for cause or principle.  
Good or Bad.  
Hidalgo! Zapata!  
Murrietta! Espinozas!  
are but a few.

They dared to face the force of tyranny of men who rule  
by farce and hypocrisy, I stand here looking back and now I see the present and still  
I am the campesino, I am the fat political coyote

I, of the same name, Joaquin.

In a country that has wiped out all my history, stifled all my pride.  
In a country that has placed a different weight of indignity upon my age old burdened back.  
Inferiority is the new load . . .

The Indian has endured and still emerged the winner,  
The Mestizo must yet overcome, and the Gachupin will just ignore.  
I look at myself and see part of me who rejects my father and my mother  
and dissolves into the melting pot to disappear in shame.  
I sometimes sell my brother out and reclaim him  
for my own when society, gives me token leadership  
in society's own name.

I am Joaquin, who bleeds in many ways.  
The altars of Moctezuma I stained a bloody red.  
My back of Indian Slavery  
was stripped crimson from the whips of masters who would lose their blood so pure when Revolution  
made them pay Standing against the walls of Retribution,  
Blood . . .has flowed from me on every battlefield  
between campesino, hacendado Slave and Master and Revolution.  
I jumped from the tower of Chapultepec into the sea of fame;  
My country's flag my burial shroud;  
With Los Niños, whose pride and courage  
could not surrender with indignity their country's flag . . . in their land.

To strangers now I bleed in some smelly cell from club,  
or gun, or tyranny.  
I bleed as the vicious gloves of hunger  
cut my face and eyes, as I fight my way from stinking Barrios  
to the glamour of the Ring and lights of fame or mutilated sorrow.  
My blood runs pure on the ice caked  
hills of the Alaskan Isles, on the corpse strewn beach of Normandy,  
the foreign land of Korea and now Viet Nam.

Here I stand  
before the Court of Justice Guilty for all the glory of my Raza to be sentenced to despair.  
Here I stand poor in money arrogant with pride  
Bold with Machismo Rich in courage and Wealthy in spirit and faith

My knees are caked with mud.  
My hands calloused from the hoe.

I have made the Anglo rich yet equality is but a word, the Treaty of Hidalgo has been broken  
and is but another treacherous promise. My land is lost and stolen,  
my culture has been raped, lengthen  
the line at the welfare door and fill the jails with crime.  
These then are the rewards this society has for sons of Chiefs  
and Kings and bloody Revolutionists.  
Who gave a foreign people all their skills and ingenuity  
to pave the way with Brains and Blood  
for those hordes of Gold starved Strangers  
Who changed our language and plagiarized our deeds  
as feats of valor of their own. They frowned upon our way of life  
and took what they could use.

Our Art

Our Literature

Our Music,

they ignored so they left the real things of value and grabbed at their own  
destruction by their Greed and Avarice

They overlooked that cleansing fountain of nature and brotherhood  
Which is Joaquin.

The art of our great Señors Diego Rivera  
Siqueiros, Orozco is but another act of revolution for the salvation of mankind.  
Mariachi music, the heart and soul of the people of the earth,  
the life of child, and the happiness of love  
The corridos tell the tales of life and death, of tradition,  
Legends old and new, of Joy of passion and sorrow of the people:

who I am,

I am in the eyes of woman, sheltered beneath  
her shawl of black, deep and sorrowful eyes,  
That bear the pain of sons long buried or dying, dead  
on the battlefield or on the barbwire of social strife.

Her rosary she prays and fingers  
endlessly like the family working down a row of beets to turn around and work and work  
there is no end.

Her eyes a mirror of all the warmth and all the love for me,  
And I am her, and she is me.

We face life together in sorrow.

Anger, joy, faith and wishful thoughts.

I shed tears of anguish as I see my children disappear behind the shroud of mediocrity  
never to look back to remember me.

I am Joaquin.

I must fight And win this struggle for my sons,  
and they must know from me Who I am.

Part of the blood that runs deep in me  
Could not be vanquished by the Moors  
I defeated them after five hundred years,  
and I endured.

The part of blood that is mine  
has labored endlessly five-hundred years under the heel of lustful Europeans  
I am still here!

I have endured in the rugged mountains of our country  
I have survived the toils and slavery, of the fields.  
I have existed in the barrios of the city,  
in the suburbs of bigotry, in the mines of social snobbery,  
in the prisons of dejection, in the muck of exploitation  
and in the fierce heat of racial hatred.  
And now the trumpet sounds,  
The music of the people stirs the  
Revolution, Like a sleeping giant it slowly rears its head  
to the sound of Tramping feet Clamouring voices Marlachi strains  
Fiery tequila explosions The smell of chile verde and  
soft brown eyes of expectation for a better life  
And in all the fertile farm lands, the barren plains,  
the mountain villages, smoke smeared cities

We start to MOVE.  
La Raza!  
Mejicano!  
Español!  
Latino!  
Hispano!  
Chicano!  
or whatever I call myself,  
I look the same  
I feel the same  
I cry  
and  
Sing the same  
I am the masses of my people and I refuse to be absorbed.  
I am Joaquin  
The odds are great but my spirit is strong  
My faith unbreakable  
My blood is pure  
I am Aztec Prince and Christian Christ

I SHALL ENDURE!

6/21/05

Primo,

Here is the  
article on "Corby"  
you requested.

Enjoy!

"Pepe"

## Viva Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales!

Dr. José "Pepe" Villarino, Professor Emeritus,  
Department of Chicana/Chicano Studies,  
San Diego State University

Aztlán pays tribute to our fallen hero and great warrior Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales, who has gone on to join his brethren César Chávez, Américo Paredes, Tomás Rivera, Bert Corona, Laura Rodríguez, Ron Trujillo and Lalo Guerrero, all key figures in the Chicano Civil Rights Movement.

Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales' long struggle for "La Causa" (The Cause) ended at his home in Denver, Colorado on Tuesday April 12, 2005. His indigenous belief and his affinity to The Great Spirit was portentous and like a true warrior he awaits the arrival of Netzahualcóyotl, Joaquín Murrieta, Elfejo Baca, Black Elk, Cochise, La Adelita, La Valentina, Emiliano Zapata and a host of other folk heroes and folk heroines to take his place among them.

"Corky" was born on June 18, 1928 in Denver, Colorado. Growing up in a tough poor neighborhood with his father Frederico, his mother Indalecia, (who died when "Corky" was two years old) four brothers and three sisters during the Great Depression of the 1930's prepared "Corky" for the hard times to come.

On life during the Depression "Corky" later remarked, "though the Depression was devastating to so many, as a child we were so poor that it (the Depression) was hardly noticed."

Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales graduated from Denver's Manual Arts High School in 1944 at the age of sixteen. He attended the University of Denver and studied engineering, but was unable to continue after the first quarter because of high costs. The school of hard knocks groomed "Corky" into a self-determined individual with a vision beyond the imagination of scholars and intellectuals. His life took many directions as he embarked on multiple careers and was successful in the majority of them. ("Sí se puede", "Yes it can be done"). He tried his hand at boxing and won the Amateur National Championship at 126 pounds. He was nicknamed "Corky" by his brother Tomás. "Corky" went on to become one of the best pound for pound professional featherweight fighters in the world, joining the ranks of Manuel Ortiz, Willie Pep, Sandy Saddler, Paulino Montes, Enrique Balaños and "Chief" Gordon House to name a few. Ring magazine ranked him number three in the world but he never got a title shot because no one wanted to fight him. ("Donde hay miedo mi coraje da" "all that's holding you back is fear")

Destiny would take this multitalented self-determined youngster to great heights. He entered the political arena and ran unsuccessfully for the city council. In 1952 he ran the first sports bar in Denver, "Corky's Corner". He was a life insurance agent and owned a bail bond company. "Corky" got involved in Democratic politics and helped many people get into office. He headed the Colorado "Viva Kennedy!" effort in 1960 and was director of Denver's war on poverty. In 1963 he and others established an organization called "Los Voluntarios" (The Volunteers). This organization was the forerunner of the Crusade for Justice, a human and civil rights organization that achieved social and economic rights for Chicanos, locally and nationally. On June 13, 1967 he resigned from the Democratic Party. Later in 1967, "Corky" ran unsuccessfully for

mayor of Denver. A devout follower of Ghandi's philosophy of protest through non-violence, he joined known figures such as: Martin Luther King Jr. and Angela Davis in the famous "Poor People March" to Washington D.C. in 1968. "Corky" delivered one of his major speeches on the steps of the Justice Department Building, calling for full control of our barrios (neighborhoods). He consistently advanced the rights of Native Americans throughout the Americas. Before his assassination, Martin Luther King Jr. recruited Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales and Reies López Tijerina, the leader of the Alianza Federal de Mercedes (Land grants organization), to coordinate the western portion of the Poor People Campaign.

It was during the late 60's or the early 70's that Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales and the Crusade for Justice launched their national boycott against the Adolf Coors Brewing conglomerate and one of the arms of corporate America. Coors could not brew beer fast enough to quench the thirst of it's Chicano clientele. The need was so great, that Coors was brewing beer so fast, way before it's aging process, that the brew turned into "cerveza verde", green beer, causing it's consumer the runs!. The Chicano drinking populace was one of the greatest contributors to the Coors economic dynasty and at the bottom of the totem pole when it came to hiring practices for positions in leadership roles. Chicanos were relegated to inferior jobs and low wages. Coors was the only brewery that was anti-union and would fire any employee complaining about these slave like conditions. The Crusade for Justice targeted key areas where Chicanos worked e.g. agriculture, mining, lumber and railroad industries. Cities like Los Angeles, Phoenix, Tucson, Albuquerque, Santa Fe, El Paso and San Antonio were also targeted. Bars and taverns in these communities refused to sell Coors. The majority of worker's unions, (with the exception of the Teamsters Union) César Chávez and the United Farm Workers of America along with the grape and lettuce boycott, The California Teachers Association, The Association of Mexican American Educators, the G.I. Forum and many thousands of sympathizers got on the bandwagon waving banners and posters which read; "Chale con la Coors" (Down with Coors). Coors sales have dropped below Budweiser king of beers and Miller. These are beers that Chicanos are now drinking. Adolf Coors should have smelled the coffee, "You don't spank the hand that feeds you!" This boycott hit Coors where it really hurts, the pocket book and brought down this Goliath like the walls of Jericho almost to the brink of disaster. In this new millennium Coors is trying very hard to rebuild the many bridges it burned down during the 60's. They have a long way to go; Chicanos do not forget!

Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales is known for four major contributions to the Chicano movement according to El Gallo: La Voz de la Justicia, newspaper that the Crusade for Justice publishes. The first is the publishing of "Yo soy Joaquín ("I Am Joaquín"), an epic poem in 1967 that chronicles the history of the Chicano and Indigenous people of Aztlán, the barrios of the communities populated by chicanos in the United States. "I Am Joaquín" is a social document that sought to instill Chicano pride and his focus is on Chicana women as companions in "La Causa", as well as encourages community activism in support of self-determination.

In doing so, the poem models the task of the modern hero, who must not only resolve the sociopolitical struggle for self-determination but, more importantly, come to terms with the contradictions of the cultural and spiritual reality that is Chicano identity. "Yo soy Joaquín" remains one of the most popular Chicano pieces written during the



1960's. The issues it raises are as applicable to young Chicanos and Chicanas today as when he wrote it more than thirty-seven years ago. David Conde describes "I Am Joaquín" as a work of art and explains that the literary merit of the work comes from the manner in which the poem is constructed and how theme and structure come together to produce a superior artistic experience. He further explains that its epic qualities come from the depiction of a dual journey into the post classic world of pre-Columbian meso-America as well as into the contradiction of the Chicano heritage. The second is the Crusade for Justice hosting of three National Chicano Youth Liberation Conferences in Denver in 1969, 1970 and 1971. The First National Chicano Youth Liberation Conference on March 27<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> produced El Plan Espiritual de Aztlán (The Spiritual Plan of Aztlán) which set forth broad general goals for the Chicano Movement and introduced the concept of Aztlán; the need for Chicanos to get involved in the Chicano Movement and for Chicanos to organize around their culture, around nationalism and use it as an organizing tool. It specifies that Chicano's need for cultural renewal, Chicano cultural renaissance, and the need for Chicanos to identify with their historical roots. The third is the establishing of the Crusade for Justice in 1966; this developed into a nationally known cultural center with a large building that included La Escuela and Colegio Tlatelolco fully accredited from grades pre-k through 12 and undergraduate school. Believing that education is the key to success was "Corky" Gonzales' vision of insuring that Chicano and Indigenous youth are fully educated and empowered to continue their human development through their university and post-graduate studies. The fourth contribution to the Chicano movement came through the speeches he presented as he was invited to speak throughout the country.

History will record Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales, trials and tribulations through his actions, deeds and achievements and our children and our childrens' children will read about the heroic deeds of this larger than life folk hero who along with César Chávez, Reies López Tijerina and José Angel Gutiérrez are coined "The Four Horsemen of Apocalypse".

On February 26, 2005 this reporter joined Ramón "Chunky" Sánchez, his wife Isabel and his daughter Tonantzín at "Corky" and "Geris" 56<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary in Denver, Colorado. This is the last time we were together with "Corky" on this momentous celebration. He was full of life and happiness among his family and friends. "Chunky" and I presented him a "Corrido"(Ballad) "Amigo Corky Gonzales" in his honor and I sang a Linda Ronstadt favorite "Por un amor" accompanied by Denver's own "El Mariachi Vásquez".

Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales left Aztlán at the age of 77. He left us a legacy that will endure forever. "Yo soy Joaquín" ("I Am Joaquín": an epic poem) is part of that legacy. "Yo soy Joaquín" is the archetype that represents the mass of humanity we call La Raza!, Mejicano!, Español! Latino!, Hispano!, Chicano!, or whatever I call myself, I look the same, I feel the same, I cry and sing the same, men and women coming together, laboring for the common cause of freedom and justice.

Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales was a humanitarian fighting for Chicano. human and civil rights, he was a literary genius, poet, playwright, lecturer, political activist, community organizer and a publisher.

Aztlán will not forget this charismatic and magnetic leader for he will envelop "La Raza" in an aura of grandeur...

WE SHALL ENDURE!

WE WILL ENDURE!

I AM JOAQUIN!

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

1. Message to Aztlán: Selected writings by Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales, edited by Antonio Esquibel © 2001, Arte Público Press, University of Houston, Houston, Texas
2. Tommy Camarillo: 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Chicano Park Program, page 14, Logan Heights, San Diego, California. April 23, 2005
3. Gus Chávez, retired, Sweetwater Union High School District, counselor, Chula Vista, California. May 8, 2005.
4. Herman Baca, Chair Committee on Chicano Civil Rights, National City, California. May 9, 2005.
5. Ramón "Chunky" Sánchez: "La cerveza verde", "The green beer outrage". May 10, 2005.
6. The last book of the New Testament and book of Revelation.
7. Dr. Cynthia Park, Professor of Secondary Education, School of Education, San Diego State University. May 18, 2005.
8. Dr. Ramón Merlos, retired school teacher. May 20, 2005.

## **Amigo "Corky" Gonzales**

Amigo "Corky" Gonzales  
cantamos con alegría,  
desde los años sesenta  
luchaste con valentía.

El gran concepto del barrio  
es un plan bien concebido,  
El Gallo: La Voz de la Justicia  
dio luz a lo sucedido.

El congreso de estudiantes  
y La Escuela Tlatelolco  
es lucha de un hermano,  
Pa'l Movimiento Chicano.

Diste todo de tu parte  
sin celos, sin avaricia,  
armaste bien a tu gente  
para lograr la justicia.

La fuerza de apocalipsis  
La Cruzada recibió,  
de Reies y José Angel  
de César y "Corky" nació.

Todo no ha sido en vano  
porque mucho se alcanzó,  
"Corky" con "Geri" a su lado  
grande familia formó.

\*Martes, el doce de abril  
dos mil cinco del presente  
Rodolfo se despidió  
diciendo adiós a su gente.

\*Vuela, vuela palomita  
vuela y sigue volando  
llévate a "Corky" a la gloria  
que del cielo esté mirando.

Vuela, vuela palomita  
vuela con mucho afan  
gran legacia dejaste,  
El Plan Espiritual de Aztlán.

Despedida no les damos  
porque aun no terminamos,  
pero con "Corky" y La Raza  
esta lucha sí ganamos.

\* These two stanzas were added after the passing of Rodolfo  
"Corky" Gonzales.

**Dr. Jose "Pepe" Villarino y Ramón "Chunky" Sánchez**





ABE TAPIA HERMAN BACA CORKY GONZALES HENRY COLLINS 1976

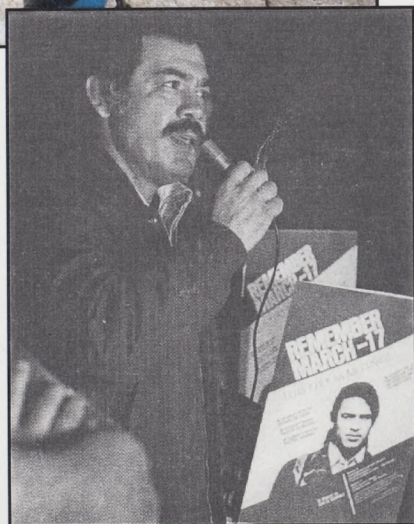
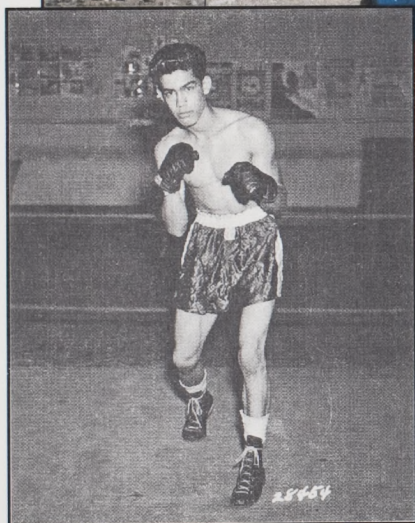




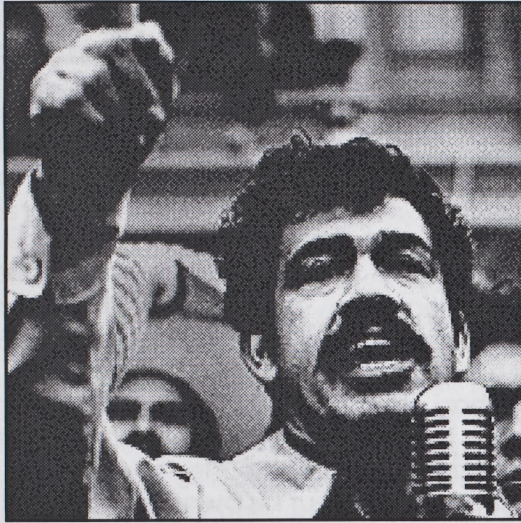




# *IN REVOLUTIONARY MEMORY OF*



**RODOLFO "CORKY" GONZALES**  
**JUNE 18, 1928 ~ APRIL 12, 2005**



***"I shed tears of anguish  
As I see my children disappear  
Behind the shroud of mediocrity  
Never to look back to remember me.  
I am Joaquin.***

***I must fight  
and win this struggle  
for my sons, and they  
must know from me Who I am."***

***(From "I am Joaquin/Yo soy Joaquin"  
by Rodolfo Gonzales)***

**Rodolfo Corky Gonzales  
1928 - 2005**

# BIOGRAPHY

And so - Rodolfo Gonzales, a political activist destined to take the lead, set the example, and inspire many people, chose his fight: "The Crusade For Justice". Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales was born in Denver on June 18, 1928 to Federico and Indalesia Gonzales. He was the youngest of five brothers and three sisters, Nattie, Beatrice, Tomas, Esperanza, Federico, Severino, and Arturo. Corky's mother died when he was two years old and his father never re-married, but managed somehow to keep the Gonzales family together. The senior Gonzales ruled his household with a firm hand, tempered with love.

The children grew up in the tough eastside barrio of Denver during the devastating Depression. Rodolfo said, "Though the Depression was devastating to so many, we, as children, were so poor that it (the Depression) was hardly noticed."

Corky's father had emigrated from Mexico to Colorado early in life and often spoke to Corky about the Mexican Revolution, Mexico's history, and the pride of the Mexican people. Thus leaving little doubt in Corky's mind about his own identity - and possibly his destiny.

With the tremendous obstacles that faced Rodolfo from an early age, it is truly astonishing that he persevered in the Denver educational system to earn his high school Diploma at the age of 16. The accomplishment is magnified by the fact that from an early age, Rodolfo worked in the beet fields and at various other jobs that left little time for study. Corky attended many schools including schools in New Mexico as well as schools in Denver, Gilpin, Whittier, Lake, Baker, West, and finally Manual High School from which he graduated in 1944.

During his final year in high school and the subsequent summer, Corky worked hard to save money for a college education. With a keen interest in engineering, Corky entered the University of Denver, but after the first quarter realized that the financial cost was insurmountable. Rodolfo then pursued a career in Boxing. An outstanding amateur national champion Rodolfo became one of the best featherweight (125 lb) fighters in the world. Even though Ring Magazine ranked Corky number three in the world, he never got a justly deserved title shot.

In the mid-1960's, Rodolfo Gonzales founded an urban civil rights and cultural movement called the Crusade for Justice. Soon he became one of the central leaders in the Chicano movement and a strong proponent of Chicano nationalism. In the late sixties and early seventies, Corky Gonzales organized and supported high school walkouts, demonstrations against police brutality, and legal cases. He also organized mass demonstrations against the Vietnam War. In 1968 Gonzales led a Chicano contingent in the Poor People's

March on Washington, D.C. While there, he issued his "Plan of the Barrio" which called for better housing, education, barrio-owned businesses, and restitution of pueblo lands. He also proposed forming a Congress of Aztlan to achieve these goals.

One of the most important roles played by Gonzales was as an organizer of the Annual Chicano Youth Liberation Conference, an ambitious effort to create greater unity among Chicano youth. These Conferences brought together large numbers of Chicano youth from throughout the United States and provided them with opportunities to express their views on self-determination. The first conference in March 1969 produced a document, "EL PLAN ESPIRITUAL DE AZTLAN (THE SPIRITUAL PLAN OF AZTLAN)", which developed the concept of ethnic nationalism and self-determination in the struggle for Chicano liberation. The second Chicano Youth Conference in 1970 represented a further refinement in Corky Gonzales's efforts toward Chicano self-determination, the formation of the Colorado Raza Unida Party.

During this time Corky and his wife, Geraldine Romero Gonzales, raised a family of six daughters and two sons, Nita, mother of two children; Charlotte, mother of three; Gina, mother of three; Gail, mother of four; Rudy, father of one; Joaquin, father of three; Cindy, mother of two; and Valerie, mother of two. All their children remain in Denver and continue to carry on Corky's fight with his guidance. Corky is proud of his family, especially the twenty-four grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren. Recently celebrating his fifty-sixth wedding anniversary, Corky attributed the closeness and strength of his family to his beloved wife, Geraldine, who has been his most enthusiastic and ardent supporter.

In many ways, Corky Gonzales has greatly influenced the Chicano movement. His key to liberation for the Chicano community is to develop a strong power base with heavy reliance on nationalism among Chicanos. His contributions as a community organizer, youth leader, political activist, and civil rights advocate have helped to create a new spirit of Chicano unity.

Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales' life has been a collage of challenges that have been met and overcome. He has never wavered in his commitment to enhance the lives of his people in this country, to change what is not fair, what is not right. As long as there are injustices, double standards, racism, and apathy, Corky's dedication, loyalty, and love of the struggle against these diseases of society will serve as an inspiration for all people to act.

In his column in the *Denver Post* of January 6, 1988, Tom Gavin wrote,

"He's grizzled now, and gray,  
but he stands tall, Corky Gonzales does,  
and taller still, Rodolfo "I am Joaquin" Gonzales.  
The one was a pretty good boxer, the other is a leader of men."

# RODOLFO CORKY GONZALES

## COMMUNITY CELEBRATION AND MEMORIAL

**Welcoming of the Raza**

*Mariachi Vasquez*

**Honoring Prayer**

*Robert Cross*

**Remembering our Grandfather  
through his poetry and song**

*By the Grandchildren*

**Primavera**

*Daniel Valdez*

*Accompanied by Grandchildren  
and Great Grandchildren*

**Words of Homage**

*Family Statements*

*Dolores Huerta*

*Co-Founder, United Farm Workers Assn.*

**Musica del Corazon**

*Ramon Chunky Sanchez*

*California and Chicano Park*

**Bailes de Vera Cruz**

*Performed by Grupo Folklorico Sabor Latino*

### **Words of Homage**

*Luis Vinieagra, Arizona*

*Maria Subia, Pueblo*

*Van Lucero, Denver*

*Antonio Esquibel, Denver*

### **Spirit Song**

*Seven Generations: Daniel Valdez*

*With Denver Chicano Voices y Tlatelolco children*

*America De Los Indios*

### **Words of Homage**

*Herman Baca, California*

*Kenneth Padilla, Denver*

*Glenn Morris, Denver*

*Walter Gerash, Denver*

### **Honoring Corky Gonzales' Legacy of Unity**

*Brother Jeff Fard*

*Cleo Parker Robinson Youth Dance Ensemble*

### **Cultural & Poetry Tribute**

*El Centro Su Teatro*

*Alurista*

*Margie Domingo*

### **Spirit Prayer**

*Enriqueta Vasquez*

### **Closing Tribute**

*Ramon "Chunky" Sanchez*

*Yo Soy Chicano*

**RODOLFO CORKY GONZALES...PRESENTE!**

# TLATELOLCO

## TLATELOLCO TLA-TE-LOL-CO TLA-TE-LOL-CO

La plaza de las tres culturas  
 La calle de sangre de niños guerrilleros  
 La escuela de liberación Chicana  
 Ahora se comienza y nunca llega el fin.

## TLATELOLCO TLA-TE-LOL-CO

La educación nunca se acabe  
 mientras que los ojos de niños  
 están abiertos y los sueños son posibles.

## TLATELOLCO TLA-TE-LOL-CO

History is the past and history is in the making.  
 The future is yours and ours.  
 Minds and muscles leap like running  
 antelopes and grasp the food of knowledge  
 like hungry jaguars in ancient jungles.

## TLATELOLCO TLA-TE-LOL-CO

We have made the beginning of history  
 and the future can only bring success.  
 Our souls bound together into one solid family.

## TLATELOLCO TLA-TE-LOL-CO

Where laughter rings constantly  
 instead of hourly mechanical bells  
 where frustration and happiness mingle freely  
 as all life should.

## TLATELOLCO TLA-TE-LOL-CO

Open up the doors to ancient secrets  
 open up our minds to future solutions  
 prepare us to settle for no less  
 than total liberation.

## TLATELOLCO TLA-TE-LOL-CO

Liberate our minds to enter plazas of wisdom.  
 Liberate our hearts to share the fruit  
 of all our knowledge.  
 Liberate our bodies to work for the good of  
 La Raza and all mankind.

## TLATELOLCO TLA-TE-LOL-CO

Make us into a family  
 create of us a tribe  
 teach us to build a nation.

## TLATELOLCO TLA-TE-LOL-CO



## QUOTES

*"Each generation takes one more step up the ladder to liberation and humanism;*

*'Never let the world change you, change the world it's yours."*

**Rodolfo Corky Gonzales**

*"We are a Mestizo Race from Alaska to the Magellan Straight."*

**Che Guevara**

*"By any means necessary."*

**Malcom X**

*"I have a dream..."*

**Martin Luther King, Jr .**

*"A revolutionary act is an act of love."*

**Che Guevara**

*"The basis of revolution is land."*

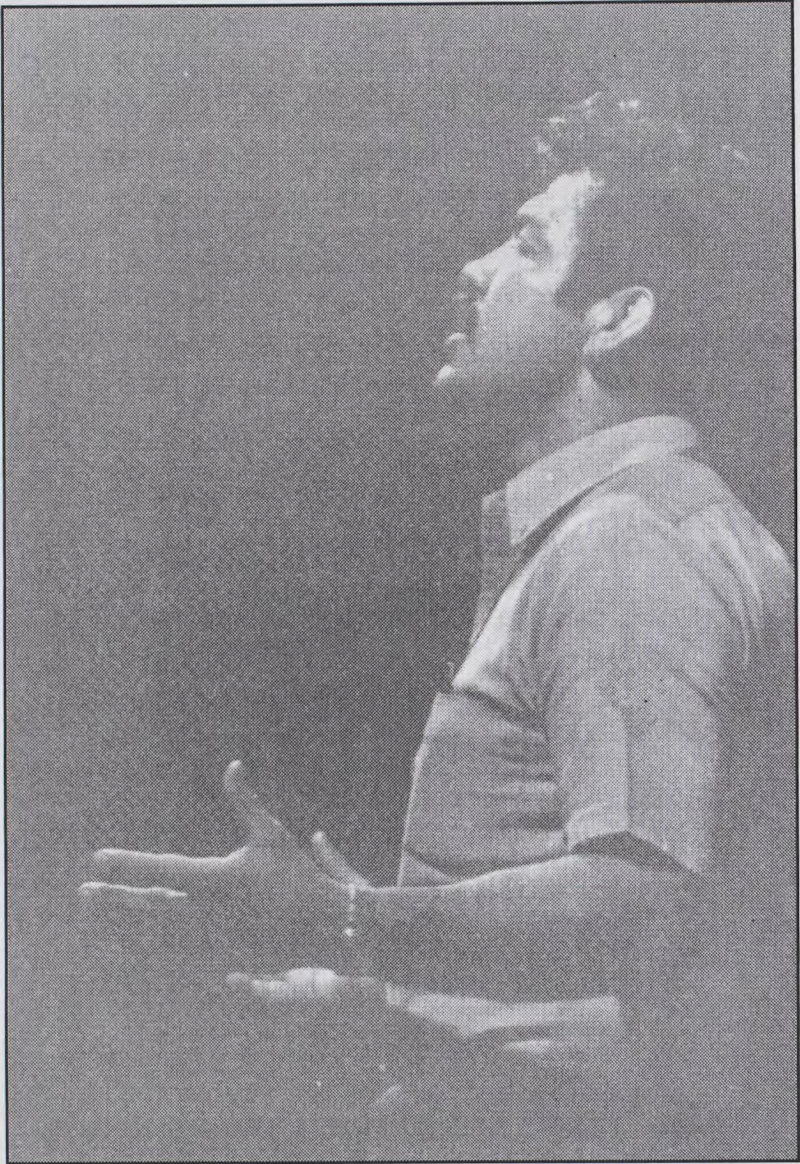
**Malcom X**

*"There's no turning back...we will win. We are winning because ours is a revolution of mind and heart."*

**Cesar Chavez**

*"And he laughed while he danced!"*

**Rodolfo Corky Gonzales**



Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales speaking at the First National Chicano Youth Leadership Conference held at the Crusade for Justice Building in Denver, Colorado, from March 29-31, 1969

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I am Aztec Prince and Christian Christ  
I SHALL ENDURE!  
I WILL ENDURE!



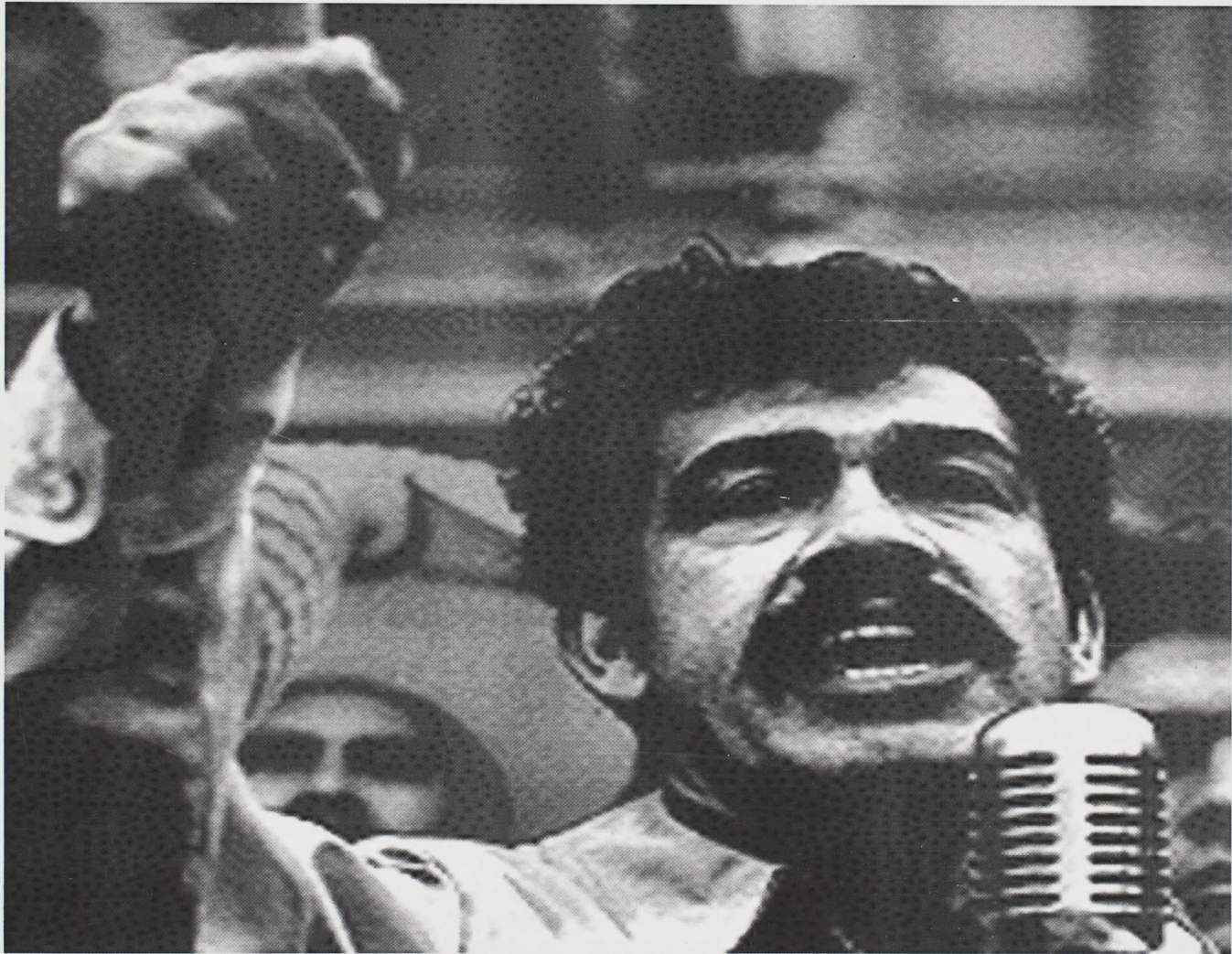
*“No man has a right to oppress people and all  
oppressed people have the right to revolution.”*



# el sembrador

Spring 2005

**THIS ISSUE OF el sembrador IS DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY OF RODOLFO "CORKY" GONZALEZ.....**



"...I LOOK AT MYSELF.  
I WATCH MY BROTHERS.  
I SHED TEARS OF SORROW.  
I SOW SEEDS OF HATE.  
I WITHDRAW TO THE THE SAFETY  
WITHIN THE CIRCLE OF LIFE-  
MY OWN PEOPLE."

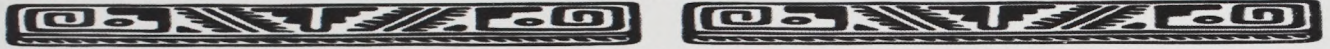


el sembrador publications

## Editorial

Now more than ever we as Chicanos and all indigenous people need to have clarity as to who we are. Even within our organization there seems to be confusion as to who we are, and ultimately what it is that we want. Who are we? This question is more important than people think. Our situation is in fact related to our own feelings of ambiguity.

There even seems to be confusion as to whether we are "Indigenous" or "settlers" to this land. We to embrace the "Indigenous" image but due to our confusion we still insist in placing ourselves in the middle. We fail to realize that our being is a result of a violation and not mutual accord. Simultaneously we forget that the "Native" in the reservations has been subjected to the same violent merging of the two cultures thus there are in fact very few "pure Native" individuals. This placing of the Native Image as an untouchable entity also produces a distorted view of our present situation. This in no way is disrespecting those that participate to "Indigenous" spiritualism but rather taking a clear and honest view as to what that means. Indigenous Spiritualism is the same as European-Spiritualism they are both the view that our lives and the world are beholden to that particular spiritual entity, god or creator. There should not be any problem respecting either as long as we understand that that respect has to be reciprocal.



**La Raza Unida and study, "The significant problems we face cannot be solved by the same level of thinking that created them." – Albert Einstein.**

As individuals, what can we do in order to advance the cause of liberation? As has been said by others, "Movement is a verb, not a noun." Individually and collectively, the first and most important thing we must do is to educate ourselves. There are important in which we must concentrate for this. Our first and main point is to learn about our indigenous history and culture. The major part of history in this continent occurred prior to the arrival of Europeans. Community control, environmentalism, greater equality among genders, collectivism, and a wide variety of communal organization existed before the savages arrived on these lands. Much of what people now want to create from scratch, existed already and in many cases continue to exist within the indigenous traditions. There is little need to create new things; it is more like we need to unlearn the materialism and other dysfunctions of colonial society. As Guillermo Bonfil Batalla stated, "it is time to look at Western culture from our indigenous perspective as opposed to judging indigenous culture from Western eyes".

Secondly, a serious commitment must be made to engage in extensive education within the socio-political aspects of our current situation. The Party has maintained that it is important to understand where we have been and where we should go as a people; as a movement. This will require an extensive amount of education. The days of just "getting out the vote" and symbolic actions need to become part of our history. It is time to move forward. Hopefully the days of supporting candidates because they are "the lesser of two evils," or because of their "Spanish surname" are also over.

Much of our community is still stuck in the pattern that has not reduced the number of our youth in prisons or high drop out rates. This is a pattern that supports politicians while maintaining our poverty, lack of health care, and militarization of our communities from the borders to the barrios. The Movement as a whole still seems to be wandering as a traveler without a compass. Collectively, we need to understand where we've been and where we want to go. This will require a development of revolutionary intellectuals (usually not the type developed in colleges and universities). For the current situation it seems fairly clear that we need to be more intellectually armed than in the past. We cannot afford lots of energy taking on all causes without thinking through, what the best use of our limited resources is. Because of the ever-growing complexity of society, we'll need more multifaceted tactics to gain wins in the future.

**continued on page 3**

# Manifesto

Aware that the colonizer, has hidden, our history, culture and identity, converting the colonization of "America" into a "Discovery", and burying in the deepest corner of our mind that horrendous act of inhumanity. Minimizing the destruction and death of America by the colonizer which in fact would make the Jewish Holocaust seem small. Understanding that the Colonization, has obstructed our growth, we uphold, our humanity which has created an everlasting bond between all colonized peoples' of Las Americas, which is, LA RAZA.

This barbaric act crystallized of our identity as Chicanos here in our mother land Aztlan. In addition to the colonization by Europe, Chicanos, have been subject to U.S. settler colonialism. This second colonization deepened the subjugation of La Raza, converting us into an internal colony, "strangers in our own land", and slaves of Capitalism.

Now, after 512 years of resistance to colonization. Our people continue to struggle for, self-determination. We are the result of that inhumane acts of barbarism, and the triumph of a new people. We know, our past, present and future.

Our quest to heal can't wait for the colonizer to rectify its inhumanity; we must resolve it for ourselves. We are aware that the colonizer will not willingly become, humane or just, thus it's up to us, to organize, raise the consciousness of our people, liberating the, hearts and minds of humanity.

TODAY WE SAY, YA BASTA! In the barrios of Aztlan, the U.S. "Indian" reservations or in the fantasies of, Capitalist Consumer America, "WE ARE ONE PEOPLE AND ONE STRUGGLE!"

UNITY in Aztlan is a must. All indigenous nations and people must not remain a fragmented people. For too long has our history and struggle been concealed, it is time to "get up and stand up" Our history and struggle must be known, Cuahutemoc. Crazy Horse, Geronimo, Joaquin, Cortina, Vasquez, Zapata, Magon, Las Adelitas, Emma Tenayuca, and Che, must echo in the minds of our children, as inspiration for liberation. Los Cortinistas (1850), El Plan De San Diego Texas (1910) the Zoot Suit Movement (1940). El Plan Espiritual de Aztlan (1968), Yo Soy Joaquin, the Chicano Power Period (1965-1975), is testimony to our identity as Chicanos and Aztlan as our motherland.

El Nuevo Amanecer is near, and Aztlan shines from within our hearts, freeing our minds from the vendido's excuses and justifications. THERE ARE NO MORE EXCUSÉS!

Revolutionary Chicanismo, which is based on our protracted struggle, viewed through the movements of our indigenous Chicano People, and projected within the perspectives of international revolutionary examples, is our ideology. Chicano Revolutionary Nationalism is the synthesis of, who we were, what we have become, and what is ours. Unity is indispensable and possible. But Unity requires, work, consciousness and a clear ideological perspective, which is Revolutionary Chicanismo. Revolutionary Nationalism opposes the system that oppresses all working class communities, and struggles for democracy and a better world for all people. Yes, Raza, Esta Es nuestra tierra, Esta es nuestra Lucha. "The Bronze Continent", La Patria Grande, and state once and for all that, we, ARE NOT IMMIGRANTS! We are Chicanos and Aztlan hungers her liberation. Aztlan lives, in our barrios, in our schools and universities and in our hearts and minds, WE ARE AZTLAN!

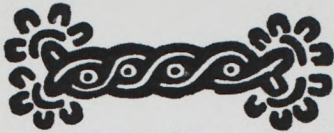
And there can't be any rest until Aztlan becomes that awaited truth. We make no apologies for affirming our national identity as Chicanos and our struggle for our Land, AZTLAN, "Que viva el Pueblo Chicano, Que viva Aztlan Libre!"

August 28, 2004, Partido

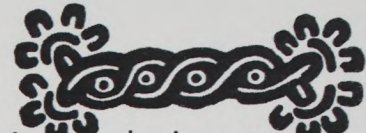
It is important to understand that living in a colonial society is living in a society where one group has decided to wage war on the rest of society. A class society is automatically one where the owning class has decided to wage class warfare upon the rest of society in order to maintain its wealth and privilege. This becomes a society in which survival victory come to those who prepare. Our mistakes of the past in which we blindly "get out the vote," supported people based on their surname, voted for the lesser of two evils, sexism, homophobia, sectarianism, authoritarianism, lack of structure, etc., will need to be addressed. By studying these mistakes, we will understand and move forward because this will provide a great meaning to a movement. La Raza Unida believes that continuous discussion of ideas and application in action will guide one and improve the lives of our communities, the de-colonization of U.S. society, and provide an example for others. The main purpose of study within the organization is to create and encourage dialogue among Party members and those interested in working for the end of colonization. Articles, discussion bulletins, other Party documents, and other readings will hopefully serve as catalysts for group discussion and action for all groups involved in liberation activities. Study is probably the most misunderstood aspect of PNLRU activities. This is the result of the "plug-in" nature of the quick-fix, television oriented, popular culture of the United States. Because study is usually separated from concrete action in schools and universities, many of us fall victim to the unnatural separation of mind and body. This extends to new members who often have a difficult time connecting the relationship between study and action. La Raza Unida encourages study because study has the potential of deeply changing the way we see things. When we change our viewpoint, it is also possible to change our actions. It often takes time before a change in perspective becomes a change in behavior. Sincere study will lead to deep behavioral changes which will contribute to better action. Individual study has the advantage of people being able to go through great amounts of information in a short time. Group study, as in all of our organizing components, provides the benefit of discussion and the sharing of individual experiences to reach a group perception and coordinated actions. Collective behavior is a key to any successful movement. Coordinated action does not mean "follow-THE-leader" but it does mean "we're all going in the same direction" as a group. (The "follow-THE-leader" type of organization is one of the shortcomings of our past.)

A good study group will work to reach a common vision as a community of people. Sometimes the process of getting consensus, or at least everyone being able to somewhat agree, will mean occasional inaction. A sincere group will act when appropriate and use the action to further discuss what was learned. A focused group will not confuse the principle of "education being a pathway to liberation" as meaning that study without action is liberation. Study is never an excuse for inaction for study and action go hand in hand. Reading and reflecting through group discussion should be balanced and lead to a group which reflects deeply and acts effectively. Action without reflection is often movement for the sake of "business." Reflection without action is just having empty thoughts. Neither "perpetual motion" nor "armchair revolutionaries" are goals of the PNLRU. Liberation (the removal of oppressive constraints) will require action that has been thoroughly planned out and thought. A positive action is one that is well coordinated, well organized and carried out by groups of people who sincerely believe in what they are doing. Neither pure action nor study alone can provide these results. This is the catch; what is our commitment to action? A movement is defined by the commitment of its participants. Are we serious about being a Liberation Movement, or are we a social club? How many inconveniences are we willing to deal with in order to actually fill the needs of our communities? Will we put ourselves out there? Will we just become advocates, keeping ourselves safe and comfortable?

The changes that came from the "Chicano Power" period, came because of action (and at a great price to some). All of the progress that has been rolled-back has been because of lack of effective action. The assertion of our self-determination will require inconvenience. If we are to accomplish anything of value for future generations, instead of hoping they will do something, it will come because of action. The saying, "By Any Means Necessary", implies an understanding of all actions available which will require study. The goal of a world where "No man, woman, or child, oppresses another", will only happen when we study, grow and commit to true liberal action!



## Chicana Artist



Tucson, AZ (June 2004) - Tanya Alvarez is not your typical artist; in fact she is a green-eyed, freckled, dark-haired, vibrant Chicana artist from Tucson, Arizona. Tanya is also a graduate from the University of Arizona and holds a B.A. in Studio Arts and Psychology. Tanya feels honored to have been published in a well respected series of books written by Gary Keller Ph.D. Five of her paintings will be published along with her biography in the book called "Triumph of Our Community: Four Generations of Chicana/o Art", written by Ph. D. Gary Keller and Published by ASU. The book will be studied at Universities and Colleges of Art Nationally. She exhibited her bold, strong, and detailed paintings in her first one-person-show presented by Aztlan Artifacts Gallery in Tucson. Tanya's strength lies within a strong family and many friends. She comes from a proud Mexican-American family which includes a grandfather who was a POW and a survivor of the Bataan Death March, and a father who is also a painter and retired Vietnam War veteran. Her parents nurtured her natural curiosity of different cultures, and her passion for the arts. In her homeland of Tucson she painted, and embraced her native and indigenous ways, to integrate back into her place of birth and replenish her roots. Her work is meticulously and traditionally hand painted; brush stroke by brush stroke. She uses symbolism and iconography familiar to her community of the south side barrios of Tucson. She shows the evolution of spirit and unity through symbols that represent a unique intellectual achievement in this part of the world. By using these symbols, her images challenge the social stigmas and stereo-types of her community while emphasizing positive and strong intellectual women. Her paintings are a spiritual reflection of who she is, Tanya explains. They mirror her strengths, weaknesses and the struggles that her community has overcome. She is inspired by stories of strength, stories of the southwest, her resilient Mexican-American culture, the ornate style of her ancestors and by artisans of the Mayan and Azteca/Tolteca tribes. Tanya's paintings are on display in Tucson, Washington D. C., Texas, New Mexico, and California. She presents an interpretation of the Chicana experience to the American public. Email Tanya: xica474@aol.com

## Towards a National Liberation Movement

The Indigenous population within the US (including the Chican@ people), with Asian, African, Hawaiian, and Puerto Riqueño heritage, continue to have a colonial relationship with the United States. The high incarceration rates, dropout rates, substance abuse, diabetes and other diseases within our communities are directly related to colonial oppression. We can choose to fight piecemeal each issue, or go to the fundamental roots of imperialistic oppression. The world history of colonized peoples teaches us that the colonized become absorbed (I.e. cultural genocide), destroyed (I.e. physical genocide), or gain some form of liberation. Unfortunately the colonized are discouraged from concretely thinking about the issues of colonization and liberation; this becomes part and parcel of the genocidal processes.

Unless we have already become assimilated into US society we must seriously consider our de-colonization and our right to determine our political, economic, social and cultural development. The definition of "National Liberation Movement" used here will be, a movement for the liberation of a nationality of people. The Charter of the United Nations uses the term "peoples" synonymously with "nations" or "States." Liberation is often used also synonymously with self-determination. Self-determination signifies, "the inalienable right of all peoples to choose their own political, economic and social system and their own international status." One point of view is as follows, "The fact is that, whenever in the course of history a people has become aware of being a people, all definitions have proved superfluous." I Plan Espiritual de Aztlan espouses our belief in our sovereignty, and our indigenous heritage. But it also points out a disbelief in "capricious borders" and that our nationality is composed as a "union of free pueblos." The idea of a union of free pueblos is very rarely explored in many discussions.

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 5**



# UN CRITO REBELDE



## YO SOY JOAQUIN!

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In today's context it can be looked at as a way to deal with the sovereignty of the many indigenous nations that had not relinquished sovereignty to México nor the US during the invasion of northern México. If one recognizes that all States on the continent are the result of colonization, the point of forming a Nation-State on the basis of maps created by colonizers is not as important as liberating the hundreds of nations within the US and continent. Recognizing the sovereignty of all indigenous nations also avoids continued colonization. Recognizing and overcoming the internalized colonization that disrespects indigenous nations by labeling them as non-native, or by denying them recognition as nations, will move all liberation movements within the US a great deal.

We must create organizations that reflect the future we wish to see: free, open, and truly democratic! Organization is important because it allows us to multiply our strength and activity. Organization will be how our deepest ideas, hopes and dreams can come to realization. Our organizations will need to encourage and inspire self-determination in the membership, and encourage true grassroots involvement. If we want participation, then organizations will need to be structured to allow everyone the maximum potential to participate. We do not need neither charismatic leaders, tyrants nor bureaucrats any longer! Our theories and ideologies must come from more than books! True, we must enrich current and ongoing social struggles with our ideas and suggestions, but more importantly, we must enrich our ideas and theories by experience and practice. The purpose of truly revolutionary, or liberatory, organization is not to get people to listen to speeches by expert leaders, but to get people to speak for themselves. Some of the basic tasks of local liberation organizing committees are to study writings of groups in the movement, discuss their own ideas, politics, and hopes, what they plan to do, organize their propaganda work, and how to work with other organizations and the wider community. In short, local liberation organizing committees will be autonomous models of a new society. Local organizing groups will apply their knowledge of local conditions and develop policies and actions that reflect those conditions. Locally and among the different cooperative levels, groups will work to coordinate with those sharing common purposes and work to avoid harming the work of others, respecting agreements made. Sharing information on lessons learned and successes will be an important aid to all, and will be a good practice to develop. Obviously, only when self-determination ideals are accepted by vast majorities of the community will a different society be possible. These ideals will be spread by propaganda and by participation in the life of the community. Bringing new discussions may help people develop a trust for national liberation workers. True collaboration and participation will allow people the trust to listen to liberation workers. Part of the development of the movement will be the creation of "new beings" - liberated beings! Our goal is people who are clear of their own internal colonizers (the voices in our heads that make us conform to oppression), and the external consent created by society (what Chomsky refers to as "Manufacture of Consent"). People attempt to resist complete annihilation of themselves by ways that seem as individualistic but are often the only ways people can think of to resist. We will have to be aware that people will develop consciousness at different speeds and in different ways based on their personal experiences and the media, current patriotism, state and business propaganda, and of course direct and indirect repression. Those people who feel they have gone through a stage of consciousness can play a key role - to aid those going through it! The role of those of us who consider ourselves conscious would not be to indoctrinate, but to encourage development and clarification of awareness and activities. Of course we can provide propaganda that exposes the current social system as bankrupt and encourage resistance to oppression and exploitation. This may seem slow, but it will be a deeper transformation bringing more activists for freedom to the movement. The people who learn to express themselves they have a greater potential to become the new beings needed for the liberation of humanity. The best consciousness will be that derived from the concrete experience of confronting oppression and colonialism. Encouraging people to take all the freedom they can and to become responsible for providing for their own needs through collective and individual action is another way to phrase this. Meaningful revolutionary action can be measured by looking at what increases the confidence, initiative, solidarity, and self-determined activity of communities.

# All-African People's Revolutionary Party



Hermanos, Hermanas, Brothers and Sisters,  
El Partido Nacional de La Raza Unida sends its warmest, and revolutionary salutations to our compañeros of the All African People's Revolutionary Party, on this heroic, Afrikan Liberation Day. Celebration May 28, 2005. We reaffirm our commitment to work for the unity of both our communities. And vow that THE Partido Nacional de La Raza Unida is cognizant of the historic ties between Afrikans and Chicano people in the Americas. We salute the work of the All Afrikan People's Revolutionary Party and the carnalismo (brotherhood) extended Chicano people. We affirm our commitment to work for the unity between Africans and Raza, and stand unwavering against any attempt to divide us.

**please contact us:**

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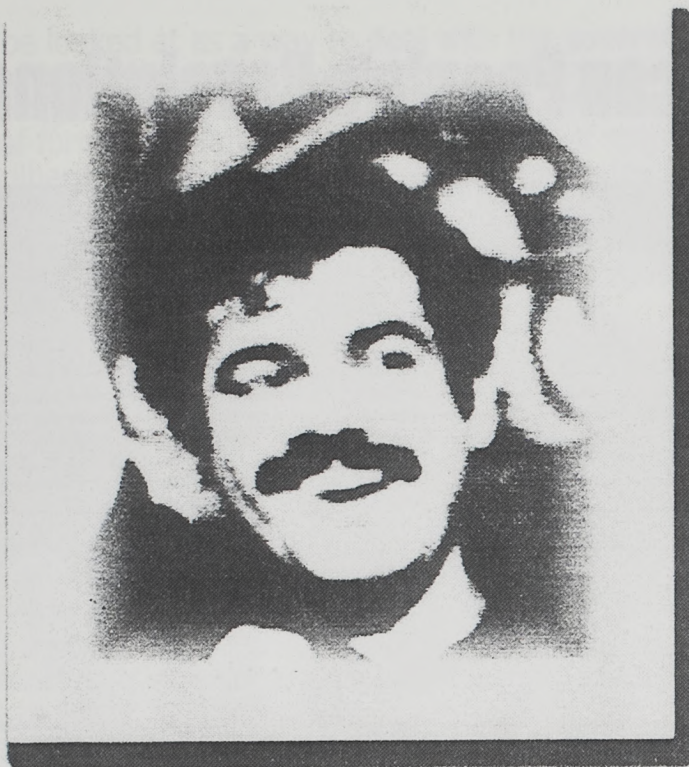
A-APRP

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In 1966 noted in the Handbook of Revolutionary Warfare, Kwame Nkrumah called for the formation of the All-African People's Revolutionary Party (AAPRP). Nkrumah understood that Africans could not restrict the bounds of the liberation struggle to the colonialist created borders, but instead must organize a political force that spans not only throughout the African continent, but the larger African world as well. Taking this banner and holding it high, the AAPRP over the last 35+ years has organized work-study circles throughout Africa. Europe, the Caribbean, Canada and the United States. Understanding the historic role that African Women have played throughout the history of the world and the fact that African Women suffer under triple oppression in the form of national oppression (as Africans), class oppression (as workers and peasants) and gender oppression (as women), the AAPRP in 1980 founded the All-African Women's Revolutionary Union (AAWRU) as its internal women's wing.

**VIVA  
RODOLFO  
"CORKY"  
GONZALEZ!**



**CHICANO**  
★  
**POWER!**

1929-2005 TU EJEMPLO VIVE EN EL MOVIMIENTO CHICANO

ON APRIL 12, 2005 RODOLFO "CORKY" GONZALEZ PASSED AWAY. THOUGH IT IS A LOSS FOR OUR COMMUNITY AND MOVEMENT WE REMEMBER WITH JOY HIS DEDICATION TO OUR MOVEMENT AND HIS LOVE FOR FAMILY AND HIS PEOPLE. "CORKY" LIVES IN THE HEARTS AND MINDS OF ALL WHO KNEW HIM.

ALL MOVEMENTS FOR SELF-DETERMINATION AND LIBERATION PRODUCE A FEW INDIVIDUALS THAT DEDICATE THEIR LIVES FOR THAT MOVEMENT AND LIBERATION. INDIVIDUALS THAT EMBODY ALL THAT IS POSITIVE, AND ADMIRABLE IN A PEOPLE. CORKY WAS THAT, HE WAS THE CHICANO MOVEMENT, THE REVOLUTION AND ALL THAT IS BEAUTIFUL IN OUR PEOPLE.

IT IS THE POSITION OF THE PARTIDO NACIONAL DE LA RAZA UNIDA THAT THE BEST WAY TO HONOR CORKY GONZALEZ IS TO LIVE LIKE HIM, TO PUT HIS PRINCIPLES INTO ACTIONS, ADVANCING HIS DREAM OF A FREE AZTLAN, AND FOR CHICANITAS AND CHICANITOS TO LIVE WITH PRIDE AND DIGNITY AS A BRONZE PEOPLE ON A BRONZE CONTINENT.

EN ABRIL 12 DEL PRESENTE FALLECIO RODOLFO "CORKY" GONZALEZ, SU VIDA Y EJEMPLO VIVIRA EN NUESTRA COMUNIDAD Y MOVIMIENTO, SU VIDA FUE UN EJEMPLO DEL AMOR Y LA LUCHA DEL PUEBLO CHICANO MEXICANO.

ES LA OPINION DEL PARTIDO NACIONAL DE LA RAZA UNIDA QUE LA MEJOR MANERA DE HONRAR A CORKY GONZALEZ ES VIVIENDO COMO EL. DEDICADO A LA LIBERACION DEL PUEBLO CHICANO MEXICANO, Y EL GRAN AMOR QUE SENTIMOS POR NUESTRA GENTE  
**CORKY VIVE, LA LUCHA SIGUE!!**

**QUE VIVA LA AUTO-DETERMINACION Y LIBERACION DEL PUEBLO  
CHICANO**

PARTIDO NACIONAL DE LA RAZA UNIDA-PO BOX 13 SAN FERNANDO, CALIFAZTLAN 91340

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# Gonzalez Cites Woes Of Chicano People

Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales, chairman of the Crusade For Justice and editor of the Chicano newspaper "El Gallo", discussed Mexican American problems in his speech to a near capacity crowd last Thursday in the Heritage Room of the Trident Lounge. Throughout his nearly two-hour talk he repeated his theme for change and new goals for the Chicano people. He proposed that the Chicano realizing who he is and where he is bringing about this kind of change should come first.

"We have a dense Anglo American Society. Many of us are brainwashed in this society. We have the machinery that makes most minorities the new conservatives of our society. They identify with "success" as the Anglo image. The system tells us to have a white Anglo Saxon image of what we are. Yet our schools are policed like concentration camps".

On government, Gonzales put down the Mexican American politician in general. He claimed that once they are elected they no longer care about their constituents. He also condemned government for poverty programs, "that get back in the hands of the corporations. Food Stamps get back in the hands of the corporations who control the economy of the system."

Considerable emphasis is focused on the Chicano being brainwashed by the mass media and movies. He discussed. For example movies that depict the Chicano dying to save the Anglo Captain. Furthermore he described how the movies would show the Mexican being either the villain in a western, or "Pancho Gonzales the one who depends upon mañana to get him by".

Television, commercials and newspaper reports were criticized heavily by Gonzales, T.V. commercials conditions its message for the idiots in our society", he said. On the newspaper coverage's, he accused newspapers of not reporting some of the brutalities like beatings and killings that have allegedly occurred in the Chicano Community.

Near the end of his speech Gonzales called on all minorities and Appalachian Whites to join together in a common cause" We can respect each others cultures" To highlight this he sighted an example at the Poor Peoples March in Washington D.C. Where Afro-Americans. Mexican Americans Puerto Ricans and Appalachian Whites, all locked arms to protest the police interference with the march near the steps of the nation's capital. "This is a beautiful thing for people to work together like this". Gonzales proposed the following program for change among all the minorities, with particular emphasis to the Chicano@.

1. "If education is inadequate, than boycott the system."
  2. "Racism must be exposed, and we must identify with the problems of all minorities"
  3. "We must be prepared to be prepare ourselves for self defense"
  4. "If the book in our educational system are racist then we should burn them."
  5. "We must have an organized direction so that whenever we protest, the residents of that community will not suffer when we leave that community".
  6. "We must produce poets, novelist, writers, historians and anthologies to make Mexican Americans aware of their culture, history and struggle.
- (Article from College Times, by Wyatt Haupt).

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**The death of Rodolfo 'Corky' Gonzales**  
**A historical era coming to an end**  
**By Herman Baca**

Chicano leader Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales' death and the reality that he is no longer with us is another devastating blow to this nation's Chicanos—whose dreams, hopes, and aspirations for social, economic and political change he passionately fought.

Corky Gonzales, preceded in death by Humberto "Bert" Corona, Cesar Chavez, and many others from the 1960s, signals that an era in Chicano history is slowly but surely coming to an end.

History will record that Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales (whom I knew since 1970) was a leader, organizer, fighter, warrior and poet. He fought a life-long militant struggle for self-determination, respect, dignity, freedom, justice and the human/civil rights of this nation's 30 million Chicanos/Mexicanos/Latinos.

If history records the historical contributions to Chicanos as follows:

- Cesar Chavez awakening our social and political consciousness and giving us social, economic and political identification;
- Humberto "Bert" Corona leaving us the political concept of "no illegal aliens" y "no fronteras";
- Reis Lopez Tijerina leaving us the concept that the land of our ancestors was stolen and historically belongs to us...

THEN,

Rodolfo's "Corky" Gonzales' historical contribution to Chicanos is:

- The political concept of nationhood...Aztlán;
- The political principal of economic, social, cultural and political self determination, and
- The political principal of nationalism rooted in the historical struggle of the Chicano/Mexicano people.

If Cesar Chavez represented the rural *campesino*; Bert Corona, the undocumented Mexican worker; and Reis Lopez Tijerina, descendants of landowners in New Mexico, then Corky represented the urban Chicano, especially the youth, with all of their issues and problems who today comprise the majority of our people in the United States.

All of us—activists, immigrants, campesinos, students, young people, politicians, union leaders, or everyday working people—owe another great historical debt to Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales for the time and sacrifices that he gave to his people in our historical struggle to live with dignity and respect. This debt can only be repaid by continuing the unfinished struggle that Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales lived and died for.

Today, even though we as a people are sad because of Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales' passing, his spirit—like Cuahatemoc, Hidalgo, Morales, Juarez, Villa, Zapata, Magon brothers, Corona, Chavez, and many others who died in the service of our people—he will not be forgotten and will live in our hearts and minds.

As all the *veterano* movement workers begin to pass away, young people will face and continue to see increased attacks on our people struggle for respect and dignity, must remember Corky's words from his epic poem "I am Joaquin":

"I must fight and win this struggle for my sons, and they must know from me who I am..."

"I am Joaquin, lost in a world of confusion, caught up in the whirl of a gringo society, confused by the rules, scorned by attitudes, suppressed by manipulation, and destroyed by modern society.

"My fathers have lost the economic battle and won the struggle of cultural survival. And now! I must choose between the paradox of victory of the spirit, despite physical hunger, or to exist in the grasp of American social neurosis, sterilization of the soul and a full stomach."

Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales' philosophical, ideological, political perspectives and leadership will be missed by all who knew, walked, marched, protested, fought, organized, and struggled with him in the Chicano Movement.

*Rest in Peace—Descansa en Paz!*

*Herman Baca is president, Committee on Chicano Rights.*



governmental institutions he saw as being unfair to the Chicano movement in the 1960s and 1970s as well as those within the community whom he saw as torchbearers for the culture's identity.

He won the National Amateur Athletic Union bantamweight title in 1946, and was named to the Colorado Sports Hall of Fame.

In the 1950s he became the first Mexican-American district captain for the Democratic Party in Denver, but later became disenchanted with the party, which he said wanted Chicano votes but not Chicano candidates.

Gonzales set forth the struggles of many Mexican-Americans with his poem titled, *I Am Joaquin*, in which the poem's character struggles with his culture or forgetting his culture to achieve economic stability in the United States.


In 1966, he founded the Crusade for Justice, a cultural center that attempted to get the city to eradicate poverty and deal with racial injustice.

He also founded Escuela Tlatelolco Centro de Estudios in 1970, a nonprofit school and health care center that his daughter, Nita Gonzales, operates.

A memorial celebrating his life is being planned, his family said.

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# DENVER POST

## Marchers bid activist goodbye

### A-list Dems among 2,000 toasting Gonzales' legacy

By Joey Bunch  
Denver Post Staff Writer



Lyn Alweis | The Denver Post

U.S. Sen. Ken Salazar kisses Geraldine Gonzales, widow of civil rights leader "Corky" Gonzales, at Mestizo-Curtis Park, where Sunday's march ended.

> See GONZALES on 9A

## GONZALES: Marchers honor civil rights leader

< CONTINUED FROM 1A

Gonzales.

At least 2,000 people — friends, family, fans and protégés — marched 3.5 miles in two hours, from Escuela Thelatlolco, the school Gonzales founded in the West Highland neighborhood, to Curtis Park near downtown Denver.

Colorado U.S. Sen. Ken Salazar, former Denver Mayor Federico Peña, U.S. Rep. John Salazar of Manassa and Denver Mayor John Hickenlooper were among an all-star list of Democratic politicians in attendance.

Ken Salazar said Gonzales preached equality for everyone. "He was a champion for inclusion," said Salazar, a 20-year friend of Gonzales. "He fought to ensure that the Hispanic community had a voice."

Thirty members of the Grupo Tlaloc dance troupe sang and danced Sunday in Aztec ceremonial garb — jolincloths, sashes, sprawling feathered head-dresses and body paint.

"Corky Gonzales is a respected figure for all our people," said the troupe's leader, Carlos Castaneda. "He inspired people to follow the traditions of their ancestors, to find their roots."

But Gonzales' influence extended beyond his race, said Rick VanWie, co-chairman of the Denver Green Party, who pushed a stroller toting his 3-year-old son, Joseph.

"Corky not only made an important contribution to the Chicano community but to all of us," VanWie said. "He set an example for all of us to stand up against what's wrong and make a change."

In the 1960s, Gonzales founded an urban civil-rights movement.

He backed student walkouts and protests over police brutality and the Vietnam War.

He wrote the epic Chicano poem "I Am Joaquin" in 1967 and led Chicanos in the 1968 Poor People's March on Washington, where he delivered his "Plan of the Barrio," calling for



Lyn Alweis | The Denver Post

Marchers celebrating the life of "Corky" Gonzales head downtown on 15th Street. His widow, Geraldine, is second from left in front. Daughter Nita, in hat, is to her left.

better housing, schools and Chicano businesses.

In 1969, he organized the first Chicano Youth Liberation Conference, a national effort to instill self-determination.

A few blocks from Escuela Thelatlolco, where the march began, 21-year-old Eladio Lucero smoked cigarettes on his mother's porch.

He works as a mechanic part time.

He had not heard of the march, or of Corky Gonzales.

"If he's for equality for all us, I'm for that," said Lucero, who is Latino, after hearing an explanation. "But it looks to me like we have a long way to go."

Staff writer Joey Bunch can be reached at 303-820-1174 or [jbunch@denverpost.com](mailto:jbunch@denverpost.com).

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Activist remembered

Chicano leader Gonzales recalled as inspirational, divisive to movement

**By Fernando Quintero, Rocky Mountain News  
 April 14, 2005**

Among members of Colorado's Hispanic community, Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales is remembered as both a beloved and divisive force in the Chicano movement.

Gonzales, who died Tuesday at age 76, is credited with inspiring generations of Latinos and laying the groundwork for a political and social movement that continues today.

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A championship boxer in his youth,




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Nita Gonzales, center, daughter of the late Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales, is hugged by Cindy Velasquez and former Denver Mayor Federico Peña at Wednesday's public viewing for Gonzales at the Escuela Tlatelolco in Denver. Hundreds came to pay their respects to Gonzales, a beloved and sometimes divisive

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**Columbine**  
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Gonzales later worked as a bail bondsman and bar owner.

But he made his mark through his activism. He was an organizer for the Democratic Party and headed up the 1960 Viva Kennedy campaign.

In 1965, he broke from the party over what he perceived to be its reluctance to back Hispanic candidates and formed Crusade for Justice, a social activist organization. He established the Escuela Tlatelolco in 1970, a bilingual school that promotes Chicano culture and activism.

"He had a tremendous impact on many young Chicanos and Chicanas," said Manuel Ramos, a Denver attorney who along with thousands of other Hispanics were exposed to Gonzales and his ideas as a young college student.

"He was among a number of people who were taking a stand and inspired others to do the same. He came into my life at a time when my consciousness was being raised, as were others, including people like Cesar Chavez."

Antonio Esquivel, editor of *Message to Aztlan*, a collection of plays, poetry and political prose by Gonzales, said his writings were among his greatest contributions.

Gonzales is best known for his seminal poem, *Yo Soy Joaquin* (I am Joaquin), about a young man coming to terms with his ethnic identity. It is credited with launching the Chicano literary movement.

But, said Esquivel, Gonzales was a prolific writer who penned a number of inspirational works that are lesser known.

"His writing inspired the work of other writers, including both local and national writers and poets," Esquivel said.

One of them was Ramon del Castillo, a poet and chairman

Chicano rights  
champion who died  
Tuesday night.



Dennis Schroeder  
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Hundreds showed  
up Wednesday  
night to pay their  
respects at the  
public viewing of  
Rodolfo "Corky"  
Gonzales at the  
Escuela Tlatelolco  
on Federal  
Boulevard in  
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of the master's degree program in nonprofit management at Regis University and adjunct professor of Chicano studies at Metropolitan State College of Denver.

"*Yo Soy Joaquin* as well as his speeches and other works were a catalyst for the next generation of writers," Castillo said. "He inspired many of us to look into the internal psychological conflict over our identity. He helped shape the way many writers wrote."

Castillo called Gonzales "the most significant urban revolutionary of the 20th century."

"He said it's OK to be brown," Castillo said. "We no longer had to hide in shame and indignation about who we were and where we came from."

That was the message Gonzales spread as an organizer of youth conferences in colleges and universities throughout the Southwest and the West in the early 1970s. Those meetings mobilized an entire generation of young people.

Rita Montero, an educational consultant and community activist, was among them. She vividly recalls her first conference as a student at the University of Colorado.

"They're vivid, wonderful memories of Luis Valdez's Teatro Campesino, Mexican folkloric dancers and the roar of the audience. I thought the crowd was going to bring the house down," said Montero, who once belonged to the political organization Gonzales founded, La Raza Unida Party.

At these events, Gonzales would talk about such issues as police brutality and immigrant rights.

But Montero also recalls clashes between Chicanos - both young and old - and Gonzales' newly formed Crusade for Justice. In her view, Gonzales was critical of anyone - including other Hispanics - who spoke out against the organization.

"You have to give him credit. Many changes came about because of him," Montero said. "What you have to couple that with is the fact that the organization got out of control.

"Their heads got too big with all the attention. And they caused a lot of divisiveness both within the Chicano community and outside of it. There is still great acrimony

among some members of the Chicano community. "

Polly Baca, executive director of LARASA (Latin American Research and Service Agency), an organization Gonzales founded, agreed there were differences of opinion on how to best achieve justice and equality for Chicanos.

"There was disagreement about how to move forward . . . There were those Latinos who believed that our responsibility was to work within the system. They were also important in this process. But you also needed those on the outside of the system," she said.

It was perhaps inevitable that Gonzales and the Crusade for Justice would clash with the system.

In 1971, he was jailed in Los Angeles for carrying a loaded weapon. In 1973, a shootout with police at an apartment building next to the Escuela detonated what police claimed was dynamite stored in the building and led to one man's death. Gonzales said police explosives were the cause.

Another member of the Crusade, John Haro, was sentenced to six years in prison for possession of hand grenades. He and another man were implicated in a 1975 plot to bomb a police station, though the charges never stuck.

In 1979, the shooting by police of a 16-year-old Chicano ignited more controversy and prompted Gonzales to tell protesters to organize and resist with violence if necessary.

Gonzales withdrew from public view in 1978 after suffering a heart attack that resulted in a car accident. He was left with permanent head injuries.

Some community members lament that no one has stepped up to the plate to replace him.

"I would say we need more leaders like Corky Gonzales that are committed to better the playing field for Chicanos in society - to improve conditions in employment, education, health care," said Kenneth Padilla, a Denver attorney who was also exposed to Gonzales' beliefs as a college student.

"It's a more complicated society we live in now, but the strains on the Chicano community are still around, if not

more severe. The need for a clear voice and principled spokesperson is evident."

Baca believes changing times call for "a multitude of leaders."


"We need a collective group of people who have different ways of meeting the challenge. The time has passed when you had one person to inspire a community. It's not a void that Corky leaves behind; that has been filled by many people. We're all leaders."

Highlights of an eclectic life

- Professional boxer in the 1940s and '50s; won the National Amateur Athletic Union bantamweight title in 1946. Inducted into the Colorado Sports Hall of Fame.
- Founded Crusade for Justice in Denver in 1965. The social activist organization attempted to get the city to eradicate poverty and deal with racial injustice.
- Founded Escuela Tlatelolco in 1970.
- Financed *Viva*, the first barrio newspaper in Denver.
- Wrote his epic poem , *Yo Soy Joaquin* (I Am Joaquin), in 1967.
- Led a contingent to the Poor People's March on Washington, D.C., in 1968.
- First Mexican-American district captain for the Democratic Party in Denver.

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Subj: **mi ofrenda a Corky**  
Date: 4/15/2005 3:12:28 P.M. Pacific Daylight Time  
From: [gmariscal@ucsd.edu](mailto:gmariscal@ucsd.edu)

<http://www.counterpunch.org/mariscal04152005.html>

The passing of a legend: Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales  
Jorge Mariscal  
Counterpunch

When in the summer of 1968 President Lyndon Johnson's Attorney General stood up before an audience of Chicano, African American, Puerto Rican, American Indian, and poor white activists, he had no idea he was about to receive a knockout punch delivered by a former Mexican American flyweight contender. When the stocky man with a moustache rose to ask his question, Attorney General Ramsey Clark dismissed him by saying he would not take questions until after his statement. Refusing to be silenced, the man stood again and forced Clark to listen to what he had to say.

That man was Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales. He had come to Washington, D.C. as part of the Southwest delegation of the Poor People's Campaign, the project planned by Martin Luther King, Jr. to force the issues of poverty and economic injustice on to the national agenda. Gonzales did not mince words, telling Clark that if he would not admit that there was racial discrimination in housing he was either naïve or blind. Although this was the first time the national media had seen Gonzales, in the Southwestern states especially among young Chicanos he was already a legend.

Corky Gonzales was born in Denver in 1928, the son of farm workers. His family continued to move constantly in order to follow the crops and yet miraculously Gonzales graduated high school at age sixteen. His boxing career included Golden Glove championships and an impressive professional record as a bantamweight. In 1988 he was inducted into the Colorado Sports Hall of Fame.

Throughout the 1950s, Gonzales owned a popular eatery and a bail bond company in Denver. His real passion, however, was community activism and he participated in numerous grass-roots organizations and electoral politics, directing the Colorado Democratic Party's "Viva Kennedy" campaign in 1960. By the mid 1960s, however, his confidence that Democrats had a better understanding of the plight of working people of Mexican descent was shaken. Police brutality, institutional racism, and an escalating war in Southeast Asia moved Gonzales towards a new identity and a new vision. "Chicanas" and "Chicanos" were being born across the Southwest-Mexican Americans with an attitude, no fear, and a hunger for social justice. Corky Gonzales would become one of their most courageous leaders. According to historian Ernesto Vigil, a founding member of Gonzales' Crusade for Justice organization, the Mexican revolutionary Emiliano Zapata was the historical figure Gonzales admired most. Like Zapata before him, Gonzales would help to transform a community that had been exploited and treated as inferior for over a century into a proud and spirited people who demanded their rights as U.S. citizens and citizens of the world. In his influential poem "I am Joaquin," Gonzales wrote: "Clamoring voices / Mariachi strains / Fiery tequila explosions / The smell of chile verde and / Soft brown eyes of expectation for a Better life."

In 1966, a full year before Dr. King made public his position against the U.S. war in Vietnam, Gonzales offered his own analysis. "Would it not be more noble," he asked, "to portray our great country as a humanitarian nation with the honest intentions of aiding and advising the weak rather than to be recognized as a military power and hostile enforcer of our political aims?" If we who are privileged to live in the United States enjoy a prosperity built on the backs of poor nations, he asked, are we not living the good life "at the expense of the blood and bones of our fellow human beings?"

When Corky Gonzales passed away on April 12, the world in which his heroic acts took place seemed far away. Images of mass movements seeking to end unjust wars, police brutality, racism, militarism, and economic inequality are hazy and out of focus. Revisionists would like to dismiss the entire Vietnam war period--the Sixties-- as a time of chaos and mayhem.

But the deeds of Corky Gonzales can never be dismissed or erased and his spirit will live on in young people who are selflessly working for a more just society and a world governed by international cooperation. And in Spanish-speaking homes across the nation, Chicano parents will teach their children that they owe a great debt of gratitude to Corky Gonzales, for he was a man who taught us to be proud of who we are and to demand the equality our families have earned.

end



Subj: **Press Release**  
Date: 4/15/2005 9:55:47 A.M. Pacific Daylight Time  
From: ncazares@swc.cc.ca.us  
To: mcmattson@hotmail.com  
CC: cpscchicanopark@ixpres.com, AztecBaca@aol.com

Hi Chris,

Per my email communiqué with Tommie, here is the draft statement to incorporate in whatever press release you may send out regarding Chicano Park Day. I look forward to seeing the exhibit at Expressions! Thanks.

Norma Cazares

**San Diego, California...The Chicano Park Steering Committee (CPSC) today announced that *Committee on Chicano Rights* Chairperson Herman Baca will be the Keynote Speaker at the 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration of the founding of Chicano Park on Saturday, April 23, 2005.**

According to Tommie Camarillo, Chairperson of the CPSC, "Herman Baca was chosen to keynote this year's historic event due to his long-time organizing efforts in the Chicano community dating back to 1968, and because of the recent acquisition by UCSD of the *Herman Baca Archives* that document the struggle of the Chicano movement in San Diego, Southwest, and the U.S./Mexico border."

Defending the civil, constitutional and human rights of *La Raza* on issues ranging from immigration, police brutality, politics, rezoning, etc., Herman Baca was a key organizer of the; Committee On Chicano Rights (a human/civil rights organization), various political organizations (MAPA and La Raza Unida Party), and Casa Justicia, an immigration organization. During that period he worked closely with many of the leading figures of the Chicano movement including Cesar Chavez, Abe Tapia, Reies Lopez Tijerina, Rodolfo Corky Gonzales and others in the U.S. and Mexico.

Camarillo concluded, "Baca continues to be a respected expert on immigration and social justice issues and his presentation at the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of Chicano park will address his perspective of the deteriorating social, economic and political status of Chicanos in the U.S."

*Norma A. Cázares, MS*  
Southwestern College  
Interim Transfer Center Coordinator/Counselor  
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(619) 482-6514 (fax)

## BACA

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Moreover, he adds, despite the fact that certain things have changed — demographics that show the Latino community surpassing the African American



Herman Baca's life has been one of activism.

community as the largest minority in the United States, for example — Latinos still do not have the social, economic and political infrastructure they need to succeed, something the Jewish community has had in place for many years.

"They understand history," Baca says.

Politicians, he says, especially those who come from the Latino community, court Latinos for their votes, but do little for them in return. "I wouldn't give you five pesos for a politician," Baca says in contempt.

He calls those who would approach the Latino community with an outstretched hand not in friendship but seeking its support while offering only promises in return, "poverty pimps."

And he asks why aren't Latinos in better social and economic conditions. "Where is our infrastructure? Our great leaders?"

However, even Baca recognizes that Latinos will continue to grow in numbers and that

sooner or later Latinos will turn the corner. "They will be like the Rio Grande," he says with conviction, "and you can't stop the Rio Grande."

And he warns those who would ignore the signs, "You better wake up and smell the menudo!" a reference to that most Mexican of dishes.

Of his gift to UCSD, Baca says he's glad to contribute to the history of Latinos in the United States, of leaving part of their history "for posterity."

"Those documents are going to be there for history," he says. And they show, he explains, that Latinos have struggled to get where they are, "but there is still much to be done."

In an explanation written in his biography, Baca writes: "I have attempted to leave for posterity a historical record of the Chicano/Mexicano people's struggle, a struggle rooted in the historical principle of self-determination. I want future generations to learn from our successes and mistakes — to build on the successes, and not condemn them to repeating the

mistakes."

Testimonials from prominent Latinos laud Baca's gift to the university. Among them, one that speaks of Baca's integrity.

South Bay Forum president Norma Cazares says, "The (Baca) archives are important yet at another level... because of the personal costs. While many have benefited directly for their involvement, Herman has been active at the grassroots level for nearly 40 years with absolutely no compensation but with great costs to himself and his family.

"Because of his involvement, he has received death threats, his family, including five children, has been threatened with bodily harm, his home and business have been vandalized, and he has never generated enough income in his small business to buy a home. Nevertheless, he always managed to have the flyers or posters announcing the next rally ready for distribution and any attempts to credit him for his work (result) in

his usual response, 'I'm just a printer.'"

The South Bay Forum is a non-partisan political organization aimed at informing the community of issues affecting it. Cazares belongs to the distinguished family of lawyers and judges that is the pride of the Latino community.

Another prominent Latina, Gracia Molina de Pick, whose deep involvement with the community as an activist and educator has earned her a special place among Latino leaders, said in her testimonial, "(Baca) challenged the professional leadership of the Chicano/Chicana Movement to join forces with the Committee (on Chicano Rights) and stand up in the defense of our community. His work inspired all of us to be militant and courageous in the struggle for justice.

"Herman Baca's archives constitute a unique and authentic source to document the history of the (community) struggles in the '60s and '70s."

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You are our "Strong Heart" ....Nuestro "Yolotzin" ....  
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Que viva Rodolfo Corky Gonzales!!*

*Luis Angel Viniestra*

*Luis Angel Viniestra XX  
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## Chicano leader Gonzalez leaves hospital

Wednesday March 30, 2005

DENVER (AP) In a red robe with white trim, Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales is holding court from his recliner in his north Denver home.

"We have nothing else, but we have friends," he said in a raspy voice while visiting with friends and family Tuesday.

Gonzales checked himself out of the hospital last week after being diagnosed with congestive heart failure. He told the cardiologist that he's "indigenous" and that he'll die a natural death, said his wife, Geraldine.

"That's his style," said daughter Nita Gonzales, head of the Escuela Tlatelolco Centro de Estudios, a nonprofit school and part-time health clinic that her father founded in the 1970s. "He has a very strong constitution and a very strong will."

Since Thursday, nearly 600 people have stopped by, some from as far away as Sacramento, Calif., and Phoenix. The phone has not stopped ringing, and the kitchen is overflowing with trays of muffins, buns and tamales. Someone even brought over a 20-pound turkey for Easter.

The community outpouring has not surprised the family. Corky and Geraldine Gonzales have eight grown children, who are spending lots of time at their parents' home.

"If you help the community, they will always help you," Geraldine Gonzales said. "Corky has always been available to help anybody."

Corky Gonzales is known as the father of the Chicano movement in the Southwest and founded the Crusade for Justice. He credited his father with instilling in him a pride in his Mexican heritage.

Initially he worked within the political system and served as the first Mexican-American district captain for the Democratic Party in Denver. Later he became disenchanted with the party that he thought wanted Chicano votes but not Chicano candidates.

Gonzales marched with Cesar Chavez and met with the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. Denver homeless people would show up at his door asking for him. And he would give his last dollar to a kid who asked for it.

In his living room, he chats with friends perched on the folding chairs brought in to accommodate the flow of guests.

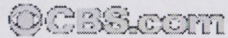
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“The community is rallying around him,” Nita Gonzales said Tuesday. “It gives us a lot of support that you need while you are going through difficult and trying times.”

Their father's early and very successful boxing career helped set the stage for his activism, son Rudy Gonzales said. He said his father worked out hard, took care of himself and believed in himself.

He used those talents in his activism as well as his athleticism. One night he was called from his bed to help police end a standoff with a man who said he would talk only to Gonzales.

He worked with city leaders and won a health clinic for the north side.

A heart attack and a car accident 17 years ago slowed down the senior Gonzales, but he never failed to stop by the school he founded and visit with students. Two years ago he went on a tour for his book, “Message to Aztlan,” a collection of his writings.

This week, he joked, flirted and reminisced.

“He was one of the greatest fighters in all of Denver,” said visitor Red Martinez, who also was a boxer. “He has a great mind. He was a great speaker; he said exactly what he was thinking.”

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In the interest of timeliness, this story is fed directly from the Associated Press newswire and may contain occasional typographical errors.

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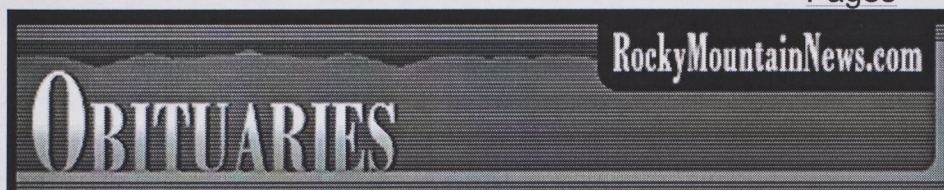
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 From: AztecBaca  
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Chicano activist and legend Corky Gonzales dies at 76

**By News And Wire Reports**  
**April 13, 2005**

Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales, a boxer turned civil rights activist and a leader in the Chicano movement, died Tuesday.

A statement from family members said Gonzales, 76, died at 7:42 p.m. in his home with loved ones at his side.

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"This splendid and gilded husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather, uncle, warrior and chief embraced death with all the love and passion in which he danced with life," the statement said. "His historic effort will never be forgotten."

Gonzales died weeks after being diagnosed with congestive heart failure and renal disease, his son, Rudy Gonzales said. He checked himself out of a hospital last month, telling doctors he preferred to die at home.

An accomplished boxer early in the 1940s and '50s, Gonzales made a name for himself by challenging

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## Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzalez

*Message forwarded by Victor Rey*

"Corky" Gonzales has recently been released from a Denver, Colorado hospital after being diagnosed with a serious liver disease. Physicians have suggested to the Gonzales family that they prepare for the difficult days ahead, and have suggested that they consider making arrangements for his final days.

According to the Dean of Chicano Studies, Dr. Rudy Acuna of Cal-State Northridge, "Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales, was the most influential Chicano leaders of the Chicano civil rights movement in the period of the late 1960s-1970's, especially among Chicano students, youths and among those

in the barrios. In his book, *Occupied America*, Acuna says that "Corky" Gonzales "came up the hard way--with his fists. A Golden Gloves champion

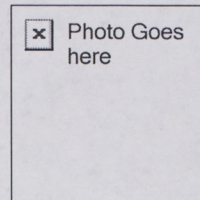
who turned pro, he was a feather-weight contender for the championship from 1947 to 1955. Later, he became a bailbondsman. In the 1960s, he worked within the Democratic Party of Denver and in 1965 became a director of one of the War on Poverty's youth programs. He founded the Crusade for Justice, a community-based organization that emphasized total family involvement. His epic poem, "I Am Joaquin/Yo Soy Joaquin" is probably the most influential piece of Chicano Movement literature ever written. Its impact is immeasurable and Luis Valdez of the Teatro Campesino has produced it into a well-known Chicano Movement film, also called "Yo Soy Joaquin".

Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales, along with Reies Lopez Tijerina, Jose Angel Gutierrez, & Cesar Chavez, captured the hearts and minds of millions of Mexican Americans/Chicanos/Latinos, young and old alike, who sought equality and justice in their civil rights struggle for improved opportunities in the areas of education, fair working conditions, a farm workers union, and end to the racism and discrimination against them.

If you wish to send letters and cards directly to Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales to wish him well and to express your thoughts at this time to him and to his family, send them to:

Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales  
P.O. Box 11432  
Denver, Colorado 8021

[FAQ](#) | [CONTACT](#) | [CALENDAR](#)  
Updated last: February 7, 2005



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COLORADO THEN & NOW		COLORADO MILESTONES		



## Chicano movement was a turning point for Denver

By John C. Ensslin  
Denver Rocky Mountain News Staff Writer

Energy, beyond.

In the late 1960s, the focal point of Chicano activism in Denver was an organization known as the Crusade for Justice.

### Contents

It was founded in 1966 by Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales, who had converted his fame as a champion boxer from the barrio into a career as a political activist.

Factory whistles blew, every church bell pealed

A former bar owner and bail bondsman, Gonzales in 1965 wrote a poem called *I Am Joaquin* in which he blurred his own identity with those of his heroes, Pancho Villa and Emiliano Zapata:

Onetime mining boomtowns find new life

*I am Joaquin,*

1965 flood left deep scars along South Platte

*lost in a world of confusion*

For years, brown cloud fouls Denver image

*caught up in the whirl of gringo society*

Colorado reputation took hit when state gave its support to Amendment 2

*confused by the rules*

Racist group dominated politics in early 1920s

*scorned by the attitudes*

Roots of state's oldest towns run deep, to south

*suppressed by manipulation*

Depression-era feats include Red Rocks, Lowry

*and destroyed by modern society*

Grazing Act still at work to protect grasslands

The Crusade would change that society, although its legacy remains in sharp dispute. Some contend it was a subversive organization that was behind a rash of Denver bombings during the 1970s.

Feisty Sabin fought to improve state's health

Others see it as a catalyst for change that paved the way for a generation of Chicano political activists during a time of prejudice and neglect suffered by people of Mexican descent.

Dearfield was founded on dryland near Greeley

One thing is certain. The Crusade marked a turning point in the



Colorado only state ever to  
turn down Olympics

history of Denver.

Oil shale collapse  
preserved scenic vistas

Gonzales' sense of social injustice started early. He was born in Denver, but he would have been born in Keenesburg if medical facilities there had been open to farm workers like his father, who was working in a beet field at the time.

Colorado tour boom began  
with hot springs

Chicano movement was a  
turning point for Denver

Gonzales had a brilliant career as a boxer, one that later landed him in the Colorado Sports Hall of Fame. In 1946, he won the National Amateur Athletic Union bantamweight title.

Springs won fierce  
competition for Air Force  
Academy

His work as a bar owner and bondsman led him into a career in politics. At first, he took a conventional path.

Griffith answered when  
opportunity knocked

Freeways opened the state  
to the rest of U.S.

He helped run the Viva Kennedy campaign for John F. Kennedy in 1960 and later became a district captain for the Democratic Party.

Denver-to-Durango path  
winds through mountains

His reward from Mayor Tom Currigan: an appointment to head the Denver Neighborhood Youth Corps in 1965. But a falling-out followed, and Currigan fired him.

The federal hold on  
Colorado

Disenchanted with the Democratic Party, Gonzales took his own organization, Los Voluntarios (The Volunteers), and broke from the party.

Heart attack hit during  
Eisenhower's Denver trip

'92 Election was fiscal face  
lift

It was during a speech at a demonstration outside City Hall in 1966 that Gonzales said, "We are on a crusade for justice." The title stuck.

From the state of flux to  
statehood

The crusade took many forms.

Sowing the seeds of  
success

Unhappy with what it saw as the city's neglect of swimming pools in poor neighborhoods, the Crusade organized a "splash-in" at a pool in a predominantly white neighborhood in southeast Denver.

Capitalist and  
humanitarian

Forging farm country

Dissatisfied with a public school system it felt did little for Chicano students, the Crusade started its own school, the Escuela Tlatelolco. Staffed by volunteers, it eventually offered free bilingual classes and lessons in Chicano culture to 300 children between the ages of 3 and 8.

The Ludlow legacy

The Great Locust Mystery

Shining words still sing

A fateful turning point in the Crusade's history occurred in the early morning hours of March 17, 1973.

The bold move that saved  
Denver

Utes swept aside by  
expansion

Two Denver police officers arrested a man for jaywalking in the 1500 block of Downing Street, in front of Crusade headquarters.

Ice Palace capped riotous  
era

The arrest -- for a rarely enforced city ordinance -- touched off a confrontation the likes of which Denver has not seen since.

The Golden Age of Mesa

Verde

'Republic of Boulder'  
cherishes independent  
identity

---

A crowd gathered to protest the arrest. A gunbattle erupted. Then an explosion ripped the upper floors of the Crusade-owned Downing Terrace apartments.

The blast tore a gaping hole in the building's upper floors. Debris rained on officers who had crouched for cover beside a pair of Volkswagen Beetles.

When the fighting ended, one man was dead and 17 people were injured, including 12 police officers.

Gonzales charged that police had lobbed grenades in an assault on Crusade headquarters.

But police sniffed the acrid air and accused the Crusade of storing explosives inside the apartment building.

"It was a regular arsenal inside," Detective Sgt. James C. Jones said, detailing 30 weapons and dummy hand grenades found in the rubble.

The bombing was one of several events that led to a gradual decline in the Crusade's influence in the city. That process accelerated in September 1975 when Denver police arrested two men in a plot to blow up a police substation in southwest Denver.

One of the men arrested was Crusade member Juan Haro, who was caught transporting the bomb by undercover cops who, with an informant's help, had been tracking his movements.

A Denver jury acquitted Haro and a co-defendant in the bomb plot. Haro, however, was found guilty of bomb possession charges and spent six years in prison.

Corky Gonzales declined to be interviewed for this story. He was severely injured in October 1987 when the car he was driving crashed into a house after he suffered heart arrhythmia.

Nita Gonzales, his daughter, still runs the Escuela Tlatelolco, a private school with about 75 students. It is one of the Crusade's most lasting legacies. It turns 30 next year.

But there are other legacies, Gonzales says.

She remembers what a voracious reader her father was. He read literature, philosophy, poetry. He insisted that his eight children read, then think and talk about what they had read.

"The legacy is political activism," she said.

The Crusade helped turn the city into a place where Federico Peña could be elected mayor in 1983 and where Hispanics could serve as police chief, fire chief and manager of safety.

In a recent book, *The Crusade for Justice*, former Crusade member Ernesto Vigil summed it up this way:

"The Crusade for Justice, for a span of 15 years, was the most powerful and effective organization to fight for the rights of people of Mexican descent in the state of Colorado in this century.

"No organization will rise to match the Crusade, much less surpass it, until it first learns from the legacy of the Crusade's rich and largely unrecognized history."

*Colorado Milestones, which appears Tuesdays, is part of a yearlong project by the Denver Rocky Mountain News, NEWS4 and the Colorado Historical Society. Digital and print copies of historical images available at the Colorado Historical Society (303) 866-2305*

**Online:** InsideDenver.com, keyword "2000."

**On TV:** at 10 p.m.: *Colorado History: Colorado's bid for the 1976 Winter Olympics pits the political old guard against the new guard.*

***September 21, 1999***

**Colorado Millennium 2000** is a yearlong project by the **Denver Rocky Mountain News, NEWS4** and the **Colorado Historical Society**  
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Subj: [Fwd: [Fwd: Re: [Fwd: Compa Corky, PRESENTE]]]  
 Date: 4/15/2005 5:29:38 P.M. Pacific Daylight Time  
 From: cpscchicanopark@ixpres.com  
 To: aztecbaca@aol.com, LNatividad@sandiego.gov, lindamvelarde@yahoo.com, davalos@csusm.edu

----- Original Message -----

**Subject:**[Fwd: Re: [Fwd: Compa Corky, PRESENTE]]

**Date:**Fri, 15 Apr 2005 17:24:35 -0700

**From:**Tommie Camarillo <cpscchicanopark@ixpres.com>

**To:**Brent & Consuelo Beltran <calacapress@cox.net>, Victor Marrero <teachyoung@yahoo.com>, Eddie Cervantes <e\_cervantes79@yahoo.com>, Josie Talamantez <jtalamantez@caartscouncil.com>, Christian Ramirez <cramcar@yahoo.com>, Rigo Reyes <rigo@losninosinternational.org>, Victor Ochoa <vochoa@worldnet.att.net>, Mario Torero <mariotorero@hotmail.com>, Angie Avila <Aavila@cde.ca.gov>, Ryan Trammell <tiahui@excite.com>, Berenice Badillo <cihuateteo@juno.com>, Leonor Chairez <chairez\_99sdsu@yahoo.com>, Lizette Perez <lp53pisces@hotmail.com>, Rico Bueno <WILDBUNCHOFHOLLYWOOD@prodigy.net>, Belinda Zamacona <BeliAca@aol.com>, Victor Payan <centrowatch@aol.com>, Rosa Olga Navarro <rtoltecas@cox.net>, Chris Mattson <mcmattson@hotmail.com>, Isabell Pena <ipena@cox.net>, Irene Castruita <ire nec7@hotmail.com>, Howard Hollman <howardhollman@cox.net>, Valerie Aranda <arandava@hotmail.com>, Desirre Smith <desireeree77@hotmail.com>, Ben Prado <bprado1@yahoo.com>, Rolando <Lee\_ro@hotmail.com>, Jose Franco Garcia <JFGP@aol.com>, Cathy Espitia <organizateraza@hotmail.com>, Ron Gocher <MEChAdeSDSU@aol.com>, Carlos Pelayo <cgpelayo@ucsd.edu>, Alex Medina <mexicanmilitante@aol.com>, Jacqueline Chavira <yakosdsuchavira2003@hotmail.com>, Jose Olague <angelolague@hotmail.com>, Christian Carbajal <titanrock@hotmail.com>, Tony Garcia <Tgarcia\_college@msn.com>, Jose Monterrosa <jmonterrosa@cox.net>, Chunky Sanchez <chunky\_sanchez@yahoo.com>, Priscilla Camacho <priclasdsu@yahoo.com>, Isabel Sanchez <chavelasanchez@yahoo.com>, Patty Castaneda <cstPattyc@hotmail.com>, Marcelle Alvarado <marcymoz@yahoo.com>, Raymond Saavedra <rsaavedra73@yahoo.com>, , Daniel Michel <mechasdsupoliticalcommittee@yahoo.com>, Roberto Maciel <Liberaztlan@yahoo.com>, Consuelo Martinez <activistchica@yahoo.com>, Gabriella Condina <gaby678@yahoo.com>, Tina Camarillo <tcamarillo@sbcglobal.net>, Felicia Castillo <prinsez858@yahoo.com>, Alina Rosas <alinarosas@hotmail.com>, Dorinda Moreno <dorindamoreno@comcast.net>, Ernesto Bustillos <Ebustill@aol.com>, Helen Goldvarg <HGold42734@aol.com>, Paul Aceves <paceves50@hotmail.com>, Tina De Baca <TinaDeBaca@aol.com>, Anita & Eddie Reyes <reyesanita@hotmail.com>, Mateo Camarillo <mateorc1@cox.net>, Jennie Lopez <jrlzapatista@yahoo.com>, Janice Jordan <jjordan@janicejordan.org>, Hoka Hawkeyes <hokahawkeyes@corndancer.us>, Sandra Sarmiento Pena <pochioux@aol.com>, Danny Villareal <lfy\_soccer@hotmail.com>, Pepe Villarino <pepev@cox.net>, Jorge Mariscal <gmariscal@ucsd.edu>, Maria de Leon <Info@nalac.org>, Patricio Chavez <pachavez@ucsd.edu>, Richard Lou <rlou@mail.gcsu.edu>, Isaac Artenstein & Jude Eberhard <cinewest@aol.com>, "Graciela B. Anguiano" <gracebet@aol.com>, Rommel Diaz <rommeld01@yahoo.com>, Mary Ann Belmontez <marybelmontez@hotmail.com>, Ashley Ware <rimmon36@dslextreme.com>, Elsa Velarde <elvs-sd@yahoo.com>, Sonia Franco <magic\_dreamer@latinmail.com>, Ricardo Pozos <evolucionofthebrown@hotmail.com>, Daniel Pozos <browntown19@hotmail.com>, Brieanne Buttner <sd\_central@yahoo.com>, Samuel Casas <samuelpcasas@yahoo.com>, Beatriz Velez <beedazed@hotmail.com>, Kimberly <daydreamer8586@hotmail.com>, Matt

Corrales <[mcorrale@ucsd.edu](mailto:mcorrale@ucsd.edu)>, Marco Anguiano <[submarx@yahoo.com](mailto:submarx@yahoo.com)>

TO: CHICANO PARK STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS & SUPPORTERS  
 FROM: TOMMIE CAMARILLO, CHAIRPERSON  
 RE: FOR YOUR INFORMATION

I am forwarding you this email I received, for your information.

----- Original Message -----

**Subject:**Re: [Fwd: Compa Corky, PRESENTE]

**Date:**Fri, 15 Apr 2005 14:17:03 -0700 (PDT)

**From:**Tonantzín Sanchez <[tgsanchez2001@yahoo.com](mailto:tgsanchez2001@yahoo.com)>

**To:**Tommie Camarillo <[cpscchicanopark@ixpres.com](mailto:cpscchicanopark@ixpres.com)>, Isabel Sanchez <[chavelasanchez@yahoo.com](mailto:chavelasanchez@yahoo.com)>, Ramon Sanchez <[chunky\\_sanchez@yahoo.com](mailto:chunky_sanchez@yahoo.com)>

**CC:**[Ebustill@aol.com](mailto:Ebustill@aol.com), [calacapress@cox.net](mailto:calacapress@cox.net), [cgpelayo@hotmail.com](mailto:cgpelayo@hotmail.com), [changingworks@yahoo.com](mailto:changingworks@yahoo.com), [cpscchicanopark@ixpres.com](mailto:cpscchicanopark@ixpres.com), [CHICANO@weber2.sscnet.ucla.edu](mailto:CHICANO@weber2.sscnet.ucla.edu), [chicnews@yahoogroups.com](mailto:chicnews@yahoogroups.com), [titanrock@hotmail.com](mailto:titanrock@hotmail.com), [garciac@onid.orst.edu](mailto:garciac@onid.orst.edu), [mexicano\\_fuerte@hotmail.com](mailto:mexicano_fuerte@hotmail.com), [titi825@latinmail.com](mailto:titi825@latinmail.com), [ebustillosjr@hotmail.com](mailto:ebustillosjr@hotmail.com), [emolivos@sdcoe.k12.ca.us](mailto:emolivos@sdcoe.k12.ca.us), [Emhgv@aol.com](mailto:Emhgv@aol.com), [raskt\\_el\\_ombligo@yahoo.com](mailto:raskt_el_ombligo@yahoo.com), [eletexie@socsci.ucsd.edu](mailto:eletexie@socsci.ucsd.edu)

We have set up a memorial for Corky since last Saturday at Chicano Park underneath the mural of Corky. It would be nice if people could come by to lend their support or our "companero." Tommie, Nani, myself and my parents and familia are so far some of the only ones that I have seen there. We have been having a problem with people taking candles and pictures from the memorial. However, I feel if our presence was stronger then maybe less people would mess with the gifts and prayers we have placed there for him. Please continue to spread the word about Corky. Not just about his passing, but also educate those who did not have the pleasure and privilege of knowing of him and the impact he made on the movement. Corky helped bring out the Joaquin in all of us, and it is now our responsibility to return the favor to our youth of today. Each one of our young warriors has a part of Joaquin in them waiting to shine. He can only live on through us. I do believe in God, but I did not weep when the Pope died.... However, I cried myself to sleep the night Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales left us. Que Viva Joaquin!

Tonantzín Sanchez

--- Tommie Camarillo <[cpscchicanopark@ixpres.com](mailto:cpscchicanopark@ixpres.com)>  
 wrote:

-----  
 Hey,  
 For your info.  
 Tommie

----- Original Message -----

Subject:

Compa Corky, PRESENTE  
 Thu, 14 Apr 2005 23:48:42 EDT  
 Ebustill@aol.com  
 calacapress@cox.net,  
 cgpelayo@hotmail.com, changingworks@yahoo.com,  
 cpscchicanopark@ixpres.com, CHICANO@weber2.sscnet.ucla.edu,  
 chicnews@yahoogroups.com, titanrock@hotmail.com,  
 garciac@onid.orst.edu, mexicano\_fuerte@hotmail.com,  
 titi825@latinmail.com, ebustillosjr@hotmail.com,  
 emolivos@sdcoe.k12.ca.us,  
 Emhgv@aol.com, raskt\_el\_ombligo@yahoo.com,  
 eletexie@socsci.ucsd.edu

Compañeros y Compañeras of the Crusade for  
 Justice: Please accept this letter on behalf of Uni3n  
 del Barrio to pay respect and honor the memory of  
 Compañero Rodolfo Corky Gonzales. We use the term  
 "Compañero" to express our appreciation and  
 admiration for Corky as a man that sacrificed a part  
 of himself with the goal of building a movement for  
 Raza self-determination. When an individual of such  
 skill and charisma such as Corky rises from our  
 community and chooses the life of an activist and  
 revolutionary, we hold that person in the highest  
 regard. A visionary fighter, Corky was willing to risk  
 what was necessary to build a future without  
 oppression, without exploitation, a future of dignity,  
 justice and respect for all. Neither our memory nor  
 our movement will be surrendered to loss and sadness  
 " we must define ourselves according to the shining  
 example Corky gave us. At his finest moment Corky gave  
 us a picture of what we all could become as a free and  
 liberated people " a human representation of Chicano  
 Liberation. Compañero Corky will be missed by all of  
 us, and it is the responsibility of each of us to  
 honor his memory by continuing to advance the struggle  
 for Raza Liberation. This is the path that Corky  
 leaves us as his legacy. Uni3n del Barrio honors that  
 legacy and memory of Rodolfo Corky Gonzales. With our  
 "VIVAS" we raise Corky to his historical place  
 among the greatest leaders of the Chicano Mexicano  
 people " Viva Cuauhtemoc! Viva Emiliano Zapata! Viva  
 Francisco Villa! Viva Corky Gonzales! Compañero Rodolfo  
 Corky Gonzales " PRESENTE! Uni3n del Barrio Central  
 Committee San Diego, Calif Aztlán (México  
 Ocupado) April 13, 2005

---

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Compa Corky, PRESENTE

Statement from Union del Barrio

Compañeros y Compañeras of the Crusade for Justice: Please accept this letter on behalf of Unión del Barrio to pay respect and honor the memory of Compañero Rodolfo Corky Gonzales. We use the term "Compañero" to express our appreciation and admiration for Corky as a man that sacrificed a part of himself with the goal of building a movement for Raza self-determination. When an individual of such skill and charisma such as Corky rises from our community and chooses the life of an activist and revolutionary, we hold that person in the highest regard. A visionary fighter, Corky was willing to risk what was necessary to build a future without oppression, without exploitation, a future of dignity, justice and respect for all.

Neither our memory nor our movement will be surrendered to loss and sadness and we must define ourselves according to the shining example Corky gave us. At his finest moment Corky gave us a picture of what we all could become as a free and liberated people; a human representation of Chicano Liberation. Compañero Corky will be missed by all of us, and it is the responsibility of each of us to honor his memory by continuing to advance the struggle for Raza Liberation.

This is the path that Corky leaves us as his legacy. Unión del Barrio honors that legacy and memory of Rodolfo Corky Gonzales. With our ¡VIVAS! we raise Corky to his historical place among the greatest leaders of the Chicano Mexicano people.

¡Viva Cuauhtémoc!  
¡Viva Emiliano Zapata!  
¡Viva Francisco Villa!  
¡Viva Corky Gonzales!  
Compañero Rodolfo Corky Gonzales ¡PRESENTE!  
Unión del Barrio  
Central Committee  
San Diego, CalifAztlán (México Ocupado)  
April 13, 2005

Subj: **Website dedicated to Corky Gonzalez**  
Date: 4/15/2005 1:21:29 P.M. Pacific Daylight Time  
From: [mudpmensajero@yahoo.com](mailto:mudpmensajero@yahoo.com)  
To: [elmensajero@mudp.org](mailto:elmensajero@mudp.org)

In order to help spread the news of the passing of our Chicano revolutionary martyr, Rodolfo Corky Gonzalez, and to combat the lack of proper coverage by the corporate media, we have created a memorial website dedicated to our hero, Corky Gonzalez.

Included are some articles and statements about Corky Gonzalez from news organizations and community organizations. Also included is a guestbook so that people may leave comments.

Photos of the memorial march in honor of Corky which will be held this Sunday will be included upon our return from the march. For more information about the march please visit...

<http://escuelatlatelolco.org/memorial.html>

To visit the Corky Gonzalez website memorial please click on the following link, or paste the address to your browser.

<http://www.mudp.org/corky.html>

If you would like to send us some comments, or links to add to the page, or some photos, please contact us at [elmensajero@mudp.org](mailto:elmensajero@mudp.org)

¡Que viva Corky Gonzalez!

Mexicanos Unidos en Defensa del Pueblo  
202 W. Ammunition #38  
Fallbrook, CA. 92028  
(760) 451-1754  
[www.mudp.org](http://www.mudp.org)  
¡La lucha sigue!



Subj: **Website dedicated to Corky Gonzalez**  
Date: 4/15/2005 1:21:29 P.M. Pacific Daylight Time  
From: [mudpmensajero@yahoo.com](mailto:mudpmensajero@yahoo.com)  
To: [elmensajero@mudp.org](mailto:elmensajero@mudp.org)

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If you would like to send us some comments, or links to add to the page, or some photos, please contact us at [elmensajero@mudp.org](mailto:elmensajero@mudp.org)

¡Que viva Corky Gonzalez!

Mexicanos Unidos en Defensa del Pueblo  
202 W. Ammunition #38  
Fallbrook, CA. 92028  
(760) 451-1754  
[www.mudp.org](http://www.mudp.org)  
¡La lucha sigue!

The Rocky Mountain News, March 29, 2005

## Another round left in fight

**Activist Gonzales stops treatment and goes home to family**

**By David Montero, Rocky Mountain News  
March 29, 2005**

Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales, diagnosed with coronary and renal distress last week, looked his cardiologist squarely in the eye and simply said he was going home.

Not that the decision came as a shock to his family.

"I think he surprised the cardiologist," Gina Gonzales said. "He told him, 'It's not in your hands or in mine.' "


Gina Gonzales is Rodolfo's 51-year-old daughter. She was there when he was released from St. Anthony's Central Hospital in Denver on Thursday after he agreed to discontinue any further medical treatment for a severe coronary and renal distress disorder. By that evening, the human rights advocate and Chicano activist was resting at home surrounded by his family.

**At 76, Gonzales is considered by many in the Hispanic community as a legend. Aside from being an accomplished boxer early in his career, he made a name for himself by challenging governmental institutions he saw as being unfair to the Chicano movement in the 1960s and 1970s as well as those within his own community whom he saw as torchbearers for the culture's identity.**

Antonio Esquibel, professor emeritus at Metropolitan State College of Denver and director of the Rocky Mountain SER Denver Head Start Program, said Gonzales was a firebrand who he first met in 1967 at a Catholic church on the Auraria Campus.

Esquibel, who was a practicing Catholic, was invited to the church by a priest who was concerned about a speaker criticizing Catholicism. When Esquibel went to hear the speaker, he said he underwent a different kind of conversion.

"I remember he said that the Catholic Church was the richest institution in the world and it had the poorest members," Esquibel said. "He said instead of teaching people to stand on their own feet, it asked them to turn the other cheek. I thought, this guy makes a lot of sense."

 Click here to view a larger image.

George Kochanec Jr. © News  
Relatives of activist Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales - from left, daughter-in-law Trudy Gonzales, daughter Gina Gonzales, son Joaquin Gonzales, daughter Charlotte Gonzales, son Rudy Gonzales, daughter Gail Gonzales and daughter Nita Gonzales - stand under a portrait of their father at Escuela Tlatelolco, the Denver school he founded. Gonzales stopped hospital treatment last week for coronary and renal distress and returned home.

Esquibel was hooked.

**By that point, however, Gonzales was already a fixture in the Chicano movement. In the late 1950s, he became the first Mexican-American district captain for the Democratic Party in Denver. Around that time, he financed *Viva*, the first barrio newspaper in Denver.**

Rudy Gonzales, Corky Gonzales' 46-year-old son, said his father was already known for his boxing career, which gave him a lot of credibility and made him a celebrity in Mexico.

Boxing, his son said, was always a passion with his father, who, up until a heart attack and a car accident in 1988, managed to do his road work - training with a bag and doing daily runs.

But the heart attack and accident had long-term effects on the activist. His son said he spent 77 days in the hospital and that the doctors said if he hadn't been in such good shape, he likely wouldn't have made it.

"It hasn't been an easy 17 years," Rudy Gonzales said. "He lost a certain quality of life, and we lost a part of our father. But it has taught us patience, empathy and compassion."

Charlotte Gonzales, 54, said her father suffered from short-term memory lapses and wasn't able to do the kind of rigorous workouts he'd been accustomed to his whole life.

But she said he remained engaged with issues - including educational issues related to public schools today.

She said his views haven't changed much since he authored a poem in 1967 entitled *I am Joaquin*.

In it the poem's character struggles between his culture or forgetting his culture to achieve economic stability in the United States.

At the root of his convictions, however, she said, was family and education.

"We always sat down at dinner together and he would ask us about what we learned," Charlotte Gonzales said. "He asked pointed questions and was interested in having dialogue with us."

**Gathered together at the Escuela Tlatelolco in Denver Monday afternoon with her brothers and sisters - Corky Gonzales has six daughters and two sons - they all agreed that their father was demanding and that their mother was also instrumental in their growing up. The school was founded in 1970 by Corky Gonzales and offers education in grades pre-kindergarten through 12.**

"The biggest lesson we learned growing up was to share," Rudy Gonzales said at the table inside a room at the school named for his father. "We had to share him with others."

Since his leaving the hospital Thursday, however, the family admits they've had more of him to themselves - even as friends continue to visit.

And Rudy Gonzales is quick to point out that his father still has a lot of fight in him and isn't dead yet. It's the boxer in him, he said.

"I remember one time a sportswriter asked him a question before a fight," he said as the table of siblings grew quiet.

"Like many Catholics, he would do the sign of the cross before the bell rang. Anyway, the sportswriter asked, 'Does the sign of the cross help you?' He told him, 'Only if you know how to fight.' "

"He does," Gonzales said.

#### Career highlights

- Professional boxer in the 1940s and '50s and won the National Amateur Athletic Union bantamweight title in 1946. Also named to the Colorado Sports Hall of Fame.
- Founded the Crusade for Justice in Denver in 1966. The cultural center attempted to get the city to eradicate poverty and deal with racial injustice.
- Founded Escuela Tlatelolco in 1970.
- Wrote his epic poem titled *I Am Joaquin* in 1970. His son, Joaquin, however, said it wasn't named for him.
- Led a contingent of the Poor People's March on Washington, D.C., in 1968.
- Father of eight children: two boys and six girls.

[monterod@RockyMountainNewscom](mailto:monterod@RockyMountainNewscom) or 303-892-5236

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REMEMBERING CORKY GONZALES

# March: 'Corky taught us dignity and self-respect'

Continued from 5A

about a just society. Corky was a fighter. He taught us that you have to be a fighter in order to win."

Cisco Gallardo, of Denver, was inspired to start Barrio Warriors the year after he graduated from Escuela Tlatelolco in 1991. His organization uses cultural awareness to bring about positive change to youths involved in gangs.

"I didn't know who I was or where I belonged," said Gallardo, a former gang member. "For many Chicanos and Chicanas who end up joining gangs, they just want to belong somewhere. Corky taught us dignity and self-respect. He taught us that we had a rightful place in society."

Like countless others, Gallardo said he initially was inspired by Gonzales' epic poem, *Yo Soy Joaquin* (I am Joaquin), about a young man coming to terms with his ethnic identity.

Regina Chavarin and her husband came from Oakland, Calif., to join the march.

"This march represents a rare opportunity to reinforce our commitment to *La Causa* (the cause). Our kids — and even adults — need to know that the movement hasn't stopped. We've lost a lot of what we fought to gain. Things like affirmative action, immigrants' rights, worker rights. The only way to bring about justice is to not wait for someone else to do it. We're responsible for our quality of life. In life, and now in death, Corky is a reminder of that."

Barbara Arguello, of Denver, also a longtime Gonzales supporter, was among many who brought families to the march.

"My kids are here because they want to be," she said. "They understand the importance of Corky's legacy. And they understand how I feel about his importance to the Chicano community. This man is my pope."

Maria Vega-Clark, who was accompanied by her 18-year-old son, Yomni Clark, was in high school in Denver when she joined the Crusade for Justice.

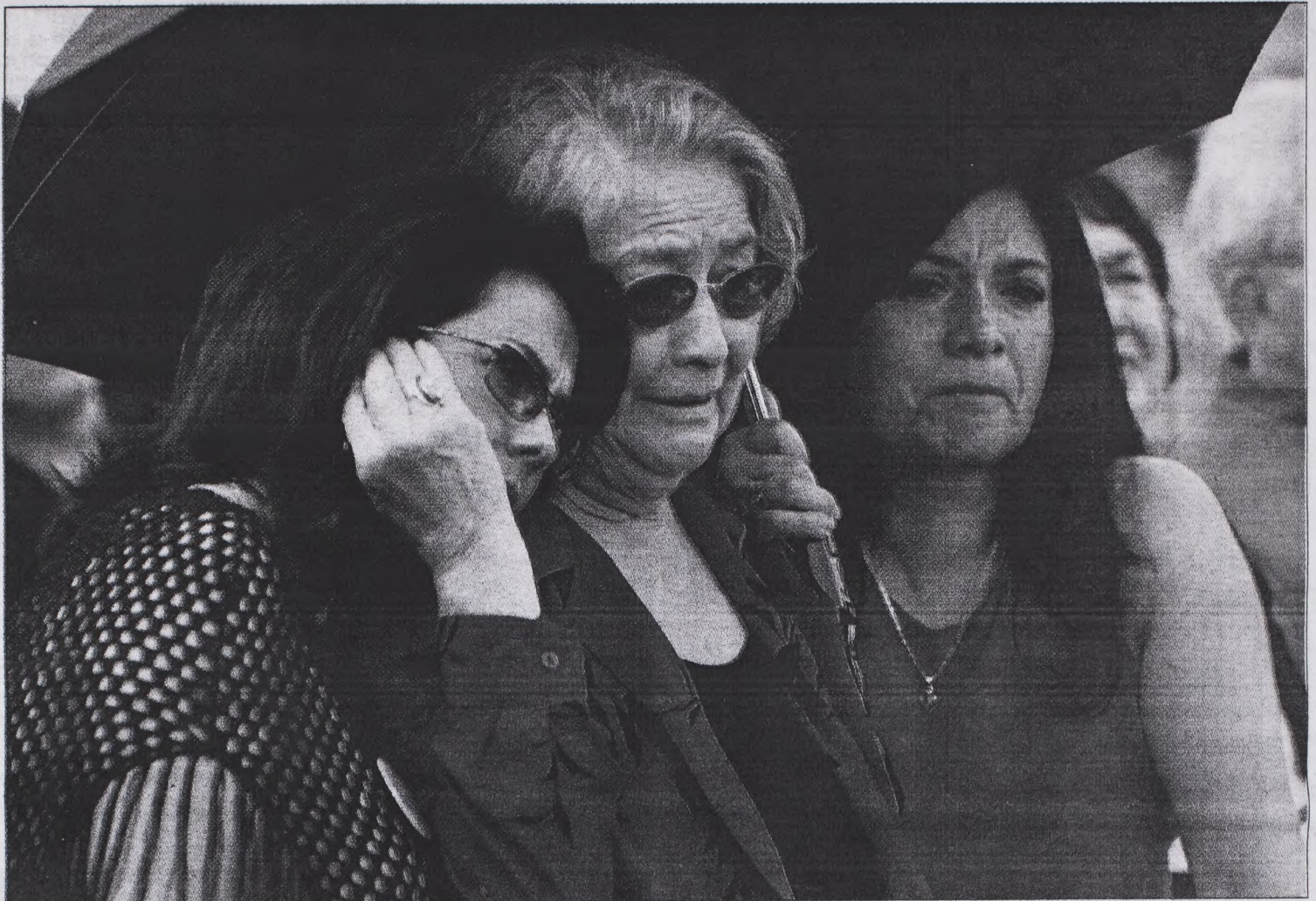
"Corky helped me feel it was OK that my parents spoke only Spanish and that they came from Mexico. Before I met Corky, I was made to feel that that was something to be ashamed of. He opened my eyes to who I was and gave me self-acceptance. Now I'm teaching my kids to be proud of who they are because society is still telling them otherwise."

Denver Mayor John Hickenlooper was carrying his son, Teddy, in his arms. "I think it's an opportunity to pay respects to a man who devoted his life to improving the quality of life for his community and for others," he said. "One of the things he taught me was that you don't have to accept things the way they are. You can change the world you live in."

Other marchers included members of organized labor, American Indian and black groups, and environmental organizations.

"I'm here today because he was not only a leader of the Chicano community, he was a leader to anyone who wanted to speak out against social injustice," said Rick Van Wie, Denver Green Party co-chair. "His philosophy certainly fits in with our values."

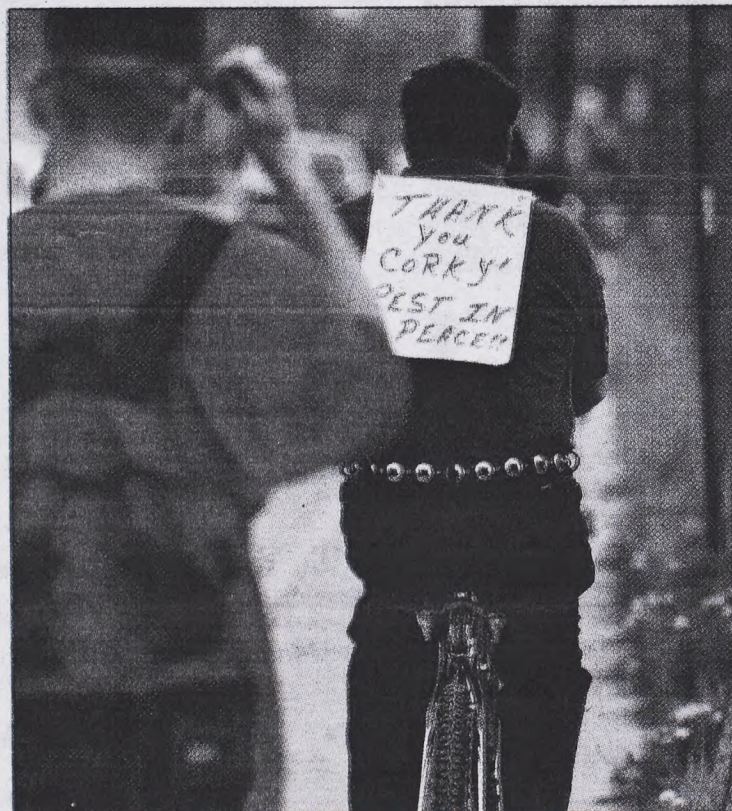
As the procession wound its way from Escuela Tlatelolco in north Denver to Mestizo-Curtis Park,



PHOTOS BY DENNIS SCHROEDER/ROCKY MOUNTAIN NEWS

**Geraldine Romero Gonzales**, center, wife of Chicano activist Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales, comforts daughters Valerie Gonzales-Torres,

left, and Gail Gonzales during a memorial Sunday at Mestizo-Curtis Park. Hundreds turned out to honor the activist's memory.



dancers wearing indigenous costumes with elaborate feathered headdresses and carrying rattles led the way. Marchers shouted "Chicano Power" and "Viva La Raza" while musicians riding in the back of a pickup truck sang songs of protest and remembrance like *De Colores*

and *Brown-Eyed Children of the Sun*.

Some carried signs and wore T-shirts with activist slogans: "Stop Bitching — Start a Revolution" and "Who Stopped the Pilgrims at the U.S. Border?"

At Mestizo-Curtis Park, members



▲ **Paul Gerelli** and Ricardo Sanchez, top left to right, and Chunky Sanchez and Daniel Valdez, bottom left to right, play music during the march Sunday in honor of Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales.

◀ **Gino Lopez, of Denver**, rides his bicycle among the hundreds who marched the streets of Denver from Escuela Tlatelolco — a community-based private school developed in the late 1960s to provide alternative education for young Hispanics — to Mestizo-Curtis Park, to commemorate Gonzales' life as an activist.

of Gonzales' family, including his wife, Geraldine, his children and grandchildren, recited poetry and told anecdotes about their patriarch.

Dolores Huerta, co-founder of the United Farmworkers Union, spoke of the special bond that had been

formed between Gonzales and UFW leader Cesar Chavez.

"It's overwhelming," said Gonzales' daughter, Nita Gonzales, as she held back tears.

"There could be no better tribute to my father."

# Catholics' wish lists center on new pope

## Factions see faith's leader as key to church's future

By Fernando Quintero and Jean Torkelson  
ROCKY MOUNTAIN NEWS

Liberal. Conservative. Third World. Healer. Diplomat.

As cardinals prepare to pick a pope today, Catholics and church observers have their own ideas about what they would like to see in the new pontiff.

Some want a fitting next act to John Paul II—a charismatic leader who presents to the world a clear, vigorously Catholic identity.

Others are hoping for a more theologically relaxed pontiff who would encourage debates on issues such as married clergy.

And some think the church would make an important statement by picking someone from the Third World, both as a sign of the church's universality and as an answer to growing Protestant evangelism in those parts of the globe.

A common wish among local Catholics is that the next pope would continue reaching out to young people, many of whom were greatly inspired by Pope John Paul's visit to Denver in 1993 for World Youth Day. John Paul created the periodic, international gathering of Catholic youth to

### Inside

■ **The conclave** procedure opens today at the Vatican. **23A**

■ **Any Catholic man** can become the next pope, but who are the front-runners? **23A**

■ **Online extra:** For an in-depth look at how a pope is elected, click on Today's links at **RockyMountainNews.com**.

inspire their faith.

"Someone who can continue to reach out to the youth of the world with the same kind of charisma as John Paul did is essential," said Matthew Archer, leader of the local Catholic group, Teen Encounters for Christ.

"I hope there is a continuation of World Youth Day. It's a powerful way to energize young people. At the same time, we need an intergenerational approach where both young and old can serve in ministry together."

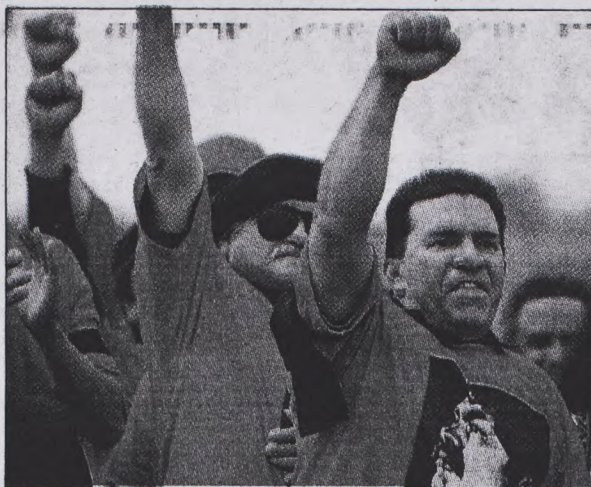
### A rich legacy

John Paul was the most prolific writer-pope in history. Many Catholics said they hope the new pope will actively promote his predecessor's densely packed theological ideas—for example, on human sexuality and the role of the laity.

In Denver, John Paul's writings inspired the formation of ENDOW, a group of lay women who study the pope's teachings on the role of women in the church.

"The Holy Father is calling forth a new feminism," said group leader Terry Polakovic. Many college-age women, and even those who once thought only in terms of a female priesthood, have been swept up in John Paul's message, she said. Essentially, John Paul said that while God reserved the priesthood for men, He gave women a radical and essential role as leaders, teachers and guardians of family life.

If the new pope continued to press his predecessor's insights, the results would be "incredi-



**Family members** raise their arms Sunday to emphasize their "Viva la Corky" chant at Mestizo-Curtis Park.

# Hundreds celebrate Gonzales



PHOTOS BY DENNIS SCHROEDER/ROCKY MOUNTAIN NEWS

**Hundreds join to march** from Escuela Tlatelolco, at 29th Avenue and Federal Boulevard, to Mestizo-Curtis Park, at 32nd Street and Champa Street, in memory of Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales. Family members dressed in red shirts with an image of Gonzales.

## Memorial march honors Chicano rights champion who touched many lives

By Fernando Quintero  
ROCKY MOUNTAIN NEWS

It was billed as a memorial march and celebration of the life of Chicano activist Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales. But for many, the procession of more than 1,000 people through the streets of downtown Denver on Sunday was a testament to the influence and impact of one man on generations of Hispanics.

Under gray skies that slowly gave way to blue, hundreds of people who were touched by Gonzales and his struggle for social justice came out to pay respects to a man who inspired a national movement and instilled cultural pride.

Some were alums of Escuela Tlatelolco, a bilingual school he established that promotes Chicano culture and activism. There were veterans from his Crusade for Justice, a social activist organization. And even a few original members of the Raza Unida Party, the short-lived political party he helped develop after breaking from the Democratic Party over what he perceived to be its reluctance to back Hispanic candidates.

"He opened up many doors. Many people in this park stood on his shoulders, myself included," said former Denver Mayor Federico Peña, who joined the celebration at its conclusion at Mestizo-Curtis Park.

Other public officials in attendance included Denver City Councilwoman Rosemary Rodriguez, U.S. Rep. Diana DeGette and U.S. Sen. Ken Salazar.

"I think Corky was a champion for freedom and democracy," Salazar said. "He was an effective voice for inclusiveness, and he demonstrated the respect and the hopes of our community."

Dave Valdez, leader of the Denver motorcycle riding club, Los Cochinos, was joined by 30 other riders to "show support for El Jefe."

"If it weren't for Corky, we wouldn't have had a Mexican mayor in Denver, or a Mexican senator," said Valdez, who graduated from Escuela Tlatelolco in 1970.

Andres Valdez, an Escuela alum and former member of Crusade for Justice, drove in from Albuquerque, where he is executive director of New Mexico Vecinos Committee, an activist organization that works on issues ranging from voter rights to police brutality cases.

"It's encouraging to see so many people, especially the younger generation," he said. "They need to learn what it takes to bring

Flip to MARCH on 17A

■ **Online extra:** See more photos from the march honoring Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales at [www.RockyMountainNews.com](http://www.RockyMountainNews.com)

**No Torkelson**  
■ Jean Torkelson's column does not appear in today's editions.



# Park skies dirtier

■ **Air pollution** over Colorado's national parks has worsened, despite funding, cleanup efforts. **4A**

## March to remember Gonzales



DENNIS SCHROEDER/ROCKY MOUNTAIN NEWS

### Paying tribute to a Chicano leader

Geraldine Romero Gonzales, center, widow of Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales, flanked by her daughters Valerie Gonzales-Torres, left, and Nita Gonzales, leads a crowd of more than 1,000 through Denver on

Sunday in a march to honor the Chicano activist who died Tuesday. Mayor John Hickenlooper and former Mayor Federico Peña joined the group in remembering the man who started a national movement for Hispanic justice. Peña said Gonzales "opened many doors." **5A**

#### COLORADO

### Hizzoner among best U.S. mayors

Hickenlooper gets 'Time' honor. **4A**

#### SPORTS



### Nuggets could face Spurs in NBA playoffs

Tough reward for good season. **1C**

■ **NFL draft: Receivers keep getting bigger.** **1C**

#### WORLD

### Draped in secrecy, search for new pope begins today. **23A**

■ From activist to Third World leader, local Catholics give preferences for next pontiff. **5A**

cessor's insights, the results would be "incredi-

Boulevard, to Mestizo-Curtis Park, at 32nd Street and Champa Street, in memory of Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales. Family members dressed in red shirts with an image of Gonzales.

■ Jean Torkelson's column does not appear in today's editions.

# "Corky" Gonzáles: Message to Aztlán and Joaquín

DAVID CONDE

When Antonio Esquibel dedicated himself to the project of compiling Gonzales' most important works into the volume *Message to Aztlán*, it was to provide an easier way for people to know and celebrate the true meaning of the Chicano movement, as seen by its immortal urban leader.



David Conde

Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales, 1928-2005, passed from our everyday lives on Tuesday, April 12, 2005.

His legacy, however, had already been established in rather prophetic forms. His work in rallying Chicano youth all over the country against a present and future life

diminished by lower expectations and unfulfilled dreams, was mirrored by a spiritual journey into our very soul and

transpersonal being.

"I am Joaquín," says Gonzales' epic poem by the same name, "I must fight and win this struggle for my sons, and they must know from me who I am." That identity carried by Joaquín is rich in complexity. At the same time, it presents a difficult challenge for all Chicanos to overcome. In the poem, our identity is manifested as problematic and contradictory. It is the Mestizo head worn for more than just decoration.

The story of how Gonzales led the struggle for liberty and justice has become an epic in itself. As a result, there was more of a chance for Chicanos to enjoy opportunities to be educated and become success stories themselves. Today, the world does not lack for testimonials about the work of the Chicano Movement being basic to their success.

Yet, the everlasting legacy of Corky Gonzales is more than that. His everlasting legacy is Joaquín.

*I Am Joaquín* celebrates the adventure of the hero, a universal journey facing and solving complexities and contradictions in Chicano self-image. Those contradictions are eloquently portrayed by the poem when it states, "I was both tyrant and slave."

This almost intractable condition provides the field for the Joaquín epic work. "I am Cuauhtémoc, proud and noble leader of men, king of an empire, civilized beyond the dreams of the Gachupín Cortez, who also is the blood, the image of

myself."

To face the European whose legacy is the very thing you are fighting in the civil rights struggle is to face your Mestizo self. To face your Indian nature as a conquered and devastated people is to face your Mestizo self.

Chicanos, like the Toltecs of old, never had a choice. We were born to two worlds and neither wanted us. We were forced to make space where there was little to be had. Yet our triumph over that challenge has made us stronger than we could ever have imagined.

Today, the question is less about whether we belong and more about our responsibilities to lead and make a difference. The Chicano movement started the process to make that possible.

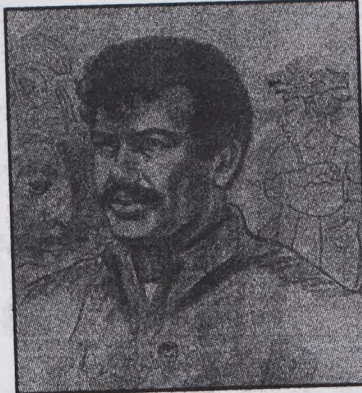
We owe it to Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales, and his generation of great leaders, to follow through on the promise of what they started.

There is no better monument to him than to take Joaquín's and make his journey our own.

Last Tuesday we lost a great leader. But he left us a legacy that can never be diminished. It can only be increased as history records and interprets his journey.

We stand on the shoulders of a giant. His energy to carry our weight is unfailing and eternal. He can also speak to us if we are willing to listen. What he will say again and again is already written. Joaquín made sure of that.

David Conde is a professor at Metro State College. To contact Dr. Conde, send email to [conded@mscd.edu](mailto:conded@mscd.edu)



## "Corky" Gonzáles: Mensaje a Aztlán, y Joaquín

Cuando Antonio Esquibel decidió dedicarse a compilar las obras de Gonzáles en el volumen titulado *Mensaje a Aztlán*, fue para que la gente tuviese una manera fácil de conocer y celebrar el verdadero significado del movimiento chicano, tal como lo veía este inmortal dirigente urbano.

Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzáles; 1928-2005, dejó este mundo el pasado 12 d abril. Su legado, sin embargo, ya estaba proféticamente establecido. Su obra incluyó desde movilizar a la juventud chicana para que luchase contra un presente y

un futuro de bajas expectativas, y un viaje espiritual a la misma alma de un ser transpersonal.

"Yo soy Joaquín," dice Gonzáles en su poema homónimo. "Debo luchar y ganar esta batalla por mis hijos, y ellos tienen que saber por mí quién soy yo". La identidad de Joaquín es rica y compleja. Y es un desafío que los chicanos (mexico-americanos) tienen que superar. En el poema, nuestra identidad es problemática y contradictoria. Es la cabeza del mestizo, que no es sólo un adorno.

La historia de cómo Gonzáles luchó por la libertad y la justicia es en sí una épica. Gracias a él, los chicanos tienen más oportunidades de educarse y tener éxito. Y muchos afirman que la lucha del Movimiento Chicano es la base de su éxito.

Pero el legado de Corky Gonzáles. Su legado permanente es Joaquín.

Yo soy Joaquín celebra la aventura del héroe, un viaje universal que enfrenta y resuelve las complejidades y contradicciones de la autoimagen latina. Esas contradicciones quedan elocuentemente reflejada en la frase "Yo soy a la vez el amo y el esclavo".

Esa condición es la base de la épica de Joaquín. "Soy Cuauhtémoc, orgulloso y noble líder de hombres, rey de un imperio, civilizado más allá de todo sueño de Gachupín Cortez, quién también es la sangre, la imagen de mí mismo".

Enfrentarse al legado europeo en la lucha por los derechos civiles es enfrentarse al hecho de ser mestizo. Mirar al indio conquistado y al pueblo devastado es mirar al mestizo.

Los chicanos como los toltecas de antaño no tuvieron oportunidades. Nosotros nacimos en dos mundos y ninguno nos quiere. Pero el triunfo ante los desafíos nos hace más fuertes de lo podíamos imaginar. Hoy la cuestión no es si pertenecemos o no, sino cuáles son nuestras responsabilidades. El Movimiento Chicano empezó el proceso que hizo posible ese cambio.

Le debemos a Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales y a su generación de grandes dirigentes la decisión de continuar con lo que ellos empezaron. Ese es el mejor homenaje a Joaquín y su viaje.

El martes pasado perdimos a un líder. Pero nos dejó un legado que no puede disminuir, sino que crecerá con la historia, cuando se reinterpreté su viaje.

Estamos en los hombros de gigantes. Su energía para llevar nuestra carga no fallará, porque es eterna. Y también nos habla, si lo escuchamos. Y lo que nos dice ya está escrito. Joaquín así lo asegura.

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# Another Latino soldier in Iraq

Dear Editor:

Re: Joey Cabral (Dr. David Conde's commentary, La Voz, April 13, 2005)

Having never met Dr. Conde or Joey Cabral, my heart goes out to their family, especially Joey's mother, Linda. Dr. Conde, I too have a nephew who just returned from his second tour of duty in Iraq. This Marine, Sargeant Michael Mancha, who is in the intelligence unit, came back to American soil a mere few weeks ago.

The Saturday following his return (April 9), my family held a welcome home party for him. All the family was at the party, including grandma, uncles, aunties, cousins, spouses, friends, nieces, nephews, and so forth. To show our support for him, even his oldest brother, Arthur, flew in the early morning from Los Angeles to Denver.

Michael is the second son of my oldest sister, whose name is also Linda. During Thanksgiving and Christmas we were at Linda's house, and there were lots of prayers and tears shed for Michael.

Though we are all proud of him and it was a joyous occasion to again have him home, it was also sad. During a private moment, I asked him how he was really doing. He said since arriving home in Colorado the nightmares have ceased. Unfortunately, he recognizes there is a strong possibility the nightmares, including his on-his-toes or looking-behind-his-back behavior will continue forever. I will share

Dr. Conde's article with my family, including my niece, who was just completing

Though we've never met, I always find time to read your (Conde's) column and it is always quite interesting and helpful. Please accept my condolences and may our dear Lord bless you and your family during this most difficult of times.

Finally, please indicate to your sister Linda I am extremely proud of, and deeply grateful to, her son, Joe Luis Cabral. God Bless You,

Athena Quezada  
Denver, CO

# Corky Gonzales – un hermano con honor

Truly, the Chicano community of Denver will miss one of its own – Corky Gonzalez. He passed away recently and I'm writing some of my thoughts from those years gone by about a man known to many of us who were involved in the social justice/equality movement, as *El Jefe*.

Corky had a vision of a better, more fruitful America by inclusion rather than exclusion for people of color. Had it not been for Corky, then I doubt very much the leaders of the new Latino community would be in their positions today. *Jefe* opened those doors years ago.

He not only gave the world an awareness of our people, but he established for us an identity – Chicano/Chicana. Let us be thankful of that because before we were always looked down upon with no true heritage or culture to maintain.

I will never forget the early days of the Chicano Movement. I was just completing

leave when the "1968 West High Blow Out" happened in Sunken Gardens on the west side. It was on that day I discovered a true need to assist in the call for Chicanos/Chicanas to become politically active and involved in a system that had been denying us our right to an equal and quality education. As a result of this experience, in which the Denver Police were beating our students, I decided to learn more about this man, Corky Gonzales, and take a look at what he was advocating. To this date, I have not looked back nor do I regret having taken on the cause of the Chicano Movement – *Viva la Causa!*

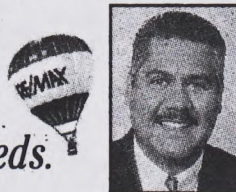
Thank you, *Jefe*, for your inspiration, council and guidance in a cause that still needs to be continued and carried on by our young people. You will always be remembered in our Chicano history and your devotion to our gente will always remain the light at the end of our tunnel. May God grant you eternal rest.

Chuck Martinez (Lone Wolf)  
Denver.

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# LA VOZ NUEVA

LA VOZ is the bilingual newspaper serving Colorado's Hispanic community with 30 years of continuous publication.

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# Congressional tribute to "Corky" Gonzáles

**Editor's Note:** On Monday, April 18, 2005, Rep. Diana DeGette (D-CO 1) said the following words in the U.S. House of Representatives as a tribute to Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzáles. These words will be included in the Proceedings and Debates of the 109th Congress, First Session.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the extraordinary life of an eminent citizen, Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales. This remarkable man merits both our recognition and esteem as his impressive record of leadership, activism and invaluable service has moved our community forward and thereby, improved the lives of our people.

Corky Gonzales lived life on the front lines of progress and is known as the father of the Chicano movement in the Southwest. He was born in Denver, Colo., in 1928 and spent his early life as a professional boxer. He became a national boxing champion and was later inducted into the Colorado Sports Hall of Fame. But for Corky Gonzales, his boxing career proved to be a metaphor for a life of social and political activism. Corky Gonzales was a fighter and he became a true champion in the struggle for human dignity and cultural respect. He became a champion of La Raza.

Corky Gonzales entered the political arena in the late 1950s serving as the first Mexican American district captain in the Denver Democratic Party. He proved to be a skilled organizer and headed up the 1960 Viva Kennedy campaign. He was recognized for his efforts to increase political participation among Latinos and for bringing the social and economic challenges facing the Latino community into mainstream awareness. But the slow pace of social change within the political system set Mr. Gonzales

on a new path of activism. He established the La Raza Unida party in Colorado and in 1965, he founded La Crusada Por Justicia -

and his writings and speeches have become an affirmation of pride in the Mexican American cultural heritage.

One of Corky Gonzales' most enduring accomplishments was the founding of Escuela Tlatelolco Centro de Estudios in 1970. It was established to ensure that Latino and Indigenous youth are educated and empowered to continue their human development in higher education. But more importantly, in establishing Escuela Tlatelolco, Corky Gonzales established a tradition of learning that helps students and parents both cherish and preserve the ethnic and cultural diversity that gives individuals dignity and strength and thereby further empowers our communities and our nation.

Corky Gonzales touched our community in many ways that will endure. He gave us courage and dignity in the face of discrimination and economic injustice. He inspired us with his devotion and willingness to fight for the rights that should be afforded to all people and the cultural expression that dignifies all people. I am reminded of the wisdom of Cesar Chavez - "What is at stake is human dignity. If (we) are not accorded respect, (we) cannot respect ourselves and if (we) cannot respect (ourselves), (we) cannot demand it of others." I would submit that Corky Gonzales understood this simple truth and his life is a testament to the activism that is guided by a deep and abiding respect for the intrinsic value of each and every human being.

Please join me in paying tribute to the life of Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales, a prominent activist and civic leader. His service, accomplishments and leadership command our respect and serve to build a better future for all Americans.



**Rep. Diana DeGette (D-CO 1)**

The Crusade for Justice - to further the cause of equality and justice for Chicanos, Latinos and Mexican Americans as well deal with racial injustice and advance the causes of civil liberty and human rights. He led a contingent to the Poor People's March on Washington, DC and in 1969, he convened the First Annual Chicano Youth Conference in Denver. Mr. Gonzales worked with city leaders to establish a health clinic on the north side and served on the Colorado Civil Rights Commission. He is credited for launching the Chicano literary movement

## Tributo a "Corky" Gonzáles en el Congreso federal

**Nota del editor:** El pasado lunes 18 d abril, la congresista Diana DeGette, demócrata de Colorado, pronunció el siguiente tributo a Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzáles en la Cámara de Representantes del Congreso de Estados Unidos. Sus palabras quedarán incluidas y en los Procedimientos y Debates del 109º Congreso, Primera Sesión. La siguiente es una traducción resumida.

Señor presidente (de la Cámara de Representantes). Me levanto en honor a la extraordinaria vida de un eminente ciudadano, Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzáles. Este notable hombre merece nuestro reconocimiento y admiración por su impresionante trayectoria de liderazgo y activismo, y sus invaluables servicios que hicieron progresar a nuestra comunidad y, por eso, mejoraron las vidas de nuestros pueblos.

Corky Gonzáles vivió en la vanguardia del progreso y se le conoce como el padre del movimiento chicano en el suroeste del país. (Entre otros muchos logros), se lo reconoce por haber iniciado una campaña de



LA VOZ Nueva photo by Shannon Garcia

Friends and supporters of the Chicano Movement gathered in front of Escuela Tlatelolco at the beginning of the march in memory of Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzáles.

Amigos y simpatizantes del Movimiento Chicano se reunieron frente a la Escuela Tlatelolco al inicio de la marcha en memoria de Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzáles.

alfabetización de chicanos, y por su constante afirmación del orgullo de la herencia cultural México-americana.

Uno de los principales logros de Corky Gonzales fue fundar la Escuela Tlatelolco Centro de Estudios en 1970. La estableció para asegurarse que los jóvenes latinos y

nativos recibiesen la educación y la capacitación necesarias para continuar con su desarrollo en la educación superior. Pero, al establecer la Escuela, Gonzáles estableció una tradición de aprendizaje donde se preserva la diversidad étnica y cultural que les da a las personas la dignidad y la fortaleza para capacitar a nuestras comunidades y a nuestra nación.

Corky Gonzáles tuvo muchos efectos duraderos en la comunidad. Nos dio poder y dignidad frente a la discriminación y la injusticia económica. Nos inspiró con su devoción y su voluntad de luchar por los derechos de todos, y por la cultura que dignifica a la gente.

La vida de Gonzáles es un testamento al activismo guiado por un profundo respeto por el valor de cada ser humano. Brindemos tributo a Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales, un prominente activista y dirigente comunitario. Su servicio, sus logros y su liderazgo provocan nuestro respeto y nos sirven para construir un futuro mejor para todos los estadounidenses.

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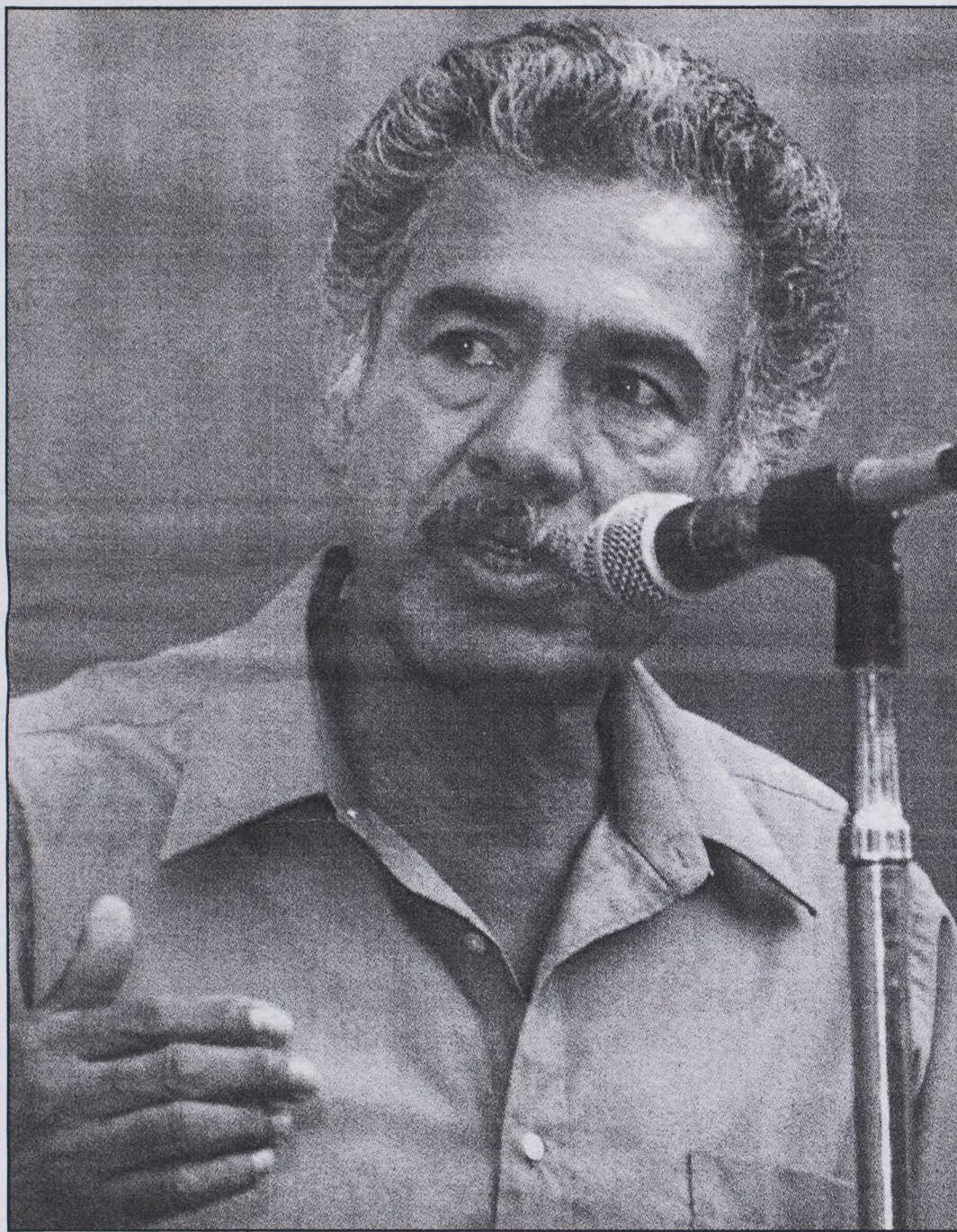
# LA VOZ NUEVA

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National Association of Hispanic Publications

April 20, 2005

## Corky remembered



LA VOZ Nueva photo by Shannon Garcia

Rodolfo Gonzáles at one of his last speaking engagements.

Rodolfo Gonzáles en una de sus ultimas charlas en publico.

## Cientos marchan como homenaje a Gonzáles

FRANCISCO MIRAVAL

Cientos de dirigentes hispanos y simpatizantes méxico-americanos marcharon el domingo pasado por las calles del centro de Denver como homenaje a Rodolfo

"Corky" Gonzáles, el respetado líder latino que falleció el martes pasado a los 76 años de edad.

Con pancartas, banderas y fotografías, la marcha buscó intencionalmente reproducir lo que sucedía casi a diario en Denver y

en otras ciudades de Estados Unidos en los años sesenta y setenta, cuando la comunidad chicana (o méxico-americana) buscaba por medio de protestas públicas defender sus derechos y promover

CONTINUA EN PÁGINA 4



### ATTRACTIONS

**Eva-Luz Tellez sheds her creative light on canvas and paper mache with revealing insight on family, femininity.**

PIGEON

### Esta Semana This Week

#### COMENTARIO COMMENTARY

##### The challenge of Joaquín

The identity of the Chicano is the identity of the Mestizo, who belongs to two worlds and is accepted by none. The challenge for Chicano youth in the post-Gonzales era is to follow the example of Joaquín, tyrant and slave at the same time. **6**

#### NUESTRA GENTE

##### El ejemplo de Juan Rodriguez

Desde hace más de dos décadas, Juan Rodriguez vive paralizado, tras ser víctima de un conductor ebrio. Pero la tragedia no le ha quitado a Rodriguez ni la energía de vivir ni el intenso deseo de ayudar a su comunidad. **9**

#### DEPORTES SPORTS

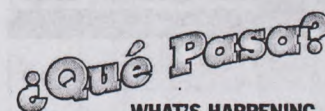
##### Ready for the playoffs

After a couple of losses, the Denver Nuggets finished seventh in the Western Conference standings. Starting this weekend, the Nuggets will face now the San Antonio Spurs in the first round of the play-offs. **21**

#### SUCESOS EVENTS

##### For children's sake

The local observation of El Día de los Niños comes to the Denver Art Museum and Aurora Fox Theater with a multitude of events and activities – music, dance, theater and storytelling abound. **19**



WHAT'S HAPPENING

EVENTS CALENDAR, PAGE 16

## March honors Chicano leader

Hundreds of Latino and Native American leaders and friends of the community, marched last Sunday, April 17, in Denver to pay tribute to the life and legacy of Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales, the well-known Chicano leader who died last week at age 76.

With signs, banners and flags, as it was done in the '60s and '70s, the march organizers wanted to honor Gonzales, and to remind the community of the battles he fought for the rights and the well-being of Chicanos and Mexicanos in Colorado.

To the cry of "La raza unida jamás será vencida!", "Corky presente!" and "¡Hasta la victoria final!" the march went from the Escuela Tlatelolco, founded by Gonzales more than three decades ago, to Mestizo Park, in northeast Denver, where there was a formal ceremony honoring the late Chicano leader.

Gonzales has been called the "Cesar Chavez of Colorado" and the "Malcolm X of the Chicano Movement." But for those close to him, he was beyond comparison.

His death closes an important chapter in the history of civil rights in Colorado, according to Dr. Estevan Flores, of the Latino Research and Policy Center at CU-Denver.

Nita Gonzales, daughter of Rodolfo and principal of Escuela Tlatelolco, spoke about how her father fought for the rights of the people, and how that battle still goes on.

Gonzales was born in Denver in 1928. In 1946 he graduated from high school, and that same year he won a national amateur boxing championship. He then used his new celebrity status to organized the Chicano community in Denver, and to work for the rights of the community.

In 1960, Gonzales was part of Viva Kennedy!, a Latino group supporting the candidacy of John F. Kennedy. In 1966, he founded the Crusade for Justice, "to defend the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

# COMMENTARY

**John Temple**  
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**On Point**  
VINCENT CARROLL

PLAN WILL HELP, BUT IS NO PANACEA

## Drug list a step toward cost savings

Everyone knows run-away Medicaid spending has been a major cause of the recent crisis in state budgets. So perhaps it was inevitable that our own politicians decided to tackle the issue again.

It's not the most innovative reform, but Senate Bill 22, sponsored by Sen. Steve Johnson, R-Fort Collins, would help restructure the federal-state partnership that provides health care to 360,000 low-income Coloradans at an expected cost this year of \$3 billion. The bill, which has passed the Senate, would create a preferred-drug list with the aim of reining in the rate of growth in spending.

Clearly, some cost containment is in order. Over the past six years, Colorado's spending on Medicaid has grown at an average 8 percent a year. And the fastest-growing portion of the program is prescription-drug costs, which soared 116 percent to \$212 million in 2004 from \$98 million in 1999.

Then there's the matter of the audit last year that found the state's prescription-drug program to be grossly mismanaged. According to auditors, the program failed to implement cost-control measures that could have saved taxpayers more than \$12 million. It's a measure of how bad things were that no one contradicted their conclusions.

SB 22's preferred-drug list would save money by steering Medicaid patients away from costly brand-name drugs and toward less-expensive alternatives. Doctors serving those patients would be required to obtain authorization from the state to prescribe drugs that aren't on the list.

But there are downsides, too, beginning with the restriction of consumer choice. A more serious concern is the potentially negative effect on patient care should doctors start prescribing drugs on the list to avoid the hassle of getting prior approval

for a superior drug not on the list.

Luckily, the bill exempts cancer drugs and medicine to treat AIDS patients, as well as people with serious mental illnesses.

It's also only fair to point out that projected cost savings haven't always materialized. Michigan's list, for example, cut Medicaid drug spending by only 4 percent. The Colorado Department of Health Care

Policy and Financing estimates SB 22's drug list will reduce the state's drug spending by 2 percent.

We should also point out that such programs all too often set the stage for health care by bureaucracy. Under SB 22, for example, a governor-appointed committee would take on the role of drug dispenser for the state's elderly, poor and disabled.

Moreover, some states with preferred drug lists have moved to even more extensive formularies to control drug prices. Such schemes only end up hurting American consumers since every dollar policy makers try to squeeze out of the pharmaceutical companies can be one less that goes toward finding a cure for a life-threatening illness.

Perhaps some of Colorado's elderly Medicaid patients would want access to cutting-edge drugs that, for example, slow or halt the progression of Alzheimer's disease but which wouldn't be allowed under a formulary. And at, say, \$20,000 a year, such drugs would be a bargain considering state Medicaid pays for nursing home care up to \$150,000 a year.

Even so, anyone who follows these policy discussions knows entitlements for the elderly in particular can't continue on their current path forever. Taxpayers can't support a system in which there are no limits on the number or types of drugs Medicaid will pay for. SB 22 is far from perfect, but it's a reasonable attempt at reining in costs.

## Freedom to hector

Sen. Bob Hagedorn remains inexplicably convinced that his freedom to speak on college campuses is under assault. And so the Aurora Democrat, who also teaches at Metro State, is sponsoring a bill guaranteeing that professors can challenge students' political and religious beliefs with apparent impunity.

For good measure, Hagedorn plans to add an amendment to Senate Bill 85 ensuring that college faculty have a say in whether a professor is punished for inappropriate speech — mere administrators not being trusted with such decisions.

Let's see: Just three weeks ago, University of Colorado brass concluded that Ward Churchill could go so far as to urge a fellow radical to "carry the weapon" when, for example, conducting "an action" on Wall Street. Meanwhile, officials at Colorado State University in Pueblo delivered a painless tap on the knuckles to a professor who treated his students to an obscenity-laced tirade on immigration — a subject that had nothing to do with the class — complete with shouting, table pounding and arm-waving.

Finally, just this week the Senate killed an attempt to create a commission to examine academic tenure and perhaps reform it.

In other words, college faculty — at least those tenured — already enjoy more latitude to say what they want than probably any professionals in Colorado. In that context, Hagedorn's bill is at best superfluous and at worst a warning to students that no matter how offensively gratuitous or combative a professor's speech or behavior might be, they had better grin and bear it.

## 'Fair share' indeed

Several readers, in letters published in this newspaper and in personal correspondence, have chided me for denouncing proposals to abolish the cap on income subjected to the Social Security payroll tax. Almost as if in chorus, they insist that those making more than \$90,000 (this year's cap) should "pay their fair share."

And of course they should; indeed, they do.

Social Security benefits are linked to the amount of earnings taxed. Qwest founder Phil Anschutz will no doubt pocket millions this year, but his eventual benefits will be calculated as if he made 90 grand — because

that's how much of his income is subject to the payroll tax. Based upon his expected benefits, he's paying his fair share.

Those who suggest Congress eliminate the earnings cap aren't proposing this because they think Anschutz needs a plumper retirement cushion. They just seek a tax windfall to shore up the Social Security system. In principle — and in its destructive potential for the economy — their tactic is no different from calling for a major boost in income taxes.

## Architecture review

I was treating myself to breakfast a couple of blocks from the new wing of the Denver Art Museum this week when a man at the next table mentioned to his companions that he'd just walked by "that monstrosity" for the first time.

Monstrosity? The Daniel Libeskind-designed Frederic C. Hamilton Building a monstrosity? Did the man realize the magnitude of his sacrilege? He's lucky he wasn't yanked from his seat by a swarm of Civic Booster Police from the Convention and Visitors Bureau and given a good caning on the spot.

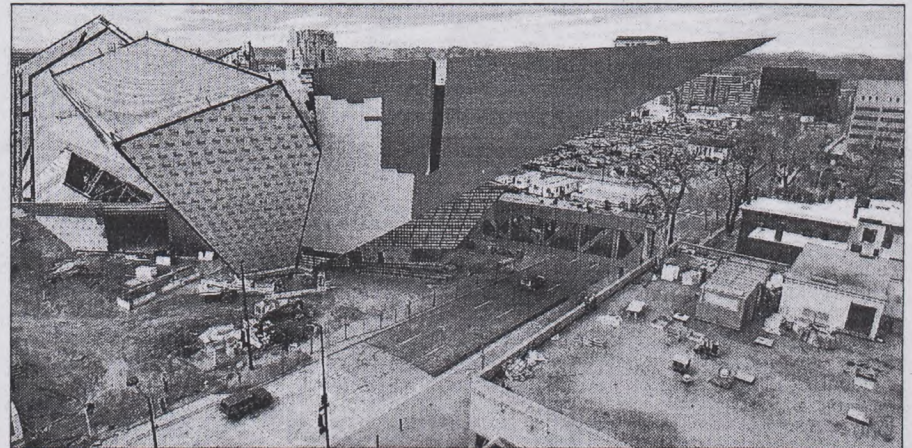
The intriguing question is, however, whether his opinion is common. Neither of his friends protested the unflattering assessment. Will Libeskind's "expressive" architecture result in one of those creations that is quietly loathed and ridiculed by a large swath of the population while it is loudly celebrated by the civic elite?

For the time being, a fair appraisal of the Libeskind building remains premature, given the amount of unfinished work. Some of the exterior is not yet exposed, while construction facilities block crucial perspectives. It's only a matter of months, however, before those of us still on the fence must finally come down and choose sides.

## On board, at last

Less than three weeks before an election to determine if many of them have a brand new place to work, Denver sheriff's deputies deigned to tell the public they support a \$378 million justice center — well, more or less. Forty percent actually voted against the project, as if a grossly self-destructive act is a clever way to signal how really, really angry they are over how they've been treated.

Vincent Carroll, editor of the editorial pages, writes On Point Tuesday through Friday. Reach him at [carrollv@RockyMountainNews.com](mailto:carrollv@RockyMountainNews.com).



Traffic makes its way down 13th Street past the new Denver Art Museum extension.

# Hundreds march...

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

rights of Mexican-descendants in Colorado."

Later, in 1969, he organized a national meeting of young Chicanos in Denver, with more than one thousand participants from all over the country. And in 1972 he was part of La Raza Unida political party.

In 1978, after a heart attack and car accident, he retired from public life. However, he was often seen with his wife and his daughter at community events.

His legacy includes many prominent Latinos, like Federico Peña, former Denver Mayor and former member of President Bill Clinton's cabinet.

"Today is a very sad day, but also a day of great pride for our community," Nita Gonzales said.



LA VOZ Nueva photos by Shannon Garcia

La esposa y las hijas de Rodolfo Gonzales marcharon en honor de "un espléndido esposo, padre, abuelo, bis-abuelo, hermano, tío; guerrero y dirigente". The wife and the daughters of Rodolfo Gonzales marched to honor "a splendid and gilded husband, father, grandfather, great grandfather, brother, uncle, warrior and chief".

## Cientos marchan por "Corky"

CONTINUA DE PÁGINA 1

su bienestar.

Al grito de "¡La raza unida jamás será



LA VOZ Nueva photos by Shannon Garcia

**Daniel Valdez**

vencida!", "¡Corky presente!" y "¡Hasta la victoria final!", los manifestantes partieron de la Escuela Tlatelolco, fundada hace más de 30 años por González, y se dirigieron hasta el Parque del Mestizo, donde se desarrolló una ceremonia de homenaje al desaparecido dirigente.

Distintos oradores usaron diferentes comparaciones para enmarcar y explicar la obra y el legado de Gonzales. Para unos, Gonzales fue el "César Chávez de Colorado". Para otros, el "Malcolm X" de los chicanos.

Con su muerte, "se cierra un importante capítulo en la historia por los derechos de los latinos en Colorado", afirmó el Dr. Estevan Flores, director del Centro de Estudios y Política Latina de la Universidad de Colorado en Denver, y amigo de la familia Gonzales.

Nita Gonzales, hija de Rodolfo y directora de la Escuela Tlatelolco, recordó "la dura lucha de su padre", y dijo que, aunque "esa batalla aún no ha terminado, mucho se ha ganado".

Gonzales nació 1928 en uno de los barrios hispanos más pobres de Denver. En 1946 completó la escuela secundaria, y, en

ese mismo año, ganó un campeonato nacional de boxeo amateur.

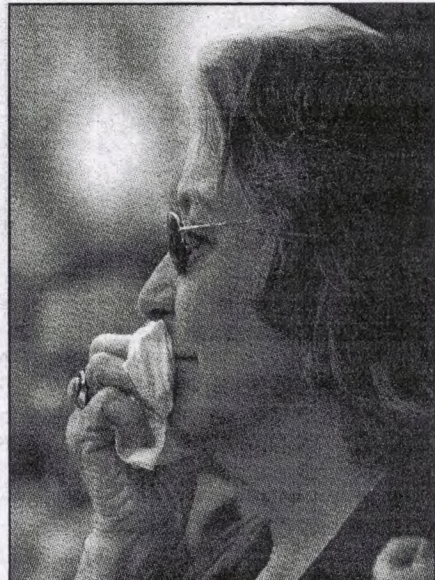
Ese título le permitió tener un amplio reconocimiento entre la juventud de Denver, y Gonzales decidió usar su nueva fama para organizar a los latinos de la ciudad, y comenzar una campaña a favor de sus derechos.

En 1960, Gonzales entró activamente en la política, y estuvo localmente a cargo de ¡Viva Kennedy!, el grupo de hispanos demócratas que favorecía la candidatura de John F. Kennedy.

Luego, en 1966, aprovechando su fama como campeón de boxeo y su experiencia comunitaria, Gonzales formó la Cruzada por la Justicia, con el propósito de "defender los derechos de los descendientes de mexicanos en Colorado".

En 1969 Gonzales convocó en Denver la Conferencia Nacional Juvenil de Liberación de los Chicanos, que atrajo a más de mil representantes de todo el país. Más tarde, Gonzales participó en el partido La Raza Unida, y pavimentó el camino para varios políticos hispanos en Denver.

"Es un día de mucha tristeza, pero también un día de inmenso orgullo para nuestra comunidad", afirmó Nita Gonzales.



LA VOZ Nueva photo by Michael V. Ornelas

**Geraldine Gonzales esposa de Corky**

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que estableció Corky. Su hija Nita es la directora y otros miembros de la familia continúan trabajando en el centro.

James Mora, 40, residente de Greeley, conoció a Corky cuando era un niño, por la afiliación de sus padres en el movimiento chicano. Por varios años fue guardaespaldas de Corky cuando hacía apariciones en público. Su amistad con la familia es profunda y dice que Corky era todo un patriarca.

"Sus nietos llegaban a la casa y le besaban la mano. Eso ya no se ve mucho...hijos, nietos, biznietos, todos lo adoraban y lo honraban".

Además, lo describe como un hombre meticuloso y pendiente de los detalles. "Preocupado por su apariencia, con su cabello peinado y su bigote impecable, hacía de una comida o una tomar una cerveza todo un ritual".

Recuerda que decía que uno tiene que respetar la comida, porque es lo que nutre el cuerpo, que le aconsejaba que perdiera peso para garantizar su salud, y que agradecía hasta el agua que tomaba. "Era muy profundo".



**ESCUELA TLATELOLCO.** Adrián Haouk, 14, participa en un ejercicio del grupo de teatro Tarahumara. La escuela fundada por Corky se enfoca en la educación de los valores y tradiciones latinos e indígenas.

FOTOS DE LA TRIBUNA/JAMES GREGG.

"Corky y la Cruzada abrieron muchas puertas para nuestra gente, y no sólo las abrieron, también las echaron abájo", comenta Mora. "Y aun así, Corky siempre fue una persona muy sencilla y

modesta".

El legado del movimiento chicano encabezado por Corky está presente hoy, en opinión de Rudy, de maneras tangibles e intangibles.

"Evidentes son el acceso a

las oportunidades de empleo, las mejores oportunidades de educación...e intangibles son el orgullo por la herencia y las tradiciones, la autodeterminación y autoestima de los latinos, poder entender la

historia de un pasado que fue extraordinario, saber de dónde venimos y cuáles son nuestras raíces...".

Jorge Amaya, 51, de Greeley, conoció a Corky cuando tenía 15 años. Bastó un discurso de Corky para que el joven Amaya cambiara su forma de ver la vida. "Nuestra cultura estaba ahí, pero estaba siendo definida por la cultura anglo. Él nos dio un enfoque claro y real de quienes somos, y eso me hizo una persona mejor".

"Creo que lo que volvió loco a todo el mundo es que Corky fue la primera persona que se atrevió a mirarte a los ojos y decir, 'Yo no tengo por qué aguantar esto'".

Mientras Amaya asegura que Corky fue quien pavimentó el camino que los derechos que hoy tiene la comunidad, Arturo Terrazas, profesor de Estudios Étnicos de AIMS Community College, lamenta que muchos jóvenes no conozcan la labor de Rodolfo Corky González y otras figuras claves del movimiento chicano de los años sesenta y setenta. "Pero afortunadamente, estamos vien-

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do el despertar de un gigante dormido”.

“El sueño que una vez tuvo Corky todavía es nuestro sueño; orgullo propio y determinación. Sus creencias están vivas entre mucha gente...”, afirma Amaya.

El 24 de marzo del 2005, Rodolfo Corky Gonzáles, 76, fue diagnosticado con una enfermedad coronaria y renal crónica en el St. Anthony Central Hospital, en Denver. Corky decidió parar el tratamiento y regresar a su hogar, con su familia.

El campeón de boxeo perdió su última pelea por la vida y murió el martes 13 de abril a las 7:42 p.m., rodeado de sus seres queridos, justo con la puesta del sol.

Brady Mc.Combs, reportero del Greeley Tribune, contribuyó con este reportaje.



FOTOS DE LA TRIBUNA/CORTESÍA FAMILIA GONZÁLES. “CORKY”. Ganó el nombre cuando tenía 7 años, de su tío Tom Johnson, que decía que Rodolfo siempre explotaba como un corcho y que nunca se quedaba callado.

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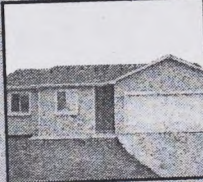
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FOTOS DE LA TRIBUNA/CORTESÍA FAMILIA GONZÁLES.

**POR LOS DERECHOS CIVILES.** Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales con César Chávez, activista del movimiento chicano en California. Corky encabezó el movimiento chicano en Colorado, a la par de Chávez, Reis Tejerina, Dolores Huerta y otros que siguieron el ejemplo de Martin Luther King en la lucha por los derechos civiles.

**RODOLFO "CORKY" GONZÁLES: CRONOLOGÍA DE LA VIDA DE UN ACTIVISTA CHICANO EN COLORADO.**

- 18 junio 1928:** Nace Rodolfo Gonzales en Denver, Colorado.
- 1944:** Se gradúa de la preparatoria a los 16 años.
- 1946-1955:** Desarrolla su carrera como boxeador.
- 1946:** Gana el título de campeón del peso-gallo de la National Amateur Athletic Union.
- 1960:** Trabaja para la campaña electoral de Kennedy. En ese mismo año rompe con el Partido Demócrata y funda la Cruzada por la Justicia.
- 1967:** Escribe el poema épico "Yo soy Joaquín".
- 1954:** Se retira del boxeo.
- 1969:** Se suma a las protestas de los jóvenes chicanos por recibir una educación inferior.
- 1970:** Funda la Escuela Tlatelolco, en Denver.
- 1988:** Entra al Salón de la Fama de los Deportes de Colorado. Sufre un infarto y un accidente automovilístico que le dejan un daño cerebral leve.
- 2003:** Viaja en una gira promocional con su libro "Mensaje de Aztlán", una colección de todos sus escritos.
- 29 junio 1968:** Dirige una marcha frente al cuartel de la policía para protestar por la muerte de Joseph Archuleta, 15, baleado por un policía.
- 25 marzo 2005:** Decide parar el tratamiento para su enfermedad coronaria y renal crónica, y regresa a su hogar.

## The legacy of Corky Gonzales

Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales, the Chicano activist and former boxer, died Tuesday in his north-side home in Denver, surrounded by his family. Just at sunset, the fighter lost his last battle.

Corky decided to pursue a career in boxing in 1946 when he realized he couldn't afford the high cost of the engineer career he had dreamed of.

One of the best boxers in the featherweight division in the world, champion of the National Amateur Athletic Union and Denver Golden Boy, Corky went pro in 1949 and then retired from the ring at age 26.

His son Rudy Gonzales said Corky was a counter puncher. "He would wait for someone to try to hit him, when they missed, he punished them."

Corky was born in Denver on June 18, 1928. His father emigrated from Mexico at early age, during the Mexican Revolution years. Corky lost his Mom at age 2, but his father managed to raise the kids and keep the family together, although he never remarried.

Suffering the identity conflicts of being Spanish speaking in the school system, and struggling with the work in the fields, Corky persevered and graduated from high school at 16. Through the boxing, being a bar owner and bail bondsman, Corky enter politics using the conven-

tional path. He worked for the Kennedy campaign in 1960 and the first Latino captain of Democratic Party's district in Denver. Disenchanted with the Democrats who wanted Chicano votes but no Chicano candidates, Corky split up from the party and founded The Crusade for Justice in the late 1960s.

The crusade, an urban civil rights and cultural movement, soon became the head of the Chicano activism in Colorado.

James Mora, 40, former Corky's bodyguard, said Corky and the crusade opened a lot of doors for today's community. "They not only opened, they broke them down."

During 1960s and 70s, Corky organized and led high school walkouts, demonstrations against police brutality, farm workers strikes and mass demonstrations against the Vietnam war.

In 1968, he led a contingent in the Poor People's March in Washington, D.C., and was the organizer of the annual Chicano Youth Liberation Conference that began in 1969.

Arturo Terrazas, professor of ethnic studies at Aims Community College, said with the increase of the Hispanic population, the dream that Corky once had will be still our dream and will be in the forefront: self-pride and determination.

*He always taught us that your word is the most important thing...he never backed down*

VALERIE GONZÁLES  
CORKY'S DAUGHTER

amor, Federico sacó adelante a sus hijos y Corky creció escuchando las historias de la revolución, de Villa y Zapata, la historia mexicana y el orgullo de su pueblo.

Corky asistió a numerosas escuelas y se enfrentó al conflicto de identidad que supuso el sistema de educación, que intentó cambiar su nombre de Rodolfo a Rudolph o Rudy, además de los castigos por hablar español dentro de la clase.

Según cuenta su hijo Rudy, en una ocasión, siendo Corky un niño, lo pusieron en un aula de retardados, aunque tenía una inteligencia normal, sólo porque sufría las barreras del idioma y el aprendizaje de una nueva lengua.

No obstante, perseveró en el sistema educacional de Denver y se graduó de la preparatoria Manual High Scho-

ol cuando tenía 16 años.

Incurrió en el boxeo tras su decepción de estudiar ingeniería, pero también fue dueño de una bar, Corky's Tavern y tuvo un negocio de préstamos para fianzas.

De su matrimonio de 56 años con Geraldine, Corky tuvo seis hijas (Nita, Charlotte, Gina, Gail, Cindy y Valerie) y dos hijos (Rudy y Joaquín). Veintidós nietos y ocho biznietos completan el clan Gonzales, y Corky, junto a su esposa, siempre han sido los pilares de la familia.

Corky leía a sus hijos todas las noches antes de dormir, desde que cumplían cinco años. Escritores clásicos que iban desde Neruda, Borges y García Lorca hasta Mark Twain y Hemingway formaron parte de esas lecturas.

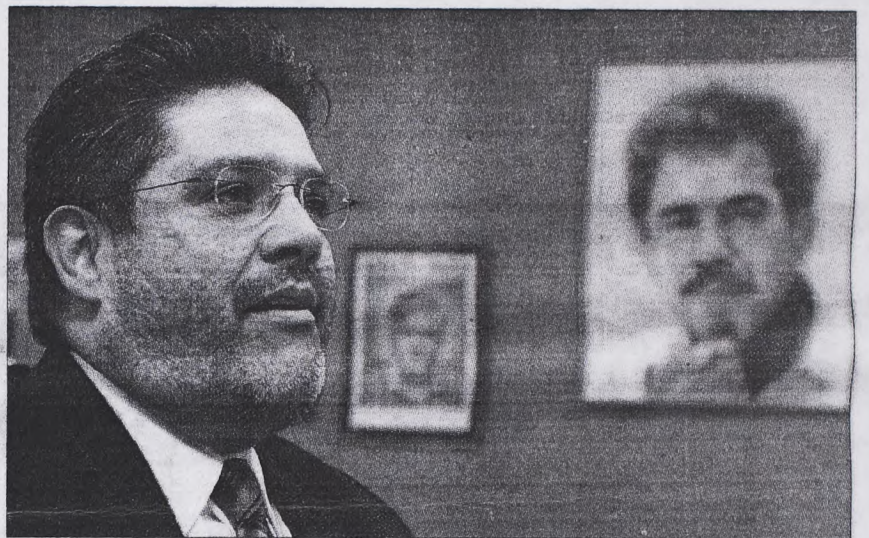
"Nos leía sólo en inglés y creo que era una ironía, por-

que era el defensor de los chicanos, de los mexicanos, de la gente que habla español, pero siempre nos decía que no quería que fuéramos en la escuela lo mismo que él pasó", agrega Rudy.

Todos se sentaban juntos a la mesa durante la comida y conversaban acerca de los asuntos del día.

"Cuando preguntaba, no aceptaba un 'bien' o 'mal'. Preguntaba por qué, cómo, cuándo, dónde... quería saber los detalles de todo y con eso propiciaba la comunicación entre nosotros".

El protagonismo de Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales en el boxeo, su trabajo en el bar y como prestamista de fianzas lo llevaron a involucrarse en la política, inicialmente por la vía tradicional. Trabajó en la campaña electoral de Kennedy en 1960 y después se



FOTOS DE LA TRIBUNA/JAMES GREGG.

**MENSAJE.** "Creo que a los nuevos inmigrantes, mi padre le hubiera dicho dos cosas; una, que el dinero no es lo que importa, que lo que importa es el ser humano. Dos, 'defiéndete por ti mismo', porque si uno piensa como una víctima, entonces será una víctima".

convirtió en capitán de un distrito electoral del Partido Demócrata en Denver.

Pero su desencanto llegó cuando vio que los demócratas buscaban los votos de los chicanos, pero no la elección de sus candidatos.

Corky se desligó del partido y a finales de los sesenta, fundó la Cruzada por la Justicia, un movimiento cultural urbano por los derechos civiles que pronto se convirtió en el núcleo del movimiento chicano en Colorado.

La Cruzada y Corky fueron una vanguardia contemporánea con César Chávez en California, José Ángel Gutiérrez en Texas, Reis Tejerina en Nuevo México, Dolores Huerta y muchos más.

Valerie Gonzales Torrez, hija de Corky, dice que su padre siempre les enseñó que su palabra era lo más importante. "Él nunca se echó para atrás en nada".

Estuvieron al frente de protestas y marchas en contra de la brutalidad policial, para pedir igualdad de oportunidades educacionales para los jóvenes chicanos y en demostraciones en contra de la guerra de Viet Nam.

Rudy Gonzales dice que cuando su padre trabajaba activamente en el movimiento, ellos vivían bajo amenaza de muerte prácticamente todos los días.

"Mi padre no era popular porque se atrevió a desafiar a los que estaban en el poder y a criticar el status quo".

En 1968, Corky dirigió un contingente de mil chicanos e indios americanos del suroeste del país que participaron en la Martin Luther King Jr. March on Poverty, en Washington, DC.

Organizó las conferencias anuales de la Juventud Chicana, como un esfuerzo más para crear unidad entre los jóvenes chicanos de todo el país. La primera conferencia, celebrada en marzo de 1969, produjo un documento llamado Plan Espiritual de Aztlán, que desarrolló el concepto del nacionalismo étnico y determinación en la lucha de los chicanos por su liberación.

Gonzales siempre recalco a sus hijos la importancia de ayudar a los demás, de hacer algo por la comunidad. "Siempre decía 'Tú no vas a la universidad a olvidar de dónde viniste, tu vas para regresar y contribuir con tu comunidad'", asegura su hija, Valerie Gonzales.

### LA ESCUELA TLATELOLCO

En 1970, Corky fundó la Escuela Tlatelolco, que comenzó como una escuela de verano con un programa diseñado para incrementar el interés de los jóvenes en su herencia chicana, dándoles un sentido de orgullo por sus orígenes y su cultura hispana.

Hoy la escuela es una institución privada que ofrece clases desde kinder hasta duodécimo grado, siguiendo las mismas pautas educacionales



# PORTADA

2 LA TRIBUNA JUEVES 14 DE ABRIL DE 2005

No quería que lo trataran como un pedazo de carne, por eso el campeón de boxeo fue su propio mánager, encabezó el movimiento chicano en Colorado y luchó por los derechos civiles a la par de Martín Luther King, César Chávez y Dolores Huerta.

POR MAILYN SALABARRÍA  
MSALABARRIA@GREELEYTRIB.COM

**R**odolfo "Corky" González entró al boxeo en 1946. Tomó la decisión luego de estudiar cuatro meses en la Universidad de Denver y darse cuenta de que no podría pagar los costos.

Como amateur fue uno de los mejores boxeadores del peso pluma (125 lbs) a nivel mundial, con un récord de 48 peleas ganadas y 4 derrotas.

En 1946 se coronó campeón del peso gallo del National Amateur Athletic Union. Aunque la revista Ring Magazine lo colocó en el puesto número tres en el mundo, nunca recibió crédito oficial por ello.

Corky pasó al boxeo profesional en 1949, justo antes de cumplir los 21 años. Se convirtió en el Denver Golden Boy y se retiró del ring a los 26 años, con un récord de 65 peleas ganadas, 9 perdidas y 4 empates.

Estuvo boxeando desde 1946 hasta 1955 y siempre fue un luchador de contraataque.

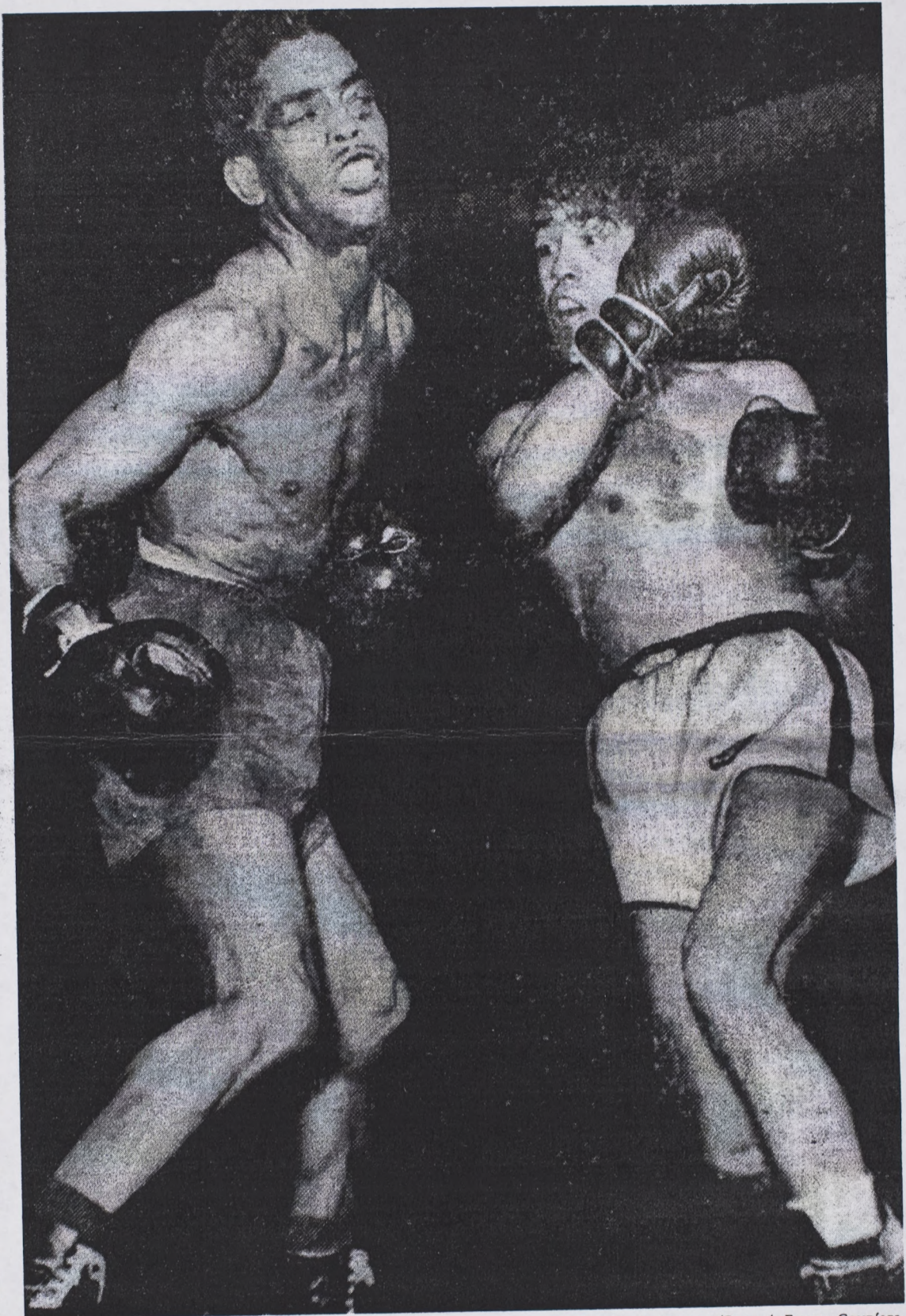
"Él esperaba a que trataran de golpearlo, entonces cuando fallaban, él los castigaba", cuenta Rudy, su hijo, "su técnica defensiva era increíble, casi no lo podían golpear".

## EL NACIMIENTO DEL LÍDER

Rodolfo "Corky" González nació en Denver, Colorado, el 18 de junio de 1928. Su padre, Federico González, era de Buenaventura, Chihuahua y muy joven emigró a Nuevo México, durante los años de la revolución mexicana. Allí conoció a Indalesia, se casaron y tuvieron siete hijos.

Indalesia murió cuando Corky tenía 2 años y su papá nunca más se volvió a casar, arreglándose para criar a los hijos y mantener a la familia junta.

Con mano firme, pero con



FOTOS DE LA TRIBUNA/CORTESÍA FAMILIA GONZÁLES.

**CAMPEÓN EN LA DIVISIÓN DE 125 lbs.** En 1988, Rodolfo "Corky" González ingresó al Salón de la Fama Deportiva de Colorado. También fue nombrado Denver Golden Boy y campeón de la National Amateur Athletic Union.

# Rodolfo "Corky" González SU LEGADO

# LA TRIBUNA

LA VOZ LATINOAMERICANA EN EL NORTE DE COLORADO

SEMANARIO GRATUITO

JUEVES 14 DE ABRIL DE 2005, GREELEY, COLORADO

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» **Espectáculos**

**Carlos Santana dijo en Costa Rica:**

**“BUSH ES UNA BESTIA”**



Un concierto en con muchas críticas y una canción dedicada al presidente.

Pág. 10

» **Inmigración**

**Candidato hispano a alcaldía de Los Ángeles**

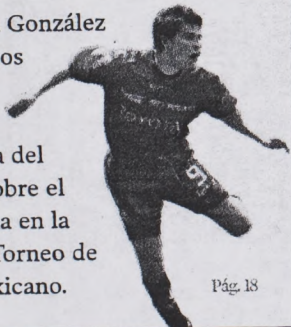
Antonio Villaraigosa es hijo de un inmigrante mexicano, fue criado por una madre soltera, dejó de estudiar en secundaria, se postuló para la asamblea de California y no sólo resultó elegido, sino que fue designado presidente de ese organismo estatal. Ahora se postula a la alcaldía de Los Ángeles.

Pág. 25

» **Deportes**

**“Chamagol” la figura en la 12a fecha**

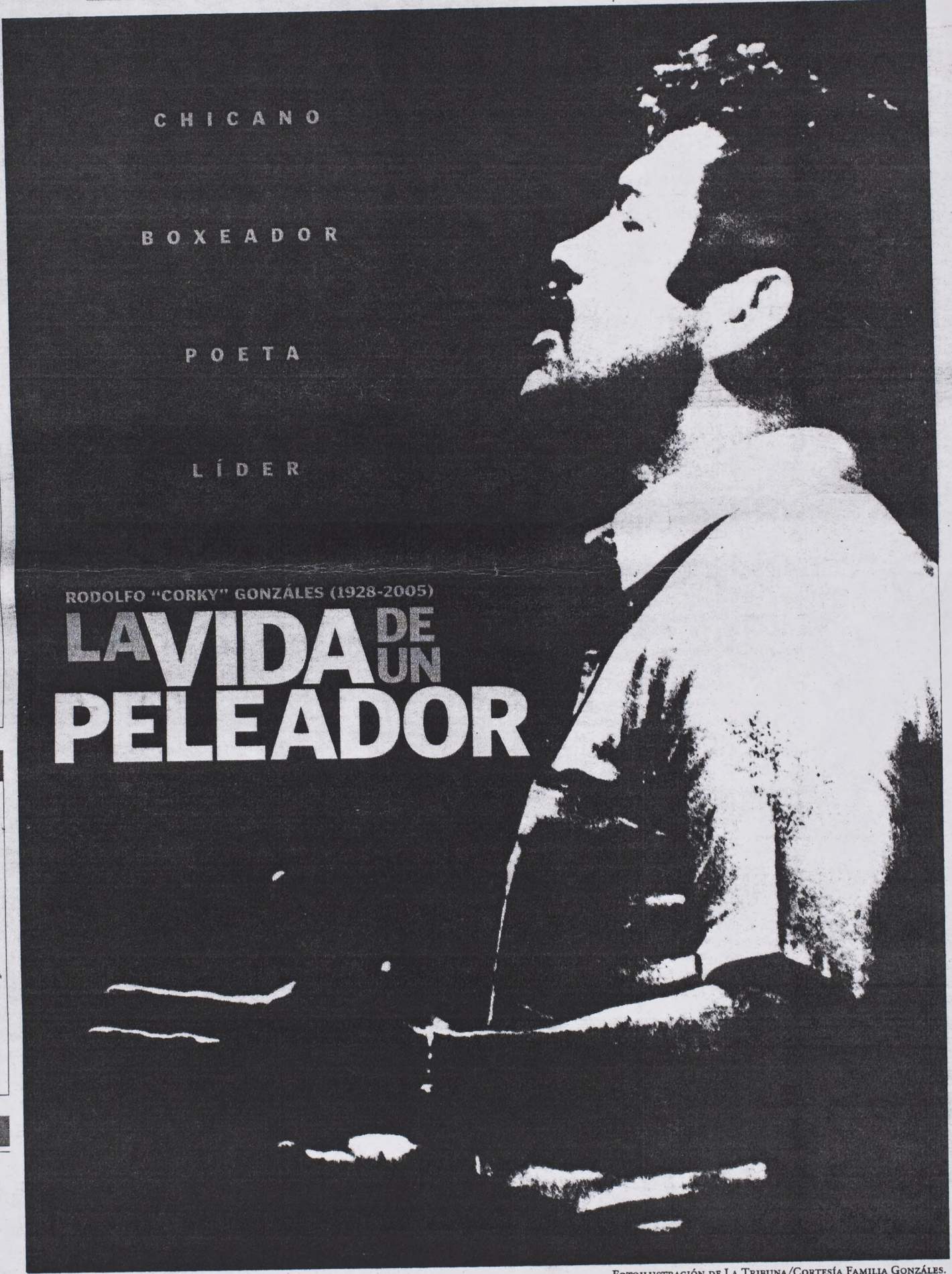
Sebastián González marcó dos goles para consolidar la victoria del Atlante 3-0 sobre el Santos Laguna en la fecha 12 del Torneo de Clausura mexicano.



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ESPECTÁCULOS	10		



CHICANO

BOXEADOR

POETA

LÍDER

RODOLFO "CORKY" GONZÁLES (1928-2005)

**LA VIDA DE UN PELEADOR**

FOTOILUSTRACIÓN DE LA TRIBUNA/CORTESÍA FAMILIA GONZÁLES.

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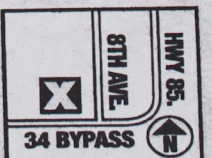
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GROWING UP  
(Denver) when I was young was extremely difficult. Racism was a given," said Lorraine Granada, executive director of the Cross Community Coalition, a social services group in Denver.

"My father got beat up by three men just because he was walking down the street," she recalls. "What Corky did lifted us all up."

### Denver in the spotlight

Indeed, Colorado Latinos have taken greater leadership roles in a system they once fought to be a part of, catapulting to prominence in politics, education and business. Federi-

that it is OK to be Chicano and be brown and walk with pride and dignity," said Ramon Del Castillo, professor at Regis University and a Chicano activist. "There had been such a bad rap given to being brown."

Gonzales' National Chicano Liberation Youth Conference brought more than 1,000 students and activists to Denver in 1969. He helped establish an independent political party, La Raza Unida, which held its only national convention in 1972 in El Paso.

But today, Colorado is no longer the epicenter of Chicano activism, observers say.

the Crusade for Justice in 1966 — founded in part because of its own success. Latinos found greater opportunities and moved into the middle class.

"We got the education; we became the professionals," said Baca, now the director of the Latin American Research and Service Agency, or LARASA.

Over the last three decades, that upward swing has created challenges for a new generation of Latino leaders. Young activists complain that those who benefited from Gonzales' movement are now occupying the plush offices of the establishment he once opposed.

"As little as it is, sometimes our clout is for sale," said Dominguez, the filmmaker.

For some, that's an inevitable result of a movement that has matured and enjoyed some success.

Events behind the Mena shooting tell that story, said Estevan Flores, executive director of the Latino/a Research & Policy Center at CU-Denver.

A member of the Mayor's Latino Advisory Council at the time of the shooting, Flores said the committee was concerned that then-Mayor Wellington Webb wasn't acting quickly enough. They asked to meet with Webb and police, but were rebuffed. After the panel threatened to hold a rally or news conference, Webb reconsidered, and coun-

hours a day, and I'm going to pay you a nickel a basket.' But because of pressure, they began to pay a heavy price for that," Granada said.

"Now they do it a little differently. They say, 'We will hire you, pay you minimum wage and not tell anyone you're not documented.' The exploitation is more hidden," she said.

Though some decry the lack of a charismatic leader like Gonzales, most agree that his mantle has been picked up by others. They are politicians, lawyers, social service workers and community activists.

Their tactics are different, but they say Gonzales' spirit inspires their fight.

"You have starry eyes to get into this business, but then you get beaten down. You have to pick your battles," said Rosemary Rodriguez, Denver city councilwoman.

"My personal goal is to be practical in terms of leadership, but I'm really hoping I won't be scared to take on the tough jobs.

"I want Corky to be proud of me."

Staff writer Michael Riley can be reached at 303-820-1614 or [mriley@denverpost.com](mailto:mriley@denverpost.com).

Staff writer Elizabeth Aguilera can be reached at 303-820-1372 or [eaguilera@denverpost.com](mailto:eaguilera@denverpost.com).

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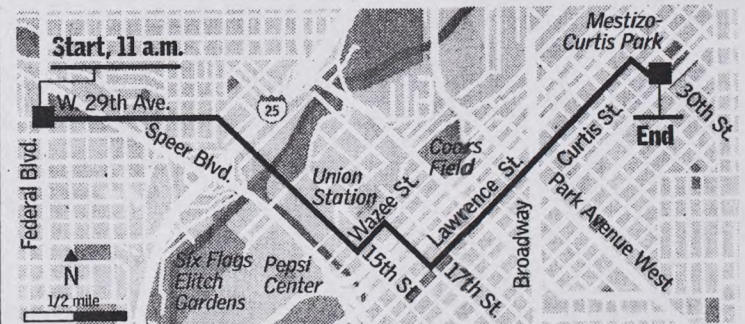
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### March to celebrate life of Corky Gonzales

A memorial march for Latino activist Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales will begin at 11 a.m. today at Escuela Tlatelolco, 2949 Federal Blvd., concluding with a celebration at Mestizo-Curtis Park at 30th and Curtis streets.



The Denver Post

The Gonzales family encourages participants to bring banners and flags saved from earlier Chicano marches, along with photographs and stories to share.

Marchers need to bring water and a contribution for a community potluck and celebration. For more information, go to [www.denverpost.com](http://www.denverpost.com) or call 303-964-8993.

# GONZALES: Denver-area Latinos contemplate the lasting legacy left by fiery Chicano activist

< CONTINUED FROM 1A

manding change, "people have gotten complacent," said Dominguez, 31.

The voice of a different generation, Polly Baca counts Gonzales as a friend and inspiration. But the former legislator and long-time activist isn't sure Gonzales' confrontational street politics have a place today.

"The times don't call for Corky Gonzales now," Baca said. "Now there are multiple leaders in multiple arenas."

## Leading and drawing fire

A poet, grassroots leader and vocal organizer, Gonzales' legacy is a complicated one.

He created a youth movement that resonated throughout the nation, helping forge a self-assured identity for a generation of Chicano youth.

He also didn't shy from challenging authority, sometimes applying aggressive, even violent tactics that many, including some of Denver's Latinos, found troubling.

"When you lead, you draw fire," said George Rivera, sociologist and professor at the University of Colorado at Boulder.

"If you are a true advocate for social change, you are going to be targeted. But without that end point of advocacy, the middle cannot shift."

Rivera calls Gonzales the "Malcolm X" of the Chicano movement.

"Corky was willing to put himself in that position, to be arrested and to have confrontations with the police," Rivera said. "He put it out there."

Certainly, Gonzales wasn't one to turn the other cheek, said his son, Rudy Gonzales.

"He believed in self-defense. We had a right to defend ourselves, and that is what he believed in," Rudy Gonzales said. "It kills me people want to criticize (Gonzales' movement), and they focus on it being violent. We live in the most violent society on the face of this Earth. ... It's a non-point."

Still, just about everyone agrees that Gonzales was a crucial figure in the fight against discrimination during the 1960s and '70s.

"Gonzales sent a message



Cyrus McCrimmon | The Denver Post

Alan Dominguez, a filmmaker working on a project about the Ismael Mena shooting, says the relative silence surrounding that event shows that Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales' style of activism is missed. "People have gotten complacent," he says.



Andy Cross | The Denver Post

Regis University professor Ramon Del Castillo, holding a United Farm Workers flag, says today's Latinos can work within the establishment in addition to confronting it. "We will still take this stuff to the street," he says.

co Peña, for example, moved from two terms as Denver mayor to serve as U.S. transportation secretary under President Bill Clinton. One of the only two Latinos in the U.S. Senate is now from Colorado.

"(Gonzales) sent a message

cil members were not only given access to police briefings, but pushed the city to settle quickly with Mena's family.

"We will still take this stuff to the street," said Del Castillo. "I know both sets of strategies, and we are willing to use whatever strategy is necessary.

"We learn how to do both."

## New triumphs, targets

If there is one thing that would have likely disappointed Gonzales, most agree, it's that many of the problems that drove his activism still persist. Nearly 70 percent of Latino students drop out of Denver public schools before graduating. Poverty rates are disproportionately high among Latinos, and housing often is poor.

Worst of all, according to some leaders, civil rights abuses are still rampant. The difference is that they are more narrowly focused on new Latino immigrants, many of them here illegally.

The issue of how to deal with those abuses divides the community and its leaders.

"It used to be the farmers said, 'You're going to work 12

"Denver doesn't have a centrality that it did at that time. He made people think of Denver," said Rudy Acuña, Chicano studies professor at California State University at Northridge.

The street movement Gonzales created — beginning with

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## “Corky lifted us up”: Latinos recall fighting spirit of Denver activist

By Michael Riley  
and Elizabeth Aguilera  
Denver Post Staff Writers

By the time a poor factory worker named Ismael Mena was shot by Denver police who charged through the wrong door in 1999, Rodolfo “Corky” Gonzales was a shadow of his former self, a firebrand activist involuntarily retired by a severe car accident.

For Alan Dominguez, a filmmaker

and part of a new generation of Denver Latino activists, Gonzales’ absence showed in the lack of outcry across the Latino community.

“If this happened in 1970, Corky wouldn’t have hesitated to be on the scene, talking to the family, getting the facts out,” Dominguez said of Gonzales, who died Tuesday at 76.

Without a charismatic leader de-

> See GONZALES on 4A



“Corky”  
Gonzales led protests in the ‘60s that made Denver the epicenter of Chicano activism.

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Books .....11-14F Crossword  
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community s... cantadores, ...  
Ortega Ericksen, stated that Corky had said to her "through your eyes, I hear your voice."

I was given the privilege of sharing a few mementos about Corky. I was also motivated to write the following:

*sacred smoke and ceremony  
surrounded by great spirits  
descended upon mother earth  
to grieve  
with la juventud  
de Escuela Tlatelolco  
children were in awe  
while human rain drops  
dropped silently on  
la alma de la tierra  
as la polvareda spread  
protecting la gente humilde*

The echoes of Corky's thunderous and charismatic voice have been imprinted in the memories of my mind since the first time I heard him speak. I recollect his valor and courage, standing up against great odds. His eloquence and the veracity, with which he spoke, articulating the many social and political problems that we faced, were always inspiring. He challenged us to organize the community in order to realize social justice.

The many speeches that I listened to are tapes that emerge as I observe

## ERA, from page 6

If history records the historical contributions to Chicanos as followed:

Cesar Chavez awakening our social and political consciousness and giving us social, economic, and political identification,

Humberto "Bert" Corona leaving us the political concept of "No illegal aliens y no fronteras."

-Reis Lopez Tijerina leaving us the concept that the land of our ancestors was stolen and historically belongs to us . . .

THEN,

Rodolfo's "Corky" Gonzales' historical contribution to Chicanos is:

-The political concept of nationhood... Aztlán,

-The political principal of economic, social, cultural and political self determination, and

I have used Corky's classical poem, *Yo Soy Joaquin*, in the Chicano and Chicana Studies classes that I have taught since the early 1970's. I have seen the flare of resistance light up in the eyes of the many young students, products of an unjust society, seeking out social justice, as they hear this poem. It is a poem etched in the minds and hearts of Chicanos who stood up for human rights during the height of *El Movimiento Chicano*.

Corky believed that people could be destroyed but that a philosophy that came from the people and that had the people's interest in mind would live forever. He leaves us with a challenge to build upon that legacy.

I think that as time passes, historians will revisit his articulation and the many messages that he gave to the people of Aztlán, and pay him the respect that is due. Maybe that will be the next generation of Chicano writers coming out of Tlatelolco.

It is with the deepest of respect that I say "hasta luego hermano," to a hero.

*¡Que viva el espíritu de Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales!*

*Ramón Del Castillo, Ph.D.  
Independent Journalist*



The charismatic leader generated a phenomenal energy, and motivated people to unite and create social change.

-The political principal of nationalism rooted in the historical struggle of the Chicano/Mexicano people.

If Cesar Chavez represented the rural campesino; Bert Corona, the undocumented Mexican worker; and Reis Lopez

See ERA page 16

threat Iraq posed to the United States and the free world) will eventually have to reconcile its moral scorecard with its children. The very meaning of truth is at stake. But there will never be reconciliation because admitting that the war was trumped up would be to admit not only to the war's illegality, but it would open up the administration to legal liabilities. And thus, the administration will instead continue to change its rationales as to why it went to war.

Such a nation - with superpower status - that insists upon imposing its culture upon the world - will soon see its culture come under extreme scrutiny. And the verdict is in. The world

## VIDA, de página 4

dicto ya se ha hecho. El mundo no está clamando para emular esa cultura de EE.UU. de dominación. Por eso la crisis cultural está en casa, no en el extranjero.

A un cierto punto, una mentira, presentada como la verdad, desmenuzará en el futuro. Tiempo no convierte las falsedades en la verdad, no lo hace el convertido las guerras inmorales e ilegales en morales y legales. El militarismo presentado como parte de la paz, mientras dejando muerte y destrucción en su estela, invariablemente causará disonancia o engaño. (Previamente, el engaño de masa estaba ganando).

Predicando sobre una cultura de vida (el aborto y la muerte digna) mientras extendiendo y promoviendo la guerra mundial permanente (o la expansión de la multa de muerte) invariablemente causará el mundo preguntar: ¿Qué es sobre esta cultura que se supone que nosotros debemos abrazar o emular? Ahora, los ciudadanos americanos están empezando a hacer la muy misma pregunta. Esto es lo que está precipitando esta crisis cultural.

*Se puede comunicar con los escritores por escribir a: XColumn@aol.com*

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**ERA,** from page 13

Tijernia, descendants of landowners in New México, then Corky represented the urban Chicano, especially the youth, with all of their issues and problems who today comprise the majority of our people in the U.S.

All of us –activists, immigrants, campesinos, students, young people, politicians, union leaders, or every day working people – owe another great historical debt to Rodolfo “Corky” Gonzales for the time and sacrifices that he gave to his people in our historical struggle to live with dignity and respect. This debt can only be repaid by continuing the unfinished struggle that Rodolfo “Corky” Gonzales lived and died for.

Today, even though we as a people are sad because of Rodolfo “Corky” Gonzales’ passing, his spirit – like Cuahemoc, Hidalgo, Morales, Juarez, Villa, Zapata, Magon brothers, Corona, Chávez, and many others who died in the service of our people – he will not be forgotten and will live in our hearts and minds.

As all the veterano movement workers begin to pass away, young people will face and continue to see increased attacks on

our people struggle for respect and dignity, must remember Corky’s words from his epic poem “I am Joaquin:”

“I must fight and win this struggle for my sons, and they must know from me who I am...”

I am Joaquin, lost in a world of confusion, caught up in the whirl of a gringo society, confused by the rules, scorned by attitudes, suppressed by manipulation, and destroyed by modern society.

My fathers have lost the economic battle and won the struggle of cultural survival. And now! I must choose between the paradox of victory of the spirit, despite physical hunger, or to exist in the grasp of American social neurosis, sterilization of the soul and a full stomach.”

Rodolfo “Corky” Gonzales philosophical, ideological, political perspectives and leadership will be missed by all who knew, walked, marched, protested, fought, organized, and struggled with him in the Chicano Movement.

Rest in peace – ¡Descanse en Paz!

*Herman Baca is President of the Committee on Chicano Rights*

**RACISM,** from page 3

indigenous peoples in the public education system. Most Indians do not speak Spanish; nevertheless, Spanish is the language that has been assigned in the Education System. As a result, for the non-Spanish-speaking people, education is often essentially unavailable. The illiteracy rate among indigenous peoples in Mexico is six times the national average. Spanish illiteracy particularly disadvantages indigenous peoples in the political process, as ballots and voter information are only available in Spanish. If citizens of Mexico cannot read or understand Spanish, they are not able to cast their votes.

In addition, Indians’ inability to speak Spanish means that they face widespread employment discrimination in Spanish-speaking areas. Indians are also over represented in low-income jobs; 40 percent of migrant farm workers in the country are Indian. Even among menial jobs, employment discrimination persists. For example, one report indicates that Indians are often not allowed to do the easier plant packing work; ostensibly because they are “too short” to reach the vegetables to sort and pick them. Migrant farm

workers in the... subjected to disc... brutality. These p... police specificall... abuse. Reports... police target thos... of being Indian, s... and height.

The vast co... wealth among th... the population, (CIA Factbook)... trusted with e... among the darke... proof that racial... ination exists in... cial and his peo... and intellectual e... tend to be white... tions, but they... scarcer), well ec... traveled abroad.

Although this... before their eyes... lation in Mexico... ful one) refuses... or even address... refuse to notice... height differen... rulers and the ru...

The current... made an effort to... indigenous righ... forefront of the... but it still maint...

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**CORKY**, from page 6

mer, Corky worked hard to save money for a college education. With a keen interest in engineering, Corky entered the University of Denver, but after the first quarter realized that the financial cost was insurmountable. Rodolfo then pursued a career in boxing. An outstanding amateur national champion Rodolfo became one of the best featherweight (125 lb) fighters in the world. Even though *Ring Magazine* ranked Corky number three in the world, he never got a justly deserved title shot.

In the mid-1960's, Rodolfo Gonzales founded an urban civil rights and cultural movement called the *Crusade for Justice*. Soon he became one of the central leaders in the Chicano movement and a strong proponent of Chicano nationalism. In the late sixties and early seventies, Corky Gonzales organized and supported high school walkouts, demonstrations against police brutality, and legal cases. He also organized mass demonstrations against the Vietnam War.

In 1968 Gonzales led a Chicano contingent in the Poor People's March on Washington, D.C. While there, he issued his "Plan of the Barrio" which called for better housing, education, barrio-owned businesses, and restitution of pueblo lands. He also proposed forming a Congress of Aztlán to achieve these goals.

One of the most important roles played by Gonzales was as an organizer of the Annual Chicano Youth Liberation Conference, an ambitious effort to create greater unity among Chicano youth. These Conferences brought together large numbers of Chicano youth from throughout the United States and provided them with opportunities to express their views on self-determination. The first conference in March 1969 produced a document, "El Plan Espiritual de Aztlán (The Spiritual Plan of Aztlán.)" which developed the concept of ethnic nationalism and self-determination in the struggle for Chicano liberation. The second Chicano Youth Conference in 1970 represented a further refinement in Corky Gonzales's efforts toward Chicano self-determination, the formation of the Colorado Raza Unida Party.

During this time Corky and his wife, Geraldine Romero Gonzales, raised a family of six daughters and two sons: Nita, mother of two children; Charlotte, mother of three; Gina, mother of three; Gale, mother of four; Rudy, father of one; Joaquin, father of three; Cindy, mother of two; and Valerie, mother of two. All their children remain in Denver and continue to carry on Corky's fight with his guidance. Corky is proud of his family, especially the twenty grandchildren and six great-grand-

children. Recently celebrating his fifty-second wedding anniversary, Corky attributed the closeness and strength of his family to his beloved wife, Geraldine, who has been his most enthusiastic and ardent supporter.

In many ways, Corky Gonzales has greatly influenced the Chicano movement. His key to liberation for the Chicano community is to develop a strong power base with heavy reliance on nationalism among Chicanos. His contributions as a community organizer, youth leader, political activist, and civil rights advocate have helped to create a new spirit of Chicano unity.

Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales' life has been a collage of challenges that have been met and overcome. He has never wavered in his commitment to enhance the lives of his people in this country, to change

what is not fair, what is not right. As long as there are injustices, double standards, racism, and apathy, Corky's dedication, loyalty, and love of the struggle against these diseases of society will serve as an inspiration for all people to act.

In his column in *The Denver Post* of January 6, 1988, Tom Gavin wrote, "He's grizzled now, and gray, but he stands tall, Corky Gonzales does, and taller still, Rodolfo 'I am Joaquin' Gonzales. The one was a pretty good boxer, the other is a leader of men."

On April 12, 2005 at 7:42 p.m., and more importantly on the last incandescent rays of the setting Sun in his beloved Colorado, Rodolfo Corky Gonzales began his journey to his relatives and ancestors.

With his loved ones at his bedside, this splendid and gilded Husband, Father, Grandfather,

Great-Grandfather, Uncle, Warrior, and Chief embraced death with all the love and passion in which he danced with life. His historic effort will never be forgotten.

In memory of Mr. Gonzales, all are welcome to join a community march on Sunday, April 17, 11am, beginning at the Escuela Tlatelolco (2949 Federal Blvd) and will proceed throughout Denver to Mestizo Park.

The march will step off from Escuela Tlatelolco (29th and Federal,

Denver) at 11:00am. The route will go east on 29th Avenue to 15th Street to

Wazee Street north to 17th Street east and then to Lawrence Street north to Mestizo/Curtis Park (32nd and Champa). Please bring water for yourself And dress appropriately for the weather and for a march.

Bring photos, banners and flags from the movement and share old stories.

The celebration will start at 1:00pm at Mestizo/Curtis Park. If you

Would like to help in any way you may bring a dish to share with others after the ceremony.

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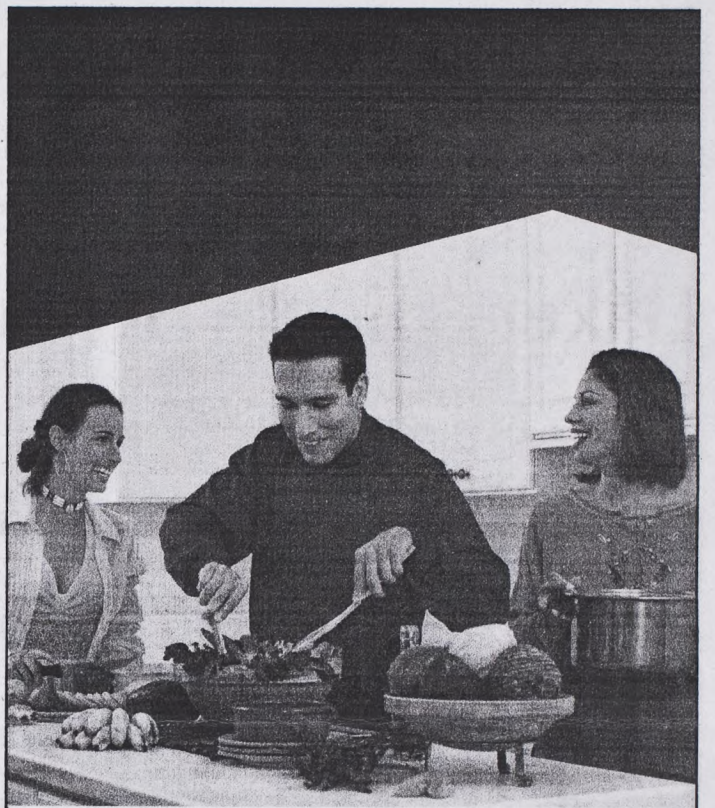
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# His strength lives through our hearts

**Rodolfo Corky Gonzales**  
1928 - 2005

*"I shed tears of anguish  
As I see my children disappear  
Behind the shroud of mediocrity  
Never to look back to remember  
me.*

*I am Joaquin.  
I must fight  
and win this struggle  
for my sons, and they  
must know from me Who I am."*

(From "I am Joaquin/Yo soy Joaquin" by Rodolfo Gonzales)

And so - Rodolfo Gonzales, a political activist destined to take the lead, set the example, and inspired many people, chose his fight - the *Crusade For Justice*.

Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales was



Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales paved a path for rights for Chicanos across the nation.

born in Denver on June 18, 1928 to Federico and Indalesia Gonzales. He was the youngest of four brothers and three sisters, Nattie, Beatrice, Tomas, Esperanza, Federico, Severino, and Arturo. Corky's mother died when he was two years old and his father never re-married, but managed somehow to keep the Gonzales family together. The senior Gonzales ruled his household with a firm

hand, tempered with love.

The children grew up in the tough eastside *barrio* of Denver during the devastating Depression. Rodolfo said, "Though the Depression was devastating to so many, we, as children, were so poor that it (the Depression) was

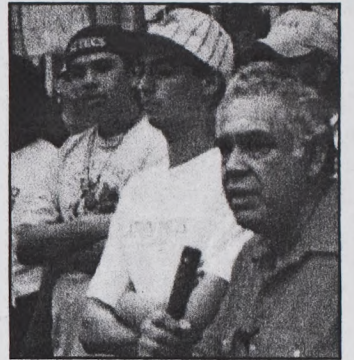


The civil rights leader marched along with his daughter Nita (left), at the 2004 César Chávez celebration.

hardly noticed."

Corky's father had emigrated from México to Colorado early in life and often spoke to Corky about the Mexican Revolution, México's history, and the pride of the Mexican people. Thus leaving little doubt in Corky's mind about his own identity - and possibly his destiny.

With the tremendous obstacles that faced Rodolfo from an early age, it is truly astonishing that he persevered in the Denver educational system to earn his high school diploma at the age of 16. The accomplishment is magnified by the fact that from an early age, Rodolfo worked in the beet fields and at various other jobs that left little time for study. Corky attended many schools including schools in New México as well as schools in Denver - Gilpin, Whittier,



Gonzales taught young people from many generations to stand up for equality.

Lake, Baker, West, and finally Manual High School from which he graduated in 1944.

During his final year in high school and the subsequent sum-

See **CORKY** page 7

# When the eagle ascends

**Ramón Del Castillo**

I often reflect upon people who I have crossed paths with in my life; people who have been influential; people who I admire and who leave indelible impressions in my *corazón*. As I delve deeper, I ask the Great Spirit how is it that on many occasions in my lifetime I have had the privilege of walking into the midst of greatness. I am asking that question now as I write this column. Usually, my illumination unfolds in front of me as time passes.

I have been teaching an Advanced Placement (AP) class in Sociology at *Escuela Tlatelolco* for the last 10

weeks, at a time when Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales, one of the greatest urban revolutionary leaders and founders of the *Crusade for Justice* and *la escuela*, has passed on. I am asking my weary self: what brings me here to teach in this Chicano institution at this time in my life? I am seeking out clarity about this question and why I had the privilege of meeting this man and watching him in his endless struggle with *la gente* for social justice.

I was privy to a Native American grieving ceremony to honor the passing of *Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales* on Wednesday, April 13, 2005 morning at *Escuela Tlatelolco*.



After receiving honors for his generous contributions, Gonzales (2nd from left), takes a moment with (l-r) the late Lalo Delgado, Geri Gonzales, Margie Domingo and Ramon Del Castillo.

The pictures and the descending spirits of other great leaders surrounded the *Rodolfo "Corky"*

*Gonzales* community room where the ritual took place. Among them were César Chávez, one of the founders of the United Farm Workers (UFW) and portraits of great Native American spiritual warriors. The spirits of *los antepasados*

were asked to join and protect us during this ceremony.

I have been in this room many times. This morning was extra special. It was to participate a communal healing ceremony.

The ritual included the circle of healing as poets from *la Escuela* recited *palabras* from *La Plaza de las Tres Culturas*." The poem reminded us that freedom only comes through struggle. It reminded us that our ancestors were valiant warriors, defenders of cultural self-determination. The silent drumming continued as "Four Came Dancing," a Native American song was shared with the students.

See **EAGLE** page 13

# An historical era coming to an end

**Herman Baca**

Chicano leader Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales' death and the reality that he is no longer with us is another devastating blow to this nation's Chicanos whose dreams, hopes, and aspirations for social, economic and political change for which he

passionately fought.

Corky Gonzales, preceded in death by Humberto "Bert" Corona, César Chávez, and many others from the 1960's, signals that an era in Chicano history is slowly but surely coming to an end.


History will record that Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales

(whom I knew since 1970) was a leader, organizer, fighter, warrior, and poet. He fought a life-long militant struggle for self determination, respect, dignity, freedom, justice, and the human/civil rights of this nation's 30 million Chicanos/Mexicanos/Latinos.

See **ERA** page 13

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## HIS MESSAGE TO AZTLÁN CONTINUES RODOLFO CORKY GONZALES 1928 - 2005

### Nominations Extended

Nomination deadline is being extended for the 2nd Annual Hispanic Education Advisory Council (HEAC) Awards program  
Page 8

### Extiende la Fecha Limite

Nominaciones se ha extendido para el 2º Reconocimiento Anual del Consejo Consultivo Para la Educación de los Hispanos  
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### Immigrant Voices

More than sixty organizations are organizing immigrant community discussions and polling as part of a nationwide initiative to project the pulse of diverse immigrant communities in the current debate over immigration  
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### Voces de Inmigrantes

Más de sesenta organizaciones están coordinando discusiones y encuestas en la comunidad inmigrante como parte de una iniciativa nacional de proyectar la opinión de diversas comunidades inmigrantes sobre el debate actual sobre inmigración  
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