

Movimiento voices on campus: The newspapers of the Chicana/o student movement

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Abstract

The political communication of the Chicana/o student movement of the 1960s and 1970s took place primarily through various forms of print media, with campus based student newspapers figuring prominently within that particular historical moment. At their peak, at least 48 Chicana/o student newspapers were produced on campuses throughout the country, marking these publications as both the principal and ideal format through which the flow of cultural and political information was channeled between movement publics, both on and off college campuses. Yet, the history of these publications has not been thoroughly documented, nor has the discursive legacy of this form of communicative resistance been fully examined. This paper provides a brief history of the emergence and significance of these student newspapers on campuses across the United States, focusing on how campus activists established this form of community media to help advocate on behalf of Chicana/o students and their broader publics.

Keywords

Chicana, Chicano, media, journalism, movement, *movimiento*, newspaper, print, student, university

Introduction

Long before the proliferation of digital media, the ideas that informed community activists about issues relating to political, social, and economic justice were conveyed primarily through various forms of print media. Contemporaneously, activists understood that they could not depend on mainstream media outlets to cover their work, and instead prioritised the establishment of independent media through which to inform the public about their causes. The political communication of the Chicana/o movement of the 1960s and 1970s was no exception, with community-based newspapers figuring prominently within that particular historical moment despite their tight circulation and scant institutional support. It is well established among scholars of Chicana/o movement history that an unexpectedly vibrant Chicano press played a central role in influencing activists and supporting the political communication of broader communities during the 1960s and 1970s (Acuña, 2004; Garcia, 1997; Garcia, 2015; Gómez-Quiñones & Vásquez, 2015; Muñoz, 2007). Within those studies of the Chicana/o movement press that do exist, far fewer scholars have focused their attention on the history and significance of the Chicana/o student press.

Chicana/o student journalism is better understood as a movement within the movement, accumulating its own victories, confronting distinct challenges, and developing a unique history within the broader context of socio-political struggle and change that motivated the Chicana/o movement of the 1960s and 1970s. At the peak of their growth, at least 48 Chicana/o student newspapers were published on campuses throughout the United States, marking these

publications as both the principal and ideal platform through which the flow of cultural and political information was channeled between *movimiento*¹ publics, helping 'bridge the gap' between *barríos*² and college campuses (Ontiveros, 2014: 77). Indeed, these student publications were an essential source of independent analysis and information, but they were also artifacts of Chicana/o political culture, simultaneously serving to document, influence and embody the movement's most meaningful iconography and ideas relating to politics, culture and identity from a Chicana/o perspective.

Despite the critical communicative role Chicana/o student newspapers fulfilled within the movement, the history of these publications has not been thoroughly documented nor has the discursive legacy of this form of communicative resistance been sufficiently examined. This lack of scholarship is indicative of the uneven representation of minority media within communication research, particularly as it relates to Latina/o media within the United States. One reason for this lack of research is that Chicana/o Studies departments do not prioritise media research in general, and less so in the field of Chicana/o political communication. A quantitative assessment of the annual conferences convened by the National Association for Chicana and Chicano Studies (NACCS) between 2015 to 2018 shows that among all the papers/talks given, only 3% related to Chicana/o media research in general, and less than 1% focused on the Chicana/o political communication (NACCS, 2018). Furthermore, communication as a field remains largely homogenous, with the top twelve communication research journals attributing to 'First Authors of Color' an overall average of only 14% of articles published between 1990-2016 (Chakravartty et al., 2018).

Drawing from both primary and secondary sources, this paper provides a brief history of the emergence and enduring significance of Chicana/o student newspapers across the United States. The principal sources include interviews with individuals that were involved with the production and dissemination of Chicana/o student journalism, multiple university archives, the author's personal collection of Chicana/o campus periodicals and first-hand experience as a former editor of several Chicana/o student and community newspapers. This is primarily a qualitative, historical review; an effort to record and validate key aspects of the origins, evolution and decline of Chicana/o print journalism, highlighting how student activists instrumentalised this form of media to help advocate on behalf of Chicana/o students, the *movimiento*, and their broader communities.

Alternative newspapers in the context of the Chicana/o movement

Like the social movement that they intended to chronicle, the history of Chicana/o student movement newspapers is rooted in the legacy of conquest experienced by people of indigenous and Mexican heritage living within the United States (US). Long after the period of colonial occupation of the Americas by Spain had receded (1492-1840), the indigenous and Spanish speaking populations of what are today known as the North American states of Arizona, California, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, Texas, and Utah remained for the most part politically and economically marginalised, a condition maintained and justified by the racialised impulses of US domestic policies and forms of cultural imperialism founded on 'manifest destiny'³ (Acuña, 2004; Barrera, 1979; McWilliams, 1990; Navarro, 2005). People of indigenous and Mexican heritage subsisted on the periphery of political power for generations, and the communicative marginalisation of this population limited the circulation of the earliest forms of print media to only a handful of Mexican communities of the Southwest where unique forms of print media emerged that could survive outside the system of the dominant English-only political communication (Rodríguez, 1999: 13, Subervi-Vélez, 2008: 22).

The history of mainstream print media in the United States is primarily the story of English-only newspapers that circulated in large urban centres. For most of the 19th and 20th centuries, US-based large-scale print media ignored (both in content and circulation) the politically marginalised and culturally isolated Mexican communities of the Southwestern United States (Cortés, 1987: 251; Greco Larson, 2006: 119). The earliest manifestations of Spanish language or bilingual newspapers emerged and circulated during the 1800s in the gap between two distinct public spheres – publications that were excluded from the dominant political culture of the United States, while operating only on the periphery of the centralised political culture of Mexico.⁴ This status often resulted in a communicative oblivion that marked early examples of Spanish language

and bilingual print media as completely foreign within the US, and a perceived 'lost cause' within Mexico.⁵ This difficult communicative middle space was not a viable media market and therefore did not draw enough commercial attention to support a regional/national daily newspaper. Instead, Spanish-speaking communities of Mexican heritage could more commonly support localized print media of irregular and limited circulation. These publications served as both alternative and community media, because this material was not only an informational alternative to the dominant English-only media, it was also distinct from it, providing content that was intended to be primarily accessible to a specific linguistic, cultural and ethnic community. It was a narrow middle space that was occupied, but these community newspapers were nonetheless of vital political importance to US based Indigenous and Mexican communities of that period and can be identified as precursor to the Chicana/o Press (Greco Larson, 2006: 125-9, Ontiveros, 2014: 44).

The Mexican Revolution (1910-1917) upended political power within that country and violently disrupted the lives of millions, and for at least a decade Mexico was awash with movements of people and radical ideas. The political convulsions provoked by the Mexican Revolution extended well into the United States, driving increasing numbers of Mexicans north, who would go on to establish new forms of political communication within their rapidly growing communities north of the US/Mexico border, thereby stimulating new practices of political action and social upheaval within the US that disrupted the relative isolation and political apathy of many Mexican communities. Through the introduction and circulation of revolutionary newspapers like *Regeneración*,⁶ a tradition of oppositional, muckraking, politically radical press took root among Mexicans living north of the US/Mexico border (Lewels, 1974: 3-4). Still, this recently acquired political effervescence remained primarily focused on intervening in political struggles taking place within Mexico.

It was not until the end of 1941 when the United States entered World War II that the political marginalisation of Mexicans living within the US began to dissolve in earnest, to be replaced by an emerging 'Mexican-American' consciousness. Anti-colonial, national liberation struggles and human rights discourses (among other things) inspired colonial subjects around the world to engage in intensified political action, influencing the global reconfiguration of political power that was established after World War II to be fundamentally different from the one that came before it. Within the United States, US veterans of diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds returned to a home country that had emerged from World War II as the dominant global economic power, and these WWII veterans expected to reap political and economic benefits from their military service and the new imperial stature of the US.

It was not long after the apocalyptic violence of WWII had settled, that Mexican-American led civic organisations within the United States, like the American GI Forum and the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), cultivated and directed the growing conviction that US citizen-veterans of Mexican, indigenous and/or other Latin American heritage deserved the same rights and privileges that were being extended to Anglo citizen-veterans.⁷ Though this presumption was rational and legally justified, during the 1950s and early 1960s it was often represented in the dominant media as anti-American, radical, and even communist inspired, especially when it was being articulated by communities of Mexican heritage. On the other hand, the emergent Mexican-American community-based print media validated and spread this clearly fair-minded civil rights demand across *barrios* throughout the United States.

With the support and growing influence of *barrio* community newspapers throughout the United States, basic demands for civil rights that were rooted in the 1950s and early 60s post-war context soon increased, expanded, and evolved into more militant movements for economic and political power. This shift was evident in more diverse urban centres where it was in closer proximity to the emergent Black Power Movement, and 'Mexican American' demands for civil rights began to make way for a politically radical *barrio*-based agenda. While 'more than their fair share' of Chicanos were being killed in action while fighting in Vietnam (Mariscal, 1999: 15-18), what became known as the Chicana/o Power Movement (1965-1975) was increasingly anti-war, national and class liberation oriented, critical of US empire, influenced by the youth movements taking place around the world, and set out a vibe that was proud of its unique cultural identity and deep historical roots throughout the US Southwest. Indeed, the 1960s were a time for social

and political upheaval across the globe, and this was the historical context that gave rise to the Chicana/o Power movement on its own terms.

The Chicana/o movement of the late 1960s and the 1970s is usually introduced as having various mutually constitutive stages and facets. One aspect of the movement was influenced by the labour struggles of agricultural workers led by Cesar Chavez and the United Farm Workers (UFW) union in Delano, California, while another part of it was focused on community rights and self-defense, as was exemplified by the work of organisations like the Crusade for Justice in Denver, Colorado (1965) and the Brown Berets in Los Angeles (1967). Another important facet of the movement was artistic, led by cultural struggles such as the 1970 Chicana/o muralist movement that developed around San Diego's Chicano Park; and yet another aspect of the movement was educational, led by Chicana/o high school and college students who initiated the 1968 student walkouts in East Los Angeles, inspiring students in other regions of the Southwest United States and beyond to engage in what was to become a national Chicana/o student movement to reform public education.

Chicana/o youth were at the centre of this generational movement – across all its sectors and facets it was primarily a youth-led and youth-oriented movement, with young people taking on roles of political leaders that continue to inspire generations of activists after them. This was a period of unprecedented political change for Chicana/o youth, who began to emerge from scattered *barrios* to explode into political life within communities, high schools and colleges throughout the United States. Chicana/o activists boldly introduced previously unknown forms of dress, music, and speech into *barrios* and onto campuses, and in this way they contributed to the broader contemporaneous youth-oriented 1960s anti-war, social justice movements that were taking place throughout the United States, Latin America, and Western Europe.

A majority of these politically active Chicana/o students originated from working class Mexican communities, and they often brought with them corresponding ideas of community-based activism (Muñoz, 2007). In other words, when Chicana/o youth would go to school, they did not leave their political and cultural identities behind, and their presence on campus and their activism would often reflect their backgrounds. Indeed, this was a big part of the Chicana/o student movement of the time – they saw a need to carve out their own space on college campuses that represented and validated their community-based political and cultural priorities (Ontiveros 2014: 76).

Chronicling *El Movimiento Estudiantil*: The rise of Chicana/o student newspapers

From the heart of the Chicana/o movement emerged an unusually robust expression of independent print journalism that became known as the Chicano Press. The Chicano Press came from the heart of the struggle because as the movement spread nationally, newspapers nourished (and were nourished by) dozens of localized organisations that focused their work on a wide range of community-centric issues. The publications that comprised the Chicano Press were often a derivative of the movement, either linked to, or under the direct leadership of community based or labour organisations, and instrumentalised to support their organisational goals.

This became the common rationale for these publications as they began to emerge across the *movimiento* - their founders often felt that their communities had for too long been silenced and relegated to a form of informational second-class citizenship, and the Chicano Press would be their best chance of breaking their communicative marginalisation. Of course, this sentiment was usually supported by reality, as this was a period of substantial institutional discrimination that was also represented within the dominant US media. The 1960s and 1970s were also a period of generalised media scarcity for Chicano communities, with most forms of political news and analysis having to pass through the filter of dominant English-only newspapers, television networks, and radio programming. Spanish language commercial media did in fact exist during the 1960s and 1970s, and though it represented a growing media market within the United States, it was still bound to specific market logics, and when it did consolidate, circulation usually remained concentrated in large urban centres with large Latino populations. Furthermore, this emergent Spanish language commercial media in the US was not considered a source of

independent political content suitable for Chicana/o activists, often perceived as representing the voice of conservative Latin American interests.

When chapters of well-known organisations like the Brown Berets, the Crusade for Justice, La Raza Unida Party (The United Peoples Party), and the United Farm Workers (UFW) sprang up in otherwise disconnected *barrios* across the United States, it was often the case that these community organisations would prioritise the development of their own print media, establishing publications like *La Causa* (*The Cause*, the newspaper of the Brown Berets), *El Gallo* (*The Rooster*, the newspaper of the Crusade for Justice), *El Sembrador* (*The Sower*, the newspaper of La Raza Unida Party), and *El Malcriado* (*The Misbehaved*, the newspaper of the United Farm Workers union). The dominant English-only press would so-often misrepresent their causes, that these groups responded by producing and circulating tens of thousands of copies of newspapers that intended to articulate a political and cultural agenda through the lens of the communities these organisations represented (Ontiveros, 2014: 68).

Within a short span of time, roughly between 1968 and 1972, at least 100 Chicana/o movement newspapers were established in *barrios* throughout the United States (Garcia, 2015: 60). While the Chicana/o movement organisations led the creation of many alternative Chicana/o publications, the Chicano Press itself became as much a generative force as the activists and organizations that personified it (Garcia, 2015: 8). Indeed, independent, combative, advocacy journalism itself became a principle of unity for the *movimiento*, motivating the creation of the *Chicano Press Association* in 1968 as a loose network of Chicana/o activist newspapers dedicated to publishing 'All the Chicano News Fit to Print' (Garcia, 2015: 61).

Similar political, representational, and informational needs were behind the process through which Chicana/o activists introduced new forms of political organisation to college campuses. For instance, the Mexican American Youth Organization (MAYO) founded in 1967, United Mexican American Students (UMAS) founded in 1968, and the *Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlan* (MEChA) founded in 1969, were the three most influential student organisations of that period (Acuña, 2004: 316-29). These new organisational forms required more effective methods for communicating the ideas and priorities of the Chicana/o student movement, not only within and across the campuses where they were active, but also with their communities that were often in close proximity to those campuses but had been historically prevented from enjoying access to these institutions of higher education by discriminatory policies, elevated costs, and other forms of institutional marginalisation.

To be sure, Chicana/o student media was not limited to the cities of the US Southwest (there were important Chicana/o newspapers in the Midwest and the Eastern part of the US), and it included other media in addition to newsprint, for instance important Chicana/o magazines and radio programs (Bustillos, 2010: 163). Newspapers were the primary source of political information for students though, and Chicana/o community newspapers often had analogous first cousin publications that circulated on increasingly diverse college campuses in the US. In the context of the Chicana/o movement, this was a period of student activism when paper-based outreach took place every day within communities and at political events, but also at high schools, colleges, and universities throughout the United States. Chicana/o Studies scholar Randy Ontiveros underscores the significance of *movimiento* newspapers by noting that 'when they were distributed at rallies, in *Safeway* parking lots, or in classrooms, a powerful Chicano/a feedback loop was instantiated... that allowed for constructive conversation apart from the dominant media...' (2014: 83). Particularly at schools located near *barrios*, it was common to see Chicana/o students assembled in campus quads handing out paper flyers, pamphlets, booklets and newsletters that intended to communicate the most urgent political messages of the time: anti-war organising, improving the educational resources in their communities, challenging racism and police abuse, and the promotion of cultural pride among fellow students, to name a few (Greco Larson, 2006: 187, Ontiveros, 2014: 77).

Chicana/o Studies scholar Maylei Blackwell cogently suggests that the vibrant 'print culture' of the Chicana/o movement became 'a strategic site of intervention and contestation', especially for Chicanas who were elaborating and validating the earliest articulations of Chicana feminism:

Through print-mediated exchange, new identities, regional and ideological differences, strategies, theories, and practices were debated and discussed in campus and community

meetings... These ideas were then shared and transformed as editorial, articles, conference proceedings, reports, movement debates, and political position papers, which traveled widely through the process of republication (Blackwell, 2011: 134).

Chicana/o student publications often became an important source of the most progressive thinking on issues relating not only to Chicana/o communities, but also to internationalism, political economy, socialism, LGBTQ+ struggles, immigration, Black Power, Native American struggles, culture and art. Critical assessments of US policy in Mexico and Latin America figured prominently within these campus publications, serving as important sources of independent news and opinion regarding key events such as the 1968 student massacre in Tlatelolco, Mexico, and ongoing US intervention within military conflicts in Central America. Armed conflicts in El Salvador led by the *Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional* (FMLN), and in Nicaragua with the *Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional* (FSLN) often found editorial support within the pages of Chicana/o student publications that ran counter to reporting provided within mainstream media sources. Chicana/o student publications were also at the forefront of issues that related to gender. In 1971 Chicana feminists at California State University, Long Beach founded the first Chicana newspaper of the movement, *Hijas de Cuauhtémoc*. The Chicana feminist focus of *Hijas de Cuauhtémoc* was especially powerful in 1971, when *machista* (male chauvinist) tendencies were still dominant throughout *movimiento* organizations and communities, and US society more broadly. This marked an extremely important moment for the movement that embodied the need for self-articulation and representation in print form (Blackwell, 2003: 68-77).

Evidence of this Chicana/o self-validating impulse was apparent in 1969 when movement activists formed the Chicano Coordinating Council on Higher Education (CCHE) and convened students, faculty, staff, and supporters for a national conference on the campus of the University of California Santa Barbara. At this conference student and faculty activists accepted what was to become the framework for the national educational plan of the Chicana/o student movement. Billed as 'A Chicano Plan for Higher Education', the *Plan de Santa Barbara* was published to summarise the results of the conference (Acuña, 2004: 329). One section of the *Plan de Santa Barbara* outlined a 10-week course, 'The Mexican American and the Schools', designed to educate prospective teachers and administrators about the priorities of the movement. Multiple Chicana/o 'Newspapers and Magazines' were not only called out in the plan as required reading, but also Chicana/o journalism was listed as a key theme within the course itself. Student activists representing the *movimiento* clearly identified an urgent need for developing independent newspapers, even within the stated intention of advancing the educational rights of the Chicana/o youth (CCHE, 1969).

Chicana/o student newspapers represented a movement within the movement

When the Mexican American civil rights and Chicana/o movements forced open the gates of higher education to *barrio* youth, they also created the need for new campus-based forms of political communication to serve student readership. When the conditions were right, a Chicana/o newspaper would appear on campus to further inspire students who, often for the first time in their lives, would see their own stories, images, and political priorities publically validated in print form. For many Chicana/o student journalists it was their first small taste of political power, and it was cathartic.

The earliest and most influential Chicana/o student newspapers were established in California between 1969 and 1974, where the basic demographic and institutional underpinnings needed to support this campus based Chicana/o media movement had taken root, producing a surge of Chicana/o student newspapers during the early 1970s. It was during those years that three statewide circumstances converged in California that helped create the conditions for this explosion in Chicana/o student publications: the first was rapid demographic change; the second was California's unique public higher education systems; and the third was the scale and prestige of the Chicana/o movement throughout the state.

Rapid demographic growth buttressed large urban concentrations of young Chicanas and Chicanos throughout the State, especially in the Bay Area and in Southern California. Between 1965 and 1975, the total US Latino population rose from approximately 4% to 6% (PRC, 2010),

while California's population of Mexican heritage increased from approximately 10.5% to 16% (CSP, 2015: 10) during the same period, making California home to one of the fastest growing Latino populations in the US and marking the beginning of a demographic trend that continued for decades.⁸

As the California population grew, so did the number of students enrolled in state institutions of higher education. Between 1960 and 1970 enrolment in the University of California (UC) system more than doubled (43,748 to 98,508), while enrolment in the California State University (CSU) system dramatically increased by over 300% - from 61,330 to 186,749 (Callan, 2009: 8). Furthermore, the 1960 *Master Plan for Higher Education* mandated the expansion of California's exceptional public university systems in order to provide institutional support for the educational needs of the rapidly growing state. Consequently, the UC system inaugurated four new campuses between 1959 and 1965,⁹ and the CSU system established five new campuses between 1958 and 1965.¹⁰ In the context of the 1960s and 1970s, this wave of new students and new campuses proved to be fertile ground for a new generation of Chicana/o activists, and helped create the conditions making CSU and UC campuses ideal incubators for the emergence of a vibrant Chicana/o student movement press that would serve as the forerunners to publications outside of California.

Table 1: Chicana/o student publications in California.

Publication Name (Translation) and Significance	Est.	California Campus
<i>Chicano Student Movement</i>	1968	Los Angeles, California
<i>Adelante</i> (Forward)	1969	University of California, Riverside
<i>Chicanismo</i>	1969	Stanford University
<i>Chicano Liberation</i>	1969	California State University, Fresno
<i>El Corrido</i> (The Song) named after a narrative style of traditional Mexican music.	1969	University of California, Davis
<i>El Indígena</i> (The Native)	1969	University of California, Berkeley
<i>La Pluma Morena</i> (The Brown Pen/ Feather)	1969	California State University, Fresno
<i>La Vida Nueva</i> (The New Life)	1969	East Los Angeles College
<i>La Voz de Aztlan</i> (The Voice of Aztlan) named after the Aztec origin story that situates Aztlan within the US Southwest.	1969	California State University, Fresno
<i>El Alacrán</i> (The Scorpion)	1970	California State University, Long Beach
<i>El Fuego de Aztlan</i> (The Fire of Aztlan) named after the Aztec origin story that situates Aztlan within the US Southwest.	1970	University of California, Berkeley
<i>El Popo</i> (The Popo), named after the largest active volcano in Mexico, Popocatepetl.	1970	California State University, Northridge
<i>¡Qué Tal!</i> (What's Up!)	1970	San Jose State University

<i>Raíces</i> (Roots)	1970	California State University, Fresno
<i>Sal Si Puedes</i> (Get Out If You Can)	1970	Santa Barbara, California
<i>El Águila</i> (The Eagle)	1971	Santa Monica College
<i>Es Tiempo</i> (It Is Time)	1971	Foothill College, Los Altos Hills
<i>Hijas de Cuauhtémoc</i> (Daughters of Cuauhtémoc), named after the last Aztec emperor and defender of the Aztec capital city of Tenochtitlan.	1971	California State University, Long Beach
<i>La Carpa</i> (The Tent)	1971	Chabot College, Hayward
<i>La Gente</i> (The People)	1971	University of California, Los Angeles
<i>¿Qué Pasa?</i> (What's Happening?)	1971	University of California, Davis
<i>Telpuchalli y Calpulli</i> (Community School), translated from the original native Nahuatl.	1971	Foothill College, Los Altos Hills
<i>Chicano Diario</i> (Daily Chicano)	1972	San Jose State University
<i>Chilam Balam</i> (Jaguar Priest) named so after a collection of indigenous Mayan pre-colonial manuscripts.	1972	University of California, Santa Barbara
<i>Nuestra Cosa</i> (Our Thing)	1972	University of California, Riverside
<i>El Clamor del Pueblo</i> (The Peoples Clamor)	1972	University of California, Santa Barbara
<i>El Árbol</i> (The Tree)	1973	Chabot College, Hayward
<i>Prensa Popular</i> (The Popular Press)	1973	University of California, San Diego
<i>Raza de Bronce</i> (The Bronze People)	1973	University of California, San Diego
<i>¡Sí Se Puede!</i> (Yes We Can!)	1973	University of California, Santa Barbara
<i>El Quetzal</i> (The Quetzal), named after the colorful bird found in Southern Mexico and Central America.	1976	California State University, Fullerton
<i>La Voz Mestiza</i> (The Mestizo Voice), named after the mixed ancestry of some Mexican people. The concept of <i>Mestizaje</i> was used by the Mexican government since the 1920s as part of a campaign to support a national Mexican identity.	1976	University of California, Irvine
<i>Voz Fronteriza</i> (Voice of the Borderlands)	1976	University of California, San Diego

<i>Carnalismo</i> (Camaraderie)	1977	University of California, Santa Cruz
<i>La Voz de Berkeley</i> (The Voice of Berkeley)	1991	University of California, Berkeley

Sources: Simón Salazar, 2017.

Table 1 offers a partial list of 35 California student movement newspapers, with nearly half (16) published on campuses belonging to the University of California system, and 10 newspapers published on campuses belonging to the California State University system. Among these California newspapers, the earliest in 1968 was *Chicano Student Movement*; a publication that played a key role in the student walkouts of East Los Angeles that took place that same year. Two of the earliest, longest running, and most consistent Chicana/o student newspapers were supported by large Chicana/o campus populations - *La Voz de Aztlan*, established in 1969 at California State University, Fresno,¹¹ and *El Popo* established in 1971 at California State University, Northridge. The rapid growth of student movement newspapers throughout California made students from the state increasingly influential within a growing national student movement, and it did not take long for Chicana/o student newspapers to begin to appear on campuses across the US.

Table 2 provides a partial list of 12 student movement newspapers outside of California. Student newspapers circulated on campuses in Colorado, New Mexico, Texas and Utah, with most established a year or two after the first wave of California publications had set roots on their respective campuses. These were states that were experiencing demographic and educational policy changes similar to what had been taking place in California throughout the 1960s.

Table 2: Chicana/o student publications outside of California.

Publication Name (Translation) and Significance	Est.	Campus
<i>El Despertador de Texas</i> (Texas Wake-Up Call)	1970	University of Texas, Austin
<i>La Voz Chicana</i> (The Chicano Voice)	1970	Pan American College, Texas
<i>Sol de Aztlan</i> (Aztlan Sun) named after the Aztec origin story that situates Aztlan within the US Southwest.	1970	Central Michigan University
<i>Somos Aztlan</i> (We Are Aztlan) named after the Aztec origin story that situates Aztlan within the US Southwest.	1971	University of Colorado Boulder
<i>El Alacrán</i> (The Scorpion)	1972	University of Texas, Arlington
<i>El Grito del Sur</i> (The Southern Caller)	1972	New Mexico State University
<i>El Diario de la Gente</i> (The Peoples Daily)	1973	University of Colorado Boulder
<i>El Escritor del Pueblo</i> (The Peoples Scribe)	1973	University of Colorado Boulder
<i>El Mestizo</i> (The Mestizo) named after the mixed ancestry of some Mexican people. The concept of <i>Mestizaje</i> was	1973	University of Texas, El Paso

used by the Mexican government since the 1920s as part of a campaign to support a national Mexican identity.		
<i>La Raza Habla</i> (The People Speak)	1973	New Mexico State University Las Cruces
<i>Peldaños</i> (Steps)	1974	University of Utah
<i>Venceremos</i> (We Will Overcome)	1993	University of Utah

Sources: Simón Salazar, 2017.

The high technical and ideological threshold for alternative and independent community publications

Campus based Chicana/o publications were rarely a welcome addition to college campus media programs. Students would often struggle to find supportive faculty, and even when they found support, students would still have to contend with campus administrators that often refused to recognise, much less provide institutional space and funding for these publications. Faculty and administrators were regularly hostile to the formation of what they perceived to be an instrument of political influence that would be in the hands of Chicana/o subversives and campus radicals. Even when institutional support was provided, funding for these publications usually remained precarious, and printing budgets would then become another challenge to be addressed by constantly unstable volunteer staffs largely composed of inexperienced undergraduates. The transitory nature of undergraduate populations was an inherent limitation to the medium and long-term survivability of these student-led publications.

Once established, it was a daunting task to consistently publish a newspaper, because this type of political communication required specialised, complex forms of organisation, and a well-coordinated division of labour. Although the cost of entry for publishing a newspaper was substantially lower than television and radio, the process still involved significant economic and technical resources, and Chicana/o students usually struggled to maintain their publications because the *movimiento* press did not enjoy institutional access to a continuous flow of these resources, nor could students count on commercial support for a potentially radical Chicana/o newspaper (Ontiveros, 2014: 83). Moreover, depending on the production schedule, publishing a weekly/monthly/quarterly newspaper required major time commitments, the concentration and coordination of specific technical skills, and an ideological cohesiveness that is difficult to muster, and nearly impossible to sustain. These complications help explain why despite the numbers of Chicana/o students enrolling in colleges and universities continuing to grow for decades after the 1970s, there was no corresponding increase in the number of Chicana/o student publications on college campuses across the US. Instead, the number of campus Chicana/o newspapers began to fall precipitously after 1975, and in 2018 only a handful remain under their original mastheads, primarily as online blogs.

The legacy of these student publications should not be underestimated. The production and circulation of Chicana/o student newspapers marked a qualitative shift in Chicana/o movement as a whole. Activists recall a time when young Chicanas/os would pick up a *movimiento* newspaper to admire the powerful artwork that was frequently featured on the cover. The evocative images, unique format, rousing headlines, and rebellious language contained within these publications were imbued with a special kind of communicative power that was experienced differently from other forms of print media. Each copy of a Chicana/o student newspaper represented more than just the sum of its words printed on large format paper – the production and circulation of each edition of one of these newspapers was more analogous to a sociocultural event; the material embodiment of Chicana/o pride and a powerful instrument of

Chicana/o protest. These newspapers became 'artifacts' of Chicana/o political culture (Cole, 1996: 117):

[M]odified over the history of [...] [their] incorporation into goal-directed human action. By virtue of the changes wrought in the process of their creation and use, artifacts are simultaneously ideal (conceptual) and material. They are ideal in that their material form has been shaped by their participation in the interactions of which they were previously a part and which they mediate in the present [...] Such imaginative artifacts [...] can come to color the way we see the 'actual' world, providing a tool for changing current praxis [...] modes of behavior acquired when interacting with tertiary artifacts can transfer beyond the immediate contexts of their use.

In this sense, Chicana/o student newspapers continued to influence generations of activists long after their pages had yellowed. There was a keen self-awareness among those who participated in the production of these publications that there was an intrinsic political power that Chicana/o newspapers embodied. When these publications achieved a certain degree of sustainability on their respective campuses, they would become an independent repository of institutional collective memory for students. Through their publication, the ideas and priorities of Chicana/o students could thereby survive experiential struggles, spring breaks, and inevitable graduation dates. Chicanas/os activists situated on campuses with a strong publication often wielded a higher degree of institutional influence that was uncommon for their otherwise marginalised communities. Moreover, while campus activists might have idealized their often ephemeral contributions to the *movimiento* as 'making our own history,' Chicana/o movement journalists made this concept manifest by 'writing our history' in publications that would survive their individual time at their respective college or university.

Another aspect of student print journalism that may seem anachronistic within our current digital media landscape that celebrates self-promotion and branding, was how Chicana/o newspapers did not often recognise the individuals that actually created these publications. Publishing an alternative newspaper, especially in the 1960s and 70s, required an unusual degree of professionalisation from students because this type of activism was technically complex and labour intensive, and it was primarily done behind the scenes. Hundreds of hours of planning, debating, writing, editing, and design work would be invested into every issue, while movement readers usually only appreciated the final printed product. As a consequence, leading figures within the Chicano Press were especially respected among movement leaders and organisations, but were generally not as well known in the broader public narratives, and too often their stories are lost in the historical recollection of the movement in general.

Chicana/o student publications required an unusual degree of ideological disciplining of thought and action. Individual activist-journalists who acquired the necessary skill set did not surrender it when their campus-based printed work declined. Instead they would often continue to be active long after graduation, and through the ratcheting effect that is common to this type of collective, specialised knowledge, former participants in the Chicana/o student movement press would become leaders in other aspects of the movement, and continue to contribute to the *movimiento* for decades after these publications had ceased to circulate - some became professional journalists or regional/national political figures, while others became scholars.

Evidence of this idiosyncratic contradiction of the Chicana/o movement is embodied in the stories of important, although not widely celebrated figures of the Chicana/o movement press - a topic deserving of its own paper. Within the Chicana/o student movement press in particular, three figures stand out: Arnulfo Casillas, Magdalena Mora and Raul Ruiz. Each of these three individuals entered into political life through the Chicana/o movement of the 1960s and 1970s, and were inspired to subsequently enrol in colleges where they became key figures in community and campus-based Chicana/o journalism.

Arnulfo Casillas was politicised while serving in the Vietnam War. Upon his return to the United States, he was swept up in the activism of the Chicano movement, enrolled in a community college, and in 1973 transferred to the University of California, Santa Barbara (Casillas, 2017). Jaime Casillas, Arnulfo's brother describes him as the 'Johnny Appleseed' of creating and supporting Chicano/a student newspapers, whose 'notion of self-determination was a driving force behind the Chicana/o Newspaper movement... Arnulfo supported the idea that we, as Chicanas/os,

needed to write our own history and our own view of the world, and not leave that to the mainstream...' (Personal correspondence, 2018). Arnulfo Casillas played a key role in establishing *¡Sí Se Puede!* in 1973 on the campus of UC Santa Barbara, and *Voz Fronteriza* in 1976 on the campus of the University of California San Diego (Avalos, 2015: 67). Casillas taught Chicano Journalism at California State University Northridge where he was a key figure supporting the publishing of *El Popo*. At the time of his sudden death in 1992 Casillas was 44 years old, and his passing was a shock to the Chicana/o movement that was at that point undergoing something of a revival on college campuses across the United States.

When Magdalena Mora passed away in 1981 she was only 29 years old, and already a widely respected organiser and ideological leader of the movement. She had been a student leader while an undergraduate at the University of California Berkeley, and was a leading member of the organisation *Centro de Acción Social Autónoma* (CASA). It was while she was working with CASA that she became a journalist and labour columnist for the CASA newspaper *Sin Fronteras* (*Without Borders*). Soon after moving to Los Angeles, Mora co-founded another newspaper titled *El Foro del Pueblo* (The Peoples Forum) (Raíz Fuerte, 1981). Her story and contributions to the Chicana/o movement press continue to inspire activists, and in many circles she has become an icon of Chicana leadership. The University of California Berkeley named an undergraduate residential life program in her honour, 'a Cal alumna and proud Chicana scholar, activist, *feminista*, and labor organizer. She was active in the Chicano Movement, which was pivotal in her growth as a community organizer' (Berkeley Residential Life, 2018).

One of the original *hombres orquesta* ('One-man band') of the movement, Raul Ruiz was a student activist who became a *movimiento* photographer, political leader, scholar, and one of the most influential figures in Chicana/o movement journalism (Garcia, 2015). While he was a student at California State University Los Angeles, Raul was initiated into the Chicano Movement off campus, in the *barrios* of East LA, where he played a key role in the founding of several key community publications. In 1967 and 1968 Ruiz co-founded *Inside Eastside* and *Chicano Student Movement*, two of the earliest publications of the Chicana/o Press, and both central to the high school student walkouts of 1968. He was also editor of another important Los Angeles publication, *La Raza* magazine, and was among the original founders of the *Chicano Press Association*. Some of the most compelling images of the *movimiento* were collected by Raul Ruiz, particularly his photographs that documented the police violence that was unleashed against the August 29, 1970 Chicano Moratorium march in East Los Angeles. As a Chicana/o Journalism professor at CSU Northridge, Ruiz helped establish *El Popo* in 1970.

Each of these *movimiento* journalists left their mark on future generations of activists. Arnulfo Casillas and Magdalena Mora passed away very young, although by the time of their deaths they had already won the admiration of many of the most recognised public figures of the Chicana/o movement. Decades later, Raul Ruiz was asked to reflect on his life's work, including his experiences as a *movimiento* journalist (Garcia, 2015: 110):

As I look back on the movement, I recognize its contributions and its drawbacks. For me, as a movement journalist, one of the biggest contributions was the movement newspapers. They... helped create a new consciousness among Chicanos, as well as provide attention to a group that the mainstream media had mostly ignored... What the Chicano newspapers did was to legitimate the movement... and to link the movement in different regions together. Through the movement papers, activists imagined a community. These newspapers are still important because they contain the history of the movement... They serve as an invaluable tool for historians. It's a shame that they don't seem to be utilized very much.

Conclusion

From their rapid emergence during the late 1960s, through to their decline in the 1990s, Chicana/o student movement newspapers were an important part of the broader socio-political movement of Latinas/os within the United States. Politically, the broader Chicana/o movement not only inspired the campus based journalistic surge, but campus newspapers proved to be utterly dependent on the movement. Student print media was rooted in the *movimiento*; it was the campus based expression and voice of a wider struggle. Early on, this was the main source of strength for these publications. When the *movimiento* declined during the 1980s, this dependency

proved to be a central weakness of these publications, and they began to disappear (Greco Larson, 2006: 189).

Drawing from a sample of 35 newspapers that existed between 1969 and 1980, the average Chicana/o student newspaper only survived for four years. The rapid decline in the number of Chicana/o newspapers throughout the late 1970s and 1980s was primarily a consequence of a global techno-cultural trend within political communication that led to a general decline of print media. This decline hit newspapers especially hard, while political communication became increasingly electronic throughout the 1980s and 1990s, and then shifted to digital technologies since the 2000s. In 2017, tabloid format printed publications have almost disappeared not only from college campuses, but also from the broader consumer market in general. These are some of the reasons why the majority of Chicana/o student newspapers were published for only short periods of time.

No comparable platform of political communication has, as of yet, filled the void left by the decline of Chicana/o student newspapers. Unlike the production of *movimiento* print media that was intentional and instrumentalised for bridging campus and community publics, contemporary political communication via social media has proven to be more useful for differentiating consumer-centric identities and reinforcing existing political inclinations. However, this poor communicative state is not static – it is subject to rapid change since new communication technologies are introduced every day. Only time will tell whether *barrio* youth can once again take communicative power into their own hands and establish new *movimiento* voices on campus.

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NOTES

- 1 *Movimiento* translates as 'movement', and it was the term widely used by Chicana/o activists to identify the broadest base of the struggle.
- 2 *Barrio* is a term commonly used by Chicanas/os to identify any working class Mexican community.
- 3 Manifest destiny is a pseudo-religious doctrine based on the idea that 'Anglo-Americans were... divinely chosen to populate the North American continent and to bring the blessings of democracy and progress to this area. Their expansion into the Southwest was simply an expression of this conviction' (Barrera, 1979: 12).
- 4 *El Misisipí* was established in New Orleans in 1808 to become the first Spanish language newspaper published in the United States.
- 5 This notion of Mexicans being lost in the North or *Norte*, was the origin of the colloquial phrase in Mexican Spanish *estoy norteado* (I'm 'northern'), meant to describe a state of being hopelessly lost.
- 6 *Regeneración* was founded by the brothers Jesús, Enrique and Ricardo Flores Magón and published from 1900 to 1918 for the Partido Liberal Mexicano (PLM). The stated purpose was to make the case for revolutionary change in Mexico, beginning with uncompromising opposition to the 35-year dictatorship of Porfirio Díaz.
- 7 This was a demand that was common among the earliest civil rights struggles in the United States, often led by African American veterans groups in the Northeast and the Southern states. In the Southwest, this civil rights struggle was led by Mexican American organisations.
- 8 California Latinos officially outnumbered Whites in 2014 (Panzar, 2014).
- 9 Davis (1959), San Diego (1960), Irvine (1965), and Santa Cruz (1965). No new UC campus was established until 2005 (Merced).
- 10 Northridge (1958), Dominguez Hills (1960), Sonoma (1960), San Bernardino (1965), and Bakersfield (1965). No new CSU campus was established until 1988 (San Marcos).
- 11 California State University, Fresno is known as Fresno State University. The first issue of *La Voz de Aztlan* was published May 5, 1969 under the name *La Pluma Morena*, and included a line on the masthead that read "Chicano-Black Student Supplement" (CSU Fresno, 2018).