

OUT OF THE BARREL OF THE PEN: BOOKS AS WEAPONS OF STRUGGLE

The Raza Press and Media Association (RPMA) held its first Raza/Barrio Book Festival in San Diego, California on May 15, 2004. Since then, Raza/Barrio Book Fests have been held in Oxnard and Los Angeles. Speakers in the past have included Rodolfo (Rudy) Acuña, Elizabeth (Betita) Martinez, Antonia Darder, Omali Yeshitela, Juan G. Quiñones, and many more.

Under the theme of “Out of the Barrel of the Pen: Books As Weapons of Struggle”, this year’s Raza/Barrio Book Fest will held on Saturday, March 6, 2010 in South Central Los Angeles at the Centro Cultural Francisco Villa (Located at 2100 Maple Ave, Los Angeles, CA). The program will include a book/art sale and exhibition, panel of authors, cultural presentation, and keynote speakers.

The 2010 book fest will have four general objectives and areas of focus:

- Advance A Critical Scholarship That is Anti-Capitalist/Colonialist and For The Liberation of All Oppressed Peoples. The Book Fests are part of the RPMA’s efforts to promote the production of Raza literature that brings clarity to our oppression and the mechanism/ways the ruling class uses to oppress us, and what can be done to move our liberation movement forward. One of our aims is to promote the production of books (and all forms of media) that can be used as weapons in the struggle for justice, liberation, and peace.

- Bring Awareness To The History, Culture, and Political Struggles of Raza/Indigenous Peoples Within The Belly of The Beast. Although over 40 million Raza (Mexicanos, Salvadoreños, Guatemaltecos, Puertorriqueños, etc.) live within the current “borders” of the United States, our history, culture, and political struggles are virtually unknown, not only to the “world”, but also within our own communities. The colonial intellectual institutions (schools, media, cultural centers, etc.) of the Empire (U.S.) have been successful in hiding our existence. We want to address this particular question by finding ways of communicating and “projecting to the world” the realities of our existence and the forms of resistance being waged by our communities.

- Work To Create A Grassroots Scholar/Media Activism That Will Serve The Interests of the Community, Working Class, and the Poor. We want to assist in the creation of scholar activists and organic (grassroots/barrio-based) intellectuals, mujeres y hombres, dedicated to working for the interest of the community, workers, and poor. The reality is that most communities have no one that can articulate their needs or have the skills to effectively struggle against the “low intensity” warfare being executed upon the masses of La Raza by a racist/colonialist government. A warfare which utilizes tactics and methods of oppression that include Nazi-like ICE raids, police check points, mass incarceration, discriminatory employment practices, denial of a quality and relevant education, “forced displacement” for whole communities (gentrification), criminalization of our youth, etc.

- Unite and Organize Progressive and Revolutionary Media Workers Into An Activist Association. The book fest also will continue the RPMA efforts to bring media workers and authors together, to “work as one”, as a way to make our work more effective. The RPMA is guided by a science of struggle that explains to us that in unity and organization there is strength. Therefore, we oppose the “bourgeois tendencies” of egotism/individualism/envy-ism that have kept many of our intellectuals from doing any real work or anything that will fundamentally challenged the capitalist oppression of the masses. For two decades, the RPMA has existed as space for those looking for a “revolutionary place” from which we can work in an organized, accountable, and structured fashion.

If you are in agreement with the aims of the RPMA’s Raza/Barrio Book Fest, make plans to attend. For more information, please see our web page for Book Fest updates and details. ***Remember, if you are not part of the solution, then you are part of the problem!***

RPMA Web Page: razapressassociation.org

