

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

**CREATING SPACE FOR GRASSROOTS RADICAL AND REVOLUTIONARY AUTHORS**

Organizing for the Raza Press and Media Association's (RPMA) 4th Raza-Barrio Book Fests continues to move forward. The RPMA Raza-Barrio Book Fests have been held every other year beginning in 2004. Book Fests have taken place in San Diego, Oxnard, and Los Angeles. Literally hundreds of media workers and social justice activities have attended these events and they have become spaces where "grassroots" progressive-revolutionary authors and others, have gathered to share their work and learn from the work of others.

**A RICH AND CRITICAL DIALOGUE IS EXPECTED**

Under the theme of "From The Barrel of The Pen: Books As Weapons of Struggle", this year's Fest consist of an excellent program of authors-media workers, cultural entertainment, and an exhibition/sale of literature. In addition, a rich and critical dialogue is expected to take place during the round table discussions.

Presenters who have confirmed to participate include: Francisco Romero (Revolutionary Reflections, RPMA), Penny Hess (Overturning The Culture of Violence, Chairwoman of the African People's Solidarity Committee, St. Petersburg, FL.) Benjamin Prado (Editor, La Verdad, RPMA), Ernesto Bustillos (Chicano Journalism: Its History and Its Use As A Weapon For Liberation, San Diego), Lucia Laguna (Chicano Studies Student CSUN, member of Unión del Barrio), Victor Ochoa (Chicano Park Murals, muralist-artist, San Diego), Benjamin Olguin (La Pinta: Chicana/o Prisoner Literature, Culture, and Politics, Austin, Tx), Laura Pulido (Black, Brown, Yellow and Left: Radical Activism in Los Angeles, professor USC, Los Angeles), Irene Vasquez (Editor, Borders Within Us: Three Global Diasporas, Associate Professor, CSU Dominguez Hills), Devra Weber (Dark Sweat, White Gold: CA. Cotton, Farm Workers and the New Deal, professor UCR), and Tara J. Yosso (Critical Race Counterstories Along The Chicana/ Chicano Education Pipeline, UC Santa Barbara)

**WHAT IS THE MAIN PURPOSE OF THE RAZA-BARRIO BOOK FESTS?**

Since the Police/FBI destruction of the "Chicano Power Movement" of the late 1960s and early 1970s, there has been little or no support for writers and media workers who still uphold an anti-colonial/capitalist and pro-liberation perspective. The Raza-Barrio Book Fests have attempted resolve this contradiction as one of its aims has been to contribute to the development of a progressive-revolutionary type of Raza media. A media that both informs and raises the critical consciousness needed to combat all forms of oppression and to fight for our liberation.

Unlike the "bourgeois (mainstream) media" who confuses and puts our people to sleep, the organizers of the Book Fest are struggling to produce a media that motivates and instills a passion for revolutionary change among the working class and

the poor. While the capitalist-bourgeois media promotes self-indulgence, narcissism, introversion, and individualism –the revolutionary Raza-Mexican media upholds collectivism, democracy, justice, and liberation. It awakens people from the mind control and false consciousness imposed by the capitalist media. Likewise, it fights to "keep the pigs awake and terrified" about the "possibility" of the slaves revolting and thus, keeping this parasitic-capitalist class from enjoying the resources and wealth stolen from our communities.

**ALL WHO TRULY BELIEVE IN JUSTICE, LIBERATION, AND PEACE SHOULD ATTEND THE BOOK FEST**

The Book Fests serve as unity building events, places for learning and sharing, and gatherings for those who are ready to work in organized and accountable fashion. Therefore, the Book Fest should be of interest to:

- Those who understand that direct action is the only way to rid of the parasitic capitalism/colonialist (imperialist) system that oppresses the great majority of the people on planet earth (Raza-Mexican/Indigenous, African, Asian, etc.).
- Those students/scholars who want Chicano Studies and Multicultural Studies to fulfill its original goal of being a science and pedagogical process that is both scholarly and liberating.
- Those who want to learn what Critical Pedagogy, Chicano Studies, Multicultural Studies, Social Justice, is –and how it can be applied to our everyday life.
- Those who tired of the "liberal" elements who talk about change but do nothing of substance to challenge the system of oppression.
- Those who want to end sexism, racism, and all forms of oppression, by getting down to the roots of the problem and doing something about it.

While we recognize that the Raza-Barrio Book Fests have been small and humble events, we also stand firm in saying that without a doubt they have been centers and spaces where some of the most progressive forces within our movement have gathered to share and learn from each other.

**JOIN THE RAZA PRESS AND MEDIA ASSOCIATION! JUNTOS VENCEREMOS**

