

Handout

Big Paper Resources: East LA Walkouts

Directions:

Use the following quotes and image to facilitate a Big Paper discussion on the East LA school walkouts with your students.

Rosalinda Méndez González (student at Lincoln High School):

“ From the time we first begin attending school, we hear about how great and wonderful our United States is, about our democratic American heritage, but little about our splendid and magnificent Mexican heritage and culture. . . . We look for others like ourselves in these history books, for something to be proud of for being a Mexican, and all we see in books and magazines, films, and T.V. shows are stereotypes of a dark, dirty, smelly man with a tequila bottle in one hand, a dripping taco in the other, a serape around him, and a big sombrero. But we are not the dirty, stinking wino that the Anglo would like to point out as a Mexican.”

Source: Mario T. García and Sal Castro, *Blowout!* (University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 115.

Luis Torres (student at Lincoln High School):

“ The classroom experience with [our teacher] Sal Castro was memorable. He didn’t shy away at all from having a point of view and expressing it. That point of view was ‘know your history and be proud of who you are.’ This was like a mantra, and it was a wildly revolutionary notion to us. Nobody else said this. He exuded this feeling that he was one of us and he respected us, and this made a difference for us.”

Source: Mario T. García and Sal Castro, *Blowout!* (University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 126.

Sal Castro (teacher at Lincoln High School):

“ To me, the greatest thing the Mexican students needed was a new positive self-image of themselves. You can’t succeed if you don’t feel good about yourself...

“ [I]n my classes, especially my history ones, I brought in as much as I could of Mexican and Mexican American history. I didn’t know much about all this myself, but I learned as I went along. This, in turn, affected my own evolving identity. It wasn’t that I had already reached the mountaintop and received the truth. I was learning also, but my own experiences and my gut feeling told me that Mexicans had been put down too often, and we now needed to assert pride in our ethnic background and culture.”

Source: Mario T. García and Sal Castro, *Blowout!* (University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 126.



Source: UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center, <https://www.unitedwayla.org/en/news-resources/blog/historical-photos-from-the-1968-east-la-walkouts/>