

BROWN-EYED CHILDREN OF THE SUN: *Lessons from the Chicano Movement, 1965–1975*. By George Marsical. (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005. 348 pp. \$24.95 paper.) Reviewed by Michael L. Trujillo.

Marsical offers a lesson to a number of different pupils in this insightful study of the Chicano/a Movement, or *Movimiento*, and its multiple ideologies. The first targets of his teaching are the purveyors of mainstream United States history whom he deems unaware of the *Movimiento* and, in particular, the scholars of the 1960s who are dismissive of its contributions. However, his chief pedagogical targets are Mexican Americans themselves: “Hispanics” who do not recognize the importance of the *Movimiento*’s progressive politics; a younger generation that does not remember and appreciate it; and scholars who work, he believes, in isolation from their communities behind walls of poststructuralist theory.

Marsical’s text attempts to capture the positive aspects of the collective vision created by Chicana/o activists and organizations in the 1960s and 1970s. Such aspects include the elaboration of a collective Chicana/o agency, the critique of naive and uncritical patriotism, the exposure of the imperialistic and white supremacist foundations of U.S. foreign policy, the history of economic exploitation in the Southwest, and the building of cross-racial and international coalitions. However, this study is not an uncritical celebration. Rather, he also outlines a wide range of counter-productive attitudes and harmful practices. These include the sexism of many of the *Movimiento*’s participants and the sectarian elements of nationalism that limited the *Movimiento*’s ability to build coalitions.

Each chapter is a cultural and political study, written in essay form, of a particular aspect of the *Movimiento*. His study topics are strategically chosen because they are understudied and possess wider implications. They include (1) prior academic representations of the *Movimiento*, (2) the connection between so-called nationalist practices and more explicitly internationalist positions of some *Movimiento* figures, (3) Chicana/o cultural production that references the Cuban revolution, (4) the construction of César Chávez as a key *Movimiento* figure, (5) Chicana/o alliances with black militant groups, and (6) the struggle to create the Lumumba-Zapata College at the University of California, San Diego. From the specifics of each topic, his essays spin outward to address the wider issues of Chicano/a culture, history, and the disciplinary debates that concern him.

In particular, Marsical’s text elaborates and demonstrates the complexity of so-called Chicano/a nationalism. He states that his interest in studying this aspect of the *Movimiento* was piqued by a “Hispanic bureaucrat” who repeatedly used the term “nationalist” to discredit a group of Chicana/o staff, students, and faculty committed to contesting elitism and structural racism at their university campus. He writes, “I realized then that the positive contributions of the *Movimiento* had become hostage to a scholarly preoccupation with a single ingredient of its complex ideological mixture—the nationalist impulse” (p. 12). Marsical shows nationalism to be part of a complex range of strategies and ideological positions.

In contesting reductive notions of Chicana/o nationalism, Marsical shows that the Movimiento's complexities lie in its details. Chapter three's cogent description of the Movimiento's iconic use of the Cuban revolutionary and Argentine-born Ernesto "Che" Guevara as well as Mexican Emiliano Zapata and the Mexican American César Chávez illustrates a strong international component to Movimiento politics. Similarly, chapter five elaborates the often-forgotten cross-racial organizing efforts of figures such as Reies López Tijerina, María Varela, and the Poor People's Campaign. This chapter demonstrates Movimiento-era commitments to coalitions that would defy the "My people first terms" politics of nationalism.

For academics committed to social justice, chapter six's focus on the Lumumba-Zapata College at UCSD is particularly useful. Mariscal's thick description of this Black and Chicana/o effort to institutionalize educational reforms offers a vision with a potential for transformative change that stands in stark contrast with our current era's more reduced expectations. This chapter also demonstrates the practical lessons of such efforts. For example, long before the University of Texas at Austin began accepting the top 10 percent of each of the state's high schools, UCSD activists argued for the automatic admission of California's top 12 percent (p. 230). However, his study also demonstrates the insurmountable obstacles of outside opposition and internal dissension that foreclosed the Lumumba-Zapata College's promise.

Less convincing than these lessons is Mariscal's contention that Chicana/o historiography's and Chicana/o studies' current focus on gender, sexuality, and the Mexican American middle class is not a fundamental shift in the discipline. Indeed, the passion of his critique of much current Chicana/o scholarship suggests that some sort of epistemological break has, in fact, occurred. I suspect the significance of this shift is why he feels we need to learn lessons from the Movimiento. Furthermore, a serious engagement with Chicana feminist works such as Chela Sandoval's *Methodology of the Oppressed* or Gabriela Redondo's edited volume *Chicana Feminisms* is notably absent. Like Mariscal, these scholars feel a deep sense of duty to their communities, to promoting social justice in the academy, and to advocating for transformative change.

Brown-Eyed Children of the Sun will be of special interest to scholars and students of Chicana/o studies, the history of the Southwest, and social movements. More generally, Mariscal's text is a powerful corrective for those who might forget the Movimiento or dismiss it as a failure. He is right that the 1960s marked the first time that the dominant U.S. culture witnessed Mexican Americans on a national stage as self-determined agents rather than as simply subservient and racialized others. Indeed, the title of this text, *Brown-Eyed Children of the Sun*, is taken from a protest song from the era, and the text itself could be experienced as a similar protest. Along these lines, I have already watched several of my students find inspiration and validation in this book. Still, this text would profit from a more serious dialog with the scholars who are the objects of its lessons.

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