

Latinos and the Law WINTER 2014

– C171 (Chicano/Latino 142)

Instructor: Prof. Vigil
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Outline

This course explores a range of conceptual and policy approaches to legal issues and events affecting the Latino population, with an emphasis on California. Both the historical dimensions and cultural dynamics of these legal issues will be addressed. Indian, Spanish, and Mexican legal traditions are central to this survey. Of most importance, however, will be the Chicano Movement of the 1960s. How and why that episode emphasized legal issues helps us unravel some of the historical and cultural conflicts of the past, especially in the aftermath of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848.

Culture contact and conflict wreaked havoc on laws and society during the early period, as land theft, border raiding, banditry, and other problems emerged, problems usually associated with the Wild West.

After the 1910 Mexican Revolution, large-scale immigration from Mexico more than doubled the population as urban barrios and rural colonias began to dot the Southwestern United States. With integration into the agricultural and industrial work force, major social control institutions, such as the family, schools, and law enforcement, were transformed dramatically, especially with urbanization.

In the contemporary era, especially in the context of the Chicano Movement, serious strains over immigration and immigrant rights and educational prospects for Mexican Americans dominated the legal stage, as they also shaped the question of welfare reform, street gangs, and crime generally.

Texts

1. Vigil, J.D.: From Indians to Chicanos, 3rd ed.
2. Mirande, A: Gringo Justice
3. Rendon, A.: Chicano Manifesto; Amazon.com, used or kindle
Select pieces available on course website

Course Evaluation

Several speakers will be invited to discuss such topics as: immigration, immigrant legal issues, juvenile justice, political patterns, and schooling, among other issues. Films and videos on some aspect of the law, crime, or society will also be shown. There will be two (2) in class exams (midterm and final, 20% each) and a research paper of 5-7 pp. (50%). Instructions for this research paper will be provided by the third week of the quarter. Attendance and participation in classroom discussions are also important (10% of grade).

| Week | Date | Lecture Topics and Readings |
|-------------|-------------|--|
| 1 | 1-8 | Introduction; Conceptual and Legal issues Through Time and History. Course requirements. Readings: Vigil: pp. 31, 40, 45; Rendon: Ch. 1-2. |
| 2 | 1-15 | A Treaty and a New People: How the Land was Lost. Readings: Vigil: pp. 78-83, 91, 104-105; Rendon: Ch. 3-4 Mirande, Ch. 1-3. |
| 3 | 1-22 | Mexican American Legal Issues and Traditions in the Aftermath of the War Readings: Vigil: Ch. 8; Rendon: Ch. 5-7. |
| 4 | 1-29 | The Long Border and the Big Immigration Readings: Vigil: 9-10; Rendon: Ch. 8-9; Mirande, Ch. 4. |
| 5 | 2-5 | Education: Street Smart/School Smart Readings: Rendon: Ch. 10-11; website Conchas&Vigil |
| 6 | 2-12 | The City and Its Laws: Social Movements Readings: Vigil: Ch. 9; Rendon: Ch. 12-14 |
| 7 | 2-19 | Politics as Usual Readings: Speaker; website??? |
| 8 | 2-26 | Social Control and Street Socialization |

Readings: Mirande, Ch. 5-6; website Vigil

9 3-5 New Methods of Control

Readings: website?????

10 3-12 Prospects and Policies for the Future.

Readings: Mirande, Ch. 7.

11 3-19 FINAL, 7-9pm.