

emissions to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), which makes them public. The Community Right-to-Know law is an important accomplishment of the environmental justice movement, because it gives local communities the information they need to more effectively challenge polluters. According to the EPA's Toxic Release Inventory, toxins may be released into any media, including the air, soil, water, landfills, or underground injection. A toxin is defined as a chemical that is a known mutagen (causes mutations), teratogen (causes birth defects or disturbs fetal development), or carcinogen (causes cancer).

In 2005, Quemetco, which does secondary smelting and chemical manufacturing, ranked as the greatest toxic polluter in Los Angeles County. That year, Quemetco reported 2.1 million pounds of toxic emissions. The number two and three spots were occupied by ExxonMobil (located in Torrance) and Chevron U.S.A. (located in El Segundo), respectively. As recently as 2002, ExxonMobil and Chevron occupied the first and second spots, respectively, but managed to cut their emissions significantly, so that each now emits just over 1 million pounds annually.

Air toxins in the county have an interesting geography. Although the Eastside, where Quemetco is located, has a much larger number of polluting firms than the Harbor/South Bay, these firms tend to be relatively small. The air pollution on the Eastside is a function of the concentration of many small polluters here and prevailing winds. In contrast, the Harbor/South Bay, where ExxonMobil and Chevron are located, is home

to a smaller number of much larger firms. Historically, the county's top polluters have hailed from the petrochemical industry, and the Harbor/South Bay, with its concentration of refineries, produces the greatest toxic emissions in the L.A. region.

TO LEARN MORE

For more on the Community Right-to-Know law and to identify local polluters, see www.epa.gov/epahome/r2k.htm.

Manuel Pastor Jr., James L. Sadd, and Rachel Morello-Frosch, "Environmental Inequity in Metropolitan Los Angeles," in *The Quest for Environmental Justice: Human Rights and the Politics of Pollution*, ed. Robert Bullard (Sierra Club Books, 2005).

Laura Pulido, "Rethinking Environmental Racism: White Privilege and Urban Development in Southern California," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 90 (2000): 12-40.

2.18 Ruben Salazar Park and Silver Dollar Café

Salazar Park 3864 Whittier Blvd., Los Angeles 90023 (between S. Alma Ave. and S. Ditman Ave.) (323) 260-2330 (parks.lacounty.gov/Parkinfo.asp?URL=cms1_033236.asp&Title=Salazar) EAST LOS ANGELES

Silver Dollar Café 4945 Whittier Blvd., Los Angeles 90022 (between S. Ferris Ave. and S. La Verne Ave.) EAST LOS ANGELES

During the late 1960s and early 1970s, East L.A. emerged as a major center of Chicana/o activism. Inspired by the civil rights movement, concerned about the Vietnam War, and frustrated with racism and poor community conditions, Mexican American youth began agitating for social

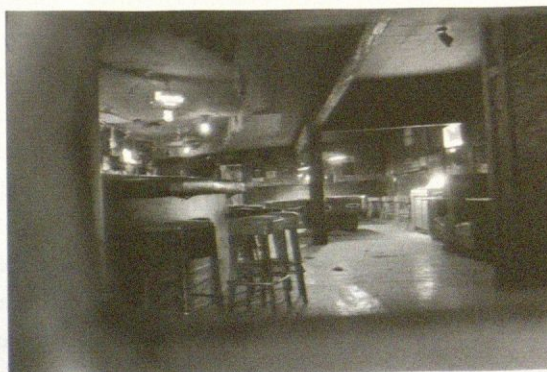


Two youths hold a banner during the Chicano Moratorium march, August 29, 1970.

change. Two linked events, in particular, formed a turning point for *el movimiento* (the movement), as it was called: the Chicano Moratorium and the assassination of Rubén Salazar.

On August 29, 1970, approximately 30,000 protesters marched six miles from Belvedere to Laguna Park. They were protesting the fact that Chicanos were disproportionately drafted and killed in the Vietnam War but also oppressed at home. As the crowd reached the park, more than 500 police attacked the marchers, resulting in the arrest of over 200 persons, hundreds of injuries, and three deaths. The Chicano Moratorium was the largest antiwar action on the part of any ethnic community in the United States. Many marchers were deeply politicized by the event and realized they needed to create a strong and united movement to defend their rights.

Closely linked to the Chicano Moratorium is the assassination of Rubén Salazar. Born in Ciudad Juárez, Mexico, in March 1928, Salazar was a journalist who became an important voice for social change. He worked for the L.A. Times and the Spanish-language television station KMEX. Over time Salazar became increasingly critical of the war and social injustice, and emerged as a key commentator on the Chicana/o



Interior of the Silver Dollar Café, where Rubén Salazar was shot during the Chicano Moratorium, in 1970; this photo was taken through the mail slot two days after the event.

movement. After covering the Chicano Moratorium on August 29, Salazar went to the Silver Dollar Café, where he was shot by L.A. County sheriff's deputy Tom Wilson. The projectile came from outside the café and hit Salazar in the head. A coroner's panel ruled that the killing was a homicide, but Wilson was never brought to trial. Before his death, Salazar was being investigated by both the LAPD and the FBI, who opposed his increasingly critical news coverage. In August 2010, Sheriff Lee Baca refused to release the records related to Salazar's shooting. In February 2011 the Sheriff's Office of Independent Review released a report saying that Salazar's death was not a conspiracy but the result of poor decisions. Eyewitnesses remain unconvinced. Laguna Park's name was changed to Ruben Salazar Park in his honor.

PERSONAL REFLECTION BY MARGARITA RAMIREZ, DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF GRANT MAKING, LIBERTY HILL FOUNDATION

When we got to the park, we were sitting there, listening to a number of speakers, [such as] Dolores Huerta, and then all of a sudden, we heard people screaming. It looked like a school of fish, I remember, when the tear gas hit, because people were running one way, and then they went the other because of the tear gas seemingly from nowhere. . . . And pretty soon we found ourselves screaming and running and trying to get out of there. . . . That was my first sort of "hit" of any social movement or political activism.

NEARBY SITE OF INTEREST

Estrada Court Murals

3200–3355 E. Olympic Blvd., Los Angeles
(www.lamurals.org/MuralFiles/ELA/EstradaCourts.html)

Vast collection of murals in a public housing complex.

FAVORITE NEIGHBORHOOD RESTAURANT

Tacos Baja Ensenada

5385 Whittier Blvd., Los Angeles 90022
(323) 887-1980

Specialties include fish and shrimp tacos, Ensenada style. And you can't beat the price, particularly the Wednesday specials.

TO LEARN MORE

Ruben Salazar, *Border Correspondent: Selected Writings, 1955–1970*, ed. Mario T. García (University of California Press, 1995).

Lorena Oropeza, *¡Raza Sil!, ¡Guerra No!: Chicano Protest and Patriotism during the Viet Nam War Era* (University of California Press, 2005).

2.19 San Gabriel Mission

428 S. Mission Dr., San Gabriel 91776
(at S. Ramona St.) (626) 457-3035
(sangabrielmission.org)

The San Gabriel Mission was built in 1771 under the Spanish crown. It was the first mission in the Los Angeles area and the fourth in California. The mission was originally located near Whittier Narrows, but after flooding there it was moved to its current location in 1775. The California mission system has been highly romanticized as an idyllic period in which Spanish padres cared for and converted the indigenous population to Catholicism, Spanish culture, and produced