

CALIFORNIAN

*California History Center
& Foundation*

A Center at De Anza College
for the Study and Preservation
of State and Regional History

Charlene Eigen-Vasquez

Descendant of the
People of Chitactac

Council Woman,
Confederation of
Ohlone People



Cover photo
by Ruth Morgan

Inside front cover:

Spirits Rising,
2007. This piece
was influenced by
world tragedies.
It represents the
awakening of Spirits,
when humans are
unable to manage
world chaos.
Textile quilted wall
hanging with painted
highlights.

Quilt and photo by
Charlene
Eigen-Vasquez.

Back cover:

*Ohlone Spirit
Dancers in the
Forest*. 2004.
Inspired by a forest
area that was
devastated by a
wildfire. At the time
of the painting,
seedlings could be
seen on the forest
grounds. The Ohlone
images are ghosts
dancing among the
charred ancient trees.

Quilt and photo by
Charlene
Eigen-Vasquez.



Calendar

Winter Quarter

JANUARY

- 8 First day of quarter
- 15 Holiday – Martin Luther King, Jr., birthday observance

FEBRUARY

- 16–19 Holiday – Presidents’ Day Weekend
- 20 Day of Remembrance 1:30 – 3 pm, Campus Center, Conference Rooms A & B
- 22 Dolores Huerta, lecture, 6:30 – 10:20 pm, CHC
- 24 Dolores Huerta, field study, 9 am – 5:30 pm

MARCH

- 1 Dolores Huerta, lecture, 6:30 – 10:20 pm, CHC
- 3 Dolores Huerta, field study, 9 am – 5:30 pm
- 15 Elders and Youth Speak exhibit ends
- 30 Last day of quarter

Spring Quarter

Note: Azha Simmons, CHC Museum Program Assistant, will present an exhibition highlighting the San Jose Black community’s efforts to advance freedom, justice, safety, and well-being since the 1960s – spring quarter dates to be determined.

APRIL

- 9 First day of quarter
- 19 Housing issues and crises, lecture, 6:30 to 10:20 pm, CHC
- 21 Housing issues and crises, field study, 9 am to 5:30 pm
- 25 Standing up against hate speech, 11:30 to 1:20 p.m. Campus Center, Conference Rooms A & B
- 26 Housing issues and crises, lecture, 6:30 to 10:20 pm, CHC
- 28 Housing issues and crises, field study, 9 am to 5:30 pm

MAY

- 3 “Repatriation and Mexican Americans” with Professor Francisco Balderrama. California Civil Liberties Program, 7-9 pm, Japanese American Museum of San Jose.
- 26 – 28 Holiday – Memorial Day weekend

JUNE

- 7 “Chinese exclusion act and San Jose’s Chinatowns” with Professor Bill Ong Hing, California Civil Liberties Program, 7-9 pm, Japanese American Museum of San Jose.
- 29 Last day of quarter



Correction

John Ravella is the photographer responsible for the cover image of the December 2017 *Californian* issue. The image of the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit in San Francisco accompanied the “Hindu-German Conspiracy” article by Suruchi Mohan. Due to editor error, John was not properly credited for this fine image. We thank John Ravella so much for the use of his photograph and apologize for the omission.



California History Center & Foundation
A Center for the Study of State and Regional History
De Anza College

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Californian is published by the California History Center & Foundation. The magazine is mailed to members as a benefit of annual membership in the CHC Foundation. Membership categories: \$30 Individual; \$40 Family; \$50 Supporter; \$100 Sponsor; \$500 Patron; \$1,000 Colleague.

Your contribution is tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. The value of goods received as a benefit of membership must be deducted from the amount of all contributions claimed as a deduction. CHCF members receive issues of *Californian* magazine and members who contribute at the \$50 level and above also receive a yearly Local History Studies publication, when available.

© 2018, California History Center Foundation ISSN: 0742-5465

Director's Report



Tom Izu

The ideal pairing – local history and civil liberties – with hints of cherry and manzanita

It has been a busy winter quarter with the center buzzing with students and visitors. We have been joined by two student interns assisting with our civil liberties projects and three from the Humanities Mellon Scholars Program. And, work on three grant projects in collaboration with several community-based organizations is accelerating.

When I look back just a few years ago, imagining this level of activity seems surprisingly incongruous given our bleak budgetary outlook. Back then, our future at the college was in question but a gift that established the Audrey Edna Butcher Civil Liberties Education Initiative provided a lifeline for CHC. It also set us on a new course with some serendipitous outcomes.

Who would have thought that civil liberties would have become such a relevant and popular topic, and its connection to local history so seamless? I say this after countless outreach presentations, meetings with community organizations, and discussions of new ideas for what we can do — all greeted by eager and excited individuals wanting to help and get involved.

We are now joining many in our society who are in the eye of a storm that continues to grow, and yet we are modestly

doing what local history societies do and have always done: encouraging learning and research on their region's history, while making important connections with local civic concerns. While this may not seem like your parents' local history organization, it still is!

In future issues of *Californian*, we will cover more about our current civil liberties work and the accomplishments of our student interns. For now I would like to promote our effort to launch a civil liberties summer course for high school students to be offered July 16 through August 3, 2018 through the "De Anza Academy," the Summer Youth Enrichment Program here on the campus. The summer class will help these young students explore current controversies swirling around

the Bill of Rights and the civil liberties it guarantees by using local history case studies. They will use the Library/Archives to learn about research methods and also help curate our fall exhibit, "Wherever There's a Fight: A History of Civil Liberties in California."

The extended-year course will be taught by a college instructor with the support of our staff. Also worth mentioning is that one of our Humanities Mellon Scholars, Trizha Aquino, is researching issues, topics, and resources to assist our instructor in creating an engaging class.

It is an exciting endeavor and one I do hope you can help support by passing along information to parents and high school students in our area which we will soon disseminate. In the mean time you may see the course listed at <http://deanza.edu/academy/> under high school courses.

We are grateful to the support of the Butcher family that made this part of a new beginning rather than a quick end for the history center. And while this opportunity does not solve all of our fiscal problems, it gives us a chance to chart a new course while transitioning into a more sustainable form for the future.

Sadly, we lost, this quarter, one of our very-long-time volunteers, Trudy Frank, who did the work on many fronts needed to make sure our Center carried out its mission for over 35 years (see page 18).



Support the preservation of local history by becoming a member of the California History Center Foundation

Membership categories: \$30 Individual; \$40 Family; \$50 Supporter; \$100 Sponsor; \$500 Patron; \$1,000 Colleague.

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Audrey Edna Butcher Civil Liberties Education Initiative

Day of Remembrance

“Because equal rights, fair play, justice, are all like the air: we all have it, or none of us has it. That is the truth of it.”
—Maya Angelou

Snapshots from CHC’s 16th Annual Commemorative Day of Remembrance, marking the signing of Executive Order 9066 and the beginning of the World War II mass incarceration of Japanese Americans:



Director Tom Izu provides introductory comments.



Guest speaker Chizu Omori with CHC Director Tom Izu. Chizu was a teenager when she was imprisoned in one of the camps. She shares her experiences in camp and talks about her activism.



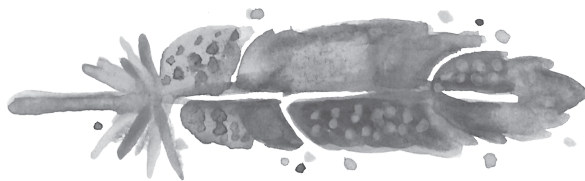
De Anza student’s share their views on lessons learned from Day of Remembrance, featuring Anisa Chaudhry, representing the Muslim Student Association, and two CHC civil liberties project interns, Paulina Hernandez, and Katelyn Cortez.

Special guest Francis Wong, Asian American Studies, San Francisco State University and renowned jazz musician/composer, performs.



Charlene Eigen-

Charlene Eigen-Vasquez (formerly known as Charlene Sul) was born and raised in San Jose, California. Her mother was born in San Francisco, her grandmother was born near Morgan Hill. Members of her family have lived within this 50-mile radius for hundreds of years. Her career and artwork is a reflection of a strong tie to this region of California, and incorporates both Ohlone and Mexican cultural influences. Today, Charlene is an accomplished textile artist and acrylic painter. She is considered an Activist in the sense that she not only serves as a spokesperson for her tribe, but she uses her artwork to influence others and her ideas to help others through self-actualization, discovery of purpose and self-inspiration. At the age of 51 years, Charlene earned a J.D. from Mitchell Hamline School of Law and began a mediation firm. Her goal is to help families and communities use their voice to solve challenging legal problems.



Note: This is the first of two parts, to be concluded in the spring quarter Californian.

CULTURAL IDENTITY

When I grew up, Ohlone ways were a subtle part of life. There were no labels or categories to distinguish ‘Ohlone-ness’ from mainstream American ways. We didn’t know any Ohlone songs or dances, we did not know what it meant to be in ceremony. The grandkids went to church with Grandma and Grandpa. Church was simply a time to visit family, at least that is what I thought. Today, when I look back, I can see that culture and tradition were simply integrated into our daily lives. Beyond church, I remember the rhythmic humming that was generally heard when parents or grandparents were playing with children, or when an adult is patting a child on the back to lull them to sleep. It wasn’t until what I consider the Ohlone cultural revival that I suddenly connected the origin of these rhythmic patterns to Ohlone prayer songs. To be specific, I was sitting in ceremony half way in dream world and half way in the physical world when the rhythms of my childhood, the humming of my grandmothers woke me; all this time they were mimicking the hypnotic ceremonial songs of the Ohlone.

Photo by Ruth Morgan

-Vasquez

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“I came to learn that this assimilation into Mexican culture was a matter of survival. Apparently it was easier to be Mexican than it was to be Indian.”

One day I asked my Grandma about Ohlone songs, dances, and sacred places. She just grinned. She did not distinguish Ohlone life from everyday life. Everything she taught me was simply what her mother taught her, and what her mother before her was taught. Today I know that many of these teachings were distinctly Ohlone, but as a result of the process of near cultural genocide and assimilation, the distinctions had either become blurred, or were simply not acknowledged. I do not think elders realized they had subconsciously carried Ohlone tradition and culture forward for a new generation.

Grandma was born just south of San Jose in a place that was once called Madrone, situated near Morgan Hill and has since been annexed. She told me many stories of the cruel world she grew up in. For her it became so unbearable that at the age of 12 she begged my great-grandmother not to send her to school anymore. My great-grandmother agreed, and so, grandma traded school for cooking, cleaning and childcare, while the other members of her family worked in the nearby fields. While she did not consider herself to be Mexican, she spoke a little Spanish and her generation certainly adopted Mexican ways during the early 1900's. I came to learn that this assimilation into Mexican culture was a matter of survival. Apparently it was easier to be Mexican than it was to be Indian.

Today it is important that young people understand why the Ohlone and other Native people could not practice their traditional ways. With this understanding, the hope is that they better appreciate what those before them had to go through to survive cultural genocide and make the current revival of Ohlone-ness even possible. One day the youth will be able to share the struggles of the past with future generations. It will be essential to emphasize the need to protect the sacredness of the teachings and pass them along with reverence. For me it has been an honor and privilege to be part of a generation that is relatively free to identify with one's bloodline; our ancestors deserve to be recognized and

respected for their struggles. Wearing regalia, leading prayer, becoming a public figure is a privilege that must be earned, not a right simply because one is part of the bloodline.

The process of creating art can be a way to connect or reconnect with one's culture. If one is really true to their work this connection may happen. In other words, if a person is able to block external influencers and create what they see and feel, the Spirit of the past, the Spirit of the future will be reflected in one's work. I began creating work as a child by teaching myself to sketch. I used any writing utensil available. I did not have art supplies, but I loved a nice sharp pencil. Grandpa was a professional photographer and while he had his own portrait studio in downtown San Jose, he also had a small darkroom in his garage. There he kept a few art supplies that included various charcoal pencils for sketching. During my visits, he



Healing quilt created for Mary Jean Robertson. Pictured are Mary Jean and Charlene.

would often sharpen a few of his “special” pencils with a carving knife and bring out scratch paper so I could draw. I am sure my sketches weren’t anything more than doodles, but I never gave up and he never criticized.

Eventually, I would find myself drawing during times of trouble in order to travel outside of my environment into an infinite wonderland. Other times drawing was a way for me to release my frustration or pain by sketching interpretations of my own reality. By the time I was 10 years old, my father had 10 children; by the time I was 20 years old he would have a total of 12 children from California to Mexico. This, along with a dysfunctional home environment, essentially forced me to retreat to find my greatest joy in art forms of all types. My mother knew I was lost and understood my sadness and frustration. For that reason, she helped me find time and space to draw and protected those breaks away from chaos. I must have been around 15 years old when my drawings began to transform. My parents were separated by then and while work and school took up most of my time, I finally felt safe so my drawings reflected a much deeper sense of wonder. Simultaneously, I had been paying attention to my elders, and was piecing together our family history. I began to document some of this in my work, in my drawings, by sketching some of the places they referenced in their stories. I would say that for me this was the beginning of what would eventually transform into the work I share in art shows and galleries.¹

My grandfather, Mac Hernandez, was definitely my pri-

¹ For the past 25 years art has been one of the primary tools I have used to teach others about culture and history. Because teaching, and creating talking circles has become one of my callings, today I put much more intention into every piece I create. When I begin the process of conceptualization, I actually call on the past through a very specific process in order to connect with Spirit. My hope is that I am always working within the realm of Spirit and that my work reflects this connection for others. At the very least, I hope my work and the work of my students inspire others to use art as a form of communication.

In terms of the technical process for a particular project, I begin by turning to the environment for inspiration. If I am creating a piece specifically for an individual, it is also important that I understand the natural environments that inspire that person. With this foundation, I then conduct preliminary research to uncover the ancestral history of the intended recipient. Finally, I take the time needed to process everything. At this point I wait for inspiration and internal guidance before beginning the physical process of creation. This practice may seem drawn-out or obscure, but the end product is almost always a broad interpretation of the past, present and future for a particular individual or an intricate discussion topic. Without a strong connection to the past, my work would definitely carry a different vibe and project a different message. That being said, there is certainly space for work that better reflects the future, and I admire those artists that can take us there.

After decades of following this personal process, and years of feedback, I began to share the concept of art as a way to explain culture and history to college students in my Ethnic Studies classes. I wondered if the process of integrating research and art would inspire students to engage. For the past four years, I taught students in Central Minnesota. Most students were college students, with less than 2% of my overall student population representing students of color. Other students came from an adult school for new immigrants. While some students came from places like China, Korea, and Latin America, the majority of students came from Somalia and neighboring countries. Art was an essential component no matter what group I was working with.

In the college classes, before discussing Ethnic Studies, or race relations, I required students to create a final group project. First they wrote an academic-level research paper comparing the migration and history of their family to that of one of the racial groups we would be studying. Once the research was complete, they had to interpret their findings in the form of a creative work of art or non-traditional presentation. Finally, colleagues offered anonymous critiques of the creative interpretations. With few parameters, and unlimited access to multiple historical resource materials the students documented the immigration and migration of their ancestors, which culminated into works of art that they could share with their own families. Each work of art was a way for them to connect with their generational past and bring it forward for future generations. As an Ohlone teacher, I felt like I had passed along a new process for thinking about the way one might connect with the past and further internalize their experience.

mary inspiration and the protector of my Spirit. When I was born I was very sick. I was in the hospital for the first four years of life, only occasionally able to leave for a few hours at a time. My grandfather did not like hospitals, but he would send me books and small gifts. I learned to read sometime before I was four years old, so he would send me books. Eventually, I underwent heart surgery and I was able to go home. From that time on we were really close and I spent a lot of time just observing him. People seemed to respect him and he seemed to have friends everywhere we went. As mentioned before, my own home was truly dysfunctional. My grandparents’ home was certainly a safe haven for me. I enjoyed the company of my grandfather. He was always encouraging and he never judged others. I was a dreamer and an artist. He was a hard worker, a successful entrepreneur, a problem solver and a photographer. In many ways we were alike I suppose.

When I was really young we did not do any traveling. Our lives and everything we knew was pretty much confined to the boundaries of the city of San Jose. My grandfather would be the first person to take my sister and me on short car trips where we would go visit local dams like Calero and Lexington. Sometimes he drove us to the gates of Mt. Umunhum where we would look out over the valley. During each car trip he might share a story about one of his brothers or sisters. We drove to his favorite places in Santa Clara County. Once in a while, we would drive to Morgan Hill to visit the burial site of my great-grandmother, Frances Herman. He was sincerely dedicated to keeping her site clean, and those surrounding her. He often brought a few garden tools, just in case there was work to be done. I used to wonder about his dedication. Today I can only guess that since my grandmother was sick and rarely traveled, he had promised her to tend to the gravesite. Perhaps on the other hand, since some of his family members passed while traveling between farms for work, the care of one individual was a tribute to his entire family. The lesson learned was the protection of gravesites. Sadly, the protection of Ohlone descendants is a huge occupation for many Ohlone today. Those car trips encouraged us to explore, taught us about family history, the integrity of our ancestors, and the responsibility we have towards protecting the past. My grandfather’s life in general, and learning about his journey as a child migrant farmworker turned successful entrepreneur, made me believe I could do anything, go anywhere for the sake of bettering society.

When I was a teenager in the late 1970’s, and showed interest, Uncle Butch (Kenneth Hernandez) began to share what

“Those car trips encouraged us to explore, taught us about family history, the integrity of our ancestors, and the responsibility we have towards protecting the past.”

he knew of Ohlone culture and Native Americans. Prior to that, I had a feeling we were Native, but no one would confirm it. My uncle and my grandmother definitely held different positions when it came to identity. My grandmother still believed, and had no reason not to believe, that our heritage should remain unspoken. She did not want her children or grandchildren to experience the harsh discrimination she felt. Both she and my grandfa-

ther believed that assimilation would protect us. Uncle Butch, on the other hand, was very proud of his identity. After all, it was a different time; he was born in the early 50's. He was one of the youngest in my mother's family. During the 1970's he was a thick-skinned biker, and a rebel in many ways, including his insistence in claiming his heritage. He really did not care about those who might try to shut him down when he spoke of being Native. He was pretty outspoken.

Unfortunately, he was alone in his cultural pride and I know that created family tension as well as societal conflict. Growing up, no one spoke of our bloodline, not my mother, my aunts, my uncles, or my older cousins. It certainly was not a matter of shame or blame; it was the result of generational assimilation and systematic racism that many people a generation or two later did not really understand.

Things began to change when one day Uncle Butch left a book with my grandmother. She was to deliver it to me, but of course, as an avid reader, she read it first! This book was *The Ohlone Way*. While she could not confirm or deny the contents, apparently she was able to make enough of a connection

"I am proud to be Ohlone because we *survived*. I look at our history and the personal history of my own family, and I think of all the different families. In 2002, an elder who was teaching the children said, 'You need to start to pay attention. You don't speak Ohlone. You don't know anything about Ohlone people, but start to open your mind up to new languages, new songs, new dances and new ways and before you know it, you will start dreaming. All that was lost is not lost. It is just invisible. When you start to dream and start to pay attention to those dreams, then everything will come back. In essence it has always been in a safe place where nobody could touch it. When the time is right, it will come back. That is what is happening right now.'"

that she allowed Uncle Butch to share what he knew. He was the one who made me my first necklace and a few other things. Every now and then I would run into him at Grandma's and my first assignment was to braid his hair. By now, Grandma seemed to be okay with the identity he wore on his shirtsleeve. He passed around 1996 and Grandma was the one who asked me to arrange for his ceremonial memorial. The journey of that task was what opened the door to the Ohlone contemporary community for my family and myself.

Grandpa Mac came to the U.S. as a migrant worker during the Bracero Program, along with his parents and siblings. More than anyone else, he knew the importance of documentation and the need to prove one's identity. Eventually, the discussion I had been having with Uncle Butch would light a fire in my Grandpa, and Grandpa helped me begin my journey to confirm our place in the Ohlone world.

When we began our genealogy research in the mid 1980's we did not know a single person tracing their heritage, so we started from almost scratch. It turns out that before Uncle Butch passed, Grandpa helped him collect evidence to prove his Ohlone heritage. Uncle Butch was trying to qualify for a specific program for Native Americans and my grandparents had a short letter written by my great-great aunt that traced our lineage to Spanish missionaries. This letter was enough at the time to demonstrate our Ohlone heritage. Pre-internet, with a few tattered hand-written documents, we began our journey.

Grandpa and I went to the main library in downtown San Jose which has a section dedicated to California history. I was already in love with libraries, but this to me was amazing! The librarian was so helpful. If you have never visited the "California Room" you can find rare maps, articles, and historical documentation. Most important, and unlike the internet, the librarians are incredibly knowledgeable. During our visit, the librarian referred us to specific historical societies that might help provide information. We were pretty lucky. Not many people were interested in genealogy at the time so librarians and historians were happy to help.

I would say that the most helpful organization was a group called "Los Californianos." Based upon the information we had, we knew that in the 1700's a Spaniard by the name of Manuel Butron had married an Ohlone woman and that during the time they were married their family owned a ranch. We were given more details, but the point was that we were led to documents to substantiate the tattered letter scribed by my great-great aunt.

As it turns out, we were direct descendants of Ohlone families that originally lived in what is now Carmel. My understanding was that our family moved north in an attempt to escape the mission system. We have mission records that take us to Monterey, San Juan Bautista and then Santa Clara. I never checked for records at Mission Dolores, but I never felt the need. My mother and some of her siblings were born in San Francisco, and my grandparents met in Oakland; that was enough for me.

I actually became involved in the cultural revitalization process at a really young age. There were so many things in my family that were not talked about in terms of culture. I was confused because I grew up towards the end of the Civil Rights Movement. I learned to read before I was 4 years old, and we did not have many children's books. Instead I read newspapers, dictionaries and encyclopedias. I did not understand everything I read, but I knew people were trying to make a difference and some of this activity was organized by race. I wanted to know where I belonged. No one in my family was a political activist and no one would answer my questions regarding the political actions taking place. I simply had to educate myself.

By the time I was 12 years old, I had had the opportunity to see Cesar Chavez speak on a few occasions. We lived in the Santa Teresa area of San Jose at the time, and a neighbor hosted weekly Bible study meetings at a neighbor's house. We did not even read the Bible. Instead, a pretty cool guy, Father Mateo, facilitated what I would now call a talking circle. Everyone in attendance was under 16 years old. Some came because they enjoyed the company, some came because they were high and simply wanted a warm place to chill. I think the organizers knew all of this and wanted a safe place for brown-skinned kids who might be wandering the streets of this mostly white neighborhood. Now that I think about it, duh!!! These were the first community activists I ever really knew. I went to the meetings for no other reason except that this is where my friends liked to hang out and yes, Father Mateo was sort of an Uncle figure. On a few occasions he took us to Most Holy Trinity Church in East San Jose where I first saw Cesar Chavez speak. The evening was incredible! I remember the outpouring of those in attendance. People had walked, biked and carpooled to the church. There were speakers outside to allow everyone nearby to hear the messages to be shared. During those visits the parking lot was not for cars because it was used for the standing audience waiting to hear what he had to say. At that point I came to realize the need to understand one's identity. I began to understand oppression, and that no matter

what my home and community environment might seem to be, I needed to find a way to rise beyond any set expectations. I never imagined myself as a leader; in fact the teachings were of humility, of service to others. We had a chance to hear other speakers, whether they came to our Bible studies class or we went to see them. Clearly if our parents were not instilling the need to be politically active, this circle of church leaders tried. At the end, I learned that if I ever wanted to help others make a difference, I first needed to know who I was.

In my family the focus was simply to be a good person. This meant going to school and finding a way to contribute and to pay your own way, if you were old enough. I had my first real job where I kept my earnings when I was 12. Prior to that my grandmother took me and my aunts to the nearby fields to pick prunes during the summer. Work and school were a priority. None of the adults in our family spoke of our family history or heritage. I didn't ask because I didn't need to; it was almost an unspoken rule not to pry. Grandma sometimes asked me, "Why are you so nosy?" I would generally smile and she would ignore my questions.

After hearing Cesar Chavez, I asked my mother how my grandfather came to the United States. I knew he was born in Mexico because he often spoke of one day returning. My mother's response was to tell me that life was hard for Grandpa when he was young and since he was not one to complain and he did not want pity, he simply did not share family history. The fact was that he had overcome many obstacles and had become a successful businessman. She emphasized that my only concern should be whether or not we were being provided for. Needless to say, her response did not satisfy my curiosity. At that point, I took it upon myself to read anything I could about Native Americans, Chicanas and the places I knew best: Santa Clara Valley, the San Francisco Bay Area and the Santa Cruz coast.

By the time I was 15 years old, I felt pretty confident about the general history of people and migration, but I still did not know about my family and that fire would not go out. As time passed I began to ask ANY family member who would give me an answer to short simple questions. I often sat quietly at the large family gatherings just trying to absorb what I could. It was an attempt to begin to piece together a story of heritage. Through this process I became more acquainted with South San Jose, Almaden Valley, San Martin, Morgan Hill, Gilroy and Madrone. I learned about the place where my grandmother and great-grandmother were born and the places they enjoyed as children. I knew our family lived within this

“To me cultural revitalization is about land and access to land so that future generations have the space to practice and share cultural ways.”

small region for generations, but the various stories I collected created a richer, multi-generational timeline.

By my early twenties Grandma understood my sincere interest in our family and regularly shared pictures, documents and family information. I remember holding one of the first old authentic family documents. To me it was amazing! The document Grandma shared was a handwritten journal entry written in what appeared to be an accounting ledger. The paper was frail, the ink faded and the penmanship exquisite. This single page, which had been removed from a ledger, listed family members, including dates of births and deaths, going back to the late 1800's. More important, it was penned by family members generations before me. I never saw the book it came from, but seeing this one page made my dedication to research worthwhile. The next natural step was to figure out how this information might help fill in gaps. I wondered about those on the list who I had never heard of. Why did some of the spellings of names change? Why is it that some people were on this list and some were not?

Grandma never drove and eventually I would often become her designated driver. She rarely left home and as she became older it seemed that I was the one who chaperoned her and my grandfather to family funerals. It may sound strange, but I am guessing her plan was to connect me to distant relatives. Grandma had a big family with hundreds of nieces and nephews. During this string of funeral/family reunion attendance, I had a chance to hear so many stories. Some of the stories created biographical sketches, and some helped me imagine what the environment was like prior to the influx of major corporations. So I did not mind being the chaperone. Before she passed, Grandma gave me this document for safe-keeping. At least that is what she said. I think she gave it to me to remind me of my commitment to the ancestors.

CULTURAL REVITALIZATION

To me cultural revitalization is about land and access to land so that future generations have the space to practice and share cultural ways. Right now we have over half a dozen projects dealing with the protection of or access to Ohlone land. Ohlone people and other California Native people who understand Spirit and ancestral responsibility know the importance of this issue. While development projects will continue to take place, there must be open spaces available for prayer, healing, the gathering of medicine, and then passing these ways on to the future generation.

One of the places currently in jeopardy of destruction is

within the Altamont Pass. The Altamont Pass is an incredibly busy thoroughway; while thousands of commuters drive through these hills, imagine that just beyond eyesight are 3,400 acres of open space, unofficially referred to as Tesla Park. This land holds a cultural site which is documented to be of cultural importance to the Ohlone. Further, imagine that not only is this park restricted from public access, but Ohlone people who have asked for permission to visit the sacred site are also prohibited from visiting the park, and that the intent for the land is off-road vehicle trails, known to destroy the surface of the land, as demonstrated by the off-road vehicle trails just adjacent to this government property. This is one example of poor land use planning that brings the Ohlone frustration and sadness.

Mt. Umunhum is another place on Ohlone radar. It was forever occupied by the Air Force which has long since left that area, and now it is considered open space and funding has been allocated for environmental clean-up and eventually recreational development. Both Mt. Umunhum and Altamont Pass/Patterson Pass are two peaks that surround the valley where Ohlone lived prior to the migration of non-Natives. Indeed these places are revered.

Little Basin in the Santa Cruz Mountains is a great example of the reclamation of important outdoor space. Little Basin is acreage in the middle of pristine redwood forest. This serene parcel was once owned and managed by Hewlett-Packard as an outdoor corporate retreat facility. During that time, it was manicured and converted into a contemporary campsite with all of the finest amenities including: a tennis court, baseball field, outdoor kitchen with a meat locker, an indoor as well as outdoor food prep areas, showers and amphitheatres! Due to a number of economic downturns, the facility was abandoned and eventually taken over by the State of California.

In 2011 the 1,000 Hummingbirds, a women's council I helped to create, held their annual gathering at this location. As it turns out, Little Basin had a new caretaker, an organization that ran youth and family outdoor educational activities. The Hummingbirds would be the first group to camp on the land in decades, and likely the first group to lay a whole week of prayers on the land for generations. While there we witnessed Earth in all of her glory. She was literally reclaiming the once manicured space in the most elegant ways. The roads were cracking and the tennis court was disintegrating, allowing grass to come through. Trees which were meticulously trimmed were growing back to their natural state. According to the Naturalist and the Facility Manager they assured us that

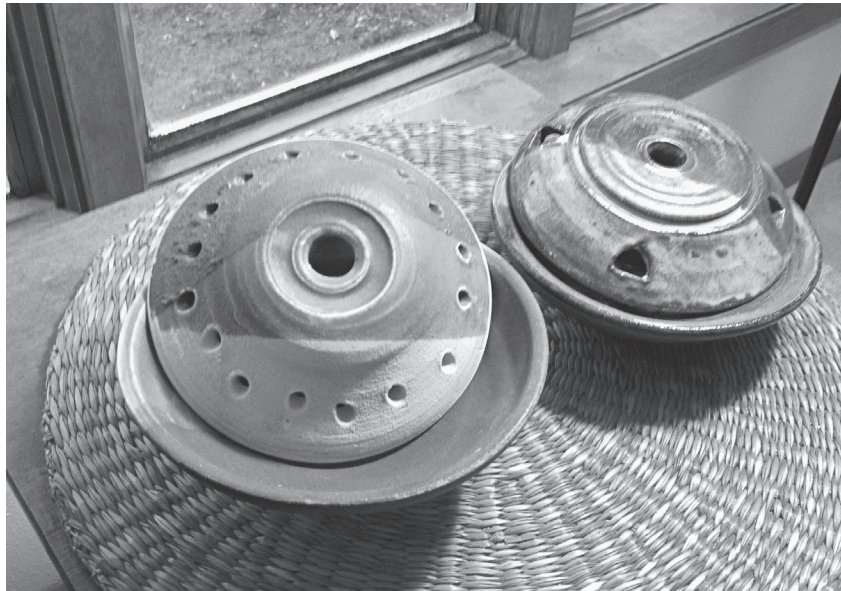
the long-term plan was focused on land rehabilitation. It is hard to explain, but over 100 women attended this particular retreat and each one testified that they felt and appreciated the new strong energy.

We must not forget the importance of song and dance. I don't know how many people realize it, but this is documented and is evident in many cultures. It just lifts your spirit and engages communities. Song and dance does not have to be "ancient" or "traditional" to be Ohlone or Native. The fact is that today's creators of Spirit are alive; dances and songs are meant to reflect contemporary environments. People like to argue about authenticity, but the fact is that if culture is to remain intact, it must be alive. Allowing youth to create new songs, dances, art forms, and means of communicating their identity will only keep the Ohlone spirit alive. Spiritual singers and dancers may agree that when one is truly expressing one's self and encouraging community engagement through song and dance, the Spirit cannot help but soar; there is no pretense for the energy I am referring to. It is so incredibly important for children to get that feeling.

The dancers represent the flow of energy that surrounds them. When you're dancing, and your heart is in the dance, you actually become part of that energy that's flowing. This energy will change, depending upon the dedication for a particular dance. If you were in the Bear Ceremony, for example, and are part of that dance, then you feel the energy carried by the bear dancers. It is easy to become consumed by the experience of dance; it is said to be healing. It cannot be healing, however, unless the dancers' intentions are good.

Singers also are important to the dance. The role of the singer is to bring life to the circle, and to the instruments they might be incorporating (clappers, rattles, drums, etc.) It's not just the dancing and singing, but the musical instruments can be used to control the flow of energy. The goal is not that any one person stands out, instead if everyone works in sync, the community will feel like they too fit in. Before they begin, dancers and singers are expected to pray for good things to happen for others. It is important to remain centered so that the group is working together to manage the energy each community member might need. Sometimes when you finish dancing you are absolutely drained; you know you gave all of your best energy for the people who need it most.

When we talk about protecting ceremony, part of it is to protect the integrity and intent of the ceremony so the foundation does not change. It is a demonstration of respect for the ancestors, and specifically an honoring for those who survived



the impact of the Catholic mission system. Good things happen with every ceremony. It's absolutely true when people say they saw or felt something special during a ceremony, and that ceremony can heal and guide. When people new to ceremony go out into modern society and share their experience, sometimes others do not understand or create doubt, essentially discrediting ceremony.

I believe we all have the ability to communicate on different levels in this world, but it's easy to get distracted by others and doubt your own experience. For example, one might experience a dream where an "actor" in the dream shares a strong message. You wake up and tell somebody and are told, "It's just a dream." What if it wasn't really *just* a dream? What if that message was really important? What if that message was meant for you to pass on to another person and that exchange never took place? When somebody tells me about their dream experience, I don't say much. I don't judge or question others.

I have had a chance to teach others about ceremony and the respect that goes along with creating and bringing ceremonial elements to life. For example, while a child may be able to create a shell necklace, there is so much more to the creation of something for ceremony. It is important to teach young people how to create items in a ceremonial way, and then to protect them in a similar fashion. If proper protocol is met, prayer experiences are sure to be incredible. To this extent, my hope is that not only have I been able to connect with the past personally, but I have also begun to teach others to do the same.

Over the last fifteen years I have been talking to people

Samples of containers for burning medicine. Normally, Ohlone and other tribes burn medicine in abalone shells. My family members have large shells for this purpose. For many reasons, including over-harvesting of abalone, the impact of coastal pollution, and cultural exploitation of the medicine ways, I created these vessels. They are meant to be shared with anyone who needs aroma for healing. Photo by Charlene Eigen-Vasquez.

from other tribes regarding their work about the preservation of culture and language. I am always happy to learn, happy to share. Perhaps it is through these exchanges that Native youth across the country will gain the internal strength needed in order to surpass society's expectations for them. Over time, I have had a chance to see some of my ideas implemented. Successful projects have taken a holistic approach to family exploration and identity. Through photography and drawing, youth have been asked to first document their families and then share their work with grandparents. The real goal is simply to strike a conversation between the two generations about their environment, and perhaps family history. While youth have been asked to record voices, due to lack of equipment that component has not been as successful. At the end of these assignments general feedback was usually pretty positive, being a learning experience and a bonding experience at the same time.

Eventually I attended San Jose State University and earned a Master's Degree studying holistic educational practices. Indigenous-based teachings can be useful in many settings.²

Bridge-building seems to be my role. When I was younger, people spoke of "giving away the medicine" in terms of how we shared culture and tradition. I truly understood that this idea had been tied to the near cultural genocide from the past. But I would submit that we live in a world that is sometimes more understanding. While it is still imperative to protect sacred ways, I have witnessed the coming together of diverse communities for the purpose of protecting the sacred -- the sacred being land, water and the Spirit of all ancestors.

I can offer many examples of the meeting of the minds. For example, I met a naturalist several years ago at one of my favorite prayer places. He was about to retire and I was new to this space. Upon first meeting, he stated, "You are Ohlone. I

knew it!" I had been looking for a particular place which had been shared with me only through story. I knew I was close, and I had a feeling he might be my guide. He asked me a number of questions. I didn't know it at the time, but they were essentially test questions to see if I knew who I was and what I was truly seeking. I must have passed the test because then he started telling me about the elders who had passed through during his tenure. He shared how they had passed on some stories about the land and Ohlone culture. At the end of our conversation he talked about the weight he carried. He was about to retire, leaving the place he had protected for decades. He was waiting to find the right person to share these stories with. He directly stated that he knew the information he carried belonged to Ohlone people. I believe that some people are caretakers of the stories, and whether they know it or not, they walk in Spirit. While he was not Native, he was definitely a caretaker of the stories. He knew it wasn't time to release the stories he had heard, and, as we spoke, he came to understand that the elders never would have shared the stories with him if had not earned their trust. I have come across this type of experience again and again. I am truly grateful to those who understand and truly respect the dissemination of information. Being a caretaker of knowledge, respecting the wishes of others to hold information sacred is not always truly understood. Bridges between generations can be created with a strong understanding for the responsibility of being a caretaker and keeper of knowledge.



Charlene Eigen-Vasquez (fka Charlene Sul) is represented in the California History Center's most recent exhibit "Ohlone Elders and Youth Speak: Restoring a California Legacy" by her portrait (Ruth Morgan, photographer), an excerpt from her oral history with Janet Clinger, and by four quilts in the series *CROSSING PATHS – Ohlone Mother, Turtle Mother, Spirit Connection*. This oral history appears in its entirety, along with 18 other oral histories, in the compilation *Ohlone Elders and Youth Speak: Restoring a California Legacy*, produced by Costanoan Indian Research, Inc. and Community Works West, Ann Marie Sayers Project Director, Ruth Morgan, Photographer, and Janet Clinger, Oral Historian.

² For example, when I first arrived in Minnesota where I currently live, I volunteered to take on an assignment for a non-profit called Hands Across the World. Initially, I was asked to teach art to refugee students. Essentially, I turned this class into an English language and cultural immersion experience for students. A new life in America was more complicated than they had planned. Most students were from Somalia and Sudan. In addition, there were students from Asia and other students from Latin America. I knew the concept of "art" was useless to some of the students, but sewing would be helpful. Students were truly interested in learning English and understanding their new community, so I used art as the vehicle to create discussion and invite exploration.

Around this same time I heard stories about incidents based on racial prejudice around the state of Minnesota. In response Minnesota mandated that college students should complete a course addressing racial issues. This requirement affected all college students earning a two year degree or higher. The course could be offered through a number of areas of study, but the goal was to provide forums for discussions. In learning about this opportunity to offer students a new perspective on American history I submitted a few applications and was given the opportunity to teach Ethnic Studies at St. Cloud State University. In accepting this opportunity, I would go from hearing the stories of new immigrants being impacted by racial intolerance, to working with traditional students who often grew up witnessing and sometimes perpetrating prejudice. Today my role in the area of cultural revitalization has truly changed. While I will always be an advocate for Ohlone, my hope is to teach truth and understanding to young people from all walks of life; the long-term impact will be a more thoughtful society, or at the least, honest discussions about race, historical migrations and injustices will provide an alternative perspective in regards to what students have been taught about American history.

At the Center

New faces at CHC

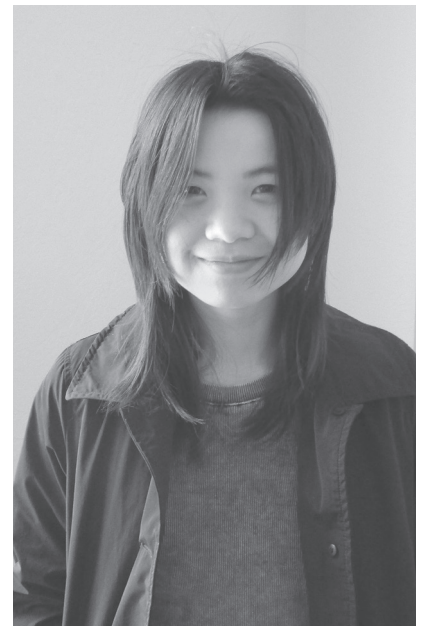


Pamela Carter, a De Anza College student with a strong interest in history, is now a regular volunteer at the CHC. She enjoys travel and has visited Israel and spent time in Latin America carrying out mission work for her church.

Pamela Carter started volunteering with the California History Center fall quarter 2017 when her world history instructor, Mylinh Pham, offered extra credit to students who visited the exhibit “Ohlone Elders and Youth Speak” featured at the history center fall and winter quarters. Pamela discovered the library and archives and its volunteer opportunities. She says the rest “is history!”



Anson Tong, CHC intern and sophomore at Saratoga High School, is working on a presentation of the Korematsu case for high school students. Fred Korematsu resisted the WWII incarceration of Japanese Americans, taking his case through the courts of the United States.



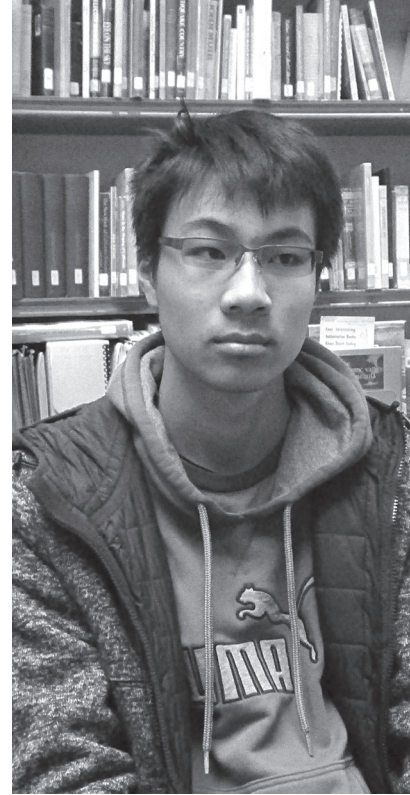
Judy Dang, a recent graduate of New York University, is coordinating the center’s collaborative project with two community organizations, the Japanese American Museum of San Jose and J-Town Community TV. Funded by the California Civil Liberties Public Education Program of the California State Library, the project brings together local communities by sharing stories in the advocacy of civil liberties.

At the Center

New faces at CHC *continued*

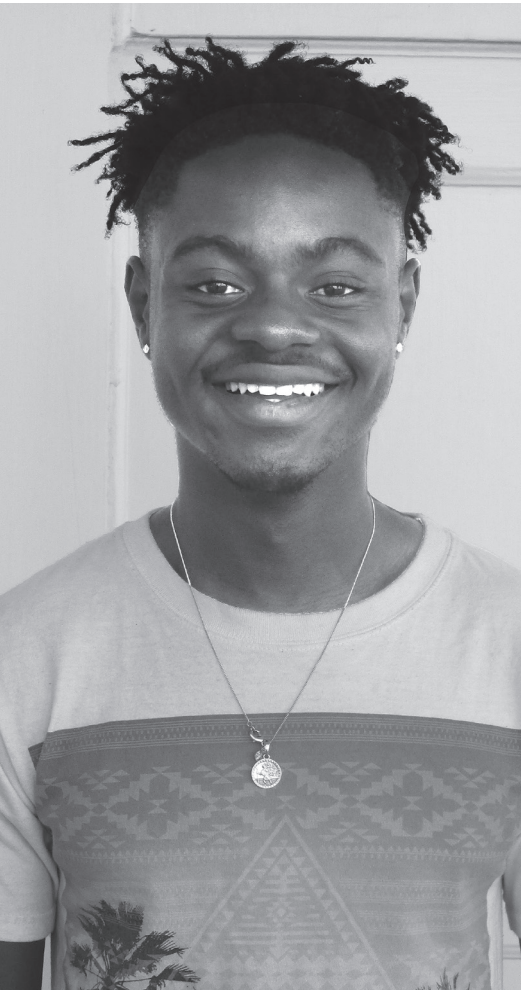


Peter Karzmark, a new volunteer, Peter recently retired from a professorship in the Neurology Department at Stanford University Medical Center, where he worked as a clinical neuropsychologist for 30 years. This has allowed him to pursue his real interest, California history. Last year he and his wife viewed their 900th California State Historic Landmark. They agreed to stop at 900 by mutual consent, leaving the last 150 for the next life. He is currently working on a photography project in the California gold country. This is a “then and now” photo-essay of structures in the gold rush towns along Highway 49, using the Division of Mines Guidebook for Highway 49 as the “then,” and taking his own photos for the “now.” At the History Center he has completed archiving the photographs in the CR Fuller scrapbook, which includes over a thousand photographs from throughout Northern California at the beginning of the 20th century.



Jonathan Chen, CHC intern and a junior at Monta Vista High School, researches the Ocean Shore Railway, which brought people from San Francisco and Santa Cruz to San Mateo coastline destinations in the early 20th century.





Kevin Amoussou is working with Azha Simmons on research for an exhibit comparing the local African American civil rights movement in the 1960s and in the current #Black Lives Matter era.

Niji Rowan is utilizing skill and artistry in crafting to create truth and beauty in the promotion of programs at the history center and of the Japanese American Museum of San Jose.



Trizha Aquino is a Humanities Mellon Scholar intern and history major at Foothill College. Trizha is conducting research and planning work for the center's upcoming summer class on civil liberties for high school students through the campus's De Anza College Academy, summer youth enrichment program.

At the Center

In Memoriam

Avid student, devoted volunteer, and steadfast friend of the California History Center Trudy Frank passed away Friday, January 19, 2018. An association that began 35 years ago leaves a legacy with her CHC family of caring, of integrity, of dependability, and of positivity.

Trudy's life story began in Chemnitz, Germany. Leaving Germany in early childhood for health reasons she journeyed with family to the Midwest of the United States. She grew up as a country girl and a city girl, spending summers assisting at her parents' resort on Shell Lake in Wisconsin and winters in Chicago, Illinois. After the end of World War II and as a young adult working in various business settings, Trudy became a U.S. citizen. In the mid-1950s she joined the California-bound population, eventually settling in Sunnyvale and raising four children. Trudy only recently officially retired from the paid work force.

California and local history classes and field trips drew Trudy to the center initially and memories from those experiences stayed with her, taking the form of stories shared for years afterward. Trudy made friendships with history center instructors like Chatham Forbes and Betty Hirsch, and recalled memorable trips with Brian Smith - lunch on the road with Brian often involved fine china and candlesticks - Lee van Fossen and Bruce MacGregor, among many others.

As CHC member and volunteer, Trudy seldom missed a history center event but especially enjoyed opportunities to help out...De Anza Day, for instance, with its book sale and throngs of visitors. Most every Wednesday for over 3 decades, Trudy helped create exhibits, served as docent, and helped with library tasks. Her accounting skills and wisdom were legend and helped guide us through many challenging fis-



Trudy loved her family, opera, travel, and the Carter Brothers rail cars that are preserved at Ardenwood Historic Farm in Fremont where she also volunteered with the Society for the Preservation of Carter Railroad Resources. The Trudy Frank Railyard honoring her attests to her work and persistence in preserving these marvelous historic artifacts.

cal circumstances. She happily joined our Wednesday lunch and (recently) quarterly movie sessions. Trudy's birthday occurred in rhubarb season and on the Wednesday closest to that date each year, she would arrive bearing a rhubarb pie which staff and volunteers would share. She was always ready with good conversation, advice, a sympathetic ear, or simply a supportive word and hug. Trudy saw instructors, directors, staff, students, and fellow volunteers come and go, budgets increase and decrease, membership ebb, class offerings diminish, but she always believed in the CHC's mission and its potential and she remained with us as part of the center's strength and energy.

MEMBERSHIP *New and renewing members*

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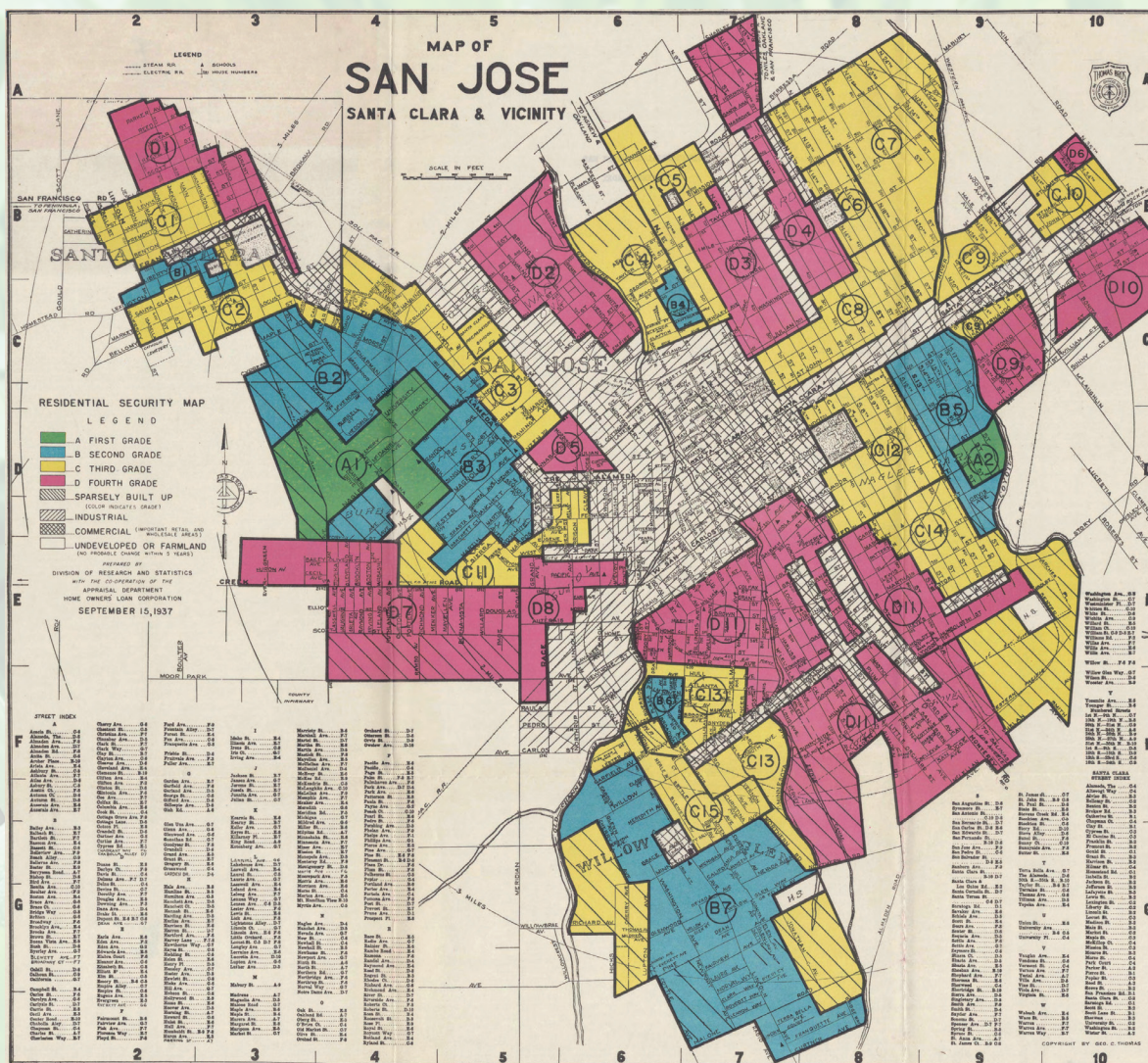
Diana Argabrite
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Purba Fernandez
David Howard-Pitney
Helen Pang
Diane Pierce
George Robles
Kristin Skager
Rowena Tomaneng

SPRING 2018 CLASS

California History Center State and Regional History Academic Program

The following course will be offered Spring quarter 2018 through the California History Center. Please see the History class listing section of the Schedule of Classes for additional information www.deanza.fhda.edu/schedule or call the center at (408) 864-8986.

Some classes may have started by the time you receive this issue. We apologize for the magazine's delay.



Home Owners' Loan Corporation (HOLC) Risk Map of San Jose, Santa Clara and Vicinity, 1937. Maps for over 200 U.S. cities indicated low to high risk for moneylenders based on race, ethnicity and other factors. HOLC was a government-sponsored corporation created as part of the New Deal.

Housing Issues and Crises in the Bay Area

Course: HIST-55C

Units: 2

Instructor: Nannette Regua

reguanannette@fhda.edu

San Francisco Bay Area residents have experienced a history of racial and economic segregation that denied their access to decent and fair housing. In the early twentieth century, neighborhood covenants forbade property owners from renting or selling homes to people of ethnic minority groups. In the twenty-first century, many residents face homelessness and live in encampments under highways and in other makeshift locations. Affordable and decent living options continue to be out of reach for many Bay Area residents.

LECTURES: Thursdays, 4/19 and 4/26, 6:30-10:20 pm, CHC

FIELD STUDIES: Saturdays, 4/21 and 4/28, 9 am – 5:30 pm

