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A CLASS APART A NIGHT TOGETHER

House Party Toolkit

**CAMINO
BLUFF**
PRODUCTIONS, INC.

**AMERICAN
EXPERIENCE** 

[ITVS]

LATINO
PUBLIC
BROADCASTING 

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A CLASS APART A NIGHT TOGETHER

Photo credits

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Top middle, bottom right,
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Introduction

About the Film

A Class Apart is a new documentary by award-winning filmmakers Carlos Sandoval (*Farmingville*) and Peter Miller (*Sacco and Vanzetti, Passin' It On*). The first major film to bring to life the heroic post-World War II struggles of Mexican Americans against the Jim Crow-style discrimination targeted against them, *A Class Apart* is built around the landmark 1951 legal case *Hernandez v. Texas*, in which an underdog band of Mexican Americans from Texas bring a case all the way to the Supreme Court - and win. The film begins with a murder in a gritty small-town cantina and follows the legal journey of the *Hernandez* lawyers through the Texas courts and ultimately to the United States Supreme Court. We see them forge a daring legal strategy that called their own racial identities into question by arguing that Mexican Americans were "a class apart" who did not neatly fit into a legal structure that only recognized blacks and whites. A grassroots national movement supports the legal efforts, with tiny contributions sent by Latinos from around the country paying for the *Hernandez* case to go forward. The film dramatically interweaves the story of its central characters - activists and lawyers, returning veterans and ordinary citizens, murderer and victim- within the broader history of Latinos in America during a time of extraordinary change.

About *A Class Apart*, A Night Together Events

A Class Apart raises important questions about inclusion, American identity, and equality before the law that are as resonant today as ever. There is no better way to celebrate this moment in our nation's history than to share it. On and after the night of the broadcast premiere (February 23, 2009 on PBS's AMERICAN EXPERIENCE – check local listings), groups throughout the country will host house parties and community screenings of *A Class Apart* in community centers, places of worship, cultural institutions, civic groups, campuses, and homes across America, guided by this discussion and planning toolkit.

The *A Class Apart*, A Night Together Project is brought to you by Active Voice and Camino Bluff Productions, in partnership with:

- The American Constitution Society
- The American G.I. Forum
- The Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities
- The Hispanic National Bar Association
- Latino Public Broadcasting
- The League of United Latin American Citizens
- The Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund

A CONVERSATION WITH THE *A CLASS APART* FILMMAKERS

Carlos Sandoval: I discovered the story of the *Hernandez* case oddly enough on the subway one day while reading a *New York Times* editorial, and it was on the 50th anniversary of the case. I had gone to law school, I'd never heard about this case. It surprised me that this case existed. I decided to delve further into it, and once I found out about the case and the fact that it covered not only issues of discrimination and the expansion of the Fourteenth amendment but it also allowed for a way to explore the issues of identity that surround being a Latino... I thought this was a case that was really, really captivating.

Peter Miller: I'm always interested in stories from American history, and in particular stories about people who have been left out of the traditional tellings of our history. When Carlos approached me about this film and said he was making a film about the Mexican American civil rights movement of the post-World War II era, I thought, "I don't know anything about that, this is a civil rights movement I should know about." So naturally, I was intrigued. And then when I got to learn a little bit more about the story, I realized that not only was this a very important story that the public needed to know about, but it also was a fantastic subject for a film with really compelling characters and with a wonderful dramatic storyline.

Carlos: I think that one of the greatest challenges of telling a story like this, a story that is in the past but not so distant past, and that comes out of a community that itself has not been documented for a variety of reasons, is trying to piece together that story.

Peter: Indeed, when we started working on this project, there [was] very little historical literature about this and we really were on our own in many ways, digging through the archives, talking to witnesses of this history, and trying to figure out what happened and putting together this elaborate puzzle.

Carlos: The *Hernandez vs. Texas* case is one that has not been generally documented by historians. This early Mexican American civil rights movement is only now coming into its own.

Photo credit: Jordi Valdés



Carlos Sandoval (Producer/Director) is the co-producer/director of the highly acclaimed documentary *Farmingville*. A lawyer and writer, Sandoval's work has appeared in the *New York Times* and other publications. Of Mexican-American and Puerto Rican descent, Sandoval worked on immigration and refugee affairs as a member of the U.S. delegation to the United Nations, and as a program officer for The Century Foundation. He has participated on several public television funding and programming panels as well as on film festival juries and panels.



Peter Miller (Producer/Director) has worked on dozens of historical and social issue documentaries, including as a producer of several of Ken Burns's films and of Barbara Kopple's Academy Award-winning *American Dream*. His own work includes the critically acclaimed documentary *Sacco and Vanzetti*, *The Internationale* (Oscar short-list), and *Passin' It On* (shown on P.O.V., winner of over twenty film festival prizes).

Planning Your House Party

BASIC STEPS

Whether you're watching *A Class Apart* on PBS's AMERICAN EXPERIENCE or using a DVD, here are some tips for hosting a great house party screening:

What do you want to accomplish?

Are you interested in the civil rights movement? Do you want people to get involved in community activism? Do you feel strongly about what happened to Latinos before, during and after World War II? Do you love documentaries? Having a sense of what you'd like people to take away from their evening with *A Class Apart* will help you plan and set a good tone.

Pick a date and time

If you're watching a broadcast, double check to confirm when your local PBS station is carrying it. (You can find your local station and search for broadcast times on PBS's website.¹) If you're using a DVD, pick a date and time to bring people together to watch the film, and make sure to leave ample time for discussion. (DVDs are available for purchase on the AMERICAN EXPERIENCE website.²)

Where will you screen?

Make sure people can be comfortably seated. If you're screening at your house, or in a dorm, borrow enough chairs so everyone has one. Try sitting in them to make sure everyone can see the screen!

Invite and inform your friends

Use the language from this kit in your invitation email, so people will know what to expect. A note that says, "I'm asking a few folks to come by, share food, and watch and discuss *A Class Apart* with me... The film is about..." is a nice way to encourage an informal but thoughtful event.

Test the equipment in advance

Don't get caught with a room full of expectant viewers with only a blank screen to look at! Test your TV channel or your DVD player (with the *A Class Apart* DVD you'll be using for your screening) days before your event, and then again the day of. (You never know – maybe a friend adjusted something and all you can see now is the "brightness" meter.)

Make the most of it!

A house party is a great opportunity to make friends, so provide snacks and drinks, make the event a potluck, or ask your friends to bring along guests. After seeing *A Class Apart*, people may want to learn and do more, you might want to provide a few key facts (from this guide or elsewhere) to help people put the film in context, or look up local civil rights, Latino and other groups to find out ways people can get involved (see What You Can Do for some ideas).

1. Online at <http://www.pbs.org/tvschedules/>.
2. Online at <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/class/>.

Have a Spanish-Speaking Crowd?

The *A Class Apart* DVD will be available with a Spanish audio track and subtitles. Host your event in Spanish, or use the English language track and Spanish subtitles to bring in a mixed crowd.

AT YOUR HOUSE PARTY

Introduce Yourself and Everyone Else

This sounds obvious, but if you have people over who are new to your group, take a few minutes to introduce yourself and go around the room so that everyone can as well.

If you like, you can also say a few words about why you've invited them, and that you hope they'll hang out afterwards to hear what people have to say. If you are hoping to get people involved in the issues, you can frame that for them as well before you screen.

Talking About *A Class Apart*

It's always a good idea to let people decompress a bit right after the film. Before launching into a strategic discussion or informative presentation, we like to start by asking if people have any personal responses to what they've just seen. (See Facilitating a Dialogue for more ideas.)

Take the Next Step

While you have everyone together, think about ways you can get involved in the issues the film raises. Volunteering with a local Latino organization, writing letters to elected officials about upcoming legislation, and hosting a community screening of *A Class Apart* are just a few ideas.

PLANNING CHECKLIST

Before Your Screening

- Check your local PBS station for a broadcast time, or buy a DVD of the film. Figure out an exact time and place for your screening.
- Get the word out! Send out an email about your event as soon as possible.
- Test your equipment (TV channel or DVD and player) in advance to make sure there aren't any glitches.
- Print out information from this guide or check with local organizations about ongoing work to help your audience members put *A Class Apart* in context.

The Day of Your Screening

- Confirm your set-up – equipment working? Enough seats for everyone? Snacks?
- Distribute information from this guide or local organizations.
- Discuss ways everyone can get involved with ongoing civil rights issues.
- Let everyone know that they can learn more about the film on the AMERICAN EXPERIENCE *A Class Apart* website³ and that they are welcome to use this guide to host house parties of their own!

3. Online at <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/class/>.

**CONNECT
With
A Class Apart
Online!**

- **Connect with other *A Class Apart* fans on the Facebook!**
Just log into www.Facebook.com and search for "A Class Apart," or visit <http://www.facebook.com/pages/A-Class-Apart/38365902140>.
- **Take pictures at your house party and share them online!**
Send photos from your event to AClassApartTheMovie@gmail.com, and we'll post them on our Facebook page!

Facilitating Discussions of *A Class Apart*

A CLASS APART
A NIGHT TOGETHER

BASIC TIPS

Facilitating a discussion about *A Class Apart* is easy! Your job will be to guide an interesting conversation where everyone participates. Encourage people to share their reactions, provide some background information, and help the group think about ways they can continue to engage with the issues. If you have a bigger group, consider working with a co-facilitator or breaking out into smaller groups to keep the conversation lively. (If you do this, make sure to go over these guidelines with any co-facilitators *before* your screening, so they'll be ready on the day of the event.)

- **Take a Minute to Reflect.** Right after you screen *A Class Apart*, ask people how they felt about it. Let people speak from their hearts before you move the conversation into the discussion questions. *A Class Apart* is a powerful experience, and sharing it on an emotional level is one great reason to host a house party.
- **Explain the purpose of the conversation.** To keep the group on track, clearly articulate your goals for the dialogue at its outset. Why did you bring everyone together?
- **Set ground rules.** Encourage people to participate, actively listen, and leave enough time for others to speak.
- **Guide the discussion, but don't micromanage!** Pick a few of the discussion questions you think your audience will find most interesting to get the conversation started, but be flexible. People will bring in unique ideas and experiences, so let the conversation flow!
- **Provide some context.** You needn't be an expert, but most audiences will enjoy hearing a bit of context about the film. This guide includes key facts you may want to share.
- **Encourage everyone to participate!** Factors like age, ethnicity, socioeconomic class, education level, and familiarity with a topic can all influence how comfortable people feel about sharing their reactions, especially if people don't know each other already. Keep this in mind and actively encourage everyone to participate! Emphasize that everyone brings something unique to the table, and provide a variety of ways for people to share. For example, you might ask everyone to write down a sentence about their initial reaction and have a couple of people read their thoughts aloud before starting the conversation.
- **Brainstorm ways people can continue to engage with the issues.** What opportunities are there in your community for people to get involved? Come prepared with suggestions for ways to take action and let everyone contribute ideas.
- **Thank everyone!** Thank your guests for participating, and ask them to share closing thoughts.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

General

- What did you learn from this film, and how might you act on what you learned?
- Imagine that you could send a copy of this film to anyone in the world. To whom would you send it and what would you say to them about why you want them to see it?
- Describe a moment in the film that you found particularly inspiring or disturbing. What was it about that scene that moved you?

The Significance of Historical Memory

- Did you already know about the history recounted in the film? What is the impact of people and communities knowing or not knowing this history? Who benefits and who is harmed by having this history remain invisible? In particular, how might greater knowledge of the *Hernandez* case influence the way Latinos see themselves today?
- What role does the acknowledgment of historical wrongs play in a nation's ability to heal from long-term discrimination? In your view, what form should that acknowledgment take?
- In the film, we hear a radio interview in Spanish with García, an example of local media coverage of the case. Elsewhere the case received little coverage. How does media coverage influence the impact of an event like a Supreme Court civil rights victory? Do you know of current struggles for justice that are not reported in mainstream media outlets? What are the effects of their exclusion?

Citizenship and Constitutional Protections

- What is the significance of the film's title, "A Class Apart"?
- The film observes that, "Legal citizenship for Mexican Americans was one thing; equal treatment turned out to be quite another." In what ways can laws guarantee equality? In what ways are laws limited in their ability to guarantee equality? In addition to changing laws, what kinds of things need to happen to eliminate discrimination when it is infused in the social code (not just the legal code) of a community or country?
- For decades, Americans have debated the value of diversity and whether or not it should be actively promoted by law (e.g., in affirmative action policies). What do you learn about the value of diversity from the questions about Mexican Americans that members of the Supreme Court asked Gus García and Carlos Cadena?
- Why did attorneys representing the State of Texas support the right of the court to exclude Mexican Americans from juries? How would inclusion of Mexican Americans, especially in trials of white defendants, challenge the social order? How would you define or describe a "jury of your peers"? Would it have to include people of your race, ethnicity, socioeconomic class, age, or gender? Why or why not? Why is judgment by a jury of peers important enough to American democracy that it is guaranteed by law?
- What do you learn from the film about the significance of the Supreme Court? Why did the *Hernandez* lawyers feel the need to have their case heard before the Supreme Court? How does the Supreme Court differ from local, state, and lower federal courts, both in terms of jurisdiction and in terms of who serves and how they come to hold their positions?
- In what ways did the victory in *Hernandez v. Texas* benefit Mexican Americans? How did the decision benefit all Americans?

Prejudice and Discrimination

- Prior to viewing the film, what images came to mind when you heard the term Mexican American? What were the sources of your ideas about Mexican Americans? In what ways did the film confirm or challenge your ideas?
- Given the history of discrimination against Mexican Americans because they were not perceived as white, how is it that America came to define Mexican Americans as legally white? What role did racism play in the designation of Mexican Americans as white?
- How was the experience of Mexican Americans similar to and different from the experiences of African Americans?
- Thousands of Mexicans came to be American citizens as the result of a military conflict in 1848 in which the United States took control of former Mexican territory. What did you learn from the film about the integration of a resident population into a new nation? In what ways does this history impact your view of today's immigration debates? What lessons does the experience of these early Mexican Americans hold for people in the world today who are displaced by war or forced to live under a new government? What lessons does it hold for today's Latino Americans?
- Describe the discrimination faced by Mexican Americans prior to the *Hernandez* decision. For those in the room who were part of that community, what discrimination did you experience or witness? What are the long-term effects of pervasive discrimination such as being denied jobs, being prohibited from buying homes in good neighborhoods, not having quality schools, or the existence of "sundown towns"? How have those effects filtered through subsequent generations, even after the most blatant discrimination has ended? Is there discrimination against Latinos today? If so, how has it changed?
- Veteran Ramiro Casso says, "We went to fight to give people liberty and to give them their civil rights, and then we come back home and we find that it is the same way as we left it." What role did WWII veterans play in making demands for civil rights? How did their military service change perceptions and expectations? Why was the 1949 denial of a memorial service to Pvt. Felix Longoria a pivotal moment? What is the current relationship between military service and struggles against discrimination?

Leadership and Change

- Would you call Gus García a hero? Why or why not? What lessons about him would you teach in schools? Would they include his battles with alcohol and mental illness? Why or why not? What are the benefits and drawbacks from the desire for perfection in our heroes?
- History often recounts only the stories of leaders or famous people. In what specific ways did ordinary people make possible the victory achieved by the lawyers? What did you learn about community involvement in change from the experience of people like Pauline Rosa or those who contributed their pocket change?
- How do you think the Supreme Court victory influenced the way that Mexican Americans saw themselves? How did it influence the community's ability to fight for and claim their civil rights?

A Class Apart In Context

THE IMPACT OF THE *HERNANDEZ V. TEXAS* CASE

When the Supreme Court ruled in 1954 that Mexican Americans were a class of persons deserving equal protection of the law under the U.S. Constitution, it laid the groundwork for many important rulings over the next 55 years. As of January 2009, over 602 court decisions and 38 Supreme Court decisions included citations to the *Hernandez* case.⁴

4. Source: LexisNexis.com, a legal database online at <http://www.lexisnexis.com/>.

Recently, the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund relied on the *Hernandez* case in an important lawsuit protecting the rights of Latino children and families. *Santamaria v. Dallas Independent School District* (2006) charged the Dallas ISD and an elementary school principal for segregating Latino children from white children in classrooms. MALDEF successfully argued that under *Hernandez*, Latino children had a right to be treated on equal terms as white children, and the Court ordered the school to desegregate its classrooms.

Below is a brief timeline of some important cases that have relied on the *Hernandez v. Texas* case.

- May 1954** *Hernandez v. Texas*: Supreme Court holds that the exclusion of Mexican Americans from juries violates the equal protection rights of Mexican Americans.
- June 1973** *White v. Regester*: Supreme Court upholds a district court's decision to dismantle voting districts in Texas that were based on past discrimination against Latino and African American voters.
- June 1973** *Keyes v. Denver School District No. 1*: Supreme Court holds that because Latinos and African Americans suffer from similar discrimination, the combined number of black and Latino children relative to whites should be considered for purposes of determining whether a school is segregated.
- June 1978** *Teamsters v. United States*: Supreme Court affirms decision in favor of Latino and African American employees who were channeled into lower paying, less desirable jobs than those reserved for white employees.
- Feb 2003** *Miller-El v. Cockrell*: Supreme Court reverses murder conviction of an African American male in part on the basis of historical, systemic exclusion of African American jurors by the Dallas prosecutor's office.
- Nov 2006** *Santamaria v. Dallas ISD*: Federal district court stops classroom segregation of Latino students from white students, which had been maintained on the false pretense that the Latino students were limited in English proficiency.
- Sept 2008** *Northwest Austin MUD No. 1 v. Mukasey*: Federal district court panel concludes that the 15th Amendment gave Congress authority to extend voting rights protections to language minority persons, including Spanish-speaking Latinos.

LATINOS IN THE UNITED STATES TODAY

A note on language:

"Hispanic" is derived from the Spanish word hispano, and was first used in the U.S. census in 1980. Though often applied to all Spanish-speakers, it more specifically refers to those with cultural heritages tied to Spain. In contrast, "Latino" comes from the word latinoamericano, and describes people of Latin American origin. It is the preferred term for many in the U.S. today, though Hispanic and Latino are often used interchangeably.⁵ Here, we've used the terms used by our sources.

Latinos in the United States have come a long way since the 1950s, but inequalities persist. Some fast facts:

- **Hispanics represent a disproportionate percentage of people living in poverty.** As of 2006, one of every four people living in poverty in the U.S. was of Hispanic origin,⁶ though Hispanics accounted for less than 15% of the total population (excluding Puerto Rico).⁷
- **Most Latino students face discrimination.** Eighty-four percent of Hispanic students reported in 2007 that discrimination is a problem in schools, up from 38 percent in 2002.⁸
- **Hispanics are severely underrepresented in America's board rooms.** Only 1% of executive officer positions were filled by Hispanics in 2006.⁹
- **There are relatively few Hispanics in the legal profession.** In 2004, just 3.3% of all lawyers and 5.7% of all law students were Hispanic.¹⁰
- **There are very few Latino judges.** Only 2.8% of all judges serving in state courts are Latino,¹¹ and to date, the Supreme Court of the United States has never had a Latino Justice. (In fact, of 110 Justices in the Supreme Court's history, 108 have been white males.)
- **Hate crimes against Latinos continue to rise.** In 2008, the F.B.I released statistics showing that hate crimes against Latinos had gone up a staggering forty percent from 2003-2007.¹²

Despite these ongoing challenges, the power of Latinos in the U.S. is significant and growing:

- **Nearly 75% of Hispanics are U.S. citizens.** As of 2004, nearly three-quarters of Hispanics residing in the U.S. were either native or naturalized citizens.¹³ And, the majority of Latinos in the United States are native-born.¹⁴
- **Hispanics are the largest minority.** According to the most recent U.S. Census Bureau data, Hispanics make up more than 15% of the U.S. population, and are the fastest-growing minority group.¹⁵
- **The number of Latino elected officials is low, but steadily increasing.** Although there are only 31 Hispanics serving in the 111th U.S. Congress (5.7% of all members),¹⁶ the number of Latino elected officials overall increased by 37% from 1996-2007.¹⁷ At the highest levels of office, there was an even greater increase in that period, with the number of Latinos serving in federal and state legislatures growing by more than 50%.¹⁸
- **Latinos are a significant voting constituency in the U.S.** In the 2008 election, 9% of the electorate was Latino, up from 8% in 2004.¹⁹

5. Want to learn more? Try reading *Are Chicanos The Same As Mexicans?* (online at <http://www.azteca.net/aztec/chicano.html>) or *Hispanic vs. Latino: ¿Cuál es la diferencia?* (online at <http://borderbeat.net/story/show/128>).

6. "Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States 2006," Table 3, p.12. U.S. Bureau of the Census. Online at <http://www.census.gov/prod/2007pubs/p60-233.pdf>

7. "U.S. Hispanic Population Surpasses 45 Million, Now 15 Percent of Total," U.S. Bureau of the Census, May 1, 2008. Online at <http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/population/011910.html>.

8. Fry, Richard and Felisa Gonzales. *One-in-Five and Growing Fast: A Profile of Hispanic Public School Students*. Washington, DC: Pew Hispanic Center, August 2008.

9. The Alliance for Board Diversity. 2008. *Women and Minorities on Fortune 100 Boards*. Online at http://www.hacr.org/docLib/20080131_ABDfinalreport12208.pdf.

10. *Miles to Go: Progress of Minorities in the Legal Profession (Executive Summary)*. American Bar Association Commission on Racial and Ethnic Diversity in the Profession. 2005. Online at <https://www.abanet.org/abastore/index.cfm?fm=Product.AddToCart&pid=4520014>.

11. *National Database on Judicial Diversity of State Courts: National Report*. American Bar Association. Online at <http://www.abanet.org/judind/diversity/national.html>.

12. Potok, Mark. "Anti-Latino Hate Crimes Rise for Fourth Year In A Row," October 29, 2008. Online at <http://www.splcenter.org/blog/2008/10/29/anti-latino-hate-crimes-rise-for-fourth-year/>.

13. Ramirez, Roberto. *We the People: Hispanics in the United States*. U.S. Census Bureau, Dec. 2004. Online at <http://www.census.gov/prod/2007pubs/acs-03.pdf>.

14. *We the People: Hispanics in the United States*.

15. "U.S. Hispanic Population Surpasses 45 Million, Now 15 Percent of Total," U.S. Bureau of the Census, May 1, 2008. Online at <http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/population/011910.html>.

16. *Membership of the 111th Congress: A Profile*. Congressional Research Service. Online at http://assets.opencrs.com/rpts/R40086_20081231.pdf.

17. "NALEO Educational Fund Releases 2007 Directory of Latino Elected Officials," NALEO Educational Fund, July 12, 2007. Online at <http://www.naleo.org/pr071207.html>.

18. "NALEO Educational Fund Releases 2007 Directory of Latino Elected Officials."

19. Lopez, Mark Hugo. *The Hispanic Vote in the 2008 Election*. Washington, DC: Pew Hispanic Center, November 2008. Online at <http://pewhispanic.org/files/reports/98.pdf>.

What You Can Do

A Class Apart shows everyday people making change in extraordinary ways – from the attorneys who pushed the unlikely case forward, to the woman who stood up to ensure her children would be treated fairly in school, and the countless men and women who contributed their hard-earned dollars to see that the *Hernandez* case went to the Supreme Court. How can you make a difference? The below are just a few ideas:

- **Continue the Conversation.** Host a screening of *A Class Apart* with your neighbors, in a community group, at your place of worship, or at a local college, law school or high school. Have a special event for immigrants and help them learn about this important chapter of American history. Introduce *A Class Apart* to as many people as possible and keep the dialogue going!
- **Share Your Story.** *A Class Apart* tells the story of many of the brave men and women who helped advance the Mexican American struggle for civil rights, but there are many more whose stories remain untold. Do you know your local heroes? Talk to your family and friends and find out if and how they were involved in civil rights struggles for Latinos or other groups.
 - **Veterans** can contribute stories to the Library of Congress's Veterans' History Project.²⁰
 - **Part of the *A Class Apart* generation?** Add your story to the archive at the U.S. Latino & Latina WWII Oral History Project at the University of Texas at Austin²¹, which has collected over 500 interviews since its inception in 1999.
- **Register to Vote.** Between 2004 and 2008, the number registered Latino voters doubled, and Latinos have become increasingly influential in the political process. If you are a citizen 18 or over and haven't yet registered to vote, visit www.rockthevote.org or www.votesmart.org for instructions specific to your state. www.VotoLatino.org is a great resource for Latino-specific issues.
- **Invite Your Local Policymakers to Watch *A Class Apart*.** Many elected officials are unfamiliar with the culture and history of their Latino constituents, and given the increasing political power of Latinos, many politicians are eager to learn more! Call or write your local officials to encourage them to watch *A Class Apart* to gain a better understanding of the history of Latinos in the United States.
- **Join the Movement.** Carlos Cadena and Gus García were civil rights pioneers, and many organizations are continuing the struggle for Latino civil rights today. The *A Class Apart* national partners (see final page of this Toolkit) are just some of the many groups that are continuing to fight for equality today. Volunteer, donate, visit their websites or join a local chapter to find out how you can get involved.

20. Online at <http://www.loc.gov/vets/vets-home.html>.

21. Online at <http://www.lib.utexas.edu/ww2latinos/>.

Resources

FILMS

Border Bandits, Directed by Kirby Warnock (Dallas: Trans-Pecos Productions). After a group of Mexican banditos raided the McAllen Ranch in 1915, Texas Rangers set out for punishment. What happened next influenced the relationship between whites and Latinos in Texas for generations to come. <http://www.borderbanditsmovie.com/>

Farmingville, Directed by Carlos Sandoval and Catherine Tambini (New York: Camino Bluff Productions, 2003). An intimate look at tensions in a small Long Island town reveals the challenges faced by communities across America as a growing numbers of Latinos head to the suburbs and the heartland. <http://www.farmingvillethemovie.com>

Justice for My People: The Hector P. Garcia Story (Corpus Christi: KEDT, South Texas Public Broadcasting System, 2002). This film tells the story of Dr. Hector P. Garcia – Mexican Revolution refugee, medical doctor to the barrios, decorated war veteran, civil rights activist, American G.I. Forum founder and presidential confidante - and his fight to ensure justice and equality for Mexican Americans. <http://www.pbs.org/justiceformypeople/>

Mendez vs. Westminster: For All the Children/ Para Todos Los Niños (Koce-TV, PBS). When Sylvia Mendez and her siblings were banned from attending the all-white school near their Orange County home, the Mendez family fought back. Their 1946 victory desegregated public schools in Orange County, California and helped pave the way for school desegregation across the nation. <http://www.koce.org/prodMendez.htm>

Salt of the Earth. Directed by Herbert J. Biberman (Independent Productions/International Union of Mine, Mill & Smelter Workers, 1954). Mexican-American mine workers strike to achieve equal pay and equal treatment in this classic film.

With All Deliberate Speed. Directed by Peter Gilbert (Serviam Media, Inc. and TELEDUCTION, 2004). This film examines *Brown v. Board of Education* and its impact a half-century later, as communities still struggle to ensure equal educational opportunities for all. <http://www.brownvboard.info/film.htm>

ONLINE

Conference on Hernandez v. Texas at Fifty. <http://www.law.uh.edu/Hernandez50/>
Provides a wealth of articles and primary material about the case from a 2004 conference sponsored by the University of Houston Law Center and Arte Publico Press.

The Oyez Project, Hernandez v. Texas, 347 U.S. 475 (1954) http://www.oyez.org/cases/1950-1959/1953/1953_406/ Legal summary of the *Hernandez* case.

Handbook of Texas Online <http://www.tshaonline.org/>
A vast storehouse documenting the rich and complex history of the state of Texas.

The Pew Hispanic Center <http://pewhispanic.org/>
A nonpartisan research organization designed to improve understanding of the U.S. Hispanic population and to chronicle Latinos' growing impact on the nation.

BOOKS

White But Not Equal: Mexican Americans, Jury Discrimination, and the Supreme Court. Ignacio García (University of Arizona Press, 2009). More than just a legal discussion, this book looks at the *Hernandez v. Texas* case from start to finish and places the story within the larger issue of the fight for Mexican American civil rights.

"Colored Men" and "Hombres Aquí": Hernandez v. Texas and the Emergence of Mexican-American Lawyering. This edited collection of essays contains the papers presented at the University of Houston Law Center's 2004 *Hernandez* at 50 conference, as well as source materials, trial briefs, and a chronology of the case.

A Class Apart National Partner Organizations

A CLASS APART
A NIGHT TOGETHER

ACTIVE
voice®

Active Voice (www.activevoice.net)

Active Voice uses film, television and digital media to tell the human stories that spark social change. Our team of strategic communications specialists develops partnerships among filmmakers, funders, and thought leaders; plans and manages screenings and high profile events; repurposes digital content for viral distribution; produces educational collateral; and consults with industry and sector leaders. Since our inception in 2001, Active Voice has built a portfolio of campaigns focusing on issues including immigration, criminal justice, healthcare, and sustainability.

C A M I N O
B L U F F
P R O D U C T I O N S , I N C .

Camino Bluff Productions, Inc. (www.caminobluff.com)

Camino Bluff Productions, Inc. is dedicated to making independent films that reflect and are inspired by the Latino experience in the United States. Founded by Carlos Sandoval in 2001, Camino Bluff produced both the documentary *A Class Apart* and the Sundance award-winning documentary *Farmingville*.

The American Constitution Society

(www.acslaw.org)

ACS is one of the nation's leading progressive legal organizations. Founded in 2001, ACS strives to ensure that fundamental principles of human dignity, individual rights and liberties, genuine equality, and access to justice enjoy their rightful, central place in American law.



The American G.I. Forum

(www.americangiforum.org)

Founded in 1948, the American G.I. Forum is a Congressionally-chartered Mexican American veterans' and civil rights organization with chapters throughout the U.S.



The Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities

(www.hacu.net)

HACU represents more than 450 colleges and universities committed to Hispanic higher education success in the U.S., Puerto Rico, Latin America, Spain and Portugal. HACU is the only national educational association that represents Hispanic-Serving Institutions, and its member institutions are home to more than two-thirds of all Hispanic college students.



The Hispanic National Bar Association

(www.hnba.com)

HNBA is a not-for-profit national membership organization that represents the interests of the more than 100,000 Hispanic attorneys, judges, law professors, legal assistants, and law students in the United States and its territories. Since its founding three decades ago, the HNBA has acted as a force for positive change within the legal profession through a combination of issue advocacy, programmatic activities, networking events, and educational conferences.



Latino Public Broadcasting

(www.lpbp.org)

Latino Public Broadcasting supports the development, production, acquisition and distribution of non-commercial television that is representative of Latino people, or addresses issues of particular interest to Latino Americans.



The League of United Latin American Citizens

(www.lulac.org)

The mission of the League of United Latin American Citizens is to advance the economic condition, educational attainment, political influence, housing, health and civil rights of the Hispanic population of the United States.



The Mexican-American Legal Defense and Education Fund

(www.maldef.org)

Founded in 1968 in San Antonio, Texas, the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF) is the leading nonprofit Latino litigation, advocacy and educational outreach institution in the United States.



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