

RUBEN SALAZAR: MAN IN THE MIDDLE

Screening and Discussion with Director Phillip Rodriguez

Monday, August 31, 2020

7:00 p.m. PT

Live Webcast

ABOUT THE FILM

Ruben Salazar: Man in the Middle is an hour-long investigative look at the life and mysterious death of pioneering Mexican American journalist Ruben Salazar. At the heart of the story is Salazar's transformation from a mainstream, establishment reporter for the *Los Angeles Times* to a primary chronicler and supporter of the radical Chicano movement of the late 1960s. Killed under mysterious circumstances by a law enforcement officer while covering the National Chicano Moratorium on August 29, 1970, Salazar became an instant martyr to Latinos—many of whom had criticized his reporting during his lifetime. Director/Producer Phillip Rodriguez used archival materials held by the USC Libraries to make a film that removes Salazar from the shroud of myth and martyrdom. The result is a clear and honest look at the man and his times. The film includes interviews with Salazar's friends, colleagues and family members, and Salazar's own words culled from personal writings.

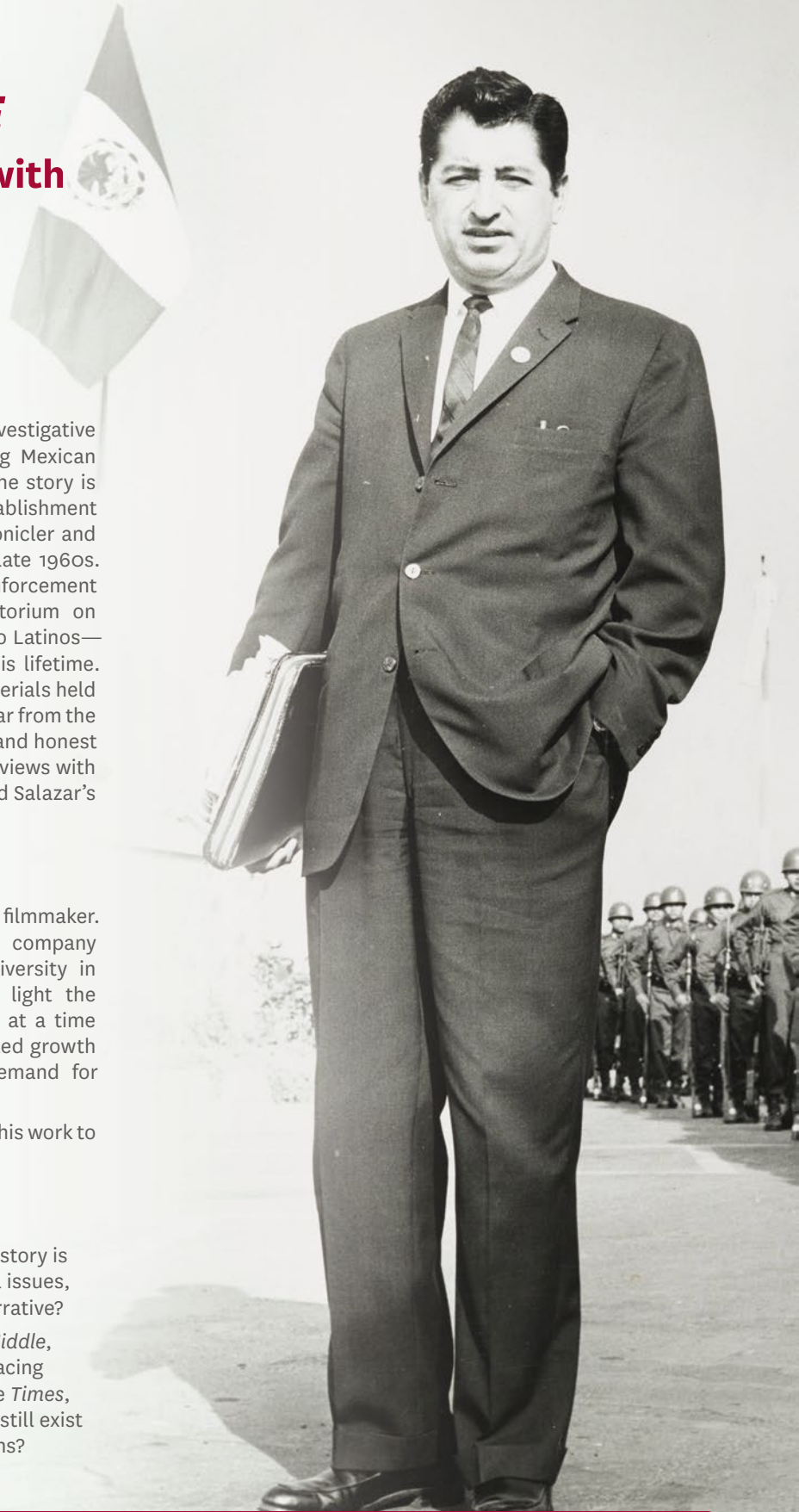
PHILLIP RODRIGUEZ

Phillip Rodriguez is an award-winning documentary filmmaker. In 2002, he founded City Projects, a production company dedicated to challenging ideas about race and diversity in America. Rodriguez's documentary films bring to light the complexities of Latino culture, history, and identity at a time when our nation's demographics reflect unprecedented growth in the Latino community and the concomitant demand for relevant storytelling.

In 2014, the *Los Angeles Times* [profiled Rodriguez](#) and his work to bring the Salazar film to fruition.

FOR FURTHER REFLECTION

- ◉ Would you agree or disagree that Ruben Salazar's story is both a West Coast story about ethnic and regional issues, and an important part of the greater American narrative?
- ◉ After viewing the film *Ruben Salazar: Man in the Middle*, what were the major issues in 1970s Los Angeles facing Mexican Americans that Salazar wrote about in the *Times*, and who was his audience? Do any of these issues still exist today for Latinos, or are there other major concerns?





- Salazar reported in the *Times* on activities of Mexican American youth in the growing Chicano Movement and Chicano anti-Vietnam war marches. Identify another recent movement since the 1970s and describe the differences and similarities.

DISCOVER MORE AT THE USC LIBRARIES

BARBARA ROBINSON of the USC Libraries selected the following resources to help you learn more about the evening's event. Those with a call number (e.g., books) are physical items available in our campus libraries. Those without a call number (e.g., e-books, journals, and databases) are electronic resources, which you can access through the search bar on the USC Libraries homepage at libraries.usc.edu.

RECOMMENDED BOOKS

- Ruben Salazar, *Border Correspondent: Selected writings, 1955-1970*. Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1995.
DOHENY MEMORIAL LIBRARY: F787 S18 1995
[Also available online.](#)

RECOMMENDED DATABASES

- Chicano Database*: designed for research and instruction for Chicano and ethnic studies programs, offering materials that explore issues within the greater US Latinx community, in particular the Mexican-American experience, from the late 20th century to the present.
- ProQuest Historical Newspapers*: find Ruben Salazar's columns he wrote while employed by the *Los Angeles Times* from 1959-1970, and articles about him after his death.

ARCHIVAL COLLECTIONS

- Ruben Salazar (1928-1970) Papers*
- Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department's Records on the Investigation of the Homicide of Ruben Salazar*

