

# Xiuhtezcatl Martinez

## At the Forefront of Climate Change

Thursday, October 25, 2018  
Bovard Auditorium  
University of Southern California

### ABOUT XIUHTEZCATL MARTINEZ

- Xiuhtezcatl Martinez is a teenage indigenous climate activist and hip hop artist.
- He has been advocating for the environment since he was a child, and is currently the youth director of the environmental organization Earth Guardians.
- Martinez has addressed the UN General Assembly and participated in successful campaigns to stop fracking in his home state of Colorado, among many other accomplishments. He is the winner of a United States Community Service Award from President Obama, the Peace First Prize, the Nickelodeon Halo Award, the Captain Planet Award, and the Children's Climate Prize Award, and was the youngest of 24 national change-makers chosen to serve on President Obama's youth council.
- In 2017, he released an album called *Break Free* and published his first book, *We Rise: The Earth Guardians Guide to Building a Movement That Restores the Planet*.

### EARTH GUARDIANS

Earth Guardians is an organization of young activists building a resilient movement for the environment. Earth Guardians began as an accredited high school in Maui, Hawaii, in 1992, focusing on environmental awareness and action as part of its core curriculum. Students studied the history of social movements and took action to restore sandalwood forests and stop the toxic practice of burning sugar cane. The school became internationally recognized, and in 1997 Earth Guardians relocated to Colorado to engage more young people in programs to empower and amplify their voice.

Earth Guardians began teaching youth about political action and activism, and engaged in campaigns to stop the spraying of pesticides in public parks, establish an environmental fee on plastic bags, municipalize Boulder's energy grid, and achieve a moratorium on



fracking. Earth Guardians is now a national and international network, which has activated thousands of youth on six continents and is working to build an ever stronger network for collaboration and engagement of young environmental activists.

## #YOUTHVGOV

Xiuhtezcatl Martinez and 20 other young people have filed a lawsuit against the United States government on behalf of future generations, alleging that actions taken by the government that have led to climate change have violated the youngest generation's constitutional rights to life, liberty, and property, while also failing to protect essential public trust resources. Juliana et al. v. United States (a.k.a. #YouthVGov) is set to go to trial on October 29 in Oregon.

## FRACKING IN L.A.

Fracking is a process of injecting liquid at high pressure deep into the earth for the purpose of extracting oil or gas. It enables extraction from deeper, harder-to-reach reserves. Critics of the process say it may increase the risk of earthquakes and release carcinogenic chemicals into groundwater, among other concerns.

L.A. is the largest urbanized area producing oil in the nation. The oil industry has been active here since the late nineteenth century, and in recent years, there has been an expansion into unconventional oil-extraction techniques such as fracking. Some of this has been happening in neighborhoods where people live—including in the residential areas surrounding USC. In 2014, the Liberty Hill Foundation published a report on drilling in L.A. that documented illnesses and other harmful impacts of oil-drilling operations in the University Park area. The L.A. City Council voted to ban fracking in the city in 2014, but the ban has not actually gone into effect, as city officials got held up researching the feasibility of such a ban.

## FOR FURTHER REFLECTION

- ⦿ What is the significance of Xiuhtezcatl Martinez speaking on these issues as a young person? As an indigenous person?
- ⦿ What are the most pressing environmental concerns in your community?
- ⦿ Why do you think climate change disproportionately impacts disenfranchised communities?

## IF YOU LIKED THIS EVENT, YOU MIGHT WANT TO CHECK OUT

- ⦿ Xiuhtezcatl Martinez online  
[www.xiuhtezcatl.com](http://www.xiuhtezcatl.com)
- ⦿ Earth Guardians  
[www.earthguardians.org](http://www.earthguardians.org)
- ⦿ Communities for a Better Environment  
[www.cbecal.org](http://www.cbecal.org)
- ⦿ The Liberty Hill Foundation's report on fracking in L.A.  
[www.libertyhill.org/news/reports/urban-oil-drilling-report](http://www.libertyhill.org/news/reports/urban-oil-drilling-report)

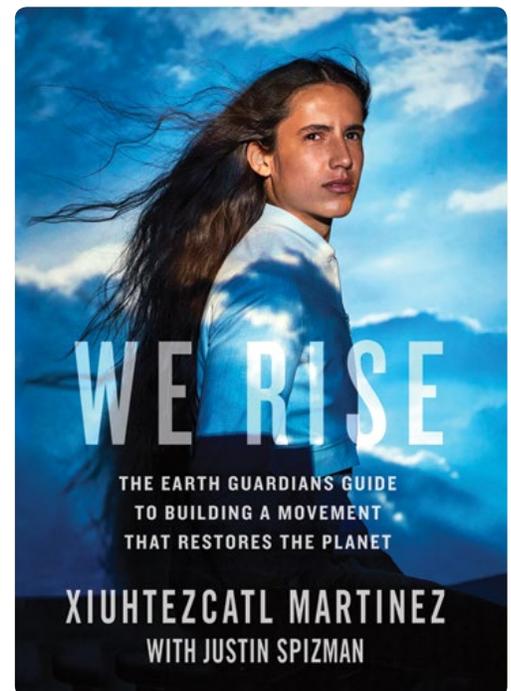
## VOCABULARY CORNER

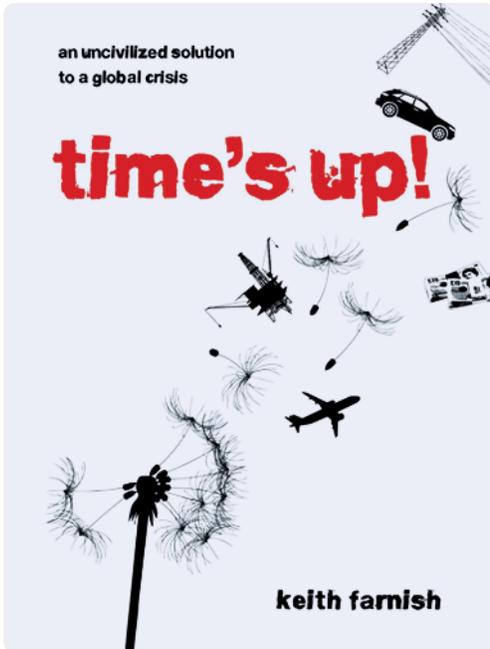
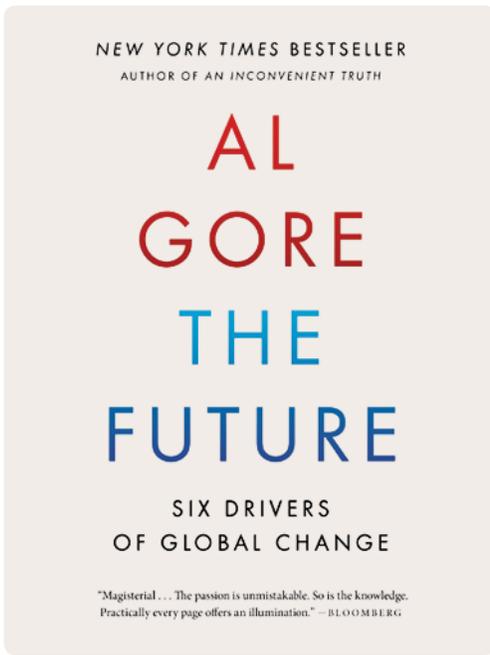
### CLIMATE JUSTICE

The phrase “climate justice” recognizes the ways that the impacts of climate change are inextricably related to human rights, especially for people of color, low-income people, indigenous people, and people whose homelands are imminently threatened by climate change. It is notable that those who are most impacted by climate change tend to be least responsible for the greenhouse-gas emissions that cause it and to have the fewest resources to mitigate the damage.

### ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Environmental justice is an approach to environmental issues that acknowledges how “the environment” is not an issue in a vacuum, but rather a set of issues that is inextricably linked to other issues, such as race, poverty, and human rights. An environmental-justice approach takes into account the reality that marginalized communities often suffer a disproportionate burden of pollution, contamination, and even vulnerability to the impacts of climate change.





## DISCOVER MORE AT THE USC LIBRARIES

**BREE RUSSELL** of the USC Libraries selected the following resources to help you learn more about Martinez and tonight's event. Those with a call number (e.g., books) are physical items which you can find in our campus libraries. Those without a call number (e.g. journal articles and databases) are electronic resources, which you can access through the search bar on the USC Libraries homepage at [libraries.usc.edu](http://libraries.usc.edu).

### BOOKS:

- ⦿ Farnish, Keith. *Time's Up!: An Uncivilized Solution to a Global Crisis*. Totnes, UK: Green, 2009.
- ⦿ Gore, Al. *The Future: Six Drivers of Global Change*. New York: Random House, 2013.
- ⦿ Hauer, Wenonah. *Frackopoly: The Battle for the Future of Energy and the Environment*. New York: The New Press, 2016.
- ⦿ Johansen, Bruce. *The Global Warming Combat Manual: Solutions for a Sustainable World*. Westport: Praeger Publishers, 2008.
- ⦿ Martinez, Xiutezcatl. *We Rise: The Earth Guardians Guide to Building a Movement that Restores the Planet*. Emmaus: Rodale, 2017.

### DATABASES:

- ⦿ Environment Index
- ⦿ Gale Environmental Studies and Policy Collection
- ⦿ GREENR (Global Reference on the Environment, Energy, and Natural Resources)
- ⦿ National Service Center for Environmental Publications
- ⦿ United States Environmental Protection Agency

### JOURNALS:

- ⦿ Belkin, Nathan L. "Environmentalism." *AORN Journal* 57, no. 3 (1993): 632–632.
- ⦿ P. A. H. Saunders. "Environmentalism." *Nature* 322, no. 6075 (n.d.): 108–108.

### DVDS:

- ⦿ *An Inconvenient Sequel*. Directed by Jon Shenk. Hollywood: Paramount, 2017.
- ⦿ *An Inconvenient Truth*. Directed by Davis Guggenheim. Hollywood: Paramount, 2006.