Ruben Salazar collection

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Sonoma State University Library
Special Collections
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2014
Descriptive Summary

Title: Ruben Salazar collection
Dates: 1955-2008
Collection Number: Consult repository
Creator/Collector:
Extent: 2 boxes
Repository: Sonoma State University Library
Rohnert Park, California 94928

Abstract: In 1979 the new library at Sonoma State University was named after Mexican-American journalist Rubén Salazar. Clippings of articles written by him during the 1950s and ‘60s for the local newspaper, The Press Democrat, were compiled and became the root of this collection. Salazar’s wife, Sally, who attended the Library dedication with her children, donated copies of photographs of Rubén. Materials about the SSU Library dedication are also included in the collection, as well as materials relating to the addition of the 500,000th book to the library collection—Border Correspondent: selected writings, 1955-1970, edited by Mario T. García. Since then, the collection has expanded to include articles about his death during a demonstration in Los Angeles and media.

Language of Material: English

Access
Collection is open for research by appointment.

Publication Rights
The library can only claim physical ownership of the collection. Users are responsible for satisfying any claimants of literary property.

Preferred Citation
Ruben Salazar collection. Sonoma State University Library

Biography/Administrative History
Ruben Salazar, born in 1928, was eight months old when his parents moved from Ciudad Juarez, Mexico to El Paso, Texas. He became a naturalized citizen, attending public schools and the University of Texas at El Paso, then known as Texas Western College. He received a bachelor’s degree in journalism. Salazar began his journalism career at the El Paso Herald-Post, launching a career of many “firsts” for the mainstream press. As the first Latino reporter at the Post, he crossed into English-language journalism. He became the first Latino foreign correspondent, and the first Latino columnist, to name a few. In 1956-1957, Salazar worked in Petaluma for The Santa Rosa Press Democrat. He moved on to the San Francisco News and in 1959 accepted the opportunity to work for The Los Angeles Times. During his tenure with the Times, Salazar was a foreign correspondent in Viet Nam and the Dominican Republic and Times bureau chief in Mexico City. Salazar’s coverage of the 1965 U.S. Marine intervention in the Dominican Republic received high acclaim. As a domestic reporter and columnist, Salazar’s topics were also “firsts”: the inferior quality of education, unemployment, poor and restricted housing conditions - essentially the full range of problems facing Chicanos in Los Angeles. His reporting earned him a state Medal Award for best local news coverage in California. “Stranger in One’s Land”, Ruben Salazar’s account of the 1968 U.S. Commission on Civil Right’s hearing in San Antonio, Texas, appeared as a commission publication in May 1970. This unique report was published for the purpose of stimulating public concern for the problems confronting Mexican Americans. By 1970, Salazar was elected Chairman of the Chicano Media Council, was news director of KMEX, a Spanish language TV station in Los Angeles, and wrote a weekly column on Chicano affairs for the Los Angeles Times. On August 29, 1970, Ruben Salazar was killed by a tear gas projectile fired by a Los Angeles Sheriff’s Department deputy as he was seated outside a restaurant. He had been taking a break from his assignment covering the Chicano Moratorium, an anti-Viet Nam war demonstration in East Los Angeles. Salazar was 42. Salazar was posthumously awarded the Robert F. Kennedy Journalism Award in 1971. In 1999, the California Chicano News Media Association established the annual Ruben Salazar Journalism Awards. The awards recognize work published or broadcast in California that exemplify journalistic excellence while contributing to a better understanding of Latinos. In March 1979, Sonoma State University named its library in honor of Ruben Salazar. In 2002, soon after a new library building was constructed, the Ruben Salazar Library building became Salazar Hall. Salazar Hall is now home to administrative and educational functions, including the Journalism Laboratory.

Scope and Content of Collection
The materials in this collection are organized in a total of two boxes. The collection is comprised of clippings of Salazar’s news stories and includes articles about him, bibliographies, photo copies of photographs, documents, and ephemera. The

Indexing Terms
Mexican Americans.
Mexican-American Border Region.
Mexico -- Relations -- United States.
Mexican American journalists – California.
Press Democrat (Santa Rosa, Calif.)
Los Angeles (Calif.).
Santa Rosa (Calif.).
Journalists -- California -- Santa Rosa.
Foreign correspondents.

Ruben Salazar Collection Inventory