



November 17, 2014

Countdown to Riverside City College's 100th Anniversary

In January 1939, "Arroyo" student newspaper Executive Editor Marvin Hayman asked members of the Riverside Junior College faculty to write a series of opinion pieces under the title "Instructor's Viewpoints" (in late February, the title was changed to "Instructor's Views"). Today, 75 years later, we can see what was on their minds. The seventh article appeared in the March 1, 1939 edition of the newspaper and was written by Peter A. Ortiz (Professor of Spanish, Sociology, Philosophy & Music 1937-1940). Ortiz was profiled in the 1938 yearbook in this manner: "The charm of the tile-roofed, arched, and arcaded campus buildings so reminiscent of his native Spain, together with the respectful courtesy of the students whom he had come to teach, decided Peter A. Ortiz in favor of remaining in Riverside for another year. He is a graduate of the Colegio de Filosofia, Olot, Spain. His classes in sociology and the history of philosophy are well-received."

Ortiz wrote about human perception in a piece entitled "Intolerance or Compromise?".



"There is a general tendency to look upon the actions of our fellow men with some kind of resentment if the actions do not conform with our particular way of thinking. Taking for granted that our standards are the standards, we consider ourselves superior to other people, overlooking with smiling indulgence those actions of ours that in the eyes of other people are considered of inferior quality. The old man cannot understand the loose mores of our younger generation, while the young man looks upon his elder as old-fashioned. We are willing to despise the poor Chinese for eating an unclean rat, and we wonder why the Mohammedans and Jews despise us for eating another equally unclean animal, the pig. The average American will be shocked at a graceful and artistic bull fight, while he will delight in a barbarous wrestling or football game. An Englishman will look upon fighting with fists as a proper means of settling personal differences, while the gaucho will consider such a way as unbecoming to a man, and will consider the machete the only way to show the masculine powers, and the Asiatic will regard any physical encounter as befitting only barbarians. The men of the Middle Ages spent years trying to explain how many angels there were in each of the heavenly choruses and how many could dance on the point of a needle, and we, the moderns, are concerned with the complicated phenomena of science. The fascist will salute his Duce for the expediency and strength in government, while the democrat will consider it a sin against our natural rights as men. The religious minded person will spend many hours praying to his gods, while the atheist will consider it a superstition and he probably will tremble at the idea of spilling salt or breaking a mirror. If there are differences among the mores, institutions, and customs of the large groups, it is not less certain that there exist also differences among the individuals of any given group, in which case everybody will be only too ready to call the dissident such names as reactionary, conservative or liberal, stationary or progressive, as the case may be, not thinking that it is possible that we also have our roof made of glass and could be called similar epithets. Is there any real standard that we can use to direct our actions and to judge the actions of the others? The anthropologist will be satisfied to show the different and opposing tribal institutions; the behaviorist will study the reflexes, impulses, instincts, and the like; the religious person will appreciate the commands and will of the Creator, while the philosopher will sit on his

chair and rationalize about ethical actions, conscience, self-development, or pleasure, wondering if the saying that “Man is the measure of all things” should be interpreted as the individual man or the man in general. To solve this complicated problem we should either accept the thesis that some things are intrinsically good or bad, or we can apply mores, the Greek saying that ‘nothing ever was, nothing ever shall be, but everything is in a state of becoming.’ In the first instance, we can and should be dogmatic, intolerant, and narrow or straight minded; in the second instance, we shall be willing to compromise with the beliefs and actions of the others, thinking that they might be as right and sincere as we are with ours, and we will ‘never do to others that which we do not wish to be done to us.’ Compromise does not mean that we renounce our ways of thinking, but it simply means that to keep peace and harmony in the society in which we live, we should be willing to give and take if we are to accommodate ourselves to the existing environment, and we wish to live and let live. It means that each part should surrender something to save the existing social union, whether it be a partnership, a team, a family, a political party, a tribe or a nation. That is to say that certain claims, certain rights, certain privileges, should give way to the claims, rights and privileges of the others in those crucial moments when the unity of the whole is in danger, when they stand in our way...and they stand in our way because there are other equally valid claims that are irreconcilable with ours. What should, then, be our final decision on the matter, intolerance or compromise?”

Below are four photos of Ortiz from “Tequesquite” yearbooks of the era. The top two are from 1938 and 1939. The bottom two are from 1939 and 1940.



It is 1 year and 16 weeks until RCC’s 100th Anniversary on March 13, 2016.

The Riverside City College Instructional Media Center is bringing you this five year countdown to RCC's 100th Anniversary. Our intention is to give everyone a weekly glance at the many people and events that have been a part of the college.

Our thanks go to the RCC Digital Library Archives and the District's Office of Strategic Communications and Relations for allowing us to use their photo and newspaper collections. Thanks as well to all of the RCC students and Faculty Advisors that were a part of the yearbook and newspaper staffs. Thanks also to Tom Johnson and Gilbert Jimenez who wrote "the book" about RCC's history. "Riverside City College 1916-1981- A 65 Year History" is available in the RCC Digital Library.

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