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THE CHICANA/O CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT



The Chicana/o Civil Rights Movement, or simply the Chicana/o Movement, was a decentralized liberation movement that emerged during the 1960s and 1970s alongside other liberation movements across the globe. The movement was part of the ethnic Mexican civil rights struggle in the United States that began with the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo and continues into the twenty-first century. Though the Chicana/o Movement has no clear beginning or ending, it can be traced through various civil rights and culturally focused organizations that pressed for ethnic Mexican empowerment. The approaches of these organizations differed. For instance, the Brown Berets emerged in Los Angeles in 1966 as a paramilitary group. The Brown Berets inspired chapters across the nation that protested the Vietnam War and police brutality. In cooperation with Brown Berets and independently, students initiated “blow-outs,” or school walkouts, in Texas, California, New Mexico, and other states to protest unequal education. Founded in 1969 in South Texas, La Raza Unida Party (The People’s Party) aimed to use the ballot box to empower Chicana/os through the political system. Other organizations, including the Hijas de Cuauhtémoc, created spaces for women’s empowerment within the often male-centered liberation movement. Overall, the Chicana/o Movement was a series of localized, social justice movements that were more militant and louder than previous efforts by ethnic Mexicans to obtain social equity. The achievements of the Chicana/o Movement include the emergence of Chicana/o Studies, the presence of ethnic Mexican scholars and students on college campuses, as well as the greater inclusion of Mexican origin people in politics and popular media.

While concentrating upon the Chicana/o Movement in major urban centers, scholars have largely marginalized Chicana/o activism in the mostly rural [Southern Plains](#). Yet, the Southern Plains was home to a burgeoning wing of the Chicana/o Movement that initiated a transformation of the region’s society. This digital history project traces that movement over time and space through an [interactive map and timeline](#).


La Virgen de Guadalupe, courtesy of plains-origin artist and writer Nephtalí de León.

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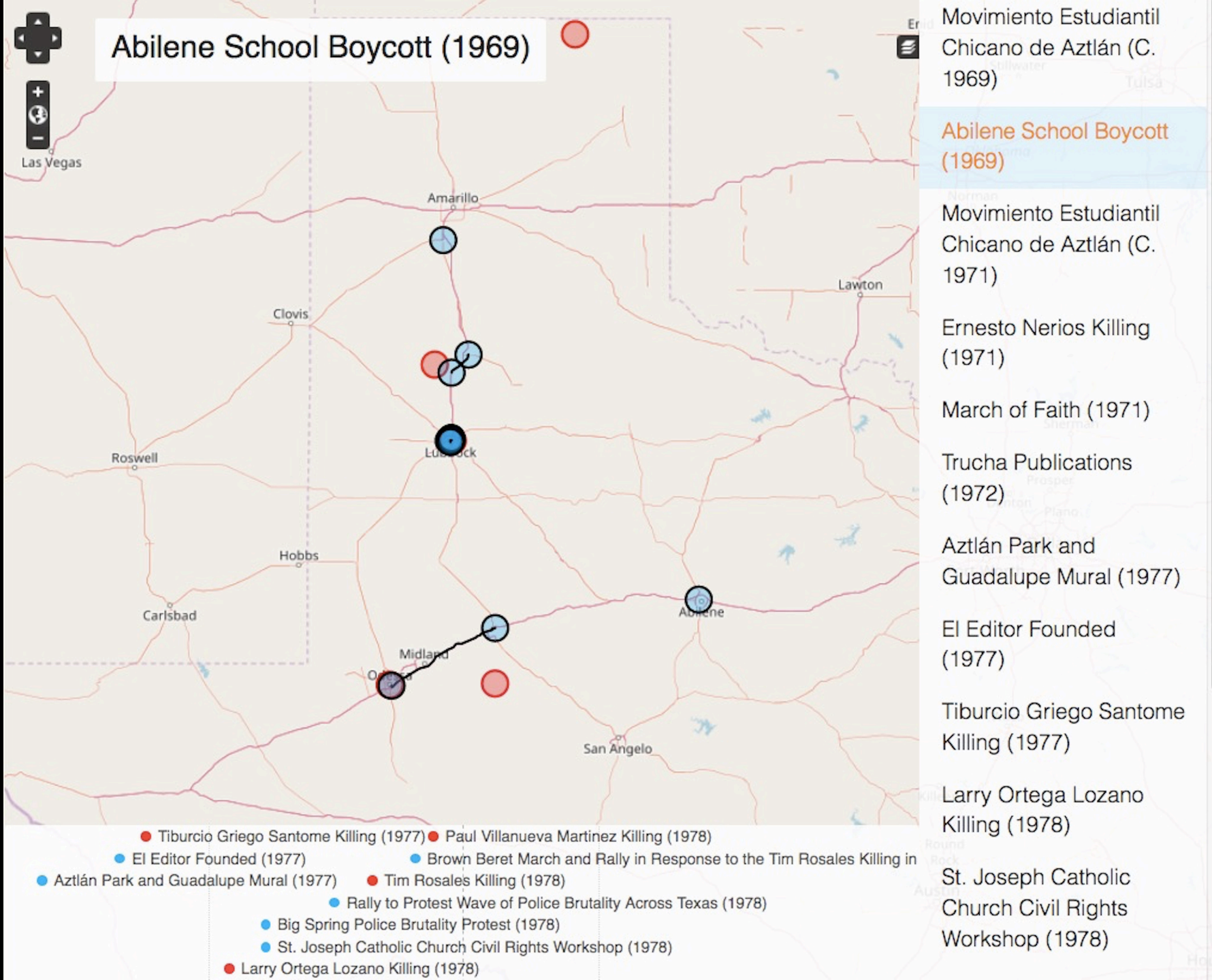
THE SOUTHERN PLAINS

The Southern Plains cover 240,000 square miles. In his *Caprock Canyonlands: Journeys into the Heart of the Southern Plains*, environmental historian Dan Flores writes: the Southern Plains “have always had recognizable boundaries, the whole forming a giant oval lying east of the Sangre de Cristo range of the southern Rockies.” From the foothills of the southern Rocky Mountains in eastern New Mexico and the far edge of southeastern Colorado, the Southern Plains extend to the 96th meridian where they meet the more hilly and humid Rolling Plains of present day northeast Texas and central Oklahoma. The region reaches north to the farthest edges of present day southwest Kansas, crossing slightly over the Cimarron River while remaining below the Arkansas River. To the south, the plains extend until meeting the Pecos River of far west Texas and the Edwards Plateau. As a whole, the Southern Plains are arid or semiarid, windy, grassy, and flat highlands that are interrupted only by escarpments and canyons at their geographical center.



The Southern Plains. Courtesy of Dan Flores, from his book *Caprock Canyonlands: Journeys into the Heart of the Southern Plains*, 1990. Twentieth Anniversary Edition, College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2010.

Creating a Digital Museum Experience



Mapping the Southern Plains Chicana/o Movement across Time and Space

Big Spring Police Brutality Protest (1978) ×

On the morning of February 25, 1978, several West Texas-based Brown Beret chapters, attorneys, and community members gathered at St. Joseph Catholic Church in Odessa. They held a civil rights workshop centered on police brutality, specifically the fatal beating of Larry Lozano by a group of police officers in Odessa's Ector County Jail, the police shooting of Juan Galaviz in nearby Big Spring, and the shooting of Tiburcio Santome by a retired Glasscock County sheriff deputy. When the workshop concluded, the Odessa city police escorted a motorcade of eighty-eight vehicles down South Dixie to Interstate 20. The motorcade grew to one hundred and twenty-three vehicles as it headed sixty-two miles east to Big Spring. In Big Spring, under the watch of rooftop, police snipers, around 1,000 people gathered in front of the Howard County Courthouse to protest the police killings of ethnic Mexican men, the lack of media coverage on those killings, and to demand prosecutions.

Trucha Publications
(1972)

Aztlán Park and
Guadalupe Mural (1977)

El Editor Founded (1977)

Tiburcio Griego Santome
Killing (1977)

Larry Ortega Lozano
Killing (1978)

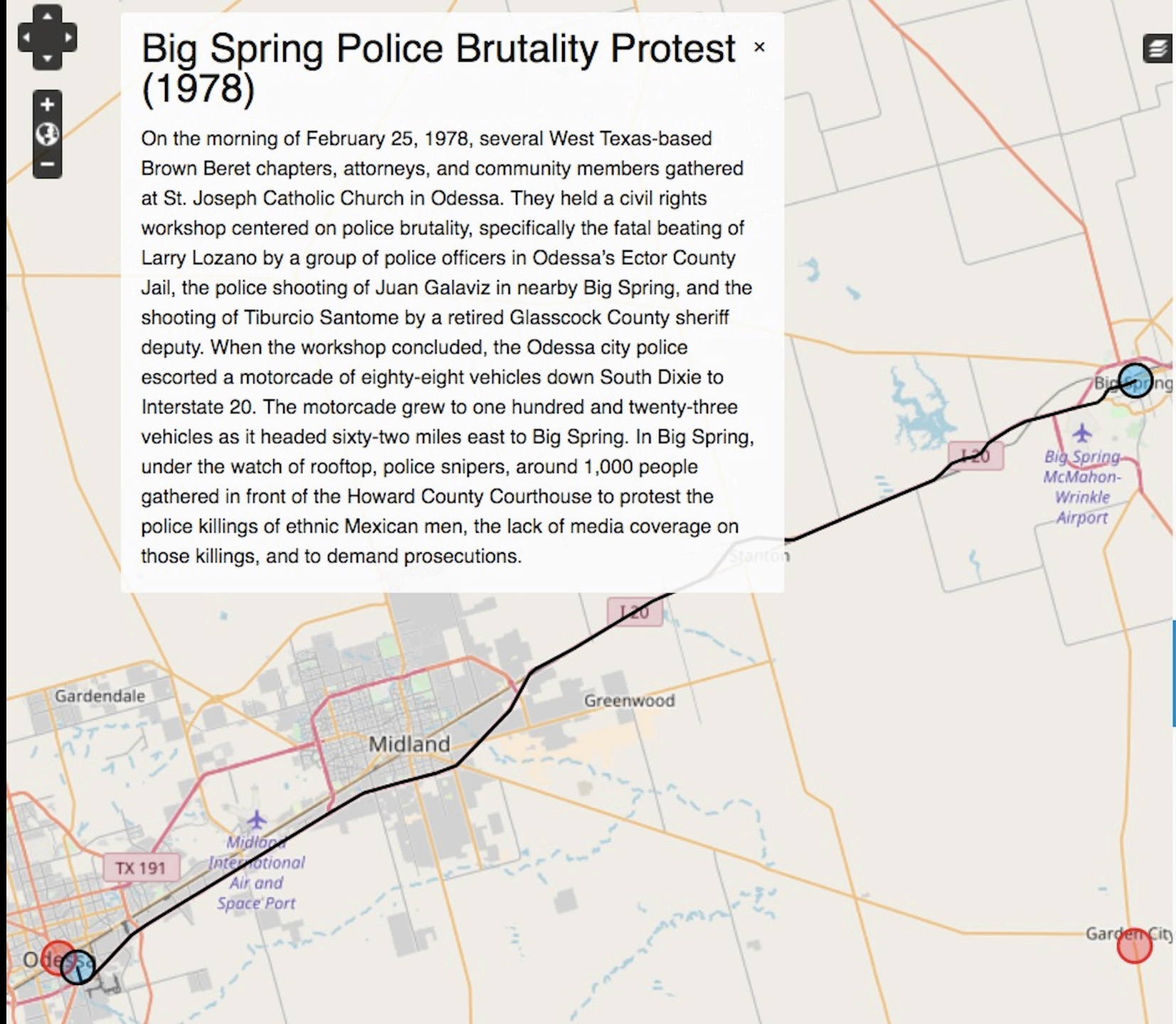
St. Joseph Catholic
Church Civil Rights
Workshop (1978)

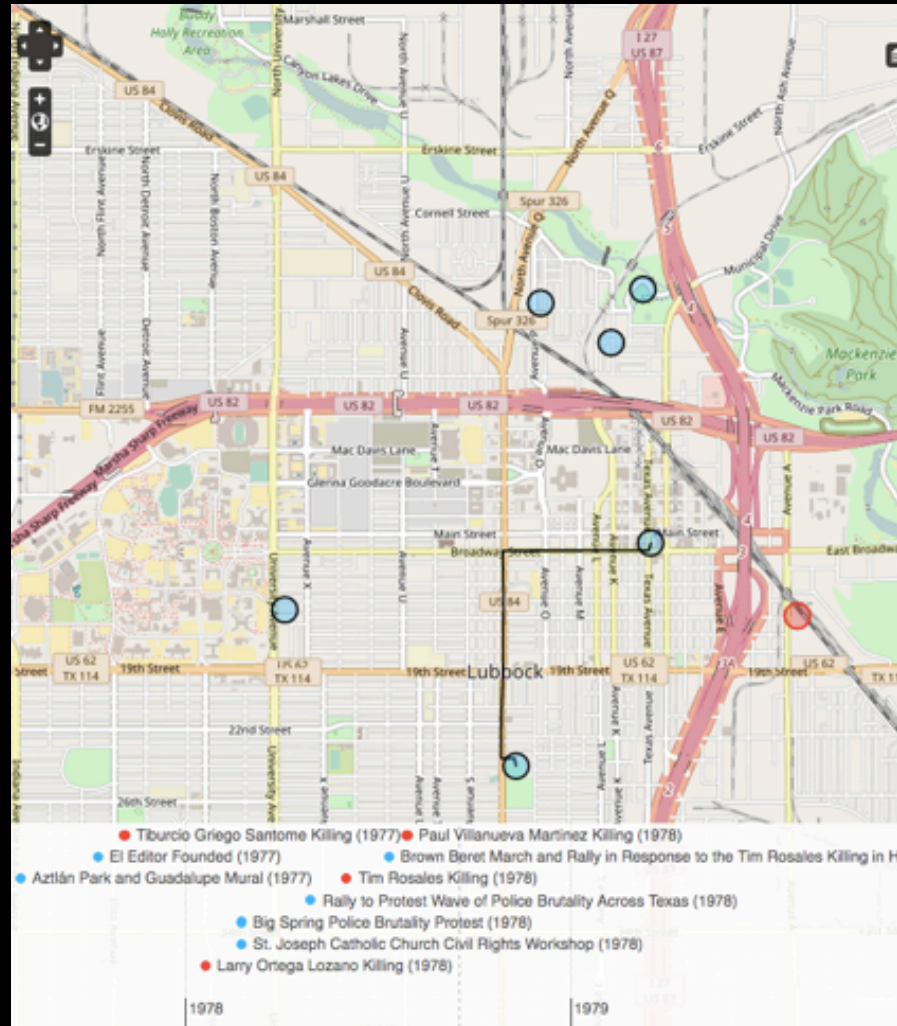
**Big Spring Police
Brutality Protest (1978)**

Rally to Protest Wave of
Police Brutality Across
Texas (1978)

Tim Rosales Killing
(1978)

Brown Beret March and

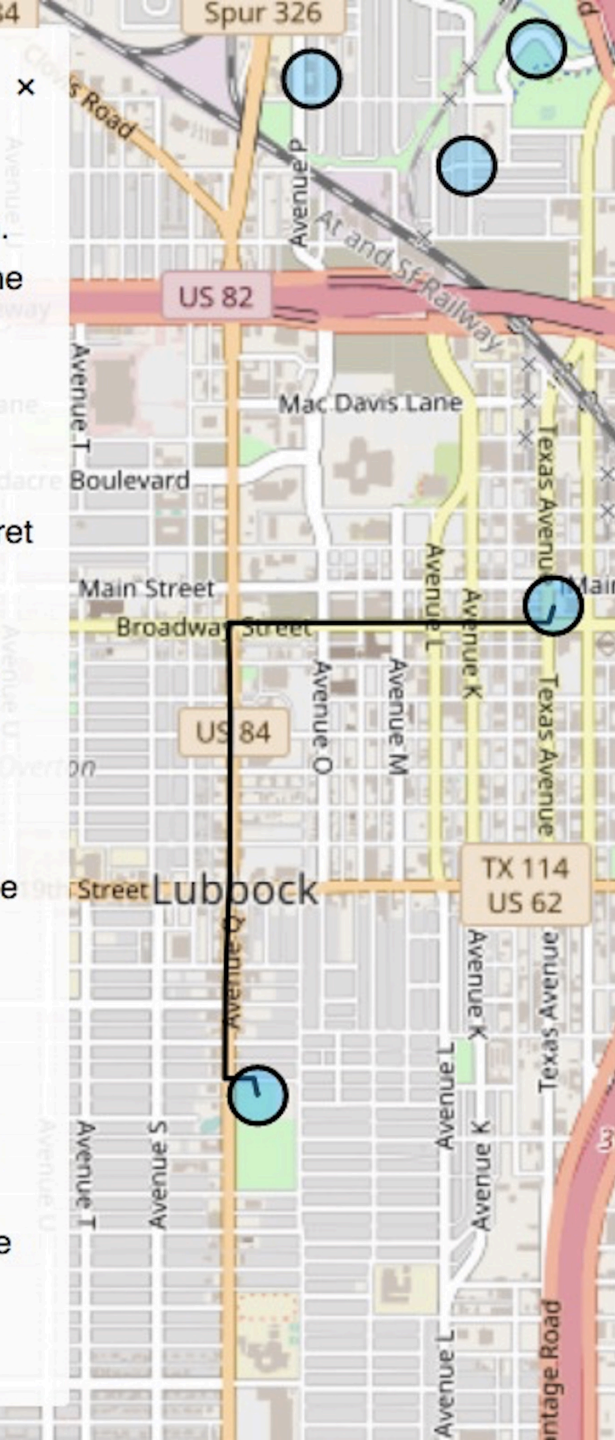


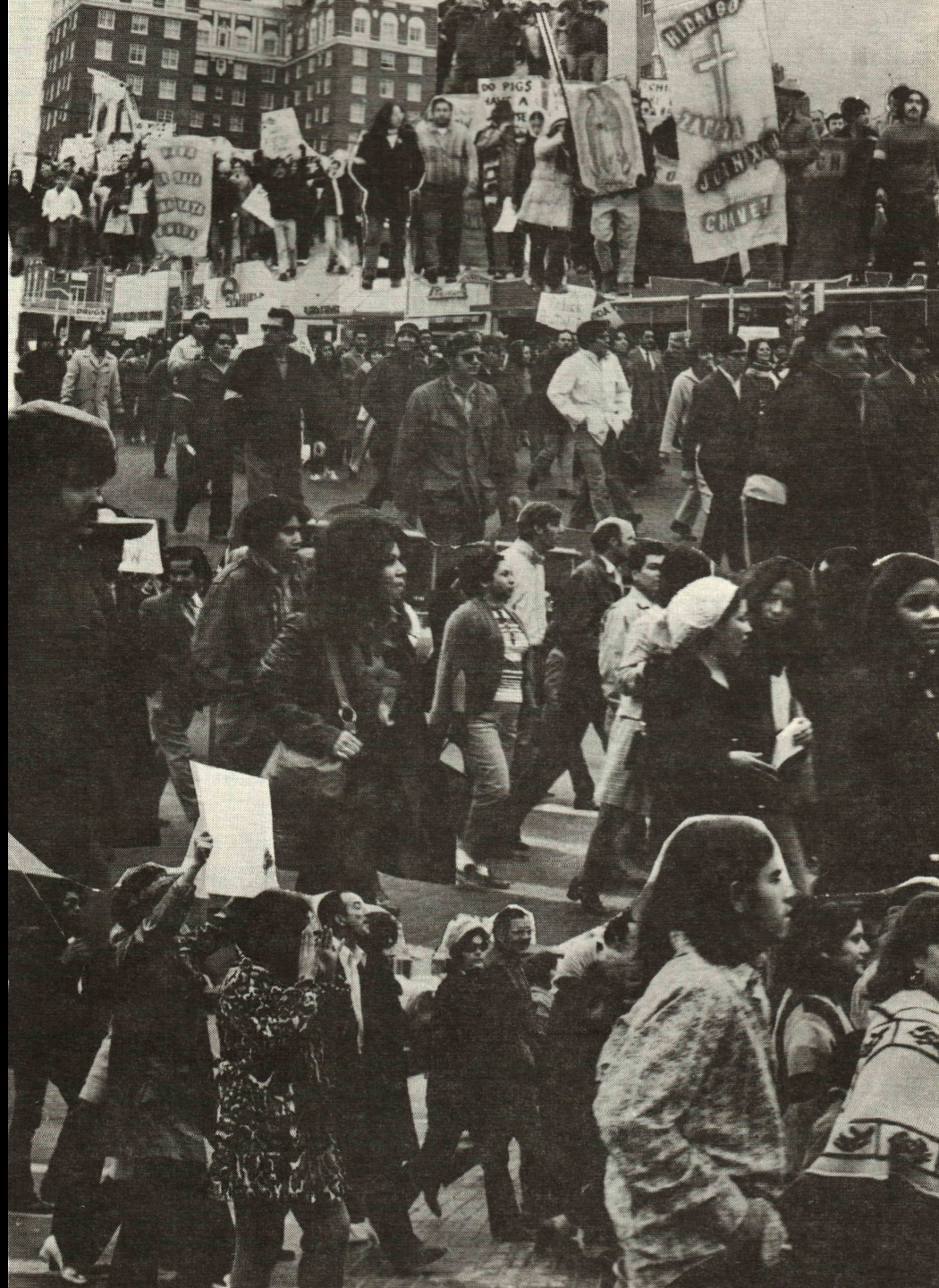


(1972)
 Aztlán Park and
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 Police Brutality Across
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 Tim Rosales Killing
 (1978)
 Brown Beret March and
 Rally in Response to the
 Tim Rosales Killing in
 Hale County, Texas
 (1978)
 Paul Villanueva Martinez
 Killing (1978)

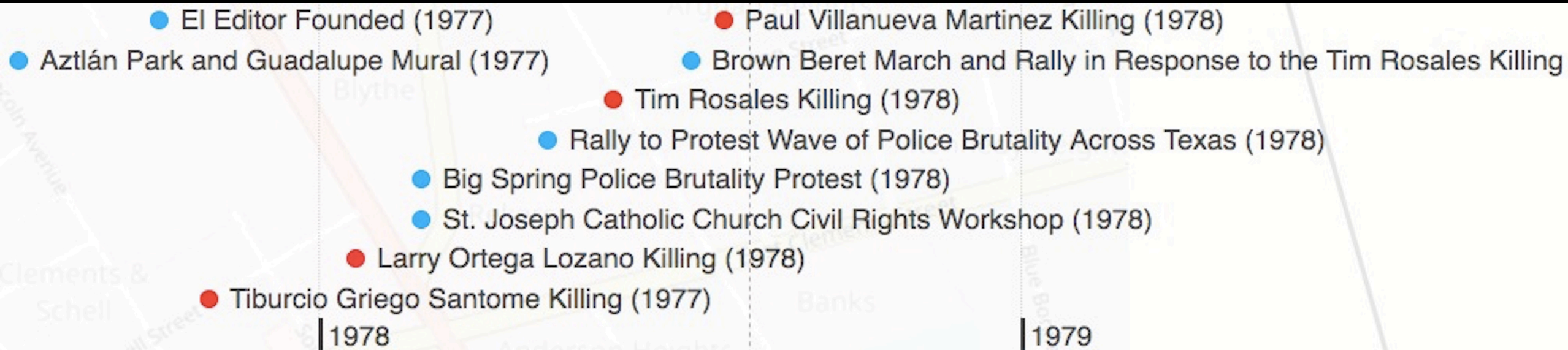
March of Faith (1971)

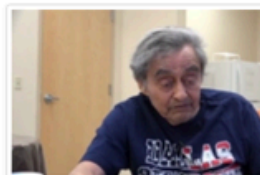
In 1971 Lubbock's Chicana/o youth, the city's Brown Beret chapter, elders in the community, and faith leaders organized a protest march. Amidst police brutality in Lubbock and across the nation as well as the ensuing Vietnam War, march organizers stressed a theme of peace and faith for the demonstration. The march leaders urged all participants to ignore racist taunts from Anglo American bystanders and police officers. Thus, the demonstration became "A March of Faith." On November 7 more than 1,500 people, including Brown Beret members from New Mexico, gathered to peacefully voice their grievances over social injustices. The march began with an interdenominational religious ceremony at Mose Hood Park. Headed by a banner of La Virgen de Guadalupe, the march proceeded onto 24th Street, north on Avenue Q, and eastward on Broadway Street until reaching the Lubbock County Courthouse. Marchers carried posters, raised their clenched fists, and cried "Chicano Power!" on the streets of perhaps one of the most conservative cities in the nation. The march organizers submitted to the city almost two-dozen demands compiled by Mexican American laborers, homemakers, students, businessmen, ministers, and priests. The community demanded equal protection under the law, an end to police brutality and abuse, equitable representation in the city government, and an end to discriminatory city employment practices. Within months of the march, the Lubbock Police Department began hiring Mexican American police officers.











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The *Civil Rights in Black and Brown Interview Database* is a publicly accessible, free, and user-friendly multimedia digital humanities website that provides digital video clips from the interviews to researchers as well as teachers, journalists, and the general public.

Rather than simply streaming full interviews or displaying transcripts, this site indexes short clips and embeds a number of thematic metadata codes and tags. End users are able to easily search for detailed subject information across the entire interview collection and add their own tags to help future users.

[About the project](#) | Number of clips on website: 3247 | Number of interviewees: 181



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