



VITA - BIOGRAPHY

November 21, 1935: **Rubén D. (Darío) Sálaz** is born in Belén to Fernando Sálaz (from Los Chávez) and Lucy Márquez Sálaz (from Cebolleta/Seboyeta). He is a 12th generation New Mexican of the Salas, Márquez, Chávez, García, Sánchez, Sena branches of New Mexican families. Rubén grows up in the typical extended family system of Hispanic families with grandparents at the heart of historical traditions.

1941-49: Rubén attends St. Mary's Parochial School in Belén. He becomes interested in New Mexican history at an early age because of the influence of his grandparents and a C.F. Lummis book (*A New Mexico David*) given to him by his father. His teachers are nuns with some lay teachers and an occasional priest. Except for a few clerics like the native Father Castillo, the priests in his parish are mostly French or Irish.

1953: Rubén's mother Lucy dies at the age of 35.

1954: Rubén graduates from Belén H.S. and enrolls at the University of New Mexico after receiving a Ford Foundation Scholarship. He majors in History but in order to support himself he works upwards of thirty hours per week while attending classes full time.

1957: Sálaz receives an unsolicited Tuition Scholarship from the UNM History Department. He is drawn to teaching so he takes Education courses required for a teaching certificate.

Rubén marries and in time his three sons **Christopher, David, and Sean** are born in Albuquerque.

1958: Sálaz is awarded a **Bachelor of Arts** degree from UNM with a major in American History and strong minors in Spanish and English. He wishes to do graduate work in History but the new Chairman of the History Department discourages the choice. Rubén decides to do graduate work in School Administration instead.

- 1959: Sálaz begins a thirty-three year teaching career with the Albuquerque Public Schools. (Over the years he is involved in a wide variety of community and professional activities.)
- 1962: Rubén is awarded the **Master of Arts** degree in Educational Administration from UNM.
- 1963-64: Sálaz is selected to participate in and successfully completes the academic year National Defense Education Act Institute for Spanish Teachers at UNM.
- 1967: Rubén writes *Tierra Amarilla Shootout: Eye-Witness Case Studies* (in tabloid format, his first publication).
- 1968: Sálaz goes through divorce proceedings, the first in his family.
- 1968-79: Rubén publishes many articles in magazines like *La Luz* (Denver), *El Grito* (Berkeley), *Mexican World* (Minneapolis), *Astral Projection* (Albuquerque), *USA Today*, etc. He also speaks to a wide variety of organizations and groups on historical and cultural matters.
- 1971: His first short story, The Race, is published in *El Grito*, Quinto Sol Publications, Berkeley. While teaching a course in Chicano Studies at UNM, Rubén initiates the idea of creating the **Profesores por La Raza** group on campus.
- 1972: Sálaz founds the **Albuquerque Raza Educators** for public school teachers and administrators.
- 1973: Rubén founds the **Metro Raza Federation**, a congress of Bernalillo County Hispanic organizations.
- 1975: Sálaz publishes *Cosmic - The La Raza Sketchbook*, a popular history of New Mexico and the Southwest.
- 1975-76: Rubén publishes his educational poster series (each set containing 30 posters): *Cosmic Posters* (bilingual) and *Indian Saga Posters*. Both are adopted for classroom use by the State of N.M.
- 1976: Sálaz publishes *The Cosmic Reader of the Southwest for Young People*. The following year the work is translated into *La lectura cósmica del suroeste para los jóvenes* by Rita Minkin.
- 1978: Rubén's short story collection *Heartland: Stories of the Southwest* is published.
- 1980: His first novel, *I Am Tecumseh! Book I* is published. With the publication of *Tecumseh*, Sálaz now adds his mother's name, **Márquez**, to everything he publishes.
- 1982: Sálaz writes and narrates the program *Adventures in American Folklore* on **KDEF** radio.
- 1983: *Embassy Hostage*, Rubén's first full length drama, is produced at the **Vortex Theatre** in Albuquerque.

- 1984: Sálaz is selected to participate in the Summer Study of Language and Culture in Madrid, Spain. The sojourn is his first to Spain and he visits many historic sites.
- 1985: *I Am Tecumseh, Book II* (of the projected trilogy) is published.
- February 14, 1989: Sálaz receives a **United States Patent** for his KTB Exerciser, a therapeutic knee exercise machine.
- 1990: Sálaz does a tandem skydive with his Jump Master son David. Rubén says that jumping out of an airplane from 10,000 feet in the air is “the dumbest thing I’ve ever done.”
- 1991: Rubén publishes *The Truth About American Education*. Various anthologies begin to include some of his work: *Voces: An Anthology of Nuevo Mexicano Writers* (UNM Press); *The Language of Literature* (McDougal Littell); *Cuento chicano del siglo XX* (Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México); etc.
- 1993: Rubén retires from classroom teaching after a career of thirty-three years. (He feels he would have taught for at least ten more years had it not been for the inadequacies of the educational system.) He runs for a position on the School Board but doesn’t win. He begins to study and learn how to use the computer by working on an inclusive history of New Mexico.
- 1997: Sálaz creates **Calendar of the Great Southwest: The New Mexico Edition** which commemorates 400 years (1598-1998) of New Mexico history. (Though the State of N.M. puts out two separate calendars every year, Rubén’s is the only one dedicated to New Mexico’s 400th anniversary. The State calendars don’t even mention the 400th anniversary.) He also creates an **Oñate poster** and **tee-shirt** for the anniversary.
- 1998: The Hispanic Cultural Center in Albuquerque contracts to publish its very first book, *New Mexico: A Brief Multi-History*, Rubén’s history of N.M., but the project doesn’t materialize. Rubén considers the work a result of a lifetime of studying as well as living New Mexican history. He believes the book represents a number of “firsts” in many categories. He also states he would be working on the book for several more years if his sons Chris and Sean hadn’t helped him learn to use the computer. Rubén becomes one of the founding members of the **New Mexican Hispanic Culture Preservation League**.
- 1999: Determined that the *MULTI-HISTORY* will be a contribution to the literature of N.M., the Southwest,

and America, Rubén buys a state of the art computer, hires a consultant and does the prepress himself all over again. Within six months the book is printed and released to the public in September. As time goes by the work receives very positive reviews in Colorado, New Mexico, and Texas.

- October, 2000: The *MULTI-HISTORY* is officially adopted by the N.M. Department of Education, Instructional Materials Bureau, for use in the public schools.
- August, 2001: Excerpts from the *MULTI-HISTORY* are excerpted into the **New Mexico Blue Book** published by the Secretary of State's office.
- February 2, 2002: In a booklet published for celebration of Hispanic Culture Day at the N.M. Legislature, the National Hispanic Culture Center is recommending the *MULTI-HISTORY* under the heading of "Consult These Sources," page 26.
- April, 2002: The *MULTI-HISTORY* has now made expenses. The book is stocked for sale at the Gift Shop of the National Hispanic Cultural Center.
- 2002: Dr. R. W. Etulain, Editor of New Mexican Lives: Profiles and Historical Stories (UNM Press), groups the *MULTI-HISTORY* with six other basic and well known ("notable," "noteworthy," etc.,) "General Histories" of N.M. (Chapter 13).
- January, 2003: Governor Bill Richardson appoints Rubén to the Board of Directors of the **National Hispanic Cultural Center**. The Senate confirms him in February, 2003. He serves until September of 2005.
- July, 2004: Rubén's inclusive *EPIC OF THE GREATER SOUTHWEST: New Mexico, Texas, California, Arizona, Oklahoma, Colorado, Utah, Nevada* is released by his publisher Cosmic House. In October he starts on a book tour that will take him into four other States.
- November, 2004: Rubén's short story "White Mice" is included in a collection of Mexican-American short stories published by **Reclam** in Germany. (The small paperback includes the works of eight Mexican-American authors, three of whom are from Albuquerque.)
- November, 2004: Rubén's short story **THE WALL** is circulating on the internet. (This is the first time he "publishes" one of his works on the internet.) In time he issues the story as a play under the title DIALOG OF THE DEAD.

January, 2005: Working with the HCPL and Rep. Rick Miera, Rubén is among those who work for passage of a law requiring NM history for graduation from high school. House Bill 139 passes unanimously through the House then through the Senate with two dissenting votes. Governor Richardson signs HB 139 into law in February.

July, 2005: *NEW MEXICO: A BRIEF MULTI-HISTORY* is in its second printing. Hardback copies are being created for the first time in Rubén's writing career.

December, 2005: Rubén's one act play, "Dialog of the Dead," is published on his website and a couple of others.

2006—During the months of March and July of 2006, Rubén does book tours into California and then into Colorado. In Southern California he also presents slide/lecture presentations which are well received.

August 1, 2006: Rubén's slide/music presentations (11 in number) are completely digitized.

Commitment to community continues to be ever present in Rubén's life.

Sálaz believes the cornerstones of his life have been his three sons, his teaching career, the launching of a regular career as a public speaker, and his writing as exemplified by the *Multi-History* and *EPIC* and the drama *Dialog of the Dead*