



Southwestern Writers Collection

Special Collections at the Alkek Library
Texas State University-San Marcos

A Guide to the Michael Rodriguez Collection

1968-1999; Bulk 1998-1999

Collection 071

Descriptive Summary

Creator:	Rodriguez, Michael
Title:	Michael Rodriguez Collection
Dates:	1968-1999; Bulk 1998-1999
Abstract:	Military documents, personal papers, writing, printed material, photos and artifacts document the literary career of Michael Rodriguez.
Identification:	Collection 071
Extent:	2 boxes (1.5 linear feet)
Language:	English
Repository:	Southwestern Writers Collection, The Wittliff Collections, Texas State University-San Marcos

Biographical Sketch

Michael Rodriguez was born at the Nix Hospital in San Antonio, Texas, on August 6, 1947, to Miguel and Herminia Lozano Rodriguez. After a few years living in the Rio Grande Valley, where his father taught high school, Rodriguez returned to San Antonio. His parents divorced when he was young, so he and his brother were raised by a single mom, which was unusual in 1950s San Antonio, in the predominantly Mexican-American South Side.

Rodriguez attended Brackenridge High School in San Antonio and played tenor saxophone, which he had learned in junior high, in nightclub bands around town. He graduated high school in May, 1965, and enlisted in the United States Marine Corps in June of that same year. Trained as an infantryman (a Grunt), he left for Vietnam in September, 1966, and returned in December, 1967. Rodriguez served as a rifleman, scout, and point man for most of the time he served in-country.

Rodriguez was assigned to Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, upon his return to CONUS (CONTinental United States), to await eventual separation from active duty, which was scheduled for July, 1968. He was twenty years old and had no idea what he wanted to do or where he wanted to go. He felt that he was smart enough to know he was better off where he was than on his own as a kid civilian.

Rodriguez went to see his career advisor, his battalion's sergeant major, who suggested he extend his tour in the Marine Corps for a couple of years and figure out what he wanted to do. He agreed to stay on for two more years. The Marine Corps allows men and women who extend, or reenlist, to select a new duty station to which they would like to transfer if they consider their present duty station unacceptable. Rodriguez took advantage and was transferred to Marine

Barracks, Naval Weapons Station-Concord, Concord, California, which was located about 35 minutes east of San Francisco, in Diablo Valley. Rodriguez left active duty in July of 1970.

Returning to school later in life, Rodriguez graduated from Incarnate Word College with a B.A. in Communications Arts in 1995. He graduated from Texas State University-San Marcos with an M.F.A. in Creative Writing in 2005.

In 1984, Rodriguez attended his first veteran's reunion and since that time has been an advocate of and for Vietnam veterans. Rodriguez's literary career consists of one book and many published articles on the struggle in Vietnam. Rodriguez earned his degree in Communication Arts from Incarnate Word College in 1995. He currently lives with his wife in San Antonio, Texas.

Being an advocate for Vietnam veterans, Rodriguez co-founded the Alamo Area Vietnam Veterans (AAVV) and also VV Chapter 366. He was also a former board member of Vietnam Veterans Foundation of Texas, Inc. Rodriguez also served as president of the Vietnam Veterans of the 2nd Battalion, 1st Marines Assoc., Inc. He is the former editor of the state newspaper for the Vietnam Veterans of America in Texas, *Texas VVA News*.

Michael Rodriguez is known primarily for his book *Humidity Moon*. The book is a collection of short stories about experiences of a Marine in Vietnam. The book has gotten praise from many Veterans' associations throughout America. The book received two awards in 1999 including Artist's E-Zine On-Line Gold Award and Award of Excellence from Shasta's Shack. The book has been praised for its ability to represent the grunt of the soldier and its ability to shed the hindsight of looking back upon the Vietnam War.

Humidity Moon is not the only writing that Rodriguez has gotten praise for. Rodriguez has had many short stories published throughout his career. He has been published in magazines

and journals. His other published works included articles on veterans' affairs, an entry in the book *Aztlan and Vietnam: Chicano and Chicana Experiences of the War* (University of California Press), and *Seminole-Negro Scouts*.

The materials included in the collection were previously loaned for the "Vietnam from a Texas POV" exhibit at the Southwest Writers Collection at Texas State University. Most of the material in the collection, with exception to a few items, was gifted to the Texas State Archives after the exhibit in 2005. The collection totals to 2.5 linear feet.

Works consulted:

Rodriguez, Michael. *Humidity Moon*. Pecan Grove Press, 1998.
<http://lonestar.texas.net/~mikerod/>

Scope and Content Note

Military documents, personal papers, writings, printed material, photos, and artifacts are the documents that highlight the literary career of the author. The collection is arranged into seven main series that include Personal Papers, Writings by Michael Rodriguez, Promotional Material, Other Projects, Photos, Writings by Others, and Artifacts.

The first series is Personal Papers. Within the papers are a certificate, email, and a thank you card. Michael Rodriguez's certificate of promotion to Sergeant in June of 1970 is included. The second document is a printout of an email from Tim O'Brien requesting an interview with Rodriguez. The last item is a thank you card from an ethics class.

The second series is Writings by Michael Rodriguez. There are two documents contained in the series. The first being a typescript for "Just Another Jungle: Short Stories of the Vietnam War." This typescript later becomes published as Rodriguez's first book, *Humidity Moon*. Also included is the short story "Prisoner" written by Rodriguez. The short story also included comments by Tim O'Brien.

The third series is Promotional Material. The first sub-series include the dates 1998-1999. The first item is a Pecan Grove promotional poster for the book "Humidity Moon." The second is a program from the San Antonio Inter-American Bookfair and Literary Festival. The next document is the newsletter, "Final Draft," of the San Antonio Writers Guild. The last item included is a San Antonio Current review of *Humidity Moon*.

The second sub-series of Promotional Material are material that is not dated. The first item is a set of quotes from Lydia Fish, Daniel L. Mouer, and Jorge Mariscal on Michael Rodriguez's fiction. The second contains a Barnes & Noble flyer for Michael Rodriguez

booksigning. The third document is a newspaper clipping from Michael Rodriguez's booksigning. The last piece is a LISTSERV post on Rodriguez's fiction.

The fourth series is Other Projects. There are two items contained within this series. The first is an outline for a novel-in-progress named "Death in Glenrio: A Route 66 Murder." The second item a narrative and treatment for a proposed document labeled "As Long As I Can Remember."

The fifth series is Photos. There are six photos in all. There are two photos of Michael Rodriguez in Vietnam. The next photo is a photo of Rodriguez by Scott Schrader. The next two photos are color photos taken in Vietnam. The final photo is a photo of the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial in Washington D.C.

The sixth series is Writings by Others. There is only one item included. The document is a newspaper clipping on psychologist Marvin Abney who helps Vietnam veterans deal with Post-Traumatic Stress Syndrome.

The final series is Artifacts. These artifacts are contained within a separate box due to size. Included in the box is a "Hell's Hotel" lighter, inscribed for Rodriguez. The inscription reads, "For those that fight for it, Life has a flavor the unprotected never know." The second item is a "Hell's Hotel" company plaque. The final item is Rodriguez's military uniform. The uniform has suffered from some moth holes.

All items included in the collection are personal papers or artifacts from Michael Rodriguez's literary career.

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

Open for Research.

Preferred Citation

Michael Rodriguez Collection, Southwestern Writers Collection, Texas State University-San Marcos

Acquisition Information

Donated by Michael Rodriguez in 2005.

Processing Information

Processed by Brennan Vogel, 2007

Detailed Description of the Collection

Series I: Personal Papers, 1950-2008.

Box Folder

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|---|---|---|
| 1 | 1 | Certificate of Michael Rodriguez's promotion to Sergeant in June 1970
Email from Tim Baldwin requesting interview
Card from Ethics Class thanking Michael Rodriguez |
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Series II: Writings by Michael Rodriguez, undated

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| 1 | 2 | Typescript for "Just Another Jungle: Short Stories of the Vietnam War" (Later published as <i>Humidity Moon</i>)
Short story, "Prisoner," with Tim O'Brien's comments |
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Series III: Promotional Material, 1998-1999, undated

1998-1999

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| 1 | 3 | San Antonio Inter-American Bookfair and Literary Festival program
"Final Draft"—newsletter of the San Antonio Writers Guild
San Antonio Current review of "Humidity Moon" |
|---|---|---|

undated

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| 1 | 4 | Quotes from Lydia Fish, Daniel L. Mouer & Jorge Mariscal on Michael Rodriguez's fiction
Barnes & Noble flyer for Michael Rodriguez booksigning
Clippings on Michael Rodriguez booksigning
LISTSERV post on Michael Rodriguez's fiction |
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Series IV: Other Projects, undated

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| 1 | 5 | Outline for novel-in-progress, "Death in Glenrio: A Route 66 Murder"
"As Long As I Can Remember"—narrative and treatment for proposed documentary |
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Series V: Photographs, undated

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|---|---|--|
| 1 | 6 | 2 photos of Michael Rodriguez in Vietnam
Photo of Michael Rodriguez by Scott Schrader
2 color photos taken in Vietnam
Color photo of Vietnam Veteran's Memorial |
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Series VI: Writings by Others

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|---|---|--|
| 1 | 7 | Clipping on psychologist Marvin Abney, who helps Vietnam veterans deal with Post-Traumatic Stress Syndrome |
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Series VII: Artifacts

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| 2 | 1968 Map of Vietnam
Pecan Grove promotional poster for “Humidity Moon”
“Hell’s Hotel” lighter, inscribed for Michael Rodriguez
“Hell’s Hotel” company plaque
Michael Rodriguez’s uniform |
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