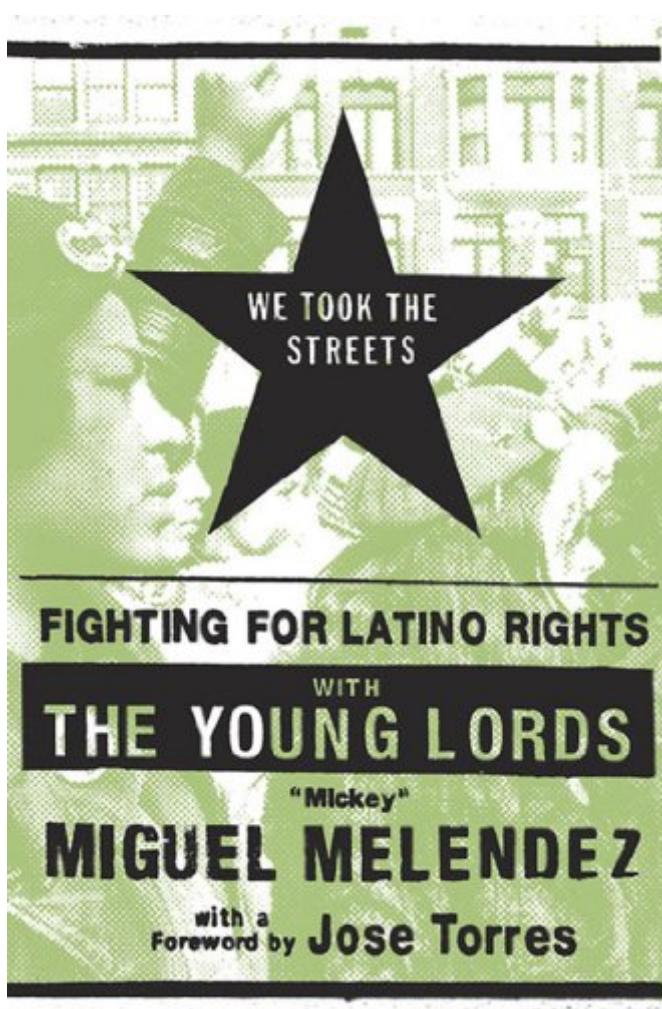


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# We Took The Streets: Fighting For Latino Rights With The Young Lords



## Synopsis

The Young Lords were one of the most provocative and controversial organizations to arise during the tumult of the late 1960s. Inspired by the wave of protest movements sweeping the country, and the world, as well as organizations like the Black Panthers, the Brown Berets, and the American Indian Movement, the Young Lords became the most respected and powerful voice of Puerto Rican empowerment in the country. In 1968 Miguel "Mickey" Melendez was a college student, developing pride in his unique cultural identity as Cuban and Puerto Rican, while growing increasingly aware of the lack of quality health care, education, and housing—•not to mention respect—his people endured for the sake of the American Dream. He was not alone. Bringing together other like-minded Latino student activists, like Juan Gonzalez, Felipe Luciano, David Perez, and Pablo "Yoruba" Guzman, Melendez helped to form the central committee of what would become the New York branch of the Young Lords. Over the course of the next three years, the Young Lords were a force to be reckoned with. From their storefront offices in East Harlem, they defiantly took back the streets of El Barrio. In addition to running clothing drives, day-care centers, and free breakfast and health programs, the Young Lords became known for their bold radical actions, like the takeovers of the First People's Church and Lincoln Hospital. Front-page news, they forced the city to take notice of their demands for social and political justice and make drastic policy changes. Melendez was part of it all, and describes the idealism, anger, and vitality of the Lords with the unsparing eye of an insider. For the first time, he reveals the extent of the clandestine military branch of the organization and his role coordinating and arming the underground. The fall of the Young Lords was as swift and as public as their rise. Fractured by internal ideological differences and plagued by infiltrators, the Young Lords imploded in 1972. The underground was disbanded and for many, like Melendez, the group they had dedicated their lives to vanished—but not its mission. Many former Young Lords continue to fight for Latino rights, including Melendez, who in 1977 led a takeover of the Statue of Liberty to dramatize the plight of Puerto Rican nationalists languishing in prison and continues to fight for peace in Vieques. Although they were active for only a brief period of time, the legacy of the Young Lords—•their urban guerilla, media-savvy tactics, as well as their message of popular power and liberation, civil rights, and ethnic equity—is lasting. *We Took the Streets* is one man's passionate and inspiring story of the Puerto Rican struggle for equality, civil rights, and independence.

## Book Information

File Size: 685 KB

Print Length: 273 pages

Publisher: St. Martin's Press (November 26, 2013)

Publication Date: November 26, 2013

Sold by: Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B00FUX7S9I

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Screen Reader: Supported

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #70,926 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #6  
in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Nonfiction > Politics & Social Sciences > Social Sciences > Special Groups > Hispanic American Studies #44 in Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Regional U.S. > Mid Atlantic #67 in Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Social Sciences > Specific Demographics > Hispanic American Studies

## Customer Reviews

I grew up during the 80's in west harlem, later the BX, went to manhattan center high school on 116 & pleasant ave .... you can't grow up anywhere in new york city and not recognize puerto rican pride, all you have to do is head up to Orchard Beach after memorial day, but it's a powerful part of the NY experience ..... I picked this up because of the Lincoln hospital story, and garbage offensives, these men and women are patriots of the black and latin community! The New York City minority community! great read, I learned about them in a american history class @ laguardia comm college, and was surprised I'd never heard of them before, I'd passed by lincoln hospital over 100 times, to hear about them being reason for it being built! I'll say it's a different time period now, but the children of NYC need to learn about this group, and movements like these, to learn discipline, and study the pride but learning journey of mister Melendez, then kids wouldn't get lost, because we are losing our city now as the rents are escalating, people are hurting now, and this knowledge is key to a new generation that needs to move forward and stand for something, not just accept circumstances, this book is excellent, powerful, and informative! True "hood", cultural, minority heroes! I'm glad and inspired by it

Mr. Melendez's book is well-written and gives the reader a great feel for what it was like living through 60s and 70s NYC as a latino. I'm old enough to remember hearing the stories on the news, but reading them in detail is a different experience altogether. I hope Mr. Melendez and his former colleagues publish more stories of these times and of the Young Lords. The work they did is still not part of regular curricula in NYC schools; more publications help to establish our history here in NYC.

Great for college students Theme is right in the title, the fight for Latino rights A book for Latino youth

great

Fantastic read from cover to end.

Now reading and enjoying the book Have learn so much about Puerto Ricans, THINGS I DID NOT KNOW The book was new and came on time Thank you and God bless you all

This is a good book to add to one's library as part of NY History! It is a must for "aware" Hispanic New Yorkers!

this political (philosophy of socialism) sound organization made headlines both local/international: "we mean business!" they did not play around, when anything had to be improved (municipalities...) they did not rely on the crooked politicians, police(pigs)... to assist them, they took the initiative. this unbelievable organization demonstrated to the people that they were all about peace and lots of love. the enemy was well aware of their philosophical views and like a cancer, found its way in... millions throughout the globe respected/appreciated and admired the many brave members of this movement that transformed a neighborhood that many thought was impossible. i recommend this volume to anyone that's interested in political science/ a touch of puerto rican history in this nation. you will be amazed at how a couple of puerto ricans got together, perused and applied the principles of mao tsetung/ karl marx/ lenin and one of puerto rico's ever lasting hero, pedro albizu campos. they realized that if they could bring the philosophy of these profound thinkers to the conscious of their colleagues and more importantly, the depressed residence; a real change is inevitable... i must rest, for i do not want to spoil the essays. this volume is complimented well with: the autobiography of malcolm x. by alex haley. both of these books are like a plate of rice and

beans.if you are a puerto rican, these books are a mandatory read.(no exceptions!)if you're not, it's not mandatory. (you're lucky)a lucid, simple and enjoyable read. (enjoy both)

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