

Good example of history essay

[Politics](#), [Communism](#)



Part I: Zoot Suit Riots

The scope of the Zoot Suit Riots can be traced back to the Sleepy Lagoon Murder trial, a case concerning the death of Gallardo Diaz; a young Latino man, which occurred in August, 1942. While the cause of Diaz's death remained unknown, Police in Los Angeles arrested close to seventeen Mexican-American suspects. Despite the lack of sufficient evidence, the suspects were charged for murder and held in prison without being accorded bail. Ending at the beginning of the year 1943, the trial of these suspects was the primary factor that elicited the Zoot Suit Riots. Mexican-Americans developed resentment as a result of the unfair trial accorded to the Mexican suspects in the aforementioned trial; hence, they began confronting the white military personnel. Overall, the Zoot Suit Riots took place in Los Angeles at a period that was characterized by intense tension amongst servicemen stationed at South California and Mexican-American populations living in Los Angeles (Bruns 65).

Notably the “ Zoot Suiters” were Mexican-Americans who had a fascinating admiration for zoot suits. Speaking of zoot suits, this connotes to flashy long coats made of loose-fitting fastened pants, long key chains, pork pie hats, and shoes that had thick soles. In other cases, the zoot suiters referred themselves as “ Pachucos.” By the close of the year 1940 a wider array of negative stories had spread regarding this group; hence, the society developed resentment over them. It is this resentment that made the Mexican-Americans the primary suspects in the death of Gallardo Diaz. This resulted in intense anti-Mexican resentment as everyone attributed Diaz's death to a culture of rebellion and lawlessness posed by the Mexican-Americans

(Alvarez 24). In a nutshell, the Zoot Riots involved military personnel and young Mexican-Americans; the Pachuco youth.

Taking place in May 31st, 1943, the riots targeted the Pachuco youth who donned zoot suits. As a result, the servicemen stripped these youth of the zoot suits and assaulted them physically. Combined with the intense resentment that the public had regarding the zoot suiters, the Pachuco youth were treated as less American. On a similar note, the negative image that the media had portrayed regarding the zoot suiters resulted in development of intense racist attitudes towards them. In fact, the press published negative stories regarding the zoot suiters and this dented their image in a detrimental manner. Amidst the escalation of the riots, servicemen drawn from various contexts got involved in the fight against the Mexican American zoot suiters. Overall, the prejudice that had been created against the Mexican Americans because of the zoot suiters escalated the violence, whereby the Zoot Suit Riots spread to various cities including Chicago, Harlem, and Philadelphia, but riots in Los Angeles were the most intense (Mazón 9).

The impacts of the riots is the close to one hundred and fifty people were injured and more than five hundred Latinos were arrested and charged for vagrancy and rioting. In addition, the riots had a devastating effect on the international relations that the United States had with Mexico. Worth noting is the fact that South California's economy was greatly reliant on Labour from the Mexicans (Pérez-Torres 36). Upon realization of the effects posed by the riots various measures were initiated to curb the riots whereby the federal government put pressure on government official to halt the riots. The

Mexican Embassy wedged remonstrations against the conduct of American servicemen during the riots and this saw the creation of a committee to ascertain the causes of the riots. As such, racism was identified as the colossal factor that elicited the riots. In conclusion, the Zoot Suit Riots remains to be a major event in the history of the United States.

Part II: Hearings conducted by HUAC into alleged Communist sympathizers in the Hollywood community

Taking place from the year 1951, the hearings conducted by HUAC occurred as the second investigations that were carried out on matters regarding Hollywood and Communism. As such, the HUAC hearings brought forward Larry Parks who testified, but was later on blacklisted because of the reluctance he demonstrated while testifying. Worth noting is the fact that during the time of HUAC hearings, the legal tactics of those who demonstrated reluctance in testifying were different in that they relied on the Fifth Amendment for protection against self-incrimination and not the First Amendment. The use of the Fifth Amendment ensured eventual blacklisting of those in support of communist ideas.

Apart from Like Parks, Dmytryk was also called to testify during the HUAC hearings whereby they cooperated with HUAC's committee. Some of the most prominent witnesses who were less reluctant in offering their testimonies against Communist Party were Budd Schulberg; a screenwriter and Elina Kazan; a director. The testimonials from the later paved way to the departure of various artists who were implicated. Precisely, most of these artists departed to Europe and Mexico. Another person who was called before the HUAC hearing was Stander who pledged to support quests to fight

against communist activities that were destabilising. Overall, evidence from the HUAC hearings indicated that Hollywood films were being used as vessels for subversive communist ideas.

Work Cited

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