

fourth generation has come to involve the work of professionals in the coordination of different activities associated with regional corporate functions (productive, logistics, labor, financial, and so on) ("coordinated in Mexico").

Regardless of whether production processes are simple or complex, that workers are men or women, with basic education or a master's degree, at the border or in the center of a country, in isolated plants or in industrial clusters, *maquiladoras* will exist as long as there is a tremendous wage disparity in the world, which is the result of the incredible concentration of wealth under capitalism.

35

Media

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In the late 1970s, Latina/o scholars began to examine the forgotten history of Spanish-language newspapers and radio in the United States, and the differences in purpose and content that these media outlets demonstrated as compared to their English-language counterparts. Latina/o media scholar-activists such as Jorge Reina Schement and Ricardo Flores (1977), Felix Gutiérrez (1977, 1981), and Federico Subervi-Vélez (1979) were some of the first to recognize that the lack of media coverage of Latina/o issues in mainstream outlets both created invisibility and placed a highly contested responsibility on Spanish-language and bilingual media. Additionally, this tension often did not mesh with the advertiser-supported structure that underpinned the broader mass media system in the United States. Although media outlets oriented toward Latina/o audiences viewed their readers, listeners, and viewers as cultural citizens who were attempting to claim a visible position within the American social landscape, the pressure for profits created an imagined Latina/o public that was dynamic only as consumers. This assimilation has consistently affected the political potential of Spanish-language and Latina/o commercial media in the United States. Yet despite the capitalist drive to utilize media outlets as corporate tools for Latina/o consumer marketing, the ongoing practices of Spanish-language media, especially community newspapers and radio outlets, is to highlight the injustices Latina/o individuals and communities encounter locally and across the United States.

The propensity to use media as forms of public service was in fact present in newspapers dating back to 1850, after the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo placed Mexicans in a precarious position as the United States sought to build the nation. Media as a tool for social justice was also extant in the 1950s during Latina/o resistance against "Operation Wetback" and the forced deportations of thousands of Mexican Americans. Today, media continues to operate as a mouthpiece and point of connection, as evident by the many Spanish-language newspaper and broadcast workers and cultural interlocutors who aim to tell their story about the impact Latina/o immigrants are having across the United States and Canada. Furthermore, Chicana feminist scholars such as Dionne Espinoza (2001) and Maylei Blackwell (2011) have also conducted research documenting how Chicana and Latina activists utilized newsprint as a political tool for developing counternarratives regarding the principles and values of the Chicano movement and moratorium that took place in late 1960s and early 1970s. In this regard, nonprofit communication outlets have historically operated as productive mediascapes—virtual spaces of symbolic communicative and cultural flows—which have the potential to challenge dominant narratives while also creating audiovisual voices for Latina/o public spheres that are generally invisible and silent in mainstream media (A. Rodriguez 1999). The debate over the role that media plays in Latina/o communities in fact continues today as political pundits decry Spanish-language and Latina/o community and commercial media as participating in (as opposed to simply reporting about) social justice movements and mobilizations for immigration reforms, for instance, particularly during high-stakes presidential election cycles.

Media are powerful social forces that are highly contested because they are pervasive and persuasive sites of cultural expression, political discourse, and lamentably,

racist, sexist, and homophobic audiovisual representations that have the potential to reinforce, shift, and/or undermine our understanding of the world. The word "media" was originally extracted from the broader term "mass media." Scholarly examinations of media histories, media representations, media activisms, and media theories, to name a few, along with intersections between them, have pointed to the significant roles that radio, television, print, film, and now the Internet play in the cultural, political, economic, and social ways of life across different local and global populations, including Latina/o communities. The early part of the twentieth century marked the moment when electronic forms of communication such as radio and film were viewed as technologies that had the potential to not only reach multiple audiences simultaneously, but also reinterpret conceptual understandings, especially of our increasingly globally networked societies. Numerous scholarly projects have noted how media (a plural word but increasingly used as a singular word as well) play a considerable role in the ways in which Latina/o communities are imagined and treated in material and discursive contexts (Noriega and López 1996; Valdivia 2000; Mayer 2003; Amaya 2013). For example, Juan González and Joseph Torres (2011) argue that the American media system has played a central role in reinforcing racial oppression, both through its coverage and its efforts to delegitimize ethnic media, particularly those with transnational roots in the Caribbean and Latin America.

Much of the work by Latina/o (media) studies scholars has aimed to uncover the historical and contemporary ways in which Latina/o communities have engaged with media and how English-language outlets in particular have visually and discursively wounded this perpetually attacked community. Relatedly, Latina/o studies scholars have made key insights, especially in the area of media representations that have furthered

our discernment of media as a powerful social force that can influence people and affect cultural change (Negrón-Muntaner 2004). For instance, forms of resistance, such as the reconceptualization of *Latinidades*, not only are present in popular culture and entertainment content, but are also represented by transnational media celebrities such as Selena, Shakira, Jennifer Lopez, and Eva Longoria. Through them, we are able to analytically examine the embodied intersections of gender, race, sexuality, class, and citizenship in Latina/o communities and media imaginaries. Additionally, scholarly insights have pointed to how audiences themselves interpret the cultural, personal, and political significance of media texts such as telenovelas, radio programming, newspaper reporting, and filmic representations (Paredes 2009; Cepeda 2010; Molina-Guzmán 2010; Rios and Castañeda 2011). In this sense, media—as a site of critical analysis in Latina/o studies—has benefited from theorizations from other disciplines such as feminist studies, critical cultural studies, ethnic studies, global studies, Chicana/o studies, and American studies, as well as sociology, anthropology, and communication. Media are more than communication technologies: they are material and cultural embodiments of historical and contemporary practices that map the terrain of meaning surrounding the production, distribution, and consumption of mass-mediated popular content.

Additionally, media—as sets of practices and institutions—circulate today in what are no longer simply information and entertainment modes. As Douglas Kellner and Meenakshi Gigi Durham (2009) note, media “is both a space of interpretation and debate as well as a subject matter and domain of inquiry.” It is also a domain of social movement activism, ranging from petitions to increase access to commercial and community-based media outlets to utilizing digital circuits of expression to challenge normative interpretations of

undocumented LGBTQIA youth. Latina/o studies scholars have asked questions such as: How do government and industry policies and economic structural conditions shape access to media outlets? Who is left out? And how have communities responded by developing their own forms of media access through grassroots activism and outlets? Accordingly, examinations of the political economy of Latina/o radio, for instance, have shown that regulatory changes in the last decade have consolidated the sector and reorganized the broader Spanish-language media industry (Castañeda 2014). Currently, the ownership of broadcast media properties by Latinas/os is nearly non-existent and the Federal Communications Commission (FCC)—the U.S. regulatory body that oversees communication systems and media content across the country—lacks Spanish-speaking and Latina/o staff. Such political-economic structures matter because they affect programming by constricting the broadcast airwaves for pro-immigrant rights organizing, for example, or by imposing a pervasive cultural politics that privileges patriarchal and homophobic radio humor (Casillas 2014).

Yet Latina/o media activists and media justice organizations such as the Hispanic Media Coalition are consistently advocating for changes to mass media access and equitable representation, while also recognizing that the U.S. communication system is based on capitalist, racist, and sexist principles that have historically excluded Latinas/os and communities of color from gaining access to the airwaves. The media policy debates in the 1970s between the FCC and minority activists groups, for instance, were attempts to rectify the media injustice that pervaded the communications landscape prior to and after the civil rights movement. In this vein, recent Latina/o studies research that analyzes electronic media history is also questioning assumptions about how and why Spanish-language print, radio, and television

outlets emerged in the United States. Scholarship by Dolores Inés Casillas (2014) and G. Cristina Mora (2014), for example, points to the need for specific examinations of media history, representation, and access in conjunction with policy, economics, gender, and race, rather than as separate issues and processes in the making of Latina/o media culture, citizens, and consumers.

By the same token, the role of (digital) media in Latina/o social movements, particularly in the most recent DREAMers movement, challenges notions of Latina/o communities as technologically oblivious and in fact highlights the multiple ways in which Latinas/os engage in the questions of cultural citizenship through the transnational audiovisual and discursive spaces that globalized media embody, particularly the Internet and digital devices. The DREAMers' strategic use of social media, for instance, has created international awareness of the issues, and in some cases, the viral nature of digitalization has led to the suspension of deportation proceedings for some youth activists. Such activism has created a globally connected online support network that is able to crowdsource information and action for immigrant rights. Thus, the emergence of digital media scholarship in relationship to Latinas/os reveals not only the ways in which media technology is changing, but also how Latinas/os are also investing in, engaging, and expanding new technologies. In this regard, digital media will increasingly become critical sites of investigation as Latina/o communities become an influential demographic group in the twenty-first-century media environment.

Lastly, media literacy is an area within Latina/o studies that has much potential, but more research is needed to more adequately comprehend how Latina/o media users critically assess and produce audiovisual texts as well as how they conceptualize the social, cultural, economic, and self-expressive forces of media. Given the media circulation of hate speech against Latinas/os and

their migratory lived experiences, it is increasingly urgent to reflect on how media is imagined, taught, and discussed in communities and schools in our highly connected mediated societies. It is imperative that Latina/o studies scholars continue to develop and expand media literacy investigations since they can help create school programming that inspire youth or community social engagement (Yosso 2002; Báez 2008; L. Vargas 2009).

Thus, media are more than simply venues for news and entertainment. As Laurie Ouellette notes, "To approach the study of media critically involves situating media within economic, political, cultural and social context and addressing its relations to capitalism, labor, citizenship, gender, race and class dynamics, inequalities, sexuality, globalization and other issues that are both larger than media, and intertwined within the production, circulation, and use of media texts, images, sounds, spaces, artifacts, technologies and discourses" (2013, 3). Media do not exist in a vacuum outside of social and power relations; they partake of a larger cultural framework. Hence the importance of critical examinations of the relations between these audiovisual and print institutions and practices and material and affective experiences within Latina/o communities. Just as we analyze education, religion, economics, public policies, and their influence on the contested formations of Latinidades, so we must treat media as meaningful sites and modes of engagement that help constitute multiple lived realities (Aparicio 1998). Latina/o scholars have successfully argued for this recognition but there is more at stake with the continuously changing contours of communities and the dynamic role of (digital) media in contesting, negotiating, resisting, silencing, and creating the historical and contemporary imaginary of Latinidad. Indeed, the imperative to evaluate, interpret, and produce media in all its formations is more important than ever.