The first essay, by Pedro Cabán, professor of Latin American, Caribbean, and U.S. Latino Studies at the University at Albany, traces the emergence of Chicano Studies and Puerto Rican Studies during the late 1960s and early 1970s. Noting the "insurrectionary and somewhat turbulent origins" of these fields, he explores how they laid the foundations for the field of Latina/o Studies. Cabán considers Latina/o Studies as a vibrant field of study, as well as the challenges that Latina/o Studies has faced as an academic unit in higher education. In the second essay, Vicki Ruiz, professor of history and Chicano/Latino Studies at the University of California–Irvine, reflects on the long history of Latinas/os in the United States and on the ways that including that history reshapes the broad contours of U.S. history. Focusing on three important historical moments, she illuminates how including Latinas/os as "meaningful actors" recasts our understandings of empire and citizenship in U.S. history. In the third essay, Frances Aparicio, professor of Spanish and Portuguese at Northwestern University, turns to a central challenge in the field of Latina/o Studies. The great diversity of peoples embraced by the term Latina/o includes distinct national origins, time and place of arrival in the United States, race, gender, sexuality, class, religion, language, and immigration/citizenship status. Highlighting the interdisciplinary nature of the field, she argues that this "heterogeneity challenges scholars to find new, interdisciplinary approaches that can address our multiple and shifting realities." Hence, in addition to comparative approaches, Latina/o Studies must also explore interlatino relations and the emergence of new interlatino subjectivities, or Latinidad. In the fourth essay, María Josefina Saldaña-Portillo, professor of Social and Cultural Analysis at New York University, argues for transnational and comparative approaches to Latina/o Studies. Using the aftermath of hurricane Katrina in 2005 and New Orleans as a lens, she demonstrates how these approaches deepen our understandings of the United States and of its relations to countries beyond its borders, as well as to the diversity of peoples within its borders.

From Chicana/o Studies and Puerto Rican Studies to Latina/o Studies

PEDRO CABÁN

Latino Studies has evolved from its insurrectionary and somewhat turbulent origins as Chicano and Puerto Rican Studies into its current incarnation as a multidisciplinary academic field that explores the diversity of localized and transnational experiences of Latin American and Caribbean national origin populations in the United States. In this essay, I draw a distinction between Latino Studies as a field of study and Latino Studies as an academic unit of instruction and research in the university. It is evident that as an academic field Latino Studies has matured in terms of the quantity and quality of the scholarship produced, the numbers of programs of instruction, the formation of professional associations, the publication of specialized journals, the growing numbers of doctorates minted each year in Latino and Latina-related subject matter, and other achievements. In the process the field has attained increased academic legitimacy and more universities have targeted hires specifically in Latino Studies.

The development of Latino Studies as academic units has not fared as favorably. As is the case with most race and ethnic studies, Latino Studies has a contested, and in some cases still undefined, status in the academy. The academy's response to Latino Studies has varied widely. As a consequence, Latino/a Studies academic units are configured in a multitude of forms. Hundreds of programs, departments, centers, and institutes have been established in the last three decades. Some academic units enjoy autonomy in hiring and in curriculum design and operate with respectable budgets, while others are merely paper programs with part-time directors. Some are exclusively research-based centers and others provide limited undergraduate instruction....

How Latino Studies is positioned as an academic unit will figure prominently in the development of the field and the nature of its contribution to fulfilling the mission of the university....

Ultimately, I am interested in explaining the gradual shift from a virtually universal hostility and rejection of Chicano and Puerto Rican Studies, the precursors of contemporary Latino Studies, to the current situation in which a growing number of universities are exploring alternative forms of incorporating Latino/a-based knowledge into their academic mission....

[D]espite the inhospitable greeting, Puerto Rican and Chicano Studies endured and helped pave the way for Latino and Latina Studies. What explains the staying power of an academic endeavor that was once perceived to have merely a fleeting and inconsequential impact on US higher education?

The reason simply is that Chicano and Puerto Rican Studies produced scholarship of academic excellence. It has developed academically viable curricula and consistently enrolled large numbers of students in its courses. Student activism has also served to sustain existing programs and remains one of the more powerful forces for the creation of new Latino/a Studies programs. In the 1960s, university and college education was a privilege and inaccessible to the vast majority of students of color, virtually all of whom were from the working class. Working-class and poor students launched the first militant campaigns to restructure the urban public universities in order to include ethnic studies instruction and research. However, the struggle was not only to achieve educational diversity. Given the entrenched racism, Chicano and Puerto Rican leaders realized the indispensability of these programs for retention by improving the self-image, confidence, and academic capabilities of those poor urban youth who were fortunate enough to attend college. The struggle for Chicano and Puerto Rican Studies was steeped in political urgency and would have a major impact on the advancement of their communities.

Pedro Cabán, "Moving from the Margins to Where? Three Decades of Latino/a Studies," *Latino Studies* 1:1 (March 2003): pp. 5–35. Reproduced with permission of Palgrave Macmillan.

As the Latino population grew and became increasingly diversified in terms of national origin, social class, and demographic characteristics, the necessity of research and instruction on this population became more pressing and the content more varied. Thirty years ago university administrators could not have envisioned the phenomenal growth of a Latino/a college student population, let alone one that would continue to demand Latino Studies instruction. Yet in the absence of student political activism and protests, academic bureaucrats chose to ignore the growing social and educational importance of providing Latino Studies instruction. In fact, during the 1990s, the refusal of university administrators to consider seriously the reasonable student calls for Latino Studies provoked strikes, building takeovers, and militant activities in a number of Ivy League colleges and prestigious research universities. The intensity and determination of some of these protests by Latina and Latino students, many from a more privileged socioeconomic stratum than the rebels of the 1960s, surprised university officials. This resolve has convinced recalcitrant academic bureaucrats that the demand for Latino-focused instruction is not a transitory political phenomenon....

Nonetheless, the role of Latino Studies in higher education remains a controversial issue for a large number of universities. Advocates for Latino Studies still envision themselves as engaged in a campaign to democratize the academy by broadening the scope of inquiry and instruction. However, now, 30 years after the student sit ins and building takeovers, Latino Studies (and ethnic and race studies in general) has generated new scholarship that reinterprets important episodes and processes of US history and society, produced an array of innovations in curricula, design[ed] ... culturally sensitive pedagogy, developed interdisciplinary research initiatives that generate new ways of knowing, and experimented with novel methods of delivering university generated knowledge to the community. In the process, Latino Studies has posed epistemic challenges to the hegemony of the disciplines....

* * *

Although a number of studies are available, a detailed, historically grounded comparative analysis of the beginnings and evolution of Chicano, Mexican American, and Puerto Rican Studies needs to be written. In 1968, the first Chicano Studies Department was established in California State College, Los Angeles, as a result of vigorous demands and strikes by the United Mexican American Students. In March 1969, the Chicano Coordinating Council on Higher Education organized a conference at the University of California, Santa Barbara. The participants drafted [El] Plan de Santa Barbara for college level instruction on the Chicano/a experience in the US and outlined the elements of a new academic enterprise that linked the creation of knowledge with community empowerment. The organizers wrote, 'We recognize that without strategic use of education, an education that places value on what we value, we will not realize our destiny.' Higher education was to be employed 'for the development of our community', which necessitated that the 'university work for our people.' The conference also resulted in the unification of regional Chicano student organizations into the national Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Atzlán (MEChA), which assumed a leadership role in promoting Chicano Studies. Soon other programs and departments were established in the California State University system.... By 1984, 19 Chicano Studies programs had been founded in the University of California and California State University systems. In 1970, the University of Texas Austin established the Center for Mexican American Studies. The current Center for Chicano-Boricua Studies at Wayne State began as the Latino En Marcha Leadership program in 1971.

In April 1969, the Black and Puerto Rican Student Community took over the walled-in South Campus of the City College of New York and closed the university until the board of trustees agreed to establish a School of Black and Puerto Rican Studies. The Puerto Rican Student Union issued a pronouncement, 'Somos Puertorriqueños y Estamos Despertando,' in 1969 that vowed 'to bring the services of the university to the community which is denied the knowledge beyond those "ivy walls" that are made to keep the majority of the people ignorant.' The same year the New York City Board of Education provided priority funding for Black and Puerto Rican Studies in the City University of New York (CUNY). The establishment of other departments and programs followed quickly. In 1970, Livingston College of Rutgers University established the first Puerto Rican Studies Program in New Jersey. By 1973, 17 CUNY units had established Puerto Rican Studies programs and departments. Programs were established in a number of SUNY campuses and private institutions. In 1973, CUNY established the Centro de Estudios Puertorriqueños as a research unit with a permanent staff of professional research associates. The Centro was the product of the demands of a politicized social movement that was linked to the struggles of other racialized communities....

A point of departure for the scholarship in this formative stage in the development of Latino Studies was a critique of the epistemological foundations of the social sciences and historical inquiry, and a repudiation of canonical claims of value neutrality in the pursuit of knowledge. The university was implicated as a crucial component of an overarching structure of racial and class oppression. Chicano and Puerto Rican Studies disavowed the assimilationist discourse and eschewed social science positivism as a static and ahistorical mode of analysis ill-suited to the task of reclaiming a history long denied. To counter the racism of the university, which expounded an ideology of assimilation but practiced the politics of exclusion, Chicanos and Puerto Ricans adopted an essentialist posture and viewed with deep skepticism the process of negotiation and compromise practiced by these institutions.

Chicano and Puerto Rican Studies emphasized a radical historiography of colonialism and territorial conquest and displacement, racialization of subject peoples and their economic exploitation, denial of equal citizenship, and a quest for symbols and practices of resistance and national affirmation. Given that Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans had been systematically excluded from the historical narrative of the United States, the pioneering scholarship questioned long-standing preconceptions regarding their contributions to building this society. Rodolfo Acuña's 1972 path-breaking study recast long-established depictions of Chicanos as passive subjects who aspired to be assimilated into the dominant society. He documented a history of the Chicano

resistance to the onslaught of Anglo colonization and displacement, and portrayed Chicano/as as agents in the making of their own history. A new narrative that centrally inserted Chicanos into the history of the Western United States was a vital antidote to the sanitized renditions of Manifest Destiny. According to Alberto Camarillo, the purpose of these early historical works was 'the recovery and reconstruction of an ignored and obscured past'—which challenged a 'history in which people of Mexican origin in the Southwest were cast into the shadows if not altogether omitted from historical consideration.' Almost two decades ago Renato Rosaldo ... observed that Chicano Studies 'shared in the broader endeavor of combating ideological, political, and economic forms of oppression confronted by their research subjects.' In addition to the critique of history as practiced in the academy, Chicano and Chicana scholars confronted the racially biased methodology of social science inquiry as practiced in the academy, and were committed to undertake applied research on education, migrant workers, and healthcare delivery.

Frank Bonilla, the founding director of the Centro de Estudios Puertorriqueños, observed that the Puerto Rican Studies research agenda 'meant a rejection of the defeatist visions of Puerto Rican reality promulgated in academic research.' Puerto Rican Studies exists, he argued, because enough Puerto Ricans 'reject any version of education or learning that does not forthrightly affirm that our freedom as a people is a vital concern and an attainable goal.' ... Historical rediscovery, national affirmation, and knowledge for political empowerment and community development fueled the incipient intellectual project of creating a new Puerto Rican and Chicano subject who was imbued with agency and capable of using the existing institution.

This formative stage of the field was also characterized by a search for appropriate paradigms that could be deployed to theorize the conditions of Chicanos/as as displaced and Puerto Ricans as colonized people. Chicanos refashioned [the] concept of internal colonialism to explicate the array of institutions and practices that subjugated the Chicano community. By the early 1970s, the Center for Puerto Rican Studies began to theorize the relation between capitalist development, colonialism, and migration to comprehend the 'massive presence of Puerto Ricans in the United States' and their collective condition as a cheap, disposable proletariat in metropolitan labor markets.

Although often informed by Marxist and structural analysis, much of the academic production of this period (late-1960s to mid-1980s) failed to interrogate adequately the practice and mechanism of race, gender, and sexual orientation oppression within the national formation. Neither was the scholarship sufficiently comparative in approach, and it often opted for an analytical perspective that explored the relations between the oppressor and the oppressed as recalcitrant oppositional binaries whose behavior was racially motivated. Political analysis relied on a discursive practice that essentialized both actors, and discouraged more nuanced thinking on strategies of resistance to the assimilationist power of the university. The reliance on historical and political analysis, as opposed to other disciplinary-based perspectives, to generate an understanding of the conditions of Puerto Ricans and Chicanos reflected the dominance of males as the intellectual workers of this early era of Latino Studies. Major theoretical and political challenges to male-centered, nationalistic discourse would be launched in the 1980s and 1990s, initially by feminists, and subsequently by queer scholars who explored the intersections of sexual orientation with other counter hegemonic discourses and practices of identity formation.

The early Puerto Rican and Chicano Studies scholarship shared many of the same normative concerns and analytical perspectives, but they differed in one significant area. Whereas the Chicano historiography and the emerging social science literature primarily explored the Chicano experience in the US, early Puerto Rican Studies was heavily invested in reinterpreting the economic history of Puerto Rico under US colonial domination. Sociologist Clara Rodríguez observes that prior to the 1970s the literature was 'reflective (and in some cases supportive) of Puerto Rico's colonial relationship.' During the late 1960s and early 1970s, the bulk of the literature was critical of US colonialism, 'and attempted to deconstruct the earlier literature and contextualize Puerto Rico and Puerto Ricans.' However, research and theorizing soon focused on the nexus between colonialism, capitalist development, and migration to the United States.

During the 1980s and 1990s, Latino Studies achieved significant academic maturation and professional development. The philanthropic foundations were important in training a cohort of Latino scholars.... Research centers attempted to deliver on early movement goals to undertake policy-relevant research that could be utilized to empower the Latino community. These fellowships and research initiatives served to validate academically the presence of Latinos and Latinas and their scholarship in the academy.

Latinos established national professional associations in order to facilitate the sharing of research, to create intellectual communities and to enhance the academic development of the field.... A number of journals on Latino and Chicano Studies were published....

The rapid expansion of the Cuban and Dominican college age populations in Florida and New York City generated demand for research centers and undergraduate programs that explored the histories of these communities in the United States as well as in their home countries. In 1991, Florida International University established the Cuban Research Institute, which supports, generates, and disseminates research on both Cuba and Cuban Americans. A new scholarship on the Cuban American experience is evolving that is indicative of a sea change in the academic community's self-perception. Second-generation Cuban American scholars are not as inclined as the émigrés of the 1959 revolution to view themselves as an exile community. Their scholarship has focused on issues of identity, exile politics, community development, Cuban Americans in US foreign policy-making, and women as economic agents. By the early 1990s, the large Dominican population of New York City was beginning to exercise its growing commercial and political influence. The Dominican Studies Institute (DSI) was established in 1994 in response to pressure from the Council of Dominican Educators for CUNY to create an institute to address the glaring gap of knowledge on the Dominican community. Current research focuses on the socio-economic characteristics of Dominican communities, the characteristics

of the migration experience, transnational community formation, the construction of national identity, and the impact of returning migrants on the Dominican Republic.

During the 1990s, Latino/a Studies underwent considerable redefinition. A new generation of scholars employed the analytical tools and conceptualizations of diverse disciplinary traditions to broaden the scope of historical inquiry and theorizing on the Latino/a experience. The scholarship included postmodernism and more theoretically nuanced applications of historical materialist analysis. The national unity that was perceived as indispensable to advance La Causa gave way to the reality that no national origin group was homogeneous; that all these formations were socially constructed and riddled by class, racial, gendered and sexual orientation divisions. The notion of ethnic identity became profoundly complicated and contested.

Latina feminist scholarship was an early and important intellectual challenge to the essentialist and male-centered orientation of the early Chicano and Puerto Rican Studies research. Chicana feminists shattered the male-imposed notion that nationalism supersedes and subsumes internal differences. They revealed that the monolithic, hegemonic construction of Chicano identity was not only male derivative, but was an exclusionary formulation that imposed a gendered division of intellectual labor. As it questioned the established chronicles of the western experience and colonial practice, Latina feminism offered a gender-based reconsideration of the historical narratives of the Chicano, Mexican American and Puerto Rican experiences....

Citizenship, civil rights, language rights and identity occupied the concerns of sizable contingents of Latino/a scholars. Empirical studies on Latino/a political behavior, immigration and naturalization were also published with increased regularity....

By the early 1990s, Latino and Latina Studies was evolving along at least the following five tracks: (1) the new history that emphasized the areas of urban communities, women, and political and institutional histories, and the frontera or border as an analytical and theoretical construct; (2) literary and cultural studies that made major contributions to the discourse of identity and racial formations, sexual subjectivity, analysis of cultural production, and cross border identities; (3) politics and political economy, with a focus on political participation and electoral behavior, economic justice and labor markets, social movements, immigration, Diaspora studies, and legal citizenship; (4) interdisciplinary scholarship on social constructions of identity, critical race studies, sexual subjectivities, language and cultural citizenship; (5) feminist scholarship that has informed all these analytical and theoretical concerns with new gendered perspectives.

Virginia Sánchez Korrol observed of the new historically oriented scholarship, 'the result was a historical interpretation that conferred agency on US Latinos, bringing them out of the shadows and on to center stage where their reality contrasted and contested the dominant Anglo experience.' ...

During the late 1980s and throughout the 1990s postmodern scholarship generated a critical rethinking of the social construction of identities and made evident the artificiality of cultural, racial uniformity within Latinidad. More recently, a new generation of scholars has embarked on theoretical and empirical explorations of sexual orientation and [its] relationship to identity, transnationalism, and popular culture, the politics of language usage and bilingualism, Latino cultural studies, local electoral politics and mass political behavior, and analyses of the impact of national economic changes on Latino communities.

This intellectual effervescence did not occur in a vacuum. The impact of globalization, Caribbean and Central and South American immigration, the growth of US Latino populations and their heightened electoral importance, the development of information technologies, and growth of the college age Latino student population were among the more notable changes that compelled many universities to rethink the role of Latino Studies. The paradox of growing economic and political interdependence between Latino communities in the United States and their countries of origin heightened policy interest.

* * *

The rethinking of the role of ethnic studies in higher education is taking place during a period of US global supremacy and unilateralism in world affairs. A triumphalist discourse attributes this supremacy to the superiority of US institutions and way of life. As they acknowledge the vibrant cultural and ethnic diversity of the country, national leaders are reasserting a singular patriotic credo that likens loyalty to the government with patriotism, and which equates dissent with disloyalty. The current re-emergence of American exceptionalism is degrading constitutional liberties and citizenship rights. In the post-9/11 context, difference and diversity are tolerated to the extent that they do not clash with an ideology of political conformity.

The debate on ethnic studies is framed in terms reminiscent of this discourse on difference and conformity....

An earlier phase of US global pre-eminence at the turn of the 19th century was attributed to the country's democratic institutions, efficient capitalist economy, and the superior moral fiber of its people. Ultimately, greatness was attributable to a core set of values that was rooted in a deeply held conviction of racial and sociocultural Anglo-Saxon superiority. National greatness was explicitly associated with male-gendered whiteness....

Historically, US elites have taken comfort in the extraordinary power of civil society and its key institutions to socialize new immigrant populations into the norms of political and economic behavior, and to legitimate the prevailing hierarchy of power. However, when these benign institutions fail to 'make Americans,' the US state has demonstrated time and again its willingness to enforce conformity and compliance.

That is why efforts of new arrivals to preserve their cultural and linguistic distinctiveness, of racialized minorities to rediscover and expose a history that contradicts the central tenets of US exceptionalism, and of activists who daily challenge the practice of race, gender, and sexual orientation oppression pose a threat to the carefully constructed ideology of US greatness, which is still based on a barely disguised discourse of white supremacy. The success with which Latino/as have nurtured a cultural identity and maintained symbolic, as well as real, ties to their countries of origin is an affront to those who believe in the

intrinsic superiority of 'American' values. Consequently, Latino/as are often depicted as an undifferentiated mass of foreigners whose first language is Spanish and who nurture the anti-democratic cultural values and anti-Western social practices of their countries of origin. In this context, conservative forces have sought to deprive immigrant Latinos of state-mandated benefits or restrict the citizenship rights of Latinos. These voices proclaim that universities should not provide Latinos the opportunity to study their experience since this only serves to foment balkanization and undermine national unity. For many who fear the growing influence of racialized minorities, Ethnic Studies programs and departments are seen as nurturing values that are antithetical to their notions of E Pluribus Unum.

Yet the history of ethnic and race studies refutes the thesis that careful and critically engaged scholarship on the experience of racialized minorities in this country leads to balkanization, alienation, and social tensions. A monolithic discourse that seeks to eradicate difference, or subsume difference, invariably is more destabilizing than an alternative approach that recognizes and values the reality of difference, but which explores the prospects and opportunities for building unity and strength from this difference.

Recasting Empire and Citizenship in U.S. History

VICKI L. RUIZ

As historians, many of us have had the experience of encountering a memoir, diary, or letter in which the individuals mentioned are far more intriguing than the author of the document. The chatty reminiscences of Señora Doña Jesús Moreno de Soza serve as a case in point. Born in California in 1855, she came of age, married, and cared for her family near Tucson, Arizona. When she was eighty-four, she recounted the following incident that had occurred at a local park some fifty years earlier:

> They used to have a dancing platform. Once it happened that an Apache squaw called Luisa was dancing when Petrita Santa Cruz ... came along, and looking at the Apache squaw said, "That is enough, get out, we want to dance." The Apache squaw replied, "I am a person, too."

Moreno de Soza noted that Luisa later married the Apache son of a prominent Euro-American doctor. Given Luisa's rise in status, Moreno de Soza began to greet her as "comadre" (a term of endearment suggesting kinship). But Luisa kept her distance and purportedly responded to the overtures of friendship with the phrase, "Why don't you call me, Mrs. Handy?"

This tale from the 1880s reveals subtle registers of negotiation and contestation.... The remembered interaction between Moreno de Soza and Luisa Handy lends insight into the ways Mexican Americans, American Indians, and

Vicki L. Ruiz, "Nuestra América: Latino History as United States History," *The Journal of American History*. Vol. 93, No. 3 (Dec 2006), pp. 655–672. Reprinted by permission of Journal of American History.

Euro-Americans could inhabit the same social spaces and thus complicate U.S. western narratives that privilege a binary relationship between Euro-Americans and a designated "other." This unusual vignette also shades our understanding of the Spanish borderlands in showing that interactions between Spanish/Mexican settlers and native peoples could occur outside the specter of bonded labor. Yet, despite a florescence of scholarship on the Spanish borderlands over the past fifteen years, U.S. historians frequently give both the region and the era no more than a passing glance.

One reason for that erasure is simply structural. Having finite time and space to devote to the colonial era, teachers and textbooks place an understandable emphasis on the thirteen British colonies as the background to the American Revolution. But such logic should not preclude discussions of other European settlers, notably the Spanish who arrived in St. Augustine in present-day Florida four decades before the founding of Jamestown, Virginia. Another reason harks back to the Black Legend. With roots in the Reformation and in the competition for New World empires, the Black Legend counterpoised virtuous English families against rapacious Spanish *conquistadores*.... The Black Legend would feed into the currents of Manifest Destiny; however, once the borderlands became territories and states, the diverse histories of pre–United States settlements, if acknowledged at all, became reduced to romanticized images of quaint New Mexican villages or crumbling California missions. Yet disdain and distrust lingered. By 1920 Spanish-speaking people in the Southwest were frequently relegated to either of two categories—the "Spanish" descendants who were living reminders of a bygone era or the larger (and more threatening) group of Mexican immigrants who required guidance and surveillance....

From carving out a community in St. Augustine in 1565 to reflecting on colonialism and liberty during the 1890s to fighting for civil rights through the courts in the 1940s, Spanish-speaking peoples made history within and beyond national borders. Certainly, one essay cannot comprehensively convey the legacies of individuals of Latin American origin. So instead, in a survey of the state of the field, I emphasize three historical moments pivotal to reimagining an American narrative with Latinos as meaningful actors—1848, 1898, and 1948....

* * *

With the conclusion of the U.S.-Mexican War and the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, 1848 marked the end of the Spanish and Mexican frontier era, an era that remains shrouded in myth and misconception.... The idea of a prestatehood California controlled by fun-loving swashbuckling rancheros was also enshrined in an earlier historiography of moonlight and mantillas where fiestas and fandangos were the order of the day. However, as the historian Douglas Monroy has pointed out, the ranching elite represented only 3 percent of the Californio population in 1850.

Typically, Californios did not preside over sprawling properties but instead tended small family farms.... Spanish-speaking settlers, according to a more recent account, lived in a society where "the entire family awoke at three o-clock and men and women worked until dusk."

What does contemporary scholarship reveal about the peoples who journeyed north to regions that would become the American Southwest, people establishing communities such as Santa Fe (New Mexico) in 1610, San Antonio (Texas) in 1718, and Los Angeles (California) in 1781? They were a heterogeneous lot representing a range of colonial *castas* that demarcated to the nth degree Spanish, African, and indigenous ancestries. Over one-half of the founding families of Los Angeles, for example, were of African heritage. In addition to mixed-race settlers born in Mexico, Jews from the Iberian Peninsula sought refuge from the Inquisition in the far-flung province of New Mexico. Combing an array of colonial documents, including baptismal records, the historian Omar Santiago Valerio-Jiménez calculated the way economic mobility determined the racial identification of Spanish-speaking villagers in the Rio Grande region of southern Texas and northern Tamaulipas in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Using the notion of "pigmentocracy," he claimed, "Individual examples abound of poor vecinos … 'whitening' their caste as their wealth increased. Particularly successful individuals not only entered the upper class but also recreated themselves as españoles."

Inventing or reinventing oneself—is that not the hallmark of the mythic American frontier? But before we enshrine the early Spanish-speaking settlers in the pantheon of western lore as rugged individuals who trekked the wilderness in search of opportunity, it is critical to recognize that the Spanish borderlands encompassed caste-based communities with bonded labor at the center of social and economic relations. Indentured servitude was prevalent on the colonial frontier and persisted well into the nineteenth century with Indians and, to a lesser extent, people of African heritage pressed into bondage. In San Antonio, Texas, for instance, in 1735, Anttonía Lusgardia Ernandes, a "free mulatta," sued her former master for custody of their son. She recalled her servitude: "I suffered so much from lack of clothing and mistreatment of my humble person." Moreover, she declared, the patrón, "exercising absolute power, snatched away from me my son—the only man I have and the one whom I hope will eventually support me." Admitting paternity, the man claimed that his former servant had relinquished the child to his wife. The court, however, remanded custody of the child to Ernandes on the condition that she provide her son with "a proper home." …

Borderlands scholars have provided compelling narratives of societies rife with conflict and accommodation, pain and possibilities, effectively destabilizing popular notions of a peaceful pastoral era. With the conclusion of the U.S.-Mexican War and the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, Spanish-speaking settlers confronted dramatic changes in their lives and in their communities. If one considers Texas in the accounting, Mexico lost one-half of its national domain and between 75,000 to 80,000 of its colonist-citizens, the vast majority residing in New Mexico. Yet, the narratives of these people remain hidden within the American experience, overshadowed by the national implications of conquest…. Historians generally focus on the U.S.-Mexican War as "the fire bell in the night" with the subsequent acquisition (not conquest) of new lands, a feat that would open up the incendiary issue of slavery in the territories….

But what happened to those Spanish-speaking settlers who remained in the Southwest, ostensibly citizens after a period of one year? Simply put, Mexicans on the U.S. side of the border became second-class citizens, commonly divested of their property, political power, and cultural entitlements….

Concurrently with the economic, political, and cultural upheavals occurring in the Southwest, many Cuban exiles to the east embraced Manifest Destiny. Rodrigo Lazo in his stunning literary history interrogated the publications of Cuban expatriates whose thriving print culture, based in New York and New Orleans from the 1840s through the 1860s, encouraged the United States to set its sights on Cuba. These writers fashioned themselves as emissaries of liberation who believed that Spanish colonialism should be supplanted by American annexation. In *Writing to Cuba,* Lazo teased out the contradictions among Latin American intellectuals who coveted American ideals of freedom while they acknowledged antebellum slavery and U.S. imperial designs. Not a monolithic group …, they faced off in internal debates, and some founded an abolitionist newspaper, *El Mulato.*

Cirilio Villaverde and Emilia Casanova de Villaverde were exiles whose views would more closely align with those of a younger and more famous compatriot, José Martí. During the Ten Years' War (1868–1878), Casanova de Villaverde, in a letter to the Italian freedom fighter Giuseppe Garibaldi, asserted "that 'the beginning of our revolution means the freedom of our slaves, giving them arms, and incorporating them in our patriotic ranks.'" … Emilia Casanova de Villaverde turned away from the privileges of the family plantation and advocated abolition. Only recently have historians acknowledged her role as an early leader in the quest for Cuban independence, a rebel in her own right, separate from her husband.

* * *

While 1848 burned in the consciousness of Mexican Americans during the decades that followed and of Chicano activists a century later, 1898 symbolized a similar transhistoric threshold for Cubans and Puerto Ricans. The Filipino-Cuban-Spanish-American War … had roots both in the jingoistic stories published by the Hearst press and the protection of U.S. business interests in Cuba (valued at $50 million). But what has remained unacknowledged is the effort of Cubans and Puerto Ricans in the United States who vigorously championed the cause of Antillean independence from Spain.

With New York City as his primary base, José Martí established the Cuban Revolutionary party (Partido Revolucionario Cubano) in 1892, and within a short span over forty branches appeared in New York, New York, New Orleans, Louisiana, and in Florida at Key West and Ybor City (near Tampa). The party also included a chapter dedicated to the freedom of Puerto Rico. On January 29, 1895, Martí was one of four insurgents to sign a declaration of war—the 1895 Cuban War of Independence had begun. Though he fell in battle early in the campaign, Martí's deeds, poetry, and essays would assume a life of their own. Revered as an "apostle" of Cuban liberation, Martí left multiple legacies extending into the twenty-first century….

Within the last decade many scholars in Latin American and American studies have also looked to José Martí for inspiration, interrogating the meanings inscribed in the 1891 essay "Nuestra América" (Our America) in which he laid out a hemispheric vision of independent nation-states in a concerted dialogue with their powerful "neighbor" to the north. Perhaps portending a century of U.S. intervention in Latin America, Martí warned that

> the pressing need of Our America is to show itself as it is, one in spirit and intent.... The scorn of our formidable neighbor who does not know us is Our America's greatest danger. And since the day of the visit is near, it is imperative that our neighbor know us, and soon....

For contemporary academics, Nuestra América not only locates cognition of imperialism among those who would feel its weight but also points to a new paradigm of "the Americas." ... On the one hand, Martí's "Nuestra América" has become emblematic of a truly transnational, hemispheric interdisciplinary discourse, but on the other, Martí as a person should be placed in his own historical moment in the United States. As Nancy Raquel Mirabal has so adroitly and succinctly argued, "Martí represents an intellectual tradition of U.S. based Latin American thought and exile that challenges assumed silences and invisibility."

Martí's contemporaries, both men and women, who had worked tirelessly toward Cuban and Puerto Rican liberation would find their hopes dashed by war's end. Cuba gained its independence in 1902 with the caveat of the Platt Amendment, a clause in the new nation's constitution that authorized U.S. intervention. Puerto Rico, however, remained under U.S. dominion as a "non-incorporated territory." "Are we brothers and our property territory or are we bondsmen of war and our islands a crown colony?"—in 1900 a delegation of Puerto Rican leaders directed that pointed question to the U.S. Congress. Economic dependency on the United States significantly recast the lives of Puerto Ricans and Cubans in the decades ahead. A verse from a poem by the Puerto Rican *independista* Lola Rodríguez de Tió perhaps expressed it best: "Cuba and Puerto Rico/are two wings of one bird."

... [T]he economic restructuring that occurred in Puerto Rico with U.S. capital investment in sugar, large corporate landholdings, and the decline of coffee resulted in the massive dislocation of the island's rural folk. Ignoring the impact of American business interests, federal policy makers tended to interpret rampant unemployment as rooted in overpopulation. As a result, they promulgated plans to disperse families away from the island through job recruitment or contract labor. For example, in 1900 over five thousand Puertorriqueños arrived in Hawaii to harvest sugar cane, filling a labor shortage caused by the Chinese Exclusion Acts, and for two decades more families would follow. In 1917, with the passage of the Jones Act, Puerto Ricans became U.S. citizens; yet for many the free exercise of their rights proved elusive. Unlike cigar rollers in Florida, who exerted some control over their labor, Puerto Rican sugar workers in Hawaii found their movements so restricted that they "could not move from one plantation to another without the planters' consent."

By 1920 Puerto Ricans had migrated as contract workers or free agents to forty-five of the forty-eight states, creating communities in such distant locales as Louisiana and Arizona. However, as the historian Virginia Sánchez Korrol revealed, over 60 percent called New York City home....

Luisa Capetillo, the passionate Puerto Rican labor leader and feminist, certainly found New York a hospitable place during her brief residence from 1919 to 1920. A veteran labor organizer in Puerto Rico and Florida, she used her position as a *lectora* (reader) to cultivate and reinforce the consciousness of cigar rollers on trade union issues, socialism, anarchism, and women's rights. In New York she ran a boardinghouse and adjoining restaurant dishing up revolution and vegetarian fare. In her feminist manifesto, published in 1911, Capetillo stressed a radical version of republican motherhood, emphasizing women's education for their own sake and for the sake of their children.... Envisioning a future of women emancipated in every respect, Capetillo declared, "women are capable of everything and anything."

The Spanish-speaking cigar workers of Ybor City welcomed both José Martí and Luisa Capetillo. Beginning in 1886, Cuban, Spanish, and Puerto Rican cigar rollers and their Italian counterparts in that city had created thriving, militant work cultures in addition to extensive ethnic community networks.... During the 1895 war, Cubans of all colors contributed their wages, savings, and jewelry for the cause of independence. Such solidarity, however, was fleeting....

Afro-Latinos across generations and regions confronted the color line at every turn.... [T]he imprints of those negotiations can be traced across the entire canvas of Latino history from the borderlands to the present.

Patterns of economic dependency, like those unleashed by the Filipino-Cuban-Spanish-American War, could also be located in Mexico and the U.S. Southwest....

In *Culture of Empire,* Gilbert González complicated the standard "push/pull" interpretation of early twentieth-century Mexican immigration that privileges the Mexican Revolution (1910–1920) as providing the crucial push north for over a million people. According to González, large-scale immigration began before 1910 with the uprooting of villagers whose common lands were seized as the regime of Porfirio Díaz attempted to modernize Mexico by opening the country to foreign investment, particularly in agriculture, mining, and transportation. González argued that the emphasis on push/pull bifurcates a more fluid, transnational migration, a migration significantly shaped by U.S. businesses on both sides of the border.

... Instead of Manifest Destiny as territorial conquest that culminated in the U.S.-Mexican War, Manifest Destiny as economic empire building retained (and still possesses) considerable currency.

* * *

Was World War II a catalyst for civil rights among Latinos in the United States?...

Approximately five hundred thousand Latinos served in World War II, and that figure does not include the tens of thousands who labored in defense plants and other industries vital to the war effort, such as food processing.... I contend that for the individual in the local community, World War II did signal a

significant shift in social relations and daily praxis. Men in uniform challenged seating sections in town theaters, demanded table service at "whites only" restaurants, and desegregated public pools. Yet, those protests did not occur in a vacuum but drew strength from two different political traditions forged during the depression, as represented by the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) and El Congreso de Pueblos de Hablan Española (the Spanish-Speaking Peoples' Congress).

Founded by Tejanos in 1929, LULAC within a decade developed into a very influential middle-class Mexican American civil rights organization with local councils scattered across the Southwest. Envisioning themselves as patriotic "white" Americans, LULACers restricted membership to English-speaking U.S. citizens. As the historian David Gutiérrez notes, LULAC, taking a cue from the early National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), stressed the leadership of an "educated elite" who would guide their less fortunate neighbors. He continued, "From 1929 through World War II LULAC organized successful voter registration and poll tax-drives ... and aggressively attacked discriminatory laws and practices." One could interpret LULAC's strategy or performance of whiteness as an organizational orchestration of "passing." While Afro-Latinos confronted the color line, *güero* (fair-skinned) Latinos could at times situate themselves quite differently....

In 1936 Blanca Rosa Rodríguez de León, a Guatemalan immigrant with a young daughter, could have passed given her complexion, education, unaccented English, and elite background. However, this young radical labor organizer chose to forego any potential privileges based on race, class, or color. Deliberately distancing herself from her past, she chose the alias... Luisa Moreno [and] would become one of the most prominent women labor leaders in the United States.... From the Great Depression to the Cold War, Moreno journeyed across the United States mobilizing seamstresses in Spanish Harlem, cigar rollers in Florida, beet workers in Colorado, and cannery women in California. The first Latina to hold a national union office, she served as vice-president of the United Cannery, Agricultural, Packing, and Allied Workers of America (UCAPAWA), in its heyday the seventh-largest affiliate of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO). Moreno also served as the principal architect of El Congreso de Pueblos de Hablan Española....

On April 28–30, 1939, in Los Angeles the first national civil rights assembly for U.S. Latinos convened—El Congreso de Pueblos de Hablan Española. Although the majority of the 1,000 to 1,500 delegates hailed from California and the Southwest, women and men traveled from as far away as Montana, Illinois, New York, and Florida to attend the convention. Over three days, they drafted a comprehensive platform. Bridging differences in generation and ethnic background, they called for an end to segregation in public facilities, housing, education, and employment and endorsed the rights of immigrants to live and work in the United States without fear of deportation. While encouraging immigrants to become citizens, delegates did not advocate assimilation but rather emphasized the importance of preserving Latino cultures, calling upon universities to create departments in Latino studies. Despite the promise of the first convention, a national network of local affiliates never materialized; only a few fragile southern California chapters limped along during the war years.

The stands taken by ... Congreso delegates must be placed in the milieu of the deportations or repatriations of the early 1930s. Between 1931 and 1934, an estimated one-third of the Mexican population in the United States (over five hundred thousand people) were either deported or quasi-voluntarily repatriated to Mexico even though the majority (an estimated 60 percent) were native U.S. citizens. Viewed as foreign usurpers of American jobs and as unworthy burdens on relief rolls, Mexicans were the only immigrants targeted for removal. They were either summarily deported by immigration agencies or persuaded to depart voluntarily by duplicitous social workers who greatly exaggerated the opportunities awaiting them south of the border. Given that recent history, advocating for immigrants was courageous. Speaking before the 1940 conference of the American Committee for the Protection of the Foreign Born, Luisa Moreno contrasted the exploitation of Mexican workers with their indispensability to western agribusiness, "making a barren land fertile for new crops and greater riches." She continued, "These people are not aliens. They have contributed their endurance, sacrifices, youth, and labor to the Southwest."

While many scholars (myself included) have profiled the possibilities for social change in the postwar era, the chill of the Cold War hastened the demise of ten progressive CIO unions and the deportations of suspected immigrant radicals, Luisa Moreno among them. LULAC and El Congreso would imprint different legacies, the former institutional, the latter ideological. LULAC continued to rely on the courts to redress discrimination, while El Congreso's platform resonated decades later in the voices of Chicano activists and political stalwarts, such as Bert Corona, who in bridging generations, would build effective coalitions among trade unions, grass-roots networks, and students in pursuit of immigrant rights.

Two California court cases ... reveal the intersections of Mexican American civil rights campaigns with a larger African American freedom movement. In 1945 Gonzalo Méndez, a naturalized U.S. citizen born in Mexico, and his wife Felícitas, born in Puerto Rico, joined with four other families to sue four Orange County school districts. They challenged the common practice of drawing school boundaries around Mexican neighborhoods to ensure de facto segregation. Mexicans who lived in "white" residential areas were also subject to school segregation. [In 1947, the] renowned California writer Carey McWilliams noted a further precaution taken by school officials, placement by phenotype. "Occasionally the school authorities inspect the children so that the offspring of a Mexican mother whose name may be O'Shaughnessy will not slip into the wrong school." During the trial, superintendents reiterated well-worn stereotypes. Referring to Mexicans as a "race," the Garden Grove superintendent told the court with an air of authority that Mexican children were inferior in "personal hygiene," "scholastic ability," and "economic outlook." The trope of

the dirty Mexican appeared prominently throughout the proceedings. The plaintiffs' attorney, David Marcus, questioned the constitutionality of educational segregation and called in expert witnesses—social scientists who challenged these assumptions about Mexican American children and the supposed need for separate schools. When she took the stand, Felícitas poignantly summed up her family's struggles: "We always tell our children they are Americans." Taking almost a year to formulate his decision, Judge Paul McCormick in 1946 "ruled that segregation of Mexican youngsters found no justification in the laws of California and, furthermore, was a clear denial of the 'equal-protection' clause of the Fourteenth Amendment." In 1947 the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit upheld McCormick's decision.

Méndez v. Westminster assumes national significance through its tangible links to *Brown v. Board of Education*.... "[I]t was the first time that a federal court had concluded that the segregation of Mexican Americans in public schools was a violation of state law" and unconstitutional under the Fourteenth Amendment because of the denial of due process and equal protection of the laws....

The courtship of Andrea Pérez and Sylvester Davis had all the makings of a 1940s Hollywood movie—pretty Rosie the Riveter strikes up a friendship with her dashing co-worker; he leaves to fight for their country; on his return, they fall in love and plan to marry. Credits roll—well, not quite. Pérez was the daughter of Mexican immigrants, and her fiancé Sylvester Davis was African American. Fully aware that California's antimiscegenation code prohibited their union, they hired the civil rights attorney Dan Marshall, a leader in the liberal Los Angeles Catholic Interracial Council. After a Los Angeles County clerk denied the couple a marriage license, Andrea Pérez filed suit.

In 1948 the California Supreme Court ruled in Pérez's favor, becoming the first state supreme court to strike down an antimiscegenation law. As [scholar] Dara Orenstein brilliantly showed, the decision hinged in part on *mestizaje*. She argued that the court found the statute "too vague and uncertain" since it did not take into account people of "mixed ancestry" and since government employees could not consistently determine degrees of whiteness. In addition, Judge Roger Traynor, writing for the majority, ruled that the law violated the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. At the time of the decision, Earl Warren was still governor of California; nineteen years later, he would preside as chief justice in *Loving v. Virginia,* the U.S. Supreme Court case that struck down all remaining state antimiscegenation laws....

The year 1948 marked several events of significance to Latino history, including *Pérez v. Sharp* [and] the founding of the American G.I. Forum.... In contrast to the close of the U.S.-Mexican War in 1848 and the Filipino-Cuban-Spanish-American War of 1898, the years after World War II did not represent a drastic transformation in Latino history, but one better compared to slow continuous shifts in plate tectonics. This period represented a claiming of public space as Latinos, through protest, politics, and popular culture, attempted to bridge the fault lines of inequality. The three defining moments discussed in this essay—1848, 1898, and 1948—are suggestive of the ways Latino history recasts and complicates constructions of empire and citizenship.

Over the last fifty years, U.S. Latinos have become even more diverse. According to the 2005 census figures, the Latino population has reached 41.3 million and can be categorized as follows: 64 percent Mexican, 10 percent Puerto Rican, 3 percent Cuban, 3 percent Dominican, 3 percent Salvadoran, and the remaining 17 percent divided among a bevy of other Latin American–origin groups. It is crucial to understand their histories within and beyond the borders of the United States and to contextualize present and projected demographic realities by exploring the pasts that preceded them. A recent National Research Council study predicts that by 2030 one-quarter of all Americans will be of Latin American birth or heritage.

With an utopian bent, José Martí dreamed of a "new America," a transhemispheric union between north and south, rooted in democracy, dialogue, and equality. "There can be no racial animosity," he wrote, "because there are no races." He added, "The soul, equal and eternal, emanates from bodies of various shapes and colors." Racism, nativism, and economic imperialism, which shaped Martí's world, remain with us in the twenty-first century. Contrary to popular media depictions of Latinos as people who arrived the day before yesterday, there exists a rich layering of nationalities, generations, and experiences. I seek a fuller recounting of this history, encompassing both transhemispheric and community perspectives. Nuestra América *es* historia americana. Our America *is* American history.

Confronting Diversity and Latinidad in Latina/o Studies

FRANCES R. APARICIO

One evening last year in Chicago, I attended a Latino concert at a local music venue downtown with some friends and colleagues. Around the table we were all Latino, yet each of us embodied very different social, class, cultural, linguistic, gendered, and racial experiences. We were all of Latin American descent; some were born and raised in Chicago, others were more recent immigrants, having arrived to the US five years ago, and others, like me, had been in the United States for most of their lives as adults. Most outsiders would have grouped us all together as Latinas/os, minorities, foreigners, and Spanish-speaking. But a closer look at the complex and contradictory identities and experiences among us all reveals a much more complicated picture about Latino America. This is, indeed, one of the most central challenges that Latina/o studies faces as a field of study....

How can we explore the mutual interactions, transculturations, conflicts, and power struggles among the 38 million Latinas/os in the United States, not to mention the power asymmetries between Latinas/os and dominant society? As a multi- and interdisciplinary site of academic inquiry, Latina/o studies examines the multiple factors that affect the everyday lives of US Latinas/os. Such

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Frances R. Aparicio, "(Re)constructing Latinidad: The Challenge of Latina/o Studies." In *A Companion to Latina/o Studies*, ed. Juan Flores and Renato Rosaldo. Copyright © 2007 Blackwell Publishing. Reproduced with permission of John Wiley & Sons Ltd.

heterogeneity challenges scholars to find new, interdisciplinary approaches that can address our multiple and shifting realities.

Since the early 1990s, Latina/o studies has produced cutting-edge knowledge that responds to the historical shifts witnessed by our communities: colonialism and subordination, border crossing and transnationalism, racism and racialization, gendered identities and sexualities, stereotypes and representations, and the constitution of hybrid identities. These areas of inquiry are also located at the intersections between individual selves, collective groups, and the institutions of civil society, the media and the state. If identity is defined by the dialogic struggles between notions of the self and the constructions imposed from the outside (other individuals, institutions, and discourses), then Latina/o identities need to be understood at the interstices of both.

Scholars have debated the usefulness of the term "Latino" as a rubric that incorporates or fails to account for the heterogeneous experiences of US Latinas/os. Because it is an umbrella term that erases our cultural specificities, or that mostly foregrounds the conflicts and segmentations among the various national groups— ... the term itself has been the object of suspicion and debate within the field. Yet now it is becoming a site from and around which to discuss the implications of the demographic diversification of the Latina/o population in the United States. Let us go back to the circle of my Latina/o friends in Chicago in order to explore the complexities behind Latina/o identities.

A middle-class immigrant from Venezuela, Sarita came to the US to study English originally in the late 1990s, but decided to stay in Chicago and brought her children over at the beginnings of the Hugo Chávez turmoils. Yet she also stayed because she fell in love with a Chilean man. Sarita and her children are undocumented, but their lives are informed by the middle-class values and aspirations that were part of her life in Venezuelan society. Their preoccupations range from being deported anyday to maintaining their social status through consumerism and social circles. José, a gay, Puerto Rican professor, has been in the United States since he was a graduate student, yet he is still very connected to Puerto Rican Island culture, to Spanish, and to Latin America. His long-term partner is an Anglo man who doesn't speak Spanish. They live in the suburbs and attend the Chicago opera and theater after work when they can. José grew up very poor on the Island, yet he is perceived as an Anglo because of his light skin color and blond hair. His gay identity, however, makes him vulnerable to homophobia and exclusion. Rosario, a Mexican woman in her fifties, a single mother of two young men, has not found full-time employment in years because she does not have a degree, yet she doesn't have enough money to pay for her tuition to complete her bachelor's degree in a continuing education program in the city. She is a citizen, but she cannot afford to pay her gas bills. She has no medical insurance, but she owns a small home in the south side of the city. Her car is always breaking down, and she is constantly struggling to make ends meet. Yet her cultural life is very rich. She has been an active participant of various Latino arts and theater organizations in the city for more than twenty years and she possesses a particular social capital in terms of her knowledge about the community. Dave (for David), half Puerto Rican, half Mexican, was born in Chicago but raised in the suburbs by his Mexican mother, who wanted to escape life in the inner city after her divorce. Despite his suburban identity, he grew up poor, lacking any sort of luxury and having to work since he was a child. Like many native-born Latinas/os, he speaks English and feels uncomfortable speaking Spanish. Many of his acquaintances assume he is privileged and assimilated because of his suburban, Anglophone identity. Yet he is deeply connected to his biological father and his family, who live in a very poor area of the city. His identity integrates the suburbs and the inner city, for he has been a part of these two worlds, cultures, and families. He knows about gang violence, about inner city high schools, and about unemployment through the experiences of his half brothers. He also knows about middle-class lifestyles, an individualist work ethos, and Anglo families and neighbors. And myself, a Puerto Rican blanquita who has lived in the United States for thirty years, been married to two working-class Chicanos, and have felt less and less connected to the Island as the years go by. A single mother of two Puerto Rican/Mexican daughters, and having lived in most regions of the United States, my own experience has connected me to both US Puerto Rican and Chicano/Mexicano cultures. I have in-laws in El Paso, Texas, and sisters in Boston and New York. Chicago is now my home. I call my girls niñas (the Mexican term) instead of nenas (the Puerto Rican term), I spend more time with my Mexican mother in law than with my own mother, but I definitely love to dance salsa and merengue more than cumbias or nortenas. In my case, class, gender, and cultural identities have all been marked by my personal connections to the Mexican American community.

This small group of individuals represents a small slice of the heterogeneous identities and experiences that constitute today what we call Latino. First, the different experiences among economic immigrants, political refugees, exiles, and native-born historical and racial minorities structure Latino lives, yet they do not determine them. Indeed, the contradictions in the lives of Sarita, Rocío, José, David, and myself reveal that individuals' multiple and contradictory identities unfold differently and lead to divergent results in terms of material and social survival. Sarita's undocumented status has made it very difficult for her to purchase a home, while Rocío's citizenship has not significantly improved her living conditions. Yet this past summer Rocío was able to travel to Mexico with a school tour and Sarita and her daughter were not able to go. While David's suburban upbringing may be seen as the most privileged experience in the group, this has not shielded him from poverty nor from witnessing the challenges and social problems of the inner city. In turn, José and I have been in the United States as part of the brain drain that has significantly robbed the Island of the talents and resources of young professionals. Yet gender issues, more than salaries, have kept José and I from returning to the Island.

Despite the fact that Spanish has been repeatedly hailed as the common denominator among Latinas/os, the linguistic diversity within this sector continues to be hybrid, fluid, and politically contingent. That evening, José refused to speak in English to David, asserting the dominance of Spanish at the table. If David has been privileged socially and in educational institutions for his knowledge of English and for not having an accent, contrary to José's heavily accented English despite his many years in the US, that evening David became a linguistic minority, silenced by the dominance of Spanish among the group, an experience

of exclusion that he has faced multiple times. This moment of linguistic conflict represented the inverse of language politics in the United States, whereby Spanish is usually subordinated and racialized. In this case, José's Latin American subjectivity and linguistic power exerted dominance over a US-born Latino.

Elements of socioeconomic status and class also become significant in accounting for the Latino experience. While most US Latinas/os are working class or working poor, there is an emerging middle class and professional sector that has become an intermediary between institutions and those with less power and social capital. The case of Rocío is interesting in this regard. While she considers herself an upper-class venezolana, in the United States she has been struggling to maintain that lifestyle while earning much less than what she made in her country. Simultaneous to this shift in her own class experience, she has become an activist and advocate for immigrant and refugee rights. She has used her skills in networking, communications, media, and marketing to speak publicly for the undocumented. This differs from the more common phenomenon of middle-class Latin American immigrants being privileged over US Latinas/os in the workplace, given their levels of education in their home countries and their native skills in Spanish. In Chicago, for instance, the Spanish-language media—television and newspapers—recruit professionals directly from Latin America rather than US Latinas/os because of a perceived deficiency in the use of Spanish among the latter. It is not a coincidence that Rosario, despite her citizenship, has not found a decent, full-time job in the city. While Latin American professionals are displacing US Latinas/os from particular jobs, some, like Sarita, are also using their skills and resources to advocate for the larger community.

The term "Latino" carries with it internal semantic tensions that reflect the multiple sites from which it has emerged. Most scholars and many community members have embraced the term because it has represented a more organic alternative to the government-imposed term "Hispanic," coined and used since the 1970s. Yet this acceptance has not precluded the recognition that the term itself homogenizes the diverse power locations among US Latinas/os. As an umbrella term, it can be used strategically to indicate the oppositional location of Latinas/os versus, or outside of, dominant society. Likewise, it can be used to erase the specificities of the various national groups and historical experiences outlined above. Many second-generation Latinas/os use the term to identify themselves vis-à-vis Anglos, yet they also use their national identity to identify themselves in relation to other Latino groups. It is also increasingly common for hybrid Latinas/os, that is, those who are descendants of two national groups, to use the label Latino in order not to erase either of their identities. Thus, the use of labels is contingent, fluid, and relational, used strategically and structurally depending on the context. I define myself as a Puerto Rican professor among other Latina/o colleagues, but I also define myself as a Latina cultural critic in the larger context of my university colleagues. The term "Latino" then does not necessarily displace the significance of the national identifiers, but is used to signal the multiple and relational selves of colonized subjects.

Many Latina/o scholars have argued against the use of the term "Latino" because the media has deployed it historically to homogenize and lump us all together as one undifferentiated mass. This media discourse has had egregious

consequences for the communities involved. For instance, the literary market sells Latin American literature as part of their Latino market. This conflation has less to do with the mutual influences or literary continuities between these two canons than with the economic benefit of attracting additional readers and buyers.... The experience of confronting racial, cultural, and linguistic marginalization and subordination in the United States as a result of the colonized status of our communities is a strong argument that distinguishes US Latino writers from their Latin American counterparts....

* * *

In Chicago, as in the other major Latino urban centers in the United States, communities from all Latin American countries live, work, dance, and interact throughout the cities that they are also transforming. Chicago is the third largest city in the US and home to the second largest Mexican and Puerto Rican communities nationwide. It is also home to a growing Guatemalan sector that has become the third largest Latino group in this urban area. As of the 2000 Census, Latinas/os constitute 26 percent of Chicago's total population. Of that, Mexicans constitute 70.4 percent, Puerto Ricans 15 percent, Guatemalans 1.8 percent, Ecuadorians 1.2 percent, and Cubans 1.1 percent. The fact that the Guatemalans and Ecuadorians have outnumbered the Cubans suggests that the traditional trinity of the three major historical minorities—Mexican American, Puerto Rican, and Cuban American—is shifting, creating a much more complex mosaic of Latin American national encounters. Indeed, recent Census figures show that Chicago ranks ninth in the metropolitan areas receiving large numbers of South American immigrants. Certainly, Peruvians have long made Chicago their home. In addition, the so-called "new Latinas/os"—Dominicans, Colombians, Ecuadorians, and other South and Central Americans—are all represented in the growing Latino demographics of the city....

This social mosaic leads to new forms of interaction, affinities, and power dynamics between and among Latinas/os from various national groups. It is interesting that media and journalism seem to zero in on the ensuing cultural conflicts and national tensions that have arisen from these new social spaces.

Yet we are also witnessing different forms of affiliations, solidarity, identifications, desire, and intermarriage among Latinas/os. This is not necessarily new, for Chicago and the Midwest witnessed similar interactions between Puerto Ricans and Mexicans, particularly since the 1940s. Yet the growing numbers and the dimensions of this demographic revolution call for a recognition that the term "Latino" is a real thing, an emerging social and cultural experience and experiment, and not just a label or construction imposed from the outside. If in the past decades, paradigms of national identity served to understand and produce a sense of collectivity grounded in particular geocultural locations and regions—the Chicanos in the West and Southwest, the Puerto Ricans in New York and the Northeast, the Cuban Americans in Miami—nowadays national identities are still significant, but they are not the exclusive axis of reference from which to understand Latino lives. In fact, national identities are restructured and reorganized as a result of these increasingly hybrid spaces. New interlatino subjectivities are emerging and we need to examine them at various levels....

First, there are myriad examples of mutual transculturations among different Latino nationals. From the impact of Afro-Caribbean music in Mexican culture (Carlos Santana's music), to the linguistic borrowings and influences, let's say, between Cubans and Nicaraguans in Miami, to the ways in which new Latino cuisine fuses Mexican ingredients with Caribbean ones, Latinas/os from various nationalities are creating new cultural objects and practices that are the result of two or more national influences.... Secondly, there are outright cultural conflicts among Latinas/os, most of which stem from the ways in which we racialize each other. These negative constructions of the national Other are usually fueled and informed by stereotypes and racializations that have been historically shared and internalized, but that also point out differences in behavior that may result from gender and racial subordination and from the larger forces of colonization.... There are also instances in which perceived differences of power inform the disidentification or the gesture toward differentiation from our national others.... For undocumented Latinas/os, Puerto Rican US citizenship is seen as a privilege, while many Puerto Ricans consider it another reminder of their colonial and second-class status within the United States. At the same time, Puerto Ricans are continuously racialized by many other Latinas/os for their Caribbean Spanish, for their darker skin color, and for their high poverty rates. Many Latinas/os also refuse to be confused for a "Mexican," an attitude that reveals their fear of being racialized themselves as much as their internalization of that very same dominant discourse. Many of these disavowals and discourses of subordination, then, are rooted in larger structural forces rather than in individual prejudices.

... [T]he hybrid Latino subjects who are the offspring of Latinas/os of two different national groups ... negotiate their identities in ways that differ from the Anglo-Latino power dyad that has structured most of our understandings about Latinas/os in the United States. These younger Latinas/os may identify with each national culture in more relational ways and in more specific contexts, rather than in the linear ways in which we tend to think about national awareness or cultural reaffirmation. Mérida Rúa's research about the MexiRicans and PortoMex subjects in Chicago suggests that, in fact, hybrid Latinas/os make strategic decisions about national differentiation based on a variety of contextual, family, and social factors. Thus, their identity constructions tend to be more concentric, multiple, and diffused than what we are accustomed to....

Like interlatino racializations, these forms of passing for a national other are likewise informed structurally by the political positions and cultural presence of specific nationalities. For instance, factors such as the power and visibility of each group in relation to the others, or the mainstream acceptance of some identities over others, or the political rights and citizenship accorded to some, have an impact on the ways in which hybrid Latinas/os foreground one identity over another. For David, who is half Puerto Rican and half Mexican, it is easier to identify with the Mexican culture, partly because he was raised by his Mexican mother, but also because, according to him, he has been keenly aware of the fact that Mexico and Mexican history—iconized through its pyramids and the epic grandeur of its Aztec culture—have been much more visible in the US imaginary than its Puerto Rican counterpart. This canonization of particular national groups reveals the uneven ways in which our specific histories have been integrated as part of the US official knowledge. Given his suburban upbringing and his US citizenship by birth, David has not had to take into account the racialization of Mexicans in the context of US labor and immigration policy, nor the privilege of Puerto Rican citizenship.... [These] identities transcend the national/regional segmentation of our fields as well as of the identity paradigms that have traditionally informed our way of thinking. Because our fields of study have developed in such segmented ways and because cultural nationalism and Cuban exceptionalism have informed the boundaries of our research and thinking, this epistemological segmentation has prevented us from exploring these other very significant hybrid Latino sites, moments, and identities.

The history of interlatino relations in Chicago dates back at least to the 1940s when, as Elena Padilla (1947) documented, Puerto Rican newcomers were welcomed, housed, and offered social and economic support by the Mexican community.... While the diversification and increasing internal hybridity of the Latino communities is now coming to the fore as a result of the great migration of the 1980s, the fact is that this hybridity is not altogether new, but rather increasing as a result of these demographic changes. Yet these sites of Latinidad do not necessarily imply a utopian, egalitarian dynamic, nor do they suggest altogether that power differentials are decreasing, but rather, that new power relations emerge from these encounters.

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What are the implications of this increasing Latinidad for Latina/o studies as a field of study? Rather than reproducing the national and geographical segmentation that has structured the way we organize knowledge in teaching and research, Latina/o studies can become the space in which these diverse experiences, identities, and power dynamics can be accounted for in the construction of a new social imaginary that transcends the old paradigms and nationality based conflicts. By studying and reflecting on interlatino dynamics through interdisciplinary approaches we can produce more nuanced knowledge that moves even beyond comparative studies. The demographic changes also call for the establishment of new programs in areas where Latinas/os are new communities in the making. For instance, the Southeast faces new challenges in terms of incorporating Latino communities in discussions about race, culture, language, and labor that have been historically informed by Anglo–Black relations.... Likewise, approaches to Latinidad will enhance current discussions about internal diversity and power differentials within national groups. The increasing hybridity of younger Latina/o subjects who embody and constitute two national groups, or a Latino and other racial group, will inevitably force us to transform the existing identity paradigms that still inform our thinking. PortoMexes, Cubolivians, Mexistanis (Mexican and Pakistani) are but a few of the possible hybrid identities that populate our urban centers. Will a new Latino melting pot develop as a result of this internal *mestizaje,* or will we continue to use national identities as the dominant criterion for exclusion and inclusion in the community? Redefining Latinidad from this point of view, rather than rejecting it altogether, will yield meaningful knowledge for the future of both Latino and non-Latino sectors in the United States.

Toward Transnational and Comparative Approaches to Latina/o Studies

MARÍA JOSEFINA SALDAÑA-PORTILLO

I begin this essay on Latina/o studies with ... two [scholars] ... for the tenor of each author's observations. Elliott Young, the historian, ... calls for a new border history that gazes ever forward, in search of scholarly paradigms to move us beyond the limitations of nations and national time. Meanwhile Lisa Lowe, the literary critic, calls for a future American studies that turns its gaze resolutely backward, in a reexamination of the United States' imperial past, a reexamination that might help us to better critique the interminable national present. Surely, the aftermath of hurricane Katrina [in 2005] makes the importance of Lowe's call painfully clear, as the United States' past of racial exploitation and segregation vibrantly informs the present. Only by coming to terms with the country's historic dependence on a racialized labor force, subject to extra-economic forms of coercion, can we fully analyze the meaning of the tens of thousands of impoverished blacks waiting at the Superdome, on rooftops and balconies, waiting to be counted as citizens while news images laid bare their disenfranchisement and the Bush Administration's calculated indifference to it. And yet, even as the media focused our attention on the racialized structure of class hierarchy in this country, news anchors fully participated in the *representational* racism undergirding it. For how else to explain unsubstantiated rumors of widespread raping and killing ("looting") throughout the city, which later proved to be completely unfounded, repeated as fact by grim-faced news anchors? This demonization of black masculinity and sexuality is so ritualized in the national news media as to have become banal.

Meanwhile, the very scope of the tragedy made evident the inadequacy of the nation-state as a unit of analysis. The government of the "wealthiest nation on earth" was itself inadequate, incapable of behaving like a truly national government, inept at rescuing its own citizens. Unparalleled military power could not protect US borders from the resolutely global effects of global warming; an administration accustomed to deriding the United Nations was forced to accept relief aid from it. Moreover, even as the predominantly African American and impoverished white victims of Katrina suffered the catastrophic effects of racial and class violence in the local, state, and federal government's failure to evacuate them before or too long after the hurricane, many rejected the internationally used term "refugee" to describe their condition. Rev. Jesse Jackson, NAACP president Bruce Gordon, and members of the Congressional Black Caucus all denounced the term as racist and as discounting blacks as citizens. Three major US papers (*Washington Post, Miami Herald,* and the *Boston Globe*) immediately banned the use of the term.

María Josefina Saldaña-Portillo, "From the Borderlands to the Transnational? Critiquing Empire in the Twenty-First Century," in Juan Flores and Renato Rosaldo, eds., *A Companion to Latina/o Studies* (Blackwell Publishing, 2007), pp. 502–512.

Yet, the very anxiety expressed over the use of the term belies its uncomfortable suitability, drawing our "attention," as Young insists, "to the stories that fit poorly into national narratives." A *transnational* ethnic studies scholarship would analyze this anxiety by elucidating the *lack* of US exceptionalism, as well as its integration into a world system. If the use of the term "refugee" was technically incorrect, substantively it hit the mark. The 1951 Refugee Convention of the United Nations defines a refugee as "a person who, owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his [*sic*] nationality." Although the use of the term "refugee" has loosened in the last half century to include victims of natural disasters (and women!), the majority of victims of hurricane Katrina are undeniably US citizens who remain in their own country. Nevertheless, what were these victims fleeing when they finally fled New Orleans, if not the effect of generations of formalized racial and economic disenfranchisement? The abandonment of the predominantly poor and black population in New Orleans by the federal government after hurricane Katrina only made evident an active structure of political violence faced daily by racialized populations in the United States, not just in New Orleans, but in all major US cities. Indeed, this abandonment—the very poverty and racism it exposes—"fits poorly" into the narrative of the universal privilege of US citizenship. In the face of this, one can imagine that, in the hey day of black nationalism and black Marxism, black leaders might have articulated their demands for enfranchisement precisely by emphasizing the similarities between the treatment of African American hurricane victims and African political refugees. Instead, the objections expressed by African Americans toward the word "refugee," as if it were a derogatory term, reveals a national minority finely attuned and attached to a *global* hierarchy of racial differentiation and nationalist privilege.

What hurricane Katrina made evident in August 2005 was that the periphery persists in the heart of the metropole. Unsurprisingly, it was Latina/o pundit Richard Rodríguez, a child of immigrants, who made this astute observation:

> ... we discovered that New Orleans, *like any other city,* had been in the third world all along. These faces of terror and want and despair and menace and stoicism are faces from the third world. They are American faces. (Emphasis added)

In Rodríguez's words a transnational Latina/o scholarship should hear the echo of the "internal colonialism" paradigm deployed by minority nationalist movements in the early 1970s with such political alacrity and force to articulate their demands before the state. Indeed, this internal colonialism paradigm provided the theoretical impetus for Chicana/os to create Aztlán as mythical homeland and for Native Americans to reclaim Alcatraz as sacred ground.

A transnational Latina/o scholarship, however, would hear a call toward a post-nationalist analysis as well. For Rodríguez's statement "that New Orleans, like any other city, had been in the third world all along" shakes the United States out of the false comfort of privileged dichotomies, out of its quaint exceptionalism, reinserting it into a continental history of labor flows. New Orleans, like any other

global city in the Americas, has always depended on peripheral populations whose racialization facilitates their hyper-exploitation. Indeed, New Orleans, like other global cities so dependent on undocumented immigrants, contained its very own international division of labor. Indeed, the Mexican and Honduran governments had to establish "mobile consulates" in the region, in the hopes of locating tens of thousands of undocumented Mexicans and Hondurans who worked in the oil, agricultural, and service industries in and around New Orleans, but who were too afraid of deportation procedures to seek government aid. According to a *News Standard* article from September 28, 2005, New Orleans was a veritable "Organization of American States":

> Hondurans and other Central American immigrants made up the bulk of the service sector working in casinos and restaurants in the New Orleans area, while Mexicans and other Latin American immigrants also constituted a large agricultural workforce in the surrounding region. The immigrant population in areas affected by Katrina included the 150,000 Hondurans and 40,000 Mexicans along with about 9,600 Salvadorans, 10,000 Brazilians, and immigrants from Perú, Venezuela, Chile, Panama, Trinidad and Tobago, and Costa Rica, according to numbers provided to the press by consulates.

Lowe and Young suggest a transnational American studies, and by extension ethnic studies, must flourish in a temporal paradox, one that seeks to move beyond the nation as the sole unit of analysis, even as it must revisit the past of the United States to continue to understand its trans(post?)national present. To step into this temporal paradox, I begin a deliberation of transnational Latina/o studies with a necessary diversion into hurricane Katrina. The racial logic revealed by hurricane Katrina returns us to an examination of the militant and filial origins of African American and Latina/o studies. (After all, behind every image of a lascivious black man poised to take advantage of an innocent's sexuality at the Superdome lurks the image of a cunning "illegal" Latina/o immigrant poised to take advantage of hurricane relief at the Astrodome.) Over the last thirty years Africana and Latina/o studies have too often evolved into the guardians of *petit* national cultures that serve to round-out the "American" student's liberal education; however, Katrina reminds us that the radical student movements that led to the founding of these departments were deeply *internationalist,* taking their cues from anti-colonial national liberation struggles in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Through walkouts and sit-ins, student coalitions in the 1970s demanded minority knowledge production within the university; but they also demanded a counter-hegemonic scholarship that would dedicate itself to the analysis of the structural inequalities impacting subaltern peoples beyond American borders. I suggest, then, that a call for a transnational Latina/o studies is but in part a return to these early militant origins of African American and ethnic studies: it is a call to the analysis of a past and present *process* of racial and economic peripheralization of minority populations as it unfolds within—but always exceeds—the boundaries of the United States.

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Border studies and border theory, which emerged with such scholarly and theoretical force in the 1980s, have been central in precipitating the move toward a transnational American studies focused on the empire-building origins of the US, as Young indicates. And yet, border theory and scholarship, precisely because of the binomial focus of their central trope, too often serve to reinforce a "nation within a nation" model of Latina/o studies: the focus of such scholarship is almost exclusively on the historical and cultural "contact zones" which occur along a border where two national cultures meet. Generally, the focus is the US–Mexico border, which produces a third space occupied by a hybridized, liminal Chicana/o culture.... Thus, though there have been invaluable titles in the area of border studies, the question still pertains: what might a truly transnational Latina/o studies look like? How might it differ from the contemporary bi-national focus of Puerto Rican, Chicana/o, Cuban, or Dominican scholarship, and why might we desire such a reformulation of the field?

A transnational Latina/o studies is necessarily comparativist and deeply historicist. However, it is not simply the comparison of Latina/o cultural production by group "X" with the cultural production of Latin American country "Y," as necessary and valuable as this kind of scholarship continues to be for our field more generally conceived. Rather, the call for a transnational Latina/o studies ... is a call for a totality critique that moves beyond the nation as a unit of analysis precisely because "Latina/o" identities begin their formation not in the US but in Latin America, as an effect of US intervention and compulsory neoliberalism. A transnational Latina/o studies, like transnational American studies, must proceed from an analysis that

- foregrounds United States nation-formation as an expansionist project in the Americas, with neocolonial interventions in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries that have generated wave after wave of "Latina/o" immigration;
- demonstrates the continued dependence of the US economy on Latin American markets, natural resources, *and* undocumented immigrants whose racially marked bodies are easily subjected to extra-economic forms of exploitation;
- compares the distinct racial legacies of the Anglo-American and Spanish colonial governmentality, and analyzes how Latina/o subjectivity is forged between these competing racial ideologies;
- analyzes the improvisation of resistive identity and cultural production in the wake of this history of racial migration.

When seen from this angle, African Americans and undocumented Mexicans and Central Americans, equally displaced by hurricane Katrina, are no longer populations vying for resources. Instead, these are populations sequentially racialized in the service of both an expanding rate of profit and the reproduction of US nationalism. An expanding rate of profit and nationalist sentiment inevitably pit racialized laboring populations against each other. Thus, a transnational Latina/o studies would provide a coherent analysis of the seemingly contradictory positions taken by the Bush Administration in the immediate aftermath of

the storm. On one hand, President Bush, in his September 15 national address, attempted to re-suture the nation's racial divide at the expense of the undocumented (and predominantly *mestizo*) immigrants. He assured an American public—reunited by the iterative gesture—that undocumented immigrants would be ineligible for temporary housing, subsidies, Social Security checks, or even the mail delivery promised to legal residents displaced by Katrina. Furthermore, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), going against standard procedure following natural disasters, "declined to promise that immigrants would not be placed in deportation proceedings if federal authorities find them through relief efforts." On the other hand, Bush suspended the 1931 Bacon-Davis Act, which would have required federal contractors rebuilding the Gulf region to pay the local prevailing construction wage, and the DHS simultaneously suspended penalties imposed on employers who hire employees without documentation of citizenship, presumably to facilitate the hiring of US citizens who lost their documents in the storm. These apparently opposing policies actually work in concert. Bush reassured his right-wing constituencies *and* segments of the African American community by refusing aid to undocumented immigrants and threatening to deport them, while he shifted reconstruction jobs to those very undocumented immigrants by suspending labor standards. Unsurprisingly, undocumented immigrants were among the first employed in clean up after the disaster struck. The lack of relief services and threats of deportation serve to create docile brown bodies on site and desperate for work....

Hence, slavery, segregation, and continued racial violence against blacks can be placed on a continuum with the "voluntary" immigration generated by US-backed genocidal regimes in Central America during the 1980s; by the IMF's structural adjustment policies imposed on South America during the same period; by the neoliberal reforms that have reformed away the livelihoods of Mexicans in the 1990s. I do not mean to suggest that a transnational Latina/o studies would indiscriminately equate the experience of US slavery and segregation with the experience of political exile and economically driven immigration produced as a violent consequence of US neocolonial and neoliberal policies in Latin America. However, such an approach would require us to place the slavery, genocide, and racial violence experienced inside US national boundaries within the larger context of US colonialism in the Americas, so that slavery and segregation are properly seen as the antecedents of the contemporary extra-economic forms of coercion (threatened deportation, debt peonage, repatriation of the costs of labor reproduction, vigilante violence) employed against undocumented immigrants from Latin America in the US today. Then and now, these extra-economic forms of coercion depend upon a racial economy of visibility and invisibility, or more accurately stated, the (in)visibility of racial labor. Then and now, such forms of subordination have produced cultures of resistance improvised precisely in that paradoxical space of (in)visibility, which at once obliges the brown laborer to disappear into the landscape of restaurant kitchen or agricultural field or hurricane debris, but also summons him or her to loom large as threat to white nationalism and black equality. Between such untenable imperatives, Latina/o immigrants use subaltern knowledge, queered spaces,

mutual aid networks, weapons of the weak, rhetorical inversion and perversion, parody and humor, to produce both spectacular and speculative identities that enable them to resist this subordination and, under optimal circumstances, transform what it means to be human in the United States.

A transnational approach to the study of US Latina/o populations corresponds to Lowe's suggested approach to the study of Asian American populations....

Transnational Latina/o studies, like its Asian American counterpart, should provide such a critical consciousness of empire, a critical scholarship that is "tirelessly reckoning with America's past," but also with its present, through an examination of how displaced cultures of racialized immigrants trouble national narratives of democracy and equality. It requires less a fluency in multiple languages than a fluency of multiple Latin American national histories as they intersected with the United States' bloodied quest for hegemony in the region.

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While Mexico may still predominate as country of origin for new Latina/o immigrants to the United States, the last thirty years of immigration from Central and South America have permanently decentered Chicana/o studies' dominance in the field nationwide. Similarly, the sheer diversity of Latin Americans immigrating to the east coast of the United States (including unprecedented waves of Mexicans) has dethroned Puerto Rican studies from its position of prominence in the region. Demographically, the Latina/o population in this country demands different approaches from us in our teaching, in the organization of our departments and programs, and in our hiring plans. We can no longer think within a cumulative model of Latina/o studies, where Chicana/o or Puerto Rican history and culture form the core of the curriculum, with other Latina/o experiences seen as providing variety to these paradigmatic cases. These changing demographics require us to reconsider the pedagogical reasons for and implications of internationalizing our approach to the study of Latina/o culture, politics, and history....

Mexico and Puerto Rico are indeed the only Latin American entities to have directly experienced US annexation. However, no Latin American country is left untouched by US intervention, and as such, there is no Latina/o immigrant population in the United States which does not [bear] the trace of this imperial legacy. Between 1898 and 1933, US governments landed marines in different Central American and Caribbean countries on a *yearly* basis, including a 20-year occupation of Nicaragua (1912–33), a 19-year occupation of Haiti (1914–34), and an 8-year occupation of the Dominican Republic. With notable exceptions, US administrations rarely deployed troops in the hemisphere after the mid-1930s. Nevertheless, CIA-directed *covert* operations to overthrow progressive Latin American governments or to repress progressive social movements occur on an almost yearly basis during the second half of the century. Such covert operations culminated in CIA-directed and US-financed counter-insurgency movements of the 1980s and 1990s and generated the latest waves of immigrants from the Central American countries. Neoliberal programs, which followed the success of these covert operations, have only exacerbated immigration to the US. Thus,

while Chicana/o and Puerto Rican experience with US colonialism is unique in form (direct annexation), it is by no means singular....

I would like to end my plea for a transnational and comparative model of Latina/o studies by underscoring what it is not. While I firmly believe that our field needs to move towards a transnational approach in order to confront the challenges of US empire in the twenty-first century, I do not mean to frame this plea as an "either/or" choice. In other words, a transnational approach would not require that each and every Latina/o scholar change his or her research to a transnational project. Clearly, projects which focus on the experiences of particular Latina/o immigrant communities—their labor histories, their artistic practices, etc.—will always be essential to the field as a whole.... I am suggesting a paradigm shift, one that would permanently decenter the *petit* nationalisms that still dominate our field. However, such a paradigm shift is just that, a decentering rather than a dismissal or a disparagement. What a transnational Latina/o studies would do would be to put comparison and the critique of US empire at the center of our field, because we're not in Kansas anymore. Or more precisely stated, Kansas, like New Orleans, is no longer Kansas. Like the rest of the country, its major cities are an "Organization of American States" in miniature....

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