

Chicana movement—that is, the movement championing the rights of Mexicanas—was emerging from the shadow of the Chicano movement.

As they encountered increasing hostility by some segments of the Mexican community, some Chicana groups attempted to make common cause with their counterparts in the white feminist movement that had resurfaced in the early sixties. In 1973, for example, they formed the Chicana Women's Political Caucus within the National Women's Political Caucus. For the most part, though, these early attempts at cooperation turned out to be disillusioning. Alfredo Mirandé and Evangelina Enríquez explain:

The Anglo women's movement showed itself to be indifferent to the unique needs of Chicanas, assuming that it could unite all women in the struggle against sexism but minimizing or neglecting the issues of race and poverty. . . .

What Anglo feminists failed to see was that it was not possible for Chicanas to conceive of a separate women's movement independent of their racial-cultural struggle, just as it had not been possible for them to separate their problems as women from their racial oppression.⁶⁹

Several dynamic leaders emerged from the early Chicana movement. Some of them tended to focus their efforts on the community, others on the schools. Community involvement was particularly stressed by Tejanas such as LRUP activists Rosie Castro and Choco Meza, but perhaps the most talented and respected barrio activist of this period was Francisca Flores (1913–1996), from Los Angeles. Together with Ramona Morín, Flores founded the California League of Mexican American Women, a political action association, in the midsixties. Beginning in 1963, she and Delfino Varela published *Carta Editorial* to keep the community informed on issues relating to Mexicanos. When the paper changed its name to *Regeneración* in the seventies, Flores became its chief editor. In October 1970, she was one of the cofounders of the Los Angeles-based Comisión Femenil Mexicana Nacional (CFMN, National Commission of Mexican Women), the first major national feminista organization, and one which played a leading role in organizing the Houston Conference. A representative of the women's auxiliary of the Pomona G.I. Forum, Flores was among the most outspoken defenders of the feminist perspective at Houston, a defense she continued in the pages of *Regeneración*. Another Flores initiative was the Chicana Service Action Center (CSAC), an employment counseling and manpower training program. For years, she and Alicia Escalante, who founded the East Los Angeles Welfare Rights Organization in 1967, remained the most authoritative voices of Chicana feminism in southern California.⁷⁰

Among the many academicians who were pioneers in the movement, several stand out. Perhaps the most productive and persevering was Martha P. Cotera (1938–). Born in the Mexican state of Chihuahua, Marta Piña was brought to the United States at the age of eight. After receiving her education at Texas Western