

# Concientización



*Time of las Mariposas* ® Selina Armenta Eleuterio

A Journal of Chican@ & Latin@  
Experience and Thought  
Spring 2015



***Concientización:***  
**A Journal of Chican@ & Latin@ Experience and Thought**

Volume 10, Numbers 1 & 2, Winter 2014 & Spring 2015

*Concientización* is an interdisciplinary, refereed student journal dedicated to promoting the study of Chican@ & Latin@ experience and thought. We are committed to creating alliances across boundaries of nation, race, ethnicity, gender, class, and sexuality. In that spirit, we incorporate in our mission the study of Latin@s and Chican@s in diaspora; the study of racial, ethnic, class, sexual, and gender identities; and the study of community and nation building.

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## Editor's Note to Reader

In this volume, the reader will find themselves on a journey through different dimensions of Chican@s and Latin@s' lived experiences. Each piece included in this volume is a documentation of the experiences, needs, and struggles found in our Chican@ and Latin@ communities today. The scholarly submissions from undergraduate and graduate students are thoughtful and culturally-integrative pieces that examine some of the unique and complex elements of Chican@ and Latin@s' lived experiences. These three perspectives include (1) Historical Context; (2) Personal Identity; and (3) Best Practices.

As with any cultural journey for many Chican@s and Latin@s, acknowledgement and reflection of our *raíces* (roots) serves as a grounding and contextualizing framework. To do so, we often reach back into our *historia* to honor or remember those who have been instrumental in supporting our ability to document our experiences. Thus, we begin the volume with a dedication to Professor Camille Guérin-Gonzales, whose life and scholarship reflected a passion and commitment to understanding the historical and political contexts of Chican@s and Latin@s.

Next, in Section One: Placing Experiences in a Historical Context, we present the reader with a piece that also retells the past to place the immigrant experience of the Latin@s of today in a historical context. This work provides insight into the struggle of immigrant populations in the U.S. across time, and highlights the long-standing factors that have contributed to the contemporary struggles of our communities.

In Section Two: Expressing Individual Identities, the authors reflect on how their own personal *historias* have impacted their identities, and express their deep-rooted values and stories of cultural transmission within a personal context. These expressions show us how individuals are shaped by their lived experiences.

Finally, the journey leads to the last section, Converting *Cultura* to Best Practices, where the authors demonstrate how community and personal experiences lend to *consejos* (advice) that Chican@s and Latin@s' can implement within their personal, professional, and academic development.

In combination, these scholarly pieces provide a journey for growth for the reader to reflect on and enter into the cultural dimensions of some of the lived experiences of Chican@ and Latin@ in today's society.

## **In Memoriam**

Professor Camille Guérin-Gonzales, one of our esteemed CLS faculty members, passed away Tuesday, 24 February 2015. Professor Camille Guérin-Gonzales was instrumental to the development of our CLS program, creating spaces and places of transformative learning through her generous mentorship and championing social justice through example. Under her leadership as CLS Director, she had many major accomplishments including increasing the number of CLS faculty and course offerings, creating an official CLS student organization, and developing the newsletter (*Regeneración*) and journal (*Concientización*) for the program. She was for many a role model and mentor as she pursued her work on labor and immigration history with great passion, gave selflessly to her students and the CLS community, and fought tirelessly for equality and justice at the local, university, and national levels.

In remembering and honoring Professor Guérin-Gonzales and her far-reaching influence throughout her academic career and life, her biography and commencement speech that she so eloquently and graciously gave for the May 2014 Chican@ Latin@ Studies Program Certificate Recognition Event is printed as part of the 2015 *Concientización*.

## Biography

Professor Camille Guérin-Gonzales



Camille Guérin-Gonzales was Professor Emerita of History at UW-Madison. She joined the faculty of the Chicana/o Studies Program in 2001, and became director of the program in 2003. During her years as director, the Chicana/o Studies Program became the Chican@ and Latin@ Studies Program and attracted 15 new faculty affiliates. As a result of this redesign and growth, over the next half-decade, the average number of students pursuing a Certificate in Chican@ and Latin@ Studies increased by more than 250 percent, from about 3 each year to about 16 each year. In addition to her work with the Program, she also served as Director of Undergraduate Studies and Associate Chair of UW's Department of History.

Professor Guérin-Gonzales received her Ph.D. in History from the University of California, Riverside, in 1985. Before arriving in Madison, she taught at the University of Colorado at Boulder, at Oberlin College, and at the University of California, Los Angeles. At the University of Colorado, she served as Faculty Advisor to *El Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán* (MEChA), and at Oberlin she was Faculty Advisor to *La Union de Estudiantes Latin@s*. At UCLA, she was among the six founding faculty of the new César Chávez Center for Interdisciplinary Chicana & Chicano Studies (now a full-fledged department) established in 1996. She also served as Chair of that unit.

Professor Guérin-Gonzales centered her research, teaching, and service on labor and working-class history and on the history of race and nationalisms. She was the author of *Mexican Workers and American Dreams: Immigration, Repatriation, and California Farm Labor, 1900-1939*, and the coeditor of *The Politics of Immigrant Workers: Essays on Labor Activism and Migration in the World Economy*. In recent years, her scholarship focused on the comparative history of coal mining communities in Appalachia, South Wales, and the U.S. Southwest. For that work, she received grants and fellowships from the Institute for Research in the Humanities here at UW, from the National Endowment for the Humanities, and from the Ford Foundation. Before her retirement, she taught courses at both the undergraduate and graduate

level on U.S. labor and working-class history, on social movements, on comparative race and nationalisms, on Chicana/o and Latina/o history, on immigration history, and on the history of the U.S. Southwest. She spoke to community audiences gathered by humanities councils, labor unions, student organizations, and Latina/o advocacy groups. In addition to her many professional affiliations, she was a founding member of *Mujeres Activas en Letras y Cambio Social* (MALCS), and of the Labor and Working-Class History Association (LAWCHA).

Beyond all of this, Professor Guérin-Gonzales was the mother of three adult children, the grandmother of seven, the great-grandmother of one, and the spouse of Professor Susan Johnson, who is also a faculty affiliate of the Chican@ and Latin@ Studies Program. Professor Guérin-Gonzales was a *manita* from northern New Mexico, and her life's work was dedicated to an understanding of difference and power in all their complexity, and to the pursuit of social justice that flows out of that understanding.



**Commencement Address**  
**Chican@ and Latin@ Studies Program**  
**University of Wisconsin-Madison**

Professor Camille Guérin-Gonzales

May 18, 2014

I am honored to give the keynote address at your graduation ceremony today, and am blessed to be able to share this important day with you.

Today, we recognize that each of you has devoted a significant portion of your college career to studying Latinas and Latinos in the United States—our histories, our cultures, our politics, our communities, our literature and music and art, and our educational and workforce and healthcare experiences. You have also examined our interactions with other minoritized people as well as our relationship to the ever-shrinking majority. Along with your major field of study, your Certificate in Chican@ and Latin@ Studies equips you to understand and advance the interests of the ever-growing U.S. population of Mexican, Central American, Caribbean, and South American origin and descent. You couldn't be taking this expertise into the world at a better time: in the very years when you were pursuing your degrees, Latinos became for the first time the largest U.S. minority group. And you couldn't have gained this expertise in a more important place: while Anglo Americans constitute the majority in every region of the nation, nowhere is that majority larger than in the Midwest. Here in the Badger State, despite the rapid influx of Latinos, it's easier for non-Latinos to remain ignorant of our presence, at best, and hostile to it, at worst, diminishing our life chances and our sense of belonging.

What you've learned about Latinas and Latinos right here in Wisconsin's capital couldn't be more crucial. When I joined the faculty at UW in 2001, a faculty colleague told me that there were hardly any Latinos living in Wisconsin and that because of this, the field of Latino studies was of no account—this despite the presence of 140,000 Latinos in the state. In the ten years that followed his pronouncement, Wisconsin's Latino population grew by 74 percent, to 340,000. I wish he were in this room right now and had to contemplate the educational choices a dozen of you have made, not to mention the 150 other UW graduates who have made the same choice over the past decade by completing a certificate in Chican@ and Latin@ Studies. Likewise, since I arrived in Madison, I have heard ethnic studies more generally denigrated as “me studies”—that is, the study of particular ethnic groups exclusively by members of those ethnic groups. I wish all such detractors had to contemplate the list of UW graduates who have earned CLS certificates in the past ten years, since nearly one-third of those students have been non-Latino; they have been Anglo American, African American, American Indian, Arab American, Jewish American, and of mixed racial and ethnic heritage.

That I'm promoting the pursuit of Chican@ and Latin@ Studies at a place like UW-Madison and applauding those of you who have followed that pursuit is an odd twist of fate. I grew up in New Mexico, long the state with the largest percentage of Latinos in the nation. It's been big news this spring that California has reached the demographic tipping point, with Latinos outnumbering white non-Latinos there for the first time since the nineteenth century—39 percent of Californians are now Latino, and just under 39 percent are Anglo. That kind of news produces a big yawn in my home state, where Latinos constitute a whopping 47 percent of the population; Anglos lag well behind at under 40 percent. And New Mexico's demography

reminds us of both the historical depth and contemporary diversity of U.S. *latinidad*; like me, a majority of Latinas and Latinos there trace their roots back 15 or 20 generations, when *nuevomexico* was New Spain's northern frontier, a frontier controlled not so much by Spanish colonists, but by the Indigenous peoples who lived in settled villages and mobile communities all around the Spanish colonies. Spain tried to conquer those peoples, but more often had to settle for an uneasy coexistence and the eventual emergence of the kind of *mestizaje* that appeared almost everywhere the Spanish went in the New World. My own New Mexico-based ancestry is Spanish and Apache, and when my non-New Mexican ancestors belatedly arrived in New Mexico in the nineteenth century from France and Germany and New England, they had to accommodate themselves to the *hispano* world that had emerged there; they had to marry into the culture in order to survive. In the twentieth- and twenty-first centuries, however, that old, deeply rooted *hispano* population has been enriched by a new influx of immigrants from Mexico and Central America, restoring to New Mexico a Latino majority that had diminished after the U.S. conquest in 1848. How strange, then, for me to end up in a place like Wisconsin, where the Latino population, relatively speaking, is so new—just a century in the making.

Still, along with the differences between Wisconsin and New Mexico, there are also similarities, and those similarities remind us of the broader circumstances Latinos face in the U.S. and thus why it's so important that you chose to earn a certificate in Chican@ and Latin@ Studies. In Wisconsin and New Mexico, as throughout the U.S., the Latino population is growing, augmented by both immigration and birth, but increasingly more by birth than immigration. That population is still disproportionately of Mexican origin, but a rapid increase in immigration from Central America—especially from El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras—has diversified the Latino population in both Wisconsin and New Mexico and throughout the U.S., even in places with large Puerto Rican and Cuban communities, like New York and Florida. In Wisconsin and New Mexico, as throughout the U.S., more than one-third of all Latinos live in poverty, compared to about a tenth of the Anglo majority. In Wisconsin and New Mexico, as throughout the U.S., far more Latinos lack health insurance than do majority Americans. By every measure, Latinas and Latinos fare more poorly in Wisconsin and New Mexico, as they do elsewhere in the U.S. That is why your commitment to Latino studies matters; armed with what you've learned in Chican@ and Latin@ Studies as well as in your major field, you are poised to make a difference, to improve the life chances and sense of belonging of all Latinas and Latinos in the U.S. You may do that as an educator, as an engineer, as a chemist, as a business owner, as a nurse or doctor or lawyer, as filmmaker or novelist, as a politician, as a journalist, or, after pursuing an advanced degree, as an academic in any number of fields—from economics to psychology, from art history to food science, from language studies to ethnic studies. There is no realm of contemporary life where your newfound knowledge can't be used to the benefit of our communities and toward the cause of social and environmental justice.

But that newfound knowledge and the commitments it engenders can never be, and should never be, extracted from the profoundly relational nature of contemporary life, where Latinas and Latinos only become Latinas and Latinos in relationship to one another and to other peoples. U.S. *latinidad* encompasses an extraordinary diversity of ancestries and cultures and migrations, only some of which we routinely acknowledge and celebrate. For example, we know the history and cultural consequences for *puertorriqueños* of Spanish and African and Indigenous mixing in the Caribbean, but how often do we recognize the importation by force of 200,000 African slaves to what is now Mexico between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries?

And we know that in the past decade or so, more and more immigrants have come to the U.S. from Central America, but how often do we acknowledge that many of those immigrants are from Maya or Nahua communities, and some do not speak Spanish, let alone English, but rather an indigenous language? And we know that family reunification has been a primary goal for generations of Mexican immigrants, but how often do we recognize the added burden placed on families created by same-sex couples or on immigrants estranged from their kin because of their sexual orientation or gender self-presentation? These questions only begin to touch on the diversity within Latino communities and the cultural hierarchies and differences of power that attend that diversity, but they are among the questions one must ask and answer if one means to embark on a lifetime of advocacy on behalf of Latinas and Latinos.

But there is more than this, because the circumstances of Latino life in the U.S. are inextricably bound up in a complex national and global political economy that demands a broader vision. We can advocate all we like for the interests of ethnic Mexican and Cuban and Puerto Rican and Guatemalan communities, but if we don't take into account the structures of capitalism that shape African American and Afro-Caribbean and Vietnamese and Hmong and Ojibwe and Lakota and poor white communities in both similar and different ways, we'll make limited political headway in our lifetimes. And we will deny ourselves crucial allies in the struggle for a more just world, a world where more people are more able to determine the contours of their own existence on this earth—where voting rights are not restricted but rather guaranteed; where national borders are not theaters of war; where love is legible as love no matter who the lovers are; where disease and wellness aren't indexed by race and class; where fewer people of color spend much of their lives in prison; where safe and meaningful work at a living wage is in reach for all. So take what you have learned in Chican@ and Latin@ Studies, and breathe life into the world around you. *¡Sí, se puede!*

## **Section One: Placing Experiences in a Historical Context**

Many issues today negatively impact our Chican@ and Latin@ communities. To more fully understand these issues, and engage in working solutions, we must understand them within their historical context. This section highlights a contribution that documents one of those issues, immigration, as it continues to be at the forefront of concerns for many Latin@ communities. The author, Christian Tigges, compares the lived experiences in our Latin@ communities today to those of immigrants in the late 1800's. In Christian's piece, *Immigration and Perception: A Paradox of Exploitation and Rejection*, the author points to the immigration parallels across time, and by doing so, makes clear the root-cause of immigrant exploitation.

## **Immigration and Perception: A Paradox of Exploitation and Rejection**

Christian Tigges

A common axiom of historical study states “Those who do not learn from history are doomed to repeat it.” Regarding the issue surrounding immigrant workers in the United States, history may be repeating. How in this day and age could a progressive society echo with the mistakes of our predecessors? In a country that is a self-proclaimed “melting pot” how could we discriminate against people seeking a higher standard of living? This proverb of repetitive history may have more truth than we may care to realize. The historic situation of the immigrant worker has already begun to repeat itself. The situation surrounding Hispanic immigrants and Latino Americans in particular is becoming synonymous with the plight of the immigrated Asian worker back in the late 1800’s. In the late 1800’s a wave of Asian immigration swept the nation and caused significant social backlash as the increase in immigrant population threatened the social norms set by pre-existing citizens. These Asian immigrants were at the center of a socioeconomic love-hate relationship with normal society and capital industry. In a paradox of exploitation and rejection the issue of Latino workers grows relevant. Many of the issues we see today with the situation of Latino American workers can be equated to the paradoxical nature many of the Asian workers faced in regards to economic exploitation, social perception and rejection due to economic hardship.

Beginning in the late 1800’s the rate of immigration from Asia began to increase. The advances in transportation by steamship had made possible the mass migration of primarily Chinese and subgroups of Japanese to the United States. Due to the predominance of Chinese immigration, much like immigration from Mexico constitutes the majority immigration from Latin America today, the immigration of the Chinese will be used to account for all Asian immigration unless otherwise specified, keep in mind some texts of the time do not make such a distinction. The Chinese were crowding into the labor market of California and becoming the new “peons” of the captains of industry (Takaki, as cited in Shah, 2005). The term “peon” depicts the Chinese worker’s status as minimum wage earner who, because of their recent immigration, had little opportunity to hold any position of economic power. These Chinese immigrants would come to be used as subclass, socially enslaved laborers to build the railroad, an industrial feat that would propel the United States into industrial power. What made the Chinese workers different from other immigrants was the nature of their immigration. Unlike earlier immigrants who moved to the United States in hopes of a new life, the Chinese had intentions of returning home. They were as scholars would come to say “A population born in China, reared in China of its own, and without the slightest attachment to the country [United States]...” (Takaki, as cited in Shah, 2005). Several possible explanations exist for the pattern in which America’s Chinese population developed before 1882 [Chinese Exclusion Act]. Foremost, scholars have long recognized the strong sojourner mentality that characterized early Chinese immigration to the United States, which helped to produce an immigrant population dominated by unattached men (Le, 2014). This population consisting of unattached men allowed for constant relocation following work provided by the railroad.

Although Chinese workers entered the labor pool on the bottom, they were quickly accepted as an effective work force. The superintendents of the cotton and woolen mills on the Pacific preferred the Chinese to the other operatives, and in the same terms the railroad people

spoke of their Chinese graders, saying they were steadier, worked longer, required less watching (Takaki, as cited in Shah, 2005). This is not to say the workers were treated with respect outside the field of labor. This is where the paradox of the immigrant worker first begins to take shape. The paradox has two sides, social and economic; while separate they support and feed off one another. The Chinese American workers were used whole-heartedly for their work ethic yet shunned for their differences in culture. They were discredited as citizens and would face hardship achieving equal citizen status. Chinese workers were kept as lower class citizens as a means of continued control, giving employers an unthreatened pool of low cost labor. Even more so, the nature of immigration for these immigrants fit perfectly with the need for a mobile and expendable workforce to build the railroad. At its peak, 9,000 to 12,000 Chinese worked for the Central Pacific Railroad, in some of the dirtiest and most dangerous jobs (different sources have different estimates on exact numbers). Many sources claim that up to 1,000 Chinese died during the project as a result of avalanches and explosive accidents as they carved their way through the Sierra Mountains (other sources claim much lower numbers of casualties). Even though the Chinese workers performed virtually all of the hardest, dirtiest, and most dangerous jobs, they were only paid 60% of what European immigrant workers were paid (Takaki, 1990).

The social side of this paradox was fed by the concept of the “ordinary American.” The “ordinary American” was a self-righteous view held by the citizens of the empowered majority, which was entirely white at the time. This population of the United States believed they had the power to decide who fit into society and who was truly “American.” The new immigrants were viewed as backwards and lacking in the social knowledge to make rational, moral decisions. In the public view, the amoral Asian could never be an “ordinary American” and was already defined as an unfit subject for American society (Peffer, 1986). Alternately the Chinese came with the intent of leaving thus they had no need to adopt western ways of living. It was this nature of both sides which lead to such distinctive social barriers. They would be subjugated by the “superior” majority as a separate class of people.

This public view of Chinese immigrants being fundamentally different caused Chinese workers to be prime candidates to scapegoat the economic depression of the 1870's, later called the Panic of 1873. In historical significance this slight economic downturn had no lasting effect. What it did spark was a wave of anti-Asian immigration. To many workers, the depression of the 1870's was due entirely to the competition of the Chinese. Exclusion of the Chinese became the supposed remedy for economic injustice and imbalances, thus sparking the phrase “the Chinese must go” (Hing, 2004) and eventually even leading to the Chinese Exclusion Act that banned any Chinese immigration after 1882.

It is at this point that the full scale of the immigrant paradox takes shape. Chinese workers came to the United States and entered the work force at the bottom, and while on the bottom they served as an efficient and cheap labor force. The labor offered by these immigrants was the main driving force behind the construction of the first transcontinental railroad, an American feat of technological prowess. Still, the proponents of the railroad's construction and success were barred from receiving acceptance as “ordinary Americans.” Praised for their work ethic and demeanor on the job, these Chinese immigrants were the first to be blamed for the economic downturn and loss of employment. Keep in mind, the work to build the railroad deterred normal non-immigrant workers because of its difficulty. The Chinese American immigrant workers were at the bottom of the social ladder, stuck in the trenches with no sign of reprieve. They were forced to hold strong the foundation for which the railroad boom grew but condemned for any instability caused by its rapid expansion.

These injustices and unqualified rejections caused by nothing but social perspective may no longer lie with Chinese immigrants and Asian Americans of the late 1800's, but they have transitioned to Latin immigrants and Latino Americans of the present. In a time where individuals pride themselves on being racially color blind, the United States has again subjugated an ethnicity of people into the same paradox faced by Chinese immigrants some 100 plus years ago.

The process of a new ethnicity of people entering the spotlight of social perspective is not the same in both cases but the results are still similar. People of Latin descent have always been present in much of the territory now considered the USA, Latin people, primarily of Mexican descent occupied Texas, southern California and parts of Utah during the same time as the railroad boom. Thus unlike Asian immigrants, Latin people have always occupied the land to some degree. Regardless, the social spotlight is focusing in on this minority group as a cause of new current issues. According to Carola Suárez-Orozco (1995) "Such rapid and profound changes are unsettling to many- whites and others-who wonder how the culture of California will be affected by the "browning" of the state. Frustrated by economic and sociodemographic upheaval, many are singling out the new immigrants as prime suspects in the creation of California's woes: the economic crisis, the budget crisis, the health care crisis, chaotic schools, and crime, to mention a few" (p. 6). Like the Chinese immigrants, the separation in culture and appearance of Mexican immigrants and Latino Americans compared to "ordinary Americans" has caused a defensive retaining wall, both social and physical in a sense, to be construed as new "ordinary Americans" fear the tidal wave of immigration will threaten their way of life.

In a similar situation that plagued the Asian immigrant of the 1800's, Mexican immigrants and Latino American workers are being kept at a lower status of employment and are thus subject to the will of employers who use their disenfranchisement for cheap labor. Stereotypes and prejudices of Hispanic work ethic prevail even though some of the most laborious work is being doled out to low cost immigrant workers. In this sense the paradox is perpetuated as Mexican immigrants and Latino Americans are exploited for their low cost labor yet criticized by the public, employers included, for taking jobs from "ordinary Americans." Also similar to the case of Chinese immigrants and the policy of "The Chinese must go" brought about by economic downturn; immigrant reform is currently pervading the United States.

Reform set forth by the American government is claiming to institute an "effective immigration system that continues efforts to secure borders and cracks down on employers who hire undocumented immigrants" (White House statement on immigration). It is also placing new guidelines on attaining citizenship through integration into American culture. While this new set of reform policies does not bar immigration it may begin to limit it, and its primary impact is on illegal Mexican immigrants due to the large portion they represent; Mexicans make up about half of all unauthorized immigrants (52%), though their numbers have been declining (Krogstad & Passel, 2014). Agreeably a more rational approach, the barrier between citizens and any immigrant who "could" be illegal is still present.

The paradox of the immigrant worker, as seen, is repeating. The paradox is a cycle of abusive profit through labor and social rejection. The cycle disenfranchises a migrant population to a social status below average and then controls the population by its assigned social status. Although this is not a universal truth for all current day Mexican immigrants and Latino Americans, it does affect a large majority. The cycle plays off of the social barriers

drawn by public perspective to moderate and control the immigrant population; this control then causes more social barriers to form and gives the cycle more power over the disenfranchised people. It is a self-sufficient process such that any economic or social distress caused by its shaky operation can then be blamed on the controlled immigrant population.

The issue today lies with the concept of illegality. There were 11.2 million unauthorized immigrants in the U.S in 2012, they constituted 5.1% of the U.S. labor force (Krogstad & Passel, 2014) and it has been declining. This number is alarming not in its facet of labor lost to legal citizenship but of labor passed to illegal immigrants for lower pay outside of the law. It is more the fault of the employer for exploitation of low cost labor. With approximately 54 million Hispanic people in the U.S., a number that far exceeds the population of illegal immigrants, why has such a vast group of people decided to scapegoat Hispanic immigrants and Latino Americans under the guise of illegal immigration, for the ills of the nation? This finger pointing is only an instant solution to more extensive issues. The demographic of the U.S. is ever changing, now more than ever. With change comes resistance, but stagnation was not how the U.S. grew to be a world power. If many of our ancestors had been refused the chance at a higher standard of living the U.S. would not have grown. Immigrants need to be adapted into the fold of what is an “ordinary American.”

Before the Chinese, the Irish were considered the peons of the working class, now after the Chinese it is the Hispanics. It falls onto us today to break this cycle and combat the autonomously controlled paradox that keeps an underground class system thriving.

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## Section Two: Expressing Individual Identities

In this section, the authors share personal and poignant self-reflections as they claim their experiences and find power in owning their narratives. The authors offer a glimpse into their own perspectives about what it feels like to be underrepresented. They share their experiences, open up to the reader to bring them in to their world, and tell their personal story as an expression of their identity as well as of their struggle to find who they are in a place that is constantly telling them who they should be. The three authors depict their own journey of self-identity, and with it they invite you to consider who you are, and how you might identify yourself in this world of continuous contradictions.

First, Selina Armenta Eleuterio shares her artistic talents with her artwork titled, *Time of las Mariposas*, which serves as the journal's cover art. Through this art, she expresses the multiple facets of her identity. Next, Alexis Rivera documents her experience of growing up through her poem *Irony*, where she portrays the multiple experiences in her life that have shaped who she is today. Finally, in her piece *Because I Know Better*, Laura P. Minero walks you through her narrative to demonstrate her passion for understanding, forgiveness, and love, and shares how she has built her strength through all of these.

## ***Time of las Mariposas***

Selina Armenta Eleuterio

The journal cover was made by putting together three different images, each symbolizing an important piece of who I am. The first image is of a woman blowing something from her hand. I chose a woman for two reasons; one, because I am a woman and two, because many of the women I admire are some of the strongest people I know. I also included *In Lak'ech* because I think it is a very powerful poem that I love and also reflects my cultural identity. Finally, I added butterflies because I believe they symbolize transformation, growth, and migration.

The three aforementioned symbols are meaningful to me as a person who was not born in the United States and does not qualify to be a citizen of this country. All three are a part of my identity as a woman, immigrant, and person who identifies as Mexican. I named the artwork *Time of la Mariposas* as a way to represent the two different languages that are also a major part of my identity. The butterflies symbolize my journey and growth as an immigrant in this country. The woman represents my strength and the strength of the women I admire. And *In Lak'ech* represents the ties to my culture, roots, and ancestry. I think my identity is similar to many of the women I look up to and that is why I chose to incorporate so many aspects of that in this piece of artwork.

## Irony

Alexis Rivera

I am six years old  
Sitting cross-legged on a rainbow carpet, face pouting  
There will be no show-and-tell today  
My peers and I have our eyes on our guest  
The navy blue costume compliments a shiny gold badge  
*Stranger danger*  
He tells us not to trust dark, hooded figures  
He tells us policemen are our heroes  
He tells us they will keep us safe  
And I believe him

I am ten years old  
Fiddling with toys at my desk and inattentive  
The teacher's lesson is on the meaning of  $x$   
Weeks ahead of the other math programs  
I sit in a Talent Development Program class  
I don't realize the sea of white surrounding me  
My eyes wander to a poster on the wall  
*The Golden Rule*  
It teaches us that we should treat others the way we want to be treated  
It teaches us that we are all equal  
And I believe it

I am twelve years old  
Hanging from the monkey bars  
The boys chase the girls around the playground  
But they do not chase me  
I try to remember my parents' pride in our Puerto Rican culture  
When the pale-skinned and knee-scraped boys taunt me  
They say I'm dirty  
They say I should go back to my country  
They say I am poor  
And I believe them

But they are all wrong

I am seventeen years old  
Admiring Brent's highlights under the fluorescent lights of the cafeteria  
We gossip about the cute new student in our class  
As Brent shows off his fuzzy, leopard pants  
I can sense them sneering from the table behind me  
Tall, white, and clad in camouflage jackets

They whisper he's a faggot  
They whisper condemnation of his sinful ways  
They whisper same-sex marriage is a joke

This is not equality

I am eighteen years old  
Strutting down State St. arm linked with his  
All stores we pass are vacant and display similar signs  
*We're Closed*  
My feet ache and my ears still ring with rhythmic base  
But I am satisfied with the night  
Suddenly, five of them appear  
Clones of one another, greek letters etched into their chests  
The drunken cat-calling begins  
They holler disapproval  
They holler profanity  
They holler at my shame

This is not respect

I am nineteen years old  
Cooking *arroz con gandules*  
My white friends laughing as I dance to salsa around the kitchen  
I describe the injustices I learn about in Chican@ and Latin@ studies  
They are shaking their heads when I mention immigration laws  
Eyes roll and I can almost read their minds  
*There's too many of them, why don't they speak English, they're stealing our jobs*  
Sensing my discomfort, they try to ease the tension  
They claim I am not one of *them*  
They claim I don't speak Spanish  
They claim I am "white-washed"

This is not my land

I am twenty years old  
Watching *CNN* from the living room of my apartment  
Images of black faces crowd the screen  
Glimpses of the lives of those whose hearts will never beat again  
Are these the hooded figures they warned me about?  
*Hands up, don't shoot*  
The anchormen lay out all the facts  
Still, our protectors get away with murder  
They state he deserved it  
They state it is not a war on race  
They state we are overreacting

This is not justice

Today I am as old as I have ever been  
Writing in anger, fear, and disbelief  
I have been betrayed by those put in power

*Mentirosos*

We suffer daily from those sworn to give us strength

I was promised rights as a child

We demand our privileges now

I am not a tragedy

We don't want sympathy

*Yo soy Boricua*

And we want change

## Because I Know Better

Laura P. Minero

We all have moments of impact in our lives, moments of impact that allow for us to make meaning of our life experiences. These moments might occur when you meet someone's gaze and your heart momentarily stops beating. When you listen to someone's words and your skin raises with chills. The hairs on your skin opening themselves to the words they have just heard as if to soak them into your soul forever.

I found courage and enlightenment in words that I heard spoken by a poet today. He spoke of his life as a child of hope, the injustices of this world, and his battles with his absent father who left him and his mother with nothing when he was an infant. I read his words of wisdom as he recalls how he owes his talent with words and passion for embracing the diversity of this world and love for and with others...to his father's absence of love and care. His spoken and written words became my moment of impact...for my mind, body, and soul, came to understand that if there is anything I owe to my own biological father, who left me while I remained in my mother's womb...who left because I was not what he dreamt of his first child...I was not, nor will I ever be the child he wanted to love...to him I owed the passion that emanates from my existence. It is thanks to him that I have chosen to love, acknowledge, and embrace whoever and whatever is to come my way...not because I am better, but because I know better, better than my nameless, faceless, invisible father. I know that although some things may not happen the way we would like them to, we must embrace what this world presents to us, whether or not we feel as though it is for ourselves to embody, for the universe has given us something greater than whatever it was we wanted in the first place.

Hence his loss also became my biological mother's loss but ultimately became a blessed gain for my soul and true parents. I became a gift of life, light and color, and a gift of care, passion and love to the two most selfless individuals I know...*mis padres de destino, mis padres que como el sol y la luna de mi universo me han cuidado y enseñado los verdaderos valores de la vida. Ellos, las raíces de mi existencia que me han dado humildad y sabiduría. Ellos me han visto crecer y madurar igual como una flor que se abre y se enfrenta a las injusticias del mundo después de un amanecer. Ellos, mi tierra y mi cielo en el que primero aprendí a caminar, correr y después a volar. Gracias a ellos aprendí a alcanzar todos mis sueños. Son mi sueño y despertar de cada día que aunque estemos lejos, son ellos a los que llevo por dentro y siempre viven por medio de mis metas y triunfos que dedico a ellos.*

They as well, I hope will continue to know better than my biological father did and will know to love unconditionally for this is what I have learned from this moment of impact when I read this powerful poem. "I just know better than my father, was never blind enough to mistake love for slaughter, so if you have the courage to place your hand in mine, I will take the opportunity to kiss your pulse, barter rhetoric feel of your skin against my lips. For every twisted impulse that he instilled in me." I have learned to not take any moment in life for granted and be passionate in everything that I do. I have learned that things do not come easy but I have the power to live life to the fullest and accept open-heartedly all that comes my way. There is always a gain in every loss we have in life and swimming with the current can get you farther along onto the shore.

Every twisted impulse that both absence and unconditional love have instilled in me have led me towards the path of fulfilling many of my life long dreams inclusive of finding my life partner. My love is for the one who has taken this leap of faith for us and our love. It is she who holds my hand and embraces me in time of need. It is she who has shown me that someone could love me just as wholeheartedly, fearlessly, willingly, and passionately as I love her. It is she who understands that we may both fall and rise in the beauty of love as we descend our hearts onto the trials and tribulations that the universe brings our way. It is she who has the courage to love me endlessly and eternally as though our souls had loved each other in another life, and will love each other once again for eternities to come. It is she to whom I dedicate my twisted and passionate impulse of love, because I know better.

### Section Three: Converting *Cultura* to Best Practices

As a means to advance the educational status of our Latin@ communities, Section Three offers culturally rooted guidance for the personal and professional development of Chican@s and Latin@s. The authors take their community and personal lived experience and convert it into best practices. From managing the interplay of the personal and the professional, to engaging in research-supported and anecdotally-confirmed best practices for resource development and graduate school studies, this section pushes readers to imagine greater possibilities for themselves and their communities. Each perspective brings a learning opportunity that allows the reader to share in the author's experience while simultaneously gaining the guidance necessary to be successful in difficult situations.

In *Super Mercado Latin@: A Keynote Celebration of Connection, Spirituality, and Community Building*, Steve R. Pereira shares his experience in graduate school, and exemplifies how one can find community in the least likely places. Next, in *Las Mujeres en Dos Dominios: Merging Personal and Professional Life*, Laura E. De Jesus delves deep into the writing of Bettina R. Flores, and through the analysis of Flores's book, as well as by providing her personal narrative, Laura outlines advice for women to succeed in the professional world. Finally, Ivan Cabrera and Alyssa M. Ramírez provide advice for students seeking to attend graduate school. In *Tomando Pasos: Consejos for Chican@ and Latin@ Undergraduates Considering Graduate School*, Ivan and Alyssa use a psychosociocultural perspective to consider what it takes to get to graduate school successfully, and provide us with familiar *consejos* by describing their educational processes.



## ***Super Mercado Latin@: A Keynote Celebration of Connection, Spirituality, and Community Building***

Steve R. Pereira

In the fall of 2006, I embarked on a new journey that I never imagined would bring me so much success. Leaving San Antonio, Texas to pursue a bachelor's degree at the University of Wisconsin-Madison was a new concept that was not a traditional rite of passage in my family. To me, however, the university was a new place of opportunity that signified advancement and progress. As I began my journey, I packed a large suitcase full of dreams, *ganas*, *espiritualidad*, and *cultura*. The underpinnings of my Mexican-American, *Tejano*, Latino and Chicano identities were also foundational in helping me get through the academic challenges of the university. Navigating new societal constructs were difficult especially when there were few spaces on campus that felt like home. At times, I felt lost; I needed to feel connected to my culture.

After completing my third year as an undergraduate, I had already joined many student organizations that sustained my ability to do well in academia. The organizations I joined nurtured my desire to feel a Latino connection that was not easily accessible at this predominantly white university. The *compadres* and *comadres* I met on campus represented *espiritualidad* because they validated my struggles and triumphs. Reflecting on my development as a college student, I realized that it was also important to constantly reinvent the university's atmosphere in order to help incoming Latina/o freshman find a place they can call home.

Six years ago, during the summer of 2009, I was sitting in my home in San Antonio, Texas; it was very late at night and I wondered what I could do to create a space of connection, spirituality, and community for incoming Latina/o freshman. At the time, there were no programs or events highlighting the Latino culture. I felt it was very important to be able to share a moment in which we could all come together to feel at home, even if it was just for a few hours. After much thought, I came up with an idea of bringing all Latino student organizations together which would help welcome new Latino freshman on campus. I immediately began to send out e-mails in hopes that all organizations would agree to be part of something new and innovative. As I received responses from various organizations, it became apparent that they, too, were looking for a way to feel connected.

During the process, I was wanted a name that would define the event. As I reflected, I remembered that *mi abuelita*, *mi madre* y *mis tias* would take me to el *mercado* in *Monterrey*, *Nuevo Leon*, *Mexico*. At the *mercado*, I remember hearing music, seeing friends and family playing *loteria Mexicana*, buying food and spending time with loved ones. As a result, I decided to call it SUPER MERCADO LATIN@! I felt that the name was a metaphor that allowed new Latino freshman to find a place within a student organization that they could call home. The day of the event, everyone who attended brought rice, *frijoles*, *tortillas*, *maduros*, *pernil*, *arroz con gandules* and *tacos*. Everyone danced and renewed their Latino vows of identity. The most important aspect of this event was that it created *comunidad*! The fusion of our indigenous roots promoted strength and they reminded us of our history and current presence in higher education. We felt our collectivist identity unite to create a place of *espiritualidad*.

This year, Super Mercado Latin@ turns six years old and its significance at the UW-Madison grows stronger. My hope for the future is to have this event continue to be celebrated, year after year, to build community, long lasting friendships, and create new routes toward

success. As you spend some time here today, allow yourself to feel connected. Share stories!  
Build community! Enjoy culture *y siente el espíritu Latino!*

## ***Las Mujeres en Dos Dominios: Merging Personal and Professional Life***

Lauren E. De Jesus

### **Introduction**

This essay is an extension of the wonderfully written work *Chiquita's Cocoon*, a self-help guide for Latinas by Bettina R. Flores (1990). *Chiquita's Cocoon* is an innovative book that aims to examine issues facing Latinas and offering suggestions on how to face those issues. In my opinion all Latinas should read *Chiquita's Cocoon*. It challenges the ideas that a Latina is programmed to accept while exploring outside ideas. It also introduces the reader to the next steps for self-improvement and discovery. I find this method uplifting and necessary for positive change in a Latina's life.

Similar to Flores' (1990) approach, I intend to discuss a certain topic, in this case, Latinas who break into the career field while maintaining their personal lives. I found this topic interesting because in the world today, more and more Latinas, myself included, are aiming to seek higher education and ultimately, access to the professional world of our chosen careers. For Latinas, higher education and a career is a fairly new and very different choice from the expected traditional role of simply wife and mother. Since the career path is so different, the challenge becomes how well we can balance our personal lives and our careers in order to ensure our success. The question is can we do it?

First, I will discuss traditional roles of Latinas; these are the roles that we are predicted to fulfill. Second, I will talk about the Latina taking on new roles outside of that tradition. Third, I will consider those women who have already reached outside of tradition but are still maintaining some of the tradition: the career moms. Then, I will discuss Latinas getting the approval to reach beyond the boundaries set before them. Finally, I will discuss ways to approach these difficult situations and how to conquer them.

### **Traditional Roles**

Growing up Latina, we are taught that women have a certain role in life and we are exposed to that role constantly to reaffirm it. We are told that we must learn how to cook, clean, take care of kids, take care of husbands... the list goes on. We hear repeatedly that "A woman's place is at home" or "in the kitchen". From our childhood, we become the helpers: we help *abuela* or mom in the kitchen, bring *abuelo* or dad their food and drink, help clean up, help watch other kids, and help with other chores. We are told that we are the nurturers, we must take care of others; this is what we are best at and this is the role that we must pursue in life. As young girls, our futures seem to be laid out before us -it does not include us making our own choices. Latinas are told not to seek a differing path because our traditional culture limits our choices down to one path- being the nurturer. We embrace it because we have seen others embrace it- mothers, *abuelas*, and even *bisabuelas*.

The goal is become *La Santita*. As said in *Chiquita's Cocoon*, *La Santita* is the "Super-Latina... who holds the family together, keeps order and peace, waits on her husband and family hand and foot twenty-four hours a day and always excuses her husband's behavior, even when he beats her or blows the family paycheck. And she never complains." (Flores, 1990, p. 49). *La Santita* sacrifices her own needs and desires in order to be the ideal wife and mother. Externally,

she is calm and happy to serve others but internally, she is sad and defeated. As Flores said, we all know a woman like this. For me, it is my *abuela*, on my mother's side. My *abuela*, Alida, married my *abuelo*, Cesar in Lima, Peru, and they seemed like a great match: he made good money and she was dedicated to their growing family, but in reality, it was not all that great for my *abuela*. Alida did everything she thought was necessary and required of a wife: She bore three children (a girl and three boys), was a fantastic cook who made dinner every night, took care of the children and tended to her husband when he came home from work. Regardless of this, Cesar, although he does not acknowledge it, was abusive to her. My mother tells me stories about how he would come home from work, pick a fight and abuse Alida, physically and emotionally, constantly making her feel inferior. Cesar was also the breadwinner and he made decent money but instead of spending money on his wife and three children, he would go to bars and stay out all the time. He would also constantly cheat on Alida with the maid. He constantly let his machismo attitude control his actions when it came to my *abuela*. Considering all this, Alida did not leave him; she only fired the maid and continued with her work as a housewife and a mother. She endured years of this until quite recently- they had been separated for years but about 2 years ago, my *abuela* filed for a divorce. However, even with the divorce, he still comes to her home and she cooks for him and mends his clothing. Although she was able to get out of the marriage and out of living with him, she still has the mindset to take care of him in all ways. This just shows how the roles that we are taught stay with us even through difficult personal experiences.

Although these traditional roles are typically seen as ideal for Latinas, I do not mean to suggest that this is always the case for every Latina. Latina culture is diverse in itself but what I am discussing here is the stereotypical model of what and how a Latina should be and act. The story mentioned with my *abuelos* fulfills this clichéd idea but the generations of Latinas in my family have proved this stereotype wrong. Personally, I have never felt a lot of pressure to fulfill this traditional role. Both my parents encourage my sisters and I to be independent and self-sufficient women. Yes, my grandmother does encourage me to learn to cook, mend clothing, and to be silent and proper, but my mother never stressed those things.

### **Taking on New Roles**

Seeing my *abuela* live her married life with abuse, infidelity, and repression, my mother did not picture her life being filled with the same issues. My mother refused to allow a man to do any of the things she saw my grandmother go through. She developed her own machismo attitude, taking control of her life and pursuing her own desires. As a result my mom became highly independent and focused on improving her life and career. Now my mother is the one that calls the shots in our family. Everyone depends on her and looks to her for answers, whether at home or at work. Her success is purely from her actions and this is something that is quite groundbreaking from the traditional role.

This is because my mother is among many Latinas who chose a different path than expected- pursuing a professional career. These Latinas aim to thrive independently rather than to depend on and serve a male figure. The goal is to better their status, their education and their place in the world by themselves- fighting against machismo attitudes. The focus is on the Latina herself and how far she can take herself in the professional world.

Deciding to enter new territory- such as the professional world- has been something more and more Latinas have done in recent years. They are stepping outside of their comfort bubble,

progressing towards being self-determining women. Since the choice is not presented overtly, Latinas are taking it upon themselves to have diverse roles and alternatives that present more opportunity for them to have a better life than they have seen other Latinas or *La Santitas* have.

This includes getting rid of the “housewife” idea: out of 371 Hispanic women, “only 10% agree that a woman’s place is in the home” (Rodriguez, 2012, p. 4). This reveals that more recently, Latinas are changing the way they see their roles and they have the means to do so. Here the “housewife” idea will be defined as the traditional role- the idea to be a nurturer and caretaker. This is not to say that Latinas who pursue this are regressive- we all are able to choose our own paths. However, since these Latinas have been raised to be dependable and attentive individuals, they are already on the right course to be great employees or CEO’s. Although these teachings of being dependable and diligent are helpful abilities for wives and mothers, they can be developed into skills that can be utilized in career fields. These skills are admired and desired in the professional world, which includes those women who work outside or inside the home. Employers look for people with the skills of being dependable, diligent, and attentive; finding people who encompass these skills is like hitting gold and what is so surprising is it is a **woman** who embodies all of this. Being able to adapt traditional teachings to the working field is a great way that Latinas are able to get ahead.

Correspondingly, simply revising skills is not the only way Latinas are pursuing the professional world, they are also receiving higher education, making them more admirable. Many of the previous Latinas that I have interacted with: *abuelas*, *tias*, older *primas*, mothers, including not just my family but my Latina friends’ families as well, have never thought about pursuing higher education. Some women did not make it past high school; they either ended up dropping out by choice or getting pregnant. They do not see the value in education. For example, a 37-year-old Latina who got pregnant at 17 is very confused when I discuss education with her. She has repeatedly shared with me that she does not understand why I feel the need to work towards a Bachelor’s degree. She values motherhood, family and working rather than higher education. In addition, she thinks that I am wasting time on getting a four-year degree when I can simply be working and making money. I can understand her thought process since she was a young mom who needed money to support her family and was devoted to them. However, I do not understand how after everything she has gone through, she does not see the value in receiving higher education. My motivation to receive higher education led me from a second-rate high school education to a prestigious University being taught by professors who are experts in their fields. I intend to follow in the footsteps of Latinas before me who have received higher education and are making great impressions in this world. This includes Esmeralda Santiago (writer), Bettina Flores (writer) and Sonia Sotomayor (Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States). These women prove that through education, Latinas can truly change the roles and make greater contributions to society than originally thought.

With this combination of skill-sets and higher education, Latinas, like Bettina Flores and Sonia Sotomayor, are able to demonstrate how valuable Latinas can be outside of the traditional role. Although some older Latinas do not see this value, there is a handful of older Latinas that do see it. For Latinas today, there is opportunity waiting in the unfamiliar territory that is professional careers.

## *Las Mamás de Carrera*

As said before, today numerous amounts of Latinas are pursuing professional careers. The desire to do this may have come from within the Latina herself- like Bettina Flores or from watching their mothers. Many older Latinas rest on traditions but there are exceptions to this. There are Latinas who started the boundary breaking into the professional field. Specifically, I am referring to mothers. These Latina career moms are great examples of how combining the two worlds, professional and family, can be done.

Being a Latina career mom is not an easy undertaking. Becoming a mother, period, is not an easy undertaking. With Latinas however, these women are already looked at differently because they decided to choose having a career in the first place but when children are added, they are expected to become doting mothers as well. How are these moms successful at this? Sacrifices must be made. Whether it is on the job front or on the mother front, Latina career moms must decide which domain the sacrifice will be made. This is not easy for a working mom- she has worked vigorously to become a well-respected worker while also deciding to commit to raising and loving another human being- so where does she make the sacrifice? Although mothers can be master multi-taskers and take on several tasks at once, sometimes they cannot handle all of it. A Latina career mom can be the most organized, attentive, reassuring employee and mother BUT if she drops the ball on one end, she either looks like a bad mother or a bad employee. She loses either way.

You may be wondering how I, a twenty-year-old Latina college student whose experience with children does not go past babysitting, can know of the dilemmas of a Latina career mom. To answer your question, I am the daughter of one of these astonishing women. My mother, Sara, is an Assistant Vice-President-Sales Support Associate at Bank of America in Chicago and she is a Latina career mom. As I mentioned before, my mother refused to follow in the steps of my grandmother and become *La Santita*; she decided her path would be one of independence and education. Being the oldest, and the only girl, she constantly had to be a responsible caretaker, supervisor for her brothers, and had to help around the house. Once my mother and her family moved to the United States from Peru, she realized that there was more out there for her and she would discover it. As a teenager, she managed to hold down two jobs, do well in school, improve her English and still manage to help around the house. She went to community college and after receiving her Associates Degree in business, started working for a bank that she would dedicate over twenty-five years to and she still works there.

Although I find it wonderful that my mother was able to accomplish all this, when I was younger it was very difficult to accept that my mother worked all the time. As a child, I did not pay too much attention to my parent's jobs but what I did notice was my mother's absence. Among the Latinas in my classroom, I was the only one with a mother who worked a full time job. This meant that at PTA meetings, school assemblies, performances, dances and any other type of function parents are invited to, my mother was not there. I remember feeling the sting of rejection every time I got my own hopes up that I would finally see her face in the crowd and it never happened. Reading Sonia Sotomayor's *My Beloved World* (2013), I resonate with some of her same experiences and feelings towards a mother's absence. My mother and father were always working so my sister and I would always be dropped off at a babysitter or put into after-school programs- similar to how Sonia and her brother would be dropped off at family's homes for hours. In addition, Sotomayor (2013) says, "...and no one resented my mother's absence more than I did..." (p. 17). These words sum up exactly how I felt about my mother never being

in that crowd. I hated that she was never there and I hated feeling alone. However, I am not alone in these feelings. There are Latinas, like me, who have working moms who are absent from a big part of their daily lives. For those Latinas and me, we are the sacrifice. It is very difficult for the child of a Latina career mom to feel as though we are getting the attention we deserve. We are told by our culture that a mother should be there for her children but where are our mothers? For us, we see other children with their mother's at all these functions while we just sit and contemplate why our own mothers could not make it- assuming it is because either we are not worthy of being priority or because our mother's do not see how important it is to us just to show up. Knowing that something is important to you while your mother disregards it is tragic. These assumptions and feelings can cause major strain in mother-daughter relationships or completely break them up.

However, the mother-daughter relationship is one of the strongest bonds in a woman's life. Breaking this relationship is not easy but if it is exposed to enough of the assumptions and feelings discussed prior, it *will* break. In order to prevent this and restore the relationship, I have learned that communication is the key. Something needs to be brought from both parties in order for the relationship to work and thrive. The mother needs to provide guidance for her daughter to become a successful, independent woman herself. She needs to listen and encourage the daughter's personal aspirations. The mother needs to allow her daughter to flourish in her own way and support her, even if she does not agree with every single decision. In addition, the mother should not make work the priority all the time and remember that her relationship with her daughter is a more important matter. On the other side of this, the daughter needs to understand that her mother works hard to support the family, to provide a better life and allow for more opportunities to spend time with her. Although a lot of her mother's time and efforts are dedicated to work, it is not because the mother doesn't care, it is because she wants to provide a life without the struggle that she went through. The daughter must appreciate this hard work and the effort that her mother puts forth. Also, the daughter should be open with her mother and not be upset or angry about her absence but appreciative of when her mother is around. Finally, the daughter should follow in the influence of independence, remembering that if she needs support, she has a strong and independent woman to look to: her mother. If both women do these things, the relationship will overpower the absence, allowing the mother-daughter bond to become strong and generating generations of strong independent women.

## **Getting Consent**

All right, so we have talked about our revolutionary mothers who have broken the seal on being both mothers and career women. You would think it is safe to say that these mothers are more encouraging and supportive of their daughter's desire of searching for new unexplored territory than their mothers were, *si*? Well, you would be wrong. Yes, these Latinas have gone into completely new domains, they have taken chances and risks to get to where they are, but that does not mean that they want you to go off and do something even riskier! These moms may have come a long way from traditional ideology BUT there is always that side of a Latina mother that is over bearing, over protective and will shut down a child's attempt to do something that is highly uncertain or unsafe to them. If mothers are unsure about something, you will NOT get approval to do so. Do they want you to succeed? Absolutely! They just want you to do it where they can still have some say in the matter.

I believe this characteristic of Latina mothers (and mothers in general) is normal. They want to protect you and keep you safe but they cannot do that if you part from them. With Latina mothers, it goes further. Our mothers want to keep us, forever. Sure, they want us to grow and be great women, but they also want us close in proximity, so they still feel in control. This stems from a combination of remnants of the traditional ideals they grew up with and them being women that are usually in control. My mother, for example, has become very accustomed to being in control of those around her. She has done such a great job of embracing her own machismo attitude and being a dominant woman that she sometimes forgets that her own daughters can and will stray from what she thinks. The idea that me, her own daughter, wants to go out in the world and make decisions that she does not agree with, is a foreign situation to deal with, so the only logical way is to tighten the grasp.

Some mothers, including my own, try to make us feel guilty for wanting to progress outside of the comfort zone they have created for us. It is as though by us striving for greater things that take us away from our mothers, we have committed the ultimate betrayal. How could we do such a cruel thing to our own mother? In addition to this, they want to protect us from being rejected or denied from the outside world. After spending years watching us develop into lovely young ladies, watching us fail or be excluded is not what a mother wants to see. They do not want us to feel the pain they felt when they were on their own, paving their way into this world because it is after all, a really harsh world, especially for a female minority. We then feel bad for making our mother's feel so betrayed and we want to let her know that her being protective is appreciated so much so, that we hold off on our plans and wait for a better time but there will never BE a better time. When you try again another time, the same thing will happen again and again so we will never accomplish those goals that we had in mind. In the end, we are stuck in the in-between of being a loyal daughter and an independent woman but never able to fully embrace either one. We can merely mask one side while pretending to accept the other. Latinas who allow this to happen to them end up returning to old ideology and becoming the woman that they did not want to be, which reinforces tradition.

Again, communication is necessary here. This is when daughters must communicate to their mothers that daughters deserve the same chance to branch out in the world, regardless of how uncertain or scary, and follow their own paths. Mothers are irreplaceable. We will always return to our mothers no matter how far we may stray.

### *Si Se Puede*

Given what has been discussed, having both career and family fall into place may seem like a difficult task. However, I am a firm believer that it is a definitely possible. Latinas are still in the beginning stages of entering the career fields while raising families and we have done well so far, so who's to say that we won't master it? The one thing that we all need, as Bettina Flores said, is **Courage**. How simple!

We Latinas must have the **courage** to reject the traditional role because we deserve so much more. We are more than child bearers, attentive wives, quiet women, and *La Santita*, and now we are aware of it. If Latinas apply the effort that women before them applied to fulfilling the traditional ideology, success is inevitable! Many Latinas have already summoned up the **courage** to pursue a life beyond what was introduced, paving the way for the rest of us. Therefore we must do the same for future generations.



We Latinas must have the **courage** to go forward into unfamiliar domains and apply the skills we were taught in our childhood to our education and our careers. We may feel that we are not good enough, or we do not know enough but this just means that we need to try harder and trust in ourselves. We have the abilities; it is just our being able to show to universities and employers.

We Latinas must have the **courage** to tell our mothers that WE are in control of our own lives. It is not about betrayal or safety- it is about control. Latina career moms had the **courage** to break out and now their daughters must have double the **courage** to further push the boundaries.

Latinas, single women and mothers, who are maintaining a career and their personal lives, are leaders to future generations. Being able to balance both requires sacrifice. Although my younger self detested my mother's absence, I now understand that it was not easy for her and she was doing what she felt was right, working to make a better life for our family and I am eternally grateful for that. Latinas like my mother are trying to show that we, too, can become independent and intelligent women with fulfilling lives of family and career.

For now, I am currently working on my relationship with my mother. Although I have figured out how to better our relationship, the idea is easier than the execution, but there is progress and for that, I am grateful. Though I know that the relationship I have with my own daughters might have the same struggles, I look forward to working on it because I know what it is like on one side already. Also, I am learning everyday to be more independent and step out of my comfort zone. Thus far, I have been successful, but this is just the beginning.

For my future, I intend to continue my independent mindset while encouraging other Latinas, and one day my own daughters, to be the same. My Latina roots will always be important to me even though its traditional ideals are not. That being said, I hope to empower other Latinas to become commanding and self-determining women in a world that can underestimate them. With the support of my mother, I know I will succeed in this and make her proud of the woman that she has raised.

Predictably, the hardest part for us Latinas is getting started. The whole panorama of our futures is spread before us like a luxurious landscape; it is up to us to have the **courage** to go running the fields of our passion.

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## ***Tomando Pasos: Consejos for Chican@ and Latin@ undergraduates considering graduate school***

Ivan Cabrera and Alyssa M. Ramírez

### **Abstract**

As of 2013, approximately 54 million Latin@s live in the United States, yet only 1.3 million aged 25 and older have an advanced degree compared to over 18 million Whites (U.S. Census, 2014). There is an unquestionable need for recruitment and retention of Chican@ and Latin@ students into graduate programs. Based on personal and professional experience as graduate students, the current authors propose *consejos* (advice) through a psychosociocultural framework (PSC; Castellanos & Gloria, 2007) to address multiple domains influencing Chican@ and Latin@ undergraduates' persistence. Through the use of *dichos*, current research, and the authors' educational narratives, they provide pragmatic advice to young Chican@ and Latin@ scholars in their pursuit of graduate school.

Historically, Chican@ and Latin@ students have struggled through the educational pipeline (Yosso, Smith, Ceja & Solórzano, 2009). Proportionately, there is only one Hispanic for every eight White college graduates (U.S. Census, 2014). This means that for every 100 Latin@s who begin elementary school, approximately half will finish high school and enter college, of whom roughly 13 will complete a bachelor's degree, 4 will seek graduate or professional degrees, and less than 1 will complete a doctoral degree (Solórzano, Villalpando, & Oseguera, 2005). Since 1993 there has been a 240% increase in Hispanic college enrollment yet Hispanics aged 18 to 24 only account for 9% of the total bachelor's degrees awarded (Krogstad & Fry, 2012). As of 2013 there are an estimated 54 million Latin@s residing in the United States (U.S.), of those who are 25 years or older, only 2.4%, have attained an advanced degree (i.e., master's, doctorate, or professional degree). Further, of these advance degree earners, Latino women consistently outnumber Latino men (U.S. Census, 2014). Lack of education limits Chican@ and Latin@s upward mobility, and their ability to influence social, political, and educational infrastructure (Gloria, 1997). Clearly, there is a need to focus efforts on recruitment and retention considering what assists and deters Chican@s and Latin@s to earn graduate degrees.

As Latin@-identified graduate students, we believe Chican@ and Latin@ students need spaces where they are welcome, can access information, and can form a sense of community and belonging to recruit and encourage them to consider graduate school. Indeed, previous authors (e.g., Castellanos & Gloria, 2007; Castellanos, Gloria, & Kamimura, 2006) have discussed the importance of mentorship models within higher education to propel Latin@ students through the educational pipeline. By drawing upon the narratives of others and implementing culturally-salient processes (e.g., passing along of wisdoms or stories), we believe that Chican@ and Latin@ students can find the holistic support and guidance to assist their explorations of advanced graduate training.

Specifically, we propose *consejos* (advice) within a psychosociocultural (PSC) framework (Gloria & Rodriguez, 2000) that integratively addresses psychological, social, cultural, and environmental dimensions influencing Chican@ and Latin@ students' persistence

towards graduate school (Castellanos & Gloria, 2007). Students' self-beliefs or sense of efficacy as academically proficient (P; psychological dimension) includes their resiliency and motivation. Relationships (S; social support dimension) can be key to students' persistence and include both academic (faculty mentors, peer support) and personal relationships (family support). Values and worldviews (C; cultural dimension) includes acculturation, ethnic identity, and adherence to other culturally-specific practices. Finally, analyzing the educational climate of the higher education institution (environmental contexts) also provides a thorough understanding of students' persistence concerns (Castellanos & Gloria, 2007; Gloria & Rodriguez, 2000).

## **Theoretical Framework**

Chican@ and Latin@ student's well-being is intimately tied with their ability to negotiate academic environments (Castellanos & Gloria, 2007). As a community, Chican@s and Latin@s typically grow and develop within a relational orientation (Comas-Díaz, 2006), which in turn strongly influences their sense of self. Learning ancestral wisdoms from a collective who include their nuclear and extended family, and close-knit community is a process facilitated through *familismo*. The experiences within family and collective contexts influence how Chican@ and Latin@s make sense of and interact with the world. Such familial and community ascribed wisdoms are powerful because they are based on past and lived experiences of others with similar life challenges or obstacles. Specifically, when messages to advance beyond their undergraduate studies are delivered by someone students can relate to and/or trust, the influence and encouragement is exponentially magnified.

Within the Chican@ and Latin@ community, *dichos*, Spanish proverbs or sayings, are one way to pass ancestral wisdoms (*sabiduría*) and knowings that address life concerns (Comas-Díaz, 2006). Indeed, Comas-Díaz (2006) suggested that *dichos* can “offer subversive strategies as they express adaptive responses to oppression, colonization, and internalized oppression (p. 444).” As such, for this article we communicate *consejos* and *dichos* in order to convey *sabiduría* to Chican@ and Latin@ undergraduates as they consider graduate studies, so that they can benefit from others messages and wisdoms that create a platform for Chican@s and Latin@s to find endurance and resilience (Zuñiga, 1991).

More simply stated, we seek to provide a platform for students to learn from our wisdom and stand on our shoulders. Indeed, it is through the passing down or sharing of life lessons, *sabiduría*, and the use of *dichos* and *consejos*, that Chican@ and Latin@ undergraduates can negotiate their educational settings and consider the possibilities of graduate studies. In the following sections, the authors offer domain-specific *consejos* using the PSC framework. These *consejos* are grounded in their personal experiences and current research that may be salient for Chican@ and Latin@ undergraduates as they explore the opportunities of graduate studies. Finally the authors share their own academic narratives that highlight the psychological, social and cultural facets that influenced their educational journeys.

## **Psychological - (Self-beliefs)**

***Believe the voces (voices) that encouraged you to pursue advanced training.*** Listen fully to the voices of *familia*, teachers, colleagues, and community members who see something special in you and believe you can succeed in a graduate studies program. Your confidence to succeed directly influences your academic achievement and success (Bordes & Arredondo,

2005). Self-doubt is part of the process and *humildad* a common cultural norm for many Chican@ and Latin@s; when in doubt, remember and reconnect to the *vozes* who have propelled and supported you. Your cultural wealth and ability to visualize your hopes and dreams while facing barriers will help you advance your academic endeavors (Luna & Prieto, 2009).

***You have a unique voice, let it be heard.*** As a Chican@ and Latin@ your perspectives and worldview are often not addressed in classrooms, left out of research, or underrepresented among faculty. Your cultural and personal narratives - - the perspective you speak from and the people it represents is a needed asset at the graduate level (Delgado, 2000). You have a unique narrative and perspective that many graduate programs would be interested in having. Communicate these narratives and voice to the graduate programs to which you are applying, your strengths and your value and how you will enrich their learning environment. You can still be humble and communicate your valuable experience.

***You are not a number, you are more than your GRE or GPA.*** The use of standardized admissions tests continues to be an ineffective measure to determine academic success and do not fully reflect your capacity for education (Solórzano et al., 2005). Remember that your academic strengths are interwoven through multiple dimensions that include all of your community efforts and activities, and non-academic educational experiences. Be sure to highlight your community and student organization involvement and leadership, volunteer and outreach activities, research and workshop presentations in your graduate school applications. Your actions and activities evidence your passion, commitment, and potential contributions to your field as a graduate student.

### **Social - (Connections and relationships)**

***Ask the experts.*** Contact graduate students, faculty, and university personnel (e.g., academic advisor) to ask questions about applying to graduate school, securing funding, or identifying a potential advisor and mentor. Connect with others who have gone through a similar process and tap into their *sabiduría*. For example, faculty members are well-acquainted with what admission committees are looking for in graduate students whereas graduate students are familiar with the intricacies of the application process. Although contacting current graduate students or faculty might be an uncertain or potentially stressful process, they have gone through the application process themselves and likely remember the difficulty, frustration, and *ganas* needed in applying for graduate studies (Castellanos & Gloria, 2007).

***Do not do it alone.*** Seek out social connections within a supportive community that values and encourages advanced education. Consider stepping out of your comfort zone to find the connections and resources within Greek and cultural organizations, support groups, and workshops that can help you prepare for graduate school. These social connections may lead you to peers, advanced students, mentors or groups focused on pursuing graduate studies. Building relationships with others who are part of your academic environment, share your goals or are invested in your success will help you access information about the graduate school application process which will be invaluable. (Arana, Castañeda-Sound, Blanchard & Aguilar, 2011; Castellanos & Gloria, 2007; Delgado-Guerrero, Cherniack, & Gloria, 2014).

***There is funding for graduate school.*** Ensuring you have some type of financial support in the form of assistantship, fellowship, or scholarship, influences your ability to complete your degree (Solórzano et al., 2005). Forming relationships with other graduate students and faculty can help you access information about funding options, connect you to other resources, and provide letters of recommendation and feedback on your financial support application. Ask faculty questions about funding inside and outside the department to which you are applying as they may have valuable connections across campus that can get you funded, provide advice about where to look for funding, and can keep you in mind when they see opportunities arise. Remember that finding funding is a process of networking, ask questions about what is available to you and reach out to those who can help you.

### **Cultural - (Values and worldviews)**

***Hold tight to your values and reasons for pursuing graduate school.*** Throughout your pursuit and experience of graduate school, remember why you are seeking advanced training. Whether you are pursuing advanced studies because of *familia*, *comunidad* or championing the cause of other Chican@s and Latin@s, your core values will help you through the challenging times that are inevitably part of graduate education. Indeed, maintaining a sense of congruence to cultural values and worldviews in higher education has been linked to increased educational wellness and academic persistence for Chican@s and Latin@s (Castellanos & Gloria, 2007; Delgado-Guerrero, et al., 2014). Given the small amount of Chican@s and Latin@s in graduate school (U.S. Census, 2014), you are among a select group who can effect change and positively affect your community by advancing your educational training (Luna & Prieto, 2009).

***Use your cultural sabiduría (wisdom) to advocate for multiple perspectives.*** As a Chican@ and Latin@ in the U.S., your identity, *comunidad*, and *cultura* allow you to embody and employ multiple perspectives. Your conceptualization of the world, informed by your community's needs and contextual knowledge can bridge, expand, and promote a fuller academic understanding of Chican@s and Latin@s as well as broaden and deepen academics more generally. The ability to hold and merge multiple perspectives is a valuable skill set in the classroom as you assist in the development of theory and culturally meaningful research questions. These skills can also translate into other arenas of graduate study such as bridging research to application or practice. Use your perspectives to create awareness and promote change in your field (Solórzano, Ceja, & Yosso, 2000; Delgado, 2000).

***Find the right fit for you.*** The graduate program you select needs to be consistent with your cultural values as well as your interests in social justice and multiculturalism. Think broadly about how programs incorporate similar values, and spend time and energy finding faculty with whom you can work and who encourage your scholarly interests. In finding a good fit, be sure to ask specific questions about the faculty and program. For example, consider asking some of the Chican@ and Latin@ students in the program the following questions: what is their experience in that program, what is it like to work with faculty, how are they treated as students, what is the climate like for racial and ethnic minority students, and what is the overall diversity of the program and university's student population? Wherever you go, make sure you can form an academic *familia* that affirms your cultural values and helps you negotiate the culture within academia (Castellanos & Gloria, 2007).

## **Environmental - Contextual - (Space and location)**

***Plan your transition.*** The support of family and friends during the transition to college contributes to Chican@ and Latin@ students' adjustment and persistence to graduate (Hurtado & Carter, 1997; Rodriguez, Mira, Myers, Morris, & Cardoza, 2003). Engage in conversation so you can communicate to your family and friends your needs and desired expectations during your application process and as you continue your education beyond an undergraduate degree. Importantly, finding out what expectations your family and friends have of you to maintain your roles and connections can ease the process, particularly when they may question or feel uncertain about your decision. Explaining your goals, dreams, and ambitions can help your family and friends understand your decision to seek advanced education and in turn support your transition into graduate school.

***Location, location, location!*** In finding a program, realize you are also choosing a space where you can envision living for the next two to six years. Although you are a graduate student remember to also consider you are selecting a community, socio-political climate and atmosphere, diversity (or lack thereof) and even lifestyle that comes with your chosen graduate program location. Consider how you will find community while being prepared to re-define or expand your notion of community in a way that may be different from which you are familiar. The location may not be how you want or need it to be, so be prepared to actively create a comfortable and congruent space as you weigh your different options for graduate studies.

***Find your sacred spaces.*** Chican@ and Latin@ graduate students will often find themselves negotiating personal and cultural values that conflict with those espoused within academia (Villaseñor, Reyes, & Muñoz, 2013), particularly because they are more than their student identity. Determine if there will be others in the graduate program with whom you can connect. Indeed, sacred spaces can emerge when Chican@ and Latin@ students come together to share the depth and complexities of their experiences as they find validation of their own experience reflected in others' struggles and stories (Soto, Cervantes-Soon, Villarreal, & Campos, 2009). Finding the places where you can express your different identities as a dimensionalized person is an important step towards academic success as you nurture who you are culturally, spiritually, and relationally.

## **PsychoSocioCultural (PSC) Author Narratives**

In this next section, the authors share their education narratives through a PSC framework, reflecting on how the driving forces within each domain have propelled them toward graduate education. The first co-author, Ivan Cabrera, describes the early education obstacles and impasses that led to his connection to his mentor, which ultimately allowed him to understand the needs of his community. It was from this understanding that his sense of responsibility to the Latin@ community was ignited to seek advanced graduate studies. The second co-author, Alyssa M. Ramírez Stege, addresses how her cultural identity and values influenced her ability to form connections that allowed her to envision herself within a graduate program. Importantly, she describes how she maintains these values within her graduate studies as she negotiates the balance of differences and remains congruent to her cultural self.

*Camarón que se duerme, se lo lleva la corriente* (Beware or you will get caught up). As an immigrant Latino male from a predominantly Black and Latin@ low-income community my road to graduate school has been untraditional compared to the path that many White students often experience. Yet my story of reaching graduate school may be similar to many students of color from similar backgrounds. Growing up in a diverse urban community there were few allusions to higher education much less graduate school, where academic success was not perceived as socially rewarding and was often labeled as “acting White.” Early on my teachers gave me little academic encouragement, communicating to me that they had little confidence in my intelligence and ability. In addition, many of my school peers got involved in gangs and drugs, which was considered a viable option within my educational setting. For me however, I took the other perceived alternative route of sports and being socially connected. The lack of academic expectations and messages of inability influenced my drive to gain social capital (i.e., vying for popularity).

Although there were few cues and little guidance to pursue higher education, my parents always said *con la educación, se gana todo* (you can achieve anything through education). Despite my parents’ marital and financial difficulties, they still clearly communicated the importance of sacrifice, believing in my ability to succeed, and tenacity. My parents’ values helped me achieve academically despite the discouraging messages I received at school. I used good grades and test scores as a means of escape from my home and community to go to college, seeking freedom and experience.

At college I felt lost, I lacked academic role models and guidance, which prompted me to seek connections to college community. Implementing my abilities to make social connections allowed me to affiliate with ethnically diverse student organizations where I gained leadership positions and bridged access to administrators of color who became my mentors. These mentors looked like me, were from communities like mine, and shared their struggles in their academic narratives. My mentors communicated confidence in my skills, importance of my perspective, value of my voice, and encouraged me to help students transitioning to college life by similarly sharing my story. Through my mentorship experience I learned to value the importance of connecting students of color with others with whom they can relate and feel understood. My relationships and connections with mentors expanded my ideas about what graduate studies could offer and transformed and strengthened my sense of commitment towards my community in working with underrepresented students.

*A donde el corazón se inclina, el pie camina* (Your values guide your journey). As an American born and Mexican raised, first-generation college student who grew up in a working class home, cultural values and beliefs played an important role in my decision to pursue graduate school. My parents owned a marketplace store in my father's hometown of Cholula, Puebla, and their values of hard work and *humildad* (humility) were funneled into my education, allowing me to attend a private school from elementary to high school. Yet, my educational experience was starkly different from my peers as I had to work from a young age in our family store. Through this work experience, my parents passed down *enseñanzas* (teachings), and because of their *echarle ganas* attitude, financial sacrifices, expectations, and educational hopes, I could not take for granted the opportunities they had provided. Their *voces* (voices) of encouragement, sacrifice, work ethic, and values helped me persevere and remain passionate in my educational pursuits despite at times feeling I did not belong in the educational setting.

Our hard work and support as a family was rewarded as I received a scholarship to attend a small private university for my undergraduate studies in my hometown. I was challenged once more feeling like an outsider in a campus with predominantly wealthy and socially privileged students. Nevertheless, through hard work, *ganar*, and *humildad*, I connected with peers and faculty and thrived in the academic setting. Awareness of my cultural values and background informed my decision-making process as I considered different master's degrees and programs. Admission into a U.S. master's program increased my academic confidence and the program's multiculturalism and social justice emphasis reassured my belonging in graduate school. Once in the program, my cultural knowledge was recognized and valued, and through mentoring experiences with faculty I bridged my personal and academic self.

When I question my capacity to persist and accomplish my educational goals, I listen intently to *las voces de apoyo* -help and support- from family, friends, peers and faculty mentors who have been indispensable to my educational confidence to continue. My family has strengthened me through difficult times, including my decision to pursue a doctoral degree and educational career in a different country. Nevertheless, I build *confianza* and *familia* with academic peers through mentoring programs, research groups, and social events that increase my sense of belonging in my doctoral program. Similarly, activities such as dancing with a Mexican folkloric group and attending *reuniones* (gatherings) with other Mexicans living in the U.S. allow me to honor my connections and cultural values. My continued perseverance is in honor of and testimony to my parents' hard work and sacrifice.

**Conclusion - *Quien la sigue la consigue*** (S/he who pursues it can achieve it)

The current paper provides pragmatic advice from current research and the authors' personal experiences for Chican@ and Latin@ students as they consider graduate school. Through the PSC framework (Castellanos & Gloria, 2007), we challenge students to think of themselves holistically, and consider psychological, social, and cultural domains that affect their decision to pursue graduate studies. Specifically, students are encouraged to explore their self-beliefs as future graduate students (psychological factors); their connections to others that include family, friends, community, academic peers and faculty mentors (social support); and their connection to cultural values and worldviews (cultural factors) that influence their graduate school endeavors. By taking a dimensionalized and integrative approach, we believe that Chican@ and Latin@ students can succeed in their process towards graduate education.

We provide *consejos* to provide insight and encouragement about the importance of having Chican@ and Latin@ students pursue graduate studies. Remember, *entre dicho y hecho hay mucho trecho* (between what's said and done, there is a much to do), so *échale ganas*, a process that has been directly tied to academic success (Easley, Bianco, & Leech, 2012)! Ultimately, we consider these *consejos* as a call to action for Chican@ and Latin@ students to continue their academic training. We call upon your passion, perspectives, and voices to propel the advancement of our Chican@ and Latin@ communities. It is through our combined efforts that we can engender change for ourselves, our *familia*, and our *comunidad*.

*¡Si se puede más!*



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## Guidelines for Authors

*Concientización* is a student journal dedicated to promoting the study of Chican@ and Latin@ experience and thought. We are committed to creating alliances across boundaries of nation, race, ethnicity, gender, class, and sexuality. In that spirit, we incorporate in our mission the study of Chican@ and Latin@ in Diaspora; the study of racial, ethnic, class, sexual, and gender identities; and the study of community and nation building.

*Concientización* invites UW-Madison student authors to submit scholarship on topics concerning Chican@ & Latin@ experience and thought that are thoughtful, substantive, and scholarly in nature:

- Research study
- Scholarly Essay or Composition
- Book and Movie Reviews
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