

EDITORS' COMMENTARY

Voices in Dialogue and the Power of Collectivity

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“There are many voices that move me deeply, as they fill the universe with their beauty and power, connecting ancient times with the future, uniting the heart of the earth with the heart of the cosmos.” For Inés Hernández Ávila, poetry, song, and voices of conscience remind us that “De lo que es Amor, de lo que es Vida,” (Latina Feminist Group 2001, 336). The scholarly essays, creative writing, art, interviews, and reviews in this issue show how productive transformational projects and the voices and images imbued within them serve to shape the field of Chicana/Latina studies. In this context, we believe that, in varied and implicit ways, the essays in this issue invoke Chela Sandoval’s “hermeneutics of love” articulated in *Methodology of the Oppressed* (2000) as part of the methodology of the oppressed: “It is love that can access and guide our theoretical and political ‘*movidas*’—revolutionary maneuvers toward decolonized being” (140). The published essays give voice to new forms of love and resistance, invoking intimate caring about communities, families, friends, colleagues, and the recrafting of knowledge and art. Chicana and Latina stories, narratives, testimonios, poetry, and art are a vital component in strategies for social change.

Jessica Lopez Lyman, in her essay “Revitalizing Poetics: Latin@s Reshape South Minneapolis,” tacitly identifies revolutionary love and differential consciousness as the basis for the Latin@ poetry group, *Palabristas*, who demonstrate the power of verse as a form of cultural revitalization that transforms Latin@ identities

and urban spaces. Norma Marrun, in “Queering La Familia: a Redefinition of Mothering, Immigration, and Education,” rewrites, through her testimonio, her family’s immigration story via a queer lens that redefines hegemonic notions of motherhood and familial relations. Marrun documents a form of collective revolutionary love that triumphs against an unjust immigration system and that subsequently helps her to secure access to employment, higher education, and a more solid foundation for her and her family.

What better way to express the power of a Chicana/Latina scholarship than to transform ways of knowing by articulating a methodology based on caring? This is precisely what Cindy Fierros and Dolores Delgado Bernal accomplish in their article “Vamos a platicar: The Contours of Pláticas as Chicana/Latina Feminist Methodologies.” Weaving their personal and academic histories, the authors identify the ways Chicana/Latina feminists engage pláticas as a site for the creation of knowledge. This essay will surely become a foundational contribution for researchers interested in pursuing pláticas as a Chicana/Latina feminist methodology. Moreover, it takes love, compassion, tenacity and the willingness to work collectively for Chicanas/Latinas to survive the tenure process. In their collective testimonio, “Latina Faculty/Staff Testimonios on Scholarly Production,” Aurora Chang, Vanessa Fonseca, Lilia Soto, Dolores Saucedo Cardona, and Lilia Soto reveal the processes they engaged as faculty and staff situated at the University of Wyoming to create the supportive environment for their respective trajectories towards tenure. They identify critical social, cultural and academic barriers that Chicana/Latina scholars, when collectively-minded, can prevail.

In Dialogue

This issue features an interview, “Recreating the Yardstick: An Interview with Delilah Montoya” conducted by Monica Montelongo Flores, whose specialization in Chicana/Latina cultural studies led her to interview this

renowned artist. The interview takes place at the New Mexico Museum of Art in Santa Fe. As they stroll through the gallery we become privy to Montoya's encapsulation of Aztlán, God, myth, and bad girls, the latter of which are represented by Chicana/Latina female boxers in a male-dominated sport.

The Art of "Being"

We are pleased and honored to feature the work of two artists. Our cover artist, Delilah Montoya explores the social and cultural meanings of Chicana/o identity and the southwest through her illustrious and award-winning photographic representation and image-making. By focusing on revered symbols in Chicana/o culture, Montoya amplifies their mystical and spiritual qualities while taunting us to reconsider them in a new light and with broader, more complex understanding.

We also feature the work of Elsa Bea Velasquez, whose multi-disciplinary photographic project, *Veme: Queering Phoenix*, focuses on queer youth of color and brings to light their lives at the intersections of queerness and race. In so doing, Velasquez reminds us of the importance of decolonizing projects, while celebrating, as she notes, "our resilience, our hope, and our courage."

In Gratitude and with a Welcome Spirit

This is a bittersweet issue for *Chicana/Latina Studies* as it is the last issue over which Eliza Rodriguez y Gibson, associate professor of Chicano Studies at Loyola Marymount University, presides as Creative Writing Editor. During her tenure, Eliza brought to our pages new innovative creative writings by established and emerging Chicana/Latina writers who express their mastery and love for words in gifted and talented ways. Throughout her tenure as creative writing editor, Eliza emphasized Chicana/Latina bodies and their expression through poetry, testimonio, cuentos, and playwriting. We thank

her for honoring and vetting the creative works and engaging in a cultural politics of renewal and transformation. We wish you the very best in your future endeavors as a scholar, writer, and keeper of creative works.

As we say good-bye to Eliza, we welcome Patricia Trujillo as incoming creative writing editor. Patricia brings ample experience editing literary magazines like *Puerto del Sol* and *Prairie Schooner* as well as community publications such as *El Placazo*, *The Valley Daily Post*, and *Greenfield Times*. As a creative writer herself, Patricia has a vision of bringing to the page new genres in creative writing by women of color, and linking them to action, academic inquiry, and scholarly studies. We are excited to seeing this vision achieved in the pages of the journal and look forward to working with Patricia.

The combined works speak to the critical importance and power of collaborative and collective efforts and the extent to which a love and commitment for the field of Chicana/Latina and indigenous studies, and toward each other, can shape the cultural and political landscape in which we reside.

References

- Latina Feminist Group. 2001. *Telling to Live: Latina Feminist Testimonios*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Sandoval, Chela. 2000. *Methodology of the Oppressed*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.