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**Towards a New Chicana/o History:
An Introductory Overview**

by

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- Development of Latino faculty, including support for the development of curriculum and scholarship for Chicano/Latino Studies.

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Chicana/o History as a Social Movement

It has become apparent to many scholars of Chicana/o History that the explosive growth and diversification in research and interpretation now requires the community

to pause and evaluate where the field has been, and where it might go in the future.¹ Thus, the conference "Towards a New Chicana/o History," held at Michigan State University, April 22-23, 1996, was organized at a timely juncture, and at a particularly exciting moment in terms of observing Chicana/o History. As a relatively new field - established less than two generations ago - Chicana/o History constitutes a living laboratory dedicated to the formation of a new academic discipline, born out of a social and political movement with which it remains closely intertwined. For historians who are interested in the writing of history and the forces which affect it - that which we call historiography - the evolution of Chicana/o History offers the opportunity to observe in the making a process of intellectualization that historiographers traditionally have had to extract from documents after the fact, after the writers of a particular history are dead."

Many of the issues which stimulated the conference on a new Chicana/o History have been lived, and are being lived, by the participants in the conference, people who have subsequently contributed to the debate on the character and future of the field. Historians expressing their views at the conference included some of the original activists in the Chicana/o political movement, and others who lived through the movement's early years in the 1960's. The new generation of Chicana/o historians who took part in the conference debate, but were born after 1960, are also living the history of the movement.

It must be remembered that Chicana/o History and Chicana/o Studies together embody a movement that represents the penetration of societal concerns into academia. Thus the initial questions that defined Chicana/o history using temporal, spatial and thematic parameters are now being augmented and redefined by newer questions centered in gender, generation, class, sexual orientation, religion, changing regionalities, and other social issues. As conference participant Lorena Oropeza observed, other new fields which have emerged from social movements - Women's, African American, Native American, and Gay-Lesbian History - are undergoing similar experiences. Within the discipline of history, these new fields represent multifaceted intellectual/cultural engagements which are shifting the paradigm through which "mainstream" history is studied and interpreted. At the same time, internal priorities and hierarchies are being challenged within each of the new fields as they all undergo rapid evolutionary changes in their conceptual growth.

The trajectory of Chicana/o History as a cultural construct is part of a larger experience that extends across all academic disciplines. Some might say that it is a scholar's truism to assert that the cultural formation of the scholar shapes her perception of her field.² Truism or not, the statement is made relevant today by the fact that so many "other voices" have risen up to reclaim and rewrite a history previously constructed from an overwhelmingly male, Euro-American perspective.

Political consciousness and the drive for self-empowerment have encouraged many social groups to seize control of their own histories and recontextualize the images of their national or ethnic past from within their own communities. The internal questions circulating within the field of Chicana/o History are therefore part of a multi-layered questioning of assumptions occurring at all levels of scholarly endeavor which interrogate the relationship of the discipline to life outside the university. Often criticized for having political agendas, the new fields of study have exposed the invisible naturalized politics of established historiographies, and raised our shared consciousness that all writing, including the consciously "objective," is political.

In order to understand the variety of perspectives expressed at the conference and format them conceptually, it is important for the reader to understand that the mission objectives of Chicana/o History, as part of Chicana/o Studies, have been reformulated and reprioritized as advances in the political/academic agenda have been made over the last three decades. As a shared political and academic enterprise, Chicana/o History has been charged with the following integrated agenda:

1. Serve the political movement by producing new knowledge and refining the ideological foundations of the movement;
2. Increase the number of Chicana/os in university faculties and student bodies. Initially, the fastest and most effective way of accomplishing this was through the establishment of Chicana/o Studies programs and departments;
3. Convert historians and scholars in other fields to the study of Chicana/o history and train new ones in the field;
4. Produce the knowledge and interpretations, not just to provide the intellectual resources for the political movement, but also to correct the actual imbalances and distortions in the historiography;
5. Establish a competitive field of study within an elitist and hostile intellectual and political academic environment. This required the invention of a new field of activity with rationalized temporal, spatial and thematic parameters, and effective research methodologies;
6. Integrate and transform mainstream fields of research by shifting their paradigms to include Chicana/o history;
7. Integrate university faculties, administrations and student bodies beyond the segregated islands of representation in Chicana/o Studies programs and departments. The transformation of the larger society and university

environments requires Chicana/o scholars researching and teaching in mainstream academic departments with a good number of them specializing in non-Chicana/o topics;

8. Integrate mainstream curricula and redefine and enrich them through the inclusion of Chicana/o history and Chicana/o perspectives;
9. Refine and redefine Chicana/o History itself by expanding its knowledge base and reworking its interpretations. This includes the conceptual adjustment to the great diversity of Chicana/o historical experiences that challenges the myth of a homogenous community. It also means the application of methodologies imported from other fields and the analytical comparison of Chicana/o historical experiences with those of other groups;
10. Diversify Chicana/o faculties through the inclusion of women and other scholars whose perspectives and interests are different from those of the more established members in the field;
11. Explore and define the conceptual and historical bases for alliances with other Latina/o groups, both in academia and outside of it. This includes negotiating the conceptual and political relations with Latina/o History, which is perceived by some Chicana/o scholars as a threat that will dilute and weaken Chicana/o History;
12. Preserve the gains made in all of these areas through institutionalized programs, networks, and pipelines;
13. Maintain open perspectives to new opportunities, challenges, and changes.

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The Debate Over the Mission of Chicana/o Studies

This complex set of mission objectives has led to real and perceived conflicts among scholars and activists who have differed over priorities and strategies in the face of resource shortages and external threats to Chicana/o Studies and the Chicana/o Movement. The reader will best understand the simultaneous conflict and harmony apparent in the following essay as resulting from the creative tension between two evolutionary stages. The founding stage, invented to challenge mainstream United

States historiography, was confrontational by nature. The developmental stage, transitional in nature, retains the traditional belief that Chicana/o History is still marginalized by the mainstream field. However, younger Chicana/o scholars, rather than take a confrontational approach, are finding increasingly common ground thematically and methodologically with mainstream scholars, especially within the new cultural history discussed later. Scholars of the developmental stage often define the newer stage in contrast to the founding stage, even while acknowledging that the previous tradition actually enabled the latter. Thus scholars of the founding generation tend to believe integration will lead to the destruction of Chicana/o History, while younger scholars are much more likely to see integration as opportunity rather than crisis. The ensuing debate concerning how, and on what terms, Chicana/o History should relate to mainstream History of the United States is subsequently reflected in this collection of essays.

To stimulate thought and discussion about the state of the field, participants were sent an essay by Ignacio García in advance of the conference.³ A scholar of the founding stage of Chicana/o Studies, García believes that the field is in crisis because it has lost the militancy of the original generation, and forgotten the purpose for which Chicana/o Studies programs were originally established - to serve the community. According to García, Chicana/o Studies is being fatally weakened by scholars who, for various reasons, have either lost or never had an "ideological connection with the original premises of Chicano Studies." Among these scholars are: (1) those seeking to integrate themselves and their programs into the general curriculum of the university; (2) older scholars who have become concerned more with advancing their individual careers than with strengthening Chicana/o Studies; (3) younger scholars who have no depth of connections to the Movement or the historiography, and do their work in a vacuum; and (4) female scholars who create internal ruptures in Chicana/o Studies by promoting either a feminist agenda or a lesbian agenda at the expense of ethnic solidarity. García perceives two other threats to the survival and prosperity of Chicana/o Studies: (1) lack of student involvement, which was once a pillar of support; and (2) the rise of Latina/o Studies which dilutes the purpose of Chicana/o Studies.

García advocates for a recommitment to Chicana/o Studies and its revival. He believes a search for new paradigms will re-energize the field the way that the internal colony paradigm energized it in the founding generation. This search would be complemented by a new "master plan" for educating and politicizing Mexican American students, carried out by yet-to-be-formed regional associations. García does not underestimate the difficulty of implementing such an agenda, but asserts that the alternative will be the further decline of Chicana/o Studies.

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The Broader Purpose of the Conference

The essay had the desired effect of stimulating comment and debate, but the participants did not limit themselves to the issues raised by García. Each participating scholar was asked to address one of the following four broad themes:

Connections

The Synergy Between Chicana/o and Mexican History;

Directions

The Evolution and Future Path of Chicana/o History;

Variations:

A Comparison of Thematic and Methodological Variations, Especially Between the Southwest and Midwest;

Positions:

Different Perspectives on Chicana/o and Ethnic Studies.

The result was a set of essays that ranged from broad sweeping interpretations of the field's evolution to the analysis of specific trends and historical problems. Some essays serve the purpose of providing important background information on the field, while others show how specific areas of the field have developed, and what topics need to be pursued in the future. The theme and format of the conference encouraged the interlacing of personal experiences with the abstract conceptualization of the field, and the politics of academia in the presentations and discussions.

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The Historical Background and Evolution of Chicana/o History

Two presenters provide analytical overviews of the background on which Chicana/o Studies and History rose to prominence. In "Asymmetry," Ramón Eduardo Ruiz, gives us an overview of the complex relationships along the U.S.-Mexico border stemming from the unequal power of the two nations. In a tour de force that can only

come from deep study and personal knowledge of the border states, Ruiz explains the economic basis of the asymmetry, the different geographies (economic, ecological, and social) of the border regions, the inequalities in wealth of their populations, the urbanization of the border, the stifling effect of political centralization on Mexican border development, the agromaquila industry, the dynamics of sister city economics, and the varied histories of the border cities. The overview sets the historical and international context against which Chicana/o history has taken place. While Ruiz does not explicitly relate the complexities of the border to Chicana/o history, his discussion of border inequalities, distortions, and hybridizations in economics, demographics, and culture contributes significantly to making Chicana/o history more comprehensible. The historical and conceptual intertwinings between United States-Mexican relations and Chicana/o history are further pursued by other contributors, including Roberto Rodríguez, Louise Año Nuevo Kerr, Stephen Pitti, Zaragosa Vargas, and Ramón Gutiérrez.

Rodríguez's synthesis of "The Origins and History of the Chicano Movement" firmly contextualizes Chicana/o Studies within the historical, political movement, and provides essential background for understanding the evolution of Chicana/o History and the issues which converge around the field. Specifically, Rodríguez reminds us that the modern political Chicana/o Movement began as a struggle for civil rights, dignity, and respect that coincided with the Black Power Movement of the 1960's. Its mass national character and strong student base differentiated it from earlier Mexican American civil rights movements that were necessarily more conservative out of fear of the frequent political attacks on immigrants, with whom Mexican Americans were often confused in the public and political mind. Rodríguez explains that a key element of the 60's Movement was a change in attitude wherein Chicana/os no longer saw themselves as foreigners, but as natives. Furthermore, the national "Movement" was really composed of many smaller movements in different parts of the country, often with different aims. Collectively, these smaller movements spawned hundreds of organizations and laid the foundation for other Chicana/o and Latina/o civil rights organizations and campaigns in the areas of gender, higher education, immigration, and the arts.

Rodríguez explains the genesis of Chicana/o Studies within the larger socio-political movement. Before the 60's, Mexican Americans were not represented in higher education in the same way that African Americans were represented by their own Black Colleges (and in the national dialogue on race centered on White/Black relations). In the 60's, however, new educational opportunities drew enough Chicana/o students to the campuses in the nation, particularly in California, to make the universities centers of Chicana/o social protest. Chicana/o Studies programs are a product of the movement and particularly of an extension of the movement into

academia. Thus a heavy expectation materialized that the new academic programs fill the role of advocates for social causes at the same time that they were pressed to fit into the traditional mold of academia. He believes that the attacks on Affirmative Action and the death of César Chávez have stimulated a resurgence of the Chicana/o Movement which re-energizes the activism of Chicana/o Studies and Chicana/o History. Although the dilemma of Chicana/o Studies that Rodríguez identifies and that Chicana/o scholars at the conference actively debated arises from the circumstances of its origins, it is similar to two other persistent tensions in academia: one is the seemingly inherent competition between theoretical and applied research; the other is the stress between the research objectives and the urban outreach missions experienced by city-based universities.⁴

Two scholars provide straightforward overviews of the development of the field of Chicana/o History. Alberto Camarillo, in "Reflections on the Growth of Chicano History," underlines the origins of the field in the baseline monographs of the 70's and early 80's and its transformation into what he considers to be a dynamic subfield of U.S. history that is interacting with the "new" subfields of U.S. Social, Cultural, Women's, Labor, Urban and Western histories. The first specialists in Chicana/o history, trained in 70's and 80's, laid the foundations of the field by recovering and reconstructing a neglected history. A second generation of Chicana/o scholars are building on the foundations with provocative research on (1) urban communities and subregions (2) urban and rural workers (3) women, and (4) political and institutional history, often combining two or more of these themes.

In "State of the Literature: Chicano History" Louise Año Nuevo Kerr reviews the past twenty years of Chicana/o History noting that Chicana/o Studies was born out of a negation by the established disciplines which subsequently encouraged Chicana/o scholars to produce works on Chicana/o immigration, urbanization, and rural and industrial labor, and to begin to look at the role of women. Kerr provides alternative explanations for why Chicana/o Studies is in transition, including weakened institutional support in California, national foundations less predisposed to fund Chicana/o programs and research, and massive attacks on Affirmative Action by political forces outside of the university. On a more positive note, Kerr also points out that support is improving in the Midwest, and that the number of Chicana/o historians is growing, while libraries and other institutions are paying more serious attention to collecting Chicana/o documentation.

While recognizing the importance of new trends in cultural studies, Kerr's agenda for future research emphasizes the need to continue the development of established paths of investigation. Calling for additional community studies to facilitate a new synthesis, Kerr recommends the following areas for future study: Mexican immigration since 1960 and its impact on established communities in the context of

economic globalization; the additional impact of Central and South American immigration on established Mexican communities in the U.S.; transnational cultural change; leadership and community development in different circumstances; the impact of the Chicana/o Movement on the political life of communities; institutional and social change in local schools; the rise of Chicana/o and Latina/o professional organizations; changes in social rituals like the quinceañera and pathways of social mobility, such as the military; individual biographies and family histories; and comparative experiences across time and space. To "facilitate the making of the new history," she recommends a continued effort to raise consciousness, and facilitate collaboration with organizations like the Midwest Consortium for Latino Research in order to improve support for scholars. She also advocates the creation of research teams for interdisciplinary and comparative projects. While not antagonistic to the choices made by research-oriented scholars, Kerr reiterates her conviction that the purpose of Chicana/o Studies is not just to create knowledge, but to advance the community.

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Competing Visions of Chicana/o History

Two participants, Gutiérrez and Rudy Acuña, analyze Chicana/o History by examining the paradigms - the conceptual frameworks and perspectives - applied by historians to the interpretation of Chicana/o historical experiences. Gutiérrez, in "Chicano History: Paradigm Shifts and Shifting Boundaries," shows that, despite the continued marginalization of Chicana/o History by scholars dominating the construction and dissemination of U.S. History, the approaches used by most writers of Chicana/o History actually fit within the traditional, post-Enlightenment paradigm used by mainstream scholars to discuss and understand human "progress."

While they vary in terms of applying bourgeois, Marxist, antiquarian, and other interpretations, to the field, Chicana/o writers still have much in common with writers of the established national historiography, with the notable exception that they write about Chicana/os, and that they do it from Chicana/o perspectives. For Gutiérrez and for many of the young scholars who participated in the conference, the applications of race, class, gender, and gay/lesbian analyses are enriching the field of Chicana/o History by revealing its diversity and complexity, while at the same time bringing it closer into a mutually beneficial relationship with mainstream national history. Gutiérrez observes that the questioning of established paradigms, and the assumption

of linear progress underlying them, has taken the study of history into a post-modern era wherein previously unexplored or underdeveloped perspectives abound.

Acuña takes a less sanguine view of the field's evolution. Drawing on the work of Thomas Kuhn,⁵ Acuña explores the nature of traditional and revolutionary paradigms, their indispensable role in human thought, and the way they selectively gather and interpret information, as well as resist being replaced by new paradigms. Acuña's understanding of structures of power and empowerment as paradigmatic is the basis for his argument that Chicana/o historians must construct paradigms that challenge and confront the Eurocentric, Cold War mentality of mainstream United States historiography. His own book, *Occupied America: A History of Chicanos*, is the most widely known adaptation of the internal colony model from Third World and African American studies to the interpretation of the condition of Chicana/os in the United States.⁶

Acuña sees the absence of new paradigms as a failure of Chicana/o Studies scholars to challenge the Eurocentric character of the historiography. He believes the use of gender, class, and racial analyses by Chicana/o scholars reflects the outdated, mechanical application of imported methodologies from other disciplines. While some scholars view the integration of Chicana/o and mainstream historiography, believing the former tradition has the potential to transform the latter, Acuña sees this process as intellectual co-optation.⁷ In analyzing the patterns of Chicana/o historiography, Gutiérrez characterizes Acuña's perspective as radical Chicana/o nationalism occupying a position further left than the more familiar liberatory perspectives advancing ideas like class struggle, assimilation, and civil rights activism.

While Acuña does not agree with all of García's statements, it is not surprising that he best represented at the conference García's position on the decline, even betrayal, of Chicana/o Studies. For Acuña, the intellectual co-optation is linked to social and occupational co-optation within the political arena of the historical profession. Acuña, like García, holds the position that Chicana/o History is inherently confrontational and directed to serving the needs of the political movement and the community. He believes many Chicana/o scholars have been co-opted by the system of rewards and punishments in academia. Acuña has an answer to the charge that service to the Chicana/o social movement corrupts the scientific objectivity of Chicana/o History which its critics believe should strive to be more professionally academic and objective. Acuña cites the work of Peter Novick who documents the racism of Anglo-Saxon scholars against Jewish scholars as revealed in the private correspondence of the former at the time when the latter were entering the historical profession.⁸ Acuña believes that Chicana/o scholars who naively seek to integrate themselves into mainstream academia are cooperating with a racist and fascist establishment that

would destroy Chicana/o Studies and its socio-political mission. Acuña thus considers the research agenda of a Chicana/o scholar as both a moral choice and a social act.

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Two Applications of the Term "Chicano"

In order to better understand the debates at the conference and the responses of younger historians to the positions taken by García and Acuña, it is important to first note that the term "Chicano" has come to have various meanings and contextual applications - at least two major ones - that need to be distinguished from each other in order to avoid confusion and miscommunication. In its strictest sense - and leaving aside the gender issue which troubles it - the term "Chicano" and its derivatives apply to the political movement that erupted in the late 60's and declined in the early 70's. This application of the term can be extended to individuals who have voluntarily taken up the political ideology and social agenda of the movement and have continued to champion them into the present despite the disappearance of a national or even regional movement. However, Chicana/o History and Studies programs and departments are caught between this very specific and politically-charged definition and a second much broader definition which, ironically, they have been a major force in shaping and promoting.

In this broader application, the term "Chicano" replaces the term "Mexican American," and is used to refer to the population of Mexican descent in the U.S., and their history, and to its antecedents in both the pre-Anglo American Southwest and in Mexico. In this second usage, the term has a much more diffuse political charge comparable to the sequential replacement of terms from "Negro" and "Colored" to "Afro American," "Black," and "African American" in reference to the population of African descent in the United States. In this admittedly "politically correct" usage, the term is extended to populations who do not share the political convictions of the Chicana/o Movement and its adherents. It is also extended rhetorically to historical populations who existed before the Chicana/o Movement. In their broader usage of the term, scholars and activists have to be careful not to project inappropriately a political mentality where and when it did not exist as a form of self-identification. Many scholars still use the terms "Mexican American" and "Mexican" to avoid the political colorization of non-Chicana/o populations. For activists who believe they represent the interest of a whole people, the difference between the two meanings of "Chicano" is often blurred.⁹

Re-inventing Chicana/o History

Three young scholars, María E. Montoya in "Class, Gender, and Culture as Challenges to Chicano Identity," Lorena Oropeza in "Making History: The Chicano Movement," and Stephen J. Pitti in "Ernesto Galarza Remembered: A Reflection on Graduate Studies in Chicano History," answer García's and Acuña's challenge by arguing for expanded definitions of the Chicana/o identity and Chicana/o history. They particularly challenge the assumptions that Chicana/os are working class barrio dwellers and that only they constitute "the community." Montoya, grew up in a hostile White environment in a Denver suburb and did not learn Spanish or Catholicism. She, nevertheless, claims a role in the shaping of the field of Chicana/o History. Oropeza responds to being characterized by García as one of the young scholars from middle class backgrounds who do not identify with the community. Pitti draws on the lessons in the life of Ernesto Galarza, who earned a doctorate from Columbia University, but spent his life challenging academia as an activist in agricultural labor while, at the same time, maintaining a broad and international vision of the historical stage on which Chicana/os have acted out their lives. Together, taken in combination, they highlight the different fronts along which Chicana/o History must face its crisis to reinvent and strengthen itself.

It is not surprising that young scholars would take up the issue of generational differences. They freely recognize that Chicana/o History is now being remade by scholars without a personal memory of the movement's or the field's beginnings. They credit the first and second generations with doing their job too well in opening the doors for younger scholars who otherwise would not be occupying positions that once did not exist. However, they turn the argument around and believe the founding fathers should investigate why the newer generation is not as radical as its predecessor - or, perhaps, how the younger scholars are radical in their own way. Rather than trying to turn the clock back to what they consider a static notion of Chicana/o History; Montoya, Oropeza, and Pitti throw themselves unreservedly into an intellectual embrace of all the forces which García sees as threats to the field.

The newer scholars advocate opening up the conceptualization of the physical space in which Chicana/o History takes place. Every nation creates its myths of origins and a homeland. The Chicana/o Movement, while not a nation in the way we understand the term at this historical moment, nevertheless, exhibited a number of characteristics of nation-building. Most prominent was the idea that the mythical homeland of the

Aztecs, Aztlán, was located in the U.S. Southwest, in the territory taken by conquest from Mexico. Chicana/os, therefore, have the deepest claim to the land on which they live - equal to that of any other Native American group. The modern-day actualization of Aztlán, as an occupied or colonized Chicana/o homeland, is the barrio, the Chicana/o ghetto, which was converted ideologically into a fortress within whose walls Chicana/o culture replicates itself. This is a logical and natural ideological invention because the Chicana/o Movement was, in fact, a class-based movement for greater political and material equality. Young scholars, however, now find this construct to be more a prison than a homeland. They point to the histories of Chicana/os in multiple places, not just outside of the barrio, but also outside of the city and the Southwest.

Inseparable from the need to expand the definition of Chicana/o History beyond the barrio is the call to expand it to include economic classes not found in the inner city of the working and jobless poor. One can almost palpably feel the tension between the politically-charged definition of "Chicano" and its broader inclusive application. The young scholars feel constricted by the model of the internal colony which worked so well in the early days of the struggle and which García uses as an example to be replicated in order to avoid what Acuña sees as a blind aping of mainstream academia. For the younger scholars, the model suppresses the perception and study of the class differences that separate Mexican Americans and discourages, even condemns, the study of the middle class along with scholars who have the misfortune of not being born or not wanting to live in the barrio. Against the ideological grain of the political movement, young scholars who identify as Chicana/os are willing to expand Chicana/o History to include the study of persons and groups of Mexican descent in the United States who are not, or who never had the chance to be, self-identified political Chicana/os. For them, the study of class differences and class struggles among Chicana/os enriches, rather than weakens, Chicana/o History and opens up the field to the examination of forms of adaptation other than victimization and resistance.

No other force has had a deeper or wider impact on Chicana/o Studies and History than the Women's Movement. Again, the complex interplay between real lives and the writing of history is evident. As a gay historian, Gutiérrez, has been particularly sensitive to issues of gender. He notes in his essay in this collection that the feminist critique of male-dominated Chicana/o historiography began with the attack on male chauvinism in the Chicana/o political movement. His voice at the conference was joined by those of Montoya, Oropeza, and Pitti in observing that most scholars who have written about the Chicana/o Movement have been male participants in the movement. Montoya adds that, with a few prominent exceptions, male Chicana/o historians have failed to incorporate gender as a method of analysis in their work. For

Montoya, Chicana/o studies has also created a gendered division of labor in which women do women's history and men do everything else.

If Chicano male scholars feel embattled, Montoya observes that Chicana female scholars do not have it any easier. While they are busy championing the importance of gender within Chicana/o Studies, and are accused of causing divisions within the ranks, they have to reverse roles in their dialogue with mainstream Women's Studies historians who downplay the importance of class and ethnicity. If Chicanas are breaking down the sexism they face both in their professional lives and in the writing of history, they are also using history to link the oppression of Chicanas at work and their oppression at home, further opening up the possibilities for liberation in both domains. In giving voices to the previously mute, Chicanas are helping to merge Chicana/o History thematically and methodology with other fields of study.

This merging or joining is something that is not happening by accident. While young scholars call for an expansion of the boundaries of Chicana/o History to include the diversity within the Chicana/o experience, they also advocate for a deliberate contextualization and comparison of the field with other areas of research. Pitti reminds us that while Ernesto Galarza was an activist who belonged to a previous generation, he, nevertheless, advocated studying the Chicana/o experience in the broadest possible contexts. This included U.S.-Mexican international economic interdependency and comparisons with the experiences of other hyphenated-Americans. Rather than look for themes, methodologies and concepts to separate Chicana/o History from mainstream areas of study, the young scholars call for the deliberate pursuit of linkages with U.S., Mexican, and Latin American Histories as well as with Latino Studies that includes the experiences of Cubans, Puerto Ricans and other Latin American groups. Pitti cautions against the tendency of recent scholars in Chicana/o History to move away from the study of Latin American history. Rather than defend the fortress of Chicana/o History for the political education of Chicana/o students, Montoya believes Chicana/o scholars must reconceptualize U.S. History by integrating Chicana/o history into it, and educate non-Chicana/o students in a new world of multiculturalism, race, and ethnicity requirements in college curriculums.

To those who would accuse them of betraying a commitment to the community, the young scholars responded that scholarship is activism and that even the "Plan de Santa Bárbara" recognized that knowledge produces social change. They cite Rudy Acuña's own Occupied America as an example of scholarship that has had an impact beyond the boundaries of academia. Acuña and García would not quarrel with this. What the younger scholars are saying, however, is that activism and service to the community can be defined much more broadly than implied by the measures of physical contact with the barrio or even other Chicana/o communities. Entering and excelling in new

fields of scholarship and competing in the academic marketplace is as important to furthering the cause of the community as going back to it personally. Breaking stereotypes held by non-Chicana/os clears a path for other Chicana/os just as the first generation of scholars provided the beachhead for today's young scholars.

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Research Redefines Chicana/o History

Conference participants also addressed other issues related to the definition of Chicana/o History as a field of study in its temporal, methodological and thematic aspects. Much of the research and work reported at the conference illustrates three of the most basic tasks facing Chicana/o scholars: (1) establishing links between modern Chicana/o cultures and those of past eras; (2) overcoming stereotypes of an inferior people without a history; and (3) reconstructing truer histories of the various Chicana/o peoples and communities in the United States. These three themes were almost invariably intertwined in each of the projects below.

Two individuals comment on Chicana/o literary and cultural history in their essays. Contrary to the established view of scholars and non-scholars that Mexican Americans have no literary history in the U.S., Luis Leal, in "Chicano Literary History: Origin and Development," shows that Mexican American scholars from the beginning of the century have documented a strong folkloric tradition dating back to the Spanish colonial period. Leal himself makes an argument that the antecedents of Chicana/o literature go back to the colonial chronicles of New Mexico and the future Southwest. The early writings lay the basis for Chicana/o culture and were further developed during the Mexican and U.S. periods of the Southwest. Gutiérrez concludes that, in defining itself within Chicana/o History, the feminist perspective has also contributed to the projection of Chicana/o history back in time. The perspective crossed the border and pushed back the temporal boundaries of Chicana/o History from 1848 to 1519 by reinterpreting Mexican history and rehabilitating the image of La Malinche from a traitor to her race to the mother of mestizaje and mexicanidad.

Zaragoza Vargas, in "Citizen, Immigrant and Foreign Wage Workers: The Chicana/o Labor Refrain in U.S. Labor Historiography," complements the essay by Ramón Ruiz and addresses part of the international context called for by Stephen Pitti by showing how recent works on Chicana/o labor have given us a view of the international character of labor utilization in Texas, California, and the Midwest. A major theme in the new historical literature is the commodification of Mexican labor in the U.S. from

the early 19th Century to the present and the reshaping of the labor force based on Chicana/o and Mexican workers by economic trends and technological changes. Another theme is that of union organization based on fraternal and mutual aid societies and influenced by radical political organizations on both sides of the border (the anarcho-syndicalist Partido Liberal Mexicano, the Texas Socialist Party, the Industrial Workers of the World, and the Western Federation of Miners). The history of international bonding in resistance to exploitation has carried forward to recent and present times with the organization of the United Farm Workers in the Southwest and the Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC) in the Midwest. Veteran organizers Ernesto Galarza and Bert Corona, who had an impact on the formation of Chicana/o Studies, emerge as leaders in the struggle to unionize and secure workers' rights. Today, in the 90's, labor strikes and alternative labor unions in manufacturing and service sectors in California are being led by Chicana/o and Mexican janitors, garment workers, carpenters and high-tech workers while the UFW experiences a revival. The set of themes is rounded out by the role of the Federal Government in assisting employers in the exploitation of Chicana/o and Mexican workers and withholding protection from abuse.¹⁰

Martha Menchaca, in "History and Anthropology: Conducting Chicano Research," addressed two topics. One is the continued domination of Anthropology by White males who are attempting to let the "other" speak, but who do not train minority and third-world scholars so that they can voice the "other's" view. She believes this is a problem which Chicana/o History has overcome through the training of Chicana/o scholars. As an example of the obstacles that have been faced in Anthropology, she cites the case of William Madsen's interpretation of South Texas Mexican American culture as dysfunctional which had to be challenged by Octavio Romano. The second topic is her own work in documenting the discrimination against Mexican Americans in Santa Paula, an agricultural community in Ventura County, California where Whites have been able to maintain power despite the end of legal segregation. Her new study in progress will focus on how Indians in Texas were forced to adopt a Mexican cultural identity after 1848 or be placed in Indian reservations.

Lorena Oropeza, in "Making History: The Chicano Movement," analyzes the origins of the National Chicano Moratorium March Against the War in Vietnam on Aug. 29, 1970. She explains how the National Chicano Moratorium Committee Against the War in Vietnam was able to turn traditional Mexican American pride in military service into an anti-war demonstration by tapping into powerful ethnic group notions of legitimacy, soldiering and citizenship. The high casualty rates did not become a factor in overcoming the pride of older Mexican Americans and the GI Forum in their military service to their country until the question was asked why Chicana/os were dying disproportionately when their rights had not been secured at home. The value of

machismo usually associated with bravery in war became equated with the bravery required to oppose the war. Oropeza observes that mainstream historians who have written about the anti-war movement have very little to say about the Chicano Moratorium because (as Acuña would agree) their cultural biases and backgrounds selected for the central actors who were relevant to their own cultural makeup. She recommends further research to place the Chicana/o Movement within the larger contexts of the experiences of Mexican American population as a whole and the national Anti-War Movement. The Chicana/o Movement should also be studied from a variety of perspectives and viewpoints and the Chicano Moratorium is one of these.

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Creative Crisis as a Constructive Experience

The conference on a New Chicana/o History captured vividly the depth and complexity of the creative crisis being experienced by Chicana/o History and Chicana/o Studies, both in the responses of conference participants to the challenges issued by García and Acuña and in the research agendas they present as their own or as those of other scholars. García and Acuña raise issues that impact on professional identities, research priorities, and even personal identities. These issues underscore the extent to which Chicana/o History is still very much anchored in contemporary politics and social issues. Gender, class, and the definition of service to the community are all intertwined in the issues being debated. The research agendas also indicate that Chicana/o History is still in a developmental stage of bringing to light and interpreting a multi-dimensional history that would otherwise be lost. Many of the mission objectives identified above as imposed on Chicana/o History by the social movement which created it and by the university environment in which it must function are still being worked out by the scholars who write it and live it. Almost everyone involved has a personal stake in how the formation of Chicana/o History takes shape and, therefore, experiences a passion for the process that, in the best profiles, is coupled with an earnest search for truth.

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Endnotes

1. The rise of Women's Studies and a feminist perspective in all disciplines and fields of study has called into question many assumptions and practices that take for granted (or operate from) a male-centered perspective. The fields formally known as "Chicano" and "Latino" Studies are no exception. In fact, they suffer from a particular problem centered in the historical evolution of the Spanish language. The English language has gender-neutral terms like "American" to refer to both genders. This is not the case with Spanish, wherein the male version of a noun like "Español," "Mexicano," "Latino," and "Chicano" is used to refer to both genders. Feminist scholars and activists have insisted on equal billing in the naming of the fields and programs and in any reference to both genders simultaneously. Given the absence of a gender-neutral alternative, the result has been the institutionalization of slashed terminology: "Chicana/o," "Chicana/Chicano," "Latina/o," and "Latina/Latino." Modern political correctness (or, in hindsight, the initial political incorrectness of the male shapers of the Spanish language) has created a grammatically-awkward construction in both written and oral forms. I believe the current slash-and-paste usage must evolve into something less artificial and emblematic of the gender clash that currently characterizes academic politics. I suggest that, until a linguist comes up with a better solution, we remove the slash and coin new terms that incorporate both genders like "Chicano" and "Latino." Conference participant, Lorena Oropeza deals with the problem in the following way: "I try to avoid the inherent sexism of Romance language by using gender neutral terms as 'movement participants' and 'activists' with frequency. When I use the plural 'Chicanos,' I usually refer to men and women. I also [use] the word 'Chicano' as a general adjective, as in 'Chicano moratorium.'" Lorena Oropeza, "Making History: The Chicano Movement," in "Towards a New Chicana/o History" (forthcoming), Endnote #7. I believe this is a formula that would not be well-received from a male writer.

I also use the term "Chicana/o History" with a capital "H" to refer to the organized study of "Chicana/o history" with a small "h." The latter refers to the actual life experiences of the diverse human groups that are the subjects of study.

2. In deference to our sensitized collective consciousness on the use of gendered pronouns, I use "she" rather than "he" when referring to the single reader or actor whose sex is unspecified. The alternative use of "she/he" is too grammatically cumbersome.

3. Ignacio M. García, "Juncture in the Road: Chicano Studies Since 'El Plan de Santa Bárbara,'" in David R. Maciel and Isidro D. Ortiz, eds., *Chicanas/Chicanos at the Crossroads: Social, Economic, and Political Change* (Tucson, 1996), 181-203.

4. see Carlos Muñoz, Jr., *Youth, Identity, Power: The Chicano Movement* (Verso; New York, 1989) for a finely-nuanced book-length interpretation of the Chicana/o Movement and its complex intertwining with the Chicana/o Movement. Frances R.

Aparicio addresses the problematic relationships of Latina/o and Chicana/o Studies to each other and to the multiple realities they attempt to define in "Reading the 'Latino' in Latino Studies: Towards Remaining our Academic Locations," Paper presented at the conference on "Constructing Latina/Latino Studies: Location and Disclosure," University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, April 2-3, 1998.

5. Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 2d ed., enl. (Chicago, 1970).

6. (New York: Harper & Row, 3d ed. 1988). Originally published in 1972. See the presentation by Ramón Gutiérrez for a more detailed depiction of the conceptual transfer.

7. In his revised essay, Acuña makes a point of drawing a distinction between his views and those of García. Acuña does not see Women's and Gay/Lesbian Studies or Ethnic Studies as a threat, and he differs on the organizational options for regenerating Chicana/o Studies.

8. Peter Novick, *That Noble Dream: The "Objectivity Question" and the American Historical Profession* (Cambridge, 1988).

9. Lorena Oropeza, in "Making History: The Chicano Movement," Footnote #7, for example resolves the problem in the following manner: "I tend to reserve the words 'Chicana' and 'Chicano' and their respective plurals to describe participants in the movement and use 'Mexican American' as a more general ethnic label. Muñoz, *Youth, Identity, Power*, 1-8, 15-16, limits the application of the term "Chicano" to the social-political movement of the 1960's and the early 1970's."

10. Among the books reviewed by Vargas are David Montejano, *Anglos and Mexicans in the Making of Texas* (Austin, 1987); Emilio Zamora, *The World of the Mexican Worker in Texas* (College Station, 1993); Cletus Daniel, *Chicano Workers and the Politics of Fairness* (Austin, 1991); Kitty Calavita, *Inside the State: The Bracero Program, Immigration, and the I.N.S.* (New York, 1992); and Dennis Valdés, *Al Norte: Agricultural Workers in the Great Lakes Region, 1917-1970* (Austin, 1991).