

INTRODUCTION

The New Latino Studies Reader is a textbook offered as an act of pedagogy and one of alchemy, conjuring *Latinidad* as a political project that cultivates a broad cultural sense of belonging to a grander community that is created through ancestral links to Latin America. As a teaching tool, this volume is designed to introduce students, teachers, and interested readers to the recent emergence of Latino studies as an interdisciplinary field of research, with all of its complex themes, preoccupations, and intellectual challenges. Gathered here is a broad-ranging collection of essays focused on the sense of group belonging brought into self-awareness, and potentially political mobilization, by naming this sentiment of affiliation as “Latina” or “Latino.” Calling oneself “Latino” and feeling a member of this group unites individuals of different nationalities from throughout Latin America, but it does not erase racial, class, gender, and sexual differences, which the all-inclusive word “Latina” or “Latino” all too often obscures. The readings presented here thus focus not only on individuality, personal sentiments, and self-fashioning, but just as importantly on group cohesion and coalition building, whether simply imagined, aspired to, or concrete and real. The collective aspirations of group empowerment captured by the word *Latinidad* often are dashed by social and national differences, levels of assimilation and adaptation to life in the United States, political beliefs, and a sense of belonging to other groups that may be just as important, say to one’s religion, to one’s town of birth, or to one’s gender as an ardent feminist. All of these cleavages hold the possibility of tearing apart that potent political possibility of a collectivity named *Latinidad*. Indeed, in a 2013 report of the Pew Research Center on Latino self-identification, only 20 percent of

its nationwide random sample of 5,103 adults explicitly called themselves “Hispanic” or “Latino”; 54 percent said they most often thought of themselves as “Mexicans,” “Puerto Ricans,” “Cubans,” and so forth, and 23 percent proclaimed themselves to be “Americans.”¹ This landscape of group membership becomes even more complex and differentiated if we include immigrants from different Latin American indigenous groups who feel oppressed and marginalized in their native states of origin, such as the Maya of Mexico and Guatemala, the Quechuas of the Andean republics, and the Mixtec and Zapotecs of Oaxaca, Mexico. For them, while the denomination as “Latino” theoretically fits, it is not a comfortable one.

That residents of the United States at present imagine themselves to be tied to some hemispheric Latin American unity, calling themselves “Latinas” and “Latinos” and referring to this sense of coherence as *Latinidad*, is of rather recent origin. The history of that sense of unity rooted in human action is perhaps only forty years old. While earlier linguistic antecedents, such as the term “Hispanic,” which is now used rather interchangeably with “Latino,” had been in circulation since the eighteenth century in English-language texts, it was only in the 1940s that both “Hispanic” and “Latino” entered into American scholarly discussions as a way of describing larger aggregations of peoples of Latin American origin in the United States. “Hispanic” was often used to describe the descendants of the original Spanish colonial territories that became part of the United States in the nineteenth century (Florida, New Mexico, Arizona, California), while “Latino” was more aptly used to describe immigrants from Latin America, of course with some geographic and temporal exceptions. *Hispanidad* and *Latinidad* remained categories that were used to describe groups of people for many years before either of these words were embraced for self-description and group membership rooted in collective discussion and action. As far as can be surmised, this first occurred in Chicago in the early 1970s. There, Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans temporarily suspended their group differences and came together to forge a coalition of civil rights organizations with the goal of petitioning the city of Chicago for bilingual education, employment opportunities, and the extension of affirmative action policies to their newly found alliance as members of a “Latino” community.² Since then, other groups, be they from public or private life, from the public sphere, from the academy, or from government, have chosen “Latinas” and “Latinos” as the categories that best describe their behavior, aspirations, sense of belonging, and community membership.

“Latino” is now included in most American English–language dictionaries as an English word, and etymologically explained as the abbreviated form of the Spanish *latinoamericano*, which simply means “Latin American.” The idea that a place called “Latin America” existed on the face of the globe was itself a mid-nineteenth-century geographic invention, created out of thin air by intellectuals from Spain’s former New World colonies who were living in Paris in the early 1850s, seeking to redraw the broad cultural boundaries that emerged in the aftermath of the American, Spanish American, and Haitian Revolutions. Looking for a way to describe the emergent political order that

had succeeded Spain's sharply reduced colonial empire, they called it "Latin America" and its residents *latinoamericanos*.³ Thus "Latinos" was birthed.

How the word "Latino" emerged in the United States among a wide swath of distinct national-origin groups is a much more complicated story. For introductory purposes here, suffice it to say that just as Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans came together in Chicago's Pilsen neighborhood to claim benefits they felt their collective due as "Latinos," so too members of other institutions, organizations, corporations, and state agencies have seen it in their interest to deploy the word "Latino" for purposes of simplification, political advantage, and monetary profit. Take the case of the Southwest Council of La Raza. When it was formed in 1968, the Southwest Council of La Raza had as its goal mobilizing and politically empowering the Mexican American and Chicano populations of Texas and California. Seeking to become the representative for this numerically ascendant population that was then being increasingly called "Hispanic," the organization changed its name to the "National Council of La Raza," moved its headquarters to Washington, DC, and developed a broader public policy agenda that included not only Mexican Americans but immigrants from many Latin American countries as well. The organization was soon recognized by philanthropic foundations and the United States Census Bureau as the organization they had to engage when they were trying to address broad issues of importance to Hispanics, much as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) did for African Americans.⁴ Corporations producing products to satisfy the ethnic appetites and consumption desires of Hispanics and Latinos were equally involved, working symbiotically with advertising agencies and media conglomerates to reach their intended targets, who if properly understood and pitched to, might indeed consume the beer, cheese, and host of consumables being intentionally produced to embody *el sabor latino*, that unique flavor they imagined as "Latino."⁵

According to the most recent population estimates generated by the United States Census Bureau and the Pew Research Center, as of July 1, 2014, the Latino or Hispanic population numbers roughly 54.4 million individuals, representing approximately 17 percent of the country's total. In previous decades Hispanics and Latinos were first counted by the census as "Spanish surnamed" individuals, then as "Spanish-speaking" persons, and now, as the result of increasing political pressure and numeric importance, they have emerged as "Latinos" and "Hispanics" in government statistics. Demographers predict that if current population trends continue, by the year 2060 Latinos will number 128.8 million, composing 31 percent of the country's population. By 2048 the country will become "majority-minority," with Latinos, African Americans, and Asian Americans numerically overwhelming the country's historically majority white population. In certain states this change has already occurred. California and New Mexico became majority-minority states in 2014; Texas and the District of Columbia should shortly follow. By 2020 Arizona, Florida, Maryland, and Nevada are expected to reach this milestone too.⁶

The Latino population in the United States comes from many Latin American countries. Historically, since the 1880s, Mexicans have been the largest group. By 2013 estimates, ethnic Mexicans constitute 64 percent of the 54 million total. Puerto Ricans follow, with 9.4 percent of the total, Salvadorans 3.8 percent, Cubans 3.7 percent, Dominicans 3.1 percent, Guatemalans 2.3 percent, Colombians 1.9 percent, Spaniards 1.4 percent, Hondurans 1.4 percent, Ecuadorians 1.2 percent, Peruvians 1.1 percent, Nicaraguans 0.8 percent, Venezuelans 0.5 percent, Argentineans 0.5 percent, with the remaining 4.9 percent coming from other Latin American countries. Immigrants from Brazil, Latin America's largest country, figure into this mix but represent only 0.1 percent of all Latinos.⁷

Latinidad has emerged potently in the academy in recent years because of the increasing ethnic complexity that now characterizes high schools, colleges, and universities. Those institutions of higher learning that once had distinct Mexican American and Puerto Rican studies departments, centers, and programs have met the challenge of increasing Dominican, Salvadoran, Cuban, and Guatemalan student enrollments by expanding into larger units of Latino studies. Increasing interest in intersectional analyses led to the first international conference on Latina and Latino studies, which was held in Chicago on July 17–19, 2014. Nearly seven hundred scholars, activists, and artists gathered for the event. As Raúl Coronado, one of the conference organizers and now the first president of the newly founded Association of Latina/o Studies explained, “We know so much about the history and culture of Mexican Americans, Puerto Ricans, [and] Cubans, for example, but we know so little about the similarities and differences between these various communities.” The association’s goal is to “promote research and effect policy change related to US Latinas/os. . . . We hope our work will help transform school curriculums and make a larger impact in national politics and culture.”⁸ We thus hope that this book addresses the pedagogical needs of teachers intent on designing courses that show the complexity of America’s Latinos and educating the next generation of students about the complexity of their divergent pasts and collective future in the United States.

This anthology is organized into seven parts that are devoted to mainly social science themes. In part 1, “Hispanics, Latinos, Chicanos, Boricuas: What Do Names Mean?” we have essays by Ramón A. Gutiérrez, Frances R. Aparicio, and Frances Negrón-Muntaner that delve into the complexity of *Latinidad* in history, social networks, and memory. In chapter 1 Gutiérrez offers us a genealogy of the politics of group naming at three historical moments: the Spanish colonial period, after the territorial acquisition of Mexico’s north by the United States at the end of the U.S.-Mexico War (1846–1848), and in the midst of the civil rights movement of the 1960s, when young Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans began calling themselves “Chicanos” and “Boricuas” in opposition to the dominant society. In chapter 2 Aparicio explores the complex ways in which women and men of various national origins, distinct sexual preferences, and various class and regional locations speak about and imagine their *Latinidad* at the most intimate and

personal levels of daily interaction. In chapter 3 Negrón-Muntaner illuminates the role of memory, evoking the images we saw on television and the musical tunes we heard on the radio and record player to interrogate how celebrities such as Celia Cruz conjure up a sense of feeling connected to a larger *Latinidad* born of exile and abandonment of the homeland.

In part 2, “The Origins of Latinos in the United States,” chapter 4 by Ramón A. Gutiérrez, traces the nineteenth-century territorial expansion of the United States, and the processes by which it annexed more than half of Mexico’s national territory at the end of the U.S.-Mexico War in 1848. Mexican citizens who resided in the conquered territory were given one year to remove themselves back to Mexico. If they remained, they automatically became American citizens. These Latinos often sarcastically quip that “we did not cross the border; the border crossed us.” The other essays in part 2 study the economic and political impulses that continually fueled and renewed distinct Latino immigration patterns, based primarily on labor needs and geopolitics. David G. Gutiérrez’s essay in chapter 5 is a comprehensive history of Latino immigration, which Lillian Guerra extends in chapter 6 with her focus on emigration from the Caribbean and Central America since the 1959 Cuban Revolution. The disparities created by U.S. Cold War politics toward different national groups is Guerra’s primary concern, explaining why Cubans were, and still are, welcomed as refugees from totalitarian Communism, while those fleeing revolutionary and counterrevolutionary violence propagated and funded by the United States in Central America are not.

“The Conundrums of Race” is the title of part 3, which comprises essays by Jorge Duany, Ginetta E. B. Candelario, and Tomás Almaguer. In chapter 7 Duany studies racial formation in Puerto Rico to contest the U.S. ideology of hypodescent and the black/white racial binary that its notion of the “one drop rule” produced historically. He argues that racial understandings among Puerto Ricans are quite complex and particularly situational, depending on whether race is being evaluated on the island or mainland. On the island many think of themselves as white despite phenotypes that most would recognize as evidence of extensive racial mixing. On the mainland these same individuals deem themselves neither black nor white, but one of a host of other racial categories the U.S. Census Bureau has never comprehended or fully captured statistically in its inquiries about race. Candelario’s contribution, chapter 8, takes us to the most elemental level, to women’s hair and its quality, texture, and look as the central organizing principle of how Dominican women living in New York City imagine race. In the Dominican Republic there is no strict racial binary but a host of physical color graduations, with whiteness and blackness at opposite ends of a continuous spectrum. Whiteness itself is far from pure and instead is imagined as a mixture between *lo indio* (i.e., the Taino indigenous people that once inhabited the island but were wiped out during the early colony) and *lo hispano* (the white somatic look of the Hispanics who first colonized the island). To distance themselves from blackness in the present, which they equate with the African slave past and with the Haitians whom they disdain, who reside

on the western half of the island of Hispaniola, Dominican women spend considerable time and money self-fashioning a mixed racial look that is appropriately demonstrated in wavy, flowing hair with no traces of African kink. Almaguer's essay in chapter 9 studies the categories the U.S. Census Bureau uses to understand Hispanics and Latinos racially, and how these two groups describe themselves. He then compares the racial lexicon of Mexicans and Puerto Ricans living in the United States with the categories that are used to describe persons of African and indigenous ancestry in Puerto Rico and Mexico. He concludes that the national cultures of origin profoundly shape how people think about racial formations in their homeland and how they "reracialize" themselves and others once they become residents in the United States.

Most of the women and men who emigrated from Latin America to the United States over the past century have come seeking well-paid work, so part 4 explores the theme of "Work and Life Chances." In essays by Patricia Zavella, Nicholas de Genova and Ana Y. Ramos-Zayas, and Manuel Pastor Jr., we learn the raw details of the work process, its hierarchical organization, and its meager levels of compensation, which naturally result in poverty for the majority of Latino immigrants. In chapter 10 Zavella surveys the rural and urban worlds of workers in Northern California, with their gender hierarchies, levels of sexual harassment that women especially experience, and linguistic barriers that routinely result in low wages. These conditions have been made all the more difficult by the economic recession of 2008 and the increasing reality of capital flight. Throughout this book we highlight instances of Latino unity, but also the conditions under which national groups feud when they compete for the same spaces, occupations, and compensation. In part 4 we read about the racial stereotypes Mexicans have of Puerto Ricans and vice versa, and of the racial tensions between these Latino populations. Here we turn to Chicago, where Mexican immigrants and Puerto Ricans live side by side and compete for the poorly paid unskilled work the city offers. While many Mexicans in the Humboldt Park neighborhood are older immigrants who have regularized their status and become citizens, the majority are unauthorized immigrants. Puerto Ricans by law have been citizens since 1917. This fact troubles the relationships between these two national groups. In chapter 11 de Genova and Ramos-Zayas explore the competing ideologies of work and worth that allow Puerto Ricans to lampoon Mexicans as "illegal aliens" who undercut wages and fail to invoke their rights as workers, and thus are caricatured as timid because of their ever-present fear of deportation. The retort Mexicans sling at Puerto Ricans is that they are lazy, that they have become dependent on government benefits because of their citizenship, particularly the women who have become "welfare queens." In Pastor's essay in chapter 12, we have a recent analysis of the levels of poverty among ethnic Mexicans in California, the state with the largest number of Latinos. What is particularly startling is that in 2012 two out of every five Mexicans in the state lived in conditions of working poverty, a ratio that significantly surpasses that for every other ethnic group in California. These Mexicans are not part-time workers. Instead, they are fully employed, indeed overemployed, with some toiling daily at two

and sometimes three jobs to make ends meet. The pathways to upward mobility for these workers are limited, with education and skills acquisition offering the surest possible route, but an improbable one. The improbability is due to their all-consuming work routines that leave little time for vocational training.

Social mobility, always measured generationally from the immigrant cohort forward to assess how they have integrated or assimilated into American life over decades, is the theme of part 5, “Class, Generation, and Assimilation.” Here we have gathered essays by Luis Fraga and a number of Latino political scientists, Edward Telles and Vilma Ortiz, and Richard L. Zweighenhaft and G. William Domhoff. In chapter 13 Fraga and his colleagues study how powerful the American dream of upward mobility and economic success has been in shaping Latino aspirations and reality. Most Latino immigrants have arrived intent on fulfilling this iconic dream, but many have failed because of limited educational opportunities and outright discrimination. How Mexican Americans have improved their lot or remained socially, culturally, and economically stagnant is the focus of Telles and Ortiz’s chapter 14, in which they study the long course of Mexican immigrant integration into American society. Mexicans are the oldest Latino immigrant group in the United States, having begun migrating northward shortly after the end of the U.S.-Mexico War in 1848. Because of the number of years that have passed since their immigrant entry, it is easiest to measure this group’s progress toward assimilation, or an embrace of American identity and an acceptance of the values and norms of the dominant culture. Telles and Ortiz characterize the Mexican immigrant experience as “generations of exclusion,” noting that by the fourth generation in the United States, there has been upward mobility only for some. Terms such as “segmented assimilation” or “bumpy road assimilation” have been used recently to reflect the difficulties Latinos have experienced advancing socioeconomically over the course of several generations. When Latinos are studied as a whole with group-level data, it is often difficult to detect what is happening with the very rich and powerful at the top of society, and what is happening with those at the bottom. In Pastor’s essay we survey the bottom of society, and in Zweighenhaft and Domhoff’s contributions in chapters 15 and 16, we focus on the top, or what they call the “Latino power elite.” There are few rags-to-riches stories, because most wealthy Latinos were already rather rich when they arrived in the United States and simply parlayed what they had into much more by attending elite schools and exploiting their social connections.

Gender and sexuality are powerful forces in the daily lives of Latinos. In part 6, “Gender and Sexualities,” we have essays by Ramón A. Gutiérrez, Robert Courtney Smith, Lorena García, and Tomás Almaguer that illustrate the impact of these themes on personal lives in the past and present. When Latina and Latino immigrants come to the United States, among the many things they bring with them as parts of their cultural baggage are a set of gender and sexual ideologies that are deeply imprinted, shaping their behavior for generations wherever they go. These gender ideals and norms mostly privilege men and masculinity over women and femininity, and they are spoken

about and understood through the idiom of male honor and female shame, which if properly reproduced result in respect for one's family and the honoring of its head. Gutiérrez's essay in chapter 17 traces the long history of honor and shame in Spain and its American colonial empire. He shows how the hierarchical secular evaluations of personal and familial honor were understood and deployed, and how these ideals constantly conflicted with the more egalitarian kinship ideology of the Catholic Church, which had as its intended goal the weakening of familial and patriarchal power that it saw as accumulating and evolving into the formation of kingdoms and states capable of challenging the authority of the Church. Ultimately, a family's honor was an evaluation of its social standing. How that judgment was rendered had much to do with the comportment of its females, particularly their *vergüenza*, or their "sexual modesty" or "shame." Men had to protect the shame of their womenfolk until they married, for if that sexual integrity was lost, it could never be restored or regained. A man's honor, his very sense of manliness and self-worth, was dependent on his capacity to protect his women. Men who did not safeguard their women were seen as unworthy of respect; disrespected men often became the easy prey of powerful men.

The essays in part 6 by Smith and by García move from history to ethnography, exploring how gender ideologies among conservative, former rural peasants from Mexico and Puerto Rico are lived and experienced in New York City and Chicago. In chapter 18 Smith studied a group of Mexican immigrants who made their way from the rural village of Ticuani, in the state of Puebla, to work legally in New York City's restaurants. Daily, in this new environment, the Ticuani men have to negotiate their "*ranchero* masculinity," donning aprons and working as cooks—considered women's work—while demonstrating their virility and manhood by economically supporting their families and maintaining order within them, which includes ensuring that their wives reproduced their own "*ranchera* femininity" amid astounding cultural pressures to change. Among some immigrants these pressures strengthened and redefined gender norms; among others Mexican gender ideals eroded, producing significant conflict among family members.

From New York we move back to Chicago and to the negotiation of gender comportment among Mexican immigrant mothers who are often seen by their daughters as having "old school" ways of thinking about gender and sexual ideals and norms, values they clearly carried from Mexico. As García's essay in chapter 19 shows, these mothers are quite concerned about the shame (*vergüenza*) and reputation of their daughters who have started having premarital sex, something quite taboo according to Mexican ideals of honor and shame, mainly because conservative men would never think of marrying a woman who is known to have lost her virginity. Mothers thus constantly warn their daughters to respect themselves, even as the daughters negotiate gender ideologies that are more egalitarian in the United States around issues of educational opportunities, dating patterns, the use of contraceptives, and partner selection. These topics become sources of immense give-and-take between mothers and daughters, particularly when

fathers are drawn into the equation concerning the family's social standing in the community, or its reputation, which is the putative source of the respect it is due. Finally, in Almaguer's essay in chapter 20, we turn to the homoerotic fantasies and sexual behavior of ethnic Mexican men who have sex with other men in the San Francisco Bay Area. Some of these men are openly gay, others bisexual, and still others are heterosexuals peeking out of the closet to experiment with their desires. In the oral histories Almaguer has collected, he focuses on childhood socialization, on the memories of the relationships these boys had with their fathers, and on the grander sexual scripts that define ideal Latino masculine sexuality as *activo* and insertive, while the *pasivo* and receptive sexual partner in oral or anal sex is equated with the feminine. The men Almaguer interviewed described playing out childhood fantasies in their adult erotic lives, seeking out older masculine men for passive receptive sex, and thus playing the feminine role with them.

Part 7 is devoted to "Latino Politics." In this part of the book, we look at formal politics at the institutional level through elections, political parties, and legislation, and then to popular manifestations of politics, from the fear some exhibit toward young Latino immigrants, to the limited social horizons those who are incarcerated experience, to the ways immigrants have organized and mobilized to protest the conditions of unauthorized immigrants. Lisa García Bedolla's essay in chapter 21 delves into the demographic complexity of the Latino electorate, disaggregating its national and class dimensions, differentiating between the native and foreign born and between the political behavior of women and men, and pointing to the low levels of voting by the working classes as compared to wealthier Latinos, who give the ballot box much more importance. García Bedolla instructs us on how majority rule functions in our system of government, often disempowering Latino elected officials at the federal level unless they can enter into larger coalitions within and between parties over converging interests.

In chapter 22 and an update in chapter 23, David E. Hayes-Bautista, Werner Schink, and Jorge Chapa carefully study California's demography, proposing the possibility of rebellion that pits young Latinos against aging whites. As Hayes-Bautista, Schink, and Chapa explain, Latinos are increasingly young, undereducated, and poor, and their numbers are increasing. Through their taxes they will be expected to support older retired whites, even as the numbers of whites are shrinking. Given that Latinos increasingly see their future prospects as bleak, what options will they have? Some imagine that rebellion is certainly a possibility. Today in California, for every one hundred Latinos who enter elementary school, only forty-seven will graduate from high school; the other fifty-three will face grim prospects. Statistics and state expenditures clearly show that their likeliest career pathway will be into prison. Since 1980 the state of California has constructed eight new prisons and only one university, which at present enrolls fewer than 2,000 students. Martin Guevara Urbina's essay in chapter 24 thus explores the difficulties Latina women and Latino men have when they leave prison, either upon serving their sentences or upon parole.⁹

While the essays by Hayes-Bautista, Schink, and Chapa anticipated that intensifying social inequality would soon pit young, poor Latino men against elderly, wealthier, white men, the Southern Poverty Law Center, in its September 2009 report in chapter 25 on conditions in Suffolk County, New York, describes a war waged by young white men against Latino immigrants. These thugs constantly harassed, beat, maimed, and even murdered Latino immigrants in the area.

Pierrette Hondagneu-Sotelo and Angelica Salas's essay in chapter 26 takes us to the spring of 2006, when across the United States major rallies were staged supporting the rights of authorized and unauthorized immigrants. This massive mobilization did not just happen spontaneously out of thin air; it was the product of a number of factors that were first catalyzed by the introduction of the Border Protection, Antiterrorism and Illegal Immigration and Control Act of 2005, authored by Congressmen James Sensenbrenner (R-WI) and Peter King (R-NJ), which proposed making entry into the United States without review a felony. To protest such draconian anti-immigrant legislation, labor unions, religious leaders, and civil rights organizations came together using social media and successfully blocked approval of the bill. Finally, in Ann Louise Bardach's essay in chapter 27, we take a closer look at Cubans. Since the Cuban Revolution of 1959, Cubans have been seen as "good immigrants" fleeing Castro's Communist regime, welcomed with open arms and given immediate assistance in ways that have never been extended to other Latino immigrants, especially not to those deemed "bad," such as the Mexican and Salvadoran "illegal aliens." The Cuban Refugee Program extended resettlement funds, welfare benefits, health services, job training, adult education opportunities, aid to public schools attended by immigrants, and foster care for unaccompanied children. Cubans were given unprecedented opportunities to integrate themselves into American society. This quickly resulted in upward mobility and entry into the country's political elite, with three Cuban Americans now serving as U.S. senators: Ted Cruz (R-TX), Marco Rubio (R-FL), Robert Menéndez (D-NJ); Cruz and Rubio are candidates for the Republican Party's 2016 presidential nomination. Bardach argues that Cubans no longer need special privileges, particularly as relations between Cuba and the United States are rapidly being normalized. All immigrants seeking entry into the United States should be treated equally, but they are not.

We began this introduction by discussing the excitement that surrounds the political and cultural possibilities of *Latinidad*, the demographic expansion of Hispanics and Latinos as an ethnic group, and the emergence of the field of Latino studies as an interdisciplinary and transnational field of study. As the co-editors of this anthology, we have labored intensely to accomplish three things: to make this work as current and cutting-edge as possible in its survey of the theoretical and empirical literature; to reproduce here the wide diversity of national, regional, class, racial, gender, and sexual differences that constitute the Latina and Latino population in the United States; and to honor the scholarship of women and men alike. We have chosen in most instances to refer to

“Latinos” generically, inflecting gender when appropriate, but generally avoiding symbols such as “Latina/o” and “Latin@” to acknowledge differential gendered experiences.

We hope you will enjoy the essays gathered here, which are organized as a course syllabus would be, systematically introducing themes with progressive levels of complexity. Because of space limitations, we have not been able to address the rich complexity of Latino cultural expression, which merits a volume of its own. Nor have we been able to traverse the terrain of language difference in Latinos who often speak not only English but also Spanish, Portuguese, and a host of indigenous languages.

NOTES

1. Mark Hugo López, “Three-Fourths of Hispanics Say Their Community Needs a Leader: Most Latinos Cannot Name One,” *Pew Center Report*, October 22, 2013.

2. Felix M. Padilla, *Latino Ethnic Consciousness: The Case of Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans in Chicago* (Notre Dame, IN: Notre Dame University Press, 1985).

3. Walter Mingnolo, *The Idea of Latin America* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2005); Arturo Ardao, *Génesis de la idea y el nombre de América Latina* (Caracas: Consejo Nacional de la Cultura, 1980).

4. G. Cristina Mora, *Making Hispanics: How Activists, Bureaucrats, and Media Constructed a New American* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014).

5. Arlene Dávila, *Latinos Inc.: The Marketing and Making of a People* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001).

6. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, “Minority Health: Hispanic or Latino Populations,” <http://www.cdc.gov/minorityhealth/populations/REMP/hispanic.html> (accessed May 30, 2015).

7. Ibid.; Mark Hugo López, Ana Gonzalez-Barrera, and Danielle Cuddington, “Diverse Origins: The Nation’s 14 Largest Hispanic-Origin Groups” (Washington, DC: Pew Research Center, June 19, 2013), <http://www.pewhispanic.org/2013/06/19/diverse-origins-the-nations-14-largest-hispanic-origin-groups/> (accessed May 30, 2015).

8. “An International Latina/o Studies Conference: Imagining the Past, Present, and Future,” press release, Inaugural Conference on U.S. Latinas/os, Chicago, July 5, 2014, <http://www.chicano.ucla.edu/files/events/ILSC%20Press%20Release.pdf>.

9. Armida Ornelas and Daniel G. Solórzano, “Reaffirming Affirmative Action: An Equal Opportunity Analysis of Advanced Placement Courses and University Admissions,” in *Mexicans in California: Transformations and Challenges*, eds. Ramón A. Gutiérrez and Patricia Zavella (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2009), pp. 77–93, dropout statistics on p. 78.

PART 1

HISPANICS, LATINOS,
CHICANOS, BORICUAS

What Do Names Mean?

Who is a Latino? Who is a Hispanic? What should we call them? What do they call themselves? What are the politics of choosing a particular ethnic label? This section addresses these nettlesome questions and explores the contemporary origins of Latino identities in a historical, sociological, and biographical way. It surveys the broad outlines of Latino diversity and how individuals are assigned or choose personal identities based on their respective nationalities (as Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, Salvadorans, Cubans, etc.) as well as collective panethnic labels such as “Latino” or “Hispanic.” In so doing, we draw upon the work of historian Ramón A. Gutiérrez and cultural critics Frances Aparicio and Frances Negrón-Muntaner to illuminate the complex ways Latino identity has been forged and evolved over time as well as experienced individually and collectively.

In chapter 1 Ramón A. Gutiérrez’s essay, “What’s in a Name? The History and Politics of Hispanic and Latino Panethnicities,” delves into the history of naming in what is now the American West as various groups have sought to forge collective ethnic identities both internally from below and through imposition from above by state institutions. Looking at how particular panethnic identities were born, Gutiérrez examines three moments in the history of what became the United States—the Spanish conquest of the indigenous peoples of Mexico’s north (which started in 1598), the military takeover of the West by the United States at the end of the Mexican War of 1846–48, and the mobilization by racialized minorities during the civil rights movement in the mid-1960s and early 1970s.

His essay reminds us that contemporary debates over terms like “Latino” or “Hispanic” have long, deep, and convoluted historical roots, which constantly shift, are abandoned, return with new meanings, and have lives of creative human makings. Gutiérrez focuses our attention on the complex ways that the three largest Latino populations—Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, and Cubans—have each contended with their subjugation under the cataclysmic colonial project initiated by Spain and then later by the United States. Their political, economic, and social subordination under the Spanish regime helped ignite status hierarchies and identity categories based on religion, region, race, property, and legitimacy of birth. Gutiérrez shows that personal identities were and remain complex bundles of status categories. What allowed Mexicans, Cubans, and Puerto Ricans to first think of themselves as “Hispanics” and later as “Latinos” was a shared language, until quite recently a shared religion, and natal attachments to geographies that were once claimed as Spain’s colonial empire.

The contemporary use of the term “Latino,” and its political invocation of a collective sense of *Latinidad*, was initially forged in the 1970s. It emerged as a sign of the combined assertion of the dignity and worth of Puerto Ricans and Mexicans in Chicago in their common struggle for collective political goals. In tracking the crystallization and

evolution of this oppositional consciousness and the militant assertion by these nationalities for collective social justice, Gutiérrez reminds us that

Latinidad, that communal sense of membership in a group tied to Latin America through ancestry, language, culture, and history, emerged from below precisely out of such nationalist sentiments. Individuals first start calling themselves “Latinos” in cities like Chicago and New York, largely to advance political agendas not easily achievable by small, isolated, and distinct national origin groups. By coming together as Latinos, their numbers swelled, and their political clout expanded, demanding inclusion in the polity through affirmative action, fair housing, voting rights, and bilingual education. In time *Latinidad* was also championed from above by ethnic specific civil rights organizations seeking grander nationwide influence and larger membership rolls. Eventually, government bureaucrats, foundations, and corporate marketers recognized the unity of *Latinidad*.

A shared common language, religious culture, residential proximity, and sense of oppression animated the emergence of Latino panethnicity from below, which in time got imposed by the state from above. This is most evident when both “Latino” and “Hispanic” are interchangeably used as the official nomenclature of the U.S. Census Bureau for the more than twenty different nationalities that are now collectively aggregated under these two designations. Gutiérrez’s essay charts this process over time and documents the varied roles that the state, the media, corporations, and community-based organizations have played in how these categories of belonging and group consciousness initially emerged. And the essay describes how it has been continually expanded and sustained with the arrival of an increasingly diverse Latino population that has immigrated to the United States in the past fifty years.

We move from this broad historical sweep of the way Latino identity emerged to an analysis of how that category functions in the daily lives of the diverse Latino population. Frances R. Aparicio’s essay in chapter 2, “(Re)constructing *Latinidad*: The Challenge of Latina/o Studies,” focuses on the complex intersection of Latino identity with a range of other social identities forged by unique personal histories. Like Gutiérrez, Aparicio challenges us to critically consider the question: Who is a Latina/o? In answering this question, she shows us that one’s replies are not always simple and easy but are born of local, regional, national, panethnic, and global forms of being and knowing. These attachments and associations are profoundly socioeconomic, linguistic, racial, generational, gendered, and sexual. The processes that shape Latino identities are rooted in ethnic conflicts and struggles, in the movement of peoples and cultures across large spaces, in the imposition of force by the powerful, and in resistance by the weak, who develop an oppositional consciousness and deploy various strategies of existence that are given form in names like “Boricua” (an identity embraced by Puerto Ricans) and “Chicano” (an identity embraced by Mexicans).

When Aparicio takes us to a Latino music venue in Chicago and introduces us to her friends, she helps us appreciate how people who call themselves “Latinos” come from

different nationalities, class backgrounds, generational cohorts, immigrant statuses, racial identities, genders, sexualities, and linguistic skills. Despite everyone being of Latin American descent, they each simultaneously embody complex and often contradictory identities and experiences. These personal selves, Aparicio notes, are “contingent, fluid, and relational, used strategically and structurally depending on the context.” It is from such complex collectivities that Latinas and Latinos are formed. According to Aparicio the mapping of this diversity remains the central challenge of Latino studies as it gains prominence as a discipline and field of study. “Latina/o studies can become the space in which these diverse experiences, identities, and power dynamics can be accounted for in the construction of a new social imaginary that transcends the old paradigms and nationality based conflicts.” And she submits that “heterogeneity challenges scholars to find new, interdisciplinary approaches that can address our multiple and shifting realities.”

In chapter 3 Frances Negrón-Muntaner explores these multiple and collective identities as they are individually experienced in “Celia’s Shoes.” Her biographical essay explores the life of the late Afro-Cuban singer Celia Cruz and delves into issues of memory, diaspora, and identity. Negrón-Muntaner begins her essay marveling at the collection of Cruz’s platform shoes in the permanent collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of American History in Washington, DC. The shoes are part of the Smithsonian’s Latino history and culture collection and its Caribbean music artifacts section. Negrón-Muntaner describes Cruz’s life from her beginnings in one of the poorest neighborhoods in Havana to her becoming lead singer for La Sonora Matancera—Cuba’s most popular orchestra—to her exile in Mexico after the Cuban revolution in 1959 and eventual permanent settlement in the outskirts of New York City.

Through the course of Cruz’s life, she was celebrated with one cultural title after another, from national musical icon in Cuba, “*la guarachera de Cuba*” (the Cuban reveler), to pan-Latino, global status as the “Queen of Salsa.” This evolution was accompanied by a continual renegotiation and refashioning of her appearance. Celia Cruz became notorious because of her distinctive raspy voice, her high-heeled shoes, her outrageously colored and designed wigs, her multicolored dresses, her long painted nails, and her very expensive jewelry.

Negrón-Muntaner’s essay charts the challenging path Celia Cruz navigated to celebrity and stardom. Often standing on shoes as high as eight inches, Cruz had a collection of platform shoes that numbered in the thousands, many of them extravagantly adorned with simulated diamonds or ruby material and custom-made to fit perfectly. According to Negrón-Muntaner, “Celia’s footwear seemed to defy gravity itself, as they did not rest on a conventional heel but on the thinnest of soles. By appearing physically unfeasible, Celia’s trademark shoes offer the illusion of walking on air, a magical attribute that again elevates the queen above mere mortals.” This regal status was a far cry from Cruz’s humble, “undistinguished” class origins in Cuba of African ancestry that was evident in her appearance. Wigs covered her coarse, kinky African hair. Flowing

dresses draped her large, voluptuous body. And Cruz's shoes elevated her stature above her adoring fans when she held court. These accoutrements helped to position her on a "good footing" as she climbed up from her impoverished background to the heights as an international Afro-Cuban female star. Celia Cruz's high-heeled shoes symbolically depict her rise in social status and the difficult path she traversed to stardom and musical immortality after her death in 2003.

Cruz's shoes also registered the unique fashioning of her gender presentation as an Afro-Cuban woman. As Negrón-Muntaner notes, "while high heels made Celia a woman, she did not want to be just any kind of woman. She wished to be seen as a Cuban, Latina, and Afro-Caribbean woman, but also as *mujer decente*, a decent woman." Not being blessed with the European features that culturally might have marked her as pretty, Cruz herself said that she was "*fea de cara pero bella de alma*" (with an ugly face but beautiful soul). Indeed, she became a "decent woman," who knew the meaning of *vergüenza* (shame), and negotiated that reputation carefully in public and private. Celia Cruz's "unique style allowed her to project an illusion of abundance, dignity, talent, Cubanness, beauty, femininity, and, toward the end of her life, eternal youth," writes Negrón-Muntaner. Celia Cruz's shoes thus offer us a complicated way to think about how Latino and Latina identity travels in diasporic ways, and intersects with and illuminates other existential dimensions of our identities in the United States.