Title
Latinx Feminist Thought

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Publication Date
2019

Peer reviewed|Thesis/dissertation

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

Latinx Feminist Thought

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy

in Sociology

by

Rocío García

2019

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Latinx Feminist Thought

by

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Doctor of Philosophy in Sociology

University of California, Los Angeles, 2019

Professor Vilma Ortiz, Chair

This dissertation uses mixed qualitative methods to explore the ideas and experiences of Latinx feminists spanning national origin, sexuality, race, and generation status not only to reimagine what we think we know about identity, social movements, and knowledge production, but also how we come to know it. Scholars theorize the Self as produced through social interactions and internalizing how individuals see each other, yet Latinx communities experience the institutionalized disappearance of their bodies, political power, and knowledge. How, then, is the Self formed under these circumstances? Across four empirically-driven chapters, I explore how Latinx feminists make sense of and contest their disappearance in four realms: ideology, discourse, reproductive politics, and academic knowledge production. I argue that for those on the margins, the Self is formed through the production of political lenses in relation to current and future realities, producing what I term *politicmaking*. I define *politicmaking* as the creation of imaginaries for being in the world that make salient intersecting oppressions rendered

invisible in non-intersectional politics and discourses, motivated by the need to affirm marginalized subjectivities, love, knowledge, and joy. As a relational approach, *politicmaking* requires the negotiation of fluid and contentious ideas and experiences of privilege and oppression that interrogate the erasure of Indigeneity, Blackness, feminisms, and queer experiences in views of and from Latinx communities.

Based on a nearly three-year ethnography with California Latinas for Reproductive Justice (CLRJ)—a social movement organization engaged in policy advocacy in the movement for reproductive justice—I find that their activism, rooted in how white supremacy, settler colonialism, and other structures affect reproduction, contends with a larger terrain of reproductive rights that prioritizes gendered inequalities. By resisting intersecting inequities and non-intersectional discourses, Latinx feminists make politics that negotiate the similarities and differences across Latinx reproductive experiences. As a result, they create counter narratives of Latinxs as whole selves who also experience autonomy and joy. To further understand how Latinx feminisms are practiced across time and space, I trace some of the permutations of *politicmaking* through content analysis of various cultural forms, including texts in the humanities and social sciences, podcasts and social media, and literary art.

Throughout the dissertation, I show that Latinx feminists as politicmakers develop a sense of being as contested communities, shifting from the Self as identity to the Self as an ongoing, relational, political stance. Specifically, I explore the relationship between Latinx feminist thought and Black feminist theories in the United States, the distinguishing features that connect Latinx feminisms across social locations, the controlling images that impinge on Latinxs' abilities to exert self-determination, the contentious perspectives on race and Latinidad, the difficulties and necessities of building solidarity at the intersections of movements and

identities, and the implications of sociological research on understandings of Latinx migration as a gendered process. I connect Latinx feminist praxis with Du Bois, Hill Collins, Hunter, and others who examine what it means to resist in a racialized body that is not fully seen. By linking these theories with data on social movements in reproductive politics, I begin to trace the origins and features of a pan-ethnoracial Latinx feminist framework. This framework offers lessons for imagining political solidarity built upon the messiness of difference *and* sameness. I reveal that Latinx feminists have created a transformative body of knowledge about intra and intergroup relations and political futures that remains either unknown or undervalued.

The dissertation of Rocío García is approved.

Marcus Hunter

Karida L. Brown

Patricia Zavella

Vilma Ortiz, Committee Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2019

For Latinx feminists who have been told that their dreams are too much or not enough. May we find ourselves and each other in our dreams as kindred spirits.

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Acknowledgements

This dissertation was inspired, imagined, and birthed on the land of the Tongva people, a privilege for which I am eternally grateful as a visitor.

As all good things in this world come into existence, this dissertation is a collective accomplishment and I am fortunate enough to have an incredible village of people who have contributed to this research and my graduate school journey. I am forever grateful to everyone I met at California Latinas for Reproductive Justice (CLRJ) for gifting me the opportunity to understand the movement for reproductive justice from their standpoints, for being so patient with me as I stumbled through the many mistakes that came with undertaking my first ethnographic project, and for modeling so many pathways for a lifelong commitment to a growing political consciousness and commitment to social justice. Trusting academics in social justice spaces is necessarily fraught and difficult, and I thank them for taking a chance on me. I aspire to continue doing the work to support the struggle for reproductive justice for communities of color.

My dissertation committee—Vilma Ortiz, Marcus Anthony Hunter, Karida Leigh Brown, and Patricia Zavella—gifted me a more valuable experience than merely mentoring me in the mechanics of research and navigating professionalization. Not only do they model how to negotiate the academy as it currently stands, but they also expect me to reimagine what the academy could be through an active commitment to disrupt the politics of knowledge production. First, I thank Vilma for her unwavering support throughout the many obstacles that graduate school and life have placed in front of me. Vilma's commitment to mentoring future generations of scholars of color, particularly women of color, to do social justice research is inspirational. As a working-class, first-generation student, I appreciated being able to share

personal issues—my experiences, fears, and hopes—and to always be met with kindness, empathy, and a box of tissues. As I transition from graduate student to faculty, I am eager to support future generations of scholars in their dreams for justice and change. Marcus is a vision for the future of the academy. His work and his advice have pushed me to theorize and move in the academy beyond the scope of my imagination, to be better while also being gentle with myself. Marcus has made so many wonderful opportunities possible for me to ensure that I am cared for by a larger community of scholars, and to make sure I know I have a rightful place in the academy. I am in awe of his generosity and will make sure to pay it forward for the generations of scholars to come. Karida's brilliance and kindness have sustained me as I reached the finish line of my graduate school journey. Karida has provided so much encouragement in times when my confidence faltered, invaluable advice on navigating the academy as a woman of color, while taking the time to offer helpful line-by-line feedback on versions of my work. I am so honored to be her first student to earn a doctoral degree and cannot wait to bear witness as she continues to mentor the future of sociology while producing research that pushes sociology to be and do better. Patricia's extensive knowledge of Chicana feminisms and in-depth understanding of reproductive justice has been crucial in the development of my work and my thinking. I am deeply appreciative to be mentored by a trailblazing Latina scholar whose struggles in an institution that was not made for us have made it a little easier for younger generations of Latina feminists like me to carve out spaces of belonging and resistance.

My survival in graduate school is a product of the mentorship of graduate students, past and present. My sisters, Susila Gurusami and Diya Bose, not only help me theorize the everyday messiness of struggles for social justice, but they push me to be a better person in and outside of the academy. They have modeled forms of solidarity and love that I never imagined possible but

now cannot imagine life without. Our friendship, in spite of *and* because of our differences, inspires my ideas on solidarity across difference throughout this project. I am so excited to continue growing together.

I am so thankful to the community of graduate students and faculty who have modeled genius and kindness while supporting me throughout the ups and downs of graduate school and the job market: Terrell Winder, LeighAnna Hidalgo, Silvia Rodriguez Vega, Brenda Nicolas, Rahim Kurwa, Uriel Serrano, Josefina Flores Morales, KT Bender, Aaron Cayer, Angélica Becerra, Aaron Crawford, Preeti Sharma, Michael Rodríguez-Muñiz, Harleen Kaur, Jerry Flores, Melissa Guzmán, Anthony James Williams, Sera Kwon, Abraham Calderón, Allison Ramirez, Lina Stepick, Nicholas Vargas, Carla Salazar Gonzalez, Ariel Hart, Kali Tambree, and the members of Vilma Ortiz's research group. You all give me hope that the academy can and will be better someday. Thank you to the Pozole Club for amazing food, life-affirming conversations, and even better company. A special thanks to Ariana Valle for being an incredible job market partner and friend, someone who I have been able to confide in about so much, especially navigating the academy as the daughter of immigrants. It was an overwhelming and exhausting process, but we did it!

My work has received generous support by the UCLA Center for the Study of Women, UCLA Graduate Division, the American Sociological Association Minority Fellowship Program, and the Mellon Foundation's Inter-University Program for Latino Research. I am grateful to the cohort of scholars in the latter two programs whose incredible research continues to motivate my work and mentorship aspirations. Special thanks to Albert Laguna and Jennifer Jones whose superb advice on my job market materials lovingly pushed me to think about the motivations and contributions of my dissertation with much-needed precision and clarity.

I am forever grateful to Jodi O'Brien and Gabriella Gutiérrez y Muhs for gifting me the writing support and confidence to dream of a book project that is both deeply personal and communal. Jodi, our many brainstorming conversations about the vision for this project over the years have sustained me in the many moments when I thought I would not be able to make this dissertation a reality. Your kindness and brilliance make you a superb mentor. Gabriella, I am so excited for us to meet in person someday and try to make sense of Latinx feminists struggles and our places within them. Thank you so much for supporting the very early ruminations of the book project, for seeing the potential in the messiness.

I cannot adequately express how grateful I am in particular for the Black American women and Black Latinas who have come into my life and showered me with wisdom, opportunities, and love. They have lovingly shown me the power of self-love as a catalyst for individual and collective change. They are incredible models for what solidarity is and what it can do. Thank you to Patricia Hill Collins, Courtney J. Patterson-Faye, Saida Grundy, Jennifer Jones, Carla Shedd, Karida Leigh Brown, Nina Johnson, Nancy Lopez, Zaire Dinzey-Flores, Robyn Autry, Brooklynn Hitchens, Brittany Friedman, Jennifer Uribe, Sonya Maria Johnson, and Christina Novaton. You are all beautiful people and I hope to practice solidarity with the same kindness and purpose that you have shown me. Thank you so much for what you do.

It has been a privilege to teach undergraduate students, particularly those who are first-generation students of color, at UCLA. Thank you for co-creating spaces to discuss the pain and joy of our everyday lives as we try to think of ways to make change, and for trusting me with your stories. A special thank you to Aunica Cesena for transcribing my interviews with CLRJ and for reminding me of the power of solidarity in the moments when I lost hope. I am so excited for the change you are making and will continue to make for communities on the margins,

Aunica. I most appreciate how students have reminded me to keep theories and conversations about social justice grounded in the everyday lives of communities of color outside of the academy—to never forget where we come from and why we are in the academy.

I would not have been able to make it to UCLA if it were not for the amazing mentorship and friendship of Ann Strahm during and after my time at California State University, Stanislaus. Ann's ability to treat first-generation, working-class and working poor students of color with respect continues to push me today. I thank her for having unwaveringly high expectations for students that most people expect little from. To Ashley and Chris Beebout for their wonderful friendship over the years and for feeding me the most amazing eggrolls throughout my broke graduate school days! To my partner and best friend, Levin Welch, thank you for growing with me as a person and a scholar. Thank you for co-creating some of the happiest moments of my life and for sustaining me in the moments when depression and anxiety were just too much to handle. I am so excited to continue working together toward our post-retirement animal sanctuary.

I am most grateful to my parents, Martha and Miguel García, who have sacrificed everything to support my goals. They could have never imagined when they crossed the U.S.-Mexico border that this Ph.D. degree would be the product of decades of hard work in the face of unimaginable exploitation. Even though they have not always understood what I do in graduate school or why I have trained academically for so long, they unconditionally nurture my dreams and support me in the ways many immigrant parents often do that are unrecognized and unappreciated by the academy. Muchísimas gracias, amá y apá.

Thank you to all Latinx feminists across time and space. You nurture my soul with daily reminders that we have been here, we are still here, and that we matter. We did it y'all!

Note: Chapter Five is an edited version of "The Politics of Erased Migrations: Expanding a Relational, Intersectional Sociology of Latinx Gender and Migration." *Sociology Compass* 12(4): e12571, 2018.

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EDUCATION

2014 M.A. Sociology, University of California, Los Angeles

2012 M.A. Sociology, University of Nevada, Reno

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PUBLICATIONS

García, Rocío R. *Latinx Feminist Thought* (Under advance book contract with Routledge Press, *Sociology Re-Wired* series).

2018 García, Rocío R. "The Politics of Erased Migrations: Expanding a Relational, Intersectional Sociology of Latinx Gender and Migration." *Sociology Compass* 12(4): e12571.

2015 García, Rocío. "Normative Ideals, 'Alternative' Realities: Perceptions of Interracial Dating Among Professional Latinas and Black Women." *Societies* 5(4): 807-830.

2015 García, Rocío. Review of *Immigrant Women Workers in the Neoliberal Age*, edited by Nilda Flores-González, Anna Romina Guevarra, Maura Toro-Morn, and Grace Chang. *Labor Studies Journal* Vol. 39(4): 321-323.

WORK UNDER REVIEW AND IN PROGRESS

"Latinx Feminist Politicmaking: On the Messiness of Collective Action."

** Winner of the 2019 ASA Section on Race, Gender, and Class Graduate Paper Award*

"Rethinking Utopia: From the Frankfurt School to Latinx Feminist Thought."

"Feisty Latinas, Deportable Mestizas, and Other Controlling Images of Latinxs."

ACADEMIC FELLOWSHIPS, GRANTS, AND AWARDS

<u>Fellowships</u>

2018 – 2019 American Sociological Association Minority Fellowship Program

2018 – 2019 Inter-University Program for Latino Research/Mellon Dissertation Fellowship ($25,000 plus fees)

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2014 – 2015 UCLA Graduate Research Mentorship Fellowship ($20,000 plus fees)

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2013 UCLA Graduate Summer Research Mentorship Fellowship ($6,000)

Ford Foundation Pre-Doctoral Diversity Fellowship Honorable Mention

2012 – 2017 UCLA Eugene V. Cota-Robles Fellowship ($21,000/year plus fees)

<u>Grants</u>

2018 Society for the Study of Social Problems Lee Student Support Travel Grant

2017 UCLA Center for the Study of Women Travel Grants (Spring, Fall)

2017 UCLA Instructional Improvement Grant

2016 California Humanities Community Stories Grant ($10,000)

2015 UC Collaboratory for Ethnographic Design Summer Research Grant ($1,000)

Awards

2018 UCLA Center for the Study of Women Constance Coiner Graduate Award ($1,500)
2016 – 2017 UCLA Excellence in Teaching Award
2016 UCLA Edward A. Bouchet Graduate Honor Society
2008 – 2009 California State University Stanislaus J. Burton Vasche Award

WORKSHOP AND PROFESSIONAL PRESENTATIONS

"The Next Generation." Invited panelist for closing plenary at the Consortium on Higher Achievement and Success (CHAS) and Institute for Transformative Practice (ITP) Symposium at Brown University, forthcoming March 2019.

"Latinx Feminist Thought." Invited panelist for session honoring the legacy of *Black Feminist Thought* at the annual meeting of the Association of Black Sociologists, August 2018.

"(Dis)Placement: Latinx Reproductive Justice as Intersectional Placemaking." Annual meeting of the American Sociological Association, August 2018.

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"The Politics of Erased Migrations: Toward a Relational, Intersectional Sociology of Latinx Gender and Migration." Annual meeting of the National Women's Studies Association, November 2017.

"The Politics of Erased Migrations: Toward a Relational, Intersectional Sociology of Latinx Gender and Migration." Annual meeting of the American Sociological Association, August 2017.

"Regulating the Reproduction of Latinxs: How Ideology Manifests in the Movement for Reproductive Justice." Annual meeting of the Pacific Sociological Association, April 2017.

"Ideological Violence in the Political Borderlands: Historicizing Latinx Controlling Images." Norte Dame Intersectional Inquiries Conference, March 2017.

"Reproducing *Choices*: Navigating Latinx Controlling Images in Reproductive Politics." Latina/o Studies Association Conference, July 2016.

"Coloring the Wife-Mother Ideal: Racial Differences in Dating and Family Formation among Professional Women of Color." Annual meeting of the American Sociological Association Conference, August 2014.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION
The Making of La Política of Latinx Feminist Thought

Remember. We will find home
again. It will exist in the depths
of compassion again
in the euphoria of love
we will build it with courage
again and again. We will rest
in roots of our intentions
If we dare to survive this war
We must remember to choose
love again and again
Remember

—edyka chilomé, *a self-described "queer child of Salvadoran and Mexican migrant activists"*
"If I Go Missing," *She Speaks Poetry (2015)*

For as long as I can remember, I have been a daydreamer. I was born and raised in the rural San Joaquin Valley of Central California as the proud daughter of formerly undocumented Mexican immigrants who have spent their entire working lives performing grueling and underpaid labor in factories. Growing up in a small town, with no siblings, with an anxious shyness that follows me to this day, with parents who greatly value the pursuit of education that was unattainable to them, and with the gendered expectation that "señoritas se quedan en la casa [young ladies stay home]" meant that I had ample time to dream of moments, people, places, and worlds beyond my immediate surroundings. I spent countless hours as a child lying alone on my bedroom floor, feeling the carpet fibers through my fingertips and the warmth of the sun's rays through my

bedroom window on my face, wondering whether others were doing the same, what their worlds were like, and if we would ever have the chance to meet.

What began as an exercise in childhood creativity evolved into a survival strategy against systemic and intersecting forms of violence. As time passed, I dreamt of my mother coming home from work smiling with energy to spare, rather than finding her exhausted and quietly crying in her bedroom because her manager verbally and sexually harassed her and other immigrant women workers—most of whom were undocumented—at the almond processing factory where she worked. I dreamt of my father enthusiastically asking about what I was learning at school instead of watching his hands shake in anger as he announced to my mother his decision to go on strike at a well-known poultry processing plant to demand higher wages and protections from environmental hazards. To this day, these are daydreams unfulfilled.

In college, I gravitated toward sociology to understand the everyday ways that Latinx communities experience the systemic disappearance and displacement of our bodies, knowledge, political power, and self-determination, and like many scholars of color, to find ways to disrupt these disappearances. For many Latinxs committed to feminist perspectives, formal intellectual engagement with theories of intersectionality begins with the renowned theories of Gloria Anzaldúa and Cherríe Moraga, but in my case, Patricia Hill Collins' (1990) transformative book, *Black Feminist Thought*, was my introduction to intersectionality as an Afrocentric feminist framework rooted in a radical Black intellectual tradition. As I voraciously turned the pages outlining Hill Collins' theories of oppression and resistance, I remember asking myself, "how does she know?" How did she know aspects of the pain and joy of growing up as a working-class, second-generation Mexican Latina? How did she know the "peculiar sensation" (drawing on the language of W.E.B. Du Bois) of feeling invisible in white feminist discourses and

masculinist racial justice movements? *Black Feminist Thought* made me feel seen—*all of me*. It was in my early 20s that I realized that I did not have to sacrifice certain parts of my identity for the comfort of others, and that this decision does not make me a bad feminist nor does it make me a whitewashed race traitor.

Black Feminist Thought helped me understand that what I was also looking for was a collective voice—a rallying cry—from my own Latinx feminist communities, not simply against our disappearance, but for blueprints for getting free. Unfortunately, much of my experience in graduate school involves reclaiming a sensibility of hope and daydreaming that sustained me as a child, a sensibility that the academy has all but tried to extinguish. Graduate school has taken more of my tears than it deserves. Despite my initial and perhaps naïve optimism in sociology, I have come to experience the full weight of a discipline that remains entrenched in racist, heterosexist, ableist, classist, and western notions of objectivity and rigor (García 2018). Through this orientation, mainstream sociology has failed in its responsibility to articulate an ethic of love, empathy, and personal and collective accountability in the work that we do as social scientists. It was through Hill Collins' words, and later those of Latinx feminists across the Américas, that I learned that knowledge production is not primarily about adding lines to my curriculum vitae, rather, it is fundamentally a political exercise in the possibilities of (re)imagining and documenting what has been, what is, and how these intersecting trajectories inform what can—and *should*—be through the situated knowledges of feminists on the margins.

This dissertation is also deeply inspired by the necessary provocations offered by three key feminist texts: *Telling to Live: Latina Feminist Testimonios* (2001), *Pilgrimages/Peregrinajes: Theorizing Coalition against Multiple Oppressions* (2003) and *Translocalities/Translocalidades: Feminist Politics of Translation in the Latin/a Américas*

(2014). *Telling to Live* highlights the centrality of experiential knowledge in forging Latina feminist thought. The authors weave together first-person narratives and poetry about their experiences with intersecting modes of violence, love, loss, desire, trauma, personal and professional failures and triumphs, demonstrating how their lived realities elucidate larger systems of global oppressions. Their stories pinpoint the exclusion of experiences and perspectives of people of color from U.S. historical narratives as emblematic of the residual effects of European colonization. The Latina Feminist Group asks readers to view political revolution and the healing of personal and structural violence evidenced by such endemic erasures as inseparable. As such, they signal the body as both a site of intersecting oppressions and a symbol for anti-colonial resistance. As Norma E. Cantú (2001) shares: "Yes. The body speaks in languages left unread, and you can only marvel at the message, literate in your own. Awed by stories told by thighs and lips or the ugliness of the littlest toe" (p. 265).

In essence, *Telling to Live* encapsulates the multiplicitous lives of Latinxs in the physical and ideological borderlands that Gloria Anzaldúa (1987) theorized about and the urgency for sharing these stories as forms of resistance. This dissertation represents an attempt to honor the perspectives and interventions of the Latina Feminist Group and other Latinxs within and outside of the academy by synthesizing some of the experiences and ideas of Latinxs to explore the possibilities for liberation that these truths carry. As inhabitants of numerous physical and symbolic borders, a study of the multiplicity of stories and ideas of Latinxs offers an avenue to map the negotiations of difference and sameness within personal, activist, and academic spaces in ways that resist essentialism, strengthen bridges, and in which Latinxs become central subjects in imagining different social worlds.

Pilgrimages/Peregrinajes has gifted me the courage to find value and solace in messy theories and methods as a means to better understand social worlds and resist oppressive conditions. The ruminations on accountability between Latinxs throughout the pages of this monograph are very much a reflection of Lugones' liberatory epistemology, a deeply relational politics of possibility and resistance that lovingly asks us all to explore our complicity in relations of power and to do the work of radical coalition-building that "is always the horizon that rearranges both our possibilities and the conditions of those possibilities" (p. ix). In sharp contrast to the troubling rise of wokeness as often a stigmatizing practice in politicized spaces (discussed in Chapter 4), Lugones' work is a wonderful reminder that social change, like people, are messy, always in flux, nonlinear, but hold wonderful possibilities for better days in the here and now.

Translocalities/Translocalidades' exploration of the ways "feminist discourses and practices travel across a variety of sites and directionalities to become interpretive paradigms to read and write issues of class, gender, race, sexuality, migration, health, social movements, development, citizenship, politics, and the circulation of identities and text" (p. 1) has been transformative professionally and personally. The book showcases the important role feminists of Latin American descent have played in politics across borders by advancing a politics of translation as a framework to understand their movement in the academy and outside of it. The volume's focus on translation as metaphor and practice also provides much-needed respite from the agonizing pressures to write a dissertation that does justice to the brilliance, pain, and diversity that Latinx feminists comprise. This dissertation is inherently a failed project—it is impossible for a single text to accurately and holistically reflect all of the ideas, experiences, and transformations of Latinx feminists across time and space. As Claudia de Lima Costa notes,

"[…] the very notion of translation, that is, of one word or idea standing in for another, dislodges any possibility of literal translation […] translation can only be understood as catachresis, as an always already misuse of words, an impropriety and inadequacy that underpins all systems of representation" (p. 19). This dissertation is my attempt to begin assembling our diverse, disappeared, and fractured ways of knowing into a dynamic interpretive framework by which to understand violence, resistance, and the politics of knowledge production. In the process, my blind spots will show and I will unintentionally engage in the same erasures I analyze and criticize. I eagerly await for future scholars who will fill the inevitable gaps in this dissertation, to co-create a legacy of Latinx feminist scholarship in the service of liberation.

Perhaps more importantly, *Translocalities/Translocalidades* provides a breathtaking model for doing solidarity through knowledge production. The twenty-two authors, encompassing numerous social locations, take their differences as the launching point for theorizing the strengths and challenges of activism and the centrality of translation work that defines the everyday lives of Latinxs across the Américas. As Sonia E. Alvarez explains, we reflect "our manifold circuits, travels, and dis/mis-placements, Translocas are more than diasporic subjects; we are necessarily translators" (p. 5). The commitment to disrupting taken-for-granted assumptions about race, migration, feminisms, sexualities, and solidarity exemplified in the text inspires the desire for fluid, messy politics of love and accountability crucial to this dissertation.

Because of these lessons spanning generations of feminists of color, I am now both a storyteller and a struggling daydreamer. At times I find myself drowning in the violence experienced by Latinx communities and other people of color, literally losing my breath from the overwhelming pain. To be honest, some days I am unable to get out of bed because my anger and

sadness are too much for my body to sustain. For people of Latin American descent throughout the Americas, disappearance and displacement of our realities and wisdom take many forms: the ongoing physical and cultural genocide wrought by European colonization; anti-Blackness; murders and sexual assaults resulting from military coups; environmental pollutants and disasters; homophobia, femmephobia, and transphobia; authoritarian regimes; lack of access to quality healthcare (including abortion) access; drug cartels; poverty; civil wars; mass incarceration; forced migration and detention; deportation; and gentrification, among many others. While it is important to stay rooted in the present and active in organized struggles to resist these mechanisms for disappearance and displacement, I often find myself escaping in my mind, creating worlds where these oppressions have given way to the liberatory freedom that would bring my parents smiling home from work.

Daydreaming in the face of violence is a critical form of imaginative self-care and, as such, a fluid form of resistance. While marginalized people are unable to immediately escape our material realities, daydreaming allows us to maintain a transcendent hope necessary for systemic transformation; to protect our minds from the annihilation of settler colonialism, heteropatriarchy, capitalism, and white supremacy. Daydreaming of worlds beyond violence—of utopias—is not a passive escape, it is the lifeblood of resistance. In *Sexual Futures, Queer Gestures, and Other Latina Longings* (2014), self-identified bisexual Latina femme, Juana María Rodríguez, explains that these utopian longings have a long history in feminisms of color, reflecting a "politics of refusal" that "through an insistence on critique that nevertheless points to a 'not yet' of possibilities, refusal remains an operative mode of analysis that demands rather than forecloses futurity" (p. 11). Many feminists of color have lived lifetimes as daydreamers, storytellers, and resistance fighters, the three never at odds or in contradiction. I dream of an

academy, of social justice movements, and of quotidian experiences that are equally hungry for all three.

I begin this dissertation with my experiences not because my story is the definitive story of Latinx feminist thought, such a story does not and should not exist. Rather, my intent is to practice what Cherríe Moraga (Moraga and Anzaldúa 1981) describes as "theory in the flesh," what the Latina Feminist Group (2001) and so many Latinx feminist theorists refer to as "testimonio," and what Patricia Hill Collins (1990) names "standpoint theory." As the Latina Feminist Group described: "From our different personal, political, ethnic, and academic trajectories, we arrived at the importance of testimonio as a crucial means of bearing witness and inscribing into history those lived realities that would otherwise succumb to the alchemy of erasure" (p. 2). These stories reflect the fundamental understanding that the lives of marginalized communities constitute situated launching points for theorizing larger processes of power and resistance (see also McClaurin 2001). This tactic reflects the recognition that Latinx feminists spanning various markers of difference are indeed social theorists. I also draw on my experiences to show that a way of seeing and being in the world rooted in love, empathy, accountability, and justice is not something that marginalized communities are born with or intuitively understand based on membership in subjugated identity categories. As Zora Neale Hurston, countless other Black and Latinx feminists, and life experience have taught me, "all my skinfolk ain't kinfolk." This fluid praxis is made and remade through ongoing, *intentional* coalitional practices based on relational understandings of differences across and within categories imposed on feminists of color. Our collective visions of our subjectivities, justice, and freedom must continue to expand, attuned to our critical differences rather than mute our many knowledges. This is the endless responsibility that comes with making a Latinx feminist politic.

MECHANISMS OF DISAPPEARANCE AND DISPLACEMENT

This dissertation takes shape during a political moment characterized by expanding modes of violence. Throughout what are now considered the Américas, Latinx migrants flee misogynist murders and other interpersonal and institutional forms of violence, along with poverty in their home countries, only to be susceptible to sexual assault, family separation, detention, and deportation, at the hands of border officials, human traffickers, and others (Fregoso and Bejarano 2010; Gaspar de Alba and Guzmán 2010). Central American migrants moving through Mexico face anti-immigrant sentiment, nativism, violence, and restrictive immigration policies similar to those faced by Mexican-origin undocumented migrants in the United States.[1] The murder of Claudia Patricia Gomez Gonzalez, a Guatemalan Maya women who was shot in the head in May of 2018 by a U.S. Customs and Border Protection agent in Texas, highlights the colonial (and by default racialized and gendered) implications of border enforcement[2]. Honduran environmental and feminist activist, Berta Cáceres, who mobilized Indigenous peoples and co-founded the Council of Popular and Indigenous Organizations of Hondurans, was murdered in 2016 in her home by armed intruders after years of persistent threats to her life because of her political actions.[3] Similarly, Indigenous women and Indias in Ecuador and Chile are also fighting for self-

[1] Estevez, Dolia. 2016. "New Report Incriminates Mexico's Treatment of Central American Immigrants." *Forbes*, September 20, http://www.forbes.com/sites/doliaestevez/2016/09/20/new-report-incriminates-mexicos-treatment-of-central-american-immigrants/#5865c956648f.

[2] Lieblich, Julia. 2019. "Killed on the border: Where is the justice for Claudia Patricia Gomez Gonzalez?" *Chicago Tribune*. Accessed April 29, 2019 https://www.chicagotribune.com/news/opinion/commentary/ct-perspec-border-shooting-claudia-patricia-gomez-gonzalez-20190412-story.html?fbclid=IwAR3AJzQomtdmQjvoG3UvBQHr92d8IdLO8WykFsnXzXWVUg_jpoarZIBJKG8

[3] Blitzer, Jonathan. 2016. "The Death of Berta Cáceres." The New Yorker, March 11 http://www.newyorker.com/news/news-desk/the-death-of-berta-caceres.

determination surrounding environmental issues related to urbanization.[4] Indigenous two-spirit[5] and cisgender, straight women throughout the Américas experience the reverberating effects of colonization through language loss, poverty, and racial discrimination.

Transgender Latinxs, who account for 70 percent of undocumented LGBT immigrants living in the U.S., are more likely than heterosexual, cisgender Latinas to migrate to the U.S. to escape interpersonal violence and economic disenfranchisement.[6] Undocumented Latinxs simultaneously face dangers of family separation through deportation (Abrego 2014; Dreby 2015; Golash-Boza 2015; Macías-Rojas 2016) and significant barriers to abortion access due to low-income status, lack of culturally competent healthcare, few abortion providers, the increase of crisis pregnancy centers (CPCs) that pose as legitimate medical clinics while pressuring Latinxs to keep their pregnancies, and fears of abortion access leading to deportation or death.[7]

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[4] Miranda, Bryan. 2016. "4 Indigenous Women Activists on the Fight to Protect their Lands and Cultures." *Remezcla*, October 31, http://remezcla.com/lists/culture/4-indigenous-ecuadorian-women-talk-land-struggles/?utm_content=buffer5fb39&utm_medium=social&utm_source=facebook.com&utm_campaign=buffer.

[5] Two-spirit refers to Indigenous peoples who identify as transgender, gender non-binary, queer, or gender non-conforming. Prior to European colonization of the Américas, many members of Indigenous tribes believed in the fluidity of gender presentation and sexuality, with evidence of "male-female" and "female-male" identified people. Scholars have documented the recognition of two-spirit people in more than 155 tribes across North America. Not only were two-spirit people free to express fluid gender and sexual identities, in some tribes they were revered as spiritual leaders, healers, and visionaries. For more information on two-spirit identities, see Jacobs, Thomas, and Lang's book, *Two-Spirit People* (1997).

[6] Padrón, K.M. and B. Salcedo. 2013. Trans Visible: Transgender Latina Immigrants in U.S. Society. Accessed March 10, 2015 http://www.chicano.ucla.edu/files/news/transvisiblereport.pdf

[7] California Latinas for Reproductive Justice. 2013. "Latinas/os and the "A" Word: Crisis Pregnancy Centers Deceiving our Communities." Accessed June 21, 2014 https://www.californialatinas.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/CLRJ-Abortion-FactSheet-3-Eng-FINAL.pdf

Amidst these concerns, the rise of and abuse toward undocumented Black Latinxs remain largely invisibilized through a focus on non-Black immigrants from Mexico and Central America. Queer and trans Latinxs continue to face severe discrimination in all areas of social life, including healthcare, housing, employment, and access to education (Quesada, Gomez, and Vidal-Ortiz 2015). Immigrant and U.S. born Latinxs are more likely than other U.S. women to lack health insurance coverage and live and work in areas with detrimental health effects, including but not limited to high exposure to air pollution, unsafe drinking water, agricultural pesticides, and lead and mercury contamination.[8]

Maquiladoras along the U.S.-Mexico border are flooded with primarily poor Mexican women who face sexual harassment, cancerous chemicals, unreasonable quotas, and poverty wages in order to satisfy global demand for products ranging from televisions to medical latex gloves, a demand fueled by governments with financial interests represented by the policies of the North American Free Trade Agreement (Segura and Zavella 2007; Flores-González et al. 2013). The physical, social, and political devastation caused by Hurricane Maria in Puerto Rico and the subsequent denial on the part of the Donald Trump administration to offer aid and to acknowledge the death toll further highlights the ongoing role of colonialism and global capitalism in shaping the daily realities of Puerto Ricans on the island and the mainland.

In the United States, while high school graduation rates for Latinas have increased, they are the group least likely to complete a college education or higher, making it difficult for

[8] California Latinas for Reproductive Justice. 2009. "Making the Case for Latinas' Reproductive Health & Justice Policy." Accessed July 15, 2014 https://californialatinas.org/resources/policy-briefs/

Latinxs to attain well-paying, stable employment.[9] Latinas also hold the lowest percentage of graduate degrees compared to women of all other ethnoracial groups.[10] Moreover, 24 percent of Latinas are living in poverty and are nearly 70 percent more likely to be incarcerated than white women.[11] Undocumented Latinxs and their children (some of whom are U.S. citizens) are increasingly held captive in family detention centers pending their deportation, euphemisms for prisons that resemble Japanese internment camp conditions.[12] Latinxs on public assistance in some U.S. states face racist, sexist, and classist federally-sanctions family caps policies that attempt to curve their reproduction as they and their progeny are deemed threats to political, moral, and economic 'fabric' of the nation-state, stemming from the same logics that spurred the eugenics movement and subsequent coerced sterilizations (Chavez 2008; Gutiérrez 2008; Lopez 2008; see Chapter 4 on The Maximum Family Grant Rule, a repressive family caps law in California repealed in 2016).

Donald Trump's proto-fascist presidency has spurred increased hate rhetoric and violence toward queer and straight Latinxs, while leaving Latinxs and other marginalized communities fearful of their futures in the U.S. Unfortunately, these paragraphs only reflect a small portion of

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[9] Moreno, Cynthia. 2016. "Latinas' reproductive justice tied to economic and social inequities." *Vida en el valle,* April 12. http://www.vidaenelvalle.com/news/state/california/sacramento/article71393167.html

[10] Gándara, Patricia. 2015. "Fulfilling America's Future: Latinas in the U.S., 2015." *The White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanics,* http://sites.ed.gov/hispanic-initiative/files/2015/09/Fulfilling-Americas-Future-Latinas-in-the-U.S.-2015-Final-Report.pdf

[11]Stepler, Rennee and Anna Brown. 2016. "Statistical Portrait of Hispanics in the United States." *Pew Hispanic Research Center,* http://www.pewhispanic.org/2016/04/19/statistical-portrait-of-hispanics-in-the-united-states/.

[12] Morales, Claudia. 2016. "Families Crossing the Border: 'We are not criminals.' *CNN*, November 2 http://www.cnn.com/2016/11/02/us/family-immigration-detention-centers/.

the violence and trauma that Latinxs experience. But what they do emphasize is that Latinx communities have always already practiced ingenuous ways individually and collectively to resist interpersonal and systemic disappearances; recognition of our contributions to any movement for social transformation cannot wait.

THE MOTIVATING PRAXIS FOR LATINX FEMINIST THOUGHT

The Politics of Reproduction

The summer of 2013 is a blur in many ways and unforgettable in one very important way. After finishing my first year as a doctoral student at UCLA, I spent the better part of the summer driving from west Los Angeles to east and south Los Angeles conducting multi-hour interviews for a new project on the intersections of hegemonic femininity and hegemonic family formation. During one of my many drives home listening to public radio, I listened to an interview with Gabriela Valle, former Senior Director of Community Education at California Latinas for Reproductive Justice (CLRJ)—a Latinx feminist social movement organization that engages in intersectional approaches to reproductive politics. Valle explained the importance of undocumented immigrant status in accessing reproductive health services, citing an example of a young woman who was apprehended by ICE agents in the parking lot of a women's health clinic while trying to receive her first pap smear screening. This radio interview marked the first time I heard explanations regarding the intersections between immigrant rights and reproductive politics—this was my first lesson on reproductive justice as intersectionality-in-action and how it is markedly different from reproductive rights. Gabriela Valle taught me what it means to create and practice an ongoing, ever-expanding way of moving in the world embedded in the experiences of communities of color.

Reproduction shapes essentially all political discourses in the United States (Briggs 2017; Gal and Kligman 2000). We see this in immigration debates about birthright citizenship, family separations due to mass deportations, Latina 'breeders,' and fears about impending demographic shifts. Similarly, recent reports detailing a growing trend of miscarriages among women held in ICE custody in 2017 and 2018, including a Honduran immigrant woman who went into premature labor resulting in a stillbirth, reveal the centrality of reproductive politics in immigration dynamics.[13] We see the centrality of reproduction in discussions of (Black) welfare queens and welfare reform. Fears surrounding nonwhite reproduction certainly contribute to the coerced sterilization of women and nonbinary people of color and shackling of pregnant people during labor in prison. The politics of respectability in reproduction are evident in the sex education in middle and high schools across the country. In the California Central Valley, schools are comprised primarily of poor and working-class mixed-status Latinx communities. This is where a Latina high schooler shared with me and CLRJ staff that her sex education teacher has long drawn on the metaphor of the bottom of an old shoe losing traction after repeated uses as a comparison to young women's vaginas to deter young Latinas from promiscuity. And we can see the importance of reproduction as Black mothers continue to parent with the fear of their sons dying for wearing a hoodie. Laurie Briggs argues that the increase in the privatization of most social services brought about through neoliberalism also fuels and reflects concerns about reproduction. As Briggs notes, "in the United States, all politics are reproductive politics" (2017, p. 18)

[13] Solis, Marie. 2019. "28 Women Have Miscarried in ICE Custody in the Last Two Years." Retrieved March 6, 2019 https://broadly.vice.com/en_us/article/yw8egw/ice-detention-miscarriages-honduran-woman-stillbirth?fbclid=IwAR0SfNnmwYgzMWUsYqRVwLi9BDpvJLyAroHNnY1g4VbjYniRiVka9IJRk1E

In U.S. reproductive politics, white supremacy often manifests in the exclusionary character of the pro-choice/pro-life binary (Nelson 2003), where the experiences of cisgender, white, middle-class, straight women serve as the basis of analyses that seek to generalize about the experiences of womanhood as a category. White, middle-class women spearheaded the birth control movement in 1914, making class and racial inequality inherent in its organizing strategies (Gordon 2007). Though the movement's rhetoric promoted birth control as a means by which to reduce class inequality, not only did the leadership lack class diversity, but existing widespread poverty led to a growing relationship between the birth control and eugenics movements that perceived poor women, particularly poor women of color, as unworthy contributors to the U.S. 'imagined community' (Huang 2008; Solinger 2005). Moreover, the movement's leaders drew on middle-class, heteronormative notions of family, gender, and work as organizing strategies that erased the experiences of poor women and women of color. As Dorothy Roberts (1997) explained in her powerful testament to the need for reproductive justice, more recent narratives of 'the welfare queen' targeting Black women, the testing of dangerous contraceptives like Norplant on poor women of color in and outside of the United States, and the continued coerced sterilization of poor and incarcerated women of color demonstrate the resiliency of racialized and classed ideologies that target poor women of color while excluding them from mainstream, pro-choice activism.

As an example of the blinding force of whiteness in mainstream reproductive politics, while middle-class white women rejoiced the end of back-alley abortions after the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* Supreme Court decision, poor and working-class women of color such as Rosie Jimenez in McAllen, Texas continued to endure botched abortions and subsequent deaths due to the economic privilege that medical abortions require (Flavin 2008; Ginsburg 1989; Gordon 2007;

Luker 1989). This political eclipsing has resulted in a reproductive rights movement that systematically ignores the ways in which gender, sexuality, and reproduction matter differently for women of color, those with disabilities, poor and working-class women, queer, trans, and gender non-conforming people. Specifically, the notion that all women should have the choice not to parent is particularly problematic for women of color (Smith 2005). The 'choice' framework rests on an individualistic ideology guided by an expanding neoliberal orientation, where women are thought to have a host of choices available for them to select or consume. Therefore, when poor and working-class women of color opt into motherhood, they are subsequently viewed as inferior women for opting into a decision that their economic lifestyle cannot sustain.

As a response to this longstanding exclusion from reproductive politics, Latinxs and other women of color have reframed reproductive rights within human rights and social justice discourses and, in 1994, ushered in a new strategy in U.S. reproductive politics: reproductive justice, a movement led by women of color and intended to liberate everyone by applying a systemic framework by which to understand the reproductive experiences of women of color. Reproductive justice is a political framework and movement that rejects the mainstream pro-life/pro-choice binary by advancing three doctrines: the right not to have a child, the right to have a child, and the right to parent children in healthy and safe conditions. Created and led by women of color, the movement for reproductive justice fights for the self-determination of all people regarding their bodies, their families, sexualities, and communities.

The vision of reproductive justice makes salient the role of intersectional theories of mobilization and organization to link the various ways in which people of color experience

reproductive oppressions (Price 2010; Smith 2005). As reproductive justice activist-theorists Loretta Ross and Rickie Solinger explain:

> At the heart of reproductive justice is this claim: all fertile persons and persons who reproduce and become parents require a safe and dignified context for these most fundamental human experiences. Achieving this goal depends on access to specific, community-based resources including high-quality health care, housing and education, a living wage, a healthy environment, and a safety net for times when these resources fail. Safe and dignified fertility management, childbirth, and parenting are impossible without these resources (2016, p. 9) .

Though this movement is a culmination of decades of women of color organizing that is often ignored in historical accounts of women's resistance, the focus on reproductive justice is a marked shift toward self-determination in choices about parenting. During a Reproductive Justice 101 workshop in Los Angeles with members reproductive rights organizations, Gabriela Valle, former Executive Director of Community Education and Mobilization at CLRJ, defined the purpose of reproductive justice as emblematic of the Zapatista movement, "we want everything, for everyone."

The years I spent with California Latinas for Reproductive Justice (CLRJ) not only taught me about the reproductive justice framework, they taught me about how to operate in the world through a politics of love, flexibility, and accountability. The late nights preparing for events; the overnight community education, advocacy, and leadership development trips; the workshop preparations; the lunchtime conversations about anything and everything; the invitations to family functions; the nights I agonized about the exploitative nature of ethnographic fieldwork because of their insights; and the ways they rallied together and flooded me with love when I

experienced a family emergency helped me imagine love, community, and utopias in ways that would have been impossible in the academy. The members of CLRJ taught me that if it is important to shift reproductive politics from a focus on 'choice' to 'choices,' then that requires multiple visions of Latinx feminisms and utopias. It was during my time with the organization that I learned about different strategies for social justice, different refuge spaces, distinct modalities and interpretive frameworks, and my personal stake in collective movements for liberation. This dissertation is deeply informed by the work of CLRJ in constructing intersectionality through active engagement. Because of this, I weave observations and interview data from my time with CLRJ throughout each chapter.

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Throughout the pages of this dissertation, I argue that the ideas and practices that members of CLRJ and Latinx feminists broadly engage involve processes of *politicmaking*. By politicmaking I refer to the ongoing creation of relational imaginaries for seeing and being in the world that focus on making visible the intersecting oppressions rendered invisible in non-intersectional politics and discourses. This praxis enacted by some members of marginalized groups—who I refer to as politicmakers—reflect the primacy of messy theories of social life central to affirming our subjectivities, love, knowledge, pain, and joy. Latinx feminists develop a sense of being as contested communities because of the disappearance and fracturing embedded in notions of Latinidad. As Ylce Irizarry explains in her analysis of Chicana/o and Latina/o fiction, "Even though Chicana/o and Latina/o literature do not always perfectly converge in themes and style, they do converge frequently in their emphasis on internal problems and possibilities for empowerment" (2016, p. 13). Latinx communities are more than our pain, labor, and resilience, we are also our joy, love, play, and wisdom. As a relational approach, the making

of Latinx feminist politics and epistemologies requires the negotiation of fluid and contentious ideas and experiences of opportunity and oppression that must interrogate the erasure of Indigeneity, Blackness, feminisms, and nonbinary experiences in views of and from Latinxs.

The methodological lessons of Latinx and Black feminisms are a reminder that one method in isolation is incapable of capturing the complexities of Latinx subjectivities and politicmaking, especially since much of Latinx feminist thought exists outside of the academy. I merge elements of ethnography, in-depth interviewing, autohistoria-teoría, and content analysis as a feminist project that recognizes the extent to which as Isabel Espinal describes, "I am implicated in the questions" (Alvarez et al. 2014, p. 96) that inspire this dissertation. I trace some of the manifestations of Latinx feminist thought through ethnographic observations and interviews with CLRJ; analyses of scholarship in the humanities and social sciences; social media; music, and art; and everyday conversations with Latinx feminists. In keeping with the Latinx feminist tradition of dislocations in praxis reflected in *Translocalities/Translocalidades,* I aim to disrupt what is typically considered theory through the use of social media, in particular, and unsettle what is considered data through in-depth analysis of existing academic texts. Drawing on three years of ethnographic observations of CLRJ's harm reduction work, their development of knowledge within current oppressive systems, and other cultural forms of Latinx feminist thinking, I trace some of the features of an epistemology-in-flux rooted in first imagining holistic representations of Latinx communities as a necessary initial step for imagining social worlds where disappearance and displacement do not define Latinx communities.

THE DISAPPEARANCE AND DISPLACEMENT OF LATINX FEMINIST THOUGHT

Outlining the rich heterogeneity of Latinx feminist thought as a means to showcase some of its essential pieces—its distinguishing features, theoretical interventions and limitations, methodological ingenuity, and implications for solidarity—comprise the central focus of this volume. These forms of Latinx feminist thought take shape within political contexts where Latinxs continuously operate within, between, and embody multiple social worlds, and these multiplicitous selves[14] will guide analyses of political moments (see Chapter 2 for a discussion of language use). One of the most notable features of this rich history of ideas is its erasure, displacement, and fracturing. Multiculturalism and the ways in which its tenets are at times imposed on notions of Latinidad are hallmarks of manifest destiny. Multiculturalism superficially nods at group differences as diverse contributions and burdens to 'the land of the free and the home of the brave,' resulting in a reimagining of United States history that homogenizes Indigenous tribes under the label of Native American, people of Latin American descent as Hispanic or Latino, and so forth, comprising a mosaic of oppressed groups who simultaneously contribute and threaten mainstream notions of democracy.

[14] Philosopher, Mariana Ortega, defines multiplicitous selfhood as a theory "characterized by being-between-worlds, being-in-worlds, and becoming-with. It is a view primarily inspired by my excursions into what I refer to as Latina feminist phenomenology, especially the work of Anzaldúa and Lugones, and into existential phenomenology, primarily the work of Martin Heidegger. My account takes into consideration not only the multiplicity of the self in general, the multiple positions that we all inhabit, but also the experiences of selves in borderlands, in *nepantla* or in-betweenness. These are selves that Anzaldúa describes as living in *El Mundo Zurdo* (the left-handed world), selves that constantly travel worlds— immigrants, exiles, multicultural beings, those that Anzaldúa daringly calls los atravesados" (*In-Between: Latina Feminist Phenomenology, Multiplicity, and the Self*, 2016). I draw on Ortega's theory to describe a transcending consciousness that travels across space and time and is necessary to bring utopias to life.

As I argued in a piece outlining the relationship between the current mainstream Women's Marches and the work of CLRJ, "Time and again, I witnessed CLRJ staff engage in cultural shift work by 'RJing' mainstream reproductive rights activists, teaching them about the importance of racial violence, anti-immigrant sentiment, environmental racism, coerced sterilization, poverty, and other issues in affecting the reproductive lives of communities of color. The results of these teachable moments ranged from genuine attempts to do better as reproductive justice allies, false promises to take reproductive justice seriously with no follow-up, to an active refusal to engage in conversations regarding white privilege necessary to be an ally (or better yet, an accomplice) to the movement for reproductive justice. I refer to the logics on the part of mainstream feminists that allow them to misinterpret intersectionality as an all-inviting identity mosaic while maintaining a blind eye to their privilege and a singular focus on gender politics as liberal violence. In true multicultural fashion, the Women's Marches invite trans, gender non-conforming, undocumented, and other communities of color to bring their oppressions with them to the streets and the polls as 'contributions' to the movement's assumed intersectional power. And yet, mainstream feminists are decidedly quiet about prison and border abolition, police brutality, forced deportations, and the environmental degradation of Indigenous lands."[15] The disappearance and fracturing of differences across Latinxs has resulted in a commitment to reclaim our different histories on our own terms beyond the scope of settler colonialism. In her synthesis of U.S. Cuban, Dominican, Mexican, and Puerto Rican literature, Puerto Rican and Dominican scholar, Ylce Irizarry, explains that "The narratives of [cultural] loss and reclamation coincide with the Manifest Destiny and neocolonialism of the nineteenth

[15] García, Rocío R. 2018. "Single-Issue Politics in Intersectional Clothing: What's New about U.S. Women's Movement." https://mobilizingideas.wordpress.com/2018/02/26/single-issue-politics-in-intersectional-clothing-whats-new-about-u-s-womens-movement/#more-11681

century [while] fracture and new memory, coincide with the rise and decline of civil rights movements such as El Movimiento, the Brown Berets, the Young Lords' Movement, and MECHA" (2016, p. 20).

Latinx feminist practices along with the lessons of *Black Feminist Thought* capture how mainstream discourses and representations in the form of controlling images disappear, distort, and eclipse Latinx feminist subjectivities. For example, in Chapter 3 I trace the development and travel of images of the mestiza—assumed to be Mexican, non-Black, non-Indigenous, cisgender, and undocumented—who is seen as a threat to the white national imaginary, evidenced in the various ways that our immigrant communities experience violence most recently through family separations. The image of la mestiza is used to justify forcing Latinx immigrants into cages more commonly referred to as detention centers—to help the people who put them there sleep at night. The violence wrought by this image is further evidenced in the repeated rape, torture, and murders of immigrant children, women, transgender, and gender non-conforming immigrants. Significantly, the mestiza is also used to erase the experiences and ideas of non-Mexican, Black, Indigenous, and nonbinary Latinx immigrants. La hyper-breeding welferera, the Latina archetype of the welfare queen, is a woman overly invested in motherhood in contrast to the Black welfare queen who is primarily invested in resource consumption and moral degradation (Chavez 2008; Gutiérrez 2008). La welferera's reproduction is hated and feared because she breeds future welfereras and bad hombres.

The cleaning lady, imagined as Central American and Mexican women cleaning houses on the U.S. west coast, and the Puerto Rican women cleaning office buildings on the east coast, has become the justification for the exploitation of immigrant and working-class Latinas' gendered labor. Massive transformations in economic and political relations between the U.S.

and countries throughout Latin America have spurred an increase in the gendered labor of immigrant women (Abrego 2004; Hondagneu-Sotelo 2002). These social, political, and economic shifts have also led to the construction of the (low-skilled) cleaning lady image. This image suggests that these female workers lack valuable skills (highlighted in the popularity of the pejorative term 'low-skilled'), they are thus easily disposable if they lack important skills, have little education, and demonstrate little desire to assimilate into U.S. culture and thus also lack the ambition 'required' for upward mobility.

La santa is utilized to assume that all Latinas make bad feminists, laden with assumptions that we are all Catholic, anti-choice, subservient to our hyper-patriarchal machista men and children, and generally tradition-bound and backward in comparison to white feminists. This image is especially ironic given that whiteness is responsible for writing the scripts of both toxic masculinities and femininities. The sexualization of the feisty Latina, hot-tempered and hyper-sexualized, exists through a white male gaze that functions justifies sexual violence toward cis and trans Latinxs because as the troubling logic presumes, if we are always hot, then you cannot 'rape the willing.' The gang-affiliated home girl, imagined as young, poor, violent, and often promiscuous, is used to obscure the longstanding criminalization of Latinx communities by the U.S. nation-state and thus exclude Latinx youth from quality educational and economic resources and instead funnel push them in the trenches of mass incarceration.

Controlling images are mechanisms of social control that attempt to disappear and fracture holistic accounts of Latinx subjectivities. Analyzing these images in juxtaposition reveals how immigration emerges as an intersectional phenomenon in the politics of reproduction of Latinx bodies. These images are possible because of the attempts at eradication of Indigenous cultures due to European colonization and more recently manifested in the history

of immigration, U.S.-Latin American government relations, academic research, and public policy. These images highlight a discursive politics, what Juana María Rodríguez refers to as "discursive demons" (2014, p. 17) where Latinx communities, regardless of individual immigration status, are disappeared through collective representations as perpetually foreign and undeserving.

WHAT THIS DISSERTATION IS AND WHAT IT IS NOT

This dissertation seeks to uncover the transformation of an unruly Latinx feminist consciousness that has been devalued, fractured, displaced, and disappeared yet refuses to die quietly. It reflects a moment in my process of contributing to the collective storytelling and dreaming of Latinx feminists, to the making of a communal and necessarily contentious politic as critical epistemology. This dissertation examines some of the ideas and experiences of Latinx feminists spanning national origin, sexuality, ethnorace, geographical location, generation, and legal status not only to reimagine what we think we know about identity, solidarity, and politics, but also how we come to know it. I am driven by questions such as: What are the distinguishing features of Latinx feminisms? What are the forms of disappearance, fracturing, and the practices of self-determination that have led to their emergence? Where do Latinx feminists find solace? And what are the transformative (im)possibilities of a framework that synthesizes some of the similarities and key differences across Latinx feminisms? These questions suggest that Latinx feminist subjectivities are formed through politicized perspectives on past, current, and future realities, reflected in processes of politicmaking.

It is impossible to describe all of the unique experiences, cultural markers, and perspectives of Latinx feminists across time and space. Rather, my intent with this dissertation is

to offer a glimpse into the "stockpile of knowledge" from which we begin to see the contours of historically disappeared and hidden experiences, subjectivities, and ideologies (McClaurin 2001). Or as sociologist Karida Brown describes, "to make beauty out of brokenness" (2018, p. 31). The theories and practices of feminists of color demonstrate that knowledge production is fundamentally a continuous, collective project. Inspired by Chela Sandoval's guide for approaching radical love as social movement in *Methodology of the Oppressed* (2000), this project is a love letter and a call to action, showcasing some of the elements necessary to conjure a flexible, radical Latinx feminist framework, a snapshot of the making of a necessarily messy politic-in-progress.

I suspect that some of the arguments in this dissertation, particularly those centered around the anti-Blackness and anti-Indigeneity embedded in many past and current discussions of Latinidad, will be difficult for some of mi gente [my people] to accept. Accountability is, after all, always a bitter pill to swallow. It seems that there is greater investment in aligning critical Latinx feminist scholarship, past and present, in a longstanding Anzaldúan tradition, for example, than to systematically interrogate the epistemological and ontological violence (intentional or not) that the prevalence of a mestiza consciousness has produced for (mis)understandings of Black and Indigenous peoples of Latin American descent. I do hope that you, dear reader, will lean into the discomfort that the forthcoming arguments create. In the discursive and psychic spaces of discomfort, in the messiness of disentangling intentions and impact, we can co-create a genuine politic of hope, care, and accountability, where non-Black, cisgender, heterosexual, and non-Indigenous Latinxs show up and show out for the most disappeared and most vilified members of our communities. Latinxs have a rich history of rightfully exposing the ways in which whites and whiteness disappear and fracture our humanity;

let's model the accountability that we demand by interrogating how and why we disappear Indigeneity, Blackness, queerness, and feminisms in our private and public lives. One of the themes explored in the writing of Afro-Dominican poet, Elizabeth Acevedo, is the intergenerational trauma brought about by the interstices of systemic violence. It is time for Latinx scholars and our communities writ large to recognize and end the intergenerational trauma we have intentionally and unintentionally created in our knowledge production, in our homes, in our relationships, in our activism. We can and must do better…sí se puede [yes we can].

Similar to one of the goals of *Black Feminist Thought*, this dissertation aims both to cultivate and utilize an epistemological orientation by which to understand Latinx feminist thought and to provide context for why Latinx feminist perspectives continue to be relegated to the margins of activist and academic pursuits. Toward this effort, in Chapter 2 I provide a discussion of key Latinx feminist academic and nonacademic labor to identify the distinguishing features of Latinx feminist thought. This framework, thus, outlines the reasons why Latinx feminist thought exists and must be fore fronted in movements for liberation. While tracing these characteristics highlights commonalities in standpoints of Latinxs, I demonstrate that these features equally show the importance of highlighting differences between Latinxs as essential to validating distinct lived realities and reclaiming our holistic humanity. To apply the principles of this epistemic framework, I insert myself as a subject in the co-construction of Latinx feminist thought. I draw on my own stories to provide opportunities by which to understand the inequalities and situated resistance of my communities. In doing so, I not only synthesize existing Latinx feminist ideas and practices, but I construct analyses about these synergies that also highlights neglected arguments and topics in existing scholarship.

I am drawn to offer this articulation of selected themes of Latinx feminist thought not only to elucidate the experiences of Latinx communities, but also to demonstrate the significance of Latinx feminist theories as central to analytical framework of freedom-oriented humanities and social sciences. As such, this dissertation is at once interdisciplinary and deeply sociological. This project is a manifestation of sociology's core mission: to understand the relationship between the Self and society, or the dialectic between agency and structures. I aim to advance sociological imaginations (Mills 2000) by linking the personal biographies of Latinxs across time and space with larger historical processes informed by racialization, global capitalism, heteropatriarchy, and colonization.

The multiple interconnected inequalities that Latinxs experience reflect macro-processes of socially constructed, reconstituted, and maintained systems of oppression; therefore, drawing on Latinx feminist theories helps clarify how these systems manifest and how they can be dismantled. Given the macro-level implications of Latinx feminisms, I include diverse theoretical orientations and movements that help garner inspiration for the revolutionary possibilities of Latinx feminist thought, while also citing non-Latinx feminist scholars. As Patricia Hill Collins (1990) asserts regarding her decision to incorporate diverse thinkers into her work: "Black feminist thought cannot be developed in isolation from the thought and actions of other groups […] Black women must be in charge of Black feminist thought, but being in charge does not mean that others are excluded" (p. 21). The quest for liberation is as abolitionist scholar-activist, Angela Davis, explains "a constant struggle" (2016) and this volume is a reflection of the continuous negotiations and relationships between fights for social justice.

My overarching motivation for this dissertation is to document some of the ways in which Latinx feminists individually and collectively find ways back to ourselves and each other,

to create a political home invested in love, as the epigraph by queer Salvadoran and Mexican literary arts activist, edyka chilomé, hints to at the beginning of this chapter. Latinx feminists have created a transformative body of knowledge about intra and intergroup relations, pain and joy, and political futures that remains largely unknown and undervalued. In documenting these lessons, I assemble the eclipsed and erased knowledges of Latinx feminists into a framework that offers a promise for politicmaking by building toward liberation through our differences rather than calls for sameness. Throughout the pages of this research, I thank feminists of color across borders for gifting me the words, "the nerve,"[16] and visions to unapologetically do work that shows that partial recognition of the intersections we experience is simply erasure by another name.

OUTLINE OF THE DISSERTATION

In the subsequent chapters, I explore the contributions of Latinx feminist ideas and practices through the discussion of targeted empirical and theoretical cases. Specifically, I delve into how Latinx feminists address their disappearances in four arenas: ideology, discourse, reproductive politics, and academic knowledge production. In Chapter 2, I define the parameters of Latinx feminist thought by outlining its distinguishing features through analysis of key themes that emerge from existing scholarship. In particular, I address four guiding questions: Who are Latinxs? Why adopt the label of Latinx? Who counts as a Latinx feminist? What constitutes Latinx feminisms? I explore how Latinx feminists have contributed to social justice methodologies by creating knowledge based on situated standpoints, and I tackle how Latinx

[16] Quoted from Courtney Patterson-Faye's dedication to the legacy of *Black Feminist Thought* at the 2018 conference of the Association of Black Sociologists in Philadelphia, PA.

feminists advance relational ideologies focused on a rejection of binary logics. In Chapter 3, I construct a relational interpretive framework for understanding the role of discourse in the disappearance of Latinx communities by outlining six controlling images. Here, I not only investigate how controlling images function as mechanisms for social control, but also how Latinx feminists enact fluid and innovative forms of resistance against these misrepresentations in the movement for reproductive justice and in social media as well as through poetry.

In Chapter 4, I draw heavily on ethnographic data with CLRJ to explore how the decolonial, relational, and cultural shift strategies enacted by CLRJ to "do intersectionality" challenge scholars of social movements to rethink current theorizing on the role of difference in collective action. Chapter 5 re-analyzes the trends in the sociology of gender and Latinx migration through the lens of Chicana feminist thought to introduce the concept of "the politics of erased migrations" as an analytical lens to theorize why and how the embodied experiences of Latinxs are marginalized and misrepresented in academic research. In this chapter, I call for deeper engagement with interdisciplinary Chicana feminist theories by sociologists of Latinx migration in order to address current epistemological erasures. Finally, in the Conclusion I briefly explicate the connections across chapters and elaborate on the implications of theorizing Latinx feminist thought as a process of politicmaking.

CHAPTER 2
Encuentros Feministas:
The Distinguishing Features of Latinx Feminist Thought

We cannot think of a feminism, an anti-patriarchy, without anti-capitalism,
without anti-fascism, without anti-racism and without class struggle.
All of these struggles are one struggle,
and they require a historic political push with perfect coordination.
—*Ana María Tijoux, a self-described*
"woman, daughter, mother, comrade, singer, feminist and much more"

In October of 2014, I joined California Latinas for Reproductive Justice (CLRJ) at a high school in downtown Los Angeles for a "Women on the Wave" national summit hosted by AF3IRM, a self-described "transnational feminist, anti-imperialist organization committed to women's liberation and social justice."[17] For a portion of the two-day summit, I sat outside of the auditorium at a small table encouraging attendees to contribute to CLRJ's story collection project, surrounded by women of color artists selling self-made jewelry, screen prints, clothing, tote bags, soaps, crystals, and other items commonly sold by artists in activist spaces. As I sat at the table with Gabriela Valle, former Senior Director of Community Education and Mobilization, she was approached by two middle-school students working on a video project about contemporary meanings of feminism. Before agreeing to participate, Gabriela asked me if I was interested in joining her for the video interview. I readily agreed and we walked toward a lunch table surrounded by trees in the quad area.

[17] http://www.af3irm.org/af3irm/about/

Once the students excitedly explained the parameters of the project and the structure of the interview, they turned on the video and posed the opening question, "What does feminism mean to you?" Gabriela smiled and suggested that I answer first. Nervously, I gathered my thoughts and explained the exclusionary character of mainstream, white feminism and that feminism refers to a movement and lifestyle attuned to the ways that intersections of white supremacy, heteropatriarchy, global capitalism, and other systems of oppression create different forms of inequality and opportunity for various people, and the importance of empowering marginalized communities because of these intersections. I quickly turned to Gabriela to take the attention away from me, she smiled at me, and began her response with, "First, there isn't one feminism, I say *feminisms* because there are many forms and they do different things. Depending on who you are, it's going to mean something different." In this moment, Gabriela explicated a fundamental tenet of Latinx feminist theorizing in an accessible and inviting way: diverse experiences create distinct forms of knowledge and practices in social justice movements, a necessary condition for fluid resistance. Gabriela's words were an important reminder for me and the students undertaking the interview of the importance of situated standpoint as central to any feminist project.

That afternoon, as members of AF3IRM stood at the front of the large auditorium and elaborated on their organization's values and commitment to the liberation of "womankind," they were met with resistance from some audience members, who asked about the place of trans and nonbinary people in an organization seemingly centering cisgender women of color. Taken together, Gabriela's emphasis on the multiplicity of feminist praxis was a gentle reminder to avoid imposing a singular perspective of what feminism should be, even if this perspective is rooted in centering the intersections that women and people of color experience. Similarly, the

trans and nonbinary audience members at the AF3IRM summit cautioned all participants about the danger of forwarding a feminist agenda rooted in biological essentialism rather than political commitments in relation to patriarchy writ large. Both instances suggest that defining the parameters of feminist ideas and practices is necessarily a fraught endeavor.

Not surprisingly, defining Latinx feminist thought is an equally messy affair. Latinx feminists espouse expansive and at times contradictory perspectives driven by the wisdom produced from widely divergent social locations. In this chapter, I address the parameters of a Latinx feminist framework by addressing four questions that drive this chapter and the dissertation broadly: Who are Latinxs? Why adopt the label of Latinx? Who can be a Latinx feminist? What constitutes Latinx feminist thought? By attending to these queries, I aim to illuminate how Latinx feminisms are necessarily fluid, messy, and reflect complex linkages of social relations.

WHO ARE LATINXS?

Given the important place of Latinx feminisms in the larger mosaic of feminisms of color, it is important to address a central debate regarding Latinx identity: are Latinxs a racial or ethnic group, or something altogether different? Some scholars (e.g. Alba and Nee 2003) contend that Latinxs are following an incorporation pathway similar to early European immigrant groups, thus constituting an ethnic group. Yet others (e.g. Telles and Ortiz 2008) argue that Latinxs have undergone a racialization experience throughout United States history that remains intact today, thus impeding their upward mobility. Existing scholarship surrounding this debate has undoubtedly produced important perspectives on the complexities of racial projects (Omi and Winant 1994) based on differences in historical points, legal contingencies, relations to social

institutions, and activisms regarding race and Latinidad. To attend to the enduring question of whether Latinxs are an ethnic or racial group, I suggest that current theorizing that conflates ethnicity with assimilation and creates a race/ethnicity dichotomy limits our understandings of the fluid and variegated experiences and identities of Latinxs. As such, in this dissertation I support the perspective that Latinxs are, in fact, an ethnoracial group, possessing both ethnic and racial characteristics (Martin-Alcoff 2006, 2009). Latinxs as a group occupy "diverse racial, national, ethnic, religious, and linguistic aspects of their identity" (Martin-Alcoff 2006, p. 227). I further contend that the ethnoracial category does not suggest assimilation, as ethnic markers are often used as mechanisms for racialization, suggesting the need for more theories on race, racism, and racial subjectivities that disrupt the white/Black binary prevalent in racial scholarship.

Race and ethnicity are inextricably linked as boundary-making identity outcomes that emerge within social interaction to distinguish between members of in-groups and out-groups (Cornell and Hartmann 2007; Sanders 2002). Ethnicity refers to a collectivity sharing a common ancestry, a shared history, and a claim to cultural symbols of some sort that are thought to embody the group's identity (Cornell and Hartmann 2007). Race refers to groups brought into existence through perceived shared physical and cultural characteristics that are thus placed within a racial hierarchy based on differential values of worth and desirability attached to groups (Cornell and Hartmann 2007; Telles and Ortiz 2008). Constructions of race—though commonly attributed to phenotype and thus considered 'natural' and more rigid—are fluid in the extent that they are created, transformed, and eroded over time (Omi and Winant 1994; Gómez 2007).

Despite these important differences, race and ethnicity are not mutually exclusive. Both race and ethnicity are constructed within macro-, meso-, and micro-level interactions between

distinct populations (Cornell and Hartmann 2007). What's more, behaviors attached to race and ethnicity are both considered to be 'natural,' whether due to common ancestry or physical characteristics, and yet, both are fluid to the extent that they are largely maintained by claims-making processes within interactions. Both academics and non-academics often conflate race and ethnicity. A group's claim to shared ancestry and shared identity may stem from physical markers and further, ethnicity has been used in some parts of the world to justify genocide based on constructions of simultaneous physical and cultural inferiority (Cornell and Hartmann 2007). Ethnicization is the process by which an ethnic group is formed based on claims of shared kinship, history, and cultural symbols (Cornell and Hartmann 2007). Racialization is the process by which constructions of physical sameness are used to systematically categorize groups of people, categorizations that create material, social, and ideological realities justifying differential status and treatment (Feagin 2006; Cornell and Hartmann 2007).

Assimilation theories are significant in the race-ethnicity debate by imposing implications for future outcomes to each category. Assimilation refers to the process by which immigrants and their progeny become integrated into the host society (Alba and Nee 2003; Telles and Ortiz 2008). Current discussions about ethnicity among assimilation theorists suggest that ethnic groups will eventually fully incorporate into 'mainstream' society. On the other hand, discussions about race are usually framed around and compared to the experiences of African Americans, thus grouping racial status with lack of belonging and lack of incorporation. While scholars in both camps overwhelming agree that African Americans are a racial group and unlikely to experience assimilation, they vehemently disagree about the implications for Latinxs (Alba and Nee 2003; Perlmann 2005; Telles and Ortiz 2008; Portes and Rumbaut 2001). Assimilation theorists suggest that Latinxs will experience an incorporation process similar to

white ethnic groups of the past, experiencing initial exclusion based on ethnicity but eventually fully incorporated and unrecognizable from other whites. Race scholars contend that the exclusion that Latinxs experience stems from their status as a marginalized racial group and will not 'become white' over time. However, what is often taken for granted in these debates is that Latinxs are assumed to be mestizos, meaning that that the theories emerging from this debate do not account for the racialization that Black and Indigenous people of Latin American descent undergo throughout their lifetimes. In what follows, I outline the evidence for both arguments and then I transition to existing scholarship showing evidence for Latinxs as an ethnoracial group.

Latinxs as an Ethnic Group

Assimilation scholars have created different measures to understand the erosion of ethnic boundaries within individuals and between groups over time. In response to the research showing the continuing significance of race for Latinxs, some scholars argue that differences in the incorporation processes between past Europeans and current Latinxs have been exaggerated (Alba and Nee 2003; Yancey 2003; Perlmann 2005; Jiménez 2010). As these scholars explain, early European immigrants groups, like the Irish, were also excluded from mainstream society based on racial and ethnic markers. Yet their status from a racial to (symbolic) ethnic group shifted over time due to assimilation measures, including intermarriage with U.S.-born whites and the substitution of native language for English by the second generation. Research shows that the overwhelming majority of second-generation Latinxs speak English, thus suggesting to some scholars rapid language assimilation (Alba and Nee 2003; Telles and Ortiz 2008; Portes and Rumbaut 2001). Further, Latinx-white intermarriage has increased over time and Mexican-

origin individuals in particular are more likely to marry whites than Black people or Asians (Perlmann and Waters 2004). Assimilation scholars note that Latinxs face more stigmatization and subordination than their past European counterparts, yet they still predict that this group will eventually fully incorporate into mainstream U.S. society. As Brown and Bean (2006) explain, the 'lag' in assimilation among Latinxs compared to past Europeans is due to the lack of human capital characteristic of the immigrant generation. This argument advances a perspective on Latinxs that essentially places the onus on marginalized people for their inability to assimilate into the white supremacist and colonialist racial project that is the U.S. nation-state, rather than the structures in place that oppress and thus reject Latinx subjectivities. What's more, Alba and Nee (2003) argue that the civil rights era has played a significant role in fundamentally changing the U.S. political landscape in favor of immigrant incorporation.

In his examination of later-generation Mexican Americans, Jiménez (2010) finds support for Mexican Americans as an ethnic group with opportunities for assimilation. Jiménez provides evidence for the upward mobility of Mexican Americans, most notably beginning during the 1980s. During this time, the U.S. began to experience higher rates of Mexican Americans in higher education and thus a growing Latinx middle class, an increase of Latino representation in political positions, and intermarriage with whites on the rise. Yet, according to Jiménez, continuous Mexican immigration, or immigrant replenishment, maintains the saliency of ethnic identity even among the later generations, as later generations are subject to nativism when confused for Mexican immigrants. As a result, Mexican Americans continue to experience positive feelings toward a Mexican ethnic identity while maintaining what appears to be a perpetually foreigner (i.e. 'illegal') status. Immigrant replenishment forces later-generation

Mexican Americans to establish boundaries separating themselves from Mexican immigrants, thus demonstrating the fluidity of racial and ethnic boundaries on the path toward assimilation.

Support for Latinxs as an assimilating ethnic group is also evidenced in discussions comparing the racialization experiences of Mexican Americans to African Americans (comparisons that do not account for Black Mexicans). Mexican Americans' off-white status (Gómez 2007) has resulted in uneven and fluid experiences with racial discrimination, to the extent that there have been points in history when Mexican Americans have passed as whites in ways that African Americans have not (Skerry 1994). Further, Skerry (1993) notes that most Mexican Americans are descendants of immigrants and thus cannot trace their roots to those who were conquered in the U.S., suggesting that they are not a racial minority group but rather an assimilating ethnic group.

Similarly, assimilation scholars hold African Americans as the standard for a group that is racialized but not ethnicized (i.e. assimilable), thus arguing that no other group has experienced racialization and subsequent blocked upward mobility to the extent that they have (Waldinger 1996; Warren and Twine 1997; Gans 2005). According to these scholars, immigrant groups establish ethnic niches in work sectors while many disenfranchised Black Americans are more likely to be relegated to the underclass. The Latinx and African American comparison is intended to highlight that racial boundaries are much more fluid for the former group than the latter, thus suggesting the possibility for (mestizo and white-passing) Latinx assimilation.

Latinxs as a Racial Group

Understanding Latinxs as a racialized group is to understand a history in which their status has hinged on discrimination stemming from European and U.S. conquest and a workforce

structured to relegate Latinxs to the lower ranks of the hierarchy. Internal colonialism theories (Gutiérrez 2004; Acuña 2000; Blauner 1969) suggest that the position of Latinxs can be attributed to domestic forms of colonialism within nation-states that highlight the pervasiveness of white supremacy. Moving beyond analyses of race relations rooted in the processing of 'othering' or other cognitive measures, internal colonialism demonstrates that the position of Latinxs is deeply rooted in a history of systemic racism tied to colonialism that continues to have reverberating effects in spatial segregation, poverty, police brutality, and the disjuncture between legal citizenship (not counting undocumented immigrants) and de facto second-class standing (Gutiérrez 2004). For example, Barrera (1979) argues that Mexican Americans during the nineteenth and early twentieth century were affected by differential work practices and wages that favored whites. Though internal colonialism models are vital for centering the role of historical and macro-level processes in the racialization of Latinxs, they do not adequately document variation between Latinxs.

While assimilation scholars have used evidence of Latinxs as legally white during certain points in history as indication of assimilation, race scholars note that their 'legal white status' did not translate into a socially white status (Gómez 2007; Martin-Alcoff 2006; Menchaca 1999; Martinez 1997). Haney Lopez (1996) argues that a significant legal paradox during the nineteenth century involved the legal construction of Mexican Americans as white alongside the social construction of Mexicans Americans as non-white and racially inferior. While Mexican Americans were deemed sufficiently white to gain naturalization through the Treaty of Guadalupe in 1848, they continued to face racial discrimination and second-class status in most social and political spheres (Gómez 2007; Menchaca 1999). Further, Hondagneu-Sotelo (1994) documents that U.S. politicians strategically granted propertied Mexicans 'white' status in order

to gain land ownership through marriage with Mexican, legally white daughters, not because they viewed people of Mexican descent as equals.

According to some scholars of race, Latinxs' non-white status continues today through segregation experiences akin in some ways to those of African Americans (Martinez 1997; Telles and Ortiz 2008; Vasquez 2011). Latinxs spanning color lines face both interpersonal and institutional racial discrimination, tend to live in racially segregated neighborhoods, and attend racially segregated schools with less resources than predominantly white schools. There is evidence that later-generation Latinxs continue to identify as Latino, Hispanic, or with a specific nationality as opposed to American, and continue to marry within-group even into the fourth generation (Telles and Ortiz 2008; Vasquez 2011). Though Telles and Ortiz (2008) acknowledge that the racialization of Mexican Americans has been more malleable than that of African Americans, the persistently low-status of this group is marked by racial discrimination and the low human capital of immigrant generations. What's more, Telles and Ortiz maintain that the downward assimilation of Mexican Americans in education and work in the third and fourth generation compared to the second generation is evidence of the pervasiveness of racialization that is not mediated by notions of immigrant optimism.

Existing research finds that experiences with racial discrimination play a significant role in the identity formation processes of Latinxs (Golash Boza 2006; Vasquez 2011). Golash Boza (2006) argues that Latinxs are more likely to embrace the Latino label and simultaneously reject the American label when they have experienced racial discrimination. Vasquez (2011) argues that the identity repertoire of both early and later generation Mexican Americans is contingent on racialization. Though she finds high levels of structural assimilation for some Mexican Americans, particularly those who are light-skinned and women, feelings of "Mexican-ness"

persist due to experiences with racism. In fact, increased upward mobility creates more opportunities for racial discrimination, as second-generation Mexican Americans are more likely to report experiencing racism when moving into middle-class neighborhoods and entering professional work. The U.S. political landscape around issues of race also influences the racial identification of later-generation Mexican Americans. Whereas members of the immigrant generation are more likely to live in ethnic enclaves and thus less likely to perceive or experience interpersonal discrimination, members of the second- and third-generation are more likely to be participants in the civil rights movement or more likely to adopt the ideology of the movement asking for verbal demands of equality (Vasquez 2011).

Telles and Ortiz (2012) support Vasquez's (2011) findings of Mexican American heterogeneity based on skin color. Darker-skinned Mexican Americans report higher rates of discrimination in the labor market and thus experience more blocked opportunities for human capital than lighter-skinned Mexican Americans (Telles and Murguia 1990). Similarly, Ochoa (2013) finds that high school youth experience racialized tracking based on teachers and administrators' beliefs of Latinxs as culturally inferior to Asians and whites, which places them in pathways for low-skill work rather than higher education. What these studies demonstrate is that while non-Black Latinxs certainly do not experience racialization parallel to African Americans, their experiences in the U.S. are nonetheless guided by racism, thus showing the dynamic process of racialization across and within various racial groups.

Latinxs as an Ethnoracial Group

Scholars now theorize Latinx subjectivities beyond the white-Black, assimilation-racialization binaries, particularly drawing on the experiences of non-Mexican origin Latinxs to

demonstrate the within-group differences of racialization (Dowling 2014; Itzigsohn 2009; Martin Alcoff 2009; Masuoka and Junn 2013; Morales 2018; Valle 2019; Vasquez 2011). Martin Alcoff (2009) argues that general public sentiment and policy reform highlight a unique paradox for the position Latinxs. On the one hand, we are perceived as a promise of a politically docile, family-oriented population with conservative values and a strong work ethic. On the other hand, Latinxs are represented as one of the most pernicious threats to the 'American' way of life by stealing jobs from white Americans, subverting U.S. law through massive undocumented immigration, and imposing Latinx cultural values on the cultural and political fabric of the U.S.

While some scholars may view this divide as emblematic of the assimilation-racialization debate, it most accurately points to the inextricable link of race and ethnicity for Latinxs as an ethnoracial group. Ethnorace is a category designated for groups who have both racial and ethnic markers, meaning that they have historically been regarded as a group of people sharing customs and values stemming from a collective agency, yet are physically distinguishable as a people based on phenotypic markers and face social marginalization (Martin Alcoff 2009). I argue that ethnorace is a more accurate and fruitful term to describe the identities of Latinxs. Ethnorace pays equal attention to the role of both race and ethnicity in the meaning-making processes of Latinx identity formation and allows for heterogeneity within Latinxs and between Latinx groups. The experiences of Native Americans Latinxs, and Asian Americans in the U.S. challenge the white-black binary and call for re-conceptualizing the racial hierarchy to understand how the general public and members of nonwhite groups themselves come to understand who belongs and does not belong in the U.S. (Masuoka and Junn 2013). For example, José Itzigsohn's (2009) research on first- and second-generation Dominicans in Providence, Rhode Island makes a compelling case against the assimilation model. Across generations,

Dominicans continue to experience persistent racialization and economic disenfranchisement, though the second generation fares better economically. And while transnational connections are significant for immigrant Dominicans, their second-generation progeny maintain a focus on panethnic identities that challenge bounded racial categories, helping foment coalition-building across Latinx ethnicities. Similarly, Ariana Valle (2019) finds that 1.5- and second-generation Central Americans in Los Angeles develop ethnoracial identities by negotiating a subjective identity repertoire contingent on diverse national origin, panethnic, racial, and minority identities. Ultimately, Central Americans define meanings of themselves in U.S. racial structures relative to the dominance of Mexican-origin perspectives and the fluid racialization of nonwhite groups.

Discussions of Latinxs as an ethnorace must take seriously the ways in which meanings of whiteness and racial "otherness" differ between Latinxs (Dowling 2014). For example, "the majority of Puerto Ricans may have chosen white over black on a racial list, but their first form of self-identification, as Clara Rodriguez has shown, is as Puerto Rican" (Martin-Alcoff 2006, pp. 237-238). And while a significant portion of Mexican-origin Latinxs select "white" as their racial category in census documents, many of these 'white' Mexican Latinxs express a strong connection to their cultural heritage, view themselves as different from European-origin whites, report instances of racial discrimination, and are not necessarily lighter-skinned than those who identify as "other race" on census data (Dowling 2014). Whiteness is an identity that white-passing Latinxs draw on at times throughout history to emphasize American status and claim citizenship rights, though this strategy rarely results in the same white privilege that U.S.-born whites benefit from (Dowling 2014; Martin-Alcoff 2006; Vega 2014). Rather than interpret these data as evidence of either assimilation or racialization, it is necessary to move beyond that

dichotomy to examine the nuances of how Latinxs construct whiteness and non-whiteness in context-specific ways contingent on narratives of race, ethnicity, and nationalism. As Martin-Alcoff elaborates:

> Given the persistent racialization of many Latinos, and the ways in which ethnic and cultural categories can carry race within them, the adoption of the ethnic paradigm will leave most Latinos behind. That is, some of us will no doubt be assimilated to the nonracial paradigm of ethnicity that has been operative for European Americans in this century, while other Latinos will continue to be racialized. This will exacerbate the hierarchies and divisions among Latinos, and weaken the political power of the overall group. It will also mean that Latinos will be unable or at least unlikely to address the racial issue from within Latino identity: if "Latino" comes to mean merely ethnicity, race will come to be viewed as an issue that may affect many of us but is properly outside of our identity as Latinos. Light Latinos will do what too many white *estadounidenses* have done: believe that race has nothing to do with them (p. 245).

Identifying Latinxs as an ethnorace allows for understanding their unique experiences stemming from undocumented Mexican immigration and nativist reactions, making them distinct from assimilated European Americans and marginalized Black Americans (Chavez 2008; Santa Ana 2002; Ngai 2005; Romero 2006; Gonzalez 2011). Mexican, Filipino, Japanese, and Chinese immigration to the U.S. during the early twentieth century yielded a political response resulting in the advent of the 'illegal alien' as a new legal category (Ngai 2005). This condition has historically allowed for the exploitation of immigrant labor, yet exclusion from citizenship rights that continues today. As a result of continuous undocumented immigration and the false generalization of undocumented immigration as a "Mexican issue," the racialization of Latinxs

intersects with undocumented immigration (Jiménez 2010). Latinxs face racial profiling as undocumented immigrants through police brutality and workplace discrimination, thus increasing the boundary between Latinxs and white Americans (Romero 2006). While continuous Latinx immigration is linked to the racialization of Latinxs as nonwhites, this racialization occurs through ethnic markers. Spanish surname, use of the Spanish language, and practice of cultural customs presumed to be Latinx and thus un-American are ethnic markers working as mechanisms for racialization rather than assimilation.

Anti-Latinx sentiment is specifically linked to nativism for Latinxs in unique ways (Martin Alcoff 2009). Nativism contributes to the conceptualization of ethnorace by merging ethnic prejudice with racialized constructions of groups as inassimilable due to erroneous assumptions about inherent biological and cultural traits. While some groups experience ethnic chauvinism, not all experience it coupled with racialization as Latinxs do (Martin Alcoff 2009). Nativism characteristic of anti-Latinx racism further distinguishes Latinx experiences from European Americans. Early European immigrants experienced xenophobia based on ethnicity, yet these experiences were not marked by essentialist arguments about cultural inassimilability. The nativism against Latinxs today is more severe than their European counterparts in that it is linked to a denigration of American life rather than a fabric of American identity (Martin Alcoff 2009).

Overall, the concept of ethnorace allows for more of the heterogeneity across Latinxs, particularly given that categories of Hispanic, Latino, and Latinx group together people who are racialized as Black, Indigenous, mestizo, white passing, and anything in between. As I note in the opening pages of this chapter, debates regarding whether Latinxs are a racial or ethnic group implicitly focus on mestizos of Latin American descent who are non-Black and non-Indigenous

Latinxs, since assimilation into the white mainstream is not possible for Black and Indigenous bodies within an anti-Black, settler colonial state. The conflation of any variation of a Latinx category with a Brown, mestizo identity is particularly dangerous since "the concept of mestizo when applied to Latinos in general, as if all Latinos or the essence of being Latino is to be mestizo or mixed Spanish and Indian, has the effect of subordinating all Latinos both North and South whose descendants are entirely African, Indian, or Asian. Mestizos then become the cornerstone of the culture, with others pushed off to the side. This is clearly intolerable" (Martin-Alcoff 2009, pp. 245-246).

WHY ADOPT THE LABEL OF LATINX?

The history of Latinx feminisms in the U.S. is in many ways a history of nonlinear movidas [moves] between erasure, fracturing, and (mis)recognition. European colonization and its reverberating effects reflected in U.S. bureaucracy have grouped and categorized heterogeneous communities of Latin American origin with distinct regional cultures, histories, languages, religions, ethnicities, phenotypes, and political orientations under an array of homogenizing labels of "Spanish," "Hispanic," and "Latino." While these naming processes have erased the diversity of identities across the Américas, they have also been effective in promoting political solidarity that has created powerful social movements and meaningful social change (Latina Feminist Group 2001; Mora 2014). As G. Cristina Mora explains regarding the development and political motivations behind the construction of the Hispanic category in the 1970s, "some would argue that groups are powerful because they can organize by an identity. With that, labels are

important. This does not mean they are perfect, but it does mean that labels matter."[18] The evolution of identity labels for communities of Latin American origin reflects continuous—and necessary—struggles over expanding the parameters of inclusivity and what Alan Pelaez Lopez refers to as "the wound of inarticulation" brought about by colonialism, anti-Blackness, and femicides through the Américas.[19]

The dialectic between disappearance and visibility—and the coalitional opportunities and tensions that arise—has been explored in-depth in discussions of Latinidad and the relationships between feminisms of color across the Américas (Alvarez et al. 2014; Blackwell et al. 2017; Latina Feminist Group 2001; Padilla 1985; Rivera-Rideau et al. 2016; Rodríguez-Muñiz 2010; Jiménez Román and Flores 2010). Latinidad refers to "a particular geopolitical experience but it also contains within it the complexities and contradictions of immigration, (post) (neo)colonialism, race, color, legal status, class, nation, language and the politics of location" (Rodríguez 2003, p. 9). The concept emphasizes relations between meaning-making processes across and within social locations as ongoing cultural processes to understand identity, placemaking, and the sense of belonging. While intended to address within-group heterogeneity, Latinidad can still reproduce the perceptions of homogeneity and unity that it seeks to disrupt. Specifically, constructions of Latinx communities often generalize the experiences of mestizo Latinxs while erasing how the construction of mestizaje was made possible through the extermination of the ideas and lives of Indigenous and Black people of Latin American descent

[18] Simón, Yara. 2018. "Hispanic vs. Latino vs. Latinx: A Brief History of How These Worlds Originated." *Remezcla*. Accessed January 12, 2019 https://remezcla.com/features/culture/latino-vs-hispanic-vs-latinx-how-these-words-originated/

[19] Lopez, Alan Pelaez. 2018. "Latinx Is a Wound, Not a Trend." *Efniks.com*. Accessed December 29, 2018 http://efniks.com/the-deep-dive-pages/2018/9/11/the-x-in-latinx-is-a-wound-not-a-trend?fbclid=IwAR30DOpyuGIgk_Ioye6grYQ1vpUNcBaRktkPyUbEmq4rQapAltjN1h4o7DU

(Blackwell et al. 2017; Jiménez Román and Flores 2010). The possibilities and impossibilities of Latinidad are particularly important for feminists for whom the essential bridging work that they do through coalitions is central to building better social worlds (Alvarez et al. 2014).

The complexities of gender and sexuality have emerged as important sites of contestation by challenging the primacy of "Latino" as masculine with "Latino/a" and "Latin@," with "Latino/a" intended to make visible the existence and contributions of women and "Latin@" offering a gender-inclusive option for all people with Latin American roots. However, each of these labels maintain the gender binary reflected in the Spanish language that renders transgender, gender non-binary, and gender non-conforming people invisible. Within approximately the last five years, a growing number of activists and academics—many of whom identify as LGBTTQIA+--have opted for the identifier "Latinx" because it moves beyond the masculine-centric "Latino" while also challenging the gender binary embedded in "Latin@." María R. Scharrón-del Rio and Alan A. Aja suggest that debates regarding the use of "Latinx" are at the heart of the growing pains that come with practicing intersectionality as an ever-evolving heuristic:

> opposition to this newer term [Latinx], however imperfect it is, comes from a place of unexamined intersectionality of privilege and oppression, one that completely furthers oppression and marginalization of non-binary and trans people from Latin American descent. Recognizing the intersectionality of our identities as well as our locations within the various systems of privilege and oppression —on a personal and social level— fosters

> solidarity with all of our Latinx community and is also necessary to engage in liberatory praxis.[20]

While "Latinx" is a significant step toward intentionally centering queer communities of Latin American descent and is my primary justification for using "Latinx" in this dissertation, I recognize the limitations of this identifier for other aspects of difference. Not only does it still paint diverse ethnoracial groups in broad strokes similar to its Hispanic, Latino, and Latina/o predecessors, but also Latinx is not necessarily accessible to monolingual Spanish-speaking members of these communities since it emerged in English-speaking spaces. In this sense, Latinx further solidifies European colonization by prioritizing English over Spanish to identify a community for whom many attribute Spanish as a central cultural marker. However, the very centrality of the Spanish language among communities of Latin American roots is a result of a pervasive and violent Spanish colonial projects in the Américas. In this vein, the use of each of these identity labels erases Indigenous ties in favor of dual European lineages made possible by physical and cultural genocide.

In addressing these definitional dynamics, I also contend with the fact that many Black Latinxs do not identify as Black Latinx, Afro-Latinx, or Latinx at all, only as Black, because of the racism they experience at the hands of white-passing and mestizo Latinxs. As Puerto Rican, Afro Caribbean, and queer correspondent, Hugo Marín González, explains in a 2017 article published by the online news source, *Latino Rebels*,

[20] Scharrón-del Rio, María R., and Alan A. Aja. 2015. "The Case FOR 'Latinx': Why Intersectionality is Not a Choice." *Latino Rebels*. Accessed June 5, 2017 https://www.latinorebels.com/2015/12/05/the-case-for-latinx-why-intersectionality-is-not-a-choice/

> I am Boricua and I am queer, but not Latinx. To be Latinx, just like Latino, Latina, or Hispanic, is to make invisible the African and the Taíno in me. It erases my ties with the Ixchil people and Lesser Antilles neighbors. It centers my cultural identity around European colonizers, perpetuating patriarchy and colonialism. My solidarity with the rest of the Americas is based upon a common history and constant struggle, indigenous blood ties, stolen people, and a stolen land. I know my history and also who killed, raped, and enslaved. I must celebrate those who gave everything to free my people from oppression, not the oppressors. I do not feel comfortable being identified or described by a word that echoes the legacy of genocide and slavery of the Spanish Empire in the Americas.[21]

In a similar vein, in an April 18, 2019 Instagram post, the media company intended to "amplify Afrolatinx/Carribean voices," *Blactina*, posted a reflection on the meanings of identity for Black people of Latin American descent and the preference with identifying with nationality instead of a Latinx identity:

> "I don't call myself Latin, I call myself Puerto Rican." @rosieperezbrooklyn Im always interested in how black latinx identify and I've noticed many don't use term "Latino" but would rather identify by country. In @migrantscribble words #latinidadiscancelled #soynegra #identificación #brooklyn #puertorico

Interestingly, the hashtag, #latinidadiscancelled, has grown in popularity across social media venues as a response to the anti-Blackness and anti-Indigeneity commonplace among people of Latin American descent who do not identify as Black or Indigenous. In contrast, other scholars advocate for an unhyphenated AfroLatina label "to convey that blackness should always be

[21] González. 2017, Hugo Marín. "Why I Chose to Not Be Latinx." Latino Rebels. Accessed July 25, 2017 https://www.latinorebels.com/2017/07/20/why-i-chose-to-not-be-latinx/

considered as part of Latinidad"[22] (Zamora 2017). The controversies surrounding the use of Latinx as an identity label reflect the messiness of attending to the recognition and disappearance of various communities among Latinxs. While the label of Latinx names a "wound" deeply lived by queer, trans, and nonbinary people of Latin American descent, it also highlights the ongoing wound of anti-Blackness and Indigenous invisibility in Latinx communities. As a result, in the process of grouping Black, Indigenous, and queer Latinxs with Latinxs who do not occupy those social identities is already a failed project that reproduces the very erasures this dissertation seeks to disrupt.

The politics of naming reflected in these debates signals an important reminder: while continuing discussions of identity and inclusivity is essential for imagining new possibilities for solidarity and social justice, these labels will always fail us. We cannot expect to find our liberation in a categorical process originally intended to make diverse communities of the Global South more comprehensible and easily digestible to those with power in the Global North. And yet, for purposes of this volume, I draw on Latinx as the label that works in some ways *for the time being*. Queer Latinx communities have been central in constructing a Latinx feminist epistemology within and outside of the academy; therefore, I use Latinx to center their wisdom and contributions. Notably, at times I will use gendered labels when the topic requires a gender-specific analysis. Following in the steps of the Latina Feminist Group and philosopher Mariana Ortega (2016), I use Latinx as a coalitional term fully recognizing the limitations of the term in perpetuating the invisibility of the very heterogeneity I seek to highlight. As the Latina Feminist Group explain:

[22] Rivera-Rideau, Petra, Omaris Z. Zamora, Sandy Plácido and Dixa Ramirez. 2017. "Expanding the Dialogues: Afro-Latinx Feminisms." *LatinxTalk.org*. Accessed February 13, 2018 https://latinxtalk.org/2017/11/28/expanding-the-dialogues-afro-latinx-feminisms/#_ednref7

> as a coalitional term, 'Latina' is neither exhaustive of the many ways that Latina women may self-identify, nor reflective of all the distinctive national-ethnic groups from 'Latina América' and beyond who live in the United States. Our use of the term 'Latina' builds on its emergence in coalitional politics in the United States and signifies our connections through praxis to the rest of the Americas and other multiple geographies of origin (2001, p. 6).

I discuss the social, political, and historical contexts surrounding different feminist forms based on nation of origin; however, this dissertation is also intended to transcend the boundaries constructed by nation-states to seek relevant commonalities across people categorized as Latinx. I hope that in the future activists, scholars, and artists find a language better-suited to negotiate difference within the dynamics of coalition-building in a way that does not erase heterogeneity.

Similarly, I spent extensive time deliberating and agonizing over whether to write in Spanish at certain points in this book. Personally, the Spanish language has been a mode of expression that has helped me create community with other Latinxs, a way of communicating emotions that simply do not translate into English. The art forms of Latinx singers and poets, when expressed in Spanish, have channeled feelings of love, loss, nostalgia, warmth, and empowerment in ways that remind me of the value of Latinx cultural contributions. Spanish has also served as a mode of resistance for me and many others in the U.S. given the long history of racist and xenophobic responses toward Spanish-speaking Latinxs. I still recall a white elementary school teacher reminding me that "we're not in Mexico" when she overheard me speaking Spanish while playing with a friend. However, prior to European colonization, the Americas were made up of a tapestry of Indigenous languages and cultures. The cultural manifestations of genocide resulted in almost the complete destruction of Indigenous languages

throughout Central and South America, including Quechua in Peru, Brazil, Argentina, Ecuador, and Colombia; Guaraní in Paraguay; Kikchí in Guatemala; Nahua, Otomí, and Totonaco in Mexico; Miskitu in Nicaragua and Honduras; Jívaro in Ecuador and Peru; Kuna in Panama; Emberá in Panama and Colombia; and Ticuna in Colombia and Brazil[23].

Romanticizing the use of Spanish language and uplifting one variation of Spanish dialect erases the diversity of Spanish dialects and the experiences of Indigenous and Black peoples, particularly the race and class-based violence Indigenous peoples and Black Latinxs experience at the hands of mestizo Latinxs and Latin Americans throughout the Americas and Caribbean (Glenn 2009). Recognizing and analyzing how the Spanish language is a mechanism for solidarity, cultural revival, and resistance for some Latinxs is undoubtedly important, yet to use the language to represent all Latinxs legitimizes the extermination of Indigenous cultures and does not align with the principles of Latinx feminist thought. Reflecting on the outcomes of colonization and vehicles of solidarity for Latinx communities is central to this volume as a means to advance an anti-colonialist project. Therefore, I occasionally write in English, Spanish, and Spanglish to mirror the nuances—the messiness—that have created both pain and solidarity for Latinxs and made Latinx feminist thought a reality. As Aurora Levins Morales demonstrates through her essay, "Forked Tongues: On Not Writing Spanish," the "vibrant impurity of Puerto Rican Spanish, of which English is only another layer" (p. 6) offers us a lens for understanding the linguistic messiness of political possibilities for destabilizing the travel of languages across borders and territories. In these strategies, I show the value in the tensions that arise when navigating the terrains between specificity and generality.

[23] The Archive of the Indigenous Languages of Latin America. "The Indigenous Languages of Latin America." Retrieved November 18, 2016 http://www.ailla.utexas.org/site/lg_about.html

WHO CAN BE A LATINX FEMINIST?

The label of Latinx feminist is a political identity rooted in practices and the possibilities offered by distinct standpoints; it is not a matter of essentialist social categories. As Patricia Hill Collins describes as she engages with the definitional dilemmas surrounding Black feminists and Black feminisms (1990), these definitions must simultaneously capture the importance of lived experiences without assuming that a particular social location automatically produces a feminist of color consciousness. Many definitions of Latinx feminists focus on women's standpoints. For example, self-described AfroLatina, Omaris Z. Zamora, notes:

> Black and Chicanx or Latinx women reclaim a feminist theory that re-centers the racialized women's body, or as Cherrí[e] Moraga describes, 'a theory in the flesh'. A feminist theory in the flesh formed from the margins that highlights lived experience—from and through the body—and challenges the homeplace of racialized women is a political necessity. This is to say that, phenomenology and the body become a place from which to theorize.[24]

Similarly, Chicana feminist, Alma M. García (1997, p. 1) explains that "Chicana feminist thought reflected a historical struggle by women to overcome sexist oppression but still affirm a militant ethnic consciousness." Moreover, philosopher Mariana Ortega (2016) reminds us that the feminist label itself is fraught with racial tensions for Latinxs:

> […] both Latina feminist phenomenological accounts of the self and existential phenomenological accounts have various similarities, the most important being the commitment to provide an account of selfhood that does justice to lived experience. This

[24] Rivera-Rideau, Petra, Omaris Z. Zamora, Sandy Plácido and Dixa Ramirez. 2017. "Expanding the Dialogues: Afro-Latinx Feminisms." *LatinxTalk.org*. Accessed February 13, 2018 https://latinxtalk.org/2017/11/28/expanding-the-dialogues-afro-latinx-feminisms/#_ednref7

> commitment, as well as other features that I describe below, have led me to understand Latina feminist views as phenomenologies, although I am aware that Latina feminists themselves might not categorize their work as part of the phenomenological tradition as understood in the discipline of philosophy and that they do not use traditional phenomenological methods. In fact, many Latinas do not endorse the label of feminisms, either, since they do not see themselves in white women's feminist accounts.

Latina feminist blogger, Sara Ines Calderon, echoes Ortega's concerns regarding the perceived whiteness attached to feminism: "I find mainstream feminism to often be lacking in substance for myself. I can't relate to it, perhaps because to me feminism is often wrapped up with white privilege."[25] In constructing the theoretical parameters for this dissertation, I also struggle to balance the fine line between acknowledging the extensive work women of Latin American descent have and continue to do to speak their truths as a means to contribute to a Latina feminist consciousness. Yet, it is important to note the ways in which using feminism and womanhood interchangeably reproduces the heteronormative perceptions of feminism that erase the importance of queer, trans, and nonbinary Latinxs in pushing Latinx feminist praxis in invaluable ways (Lugones 2007; Moraga 2011; Moraga and Anzaldúa 1981; Quesada et al. 2015; Rodríguez-Muñiz 2010; 2014; Soto 2010; Trujillo 1991). Therefore, I suggest that a Latinx feminist can be anyone of Latin American descent living in the United States who advances understandings of their reality and social worlds broadly at the intersections of systems of racism, heteropatriarchy, global capitalism, nationalism, and other oppressive structures for the purpose of achieving social justice and empowerment. However, the review of existing ideas and

[25] Nathman, Avital Norman. 2013. "The Femisphere: Latina Bloggers." *MsMagazine.com*. Accessed March 4, 2019 https://msmagazine.com/2013/02/12/the-femisphere-latina-bloggers/

practices that structures this dissertation suggests that people occupying certain social locations are more likely to advance feminist ideas (and do the bulk of feminist work) and those locations tend to not include cisgender, straight Latino men. To be clear, I do not argue that Latino men have not contributed to Latinx feminisms, but I do find that Latinx feminist praxis is often birthed from the standpoints of cisgender and lesbian women and femmes, trans people, and nonbinary individuals structurally disadvantaged by heteropatriarchy in tandem with other systems of oppression. Significantly, a Latinx feminist consciousness also treats gender as a process, standpoint, and politic, not as a categorical variable to control or to use only for purposes of comparison in research models.

WHAT CONSTITUTES LATINX FEMINIST THOUGHT?

Latinx feminisms reflect distinct and at times contentious theories and positionalities, yet important recurring features span these testimonios. In the remaining pages of this chapter, I briefly outline five thematic features (with targeted examples) reflected in Latinx feminist praxis that, taken together, offer a glimpse at a Latinx feminist interpretive framework.

The Complexities of Interwoven Relational Dynamics

Latinx feminisms, at their core, have developed a política at the intersections of race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, language, class, generation status, legal status and many other social locations to demonstrate how Latinxs' everyday lives are shaped by and shape oppressive structures and resistance practices (e.g. Acosta-Belen 1986; Anzaldúa 1987; Gaspar de Alba 2014; Lugones 2003; Mirabal 2017; Moraga and Anzaldúa 1981; Latina Feminist Group 2001; Ortega 2016). One of the most prominent strategies Latinx feminists have engaged in to emphasize the importance of intersectionality is through interventions in theorizing of the Self. Social theorist

George Herbert Mead contends that the Self is produced through social interactions and internalizing how individuals see each other (1934). However, Mead's theorization takes for granted "mutual recognition" (Brown 2018, p. 77) between individuals that cannot account for racialized people. W.E.B. Du Bois ([1903] 1965), in contrast, previously argued that (1) the external social factors captured in the veil (i.e. the color line) produce (2) internal feelings of twoness for Black Americans in White America, leading to a (3) second sight—double consciousness—where Black Americans are able to recognize and navigate between Black and white worlds, and in this gifted sight lies the possibility for change.

Gloria Anzaldúa (1987) challenged the binary representations of the racializing and the racialized in Du Bois' theory by (1) presenting the metaphor of the border as encapsulating the external material and symbolic crossings Mexican-origin mestizas experience (e.g. racial, sexual, class, linguistic, political, etc.). These border crossings produce (2) internal feelings of nepantla, a process of in-between-ness that results in (3) conociemiento (a way of knowing) based on self-reflexivity, imagination, and a commitment to justice. Those who possess conociemiento can meet in (4) a visionary place—el mundo zurdo (the left-handed world) where people of different backgrounds work toward revolutionary transformation. Yet, as I discuss in Chapter 3, Anzaldúa's mestiza consciousness appropriates and romanticizes pre-Aztec Indigeneity—suggesting that all Chicanas are Indigenous—while erasing Indigenous peoples today and does not account for the experiences of Black Latinxs.

Argentinian-born lesbian feminist philosopher, María Lugones, offers pivotal phenomenological perspectives on theories of the Self. Specifically, Lugones (2003) rejects the notion of a unified theory of the Self. Instead, she centers the reality of the messiness of lived realities to suggest that individuals embody a plurality of selves precisely because the Self is

relational, created by traveling through multiple worlds inhabited by others as a means to "understand *what it is to be them and what is to be ourselves in their eyes*" (p. 97) [emphasis hers]. Inspired by the ideas of Anzaldúa, Lugones, and Martin-Alcoff (2006), Mariana Ortega (2006) further attends to questions of the Self through her theory of the multiplicitous self, defined as a process-oriented in-between self, embedded in specific material conditions where individuals are able to exist as one and as multiple given the confluence of multiple social locations operating simultaneously. Rather than thinking of this in-between condition negatively, "it is this ability to see various perspectives from various worlds that is especially important for multiplicitous selves because it allows for the possibility of critical reflection and resistance" (p. 153).

Importantly, in theorizing the racial subjectivities of Black people, sociologist Karida Brown notes that "what these theorizations illuminate is that the self is an amalgam of the thoughts and feelings of others in society, what Mead calls a 'structure of attitudes,' cognitively mapped onto the individual perception of his- or herself. However, this process is distorted for the black person who receives no mutual recognition from what Du Bois calls 'the other world' but instead only 'contempt and pity'" (2018, p. 79). If "mutual recognition presupposes humanity," (Brown 2018, p. 77), then it is incredibly difficult to argue that Latinxs occupying different races, relationships to Indigenous lands, sexualities, languages, class positions, etc. mutually recognize each other within larger social structures that render Indigenous, Black, trans and nonbinary, and feminine bodies as less than human. Therefore, I suggest that there is no unified Latinx Feminist Self. Yet, Latinx feminisms demonstrate a general commitment toward making politics invested in social justice and self-determination. Thus, the very differences and unequal social relations that make a unified Latinx Feminist Self an impossibility offer

possibilities for moving toward more meaningful coalitions and solidarity across Latinxs invested in dismantling structures of oppression spanning distinct Latinxs social locations, provided that Latinxs lean into the work of accountability in contexts where we experience privileges relative to other Latinxs and marginalized Others—of engaging meaningfully in the "playful world-travelling" that Lugones (2003) theorizes.

Reimagining Methodologies from Experiential Knowledge

As a means to develop and expand an intersectional or interwoven política, to make visible what is often ignored and deliberately rendered invisible and fractured aspects of social life, Latinx feminists have created dynamic methodologies, theories, and historical accounts grounded in experiential knowledge. Principally, variations of storytelling have been central in the theorizations of Latinx feminists, reflected in oral histories, poetry, memoirs, feminist ethnographies, testimonios, and autohistoria-teoría (an epistemology formed through examination of personal knowledge), to name a few. As the authors of *Queer Brown Voices: Personal Narratives of Latina/o LGBT Activism* (2015, pp. 7-8), explain:

> By telling the his/herstory of Latina/o LGBT activism through first-person accounts in the form of testimonios, autobiographies, memoirs, and oral histories, we aim to show a composite of stories that link to each other in different ways: through shared political issues, other activists and organizations, or discriminatory practices experienced by more than one activist. Thus this volume follows in a tradition of Latina/o writings (Latina Feminist Group 2001), Latina lesbian writings (Moraga and Anzaldúa 1981), and first-person narratives (Berger and Quinney 2005), including LGBT narratives, in which the personal evokes the social; a story may begin with an individual, but it is more than just the sole narrative of the individual […] Personal narratives are, by necessity, a central

> element of the book. It was our belief that a collection of stories, along with archival-based visual documentation (of the contributors or the organizations they were involved with) would provide the book with a significantly new and perhaps more complex version of events while remaining, as other oral history scholars have suggested, simple in its implementation (Janesick 2007; 2011). We sought stories that, if powerfully told, would provide enough detail and description to illustrate broader social issues through first-person accounts. We caution the reader that even though these stories use the concept of "I" in their making, they are not just singular stories; instead they represent a complex set of elements, including experiences of social marginalization (based on gender, sexuality, or ethnoracial identification); of living in the flesh and of desire; of growing pains and successful turnarounds; and of organizing people from different backgrounds to work for a cause (or set of causes).

By weaving together individual accounts, Latinx feminists demonstrate that these stories offer the foundation by which to generalize larger social, political, and historical processes of marginalization, resistance, and the spaces in between this dialectic. More recently, Salvadoran feminist research activist, LeighAnna G. Hidalgo, advances the use of storytelling to theorize the experiences of Latinx communities through fotonovelas, photo-based comics (2015). By working at the intersections of anthropology and digital humanities, Hidalgo uses documentary film excerpts, photographs, and cultural production from street vendors to show the effects of race- and class-based discrimination on the families of street vendors, and their methods for resisting the policing of vending in urban areas. The "Chupacabras Selfie Project" (2017) spear-headed by queer and formerly undocumented Chicana feminist, Silvia Rodriguez Vega, also draws on the ingenuity of the digital humanities to advance humane counter-narratives of undocumented

immigrants in contrast to the myth of the bad immigrant. A self-described artivist (activist through art), Rodriguez Vega challenges the dehumanizing consequences of the good/bad immigrant dichotomy advanced through a politics of respectability prominent in immigrant rights activism by detailing how undocumented immigrants take selfies wearing chupacabra[26] masks.

Significantly, Latinx feminist theories and methodologies simultaneously showcase the importance of recovering community memories and histories while recognizing how the political project of remembrance always reproduces disappearance and displacement. The epistemological work that Latinx feminist theories have performed involves the act of what Maylei Blackwell (2011) refers to as retrofitted memory: "a form of countermemory that uses fragments of older histories that have been disjunctured by colonial practices of organizing historical knowledge or by masculinist renders of history that disappear women's political involvement in order to create space for women in historical traditions that erase them" (p. 2). The historiographic work of Latinx feminisms builds on the strength of oral tradition central to Indigenous peoples as a method for cultural preservation. Rather than simply 'insert' Latinxs into historical renditions, the analytical projects of Latinx feminist thought involves in-depth interrogations of the processes that allowed for their erasures in the first place (Blackwell 2011; Fregoso 2003; Latina Feminist Group 2001; Moraga and Anzaldúa 2015; Pérez 1999).

The process of retrofitted memory is essential to Latinx feminisms not only because it recovers their contributions in political organizing, but because it also emphasizes the heterogeneity among Latinxs based on ethnicity, phenotype, nationality, generational status,

[26] Rodriguez Vega defines the chupacabra as "the dangerous mythical reptile-like creature known to prey on livestock and people around the US-Mexico borderlands during the 1990s" (p. 138).

class, sexuality, among others that was stripped away in research, activisms, and public thought (Moraga and Anzaldua 1981). For example, while early research on Chicana sexuality and gender relations with men portrayed them as submissive, traditional, and bound by religion and culture, contemporary Chicana work has uncovered meaning-making process of sexuality involving a continuous interplay between repressiveness and expressions of bodily pleasure, where religion and culture are only templates of their lives and not deterministic variables (Asencio 2010; Garcia 2012; Zavella 1997). The fluidity in Latinas' sexualities highlights the importance of borders and transgressions in their lived experiences.

Latinx feminist methodologies have also been central for processes of collective healing from historical and contemporary traumas. Puerto Rican feminist thinker, Aurora Levins Morales, developed a "curandera [healer] handbook" with fifteen steps that she suggests are necessary "to not only document the consistently silenced history of Puerto Ricans in the United States, but also to create healing narratives" (García 2018, p. 23). The responsibility of facilitating healing for marginalized historians suggests that Latinx feminisms are not simply about telling stories previously erased, but also about making visible the hegemonic processes that inflict epistemological violence on Latinx communities (Pérez 1999; Blackwell 2011). Enacting this imperative, Puerto Rican scholar, Elizabeth García (2018), analyzes the work of Puerto Rican women literary authors including Aurora Levins Morales, Judith Ortiz Cofer, and Esmeralda Santiago to argue that they focus on archiving marginalized knowledge, reclaiming memories, and (re)writing cultural histories through feminist perspectives to help in the healing of migrant women in particular.

Rejection of Binary Logics

Whether it pertains to race (black/white), gender (feminine/masculine), sexuality (gay/straight), power (oppressed/oppressor), legal status (undocumented/documented), or an array of other categories and conditions, Latinx feminist praxis demonstrates a persistent concern with disrupting binary logics that impede the self-determination of Latinxs. Importantly, in the process of these disruptive practices, Latinx feminists demonstrate how binary logics are vestiges of ongoing colonial projects. The collective theorizing in *Chicana Movidas* (Espinoza, Cotera, and Blackwell 2018) speaks to the importance of fluid and nonlinear understandings of the rebellious work, the movidas or moves, of Chicana feminist activisms. As the editors explain,

> When understood as a mode of submerged and undercover activity, a *movida* operates as both the generative "other" of what is visible, accredited, and sanctioned and as a strategy of subversion. Within this constellation of meanings, *movidas* as outside of the specular range of large-scale political and social relations. Enacted in backrooms and bedrooms, hallways and kitchens, they are collective and individual maneuvers, undertaken in a context of social mobilization, that seek to work within, around, and between the positionings, ideologies, and practices of publicly visible social relations (p. 2).

Resisting dichotomous thinking regarding activism in formal social movement spaces and quotidian lived experiences, Chicanas demonstrate the need to blur these lines since resistance practices are multimodal. In addition, in line with the reproductive justice framework, Iris Lopez's (2008) research on the politics of sterilization surrounding Puerto Rican women demonstrates that a victim/agent dichotomy centering a 'choice' logic obscures the complex ways in which women attempt to exercise self-determination within social, cultural, economic,

and historical constraints, arguing for the need to redefine reproductive rights beyond dichotomous thinking.

Once again, the theorizing of Afro-Latinas is central in complicating binary thinking regarding race and racisms. The notion of representation, central to the recovery work of Latinx feminisms, has also become an intellectual arena for thinking beyond binaries. Afro-Latina feminist scholar, Dixa Ramirez speaks to these reflections:

> […] inspired by the work of Afro-Latinx feminisms and other branches of African diasporic thought, I find myself wondering about those spaces beyond (or before, underneath, after?) representation. I am excited by the work of Afro-Latinx artists and scholars, and others working in this field, who engage with issues of subterfuge, surveillance, and various forms of visibility […] Terms such as dissimulation, subterfuge, and elision subtly reveal what I am trying to get at. What is the value of representation when black Latinx subjects have a history of dissimulation in order to slip away from white supremacist surveillance? As such, I am not rejecting projects of representation and visibility, per se, but expressing a hunger for what is difficult to articulate. What if we look beyond the "commonsense" of identifying important "firsts," and embrace the nonsense that might not even be recognizably human, or, more to the point Human (as in the Enlightenment model of Manhood)? Might this line of inquiry lead us towards an "ecumenically human [that is, homo sapiens] interpretation," to cite Sylvia Wynter, that, in our current moment, might help save us from total environmental and political catastrophe? Can we afford to move away from the work of redress and representation and think much more broadly about what it means to be human? Can we afford *not* to, considering the impending environmental and political catastrophes that face us?

Rather than continue engaging in the work of making visible those who are made invisible, Ramirez asks us to consider grappling with the interstitial spaces within and beyond this binary. By recognizing the importance of representing the diversity of Latinx identities and realities while making space for other modes of thinking, Ramirez carves an epistemological locality for reimagining what justice even means for Latinxs and how envisioning justice differs dramatically in the weavings of social locations.

Ni de aquí ni de allá (Neither from here nor there)

Latinx feminist standpoints reflect an in-between position, at the intersection of multiple identities, histories, and sociopolitical realities, while not feeling completely seen in any context (Anzaldúa 1987; Arrendondo et al. 2003; Blackwell 2011; Blea 1997; Castillo 2014; Facio and Lara 2014; Garcia 1997; Moraga and Anzaldúa 1981; Zavella 1991; 1997). As a result, these in-between positionalities—and the erasures that emerge from these locations—offer the possibilities of vantage points invested in critical consciousness necessary for social transformation, healing, and justice. Undoubtedly, the scholarship of lesbian Chicana feminist thinker, Gloria Anzaldúa, has received the most attention for theorizing the nuances of this in-between existence, a third space consciousness rooted in the many borders—physical and symbolic—that Chicanas traverse throughout their lives to create altogether new existences and consciousness (Anzaldúa 1987; Arrendondo et al. 2003; Moraga and Anzaldúa 1981).

Borderlands theory (Anzaldúa 1987) expands on the geopolitical, racial, gendered, classed, sexual, linguistic, cultural, and political borders that Chicanas experience as inhabitants of the borderlands. While borders, on the surface, connote separation and boundary-making, one of the strengths of Chicana feminist productions of knowledge is to show that borders do not only divide, but they constitute a third space where *mezcla*—mixture or hybridity—takes place to

create an altogether new existence and consciousness rooted in the history of the U.S.-Mexico border (Anzaldúa 1987; Castillo 2014; Moraga and Anzaldua 1981). Chicana feminists attribute the development of a hybridized consciousness—a mestiza consciousness—to the origins of European colonization that suddenly created barriers with material consequences for Indigenous peoples, particularly Indigenous women (Moraga and Anzaldúa 1981). As such, the outsider-within status (Collins 1990) that Chicanas and other women of color occupy suggests that a Chicana epistemological project must be experiential: "their ability to 'see' the arbitrary nature of all social categories but still take a stand challenges Chicana feminisms to exclude while including, to reject while accepting, and to struggle while negotiating" (Anzaldúa [1987] 2012, p. 7). Chicana feminisms take the interwoven nature of oppressions characteristic of intersectional work and expand it by promoting a metaphysical understanding of borders as both obstacles and opportunities for women who embody multiple oppressions.

This in-between status is increasingly experienced by Central American immigrants in the United States who occupy a gray area of liminal legality that challenges binary constructions of immigration as encompassing either the documented and undocumented (Menjívar 2006). And as Central American scholars have noted, this gray area is a product of many hidden truths, truths often eclipsed in popular representations of Central American immigrants as a 'social problem':

> We are a diverse community of peoples who have long histories of migration as a result of U.S. interventions in the isthmus. Our political struggles, which include civil wars, have been as ongoing and extensive as the ones incurred within the internal colonial model experienced by Mexican Americans and Caribbean Americans. Moreover, as long as the isthmus continues to experience economic poverty and vast disparity between the

> rich and the economic poor at local, binational, and geopolitical levels, the context for civil strife and migrant escape remains present. Our migrant communities come from countries that have been made to occupy the geopolitical margins as some of the most geodisenfranchised and georacialized people within the Americas. This bottom placement within global hierarchies is reproduced at local levels, influencing representations of Central Americans as silent and invisible. Thus, economic underdevelopment is transposed onto the people, shaping stereotypes around the tropes of impoverishment and violence. Central Americans and U.S. Central Americans maintain hope, resistance, creativity, agency, voice, and memory as part of our identities and cultures that are often overlooked (Alvarado, Estrada, and Hernández 2017, p. 4).

In addition, the notion of ni de aquí ni de allá (neither from here nor there) points to the realities at the interstices of multiple identities and contexts that are often erased from public thought. As Omaris Z. Zamora articulates, "Chicano feminist thought—which has become a hegemonic feminist Latino thought—does not take black women into account outside of ways that are parenthetical or invoke a discourse of racial harmony. Meanwhile, trying to find ourselves within Black feminist thought is a complicated task due to its essentializing of blackness that does not open itself to the vast inclusion of afro-descendants outside the United States […] The spaces that Afro-Latinas in the United States occupy are undefined spaces that result from the ways in which race has been constructed in U.S. society. Because of these constructions, and the institutions built around them, many Afro-Latinas are often not seen by Black American nor by other Latinos. We must in turn push to be seen."[27] Racism experienced by Latinxs cannot only be

[27] Rivera-Rideau, Petra, Omaris Z. Zamora, Sandy Plácido and Dixa Ramirez. 2017. "Expanding the Dialogues: Afro-Latinx Feminisms." *LatinxTalk.org*. Accessed February 13, 2018 https://latinxtalk.org/2017/11/28/expanding-the-dialogues-afro-latinx-feminisms/#_ednref7

attributed to white Americans, thus suggesting the need to think beyond a white/nonwhite racial divide that eclipses Black Latinxs. As Zamora argues, a Latinx feminist politic of accountability must permanently disinvest from treating Black Latinx feminisms as appendages in a façade of multicultural Latinidad.

Knowledge Production in the Service of Liberation

Despite the highly contentious relations between and among Latinx feminists, there is a common thread reflected in our unwavering commitment to produce knowledge in the service of liberation and social justice movements. As Afro-Latina scholar, Petra Rivera-Rideau notes, "For me, Afro-Latinx feminisms ensure that combatting racism in all forms, including within Latinx communities, is part and parcel of feminist actions for social justice."[28] In the same source and echoing Rivera-Rideau's sentiments, Sandy Plácido suggests that Afro-Latina feminisms are integral for building solidarity in social movements: "Afro-Latinx Feminism can lead the way as we determine how to navigate this intersectional and international organizing, because Afro-Latinx feminists have already been doing the work of negotiating and creating different axes of solidarity." Rather than finding political strength in unifying perspectives of Latinidad, Plácido suggests that centering Blackness in Latinx solidarity projects offers fruitful avenues for engagement that do less harm toward highly marginalized Latinxs like herself.

In addition, consider, for example, the insurgency of Chicana feminisms within the historical context in which they emerged. Chicana feminist theories are linked to the origins of colonization, but theoretical frameworks were not formally introduced until the Chicano

[28] Rivera-Rideau, Petra, Omaris Z. Zamora, Sandy Plácido and Dixa Ramirez. 2017. "Expanding the Dialogues: Afro-Latinx Feminisms." *LatinxTalk.org*. Accessed February 13, 2018 https://latinxtalk.org/2017/11/28/expanding-the-dialogues-afro-latinx-feminisms/#_ednref7

movement of the 1960s and 1970s (Blackwell 2011; Garcia 1997). The Chicano movement was considered by its members to be a new nationalist political uprising demanding complete liberation of all Chicanos, and yet Chicanas in the movement quickly recognized the hypocrisy of this call to action given the saliency of patriarchal attitudes among their male peers (Arredondo et al. 2003). Similar to the Black feminist insurgency that grew during the Civil Rights Movement, women of color feminisms for Black women and non-Black Chicanas crystallized within cultural and nationalist contexts (Arredondo et al. 2003; Garcia 1997). Though Chicanas' frustrations with their marginalization within the Chicano movement grew, they also felt out of place within a mainstream women's movement that demonstrated indifference at best and hostility at worst to the intersections of race, class, and gender for women of color. As a result, a key component to the early development of Chicana political consciousness was not to branch off from the Chicano movement because women of color cannot separate themselves from the intersections—the borders and transgressions—that their many identities create. Rather, Chicana feminists largely remained grounded in racial movements and worked extensively to create dialogues about gender relations within their racial and ethnic communities (Arredondo et al. 2003).

Working within a cultural context has allowed Chicana feminist theories to focus on intricate connections between women's liberation and immigration issues (Anzaldúa 1987; Garcia 1997). As a result, Chicana feminist agendas have always focused on immigration reform to alleviate the injustices experienced by undocumented immigrants, reproductive healthcare, bilingual rights in schools and other major institutions, the importance of cultural competency in healthcare and other social services, racial discrimination, welfare rights, access to higher education, community-based solutions to childcare, and worker rights for Chicanas/os in the

most tenuous and exploited jobs (Blackwell 2011; Garcia 1997). Moreover, Chicana feminist theories expand on traditional gender theories by not limiting discussions exclusively to women's betterment, but rather, noting how Chicana empowerment and liberation is only possible through community-wide liberation. As a result, Chicana feminist theories have expanded notions of solidarity by engaging in transnational coalition-building—from Chicana to Xicana—to construct an Indigenous-inspired banner of Third World feminisms contributing to the construction of "women of color" as a new category of community resistance in the twentieth century (Blackwell 2011; Blea 1997).

Chicana feminists have advanced spiritual activism as central to the contributions of Chicana womanhood in feminist genealogies (Castillo 2014; Facio and Lara 2014; Garcia 1997; Moraga and Anzaldúa 1981). In line with the ultimate goal of decolonization, Chicana feminisms have drawn on subjective meanings of Indigenous spirituality as the first step in decolonizing their bodies, minds, and actions and thus support community healing and justice (Facio and Lara 2014). Connected to the recognition of intersectional existences for women of color, spirituality does not necessarily refer to a relationship to God or another deity, but rather it is "a way of understanding someone's (or a community's) position in the world by trying to make sense of unfair economic conditions and gender inequality, and to do something about it" (Facio and Lara 2014, p. 2). Thus, spirituality contributes to Chicana feminisms by affirming that intersectionality does not only refer to the connections between political identities, but to the nexus between the physical, spiritual, and emotional well-being of women essential to the decolonization of women's bodies as sites of questioning, negotiation, and transformative[29]

[29] Transformative justice carries many meanings and expressions in activist circles. For purposes of this paper, I define transformative justice as a type of consciousness that draws on historical

justice (Castillo 2014). Through this process, Chicana feminist theories seek to sensitize all aspects of women's realities to the colonization, marginalization, rebellion, liberation, and ultimate transformation that characterize their lives experiences, bringing a nuanced meaning to the adage "the personal is political."

The distinct ways that Latinx feminists reflect the centrality of the aforementioned distinguishing features suggest that we are attempting to make sense of the messiness of social life, to make sense (to make politics) of ourselves, our contradictions, the worlds we inhabit, and the possibilities for meaningful change. In this sense, Latinx feminist thought is the work we do to increase our political power through interwoven identities, histories, and strategies that contest the relative exclusion of our ideas and realities through accounts of our standpoints.

and persistent traumas of marginalized populations to strengthen the emotional capacities of these groups and by which to envision alternative, liberating future realities (Castillo 2014).

CHAPTER 3
Feisty Latinas, Deportable Mestizas, and Other Controlling Images

In today's society, a Latina is thought to be docile, faithful, a submissive wife, an all-caring mother, domestic, and virginal (regardless of the fact that she may be a mother). But at the same time, a Latina is also thought to be completely hyper-sexualized, a welfare queen (within the US), meaning she is mooching off the state while endlessly bearing children to most likely different men, has an overbearing body that does not conform to dominant standards of beauty, and is "hot and spicy", meaning she is opinionated (but whose opinions are not necessarily taken seriously) and feisty. Both representations of Latina identity serve to keep what is thought to be an unwieldy population in the US under neat oppressive categories that further subjugate an already subjugated group…

—Christina O'Brien, 2011[30]

I used to try to assert my otherness,
to put on a performance to convince others I'm a *real* Puerto Rican.
But these stereotypes of what it means to be Latinx take away my choice,
my complexity, my humanity, my queerness.
Messages like these are so pervasive
that I often wonder how much of my personality is mine,
based on what I want versus what's expected of me.
Who am I: I'm working on figuring that out.

—Vianca Lugo, a self-identified "Puerto Rican receptionist in New York" 2018[31]

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[30] O'Brien, Claudia. 2011. "Latina Identity through Motherhood." *Latinanarratives.wordpress.com* Accessed February 1, 2019 https://latinanarratives.wordpress.com/2011/01/03/latina-identity-through-motherhood/

[31] Castañon, Kelsey. 2018. "I'm Latinx — & I'm Fed Up with Being Called "Exotic." *Refinery29.com*. Accessed February 1, 2019 https://www.refinery29.com/en-us/2018/05/197463/latina-hispanic-stereotypes-culture-fetishization

Feminists of color have been at the forefront in theorizing how controlling images are all around us, how they are internalized by members of both dominant and marginalized groups, and function as mechanisms of social control by distorting holistic perceptions of marginalized communities. As Patricia Hill Collins argues, "Race, class, and gender oppression could not continue without powerful ideological justifications for their existence" (1990, p. 67). She explains how images of Black women as mammies, matriarchs, welfare queens, and jezebels operate as powerful symbols of domination by presenting these images as commonsense knowledge. The pervasiveness of these representations—and their hybridity— speaks to the power of discourse in structuring what we can and cannot think about certain phenomena (Foucault 1966).

As sweeping and unidimensional misrepresentations, controlling images are more damaging and insidious than stereotypes because these images carry a cumulative effect through the process of internalizing them as natural 'facts' of social life. In order to maintain an ideological stronghold over time and across contexts, controlling images rely on dichotomous thinking, perceptions of difference in oppositional terms, and address their inherent instability by "subordinating one half of the dichotomy to the other" (Hill Collins 1990, p. 70). These images offer false understandings of social dynamics by reaffirming binary logics, where marginalized communities are understood as caricatures in an either/or fashion, systematically erasing the ways in which marginalized communities are messy, complex human beings. These images justify unequal social relations, guiding people's behavior and perceptions of themselves and of others. Necessarily pervasive, controlling images are saturated via all major social institutions, including families, the media, educational systems, peer networks, politics, the economy, and religion.

Black feminist scholars have contributed extensively to deconstructions of and resistance to controlling images. Kimberlé Crenshaw (1991) introduced the concept of representational intersectionality to focus on cultural representations of Black women that render invisible the complexities of their social locations and lead to intersecting forms of disempowerment. As such, Crenshaw argues that examining the contours of representational intersectionality is essential for understanding the inequalities experienced by Black women because "the production of images of women of color and the contestations over those images tend to ignore the intersectional interests of women of color" (p. 1283). Adding to our understanding of the relationship between controlling images and health, Tamara Beauboeuf-Lafontant (2009) contends that the image of the strong Black women is unique to Black womanhood, creating a one-dimensional portrayal of Black women that hides their experiences with suffering and vulnerability. What she terms "the performance of invulnerability" results in mental and physical health problems, particularly depression and eating disorders. Furthermore, Dorothy Roberts (1997) traces how representations of Black welfare queens as lazy, childlike, criminal, and neglectful mothers have been used to develop policies that justify regulating their reproductive lives. Emphasizing the importance of such imagery for working-class Black women, Ivy Kennelly's (1999) research explores how white employers draw on the image of the Black working-class woman as a single mother to justify perceptions of Black women broadly as poor workers, unreliable, and unprepared for the labor market.

Existing scholarship demonstrates that the pernicious effects of these images are not only experienced by poor and working-class Black women. For example, Dawn Marie Dow (2016) contends that Black middle and upper-class mothers are forced to contend with the image of the thug and its impact on the safety and opportunities for their sons. Since the type of racialized

masculinity associated with the thug is viewed as dangerous and subordinate to white masculinities, Black mothers view their sons as vulnerable and respond by managing their sons' regular interactions and appearance. In her research on gendered racism among Black women and men professionals, Adia Harvey Wingfield (2007) finds that professional Black men have to manage their behavior to avoid being portrayed as the angry Black man, while Black women are forced to negotiate a modern-day version of the Black mammy image along with eroticized expectations of Black womanhood from co-workers.

Importantly, some research theorizes the manifestation and effects of controlling images on Asian communities. Yen Le Espiritu (1997) traces controlling images of Asian women vacillating between The Dragon Lady—imaged as hypersexual and deceitful—and the Lotus Blossom as subservient and docile. Espiritu also explores the binary in images of Asian men as Fu Manchu representing evil and villainous Asian men and the Chinese laundryman who is eager to serve. Through this analysis, Espiritu advocates for analyzing discursive imagery through a lens of gendered racism, and in the case of these images, their intersections ultimately show how Asian woman and men are unable to meet normative standards of Western femininity and masculinity. Similarly, Aki Uchida (1998) addresses the process of Orientalization, defined as the "objectification of Asian women as the 'Oriental Woman'—the stereotypical image of the Exotic Other—in the discursive practices in the United States" (p. 161). The Oriental Woman exists as a binary between the submissive, docile woman and the sexy vixen. Uchida argues that the history of immigration centered around Chinese sex work, U.S. involvement in the Far East, and contemporary discourse of Asian women in the United States are responsible for the rise and persistence of this controlling image.

Not surprisingly, the politics of discourse and representation in the United States have also forced violent misrepresentations onto Latinx communities that attempt to undermine our self-determination. As such, naming and contesting these images has been a principal concern for Latinx feminists in the academy and outside of it. In what follows, I construct an interpretive framework by tracing the origins and manifestations of six controlling images commonly imposed on feminine-presenting Latinas.[32] In doing so, I draw heavily on existing research, literary accounts, Latinx-created social media accounts, and ethnographic data from my time with CLRJ. In addition to building on Patricia Hill Collins' theorizing on controlling images surrounding Black women in the United States, the analytic framework guiding this chapter is inspired by Isabel Molina-Guzmán's (2010) mutually shaping concepts of symbolic colonization and symbolic rupture to make sense of the power of and resistance to repressive imagery for Latinxs. As Molina-Guzmán explains:

> Symbolic colonization is an ideological process that contributes to the manufacturing of ethnicity or race as a homogenized construct. It is the storytelling mechanism through which ethnic and racial differences are hegemonically tamed and incorporated through the media. What is of interest in my discussion of symbolic colonization is the ways in which media practices reproduce dominant norms, values, beliefs, and public understandings about Latinidad as gendered, racialized, foreign, exotic, and consumable (p. 9).

[32] Given the focus on feminine-centered controlling images, throughout this chapter I often use Latina rather than Latinx to point to the specificity of the gendered dynamics at work in the construction and dissemination of these images, and their implications for feminist theorizing. I describe the images as Latinas rather than Latinx not because queer, trans, and gender nonbinary people are unaffected by these violent representations. I do so because the hegemonic stronghold of this imagery relies on a reification of cisgender, Latina reproductive behavior that erases the politics unique to gender nonbinary and trans Latinxs.

> […] symbolic rupture, turns attention to online audience reception of the mainstream media. Symbolic rupture points to the process of interpretation that allows audiences, including myself, as cultural readers to disrupt the process of symbolic colonization (p. 9).

I detail the contours, effects of, and resistance to images of la mestiza, la hyper-breeding welferera, la santa, the cleaning lady, the feisty Latina, and the home girl. These discursive misrepresentations not only situationally complement and contradict each other, but more importantly, they are linked through what I describe as a broader displacement of the reproductive Other process, where regardless of immigration status, Latinxs emerge as foreign, threatening, unwanted, and undeserving. In particular, by addressing how these images showcase the importance of rendering salient the deep-rooted erasure of Blackness, Indigeneity, feminisms, and queer experiences in how Latinxs are often perceived, I conclude that fears surrounding the reproduction of Latinxs are an important thread connecting all of the images.

LA MESTIZA

> "A woman gets pregnant. She's nine months, she walks across the border, she has the baby in the United States, and we take care of the baby for 85 years? I don't think so." – Donald Trump, 2016

On September 16, 2015, then presidential candidate, Donald Trump, bemoaned the United States' birthright citizenship constitutional law during the Republican primary debate that aired across the U.S. and international news sources. This comment contributes to Trump's continuing pseudo-manifesto of disparaging and sensationalist remarks targeting Latinxs, Muslims, queer people, women, and other marginalized communities that is garnering extensive support among a

specific demographic—mostly poor white men with low educational attainment—who are increasingly frustrated by what they feel are threats to the 'national fabric of America' (note how the U.S. and America are erroneously interchangeable in this context). While this comment comes as no surprise to followers of the 2016 presidential election and now presidential administration, it bears special significance in highlighting the extent to which a controlling images framework is useful for understanding perceptions of and inequalities experienced by Latinxs.

The discursive power embedded in this passage is two-fold. First, Trump does not mention a specific ethnoracial group nor does he clarify whether he refers to the U.S.-Mexico or U.S.-Canada borders. However, the fact that such specification is absent (and unnecessary) showcases the extent to which the image of the pregnant woman *walking* across the border to birth is a coded signifier (Hall et al. 2013) for a Mexican, poor, presumably undocumented, Spanish-speaking woman, given high rates of Mexican immigration and Mexico's proximity to the United States. Second, this image brings to light the all-encompassing quality of controlling images. In this discursive moment, this anonymous woman—Mexican, non-Black, non-Indigenous, poor, undocumented, Spanish-speaking, fertile, straight, cisgender woman—becomes the ideological reference point for all Latinas. Moreover, her fertility and thus her progeny (i.e. fueled by the construction of "anchor babies" as ideological appendages to la mestiza) are threats to the political, moral, and economic fabric of the U.S. through fears of overreliance on public assistance, crime, reduction of job availability, and overpopulation. The hyper-fertile, poor immigrant Mexican woman with few skills and little respect for immigration laws has long captured the U.S. national imaginary (Escobar 2016; Gutiérrez 2008; Huang 2008) via immigration policy, fictional and news media representations, and academic research.

Immigrant rights discourse in both activist and academic spaces, in attempts to challenge the criminalization of la mestiza and other undocumented immigrants of Latin American descent, simultaneously highlight intersecting forms of social control surrounding la mestiza while reproducing erasures (Chavez 2008; Escobar 2008, 2016). The sharp increase over time in the criminalization of undocumented immigrants evidenced in the rise of deportations, family separations, and detention centers has led to ongoing responses from Latinxs that often attempt to challenge demonizing representations of Latinx immigrants with alternate representations of immigrants as hard-working, non-criminals. As a result, these discourses create a binary between the bad immigrant/good immigrant, where sympathetic perspectives on immigrants are contingent on what value they generate for the U.S. labor market. These narratives ensure that undocumented Latinx immigrants become ideal workers in a neoliberal market because they are easily exploited and expendable, have limited rights, and are often unable to advocate for themselves given their precarious legal status. However, in this process, not only are immigrants dehumanized through a politics of respectability, but Black bodies are often sacrificed at the expense of liberal perspectives on undocumented immigration. Specifically, when discourses focus on immigrants as non-criminals and hardworking, these discourses implicitly position (mestizo) Latinx immigrants in opposition to Black people. As Escobar (2008, p. 57) explains,

> When the innocence of immigrants is articulated, we are left to ask "If immigrants are not the criminals, then who are? If immigrants are innocent, then who is guilty?" […] when we claim that immigrants are not criminals, the fundamental message is that immigrants are not Black, or at least, that immigrants will not be "another Black problem." Tracing the construction of criminality in relationship to Blackness and how it is re-mapped onto brown bodies through the notion of "illegality" gives witness to the ways that criminality

> allows a reconfiguration of racial boundaries along Blackness and whiteness. In other words, criminalizing immigrants serves to discipline them into whiteness.

The implicit criminalization of Blackness pervasive in immigrant rights discourses suggests the need to reframe immigrant justice as an abolitionist issue in solidarity with the violence imposed on Black, Indigenous, and other nonwhite people in the United States.

Undoubtedly, la mestiza—a woman of mixed Indigenous and Spanish descent—is the most pervasive controlling image of Latinas. La mestiza has garnered legitimacy over time through the intersections of discourses surrounding mestizaje as la raza cósmica (the cosmic race) throughout Latin America and Puerto Rico (Vasconcelos 1948), and the construction of Aztlan as a mythical place to help legitimize Mexican nationalism by treating mestizaje and Indigeneity as interchangeable (Acosta 1972; Anaya, Lomelí, and Lamadrid 2017; Forbes 1973). The origins of la mestiza lie in the advent of Spanish colonization in Latin America, when Spanish settlers lauded the perceived hyper-fertility of Indigenous women and encouraged reproduction between Indigenous women and mixed-raced soldiers as a means of physical and cultural genocide (Castañeda 1990; Huang 2008). Yet, it was the work of Mexican philosopher, secretary of education, and 1929 Mexican presidential candidate, José Vasconcelos, that solidified the ideology of mestizaje that has since been used to justify the ongoing oppressions of Indigenous and Black peoples throughout Latin America (1948). By arguing that Latin Americans comprise a fifth race through a mixture of European, Asian-descended Indigenous peoples, and African bloodlines, Vasconcelos and other intellectuals romanticized the superiority of mestizaje and nationalism. As a result, mestizaje continues to be used by people across Latin America to suggest that racism is a problem only in the United States (falsely suggesting that Latin America is racially harmonious), thus obscuring the pervasiveness of anti-Indigeneity and

anti-Blackness across Latinx communities. Similar discourses have spread across Latinx communities. Among Puerto Ricans, the popular notion that all Puerto Ricans are a mixture of African, Taíno, and Spanish ancestry distorts the reality of Indigenous genocide and the enslavement of African peoples. As Puerto Rican journalist, Yaniré Ferrer Cesari, explains, in order for this perspective to become commonsense, mestizaje is normalized since infancy:

> Puerto Rican schoolchildren are taught that regardless of physical appearance they all individually derive from the same aforementioned roots. Regardless of whether this is true or not hasn't eradicated in Puerto Rico structural or personal racism. Belief in mestizaje silences conversations about white supremacy and doesn't force those with privilege to take responsibility for it. This allows white Puerto Ricans to appropriate, steal, and taint Afro-Puerto Rican traditions and exploit afro-descendant communities with no repercussions or consequences because "we are all Puerto Rican so all parts of Puerto Rican culture belong to all of us." Not acknowledging the fact that a racial construct exists in Puerto Rico allows white privilege, white saviourism, and finally racism to flourish.[33]

The ways in which mestizaje has traveled across Latin América and the Caribbean is in some ways akin to the multiculturalism rhetoric that has gained traction in the United States following the misappropriation of ideals stemming from the Civil Rights Movement.

Current contentious debates regarding the recent name change of the student organization, MECha (Movimiento Estudiantil Chicanx de Aztlan), speak directly to the

[33] Ferrer Cesari, Yaniré. 2016. "How 'Mestizaje' in Puerto Rico Makes Room for Racism to Flourish." *Insurgentprieta.wordpress.com*. Accessed April 27, 2018 https://insurgentprieta.wordpress.com/2016/02/08/how-mestizaje-in-puerto-rico-makes-room-for-racism-to-flourish/

hegemonic consequences of mestizaje and divergent meanings of Indigeneity for Mexicans and other Latinxs. As leaders of the organization who spearheaded the name change explain[34]:

> As a collective, we recognize that the term Aztlán reflects MEChistxs' appropriation of Aztec cultures and traditions; however, many of our ancestors were not Aztec but rather Maya, Purépecha, K'iche', Guaraní, Garifuna, among others. The use of the term "Aztlán" also influences us to take part in the erasure of Indigenous peoples who are the true ancestral stewards of the US Southwest. We voted to remove "Aztlán" because although Aztlán was created as a philosophical ideology, it has had geographical consequences in claiming the land that was taken by the US on February 2, 1848 with the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. Chicanxs from the '60s claimed the Southwest part of the United States as "Occupied Mexico" and our rightful land; however, **this is not our land**. The reality is this land belongs to the many **Indigenous people** who were here before the Mexicans and Chicanxs, e.g. the Diné people, the Tongva people, etc. [emphases theirs]

The notoriety of scholarship by Gloria Anzaldúa, Cherríe Moraga, and some other Chicana feminists have simultaneously brought to light important aspects of mestiza existence and resistance long erased from academic perspectives, while also further contributing to the erasure of Indigenous peoples in perspectives on people of Latin American descent. The cultural appropriation and erasure of Indigenous peoples in various theories of mestiza consciousness has been taken up by both Latina and Indigenous feminist scholars. Take, for example, this notable passage from Judy Rohrer (2016):

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[34] MEChA National Board. 2019. "A Message From ME(ChA)'s National Board: Why We Decided to Change the Name of Our Movimiento." Remezcla.com. Accessed April 15, 2019 https://remezcla.com/features/culture/mecha-national-board-statement-on-name-change/

> Maria Josefina Saldaña-Portillo and Sheila Marie Contreras have taken up the issue of cultural appropriation in Anzaldúa's work. Saldaña-Portillo finds that Anzaldúa does not rise to her own challenge but "quickly slips back into the conventional usage of mestizaje" (2003, 281), which she identifies as its deployment to "produce a biological tie with pre-Aztec Indians rather than a political tie with contemporary U.S. Native Americans or Mexican Indians" (281). She continues: "In this system of representation, indigenous subjectivity is once again put under erasure" (282). Sheila Marie Contreras also has trouble with Anzaldúa's appropriation of Aztec mythology, which she sees as a return to origins that contradicts notions of hybridity: "Indigeneity exists most forcefully in Anzaldúa's text as myth and signifies the denied or unconscious side of mestiza consciousness"; consequently, this "dehistoricizes the relations between Chicanas/os and Natives" (2008, 117). Their critiques resonate strongly with Patrick Wolfe's teaching that "colonialism does not appropriate a historical indigeneity; it replaces it with a conveniently mythical one of its own construction. The condition of this replacement is precisely the elimination, or *dis*placement, of the empirical indigene within civilization" (1999, p. 208).

As Rohrer, Saldaña-Portillo, Contreras, Wolfe and other scholars suggest, it is incredibly dangerous to treat colonization and decolonization as metaphors for the disappearances and attempts to build resistance practices by non-Indigenous peoples through the Américas, essentially treating Indigenous peoples as idealized relics of the past (Tuck and Yang 2012). Anzaldúa also voiced similar concerns about the epistemological and political ramifications of her theorizing as it relates to the erasure of present-day Indigenous peoples:

> I'm afraid that what I say may unwittingly contribute to a misappropriation of Native cultures, that I (and other Chicanas) will inadvertently contribute to the cultural erasure, silencing, invisibility, racial stereotyping, and disenfranchisement of people who live in real Indian bodies. I'm afraid that Chicanas may unknowingly help the dominant culture remove Indians from their specific tribal identities and histories. Tengo miedo que [I fear that], in pushing for mestizaje and a new tribalism, I will 'detribalize' them (Anzaldúa and Keating 2009, p. 286).

The motivation for the development of a mestiza consciousness as a means of resistance against settler colonialism, white supremacy, and heteropatriarchy, and subsequent discussions about the ideological violence wrought by a mestiza consciousness, suggest that practices of empowerment still have disempowering consequences. The theorizing of Anzaldúa and other Chicana feminists[35] has been instrumental in cementing the important contributions of Chicanas in the academy and social movements, yet these epistemological projects have at time come at the expensive of Indigenous recognition and self-determination.

Another significant intellectual arena that has contributed to the pervasiveness of la mestiza is the ongoing debate among sociologists about whether Latinxs constitute a racial or ethnic group, a debate that often attempts to use mestizo, Mexican-origin Latinxs as a generalizable case for questions about race regarding Latinxs more generally. As I explain in Chapter 2, these debates racially position Latinxs in a binary logic that cannot fully account for the diverse ways that people of Latin American descent are racialized. Philosopher Linda Martin-

[35] To be clear, I am certainly not arguing that all Chicana feminist theorizations have contributed to the erasure of Indigenous peoples. Echoing the sentiments of other Latina and Indigenous feminists, I am pointing to a trend among scholarship directly invested in continuing an Anzaldúan intellectual tradition without properly attending to the criticisms of its implications.

Alcoff (2006), who argues that Latinxs are best understood as an ethnoracial group, elaborates on the shortcomings of dichotomous thinking regarding race:

> To understand race in this way is to assume that white supremacy targets only black identity. Others can be affected by racism, on this view, but the dominance of the black/white paradigm works to interpret all other effects as "collateral damage" ultimately caused by the same phenomena, in both economic and psychological terms, in which the given other, whether Latino, Asian American, or something else, is placed in the category of "black" or "close to black." In other words, there is basically one form of racism, and one continuum of racial identity, along which all groups will be placed (p. 248).

Due to the effects of this binary, it serves two general purposes: "As a descriptive claim, the black/white paradigm intends to describe the fundamental nature of racializations and racisms in the United States. As a prescriptive claim, it intends to enforce the applicability of the paradigm by controlling how race operates; some of the legal history can be read as having (or aiming for) such prescriptive effects" (Martin-Alcoff 2006, pp. 247-248). In addition, theories of Latinxs as a racialized group, while criticizing assimilationist perspectives, at times still uphold the legitimacy of the very paradigm that they seek to challenge. Rather than completely disavow the assimilationist perspective that legitimizes current racial inequalities and downplays the centrality of white supremacy in creating the very ideological and material conditions for racial inequalities, existing theories supporting Latinx racialization still fit their findings into assimilationist frames and center meritocratic perspectives on race and racisms (Bashi Treitler 2015).

In light of the erasures that permeate in discussions about mestizaje and Latinx racialization, one strategy among scholars to combat la mestiza image is through the perspectives of Indigenous scholars advancing a Critical Latinx Indigeneities framework. According to Blackwell et al. (2017), Critical Latinx Indigeneities is an "interdisciplinary analytic that reflects how indigeneity is defined and constructed across multiple countries and at times, across overlapping colonialities. This includes thinking through the colonial legacies at play across the transregions created by Indigenous migration" (pp. 126-7). As both a local and hemispheric approach, this framework disrupts the perpetuation of the United States as "a nation of immigrants" myth that as the authors argue, is often reflected in extant migration scholarship. This disruption is central to the framework because it reminds us that this logic relies on a normative understanding of terra nullius whereby immigrants are thought to arrive to unoccupied lands and attempt to integrate into mainstream society, simultaneously treating Indigenous peoples as no longer Indigenous once they migrate.

Moreover, examining the relationships between colonial legacies reflected in migration allows for research attuned to the particularities of the anti-Indigenous racism Indigenous migrants experience in Mexico, Central America, and once they arrive to the United States. This perspective not only highlights the racism Indigenous peoples experience from mestizos and ladinos[36] but also the complexities that come with multiple colonialities and hybrid hegemonies. Significantly, this lens brings to the fore the violence of the category of Latino in erasing Indigenous peoples and the fact that multiple races exist among Latinxs in favor of panethnic homogenization. For example, by constructing Indigenous migrants from Latin America as

[36] Ladinos refer to people of mixed Indigenous and Spanish descent, primarily located in Central America and the Phillipines.

Latinx once they arrive to the United States, the U.S. settler-state is able to circumvent the notion of the Indian as incapable of laboring because of the pre-existing controlling image of Latinx immigrants as hardworking and easily exploitable (and disposable) workers (Castellanos 2017).

A Critical Latinx Indigeneities approach also carries significant implications for research on political solidarity among marginalized people by delving into the difficult conversations about nonwhite people as potential settlers. As the authors contend, "We therefore establish that similar to Asian settlers in Hawai'i, Indigenous migrants from Latin America are also settlers on other Indigenous peoples' lands, but like Fujikane and Okamura (2008), we also simultaneously deny that all Indigenous migrants have the political capacity to colonize Northern Native nations" (Blackwell et al. 2017, p. 127). Offering foundational interventions in taken-for-granted assumptions among scholars of Latinx studies, Latin American studies, critical Indigenous studies, and sociology, a Critical Latinx Indigeneities approach not only addresses the politics of knowledge production regarding notions of mestizaje, indigenismo, and Aztlan, but for sociology, offers a much-needed reminder to center the knowledge and experiences of Indigenous peoples in understandings of migration, past and present. Aligned with the epistemological lessons offered by Indigenous feminists and other feminists of color, a Critical Latinx Indigeneities framework centralizes the importance of standpoint theory as intervention in theory and method. Blackwell et al. (2017, p. 132) elaborate on the intellectual implications and political necessity of this iteration of standpoint theory:

> Critical Latinx Indigeneity is building a perspective, or standpoint, that draws from the personal stories, interpretive lens, ways of knowing, and ways of being of Indigenous Latinxs from what is now the US or who have arrived via migration from Latin America where second and future generations of Indigenous migrants, especially youth, address

> their complex and multilayered realities. This analytic frame is needed because there has not been, until now, a collective effort to name and theorize the various expressions of these experiences, which tend to be outside of, but also within, dominant narratives such as Latinidad and often in tension with Hispanic, and Chicana/o. Critical Latinx Indigeneity fills a need to critically engage and critique enduring colonial logics and practices that operate from different localities of power as well as the physical, social, cultural, economic, and psychological violence that often targets Indigenous Latinx peoples, including forms of state and police violence, cultural appropriation, economic exploitation, gender violence, social exclusion, and psychological abuse.

Sociologists of migration have been remiss to center the experiences of Indigenous migrants from Latin America, favoring analyses of immigrant assimilation and integration instead. Yet this approach offers the promise of a liberatory paradigmatic shift that draws on an intersectional feminist lens and remedies the colonialist erasures of Indigenous peoples in current research.

Social media has emerged as a central site for resistance to la mestiza image, and for disseminating these counter-narratives to a broader audience than academic writings. Artist and sociocultural critic, Zahira Kelly-Cabrera, and Afro-Indigenous poet and essayist, Alán Pelaez, have emerged as leading theorists on social media regarding the anti-Blackness and anti-Indigeneity inherent in the very construction of Latin American and Latinx identities and group categories across the Américas. Principally, both theorists engage in extensive cultural shift work that seeks to demonstrate that Latinxs do not constitute a single, collective race. As a means to center their analyses as theorists, consider the following threads from Kelly-Cabrera and Pelaez. Pelaez, for example, offers the following insights in a February 5, 2019 Twitter post on the misconceptions created by the notion of Latinidad.

> PSA: Latinidad is a white imaginary that needs you to believe that indigenous cultures are dead, that Black people don't exist in your country, and that class is the problem, not race, or you know, settlement and occupation…

In contrast to scholarship that portrays Latinidad as a richly diverse yet somewhat cohesive conceptualization of a people, Pelaez advances a perspective of Latinidad as an outgrowth of white supremacy that does the ideological work of disappearing Indigenous and Black peoples along with the rampant white supremacy throughout Latin America. In a March 5, 2019 Instagram post, Pelaez further elaborates on the need to offer messy theories of race and racisms when discussing Latinxs:

> TBQH [to be quite honest] Latinidad is not an all-encompassing identity so please be specific with your language. People always telling me, "as a Latinx person, I've experienced racism from Black people," (listen eurodescendant Latinxs, Latinx people are Black too) and "as a Latinx person, I feel that Latina women need…" (oh, why don't you tell me more about the need of a gendered community over the geography of 33 different countries all under different experiences of occupation, patriarchy, labor laws, surveillance practices, spirituality, reproductive right policies, and more). & the one I literally can't stand anymore, "as a Latinx person, I have a right to be indigenous…" (Latinx ≠ Indigenous). Please stop assuming that being Latinx means sharing the same race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, abilities, gender(s), etc. as other people.

Similarly, Kelly-Cabrera uses social media as a vehicle to disrupt the normalizing of common racial scripts amongst people of Latin American descent, often sharing comments from non-Black Latinxs in response to her posts about anti-Blackness. In a February 12, 2019 Twitter post, Kelly-Cabrera notes:

> I just love how latinamericans know what black is enough to call u prieta, negra bruta, mona fea. But suddenly become amorphous rainbow blob when any accountability is mentioned. Being fucking gaslighted antiblack trash = Latinidad #latinidadiscancelled

And as a means to elucidate the intersections of race and gender oppressions among Latin Americans that produce particularly harmful representations of Black women, Kelly-Cabrera argues in a March 4, 2019 Instragram post that:

> Retorts of "you negras are too ugly to be raped, harassed or paid for sex". while all they fuckin do is use, abuse, coerce, rape and solicit negras for sex like thats all tf [the fuck] we here for. on some slavery shit.
>
> They keep us out of everywhere on account of us not being dique [supposedly] pretty nonblack women.
>
> Even black latino men will talk about how dominican women are just mad whiter venezolanas are prettier. theyre literally only whiter tho. thats the entire draw.
>
> beauty is not just some shit women obsess about. Its linked to power and gatekeeping and being treated like a fucking unworthy animal if u don't look like the ruling class.

Kelly-Cabrera brings up significant dynamics regarding the dominance of white femininity and European beauty standards across Latin America, to the extent that men of color internalize whiteness as representative of beauty and thus denigrate Black women. And rather than only focus on the consequences of this gendered racism for romantic relationships, Kelly-Cabrera links the dynamics of colorism to the conditions that make sex work a realm for the oppression of Black Latinas. The ideological work of Kelly-Cabrera, Pelaez, and other Black Latinxs on social media suggest a sharp disjuncture between the theories of Latinx racialization that prevail in the academy and those advanced in nonacademic spaces.

LA HYPER-BREEDING WELFERERA

A prominent image often attributed to Latinas is that of la hyper-breeding welferera[37]—the cisgender, Spanish-speaking Latina archetype of the Black welfare queen. Internalized both by whites and people of color, la welferera was created to simultaneously punish Latinas in poverty who dare ask the state to provide a social safety net to those in need and their progeny, and to divert attention away from the global capitalist and neoliberal projects that make poverty a systemic reality for many Latinxs in the United States. In contrast to la mestiza who is assumed to have a relentless work ethic regarding 'unskilled labor' often linked to working-class immigrants, irresponsible welfereras are often presumed to lack ambition toward any form of work, instead opting to engage in incessant treachery by abusing their access to social services, including food assistance programs, housing subsidies, Medicaid, and the services offered by the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program.

As such, la welferera's reproduction is an immediate threat to the nation-state via fears of reproducing the gang members and welfereras of tomorrow through the transmission of a culture of poverty and hyper-fertility. Similar to la mestiza, la welferera is also hated for refusing to assimilate into the normative values of middle-class whites focused on professionalized employment and an avoidance of crime. Importantly, the assumptions surrounding la welferera's mothering practices diverge along phenotypic lines. While Black Latinas, primarily Black Puerto Ricans and Dominicans, are often portrayed similarly to Black American welfare queens as irresponsible and negligent mothers, As Elena Gutiérrez (2008) discusses in her work on forcibly sterilized Mexican-origin immigrant women, mestizas are imagined as overly invested in

[37] The term welferera is specifically a working-class colloquial term for welfare queen.

motherhood, supporting stereotypes of non-Black Latinas as morally (read: religiously) traditional and family-centered.

Given the narratives of un-deservingness and concerns about the consequences of their reproductivity capacity, la welferera is often deemed as not belonging to the nation-state in ways similar to la mestiza, to the extent that at times la mestiza and la hyper-breeding welferera are thought of interchangeably. Undergirding both controlling images is a larger myth of deservingness that creates binary logics between good workers/bad welfereras and good/bad immigrant mestizas to justify the notion that only some members of the United States are valuable to the nation-state and are therefore more deserving of civil and human rights. The racial politics of Latinas' reproduction highlight the extent to which immigration concerns have uniquely molded the image of the Latina breeder, as the possibility of a growing 'unassimilable' population of commonly referred to 'anchor babies' and their undocumented immigrant parents challenges the U.S. nationalist identity founded on a white imaginary. The emergence of the immigration control movement in the U.S. unearthed a heightened nativism linked to attempts to limit the reproductive capacities of immigrant women of color. This connection has thus curtailed the reproduction of immigrant women of color while urging U.S.-born white women to reproduce. The immigration dimensions of reproductive politics are especially salient in the construction of the anchor baby as an image that justifies restrictive eligibility guidelines for public assistance; for example, requiring immigrant women to have sponsors whose income must be included in applications for federal benefits. Debates regarding the rights of 'anchor babies' also yield a paradoxical condition regarding political coalitions. The Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services revised the healthcare restrictions for undocumented pregnant women in the 1990s, changing the definition of a child to include an unborn fetus (Huang 2008). While this

policy reform increased vital access to pre-natal care for undocumented pregnant people, it undermined the rejection of fetal personhood as a bedrock of reproductive rights rhetoric.

As Huang (2008) explains, anti-immigration and anti-abortion movements have both supported policies and discourse that create alarm about the perceived overpopulation problem in the U.S. Through these discursive politics, both anti-immigrant and anti-abortion groups protect and promote the white, U.S. population while deterring marginalized 'others' from reproducing. Furthermore, fears of Latina over-fertility have justified restrictionist immigration policies and the coerced sterilization of Puerto Rican women (Lopez 2008; Silliman et al. 2004) and Mexican-origin women (Gutiérrez 2008) through government-sanctioned family planning programs.[38] For example, during the 1960s and 1970s, doctors at Los Angeles County-USC Medical Center sterilized numerous Mexican-origin immigrant women without their informed consent due to a well-funded government incentive focused on family planning programs to limit population growth. Doctors and nurses attempting to complete rush labors encouraged monolingual Spanish-speaking women to sign forms authorizing tubal ligations, forms available only in English at the time (Stern 2005).

La welferera is not only used to misrepresent the realities of poverty for Latinas, but the image also successfully eclipses the severely disproportionate poverty rates among trans Latinxs relative to their cisgender counterparts. The TransLatin@ Coalition, an organization that according to their mission seeks "to advocate for the specific needs of the Trans Latin@ community that resides in the U.S.A. and to plan strategies that improve our quality of life,"[39]

[38] As recently as 2010, reports of forced tubal ligations of at least 148 female inmates in California prisons, including Latinas, have surfaced (http://cironline.org/reports/female-inmates-sterilized-california-prisons-without-approval-4917).

[39] https://www.translatinacoalition.org

released a report[40] in 2016 on the state of Latinx trans health in southern California. Among the key findings, the report indicates that "18.8% of participants are either homeless or living in temporary housing and 13.4% of participants rely on someone else to pay for their housing (i.e. spouse or partner, etc.). In addition, the findings show that "only 20% of participants have full-time employment, while 80% of participants include participants who are self-employed, unemployed, on disability, or other." Highlighting how poverty affects health and health access, the report notes that "49.5% of participants are covered under Medicare/Medicaid/Medi-Cal, while 28.1% of participants have no health insurance coverage. 50.5% of participants currently experience anxiety, while 26.4% of participants report that they are currently experiencing depression. 46.7% of participants strongly agree that their mental health needs are not being met because of a lack of personal resources while 43.7% of participants strong agree that their mental health needs are not being met because of a lack of support groups." Overall, the vast majority of those involved in the study reported making less than $10,000 dollars a year. These empirical facts shed light on the systemic poverty among trans Latinxs that often goes unnoticed when academic, policy, and public attention is focused on demonizing cisgender Latinas accessing social services.

The image of la hyper-breeding welferera carries significant policy implications that members and staff of California Latinas for Reproductive Justice (CLRJ) spent years fighting against. CLRJ led a five-year coalition campaign to repeal the Maximum Family Grant (MFG) Rule, a 20-year-old family caps policy that denied financial support to children born while their

[40] Caraves, Jacqueline, and Bamby Salcedo. 2016. "The State of Trans Health: Trans Latin@s and their Healthcare Needs." Accessed January 28, 2017 https://static1.squarespace.com/static/55b6e526e4b02f9283ae1969/t/583dee0a579fb3beb5822169/1480453645378/TLC-The_State_of_Trans_Health-WEB.pdf

families received CalWORKs basic needs grants, California's welfare assistance program. Successfully repealed in June of 2016 due to the persistent advocacy of CLRJ, other reproductive justice organizations in California, and allies in reproductive rights and anti-poverty advocacy, exceptions were previously only made under the MFG Rule if women could prove that they became pregnant as a result of rape or incest, requiring that they report their sexual assault to a law enforcement, medical, or mental health official within three months of the child's birth (or once paternity has been established in the case of incest). Exemptions were also made under the MFG Rule if a pregnancy was the outcome of failed birth control, specifically Intra Uterine Device (IUD), sterilization, the Depo-Provera shot, or Norplant, the last of which has been unavailable in the United States since 2002. This policy reflects neoliberal paradoxical principles of privatization and reduced government intervention while increasing the surveillance of poor communities of color, similar to other policies such as the privatization of governance that spurred the water crisis in Flint, Michigan (Hackworth 2007), the War on Drugs (Hancock 2004), and the implementation of the North American Free Trade Agreement (Fernandez-Kelly and Massey 2007).

Staff at CLRJ shared with me their theories on the individualistic culture that villainizes welfereras, the degradation that Latinas who access welfare assistance experience, and nuanced dynamics regarding intersecting controlling images and significant erasures. Consider the following exchange:

> Rocío: You mentioned that online, in terms of harassment, abortion and MFG were the most popular topics that people would comment on. Did you notice any patterns in the people that you heard opposing repealing it [MFG Rule]?

Susy: Sometimes it would be like really hateful people who were white. White men. We had one person say something about connecting it to having anchor babies. Anytime that you say welfare, even like the most progressive people are really weird about it.

Rocío: Why?

Susy: I think it's because they think their taxes are going to it. And that they're paying for other people to have children. And all these kinds of stigma around welfare.

Rocío: Hmm, okay—

Susy: Which is—it means that nobody—there's stigma around *needing help*, you know? I just—I think about it in other ways. Because in my experience working outside of the country, people would ask for help, like monetarily, but it doesn't work the same way [here]. There's this everlasting, I don't know…*shame*. [emphases hers]

Susy Chávez Herrera, the Communications Director at CLRJ, in her discussion of the campaign to repeal the former California family caps policy—the Maximum Family Grant Rule (MFG)—makes salient the presumptions regarding the campaign and the suspicions of Latinx-led activism in anti-poverty work. As a producer of Latinx feminist knowledge via her work in the movement for reproductive justice, Susy seamlessly weaves together a narrative coupling two tropes that are oft-discussed separately: la hyper-breeding welferera and la mestiza. The welfare wars, especially since the 1990s, have been heavily influenced by what Michael Rodríguez-Muñiz refers to as "demographobia," (2016) the racialized fear on the part of whites of major demographic shifts leading to what some have referred to as "the browning of the nation." The fear of overpopulation concerns due to the increasing rates of unauthorized immigration by Latinx communities and subsequent drains to the economic system helped justify the Personal

Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 that ended the government's commitment to provide cash assistance to every eligible poor family with children (Chavez 2008). The welfare reform of the 1990s and restrictionist immigration law gave rise to the crystallization of the Latina archetype of the welfare queen, la hyper-breeding immigrant welferera. The racialized, gendered, and classed undertones that fuel these fears are all the more evident by the fact that undocumented immigrants are ineligible for federal public assistance services.

For some CLRJ staff, like Rochelle Martin, Funding Manager, the stigma surrounding public assistance and la welferera is all too real:

> Rochelle: As an educated woman walking into social services, seeing what people deal with, and seeing how broken and fucked up that system is and functions against the people it's aimed at helping, it's a really, really sad reality to look at. To see how we treat the most vulnerable people in our community and to really evaluate how these systems work against our communities healing themselves is a really sad predicament to face as a person, as a parent, as a woman. There's so many issues and there's so many hurdles and it's so messed up how we operate.
>
> Rocío: How were you treated when you would go to get welfare?
>
> Rochelle: [crying] It makes me so upset because I think of all the people who don't have the education, and the background, and the *fight* in them to fight back that fucked up system, how they run shit. The people who don't know English or really need the resources way more than I did. You're treated like you don't matter, every step of the way. From when you walk in there standing in line, to when you're in there sharing your living situation, the bills you have, it's degrading. It's a really degrading experience. The

reporting systems you have to follow and the ways that those reporting systems *literally* work against you. I get really emotional because I didn't even—when I got hired at CLRJ, I didn't even really understand or grasp what I was walking into, you know? As I sat on the plane and looked at all the people around [on the way to Advocacy Day], I was so enlightened at that point about what I was really doing. I hadn't really come to terms with—I was fighting for *myself* and I didn't even know that I fit into that category. [emphases hers]

Christina Lares echoes Rochelle's feelings of degradation and shame experienced by those seeking assistance from the state. When asked about her perceptions of the repeal MFG campaign, Christina explained that garnering support from nonprofit organizations, policymakers, and Latinx communities against the MFG rule was very difficult because of the stereotypes undergirding the politics of welfare.

Rocío: What were the kinds of things you heard around MFG?

Christina: Just welfereras and people who just…and also who are those welfereras? Like in Oxnard, those welfereras are the Indigenous community who supposedly has a bunch of kids and leeches off the system and blah, blah, blah. So they say "no, I don't support that" but it's all based on stereotypes. In reality, there's many different people who are receiving assistance from the state. I worked as a welfare worker for a year and a half and there was a *wide* variety—white, Latino, Black, middle-class, low-income, working class, farmworkers—it was everyone that was receiving assistance because the recession had just hit and people were losing their homes, their jobs, it was a really bad place. Even folks calling in to receive services were ashamed that they had to call me and apply to feed their families because they were broke! They were losing everything, some families

were homeless and they still felt ashamed to even ask for assistance. And I was like, "wow, we pay for these services, I pay for you to be healthy because if you're healthy then that's better for me!" That's a difficult one for folks to get behind because of the stereotypes and stigmas of welfare and social services and that was all perpetuated by the state when they were moving these campaigns forward to take away resources and assistance to families in need. We have to do a lot of work on that cultural shift and moving folks away, opening folks' mind to looking at issues from a different perspective, a broader perspective, from a more holistic perspective and it's challenging.

Rochelle and Christina highlight the role of representation in shaping activist opportunities. The shame linked to public assistance was obvious to Rochelle when she requested it and for Christina when she processed requests for help. As Christina notes, the state has actively constructed discourse to demonize welfare services that supports activist campaigns seeking to destroy social safety nets for communities of color. Significantly, Christina brings to the fore an aspect of la hyper-breeding welferera often ignored in debates: the importance of place and Indigeneity. Discourses about immigrants and welfare recipients of Latin American descent in the United States rarely take into account the specific experiences of Indigenous peoples. Therefore, rather than discussing the inequalities produced by this imagery for poor Latinxs, it is imperative to also specify the role of settler colonialism and multiple colonial histories connected via migration in stripping Indigenous migrants of economic self-determination.

Rochelle brings up important intersections in the experiences of those seeking help. She went on to detail the bureaucratic difficulties involved in completely the paperwork that resulted in her losing assistance and waiting for hours to speak to someone over the phone, and the feelings of dehumanization involved in every step of the process. As Rochelle notes, if the

process was confusing for her as an English-speaker with a college degree, it is imperative to analyze the intersections of language and educational attainment in further impeding Latinx communities from garnering necessary assistance. The construction of la welferera looms large in these narratives, which made it difficult for CLRJ and their partners to mobilize supporters to repeal the MFG Rule until its repeal in 2016, and thus they emphasized the centrality of cultural shift work (discussed in more detail in Chapter 4) in dismantling dehumanizing narratives and replace them with holistic perspectives to facilitate policy reform.

Traditional and social media were additional avenues in promoting holistic representations of Latinxs as a means to counter la welferera discourses. In a 2016 press release, Susy Chávez Herrera, used storytelling to highlight the experiences of three Latinas who were affected by the MFG Rule to humanize CalWORKs recipients and render la welferera image obsolete. In the press release, Susy shares Vivian's story, a Bay Area woman who lost her job at Walmart when she was injured. The press release centers Vivian's voice in sharing the complexities of her path toward seeking CalWORKs assistance:

> It wasn't my plan to be on welfare. It wasn't my plan to have kids when I did, but then I got pregnant while in an abusive relationship with my fiancé. The MFG rule made it much more difficult to leave welfare and make it on my own. Today, not only have I been able to retain job security at a job where I help people, I have also raised three amazing girls who are happy, healthy, bright and already contributing to society.

By sharing stories like Vivian's, Susy drew on the strength of storytelling—a strategy common in Latinx feminist work in activist and academic spaces—to show that binary logics surrounding la welferera discourse focused on the deserving and underserving are incapable of reflecting the causes and experiences of poverty and restrictionist immigration law for Latinas and their

communities. What's more, by centering Vivian's voice—someone who has experienced the effects of the MFG Rule—CLRJ centered a marginalized person as a means to challenge dominant discourse about Latinas and public assistance, where Vivian emerges as an expert given her experiences. CLRJ used social media to center marginalized voices in MFG Rule debates by organizing a repeal the MFG Rule Twitter Thunderclap in June 2016, a crowd-speaking platform where supporters mass-shared a message against the MFG Rule. The organization's Facebook page was often used to keep supporters up-to-date on policymakers' actions for and against the MFG Rule, including sharing California Governor Jerry Brown's state budget plans as a way to keep him accountable to Latinx communities.

As a means to destigmatize CalWORKs recipients and shift public thought from the narrow 'choice' rhetoric of reproductive rights focused on the right not to parent to the reproductive justice focus on 'choices,' in January 2016 CLRJ created messaging to celebrate the forty-third anniversary of the *Roe versus Wade* Supreme Court decision. *Roe versus Wade* was a landmark decision that legalized abortion, yet CLRJ strategically connected government interference in abortion decisions to government infringement in the right to parent, evidenced by the MFG Rule. As Susy wrote in a press release, "For far too long, anti-choice politicians have interfered in reproductive health decisions by banning insurance coverage to abortion care or dictating birth control for poor women through policies like the Maximum Family Grant in California." This discursive strategy connected abortion and family caps debates under the umbrella of self-determination, creating an avenue for coalition-building, challenging the pro-life/pro-choice binary, and shifting attention away from la hyper-breeding welferera rhetoric.

Another policy initiative that members and staff of CLRJ participated in that challenged assumptions about la welferera is Justice 4 Young Families (J4YF). The initiative is intended to

promote dignity and increased resources for young parents and their children, a form of cultural shift work that many other reproductive justice organizations also engage. As a way to de-stigmatize young families, CLRJ created the Justice for Young Families Initiative to help empower young parents to advocate for policy changes and ensure that they receive the resources they need. J4YF includes community-informed research involving focus groups with young parents, workshops and trainings, and a young parent leadership council where young parents are on the frontlines of developing policy agendas. Policy campaigns that uplift stigmatizing language surrounding teen pregnancy prevention campaigns, often advanced by white reproductive rights advocacy groups, result in the targeting of communities of color and stigmatize their sexuality rather than supporting young families in gaining the necessary resources that parents of any age need to raise children in healthy and safe environments. As a result, white reproductive rights advocates become complicit in a growing neoliberalism that destroys social safety nets and increases racialized surveillance tactics, and in this way, liberal white feminist politics are liberal violence.

Adolescent Latinas are often characterized as sexually promiscuous and as having children prematurely, foreclosing their opportunities for educational attainment and pushing them toward a lifelong cycle of poverty and welfare assistance. The J4YF initiative is intended to disrupt these assumptions by showcasing the diverse and complex lives of young parents. As members and staff involved in this initiative often explain, parents of all ages experience difficulties with parenting; therefore, it is imperative that parents of across all age groups receive the respect, recognition, and resources to raise their children in healthy and safe conditions. For example, during a CLRJ-organized Google Hangout session that streamed live on May 19, 2016

titled, "Seeing Ourselves: Young Parents, Popular Culture, and Representation,"[41] young mothers and fathers engaged in conversations about their feelings regarding teen parenting stigma and the importance of resisting those harmful narratives. For example, the moderator Natasha Vianna who is a young mother and co-founder of #NoTeenShame, a national movement working to eradicate stigma from education, healthcare, and social support, explained:

> Births among young people between the ages of 15 and 19 has been on the decline since 1990, yet we still hear messages that shame and blame young parents for society's problems. We know that sexual and reproductive health are key components to the overall health and well-being of Latino youth, yet our communities are facing persistent barriers when it comes to accessing healthcare resources, achieving economic security, and attaining education career goals. But in addition, young Latinos are facing an overwhelming amount of scrutiny and stereotyping when it comes to our sexuality. So today we are talking about the realities of being a young parent, how the media and popular culture portray young parents, but also the future that we're building for ourselves, our children, and our communities as we grapple with how we're portrayed and what our stories really look like.

Another young mother involved in the discussion, Tania Molinar-Castillo, an alum of Latinas Increasing Political Strength (LIPS), elaborated on her experiences and the shame she has felt in multiple social institutions.

> The real emphasis on prevention that our society has and a lot of outreach prevention programs. What happens when those prevention programs don't work and now you're a young parent, there's not a lot of promotion toward support programs. And so that in and

[41] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2MUGgaRNkvk

> of itself is very shameful because it really leaves young parents in the dark in terms of what to do after that. And then you go home and see shows like *Teen Mom* on MTV, which really put a dramatic spin on being a young parent and portrayed in a whole different light that's not very realistic. In my experience as a college student at the University of Denver, college settings, in particular mine and just college settings, don't have a lot of support for young parents. And when you meet people and tell them that you're a young parent, they're not very supportive either.

CLRJ's cultural shift work signals a significant aspect in contesting la welferera image because in order for the violence wrought by this image to cease to exist, people must be able to imagine Latinas beyond the confines of this image; to see Latinas and their communities as whole beings. Most of CLRJ staff and their supporters come from working-class or poor backgrounds; therefore, in these activist spaces, they draw on their voices and those of their communities as experts in the stigma that renders la hyper-breeding welferera visible and the strategies necessary for Latinx communities to exist beyond the ideological violence of controlling images.

THE CLEANING LADY

Historically Black American women have largely been relegated to exploitative domestic work in white homes where they clean and serve white people and raise white children, providing the material conditions for the development of the controlling image of the mammy, the desexualized and loyal domestic servant (Hill Collins 1990). The end of legal segregation in the U.S. beginning with the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* decision facilitated poor and working-class Black women's exodus from domestic work, labor long forced upon Black women since the abolishment of slavery via the thirteenth amendment. Yet changes in economic and

migration patterns have made domestic and other care work the realm of Latina and Asian women's labor, with Black Latinas disproportionately represented in this work. According to Pierrette Hondagneu-Sotelo (2001), as the rates of white professionals have increased in global cities like Los Angeles and New York, relying on Latinx immigrant workers has become a social obligation and signifier of upward social status. Mexico's economic crisis during the 1980s propelled many married women with small children into the labor force (see Chapters 4 and 5 for more detailed discussions of the dynamics of domestic work for Latinas from the research of Mary Romero and Pierrette Hondagneu-Sotelo, respectively). The racism and class oppression that Dominicans and Puerto Ricans experience in U.S. states throughout the east coast pushes Dominican and Puerto Rican women into persistent unemployment or into low-paid domestic and factory work (Ortiz 1996; Rios 1990; Safa 1981; Toro-Morn 1995). In addition, civil wars and military coups in El Salvador and Guatemala spurred mass migration to the United States beginning in the 1980s, further adding to an easily exploitable labor force of largely undocumented, immigrant women (Abrego 2014; Alvarado et al. 2017). These marked social, political, and economic shifts have led to the construction of the cleaning lady image. The cleaning lady is portrayed as lacking valuable skills, evidenced through the term 'low-skilled' that academics, policymakers, and the general public continue to draw on. Because of the perceived lack of respected skills, the cleaning lady is often deemed easily replaceable, does not speak English or speaks broken English at best, possesses little formal education, and lacks the ambition required for assimilation and upward mobility through an individualistic lens.

The cleaning lady effectively connects aspects of la mestiza, la santa, and the feisty Latina. In the western and southern parts of the United States, the cleaning lady is often assumed to be an undocumented, Spanish-speaking mestiza of Mexican descent, adept at performing

housework and childcare given la santa's family-centered values and thus making her an ideal surrogate mother to white children, while at times also manifesting the hot-tempered aspects of the feisty Latina as she negotiates relations with her employers. The Salvadoran character of Rosario in the popular show, *Will & Grace* (1998—present), is a prominent representation of the feisty cleaning lady. Rosario continuously advocates for herself and criticizes her employer, the white socialite, Karen Walker, each time Karen berates her with racially-charged comments. However, despite Karen's constant racist and classist remarks, Rosario takes care of all of Karen's demands and expresses unconditional love for her employer, often referring to Karen as her mami.

The erasures that exist in the orbit of the cleaning lady are numerous, to say the least. The controlling image of the cleaning lady distracts from numerous forms of oppression that Latinx communities experience as well as the heterogeneity inherent among these communities. Stereotypes of domestic workers and immigrant women engaged in custodial labor in public places ignore the resilience and ingenuity immigrant women enact as they navigate a country with anti-immigrant sentiment, a racialized hierarchy, a low-wage labor sector, and a discriminatory and alienating school system for those with children. For example, a 2018 news article[42] on the experiences of Gilda Blanco, a Black Guatemalan immigrant domestic worker in Seattle, details the psychological toll of sexual abuse prevalent among immigrant women in the privacy of their employers' homes.

> It's hard to describe this feeling of anger, hurt and deception when someone looks at you that way. They trick you more than anything, making you think they want a cleaning lady

[42] Fowler, Lily. 2018. "Domestic Workers: 'We're like the garbage they ask us to clean up.'" Crosscut.com Accessed July 12, 2018 https://crosscut.com/2018/06/domestic-workers-were-garbage-they-ask-us-clean

> and instead they have this outfit ready for you [nurse's outfit]. I thought as a woman I would be able to manage these situations and defend myself, but it's not like that. It's harder than you think to confront men, especially when you're isolated—you don't know what might happen. You don't know, and you might even feel like your life is at risk. They know we're immigrants, they know we're undocumented, but they still think they have the right to have us there like their property to abuse us.

Blanco's account of her sexual assault at a white employer's home demonstrates how the precarity of poverty and undocumented status intersect with the sexualization of the feisty Latina image to make her and other domestic workers increasingly vulnerable to sexual abuse and labor exploitation.

Misunderstandings of the cleaning lady also erase the violence of forced family separations through migration for economic or political reasons. It ignores the fact that not all of these women speak Spanish. The image further disregards the fact that some of these 'low-skilled' cleaning ladies achieved high educational attainment in their home countries yet their credentials were not deemed legitimate within the white gaze of the United States. More importantly, the image ignores the fact that immigrant women should not need access to high education in order to have the necessary resources to care for themselves and their families. As Cecilia Menjívar (2006) exposes in her work on liminal legality, popular perceptions of immigrant workers overlook the anxiety and depression caused by daily fears of deportation for those who are undocumented. Lastly, the cleaning lady image is a diversion from the violence embedded in expectations of assimilation to a country that has forced their migration through U.S. imperialist and capitalist agendas.

Uncovering these vast disappearances that dehumanize immigrant women workers is critical for recognizing how ongoing colonial conditions make these erasures possible. Padilla (2009) suggests that media portrayals of Salvadoran maids are predicated on logics of Manifest Destiny, where domésticas are constructed as foreign Others valuable only to the extent that they fulfill the demands and needs of white Americans provided that they successfully oblige to domestication, "the links between the domestic and the imperial project of civilizing are visible when we think of domesticity not as a 'static condition' but as a 'process of domestication, which entails conquering and taming the wild, the natural, and the alien' both at home and abroad" (p. 45). Thus, through the process of performing domestic work, the cleaning lady herself undergoes a domestication process, where she is integral to maintaining the U.S. economy while remaining perpetually inferior. Guatemalan poet, Melissa Lozada-Oliva, suggests that the unequal dynamics between the cleaning lady and white employers are also present in the affective labor of beauty work. In her poem, "Maybe She's Born With It, Maybe She Got Up Early," (2017) Lozada-Oliva paints a vivid picture of this condition:

> i don't know who or what the "good immigrant"
> Is, but i think my mother could never get away
> from being the cleaning lady. maybe
> she has always been a knot in the neck
> of a trash bag. so, instead of a white lady
> house it was a white lady body. instead of dirt
> from curtains, it was soil beneath nails.
> instead of clean countertops, it was faces
> without blackheads. the girls in the bathrooms

say that their mothers never taught them
about "beauty stuff." *& anyway, beauty is*
ephemeral. i don't know what ephemeral
means, but i know i bought sandwiches
for lunch with my mother's tips, i know
when the economy crashed, beauty was
the first thing my mother's clients crossed
off their weekly budget so they let their nails
grow jagged, let their bikini lines become
bikini borders

Lozada-Oliva points to the disposability not only of the labor of the cleaning lady, but of the cleaning lady herself. The fact that she describes her mother as unable to avoid being the cleaning lady hints to the ways in which the economic conditions in Latin America and the United States track immigrant women workers into the unstable, lowly paid, and underappreciated service industry. Her mother, a cleaning lady and "knot in the neck of a trash bag," offers an appealing service only to the extent that white women can afford the luxury in a thriving economy. The poem also provides an important view through the lens of the daughter of the cleaning lady, who relies on her mother's tips from a lavish service to afford her school lunches. The significance of point of view in representations of the cleaning lady has also received extensive attention recently in the popularity of the movie, *Roma*. Though filmed and set in Mexico, *Roma* (2018) has garnered significant attention in the United States, particularly for the stellar performance of Yalitza Aparicio as a live-in Indigenous housekeeper serving a middle-class white-passing Mexican family. The film attempts to humanize Aparicio's character,

Cleo, by showcasing her life in various contexts: on dates, having fun with her friend, exerting sexual autonomy, and experiencing subsequent heartbreak. Yet, *Roma* is undeniably written from the perspective of the director, Alfonso Cuarón. It is unlikely that in light of Cleo's many hardships as a poor Indigenous woman, the film would showcase her happiest moments as coming from her relationships with her employers and their children had the movie been written through Cleo's perspective.

LA SANTA

Perhaps one of the most pervasive images of Latinas in the United States is that of la santa (the saint), often personified through mass media, research, and public thought as the self-sacrificing and pious mother. As Peruvian feminist, Claudia O'Brien, explains of this archetype in, *latinanarratives*, "a blog against the silences and erasures within the latina experience,"

> One of the most dominant signifiers of Latina identity is the submissive, self-sacrificing mother. To be a woman is to eventually become a mother and carry on the role of taking care of the children, the home, and be relegated to the private sphere, while the male is the breadwinner, head of household, can navigate almost effortlessly between public and private, though is mostly relegated to the public, and mostly devoid of a fulfilled emotional life.[43]

Representing one half of an externally imposed virgin/whore dichotomy endemic to heteronormativity, la santa must be understood as originating from a white, heterosexual,

[43] O'Brien, Claudia. 2011. "Latina Identity through Motherhood." *Latinanarratives.wordpress.com* Accessed February 1, 2019 https://latinanarratives.wordpress.com/2011/01/03/latina-identity-through-motherhood/

propertied male gaze. La santa is simultaneously fragile in relation to male figures, while also exhibiting unwavering emotional strength required to care for her family. This gaze reconfigures Latin American cultures as excessively patriarchal through ongoing discourses about machismo, which consequently are used to explain Latinas' supposed inclination toward submissiveness, all the while downplaying the prevalence of patriarchal violence rampant among white Americans in the United States. The forced indoctrination of Catholicism by European colonizers as a means to assimilate Indigenous peoples and thereby engage in cultural genocide continues today through assumptions that view Latinas and Catholicism and inextricably linked. Furthermore, the ideological justification for la santa can also be traced back to the Victorian cult of domesticity instituted via federally-sanctioned boarding schools during the nineteenth century. The indoctrination process in these schools used the cult of domesticity to elevate values of "piety, purity, submissiveness, and domesticity" (Hill Collins 1990, p. 71) as emblematic of white femininity and by extension, a model for true womanhood, thus disparaging expressions of femininity espoused by Black and Indigenous women. Not only are Latinas (regardless of whether they are mothers or not) assumed to be sexually conservative, submissive, and family-oriented, but we are also assumed to be against abortion access. As CLRJ staff explained to me on several occasions, reproductive rights organizations often demonstrated an internalization of la santa image in meetings about coalition-building by assuming that Latinas make poor reproductive rights advocates—and bad feminists—due to the assumed centrality of family and religious conservatism across Latinx communities.

The academy has been a significant site for the propagation of la santa imagery. Early research on 'Hispanic' families during the early to late twentieth century, conducted by both white and Latinx social scientists, is rife with stereotypes of Latino men as machistas and Latinas

as self-sacrificing in relation to men who raise their children to follow in their gendered footsteps. These representations became the ideological repertoire of a vast body of research on what was then termed Hispanic familismo or familism. Take, for example, this notable passage from an empirically-driven study of the utility of familism as a framework to understand "the Chicano family" by Ramirez and Arce (quoted in Baca Zinn 1982, p. 226):

> Our review of this small but important body of research leads us to conclude that the structure and function of Chicano families is characterized by (a) a strong persistent familistic orientation; (b) a widespread existence of highly integrated extended kinship systems, even for Chicanos who are three or more generations removed from Mexico; and (c) the consistent preference of Chicanos for relying on the extended family for support as the primary means for coping with emotional stress.

Evaluations of the efficacy of the significance of family among Latinx communities varies between perceived positive effects on physical, economic, and mental well-being to conclusions that familismo entrenches women in heightened oppressive relations with men in their families. Yet all take for granted the centrality of family formation for Latinx communities to the extent that it is expected to be a natural feature of Latinx realities. Consequently, la santa's accomplishments as a doting wife and mother are used to advance a politics of respectability for Latina motherhood that villainizes mothers who attempt to feel, think, and act based on their own desires and not those of their families. By crystallizing this dichotomous thinking, Latina mothers are placed in an impossible situation; they are either failures for not assimilating into middle-class, white feminist sensibilities or they are failures when they engage in alleged selfish actions when they attempt to define their standpoints for themselves. Moreover, this dichotomy ignores the paradox that Black Latinas find themselves in given contrasting expectations for

mothering between non-Black and Black Latinas. As Marta I. Cruz-Janzen explain of her upbringing and the lessons offered by her Black Puerto Rican grandmother: "Whereas my Spanish heritage taught me that women are weak and dependent, my African heritage taught me that women are strong and self-reliant. African women flourished in spite of the despair of their lives to emerge as enduring forces of cohesion and cultural transmission" (2010, p. 288).

Yet Latinx feminist scholars since the 1970s have engaged in critical research to demonstrate that this early research reinforced complicit comparisons of Latinx families to white, middle-class, heteronormative family ideals (see Chapter 5 for a detailed discussion of these epistemological disruptions). For example, Patricia Zavella's seminal work (1987) on Chicana cannery workers in the Santa Clara Valley forwarded a paradigmatic shift in the sea of racist, sexist, and classist perceptions of Chicano families at the time. Zavella centers the perspectives of Chicanas as working mothers and wives to demonstrate that rather than blaming patriarchal cultural dictates inherent in 'Chicano culture' for the gendered inequalities experienced by Chicanas, it is imperative to understand how the culture of cannery work and the tactics of the Teamsters Union created a significantly segmented gendered labor market. Importantly, throughout the book, Zavella shows how the cannery labor market reinforced patriarchal gendered family dynamics, thus shedding light on the complexity of gender, race, and class relations among Chicano families without relying on normative representations of these communities.

The construction of la santa strips Latinx mothers of their ability to exert agency without shame, to express fluid forms of sexuality without being compared to the Virgin Mary (Gaspar de Alba 2015), and to express their humanity and desires beyond the scope of their family lives. This image clouds the fact that not all Latinxs are against abortion care. Moreover, when

considering the standpoints of immigrant Latinas, it is imperative to center the political context in Latin America that hyper-criminalizes abortion access. Thus, instead of attributing anti-choice perspectives to religious and cultural mandates, anti-abortion perspectives from immigrant Latinas at times are a direct response to repressive governments that arrest and murder people who attempt to access those very services. Ena Suseth Valladares, Director of Research at CLRJ, explained in trainings on sexuality the following from a March 2016 workshop: "There's a common belief that Latinas are not concerned with issues of reproductive health or sexuality. We are assumed to be Catholic or Christian, that we are all against abortion, we don't use birth control, and we shouldn't be counted on to participate in political struggles for reproductive freedom."

As a result, CLRJ developed a Latinas and the A word campaign involving trainings, facts sheets based on original community-informed research, and informal pláticas [conversations] where they offer more holistic representations of Latinxs and destigmatize abortion care. Part of their cultural shift work involves highlighting how most research designs on abortion attitudes fall prey to the pro-life/pro-choice binary and falsely misrepresent Latinos as anti-choice because that language does not resonate with these communities. Instead, they highlight the need for community-centered research methods and center survey findings where Latinas largely support women's rights to decide the number and spacing of their children, the need for medically-accurate information about abortion, and that many Latinas support another Latinas' right to choose abortion even if they would not make that choice for themselves, using research as a way to dismantle the controlling image of la santa.

While media representations of Latina mothers are more complex and diverse over time, allowing for glimpses of their necessarily messy realities, contemporary representations still tend

to romanticize the centrality of biological kinship for Latinas and their unwavering resiliency in protecting their children. The Netflix-created comedy show, *One Day at a Time* (2017), has generated extensive attention for centering a Cuban family in Los Angeles while tackling important yet contentious issues in Latinx communities, including immigration, anti-Blackness, and homophobia. Yet, a 2018 article by the online magazine, *Hip Latina*, simultaneously lauds the shows non-normative portrayals of motherhood while reifying key tenets of la santa image. In an article titled, "5 Latina TV Moms We All Aspire To Be," the author describes the show's leading actor, Justina Machado:

> *One Day At A Time's* Penelope isn't just a mom, she's a single mom. And she isn't just a single mom, she's also a war veteran dealing with PTSD. Plus she lives with her own mother (we all know how complicated that is once you're a mother yourself, even if your mom is played by Rita Moreno) and takes care of everyone in her family (even, occasionally, her quirky neighbor). She's incredibly resilient, not afraid to speak her mind, an extremely hard worker, and wholly accepting of her two children (including when her daughter comes out as a lesbian). Seriously, if this character isn't mom-goals, I don't know who is.[44]

While the show deviates from common portrayals of Latina mothers through Penelope's story as a single mother, a war veteran grappling with the mental health consequences of war and military life, and embracing of her lesbian daughter, this description still upholds the self-sacrificial quality of la santa by taking care of all of the other characters, demonstrating resiliency, and a strong work ethic expected of all Latinxs.

[44] Blossom, Priscilla. 2018. "5 Latina TV Moms We All Aspire To Be." Hiplatina.com Accessed April 2, 2019 https://hiplatina.com/5-latina-tv-moms/5/

Just as the academy has historically been central in perpetuating the epistemological violence of la santa, academia has also played a significant role in dismantling this image. More recently, scholarship and direct action has advanced theories of the mothering that Latinas do as transformative activism with implications for interpersonal and systemic social change. For instance, *The Chicana Motherwork Anthology* (Caballero et al. 2019), draws on the Latinx feminist tradition of testimonio to enact social change by weaving together various narratives from Chicana scholars who mother in ways that resist various forms of violence and disappearance in their everyday lives. Drawing on Patricia Hill Collin's concept of motherwork, the editors of this volume theorize Chicana M(other)work as:

> […] a strategy for collective resistance within institutions that continue to marginalize us. In our research, we found that much of the small but expanding body of scholarship on academic mothers narrowly focuses on white, middle-class, and married women (Evans and Grant 2008; Mason, Wolfinger, and Goulden 2013). For this reason, we draw attention to issues of heteropatriarchy, racism, and classism by highlighting the lived experiences of working-class Mothers of Color […] Chicana M(other)work is a concept and project informed by our shared gendered, classed, and racialized experiences as first-generation Chicana scholars from working-class, (im)migrant Mexican families. Through Chicana M(other)work, we provide a framework for collective resistance that makes our various forms of feminized labor visible and promotes collective action, holistic healing, and social justice for Mother-Scholars and Activists of Color, our children, and our communities (p. 4).

Rather than romanticize idyllic notions of motherly resiliency, the creators and contributors of this volume lean into their stories of the state-sanctioned separations, migrations, and detentions

that impede reproductive self-determination, experiences with rape via migration, the strategies Mothers of Color engage in to organize the next generation's social movements, how mothering offers the possibilities to disrupt intergenerational trauma, and the secrets surrounding Latina infertility and abortion. Throughout the pages of this book, Mothers of Color make spaces for themselves to bring to light the many disappearances subsumed by la santa.

The image of la santa provides analytical leverage for unpacking some of the gendered dynamics produced by settler colonialism throughout the Americas. La santa normalizes the centrality of Catholicism among Latinx communities, effectively erasing ongoing spirituality practices stemming from Indigenous ways of knowing. The creation of la santa as an exemplar of European religious values and has been used to demonize Indigenous woman healers with accusations of them being brujas, or witches. Throughout Europe and the Américas, the physical threat of being deemed a witch or bruja loomed large for women, often resulting in their deaths. As Antonia Castañeda (1997) explains,

> Ostensibly, all women in colonial Mexico and Latin America, like their counterparts throughout the Christian world, were suspected of being witches on the basis of gender, but women of colonized groups were suspect on multiple grounds. Indian women, African-origin women, and racially mixed women—whether Indo-mestiza or Afro-mestiza—were suspect by virtue of being female, by virtue of deriving from non-Christian, or "diabolic" religions and cultures, and by virtue of being colonized or enslaved people who might rebel and use their alleged magical power at any moment.

Perceptions of the Afro-Cuban religion originating in the slave era, Santería[45], as linked to witchcraft despite it incorporating aspects of the beliefs of both the Yoruba people and Roman

[45] Santería as English translates means "honor of the saints" or "way of the saints."

Catholicism speaks to the role of racism and colonialism in signifying Blackness as evil in contrast to whiteness, and Black Cuban women practitioners of Santería as dangerous due to the intersections of race and gender oppressions (Vidal-Ortiz 2005). Irene Lara (2005) argues that the construction of brujas "as inherently bad women served the interests of the patriarchal church, state, and family by making them examples of how not to behave […] As an empowered female cultural figure, la Bruja symbolizes power outside of patriarchy's control that potentially challenges a sexist status quo. In las Américas, where she is associated with 'superstitious' and 'primitive' Indian and African beliefs and practices, la Bruja is also a racialized cultural figure" (p. 12). This cultural context suggests that la bruja is the antithesis to the good santa maternal figure and to the good curandera, a desexualized female healer. Given the transgressive possibilities offered by la bruja, Lara advocates for a bruja positionality as a means for decolonial resistance and to build solidarity across differences. Specifically, she suggests that the demonization of the la bruja has been a deliberate colonialist tactic to separate women's "bodymindspirit" intuition from notions of health and healing. Lara asks provocative questions in line with the need to reclaim la bruja as a strategic feminist practice (p. 28):

> What is possible when we speak and listen from and through our bruja positions? What might we be able to imagine, think, and sense that we may not otherwise? How might we be better able to build solidarity with the dark, india, puta, queer, outcast, and maligned "others"?

An additional avenue for resistance to la santa is in research on transgressive Latina sexualities, both among straight and lesbian Latinas. In *Sexual Futures, Queer Gestures, and Other Latina Longings* (2015), Juana María Rodríguez offers a viscerally seductive theorization of queer imaginaries, sex, and Latinaness by tackling various cases that center the Latina queer

femme. In sharp contrast to la santa who wholly exists for the benefit of others, Rodríguez advances accounts of Latina pleasure that exist beyond the binary of dominance and submissiveness and offers glimpses of utopian sexual pleasures in the present. In her discussion of Latina femmes in performance art and pornography, Rodríguez states:

> For those who feel threatened by the sexual opportunities available in public venues, the space of fantasy fueled by *telenovelas*, soap operas, books, television, film, and online viewing practices become a site for both private and shared sexual exploration. Nevertheless, even these more private encounters with the porn archive seep into and through the spaces of the public. Even as our fantasies might reveal an uneasy intimacy with erotic narratives organized around the coercive deployment of power, we must also recognize how fantasies of domestic bliss are likewise predicated on multiple forms of corrosive power—the exploitative labor of others that makes domesticity possible, the unequal power relations within the home, the normativizing privilege that is denied those who refuse to participate in the valorization of coupledom, and the very forms of hegemonic romance that make rape appear as the genesis of marriage (pp. 179-180).

Rodríguez powerfully explains the necessity for queer theories of Latina sex and sexuality in struggles for social justice and freedom and the politics of discourse and representation. In order to abolish the image of la santa from the United States imaginary, we must collectively explore why Latina femme pleasures and dreams are more threatening than the hegemonic forces that made la santa a discursive reality in the first place.

THE FEISTY LATINA

The feisty Latina comprises the other half of the virgin/whore dichotomy in relation to la santa. Commonly referred to as the spicy or hot Latina as well, the hyper-sexualized feisty Latina conjures images of caramel-skinned, dark-haired, voluptuous and seductively dressed cisgender, heterosexual women with thick Spanish accents (Casillas et al. 2018), quick tempers, and insatiable sexual appetites. The following opening lines from a 2018 online news article by Kelsey Castañon[46] succinctly summarizes the prevalence and impact of this image:

> Like many Latinxs, Luna Diaz, a 21-year-old retail associate in New York, had to learn how to navigate her identity beyond the stereotype portrayed in TV and film—of the cishet,[47] curvaceous woman with dark features and a broken accent. "I've had white folks sexualize my entire existence—asking me to speak Spanish during sex or calling me 'exotic,'" she says. "I hate that fucking word!" And she's not alone in her experience. In a recent study published in the USC Annenberg School of Communications and Journalism, researchers found that of the 100 top-grossing films of 2016, only 3% of roles were occupied by Latinxs—and of that, one-fourth of the women cast were either nude or in sexy attire.

The sexual objectification of nonwhite women in the Américas is directly linked to the logic of Manifest Destiny that justified the invasion of Indigenous lands and the enslavement of African peoples. For example, Irene Lara provides important historical context for the duality of the virgin/whore construct in Latin America, arguing that it not only reflects the surveillance of

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[46] Castañon, Kelsey. 2018. "I'm Latinx — & I'm Fed Up with Being Called "Exotic." *Refinery29.com*. Accessed February 1, 2019 https://www.refinery29.com/en-us/2018/05/197463/latina-hispanic-stereotypes-culture-fetishization

[47] Cishet refers to cisgender and heterosexual people.

women's sexual agency, but also attempts to impede possibilities for collective healing and decolonization:

> The virgin/whore dichotomy, largely represented in the Américas by *La Virgin de Guadalupe* as spiritually pure mother and La Malinche as physically defiled concubine, is a foundational theme in Chicana feminist thought, along with this dichotomy's negative effects in the development of female subjectivity. Religiously sanctioned ideologies of the good Mary versus bad Eve female figures in Spanish Christian medieval and early-modern discourse were given racialized "New World" faces with Guadalupe, an indigenous or mestiza Marian figure, and Malinche, the indigenous mistress of, and translator for, conqueror Hernan Cortes. Their status as iconic good and bad mothers was affirmed as they became symbolic tools in perpetuating a nationalist Mexican identity (2008, p. 99).

In the wake of these historical colonial origins, the crystallization of the modern-day feisty Latina can be traced most immediately to 1933 when Franklin Delano Roosevelt implemented his Good Neighbor Policy. According to Afro-Puerto Rican writer, Katherine Garcia[48], Roosevelt's policy set the United States and Latin America on friendlier terms, at least on the surface. During this time, the United States sought to make Latin America an ally in World War II as a tactic to undermine the spread of communism. Consequently, the United States offered financial support to Latin American filmmakers to produce films promoting tourism. Garcia explains that:

[48] Garcia, Katherine. 2015. "Where the 'Spicy Latina' Stereotype Came From—and Why It's Still Racist Today." Everydayfeminism.com. Accessed December 22, 2017 https://everydayfeminism.com/2015/12/spicy-latina-stereotype-bad/

> One of the most popular icons that emerged from this policy was the Brazilian dancer, Carmen Miranda. Known over time as the Brazilian Bombshell, Miranda was the feisty Latina personified with her exotic Latin American accent and emblematic fruit hat. The effects of her image continue on today as the perfect example of "Tropicalism," or the portrayal of Latin Americans as exotic, fun, and friendly foreigners. She was so much the symbol of Latin culture that the United Fruit Company created the Chiquita Banana, a cartoon character whose resemblance to Carmen Miranda was no coincidence, to represent their company.

The feisty Latina exists for the entertainment and sexual pleasure of heterosexual men across racial lines. She is not only an object of desire, but also an object *for* desire, showcasing how this image intersects with logics of consumption more broadly. As Isabel Molina-Guzmán explains, Latina bodies like Jennifer Lopez's and Sofia Vergara's, modern-day manifestations of this image, "function as sexually desirable, ethnically and racially ambiguous docile bodies that are financially productive within the realm of global popular culture and equally threatening to dominant ethnic and racial formations in the United States" (2010, p. 52). The dangers of the feisty Latina's sexual prowess are evidenced in a billboard promoting the dating site, ArrangementFinders.com, that circulated in Austin, Texas in 2016.[49] In the red, white, and green-adorned billboard, a young Latina, olive-skinned with dark hair and a sultry facial expression, is placed adjacent to text that reads: "Undocumented immigrant? Before You Get Deported Get a Sugar Daddy." This billboard seamlessly links images of the undocumented mestiza with the feisty Latina to demonstrate how Latinas, whether through their undocumented

[49] https://www.thedailybeast.com/austin-billboard-for-dating-site-told-undocumented-workers-to-find-sugar-daddies

entry into the United States or through their morally corrupt sexual escapades, produce a threat to the white nation-state in their very existence. The centrality of the feisty Latina's sexuality carries significant implications for the safety of Latinas specifically and feminine-presenting people writ large. The voracious sexual appetite of the feisty Latina means that, by definition, she is unrapeable, the implied troubling logic here being that the willing cannot be raped. Common stereotypes of Dominican and Puerto Rican women as loud, sexually promiscuous, and for Dominican women as likely sex workers, provide additional ideological support for the unrapeability of Latinas.

The pervasiveness of the feisty Latina has particularly harmful repercussions for the self-definitions and policies surrounding young Latina girls. Public policies targeting young Latina and Black girls in urban areas continuously rely on messages of these girls as hyper-sexualized 'at-risk populations' in need of immediate interventions such as teen pregnancy prevention programs (Garcia 2012). Rarely do these policies and most research on young girls of color make space for centering these girls' perceptions of their own subjectivities. Lorena Garcia's, *Respect Yourself, Protect Yourself: Latina Girls and Sexual Identity* (2012), provides much-needed relief from these problematic patterns in knowledge production. By centering the voices of Puerto Rican and Mexican teenage girls in Chicago, Garcia shows that these girls are acutely aware of the traits associated with the feisty Latina image and negotiate it by prioritizing the importance of sexual respectability, where they take control of their sexual behaviors to avoid pregnancy and thus divest from the significance of virginity. In the process, these girls demonstrate the messiness of processes for exerting sexual agency; by constructing alternate narratives for themselves of sexual respectability, they participate in the stigmatizing of young mothers and ultimately reproduce ideologies of Black girls as hypersexualized. Ultimately, these comparisons

maintain the ideological justifications for young girls of color as sexual Others and undermine opportunities for solidarity across racial and ethnic lines.

Challenging the normalcy of the sexual traits attributed to the feisty Latina requires subverting the dominant discourses and conditions that foster pro-rape perspectives (Martin Alcoff 2018). Latina philosopher and survivor, Linda Martin Alcoff, uncovers the various ways in which the voices of those who experience rape, sexual assault, and other forms of sexualized abuse are continuously disappeared and villainized and thus she challenges readers to take seriously the situated knowledges of survivors as a means to construct new understandings about rape and phenomenological understandings of the formation of the Self as a process through explorations of sexual subjectivity, desire, consent, and pleasure. In a 2015 workshop on sexuality and representation, Ena Suseth Valladares, Director of Research at CLRJ explained:

> We're either put on a pedestal of purity of being a good mother, or we're sexualized. If we look at media representations of Latinas in particular, we're hyper-sexualized as exotic and spicy. And we're usually depicted as cisgender…when's the last time you've seen media representations that center experiences of trans, queer, or gender non-conforming Latinxs? These stereotypes make us more vulnerable to different types of violence so it's not just an issue of the type of laws in place, but also how these ways of thinking trickle down into interactions.

As a response against the controlling image of the feisty Latina, in 2017 CLRJ began developing a research report on trans Latinx experiences with healthcare based on narratives from trans Latinxs. And as part of their annual Capitol Education Day where they mobilize Latinxs from across the state to lobby their legislators in Sacramento, CLRJ staff and supporters annually advocated for comprehensive sex education, advocating for medically accurate, positive

discussions about sex that are LGBTQIA-inclusive and involve discussions about what healthy relationships look like. In 2015, they earned a win when AB 329 passed mandating updated, comprehensive sex education curriculum in California public high schools.

While the feisty Latina justifies various forms of interpersonal and institutionalized violence against cisgender, heterosexual Latinas, it also perpetuates violence against queer, trans, and gender nonbinary Latinxs by erasing their sexualities altogether. The heterosexuality embedded in this image serves to normalize heteronormative sex, reproduction, and family formation, where the straight and feisty Latina fits normative standards of motherhood while transgressing U.S. racial boundaries. As Katherine Garcia notes, this heteronormative impulse bears unique consequences for bisexuality:

> […] one of the most prominent characteristics of the spicy Latina stereotype is her sexuality, or more specifically, her heterosexuality. This is coupled with reproductive pressure and the belief that all Latina women are or will someday be mothers because they are too sexually promiscuous not to be. **As a bisexual identifying Latina woman, I resent this.** It took me so long to finally accept my sexuality because everything I saw about what it mean to be Latina told me I should be attracted to men only, told me I should dress for men only, told me my ambitions in life should ultimately lead to motherhood.[50] [emphasis hers]

Through the gaze of the white imaginary, the feisty Latina is assumed to birth children who will become tomorrow's gang members, teenage welfereras, and unassimilable 'low-skilled' workers,

[50] Garcia, Katherine. 2015. "Where the 'Spicy Latina' Stereotype Came From—and Why It's Still Racist Today." Everydayfeminism.com. Accessed December 22, 2017 https://everydayfeminism.com/2015/12/spicy-latina-stereotype-bad/

existing merely as cultural, social, and economic drains to white Americans. The centrality of a gender binary in Garcia's statement, and of the feisty Latina image generally, will likely also continue to receive significant resistance from youth in particular, as a recent Pew Research Center study found that 35 percent of polled members of Generation Z, those born after 1996, know and support nonbinary people compared to millennials.[51]

In addition to the implications for Latina sexual subjectivities, the feisty Latina is leveraged against Latinas on a regular basis to undermine the legitimacy of their thoughts and contributions in various social realms. Law student and social justice blogger, Juliana Barona, draws on her experiences to explicate the contours of the feisty Latina within a politics of respectability that demands that Latinas adapt to the virtues of submissiveness glorified by the cult of domesticity[52]:

> […] the feisty Latina trope is harmful towards our careers and ability to work with others. When people have negative preconceived notions about a Latina, they will always be defensive when having to work or study with one. This is not conducive towards a positive and productive environment in any way. If someone expects us to hurt their feelings every time we open our mouths to speak, no one is going to be open to having an actual conversation with us and actually getting to know us. I recall a couple of months ago when I was called a hater after I politely and insightfully critiqued a colleague's article. It was very disheartening to watch myself be perceived in a very negative light just because I

[51] Parker, Kim, Nikki Graff, and Ruth Igielnik. 2019. "Generation Z Looks a Lot Like Millennials on Key Social and Political Issues." *Pewsocialtrends.org*. Accessed January 20, 2019 https://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2019/01/17/generation-z-looks-a-lot-like-millennials-on-key-social-and-political-issues/

[52] Barona, Juliana. "Stop Flinching! We Don't Bite: Why the 'Feisty' Latina Stereotype is Harmful." *Modernbrowngirl.com*. Accessed March 10, 2019 https://www.modernbrowngirl.com/blog/category/harmful-latina-stereotypes

> stated an opinion that the recipient did not like. I must admit, at times it has caused me to think twice before giving any type of constructive criticism to colleagues out of fear of being perceived as aggressive or intimidating. Just because a woman is Latina does not mean she is about to rip your head off every time she speaks!

As Juliana demonstrates, the feisty Latina as a signifier polices not only the sexual behavior of Latinas, but also their behavior in professional settings to the detriment of their ability to be perceived as experts and collegial workmates in their respective fields:

> One of the most frustrating aspects of the feisty Latina stereotype is the vastly different treatment that White women receive for displaying the same type of assertive, boss-like characteristics. Everyone remembers how Miranda Priestly was revered in the family movie, *The Devil Wears Prada*. Meryl Streep's character was described as grandiose, highly respected, very critical, and tough to satisfy. I can only imagine how different the reactions would be had Meryl Streep's character been written to be played by a Latina.

As Juliana poignantly notes, this dynamics highlights the racialized double standard of behavioral expectations of Latinas versus white American women.

Dominant discourses surrounding the feisty Latina obscure how Black Latinas navigate the intersections of the feisty Latina, the Black jezebel, and the Black mammy (Jiménez Román and Flores 2010; Rivera-Rideau et al. 2016). As Marta I. Cruz-Janzen notes, "Latinegras are women who cannot escape the many layers of racism, sexism, and inhumanity that have marked their entire existence. Painters, poets, singers, and writers have exalted their beauty, loyalty, and strength, but centuries of open assaults and rapes have also turned them into concubines, prostitutes, and undesirable mothers, daughters, sisters, and wives" (p. 282). For example, the discursive politics surrounding the legacy and death of famed Black Cuban singer, Celia Cruz,

suggest that embracing Black womanhood among non-Black Latinxs often requires a desexualization of their identities: "In the case of Celia Cruz, her portrayal as a black mother to all Latinos ultimately downplays her blackness, relegating it to a longer historical stereotype, in such a way that the conceptualization of Latinidad as raceless/mestizo can be kept intact" (Monika Gosin, p. 97 in Rivera-Rideau et al. 2016, p. 97). Specifically, by describing Celia Cruz upon her death as a mother to all Latinxs, non-Black Latinxs relegated Cruz to a similar subordinated function that the Black mammy has historically served for white Americans: "As a desexualized, nurturing mother figure, she is a 'good black,' or in Hijuelos' characterization, 'a woman of worldly charms, good humor and much wisdom, the kind of gracious lady that we would love to have for an aunt, a fairy godmother whose tender-heartedness works a healing magic on even the most troubled of souls'" (p. 96 in Rivera-Rideau et al. 2016).

Latinas' love relationships and notions of bodily self-worth are other prominent domains for the reinforcement of and resistance to the feisty Latina image. Los Angeles based Salvadoran self-identified "fat, fly poet" and internationally-acclaimed body positivity activist, Yesika Salgado, has emerged as a prominent knowledge producer regarding the messiness of loving while Latina and fat in light of the feisty Latina image. Consider this excerpt from a 2018 online interview with the Latinx digital media channel, *We are mitú*:

> The fact that you're a fat woman in love adds this whole other layer to something that's already super messy. I talk about hunger a lot because I feel that Latinas, we use food to celebrate everything that we do. You go to your parents or your parents' friend's house and you don't eat, it's offensive. It's like, "I cooked this for you. How dare you not eat all of it." Whenever I would visit any of my aunts and uncles, they would always have my favorite things on the table for me. And then when you do eat the food and your body

> starts to react to it and you gain weight, then it becomes a question of how dare you be fat. You're always apologizing for your love for something that you're supposed to love, but that doesn't always love you back the way it should. I used to have to always ask every new man I was dating, "Are you okay with my body? Are you sure you're gonna stay?" That's why I wrote, "Fat Girl Wants Love," because I felt I was trying to love people with disclaimers, because I thought that that was the only way that love could exist for me as a fat woman.

Salgado's account of her perceptions of her body, the cultural milieu in which those perceptions were fostered, and her relationships with men suggest that the role of fatness as an embodied and epistemic site of resistance to controlling images is an undertheorized realm in the academy. Salgado's poem, "Fat Girl Wants Love," (2017, p. 12) further speaks to the transformative possibilities of a fat Latina epistemology of resistance against the repressive effects of the feisty Latina and other controlling images:

> I am in love / I am a fat girl / sometimes they are not the same thing / sometimes they are / he tells me he loves me / he keeps me a secret / I love him / I am a fat girl / this is the same this time / he doesn't have a name / he has too many names / I am good at loving in dark places / see: his mouth / see: his bedroom / see: the way I still smile when he lets my hand go in public / I love hungry / remember the time I ate my heart out in a movie theater / I was alone / remember the time I threw up all my fast food in a shopping mall bathroom / I was alone / remember the time I shoved my fingers down my throat / remember I failed / remember I wanted to die / remember when he kissed another woman in front of me / how I looked at her body / how I wanted her too / wanted to wear her / squeeze into her / I am a fat girl / I am in love / there is a joke here / he calls / my body

> wants to answer / my uncles used to say they needed longer arms to hug me / they would laugh / I would too / I grew up thinking no one could hold me / but he did / when no one was watching / it's okay / I don't watch myself all the time either / I am in love / I am hungry / this is synonymous / I wonder if my stomach and heart live in the same place / I gained weight again / I cry during my lunch break at work / I eat ice cream on my way home /

Salgado's description of forcing herself to vomit her food, of the hunger for men to love her and her body in public, of the desire to "wear her / squeeze into her" when seeing a man she loves kiss another woman, speaks to the effects of the feisty Latina on Latinas' perceptions of our bodies and the pressure to fit the curvaceous mold. The woman who Salgado wants to wear and squeeze into is the embodiment of the feisty Latina, sharply juxtaposing Salgado as the antithesis to this image, a failed Latina. Salgado's poetry explores the many ways that fatness is punished in the United States across racial lines. While Latinas who fit the physical mold of the feisty Latina undoubtedly experience sexualized objectification, fat Latinas and other Latinxs who do not fit the mold also experience a particular form of dehumanization that often treats them as undeserving of love, respect, and self-determination. Because of this, Salgado also uses her notoriety as a platform to expose the sexualization and heightened disrespect toward fat Latinas evidenced in online dating. Specifically, Salgado regularly shares screenshots of private messages she receives from men who simultaneously attempt to force her into the caricature of the feisty Latina, while reminding her of how her fatness is a betrayal to that image. Given the harmful effects of anti-fat stigma, particularly for feminine-identified people of color, Gloria Lucas created Nalgona[53] Positivity Pride (NPP), a "Xicana-indigenous body-positive

[53] Nalgona colloquially translates into a woman with a large rear end.

organization that provides intersectional eating disorders education and community-based support for people of color who are struggling with troubled eating and poor body-image."[54] Lucas' detailing of the genesis for NPP further speaks to the necessity of analyses of Latina body image issues as direct action for shifting the larger cultural narratives surrounding fatness that further lend credence to the feisty Latina. As NPP's homepage details:

> After not seeing her own experiences reflected and the lack of cultural awareness in the eating disorder world, Gloria Lucas started NPP in 2014 out of an urgent need to create a platform for communities of color and indigenous-descent communities who struggle alone. Gloria first-hand experienced the isolation that comes with being a person of color with an eating disorder and the absence of services for low-income people. NPP's line of work focuses on uncovering the impacts of colonialism, social oppression, historical trauma and its role in impairing relations indigenous-descent people have with food and body-image.

The poetry of Guatemalan poet, Melissa Lozada-Oliva, also provides much needed relief from the unrealistic body expectations linked to the feisty Latina. Much of Lozada-Oliva's poetry explores the embodied experiences of not fitting hegemonic European body standards. For example, in her poem, "Origin Regimen," Lozada-Oliva (2017) includes the following passage:

> if you start waxing early enough
> the hair will grow back thinner & if you're in america
> long enough you can get rid of your accent[55]

[54] https://www.nalgonapositivitypride.com

[55] The word, peluda, refers to a woman with excessive body hair.

Here, Lozada-Oliva touches on the important parallel between the assimilation of feminine nonwhite bodies as a means to assimilate into mainstream white America, literally waxing away her Latina markers of difference. The resistance work of CLRJ, Yesika Salgado, Nalgona Positivity Pride, Melissa Lozada-Oliva, and many other Latinx feminists demonstrate that Latinx feminists are on the front lines of exposing the violence of the feisty Latina image and in the process, creating new, liberatory self-definitions that reflect the reality and beauty of feminine, Latinx subjectivities.

THE HOME GIRL

Though not as longstanding as images of la mestiza or la santa, the gang-affiliated home girl has increasingly captured the attention of researchers, policymakers, entertainment media, and the general public. Spanning popular representations in films such as *Mi Vida Loca* (1994), *Dangerous Minds* (1995), *Stand and Deliver* (1998), and *Freedom Writers* (2007), to recent feminist scholarship that recovers the significance of women Zoot Suiters in the 1940s and 1950s (Ramírez 2009), the home girl is an ideological site of contestation. Operating at the intersections of the other controlling images outlined in this chapter, the home girl is assumed to be hot-tempered and thus prone to violent and criminal behavior, often found in urban environments, drug-addicted, promiscuous, an irresponsible young mother, inherently unintelligent, and more invested in performing allegiance to a gang than pursuing educational attainment. Often imagined as the product of a culture of poverty that plagues low-income communities of color, even sympathetic perceptions of the home girl in movies and research suggest that she is a victim in need of saving, thus undermining the agency of young Latinas.

In reality, the experiences of gang-affiliated and formerly incarcerated young girls highlight the centrality of race, gender, and class oppressions in a punitive criminal justice system that is supported through the punishment and surveillance of these girls in other social institutions, including their biological families and schools. Primarily, larger social forces including the War on Drugs, the increasing gentrification of neighborhoods of color, and the "Prison industrial military complex" (Díaz-Cotto 2006) work in tandem to undermine the safety and self-determination of young Latinas. For example, it is common for girls who are involved in gangs or are detained in some fashion to experience physical and emotional abuse in their homes and to be forced out of their homes for violating sexual norms imposed on Latinas, essentially for being failed santas. Joining gangs, an inevitability for some young Latinas living in neighborhoods with high gang activity, produces a paradoxical situation, where they are susceptible to increased interpersonal and institutional violence, yet gangs are also important refuge and support systems for young girls under the constant threat of various forms of surveillance and isolation.

As a means to disrupt the effects of the controlling image of the home girl, Latinx feminist scholars have centered the testimonios of young Latinas as a means to humanize their experiences and place the onus of responsibility on social institutions rather than communities of color. Intergenerational poverty, rampant unemployment, and gentrification are direct impediments for young Latinas to not only survive, but thrive. The relationships between detention centers, juvenile probation, and community school further exacerbate inequalities that place young Latinas in a "wraparound incarceration" system that becomes nearly impossible to escape (Flores 2016). For instance, the tesimonio of Katherine Maldonado, a formerly gang-affiliated young mother, demonstrates how misrepresentations surrounding numerous controlling

images of Latinxs converge to justify the increased surveillance of the home girl in various public spaces and undermine her reproductive autonomy:

> At my school, rumors about me and my pregnancy went around. Many people congratulated me, while others looked at me with despair. School friends asked if I was going to leave high school and go to the "pregnant school" (i.e. continuation school), where a lot of the girls who became pregnant attended. Why was I not seen as a "regular" student who could succeed alongside my peers? I was seen as a "fuckup" even before I got pregnant. I was a member of a female gang. My partner was also a gang member. We both engaged in heavy drug use and violence.
>
> My life involved navigating the streets, which included police harassment and rival gang approaches. I remember getting patted down by police officers every time I walked to the store, with my huge belly, to get food to satisfy my late-night cravings. One time, when I was nine months pregnant, walking home with my partner from school, eight young men approached us. One person pulled out a gun. They all surrounded us. It was the first time I feared not for myself but for my son. Incidents like these made me hyperaware of my identity as a young mother (to be) and gang affiliate (pp. 34-35 in Caballero et al. 2019).

Once Maldonado enrolled as an undergraduate student at UCLA, harmful perceptions of her as the home girl continued to haunt her and resulted in her temporarily losing custody of her sons to Child Protective Services (CPS) after her son sustained an accidental injury. She details questions from a social worker that make evident assumptions of Maldonado as an unfit mother (pp. 37-38):

> "How do you parent, being that you are so young?" And "What do you think about your partner's criminal record?" In addition, she reported false information about our case to

> her agency, including that we struck "the children with belts and hangers. These neglectful acts on the part of the child's parents endanger the child's physical health, safety and wellbeing, creating a detrimental home environment" (Code 300, page 4 of the case). In what was this caseworker really interested? The safety of the children or our backgrounds as individuals and our gang affiliations?

This excerpt of Maldonado's story demonstrates how multiple institutions work together to impede the self-determination of young Latinas. When she became pregnant at fifteen, she began to feel the pressure from teachers and students to leave her school and transition into a continuation school for young mothers where she would have received little encouragement to pursue higher education. Her gang affiliation also exposed her to multiple forms of interpersonal and systemic violence, wherein even mundane tasks such as shopping for late-night pregnancy craving became dangerous moments. And once she was a student at UCLA, the intersections of her ethnoracial identity, gender, class position, and former gang affiliation positioned her as a reckless mother and danger to her children, despite a lack of evidence to attest to this presumption. Maldonado further draws on her lived experiences and existing scholarship to theorize the ways that living at the intersection of being gang-affiliated and a young mother produces particularly harmful ideological forms of social control:

> When a mother does not disconnect herself from a gang, she is labeled a "bad mother," placed under the same umbrella as teenage mothers, welfare mothers, and drug-abusing mothers (Hunt, Joe-Laidler, and MacKenzie 2005; Hunt et al. 2011). For Latinas, these stereotypes are exacerbated when a woman falls into more than one category or has a gendered form of multiple marginality (Vigil 2008), as when she is both a gang affiliate and a teen mother. Stereotypes about Latinas are rooted in and replicated by structures

> like the media and politics, which disseminate these notions throughout the entire public arena (2008, p. 240).

The normalcy of stories like Maldonado's speaks to the ways that institutions and public discourse weave together to make it nearly impossible for young Latinas to exert reproductive autonomy beyond the scope of the home girl image.

A burgeoning area of research explores how gang-affiliated Latinas resist externally imposed gender norms. In some ways, gang-affiliated Latinas are able to exert more freedom by not being physically restricted to their homes and not adhering to expectations of virginity for young women. Ramírez's (2009) research on women zoot-suiters, more commonly known as pachucas, shows how misogynistic notions of gender have historically been used to police the behavior of young Latinas, where pachucas were accused of being lesbians or promiscuous for rejecting notions of domesticity. Significantly, motherhood becomes a powerful means of resistance for gang-affiliated and formerly affiliated young Latinas, especially since teen prevention campaigns often rely on the hood girl trope to justify curbing the reproduction of young Latinas in poor and working-class neighborhoods. An area of interest for feminist scholars centers around the role of trauma that goes unhealed and the lack of services to address the mental health issues of young Latinas as they experience their lives in punitive terms. As Puerto Rican scholar, Juanita Díaz-Cotto (2006), argues, "these women are often absent from academic and social policy discussions related to their lives" (p. 3). The realities posed by these young Latinas in juxtaposition to the home girl image suggest that Latinx feminists have a significant stake in the work around prison abolition and its intersections with the movement for reproductive justice.

Taken together, the six controlling images outlined in this chapter not only demonstrate how ideology is used to justify the oppression of Latinx communities, particularly those who are feminine-presenting, but they are linked through what I call a broader displacement of the reproductive Other process. I define the displacement of the reproductive Other as a material and ideological process with origins in European colonization and current manifestations in the history of immigration in the United States, U.S.-Latin American government relations, and U.S. public policy. This process is manifested in discursive politics where Latinx communities, regardless of immigration status, are othered through collective representations as foreign, unwanted, and undeserving. The notion of displacement is central because these images suggest that spatial dynamics contribute to the dehumanization of Latinxs. Specifically, human interactions and social arrangements co-construct a cultural landscape. In this landscape, controlling images provide the ideological repertoire to normalize the denigration of Latinx communities, resulting in physical displacement (e.g. genocide, forced migration, deportation, gentrification, incarceration) and ideological displacement that strips Latinxs of holistic, messy, and complex representations—essentially stripping us of our humanity.

By analyzing these images in conjunction, it becomes apparent that reproductive undertones weave the images together and make it so that Latinxs are perpetually foreign in practice and ideology, suggesting that Latinx reproduction is a mechanism for displacement. As such, the politics surrounding Latinx reproduction are the site for both the oppression of Latinxs subjectivities and resistance to their oppression. The prevalence of these images and the significance of reproduction across each of them suggest that the movement for reproductive justice is central to tackling the intersecting oppressions that these images bring to light. The fluidity and nuanced relational analyses forwarded by the reproductive justice framework—the

right to parent, not parent, and parent in healthy and safe conditions—shift attention away from controlling images and toward the humanity of Latinx communities. In the process, the intersectional work of CLRJ and the reproductive justice lens show that the criminalization of immigration, systemic poverty, sexual and gendered violence, mass incarceration and an array of other issues experienced by Latinxs are in fact all matters of reproductive justice. While it is undoubtedly important to understand how the politics of discourse are wielded against Latinxs, it is imperative to analyze how Latinxs across time and space create counter-narratives against controlling images that allow us to imagine the possibilities of worlds invested in justice and freedom beyond current conditions.

CHAPTER 4
What's the Matter with Difference?
The Messiness of Solidarity in Social Movements and in the Everyday

Solidarity is not a matter of altruism.
Solidarity comes from the inability
to tolerate the affront to our own integrity of passive or active collaboration
in the oppression of others,
and from the deep recognition of our most expansive self-interest.
From the recognition that, like it or not,
our liberation is bound up with that of every other being on the planet, and that politically,
spiritually, in our heart of hearts we know anything else is unaffordable.
—Aurora Levins Morales, *a Puerto Rican Jewish self-identified*
"writer, artist, historian, teacher, mentor, activist, healer, a revolutionary"
Medicine Stories: History, Culture, and the Politics of Integrity (1998)

The possibilities and tensions that emerge from navigating various domains of sameness and difference in activism and in everyday life is a longstanding theme in feminist of color practices and theories. Among Latinx feminists, these theoretical and empirical negotiations demonstrate the complexities that arise when attending to differences of language, nationality, race, sexuality, class, religion, immigrant status, colonial context, and geographical location among people of Latin American origin, to name but a few modes of difference. By and large, the scholarship and practices of feminists of color, generally, and Latinx feminists, specifically, reveal an ongoing rejection of uniformity as a means for building solidarity and political power to create social transformation (Alvarez et al. 2014; Castañeda and Krupczynski 2018; Latina Feminist Group 2001; Lugones 2003; Moraga and Anzaldúa 1981). Importantly, feminists of color caution that

even in their efforts to continuously expand the parameters of inclusion, deep erasures remain (Luna 2016). The Latina Feminist Group (2001) rightfully highlighted Cherríe Moraga's comment in the second edition of *This Bridge Called My Back*, "The idea of Third World feminism has proved to be much easier between the covers of a book than between real life women" (p. 8).

Doing the work of building solidarity across difference is undoubtedly difficult. Yet, the implications of Levins Morales' emphatic proclamation in the opening excerpt of this chapter suggest that making politics to see each other as full, complex, messy, at times contradictory humans is imperative to engaging in practices that recognize that "our liberation is bound up with that of every other being on the planet." Latinx feminists demonstrate that making politics is both a matter of organized resistance in social movements and every day, individual practices. I suggest that while persistent discussions among sociologists of collective action about the role of difference tend to place difference in a binary logic as either a problem or an asset, Latinx feminist theories and actions suggest the analytical and political value of understanding these negotiations across differences as the necessary messy work of making politics capacious enough to expand meanings of social justice and liberation over time and across various spatial formations. The messiness of in-progress personal growth needed to create resilient solidarity is vividly expressed by Latinx and femme therapist, Melissa Lopez (commonly known on social media as @counseling4allseasons), in an October 9, 2018 Instagram post:

> Repeat after me: I am allowed to be BOTH a work in progress AND help others grow at the same time. I refuse to wait until I believe I'm perfect or someone else has deemed me worthy of impacting others. I am unapologetically accepting a life of massive growth & improvement.

In this chapter I provide an overview of some of the ways that Latinx feminists resist the disappearance of their intersectional standpoints in reproductive politics to make politics that contend with some of the messiness of lived realities at the intersections of multiple systems of oppression. First, I review how the discussions on the role of difference manifest among sociologists of collective action and among Latinx feminists. I follow this dialogue with three practices that members of California Latinas for Reproductive Justice (CLRJ) engage in to do intersectionality in the movement for reproductive justice. I conclude with a brief overview of existing Latinx feminist scholarship and social media sources to present some of the ways that Latinx feminists engage in every day resistance practices to showcase the expansiveness and flexibility of Latinx feminist political power.

DIFFERENCE AS A BARRIER TO COLLECTIVE ACTION

Social scientists focused on collective action dynamics, particularly sociologists, have greatly attended to the function of difference in social movements. Research suggests that difference creates significant barriers to constructing collective identities (Melucci 1994), forming and maintaining social trust (Putnam 2007), and reaching consensus on movement strategies (McCarthy and Walker 2004). Based on a robust review of over one hundred studies of collective action across racial/ethnic, class, gender, religious, and citizenship identities, Walker and Stepick (2014) find that while some identities prove to create less friction in coalition-building (e.g., interfaith organizing and immigrant rights organizing involving both documented and undocumented members), race, gender, and class-based activisms tend to experience more difficulties in attending to intersectionality.

A prominent arena of discussion on the role of difference in collective action is the social movement research on factionalism (Balser 1997; Fligstein and McAdam 2012; Gamson 1975, 1995; Hart and Van Vugt 2006; Zald and Ash 1966). Factionalism refers to the tensions that arise between an organizational faction and other members or between opposing organizational factions, in general focused on understanding intra-organizational conflict. Organizational factions are usually outcomes of poor leadership skills and those with greater membership exclusivity are more likely to suffer from factionalism than inclusive organizations (Balser 1997; Zald and Ash 1966). Factions in organizations often reflect identity-based divisions prevalent in societies more broadly and can be triggered based on grievances that may not be significant to the organization's focus (Hart and Van Vugt 2006; Lau and Murnighan 1998).

Scholarship on the micro-level processes of mobilization further lends credence to the need to expand analyses beyond primarily macro- and meso-level analyses of political opportunities, resources, and network ties to demonstrate how organizing on difference is simultaneously a unifying and contentious process (Busher and Morrison 2018; Gould 2009; Jasper 1997; Luft 2015a, 2015b; Oliver 2017; Viterna 2013). As Francesca Polletta (2004) argues, macro-level theories underestimate the making of subjectivities in social movements and thus advocates for examining "the cultural dimensions of political structures" (p. 102). Jocelyn Viterna (2013) explains in her research on women's motivations to participate in guerrilla warfare in El Salvador that to fully understand how macro-level contexts inform mobilization, it is imperative to "analyze how individual participants themselves view, interpret, and act upon the political and cultural environment in which they operate" (p. 41). Yet, Viterna's work also undermines the importance of agency by relying on rather static notions of identity as comprised of social roles connected to normative expectations about men and women in Latin America.

In many ways, contemporary social movement studies have relied on a measure of difference focused on relatively discrete social identity categories (see Walker and Stepick 2014 for an excellent discussion of this intellectual pattern). This tendency has resulted in three significant epistemological outcomes. First, discussions surrounding difference in mobilization place difference within a binary market logic as either a problem to be dealt with or a nebulous asset yet to be fully exploited for its transformative potential. Second, measuring difference as socio-demographic categories results in the essentializing of socially constructed classifications (and of oppression and resistance, by extension) that deny the fluidity and heterogeneity of social locations and power differences. Third, these debates can reinforce the legitimation of the dichotomy between universalism stemming from the Enlightenment era that attempts to construct grand theories of social interaction by muting difference, and extreme relativism where differences are assumed to be too much to overcome (Yuval-Davis 1997).

Wokeness and Call-Ins Versus Call-Outs

An oft-discussed topic among activists and scholar activists in recent years is the seemingly growing popularity of a "woke" culture and debates surrounding practices of calling out versus calling in. Woke is a term referring to the ongoing awareness of issues pertaining to social justice, particularly racial justice, from a critical perspective. The concept gained traction beginning in 2014 with its regular use, specifically the phrasing "stay woke," among activists involved in the Movement for Black Lives and immortalized by artists such as Erykah Badu and Childish Gambino[56]. As is often the case with manifestations of Black brilliance, the concept has

[56] http://www.ibtimes.com/what-does-stay-woke-mean-bet-air-documentary-black-lives-matter-movement-2374703

since then been appropriated by non-Black people and is the foci of questions regarding the effectiveness and appropriateness of call-outs and call-ins within and outside of activist spaces.

Calling out involves confronting someone publicly whose behavior is oppressive to others relatively less privileged as a means to hold them accountable to their actions. In contrast, calling in is considered a more compassionate means to hold people accountable for problematic behavior by approaching the discussion in a private setting. As self-identified Viet/mixed-race disabled queer writer, Ngọc Loan Trần, explains,

> I picture "calling in" as a practice of pulling folks back in who have strayed from us. It means extending to ourselves the reality that we will and do fuck up, we stray and there will always be a chance for us to return. Calling in is a practice of loving each other enough to allow each other to make mistakes; a practice of loving ourselves enough to know that what we're trying to do here is a radical unlearning of everything we have confused to believe is normal. And yes, we have been configured to believe it's normal to punish each other and ourselves without a way to reconcile hurt. We support this belief by shutting each other out, partly through justified anger and often because some parts of us believe that we can do this without people who fuck up (in McKenzie 2016).

In theory, both practices are outcome-oriented, with the intention of refusing complicity in harmful behavior through silence and to encourage the person causing harm to reflect and change. Call-outs and call-ins both have utility value in moving forward new visions of justice and relationality. However, in practice, calling out often creates toxic social justice environments, where the performative aspects of doing 'wokeness' take precedence over changing problematic ways of thinking and creating space for people to change and evolve. The culture shock I experienced between living in the Central Valley with no exposure to formal

activist spaces and moving to Los Angeles where I was embedded in social justice discourse in the academy and outside of quickly taught me that the institutionalization of social justice creates a sharp (and overwhelming) learning curve. Ironically, while activism centering communities of color is a response to systemic and interpersonal oppression, access to the ideologies, practices, and evolving language of social justice is increasingly a matter of privilege.

The ways in which notions of wokeness and call-outs have traveled have resulted in the essentializing of political consciousness, reifying a binary between those who are believed to be politically conscious and those who are not. As the self-identified AfroIndígena poet and essayist, Alan Pelaez, commonly known as @migrantscribble on social media, commented on an April 25, 2019 Instagram post:

> Woke: an investment in sounding like an inclusive and radical person but giving no fks [fucks] about hood politics, embodied ways of knowing, messiness, and the overall humanity of black, indigenous and poor people of color.

Commenting on their post, Pelaez further elaborated:

> who else remembers breaking bread with community and being vulnerable about the things we didn't know, the contradictions we inherited and our success and failure in showing up for one another? i remember these as the most transformative moments in my life. a lot of my politics come from black and indigenous migrant women who invited me into their communities & we would all talk about our home countries, the shit we learned from our culture that exiled us & the parts of our culture that we loved that gave us reasons to continue to live and imagine liberation. i'm afraid "woke" politics prevents necessary ways of relating amongst one another. wish people were less invested in being

perceived as “woke” & more invested in being an active community member who witnessed more often than canceled.

Pelaez’s reflections suggest that the practices of wokeness necessarily go against fundamental principles of political organizing and justice. This involves recognizing that love, compassion, patience, and understandings of situated knowledges are necessarily partial and interdependent. Political consciousness is a lifelong, messy process requiring doing the work to unlearn ideas and behaviors that are toxic to ourselves and those around us. As veteran reproductive justice activist and author, Loretta Ross, shared with members of CLRJ in downtown Los Angeles on May 5, 2017: “If you have to tell people you’re woke, you ain’t woke.” Moreover, discussions regarding the efficacy of calling out and calling in strategies suggest that flexible and context-specific approaches are at times enacted based on identity membership. Carina Reyes, former CLRJ Los Angeles Chapter Coordinator, explained to my undergraduate students during a seminar presentation in the spring of 2018 that while she is more likely to engage in calling in with people of color, the decision to call out white people as a primary tactic is much easier. Carina’s rationalization suggests that a sense of “us-ness” produces more compassionate attempts toward individual and collective growth, whereas white people, given their positions of relative privilege and the fact that they are often catalysts for perpetuating harm, are not afforded the same treatment.

Not surprisingly, women and queer people of color often bear the brunt of the emotional labor that calling out and calling in requires. And when these encounters do not produce meaningful reflection and change on the part of those doing harm, the cumulative exhaustion and burnout from doing accountability can become too much. Thus, the call out/call in binary also bears relevance for mental health issues in social justice spaces. These encounters can produce

exhaustion for those doing the call-outs and call-ins, and for those with anxiety and depression, the fear of potentially hurting others and facing social ostracization can also exacerbate mental unrest. These dilemmas of negotiating difference and accountability, and the role of identity membership in these situations, suggest that social justice-minded communities are working through the potential capitalist implications of what Ngọc Loan Trần refers to as "a politic of disposability" (in McKenzie 2016) and the possibilities for building authentic allies and accomplices within and across categories of difference.

DIFFERENCE AS DIFFICULT *BUT NECESSARY* FOR COLLECTIVE ACTION

Contemporary research on intersectional activisms delves into the nuances of organizing based on difference in shaping coalition-building and political consciousness (Carastathis 2013; Ernst 2012; Luna 2016; Terriquez 2015; Zavella 2016; Zavella forthcoming). Some suggest that implementing intersectional frames within existing non-intersectional movements may impede political goals. For example, some research on LGBTQ activists in the undocumented immigrant youth movement has shown that LGBTQ members experience difficulties disclosing their sexuality within immigrant activist spaces or are perceived as interfering with unified attempts to dismantle inequality, despite the fact that they comprise a significant proportion of movement participants (Pastrano Jr. 2010). Stockdill (2002) further argues that activism against AIDS creates complex dynamics when intersectional strategies are utilized toward prevention and intervention, advocating for policy goals that span the nuances of race, gender, class, and sexual identities.

Other research finds that practicing inclusivity along multiple intersections of experiences can also lead to increased membership; collective identities that are more dynamic; more

coalitions; and the intensification of activism among multiply-oppressed individuals and groups (Chun et al. 2013; Cole and Luna 2010; Flores-González et al. 2013; Spade 2013; Zavella 2016, forthcoming). In her study of feminist activisms in United Nations forums on racism, Sylvanna Falcón (2016) finds that women of color advanced analyses at the intersections of racial and feminist justice that expanded opportunities for feminist organizing at a global scale. And while LGBTQ Latinxs face heteropatriarchal exclusion in some immigrant rights spaces, Veronica Terriquez (2015) finds that the immigrant rights movement's strategic use of a "coming out" discourse facilitated the inclusivity of undocumented LGBTQ youth, leading to greater civic engagement, intensification of commitment to the movement's goals, and a fluid political consciousness among undocumented LGBTQ youth. Similarly, Amin Ghaziani and Gary Alan Fine's (2008) analysis of LGBTQ activism demonstrates that conflicts regarding issues in the movement not only benefitted the movement by providing fluid perceptions of gay identities, but infighting constituted the very process of successful activism toward social transformation.

Attempts to create unifying identity frames and strategies in social justice movements for purposing of harnessing increased political power can best be understood as methods of assimilation, largely invested in logics of inclusion into the mainstream imaginary. As such, Karma R. Chávez (2013) analyzes a series of coalitional moments that disrupt mainstream perceptions of LGBTQ and immigrant rights movements as discreet by offering the concept of "queer migration politics." Chávez defines queer migration politics as "activism that seeks to challenge normative, inclusionary perspectives at the intersection of queer rights and justice and immigration rights and justice" (p. 6). By tracing queerness as a coalitional term, Chávez demonstrates that activists imagine fluid ways of being in the present where they are invested in numerous communities, issues, and spaces.

Current understandings of feminist activisms suggest that solidarity across difference is most effectively inclusive when it finds a middle ground between constructing broad, inclusive political identities capable of inspiring solidarity across differences (e.g. category of "women of color") and explicitly addressing the differences in experiences of various social groups for accomplishing movement goals (Cole and Luna 2010; Flores-González et al. 2013; Luna 2010). Zakiya Luna offers a cogent reminder that even as women of color attempt to find ways to attend to the differences amongst themselves, erasures persist. As she finds, the movement for reproductive justice, in particular, constructed a women of color collective identity premised on awareness of "same difference" as women who are all marginalized along race, class, and gender lines and "difference-in-sameness," based on recognizing the reproductive oppressions unique to each community of color and individuals within these communities (2016). Importantly, Patricia Zavella finds that CLRJ engages in intersectional practices that promote feminist logics in the context of immigrant experiences, thus "expanding the parameters of immigrant activism" (2016, p. 38).

Intersectional theories of collective action emphasize the relational as central to correcting the ideological and material violence wrought by non-intersectional politics. These theories begin from the premise that oppressions occur intersectionally, therefore, our understandings of them and responses against them must be as well (Anzaldúa 1987; Hill Collins 1990, 1998, 2017; Crenshaw 1991; Yuval-Davis 1997). Nira Yuval-Davis (1997) explores the notion of transversal politics for addressing the complexities of solidarity across difference. Rejecting both the muting and essentializing of difference for enacting change, Yuval-Davis advocates for marginalized communities to simultaneously make salient analyses of power

"rooted" in the particularities of social location while continuously "shifting" to dialogue that understands how power is experienced by those of different social locations:

> In 'transversal politics', perceived unity and homogeneity are replaced by dialogues which give recognition to the specific positionings of those who participate in them as well as to the 'unfinished knowledge' that each such situated positioning can offer […] transversal politics differentiates between social identities and social values, and assumes that what Alison Assiter calls 'epistemological communities' (1996: Chapter 5), which share common value systems, can exist across differential positionings and identities. The struggle against oppression and discrimination might (and mostly does) have a specific categorical focus but is never confined just to that category (p. 131).

Similarly, Patricia Hill Collins (2017) proposes flexible solidarity to refer to the significant political work Black feminists engage in over time and space by forming alliances with other Black people. Engagement in flexible solidarity shows the daily realities for Black feminists grounded in fighting for holistic understandings of their humanity within their own racial communities. In her discussion of the historical manifestations of African American women's political action as demonstrative of flexible solidarity, Hill Collins explains that "solidarity was not an essentialist category, a bundle of rules that was blindly applied across time and space. Instead, a flexible understanding of solidarity enabled African American women to work with the concept, molding it to the particular challenges at hand" (p. 1469).

Patricia Hill Collins and Nira Yuval-Davis importantly contend that situated knowledges birthed from social locations are by definition partial, requiring constant dialogue between people with different forms of knowledge. The authors of *Translocalities/Translocalidades* might complicate the possibilities of these discourses in their narratives of "translation as

discursive migration" (p. 29). As these authors contend with the ways in which language, meaning, and politics are negotiated across and within nation-states, they suggest that in our very attempts to traffic across difference—to translate ourselves to others—"translations, besides being intrinsically mistranslations, as Walter Benjamin (1969) had also pointed out, will always entail defacement; when a theory travels, it disfigures, deforms, and transforms the culture and/or discipline that receives it" (p. 29). The theoretical opportunities and tensions that arise between situated knowledges and (mis)translations suggest the need for more theorizing on the messiness of contending with difference that center the practices of Latinx feminists. Intersectional perspectives are neither instinctive nor fixed across political contexts. Fluid notions of solidarity are not just a matter of building political power, they are also about birthing ideological solidarity, a vital element for conjuring future worlds (Muñoz 2009) outside of current oppressive conditions.

LATINX FEMINIST POLITICMAKING: A PRACTICE-BASED APPROACH

Negotiating difference in collective action is messy both in theory and in practice. My concept of Latinx feminist politicmaking begins with the premise that social practices and identity categories are not interchangeable, further supporting the need to reject the essentializing of identity in social scientific research (Hill Collins 2017; Luft 2015a, 2015b; Yuval-Davis 1997). This analytical point of departure is critical because as W.E.B. Du Bois demonstrated long ago when he asked of Black Americans, "how does it feel to be a problem," (1903) debating the benefits and costs of difference-as-identity often results in debating the very existence of communities deemed 'different' in the first place by dominant groups. Conflating social practices with social categories for the purposes of research results in biased analyses (Luft

2015a) because it takes for granted the fact that these categories were forcibly imposed on marginalized communities by dominant groups through processes of settler colonialism and racialization. As such, politicmaking answers Julian Go's call for a postcolonial sociology of race (2018), one that analytically recovers how empire, colonialism, and imperialism have been central to the making of modern societies and the knowledge produced about those societies.

The concept of Latinx feminist politicmaking is derived from the confluence of two processes. By *politic*, I refer to values, actions, and symbols rooted in love, the importance of being accountable to one's privileges, and a commitment to fighting for self-determination of marginalized communities, meaning having the resources and systemic conditions to make decisions about what is best for you and your community without fears of violence. Specifically, I point to the physical, spiritual, and creative ways of knowing that marginalized subjects make for existing in social life amidst ongoing, external, and internal processes of physical and ideological erasure of their bodies, actions, and ideas (i.e., Latinx subjectivities) across time and space. I suggest that politics are not simply the sum total of activities surrounding the governance of a particular region. Rather, politics are also reflections of individual and group-level sensibilities by people who are able to see and feel intersecting oppressions and forms of resistance and expressions of joy erased in non-intersectional politics.

By *making*, I suggest that politics capable of tackling ongoing intersectional disappearances demonstrate an ongoing process where politics are continuously created, negotiated, and recreated, and thus, are not inevitable based on identity. Similarly, Chela Sandoval calls for an examination of love as social movement across disciplinary thought based not on static notions of identity, but rather, "unexplored *affinities inside of difference* attract, combine, and relate new constituencies into a coalition of resistance." (1998, p. 362). As Michael

Rodríguez-Muñiz (2017) explains of the persuasive work that nonstate leaders do in Latino politics, the building of "consent is neither automatic nor permanent" (p. 391). The idea that individuals' and groups' politics should not be assumed, nor should their transformative ability be underestimated, is rooted in the theories of political agency among communities of color (Collins 1998; Hunter 2013; Martin Alcoff 2006; Morris 1984). The Combahee River Collective poignantly summarized the necessity to disentangle identity and political commitment in their groundbreaking "A Black Feminist Statement": "as Black women we find any type of biological determinism a particularly dangerous and reactionary basis upon which to build a politic" (p. 17). Examining the manifestations and implications of political agency is significant because disappearance is not a linear and inevitable outcome simply inflicted on marginalized communities, but rather a complex process that is resisted, supported, and transformed (Hunter 2013).

Marginalized communities are much more than the sum total of their oppression and resistance, and yet the epistemological and ethical dynamics of collective action remain underexplored in social movement studies. As such, an overreliance on outcomes of political opportunity structures and resource mobilization in analyses of social movements can underestimate the construction of subjectivities and the "cultural dimensions of political structures" (Polletta 2004). I contend that we think of resistance not simply as individual and organized political responses to violence, but rather as manifestations of spiritual imaginations that offer us glimpses of social worlds without violence while tackling the violence of the present (Hunter 2013; Hunter and Robinson 2018). Linking politic and making, through *politicmaking* I attempt to capture the processes for both building on difference and expanding notions of difference as correctives to the erasures created by mainstream politics as expressions of

heteropatriarchal settler colonialism. In what follows, I outline three strategies Latinx feminists in the movement for reproductive justice in California enacted as a means to make fluid politics attuned to some forms of difference.

LATINX FEMINIST POLITICMAKING IN REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE

The intersectional ideas and political power of those on the margins of mainstream reproductive politics are often disappeared and fractured because of the refusal from actors in non-intersectional politics to see and act on intersecting forms of violence, resulting in politicmaking as resistance and creativity. As a response, Latinx feminists engage in politicmaking practices that are decolonial, relational, and committed to cultural shift work to contest non-intersectional politics. These practices expand meanings of (1) reproduction by moving beyond abortion care-centered strategies to highlight interlocking systems of settler colonialism and heteropatriarchal white supremacy; (2) solidarity by acting on the value of leaning into the complexities of difference in collective action rather than mute it; and (3) perspectives on Latinx subjectivities by centering the differences within and across intro-group differences. These strategies support Patricia Zavella's findings in her forthcoming book on the practices of reproductive justice organizations, including CLRJ, centered on "cross-sectoral collaboration, storytelling, and a strengths-based approach" (p. 102). As Zavella explains, "these practices concretize the praxis of intersectionality through what Duong calls 'world-making' – creating a collective identity that incorporates constituents across the political spectrum that range from LGBTQ to faith-based activists" (pp. 102-103). These strategies demonstrate the strength of building political power based on intersecting differences, regardless of the difficulties in doing so.

Decolonial Practices

Making politics on the margins requires analyses that show how settler colonialism and white supremacy shape reproductive politics, analyses often missing from reproductive rights movements. Because Latinxs must not only fight for the right not to parent but also the right to parent in relation to hegemonic constructs of white parenthood, Latinx feminists recognize that they must undo epistemological disappearance by rewriting the mainstream scripts of reproduction. At various times during my time with CLRJ, the centrality of European colonization in perpetuating reproductive oppressions against Indigenous peoples and communities of color across the Americas emerged as a topic and tool for community education and mobilization. When asked what they consider to be the sources of the inequalities experienced by Latinxs compared to whites, most staff cited European colonization as the root cause of the oppressions they organize against. As CLRJ's Community Engagement Manager, Christina Lares, elucidates:

> Colonialism, patriarchy, mostly colonialism. Neocolonialism, globalization, but I feel that colonization is where it all begins for us, at least here in the U.S. That relationship with European explorers and the United States itself. It's just crazy [takes deep breath and shakes her head], we've been through so much as a people here in the Americas and we still resist, we survive, we thrive, or we're trying to thrive. I really feel that's the source where it all began and that we were stripped away of our humanity at that point and we really haven't been able to get it back.

Rather than cite policies currently in effect or broader notions of discrimination, Christina emphasizes that colonialism and its reverberating effects in capitalism, neoliberalism, and globalization are at the core of oppression for Latinx communities. She directly links European

colonialism and broader systems of economic exploitation with a dehumanization process that helps justify the structural and interpersonal violence communities of color experience. Difference here does not operate as an obstacle in movement-building, but instead, provides the historical antecedents for the urgency of organizing precisely based on difference. This movement-wide framing strategy focused on how colonization and white supremacy shape "reproductive destinies" (Ross et al. 2017) suggests that a lens of politicmaking crystallizes continuous logics of the extermination of Indigenous bodies and their ways of knowing. In other words, the disappearance of bodies and ideas are mutually shaping and reflect historical patterns within power dynamics. Christina explains that doing intersectionality requires making a lens for viewing the social world that politicizes the past as a means to re-understand the present, thus rewriting the disappeared histories of marginalized communities into U.S. reproductive politics. Yet, in conjunction with these forms of disappearance, Christina notes how violence and resistance are mutually constituted. In the process of withstanding systemic violence and reclaiming a humanity "we really haven't been able to get back," communities on the margins move in a non-linear fashion across resistance, survivance, and thriving, the last still a work-in-progress. The reclamation of individual and collective humanities requires fluid forms of making politics. Christina's response reflects the importance of historically-informed analyses of interconnected oppressions in the reproductive justice framework. The separation of Black families during chattel slavery in the past and mass incarceration in the present, the separation of Indigenous families from missionization and boarding schools to now, and of Latinx immigrants today through detention centers and deportations are just some examples of how colonization and settler colonialism continue to disappear the conditions necessary for self-determination,

resulting in the stripping away of marginalized humanities that Latinx feminists actively struggle to center in their politics.

The decolonial politicmaking that Christina alludes to also translated into CLRJ's community education events. For example, CLRJ led a four-year coalition campaign with reproductive justice and anti-poverty organizations throughout California to repeal the Maximum Family Grant Rule. Most commonly referred to as the MFG Rule, this family caps policy deems children born while their families received CalWORKs basic needs grants ineligible for further assistant except in cases where applicants can prove that they became pregnant as a result of rape or incest. In order to generate urgency among Latinx communities to advocate for the repeal of this repressive policy, in 2016 CLRJ collaborated with the creators of the documentary film, *No más bebés* (*No More Babies*), to host free screenings throughout California and create safer spaces for discussions of the interlocking race, class, and gender dynamics at work in the film. *No más bebés* documents the coerced sterilizations of Mexican-origin immigrant and non-immigrant women throughout the 1960s and 1970s at the Los Angeles County-USC Medical Center. During a Los Angeles screening of the film in January of 2016, staff followed the film with a panel discussion including both creators of the film—Renee Tajima-Peña and Virginia Espino—CLRJ's Executive Director, Laura Jimenez, and Gabriela Valle, former Senior Director of Community Education and Mobilization. In a large room filled with echoing, angry chatter toward the stories centered in the film, Laura began the discussion by explaining that tackling reproductive oppressions are at the heart of the movement for reproductive justice. She defined reproductive oppression as "the control and exploitation of women, girls, and individuals through our bodies, sexuality, labor, and reproduction." By using this definition, one common to the

reproductive justice movement, Laura highlighted the importance of questioning who has power over matters of reproduction and its consequences in the work of CLRJ.

In a large conference room filled with approximately one hundred people—the vast majority Latinxs—many attendees cried during the film and voiced their shock and anger during the discussion because they did not know about these sterilizations until they watched the film, some of who were born at the same hospital during the time that the sterilizations took place. Both Laura and Gabriela used this space to explain how the discriminatory ways of thinking prevalent in the film are evidenced today in the MFG Rule, where the wombs of women of color are the sites of contentious politics about welfare reform and anti-immigrant sentiment (Chavez 2004, 2008, 2017; Roberts 1997). Laura and Gabriela ended the night by providing detailed information about how communities of color could become involved in repealing the policy. The organization's emphasis on marginalized communities' historical knowledge creates new political sensibilities that attempt to abolish Latinx dehumanization. As reproductive justice activists show, creating social change necessitates learning how marginalized communities came to be deemed different in the first place in reproductive politics and U.S. society writ large.

Making intersectional politics also requires non-hierarchical, intergenerational learning, where older and younger generations of reproductive justice activists teach each other how to unearth the messiness of marginalized experiences through social movement frames and strategies. On a September afternoon in late 2014, Gabriela Valle, former Senior Director of Community Education and Mobilization, and I sat at a conference table overlooking the downtown Los Angeles skyline. Writing on several large, white easel pad sheets pasted to the conference room's turquoise-colored walls, Gabriela mapped the organization's new strategy to create regional chapters in the Bay Area and Los Angeles to recruit and train a new generation of

reproductive justice activists. Gabriela asked me to develop a reproductive justice timeline as part of an activity for the two-day institute to commemorate the establishment of the chapters. She glanced at my computer screen as I searched for significant events surrounding abortion care, gently shook her head, and remarked, "Make sure to start from the beginning. For us, it always starts at 1492."

During the first day of the institute, Gabriela stood at the entrance of the warm conference room filled with nearly twenty Latinxs who all watched her intently. Looking around the room, Gabriela explained that the reproduction of Indigenous and women of color has always already been a matter of interest to European settlers, policing their bodies either for profit or as a means for genocide—both physical and symbolic forms of the disappearance of their situated realities used to regard them as 'different' (and therefore unequal) relative to whites. She further explained the prevalence with which Black enslaved women, for example, used herbal abortion methods to exert bodily autonomy as a means of gendered racial resistance under a system that "continues to use Black bodies to generate white wealth." By drawing on the situated reproductive experiences of Black women during chattel slavery in a mostly non-Black Latinx feminist space, Gabriela highlights one of the requirements for politicmakers like her to transform reproductive politics: to weigh the importance of specific social locations for building relational knowledge and coalitions, where "empathy, not sympathy, becomes the basis for coalition" (Hill Collins 1998, p. 934). However, these history lessons are changing over time in the organization's community education curriculum. The younger members of CLRJ's regional chapters have expanded Gabriela's lesson by emphasizing that the reproductive justice timeline actually needs to begin prior to 1492 because Indigenous reproductive autonomy existed long before, thus highlighting Indigenous subjectivities beyond the scope of colonialism.

CLRJ staff used the two-day institute and subsequent development of the organization's regional chapters to advance the repeal of the Maximum Family Grant Rule as central to Latinx reproductive justice in California. During the second day of the institute, Senior Policy Manager, Myra Durán, sat in a circle with chapter leaders and facilitated a discussion on the intent and effects of the MFG Rule for Latinx families. As a means to stress the importance of this policy for communities of color, Myra argued that "family caps must be seen for what they are, a form of population control rooted in racist, classist, and sexist stereotypes." As the chapter leaders and staff huddled around the large, cherry-colored table at the organization's office, a queer, femme-identified[57] Latinx mentioned that she was not familiar with the eugenics movement and asked Myra to elaborate on the connection. This question sparked a spirited discussion—a moment for the making of a historical and relation collective politics—as Myra explained that the U.S. eugenics movement targeted communities of color, differently-abled, and poor communities to delimit their reproduction in an attempt to construct the U.S. as a nation-state through a white male gaze. Myra concluded by stating that the MFG Rule reflects the United States' perception of poor communities of color as a burden to taxpayers and thus viewed as unworthy of reproduction. Newly accepted chapter leaders were encouraged to use the policy advocacy skills they would learn during their time in the regional chapters to continue to struggle to repeal the MFG Rule in California and other states with similar family caps policies.

Lastly, an important aspect of decolonial practices involves disrupting linear notions of social change and progress. While discussing the importance of engaging in nonprofit work that addresses the tensions that come with the passion for social transformation that drives many activists of color into nonprofit organizations versus the limitations of these organizations for

[57] Femme is a label for a queer person whose gender presentation aligns with a feminine manner.

creating radical change, Christina Lares explained, "Our actions need to reflect our values. Instead of fighting to *get free*, let's *be free* with each other now and work from there…the rest will follow" [emphases hers]. Christina explained that it is essential for activists in leadership roles to resist perpetuating hierarches as a means to justify accomplishing movement goals, and to center self-care strategies as a means to heal from trauma and avoid doing harm toward their fellow activists. She suggests that social movements are not simply about political opportunities and mobilizing resources, but they primarily require bringing into movement spaces values of love, respect, and justice that activists like Christina learn throughout their lives before entering activist spaces. As Christina emphasizes the difference between getting free and being free now, she advances a nonlinear, nonbinary theory of social transformation. Rather than fighting now for freedom in a potential future, but changing how activists relate to one another, Christina suggests that freedom is a plurality, ongoing, fluid, and visible in moments of solidarity, compassion, joy, and resistance.

The emphasis on a decolonial stance in the community education work of CLRJ provides a unique footing for understanding the reproductive lives of Latinxs within a historical context that the organization intentionally politicizes. Through CLRJ's strategies, Latinx communities analyze the reproductive potential of Latinxs as threats to the U.S. colonialist imaginary. Rather than fight for integration into mainstream reproductive politics, Latinx advocates in the movement for reproductive justice demonstrate that women of color have long lived the reproductive justice lens via alternate life worlds as the United States developed as a settler colonial state. As such, the organization's emphasis on historical and intersectional analyses—creating politics where Latinx dehumanization does not exist—emerges as a nuanced strategy in dismantling the cultural logics of disaggregation prevalent in mainstream politics as a form of

epistemic disappearance of Latinx subjectivities. CLRJ connects the policing of the reproduction of people of color with community-based policy advocacy, enacting key features of Latinx feminist politicmaking strategies: the organization rewrites history from the lens of the disappeared, exerting self-determination by mapping individual and collective needs and rights, and by building political power via organized collective action that straddles both difference and sameness.

Relational Practices

While decolonial practices were important for politicizing and mobilizing Latinx supporters and allies, I found that relational strategies created flexible politics that expand the meanings of solidarity within and across identity categories. The reproductive justice movement emerged in 1994 as Black women's collective response to the erasure of intersectionality in mainstream reproductive rights (Ross et al. 2017). As a result, various longstanding members of the movement for reproductive justice in California explained that being in the movement requires holding themselves accountable to the ways in which marginalized and dominant groups experience various degrees of privilege and oppression in different contexts. These relational analyses further demonstrate the need to challenge static identity categorization.

An important aspect of these relational practices involves first understanding the motivations for participation in intersectional activism. Former Community Engagement Coordinator, Mayra Yñiguez's, path to reproductive justice echoes many of the frustrations due to the non-intersectional practices that other members of the movement expressed:

> I left PP [Planned Parenthood] because I got tired of being overlooked; I got tired of the institutional racism. PP is the kind of org that says it supports diversity, but what that

> really means is they may have one woman of color in the office doing all the race and immigration work […] I got tired of being asked to leave my race and immigration status at the door in gender spaces, then to forget gender when talking about race and immigration. I wanted a space that embraced all of me. So I came into reproductive justice.

The desire to find a political home that builds on a lens committed to seeing marginalized people as whole selves is the central motivation for participation in the intersectional movement for reproductive justice. Mayra points to one of the many shortcomings of mainstream perceptions of diversity, where diversity is an organizational label, not an ongoing organizational politic, resulting in those who are deemed 'different' or 'diverse' doing the bulk of the work to uphold the organization's diversity authenticity (Luna 2017). Mayra's description of her experiences working for Planned Parenthood came shortly after a 2014 media backlash against a *New York Times* article[58] on the future of Planned Parenthood. The article, featuring an interview with a prominent representative of the organization, discussed Planned Parenthood's 'new' decision to move beyond narrow pro-choice language to discuss the importance of access, a strategy that would require attention toward the structural factors that prevent women—particularly women of color, low-income women, undocumented women, disabled women, incarcerated and formerly incarcerated women, and gender non-conforming women—from making autonomous decisions about their bodies, regardless of the choices themselves.

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[58] Calmes, J. 2014. "Advocates Shun 'Pro-Choice' to Expand Message." *The New York Times*. Retrieved August 5, 2014 (http://www.nytimes.com/2014/07/29/us/politics/advocates-shun-pro-choice-to-expand-message.html?_r=1). The dynamics of this contentious event between Planned Parenthood and reproductive justice advocates is discussed is greater detail in Patricia Zavella's forthcoming book, *Our Bodies, Our Rights: Women of Color and the Movement for Reproductive Justice*. New York, NY: New York University Press.

Enacting colonial logics of discovery akin to terra nullius, the article failed to mention that this political strategy is not a twenty-first century development. Women of color created an intersectional, reproductive justice movement in 1994 that centers the roles of race, gender, class, sexuality, and immigration for women of color by advocating for self-determination and choices outside of a pro-life/pro-choice binary. Moreover, women of color, some of whom were central political actors in the emergence of the reproductive justice framework, were doing this intersectional activism in other movements for generations previously to Planned Parenthood's strategic shift. Shortly after publication of the *New York Times* article, reproductive justice organizations across the country, along with reproductive rights allies, and women of color attorneys and academics banded together to write an open letter[59] to Planned Parenthood demanding recognition of the experiences and contributions of women of color in reproductive politics.

The tensions that emerge from longstanding collaborations with Planned Parenthood were a recurring topic of discussion among CLRJ staff. As Gabriela and I drove to the CLRJ office after an anti-militarization poetry event in Chinatown organized by an anti-imperialist feminist group in the fall of 2015, she divulged how pro-choice messaging is often at odds with the empowerment of young parents, for example, when adopting a reproductive rights framework. Gabriela recalled a contentious meeting with Planned Parenthood and other reproductive justice organizations:

[59] Simpson, M. 2014. "Reproductive Justice and 'Choice': An Open Letter to Planned Parenthood." *RH Reality Check*. Retrieved August 5, 2014 (http://rhrealitycheck.org/article/2014/08/05/reproductive-justice-choice-open-letter-planned-parenthood/).

> They wanted us to help promote pro-choice messages that showed abortion as a solution to preventing teen pregnancy, but in our communities [Latinxs] there are a lot of young parents and we [CLRJ] do a lot of work to challenge the stigma around young families. We have policy work just on creating more services and resources for young parents to succeed. So we had to tell them again that it's not about a choice, but about choices. You don't have to throw one community under the bus to advocate for another.

Gabriela's rejection of a binary perspective between abortion care and young parenthood is a concrete example of the importance Nira Yuval Davis' transversal politics and Patricia Hill Collins' flexible solidarity. Gabriela and other members of CLRJ do not view these issues at odds, but rather, as part of a larger mosaic of much-needed social justice work. Afro-Dominicana writer, artist, and sociocultural critic, Zahira Kelly-Cabrera (commonly known on social media as @Bad_Dominicana), voiced a similar critique of the narrowness of the reproductive rights frame in a Twitter post on October 11, 2018:

> reproductive rights is also: when youre being systemically stamped out, erased. We put another dominican and native hawaiian child out her in the face of physical and cultural genocide. its not just abortions. its the right to still be here.

Successfully advocating for abortion care while increased resources for young parents and systematically addressing the erasure of communities of color through reproductive oppressions requires that reproductive rights organizations like Planned Parenthood remain rooted in their ongoing work while shifting to recognize the disempowering implications of single-issue frameworks.

While tensions and coalitions between reproductive justice and rights activists are ongoing, the difficulties between intersectional and non-intersectional politics also existed

among Latinxs. When Senior Policy Manager, Myra Durán, lobbied Latino male-identified legislators to repeal the Maximum Family Grant Rule, she explained how Latinx communities also erase the messiness of lived realities in favor of non-intersectional politics:

> I felt like there was a bit of a disconnect with certain legislators, especially Latino [male] legislators, in seeing that this was important. At CLRJ we tried to mainstream it for them, how do you mainstream MFG as being a Latino issue? They're not going to care about this if they think it's a women's issue.

Mayra Yñiguez's experiences with Planned Parenthood and Myra's Durán's detailing of the resistance on the part of Latino legislators to acknowledge the MFG Rule as a Latinx issue reflects what Kimberlé Crenshaw terms "intersectional disempowerment," (1991) where women of color experience their belonging in multiple subordinated groups as conflicting political agendas requiring that they separate their political energies. This type of disempowerment is only possible by advancing political ideologies that disaggregate experiences into bounded categorical measures for difference that are forced into preexisting non-intersectional social movements. The idea of mainstreaming reflects CLRJ's focus on political consciousness as a process, where, as Myra explained, they initially "meet people where they are," to make the MFG Rule, for example, a Latinx issue, and over time, CLRJ guides their partners to understand the MFG Rule and Latinx issues broadly as intersectional. From this brainstorming, Myra and Ena Suseth Valladares, Director of Research, gathered statistical information demonstrating that Latinx families were the most affected by the MFG Rule. Susy Chávez Herrera, Communications Director, implemented this information into a press release following California Governor Jerry Brown's revised budget that did not include funds to repeal the MFG Rule:

> As a reproductive justice organization that works at the intersections of race, class, gender, and immigration status we know that California's MFG policy is especially devastating to our Latino communities […] According to the California Department of Social Services data, 58 to 60 percent of all households affected by the MFG are Latino households.

After another failed attempt to repeal the bill due to the reported lack of funds, Myra recounted that the messaging shifted from a focus on child poverty to reproductive autonomy influenced by the increased attention toward the *No Más Bebés* film:

> We started doing more work with *No Más Bebés*. I started messaging around the fact that these two things [sterilization and family caps policies] are inextricably linked with the historical ramifications and the historical sterilization of Latinas. Well, now MFG is the current iteration of it because the fact that you're saying that poor women, Latina women, on CalWORKs don't have the decision-making power that any other woman has, that's just a form of sterilization to me.

Myra described how policymakers and staffers were shocked to hear her and partner organizations frame the MFG Rule as an extension of sterilization rather than childhood poverty. She went on to explain a key political and epistemological implication of this new framing: "So we really tried to center our women, not that we don't care about children, but we felt that women were getting thrown under the bus, *just like always"* [emphasis hers]. Interestingly, Myra's analysis suggests that the discourses surrounding both abortion and mainstream child poverty advocacy can fulfill similar functions—a disappearance of women's reproductive self-determination. The strategic collaborations between the creators of the documentary film and CLRJ staff created a powerful counter-narrative for demonstrating the extent to which the

fertility of poor and immigrant Latinas are equally threats to white nationalism. As Myra later recounted, it was important that the repeal MFG coalition note the seeming hypocrisy of California legislators in proclaiming the state as a beacon of reproductive rights while mandating the MFG Rule for over twenty years. Importantly, this hypocrisy is only visible from an intersectional lens, a form of politicmaking where reproductive politics are not synonymous with abortion wars.

Making Latinx feminist politics that center relational analyses is an embodied experience. Every year CLRJ mobilized Latinxs from across California for a day-long retreat where they lobbied legislators in the state capitol. Central to this training was demystifying the political process for Latinxs given that the process often discourages participation from poor and working-class communities of color. CLRJ staff encouraged participants to share their personal experiences with reproductive inequalities to remind their legislators of the daily realities of this policy.

Over one hundred Latinxs' voices buzzed in the halls of the Capitol building in Sacramento during the CLRJ-organized Advocacy Day of 2016. Within this group, a new mother, who was accessing public assistance at the time, walked to each lobby visit carrying a large and heavy beige and maroon box that was provided to her by Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Food and Nutrition Service Program to pump and store her breast milk. Soft-spoken and shy, when it was her turn to speak during each visit, the room was silent as she held up the box and explained the daily realities of family caps policies like the Maximum Family Grant Rule on poor Latina mothers: "I carry this box around every day and it's giving me back pains, not to mention the weight of my baby. I see how people stare at me when I have it and I know I'm supposed to feel guilty. I'm doing the best I can to do what's best for my baby, but

politicians are the ones who need to do better." In these moments, this poor, young, Latina mother was the embodiment of la Latina welferera from the legislators' gaze, literally carrying the weight of the stigma of this image with her every day. And yet, in this moment, she physically and symbolically created space in legislative offices for her own and her community's humanity, for her undeniable right to exist and have justice. More importantly, through this physical and discursive politicmaking, she creates a new ideological terrain that shifts the shame to the state actors doing the shaming. She brings that box to the feet of the State, releases herself of its weight, and describes how the MFG Rule impinges on her ability to raise her children in healthy and safe conditions. In this way, she creates a politic that rejects the perpetuation of "intersectional capitalism" in which the morality of women of color is constructed through the rationale of the labor market (Gurusami 2017).

The relational practices evidenced in CLRJ's activism demonstrate the importance of continuously developing intersectional analyses that shift the institutional mechanisms for non-intersectional politics. Rather than identify whiteness as the primary source of the inequalities that members of the reproductive justice movement fight against, CLRJ demonstrates that as they maneuver multiple political contexts, the threats to Latinx feminist politicmaking change because sources of privilege and oppression shift as well. White women engaged in non-intersectional reproductive rights, Latino male legislators who advance policies that ignore gender dynamics, and a broken welfare system that disproportionately stigmatizes and disempowers Latinx families each work to disappear the intersectional realities that members of the reproductive justice movement center. While holding these various political actors accountable to intersectional analyses is an ongoing commitment for members of CLRJ, these tensions do not prevent the organization from building coalitions with non-intersectional organizations and

actors, instead, opting to practices values of compassion in contrast to the prevalence of call-out culture, where CLRJ "meets people where they are."

Cultural Shift Practices

Most people in the United States know little about reproductive justice as a framework or movement, often conflating it with mainstream reproductive rights rhetoric. This invisibility is critical because collective framing processes in social movements not only construct meaning around social events and political actors, but they also create collective identities around which participants mobilize (Benford 1993; Goffman 1963; Snow et al. 1986; Snow and McAdam 2000). Therefore, much of the work that CLRJ does is self-described "cultural shift work," changing public discourse about reproduction and the convergence of race, class, age, gender, sexuality, immigration, and other ideologies in reproductive politics. These cultural shift practices do the critical work of making salient the messiness in the humanity of marginalized communities that are diluted in discussions of negotiating differences between reproductive rights and reproductive justice activists. Cultural shift practices also highlight the complexities of intra-group relations when making politics. As staff explained to me on several occasions, advocating for policy changes will have limited impact without changing the way that people think about society and their place within it. Audre Lorde's powerful lesson, "There is no such thing as a single-issue struggle because we do not live single-issue lives," (1982) highlights how some social movements and research construct a warped view of social realities that treat grievances, frames, and strategies tied to racism, sexism, classism, and xenophobia, for example, as relatively discrete phenomena.

During my second week of fieldwork in 2014, I received my first lesson on the distinction between reproductive rights and reproductive justice, and its relevance for understanding social justice values as always in flux, a continuous learning process. As Gabriela Valle and I looked through past project materials to familiarize myself with the organization's history, she shared:

> So much of what we do is cultural shift work. We have to RJ [reproductive justice] the reproductive rights folks, the Latino male politicians, we RJ the funders, our community. We're not just fighting with the Right, we're fighting with liberals too—with the people who are supposed to be on our side. That's what makes what we do *more* important. [emphasis hers]

Gabriela's use of reproductive justice (RJ) as a verb rather than only a noun is telling because it suggests that reproductive justice is not simply a lens, it is an active engagement with practicing values to fully see marginalized communities. Importantly, Gabriela deconstructs a political context in which it is not her racial, gender, class, or immigrant identities that are barriers to mobilization. Rather, the barriers are the constellation of actors involved in reproductive politics who perpetuate collective identities invested in muting difference rather than embracing it. Disrupting the false Right/Left political binary, Gabriela emphasizes the responsibility that comes with being a politicmaker: practicing relational values of love and accountability to capture holistic representations of Latinx subjectivities disappeared in conservative and social justice politics.

Making politics to rewrite the mainstream scripts of non-intersectional politics regularly involved Reproductive Justice 101 workshops where participants learned the building blocks of the RJ framework, how it differs from both reproductive rights and reproductive health, and the

importance of holistic representations erased from collective memories through settler colonialism. Gabriela Valle and all other staff would begin these introductory workshops by drawing a large cartoon of a person on butcher paper with lines surrounding the body. They asked participants to imagine that the cartoon represents them and then to write on each line which identities affect their ability to experience autonomy over their bodies and their lives. During each workshop, participants each walked up to the butcher paper and filled the blank lines with a mosaic of social forces that structure inequalities and community-building: geographical location, religion, sexual assault, etc. This activity allowed participants to recognize the need for the intersectional lens offered by reproductive justice because people experience social issues differently based on the connections between their social locations. Staff continuously explained the importance of respecting and engaging with everyone's lived realities by "meeting people where they are." For example, Gabriela explained that rather than judge a Latina mother in Merced, California for drawing on public assistance, we should recognize that if the unemployment rate in rural Central California is much higher than in other parts of the state, people may have fewer opportunities to secure employment and are thus forced to seek other resources. Through these trainings, Gabriela and other staff and chapter leaders demonstrate that making politics rooted in compassion and relational analyses are integral to changing discourses surrounding difference in organized politics.

One of the most direct strategies for resisting non-intersectional politics and thus highlight the messiness of social life was through collecting and sharing stories from Latinxs where they explain their experiences with reproductive inequalities, a project CLRJ refers to as Speaking Story. Storytelling is bedrock of Latinx feminist praxis and a longstanding tradition in protests for making grievances heard and foment coalitions (Latina Feminist Group 2001;

Polletta 2006). As described in the Speaking Story toolkit created by staff and later revised by chapter leaders to teach other Latinxs to collect and share reproductive justice stories:

> Speaking Story is a story collection project that houses our efforts to witness/listen to, acknowledge, and document a wide variety of Latinas/xs' stories. Speaking Story allows us as Latinas/xs to tell our stories in our own words, on our own terms, rather than having news and social media along with public thought misrepresent us by spreading hurtful and dangerous stereotypes about our communities.

History is often told from the perspectives of dominant groups (Dunbar-Ortiz 2014; Zinn 1980). In the same way, the perspectives on reproduction that receive the most attention and the most resources are those from reproductive rights framing. Thus, the Speaking Story project attempts to humanize social realities and inequalities through a diverse array of testimonials. This epistemological erasure makes the storytelling of Latinxs all the more important for reconstructing collective memories, where Latinxs have the autonomy to recover their own histories as a means to fight for freedom now.

The messiness of social life evinced in CLRJ's strategies necessarily reflects the complex experiences of its members. To provide a poignant example, during the past eight years, Myra Durán has been CLRJ's primary representative on their policy initiatives and strategies. Myra entered the organization as an intern with no previous experience with policy advocacy, so she makes it a point to share her path to CLRJ and to teach policy in a way that demystifies the process for poor and working-class Latinx communities, especially young Latinas. Three years prior to joining the CLRJ staff, Myra joined a transnational, multiethnic feminist group engaged in anti-imperialist activism dedicated to abolishing oppression in all of its forms. Among one of the many analyses forwarded by this group is a criticism of nonprofit organizations as encompassing one of the largest economies globally that impedes radical social transformation by appeasing government and foundation

demands (INCITE! 2017). Myra has maintained involvement with both groups, which prompted me to ask how she negotiates seemingly opposing commitments to social justice. Myra explained:

> I'm an anti-imperialist feminist. And so there is this conversation about, 'We're not going to win change or power through legal means or civil processes.' And so you know, it's often hard for me. When I started at CLRJ, I had to negotiate that with my own personal beliefs. I've been able to kind of be okay with doing this work and slowly loving this work because I see that it has direct impact on the people. [Policy] is seen as not being radical enough or it's not the revolution. Yes, it's not the end all, be all […] but it is a harm-reduction strategy when you think about it. I'd rather be doing policy for us in our community to reduce any extra harm.

Myra's story and Christina Lares' earlier point about getting free rather than fighting to get free, demonstrate the need to disrupt ongoing binary logics surrounding reform and revolution. Myra, Christina, and several other members of the movement for reproductive justice voice important reflections on the limitations of nonprofit work. However, Myra suggests that the ways in which she moves between reformist and radical spaces—something that I found very common among many members of CLRJ—suggest that it is possible to bring the politics (e.g. the passion, principles, and values) of radical activism to the politicmaking that happens in reformist spaces as well. The ways in which Latinx feminists traverse the borders of nonprofit and radical spaces suggest that rather than viewing nonprofit activists as simply complicit in reproducing normative logics, feminists of color are straddling various social movements and leaning into the messiness of politicmaking.

Controlling images of Latinx communities reveal the extent to which Latinxs are understood first and foremost as both profitable and disposable, worthy of not much more than disappearance. Moreover, as I discussed in Chapter 3, the politics surrounding Latinx

immigration, and the racialization processes at work, have resulted in the construction of the Mexican immigrant as a state-sanctioned caricature of undocumented immigration, for example. CLRJ's cultural shift work signals a significant aspect of contesting the disappearing function of controlling images because in order for the violence wrought by these images to cease to exist, people must be able to imagine Latinxs beyond the confines of these caricatures—to see Latinxs as whole beings and not discreet markers of difference to "deal with" in politics. Most of CLRJ staff and their member base come from working-class or poor backgrounds; therefore, in these activist spaces, they draw on their experiences and those of their communities as experts in intersectional politicmaking. They work to enact the strategies necessary for Latinx communities to exist in places of their own creating beyond the ideological violence of controlling images and discourses of difference in social movements that erase the necessity of fluid politicmaking.

WHY POLITICMAKING IN REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE MATTERS

The question of difference has been a persistent concern for activists and scholars of U.S. collective action. Intersectional feminist scholarship demonstrates the analytical and political potentialities that rest with thinking about difference as a process of espousing and building community based on relational principles of intersectionality rather than as identity categorization (Hill Collins 1998, 2017; Luna 2016; Moraga and Anzaldúa 1981; Terriquez 2015; Yuval-Davis 1997; Zavella 2016, forthcoming). Inspired by the practices and theorizing of Latinx feminists, I use politicmaking to propose doing research with the guiding assumption that building movements that reflect the realities of intersecting oppressions is essential to liberation (although necessarily difficult). Within the purview of this guiding assumption, it becomes clear that the problem of collective action is not difference—nor is it the bodies that occupy social

locations deemed as "different"—but rather, the problem is the cultural and material dynamics driving the reluctance to create social movements and research vested in intersectional analyses and actions. United States politics reify binary logics that construct power dynamics as bounded by group identities, whereby, coerced sterilization and abortion care, for example, become "women's issues," mass incarceration becomes a "Black issue," and family separation via deportation becomes an "immigrant issue." As a result, the frames and tactics birthed from non-intersectional activisms reflect a tendency toward universalism that ignore the distinct experiences and perspectives that come from different social locations (Hill Collins 1990, 2000; Yuval-Davis 1997). The marshaling of non-intersectional politics requires that people on the margins disaggregate their own humanity as collateral damage for the sake of building universalist political power. I suggest that partial recognition of the oppressions experienced and resistance enacted by those on the margins is simply erasure by another name.

My findings support existing research on the translation work that takes place in the reproductive justice movement (Alvarez et al. 2014; Zavella 2016). Translation is undoubtedly important, since these projects bring attention to the importance of legibility in mobilization efforts, making marginalized social actors and their grievances legible to the State, non-intersectional organizations, funders, legislators, and their own communities broadly defined. Through Latinx feminist politicmaking, I propose that intersectional activisms are about making grievances on the margins palatable to the mainstream and also about affirming erased subjectivities to lay the groundwork for different social worlds.

This chapter thus far reveals three types of practices—decolonial, relational, and cultural shift—that Latinx feminists engage in to make intersectional politics. These practices are mutually constitutive, evidence of the need to engage in practices that move in nonlinear paths

between the past, present, and futures. Importantly, the mobilization practices of interest here align with the larger motivations of the movement for reproductive justice as well as with women and queer of color feminisms across time and space: decolonizing violent discourses of marginalized communities deemed as commonsense knowledge, building solidarity based on difference because liberations are bounded together, and creating holistic accounts of marginalized subjectivities and political futures (Arredondo et al. 2003; Latina Feminist Group 2001; Moraga and Anzaldúa 1981). These strategies represent principles indicative of feminist theorists of color. For example, the historiographic work of Latinx feminisms builds on the strength of oral tradition central to Indigenous peoples as a method for cultural preservation (Blackwell 2011; Fregoso 2003; Latina Feminist Group 2001; Pérez 1999). As I discuss in Chapter 2, this process of "retrofitted memory" (Blackwell 2011) is essential to Latinx feminisms because it recovers their contributions in political organizing and academia and it also emphasizes the heterogeneity among Latinxs based on markers of difference that are misrepresented in some academic research on Latinx communities.

My focus on these practices also further lends credence to existing research on the micro-level process of mobilization (Luft 2015a, 2015b; Viterna 2013). Existing scholarship on macro-level analyses is important for recognizing that certain political contexts and network ties are more likely to spur mobilization than others, that the formation of collective identities are important for maintain participation over time, and that partaking in mass mobilization changes individual identities (McAdam 1982; McCarthy and Zald 1977; Tilly 1978). By honing in on how Latinx feminists make sense of their fluid identities, their perceptions of mainstream reproductive politics, and their responses to these perceptions in the practices outlined in this chapter, I point to the normalization of identity disaggregation across social groups and the

ongoing struggle to contest this normalization. Many of the members of CLRJ have come-of-age following the emergence of ethnic and gender studies in the academy following the civil rights movement. In fact, most of CLRJ staff earned bachelor's degrees and master's degrees in variations of ethnic studies, public health, and gender studies. The emergence of the reproductive justice movement as one intended to correct rampant non-intersectional politics is indicative of a political moment where engaging with notions of difference is increasingly central to making politics.

Members of CLRJ and other feminists of color continuously work to teach others how to think and act intersectionally in movement spaces *and outside of them* within a political system founded on settler colonialism and white heteropatriarchy that actively works to erase intersections. This cognitive, physical, and emotional labor occurs in addition to all of the commonplace demands of under-resourced nonprofit work, meaning that reproductive justice activists are doing significant additional, uncompensated emotional labor. As Executive Director of CLRJ, Laura Jiménez, explained during the organization's 2018 fundraiser, "Women of color-led nonprofit organizations receive less than two percent of all funds allocated to nonprofit organizations." I continuously observed that the systematic lack of financial and emotional support for the labor that women of color, trans, and gender nonbinary people of color do often results in heightened anxiety, depression, various physical ailments, and ultimately burnout. I suggest that the mental and physical health dynamics of doing intersectional activism are under-examined areas to explore the barriers to organizing on difference.

Further, while tactics such as voter engagement and lobbying certainly do not constitute radical politics given the impossibilities that lie with the institutionalization of nonprofit sector work, the principles and values of intersectional self-determination central to reproductive justice

are in fact radical in their imaginations and possibilities. The contentious politics surrounding intersectional and non-intersectional activisms showcase the need to position flexible solidarity and transversal politics at the heart of sociological discussions of difference and collective mobilization. When discussing a book on community-based feminisms in Bolivia and the applicability of the reproductive justice lens outside of the United States at the CLRJ office, Policy Manager, Myra Durán, described the question at the root of Hill Collins' and Yuval-Davis' theories—what does it mean to successfully mobilize on difference—as "the million-dollar question for activists." Therefore, the role of difference in collective action is not simply of interest for academics, but also for community-based advocates, activists, and organizations.

As an analytic approach, politicmaking suggests the need for research that leans into the discomfort of messy theories of the Self and the social. Successfully doing collective mobilization that does not erase difference is definitely difficult; my intention is not to downplay this reality. But rather than asking marginalized activists to continuously teach others how to make themselves and their differences more agreeable to non-intersectional politics, I encourage sociologists of collective action to take seriously the perspectives of feminists of color and adopt theories of collective action as elastic, contested, and contradictory—as messy—to highlight the knowledge production of communities on the margins as blueprints for living in worlds without margins.

THE EVERYDAY POLITICMAKING OF LATINX FEMINISMS

"I'm the rose that came from the concrete."

—Cardi B

In *Black Feminist Thought*, Patricia Hill Collins gifts us a chapter on the need to rethink Black women's activism along two dimensions: a focus on group survival and institutional

transformation. In this chapter, Hill Collins advocates for social scientific research that takes seriously the resistance that Black women engage in as part of their everyday lives outside of formal activist spaces. Since Black women, nonbinary people of color, and women of color generally have historically and presently been excluded from social movement spaces, the quotidian ways in which they move through the world—showcasing that existence is indeed resistance—is of central importance. In the remaining pages of this chapter, I explore the "personal rebellions" (Hernández and Rehman 2002) of Latinx feminists in three spheres: on the streets, in homes that ain't ours, and in digital spaces. I focus on these cases, not because they offer exhaustive representations of Latinx feminist resistance, but because they offer us glimpses of the expansiveness of Latinx feminist movement, and perhaps most importantly, the messiness of resistance in challenging and reaffirming power dynamics. Rather than view these vignettes as opportunities to garner data to construct analyses, I suggest that these are sites of on-the-ground theorizing—roses rising from the concrete—in and of themselves beyond the scope of the academy.

On the Streets

The informal economy is a space where Latinx communities struggle for economic survival while also reshaping normative ideas about family formation and the urban landscape in which they are embedded. Street vending, in particular, has emerged as a topic of great interest among community organizers and academics alike. The influx of immigrant women from Latin America and Asia into the United States' informal economy nuances the meaning of deregulation within neoliberalism. The contributors of *Immigrant Women Workers in the Neoliberal Age* focus on the labor experiences of low-wage women, demonstrating that race, gender, citizenship, and class

identities intersect and produce distinct opportunities for navigating the informal economy. The book outlines the "labor disruptions" that women experience: "[…] interruptions in immigrant women's labor patterns due to the social and political processes resulting from neoliberal globalization" comprising "both 'for-pay' labor and gendered labor within the family" (2013 p. 2). Examining women in street vending, domestic work, elder care, and the garment industry, the strength of this book lies in weaving the oppressive and empowering aspects of women's lives within informal work. While past research argues that migration signals increased independence for women, this book demonstrates that immigration at times substitutes some inequities for others for women in low-wage, unregulated labor. Yet the same deregulation that allows for tenuous economic standing creates increased flexibility, permitting immigrant mothers to redefine the work/family balance binary that pervades scholarship and public discourse.

Within this volume, Lorena Muñoz provides an analysis of Latina immigrant street vendors that demonstrates collective motherwork as a powerful form of feminist resistance to the privatization of childcare in the United States. Consider the following excerpt from Muñoz's chapter centering, Renata, one of the immigrant street vendors she met during the course of her research:

> For Renata, street childcare has been a pathway to building a gendered network in her neighborhood. After her arrival in Los Angeles two years prior to my study, she started working for her cousin's street-vending business. She found street vending easy, although the preparation was at first overwhelming. She later decided to work in the garment industry, since she had experience in Mexico working for a seamstress. She also worked briefly as a domestic before discovering the she was pregnant and then returning to street vending. She obtained her own cart, causing friction with her cousin. She came to feel

> isolated in a city that was large and difficult to navigate; she was considering returning to Mexico when she found a way to join a group of women who sell together and take care of their children at the same time. Renata found it much easier to sell while other people were watching out for her child: "You don't know what great help are my *comadres* with Andrecito…Of course, here all of us help each other, and I even come with joy to work, knowing that I can bring my son with me. If I had another job—well, impossible. Who would take care of Andres? (2013, p. 137)

Renata's description of the function of communal mothering among street vendors highlights the value of othermothers and fictive kinship networks that Patricia Hill-Collins notes as central to the survival of Black women and their families (1990). Perceptions of street vending as simply an option of last resort occlude the agency in the decision-making of street vendors. Working in the informal economy offers flexibility in terms of work hours and allows mothers to bring their children to the workplace, children who often help with the work as they age. In these spaces, immigrant women offer each other unpaid childcare and invaluable emotional support, reflected in Renata going "with joy to work." This strategy for balancing mothering and paid work challenges the prevalence of the public/private sphere binary in current research on balancing motherhood and occupational demands, particularly among professional women.

In Homes that Ain't Ours

Domestic work, primarily performed by immigrant women of color across the United States, is often riddled with wage theft, stigma, demanding and unscrupulous employers, hazardous work conditions, little to no health benefits or retirement plan, and job insecurity. And yet, the domestic sphere is a critical site where Latinas engage in ingenious feminist practices of self-

determination. Mary Romero's seminal book, *Maid in the U.S.A.* (1992), demonstrates how global capitalism conditions the relations between employers and domestic workers in ways that have raced, classed, and gendered consequences. While the Chicanas in her study experienced significant inequalities at the hands of both employers and at times their husbands, Romero outlines strategic practices women used to advocate for themselves. Consider the following two excerpts from Mrs. Tafoya on negotiating pressures for unpaid labor and then Mrs. Fernandez on defining her professional role:

> I guess the niece came home. I knew the record player was playing and she was kinda—but I thought she was just tapping like you would [indicates with her hand on the table], you know. She was dancing and I guess the wax wasn't dry. She made a mess. I said to Mrs. Johnson [employer], I says I'm not going to clean that again. You get your niece to clean that. I did it once and it was beautiful. And I did it because nobody was here and I knew that it would dry right. So if you want it redone you have your niece do it. And she says but you're getting paid for it. I says yes, I got paid for it and I did it. (pp. 150-151)

> They [the employer's children] started to introduce me to their friends as their maid. "This is our maid Angela." I would say "I'm not your maid. I've come to clean your house and a maid is someone who takes care of you and lives here or comes in everyday and I come once a week and it is to take care of what you have messed up. I'm not your maid. I'm your housekeeper. (1992, p. 155)

In the first vignette, Mrs. Tafoya challenges assumptions of Latina domestic workers as submissive and disposable. Refusing to perform unpaid labor, Mrs. Tafoya advocates for herself as a worker and a human deserving of dignity and appreciation of her labor. Rather than

extending her workday, she shifted the onus on to her employer's niece, rejecting the ideological justifications for the exploitation of immigrant women of color in the United States. Similarly, Mrs. Fernandez demonstrates the power of self-definition in sustaining relationships with her employer's children. She is aware of the stigma that the maid and cleaning lady images carry, and the disempowering effects they have in dehumanizing immigrant women of color. As such, Romero suggests that she frames herself as an expert rather than a maid subject to the whim of her employer's demands. Mrs. Tafoya and Mrs. Fernandez engage in creative strategies to center their humanity within contexts purposely created to dehumanize them.

In Digital Spaces

Latinx feminists, like other communities on the margins, use social media avenues, such as Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, and podcasts to make spaces for self-expression, community-building beyond physical and geographical constraints, gathering and disseminating information, and "life-sustaining practices in the face of community, extrajudicial, and state violence" (Hunter, Pattillo, Robinson, and Keeanga-Yamahtta 2016, p. 46). While social media venues are increasingly central to social movements, they are also sites for individual resistance. The podcast, *AnzalduingIt*, co-created by best friends and doctoral candidates in Chicana/o Studies at UCLA, Angélica Becerra and Jackie Cáraves ,"talks about what it's like to live in the borderlands as queer Latinxs on a budget." The podcast tackles everyday issues related to queerness, racism, patriarchy, surviving graduate school, life as an artist, family dynamics, popular culture, and horoscopes, to name a few. The podcast, among many of its implications, demonstrates the ways in which chisme (gossip) is a powerful form of resistance. The information sharing that takes place while chismeando about life, particularly when sharing

experiences with systemic and interpersonal violence, becomes invaluable information to negotiate survival but also as a means of feeling connected to communities of choice. The podcast also provides an avenue to encourage self-reflection among Latinxs and continue to grow personally and build an accountable politic invested in liberation for all.

For example, in the August 21, 2017 episode, "Calling Out Racist Tíos & Joanne the Scammer Disease," Angélica and Jackie discuss the events and aftermath of the white supremacist rally that took place in Charlottesville, Virginia from August 11-12, 2017. Importantly, as non-Black people of color, they discuss concrete everyday actions to resist the anti-Blackness that motivated the rally.

> *Angélica*: I know who's listening to this and I want you to know that it's going to be okay. At least staying in my own lane means that I'm going to keep doing my work and that I'm going to keep challenging my racist tíos, you know [laughter]? I don't have many challenges right now, but I'm up for it. I'm that person at Thanksgiving that's like ready [laughter]—
>
> *Jackie*: Yeah I mean, we were talking about this earlier and this is something that didn't just happen, this is Virginia, Charlottesville, 45. I was gonna say his name, but—
>
> *Angélica*: Thank you for stopping…
>
> *Jackie*: This isn't something that just happened, it's a manifestation of things that have been going down. It's exploding or peaking right now, but it's nothing new, so what are we doing in terms of daily basis in responding—not reacting, but responding—to those things like calling out racism when it's in front of us, right? Calling out those microaggressions, those macroaggressions, calling that out not just from white people,

but even within our own communities. Like you were saying, calling out your tíos and the anti-Blackness.

Angélica: Yes!

Jackie: And we do it to each other as people of color, right, but then coming together, what does that mean to educate our own people on what this looks like.

Angélica: I think, yeah exactly, and if you're sitting around the TV and *Primer Impacto* is on, or whatever, and your grandma says something like, "oh, it's because, they have every right to protest, America of the free and brave—I don't know how it goes—

Jackie: Free speech bulshit…

Angélica: Right, there's so many angles you could take on it, right? My first instinct was to call my mom and be like, "hey, this shit went down, what do you think?" And she was like "I can't believe they did that." And she was actually posting videos of the late-night host who came forward and said something about this and defended it. And I was really thankful because then she was engaging her friends. So it's not about going home and lecturing at your parents, or tíos, or abuelitas, about this, it's more about stopping that shit at the root when the comments are made. Anti-Blackness has so many shapes and forms in our own families. You can even start when a baby is born and someone in the family is bound to be like, "oh it came out lighter," or "it came out darker," this type of language needs to stop. This is how we begin to make assumptions about people based on colorism. I'm Latinx so I'm going to call it out in my own family and in my own community. If I see a Latinx talking shit like that, anti-Black shit, I'm going to call it out.

Angélica and Jackie use their platform to engage in conversations about anti-Blackness in a way that will likely resonate with their Latinx listeners. By mentioning popular news shows like

Primer Impacto, racist tíos and abuelitas, and common discussions about skin color among children, the hosts of *AnzalduingIt* crystallize concrete examples of everyday anti-Blackness. Angélica and Jackie went on to discuss middle-class Latinxs, or "Hispanics with a capital H" as they note, and the way that class privilege often makes people of color complacent and less empathic to racial injustices, especially if they are not personally affected by incidents like the rally in Charlottesville. By disclosing that they make it a point to call out their relatives and other Latinxs when instances of anti-Blackness occur, they model and normalize a powerful and concrete everyday practice of solidarity invested in anti-racist dialogue, rather than simply shaming as an end in itself.

The organized practices of CLRJ, the collective mothering of street vendors, the acts of self-determination by domestic workers in their employers' homes, and the digital work of Jackie and Angélica to address anti-Blackness in Latinx communities demonstrate the importance of continuing to negotiate differences within and across groups in pursuits of justice and liberation. Their actions ask us to consider: did we get here because of a resistance to practicing intersectional, messy politics, where marginalized communities are often viewed as divisive when advocating for their whole selves? The implications of organized and everyday resistance suggest the need for practices that combat non-intersectional politics, and communities on the margins cannot be collateral damage in the processes of trying to be and get free.

CHAPTER 5
Reflections on the Sociology of Latinx Gender and Migration

I was taught in the Cherokee way to believe that stories have power:
the power to inspire, the power to heal, the power to transform,
the power to incite new possibilities, in fact, to create new worlds.

—Maylei Blackwell,
¡Chicana Power! Contested Histories of Feminism in the Chicano Movement (2011)

The history of Latina feminisms in the U.S. is in many ways a history of dialectical movement between erasure and recognition. The very existence of Latina feminisms signals the urgency for recognizing the humanity of Latinas within violent social worlds comprised of intersecting oppressions. This dialectic was crystallized in the formal emergence of Chicana feminist movement in the 1960s as a response to the patriarchal notions embedded in nationalist Chicano activism and the racial exclusion of women of color from mainstream white feminisms (Arredondo et al. 2003; García 1997). To discredit this resistance, discussions of gender inequalities experienced by Chicanas and attempts to mobilize at the intersections of sexism and racism were often met with accusations of sexual promiscuity, treason, whitewashing, anti-family, and anti-cultural sentiments (Blackwell 2011).

In the academy, the erasure of Latina perspectives led to a major transformation in the early Chicano Studies framework in which feminist principles were infused into the field. Yet as Chicanas advocated for recognition of their experiences and knowledge within the nationalist and male-centered field and successfully shifted the discipline to Chicana/o Studies, Chicana feminist thought continuously faced exclusion from both women's and Chicano studies (Arredondo et al. 2003; Garcia 1997; Segura and Zavella 2007). As both theory and social justice praxis, the intersectional work of Latina feminist scholars demonstrates that oppressive

ideologies and institutions within a society, including but not limited to racism, ageism, sexism, homophobia, and classism, do not act independently, but are instead interrelated and continuously shaped by one another. Since the emergence of Chicana Studies, a rich interdisciplinary research agenda has developed examining the myriad experiences of various migrant groups across nation-states and within various institutions (Hondagneu-Sotelo 1999, 2001, 2000, 2003, 2011). The qualitative methods and intersectional theories of Chicana feminist scholars have been especially influential in sociological research on Latina/o migration—indeed, some of the most prominent sociologists of gender and Latina/o migration are Chicana feminist scholars—demonstrating the need to challenge outdated assumptions about identity, migration, and knowledge production (Blea 1997; Castillo 2014; Facio and Lara 2014; García 1997).

Within this context, the politics reflecting erasure and recognition in academe are especially crystallized in the trajectory of sociological research on gender and international migration. Preeminent scholars of gender and international migration have long decried the absence of gender analyses in the field prior to the 1980s (Gabaccia 1992; Hondagneu-Sotelo 2000, 2003, 2011; Mahler and Pessar 2006, Morokvasic 1984; Sassen 1984; Segura 1989). Previously, the experiences and perspectives of economically disenfranchised Mexican migrant men were taken for granted as the bases for research that sought to generalize about the experiences of all migrants, at the expense of women, children, middle-class migrants, non-Mexican communities, and gender-nonconforming people, among others. Scholars of gender and migration in the 1980s noted how the labor of women migrants (e.g. domestic work, sex work, and service work in the informal economy) did not fit prevailing ideas of work reflected in research of the time and therefore was excluded from economic analyses (Morokvasic 1984).

Migration policies, particularly in industrialized nations, initially limited migration to single workers and this, along with Western ideals of men as breadwinners and women as passive dependents, has also contributed to the omission of women and gender analyses in early migration research (Piore 1979). Others have noted that the rise of the second-wave mainstream feminist movement in the 1970s, along with increased migration rates during that time, incited increased interest in the migratory experiences of women (Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2000, 2003). This political moment led scholars to make urgent calls for investigations of gendered processes in migration because of the increasing yet neglected feminization of migration due to capitalist global expansion that uses poor women of the Global South to maximize profits while maintaining a steady supply of low-wage immigrant labor (Morokvasic 1984; Sassen 1984; Segura 1989). Others cited the balkanization of gender and migration research prior to the 1980s as reflective of perceptions of gender as a 'woman's issue' in academia; thus migration scholars glossed over important questions of migration as gendered. Hondagneu-Sotelo (2000, 2003) describes the initial stage of gender and migration research as focused on inserting women into the migration picture and thus reclaiming marginalized voices.

These examples within and outside the academy suggest the need to interrogate what I call *the politics of erased migrations* to provide an epistemological mapping of where the field of gender and migration has been and remaining opportunities for its expansion. The "tolerance for contradictions, a tolerance for ambiguity" (Anzaldúa 1987, p. 79) reflected in Chicana/x feminist thought is foundational to this project. In contrast to the positivist culture prevalent in much sociological scholarship that distorts feminist of color knowledge production, Chicana/x feminist theorizing questions mainstream notions of objectivity and universal theories. It is grounded in experiential knowledge, challenges mainstream representations of Latinx feminisms, and rejects

binary thinking and methods in favor of fluid and relational analyses (Delgado Bernal, 1998). The politics of erased migrations provides an analytical lens to theorize why and how the embodied experiences of Latinas are marginalized and misrepresented in academic research. Latinas experience various physical and symbolic migrations—across and within national borders, social and political contexts, identities, academic disciplines, methodologies, and social movements. Yet Latina feminist experiences, knowledge, and political movement largely remain at the margins of these borders. Why and how are holistic representations of these communities continuously erased from research on gender and migration? How do feminist perspectives claim recognition of their migrations amidst these erasures? What erasures remain in academic understandings of gender and migration?

The politics of erased migrations operate in various contexts and can be grouped along three modalities: erasures of lived experiences, knowledge, and social movements. In the academy, media, and public thought, the experiences of Latinas that center their perspectives and voices are largely ignored, often leading to one-dimensional misrepresentations of their lived realities. Not only are cisgender, straight Mexican-origin Latinas—the most represented Latinas—erased to the extent that they are often understood via lenses of stereotypes and controlling images, queer, indigenous, Afro-Latinas, and Central Americans are usually absent altogether from academic and public analyses, including some prominent research developed by Chicana feminists. Academic knowledge production is riddled with political debates centered on what types of knowledge are perceived as legitimate (Lowy and Baker 1987; Turner 2006). Dominant perspectives in these debates assume that researcher objectivity is possible and necessary for creating rigorous research. As a result, Latina-produced research—specifically,

Latina research with their ethnoracial communities—is often designated as subjective and therefore, lacking legitimacy (Gutiérrez y Muhs et al. 2012).

Amidst these academic debates, the predominantly qualitative methodologies employed by Latina feminists—including theorizing from experiential knowledge, and the use of poetry and fiction—are used to further invalidate their work. The social sciences reflect tensions between the presumed rigor and generalizability of quantitative methods over qualitative methods. Traditional disciplines like sociology, in their quest to privilege positivist and value-neutral perspectives toward research that reflect the histories of economically privileged white men in the academy (Comte [1853] 1998; Durkheim [1893, 1895] 2004; Parsons and Shils [1951] 2001; Spencer 1898; Turner et al. 2011), create firm boundaries that limit opportunities to expand modes of knowing in ways that interdisciplinary fields like Chicana Studies have flourished. As a result, the coupling of perspectives of Latina-produced research as subjective and broader concerns about the shortcomings of qualitative work presume Latina academic knowledge to be incompetent (Gutiérrez y Muhs et al. 2012).

Moreover, the Chicana movement of the 1960s and the current women of color-led movement for reproductive justice are poignant examples of the erasures women and queer people of color experience in social movement spaces when fighting for social justice at the intersections of various oppressions (Silliman et al. 2004). The erasures captured through the lens of the politics of erased migrations are significant for understanding the sociopolitical contexts in which perceptions of Latinas are created and how these multiplicitous erasures delimit the radical potentialities for imagining social worlds beyond our own where the ideas and experiences of Latinas and other oppressed communities are centered.

Focusing on gender research on Latina/o migration, the most publicized U.S. migrant group, I call for further integration of sociological and Chicana feminist perspectives on Latina/o migration to reinvigorate its interdisciplinary origins and crystallize the future agenda for the field in ways that continue to center the voices and experiences of marginalized communities. I argue that existing sociological scholarship has made significant contributions to current understandings of gender and Latina/o migration, yet there are opportunities to expand the field by prioritizing relational analyses over comparative research and including the contributions and lived realities of the movement for reproductive justice, queer, indigenous, Central American, and Afro-Latinx. While exploring all of the epistemological opportunities offered through the politics of erased migrations is beyond the scope of this chapter, I demonstrate its utility in bolstering relational approaches as a principal tenet of intersectionality.

I use the politics of erased migrations to interrogate how existing frameworks, in their intent to amplify the perspectives of some groups, create an effect that renders others invisible. I use this lens of erased migrations to provide a targeted review of the prominent research on gender and Latina migration. In the spirit of imagining social worlds vested in liberation for marginalized communities, I intentionally shift to the gender-inclusive term, Latinx, to refer to all people of Latin American descent. By adopting a gender non-binary term, I expand the parameters of gender analyses and continue the project of centering marginalized voices emblematic of the origins of Latina feminist thought and research on Latina/o/x gender and migration.

Given several existing comprehensive reviews of gender and migration studies and the current breadth of scholarship on gender and Latina/o migration with various methods, theories, and political interventions, this chapter does not seek to offer an exhaustive overview of the field

(see Curran et al. 2006; Donato et al. 2006; Hondagneu-Sotelo 1999, 2001, 2000, 2003, 2011; Mahler and Pessar 2006; and Segura and Zavella 2007 for exemplary reviews). Rather, I focus on key theoretical and empirical work on Latinx gender and migration to develop the politics of erased migrations as an analytical tool and demonstrate how it can expand a relational, intersectional sociology of Latinx gender and migration based on indigenous ways of knowing. I begin by outlining how intersectionality has traveled in the academy and how the politics of erased migrations lens furthers the mission of intersectionality through its expansion of relational research, organizing, and advocacy. I then outline existing research on gender and Latinx migration, first by providing the contexts of the origins and theoretical orientations of this subversive field, followed by a selected review of scholarship centered on issues of heteronormativity, reproduction, and the nation-state. I conclude with suggestions for future research focused on queerness, the movement for reproductive justice, and Central American experiences that can expand current gender and migration research. By tracing both the strengths and shortcoming of existing research on Latinx gendered migration experiences, I argue for a research agenda that can equally attend to current conditions while imagining new possibilities for social justice.

ON INTERSECTIONALITY AND RELATIONAL APPROACHES

Originating from the lived realities of women of color in the U.S, intersectionality theory was created as an analytical framework to account for the complex ways in which power relations manifest within and between mutually constructed systems of race, gender, class, sexuality, nation, and age (Crenshaw 1989; Collins 1990; Anzaldúa 1987). The focus on the interconnectedness of oppressive systems was intended to highlight how the experiences of

women of color are largely elided in policies and movements for racial justice, feminism, and class equality (Collins and Bilge 2016). As theories of intersectionality have traveled through the academy, activist spaces, and popular culture, contestations regarding its meaning, methodology, and interpretive community have gained traction (Carbado and Gulati 2013; Hancock 2016; Roth 2017).

One such debate centers on the applicability of intersectionality as a heuristic process and as a method. The core principles early scholars advanced included 1) a rejection of an additive approach that treats identities as variables to be added or omitted from the histories, social relations, and institutional processes that produced them; 2) a commitment to a relational, rather than comparative, approach that examines how sociocultural processes are comprised of fluid interactional and institutional arrangements that vary within social relations rather than primarily across falsely bounded identity categories; and 3) its commitment to social justice, which relies on the use of a deconstructive method that critically interrogates how intellectual frameworks, in their process of elucidating certain marginalized experiences such as the family and work experiences of cisgender Latinas, render invisible other oppressive conditions (e.g. queer family formations; racialized incarceration, detention and deportation; and sexualized governance and violence). This deconstructive method ensures that intersectional analyses avoid essentializing identities that treat all Latinx as equally disadvantaged (Collins and Bilge 2016).

By contrast, intersectional work has been taken up by many scholars (including migration scholars) as a grid where seemingly fixed identity categories are plugged in to identify axes of interconnectedness and their outcomes (see Hancock 2016 for an excellent discussion of this epistemological trend). The prevalence of this strategy reflects the continued stronghold of positivist theorizing in sociology. Many social sciences adopt some form (often multiple forms)

of positivism, with a common dedication to practicing the scientific method. In sociology, positivism is reflected in ideals of objectivity and value-neutral scientific inquiry to develop empirically testable and universal theories of the social world. Rooted in notions of Western 'progress,' early sociological theorizing including August Comte's ([1853] 1998) stage model of society, Durkheim's ([1893, 1895] 2004) analysis of social facts, Herbert Spencer's (1898) focus on the development of 'primitive' to complex societies with attention to the consolidation of power, and Parsonian ([1951] 2001) attempts to identify universal elements in society reflect linear models and a desire to reduce people to fixed categories for study. As such, binary logics have long been a bedrock of positivist research. The overreliance on contrasting categories (e.g. gay/straight; man/woman; Black/white) for purposes of classification reinforces the hierarchies implied in binary thinking, limits possibilities to understand social behavior outside of the boundaries of fixed categories, and reflects othering processes rooted in European colonialist practices.

Chicana/x and Latina/x feminists have highlighted the significance of relational analyses for intersectional theorizing as a means of decolonizing knowledge (Delgado Bernal 1998). Chicana/x and Latina/x feminist scholars across disciplines demonstrate that non-comparative gender research using oral histories, feminist ethnographies, autobiographies, *testimonio*, and *autohistoria-teoría* uncovers nuanced gender analyses (Latina Feminist Group 2001). Relational analyses reject binary logics in favor of a "both/and frame," meaning that the "[…] focus of relationality shifts from analyzing what distinguishes entities, for example, the differences between race and gender, to examining their interconnectedness" (Collins and Bilge 2016, p. 27). Relational analyses, through their focus on how power relations shift across time and space

based on the intersections of oppressive systems, exist in sharp contrast to the temptations toward universal theories of positivist thinking.

The multiplicity of identities, histories, and contexts embodied by mestizas is an indigenous-inspired challenge to the binaries wrought by colonization. Thus, mestiza[60] consciousness embraces ambiguity in ways that positivism is simply blind to; mestiza consciousness reflected in border theories demonstrates an acceptance and recognition of the strengths of living within contradictions, transforming ambivalence from these contradictions into a decolonial bridge between mestizas and indigenous ancestors (Anzaldúa 1987). Research on gender non-conforming people and womxn-identified[61] people is inherently always in relation to systemic manifestations of patriarchy, thus highlighting the importance of understanding gender as a system of inequality and power rather than categorical differences (Alarcón 1993;

[60] Mestiza refers to women of mixed Spanish and indigenous descent throughout Latin America. The general term, mestizo, is often used to designate mixed-race descendants from *indios* (people who have maintained an indigenous ethnic identity), reflecting unequal sociopolitical relations between mestizos and *indios*, where the former exerting dominance over the latter. While the term was originally imposed on mixed-race people by Spanish colonizers, the term has been embraced by Mexican-origin political activists and critical race scholars over time as a collective identity of resistance against the reverberating effects of colonization, reflecting an in-between physical and metaphysical status that manifests culturally, socially, and politically.
[60] My use of the term, "the choice-life binary" refers to a paradigm created and re-created by conservative and liberal debates, activism, policy advocacy, and academic research that essentializes the politics of reproduction in the U.S. as encompassing only perspectives that either support the criminalization or decriminalization of abortion. As the movement for reproductive justice explains, this binary framework erases the experiences of poor and working-class women of color. See Andrea Smith's 2005 article, "Beyond Pro-Choice Versus Pro-Life: Women of Color and Reproductive Justice," for more information on the pitfalls of this limiting framework for communities of color).

[61] I use the term womxn-identified to refer to people who identify with femininity and/or femaleness yet do not resonate with the "women" and "womyn" spellings due to the inherent patriarchy in the former and the history of transphobia in the later. The use of the x in womxn is often adopted by Latinx people to signal the subversive quality of the "x" given Spanish colonialist's attempts to remove it from the Spanish language given its roots in indigenous language.

Anzaldúa 1987; Arredondo et al. 2003; Blackwell 2011; Blea 1997; Castillo 2014; Facio and Lara 2014; Garcia 1997; Latina Feminist Group 2001; Moraga and Anzaldúa 2015; Segura and Zavella 2007; Zavella 1997; 2011).

A relational approach requires analyses of gender not as a set of binary differences for comparison, but rather as a set of relations that structure actions in ways that produce distinct and overlapping experiences across and within identities (Irby 2014). Moreover, a relational approach to gendered migration is crucial to understand complex processes such as transnationalism in ways that avoid U.S. ethnocentric assumptions. While the origins of assimilation theories reflected linear models of immigrant integration, such as the work of Alba and Nee (2003), a relational approach rooted indigenous knowledge as fluid and non-linear can capture the ebb and flow of immigrant lives in relation to individuals and institutions in homelands and hostlands.

While women and queer people of color have long developed relational frameworks, the critical distinction between comparative research that essentializes identity categories versus nuanced relational work bears repeating not only because mainstream migration research privileges fixed identity comparisons (García 2017), but also because existing erasures captured through a politics of erased migrations lens suggest the need to continue expanding theories of relationality, particularly as it relates to moving beyond a gender binary and the relationship between calls for immigration reform versus the liberation of all migrants. Though some research has begun to examine the connections across queer-identified Latinx (Acosta 2013), sociologists should account for social relations between and among queer-identified Latinx migrants, particularly those who are gender non-conforming.

Scholars of biopolitics and critical feminisms demonstrate that rights-based approaches, through their reformist engagement with existing bodies of governance, legitimate the existence of the very nation-states they seek to critique (Binion 1995; Clough and Willse 2011; Qureshi 2012). While the right for undocumented immigrants to hold driver's licenses, for example, is a significant gain that may alleviate some forms of everyday policing and exclusion, the politics of erased migrations necessitates an interrogation of what is lost when we focus primarily on national citizenship rather than focusing on demolishing the institutional arrangements within and between nation-states that perpetuate violence against indigenous, undocumented, and racialized communities. While the human rights movement has made some gains in advocating for marginalized communities across borders, its focus on legal institutions solidifies the hierarchical and Western qualities of the human rights framework that reflect the interests of male citizen-subjects and render it unable to address the violence toward undocumented immigrants who are often portrayed as sub-human.

Emblematic of the spirit of the proposed politics of erased migrations lens, Cacho (2012) interrogates the mechanisms through which human value is assigned and denied relationally at the intersections of race, gender, sexual, and national logics. For example, Cacho argues that when African Americans advocate for their civil rights, they necessarily extend representations of undocumented immigrants as criminals while simultaneously erasing indigenous peoples' original claims to what we now consider the Americas. Specifically, African Americans who support struggles for their civil rights as U.S. citizens while opposing immigrant rights reify the legitimacy of legal status as a marker of morality and deservingness. This perspective on African American relationships to U.S. law further clouds the use of U.S. law to justify the killing, rape, and displacement of indigenous peoples from their lands as foundational to the establishment of

the U.S. as a nation-state. How do we expand sociological research to examine the experiences of Latinx migrants as emblematic of the reverberating effects of colonization and the need for scholarship that theorizes about decolonization? While Chicana feminist scholarship draws on indigenous perspectives and experiences to advance theories of borderlands as colonial products (see Anzaldúa 1987; Facio and Lara 2014; Téllez 2014 for examples), many sociologists of gender and migration have largely omitted discussions of the role of colonization in shaping migratory inequalities (see Peña 2007 for a notable exception).

The origins of intersectionality, through its rejection of additive approaches in favor of relational analyses of oppressions and its continuous interrogation of power dynamics embedded in knowledge production, demonstrate the necessity to develop a politics of erased migrations lens that continues to examine how contributions toward certain representations of Latinx migrants may erase the existence of others subsumed in the category of 'Latinx migrant.' Expanding intersectional work by theorizing about erased migrations—where migrants traverse national borders, identities, and social worlds—can expand the terrain of relational work by moving beyond binary logics prevalent in current research and by shifting from a focus largely on immigration reform to one of systemic liberation. In the following section, I provide a selected review of notable scholarship on gender and Latinx migration both to highlight the contributions of the work in amplifying the voices of Latinx migrant communities and to demonstrate how the centering of some voices mute others, thus delimiting opportunities to envision holistic representations of Latinx communities.

DISMANTLING SOME ERASURES AND MAINTAINING OTHERS: THE TRAJECTORY OF GENDER IN LATINA/O MIGRATION STUDIES

A process of retrofitted memory marks the origins of gender and migration studies, where rather than simply 'insert' women into empirical renditions, early scholars interrogated the processes that allowed for their erasures in the first place (Blackwell 2011). While Piore (1979) famously and erroneously theorized about the economic motivations and consequences of all migrants—arguing that people temporarily migrate from poor to rich countries because they are recruited by industries to do undesirable work—by focusing only on men, Morokvasic (1984), Schwartz-Seller (1981), Rubbo (1975) and others argued for the need to analyze women's migratory experiences because women tend to experience more exploitation than migrant men. Women tend to have various motivations for migration that transcend simply following their husbands, and family dynamics change with migration (Palmer 1979; Pinto 1979).

Hondagneu-Sotelo (2000, 2003) notes that some early research approached analyses of women migrants through an overly simplistic 'add and stir' approach that measured "woman" as a variable rather than gender as a dynamic set of social relations; however, there were notable exceptions (Baca Zinn 1980; Ruiz 1987; Segura 1989). Some early scholarship, for instance, challenged assumptions of the U.S. labor movement by demonstrating through an intersectional lens how Mexican and Mexican-American women exercised agency not only in changing family dynamics, but actually led the struggles in their workplaces for better work conditions and higher pay (Ruiz 1987). Rather than portray these women as submissive within a largely patriarchal context, this research demonstrated how their ability to navigate their cultural context actually facilitated the unity needed to organize for change. Not surprisingly, sociologists and others who

first introduced gender analyses were met with indifference at best and hostility or marginalization at worst (Hondagneu-Sotelo 2000, 2003).

Analyses of gender and Latina/o migration dynamics have, since the field's inception, been influenced by theories of Chicana feminisms, globalization studies, and immigrant incorporation (Hondagneu-Sotelo 2000, 2003, 2011; Segura and Zavella 2007). Globalization studies of migration focus on the role of an expanding global economy in guiding migration experiences (Segura and Zavella 2007). These analyses demonstrate how industrialized nations exploit the labor and raw materials of nations in the global south in ways that expand capitalist imperatives and alter migration flows (Flores-González et al. 2013; Wallerstein 1976). This framework is useful in analyzing state violence against women migrants along the U.S.-Mexico border, transnationalism and the continuously expanding global division of labor, and identity formation (Fregoso 2003; Mohanty 1997; Segura and Zavella 2007). However, globalization studies tend to privilege macro analyses, which excludes micro- and meso-level analyses of global forms of resistance and the daily meaning-making processes by which migrants make sense of neoliberalism and global economic expansion.

In contrast, theories of immigrant incorporation and assimilation focus on the extent to which various immigrant groups integrate into U.S. society (Itzigsohn 2009; Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Portes and Zhou 1993; Telles and Ortiz 2008). Sociological research often draws on measures of educational attainment, economic mobility, political participation, and intermarriage (among others) to gauge how immigrants experience the receiving country (Alba and Nee 2003). While some research posits that immigrant groups can achieve socioeconomic mobility and enter the mainstream over time, others argue that different groups are guided by varying individual and group contexts that may facilitate upward mobility and assimilation for some while

relegating other groups to 'downward' or 'segmented' pathways that maintain their marginalization (Portes and Rumbaut 1996; Portes and Zhou 1993; Rumbaut and Portes 2001). And yet others argue for the importance of understanding distinct racialization processes in impeding the incorporation of some immigrant groups, particularly those of Mexican origin (Telles and Ortiz 2008). These theories have advanced understandings of migration processes and immigrant settlement patterns, yet scholars of Chicana/o Studies critique assimilationist perspectives, arguing for the importance of subaltern analyses that reject the imperialism embedded in the U.S. nation-state (Anzaldúa 1987; Garcia 1997; Segura and Zavella 2007).

In what follows, I provide a targeted overview of key works on gender and Latinx migration. For purposes of clarity, the review is organized thematically around issues of heterosexuality, reproduction, and the nation-state. However, there is extensive overlap in the implications of research outlined below (e.g. studies on transnationalism that implicate the nation-state extend theories of heteronormative family formation).

Heteronormativity in Gender and Latinx Migration Research

The interdisciplinary field of gender and Latina/o migration studies, past and present, largely focuses on the experiences of heterosexual migrants in work and family contexts[62]

[62] It is important to note that some gender research on Asian migration reflect nuanced relational analyses. Esther Ngan-Ling Chow's work on Asian American feminist consciousness, globalization, and transnationalism established intersectional work on Asian American women as a distinct field of study. Yen Le Espiritu's, *Asian American Women and Men: Labor, Laws, and Love* (1997), examines how immigration laws along with racist and gendered labor conditions make gendered dynamics between women and men fluid. Rhacel Parreñas (2009) argues for a reexamination of the role of feminism in gender and migration studies. As Parreñas explains, "feminist migration scholars have the responsibility of identifying and documenting the ways that gender inequalities shape people's experiences of migration, whether men or women" (2009, p. 6). She further argues "the mere recognition of gender is not necessarily a feminist practice. To do feminist migration studies, one needs to move from a simple enumeration of the

(Abrego 2009, 2014; Boehm 2012; Dreby 2006; Hondagneu-Sotelo 2001, 2002; Mahler and Pessar 2001, 2006; Menjívar 2000; Pedraza 1991; Segura 1989, 1991; Vasquez 2011). This pattern is rooted in both policy realities and empirical imperatives. As Menjívar et al. (2016) explain, U.S. immigration policies are distinct from other industrialized nations in that they encourage family-based migration to a greater extent. As such, analyses of migrant families serve as an analytical entry point by which to theorize about migration law, motivations and meaning-making processes for migration, and reconfigurations of family dynamics in sending and receiving countries. Moreover, because U.S. Latina/o migration "takes place in the context of families" (Menjívar et al. 2016, p.2), drawing on migrant families as unit of analyses allows scholars to theorize about families as microcosms of larger processes of immigrant incorporation, nationalism, kinships, relationships between individuals and institutions, class inequalities, social change, gender dynamics, sexuality, and racialization in ways that challenge U.S. assumptions of normative family structures.

Maxine Baca Zinn's work, at the intersections of race, migration, class, and gender, has been instrumental to the development of intersectional women of color feminist theories and the sociology of Latinas/os and gender and migration studies. Baca Zinn's research has fused sociological theories on race, gender, and migration with the oppositional consciousness characteristic of Chicana feminist thought to challenge views of Latinas/os in mainstream sociology. This research attempted to challenge preconceptions of Latina/o cultural inferiority, namely, stereotypical portrayals of immigrant women as traditionally bound by cultural

differences between men and women towards an examination of the structural inequalities that underlie experiences of migration" (2009, p. 10).

constraints and women's motivations for migration centered on following their migrant husbands or general family reunification purposes.

Baca Zinn (1982) challenged assumptions surrounding Chicanas/os as primarily family-oriented by demonstrating that any prevalence of family ties among Latina/o immigrants is best understood as responses to the structural forces of migration, rather than as emblematic of homogenizing interpretations of 'Latino culture.' Baca Zinn challenges mainstream research of her time that focused on Latina/o family dynamics as shifting from collective (read 'backward') in Mexico to nuclear (read 'modern') in the U.S. Foundational to the burgeoning research on gender and migration of the time, Baca Zinn fiercely criticized western theories of modernization that assumed the U.S. context as providing a gender egalitarian playing field. Much of Baca Zinn's work, by expanding on the unique racialization experiences of Latinas/os, advances sociology and Chicana feminist thought by moving discussions of race outside of the prominent white/Black binary to center the mestizaje[63] of Latinas/os as a unique case of racialization in the U.S.

Hondagneu-Sotelo's (1994) seminal book takes the 'functional' quality of gendered divisions of labor noted by previous scholars as a launching point to critique the power dynamics of gendered familial relations. Hondagneu-Sotelo takes seriously the use of the family as an entry point to analyze macro political and economic shifts between U.S.-Mexico relations and migration patterns by examining the extent to which migration itself is gendered. While Mexican

[63] Mestizaje refers to the dual processes of race mixture and cultural mixing between people of European (Spanish) and Latin American indigenous descent stemming from Spanish colonization. As Antonia Castañeda (1990) explains, these processes were made possible through the rape and coerced intermarriage and reproduction between Spanish soldiers and indigenous women; the attempts to eradicate indigenous religions, education, and languages via violent resocialization processes in missions; and the forcible integration of indigenous lands into slave economies and subsequently global capitalist societies.

undocumented migration is founded in U.S.-Mexico political and economic struggles, decisions about immigration are greatly affected by family and community dynamics. Men and boys may have more flexibility in immigration behavior compared to women and girls, yet the latter challenge these constraints through the development of gendered social networks.

Transnationalism studies challenge dominant theories of family formation by showing the extent to which migrant families exercise malleability as a form of survival that both supports and challenges gendered dynamics (Abrego 2014; Hondagneu-Sotelo 2002). Specifically, Chicana feminists argue that a mestiza political consciousness reflects a tolerance for ambiguity of place as mestizas continuously traverse multiple borders; a phenomenon Segura and Zavella (2007) refer to as "subjective transnationalism." Changes in the economic, social, and political landscapes of both the U.S. and Latin America beginning in the late twentieth century have created a demand for female immigrant labor (Mexican, Central American, and Asian) in the U.S., thus marking the advent of new transnational families in which women are migrating to the U.S. alone for work in hopes of remitting money to their families (Abrego 2014; Hondagneu-Sotelo 2002).

In light of macro shifts in U.S.-Mexico political and economic relations, there is growing attention to the relationship between transnationalism, gender, and family dynamics to understand how migrants maintain ties between sending and receiving countries (Abrego 2014, 2009; Boehm 2012; Dreby 2006, 2010; Hirsch 2003; Hondagneu-Sotelo 2002; Mahler and Pessar 2006; Segura and Zavella 2007; Zambrana 1995), yet there is little consensus regarding the extent to which transnationalism exacerbates gender inequalities. To safeguard against neglecting the role of gender in transnationalism, Mahler and Pessar (2001, 2006) developed a theoretical framework of "gendered geographies of power," a paradigm that emphasizes the

spatial and multi-scale qualities of both migration and gender contexts. A key question of this approach is whether migration produces opportunities for heightened gender inequalities or whether contact between gender ideologies across borders produces avenues to challenge and reinvent gender ideologies.

The increased policing of the U.S.-Mexico border makes the economic viability of transnationalism highly tenuous for immigrants and their families (Dreby 2010), yet migrant parents continue to venture north in pursuit of social mobility for their children. Dreby finds that transnational parenting practices and motivations for migration are similar for both mothers and fathers and; Hondagneu-Sotelo and Avila (2007) suggest that transnational mothers construct new visions of motherhood that challenge those of U.S. middle-class white women. In contrast, Boehm (2012) uses an illegality lens to show that children mirror the migratory behaviors of their parents, resulting in boys ultimately migrating for economic opportunities while young girls stay in their Mexican hometowns to care for their households and children.

Studies of gender and Latina/o migration have advanced family theories by challenging assumptions of heterosexual Latina sexuality and what constitutes a family (Abrego 2014; Cantú 2009). Arredondo et al. (2003) and; Zavella and Castañeda (2005) remind us that Mexican women migrants and Latinas walk the line between repressive sexual contexts that put them at health risk and embracing notions of pleasure and sexual agency. This work is significant in rejecting essentialist representations of Latinas as submissive and tradition-oriented. In his research on gay Mexican men, Cantú (2009) constructs a "queer political economy of migration" and demonstrates how concepts such as citizen, border, and homeland are not only guided by racial and nationalist projects, but also by normative expectations centered on gender and sexuality. Cantú demonstrates how Mexican gay men form families with other gay immigrant

men and women that are essential to their emotional and economic survival. Sexuality research argues that LGBTQ individuals must often suppress their sexual identity in normative spaces for fear of negative repercussions, yet Cantú demonstrates that this is not always the case for gay Mexican men who must prove an 'authentic' gay identity for adjudicators and LGBT advocates when petitioning for gay asylum cases.

Scholarship on Latinx immigrants' family lives highlights the ingenuity with which immigrant communities navigate structural and interpersonal violence in ways that carve out transformative spaces where logics between nation-states are challenged, supported, and reconfigured (Abrego 2014; Boehm 2012; Dreby 2006, 2010). This work carries significance for highlighting the value of Latinx-produced research in making visible the humanity of Latinx communities. While existing research has made extensive theoretical contributions to understandings of social life in various institutions, I urge migration scholars to avoid largely relegating analyses of gender to family and work contexts, not because we have exhausted inquiries in these areas, but because it is imperative to understand the various ways in which gender matters outside of work and family contexts with the same analytical depth as we have offered work and family studies. While we still have a great deal to learn about family and work dynamics among migrants, future research can strengthen the current agenda by avoiding marginalizing other equally important avenues for gender research in line with the goals of transcending the politics of erased migrations. In the following section, I discuss the centrality of reproduction debates surrounding Latinx immigrants, arguing that these normative debates erase holistic representations of Latinx humanity and reproductive autonomy while also rendering invisible the reproductive lives of trans and gender non-conforming Latinx.

Reproductive Politics in Gender and Latinx Migration Research

The reproductive lives of Latinx migrants and their progeny have long been of interest to the development of the U.S. nation-state and states through Central and South America. As Gutiérrez (2008) explains, "women's procreation has been a subject of political interest from the time of the Spanish colonization of Mexico" (p. 9). Spanish colonizers used rape, marriage encouragement between 'converted' indigenous women and mestizo soldiers, and abandoned children from Spain to increase the mestizo population of the Americas and thus exterminate indigenous peoples (Castañeda 1990). The racial politics of Mexican-origin and Central American women's reproduction highlight the extent to which immigration concerns have uniquely molded images of migrant Latinx as hyper-breeders, as the possibility of a growing 'unassimilable' population of commonly referred to 'anchor babies' and their undocumented immigrant parents challenges the U.S. nationalist identity founded on a white imaginary (Chavez 2008). These controlling images led to the development of Proposition 187 in California that sought to prevent undocumented (Latinx) immigration by prohibiting undocumented immigrants from accessing prenatal care and formal education for their children (Chavez 2007). Fears of Latina over-fertility have also justified restrictionist immigration policies and the coerced sterilization of Puerto Rican women (Silliman et al. 2004) and Mexican-origin women (Gutiérrez 2008) through government-sanctioned family planning programs.

More recently, scholarship on Latinx politics of reproduction has focused on the funneling of Latina immigrant women into formal reproductive labor via domestic work (de la Luz Ibarra 2007; Hagan 1998; Hondagneu-Sotelo 1994; Menjívar 2003; Romero 1992). Changes in the economic, social, and political landscapes of both the U.S. and Latin America beginning in the late twentieth century have created greater demand for female immigrant labor in the U.S.,

thus marking the advent of new transnational families in which women are migrating to the U.S. alone to find work in hopes of remitting money to their families (Abrego 2014; de la Luz Ibarra 2007). While Salvadoran women tend to gain more independence as financial providers for their families, they tend to reinforce gender ideals of self-sacrificing mothers, as transnational mothers are more likely to remit money to their children than transnational fathers (Abrego 2009, 2014). Immigrant women experience significant inequalities in the forms of underpaid or unpaid domestic work, their objectification as status symbols by employers (Romero 1992), and social isolation compared to male counterparts, (Hagan 1998) yet their access to paid work may also help them negotiate avenues to reconfigure gendered dynamics in ways that result in heightened independence (Hondagneu-Sotelo 1994).

Latinx reproductive justice is a framework of organizing and resistance created by and for women of color that equally prioritizes the right to parent, not parent, and to parent in healthy and safe environments (Ross and Solinger 2017). Reproductive justice activists operate within and resist a U.S. political landscape invested in a false and limiting 'pro-life/pro-choice' dichotomy where abortion access is privileged over the reproductive autonomy to choose parenthood. Mainstream reproductive politics, whether conservative or liberal, advances primarily the interests of heterosexual, middle-class, U.S. born white women at the expense of all other women. The 'choice' framework rests on an individualistic ideology guided by capitalism, where women are thought to have a host of choices available for them to select or consume. Therefore, when poor and working-class women of color opt into motherhood, they are viewed as inferior for opting into a decision that their economic lifestyle may not sustain (Smith 2005; Roberts 1997).

Segura's (2007) qualitative study comparing perceptions of balancing work and motherhood between immigrant Mexican-origin women and second-generation Chicanas offers another example of the integration of sociological and Chicana feminist research. Rather than compare Mexican-origin women to women of other ethnoracial groups or to men, Segura utilizes a generational comparison to highlight the heterogeneity that exists under the 'Latina' umbrella category. The author's case study uses sociological theories of motherhood and Chicana feminist work to complicate sociological assumptions of ideologies of motherhood. Segura demonstrates that ideas about incongruence between the desire to mother and the desire to work as incompatible rest on privileged, white feminist perspectives dominant in sociology. Advocating for the importance of a culturally informed analysis, the author finds that immigrant Mexicanas are more likely than U.S. born Chicanas to view paid work and motherhood as inextricably linked, where participation in the labor force is a commonsense extension of motherhood. This finding not only challenges gendered assumptions in mainstream feminist scholarship; it also challenges incorporation models that would expect Chicanas to demonstrate a heightened desire for paid work versus immigrant women.

Latinx reproductive activism, similar to that of other women of color, has focused on women's health as an extension of race-based community well-being (Arredondo et al. 2003; Blackwell 2011; Blea 1997; Garcia 1997; Nelson 2003; Silliman et al. 2004). Grounded in issues of race, class, and immigration, Latinas have successfully argued for the dismantling of the choice-life binary[64] given its lack of applicability among their communities and have instead

[64] My use of the term, "the choice-life binary" refers to a paradigm created and re-created by conservative and liberal debates, activism, policy advocacy, and academic research that essentializes the politics of reproduction in the U.S. as encompassing only perspectives that either support the criminalization or decriminalization of abortion. As the movement for reproductive justice explains, this binary framework erases the experiences of poor and working-

drawn on organizing practices rooted in their cultural needs. Mexican women have organized to make much-needed connections between immigration and reproductive rights, highlighting the added barriers to health access for undocumented Latinas (Silliman et al. 2004). The expansive work of women of color in U.S. reproductive politics demonstrates how they have and continue to forge transformative spaces that do not reduce them to the limiting category of 'woman.'

Latinx-produced research on the reproductive lives of Latinx migrants demonstrates the extent to which mainstream U.S. perspectives on reproductive rights—where gender identities are at the center—are inadequate for understanding how Latinx experience reproductive oppressions (Silliman et al. 2004). The policing of Latinx migrant reproduction is a logical outcome of European colonial structures that have attempted to erase indigenous peoples via sexual violence and sterilization at best, and through genocide at worst. In its current iterations, reproductive oppression for Latinx migrants exists at the intersections of race, gender, sexuality, class, geographic location, age, and immigrant status. Expanding analyses of reproductive oppressions are essential for interrogating the politics of erased migrations that erases the self-determination of Latinx migrants to decide what is best for their bodies, their families, and their greater communities. By moving beyond analyses that privilege binary logics (e.g. choice-life), focusing on how Latinx immigrants' reproductive lives reveal negotiations with settler colonialism, and paying equal attention to resistance practices and structural constraints that delimit the bodily self-determination of communities of color, the politics of erased migrations captures the centrality of relational dynamics in reproductive politics that the movement for reproductive justice highlights. In the following section I discuss how these erasures are further

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class women of color. See Andrea Smith's 2005 article, "Beyond Pro-Choice Versus Pro-Life: Women of Color and Reproductive Justice," for more information on the pitfalls of this limiting framework for communities of color).

evidenced in the constructions of nation-states and how Chicanx/a feminist theories actively resist these processes of invisibility.

The Nation-State in Gender and Latinx Migration Research

Chicana feminisms have undoubtedly made the greatest impact in deconstructing the violence enacted by nation-states on Latinx migrants and their communities (Menjívar and Abrego 2012). Federal and state-level immigration laws have been implemented over time that undermine the well-being and identities of immigrants. For example, Narayna's (1995) research on how U.S. immigration legislation such as the Immigration Marriage Fraud Amendments (IMFA) makes immigrant women susceptible to domestic violence due to its provision requiring women to be with their partners for at least two years. The state greatly dictates migration patterns through the implementation of migration law, which exclude sex workers, pregnant and queer women (Luibhéid 2002, 2013) and construct cisgender, straight women as vulnerable and dependent on the same patriarchal structures for safe movement that enact violence against them in the first place (Schaeffer 2013). A growing field of analysis focuses on the gendered effects of immigration raids and deportations of primarily Mexican-origin undocumented immigrants. Romero (2008) uses the Chandler Roundup as a case study to argue for the inclusion of citizenship status in intersectionality, demonstrating how gendered, cultural, and class-based activities render undocumented Latinx immigrants hyper-visible by immigration law enforcement. Further, the state reshapes immigrant families through its focus on restrictive immigration law versus pathways to citizenship (Dreby 2015). Dreby (2015) demonstrates that gendered association of criminality with men of color increases the likelihood of men facing

deportation, leaving immigrant women as economically disenfranchised "suddenly single mothers."

Borderlands theories have contributed to analyses of the nation-state by theorizing the resistance practices of Chicanas via their social location. At its essence, Chicana feminist thought highlights a third space consciousness rooted in the many borders—physical and not—that Mexican-origin women traverse continuously throughout their lives (Alarcón1993; Arredondo et al. 2003; Blea 1997; Castillo 2014; Facio and Lara 2014; Moraga 2011; Moraga and Anzaldúa 1981). As a critique of assimilationist paradigms in sociology and other disciplines, Anzaldúa (1987) constructed borderlands theory to expand on the geopolitical, racial, gendered, classed, sexual, linguistic, cultural, spiritual, and political borders that Chicanas experience as inhabitants of this space. Borderlands carry multiple meanings: the land occupying the Mexico-U.S. borders, the many crossings Chicanas experience between social systems given the multiple oppressions that their identities yield, and spaces where marginalized identities and resistance are created. While borders connote separation and boundary-making, one of the strengths of Chicana feminist knowledge is to show that borders do not only divide, but they also constitute a third space where *mezcla*—hybridity—takes place to create an altogether new existence and consciousness rooted in the history of U.S.-Mexico border relations (Anzaldúa 1987; Castillo 2014; Moraga and Anzaldúa 1981). Borderlands theories have expanded generally around two threads: borderlands as a theory of the deterritorialization of borders (Levitt 2003; Portes et al. 1999) and borderlands as a theory of identity formation vis-à-vis spiritual activism (Castillo 2014; Facio and Lara 2014; Garcia 1997; Moraga and Anzaldúa 1981).

Borderlands theories rewrite history to center the experiences of women, arguing that the experiences of Mexican women and Latinas represent a third space of transition, rooted in

colonialist ways of knowing and existing while offering possibilities for liberation via decolonization (Pérez 1999). Through various forms of "doubling" strategies, women draw on colonialist perspectives from men to transition to feminist theories. Thus the third space of borderlands becomes one where women always experience pluralities of being. Zavella (2011) extends borderlands theories by offering an in-depth examination of the everyday struggles of Mexican migrants in Santa Cruz County within a larger context of neoliberalism and the increasing militarization of the U.S.-Mexico border. The experiences of these migrants and their families highlight how the increase in transnational migration along with the meanings and consequences attached to ethnoracial, gender, class, sexual, and migrant identities offer these communities simultaneously a peripheral vision as Others and a transnational imaginary where they understand their everyday realities in relation to the realities across the border. This results in a permanent sense of marginality for Mexican migrants and their progeny where they feel like outsiders both in Mexico and the U.S. Yet, while these migrants and their families experience structural marginalization, this permanent sense of exclusion facilitates ethnoracial solidarity across multiple identities.

In line with the ultimate goal of decolonization, Chicana feminisms have drawn on subjective meanings of indigenous spirituality as the first step in decolonizing their bodies, minds, and actions and thus facilitate community healing and justice (Facio and Lara 2014; Peña 2007; Téllez 2014). Connected to the recognition of intersectional existences for women of color, spirituality does not necessarily refer to a relationship to God or another deity, but rather it is "a way of understanding someone's (or a community's) position in the world by trying to make sense of unfair economic conditions and gender inequality, and to do something about it" (Facio and Lara, 2014 p. 2). Thus, spirituality contributes to Chicana feminisms by affirming that

intersectionality does not only refer to the connections between political identities, but to the nexus between the physical, spiritual, and emotional well-being of women essential to the decolonization of women's bodies as sites of questioning, negotiation, and transformative[i] justice (Castillo 2014).

Rather than subscribe to an analysis of faith-based organizing and feminism as antithetical, research suggests that Mexican women and Latinas exercise agency in ways that highlight both tensions and reconciliations between feminism and religion (Peña 2007). The experiences of women in Michoacán and along the borderlands reveal how they develop a hybridized political consciousness that is at once spiritual and feminist. This work not only challenges stereotypical portrayals of Latinas but also offers new visions for the ways in which Mexican-origin women navigate geographical terrain, spirituality, and gender in ways that create third space consciousness, a central hallmark of Chicana feminist thought. Yet others find that embracing ancestral forms of spirituality that pre-date the rise of Catholicism in Latin America can lead to tensions between women of color and their families, creating yet another border that Latinas traverse (Téllez 2014). Through this process, Chicana feminist theories seek to sensitize all aspects of women's realities to the colonization, marginalization, rebellion, liberation, and ultimate transformation that characterize their life experiences.

The field of gender and Latinx migration has also expanded theories of social networks to demonstrate how migration processes may facilitate both healthy and toxic effects (Gilberson 1995; Hagan 1998; Menjívar 2000). For instance, Menjívar (2000) explains that among Salvadoran immigrants, women's gender identity may facilitate network formation for women and simultaneously create increased tension between Salvadoran women and men. Fear of unwanted sexual advances and gossip deter Salvadoran women from forming ties with unrelated

men. As a result, these women are more likely to seek networks with women of other ethnic groups and thus gain more information about their rights. Similarly, Hagan (1998) shows us that while both Guatemalan women and men may benefit from social networks upon initial arrival to the host country, the private nature of women's paid domestic work limits their opportunities to create the weak ties—friendships that facilitate networking—necessary for economic mobility. Men's advantage in developing social capital over time does not only result in financial benefits, but may also create increased avenues to information about attaining citizenship.

González-López's (2005) research on interpersonal sexual violence in Mexican families advances a feminist sociology of incest that sheds light on the institutionalization of sexualized gendered violence via the intersections of gendered family socialization, Catholicism, and lack of state intervention. Through oral histories of men, women, and transgender individuals who experienced incest and sexual violence, González-López finds that this type of violence is much more prevalent than most expect and is shaped by dominant patriarchal and homophobic ideals of family life that permeate family life more broadly, thus successfully avoiding a sensationalist and pathologizing account of Mexican culture. For example, González-López demonstrates that the early socialization of women and girls to serve the men in their families facilitates a process by which girls are sexualized at a young age and become the sexual substitutes for their mothers and aunts or are viewed as sexually available to their brothers, cousins, and other relatives.

Family Secrets (2005) is an exemplary case of the integration of sociological and Chicana feminist influences and a sharp critique of the institutional arrangements subsumed within nation-states. González-López uses *testimonios* to weave together narratives of sexual violence and family dynamics that highlight the complexities of Mexican identities and family contexts that quantitative methods are much less able to capture. This methodological stance common in

Chicana feminist scholarship allows the author to center the voices of her respondents—to make space for the pain her respondents carry—without sanitizing or further silencing their lived realities. González-López historicizes the role of the Catholic Church as a product of European colonization and patriarchy that continues to permeate Mexican society via cultural norms, interpersonal dynamics, and legal code. What's more, the author provides historical context for the use of rape and other forms of sexual and reproductive violence as a tactic of conquest stemming from colonization, explaining how those ideologies of patriarchy and settler colonialism continue to impinge on the self-determination of her respondents. This analysis allows González-López to merge sociological perspectives on gendered violence with accounts of colonization in Chicana feminist thought to theorize about family life as a complicated site of both refuge from and perpetuation of structural violence. By analyzing oral histories through a feminist lens to connect manifestations of patriarchy and heterosexism under larger systems of colonization, González-López plants some of the seeds for a sociology of Latinx gender and migration.

Chicanx/a feminist thought, in its focus on empowerment and elucidating the unique experiences of Mexican-origin women in the U.S., offers a nuanced critique of nation-states as social constructs by exploring and bringing new meanings to borders as continuously shifting physical, discursive, and metaphorical realities that Chicanx/as navigate. Further, indigenous spirituality emerges as a unique cultural tool by which to heal from the trauma of colonization that has made nationalism, capitalism, and neoliberalism subsequently possible, while addressing the ultimate goal of Chicanx/a feminisms (Facio and Lara 2014)—the complete decolonization of all people of color from capitalist, heteropatriarchal, and racial structures. Chicanx/a feminist theorists are inherently engaging in the project of interrogating the politics of erased migrations

by centering their oft-marginalized voices and demonstrating that Chicanx/as do migrate between numerous borders, despite the fact that these migrations are rarely acknowledged in academia. As a result, much of existing Latinx-produced research works to deconstruct the one-dimensional, demonizing representations of Latinx that are rampant in public thought. Extending this work from current Latinx feminists migration scholars, in the next section I propose suggestions for future research that address some of the most prominent erasures in current scholarship. In the process of continuing to tackle erasures, Latinx feminists can continue to regain their humanity, a necessary condition to imagine futures outside of the confines of current violently repressive structures.

DISLOCATING ERASURES: TOWARD A SOCIOLOGY OF LATINX GENDER AND MIGRATION

The sociology of Latina/o gender and migration, particularly research influenced by Chicanx/a feminist studies, has made incredible interventions in current understandings of the migration experiences of Latinas/os. What's more, this scholarship has successfully highlighted and begun remedying the lingering exclusion of gender analyses prevalent in most migration studies. However, areas for extension still remain. I suggest that sociology continue to draw from Chicanx/a feminist thought to extend a relational framework that intersectionally examines relations among Latinx migrants in various institutions rather than over-relying on comparisons between Mexican-origin masculine-presenting men and feminine-presenting women. In this section I outline three potential research avenues for sociologists to continue developing Latinx gender and migration scholarship informed by Chicanx/a feminist thought.

First, the implicit heteronormativity found in existing research on Latina/o immigrant work and family experiences means that, with some exceptions, sociologists of Latina/o gender

and migration have been remiss to reverse the exclusion of queer migratory experiences (Leyva 1998; Moraga 2011). Most research on migrant sexualities focuses on the experiences of gay men or heterosexual migrant women at the expense of lesbian, bisexual, trans, and other queer-identified migrant Latinxs (Acosta 2013; Cantú 2000, 2009; Hirsch 2003; Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2011; Pribilsky 2007). Since the 1980s, Chicana lesbian activists and scholars have been vocal about the need to expand the inclusivity of Chicana feminist thought to incorporate sexuality (Anzaldúa 1987; Arrizón 2006; González 1998; Leyva 1998; Moraga 2011; Pérez 1991; Trujillo 1991; Vargas 2014). Chicana lesbian sexuality has challenged heteronormativity, while facing hostility from other Chicanas for unearthing the erasure and homophobia prevalent in activist spaces and writings (González 1998).

Yarbro-Bejarano (1999) proposes a paradigmatic shift in Chicana/o studies that centralizes the study of sexuality. Noting the importance of contestation and resistance in Chicana/o studies, Yarbro-Bejarano argues that the field is an ideal site for challenging heteronormative assumptions. Rather than advance an additive, hegemonic approach to sexuality in Chicana/o studies, the author calls for a relational theory of difference in which social relations are dynamic, fluid, and continuously contested. The move toward expanding definitions of inclusivity and fluidity continues today as trans, bisexual, and other queer-identified Chicanas highlight the pitfalls of woman-focused research that places sexuality discourses within a normative gender binary, characteristic of early Chicana lesbian thought (Galarte 2011).

While existing research on queer-identified Latinx migrants has made significant in-roads in challenging heteronormative assumptions of migration, identity, and family, most of this work centers on feminine-presenting lesbians (Acosta 2003). Understanding how trans, bisexual, masculine-presenting womxn, and other genderqueer migrant Latinxs navigate racial, gender,

sexual, and immigrant ideologies in both homelands and hostlands is imperative for expanding migration scholarship (Argüelles and Rivero 1993). Trans Latinx are more likely than cisgender Latinas to migrate to the U.S. to escape interpersonal violence and economic disenfranchisement (Padron and Salcedo 2013). The prevalence of harassment toward trans womxn and mxn in all-male immigrant detention centers has received media and activist attention, yet little research explores these sexual abuses.

Rodríguez (2003) advances a queer Latinidad framework to argue that queer identities as fluid constructs are always under construction because of the agency of queer actors in activist, legal, and cyberspace and thus continuously alter identity politics more broadly. How do LBTQ immigrant Latinas traverse various U.S. institutions through their experiences with healthcare access, sexual assault, petitioning for asylum status to escape sexual abuse in their home countries, and detention center placement? Scholars of gender, families, and Latina/o migrants argue that we still have much to learn about families; how does the prevalence of chosen families—a group of individuals who are emotionally close and intentionally consider themselves families despite lacking biological or legal kinship—among queer Latinx communities expand current understandings of families? And how does migration shape the development of chosen families among Latinx migrants?

Second, to advance current research that resists the demonization and criminalization of Latinx reproduction, sociological research on gender, migration, and reproductive politics for Latinxs might consider operationalizing the deterritorialization processes examined in borderlands theories within U.S. reproductive politics (Gutiérrez 2008). Reproductive politics is the arena where struggles over who has power to make decisions about reproduction take place. In this arena, Latinx reproductive justice activists embody Chicana feminist thought and contend

with white reproductive rights activists to expand discourses on reproduction beyond abortion care that reflect the experiences of Latinxs and their communities. Segura and Zavella (2007) show that central to borderlands theory are the "in between" feelings Latinxs experience as they move amid places, cultures, languages, and ideologies. As such, Zavella (2016a) argues that Latinas in the movement for reproductive justice engage in politicized translational practices by negotiating "[…] the borderlands between Latina/o communities and the world of reproductive justice activism and they expand the parameters of immigrant activism" (p. 38). Similarly, Zavella (2016b) demonstrates how women of color reproductive justice organizations in New Mexico rejected choice/life binary approaches to contesting an anti-abortion ordinance in favor of intersectional strategies that promoted ethnoracial coalitions advancing bodily self-determination as a community-building practice. I urge sociologists to examine how migrant Latinxs traverse the "in between" spaces of U.S. reproductive political terrain. Under what conditions do Latinx reproductive justice activists expand reproductive debates through intersectional discourses and strategies that highlight the ethnoracial, cultural, and migrant contours of reproductive politics? What social movement strategies, coalition-building, and frames do Latinx reproductive justice activists use—the manifestations of borderlands—to advocate for Latinx migrants? How do historical and contemporary experiences of coerced sterilization and family caps policies for poor communities of color alter the perceptions of migrant Latinxs? Merging theories of borderlands in Chicana studies, intersectionality, and social movements in sociology is a fruitful avenue for advancing a Latinx interpretive framework for gender and migration.

Third, as a means to imagine social justice beyond current constructs of nation-states that focus on Mexican-origin experiences in the U.S., scholars of gender and Latinx migration can

continue to recover excluded experiences by advancing scholarship on violence against Central American migrants (Alvarado et al. 2017). As more Central American womxn migrate alone to the U.S. to escape violence and seek work, the rates of Latinxs experiencing rape at the hands of border officials, human traffickers, gang members, and other migrants have increased dramatically (McIntyre and Bonello, 2014), yet little academic research addresses this rapidly increasing trend. Central American womxn and their communities also have a uniquely contentious relationship with the U.S. government given their attempts to seek refugee status and asylum in 1980 to escape civil war and continuing today as they flee organized crime, gang violence, and poverty. What's more, Salcido and Menjívar (2012) find that immigration laws not commonly considered gendered actually exacerbate abusive situations for some migrant Central American women when they must rely on their male spouses to facilitate legalization procedures.

El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala have experienced increased migration to the U.S. over time and are among the countries with the highest female homicide rates in the globe. Fregoso and Bejarano (2010), though focused on Mexican empirical cases, advance a paradigmatic shift in the study of gender-based violence through a cartography of feminicide that centers theories and experiences of the larger Global South. The authors argue for a systemic and intersectional theory of feminicide as "the murders of women and girls founded on a gender power structure" (p. 5)—a form of gendered violence rooted in social, political, economic, and cultural inequalities in which women and girls of the Global South are disproportionately impacted and state and individual actors are complicit.

Feminicide as theory not only has the potential to inspire new empirical projects surrounding gender-based violence, but also bears new possibilities for questioning knowledge hierarchies to avoid imposing Global North perspectives of women of color on women of color

in the Global South. Perhaps an avenue for extending feminicide as theory is expanding the framework to include all feminine-presenting people, rather than only women and girls. Femmephobia—the fear and hatred of all people viewed as feminine regardless of gender—is an all-too-common experience for queer communities of color. As Serano (2016) explains, fear of gender-variant persons is linked to the sexism analyzed by feminist theories to the extent that trans women, in particular, often experience greater rates of violence not only because of their transitions, but more so because of their embodiment of a femaleness and femininity despised within systems of patriarchy. A *femmeinicide* lens may be useful to expanding on the differences and similarities in experiences across feminine-presenting people in the Global South and how these experiences intersect with processes of war, neoliberalism, racialization, patriarchy, globalization, heterosexism, and migration. Research on these various manifestations of gendered violence in Central America requires expanding intersectional scholarship to account for the fluidity of gender and how it interconnects with violence, war, and displacement, thus crystalizing nuanced ways in which the state impinges on the self-determination of immigrants across borders.

Expanding gender and Latinx migration research to center queerness, resistance against reproductive oppressions, and the distinct experiences of Central Americans are some targeted strategies to build on the contributions of current Latinx feminist research on migration. This work is in progress, as evidenced by the scholars cited here. I focus on these three topics, not because there is no research in these areas, but as a strategy to highlight the epistemological invisibility that remains when some marginalized communities receive more attention than others. I offer this synopsis as a call to action to continue tackling these erasures, expanding knowledge of the intricacies of various Latinx migratory experiences, and in the process,

recovering the collective humanity of all Latinx communities as a vital initial step toward using our radical imaginations to construct realities where all marginalized communities experience true liberation outside of the confines of racism, heteropatriarchy, neoliberalism, ableism, anti-immigrant sentiment, and all other forms of violence.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

By reviewing selected work on gender dynamics in Latinx migration, this chapter demonstrates the need to continue integrating the methodological and analytical strengths of Chicana feminist thought in sociological research as a strategy to deconstruct the politics of erased migrations. The lens of the politics of erased migrations offers possibilities for new interrogations of the invisibility that remains with respect to Latinx migrant communities. As demonstrated by the substantive contributions of current research, these interrogations are only possible by centering work produced by Latinx feminists who have proven adept at uncovering the nuancing of Latinx peoples. Recovering marginalized voices has always been at the forefront of gender and Latina/o migration scholarship. It is imperative that the field continues to expand this political and epistemological project by interrogating the politics of erased migrations through gender non-binary research and investigations of queering migration to center the perspectives of transgender and other gender non-conforming people, the role of gendered migrations in reproductive politics, and expanding on structural and gendered violence through analyses of Central American and other non-Mexican communities.

Existing Latinx scholarship challenges assumptions of family structures, elucidates on the everyday realities of social networks, transnationalism, workplace inequalities, and changes in family dynamics from migration. Yet, a great deal of the research continues to focus on

cisgender family and work contexts experienced mostly by Mexican-origin migrants. My argument is not intended to suggest that research on gender and migration should exclude the experiences of migrants in work and family altogether, two undoubtedly significant institutions. Rather, I propose that there exist multiple avenues to explore how gender inequalities are embedded in migration experiences and the theoretical insights of Chicana feminist thought yields exciting avenues to develop sociological research. From an intersectional lens, if research continues to prioritize the work and family experiences of cisgender migrants, while it may challenge assumptions of family and work contexts held by dominant groups, the experiences of LGBTQIA, genderqueer, and gender non-conforming Latinx migrants are rendered invisible.

While expanding analyses of migrant queerness, reproductive politics, and Central Americans is important, future research should work at the intersections of these areas. For example, what are avenues the movement for reproductive justice can undertake to center trans Latinx migrants? How do trans migrants make sense of the economic privilege that hormone replacement therapies necessitate for those advocating for their transitions? How can the reproductive justice movement combat the violence experienced by trans Latinx migrants that hinders their ability to reproduce? While expanding research on how Latinx feminists fight against reproductive oppressions through participation in the movement for reproductive justice, a politics of erased migrations lens would continue to examine what communities and experiences are rendered silent in social justice strategies.

Continuing to expand a relational, intersectional sociology of Latinx gender and migration will develop research outside of the confines of gender binaries, privilege marginalized experiences, and center analyses of transformative liberation that divests from the privileges of U.S. citizenship that ignore the structural realities in which indigenous, queer,

undocumented, and racialized people are understood as sub-human and therefore 'undeserving' of civil and human rights. Sociologists in this field can expand this scholarship by continuing to draw on the strengths of Chicana feminist thought, primarily its intersectional lens, and focus on the continuing significance of colonization in migration processes. I call for continuing to develop relational analyses that go beyond comparisons of heterosexual masculine-presenting men and feminine-presenting women to understand gender as a manifestation of social relations guided by power dynamics.

While there is some value to research that aggregates variables and compares experiences across identities, as sociologists let us not forget the value of ways of knowing—*conocimiento*—that the communities we document and subaltern fields such as Chicana Studies offer to perspectives of migration, gender, sexuality, ethnorace, and nationalism. Continuing the interdisciplinary tradition of the field is sure to provide scholars the lens through which to tackle the politics of erased migrations and develop a sociology of Latinx gender and migration. In the movement toward liberation from the governance of nation-states and the systems of intersectional oppressions that operate within them, it is imperative that scholars, activists, and scholar-activists alike continuously examine who is excluded from calls for social justice to dismantle the politics surroundings erased migrations and begin to imagine alternate social worlds.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION
Toward Latinx Feminist Thought

Silence has never been in my nature.
Roared in my mother's belly;
conceived from her desire, released in speech
I was her wish, her prayer,
her first spoken word.
Born to the sound of thunder;
to whisper with the dead,
to shout with the living,
I was born to make noise
to rattle shells, to beat drums, to chant, to dance
to dream in free verse, to bless and to curse—
¡*Porque mami dijo que así es que se reza!*

—Peggy Robles-Alvarado, *a self-identified "Dominican-Puerto Rican author and resilient New York City tenured educator"*
"Boca Grande,"
¡*Manteca! An Anthology of Afro-Latin@ Poets* (2017)

This dissertation has explored how Latinx feminists resist the disappearance of their wisdom and political power in four arenas: ideology, discourse, reproductive politics, and academic knowledge production. When examined in unison, the chapters speak to some of the ways in which Latinx feminists make politics attuned to the reality of the messiness of social life. Throughout the dissertation, I argue that in order for a Latinx feminist interpretive framework to continue making politics centered on love and accountability, Latinx feminists must address the political and epistemological consequences of the disappearance of Blackness, Indigeneity,

feminisms, and queerness in how Latinx communities are perceived and the situated complicity of Latinxs in propagating these ongoing disappearances.

In the first substantive chapter, Chapter 2, I outline the distinguishing features of Latinx feminist ideologies based on existing scholarship and social media theories. I show that there are five epistemological and ontological concerns that cut across Latinx feminist praxis, including but not limited to commitments to theorizing, producing methodologies, and engaging in activist practices stemming from lived experiences; an ongoing disruption of binary logics through emphases on disappearances, dislocations, and movidas; amplifying and complicating the representation of Latinxs across space and place via the focus on intersecting oppressions; and a commitment to knowledge production and political activity in the service of social justice and liberation. However, if we take seriously the perspectives of Black, Indigenous, and queer people of Latin American descent in the United States, Latinx feminists do not constitute a unified Self or standpoint because systems of anti-Blackness, anti-Indigeneity, and heteropatriarchy require that Black, Indigenous, feminist, and queer Latinx people operate in different lifeworlds, with markedly different vantage points, relative to other Latinxs and non-Latinxs.

Not only do these locations not comprise a unified standpoint, but Black, Indigenous, and queer people of Latin American descent identify non-Black, non-Indigenous, cisgender, and heterosexual Latinxs as actively implicated in the disappearances of the former groups' wisdom and social realities. Inspired by the writings of María Lugones on the "plurality of selves" (2003), rather than view this finding as a detriment or deficit to the political power of Latinx communities or to unifying theories of the Self, I suggest that the lack of a unified Latinx Feminist Self due to the deep fissures of social location, and due to the lifelong transformation of social selves, is vital for both disentangling the violence of homogenization in Latino

categorization—allowing for new avenues in political organizing and theorizing—and for advancing new understandings of accountability and solidarity.

In Chapter 3, I tackle how discourse is used to disappear the humanity of feminine-presenting Latinxs. Through the use of ethnographic observations with CLRJ, a review of existing scholarship, and Latinx-centered social media theorizing, I explore the manifestations of and resistance to images of la mestiza, la hyper-breeding welferera, la santa, the feisty Latina, the cleaning lady, and the home girl. Throughout the chapter, I demonstrate how these images function to erase the humanity—the messiness—of Latinxs through either misrepresentations or via complete erasures of some Latinxs altogether. Significantly, while these images manifest and matter differently in various parts of the United States, a common thread that underscores each is the fear and villainizing of Latinx reproduction. I conclude by suggesting that these images together suggest that a displacement of the reproductive Other process is imposed on Latinxs, where regardless of individual immigration status, Latinxs emerge as foreign, threatening, unwanted, and undeserving through the discursive politics of the United States. As such, these images together demonstrate the necessity of a fluid, intersectional reproductive justice framework for practicing and theorizing holistic humanity and self-determination in opposition to controlling images.

In Chapter 4, I center the motivations and practices of staff and members of California Latinas for Reproductive Justice (CLRJ) as a means to explore the disappearance of intersectional perspectives in reproductive politics and CLRJ's resistance to these disappearances. Specifically, I aim to intervene in two noticeable patterns in academic scholarship. First, while there is a growing body of research examining how communities on the margins experience inequalities at the intersections of various identities and social structures,

scant research examines how marginalized communities *practice* intersectionality in social movement spaces. Second, there is a persistent debate in the sociology of collective action on the efficacy of difference—often measured as social group diversity—in mobilization efforts. Through a focus on the ways in which CLRJ practices intersectionality in reproductive politics, I shed light on the importance of theorizing difference in collective action beyond identity categorization and beyond a deficit/asset binary approach toward a messier theory of collective action. The intersectional practices of CLRJ are foundational for theorizing Latinx feminist thought more broadly in this dissertation; therefore, in Chapter 4 I delve more deeply into the analytical parameters of the concept of politicmaking. By tracing the ways that CLRJ engages in decolonial, relational, and cultural shift practices to make politics, I call for re-conceptualizing difference in social movements research that rejects the disaggregation of lived realities for the purposes of research analyses. By thinking about difference as a process of making epistemically-driven politics through solidarity based on difference *and* sameness, feminists on the margins are molding future places for love, compassion, and self-determination, for the stuff of humanity. In the concluding pages of this chapter, I draw on existing scholarship and social media theorizing to explore how Latinx feminists negotiate differences in their everyday resistance practices on the streets, in homes that are not ours, and in digital spaces.

As the final substantive chapter of this dissertation, Chapter 5 delves into the disappearance of certain gendered dynamics of Latinx immigration in academic knowledge production. I take the central motivation that led to the development of Latinx gender and migration research—the need to recover women's marginalized voices in migration scholarship—and intellectually pivot by investigating the erasures that remain in Latinx gender and migration research, how Latinx feminist scholars claim recognition of migrations amidst

these erasures, and offers a nuanced lens for making sense of such erasures. This chapter acknowledges that sociologists of gender and Latinx migration and Chicanx feminist scholars in Chicana/o Studies have made extensive interventions in the academic project of recovering the experiences of women in migration studies across disciplines. I consider these contributions and advocate for an interdisciplinary research agenda that continues expanding relational scholarship by developing the concept of *the politics of erased migrations*. Through a review of over 100 books and articles on gender and migration scholarship centered on heteronormativity, reproduction, and the nation-state, I demonstrate the possibilities of the politics of erased migrations as a theoretical intervention in expanding a relational, intersectional sociology of Latinx gender and migration.

In this chapter, I intervene in debates regarding what 'counts' as intersectional research by demarcating the oft-overlooked distinction between research that examines race, class, gender, etc. as discreet (and often static) categorical variables for comparison and the relational work of Chicana feminists that rejects binary logics in favor of a "both/and" framework to examine the interconnectedness of systems of oppression as context-specific and thus fluid. The embrace of ambiguity that anchors the power of Chicanx feminist analyses is in sharp contrast to the temptations toward universal theories of positivist thinking, and sociology should take seriously the analytical leverage of ambiguity offered by relational analyses to capture the messiness of quotidian inequalities experienced by Latinx immigrant communities. As I illustrate, this chapter carries implications for shifting the field of Latinx gender and migration from a focus on current oppressive conditions to one that also imagines new avenues for social justice and alternative epistemological social worlds.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Feminist of color actions and perspectives in movements for social justice reflect a longstanding mosaic of visions, struggles, debates, and ideas, as marginalized communities continuously imagine possibilities for liberation. In 1990, Patricia Hill Collins gifted us a brilliant account of many of the complexities of Black American women's experiences and ideas as a vehicle for empowerment and knowledge production in *Black Feminist Thought*, but there exists no contemporary parallel vision for Latinx feminists. Today, as I explain in the opening pages of this dissertation, people of Latin American descent experience physical, cultural, political, and epistemological erasures, so much so that these erasures and our resistance to them very much define Latinx feminist praxis. Communities of color, women, and queer people have long been misrepresented in policy and academia, then used to justify interpersonal and institutionalized violence. These communities challenge normative assumptions of knowledge production based on colonialist perspectives through which U.S. institutions of higher education were founded.

Yet ethnic studies, gender studies, and queer studies generally garner less funding than 'traditional' disciplines, ethnic studies in particular is under constant threat of eradication, and scholars in these fields as well as scholars on the margin of traditional disciplines face significant lower rates of tenured positions compared to white men, experience heightened anxiety, depression, and exhaustion, and are often forced to defend the quality and rigor of their work via institutional channels that maintain white-centered values toward knowledge production alive and well (Gutiérrez y Muhs et al. 2012). Furthermore, the experiences and perspectives of Latinx queer and straight feminists have established their contributions in imagining and enacting possibilities for liberation, yet their stories in many ways remain marginalized through colonialist demands for 'objectivity.' Amidst these intersecting manifestations of oppressions,

Latinx feminists have long engaged in disappearing acts of their own: developing subaltern epistemologies, escaping toxic spaces as a radical form of self-care, and taking part in intersectional social justice projects to erase oppressive systems that exert violence against them and their communities, planting seeds of hope to imagine utopian futures beyond our own.

This research also carries significant methodological implications, particularly for sociology. As I discuss in Chapter 5, the origins and current mainstream iterations of sociological data collection and theory construction uphold notions of objectivity and rigor that are not only untrue, but also perpetuate racialized, gendered, classed, and colonialist understandings of knowledge production. By drawing on the insights of non-academic people of color as theorists along with literary sources and academic research from interdisciplinary fields, I attempt to disrupt the violence of sociology and show the value of multi-method qualitative research. Sociologists have much to learn from literary works, interdisciplinary works, and the everyday ideas of communities of color outside of the ivory tower. In order to capture the messiness of marginalized subjectivities, it is incumbent for sociologists to adopt methods and analytical perspectives that take seriously the ways of knowing of people on the margins of social worlds. Given the extent to which Latinas and trans and nonbinary Latinxs are underrepresented in the academy, particularly in the professoriate, sociology is long overdue for adapting to the theoretical sophistication that Latinx feminists scholars learn long before they enter the academy.

Throughout the dissertation, I show that Latinx feminists—politicmakers—develop a sense of being as contested communities, shifting from the Self as identity to the Self as an ongoing, relational, political stance. The implications of this research connect with the contributions of W.E.B. Du Bois, Patricia Hill Collins, Marcus Anthony Hunter, Karida Brown and others who examine what it means to resist in a racialized body that is not fully seen. By

linking these theories with data on social movements in reproductive politics, I trace some of the origins and features of a pan-ethnoracial Latinx feminist framework. This framework offers lessons for imagining political solidarity built upon difference and sameness. I reveal that Latinx feminists have created a transformative body of knowledge about intra and intergroup relations and political futures that remains either unknown or undervalued. Latinx feminists deserve to be recognized for creating movements, theories, methods, and standpoints that not only challenge us to rethink assumptions about identity and politics, but that provide maps for delving into the messiness of life as a means to ensure that all members of Latinx communities are seen, valued, and fought for. Throughout the pages of this dissertation, I show the urgency to redefine what Angela Davis describes as our "intersectionality of struggle" (2016) as vital for futures centered on self-determination and freedom.

Appendix A. Data Collection Methods

Tracing the experiences and ideas of Latinx feminists spanning national origin, sexuality, race, and generation status is a necessarily fluid endeavor. Originally, I intended to develop a dissertation exploring how Latina feminists in the movement for reproductive justice practice intersectionality in Los Angeles, with special attention to the implications of these intersectional practices for mainstream sociological analyses of social movements and for theories birthed from Latinx feminists across disciplinary borders. As I explain in the introductory chapter, listening to Gabriela Valle's radio interview on the particularities of abortion access in Los Angeles for undocumented women was the catalyzing force for this research because it pushed me to think about the intersections of what are often discussed as separate phenomena in media and academic sources: the struggles for abortion care and the struggles for immigrant rights and justice. In the academy, I had grown weary of sociological examinations of social movements overly invested in outcome-oriented quantitative analyses that measure results as "wins and losses" and thus, often do not center the perspectives of activists of color as producers of knowledge. Simultaneously, I was also hungry for more research documenting *how* women of color intentionally *do intersectionality*, rather than analyses primarily centered around how women of color experience inequalities through an intersectional framework (fully recognizing that expanding analyses of the latter continues to be of importance).

Once I discussed my theoretical interests in more detail with one of my advisors, Marcus Anthony Hunter, he suggested that I expand the theoretical implications of the project through a direct engagement with the contributions of Patricia Hill Collins' *Black Feminist Thought*. While Hill Collins' book has been influential in my work since I was an undergraduate student, I had not considered creating a project that would place me in direct conversation her. At this point, I

began to reflect on what it would mean to place distinct Latinx feminist trajectories in conversation, the possibilities for cross-pollination of ideas and the centrality of theoretical coalition-building, and the shortcomings of synthesizing (and in the process erasing some of the nuances of) seemingly disparate theoretical motivations and manifestations. Initially, I was paralyzed by a question centered on the daunting task of synthesizing a large body of knowledge and the potential harm of my positionality: "How can I possibly do justice to the tremendous variation in Latinx feminist thought and practice given my own positionality as a light-skinned, cisgender Mexican-origin Latina with access to significant educational privilege deeply rooted in a California experience?" After all, the stories of second-generation Mexican-origin Latinxs in California are offered significantly more representation than other Latinx stories in the academy. I reconciled these feelings of being an impostor within my own ethnoracial and feminist community as best I could by leveraging my own relatively privileged positionality in the service of liberatory knowledge. While the question of "What is Latinx feminist thought?" quickly became overwhelming since I did not believe that I alone should provide an answer, the question of "How can I use my relatively privileged standpoint to promote more inclusive, expansive, and fluid Latinx feminist ways of knowing?" was a motivating force. Much of Hill Collins' research trajectory has increasingly focused on the necessity of coalition-building across differences, thus making this analytical shift in the framing of this dissertation timely and politically indispensable.

I reflected on the many inequalities that were normalized in my upbringing and the ways in which those inequalities are receiving heightened attention. I quickly realized that in order to explore some of the manifestations of Latinx feminist subjectivities, I needed to account for the disappearance of Indigeneity, Blackness, feminisms, and queerness in views of and from

Latinxs—to lean into the subjectivities often denied among Latinxs. The more scholarship I read spanning different areas of the United States, the more affirmations I received that tackling these erasures is of critical importance. To accomplish this task, I employed an interdisciplinary and multi-method approach connecting ethnographic observations, in-depth interviews, content analysis of social media platforms, and analyses of existing Latinx feminist scholarship across the social sciences and humanities, both nonfiction and fictional. In what follows, I outline how I engaged in data collection utilizing these various qualitative methodologies.

Ethnographic Observations

This dissertation draws on thirty-two months of ethnographic observations with staff and members of California Latinas for Reproductive Justice (CLRJ) between June 2014 and June 2017. The ethnographic data collection took place in the greater southern California area, primarily in Los Angeles, although I traveled across California and to other states with the organization as well. It took approximately a year to gain access to CLRJ. After listening to Gabriela Valle's radio interview in the summer of 2013, I looked up the organization's website and began following them on Facebook. I reached out via email to the organization several times expressing interest in participating in their volunteer efforts. I was invited to help with a community education event, but the data collection I was conducting at the time for my master's thesis did not afford me the time to tackle the schedule that the event required.

After completing data collection for my master's thesis, I attended a few of CLRJ's events in Los Angeles and in the spring of 2014, I introduced myself to Gabriela after an event and shared my interests in learning more about reproductive justice and supporting the organization's efforts. Gabriela informed me that they had recently begun a collaboration with a

national reproductive rights organization on an abortion story collection project and they sought a volunteer with story collection experience. As a result, Gabriela facilitated my access to the organization and vouched for my presence with other staff members. Within two weeks of entering the organization, Gabriela organized a meeting with all staff so that I could share my interests in centering the organization in my dissertation, I asked for permission to do the work, and discussed logistics about what they were comfortable with, especially in terms of anonymity.

I entered CLRJ as an intern and I coordinated their story collection work, assisted and at times organized community education trainings, helped with recruitment of new members, lobbied state legislators to assist with the political advocacy work of the organization, participated in political canvassing and phone banking for civic engagement activities, and occasionally transcribed focus group interviews for the organization's research efforts. I also attended many community events, staff meetings, and meetings with partner organizations. During the 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 academics years, I taught my own seminar at UCLA titled, "Latinx Feminist Thought." In order to continue supporting the story collection work that CLRJ does, I developed a final assignment that tasked students with conducting either an oral history or in-depth interview with a Latina or Latinx-identified person about topics related to reproductive justice. Once the projects were completed, students donated their projects to CLRJ. While in the CLRJ office in downtown Los Angeles, I wrote jottings on my laptop without bringing attention to myself since all staff worked from laptops in the office. I subsequently expanded those jottings into field notes during the evenings when I returned home, or if I stayed in the office late, I developed the field notes the next day. When I traveled with the organization for events or meetings, I either developed jottings on my laptop or using the Notes app on my iPhone to offer

more discretion. I conducted, on average, between 10-35 hours of fieldwork per week, totaling nearly 3,000 hours of observations.

The ethnographic fieldnotes were analyzed using an abductive analysis strategy (Timmermans and Tavory 2012). I conducted focused coding through line-by-line analysis based on the ideas, themes, and issues identified during open coding. This resulted in a specified codebook that guided the writing of the final stage of analysis. I initially organized the observations descriptively based on the different programming areas that the organization focuses and which I had the most access to: community education, policy advocacy, communications, voter engagement, and community-based research. Over time, I created new memos as I began linking my observations with existing Latinx feminist scholarship. As such, the themes became more conceptual, tracing different forms of difference (within and across group differences) that are tackled drawing on an intersectional lens both by members and staff of CLRJ and by Latinx feminist scholars. My ongoing conversations with CLRJ staff not only contributed to my ethnographic fieldnotes, but they also helped me conceptualize the centrality of accountability that guides this project. I had the opportunity to engage in many conversations about the work of notable Latinx feminist scholars, where staff shared their perspectives on academic scholarship from the perspectives of non-academics.

The Organizational Site

CLRJ is a policy-based, statewide advocacy organization established in 2005 that focuses on issues affecting Latinas and their ethnoracial communities. CLRJ is currently the only all Latinx-staffed reproductive justice organization in California. The organization advances its mission through policy advocacy, community education and mobilization, community-informed research,

and strategic communications with legislators and other advocacy organizations. Its policy priorities include: "promoting Latinas/xs' access to reproductive health care and positive health outcomes; promoting the reproductive health and justice of Latina/o youth; and mobilizing Latinas to highlight the reproductive justice framework and advance a vibrant reproductive justice movement."[65] CLRJ has advocated for state and federal-level initiatives including repealing the Maximum Family Grant Rule, providing lactation services in high schools for young parents, and the California Healthy Youth Act to mandate comprehensive sex education in public high schools. One of CLRJ's most pronounced endeavors is a collaborative policy initiative centered on Justice for Young Families (J4YF) to promote dignity and increased resources for young parents and their children, a form of cultural shift work that many other reproductive justice organizations also engage. CLRJ's community education department focuses on four main projects. The first and most widely known is Latinas 4 Reproductive Justice Chapters (L4R), an initiative intended to teach young, generally feminine-presenting Latinxs reproductive justice work in order for them to continue the work in their communities and thus become political actors and agents of change.[66] Votando por Igualdad Viviendo por Actualizar (VIVA) is a civic engagement undertaking on the part of LEA members and CLRJ staffers to transform constituents, staffers, and supporters of the organization into informed citizens and thus improve Latina/o voter turnout around issues regarding community health and family well-being. Third, the Instituto de Autonomía y Justicia is a Spanish-language training series that creates a space for Latinas to discuss reproductive justice issues encompassed within

[65] California Latinas for Reproductive Justice. Retrieved July 15, 2013 (http://www.californialatinas.org).

[66] This program has recently been rebranded the Latinas4RJ Leadership Institute but continues to focus on providing Latinas with training to engage in reproductive justice grassroots organizing.

reproductive health. Fourth, the organization launched a storytelling campaign in 2014, Speaking Story, to encourage Latinxs to share their reproductive justice story.

This story collection project touches on experiences with immigration, pregnant and parenting youth, healthcare access, culturally competent healthcare, abortion care, environmental racism, policy brutality, sexual violence, and another other experience that highlights how race, gender, class, sexuality, and immigration bear relevance on Latinx reproductive lives. The organization's motivation behind the use of storytelling is to refute stereotypes surrounding Latinxs and reproduction, to emphasize stories of struggle and resiliency, to expand reproductive discourses beyond binary discussions of abortion and 'choice' to discuss the structural impediments Latinxs experience in making choices around reproduction, to use stories to sway policy reform, and to promote community-level healing through narrative therapy.

Most staff are children of Latinx immigrants, with one migrating to the United States as a child and two who identify as third-generations Latinas. The staff is comprised primarily of Mexican-origin Latinas, with one who identifies as Puerto Rican and two who are of Central America origin. In addition, all staff members at the time of my ethnographic observations held at minimum Bachelor's degrees in ethnic studies, gender studies, public health, or business administration, with a few also holding Master's degrees. The organization's membership is comprised of womxn-identified Latinxs ranging in age from 15 to over 60, as well as male-identified, young Latino fathers. CLRJ's membership reflects a range of positionalities regarding age, gender, sexuality, parental status, immigrant status, countries of origin, and race. Of the over 2,200 members, 90 percent are bilingual, speaking both English and Spanish, with the remaining 10 percent comprising of monolingual Spanish speakers. The membership is predominantly working-class and working poor, with 7 percent identifying as middle-class.

In-depth Interviews

Between October 2015 and February 2016, I conducted twelve in-depth interviews with current and former staff members of CLRJ. I conducted these interviews in order to analyze whether my perceptions of CLRJ's work aligned with staff's perceptions and also to garner vital information about the founding and early years of the organization before I entered the organization. When I first proposed this project, I knew I would undertake both ethnographic observations and in-depth interviews. However, delaying the timing of the interviews was an important methodological strategy because I wanted to have time to develop a stronger rapport with staff and to have extensive opportunities to participate in the work that CLRJ engages. As a result, I developed an interview guide with extensive detail based on the information I gathered through my observations.

The interviews covered a range of topics, namely, 1) the emergence of the organization; 2) personal trajectories that brought each member to their organization (i.e. potentially direct or indirect experiences with race, gender, class, and/or immigration based state violence); 3) motivations and implementation of policy and cultural strategies; 4) how they formed coalitions with other organizations; 5) ways in which academics can better support nonprofit work; and 6) how they envisioned justice as individuals and as an organization. The interviews ranged between two and five hours and were audio-recorded using my iPhone and subsequently transcribed with the aid of a research assistant I hired on at UCLA. In order to work around staff's schedules, the interviews either took place in private in the CLRJ office or at staff member's homes. Due to the significant length of several of the interviews, some respondents opted to extend their interviews over the course of several days. Transcription services were funded through a grant from the UC Collaboratory for Ethnographic Design. I modified the

interview questionnaire throughout the course of data collection, a technique known as "case study logic" where interview questions are refined and added based on insights offered by respondents (Yin 2002).

Social Media Content Analysis

In order to capture the ways in which Latinx feminist knowledge is produced and disseminated beyond traditional academic sources and outside of a Los Angeles context, I conducted a qualitative analysis of various social media sources, namely from Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, and podcasts. Between December 2017 and January 2019, I downloaded posts from the following individuals and collectives across Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook (I use their social media names): bad_dominicana, counseling3allseasons, yesikastarr, xicanisma, we are mitú, migrant scribble, nalgonapositivitypride, dichos de un bicho, latinarebels, unapologeticallybrownseries, theafrolatindiaspora, justice4sister, 3tokenbrowngirls, fatchicanafeminist, bitterbrownfemmes, queerxicanochisme, lafemenistadescolonial, basicbrownnerds, and mothersofcolorinacademia. I also listened to and transcribed excerpts of podcast episodes from the following sources: AnzalduingIt, Locatoria Radio, De Colores Radio, Jotxs y Recuerdos, Cabronas y Chingonas, and the Trans Specific Partnership Podcast.

I selected these social media sources for two primary reasons. First, the individuals and collectives who created these profiles all identify as queer, trans, nonbinary, lesbian, or cisgender, heterosexual women of color of Latin American descent in the United States. Second, each of these social media profiles reflected nearly daily engagement with the complexities of enacting intersectional politics of accountability. During data collection, I coded the posts for explicit development of discussions about Blackness, Indigeneity, feminisms and reproductive

justice, and queer experiences among communities of Latin American descent. When certain posts received extensive media attention reflected in extensive comments from their followers, I also downloaded online comment information. In addition, I downloaded the responses of these social media personalities to the comments, particularly contentious interactions, to understand how they practice and teach an intersectional lens in the face of resistance toward such a lens. For purposes of the dissertation, I coded the posts by hand using a word processor; however, as I revise this dissertation into a book project, I will expand the amount of data collected and re-analyze the data I currently have using a qualitative data analysis program, such as NVivo.

I sampled approximately ten podcast episodes from each of the sources listed previously. I selected the episodes based on the titles and description of the topics discussed, focusing on issues of Blackness, Indigeneity, feminisms and reproductive issues, and queer experiences among people of Latin American descent in the United States. I listened to each episode in its entirety and selectively transcribed the excerpts that directly spoke to the themes of interest. As with the social media sources, I intend to expand the sample size of podcast episodes and pay for transcription services to garner full-length transcripts for each episode as a revise this project into a book manuscript.

Existing Scholarship

Throughout this dissertation, I draw heavily on the written words of Latinx feminist scholars across disciplines. Rather than treat existing scholarship as the substance of background sections and literature reviews, given my interest in the politics that surround knowledge production, I draw on existing research as data in itself. This strategy serves two functions. First, by weaving together existing scholarship with ethnographic data and social media reflections, my aim is to

attend to a politicized written form that demonstrates that academic and non-academic Latinxs are all theorists in their own right. In this sense, I seek to blur the boundaries for theorizing by refusing to reify an academic/non-academic theoretical divide; instead, arguing that the vantage points of academic and non-academic Latinxs engaged in feminist issues offer unique strengths to the larger ongoing project of Latinx feminist thought. Second, one of the guiding motivations for this dissertation project is to center Latinx feminist contributions to a variety of social justice issues that are often eclipsed; therefore, it was important for me to not allow Latinx feminist scholars to become background voices in literature reviews, but to be front and center in the meaning-making processes of social justice theorizing. In a similar writing tactic to Patricia Hill Collins' *Black Feminist Thought*, the ways in which Latinx feminists think about social worlds, and their places within those worlds, are central to the very foundation for this dissertation. Therefore, this project attempts to develop a deeply relational analysis in which the theorizing Latinx feminists do over time and across various geographical and social locations are continuously engaging each other.

For the purposes of data collection, I assembled lists of scholarly sources (lists that grew over time) through a form of snowball sampling. Based on the aforementioned conceptual codes I developed for ethnographic data and content analysis, I grouped existing scholarship based on those codes beginning initially with sources that I had read throughout my academic career. From there, I looked at the sources that these initial writings included in order to expand my analytical scope. In addition, for the final two years of dissertation writing, I conducted bi-weekly online library searches of topics pertaining to this dissertation authored by Latinx feminine-presenting scholars. Edited volumes and readers were particularly useful in this endeavor given the immense amount of sources cited in them and the ways in which they are

organized based on thematic patterns in the respective subfield. When possible, I also collected biographical data about the authors, though I was unable to collect this personal data systematically and therefore have not included it in this project. While some of the sources included do not address gendered or intersectional dynamics directly (e.g. the scholars in the discussion on whether Latinxs constitute a racial or ethnic group in Chapter 2), most sources cited do address social dynamics by examining the intersections of at least racial and gender dynamics for Latinxs. Furthermore, since Latinx feminist praxis does not occur in a vacuum, I do cite non-Latinx feminist scholars when necessary to outline the parameters of particular intellectual conversations about issues that affect Latinxs.

Outsider-Within Positionality

My position as an "outsider within" (Hill Collins 1986) among Latinx feminist activists undoubtedly facilitated and impeded my interactions and data collection. I am a self-identified cisgender, second-generation Latina feminist of Mexican-origin and working-class background with significant access to higher education. As such, I share with many members of CLRJ similar upbringings and experiences with intersecting inequalities. Occupying similar social locations facilitated trust in some contexts, particularly with newer members of the organization. My three-year tenure with organization also enabled my relationships with members and staff who entered the organization after I did since I was able to assist some of them in familiarizing themselves with the organization.

However, my affiliation with a sociology doctoral program at a major research university in southern California also rightfully created a great deal of mistrust toward me. Early in the data collection process, it was not uncommon for staff to share the inequalities they experienced in

higher education, particularly racist and classist experiences at UCLA. Staff and other members distrusted me, especially early on in the data collection process, because of the colonialist origins of ethnography along with ongoing exploitative practices where researchers extract data from communities of color without reciprocating or at the very least reflecting on the power dynamics embedded in participant observations. As such, I prioritized assisting with the organization's work as much as possible within the time and emotional constraints that doctoral training produces to demonstrate that I was not interested in conducting what is at times described colloquially as a 'drive-thru' ethnography. Not surprisingly, the tensions between my positive intentions in doing community-based research and the reality of the impact of doing research among activists of color took a toll on my mental health over time. I continuously wrestle with what it means to do research *with* a marginalized community rather than *on* a marginalized community, and whether my institutional location can even afford me the possibility of the former. Specifically, members of CLRJ gifted me an important lesson on the necessity to continuously reflect on the possibilities and impossibilities of community-based research, many staff noting that 'community-based research' is a buzzword in the academy that often fails to mitigate the power dynamics between researchers and respondents. In other words, the theorizing of messiness in politics that I advocate for also helped me to reflect on my own positionality as a Latina ethnographer. The mental and physical reactions I had to the anxieties surrounding the exploitative dynamics of ethnographic research were an important reminder of Cherríe Moraga's call to "theorize from the flesh." I realized over time that my mind and body were echoing CLRJ's points about the shortcomings of partnerships between academics and activists; therefore, it was imperative for me to theorize future possibilities through the embodiment of those shortcomings.

In an attempt to disrupt the power dynamics that staff and members felt toward me when I first began fieldwork, not only did I become heavily involved in assisting with the various projects CLRJ undertook, but I also made myself vulnerable in daily conversations at the office. When asked about aspects of my upbringing and my experiences in graduate school, I was completely transparent with the information I shared. My intent in offering information about myself was to recognize the vulnerability that comes when an ethnographer is observing your daily work life; I wanted to reciprocate vulnerability with my situated vulnerability.

Over time, as the organization hired new staff and my relationships with longstanding staff members strengthened, the immediate feelings of awkwardness subsided and staff trusted me with more organizational and personal information. New staff approached me with questions about acclimating to office dynamics and I tried to make new staff feel a sense of belonging by affirming their nervous feelings. Since many of the members I interacted with are in college or graduate school, I gladly offered to share advice, read admissions applications, and connect members with scholars. These practices also helped members to feel more at ease with me since I acknowledged the importance of leveraging the privileges that come with affiliation to a research university to support communities of color.

Appendix B. Semi-Structured Interview Guide

BACKGROUND

1. Where are you from?
    a. If U.S. born: Where are your parents from?
    b. If not from U.S.: Are you comfortable disclosing your legal status?
2. What is your job title at CLRJ and what tasks does your position entail?
    a. How long have you been with this organization?
    b. How did you first learn about CLRJ?
    c. If interviewing one of the founding members: What was the motivation for creating a Latina reproductive justice (RJ) organization? Can you walk me through the process of becoming an organization?
3. Is this your first experience with activism? If not, can you tell me about your history with activism?
    a. What motivated you to get involved with activism in the first place?
    b. How do your family and friends view your work?

MEANINGS AND MOTIVATIONS OF REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE WORK

4. What does RJ mean to you?
5. How do you see an RJ lens and RJ work fitting into U.S. politics around reproduction?
6. Is there a part of your individual work, or a part of CLRJ's collective work, that you find most rewarding? If so, what is it and why?
7. What are some of the most pressing issues around reproduction you have seen in Latinx communities during your time at CLRJ?
8. What does engaging in activism that examines connections between race, gender, class, age, and immigration mean to you? Why is making those connections important to you and to CLRJ?
    a. Can you explain some of the ways that race, class, age, and immigration matter in reproduction?
    b. What is unique about the reproductive experiences of Latinas in California?
    c. How do you see the relationship between issues affecting Latinas and issues affecting other women?
    d. How do issues around sexuality fit into RJ work, specifically for Latinas?
9. Who is a Chingonx? How did CLRJ come to adopt that name for members?
10. What does womxn of color feminism look like to you?
11. Do you ever experience burnout from activism? If so, how do you deal with it?

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE/CULTURE

12. Can you give me a breakdown of the history of CLRJ?
    a. How was the organization created?
    b. What were the motivations for creating a Latina RJ organization?
    c. Who were the people most involved in creating the organization at the beginning?
13. Why has CLRJ adopted policy advocacy as a primary tool for resistance?

14. What is the relationship between staff and supporters of CLRJ?
15. What is the relationship between the different departments in CLRJ?
16. What dynamics, positive or negative, do you feel are unique to small organizations?
    a. Are there certain strategies that small organizations use that national organizations might not?
17. How do you view CLRJ's policy work in relation to other RJ organizations in California?
    a. What about in relation to RJ organizations in other states?
18. How do you view CLRJ's relationship to other women of color organizations and collectives in southern California?
    a. What are some advantages to those relationships?

<u>STRATEGIES, FRAMES, NARRATIVES</u>

19. Can you give me an overview of the different strategies CLRJ currently uses to promote RJ and justice for Latinas?
    a. Follow-up on the inception and experiences with specific initiatives: J4YF; Speaking Story; Yo Soy; VIVA; ELAYO; LEA; Latinas4RJ; #WeRJTogether; parental notification; anti-abortion billboards; HPV
20. Can you take me through the process of the policy work CLRJ does?
    a. How do you decide which policies to engage with, whether to support or repeal them?
    b. How do you identify and engage legislators?
    c. What is the process for getting a bill passed or repealed?
    d. How do you make policy relevant to new members? How do you make policy relevant to Latinas who can't vote, don't know much about the political process, face language barriers, or don't feel that they care about policy?
21. How do you decide as an organization which organizations to partner with?
    a. Is there a different decision making process when dealing with other RJ organizations versus non-RJ organizations?
    b. In 2014 RJ organizations and RJ advocates wrote an open letter to Planned Parenthood because it did not acknowledge existing RJ work when discussing its new strategies moving forward. Can you fill me in, to the best of knowledge, on how the decision to write that collective open letter happened?
        i. How did that Planned Parenthood make you feel?
        ii. What is your relationship to Planned Parenthood Affiliates of California?
    c. CLRJ is a member of the L.A. Coalition for Reproductive Justice. What is the purpose of that coalition and CLRJ's work within it?
        i. What are the dynamics of the coalition since not all of the participating organizations are reproductive justice organizations?
    d. As election season nears, do you see RJ organizations having a role in the upcoming election?
        i. Do members of partner organizations talk about the candidates?
        ii. How do you respond when partner organizations do or say something that does not align with the RJ framework? If you do respond, how do they take your comments and/or actions?
        iii. How do these experiences make you feel?

    e. Who are promotoras and why do you work with them? What are the specific ways that CLRJ works with them?
    f. Do you view differences over time in your relationships with partner organizations and promotoras as far as their RJ advocacy?
    g. How do men of color fit into RJ activism? What have been some of your personal and organizational experiences in motivating men to get involved in RJ work?
    h. How do white women fit into RJ activism? What have been some of your personal and organizational experiences in motivating white women to get involved in RJ work?
    i. How do gender non-conforming folks fit into RJ activism?
22. CLRJ seems to do a lot of outreach with students. What are the advantages and difficulties that come with this strategy?
23. When did CLRJ first begin civic engagement work and why?
    a. Canvassing focuses on predominantly Latinx neighborhoods. What is the reasoning behind that decision?
    b. Do you think canvassing will remain in Latinx neighborhoods?
    c. What have been your experiencing with canvassing so far?
24. How do you see the storytelling work fit into the larger vision of CLRJ's work?
25. Do you think that an RJ lens and the strategies employed by RJ organizations in the U.S. would resonate in other countries?
    a. Do you think transnational RJ activism is possible?
26. As far as CLRJ's social media presence, how do you decide which issues to address and how to talk about them?
    a. What do you think are the effects of an increased social media presence in activism?
27. What is the role of legislators, as state officials, in tackling state violence experienced by Latinas and their communities?
28. How do you frame issues using an RJ perspective to people who do not see those issues as RJ-related?
29. Are there certain issues you advocate for that you've noticed that other organizations, collectives, or individuals have more difficulty supporting than others?
30. In your experience so far, do you feel that RJ strategies for organizing and mobilizing in southern California are different compared to the Bay Area or Central Valley? If so, how? Can you provide some examples?
31. As an organization, do you think it's difficult to juggle policy advocacy versus more grassroots methods?
32. Has CLRJ ever organized protests? Why or why not?
33. What is the purpose of the community education work? Does education look different when you're with other organizations versus new members?
34. Are there issues, in social media for example, that supporters pay more attention to than others? If so, what do you think accounts for those differences in what issues resonate more?
    a. How do you respond in these situations?
35. Who/what do you hold accountable for the issues affecting Latinas and their communities?
    a. Is there something they can do to rectify these issues?

36. How do you view your strategies fitting together in the broad goal of reproductive justice?

INTERSECTIONAL FRAMING AND STRATEGIES

1. One of the central principles I've noticed when explaining RJ to folks is the idea that we bring our whole selves into the movement and our whole selves are made up of various identities. How do you see the RJ framework in this way as distinct from other social justice movements?
    a. Why is it important to see people as whole beings rather than only as womxn, people of color, immigrants, etc.?
2. How do you think the RJ framework affects the strategies CLRJ engages in? Are these strategies distinct from other organizations that do not do RJ work?
3. Can you map where you see CLRJ fitting in the terrain of reproductive politics?
    a. What are some advantages you see in where CLRJ is on this map?
    b. What is missing from the map?
4. Which partnerships do you see working best and why?
5. How do you have to frame certain issues for organizations and legislators to get their support? Can you give me a couple of examples?
6. What advantages do you see in advocating for Latinx communities as whole selves?
7. What barriers do you see in advocating for Latinx communities as whole selves?
8. Are there situations where partner organizations have asked you to minimum your focus on race, for example, to prioritize another identity that's important to them (e.g. gender)? If so, how did you navigate those partnerships and strategies?
9. Are there ways that you've noticed that your perspective and strategies toward RJ change how other organizations think about issues? If so, can you give me an example?
    a. Have there been situations where organizations that do not work at the intersections of multiple identities have been convinced by your work to take that perspective seriously?

MAXIMUM FAMILY GRANT

Having Governor Brown allocate money in the state budget to repeat MFG was a huge win for CLRJ, other orgs, and Black and Brown families across the state.

1. On a daily basis, how do you view MFG affecting the reproductive lives of Latino families?
2. Can you walk me through how CLRJ first get involved in anti-MFG efforts?
    a. What were the initial motivations?
    b. Did you already have existing relationships with other organizations doing MFG work?
    c. How did you divide the work among organizations?
3. What have your interactions with legislators been throughout the process of garnering support?
    a. Were there some legislators who reached out to you for support?
    b. Were there legislators you specifically wanted to target for support? If so, how did you decide which to choose?

    c. Did you notice any patterns in terms of who was most likely to support?
    d. Were there variations in support from legislators depending on other policy agendas at the time, reelection seasons, etc.?
4. Staff have mentioned during trainings that MFG is part of a historical legacy of eugenics in the U.S. Can you elaborate on the connection between MFG and the eugenics movement?
5. What strategies did CLRJ develop to garner support for repealing MFG?
    a. Policy advocacy?
    b. Communications?
    c. Community education?
    d. Research?
    e. Civic and voter engagement?
6. Over the course of the five years it took to allocate state funds to repeal MFG, were there certain strategies you noticed were more effective in garnering support among legislators? What about among the community? Other organizations?
7. What do you think made the difference last year in cementing the success of this work?
8. How do you think repealing MFG will impact Latino families moving forward?
9. Now that MFG has been repealed, what other policy issues need to be address that are still connected to the issues with this rule?

<u>VISIONS OF JUSTICE</u>

37. What does social justice, broadly conceived, mean to you?
38. What is the role of RJ activism in promoting social justice?
39. Are you familiar with Latinx artists (e.g. musicians, painters, poets, etc.) that embody social justice/RJ principles?
40. What are some things more people can do to promote RJ?
41. If CLRJ were to create their own definition of RJ, what are some elements you think should be included?
42. Where do you see the RJ movement going in the future? What barriers to growth do you see now or foresee in the future? What advantages do you see RJ offering now and in the future?
43. What does the end goal for RJ activism look like? If RJ existed everywhere, what would that look like?
44. What are some of the barriers you individually and as an organization have experienced with academics?
    a. What are your critiques of methods and/or theories developed by researchers?
45. What are some ways academics can better support community work, especially RJ work?
    a. What would those collaborative projects look like?
    b. How can academics best use their institutional resources to support social justice work?
    c. What type of research would best serve your initiative?
    d. Is truly it possible to be a scholar-activist?

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Appendix A. Data Collection Methods

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