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The Spanish Americas
Introduction

With the title "The Spanish Americas," this special issue returns to an ongoing dialogue among scholars who might otherwise be situated across a gaping field divide. Well over a decade ago, the Society of Early Americanists sponsored two "Ibero-Anglo summits," with the latter term suggesting a diplomatic meeting of distinctive polities: Latin Americanists and (adjectivally unmarked) Americanists, including historians who might cohabit within a single department and literary scholars who would more likely be sorted into separate English and Romance language departments.[1] The summits were prompted by, and productive of, a new vein of published research. After the first summit, Luis Millones-Figueroa issued several recommendations for continuing to foster the conversation, which have been largely followed: more joint conferences, the development of electronic and print bibliographic resources, shared special issues of scholarly journals. On a parallel track, many of the books and articles associated with what Ralph Bauer influentially dubbed "the hemispheric turn" were strongly tied to the classroom: what could the inclusion or comparison of a text do to enhance the "American" survey? The debut of the *Heath An-*

thology of American Literature (1989) and its pedagogical apparatus was followed by the publication of Carla Mulford's collection *Teaching the Literatures of Early Colonial America* (1999) and of Susan Castillo and Ivy Schweitzer's anthology *The Literatures of Colonial America* (2001), accompanied by their companion volume of articles (2005): all included materials originally written in Spanish as part of their effort to complicate a notion of early America tied to the national histories and chronologies that had come to structure literary study between the late nineteenth century and the early twentieth.[2] By the time of *EAL*'s fiftieth-anniversary issue in 2015, these currents were so pronounced that editor Sandra Gustafson devoted a considerable portion of her introductory reflections on the shifting state of the field to such hemispheric conditions and contexts.

While this special issue joins in that ongoing conversation, it has three additional goals. First, we want to prod readers into questioning how widely and seriously the field has adopted the intellectual vantage points afforded by this pluralized "Americas." Given the considerable energy and goodwill that has been expended on it, why does work informed by the Spanish Americas—a term we will define in its historical, linguistic, and ethnic senses—remain, in our view, the province of a few specialists? Second, we seek to encourage research that is more willing to cross linguistic and disciplinary traditions by putting pressure on the assumed nexus between field of study and expertise. Rather than calling upon early (Anglo) Americanists to master a range of new fields and languages a priori, we endorse project-based approaches and questions that seek new scholarly engagements, collaborations, and institutional contexts. Third, we raise (without pretending to resolve) hitherto unspoken questions about how the study of early America in its Spanish contexts relates, through the space of the classroom, to an increasingly Latina/o/x student demographic. The *Spanish Americas*, as we use it here, does not designate a new subfield or a prescription for a single methodology. Instead, it represents an *orientation* that goes beyond what we will describe as an additive approach to consider a variety of cultural and historical relations that cut across geographies and languages. The five articles in this special issue present a range of approaches, varied in their degree and kind of engagement with materials, that exemplify the results of this kind of orientation. In so doing, they implicitly complicate scholarly investments in a single field or turf.

By choosing a title for this special issue that suggests a need for critique

(a point to which we return), we emphasize that it is not (and has not been) easy to adopt the types of crossings required by more expansive studies of the early Americas. Skepticism about the limitations of the hemispheric turn continues to circulate, and was voiced in the fiftieth-anniversary issue by Rolena Adorno, who is identified as a "Latin Americanist" in the title of her article. Adorno concluded from a content review of recent numbers of *EAL* that so far, ventures into Iberianists' territory had been focused on a "limited and predictable" canon (43), and that despite a few promising individual essays, "several conditions" having to do with linguistic and historical expertise had not yet been met (49).[3] Adorno's progress report is deflating. It suggests that the field has gone further in terms of collecting and planning for the presentation of classroom material than it has in building the rigorous intellectual basis for the type of hemispheric analysis called for in the Ibero-Anglo summits and other forums. Some collections that contribute to this dialogue, we note, depict both the potential and challenges of working across traditions.[4] Adorno continues, "[T]he more I reflect on the problem of how to position Anglo-American colonial-era literary production vis-à-vis that of others in a hemispheric perspective, the more challenging the problem becomes. . . . [D]etermining how to situate our respective academic fields into ever broader (and proliferating) classificatory domains is our abiding challenge" (56).

Those challenges may explain why for every incremental turn toward geographical and linguistic inclusion—every slow drip of a new edition of Cabeza de Vaca here, a syllabus that discusses Spanish-Indian Florida there—an Anglophone definition of early America remains persistent in the scholarship. To take just one example: excerpts from Gaspar Pérez de Villagrá's epic *Historia de la Nueva México* (1610) have appeared steadily in all the diversified anthologies of early Americas literature mentioned above, and the text's status as a "first" is widely acknowledged, yet Manuel Martín-Rodríguez's article in this issue is the first extended discussion of the text to be published in the more prominent journals of American literature since 1991.[5] We begin, then, by observing that the transformation of the field's normative assumptions has been lagging well behind the enthusiasm among some scholars for doing serious research on the multiple cultures of the early Americas. In light of this slow pace of change, the now-familiar call among early Americanists to move beyond the nation (as an organizing principle even for the "prenational"), and beyond Anglo-

phone expressive practices, should not be thought of as an event or epistemological rupture associated with the 1990s that has already accomplished its mission. Rather, we argue here, it is an ongoing necessity, one whose rationale, scope, and definition must constantly be rethought in light of the changing conditions under which we research and teach. Those conditions include recent shifts in the intellectual focus and institutional status of other disciplines, particularly history, and also the interdisciplinary formations of Latina/o/x studies, indigenous studies, and African diaspora studies and their theoretical as well as activist claims.[6]

To consider literature through the lens of the Spanish Americas demands respectful dialogue with various disciplines and fields and their already existing scholarship: that much is clear from the diplomatic model of the summit meeting. We do not use the term *Spanish America* in what may seem like the obvious geopolitical sense, to designate the Spanish-speaking parts of America (as marked by the Treaty of Tordesillas) as a set of distinct entities that constitute a region and lead to postindependence nations. Such an expansion of the space we study invites exceptions, and rightful quarrels: Iberian culture and political power were centered in many other sites than Madrid; and the Castilian language was not universally spoken over the fractious kingdom of Spain, much less over the far-flung colonial dominions it claimed. *The Spanish Americas*, as we use it here, is thus not a synonym for *some* of the rest of the Western Hemisphere, with exclusions. Rather than a wholesale call to "be hemispheric" or to "be multilingual"—imperatives that certainly open out to other reference points beyond Spain and Spanishness—we offer the concept as a reorientation that is not bound by a particular approach or set of texts. Our special issue offers provocations (in this introduction) and examples (in the five essays and the extracts from a recovered eighteenth-century play) of how we might see "early America" differently from the various implications of "Spanish." Such a reorientation may refuse the dichotomy, both geopolitical and cultural, of "Ibero-Anglo" altogether, and with it the dominant methodology of comparing texts and material conditions, and translating them across the two language systems. Instead, it may operate by alienating a normatively Anglo version of America within a *shared* space that is not sundered by the oppositions built into comparison. Against a binary that misleadingly privileges the two empires—as if either had exercised complete hegemony over all the peoples of what mapmakers framed as its own hemi-

sphere—"the Spanish Americas" recognizes a necessary entanglement (to use a term adopted recently among historians, as we discuss below) with various indigenous, African, and mixed-race populations who negotiated between colonial boundaries and structures.

What is at stake in arguing for the particularity of an orientation to the adjectival *Spanish*, among the many other imperial projects and local sovereignties, each with its own linguistic and cultural forms of expression, in the Americas? Without depreciating any of the other paths that have usefully led the field away from its original New England and English-language focus, we argue that Spanish is another way to suture the research and teaching aspects of our work together transtemporally in a way that may help support new research and publication, by calling forth a differently usable past appropriate to contemporary conditions. With forty million speakers in the United States—15 percent of the resident population, and the second-highest aggregate number in any nation, after Mexico—Spanish is the de facto second language of the country. It takes nothing away from the importance of French, Basque, or Abenaki during the sixteenth through nineteenth centuries to observe that Spanish, in both the linguistic and the ethnoracial sense through the derived terms *Hispanic* and *Latino*, is still actively shaping the present-day conditions under which we create, consume, and spread knowledge. An orientation to the Spanish Americas helps us foreground the continually shifting stakes of belonging to a nation, to a continent, to a dominant language or educational culture.

To get at the interdisciplinary and institutional demands at work in thinking of early American literature by way of our heuristic of the Spanish Americas, it will be helpful first to revisit the historiographic models that shaped the way so-called hemispheric approaches and texts entered the field. Models of a common or comparable *Americas* considerably predated the 1990s calls for hemispheric viewpoints and the Ibero-Anglo summits of the early 2000s. Edmundo O'Gorman, whose articulation of the Columbian encounter as a profound epistemological divide in European life has been formative for all American historians, was haunted by the problem of what made Anglo and Latin America different. In the closing passage of *The Invention of America* (1958), gesturing forward toward the modernity that (as he argued) the shock of the "discovery" of a fourth continent had brought to the West, O'Gorman noted "an otherwise baffling [*desconcertante*] phenomenon in American history, the fact that it took

a double course, as may be seen in the two Americas, Latin or Spanish and Saxon or English [*la latina y la sajona*]" (*Invention* 141, *Invención* 153).[7] O'Gorman's stark "two Americas" model was perfectly timed to vindicate the emergence of Latin American studies as a separate field with privileged access to government funding during the Cold War, and that sense of an absolute division still resonates in Adorno's 2015 assessment of *EAL* from the vantage point of her (Good?) "neighboring field" (41) of Latin American literature. Adorno underscores settlers' "entirely different" experiences of American peoples and spaces (52), arguing against the false similitudes of "comparison" as a mode of reading and in favor of "juxtaposition," which "acknowledges surface similarities but sets in relief productive differences" (52). This is one example among many of how binary historiographic models for understanding the relationality of hemispheric spaces have conditioned literary scholarship since the latter half of the twentieth century. (The various nationalistic projects structuring these fields have also affected their separation.)

O'Gorman's positing of a fundamental North-South division, sundering America into the antinomy of *la latina y la sajona*, may be seen as a rebuttal of the historian Herbert Bolton, on the other side of the Rio Grande, who had famously put forth the model of a culturally blended "borderlands."[8] But Bolton himself, in the preface to his *Spanish Borderlands* (1921), had also endorsed such an antinomy. He drew a distinction between regions that grew from Spanish colonial territories into independent nations, "[f]rom Mexico to Chile, throughout half of America," and, on the other hand, those areas that became parts of the United States and bore the "imprint of Spain's sway" (vii). In the former, the Spanish language and what he called Spanish institutions remained dominant into the twentieth century, creating a lifeworld as fundamentally different from the Anglo-American as O'Gorman's "two-Americas" thesis would have it. In the latter spaces, however, what remained of "Spain's sway" could at best be described as residual cultural and language markings: Hispanophone place names such as Colorado, rivers and towns that take the names of saints such as San Francisco, architecture as found in the missions, and a variety of social, religious, and economic customs such as rodeos and cowboys. "The Spanish occupation has stamped the literature of the borderlands and has furnished theme and color for a myriad of writers, great and small," Bolton wrote. "Nor is this Spanish cult—or culture—losing its hold" (x).

The reference to "occupation" recognizes the effects of Spanish colonialism on territories that are now part of the United States, even as "cult" calls forth the emotional effects prompting nostalgia for a past that, at least in the United States, could both pass into forgotten history and remain persistent in its hold on places from Florida to Texas, what he would dub the "borderlands," eschewing prior language of the "frontier." To understand this culture called for a comparative method internal to the nation, as opposed to the external comparison of *la latina y la sajona*.

Bolton's nostalgic language situates "Spanish cult [and] culture" as a contribution of themes and colorful elements to a dominant US culture whose primacy was taken for granted. So does the title of Stanley T. Williams's *The Spanish Background of American Literature* (1955), a belated product of a Bolton school perspective that had taken unlikely root in an English department. Williams's two-volume work languished on shelves during the primacy of the myth and symbol school, and during the early turn to theory, but it was dusted off following the Columbian quincentenary of 1992, when American literary criticism "discovered" Latina/o/x audiences and students. We both have vivid memories of discovering Williams's work, as graduate students in different universities, with a certain degree of validation, relief, and delight. Williams, who was among other things a Melvillean, retained an Anglocentric vision of American literature, especially as represented by its major authors: the Spanish language and Boltonian borderlands offered "background," but no more (indeed, he often went out of his way to point out how inconsequential certain sources and publications were). The work's title implicitly echoes Walt Whitman's endorsement of Spanishness as a "far-back source" of American character in an 1883 piece that calls attention to "Spanish" antecedents such as those Bolton saw stamped on the names of towns and rivers in the Southwest. Whitman's words have been frequently (and approvingly) cited by many scholars associated with the "hemispheric turn," as well as by popular writers urging a more open stance toward the post-1992 surge of Latin American immigrants and of Latino culture in general.[9] Yet the nature of Whitman's argument is crucial to understand here, for it carries over to Bolton and Williams as well. "Spanish character" would, in Whitman's view, supply "parts" of a "composite American identity of the future": this is the logic of additive multiculturalism, the idea that the inclusion of a diverse set of voices and backgrounds will lead to a satisfying composite.

Against such logic, we offer a critique of the way the Spanish Americas are presented in teaching materials as opposed to research, a topic to which we will return momentarily.

As we noted, Bolton's Spanish borderlands had separated what today is called Latin America from the Spanish colonial territories that became part of the United States. One became a sovereign space; the other was a defeated and politically powerless one, reduced to being a contributor of haunted objects, failed projects, and commemorative opportunities for creating colorful feelings of otherness within the US polity. That differentiation came back to haunt Bolton's project. Looking back at shifts in historiography during the twentieth century, David Weber noted that by the 1980s, "Notwithstanding a substantial outpouring of books and articles, the Spanish borderlands had fallen from fashion in US history departments and had failed to win the attention of writers of American history textbooks" (44). This was largely the result, he says, of specialization: "United States historians saw the field as part of Latin American history and ignored it. Latin American historians regarded it as belonging to the history of the United States and likewise gave it short shrift" (44). Weber was pointing to a dynamic that cut across from historical to literary study: an ossification of the divide between Latin American studies (including its nationalist versions) and US American studies in the era of O'Gorman. When major figures like Weber and Patricia Nelson Limerick revived the idea of borderlands history, it was not through Bolton's residual nostalgia for a defeated empire but through an overt critique of imperial and settler colonial logics, promoting scholarship that placed indigenous perspectives at its center. In literary study, on the other hand, that divide remained buttressed by the disciplinary turf guarding of Spanish and English departments, during a time when comparative literature (which might have been an obvious place to disrupt the Ibero-Anglo antinomy) was first suffused with European theory, then by postcolonial and world literature models that seemed to look everywhere but the Americas.

But if comparative literature as a discipline largely passed on the opportunity to revisit the borderlands as something more than the defeated term in a binary opposition, Chicano/a studies, a field with strongly vernacular, populist origins, stepped in to fill the void. In Gloria Anzaldúa's *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (1987)—still the highest-impact theoretical work in that field after decades of vigorous debate about its

contradictions and blind spots—the dichotomy of *la latina y la sajona* was crisscrossed by other rejected binaries of language, gender, sexuality, and ultimately textual genre. In its pages, a poem about the border would be located not far from a paragraph providing an account of the history of the conquest of Mexico. Anzaldúa turned to the early Americas to bring forward the indigenous-European conflict as an open wound that could not be easily sutured by a celebration of the cultural hybridity of the borderlands. Regardless of the quality of Anzaldúa's historical claims (they were always a vehicle for the theory, not an end in themselves), her method—as an updating of Bolton's borderlands—did not root itself in the field of early American literature in the same way that Weber's did for history. *Borderlands/La Frontera* was and is a necessary text for scholars of Latina/o/x studies, but it has reached the US American field overwhelmingly through its frequent excerpting in anthologies. Like one of Whitman's token "elements" of "Spanish character," Anzaldúa is there to represent Chicana writing or queer theory or writing from the Texas border region. The irony is pronounced. Anzaldúa's work is not contributionist, nor does it celebrate hybridity, despite what a superficial reading of the subtitle, "the new *mestiza*," might imply; rather, it proposes a radical and multiple, perpetually destabilizing, view of identity and meaning.[10]

The question of Anzaldúa's reception might seem germane only to contemporary literature, but in fact it points to the broader problem that the early American field has inherited from the historiographic models of the borderlands and the "two Americas." Another Latin Americanist, Lisa Voigt, noted in a review of the first "colonial Americas" anthologies published in this journal in 2005 that some Iberian texts seemed to have been included contrastively (a "two-Americas" model, so that Sor Juana could meet Anne Bradstreet), while others were clearly intended to spark discussion of the borderlands of what would become the United States. Voigt challenged the anthology's rationale of "intermingling" diverse texts: "Although the efforts [of anthology editors] . . . may seem to suggest that 'all of us are almost intermingled,' the construction of a more expansive and inclusive early American literary canon is surely just beginning" (427). Voigt's critique of this "intermingling" rhetoric, the celebration of composite mixedness, or being *mesturado* as her Brazilian texts describe it, reminds us that literary scholars and teachers cannot simply add more of Whitman's "antecedents" and will them into a state of self-evident inter-

mingling into a whole. It implicitly asks the question: does adding a few texts to an anthology of "American" literature change the Anglocentric focus of the field? Has that field, in any meaningful way, begun to think *from* the borderlands, as Anzaldúa urged? Or has the salt-and-pepper approach of "intermingled" anthologies—and the work of a few scholars interested in these issues—allowed the field as a whole to retain a center (still situated in New England), while relegating other cultural work to peripheral status?

Let us return to the models offered on the parallel track of hemispheric historiography. In a neat inversion of O'Gorman's alternately mournful and defensive notion of the superior capture of modernity by the Anglo half of the America that Europe had invented, many historians today follow Eliga Gould in characterizing the English colonies as a "periphery" of the more powerful Iberian world. In a 2005 *American Historical Review* roundtable asking whether Atlantic studies had lost its utility as a trans- or nonnational model, Gould writes, "If we think of the British and Spanish empires as two parts of the same hemispheric system, we also need to realize that this system was deeply asymmetric, with the balance of power tilting heavily for much of the colonial era in Spain's favor" (768). But the consequence of this recognition is not simply to flip O'Gorman's division of power upside down; it is to reject the binary of an Anglo-Dutch Protestant America versus a Spanish-French-Portuguese-Catholic America altogether. The comparative method seems inadequate to this task, as it veers between highlighting similarities and highlighting differences and then assesses how far one outweighs the other. In Rolena Adorno's judgment, for instance, hemispheric studies has overzealously emphasized a common Americanness, and she proposes a strategy of "juxtaposition" that puts the differences in the foreground. However weighted, this comparative method reinforces the familiar antinomy, Ibero-Anglo. Yet when we consider indigenous peoples whose right to their ancestral ground was revoked and Africans captured and kidnapped into chattel slavery, the English and Franco-Iberian worlds, or the Protestant and Catholic worlds, were all invested in oppressive colonial structures. Examining how European missionaries developed linguistic thought based on their contact with native peoples, for instance, Allison Bigelow argues that "the traditional binaries upon which the study of language and evangelization in the early

Americas has long rested—South and North, Catholic and Protestant, Old World and New—hold little explanatory power for our field today" (107).

Recent currents in historical scholarship have made it impossible to think of New England settlements as disconnected, culturally or economically, from the continent occupied by indigenous nations, or from the oceanic worlds that have now been reimagined as "Black," "Red," or "Catholic" Atlantics: these observations have certainly penetrated the awareness of scholars of early American literature. Continentally, too, recent historians have situated New England's settlements as archipelagoes, or peripheries, provincializing them within a broad geography of contact zones stretching north to Quebec, south to the Carolinas and Florida, west and south to New Spain. In Karin Wulf's catchphrase for the Omohundro Institute blog, early America now means "Vast Early America," which has become its own hashtag and appears regularly in conference program titles. But against this giddiness of seemingly new geographies, it may be instructive to return to Gould's assessment of the limits of Atlantic and borderlands studies. After noting the powerfully Anglophone tendencies of Atlantic studies and rehearsing the decline of the Bolton school, Gould's essay goes on to note that even the fruitful recent branch of Weberian borderlands history—with its privileging of indigenous experience—focuses on spaces of proximity and overlap between the English and Spanish worlds, shutting out whatever extends beyond that contact zone. As an alternative, he proposes "entangled" histories that "examine interconnected societies. Rather than insisting on the comparability of their subjects or the need for equal treatment, entangled histories are concerned with 'mutual influencing,' 'reciprocal or asymmetric perceptions,' and the intertwined 'processes of constituting one another'" (766). Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra, discussing Ibero-Anglo entanglements that consider everything from slavery to smuggling to commodities, writes, "Every region in the vast Atlantic basin should, in fact, be considered a mosaic of interdigitated Atlantic histories" (3).

Although *entanglement* is not yet an everyday term among literary scholars, recent books by literature-trained scholars such as Anna Brickhouse, Gordon Sayre, and Raúl Coronado consider reciprocal or multiple influences on the transference, translation, and adaptation of ideas or tropes. Multilingual in their sources, each has opened the field beyond New England. Sayre, for example, begins a book that considers the role of

the tragic Indian hero with a chapter on Moctezuma, and it is only after considering indigenous elements in Mexico's historiography that Sayre delves into a rich Franco- and Anglophone archive. As Brickhouse notes in her revisionist description of "Hispanophone Squanto," an exemplary entangled story that crosses hemispheric and Atlantic spaces, one of the challenges of such an orientation is reading against "the assumption of English rather than Spanish colonial priority at the ostensible site of US national origin" (4). It is at precisely this point at which *entanglement*, as a concept, becomes quantum, linking space with time through questions of "priority" and "origin." Brickhouse gestures here at the usable past that all early American literature classrooms are charged with inventing. We began by arguing that the production of "hemispheric" teaching materials seemed to outstrip the production of published analysis about them, assuming that the former would propel the latter. Yet the source texts that Brickhouse uses to assemble the story of Don Luis de Velasco in *The Unsettlement of America* cannot be found in those anthologies (with the exception of a small excerpt from Garcilaso de la Vega). Coronado's revolutionary archive of early *tejas* in *A World Not to Come* does not derive from them, either. Instead, he focuses on European intellectual influences alongside Catholic teachings and independence movements in Spanish America.

Study of entanglement, as an alternative to the comparative method, focuses on tracing intertwined influences and relationships in the form of economic relations, technological exchanges, transculturation, and language interactions. Rather than centering a fixed notion of space, whether the hemisphere, the borderlands, or the vast continent, it emphasizes connections and forms of communication across boundaries. These are fruitful possibilities for moving the early American field away from its former reliance on one dominant culture and perspective, and of course they extend beyond Spanish-language materials and spaces claimed by the Spanish Empire. As a critical orientation, the "Spanish Americas" of our title does not claim some new geographical or linguistic center for the field. It does, however, recognizes the importance of how particular cultures and histories register across the temporal divide: how the past matters for the present. In his introduction to a recent collection of "entangled" historical scholarship, Cañizares-Esguerra acknowledges the many linguistic and political dimensions operating in the early modern world, while making a case for the special urgency of understanding the Spanish dimension:

"This book . . . ultimately seeks to bring into focus the centrality of the Iberian-Latino past to the very constitution of the history of this nation. A historiography that brings Latinos into the narrative as 'minorities,' whose voices need to be heard, is itself complicit in their marginalization" (3–4). Returning, then, to our opening observation about the long lag time between the introduction of Spanish American texts to early American anthologies and the relatively slow pace of scholarship that crosses field and language divides, we ask: to whom are the teaching materials—those presently available, and those that may be augmented thanks to recent scholarly work—directed?

It is no surprise that in the past twenty-five years, attention to early Spanish Americas has been accompanied by a dramatic increase in the number of Latina/o/x students on US campuses—a demographic transformation of which those of us who teach at public institutions most affected by these changes are particularly aware. But the question of how present-day conditions shape our scholarship, and our pedagogical and public narrative about the past, is not a simple one. E. Thomson Shields tells the story of a conference panel in 1993 at which someone in the audience "asserted that in order to have colonial Spanish materials incorporated into the regular teaching of early American literature, we will have to wait for Hispanic students to do for the Spanish materials what Black students did for the African American materials" (2). Shields was not content to wait for such a handoff—he was endorsing the *Heath Anthology* here—and he expresses some discomfort with the commenter's unreflective essentialism. But the comment is worth lingering over because it points toward three important questions: who is to research and teach Spanish Americas, what are the language demands of doing such work, and at what point does it become necessary knowledge for the field at large, not just for a cadre of Latino/a/x students carrying this banner? We have retained the modifier *Spanish* in naming a plural *Americas* in this special issue not to substitute one colonial-imperial perspective for another, or to negate the multiplicity of languages that circulated in the hemisphere (including indigenous languages that are ignored by most contemporary Spanish or English departments), but as a way to recognize the resurgent presence of Spanish-speaking populations and their descendants in the United States today.

The question of language remains one of the most important in this discussion of field divisions and the need for more, and more inclusive,

interdisciplinary work. Robert McKee Irwin once argued controversially that "a minimum competence in the country's second language [Spanish] should be a requirement" (314) for every student in American studies graduate programs. Yet replacing one colonial language for another would not solve either the problem of pluralizing and decentering early American scholarship or the problem of a lack of diversity within its professoriate. The anonymous conference commenter committed a logical fallacy in equating a linguistic capacity with an ethnoracial identity—there's a wide range of command among Latinos over different registers and varieties of Spanish. But it is the case that many heritage speakers—as well as students tracked through university-level language courses today, with their emphasis on producing idiomatic, contemporary spoken language—may not in fact be well prepared for reading seventeenth- and eighteenth-century documents in the Archivo de Indias (a resource that is vastly underutilized by early Americanists). No single pathway through a graduate program necessarily guarantees the linguistic, historical, and cultural proficiencies that might be required to responsibly tell an entangled narrative about the early Americas.

The question of language is where the two disciplinary paths, history and literature, most clearly deviate in their concerns. For many historians, language is a medium, a scrim through which to perceive and assess evidence that is much more important than the medium itself. But for interpreters of cultural expression, language is the place we linger, in its epistemological uncertainty and ambiguity; it is the thing that requires our most careful attention. It is understandable that specialists who have invested years in their graduate training in Spanish and Romance languages might find fault with a dissertation prospectus, or a manuscript submitted for review, that showed signs of having missed some important brick in the Spanish literary canon. We suspect that one reason for the slow pace of published scholarship informed by a Spanish Americas perspective is the lingering trace of an O'Gorman-style, binary way of thinking about expertise as the product of field formation alone: such work may seem to require the equivalent of two separate PhDs. It is indeed daunting, especially for someone early in their career, to be expected to address the diversity and complexity of all the forking paths of the Anglo *and* Spanish colonial and revolutionary spheres. But the same complexity is present in indigenous studies as well. Perhaps a more productive approach would be to adjust

the bar of necessary expertise to the limited dimensions of the project—inviting collaboration when necessary—rather than to assume that it has been gotten through one's disciplinary training. An abstract idea of language proficiency need not precede the conception of a project.

Letting the research question determine its methods and materials is a hallmark of much interdisciplinary work, particularly in emergent fields. So is collaboration. Rather than using a blanket definition of linguistic proficiency tied to field training as a gatekeeping mechanism, we encourage early Americanists to become proficient in the necessary languages or to actively collaborate with other scholars who have expertise in the particular variety of the language that is germane to the research topic, whether it be the Spanish of the *Siglo de Oro*, classical Nahuatl, Angolan-Portuguese, Kikongo, or Palatine German. This list may also include contemporary global standard Spanish, so that the depth and importance of Spanish-language scholarship can be more widely consulted in our work, for this acknowledgment of work published outside the United States is as much a part of ethical scholarship as is self-reflexivity about the conditions and the personnel involved in research and teaching.

We argue that it is not enough to hand off the work of thinking about early America from the perspective of the Spanish Americas to a select few, especially if this separation or hiving off of a subfield implicitly gives permission for the majority to retrench in an Anglophone and Anglocentric emphasis. To make "Hispanic students" (and those who go on to become graduate students and professors) responsible for bringing this new vision of the Spanish Americas into being is to lean toward a pernicious tendency in society to assign certain forms of labor to specific ethnoracial groups. A full account of these complex questions of representation and structural equity (much less an account of the internal fissures of the "Latino" category itself) lies beyond the scope of this essay; however, there is perhaps inspiration to be found in the rich debate and dialogue among early African Americanists about equity and inclusion in scholarship. P. Gabrielle Foreman has nicely articulated this as an ethical problem: "a call that we commit to holding each other and our institutions accountable so we might build and safeguard structure to ensure that groups of people who are the subject of our studies are also fully present, fully leaders, fully citizens, fully belonging, fully and continually heard" (316–17). Making our scholarly institutions better incubators for future work on the textual and

expressive production of the Spanish Americas, a commitment we hope this special issue will instill in its readers, is crucially important but it is not a proxy for addressing other very real social imperatives.

Attending to various geographies and cultures and developing a range of knowledge and expertise to bring new research into the classroom should be the work of more than a few scholar-teachers of the early Spanish Americas who are repeatedly called upon to represent it. Not every project need invest the majority of its attention in a Spanish Americas orientation, or even the fifty-fifty split of a classic comparative literature analysis. As the essays gathered in this issue indicate, there is a wide variety of approaches to, and degrees of investment in, what we have broadly gathered under the umbrella of the Spanish Americas. It will be a sign of the lasting impact of the hemispheric or entangled-Americas turn when every early Americanist pauses to ask: is there a Spanish colonial angle, a possible document in a Mexican state archive, to this research question that is not on my radar? Any such foray, however, will entail crossing into less-familiar territories, not only in archives but also in relation to associations and conferences tied to various disciplines, fields, and approaches.

This special issue, for example, brings together early American literature with scholars associated with the Recovering the US Hispanic Literary Heritage Project, which has continually reached toward the colonial period.[11] Founded before the first Ibero-Anglo summit (again, around the Columbus quincentenary), the Recovery Project has accomplished an extraordinary amount of work in making documents available: it has produced over forty recovered books, two anthologies, and nine volumes of essays growing out of its biennial conference. Not all of these fall into the period coeval with "early American literature"—the project's scope is 1492–1960—but a number of them are. One of the earliest books published under the auspices of the Recovery Project was an English translation of Cabeza de Vaca's *Relación* (1993), and the table of contents of its *Herencia: The Anthology of Hispanic Literature of the United States* (2002) includes a short, translated excerpt from Alonso Gregorio de Escobedo's late sixteenth-century narrative, historical poem *La Florida*, among other colonial-era documents. Claiming the anonymous Spanish-language novel *Jicoténcal* (Philadelphia, 1826), the Recovery Project has never had much appetite for enforcing the type of field divisions that would separate US American from Latin American studies: its collection and republication

scope has taken a very ecumenical view of what might be relevant or not, and left it up to individual scholars to debate. Some of the scholars involved in this special issue, including the editors, have been active in conferences and discussions under the auspices of the Recovery Project. Even more immediately, Pedro García-Caro's essay on Fermín de Reygadas's *Astucias por heredar (Tricks to Inherit)* derives from a scholarly edition of the play in Spanish that he prepared and published under the auspices of the Recovery Project at Arte Público Press.

This issue leads off with a reflection on Villagrá by Manuel Martín-Rodríguez, a longtime contributor and former Recovery Project board member. It was Martín-Rodríguez, following the early Chicano literature scholar Juan Bruce-Novoa, who prepared the bilingual excerpts from Villagrá's poem for the most recent edition of the *Heath Anthology*, and many of the new biographical and textual findings he offers here have not previously appeared in English. Martín-Rodríguez contends that Villagrá's reputation as an apologist for Juan de Oñate, the bumbling conquistador responsible for the Acoma massacre, is unwarranted. Emphasizing the author's trajectory from New Spain, he presents Villagrá as a Nahuatl-speaking Creole, attempting in his own way to pose the Pueblo perspective (even if he must invent most of it). By shifting the lens of genre through which we read this text from neoclassical epic to legal discourse, and by emphasizing what he calls the "plural appropriations" of texts, Martín-Rodríguez calls our attention to the way different readers transform those texts over time—a common thread among many of the essays assembled in this issue.

Like Martín-Rodríguez, Andy Doolen, in his contribution to this issue, meticulously cuts through layers of historical misapprehension about a notorious author and assembles an alternate history of textual reception. Doolen for the most part avoids the notion of the Spanish borderlands to emphasize "Indian Country" as the dominant political-cultural matrix in assessing the work of John Dunn Hunter. Drawing from various critics, Doolen describes Indian Country as "a conceptual-geographical space that refers at once to specific tribal lands and their respective spheres of cultural production." This brings forward a necessary tension between a borderlands approach that continues to privilege a colonizing effect versus one that stems from considering a multiplicity of participants in borderlands interaction. An either/or approach that differentiates between Spanish colonization and Indian country, at a time when various parties are

meeting in geographies around North America, risks missing the tensions inherent in borderlands, which are not dualistic. When Hunter reaches Mexico City in the 1820s, he is navigating at least three countries and multiple indigenous peoples. Red Fredonia, Doolen concludes, espoused grievances against the tyranny of the Mexican state in accordance with republican revolutionary movements.

In her contribution, Jillian Sayre models a classically comparative approach to hemispheric literary production, juxtaposing (in Rolena Adorno's terms) texts from the United States, Mexico, and Peru that did not commingle across the language divide during their time. She links the "Vanishing Indian" as portrayed in familiar works by Eliza Lee Follen and William Cullen Bryant to heroic poems about the Aztec and Incan Empires through what she calls, following Achille Mbembe, the "necropolitics" of New World nation building. Necropolitics, she argues, is the process by which the displacement and death of indigenous populations is both mourned and celebrated as inevitable. Sayre follows critics who rename North American elites as *Creoles*, in the Latin American sense of the term, thereby redressing a long-standing historiographic tendency to see the Spanish colonial context as belated and backward in contrast to the Anglo-North American Enlightenment. While careful to avoid collapsing the conditions of Anglo and Ibero-American nationhood into sameness, her essay does not reify a two-Americas division in the manner of O'Gorman but rather challenges us to rethink the "possibility of an indigenous present."

The Spanish language and people speaking it crossed into New England and the Atlantic Seaboard throughout the colonial period, and the decades when most of the remainder of Spain's colonies declared independence. Emily García's article emphasizes the importance of linguistic negotiation in the development of republican political thought during the era of independence, demonstrating the interdependence of various revolutionary texts. She introduces *EAL* readers to Santiago Puglia's *El desengaño del hombre* (*Man Undeceived*, 1794), a book published in Philadelphia with the endorsement of prominent figures like Thomas Jefferson, written by a European immigrant who became active in that city's print culture. Although the book appeared in Spanish, Puglia integrated his reading of Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Thomas Paine. Attacked by the "language police" of his day—he was accused by the Inquisition of not writing in

correct Spanish, while his accent in English was mocked by his enemies in Philadelphia newspapers—Puglia offers a prescient example, in García's provocative argument, of what she identifies as the "interlingual" practices of contemporary Latina/o/x communities.

On the other side of the North American continent from Philadelphia, as Puglia was ingratiating himself with a new post-Revolutionary order, Spain was actively trying to retrench its dominance along the Pacific Coast. Against a canon of early American literature that has rarely included anything about California, Pedro García-Caro recuperates an unexpected story: that of a small group of ex-soldiers performing a mildly lascivious social comedy in one of the Crown's remote secular settlements near the Monterey Bay. García-Caro unfolds the many layers of the writing, reception, and preservation of Reygadas's play *Astucias por heredar*, from its composition in New Spain (after a French model) to its travels in manuscript form to Alta California, to its preservation by descendants of the *californios* as they were stripped of titles to the lands they had inherited from those same ex-soldiers. The story of the manuscript is entangled, in fact, in the larger unfolding of US historiography we have briefly sketched here: it was Hubert Howe Bancroft who received the manuscript from Mariano Vallejo, as he received so much other source evidence for his historical writings, and kept it in the collection that would later form the Bancroft Library—and the basis of much of Bolton's work. The brief excerpts that follow from Reygadas's play, in Spanish and in a contemporary English translation for the stage, give some hint of the vast trove of material that has yet to be brought to the surface, much less analyzed and brought into dialogue with better-known elements of early American literature.

The essays in this special issue demonstrate the crucial importance of archivally based textual study, but also of theories of translation, transmission, and adaptation across space, language systems, and temporal frameworks. Our contributors hail from different disciplinary locations and bring a range of approaches and methodological tools: the recovery and contextualization of little-studied material, consideration of how biographical conditions are intertwined with language practice, comparative studies of social formation in the Americas, analysis of the indigenous elements in texts by people from European cultures, and how texts are understood differently in relation to academic field formation. But these examples are by no means representative of the full range of potential work

across the (Spanish) Americas, nor would one journal issue capture that. The Spanish-language archive can contribute much more to the ongoing projects of foregrounding indigenous expression (rather than simply Creole writing about "Indians") and of repopulating the textual record of early America with more Africanist voices than Estebanico, the well-known "Moor" in Cabeza de Vaca's *Relación*. The flowering of recent early Americanist historical scholarship on the entanglement of the United States with revolutionary Saint-Domingue, for instance, has not yet integrated Spanish-language materials as fully as it might. In addition, there is a possibility that new texts, conditions, and cultural contexts will lead in new scholarly directions. The Spanish Americas provide a reorientation but not toward any particular place; rather, they point to the possibilities of moving beyond the limitations of a colonial and monocultural frame.

NOTES

1. The two "Anglo-Ibero" summits were in Tucson in 2002 and Providence in 2004. Since then, the SEA has sponsored seven special topics conferences, including "Early American Cartographies" (2006), "A Summit on Early Native America Studies" (2008), "Borderlands" (2010), "African Atlantic Culture, History and Performance" (2012), and "Translation and Transmission" (2016).
2. These references are by no means exhaustive. Among other anthologies that include Spanish-language materials in translation are *Early American Writings* (2001), edited by Carla Mulford et al; *The Bedford Anthology of American Literature*, edited by Susan Belasco and Linck Johnson; and *The Norton Anthology of American Literature*, edited by Robert S. Levine et al. The trend over the last twenty-five years has been for anthologies to offer a panorama of early American materials from various contact zones that bring together indigenous people with explorers, colonizers, and religious figures from Spain and France as well as England.
3. Adorno devotes a significant portion of her overview to the analysis and critique of hemispheric classroom anthologies, both their implicit categorization principles and their politics of translation. She notes that other scholars, including Bauer and Gustafson, had previously issued similar critiques.
4. Collections such as *Creole Subjects in the Colonial Americas*, edited by Ralph Bauer and José Antonio Mazzotti, and *Religious Transformations in the Early Americas*, edited by Stephanie Kirk and Sarah Rivett, build on the spirit of the Ibero-Anglo summits but also register the difficulty of crossing from one language to another. Bauer and Mazzotti propose that the "discourse of creolization and the creole subject" are important categories "for comparative literary

analysis" (8). With most contributors working on one side of the Anglo-Ibero divide, the two sides come together most convincingly in the collection as a whole. Kirk and Rivett's collection brings these fields together under the rubric of the massive "religious reinvention" (1), arguing for an "interdisciplinary model and comparative methodological framework" (20). While concluding that the Anglo-Protestant and Ibero-Catholic projects "were in many respects parallel endeavors" (21), their introduction ends on a similar note to Adorno's, arguing that "we should proceed with this comparative methodological approach with caution" (21).

5. We refer to Wiget's 1991 article comparing Villagrá's poem to *Of Plymouth Plantation* and a Native American migration story. Otherwise, *Historia de la Nveva México* has been largely absent from *American Literary History*, *American Literature*, and *EAL*, whereas numerous articles appeared in Chicano/Latino and southwestern-focused journals such as *Bilingual Review/Revista Bilingüe, Hispania*, and *Camino Real.*
6. Martínez-San Miguel has proposed "analyzing the narrative and rhetorical structures of Latin American colonial texts by establishing a dialogue with contemporary studies on minority discourse and colonial and postcolonial theory" (163).
7. After *La invención de América*, O'Gorman wrote *Mexico: El trauma de su historia* (not available in English) in order to trace a second major epistemological shift, this time not between Old World and New but between "las dos Américas, la sajona y la latina, la gran dicotomía histórica americana" (5). The notion of a "great historical dichotomy of America" is more explicitly expressed in his Mexico book.
8. Bolton's work inspired the posthumous debates over Bolton's legacy collected in the 1964 *Do the Americas Have a Common History?* (Hanke). In that collection, O'Gorman contributed a hostile response to Bolton, accusing him of fabricating commonality and attempting to separate the hemisphere from its inextricable connections to Europe ("Do the Americas"). For O'Gorman, America remained forever an outgrowth of European thought.
9. Whitman wrote:

> To that composite American identity of the future, Spanish character will supply some of the most needed parts. . . As to our aboriginal or Indian population—the Aztec in the South, and many a tribe in the North and West—I know it seems to be agreed that they must gradually dwindle as time rolls on, and in a few generations more leave only a reminiscence, a blank. But I am not at all clear about that. As America, from its many far-back sources and current supplies, develops, adapts, entwines, faithfully identifies its own—are we to see it cheerfully accepting and using all the contributions of foreign lands from the whole outside globe—and then rejecting the only ones distinctively its own—the autochthonic ones?

> As to the Spanish stock of our Southwest, it is certain to me that we do not begin to appreciate the splendor and sterling value of its race element. Who knows but that element, like the course of some subterranean river, dipping invisibly for a hundred or two years, is now to emerge in broadest flow and permanent action? (1147)

Among popular writers who have "discovered" this passage from *November Boughs* to defend the place of Latinos in the United States are Hayes-Bautista (13), Remeseira ("Whitman"), and the editorial staff of the *New York Times* ("As Immigration").

10. Anzaldúa's use of *mestizaje* (racial mixing) has been seen by some as contributing to the erasure of present and past indigenous communities and identities. For a useful summary of such critiques, see Pérez.
11. We wonder if one of the unintended effects of the Recovery Project's success is that a separation has developed over the last two decades between projects associated with Latino/a studies and, on the other hand, US literature writ large. (The exceptions are a few scholars who shuttle back and forth between conferences and journals connected to both: the specialists whose specter we raised at the beginning.) While the Recovery Project has made efforts to interact with various organizations—for example through joint conferences with the American Studies Association in 2002 and the Western History Association in 2006—attempts to build bridges across separate scholarly spheres are not always successful. The format of the Ibero-Anglo summits and of the dedicated panels or program tracks for Latin Americanists embedded inclusively in other SEA-sponsored tracks represent good beginnings, but do not in themselves demonstrate a deep integration of the field.

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