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Authors
Lara, Génesis
Ordaz, Jessica

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INTRODUCTION

Introduction: Solidarity sin Fronteras

Génesis Lara[2] **· Jessica Ordaz**[1]

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The future of Latino Studies must be transnational and examine Latinidad across and beyond borders. The current fascist authoritarian regime's attacks on Latinx/Latin American peoples have employed a transnational strategy of violence, fear and displacement. It is not a new strategy. While the expansive power of authoritarianism has been central to totalitarian leaders for decades, and while some of the most successful social movements have made global connections of solidarity in the past, it is vital and urgent that scholarship about these themes do so as well.

Given the borderlessness of state power and the countless attacks our communities are currently facing, this special section of *Latino Studies*, "Solidarity sin Fronteras," calls for the creation of scholarship that centers a transnational lens in the analysis of social and solidarity movements among Latinx and Latin American communities. For this reason, the following authors underscore the utility of placing Latino studies in conversation with Latin American studies, Caribbean studies, and Black studies. While each article has a different focus, from critical food studies to revolutionary politics, a transnational frame helps us better understand the extent to which each of these movements has embraced a hemispheric perspective rooted in historical, political, and cultural relations between U.S.-based Latinx activists and Latin American organizers. Rather than proclaim an all-encompassing, homogenous, and uncomplicated notion of hemispheric Latinidad, these articles interrogate the interconnected histories of movement work across the Americas, as well as the potential and the limits of solidarity, the moments of unity as well as the fractures—around race, labor, community, and around competing political priorities—that sometimes erupted. Organized around three central themes, liberation struggles, feminism, and family and community care, the following articles demonstrate that community organizers also evolve, shape shift, expand, and continue to make revolution, whether it

✉ Génesis Lara
genesil1@uci.edu

Jessica Ordaz
Jessica.Ordaz@Colorado.EDU

[1] University of Colorado, Boulder, Boulder, Colorado, USA

[2] University of California, Irvine, Irvine, CA, USA

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be in the kitchen or the streets. Telling these stories was possible by looking beyond the boundaries and borders of the United States.

Transnational Visions of Latinx Solidarity

If we redefine and reconceptualize Latinidad as borderless and heterogeneous, we open the possibility to more deeply interrogate the parameters of Latinx freedom struggles between and beyond nation-states. The question that the following articles center on is: how are liberatory visions shaped, transformed, and influenced by movements across place and time? The authors examine resistance against systems of inequality and oppression in multiple geographic spaces, with the critical knowledge that these battles are fought not only through protests but also in the most intimate of spaces: in our homes, and even through what we eat. They examine formations of transnational efforts to showcase how movement building transforms how we envision radical organizing and the lived experiences of Latin American and Latinx peoples. Recent social justice movements across the United States, the Caribbean, and Latin America demonstrate how now, more than ever, it is necessary to consider how transnational relationships influence and complicate conceptualizations of justice and liberation within and across the Americas. Rich in oral history and archival research methodologies, the following articles speak to scholars across disciplinary borders by centering how transnational solidarity has been at the forefront of Latin American and Latinx visions of liberation for decades.

"Solidarity sin Fronteras" argues that transnational solidarity efforts challenge the limitations of U.S.-based definitions of Latinidad. The rigidity of U.S. racial categorizations, when combined with the historical erasures contained within Latinidad itself, makes engaging with the complexity of Indigenous and Black experiences, as they move within and beyond the borders of the state, less legible in more homogenous discussions of what it means to be Latin American and Latinx. Consequently, the following special section emphasizes the importance of considering how local organizing is tied to wider hemispheric histories that have come to shape the complexity of a hemispheric understanding of Latinidad. There is a long history of transnational solidarity movements, whether we call them emancipatory politics or movements for Third World liberation. What the following authors accomplish is the utilization of transnational solidarity movements to expose the depth and complexity of Latinidad itself.

Approaching Transnationalism

The following scholarship on "Solidarity sin Fronteras" was inspired by and builds upon a rich scholarship on transnationalism and transnational Latinx Studies in particular. This literature opens a lens onto the ways Latinx familial relationships, political aspirations, migrations, and cultural production, among other phenomena, live in multiple geographic locations. It showcases the way intimate and personal relations are stretched and altered by migration. Invariably, it centers women as change-makers

whenever informal, cross-border networks need to be constructed and maintained. The literature also foregrounds revolution as seeping beyond borders, both as inspiration and as chaos. Again, and again, and relatedly, this scholarship forces us to deal with the role of the American empire, and, to a lesser extent, the legacy of the Spanish one. Above all, the existing literature challenges us to consider and reconsider who exactly is Latinx and what we mean by Latinidad (see Concannon et al., 2009; Patino, 2017; Soto, 2018; Félix, 2019; and Rosas, 2014).

The impact of transnationalism on personal relationships and the lives of migrant families is a central endeavor of this section, as evidenced in the work of Jessica Ordaz and Nicole Ramsey. Ordaz's study of veganism among intersectional vegans across the U.S.-Mexico border offers a new perspective on the intimate relationship between food and family. Her interlocutors' efforts to combat food apartheid, agribusiness, and its negative health impacts, in turn, open a transnational window onto Latinx relationships, often from a multi-generational perspective. Similarly, Ramsey's work immerses the reader in the complex relationships of the Los Angeles Belizean community. Ramsey's work asks us to question the role of placemaking, as Belizeans have combated the very definition of Latinidad itself, one which could not seem to allow for a Black Indigenous Latinx identity.

In this text and others, the connection between Latinidad and struggles for liberation within Latin America and the United States is undeniable. This connection is a centerpiece of "Solidarity sin Fronteras." The outsized influence of the Cuban Revolution is examined in Diana Johnson's contribution to this special section. Johnson explores the impact the Cuban Revolution provided for activists throughout the globe, through a focus on multi-racial organizers in Seattle. Specifically, Johnson centers Latinx female activists and their adoption of feminist Cuban strategies in the racial dynamics of solidarity organizing in Seattle, Washington. Alexis Meza's piece provides a transnational framing through which to understand Salvadoran activist Maria Guardado's influence and legacy in Mexico and the United States. She too was a victim of Cold War conflicts, but she was also a determined fighter for justice on many fronts. Lisa Materson tells the story of another woman, Peruvian-born Laura Meneses, who, starting in 1922 with her marriage to the famed Puerto Rican independence leader Pedro Albizu Campos, negotiated a lifetime of activism and a series of citizenships despite the impositions of both empire and patriarchy. These articles are set during the second half of the twentieth century, a period that encompasses Materson's contribution as well. Against the backdrop of the Cold War, which was a critical moment in ushering radical challenges to racial capitalism and colonialism throughout the globe, contributors tease out the connections between state violence and revolutionary organizing in Latin America and, as a result of the migrations prompted by war, within the United States.

Scholars taking a transnational approach have also questioned who the concept of Latinidad excludes. Unfortunately, entire histories of Black and Indigenous people throughout the hemisphere have been ignored or forgotten. In 2017, a groundbreaking special edition of *Latino Studies* on Critical Latinx Indigeneities opened a broader conversation about the relationship between Indigeneity and Latinidad against this longer history of erasure that often continues even when scholars do center Indigenous histories and voices within Latinx studies. Mexican identity and nationalism

have been wrapped up in the legacies of the Mexica at the expense of centering the over 68 distinct Indigenous groups living throughout the region. Luis Sanchez-Lopez sheds further light on this topic in "Oaxacan Studies: Building a Field from Within," which examines the emergence of "Oaxacan Studies" and its evolution, paying particular attention to the rise of a new generation of Indigenous Oaxacan scholars who are part of the Oaxacan diaspora in the United States. As members of the Oaxacan diaspora, primarily in the state of California, these Oaxacan scholars are bringing to the fore the importance of studying Indigenous politics from within the community and contributing to conversations about decolonization, Indigeneity, and settler colonialism in Latinx America.

Other scholars deny that there is any relationship between Blackness and Latinidad. In "'Latinidad is Cancelled': Confronting an Anti-Black Construct," for example, Tatiana Flores declares, "Black erasure, sadly, is built into the concept of latinidad" and "Latin America" is a white supremacist construct" (Flores, 2021, p. 59). Flores' assertions beg us to interrogate: Is it possible to decolonize Latinidad? Lorgia García Peña might answer "yes" in *Translating Blackness: Latinx Colonialities in Global Perspective* (2022) as she considers Black Latinidad as a social, political and cultural formation rather than solely a form of identification. Moreover, *Translating Blackness* is not tied to an interpretation of Latinidad which is confined to the United States, but rather examines the ways Black Latinx people survive and resist colonialism in a global perspective.

The following articles interrogate solidarity, activism, and social justice movements within a transnational framework. They explore how people across the United States, the Caribbean, and Latin America have organized, communicated, protested, marched, and fomented revolution across borders. They pay close attention to the lessons and teachings of movement makers and freedom seekers, in various sites including the kitchen, protest rallies, and radio stations. The histories and lineages of social movements throughout Latin America have shaped Latinx identity, community, and tactics of resistance. Conversely, the formation of transnational forms of community care between Latin America and U.S.-based Latinx communities indelibly marked definitions of identity and belonging within Latin America. While it might be impossible to detangle the origins, roots, and histories of Latinidad from white supremacy completely, "Solidarity sin Fronteras" showcases scholarship that is attempting to reconcile this reality.

Declarations

Competing interests There are no competing interests.

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