La Chicana: A Bibliographic Survey

Catherine Loeb

"Herstory," unfortunately . . . tends to exclude the history of the Chicana. Historians have ethnocentrically made women's history synonymous with the Indo-European heritage. More often than not, indigenous women of the Americas are either ignored or tokenistically offered a sentence or two.[1]

Rape and territorial conquest have often gone together in history. The Spanish men who took possession of what is now Mexico in the sixteenth century also freely took possession of native Indian women, and thus it is said that "La Raza,"[2] the mestizo race, was born of Spanish father and Indian mother. It is from Mexico's native peoples, their conquest and transformation by Spain and their reconquest of the Southwest by the United States in 1848, that Chicanas descend. America being their native land, it is not they but the descendants of European conquerors and immigrants who are the true "aliens" in the United States.

Women historians have argued that knowledge of women's lives calls into question conventional views of history and of historical periods.[3] It seems clear to me that coming to grips with Chicana history would demand a fundamental altering of historical conceptions not yet even imagined by "herstory." It would require not just a feminist, but an anti-colonialist history of America. It is not only racism or ethnocentrism that prevents our constructing this new history; it is also that we hardly even know how to conceptualize a history of America that does not begin with Columbus.[4]

This essay will unfortunately not be able to lead the way into such uncharted territory. Its aim is necessarily more modest: to provide an introduction to English-language materials on Chicanas. While I assume no prior familiarity with Chicana issues or literature, I do take for granted a certain acquaintance with the issues and literature of what is commonly referred to by Chicanas as Anglo feminism.

A preliminary note is necessary on the problems the reader/researcher is likely to encounter in exploring literature on La Chicana. First of all, for those lacking Spanish, access to resources is significantly restricted. Secondly, locating existing English-language sources in our ethnocentric library collections and bookstores can present formidable obstacles, as I soon found out in the course of this project. These two barriers to the existing literature are extremely frustrating, but ultimately less disturbing than the general paucity of sources. Historical materials were suppressed or destroyed in the course of the Spanish and U.S. conquests.[5] Others lie buried in archives, invisible until the contours of Chicana history are better known. Studies by the Federal Government often deprive us of data on Chicanas by submerging it with data on Chicanos (the "minorities and women" approach), on Hispanics, or even whites. Finally, one finds Chicanas overlooked or tokenized in both the feminist and the Chicano literature of the last decade.

I will emphasize easily accessible works wherever possible in this essay. However, failure to include the hard-to-locate Chicana/o sources would only contribute to their continued invisibility; I include many of these sources with the hope that readers will pressure their libraries to increase their collections in this area. Finally, I am emphasizing very recent works.

BACKGROUND SOURCES

Martha P. Cotera's Diosa y Hembra: The History

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and Heritage of Chicanas in the U.S. is a groundbreaking
work. Published in 1976, it was the first attempt to
provide a synthetic account of the history of Chicanas
(from pre-Columbian times) and of their status and
struggles today. This work was also published under the
title-profile of the Mexican-American Woman, with
the addition of a 129-item English- and Spanish-
language bibliography, a list of thirty-five Chicana or-
ganizations, and texts of resolutions passed at ten
Chicana conferences between 1970 and 1975.

Diosa y Hembra is written in a kind of shorthand,
assuming some familiarity with the broad outlines of
Mexican-American history. Persons new to this history
may find the recent work by Alfredo Miranda and
Evangelia Enríquez, La Chicana: The Mexican-
American Woman, a somewhat easier starting place.
Though it covers much of the same ground as Cotera's
book, La Chicana goes further in offering a rudimen-
tary background in Raza history. In addition, it pro-
vides a lengthy essay on Chicana images in literature,
and an extensive, up-to-date bibliography of Spanish-
and English-language books, articles, and disserta-
tions.

María Linda Apodaca's essay, "The Chicana Woman:
An Historical Materialist Perspective," stands out as an
attempt to develop a theoretical and analytic perse-
pective on Chicana oppression. Apodaca seeks to
go beyond historical description to find an explanation
of the forces behind this oppression, from the primitive
communism of pre-Aztec Mexican society, through
Spanish colonial feudalism, to the period of U.S.
Imperialism. With such ambitious aims, the essay is un-
derstandably sketchy. It does, however, try to analyze
the impact on Chicanas of changes in the relations of
production and reproduction throughout this historical
period.

Yet another good introductory source is the 1977
collection entitled Essays on La Mujer, edited by
Roxaura Sánchez and Rosa Martínez Cruz. Judith
Sweeney's "Chicana History: A Review of the Litera-
ture" in this volume is to be particularly recommended.
Covering the period from the early sixteenth century to
the present, Sweeney's review is more inclusive than
her title would suggest, looking to sociological,
psychological, and literary—as well as strictly
historical—sources. Moreover, she manages to inter-
weave bibliographic citations with a clear historical
chronology.

Chicana labor struggles and political identity are the
focus of a more recent reader entitled Mexican Women
in the United States: Struggles Past and Present.
Editors Magdalena Mora and Adelaida R. Del Castillo
bring together in this anthology twenty-three articles,
the majority of which appear for the first time.

There are several good bibliographies on Chicanas,
though they are now somewhat dated. Most notewor-
thly are La Mujer Chicana by Evey Chapa, et al. (232
annotated citations, covering 1916-1975 in twelve sub-
ject areas); Bibliography of Writings on La Mujer, by
Cristina Portillo, et al. (an unannotated listing of the
Chicana-related holdings—books, articles, unpub-
lished papers, dissertations, documents, and serials—
of the University of California Berkeley Chicano Studies Library through 1976); and The Chicana: A
Comprehensive Bibliographic Study, by Roberto
Cabello-Argándona, et al. (nearly 500 entries cover-
ing monograph and journal literature, government docu-
ments, and films, with evaluative annotations for most
entries).

Researchers interested in developing a perspective
on Chicanas will probably also want to delve into the
-growing feminist scholarship on Latin American
women. While these sources do not focus specifically
on Chicanas, the questions they pose and the themes
they develop will often be relevant to Chicana re-
search.[6]

Much of the recent writing by Chicanas represents at
least in part a reaction to the absence of women from
Chicano movement literature. As is the case with much
"corrective" literature, these Chicana sources assume
background knowledge on the part of the reader. The
reader new to Chicana/o issues will therefore need to
explore the Chicano literature of the last decade, de-
spite its neglect of women, to adequately understand
the context of Chicana writings. Daniel Durán in Latino
Materials: A Multimedia Guide for Children and
Young Adults offers good, up-to-date coverage of
Chicano books, journals, and films in English and
Spanish. The emphasis is not on juvenile materials as
the title suggests; annotations are substantial and intel-
ligent. Another important reference source, though less
recent, is Arnulfo Trojo's Bibliografía Chicana.[7]

The struggle to establish Chicano identity has given
rise to a number of critical assessments of the image of
Chicanos in social science literature most notably by
Octavio Romano-V and Nick Vaca. These reviews
identify the nativist and xenophobic slant of studies
which see in Mexican Americans' failure to become
"acculturated" and "Americanized" the cause of their
poverty, low educational attainment, unemployment,
poor health, and the like. If Chicanos are seen—as
oppressed peoples often are—as passive and backward,
responsible for their own oppression, then Chicanas
tend to be seen as "super-passively fatalistic with a
touch of sado-masochism thrown in for good me-
asure."[8]

There are several excellent general studies of La
Raza. The classic is Carey McWilliams' North From
Mexico, still universally recommended after over thirty
years. Viva La Raza! is a militant and eloquent account
by Elizabeth Sutherland Martínez and Enriqueta Lon-
gauex y Vásquez, two women active in the Chicano
movement. Stan Steiner's La Raza is journalistic in
approach, and provides a useful bibliographic essay.
For a Marxist analysis, see Gilberto López y Rivas' The
Chicanos. Tomás Almaguer's essay, "Toward the
Study of Chicano Colonialism," presents a helpful his-
torical and theoretical exploration of Chicanos' explo-
tiation as an internal colony of the U.S. The writings of
Jovita González, one of the first Chicanas to write in
English about Chicano culture and folklore, have ap-
ppeared in Luis Valdez and Stan Steiner's anthology
Aztlán and in Américo Paredes and Raymund Paredes' *Mexican-American Authors*.

Chicana anthologies have been noteworthy for their exclusion of Chicana perspectives, or, alternatively, for their repeated anthologizing of the same essay.[9] This qualification aside, some good readers are David Weber's *Foreigners in Their Native Land*, a collection of primary source material; Valdez and Steiner’s *Aztlán*, a good documentary complement to Steiner's narrative, *La Raza*; and Matt Meier and Feliciana Rivera’s *Readings on La Raza*.

**CHICANA STUDIES**

 Barely a decade old, Chicana studies have only just begun to be developed. One indicator of this is the sizable number of very general essays on *La Chicana* that have appeared and continue to appear. The best known (and most accessible) of these include Elizabeth Olivarez's "Women’s Rights and the Mexican-American Woman"; Jennie Chavez's "Women of the Mexican-American Movement"; Linda Aguilar’s controversial "Unequal Opportunity and the Chicana" (with its contention that Chicanas face particular discrimination from Chicano employers); Mirta Vidal’s "Chicanas Speak Out"; and Enriqueta Longueyx y Vásquez’s repeatedly anthologized essay, "The Mexican-American Woman."

 More specific topics for which one can find published sources include education, counseling, history, anthropology, autobiography, family, law, employment, labor struggles, literature and literary criticism, psychology, medicine and health, reproductive issues, welfare, prison, immigration, politics. As space does not permit extended discussion of all of these, in what follows I will be highlighting the areas of history, literature, the family, and politics, while only briefly considering materials for other topics under the broad heading, "Economic and Social Profile."[10]

**History**

 A truly integrative American history—one in which Chicanas were fully present—would have to show us the evolution of this continent through the eyes of indigenous peoples, as well as from the perspective of, for example, the Spanish, the Pilgrims, and slaves from Africa. It would simultaneously have to pay as much attention to the world of women as to the world of men: to the realm of the home, family, and reproduction, as well as to the world of the hunt, the public square, the factory, the White House. Such a history would help us to understand the Spanish conquest from the perspective of the conquered. We would see the emergence of the mestizo race from the vantage point of the native women who gave it birth. This history would enable us to see the current struggles of *La Raza* as the product of an historical past.

 Given the submersion of this past, the most imaginative work in social history will be required to bring it into view. The pressing need for such a social history is emphasized by Sweeney, in her previously mentioned review of *History of Mexican Americans* (an excellent place to begin study in this area). However, when we look to the two most extensive historical portraits now available—Cotera’s *Diosa y Hembra* and Mirandé and Enriquez’s *La Chicana*—we find in both of them primarily an enumeration of notable women, against a backdrop of Chicano social history. Primary research into the everyday lives of Raza women, past and present, remains to be done.

 Identifying available sources for this research will present formidable obstacles, as they are undoubtedly deeply buried and unfamiliar to archivists. The recent landmark publication, Andrea Hindle’s *Women's History Sources: A Guide to Archives and Manuscript Collections in the United States*, lists only nineteen entries on Mexican Americans, only eight of which have an exclusively Mexican-American focus.

 In the meantime, one important available source for social history is to be found in autobiographical and oral history materials. Manuel Gamio’s classic oral history collection, *The Life Story of the Mexican Immigrant*, includes the stories of seventeen women. Oral histories of five more contemporary Mexican-American migrant women have been published in Kristina Lindborg and Carlos Ovando’s *Five Mexican-American Women in Transition*. Elizabeth Loza Newby’s *A Migrant with Hope*, has much to say about relations between migrant men and women. A recent Feminist Press publication by Ellen Cantarow, *Moving the Mountain*, includes extended interviews with Jessie López de la Cruz, organizer for the United Farm Workers (UFW) and mother of six children. Forthcoming (also from The Feminist Press) is a book by Nan Elsasser, et al., entitled *Las Mujeres: Conversations from a Hispanic Community* (excerpted in this issue).

 As for historically visible women, sources are available for the study of: Malintzin Tenepal (La Malinche), the native Indian woman traditionally scapegoated as the traitor who surrendered Mexico to the Spanish because she became the mistress of Hernán Cortés and bore his mestizo son;[11] Teresa Urrea, a nineteenth-century woman cast alternately as saint and revolutionary;[12] Lucía González de Parsons, labor organizer and wife of one of the Chicago Haymarket martyrs (claimed as a Chicana by contemporary Chicanas, although considered a black woman by one biographer);[13] Sara Estela Ramirez, a labor organizer and feminist from the period of the Mexican Revolution;[14] Rose Pesotta, an organizer of the Los Angeles dressmakers’ strike of 1933;[15] Dolores Huerta and other women active in the UFW struggles;[16] and Maria Moreno, also active in farm labor struggles.[17] Brief discussions of most of these women can also be found in Cotera’s *Diosa y Hembra* or Mirandé and Enriquez’s *La Chicana*.

 A variety of other historical topics have been researched to a greater or lesser degree. There are studies of women in colonial Mexico; women in the nineteenth-century Mexican labor movement; Mexican women's suffrage; and the Mexican Revolution.[18]
Fabiola Cabeza de Baca has written on the important and little explored subject of "The Pioneer Women" of La Raza. For a history of Chicanas in the American Southwest, one could begin with the studies of Ruth Allen, particularly The Labor of Women in the Production of Cotton, a study of white, black, and Chicana women living on Texas cotton farms in the eve of the Depression. More recent studies of Chicanas in the Southwest include Jane Dysart's "Mexican Women in San Antonio, 1830-1860," and Ester Gallegos y Chávez's "The Northern New Mexican Woman." In the area of Southwestern labor history, one can read about the 1938 pecan sheller's strike[19] and women in the Texas International Ladies' Garment Workers Union.[20] The story of the early 1950's strike (primarily by Mexican-American workers) against a New Mexico mine, and of the pivotal role of women in this strike, has been portrayed in the moving film Salt of the Earth. The Feminist Press has recently published Michael Wilson's screenplay, along with an excellent commentary by Deborah Silverton Rosenfelt. A more recent labor struggle in which Chicanas were prominent—the strike and boycott against the Farah Manufacturing Company, a major garment producer—is the focus of a new pamphlet by Laurie Coyle, et al. entitled Women at Farah: An Unfinished Story; the study is based on more than seventy hours of taped interviews with Farah strikers.

Literature

In a 1976 work entitled Reference Materials on Mexican-Americans, Richard Woods noted that the major deficiency in Chicano reference sources was in the humanities. As of 1976, he found only four works in the area of literature. The results of my own searches would indicate that literature remains a neglected area for Chicano reference materials in 1980.

The very recent Chicano Scholars and Writers by Julio Martinez offers good biographical and bibliographical information on a considerable number of Chicana writers of fiction, poetry, drama, and literary criticism. An important new collection of critical essays by Lucia Fox-Lockert entitled Women Novelists in Spain and Spanish America unfortunately limits its focus on American writers to Latin America.[21] The periodical El Grito compiled a bibliography in 1973 entitled "Toward a Chicano/Raza Bibliography: Drama, Prose, Poetry," which could be mined for works by Chicanas.


Among sources on Chicana writers are two essays by Inés Hernandez Tovar ("Chicanas Writings," and "The Feminist Aesthetic in Chicano Literature"), Marcella Trujillo's "The Dilemma of the Modern Chicana Artist and Critic," Sylvia Gonzales' "Congress of Inter-American Women Writers—An Overview," and Bernice B. Ortiz Zamora's "The Chicana as a Literary Critic." Several of these were published in Chicano periodicals that can be difficult to locate. Joseph Sommers and Tomás Ybarbo-Frausto have just published a collection of criticism entitled Modern Chicano Writers, which may or may not have writings relevant to Chicanas—I was unable to obtain a copy of this book to find out. Studies on specific writers include Judith Thurman's study of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz (one of Mexico's greatest literary figures of the seventeenth century) and Marvin Lewis' essay on Chicano poet Rita Mendoza.

The most frequently cited literature anthology is Dorinda Moreno's La Mujer en Pie de Lucha, which includes articles, poems, and essays addressing issues of concern to Third World women. I was unable to retrieve a copy from either the University of Wisconsin-Madison libraries or the Wisconsin Interlibrary Loan Service—yet another indication of the absence of Chicanas from our libraries. A special issue of the bilingual journal De Colores entitled "La Cosecha: Literatura y La Mujer Chicana," brought together poetry, book reviews, essays, and fiction by and about Chicanas and literature. Finally, a literary anthology edited by Dexter Fisher entitled The Third Woman: Minority Women Writers of the United States includes writings of Chicanas along with those of American Indian, black, and Asian-American women.

Economic and Social Profile

Both Cotera (Diosa y Hembra) and Mirandé and Enriquez (La Chicana) offer good statistical summaries of the status of Chicanas in the U.S. today in work, education, and income. The often-cited U.S. Women's Bureau pamphlet, "Women of Spanish Origin in the United States," unfortunately is now out of print, but is available through ERIC. The frequently updated report of the Census Bureau, "Persons of Spanish Origin in the United States," provides a basic statistical profile of Chicanos, in comparison with other Spanish-surnamed groups in the U.S., and many of the statistical tables are broken down by sex. These tables, along with relevant tables from other Census Bureau publications
(1975 editions), are reproduced and briefly analyzed in Elizabeth Waldman’s “Profile of the Chicana.”

**Education:** Women’s Educational Equity Communications Network (WEENCN) has published an excellent overview of resources available for the study of Chicanas and education. Entitled *Hispanic Women and Education* (edited by Valerie Wheat), this annotated bibliography cites eighty-two sources pertaining to Hispanics, the majority of which relate specifically to La Chicana. In the area of curricular materials, a fine source is *New Directions in Education: Estudios Femeníles de la Chicana,* edited by Anna Nieto-Gómez and Corinne Sánchez. Intended as an aid to teachers wishing to integrate the study of Chicanas into the curriculum, the pamphlet offers four course outlines in the areas of history, higher education, literature, and sociology. These are followed by a partially annotated bibliography and list of films.[22]

Most articles relating to Chicana education speak to very general issues.[23] However, my searches also turned up more highly focused sources on counseling reentry Chicanas; student aspirations; Chicanas in educational administration; and the history of early twentieth-century “Americanization” programs.[24]

**Employment:** Laura Arroyo’s “Industrial and Occupational Distribution of Chicana Workers” is an excellent analysis of the Chicana worker in California and Texas as of 1969. Of particular interest is Arroyo’s clear discussion of the difficulties which stand in the way of obtaining reliable data on Chicanas, particularly methodologies in government studies which effectively render Chicanas invisible. Cotera’s *Diosa y Hembra* and Miranda and Enriquez’s *La Chicana* also have good analyses of the status of the Chicana worker. Yet another significant—and easily accessible—study of the Chicana worker (specifically the married Chicana worker) is Rosemary Cooney’s “Changing Labor Force Participation of Mexican Wives,” which reports on the increasing labor force participation rates of these women.[25] More specific topics addressed by the literature include Chicana farmworkers and agribusiness; Chicanas’ exploitation by the textile and electronics industries; the CETA program; affirmative action; and employment counseling.[26]

**Law:** A basic source for issues relating to Chicanas and law is the *Chicano Law Review.* This journal has published at least two articles relevant to Chicanas in recent volumes: Antonia Hernández’s “Chicanas and the Issue of Involuntary Sterilization” and Patricia Vásquez’s “Establishing Litigation Priorities to Secure Chicana Rights.” A handbook on Chicana rights is available from MALDEF (Mexican-American Legal Defense and Educational Fund). Readers interested in this topic might also want to investigate the Women’s History Research Center microfilm collection entitled “Women and Law.” Part of this collection, entitled “Black and Third World Women,” has some materials on Chicanas.

**Medicine, health, mental health, sexuality, reproduction:** Chicana reality as defined by Chicanas may be virtually invisible within the dominant culture, but there are important areas of Chicanas’ lives which are too visible, too exposed. Among these are health, sexuality, and reproduction (along with the family, crime, and poverty). Many of the social science sources on these topics put the spotlight on Chicanas as objects of study in ways which may make these women vulnerable as potential objects of manipulation and social control. Fertility studies are a prime example.[27]

However, U.S. population control programs, both domestic and international, are increasingly scrutinized and resisted by their target populations, and there is a growing critical literature on this topic. Bonnie Mass’s *Population Target: The Political Economy of Population Control in Latin America* is vital background reading in this area. Ellen Frankfort’s recent book, *Rosie: The Investigation of a Wrongful Death,* offers a journalistic account of the human reality behind the first documented abortion-related death following the termination of Federal Medicaid funds for abortion. The victim was a Chicana named Rosaura Jiménez, who at the time of her abortion and its fatal complications was living in McAllen, Texas, trying to finish her B.A. while also caring for her five-year-old daughter and working part time. Other sources which address reproductive issues are the previously cited Hernández article on involuntary sterilization, articles by Carlos Velez-I and Diane Ainsworth on involuntary sterilization at the Los Angeles County-USC Medical Center, and Kathy Flores’ essay on Chicano attitudes toward birth control.

Marsha Hurst and Ruth Zambrana’s recent study of the “health careers” of East Harlem women reveals the kinds of barriers to decent health care that low-income Hispanic women face.[28] On the specific topic of mental health, there are a number of sources available, among them Carmen Carrillo-Berón’s “Raza Mental Health: Perspectivas Femeníles” and Susan Keefe’s study of Mexican Americans’ “underutilization” of mental health clinics (the assumptions underlying the use of the term “underutilization” are seemingly not examined by this article).[29] Other materials for the study of Chicana mental health may be found in the Women’s History Research Center microfilm collection entitled “Women and Health/Mental Health,” part of which looks at black and Third World women. Finally, other available sources in this general area address the issues of sexual taboos: rape; and drug addiction.[30]

**Welfare, immigration, prison:** I group these topics together partially because I have relatively few citations to offer on each, but also because in each of these three areas Chicanas experience the kind of vulnerability to state intervention and social control mentioned above. Most of the sources I mention represent Chicana viewpoints. Further search of the mainstream social science literature would undoubtedly produce more citations from that vantage point.

The writings I turned up on the subject of welfare are all in difficult to locate Chicana/o journals: a piece in *Regeneracion* (“Chicana Welfare Rights Challenges Talmadge Amendment”); writings by Alicia Escalante, a Chicana on welfare, published in *Encuentro Femeníl*; and Clemencia Martinez’s article on the plight of wel-
fare families in the periodical La Raza.

The subject of immigration goes to the heart of the paradoxical situation of Mexican Americans and Mexicans in the United States. To understand how the descendants of the native peoples of this land have come to be seen as "illegal aliens" necessitates going beyond narrow demographic studies of "migration" and sociological studies of "acculturation" to the entire history of La Raza. In The Illegals, Grace Halsell, a woman who worked as a reporter in Viet Nam during the war, compares the brutality and futility of that U.S. war venture with the ongoing war being waged against Mexican immigrants. In an effort to better understand the reality of the "illegal aliens," Halsell traveled back and forth along the U.S.-Mexico border, crossing three times without paper. In this personal, journalistic account, she pays particular attention to the experience of women immigrants: the pressures leading up to their immigration, the particular dangers which threaten their attempts to cross the border, and the struggles which await them in the U.S. Sasha Lewis' new study, The Slave Trade Today: American Exploitation of Illegal Aliens, paints a grim picture of the world of the underground labor market in the U.S. Yet another MALDEF publication looks at "Hispanic Women: Immigration Issues." Elizabeth Gutierrez and Herman Lujan's "The Kansas Migrant Survey" and Glenn Hawkes' Patterns of Living in California's Migrant Labor Families provide data on the lives and needs of Chicana/o migrants; the latter study is based on interviews with housewives from the migrant camps. Margarita Melville's article, "Mexican Women Adapt to Migration," is an example of this viewpoint." "Acculturation in the United States" is a collection of articles that examine the process of adaptation to the American way of life by Latin Americans. The authors examine the impact of acculturation on the individual's identity, cultural practices, and economic opportunities. The studies highlight the challenges faced by Latin American immigrants in adapting to the American cultural and social landscape.

In this literature, Mexican-American culture is viewed as being very much centered on the family; the Mexican-American family itself is often equated with the "traditional" Mexican family model. [33] This "traditional" family is depicted as extended in form, emphasizing family loyalty and mutual aid at the expense of individual achievement, and adhering to a present rather than a future orientation. Central to this family traditionalism, it is argued, are extreme forms of male dominance—"machismo"—and female subservience and self-sacrifice—"hembriismo." [34] These characteristics of the "traditional" Mexican-American family—and especially machismo—are seen as inhibiting individual advancement and assimilation into the dominant society. [35] What is more, it is argued, is that they perpetuate a cycle of poverty from generation to generation. The implication is, as one Chicano critic has put it, "that Chicanos create and perpetuate their own problems." [36]

If Chicano culture is the problem, then "acculturation" or "Americanization" is seen as the solution in much of this literature. [37] The restructuring of the "traditional" male-dominated family along the lines of the (supposedly) egalitarian, "modern" Anglo middle-class family is taken as one of the key indicators of "acculturation." One study of marriage roles and "acculturation" of Mexican-American women went so far as to posit that "the Mexican-American family is the dominant role arrangement in American culture." [38]

Nonfeminist critiques of social science literature on the Chicano family have tended to emphasize its ideological (rather than empirical) content and have rejected its victim-blaming generalizations. Michael Miller, for example, concludes his literature review with the statement, "The Mexican-American family does not exist." [40] Octavio Romano-V argues that to move from the prevailing ideological literature to a more truly empirical picture of Chicano reality will require introducing "Chicana self-image into the arena of social science thought." [41] The theory of machismo comes under particular fire from Chicano writers, who see it as a key buttress to the view of Chicano culture and family life as pathological. [42]

Chicanas, too, have rejected theories of pathological machismo, pointing out the hidden implication that Raza women's history is one of mindless passivity and subservience, rather than one of strength and rebellion. [43] Furthermore, they note the absurdity of a key underlying assumption in this literature—that "the oppression of women is somehow peculiar to Mexican..."
culture."[44] It is of course highly ironic that the same social science which has shown itself to be straightforwardly patriarchal in its response to feminist scholarship should latch onto machismo as an "explanation" of the oppression of Mexican Americans.

Moreover, it is a curious fact—and one that deserves further investigation—that mainstream social scientists often look to sexual relations as a key factor in their attempts to "explain" the problems of oppressed groups. For example, whereas the inequality of Chicanos is claimed to be at least in part a product of a pathological form of male dominance, the inequality of black Americans is ostensibly rooted in the pathological dominance of black women ("black matriarchy").

In the midst of all these contradictions, there is emerging the increasingly clear voice of the Chicana insisting on the possibility of embracing both the cultural integrity of La Raza and change in the relations between Raza men and women.[45] In an important essay entitled "Political Familism: Toward Sex Role Equality in Chicano Families," Maxine Baca Zinn casts the Chicano movement (El Movimiento) as a decolonization movement, and argues that within this movement, nationalism and feminism, cultural and political resistance, are fused in what she calls "political familialism." The Chicano family is defended by movement women as well as men, she says, because it has truly been a kind of "haven in a heartless world" for La Raza: it has protected individuals "from the hostilities of Anglo White society." El Movimiento, according to Baca Zinn, is built on the participation of entire families. This is significant for two reasons: first, it is the source of the movement's strength, and second, it provides a basis for the transformation of men's and women's roles within the family through the collective experience of struggle.

Politics

As should be apparent from the preceding discussion, the struggle for Chicana self-definition is particularly complex. In the political arena, Chicanas have at times faced invalidation from both El Movimiento and the women's movement, each in turn demanding that Chicana "particular" interests (as women, as members of a colonized race) be submerged in the "greater" cause.[46] Pushed to choose one movement or the other, to be Chicana OR feminist, many Chicanas have insisted on the right to work politically from their total reality as women and as Chicanas. Those who have chosen to embrace the still-loaded term "feminism" have found their feminist roots in Mexican/Chicana—rather than Anglo—foremothers.[47]

Martha Cotera has collected seven essays and speeches dating from 1970 to 1977 into one volume entitled The Chicana Feminist. These writings address important dimensions of Chicanas' complex political identity, as does a chapter in Mirande and Enriquez's La Chicana entitled "Chicana Feminism." Both the Mirande and Enriquez chapter and a chapter from Cotera's Dios a y Hembra ("Chicanas and Feminism")

present information on the history of Chicana organizations and publications.[48]

Writings by Chicanas addressed specifically to the question of Chicanas in El Movimiento tend to be published in hard-to-locate movement journals. Adaliza Sosa Riddell's interesting and provocative essay, "Chicanas and El Movimiento," is one of the more easily accessible of these, along with Sonia Lopez's paper on "The Role of the Chicana Within the Student Movement."[49] Three different analyses of the women in the Chicano movement are presented in Mora and Del Castillo's new reader, Mexican Women in the United States: Del Castillo's "Mexican Women in Organization," Patricia Hernández's "Lives of Chicana Activists," and Carlos Vásquez's "Women in the Chicano Movement."


Turning to writings by Anglo women on Chicanas, Bridget Wynne's recently published essay emphasizes the specificity of Chicana oppression and considers the reality and the myth of machismo. Jo Delaplane's article "Women in the Latin Community" looks at important divisions between the Latin and the Anglo feminist community, as well as what the two communities might have to offer each other.[52] Though not focused specifically on Chicanas, recent articles by Bev Fisher, Lyn LeVeque, Adrienne Rich, and Margaret Simons analyze the general question of racism from a feminist perspective. Simons makes the important point that when material on minority women is included in feminist writings, it tends to be "confined to the level of a pretheoretical presentation of concrete problems," rather than being integrated into the substance of feminist theory itself.

Other Sources

Periodicals: The invisibility of Chicanas in libraries is nowhere more apparent than in periodical collections. This is particularly unfortunate, since most of the important Chicana writing of the last decade has appeared in periodicals. The emphasis on established periodicals, big trade publishers, and major distributors which characterizes most library acquisitions will inevitably create collections from which Chicanos, blacks, Asian-Americans, Native Americans, the poor, and almost all women are absent. Maintaining a decent collection of "alternative" publications is only possible if libraries hire bibliographers familiar with this literature and if the public makes its needs for this literature known. Unhappily, libraries which failed in the course
of the last decade to acquire periodicals important for the study of Chicanas may not be able to correct this omission in the future, as several of these publications have already ceased and/or are out of print. At this point, one can only hope that someone will initiate a microfilming project for Chicano/a materials similar to the Women’s History Research Center collections on women.


**Aztlan: International Journal of Chicano Studies Research.** V. 1, No. 1, Spring 1970-. Tri-annual. University of California, Chicano Studies Research Center, Publications Unit, 405 Hilgard Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90024. A scholarly journal, interdisciplinary in approach. Aztlan has not published much on Chicanas, but has published important bibliographic articles on Chicano studies, in addition to writings on many aspects of Chicano reality.


**Encuentro Feminil.** V. 1, No. 1, Spring 1973-. (ceased, but unable to determine volume number or date). San Fernando, CA. This journal published a significant portion of available Chicana writings. I was unable to obtain any issue.

**El Grito.** V. 1, Fall 1967-V. 7, 1974? Quarterly. Berkeley, CA: Quinto Sol Publications. A very literate and militant journal of Chicano political theory, social criticism, and literature. Consistently fine articles debunking myths about Chicanos, as well as bibliographies and bibliographic essays giving direction to the Chicano researcher. Not much on women, or by women, with the exception of a special issue (Volume 7, September 1973) of literature written by Chicanas. A collection of important *Grito* writings has been published entitled *Voices: Readings from El Grito* (ed. Octavio Romano-V). Former *El Grito* editor Octavio Romano-V now edits a journal entitled *Grito del Sol* (1976-).

**Imágenes de la Chica.** 2 issues. Stanford University. *Imágenes* offered literature and social criticism, including writings on birth control, sexuality, historical figures, machismo, and Chicana prisoners. Number 1 is now out of print; copies of Number 2 are available from Professor Rita Sánchez, Department of Mexican-American Studies, San Diego State University, San Diego, CA 92182.


**El Nahuaatzen.** V. 1, No. 1, 1978-. Semi annual University of Iowa, 310 Calvin Hall, Iowa City, Iowa 52242. The subtitle of this new journal reads “A magazine with emphasis on poetry by Chicano and Native American writers.” Though the first two issues seem to have writings primarily by Native American men, this journal with its multicultural emphasis on native peoples seems promising.

**Regeneración.** V. 1, January 1970-. (ceased, but unable to determine volume number or date). Los Angeles, CA. This important journal was edited by a Chicana feminist, Francisca Flores, and included considerable coverage of women’s issues, as well as publishing two special issues: Volume 1, No. 10, 1971 (writings on child care, women in prison, the role of the Chicana); Volume 2, No. 3, 1973 (poetry, fiction, articles, reviews).

**Film:** Space does not permit discussion of individual films relevant to Chicanas. However, readers interested in positive portrayals of Chicanas/os in film should be aware of *Salt of the Earth* and *Alambrista* both of which are discussed in this issue by Linda Williams. Also of note are the films of Jesús Treviño, Luis Valdez, Moctezuma Esparza, and Sylvia Morales. Reference sources to consult in this area include: Durán’s recent *Latino Materials*, which offers lengthy critical annotations of Mexican-American films; the bibliography of films in *New Directions in Education* (Nieto-Gómez and Sánchez); *Positive Images* by Linda Artel and Susan Wengraf; and *Women’s Films in Print* by Bonnie Dawson. *Film Library Quarterly*’s recent special issue on American labor films is also worth exploring. Particularly valuable for the labor film researcher are the up-to-date annotated “Directory of American Labor Films” by Thomas Brandon, the distributor index (with complete address information), and the annotated listing of additional resources.

**NOTES**

Footnotes have been used for explanatory notes or in cases where the author/title is not cited in the text. Where the author/title is cited in the text, the reader should seek the full citation in the bibliography.

I would like to express my appreciation to Esther Silliman for continuing friendship and inspiration, as well as for having made the original suggestion that I develop this essay. I would also like to thank friends and colleagues Linda Parker and Lisa Hilliker of the office of the Women’s Studies Librarian-at-Large, University of Wisconsin System, for assistance which made this project possible. Martha Cota of Information Systems Development, Austin, Texas, generously gave consultation time which helped me efforts to track down elusive publications.

1. Nieto-Gómez and Sánchez, p. 4.
2. ‘*La Raza*’ means in Spanish ‘the race’ and stands for the blending of predominantly Indian and Spanish peoples who were our ancestors—the blend that we are today. The essence of *La Raza* is that we are mestizo people, a mixed people, a blend of races and

A brief note about sources. A good number of citations below include a number such as "ED 164216." This number indicates that the paper has been included in the ERIC system. ERIC (Educational Resources Information Center) is a system of clearinghouses, sponsored by the U.S. Office of Education, which collects reports, papers, bibliographies, and studies in the field of education (broadly defined). Per- served on microfiche, these materials are indexed by author and subject in Resources in Education and are assigned an ED


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