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Editors' Commentary

Alicia Partnoy

Loyola Marymount University, apartnoy@lmu.edu

Karen Mary Davalos

Loyola Marymount University, KarenMary.Davalos@lmu.edu

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Nosotras ya de por sí estábamos muertas, no contábamos para nada.

—Comandanta Ramona-EZLN-San Cristóbal de las Casas-Febrero de 1994

EDITORS' COMMENTARY

Alicia Partnoy and Karen Mary Davalos

Chicana/Latina Studies wants to pay tribute to Comandanta Ramona, who will continue to remind us that silencing, el ninguneo al que nos somete la marginalización is a form of death. In the pages of our journal, another exemplary fighter, Rigoberta Menchú Tum, advises us to break that silence, and to become “swallows in the darkness” who sing together with a goal porque “una golondrina cantando verano en la noche no va a hacer el verano.”

The contributors to this issue continue building alliances while exploring the importance of listening to the voices in our communities and educating the world about our rich, diverse, ever-changing identities as Chicanas/Latinas. Ellie D. Hernández undoes the “braid of traditionalism,” and brings to the forefront the challenges we must confront to work, as scholars and activists, toward “The Future Perfect.” Emma Pérez explores the sitio y lengua of lesbian familial relations in “Have Your Cake,” an excerpt from her unpublished novel

Las Shameless Sisters. El sitio is one of tension, escape, and release. It is not the space we might imagine for a lesbian heroine but Pérez reminds us that none of us lives in a romance novel. In "Crossing the Border with *La Adelita*," Ann Marie Leimer examines the work of Chicana photographer Delilah Montoya and uses a historical analysis to queer *La Adelita*. Photography and art take the speaker in Gladys Ibarregui's poetry to the multiple universes that inhabit the memories of a Latina immigrant. In her extended review of two leading scholarly books, Kathryn Quinn-Sánchez convincingly demonstrates that our practices of Chicana/Latina feminism have produced a methodology that is collective, liberatory, and autobiographical.

In 2005 we took our journal to several conferences, including the Latin American Studies Association (LASA) and the National Association for Chicana and Chicano Studies (NACCS). In December, we attended the Modern Languages Association annual meeting in Washington, DC, and we spoke about our feminist editorial process on a panel sponsored by the Women's Caucus. Offering both semiotic analysis and practical guidelines for the work within these pages, we discussed the premises outlined in our reinaugural issue published two years ago. Among the contributors for that issue were Alicia Gaspar de Alba and Maylei Blackwell. Both compañeras have been recently profiled, along with dozens of UCLA professors, on the Bruin Alumni Association Web site. This organization of political zealots offered money in exchange for class notes, handouts, and recordings of lectures by professors that did not match the association's neoconservative agenda. An outburst of protests and a university administration aware of the legal issues at stake forced the group to give up that tactic within a few days. However, even though the targeted professors included the entire Chicana and Chicano Studies Department at UCLA, and even though a few of the advisory board members of the Bruin Alumni Association resigned after learning of the

witch-hunting techniques used by their advisees, Linda Chavez still figures prominently on that board. At least, she is the first to be listed on the Web site of the organization—the list is not in alphabetical order. Chavez's short biography includes her political achievements, publications, and the fact that she taught "UCLA's first Chicano Literature class." Es preocupante to see how Chavez lends herself to validate an organization that hopes for the "time that the Chicano Studies Department is dissolved" (www.uclaprofs.com/profs/avila.html, accessed 24 January 2006). Sin embargo, no debemos asombrarnos. Su posición simplemente nos recuerda que el hecho de ser latina no implica tener claridad política ni voluntad de justicia social.