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Chiricú Journal: Latina/o Literatures, Arts, and Cultures, Volume 3, Number 1, Fall 2018, pp. 8-20 (Article)

Published by Indiana University Press



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# Introduction

## The Places and Spaces of Latinx Cultures

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Issue Editor

As promised during his campaign, President Trump made immigration central to his administration's goals, aiming to restrict the influx of those who immigrate to the United States through either legal or extralegal means. Almost immediately after taking office in January 2017, President Trump issued an executive order instructing the Department of Justice to prioritize the criminal prosecution of immigration offenses. The current attack on immigrants took further shape in September 2017, when President Trump chose to rescind protections under the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) afforded to the estimated 800,000 people brought to the US as minors. Despite widespread and bipartisan support for the Dreamers, as DACA recipients are often called, President Trump directed the agencies under his purview to phase out the program that enabled DACA recipients to avoid deportation and to work legally in the country. Ending DACA put hundreds of thousands of child immigrants at risk, deliberately undermining these young Americans' chance of success and preventing their inclusion as members of society. The changes to DACA were a clear attack on the social incorporation of a vulnerable segment of the population, paving the way for the immigration crisis the following summer. These attacks deliberately racialize and exclude Latinx people, demanding a collective and concerted response. The immigration crisis requires us to imagine how Latinx communities can engage, resist, and reshape the spaces that structure our lives.



From the fall of 2017 into the summer of 2018, under the direction of the Trump administration, the offices under the Department of Homeland Security altered their policies on how to process undocumented immigrants to the United States. On May 7, 2018, Attorney General Jeff Sessions publicly declared a "zero-tolerance policy" for those entering the country without authorization.

Whereas previously authorities working in US border control and enforcement had several options and could exercise discretion, the Trump administration has taken a hardline stance, demanding full criminal prosecution of those entering the country without appropriate documentation and prioritizing deportation as quickly as possible, often at the cost of due process. As part of the drive to criminally prosecute unauthorized immigrants, the administration instituted a “family separation” policy that facilitated the rapid deportation of migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers deemed unworthy or undesirable by authorities. Minors, some as young as toddlers, were torn from their families and travel companions, forced into state custody or detained until foster care arrangements could be made. This practice peaked in the summer of 2018, when over two thousand children remained in detention separate from their families and travel companions. Such practices come with untold costs to the mental and material well-being of those being held, and have direct implications for the immigrants’ pending cases. Following an international outcry and national protests, the family separation practice was ended by executive order on June 20, 2018, and a federal judge gave the US government thirty days to reunite families. Nonetheless, in order to remain in compliance with the law, officials have shifted immigration strategy so that families are now detained together. While this shift restores some of the basic human rights and dignity to the detained families, immigration enforcement officials continue to treat migrants as criminals.

While there is no official US government policy requiring the separation of families, this is precisely what makes this policy especially pernicious. The decision whether or not to separate families relies on prosecutorial discretion. Should an unauthorized immigrant be held for immigration proceedings, they remain in detention centers united with their kin. However, under the revised directive, adult immigrants are to be tried as criminals, and thus sent to prisons separate from the minor children. Although immigration rates have remained relatively stable year after year, by late summer 2018 an estimated 12,000 migrant children were held in government-contracted detention centers and shelters, with over a thousand others expected to join those ranks.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Sessions, who in his announcement of the family separation policy expressed skepticism over the legitimacy of a majority of asylum cases, has long maintained a cynical position regarding American race relations. His record on these issues stretches back decades, and has surfaced front and central in his current position as US Attorney General. Testifying before the Senate Judiciary Committee in 1986 during his failed nomination to fill a US District Judgeship, Mr. Sessions remarked that when civil rights organizations such as the NAACP

1. Caitlin Dickerson, “Detention of Migrant Children Has Skyrocketed to Highest Levels Ever,” *New York Times*, 12 Sept. 2018.

or the ACLU promote “foreign policy issues” deemed “un-American,” those organizations “hurt themselves; they lose credibility.” According to his testimony, when organizations take a position supporting sanctuary for refugees, it “causes them to lose support. They lose their moral authority” (543).<sup>2</sup> When pressed to define the foreign policy issues to which he referred, Mr. Sessions explained, “the sanctuary movement and Sandinistas” (51). How we conceive of immigrant lives is now linked to these sites of detention and family trauma.

To be fair, Mr. Sessions (born in a segregated pre-civil rights Selma, Alabama) did, in the same conversation, acknowledge that “Federal intervention was essential in the South,” where racial integration would have otherwise been impossible (52). Yet his office’s current position, whether self-directed or under the direction of the President, represents a biting reversal and fallible logic. While in the 1980s Mr. Sessions chastised specific activist groups for what he deemed “moral” dubiousness, perhaps no government policy since then has so shamefully abdicated our nation’s moral responsibility and weakened our nation’s moral authority on the global stage. Claiming that support of sanctuary cases is un-American, but then calling for the detention of those with the least ability to defend themselves, constitutes nothing less than full abdication of human rights enshrined as legal and moral responsibility since World War II. At stake is the very definition of the categories of detention, sanctuary, and asylum, and the racialized subjects that are produced by them. These immigration categories, and the spaces in which they are actualized, reproduce a racialized, national hierarchy that privileges certain groups and devalues others.

The family separation policy, intended to deter unauthorized immigration, continued increasingly hostile US government attitudes to migrants, and failed to take into account the wide range of reasons and motivations behind immigration. It is important to distinguish between unauthorized immigrants and those seeking asylum, since US immigration law holds these groups in separate legal categories and thus with different legal options and distinctions. As an immigration category, asylum allows individuals who present themselves at the US border or who meet the international definition of “refugee”: a person who is or has a well-founded, credible, or reasonable fear of persecution in their home country because of their race, religion, nationality, or group membership. This definition was codified in the United States in the Refugee Act of 1980. Noncitizens who arrive at the US border have the legal right to apply for asylum defensively, as a remedy against deportation, and are due a hearing to evaluate the merit of their case. On average, asylum

2. “Hearings Before the Committee on the Judiciary United States Senate, Ninety-Ninth Congress, Second Session, on the Nomination of Jefferson B. Sessions, III, of Alabama, to be U.S. District Judge for the Southern District of Alabama,” March 13, 19, 20, and May 26, 1986, serial no. J-99-120, Government Printing Office, 1987.

proceedings can take upwards of two years to wind through the immigration system.

Asylum has its antithesis in deportation, yet between these lie detention, racialization, and prosecution. There is a slippage between categories of immigration, and the current administration remains hostile to the global currents that produced the migrant crisis we currently experience. For instance, temporary protected status (TPS), a program in effect since 1990 that offers people from war-torn countries or those who have suffered environmental disaster a special legal status to remain, is also under threat. TPS overwhelmingly supports asylum seekers from Central America and a select few countries in Africa; in eliminating the program, racial bias clouds the real needs of those facing dire circumstances, and the government fails to recognize the difference between those coming as economic refugees and the violent gang members produced by civil conflict.

The United States often denied or made difficult the mechanisms and possibility of asylum for many displaced peoples. Immigration status on its own is not a criminal offense, and it is against United Nations' international law to deny asylum proceedings. (It is also worth noting that the US is bound by its treaty obligations since World War II to honor these laws preventing the persecution of asylum seekers.) When asylum proceedings fail, or move so sluggishly that they have detrimental impact on noncitizens' lives, efforts to provide sanctuary emerge from nongovernment groups seeking to remedy potential injustices. Although sanctuary has its origins in the nineteenth-century abolition efforts, the sanctuary movement of the late twentieth century has been intimately connected to Latinx culture. In the 1980s, nearly a million Central Americans sought refuge in the United States, fleeing violence resulting from civil conflict and Cold War proxy battles. With bitter irony, the United States's own complicity in inciting or fomenting the violence caused the upswell in refugee migrants, to which the Reagan administration then denied entry. The incongruity of these two facts—US political destabilization in Latin America and increasingly restrictive immigration policies—heightens and exposes some of the most complicated ideas facing Latinx culture even today: what does it mean to move between national spaces? What responsibility does the nation have to its noncitizens?

Returning to the issue of family separation, these migrant children are officially labeled “unaccompanied alien children,” and are placed under the protection of the Office of Refugee Resettlement, which moved thousands of children to detention centers. By current agreement known as the Flores Settlement, the federal government is obligated to release minors from detention within twenty days of their confinement, a fact that the current administration treats as a legal inconvenience. By limiting the length of their detention, this consensus document protects children from unnecessary detainment and from the ensuing physical and psychological damage that detention could produce. In a further attempt to strip immigrant children of their human rights, the Department of Homeland Security

and the Department of Health and Human Services proposed changes that would terminate the Flores Settlement Agreement, removing the twenty-day detention limit and releasing the government from the requirement that child detention centers be state-licensed.<sup>3</sup> Justifying the easement of child protections by citing “operational difficulties” caused by the Flores Settlement, the government’s proposed rule fails to see that the overburdened system is a consequence of its own heightened prosecutorial discretion. In September 2018, after three lawsuits successfully challenged the family separation policy, the Trump administration began allowing some of those impacted by family separation to have their asylum claims reconsidered.<sup>4</sup>

In contrast to the narrowly prescribed legal venues for immigration assistance, sanctuary decentralizes immigration protections from the space of government and relocates these to places committed to supporting immigrants without regard for official status. These spaces can be official, such as those actions at the state or city level that designate their jurisdiction safe, or they can be more local or informal, such as schools, campuses, or private business that open their doors. These solutions offer temporary reprieve, and function as sites of protest for the unjust practices of a nation, but cannot address the underlying problem at the heart of the immigration debate. The minors impacted by the family separation policy (if not the families overall) are criminalized because of a law that equates arrival with criminality. As A. Naomi Paik explains of sanctuary generally, “though cast as violators of the law and therefore deserving of discipline, criminalised populations are in fact produced as an effect of the law, which has ensnared them through an ever-expanding scope of law-breaking behavior” (9).<sup>5</sup> Paik points out the difficulty facing the sanctuary movement as it attempts to unify multiple disparate groups attempting to resolve a crisis whose scale exceeds localized efforts. Where does that leave those immigrants who find themselves forced to navigate a shifting terrain of legal inclusion?



3. “Apprehension, Processing, Care, and Custody of Alien Minors and Unaccompanied Alien Children,” Proposed Rule dated September 7, 2018, DHS docket no. ICEB-2018-0002, Document 83 FR 45486.

4. These lawsuits were *Ms. L—v. ICE*; *M- M- M- v. ICE*; and *Dora v. Sessions*. While the majority of minors have since been reunited with their families, over a hundred still remain separated as of September 24, 2018. See “Joint Status Report,” September 27, 2018, [www.aclu.org/sites/default/files/field\\_document/2018-09-27\\_status\\_report\\_joint\\_dckt\\_243\\_0\\_0.pdf](http://www.aclu.org/sites/default/files/field_document/2018-09-27_status_report_joint_dckt_243_0_0.pdf).

5. A. Naomi Paik, “Abolitionist Futures and the US Sanctuary Movement,” *Race and Class*, vol. 59, no. 2, 2017, pp. 3–25. Paik provides a brief history of the sanctuary movement and how the sprawling movement has historically adapted to changing social needs.

## Theorizing Detention: The Space between Borders

As these cases demonstrate, the legal spaces through which we imagine belonging remains contested. The detention center produces and reproduces a logic of racialized America that determines one's status, how one can move, even one's right to belong. While these concerns are not new, they mark a shift in the national use of violence and police power to suppress. Yet, the detention center, which is actively being used to contain brown life, might actually facilitate a new way of thinking about the spaces of latinx culture. When the detention center replaces the court as the institution mediating one's legal status, the permanence of the nation-state gets replaced by precariousness. These spaces thrive on, depend on, precarity; they are in their very nature precarious. As opposed to incarceration, detention suggests an impermanence, a temporary grounding on a longer journey elsewhere. Yet in reality, the detention center becomes a final destination, a blockage that refuses passage where the promise of a better future, of equality, becomes equivocation. If the precarity of living in a detention center was not sufficient, in September 2018, the Trump administration quietly relocated approximately 1,600 migrant children from licensed shelters into a temporary tent city in Tornillo, Texas, making even more visible the force of the detention centers' imaginative capacity to terrorize and cordon off noncitizen members of society. Through the detention center as a space of meaning production, narratives of immigration shift their meaning from the promise of opportunity to sites of "deterrence," discouraging the possibility of incorporation into the US body politic. Detention precludes the possibility of social incorporation either in the present, as immigrants are physically separated from the local and national communities that might support them, or in the future, as the trauma produced by these spaces lingers and marks those that pass within it.

While the treatment of unaccompanied minors and separating families is shocking, it represents a small percentage of the overall undocumented population in the United States. Rather, as a site of meaning-making, the detention center becomes a place through which fear can be packaged and disseminated; the power of the detention center as a tool of deterrence lies largely in its ability to intimidate. Locally, it seeks to rupture communities from their immigrant neighbors; nationally, it seeks to suppress the efforts of immigrant activists; and internationally, it terrifies potential immigrants against the risk of fleeing to a better life. But the determination around who gets detained is never separate from the long-standing ideas about racial power. The detention center, by extension, brackets off noncitizens from their social world, attempting to rupture their connection to community and nation. The term "noncitizen," by design, neglects the distinction between those residing in the US without authorization and those who have legal, permanent status but not citizenship. The power of sanctuary lies in its ability to elide the

boundary between the citizen and the noncitizen. The detention center triggers a strong emotional response from people on both sides of the political spectrum, either empathetic or hostile, and the detention center, along with sites of sanctuary springing up around the nation, offer nodes in a complex network of responses to this moment in Latinx history.

We most often associate space with physical location, but within a discourse in which location is rendered unstable, dangerous, and impermanent, space itself becomes a migratory concept, indicative of the imaginative and multiple places in which we imagine belonging. The sites of detention take on and produce multiple meanings and the burden placed on those sites stretched to capacity yet tasked with containing the crisis are actively shaping our understanding of citizenship and belonging. Detention centers have, in many ways, replaced the border as the location of the migrant crisis, and Latinx culture then finds itself in the peculiar position of being of the border, at the border, but having to imagine itself out of such confinements that refuse its passage into a national space.<sup>6</sup>

The detention center, as a space of brown meaning-making, exhibits as much as it contains. The center functions to prevent entry and incorporation into the national body politic, but it also becomes the focal point for debates about noncitizens' alleged suitability for inclusion. By shifting the debate around immigration from the border and flow to detention and deportation, debate around immigration is further restricted into sites of increased surveillance and control. It is indicative, as Lisa Marie Cacho has suggested, of a different but related context, "the ways in which social value is also contested and condoned through legally inflected notions of morality" (4).<sup>7</sup> More tellingly, the immigrants and discourses of migration that emerge out of the detention center criminalize individuals so that they are even "prevented from being law-abiding," rendered "ineligible for personhood—as populations subjected to laws but refused the legal means to context those laws as well as denied both the political legitimacy and moral credibility necessary to question them" (4, 6). In the current political moment, minors—in age and racial categorization—are doubly subjected to the divestment of rights as both too young and too brown to be given the possibility of social inclusion.

The kind of racialized separation on display in the detention center, though thankfully a far cry from conditions of the previous century, bears semblance to an earlier moment. The detention center, and the narratives produced by those held there, might offer a twenty-first-century example of a captivity narrative.

6. The "border" is a central concept in Latinx studies and has been conceptualized in myriad ways. Some of the more influential treatments include work by Gloria Anzaldúa, Kelly Lytle Hernandez, Andrés Reséndez, José David Saldívar, and Alicia Schmidt Camacho.

7. Lisa Marie Cacho, *Social Death: Racialized Rightlessness and the Criminalization of the Unprotected*, NYUP, 2012.



Historically, captivity narratives were associated with the US colonization of the frontier and chronicled encounter with Native American tribes and the experiences of those who spent time living with the tribes.<sup>8</sup> In these accounts, the generic conventions associated with captivity—such as stereotypical representations of Native Americans, proper gendered comportment, or religious suffering—justified westward expansion and the purported divine sanctioning of the colonial enterprise. The trauma of captivity upturns the captives' worldview, destabilizing the very institutions charged with providing stability and legitimacy to their social order, which are later restored by the captives' return. This narrative history, and its inversion of the perpetrator of captivity, reframes and validates extralegal forms of resistance by animating the sanctuary movement's roots in abolitionism and conscientious objection. Here, captivity is not perpetrated by an outsider but rather by the very mechanisms of the nation-state, by the United States itself. The detention center is a temporary space, a holding ground between points of entry and exit. The detention center is intended as the temporary suspension of freedom in order to restore social balance, yet when the family, a core principle upon which the social order and legal doctrine depends, is rendered unstable and susceptible, its ability to preserve the body politic falls well short of its purported ambitions.

Both President Trump and his predecessor President Obama instituted policies that sought to deter Central American migration through harsh prosecutorial discretion, processing and deporting migrants in record numbers. In contrast to the narrative by President Trump's administration, the spaces described herein offer different trajectories for the possibility of resistance and social inclusion; they offer avenues to imagine how we imbue space with meaning, and in doing so, make claims of belonging to place and nation. While many of the migrant children have since been reunited with their families—although a troubling number still remain in custody—the aftermath of the migrant crisis still colors our national conversation on immigration and the spaces that Latinx inhabit. What, then, does it mean to imagine Latinx lives through these physical, geographic, and figurative spaces? It is in this intellectual act of imagining, inhabiting, and contesting the sites that attempt to circumscribe the Latinx experience that space gets transformed. Almost paradoxically, brown spaces must ground Latinx lives and provide the flexible terrain through which Latinxs can move. Detention is a feeling unmoored—the brown spaces necessary to provide the opportunity to think through how we, individually and collectively, anchor ourselves to place and idea. The ideas produced

8. Mary Rowlandson's 1682 narrative of life among the Narragansett and Nipmuck Indians following King Philip's War is perhaps the most famous US example; others include Hannah Dustan's via Cotton Mather (1702), Sarah Wakefield's *Six Weeks in the Sioux Tepees* (1864), and within Latinx literary history, Ruiz de Burton's fictional *Who Would Have Thought It?* (1872).

in and about these facilities threaten to percolate across the nation and into legal frameworks that impact Latinx families and social relations. In these and other ways, detention centers produce meanings that are legal and cultural, meanings that will define not just American immigration policy, but potentially the social fabric of Latinx communities for years to come.



## Landscapes of Latinx Memory

To talk about space is to imagine how we belong to, through, and within spaces that are simultaneously local and national. Yet, when we issued the call for submissions, we could not predict the range of approaches the scholarly and creative community took. Spaces are not just locations but imagined relations to past and potential futures. How do we navigate our environments, whether those are built or natural? To that end, we selected work by scholars and artists from a range of positions, in and out of the academy. The articles published here gradually move from space imagined through embodied experience to space as a more external reflection of the physical landscape. As demonstrated in these pages, Latinx culture finds itself responding to the political exigencies of a social climate.

The concept of space and memory yielded a strong sensory response, demonstrated by the abundance of visual material in this issue. As we move through the world, our bodies pass through physical spaces that leave imprints on and are variously imprinted by these places. Memory is absorbed, distilled, transcoded in the bodily experience of racialized subjectivity that is both individualized and shared by one's community.

In her beautiful and imaginative photography, RAEchel Running provides images deeply connected to the people and places depicted, but, using her artistic toolkit, overlays those images with ideas about the land and how it connects us. People are largely absent from the photographs included here, but the somber landscapes evoke issues of sovereignty, indigeneity, and violence, allowing personal memory to overlap with cartographic remembrance. The cover image, one of Running's photographs, is a forceful testament to the violence of immigration, especially to women who undertake the crossing, and visualizes a refusal to allow those immigrants to be forgotten.

Eric Mayer-García's article urges us to consider the emotional weight of how we imagine *latinidad*, as a "multiply-bordered consciousness," one that inscribes its practitioners within an expanding mesh of supranational affiliation. Mayer-García turns to the off-Broadway production of María Irene Fornés's *Cap-a-Pie* (1975)

and examines the collaborative efforts that produced it. The essay reads the play as an instance of a proto-Latinx set of feelings, “the connection between the memory, the body, and Latinx ways of being and feeling in the world.” Here, what Latina/os share is parallel legacies of colonial occupation and how those legacies move from memory into aesthetic form, and *Cap-a-Pie* prefigures some of contemporary latinidad’s preoccupation with connections beyond or exceeding national ethnic labels. Mayer-García builds upon prominent theories of latinidad to identify what “feeling brown” across difference means, and the transfer and transposition of that difference is central to its formation. To access that feeling, Mayer-García turns to Fornés’s play and the experimental assemblages that produced it, in which he finds an early example of how difference takes on aesthetic form that produces and represents differential feelings. Foregrounding displacement as central to latinidad, he asks what connections are possible, even vital, precisely because of and through the differences they broach.

As theorized by these scholars, “cogito, ergo sum” is inverted, becoming “I am, therefore I feel and think differently.” The next contributor, Bonnie Cox, continues thinking through the embodied experience of latinidad, further exploring the convergence of memory and the body. If sites and performance carry affective meaning, the sensory capacity of the body can also produce new meanings of Latinx spaces. Although Cox’s essay occupies the unusual position of analyzing the author’s own performance, such self-referential analysis extends the critical engagement with embodied memory. In the two performances described here, savagery and abjection refute assumptions of what is acceptable to represent and offer a refusal of the exclusion it represents. These performances, analyses, and kinesthetic enactment of gendered and racial violence speak against the sexual and gendered violence that plague the borderlands, spaces where surveillance and the policing of memory production are unfortunately too familiar. The staging of Cox’s *Dar a Luz* and *Censura* expose the porousness of borders, that space which both separates and connects. For the performances, the audience sits in the round, circumscribes the stage, acknowledging the mutual complicity between performer and audience, between stage and the real.

Moving from the body to the representational power of language, Ruth Solarte González’s essay directly responds to the legacy of the conditions described above through an attentive reading of William Archila’s *The Gravedigger’s Archaeology* (2015). Archila’s rich yet understudied collection grapples with the memory of the 1980s Salvadoran civil war, both the events during the conflict and how it is remembered by those who both fled and survived its violence. Solarte González expands our understanding of Salvadoran and Salvadoran American poets by attending to Archila, who, alongside Roque Dalton, Javier Zamora, Willy Palomo, and others, testify to our imbricated hemispheric history and augment the archive of knowledge about that conflict. In her reading, memory is only accessed in

fragments, by those moments that reveal themselves by chance encounter or active excavation. Solarte González reminds us that a poem holds the power to preserve that which refuses to be forgotten, the unforgiving memory of a violence slipping into the past.

The last two scholarly pieces concretely ground themselves in the nonembodied material space of Latinx lives, though in very different ways. José E. Limón turns to photorealism to grapple with the distance (and desired closeness) between representation and the community represented in aesthetic practice. In its close association with place, particularly the space of San Antonio, Texas, Limón examines the work of Jesse Treviño, who, in Limón's reading, turns daily visual culture into art, serving to capture the familiar and render it a site for critiquing and relieving the pressures. Building on the work of art critic Chon Noriega, Limón sees Treviño pushing against other abstracted modernist trends that exclude racialized populations, demonstrating how Treviño maintains the activist impulse attached to his community without sacrificing his artistic goals, thereby bridging the high art world with the artist's own local community. Photorealism both reflects the sites of Mexican American cultural production and pushes the boundaries between the private spaces of everyday life and mass culture.

Memory and meaning are produced on the very landscapes that we inhabit, as Elena V. Valdez illustrates in her essay. Public spaces provide the physical and discursive venues in which we, as a country, debate and discuss the values that shape our nation. Valdez analyzes the Fiesta de Santa Fe, an annual tradition in New Mexico that showcases Hispano heritage through a variety of performances and events. The event encompasses Santa Fe's people and civic institutions, and Valdez discusses how the school system problematically represents indigeneity and conquest. In her analysis, the school system reproduces a logic of coloniality tied up in long-standing debates over land and power, part of broader investments in fantasy heritage. Here, "folkloric difference" of local performance offers an attempt, though incomplete, to reinscribe racial complexity and self-determination into the legacy of colonial difference. This study underscores the importance of physical space to forge connections within, among, and around Latinx communities.

The interview and roundtable included here further expand the geographic possibilities of Latinx space and make clear the long-standing historical and contemporary alliances between Latinx cultures and Indigenous groups. At the inverse of the collapse of freedom represented by the detention center, the ability to control and manage one's life within the structures of a just government is a fundamental concept to American democracy. For Indigenous communities, the right to self-determination is never a foregone conclusion and sovereignty takes economic, social, and political urgency in the face of ongoing threats to communal survival. Sovereignty is not just a theoretical concept, but has material impact on the lives of thousands of Native Americans. In April 2018, pushing new legislation

that requires work verification for Medicaid participation, the Department of Health and Human Services proposed reclassifying Native Americans as solely a racial group, and in doing so removing their status as sovereign political entities. Such a move would overturn nearly two centuries of legal precedent, and the treaties and agreements that designate federal recognized tribes as sovereign governments with treaty and trust obligations accorded to them. This move to divest Native Americans of their status as sovereign governments stems from technicalities around the latest changes to healthcare law, but is another flashpoint in repeated attempts to restrict tribal authority over mineral rights and their effects on energy and environmental policy, such as the standoff at the Standing Rock Indian Reservation over the Dakota Access Pipeline. The roundtable organized by Rafael Martínez and Rebecca Schreiber, and published here, urges us to consider the intersection of scholarship and activism, as the conversations around sovereignty, sanctuary, and settler colonialism are ongoing, and never more pressing. They invite us to consider alternative perspectives to issues around the criminalization of the undocumented.

Cristóbal Garza-González's extended interview with Stephanie Elizondo Griest shifts the stage of Latinx encounters. In their conversation, a chance encounter opens up a revealing dialogue about the vivacity of Latinx writing, and this writer in particular. The conversation, like the ideas described within it, travels globally, but finds its home in the literal and figurative borderlands. In sharp contrast to those wishing to contain *latinidad*, Griest's lyrical perambulations demonstrate how the writing process is about sharing stories and the lives they contain, making accessible the connections between us rather than the walls that divide. We have the pleasure of publishing a short excerpt from Griest's most recent work alongside the interview.

The creative and visual pieces selected for this issue help represent the ways in which memory and storytelling potentially serve vital roles as antidotes to historical exclusion. Written in English, Spanish, and Mayan, these poems and short stories exhibit the range of experiences characteristic of Latinx space. Tino Villanueva's poems contemplate how memory intersects with history, asking the reader to confront what it is, and how it is, we remember. Renowned writer and poet Ana Castillo uses verse to stage a biting critique of current politics, calling on race and culture that might provide a powerful rejoinder to political narratives of exclusion.

Domino Renee Perez's poignant story of pain and love focuses on the relationship between people, and readers are treated to the quirkiness of a family brought together by the birth of child, where even a hospital room can be converted into the intimate space of family reunion. In her story, family dynamics are simultaneously familiar and made new, and we, like the characters, are reminded—if but momentarily—of the moments that cement themselves to memory. Urayoán

Noel's poems flit between language, evoking landscape ever changing, ever shifting, and his poems search for a "history of blood" tied up in the vestiges of memory its speaker strives to recall. Wildernain Villegas Carrillo's poems connect to a long and storied past, rooted firmly in the space of the Yucatán, but in its embodied memory, the past is one still in the making. Since 2005, when Lin-Manuel Miranda premiered *In the Heights*, the Washington Heights neighborhood has become a nationally recognized symbol of Latinx cultural life. Luis Guzmán Valerio offers a different take on this space, examining the fragments of memory that signal different routes, crossings that get grounded in place, whether Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic, or Manhattan and Queens. Sexuality, violence, and gendered expectations come to a head, but in doing so reveal new pathways for Latinx subjectivity.

Finally, the review section showcases the visibility of Latinx culture in mainstream, contemporary global culture, as well as the plasticity and resilience of Latinx culture. Berenice Sánchez reviews Adelina Anthony's powerful *Bruising for Besos*, while José de Jesus Flores Figueroa turns to Latinx representation in Hollywood. Included in the issue are also several book reviews concerned with how Latinx people and institutions construct meaning in the spaces in which they dwell, each attending to a case study of how Latinx spaces are built, remembered, forgotten, and ultimately lived; these are stories of how Latinxes reclaim space to create alternative narratives of belonging. As the diversity of these reviews demonstrates, Latinx culture is active, growing in its visibility and in its potential representations. Latinx space is a refusal to be contained or to be relegated to the shadows; ours is a space of promise and possibility.

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