The other within the other: Chicana/o literature, composition theory, and the new mestizaje

Charles Ray Murillo
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CHICANA/O LITERATURE, COMPOSITION
THEORY, AND THE NEW MESTIZAJE

A Thesis
Presented to the
Faculty of
California State University,
San Bernardino

In Partial Fulfillment
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Master of Arts
in
English Composition

by
Charles Ray Murillo

December 2004
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ABSTRACT

For roughly 35 years, arguably beginning with the "actos" (interactive 'street theater presented in the fields of non-union growers to non-standard English speaking Latino laborers that directly addressed issues of labor, housing and exploitation) composed and presented during the Delano Farm workers strike by Luis Valdez, Chicana/o literature has given us a view of a marginalized textuality borne out of a socio political movement and its resistance and reaction to the hegemonic society that it inhabits. This textuality makes visible the variables of social and cultural oppression, mestizaje (the racial blend of the Spanish and indigenous people of what is now Mexico), cultural nationalism, subjectivity and identity within the Chicana/o community. Chicano/a literature offers us a "hybridization" of new world/postmodern constructs that expand the limitations of traditional literary interpretation while exploring the construct of the "other" within "interactive academic and street discourse" communities. In this thesis, I argue that Chicana/o literature offers us a view into a textualized dialectic that exist between the "Basic" and "Real"
writers as they coexist within the confines of a hegemonic society.

Further, I explore the pedagogical possibilities of incorporating the many textual offerings/publications produced by the basic writers in the Chicana/o community into the classroom. Chicana/o communal periodicals such as Teen Angel, Qvo, and Lowrider Magazine are prime examples of the collective voice from this community. The individual "poetic" dedications of love and homage to those who have passed on, extol the virtues of the individual personal, and communal voice. Finally, I argue that the recognition of "street" textuality produced by basic writers, with its multiple pedagogical possibilities, is Chicana/o literature.

This study illuminates the creative output of an overlooked community of basic writers. As these writers continue their cognitive migration from "basic writer" to active agent in the academic discourse community, Chicana/o literature and the relevant "street textuality presented as such literature, empower those "real and basic writers" with long deserved recognition and relevance.
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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Chicana/o literature has always existed as a direct reflection of the social political movement known as El movimiento. Although the literary output was not limited to this social reflection, El movimiento seems to be an organization that has directly influenced this body of American literature. This influence and the textuality it has produced makes visible the variables of social and cultural oppression, mestizaje (the racial blend of the Spanish and indigenous people of what is now Mexico), cultural nationalism, and identity within the Chicana/o community. In this thesis, I will explore the notion that American Chicana/o literature serves as an interactive pedagogical site that nurtures a blend of academic and street discourse, proposing that we acknowledge the writing of those who exist on the "downside" of the border of non-standard English and academic discourse—basic writers.

In order to illuminate the complexity of this interactive border, I will examine the pedagogical possibilities of incorporating the many "street" texts produced by basic writers in the Chicana/o community into the writing classroom. Local Chicana/o communal periodicals such as Teen Angels, Qvo, and Lowrider magazine
are prime examples of the collective voice of this community of writers. The individual "poetic" dedications of local and extended camaraderie, love, and remembrance, enhanced by an open request for correspondence, extol the virtues of individual and communal voice. I believe that "Chicana/o literature" must include the street texts produced by these basic writers as well as the standard multicultural canon of college English departments.

In my experience as a teacher at four different southern California junior colleges (for two of which I developed courses in Chicano/a literature), I have seen that often, for the sake of "multiculturalism," college curricula include Chicana/o literature courses but emphasize that literature's status as "low discourse," the gaily festive reflections of a marginalized majority. For example, Sandra Cisneros' *The House on Mango Street* is often criticized as merely an excursion into the simplicity of childhood. However, in *Chicano Narrative: The Dialectics of Difference*, Ramon Saldivar compares Cisneros' book to "the link between artistic creation and a kind of poetic self-creation that is not separated out as an individual imperative but is conditioned by its ineluctable tie to the community" (184) *Mango Street* strives to illuminate the voice of the oppressed and indeed echoes Susan Miller when she states that "a revised account [of the narrative of composition's history] requires that we
endow dignity on its protagonist by making them 'relevant' to contexts we already find greater than the sum of the parts" (Textual Carnivals 3). In my thesis, then, I will argue that Chicana/o literature offers us a view into a textualized dialectic that exist between "basic" and "real" writers as they coexist within the confines hegemonic society. In other words, these new mestizajes—blending the categories of basic writing and active textual agency—become relevant through a new vision of Chicano literature.

As student in the M.A. program in English Composition at CSUSB, I discovered a notable omission of Chicana/o related texts in the selection of reference and textbooks. And after attending numerous conferences and exposure to such field-specific texts as the College Composition and Communication, I came to the conclusion that the Chicana/o community did not exist in the grand scheme of rhetoric and composition studies. After complaining to a CSUSB professor (himself a well-known compositionists) about the lack of Chicana/o representation, I was asked "why can't you just be yourself?" Stunned with absolute disbelief by a teacher that I truly admired, I called Victor Villanueva at Washington State University. I had just met Villanueva at the Latino Caucus meeting at the 4cs conference 1992. He understood my disbelief and subsequent sorrow at seeing one of my literacy idols fall the way of my literacy oppressors. He further commented "Never is discrimination
more painful than in higher education." Villanueva listened to my complaints and ideas and encouraged me to continue my work. He later sent me a copy of his work in progress, the now familiar *Bootstraps: From an American Academic of Color*. After reading the draft that addressed the politics of rhetoric and literacy, I realized my goal of interpreting the complex nature of the Chicana/o existence with composition theory was a strong possibility. Still, a major component to my research goal was not in place; I needed a "gray area" in the canon upon which to expand. I found that area in Chicana/o street textuality. In this thesis, I also explore the close ties between Chicana/o literature, street textuality, and "the politics of rhetoric." Finally, by using the theories of Paulo Freire's *conzientizacion* and true organization, I attempt to unify these diverse writers and constructs into an emerging group.

In chapter two, I will provide a general overview of American Chicana/o literature, its history, its multiple definitions, its place in the traditional and current English departments, its seemingly constant attempt at academic validation, and its pedagogical relationship to basic and real writers. In the third chapter, I explore the similarities between Bede's *England 701*, and the Chicana/o community 2003. In this chapter I further argue
that both groups stylistically altered the English language while partaking in textual counter-hégemonic discourse.

In the fourth chapter, I will examine the many street texts produced by the writing communities embedded within the Chicana/o community. In particular, I am interested in the value of these texts as pedagogical tools. I have already composed and implemented classroom lessons drawn from this material in a continuation high school; I have analyzed some student writing samples, visited classes, and also gone to Chicana/o neighborhoods in San Bernardino and Riverside to ask questions of local youth about the street texts and about their public school experiences. Thus, I hope to use the lessons, writing samples, and results of my interviews to assess the pedagogical value of alternative texts in the writing classroom.

Finally, in chapter five, I argue that a "feminization" of Chicana/o texts, similar to the feminization of composition studies noted by Elizabeth Flynn, Susan Miller, and others has transformed Chicana/o print culture into a culture of possibility. Finally, I explore the larger implications of my study, arguing for an expanded definition of Chicana/o literature in order to illuminate the relationship between these street magazines, the community that produces them, and the Freirean theoretical construct of "conscientizacao." As this community of writers "strives to perceive social,
political, and economic contradictions, and to take action against the oppressive elements of reality” (Freire 19), they have created a textually interactive site that exists outside academia. I hope that my research will reveal the relevance of this overlooked community of writers.
CHAPTER TWO

THE OTHER WITHIN THE OTHER:
CHICANA/O LITERATURE, COMPOSITION
THEORY, AND THE NEW MESTIZAJE

Since 1968, with the formation of the Chicano Press association, Chicano movement magazines and their contemporary heirs to Chicano/o cultural reflection—street magazines—have given us a view of a male dominated marginalized textuality borne out of a social political movement and its resistances and reaction to hegemonic society. From the resources of these political intersections, Chicana/o literature received much of its initial social political content. In this chapter, I will provide a general overview of Chicana/o literature and print culture, its history, its multiple definitions and place in traditional and current English departments, and in some academic cultures, its constant attempt at validation.

In the mid-sixties, Chicana/o youth developed a form of street textuality out of need to for self and collective expression. Anchored by a 25-year Lowrider tradition as a social foundation for this collective cultural voice, this group of Hispanic youth discovered the possibility of challenging the dominant culture in the Southwest. In the
essay "Ese Low Rider: The Chicano Movement Is Your Daddy,"

Sonny Madrid, a self-professed "Original Low Rider"

comments on this awakening moment:

Chicano Youth was referred to as 'La Pleve'. In those days and nobody knows how it started, but there was this thing of rivalries among the vatos. I mean this thing happened in the desert country cities like Yuma and Somerton, Arizona, Brawley and El Centro, Califas etc. It was not an urban city onda like Los Angeles or San Anto. Maybe it came from the Indio heritage and Spanish aggression. Anyway there was this onda among La Chicanada of social disunity.

Madrid asserts the notion that violent culture clashes between La Pleve and the surrounding dominant culture, Hell's Angels, and the local police, in large part forced La Pleve to unify in order to survive. Although he clearly articulates these clashes and "rivalries," Madrid is careful to remind the reader that these types of violent outbursts were nothing short of a sign of the times. He writes "In 1966 the Negroes rioted in Watts. Meanwhile over in Delano Cesar Chavez was leading a revolt among the farmworkers union. There was this onda of a war in Vietnam" (39).

While the San Jose Pleve was engaged in this onda of war, the well-intentioned Chicano Moratorium in East Los Angeles erupted in a riot. During this unrest, Chicano journalist Ruben Salazar was shot and killed by members of the Los Angeles Sheriff's department. The "onda (wave) of
war" and "revolt" had found its way to the youth of California's Chicano population.

Back in San Jose, this social revolt lead by La Pleve was fueled in large part by the process of collaboration and support for the Chicano movement. Madrid comments on these moments of historic cultural social unity:

The Pleve endorsed the Farmworkers boycott of Safeway and closed down the store in the Northside at 6th and Julian. It's now Mi Pueblo Market. The New Breed club joined the students at San Jose State and the Chicano Commencement to demand more Chicano Financial Aid Opportunities and founded the EOP program The Brown Berets and the Black Berets soon followed. La Junta a klique of homeboys from Los came up to San Jo-to rap with the Vatos de San Jo that they heard so much about. Then came the Chicano Publications. (42

The significance of the successful Farmworker's boycott was the fact that it was a direct result of a collaborative effort between the Chicano youth and the Chavez-led union. Although at times the Teamster-led opposition became violent with the protesters in the Safeway parking lots at designated stores, Chicano youth learned the power of organized social protest. This type of "organization," the direct result of anti-hegemonic endeavor echoes the concept of true social organization introduced by Paulo Freire in his work Pedagogy of the Oppressed. In the section of this text entitled "Manipulation," Freire examines the complex nature of social anti-hegemonic organization. Manipulation, Freire asserts, is a "strategy of division" and an "instrument of conquest." Freire
further asserts that the elite class uses this strategy to “increase the subjugation of the people.” He states:

Through manipulation the dominant elites can lead the people into an unauthentic type of ‘organization,’ and can thus avoid the threatening alternative the true organization of the emerged and emerging people. The latter have two possibilities as they enter the historical process: either they must organize authentically for liberation, or they will be manipulated by the elites. (145)

One could definitely make the argument that La Pleve from San Jose experienced the realization of “true organization” when they refused to be “manipulated “by bipolar reflections of social restraint and caution: the Hell’s and the San Jose police department. Furthermore upon this realization and in defiance of attempted “subjugation” La Pleve merged their organization with the more clearly articulated Chicano sects, the United Farmworkers and the collegiate-based EOP. Finally, the Chicano publications gave a coherent voice to La Pleve as they suddenly found themselves, in this “historical process,” the leaders of group of “emerging people.”

This wave of social protest and awareness particular to the emerging people of the Chicano movement found a voice and ultimately true organization in print culture. Madrid comments on the onset of these periodicals:

In 1968 a Chicano Press Association was formed among all Chicano Movement Newspapers throughout the Southwest and Chicago. In San Jo there was El Machete, then Bronze and La Palabra. I worked on all of the San Jo Chicano Movement papers. I learned about Chicano Journalism and took classes
Chicana/o Literature: A Streetwise Chronology

Like Chicana/o street publications, Chicana/o literature has been in existence for at least 45 years. Its inception mirrored the Chicano movement itself as that movement campaigned through the 1960s in a Homeric quest for social acceptance and recognition. Noted Chicano dramatist and film director Luis Valdez was given the opportunity in the mid-sixties to coordinate a literature class at San Jose State college that focused on Chicano literature. He stated at a conference presented in the honor of late Chicano author Tomas Rivera that although he was thrilled at the aspect of designing the class, he had one problem: he could not find a text representative of the Chicano community, much less multiple texts to fill a syllabus. At that point he found a short story by Rivera and was charmed that he mispronounced the Texas town in the
story "Ostin" (as opposed to Austin). He further stated that although this point of mispronunciation was indeed minute, he did find a culturally kindred spirit in Rivera.

Needless to say, Rivera's autobiographically based novel *y no se trago la tierra* (and the earth did not swallow him) was deemed at that time in the early 1970s, along with the novel *Bless Me Ultima* by Rodolfo Anaya, as one of the texts that would ultimately define the canon. In a sense these novels, like Chicano publications, had the urgent intimacy of "communal" reportage as they addressed the complex problems and scenarios of the Chicana/o experience. Ramon Saldivar, in his critical text *Chicano Narrative: the Dialectics of Difference* comments on the historical relevance of this novel.

Tierra represents the first milestone in Mexican American literary history after the turbulent events of the of the 1960s and sets itself explicitly within the political and social contexts of the post - World War II agricultural worker's life. Winner in 1970 of the first Quinto Sol prize for literature, the most prestigious award in the early years of Mexican American literature, Rivera's novel immediately established itself as a major document of Chicano social and literary history. (74)

The Rivera novel was read critically by some as a departure from the traditional socio-cultural beliefs of the Chicana/o. The nameless protagonist does the unthinkable: he questions God's existence while suffering the harsh existence of a "agricultural worker's life." In such an atmosphere of blatant cultural rebellion, Saldivar notes,
There haunted by his inability to understand why a beneficent God would allow disaster to strike unremittingly a good innocent people, the boy finally brings himself to do what he could not do earlier: deny and curse God. This rejection of the traditional ideology of acceptance and submission that his Catholic faith has taught him allows him now to elevate his own creative will to a higher sphere of existence and thus produce his own history. (81)

In a sense, this "rejection of all the traditional" in all aspects of the Chicana/o culture in the creative output is what was considered the new and defining construct of the canon. The submissive yet inquisitive migrant son, born and raised in America who sees the futility of his parents' existence, questions their oppressive state enforced by society. This line of inquiry also addresses "traditional" aspects of the Catholic religion that seem to condemn his family to a perpetually penitent state of social submission. These submissive aspects can also be found in the Anaya novel Bless Me Ultima. In Bless Me Ultima, the protagonist, Antonio, like Marcos in Tierra, also questions the existence of God and is directly apprenticed in the indigenous medicinal and philosophical ways of the Yaqui. Although he does not directly curse God like the protagonist in the Rivera novel he, does question the philosophical tenets of Catholicism. These questions strategically occur as Ultima administers indigenous cures in her practice of cuanderismo to the citizens of her New Mexican province.
In the story, Ultima is summoned to cure Tellez a nearby villager. After disserting a cure in which she uses Antonio’s inherent child spiritual purity, she explains the origins of the curse. She then makes the distinction that the evil she has defeated comes from man and not necessarily a satanic entity. Within the constructs of this philosophical distinction Saldivar states: It is human action and not “supernatural” agency that is the cause of this devilishness and the source of its symbolism is not the collective but the political unconscious (121). Anaya, like Rivera who challenges God, is quick to dismiss the “devilishness” as the work of man and not the “supernational” in opposition to God. It was this type of rhetorical debate that made Bless Me Ultima a popular novel representative of the Chicana/o community. Juan Bruce Novoa, in his collection of essays, RETROSPACE, collected essays on Chicano Literature comments on the popularity of Bless Me Ultima, Tierra, and Rolando Hinojosa’s Estampa del Valle in the context of the first series of Chicana/o literary awards of the 1970s:

To the satisfaction of some and the continual frustration of others, Rivera, Anaya and Hinojosa became the big three. More than a decade after the last Quinto Sol prize was awarded and despite the numerous novels that have tripled the number available to readers and critics, one finds that most of the critical attention is still dedicated to these authors; they are the subjects of more written essays and presentations at conferences than any others. (Novoa 136)
One of the reasons why these authors dominated the "critical attention" aimed at the Chicana/o canon, was these novels "mirrored the ideology of the Movement: find out who you are by learning your history and the lessons inherent the communal heritage. Those lessons, and the very process of search and retrieval would teach survival techniques and sustain life" (Novoa 136). Bless Me Ultima, like Tierra, focused on a search for "identity" and did indeed "end in positive affirmations."

As the result of the positive affirmation within Bless Me Ultima and its apolitical context, the novel became a staple in the development of a curriculum that began to recognize Chicana/o literature. Anaya introduced the wonders of the frontier of New Mexico to the world while directly exploring themes embedded within the constructs of mestizaje, Catholicism, indigenous beliefs, and social and psychological theory. Because of the possibilities of multiple interpretations and its direct relationship to the Chicana/o community, Bless Me Ultima was a pedagogical dream. Naturally, like other novels in this emerging field, Bless Me Ultima became a target for criticism. The communities aligned with the now multiple sects of the Chicana/o movement criticized the novel for its lack of political commitment to the movement Antonio did not represent the social political awakening of La Pleve in San Jose or East Los Angeles.
In stark contrast to the Anaya novel, these publications addressed the violent political topics of the day. On a cover of TRUCHA magazine, published in the same time period as Ultima were the statements "POLICE SHOOT FOUR MORE RAZA," and "Cop's nightmare attack on 8 youths."

To say these Chicano-organized groups of social change deemed the novel apolitical is an understatement. In disturbing alignment with the Chicano social critics, some literary critics felt that the major appeal of the novel was derived from the cultural ornateness (costumbrismo) of Mexico.²

In spite of this barrage of questionable cultural criticism, Anaya and his novel Bless Me Ultima continue to be rhetorically relevant in and out of academia.

Anaya's success as an author was accompanied by his accomplishments as an educator and editor. In the mid-1980s, Anaya and Antonio Marquez assembled the anthology Cuentos Chicanos with the University of New Mexico press. Although anthologies were nothing new to the field of Chicano literature (Quinto Sol published a few in the seventies) this particular multitude of texts had the guiding hand and inherent endorsement of Anaya. The anthology contained a number of Chicana writers such as Denise Chavez, Ana Castillo, Marta Salinas, and Kika Vargas. Although these women's contributions were excellent, men's contributions dominated the anthology.
This textual domination of male writers would soon be formally recognized as what Freire would label an "instrument of conquest."

In the mid-eighties Sandra Cisneros’ *House on Mango Street* was published and was immediately deemed “brilliant” by both the academic community and the multicultural powers that be. The series of vignettes centered on an adolescent Latina girl growing up in Chicago dealing with every form of oppression and conquest possible. The book seemed to capture the interest and imagination of a wide and diverse intellectual audience while maintaining the remarkable ability to be read as a children’s novel. These diverse interpretive possibilities made *House On Mango Street* a welcome addition to the Chicana/o literary canon. Like the “Big Three,” the *House On Mango Street* ended with “positive affirmations,” and like Chicano print culture arguably functioned as direct reportage from an oppressed micro community as Saldivar notes:

> Each of these stories narrates Esperanza’s negotiations with the realities of working class life. They also speak to the link between artistic creation and a kind of poetic self-creation that is not separated out as an individual imperative but is conditioned by its ineluctable tie to the community. Other chapters add to the issue of individual artistry and collective responsibility the overriding concerns for the woman artist of gender and sexual power. (184)

These multi-interpretive qualities that illuminated and simplified such constructs as social “collective
responsibility" were theoretically articulated by the academic community. They can be found in textbooks that cater to all levels of curriculum. Unlike its textual predecessors, *House On Mango Street* seemed to emphasize the "manipulative" nature of "gender and sexual power."

La Conscientización Textual de la Mujer Chicana/Mexicana

In the mid 1980s, the Chicana/o academic community began to address the issues of gender and sexual power. The Chicana voice began its quest for recognition and empowerment as it achieved true organization.

In 1984, a textbook for the still evolving area of Chicano studies, *Chicana Voices: Intersections of Class, Race, and Gender*, was published by the Center for Mexican American Studies, The University of Texas at Austin. This text was the direct result of a 1984 conference held by the National Association for Chicano Studies (NACS) held at UT Austin. The conference theme was *Voces de la Mujer*. This conference was a first meeting of its kind that would directly address the "question of gender in the Mexican community." The purpose of this conference echoed the Freirian construct of *concientización* with its emphasis on emerging voices.
General Editor Ricardo Romo comments on the event, its multiple textual results, and the deepening attitude and emergence of the Latina:

Based on outstanding papers from the 1984 conference, this book is also a historic first. It is the first NACS publication devoted totally to scholarship on la mujer chicana/mexicana. (lx)

*Chicana Voices* contained papers from the fields of (1) Plenary Statements and Special Tributes, (2) Labor and Politics, (3) Research: References and Primary Data, and (4) Language Literature and the Theatre. The literature section of chapter four is representative of the illuminating nature of this series of papers because it addressed the oppressed role of "la mujer chicana/mexicana" in Luis Valdez' Teatro Campesino,

Yolanda Julia Broyles, in her critical essay, "Women in El Teatro Campesino: Apoca Estaba Molacha la Virgen de Guadalupe?," offers a revealing account of feminine artistic repression within the groundbreaking innovative theatrical troupe led by Valdez. She recalls seeing the final performance of the of ensemble in Europe and being disappointed and impressed with certain characters and characterizations in the production of *Fin del Mundo*:

The woman characters in the show felt like an eerie rerun of earlier Teatro plays: the saint-like wilting wife, the sleazy whore, and the grandmother figure. Compared with the male characters, the females seemed one-dimensional and relatively insignificant. (163)
The essay continues to explore the multiple answers to a rhetorical question postulated at the end of the passage pertaining to gender equality. The answers come in large part in the form of interviews done with former Teatro female actors. Many of the women simply stated that they knew their roles as women were lacking the necessary "mexicana/chicana" representation. They also admit to having the inability to "confront" director Valdez about the oppressive nature of the female roles. Valdez, in her interview with Broyles, laments:

> I was growing up you know. So for me to confront Luis at that time and say: Look, your writing about women is no good...well, that is not is not where I was coming from; he was much older than me and had more life experience. But he didn't have female experience. (165)

Many of the interviews resonate with this type of resistance and hesitancy to address change within the dramatic structure and composition of Valdez's work. Valdez was fifteen when she began her tenure with Teatro Campesino. Another actor, Diane Rodriguez, felt that despite the fact that the feminine voice was misrepresented and the input of females in contribution to these roles was indeed minimal, she compromised her position in order that "the show go on." This variable of submission of the female within a dominated male arena, Broyles tells us, is indeed a common factor in oppressive social struggle:

> Putting women's issues second, or discounting them altogether, was common among leftist groups
of the 1960s in the United States and around the world. The liberation of people "in general" was considered the chief priority. Ironically, those engaged in struggles for human equality were slow to recognize that class struggles and ethnic struggles would not necessarily better the lot of women. (166)

As the body of Chicana/o literature continued to grow, it continued to reflect, in part, the Chicano movement: Movimiento.

This textual reflection of an oppressed but emerging voice, like the motive behind the NACS conference was once again in strong resemblance to Freire’s concientizacao. The United Farm Workers, led by Cesar Chavez, achieved this "emergence" with unprecedented victories for the rights of farmworkers in Delano, California and throughout the country. One of the major unprecedented victories was the Pleve-empowered boycott of the Safeway market chain. Like the revolutionary effect Freire’s theoretical applications had on education, the success of this strike empowered the Pleve as it illuminated the clout of the organization.

During these times of protest and illumination of agricultural atrocities (pesticides, labor exploitation) Chavez’s image and commentary saturated the media and print culture. An image that was not seen though was that of Delores Huerta, Chavez’s UFW associate and co leader.

Delores Huerta assisted Chavez in achieving these unprecedented goals. But unlike Chavez, during a time of
protest against a "union bashing" organization like the Teamsters, she was brutally beaten by the San Francisco police. After this beating, she was not expected to live, but she did. She continues to be an inspiring and effective force in support of farmworkers' rights. Currently, she is leading the renewed boycott against the Gallo wineries for reneging on the agreement solidified by Chavez, during the sixties. Until recently Huerta, however, has been denied the recognition that she deserves in Chicana/o studies.

Huerta's presence in the UFW union was overshadowed by the male-dominated leadership of the union. Like Anaya's Ultima, Huerta played a secondary role to the male figure in her "organization." Finally, both women, textual and non-textual, represent the oppressed roles of females that can be found in past and current Chicano publications as the writers explore the "Chicano perspective."

Quinto Sol, one the first Chicano publishing companies to produce a scholarly journal on multiple subjects with a "Chicano perspective," is well-known for the coverage of Chavez and of the farmworkers' plight and subsequent legal battles. An essay in the second edition of the journal, Voices: READINGS FROM El Grito 1967-1973, contains exhaustive research and reportage on the litigious nature of the battle for farmworkers' rights in Northern California in the midsixties. Salvador E. Alvarez's essay, The Legal and Legislative Struggle of the Farmworkers, is,
as mentioned earlier, impressive. Like the "Vatos from San Jo" who championed for the rights of farmworkers, Alvarez' study was a flaming sword in the face of hegemonic "manipulation." However, the essay lacked the recognition and acknowledgment of "la mujer chicana/mexicana." Although the essay did address the section in the litigious battle for equal pay for men and women (323), no women were cited directly as were Chavez and other males involved in these legal endeavors. Certainly, the essay lacked equal gender representation. Huerta, like her seemingly socially oppressed martinet Teatro Campesina actor Socorro Valdez, fell victim to the leftist male-dominated approach postulated by Broyles that advocates "Putting women's issues second, or discounting them altogether" (234).

This groundbreaking journal contained 23 submissions. Because it captured many moments of cultural "emergence," it exists as an example of textual conscientizacáo. One article was written by a female, another co-authored by a female. In contrast to these submissions, this unprecedented Chicano journal revealed the manipulated voice that existed within the Movimiento in the year 1973. The oppressed voice of the Chicano male dominated culture appeared locked in a "pattern of negation" with the hegemonic society it inhabited.3

Luis Valdez's Zoot Suit and Other Plays was another text that was widely embraced by both the academic
community and Chicana/o population. Its historical relevance (LA's unsolved Sleepy Lagoon Trial), the Chicano battle against the discriminatory forces of the Los Angeles judicial system and the story of Henry Reyna and his spiritual counterpart El Pachuco empowered the play with themes that were as easy to follow as good and evil. Henry Reina and his gang, like "La Pleve" from "San Jo" violently fought the police and oppression imposed by the hegemonic society of Los Angeles during World War II. Unfortunately, the play still suffered from Valdez's gender-challenged narrative; the female roles were restricted once again to another variation of the Angel-Whore dichotomy referred to in the Broyles' essay.

Not all Chicano texts were embraced by the communities that granted a semblance of cultural and academic validation. The 1991 anthology CHICANA LESBIANS The Girls Our Mothers Warned Us About, edited by Carla Trujillo, was such a text. Chicana Lesbians was not the first text to address lesbian Latina writing. In the preface of the text, Trujillo notes that Juanita Ramos had published the anthology Companeras: Latinas Lesbians as early as 1987. Although she admits to being "exuberant" over the context of the anthology, she still found that it was unable to address more specific and complex issues. "The problem was that since Latinas comprise a very diverse group, capturing them all in full context was virtually
impossible" (ix). The 1991 anthology, then, is centered on the "...intricacies and specifics of lesbianism and our culture; our family, mixed-race relationships and more" (ix). It appears Chicana Lesbians, with its multifaceted approach to the full context of lesbianism has attempted to combat oppression with the Freirean construct of true organization.

One essay that attempted to address a blend of these specifics is "Sexuality and Discourse: Notes From a Chicana Survivor" by Emma Perez.

Perez, a historian of Chicana/o and women's history stands in direct opposition to the Marxist theoretical based construct adapted by the Latino community to combat the "manipulation" of the dominant culture.

While Chicano scholars argue that race must be integrated into class-based revolution, many Chicana scholars defend that the secondary status given women's issues in a race and class based revolution cheats the revolution. We are tired of debating the same questions that plagued Alexandra Kollanti in Russia to Hermila Galindo in the Yucatan in 1917 (159)

In this historically laced paragraph, Perez argues against embracing this type of antiquated, unproductive, and hypocritical ideology. Also this paragraph disturbingly echoes the Broyles' essay on the women of the Teatro Campesino whose theatrical possibilities were manipulated because "women spoke. But they were not heard." In such an atmosphere gender textual politics, texts that illuminated
the fallacy of this leftist Latino approach were not embraced by the academic and Chicana/o cultural community in the same way that the Anaya, Rivera and Chicano publications that brandished the image of Che Guevara on their covers were. This new variation of the "rejection of the traditional in all aspects of the Chicana/o culture" met and is continues to combat academic and social resistance. Perez comments on the fact that such publications that directly challenged male-dominated discourse encountered such resistance; publishing their work was an endeavor that came from within the Chicana community:

Norma Alarcon's Third Woman Press, Kitchen Table Press and Arte Publico Press's publications by Chicanas and Latinas, and other journals that I have not named, are vital mediums for women of color who publish work that is rejected by "mainstream" presses. My Chicana colegas de MALCS know this dilemma only too well. Chicana scholarship in mainstream feminist journals like Signs and Feminist is grossly underrepresented. (161)

Because of the cultural and rhetorical intricacies of the Chicana in direct opposition to the mainstream presses, the prospect of scholarly publication was indeed minimal to say the least. Perez hypothesizes on this "dilemma":

As Chicanas, we face the same problems that white women face when they attempt to publish in male centralist journals. The arguments that men pass down to white women are passed down to us. We are forced to address issues as they define them, not as we define them. And, of course, the issue of 'academic standards' haunts us. (161)
It is exactly this type of oppressive situation that produced texts like *Chicana Lesbians* in the early 1990s. With this new body of illuminating texts being published as a result circumventing the “male centralist” publication process that tended to censure such innovative work by imposing the constraints of “academic standards,” a dramatic pedagogical shift occurred.

La Llorona Reexamined: Vato Loco Bourgeoisie Manipulation/the Other Within the Other

This pedagogical shift within Chicana/o literature classes occurred as the result of the growing body of diverse work and the overdue recognition of Chicana literary production. In the early 90s anthologies of Chicana/o literary textbooks as well as those works across the curriculum, strived to reflect the diversity of the culture. Texts like *Literatura chicana 1965-1995: An Anthology in Spanish, English, and Calo*, reflected the complexity of the literary cultural production with such ground breaking essays and poems as Anzaldúa’s “La conciencia de la mestiza: Towards a New Consciousness” (1987) Bernice Zamora’s “Notes from a Chicana Coed” (1977), Cherie Moraga’s “La Guera” (The War) (1981), “Pendejismo” (Stupidity) (1993) by noted Chicano humorist and Culture Clash (celebrated Chicano comedy ensemble) founder Jose Antonio Burciaga. These critical essays were predominantly
written before the 1990s, yet they achieved a greater audience within the academic community as part of a anthology and textbook.

The works that received surprising resistance were those that directly attacked cultural entities that continued a pattern of oppression and "manipulation." Such a work was Cordelia Candelaria's "Letting La Llorona Go, or, Rereading History's 'Tender Mercies'" (1993). The tale of the Llorona Legend varies in the Mexicano Chicana/o community, but in her essay, Candelaria offers a substantial synopsis:

La Llorona, the Weeping Woman of Mexican legend, is considered by many historians and folklorists as the mythic form of the historical woman, La Malinche (also known as Dona Marina, Malinalli and Malintzin), who was given by her village chief to assist Hernan Cortes in what resulted in the conquest of Mexico in 1519-1521. The hundreds of variants of the Llorona tale share a kernel plot: as punishment for her conduct a young, usually beautiful woman is condemned to wander (often by rivers and other bodies of water) forever crying in a grief search for her lost children. (93)

This myth/tale was and still a staple in the traditional Chicana/o household. The sheer barbaric horror of this tale was enough to frighten anyone who heard it with a semblance of cultural sincerity. Parents found this tale an extremely useful tool; it could discourage those children who had a tendency to "wander" from their home. In his essay
"Manipulation," from Pedagogy of the Oppressed, Freire discusses the manipulative prowess of myth. He states:

The people are manipulated by a series of myths described earlier in this chapter, and yet by another myth: the model of itself which the bourgeoisie presents to the people as the possibility for their own ascent. In order for these myths to function, however, the people must accept the word of the bourgeoisie. (144)

While there are many variations to this myth, all of the variations however portray the woman in a negative light. This male-dominated myth which falls under the rubric "malanchismio" can arguably be traced to the Spanish bourgeoisie. In such an atmosphere of cultural mythic absurdity, Candelaria argues for a dramatic rereading of the myth empowered by historical fact:

The first thing to stress in recuperating La Llorona for the next century is that she and La Malinche got a bum rap ..." [There] there is no valid historical basis for "malinchismo," the Mexican concept of betrayal that emerged in the nineteenth century. Women didn't have the political military power to win or lose Mesoamerica to the Spaniards. Thus, the Malinche as traitor and whore image which gave rise to the Llorona folk legend and which was memorialized by, among others, muralist Jose Clemente Orozoco and Nobel poet Octavio Paz in Labryrinth of Solitude (1950), lacks the legitimacy except as reflections of masculinist visions of power. (96)

Not only was this myth memorialized by these respective artists, it was also a major component of Chicana/o literary and film production. This mythic figure is in Anaya's Bless Me Ultima. As Antonio searches for the ever-elusive "golden carp" in the river near his home, he is
warned about the La Llorona legend. Ultima, to some degree, directly resembles the mythic character. When her indigenous healing practices are misinterpreted by those unfamiliar with the complex cultural nature of cuanderismo she is branded a witch. This manipulative oppressive myth can also be found in Chicana/o street textuality. Magazines such as the now-iconic LowRider continue this traditional, mythic misrepresentation of women.

First published in 1977, LowRider magazine initially mirrored the emerging Chicano movement by featuring articles that directly addressed manipulation, oppression and discrimination within the lowriding culture. For example, in the premier issue, the essay "WHAT IT IS QUE ONDA or Low riders vs. Chico And The Man," begins with an explanation for the purpose of the text—Chicano subjectivity and identity:

Usually one would have to depend on chance opportunities where a Chicano was portrayed on TV, or the movies. La Chicanada is generally viewed as somewhere between the Cisco Kidd, Emiliano Zapata and Caesar Chavez. However, there are no horses in East L.A. and no more farmworkers in San Jose. Chicanos are urban and the rural Chicano acts like the urban. Youthwise, the popular word is Lowrider cause that's what they are, and I am. (3)

The essay then continues to address the hot topic of the day: Freddie Prinze and the television program Chico and the Man. Prinz was the Puerto Rican comedian whose comedy skit portrayed Richard Nixon as a whiny Puerto Rican
janitor complaining about cleaning toilets. His broken English lament "Ease No My Job Man," spoken while cleaning an air toilet seemed funny at the time (3). The essayist then attacks NBC for misrepresenting Chicanos in with a phony insulting portrayal of Chicano youth.

*LowRider* magazine's debut was a defining moment in Chicana/o print culture. At last there was a text that dealt, in part with the Chicano popular culture and the "pattern of negation" that would later be postulated by the Chicana/o critic Ramon Saldivar in his work *Chicano Narrative: the Dialectics of Difference.* Saldivar writes:

> To be true to the principals of the text and the world that conditions it, criticism must take the text's dialectical pattern as its analytical model. We must remember that a true dialectic necessarily involves us in negation. In a relationship of opposed terms, one annuls the other lifts it up to a higher space of existence development through opposition and conflict. (8)

The writer's "dialectical pattern of negation" contains the recurring concepts of class resentment and manipulation. Also there is a strong sense of new identity and "emergence" asserted in this essay. The names of the Lowrider groups suggest the concept of "sophistication" rather than "macho violence" of the clubs of yesteryear.

Finally, at the end of this essay/mission statement, the author rallies with a vintage rhetorical call to arms: "You have to be from the people, and of the people to be able to righteously represent present peoples lifestyle. That's
what this communique called LowRider is all about. A mirror of La Chicanada, a magazine of LowRiders, by LowRiders" (3)

LowRider's mission statement echoes Freire's anti-hegemonic plea to the oppressed masses when he states that there are only "...two possibilities as they enter the historical process: either they must organize authentically for liberation, or they will be manipulated by the elites" (145). Unfortunately, what this LowRider premier magazine omitted as La Pleve entered this "historical process" was the voice of the Chicana. Madrid, whose essay asserts the notion that the Lowrider movement was indeed a foundation for the "organization" that developed into the Chicano movement, did not address the possibility that La Pleve could have been responsible for the revolutionary influence of Chicana/o literature and street textuality.
CHAPTER THREE
THE CHEEKY CHOLO DOCTRINE OF STYLE

Chicana/o street textuality demands that it be academically and chronologically situated in the canon of Chicana/o literature, since street texts are prime example of the collective voice of the Chicana/o community of writers. The individual poetic dedications of love and homage to those who have passed on extol the virtues of the individual, personal and communal voice without submitting to the unrealistic Chicana/o demand of "positive affirmation." Although some instructors recognize Chicana/o street textuality in classes and seminars geared toward Chicano literature, studies and multiculturalism, these texts are curiously omitted from the mainstream readers. More importantly the inclusion of Chicana/o street texts in academia could empower the relationship between the instructor and student as they examine the multifaceted world of Chicana/o print culture. These connections of empowerment become clear when we situate these texts within a tradition of rhetorical strategies that span centuries, cultures, and textual counterparts. The majority of imaginative contributors that create Chicana/o street textuality fall under the category of basic writer. Their expressive, simplistic style, although not formal, clearly
articulates a complex lifestyle and culture. In order to further examine the complexity of this group of writers, it is necessary to define the basic writer in and out of academia.

The definition and state of Basic Writing has been empowered by the passing of time and the evolution of academic political climate. In her 1976 essay, "Diving In: An Introduction to Basic Writing," Mina P. Shaughnessy comments:

Basic writing, alias remedial, developmental, prebaccalaureate, or even handicapped English, is commonly thought of as a writing course for young men and women who have many things wrong with them. Not only do medical metaphors dominate the pedagogy (remedial, clinic, lab, diagnosis, and so on), but teachers and administrators tend to discuss basic-writing students much as doctors tend to discuss their patients, without being tinged by mortality themselves and with certainly no expectations that questions will be raised about the state of their health. (289)

In chronological juxtaposition, Bruce Horner, in his 1996 essay "The Birth of 'Basic Writing,'" continues the controversial conversation pertaining to the status of basic writing. He writes:

The teaching of basic writing occupies a peculiar position in composition studies. It is the specialty of some of the leading figures in composition studies and, simultaneously, the province of teachers and students placed at the bottom of the academic institutional hierarchy. The emergence of basic writing as an academic field in the early 1970s has been cited as crucial historically in the development of composition. (Representing the 'Other' 3)
The 20-year space between these two essays clearly illuminates not only the "peculiar position" of basic writing, but also the notion that these students are indeed flawed in some way or another. Today, in fact, these students are still viewed by the "academic institutional hierarchy" as "remedial." Their placement in these remedial classes is yet another form of oppression and echoes Freire with his statement pertaining to the "subjugation of the people" by the dominant elites.

In this context, the bridge between composition theory and Chicana/o literary criticism that illuminates these "pedagogical possibilities" seems both necessary and inevitable. Yet some might question why the application of composition theory excels over other traditional and postmodern critical approaches. To shed some light on this particular question, Rafael P'erez Torres, in his work *Movements in Chicano Poetry, Against Myths and Margins*, comments on both the current and future state of multi-cultural literary production and criticism: "Maybe all that remains for multi-cultural writers—as the last group to wander the ruins—is to go about picking up the shards and fragments across the postmodern junkyard" (2). Composition theory clearly appropriates the "shards and fragments" of theoretical constructs from across the curriculum, while simultaneously recognizing the voice of the student writer and the community he/she represents. In strong resemblance
to P'erez Torres, Susan Miller, in *Textual Carnivals: The Politics of Composition*, argues for a "lens of symbolic interpretation that portrays composition more consequentially than reportage alone" (3). It is this "lens of symbolic interpretation" that Miller postulates can be employed as an empowering force that illuminates the art that resides within "the interstices and liminal spaces" of Chicana/o literature while keeping it away from the clichéed existence of the "postmodern cultural junkyard."

Since its inception in the mid-sixties, Chicana/o literature has proven to be a significant postmodern cultural literary force. The traditional and current approaches aimed at this body of work, however, can be perplexing. Saldivar, in his work *Chicano Narrative: the Dialectics of Difference*, argues for a more culturally sensitive and historically accurate interpretation of Chicana/o narrative that will result in the reconstruction of American literary history. This reconstructive process, according to Saldivar, will "offer readers a reformulation of historical reality and contemporary culture with the way reality and culture are actually experienced than do other representations" (12).

Like the works of Mexican American and Chicana/o authors, composition studies has been the political victim of manipulation and exclusion from the syllabi of courses in English departments throughout the United States.⁵ Jim
W. Corder, in Studying Rhetoric and Literature, argues for the inclusion of composition and rhetoric in English studies. He writes: "If people want to believe that literature must have no traffic with rhetoric, if they want to believe that rhetoric is always and only" tradition of instruction in persuasive public discourse, I'll be sorry but I'll not be bound by them" (332). Composition studies and Chicana/o literature and street textuality are bound by their constant struggle for academic mainstream inclusion.

Both Corder and Saldivar argue for a re-examination and subsequent modification of English Studies. Saldivar argues for a recursive examination of American literature that will illuminate the injustice of historical literary exclusion while subsequently empowering the Chicana/o literary canon. Corder argues for the reinstatement of a pedagogy derived from a systematic search for the truth of the study of English Studies. Also an advocate for dramatic change in the field, Miller clearly states that her "goal is to provide a space for reflecting on commonly unified structures of belief, the superstructural tradition that specific political interactions in English studies are instances of" (3).

In this chapter I will explore one possible space for reflection given to us by stylistic rhetoric. In Logic and Rhetoric in England 1500-1700, Wilbur Samuel Howell
provides a mission statement and definition of stylistic rhetoric:

Stylistic rhetoric as a recognizable and distinctive pattern of traditional rhetorical theory in England, has two main characteristics. First of all, it is openly committed to the doctrine of style as the most important aspect of training in communication. Secondly, it is openly mindful that invention, arrangement, memory, and delivery or combinations of two or more of them, conceived in sum as Cicero had anciently dictated, were also legitimate parts of the full rhetorical discipline. (116)

Howell then comments on the stylistic emphasis placed on Cicero's de Oratore and Quintillian's Institutio Oratoria and how these particular texts contributed to the "development of stylistic pattern in England." Howell all but dismisses the first English treatise in this vein, Venerable Bede's Liber de Schematibus et Tropei, calling it a "dictionary of terms than a discourse upon achieving effectiveness in style..." (117). However, Howell also illuminates Bede's provocative theory "that good style is a deliberate and systematic repudiation of the speech of everyday life. In other words, good style results only from word orders that stand opposed to patterns of common speech" (117).

One powerful example of a "deliberate and systematic repudiation of the speech of everyday life" exists within the Chicana/o communal periodicals Teen Angels, LowRider and Streetlow. Unlike composition studies, these periodicals wholeheartedly combat political manipulation
and exclusion from the hegemonic society that it inhabits
by illuminating the many facets of its diverse communal
individually. For example Teen Angels magazine, with its
broad range of textual "varrio [sic] life" contributions,
begins with a mission statement that blatantly proclaims
its seemingly counter-hegemonic position and purpose:

TEEN ANGELS MAGAZINE IS PUBLISHED TO GIVE THE
YOUNG PEOPLE FROM THE BARRIOS & NEIGHBORHOODS A
VOICE, SO THEY CAN EXPRESS THEIR OWN VIEWS IN
THEIR OWN WAY THROUGH POETRY, DRAWINGS,
DEDICATIONS, PHOTOS, ETC. ANY OPINIONS ARE THEIR
OWN AND WE MAY NOT AGREE WITH THEM, HOWEVER, THEY
HAVE EVERY RIGHT TO EXPRESS THEIR VIEWS IN THEIR
WAY, TO REPRESENT THEMSELVES THE WAY THEY WANT TO
BE REPRESENTED, AND SHOULD NOT BE JUDGED BY THE
STANDARDS OF OTHERS WITH DIFFERENT SOCIAL
STANDARDS & VALUES... (186)

The defensive tone and position of this mission statement
is enhanced by the use of capital letters and a seemingly
imaginative disregard for sentence structure. The authors
are careful to not overwhelmingly endorse the broad range
of content that exists within the magazine by stating "WE
MAY NOT AGREE" in reference to the depictions if life in
the "BARRIOS AND NEIGHBORHOODS." They are also careful to
side step the fact that this is a Chicana/o periodical,
thereby countering any accusations that the content and
contributions are restricted to a particular race and
culture with "DIFFERENT SOCIAL STANDARDS." Finally,
although the conclusion of the mission statement resonates
with territorial bravado ("TEEN ANGELS GIVES NO NEWS AGENCY
THE RIGHT TO PRINT ANYTHING FROM THIS MAGAZINE!"), it can
be assumed that the conclusion, like the statement itself, was constructed upon the tenets of periodical litigation: intellectual theft, copyright infringement, freedom of speech. The form and tone of the mission statement parallels, and to some degree rhetorically employs, the style of the basic writer. Its defensive, litigious content sets the stage for a textual space of specific political interaction representative of real writers. Finally, this statement echoes Bede's definition of "good style" by standing "opposed to the standards of common speech."

The opposition to common speech found in Teen Angels magazine could be the direct result of the social environment of the contributors. A substantial percentage of contributors to this magazine appear to be gang members and people on the economic downside of La Chicanada. Many of the contributors extol the virtues of "varrio pobre." They artistically write the name of their particular province over the snapshot they have submitted of their various "klicas" and neighborhoods with Cholo letters. Some of these names are untampered, "Panorama," "Anaheim," while others receive the alteration of sentiment: For example, the border town and area that separates San Diego and Tijuana Mexico, is called "Varrio Frontera."

Photographs of "homies" with names such as "Chino," "Evil," and "Casper" also written on these pictures, suggest a curious blend of blatant macho bravado and adolescence. At
times certain “klicas” taunt and wish ill will upon their “enemies” and territorial geographic counterparts with profane textual tirades placed at the end of their pictorial role call. Once again, these blatant textual oppositions to “patterns of common speech” that exists within Teen Angels magazine echoes Bede’s definition of good style. Howell writes:

On many occasions in writings it is customary for the sake of elegance that the order of words as they are formulated should be contrived in some other way than that adhered to by people in their speech. These contrivances the Greek grammarians call schemes, whereas we may rightly term them attire or form or figure, because through them a distinct method of speech may be dressed up and adorned. On other occasions, it is customary for a locution called a trope to be devised. (171)

One of the schemes of choice found in Teen Angels magazine is alliteration. Because many of the dedications and geographical declarations of dominance mirror the format for Rap music the repetition of consonants is prevalent through the submissions. At other times, the contributors to Teen Angels magazine textually redirect their anger toward society at large with poetic endeavor. For example, the poem “Justice” addresses many issues of oppression and discrimination while employing a variation of the trope, Irony. Edward Corbett, in Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student, defines the term as the “use of a word in such a way as to convey a meaning opposite to the literal meaning” (454). According to this definition, the poem’s
title and the two meanings of justice in the poem and artwork serve as departures to common speech.

Will the scales of justice ever tip our way?
What is the meaning of justice anyway?
It goes back to Jesus day when the judges and Juries of then Sentenced our Lord to death, hung on the cross to die until he had risen again.
One day he’ll come to save us and the table’s will turn.
When all the politician’s and the real criminals, will be sent to hell and burn!
Our people are not violent murdering beasts...

Although the poet is not identified, the poem is set within the drawing of a young woman holding the scales of justice in one hand and a flaming sword in the other, amid flames. Out of her mouth, a cartoon bubble has the words “Just Us.” “Just Us” was a popular comedy routine composed by African American, counterculture comedian Richard Pryor. In it he talks about spending a day in court and seeing only black people in the defendants section of the courtroom. He stated “I went for justice and I saw Just Us.” Like the Pryor routine, the poem strives to illuminate fundamental flaws in the judicial system while simultaneously indicting the hegemonic society as a whole. One of the most notable departures from “common speech” in this poem, aside from the use of irony (JUST US) is the use of rhyme. Howell, citing the work of Thomas Wilson, comments on the nature and employment of this poetic stylistic device:
Speaking of the use of rhymed sentences as one of the uncommon patterns of speech, Thomas Wilson said in his *Rhetorique*, 'Yea, great Lordes would would think themselues contemned, if learned men (when they speake before them) sought not to speake in this sort.' These words imply that the schemes and tropes are the functional rhetoric of any aristocratic state and society, and that learned men as commoners and rhetoricians in aristocratic states must formulate rhetorical theory upon that principle. (118)

Basically the poem *JUST US* is written in what some would call a variation of the couplet. The rhymed sentences illuminate and accentuate the social political content of poem: "One day he’ll come to save us and the table’s will turn / When all the politicians the real criminals will be sent to hell and burn." Throughout this particular periodical, the poetic submissions, dedications and pictorial role calls, this "uncommon pattern of speech" exists as a form of "functional rhetoric" for the Chicana/o community.

A closer reading of the poem suggests the notion that the artwork and language function as a rhetorical device and mirrors the opening lines that also serve as dual rhetorical questions: "What is the meaning of justice, who created anyway?" Immediately, the poet aligns the administrators of justice with those who "Sentenced our Lord to death". Next the poet is quick to address "crooked politicians" and "real criminals" and makes mention of the fact that "they will be sent to hell and burn." The choice and counter-hegemonic topic and content of this poem echoes
the concept of *Dialectics of Difference*, postulated by Saldivar. The poet’s dialectical “pattern of negation” is laced with the recurring concept of class struggle. There is a prevailing sense of hopelessness and oppression in certain stanzas (“Made up this one sided system and turned all into slaves”). Yet at the conclusion of this seemingly bleak poem, the poet rallies with a vintage rhetorical call to arms: “the future is what you make of it. Let's all unite before it's too late.” This counterhegemonic call for unity suggests the notion that the author of this poem clearly has experienced social awareness and artistic development through opposition and conflict. Within similar constructs of class resentment and struggle, Howell, like Saldivar, comments on the politics of rhetorical class separation.

It is suggestive to speculate upon the cultural implications of a rhetorical theory which equates true elegance and hence true effectiveness with a system of studied departures from the established pattern of everyday speech. Such a theory appears to be the normal concomitant of a social political situation in which the holders of power are hereditary aristocrats who must be conciliated by the commoners if the latter are to gain privileges for themselves. (117)

Certainly comparisons can be made between the “holders of power” of “701 or 702” to which Howell, through Bede, refers and the “hegemonic society” that is being indicted in “Just Us.” The British “commoners,” like the author representative of the Chicana/o community in the Teen Angels text, must be “conciliated” with their respective
dominant culture in order to achieve a semblance of cultural and "social political" recognition and to "gain privileges for themselves." And most certainly, the contrast between the early 700s in England and the Chicana/o community in 2002 are glaringly evident. Quite simply, Howell illuminates the concept of conciliation in regard to the social political space of the early 700s, whereas Saldivar illuminates and advocates a reading of texts in 2002 from this space in dialectical opposition. Yet curiously, both communities align themselves in their negotiation of these political spaces through their application and emphasis on stylistic rhetoric "as the most important aspect of training in communication."

Thus, although Madrid did not address the possibility that La Pleve could have been responsible for the counter hegemonic influence of Chicana/o literature and street textuality, it appears that both Teen Angels and the texts illuminated by Bede are truly revolutionary with their application of stylistic rhetoric and resonate of pedagogical possibilities. By illuminating and utilizing the stylistic similarities between England 701 and San Bernardino, California, 2003 in a pedagogical process, interesting results, as well as student empowerment, by mere virtue of inclusion, are a given.
In the next chapter, I will explore the pedagogical possibilities of street texts in a junior college "bonehead" English classroom setting.
Wilbur Samuel Howell, Bede, and LowRider historian Sonny Madrid are bound in their distinctive counter-hegemonic positions and deployment of stylistic rhetoric as a weapon to combat oppression. It is in the spirit of these collective and distinct positions that I explore, in this chapter, the pedagogical possibilities of street texts in a junior college literature and basic English classroom setting.

I have had the pleasure of introducing Chicana/o literature to several community colleges in Southern California. To some degree I followed the historical chronological order of the canon. This approach allowed me to set up a nice macho first-semester segment that would be followed with a second-semester feminist perspective; I like the idea of setting up a macho canon and then "blowing it up" with Chicana feminist theory. I started the winter semester 1999 with Anaya's *Bless Me Ultima*. Many of the students were already familiar with the novel. The male students enjoyed the variation of the “Hatfield and McCoy" saga story line, the gunplay, the bordello, and “macho bravado." Both male and female students were more than familiar with aspects of cuanderismo (folk healing) and
brujeria (witchcraft). The novel, in a sense, was easy to teach. The lines of good and evil were clearly drawn and the feminine symbol of "good," Ultima, dies a physical and symbolic sacrificial death at the end of the novel.

Midway through the semester, I assigned The House on Mango Street. I had the students read a critical essay pertaining to the novel by Saldivar in an attempt to enhance the reading and class discussion. Needless to say, the students at the junior college level had difficulty with the level of diction in the essay. In an order to make the Saldivar essay more "reader-friendly," I had to address the essay in terms and scenarios to which my students could relate. In short, I had to relate the text and the critical essay to the world of the class. This is when I brought in Teen Angels magazine. While reading James Berlin's Rhetorics, Poetics and Cultures for a graduate seminar, I discovered that he advocates a similar strategy in his "Course One: Codes and Critiques": "We start with the personal experience of the students, with the emphasis on the position of this experience within the formative context" (116).

In my class, the female students clearly dominated the discussion. They were able to relate to the awkward, confusing, and at times competitive biological stage of adolescence that Esparanza, the main character of Mango Street, experienced throughout the story while she lived
within the constraints of a male-dominated culture. Additionally, they were able to recognize the oppression within the multiple communities represented in *Teen Angels*. Indeed, many of the students actually were acquainted with, if not directly related to, some of the contributors. The male students had a tendency to not place importance on the same topics generated by their female counterparts. Some female students did not embrace some of the feminist views postulated in the readings and criticisms, referring to the new generation of "Chicana" who refuses to live their life under the label of "dumb chola." And surprisingly, a substantial number of students were outraged by the inclusion of *Teen Angels* in their literature class. One student blurted out "I did not come to college to study this" while pointing to the magazine. The ongoing classroom discussion was a direct result of the multiple variables derived from the "formative context" of the novel and magazine, and I asked students to address several of these variables in their paper.

My approach toward this assignment seems to echo Berlin's methodology when he states: "Our larger purpose is to encourage students to negotiate and resist these codes—these hegemonic discourses—to bring about more democratic and personally humane economic, social, and political arrangements" (116). The students in this particular class recognized Esperanza's and the Teen Angel poets' attempt at
"resistance" to the "hegemonic" society that strives to keep them within its "political arrangements." This recognition, the result of lively classroom discussion, the students' personal lives, and the Saldivar essay that emphasized the novel's "ineluctable tie to the community" (184), provoked the creative output of the class.

This particular class and seminar, in which I introduced Teen Angels, was the first in a series of exercises that utilized similar periodicals representative of the creative output of the Chicana/o community. The next series of exercises were done in a college's basic writing classroom. I designed the particular exercises to coincide with the cause and effect section of the course. In addition, this particular group of students was from my former neighborhood or "varrio." Once in the classroom, and after a brief introduction, I addressed the class. I told them that I was working on a research project that dealt with a series of culturally specific periodicals. I further explained that I was going to present the results of my classroom visit at the Fifth Congress of the Americas, Cholula Mexico.

I began my classroom visit by stating that I was from the same neighborhood as many of the students, and that I also was a former student of the college. Upon the completion of my introduction, I presented the magazines Teen Angel, LowRider, and Streetlow. As expected, many of
the students were more than familiar with the periodicals. After a brief description pertaining to the content of the magazines, I presented the first assignment, a written response to the poem "CLOWN TOWNE" from Teen Angel magazine. The students were then asked to respond to the poem in this manner:

Write as essay or a poem about the "towne" that you live in. Use the poem "CLOWN TOWNE" as an example and starting point in your writing process. What are the problems in your "towne"? What are the good things about your "towne"? And finally, in the conclusion of your essay/poem, do you have any ideas on how to improve the condition in your "towne"? Note that the author of the poem suggests that God is the answer. Religious affiliations aside, what do you think are the answers to the problems in your "towne"?

Francisco, who hails from Mexico, responded to the assignment with "love and a feeling of optimism," writing:

As an immigrant from Mexico, I really feel proud to live in a city like San Bernardino. And there are many reason I fit into the city. One of them is there is a lot of people from Mexico. These also speak our native Spanish, and continue arriving everyday for the other side, The South. Another reason I love to live in San Bernardino, is because everything is cheap in comparison with other cities around. San Bernardino has apartments to live for less than $400 per month. In San Bernardino we can attend San Bernardino Valley College and also we can go to California State University San Bernardino. As a matter of fact I feel like if I were in my homeland Merida. Specially in April, May, June, July, and August San Bernardino City has the same weather condition than my state Yucatan, in Mexico. I definitely love to live in San Bernardino and I would never moved to another city at least I have to.
Francisco has enrolled in junior college to study business. He is a sort of "jack of all trades," equally adept in the fields of food service, landscaping, and construction. He is also familiarizing himself with computers and software. Unlike the immigrant from 30 years ago, he is somewhat prepared to deal with the economic factors of southwestern life.

Francisco's in-class writing assignment in response to the Teen Angel poem produced points of social and economic interest. He is "proud" to live in San Bernardino. He also acknowledges the fact that like the immigrant some 30 years before him, he is "well integrated" into the cogs of the social system dominated by Anglos." This point of lower-class economic integration is evident when he states "And there are many reason why I fit into this city. One of them is that there is a lot of people of from Mexico." An examination of Francisco's in-class writing attempt at sentence structure would reveal a substantial amount of what some would deem remedial and/or ESL errors. At mid-semester, with the Freshman Composition class on the horizon, many instructors would secretly hope that Francisco pursue landscaping as a possible vocation. However, as Sondra Perl, in The Composing Process of Unskilled Writers, comments: "Teaching composing then, means paying attention not only to the forms or products
but also to the explicative process through which they arise" (38).

From one perspective, Francisco mirrors the "explicative" process of the Mexican immigrant. In San Bernardino, Francisco has discovered an accommodating province. In this town, the citizens "speak our native Spanish, and continue arriving every from the other side, The South." The housing accommodations are indeed "cheap" and the possibility of academic enlightenment and prosperity are also on the horizon: "... we can attend San Bernardino Valley College, and also we can go to California State University San Bernardino." Clearly, the utopian icing on the cake in Francisco's essay occurs when he states" ... I feel like if I were in my homeland Merida."

One of the major social and psychological factors that immigrants experience when they leave their homeland is displacement. Juan Bruce Novoa, in his series of essays *Retrospace: Collected Essays on Chicano Literature*, comments on the somber nature of this displacement:

Migration is the failure of roots. Displaced men are ecological victims. Between them and the sustaining earth a wedge has been driven. Eviction by droughts or dispossession by landlords, the impoverishment of the soil or the conquest by arms—nature man, separately or together, lay down the choice: move or die. Those who are able to break away do so leaving a hostile world behind to seek an uncertain one ahead. (57)
It seems, however, that Francisco has been spared the requisite immigrant trauma of displacement. Not only does San Bernardino accommodate him culturally, the climate also is similar to his abandoned, cherished "Merida."

Unfortunately, Francisco in his utopian vision of San Bernardino (and quite possibly the southwest as a whole), does not realize that the oppressed and exploited Mexican immigrant is strongly present in the town of San Bernardino and the southwest. The Press-Enterprise, an inland southern California newspaper, published an article on the current plight of Mexican immigrant entitled "Fighting abuse, gaining clout." The article focused on the plight of the Latina farmworkers and an organization conceived at the grassroots level to assist them in their quest for basic human rights. This grassroots organization is clearly in the process of conscientizacão. In their quest for emergence and awareness from the dominant culture that would oppress them, they declare that the exploitation of the Mexican immigrant continues. The article states:

The workers are poorly paid: Average hourly earnings for the 44, 200 agricultural workers in Riverside, San Bernardino and Imperial counties is $8.08, according to most recent figures from the state Employment Development Department. And benefits, such as medical insurance, are rarely available. (A5)

Many Mexican immigrants like Francisco are not spared the trauma of displacement. Indeed the article illuminates not
only the economic plight of the farmworker; it exposes some of the atrocities inflicted on the Latinas by both the hegemonic society that employs them and the abusive men that some have had the misfortunate of marrying. The exploited nature of the farmworkers echoes a 30-year-old statement regarding worker exploitation on both sides of the border made by socio-cultural historian Thomas Carter: "In a sense, the Mexican immigrant never left home the social, economic and even perhaps political arrangements on both sides of the Rio Grande in the past were very much alike." (448) Quite simply, Francisco's countrymen, who "... continue arriving everyday from the other side, The South," are merely entering social arrangements "reminiscent" of the plantation system of the pre civil war South (448).

This exploration of the external and internal "explicative process" pertaining to Francisco and the community of people that he indirectly represents makes his response to the Teen Angels poem that much more resilient. It appears that he has produced, at the basic writing level, an essay that mirrors the hope and optimism of the Mexican immigrant experience. The counter argument to this assertion is that Francisco's optimistic tone is merely a form of denial. This form of denial is merely a cliché macho response to socio economic hardship and endurance.

In stark oppositions to the optimistic tone of Francisco’s essay, Dionicia, a Chicana from the westside of
San Bernardino, comments on some of the problems in her town in her in-class essay response to the Teen Angel poem:

We have many problems in our town. I was raised in the hood. Gangsters, chucos, cholos. Whatever you want to call them all they did was fight for their hood and the little kids around them wanted to be just like them. Not us even though we were raised by a single parent she was strong and hard worker. My mother use to talk to the teenagers and told them that there was a better life out there and there is one just direct them the right way.

Dionicia describes her town with bit more grit than Francisco. She alludes to the "Gangster" element and how they influence the "little kids" from the neighborhood. She also mentions the fact that her "single" mother was a "strong hard worker" and that she would dispense advice to the neighbor's children about the "right way." Her admiration for her mother is obvious, and it seems to have instilled as sense of "right" and "wrong." Unlike Francisco's utopian vision of his San Bernardino, Dionicia's writing focuses on the sociological downside of her town. Susan Miller comments on the importance of recognizing this component of student writing, stating that "... men have different conceptions of self and different modes of interaction with others as a result of their different experiences, especially their early relationship with their primary parent, their mother" (552) The positive nature of Dionicia's early relationship with her mother reverberates throughout this particular writing assignment.
The fact that her mother was indeed a "single parent" appears to be a significant factor in her psychological makeup and subsequent bond with her mother. This bond is what Miller, citing Nancy Chodorow's *The Reproduction of Mothering*, has referred to as an "identification process". In regard to this identification process Chodorow says,

Girl's identification processes, then, are more continuously embedded in and mediated by their ongoing relationship with their mother. They develop through stress particularistic and affective relationships to others. A boy's identification processes are not likely to be so embedded in or mediated by a real affective relation to his father. At the same time, he tends to deny identification with and relationship to his mother and reject what he takes to be the feminine world; masculinity is defined as much negatively as positively. Masculine identification processes stress differentiation from others, the denial of affective relation and categorical universalistic components of the masculine role. Feminine identification processes are relational, whereas masculine identification processes tend to deny relationship. (176)

Given the nature of her environment on the Westside of San Bernardino, with the trappings of the "gangster" element and her non-relationship with an absentee father, Dionicia's identification process "borne out of the "relationship" with her mother, was to some degree developed through this "stress particularistic" bond. However, it could also be argued that Francisco's essay glorifying the socioeconomic possibilities of San Bernardino lacks any "affective" stress particularistic
relationships as the result his "masculine identification processes," which, as Chodorow asserts, tend "to deny relationships." Given this approach to the immigrant Latin male experience, one could definitely argue that Francisco's essay was not the textual declaration of hope and satisfaction that it superficially appears to be. Alas, according to Chodorow, it could be merely an exercise in "macho" denial.

As a pedagogical tool, Chodrow's construct, the "identification process" might prove useful in a number of ways. Once the macho denial is illuminated, the instructor can attempt to redirect those basic writers who traditionally and culturally practice gender oppression while laboring within the restraints of a micro-community imposed by the dominant culture. This redirection can be the result of a collaborative peer observation exercise within a compare contrast assignment. The blatant differences in style and interpretation of reality can be used as foundation for a discussion or writing prompt aimed at gender equality. Such a collaborative effort would clearly be an example of "true organization."

Composition theorists would have a field day with the fodder for analysis in these street-text-based assignments presented in schools that exist in a geographical area that produces many of the "basic" and "real" writers that end up in their classrooms. For the most part, my motive for these
"street" text assignments is to eventually entice these writers to the upper levels of academia. However, as Miller writes:

I am not suggesting that the proper application of social progress theories would end in talking students out of the desires that bring them to college, to learn institutional conventions that appear to be keys to "success." The issue is, what will they learn about such conventions. If students are not asked to analyze the conventional and are not required to perceive both conventional and unconventional language as relatively successful strategies in varying situations they will develop no self-consciousness about the language games that they attempt to master. (112)

The essays from this particular group of writers resemble the content and form of the various examples of "street" text found in Teen Angel, Lowrider, and Streetlow magazines. More importantly, these "street" texts employ a blend of conventional and unconventional language throughout their texts as they expose the varying situations of barrio life. Many of these writers reveal the constructs that constitute Saldivar's "dialects of difference," as they continue their cognitive migration from what some would label "remedial" writer to "wannabe" citizen of the dominant culture. This writing—complimented by the complexity of multiculturalism, multinationalism, and the intimate urgency of an emerging textual "varrio"—can and should be called Chicana/o literature. These "basic" and "real" writers, like Miller, Saldivar, and
Chodorow, continue to combat the dominant culture and academic marginalization with good writing.

In the final chapter of my thesis, I will explore the larger implications of my work; in particular, I will demand that the rhetoric and composition community and the Chicana/o literary community recognize the contributions of this distinct community of basic and real writers.
CHAPTER FIVE
THE OTHER CHALLENGE OF CONSCIENTIZAÇÃO

In retrospect, one should have expected Basic Writing, as it evolved from The 1960s, to be among the most chaotic areas of inquiry in higher education. Nontraditional students showed up in record numbers, with new Social urgency embodying the most varied set of social demographics, on college campuses before teachers, researchers, and administrators who spanned the spectrums of experience, compassion, educational philosophy, and political ideology. There was no way this situation could have swiftly generated uniformly productive outlooks, policies, and procedures.

Keith Gilyard (xi)

Although many would agree with Gilyard and his historical justification for the initial "chaotic areas of inquiry" that occurred in the 1960s, many would argue that this state of academic chaos has not subsided as the result of a demanding "social urgency." Many of the authors of these street texts have been discouraged by their experiences with the "educational philosophy and political ideology "imposed upon them by the dominant culture. This group of nontraditional basic and real writers were not represented and were continually oppressed. Despite this oppression they have produced an interactive pedagogical site that nurtures a blend of academic and street discourse, demanding that we acknowledge the writing of those who exist on the "downside" of the border of non-standard English and academic discourse—basic writers. To
this end, in this thesis so far, I have (A) provided a general overview of Chicana/o literature, its history, its multiple definitions, its place in the traditional and current English departments, its seemingly constant attempts at academic validation, and its pedagogical relationship to basic and real writers, (B) provided definitions for real and basic writers and the hegemonic society they inhabit and examined their relationship to the various street texts that exists outside academia, and (C) examined the many street texts produced by the writing communities embedded within the Chicana/o community and explored the value of these of these texts as pedagogical tools. In this final chapter, I explore the larger implications of my study, arguing for an expanded definition of Chicana/o literature in order to illuminate the relationship between these street magazines, the community that produces them, and the Freirean theoretical construct of "conscientizacao." As this community of writers "strives to perceive social, political, and economic contradictions, and to take action against the oppressive elements of reality" (Freire 19), they have created a textually interactive site that exists outside of academia. I hope that my research will reveal the relevance of this overlooked community of writers.
Unfortunately, magazines such as Teen Angels, LowRider, and Street Low mirror the Chicano movement of the past in their creation of an Other within—that is, the old movement and the current magazines are saturated with machismo, with little apparent room for women's textual agency. In this developmental stage of Chicana/o print culture, however, I argue that a "feminization" of Chicana/o texts similar to the feminization of composition studies noted by Elizabeth Flynn, Susan Miller, and others has transformed Chicana/o print culture into a culture of possibility. That is, as Flynn argues in "Composing as a Woman," the reversal of traditional textual hierarchies has created a "feminization" of composition studies; in this section of my thesis I argue that a similar reversal may be seen in Chicana/o street texts, a reversal that has given Chicana women voice where none was expected before.

What Saldivar fails to mention is that this reconstruction, once realized in theoretical application to text, is enhanced and subsequently empowered by its own feminization. As mentioned in the first chapter, this feminization can be found in Saldivar's interpretation of Sandra Cisneros' House on Mango Street. Cisneros' series of vignettes has been dismissed by some critics as merely an excursion into the simplicity of childhood. Saldivar,
however, argues that the structure and form of the vignettes resemble the written letters and diaries that feminist critics have reclaimed for literary history. Similarly, I will argue that the same sort of textual feminization is apparent in the male-dominated Chicana/o street magazines. Certainly, these periodicals that harbor "street textuality" have given voice to the oppressed Chicana/o culture - locked in a "pattern of negation" (Saldivar) with the hegemonic society it inhabits. However, and more importantly, they also reveal the emerging (asomada) feminine voice, the "other" within this already marginalized textual community: las Chicanas.

The content and tone of the female contributors to Teen-Angels magazine differs greatly from their male counterparts while still maintaining a textual "space of political interaction" "representative of real writers." Many of the female submissions do not resonate of "macho bravado" and "adolescence." They tend to focus on the oppressive aspects of their subordinate existence within a male-dominated culture. For example, the poem "young women these days" offers a glimpse of the oppressive state that some Chicanas experience.

The abuse of women in a hegemonic society is nothing new: The Chicana has been a victim of abuse by the many variations of "male power" and "sexual politics." Noted
Chicana writer, poet and theorist Ana Castillo, comments on this particular dilemma facing the Chicana.

First of all, Mexican women are not acknowledged even in Mexican society, we have money and unless we have a certain aesthetic, which means white and classically attractive. So for most of us, within our communities and families, the only place (which therefore is a sense of security) is with the family. (122)

The author of this poem and the female audience that she appears to address, a not “acknowledged” in the society they inhabit. They are victims of every form of male oppression seemingly conceived. They exist, communicate and find forms of textual expression within their own textual community, not worrying about a “certain aesthetic.”

It seems that such a worry is not within the grasp of a group of women whose “most fragile lives are abused & treated wrong day by day.” These women have replaced the dominating male with a version of the “nurturing mother” “borne out of their own cultural experience - La Virgen de Guadalupe. The notion of hope and possibility is presented to this oppressed group and clearly dominate the text.

This oppressed group of Chicanas that has textually bonded through this interactive street magazine is in strong resemblance to the concept of “connected knowing” postulated by Mary Belenky et al. in the Flynn essay. According to Belenky, this construct “is rooted in empathy for others and is intensely personal. Women who are connected knowers are able to detach themselves from
relationships, and institutions to which they have been subordinated and begin trust their own intuitions" (555). The majority of the Chicanas are indeed able to detach themselves through their submissions from their oppressive states within their textual community. They share a deep empathy for each other that is nothing short of personal. Finally with the realization that "la virgen" is someone they can turn to "no matter what you have done" within their oppressed male dominated society the conclusion of the poem, despite its bleak content, resonates of hope and possibility.

In violent juxtaposition to "young women these days" is the poem Revenge:

Look at that fool, laughing and joking around, Showing no remorse for all the people he's hurt and Down. Hell why should he care, as long as he's alive, out. partying being free While the young hearts he's broken are watching his children living in poverty. Lil does he know what comes around goes around As he laughs and wastes his final breath, I pull the trigger and lay him down. (13 Teen Angels 178)

The difference in tone between the poems is glaringly evident. This home girl is mad as hell at the fool who has abused young hearts. Unlike the poet of the previous poem, this poem was apparently written to articulate her longing for revenge against an abusive male. The author does not
plead for the unconditional forgiveness of "la virgen." The author does not look toward the concept of "nurturing mother" illuminated by Flynn, but believes in a curious blend of optimistic fatalism: "what comes around goes around." Although the composer of this poem deals with oppression and abuse with extreme measures and should not be applauded for proposing to pull the "trigger," the poem itself, preceded by the previous poem stands as a testament to the diversity of female voices that can be found in Teen Angel's magazine. Like the emerging field of composition studies, this macho male street dominated Chicana/o street magazine has been transformed into a culture of possibility.

In stark contrast to the street reality of Teen Angels magazine, Lowrider focuses on vehicle-centered phenomena. Its content and focus is on the relationship between the owners the vehicles and the originality that comes with the "cool" "firme" modifications. The magazine also functions as a textual community space for entertainment events throughout the portion of the southwest known as AZTLAN by the Chicana/o culture. Like Teen Angels, Lowrider magazine seems to be aware of the marginal audience it addresses. The notable difference between the target audiences of these periodicals appears to be economic. The subjects in Lowrider magazine appear to be from the Chicana/o middles class community. The exquisite "firme" vehicles require a
degree of maintenance that demands a substantial amount of money.

In the year 2003, Lowrider magazine is a "cash cow" periodical to be reckoned with. It has evolved from a simple politically assertive street text to a high glossy magazine rife with pages of ads that boast the best custom wheels, hydraulic systems and gold plated engraved engine parts done by Hernan's custom engraving. Fortunately, the magazine has not escaped the feminization process it seems to dodge. Tucked deep within the advertisements, articles and semi-nude models is a section entitled Raza report.

Tucked further within this section is an article by Denise Sandoval entitled, "Que Viva la Mujer! A Chicana 'Her Story.'" In the article, Sandoval offers a brief concise survey of prolific Latinas in the past century. Sor Juana Inez de la Cruz, the tenth muse of Mexico and rebel nun of the seventeenth century was featured as was UFW co-founder and mother of eleven, Delores Huerta. Tucked even further away, in the section entitled "Forum," was a letter of indictment from an apparent nurturing mother who was quite simply disturbed by the semi-nude models found in this so-called family magazine. The mother states:

In my boy's eyes, you have taken away the beauty of the cars through the women posing with them. I have never had this problem, since that's the love of the old school that their daddy taught them. How do you explain 'nasty ladies,' " as my youngest boy calls them, next to those beautiful
carts? How do you explain to the next generation of LRM fans? (80)

The strongest voice in *Lowrider* magazine 2003, then, does not come from Hernan the gold plater of engines; nor does it come from the many semi-nude models placed against “firme ranflas.” It comes from an emerging (asomada) feminine voice, the “other” within this already marginalized textual community: las Chicanas.

*Chicana/o Literature & Street Textuality: The Politics Of Inclusion: La Pleve in the New Century.*

I have introduced Chicana/o literature to several community colleges in Southern California. Some of the colleges had me revise generic template-based course descriptions, while others allowed me to create the course from “scratch.” After many hours of joyful labor, I produced a course outline that reflected the many reading seminars and conferences I had attended. I also consulted “baggies” in the field for soundness and validation. After much praise and some flex-time pay, I presented the classes, which were eventually deemed a success. One department chair patted me on the back and said “I’ve checked the rosters; your classes are full you’re doing something right.” I must admit, I felt a flush of pride. This flush soon dissipated when I remembered the last time this particular department chair patted me on the back: it was after my interview to teach at the college. He patted
me on the back and said, "You know you are very Americanized."

After two years of continued success at this particular college, I was asked to revise the generic course description with one of my own making. I submitted my course description, and from what I understand, it flew by the curriculum committee with ease. It was once again placed in the spring schedule of classes. When I received my spring contract, the class was not assigned to me. I discovered the class was given to friend of mine who was not Chicano and had very little, if any, exposure to the canon. Needless to say, I was enraged. I could not argue that this person was not qualified to teach the class because he was not Chicano. I was angry over the fact that this person had no knowledge of the content of the seminar and was going to "get a book list off the internet and bone up over holiday break."

Upon hearing of this personnel switch, the students who supported the initial resurrection of the Chicana/o literature class formed a coalition to get me reinstated as the instructor. Like La Pleve from San Jo, these students engaged in a form of social protest that that resembled Freire’s construct of "true organization." Their agenda for this reinstatement process was to pursue the issues pertaining to the qualifications of the instructor and not race and culture. When the students approached the
new instructor and asked him politely about his qualifications for teaching the class, he stated that he "... could not talk about it right now, please make an appointment." Immediately he went to report the incident to the department chair, who bluntly stated that his word was final.

The students then informed the chair that they have already made plans to alert the media and inform them of the student faculty dilemma. In a frantic effort to dodge bad press, the department chair asked me to attend a meeting with the newly appointed instructor to discuss the situation. It was at this meeting where variables of the construct of Mary Louise Pratt's concept of the "contact zone" spun around the room in a political frenzy.

In her essay "Contact Zones and English Studies," Patricia Bizzell expands upon the work of Pratt to address the issue of multi-cultural inclusion to English studies. In reference to contact zones, Pratt states:

I use this term to refer to social spaces where cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of power, such as colonization, slavery, or their aftermaths as they lived out the many parts of the world today. (34)

This meeting called by the department chair became an "asymmetrical" debate on the definition of Chicana/o literature. The chair wanted an international influence to dominate over the theoretical constructs presented in
class. Although he was not particularly clear on how the international theme should be presented, he was adamant about its presence in the seminar. This example of oppressive rhetoric could be interpreted as an indulgence in power. The newly appointed instructor immediately accused me of teaching a predominantly politically based literature class. He asked me if I include the teaching of literary devices. Not wanting to fall victim to fallacious argument, I politely denied the accusations. The newly appointed instructor then presented me with a list of people with Spanish surnames that he had worked with in various academic settings. I told him that I had no problem with his qualifications, but I could not speak for the students he was attempting to recruit for the class. Indeed both he and the department chair threatened to take disciplinary action against the students in question for merely presenting a persistent line of inquiry. He was “shaking” from the encounter. These meetings between students and faculty as well as the interdepartmental meeting were undeniably academic settings that became, according to Pratt, one of those “social spaces where cultures meet, clash, and grapple.” (740)

Bizzell, with her concept of “negotiating difference,” argues for the study of “how various genres have grappled with the pervasive presence of difference in American life and developed virtues out of necessity.” (741) Like
Gilyard, she recognizes the "the new social urgency" on campuses with a pronounced multi-cultural student population. She also argues for the inclusion of student writing into her construct. Unfortunately, she fails to wholeheartedly condemn those who continue to indulge in the contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of power and the continued oppression this power promotes.

In direct contrast to Bizzell, Henry Giroux, in his essay, "The Limits of Academic Multiculturalism," reveals the manipulative strategy embedded within cultural politics, recognition, and curriculum development.

Academic multiculturalism in its corporate and liberal versions has come under considerable attack recently not only from a diverse number of conservatives but increasingly from critics on the left. Refusing to link cultural differences to relations of power, multiculturalist representing multinational corporate interest and centrist views of the academy have been rightly criticized for attempting to manage diversity through policies designed to incorporate resistance by, as David Theo Golberg sees it, "paying lip service to the celebration of cultural distinctions. (65)

By insisting that the Chicano literature class be dominated by an international theme, the department chair within this contact zone and asymmetrical debate, attempted to clearly subjugate the Chicana/o youth under the guise of imposed Multiculturalism and disciplinary action. Once again, like the sixties Pleve from San Jo who unified in order to survive, "La Nueva Pleve" (Chicana/o youth) at
this particular college did indeed link their "cultural differences to relations of power by threatening to illuminate" the centrist views of the academy" through media attention. By successfully combating an attempt at academic oppression, the demands of the students were met, and a new emerging organization discovered the meaning of conscientizacao.

Implications for Rhetoric and Composition

As I have attempted to demonstrate in chapter three of this thesis, Chicana/o street textuality, like the writing examined by Bede in England 701 and 702 are connected by their use of stylistic rhetoric. I further assert that both communities, although separated by a time span of centuries, attempt to combat the dominant culture with a blend of conventional and unconventional language. Such connections should be a major part of Rhetoric and Composition studies. Granted there are many texts in the field that address multiculturalism; none of these critical texts, however, specifically examine the seemingly vast expanse of Chicana/o street textuality.

As I have attempted demonstrate in chapter three of this project, basic writers at the community college level did indeed respond productively to these street texts when
they were incorporated into the pedagogical structure of the class. At this point in this project, I further suggest that appropriate representations of Chicana/o street textuality be placed in composition readers—readers that should recognize basic and real writers as productive contributors to (not just students in) the grand conversation of rhetoric and composition.

Rethinking Chicana/o Literature

I have presented sections of this project at seven different conferences within a two period, most notably at the Conference of College Composition and Communication (in 2002 and 2003) and and the Chicana/o Literature Conference at the University of Malaga, Spain. It was in Spain that I received the most interesting responses. The audience for my presentation contained an impressive list of authors of Chicana/o literature and critical essays. Many in the audience had never even considered Chicana/o street textuality as literature and much less as a pedagogical tool. I was told by the moderator of my panel that my presentation was "refreshing" in that it brought up the question "what is literature?" One of the most memorable instances from that question and answer section of the presentation came about when I was asked "Where can we purchase these magazines?" My response was simple "In
liquor stores, specifically those that sell fortified wine.”

The conference was filled with great presentations from people who came from major universities. The majority of the presenters came from the U.S, Latin America and Spain. There were very few presentations that were not academically connected much less from the street. After several days of attending these presentations, poetry readings and plays, I realized that any work remotely resembling the provocative content of Teen Angels lacked the intimate stark realism associated with Chicana/o street textuality.

Not only does Chicana/o literature have to combat the constraints of a male dominated culture, it must once again partake in the Freirean construct of true organization by recognizing Chicana/o street textuality as literature and a weapon against oppression. It is my hope that my research has formed one step toward that goal.
Chapter One

1. Like Chicano literature, Chicana/o street texts were borne out of communal self reflection, social protest and true textual organization.

2. In disturbing alignment with the Chicano social critics, some literary critics felt that the major appeal of the novel was derived from the cultural ornateness (Costumbrismo) of Mexico _______La Madrid

3. With collective events similar in female based content of the 1984 Nacs conference, the Chicana voice in Chicano literature continued its emergence. Certainly Cisneros's novel was instrumental in the empowerment of this voice and indeed the fact that it was embraced by a number of discourse communities help assure its place in a number of textbooks, anthologies and syllabi of Chicana/o literature.

4. Parents found this tale an extremely useful tool; it could discourage children who had a tendency to wander from their home. Not unlike the concept of the "boogey
man" there was a practicality to maintaining this oppressive myth in the immediate oral culture.

Chapter Two

5. In juxtapostion to the inception of the Chicana/o literary canon is the field of compostion studies. It differs greatly from the traditional modes of English instruction with its emphasis on intersections of psychology, linguistics, and rhetoric.

6. Cholo letters are stylized graffiti with an over elaborate emphasis on flair and size. Arguably conceived during the Pachuco era of the 1940s, it continues to be a graphic trait particular to the Chicana/o experience. In an example of reverse migration, recently this type of print can be found on buildings that exist on the border of Tijuana, Mexico and San Diego, California.

7. English 015 is a preparatory freshman composition class. The rhetorical strategies presented in the class address the academic rigor of college writing.

Most Mexican immigrants, as well as those of Spanish ancestry resident in the Southwest for generations, became well-integrated cogs in the social system dominated by Anglos. Most of them possessed the skills, experience and perhaps temperament demanded to mesh into the rural agricultural economy. The economic system was (and still is in many areas) characterized by a "hacienda-like system" social structure (by latifundismo) and a dual caste system reminiscent of the social arrangement of the plantation system of the South. (142)
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