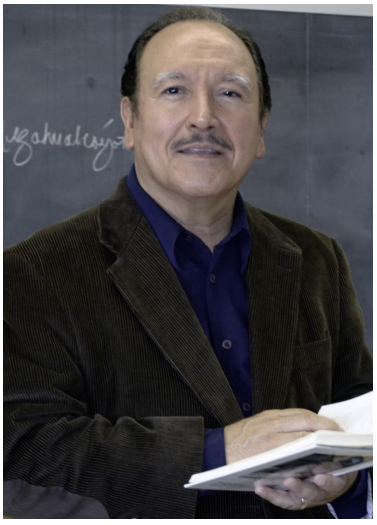
Spring 2019, Volume 1,(2)



Una Palabra from Retiring Faculty Member, Roberto Cantú



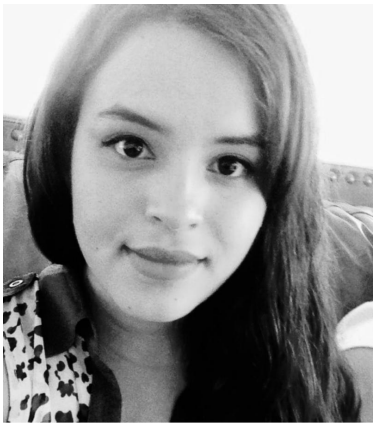
Teaching at Cal State LA during 45 active and productive years has been a most rewarding experience in my life. In 1974, I joined the Department of Chicano Studies (as the department was known at the time), in the midst of a decade in which the faculty's enthusiasm was at its peak: we were founding Chicano Studies and establishing a new interdisciplinary academic field! Among my colleagues, Louis R. Negrete, Ph.D., was the one to set the highest working standards: he labored quietly, methodically, and with clear academic objectives, thus as a true founder. Lou authored the department's multiple-subject credential, the single-subject credential, and the master's degree in Chicano Studies. In other words, his activism was channeled into building and making what the department is to this day, emphasizing teaching, scholarship, and the preparation of students for future careers in different areas. From the beginning of our friendship, I sensed that Lou was the one to write the history of the Department of Chicano Studies at Cal State LA. After his retirement, he published a book with a wider scope and more ambitious intent: *Chicano Homeland: The Movement in East Los Angeles for Mexican American Power, Justice, and Equality* (2016).

In later years, I worked with other campus colleagues, staff, and students on various international conferences, and founded the Chicano Studies Publications Center (1976-1984), and two journals (*Campo Libre* and *Escolios*). In 1982, Lou and I sent a proposal to the Rockefeller Foundation, requesting the sum of $25,000 for a conference. We received the funds, and I immediately began to organize an international conference titled "Culture and Technology in the Mexico-United States Border," held in La Jolla, California on October 9-12, 1983. I edited a selection of the papers presented at this conference in a 1984 special issue of *Campo Libre: Journal of Chicano Studies* (Vol. II, Nos. 1-2). Ten years later, I was invited to join the English faculty, thus beginning my joint-appointment, teaching courses in world literature and in Latin American literature (in translation). My joint appointment in Chicano Studies/English departments created remarkable opportunities for me in teaching, research, and publications in various literary traditions: Mesoamerican, American (U.S.), Mexican, Latin American, and European. These years marked the best and most involved in my teaching duties, and in the organization of cultural events at Cal State LA. I produced several plays on campus, among them Bodas *de sangre*, by Federico García Lorca (1998), and *Bless Me, Ultima* (2008), a stage reading adaptation of a novel by Chicano writer Rudolfo Anaya. In 2007, I wrote the Minor in Mesoamerican Studies (the only one of its kind in the California State University system), with the enthusiastic encouragement and assistance of colleagues in the anthropology and art departments. As project director of the "Gigi" Gaucher-Morales Memorial Conferences (2009-present), I have organized, with fellow

colleagues, international conferences on Mesoamerica, Octavio Paz, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, Carlos Fuentes and, most recently, on Rudolfo Anaya, Américo Paredes, and Alfonso Reyes. I have been very lucky; Cal State LA has been a second home. It has honored me with an Outstanding Professor Award (1990) and with the President's Distinguished Professor Award (2010).

What is next for me after my retirement from Cal State LA? I am looking forward to spending lots of time with my wife Elvira, and with our three children: Victoria Guadalupe, Isabel, and Roberto. Any remaining time in the days to come will be for reading, writing, and enjoying the company of friends.

¡FELICIDADES ESTUDIANTES!

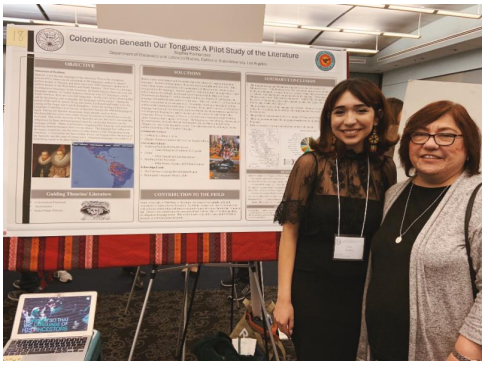


My name is Karla Hernández. I am a third year DACA student and CLS major. Aside from being a student, I am also a mother of a three-year old boy. I was born in Tequila, Jalisco. I wrote this poem as a tribute to my beloved hometown, which I have not been able to return to or visit, but that lives on in my heart and memory. The poem was part of a final portfolio assignment I completed in Chicanx Literature class (CLS 4020) with Professor Olga García in the fall of 2018. It was modeled after a poem with a similar sentiment in Erika Ayon's collection Orange Lady. Aside from reading Ayon's collection of poetry, we were very fortunate to have her visit our class and share her work with us in person.

Pá Jalisco Con Dolor

By Karla Hernández

I still remember the day I had to tell you goodbye
Carlos the boy who I have liked since forever
was playing José en las posadas del barrio
Mi primo Mario and the other boys
who I played La Traes with every night
were there to say goodbye
I remember I was sucking on a hard candy paleta de chile
When I heard my mom say tío Gil was there
to drive us away
Then I felt so vacía and sad
I think that was the first time I felt that sensation
like when your stomach feels so so empty
y te quedas aturdida
I remember I left my paleta
covered with my saliva on the table
I wonder who cleaned it up
My tears cover the whole ground on our way to the airport
I remember thinking
I'll use them to find my way back to you
and never get lost
It's been eleven years and
I still haven't smelled your tierra mojada like when it rains
I still haven't seen your cerros full of magueyes
I still haven't returned to my favorite street
where the Goddess Mayahuel stands
The thought of you me entristece tanto
One day I'll be able to embrace you
One day I'll be able to call out to you
with all my strength and wake you
¡Tequila! ¡Estoy aquí! ¡Estoy de vuelta!



Sophia Hernández, a CLS major, participated in the 27th Annual Student Symposium on Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activities in February. She is pictured with her mamá.

Adelante Sophia!

Student Publications

Vargas, Jocelyn. (2019). *Life Embracing Death.* In Voices From the Ancestors: Xicanx and Latinx Spiritual Expressions and Healing Practices, edited by Lara Medina and Martha R. Gonzales. Chicago, IL: The University of Arizona Press.

Conference Presentations

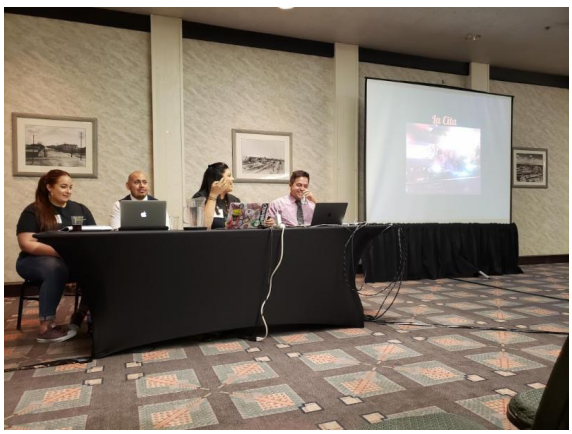
Martínez, Y. Stephanie. (2019). *The Coloniality of AI: Toward a Decolonial Feminist Reading of Hosts in the Future-Past of Westworld.* Presented as part of the panel Colonialism and Body in Science Fiction at EagleCon at California State University, Los Angeles.

Pineda, Ramón. (November, 2018). *CumbiaLAndia: Digital ephemera, borderlands sounds, and the dissonant DJs queering sonic imaginearies in LA's cumbia scene*. Poster presentation at American Anthropological Association Annual Conference.

Verdín, Karla, Alonso, Alonso, Cynthia, Pineda, Ramón. (April, 2019). *Latinx Listening Culture Echoing Across Turtle Island.* Panel presentation at National Association of Chicana and Chicano Studies Annual Conference.

Garcia Vera, Bridget; Alonso, Cynthia; Verdin, Karla; Valenzuela, Nancy; Pineda, Ramón, and Bernal, Ireri. (April, 2019). *Critical Race Feminista Praxis: Working In-Community within Los Angeles Neighborhoods.* Panel presentation at National Association of Chicana and Chicano Studies Annual Conference.





Eleven CLS community members, six students and five faculty, attended and presented at the National Association for Chicana and Chicano Studies National (NACCS) Conference in Albuquerque, New Mexico in April, 2019.

Special Recognition

Stephany Bravo was accepted to Michigan State University Department of English Doctoral Program and awarded the Michigan State Enrichment Fellowship.

Stephanie Yolanda Martínez was accepted to University of California, San Diego Department of Ethnic Studies Doctoral Program and awarded the Strategic Enhancement of Excellence through Diversity Fellowship.

Ramón Pineda was accepted to University of California, Riverside Department of Ethnic Studies Doctoral Program and awarded the Chancellor's Distinguished Fellowship.

Two of our graduating master's degree students offer consejos for pursing doctoral studies:

Consejos from Stephany Bravo: The transdisciplinary nature of the CLS department allowed me to take courses in fields ranging from literature to museum studies. So, essentially, it allowed me to tap into and visualize myself in an array of fields/professions where I could either become a professor of Chicanx/Latinx literature or a curator of all things Chicanx/Latinx popular culture. Figure out your passion. Visualize your future. Find a graduate student and a professor in a doctoral program that inspire you. It sounds weird, but look at their vitas. What scholarships or grants have they applied to? Where have they presented? Where have they interned or landed jobs? Once you have an idea, start talking to people who will help you pave your path(s). Professors should be your go-to people (you need three letters of recommendation . . . start considering who you want your references to be . . . now). I find that the CLS department has both faculty and staff that are more than happy to help, but you have to have a plan to get the "ball rolling." If you have no plan, office hours are a perfect opportunity for you to discuss your doubts. Don't be scared. Always ask questions, be your own advocate!

P.S. I want to highlight that I applied to doctoral programs TWICE! I survived. Be gentle with yourself. Besides faculty support, the graduate student community, and curriculum, your goal for a doctoral program should also be that you don't take out student loans and that the department funds your conference travel, your research, and other professional development . . . know your worth.

Consejos from Stephanie Yolanda Martinez: In the short time I spent working on my master's at Cal State LA, I found an intellectually stimulating community in the Department of Chicana(o) and Latina(o) Studies. The students and professors in our department have provided me with unwavering academic guidance and support as I often researched the most seemingly abstract of things, all of which allow me to creatively and rigorously envision projects of community continuity and sustainability. The interdisciplinary and interdepartmental training I received during my M.A. coursework led me to propose a large scale project that aims to bridge studies in gender, race, labor, migration, and speculative fiction, which I feel I am better prepared for as I begin doctoral work in Ethnic Studies at UC San Diego next fall. I am especially thankful for the intellectual curiosity that the department welcomes. Chicanx and Latinx Studies at Cal State LA is and will be a springboard for many of us to continue to envision collective and liberationist futures."

¡Felicidades Estudiantes!

Alum Profile: Michael Cervantes



Can you share some highlights about your educational journey to Cal State LA and within the CLS department? As an undergraduate, I was an English major. It was a positive experience learning about works of literature from the United States, and Europe. I completed my bachelor's degree and moved on to graduate school to receive a teaching credential. I returned to Cal State LA to begin my master's degree in Education. Once finished, I explored courses in various departments. One of them was in the Chicano Studies department with Roberto Cantú on Pre-

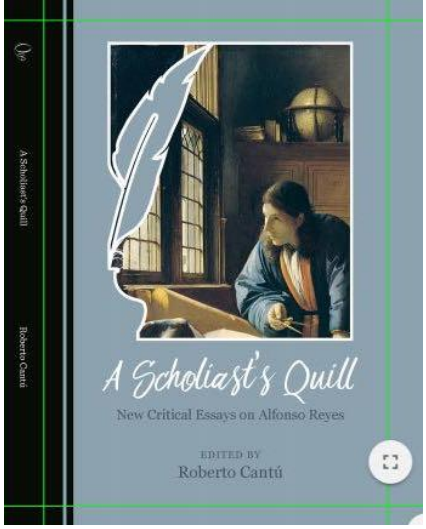
Columbian Literature. One day a group of students entered the class to announce that the department was now offering a master's degree in Chicano Studies. That announcement, along with the course I was in, motivated me to begin a second master's degree with Cantú as my thesis advisor.

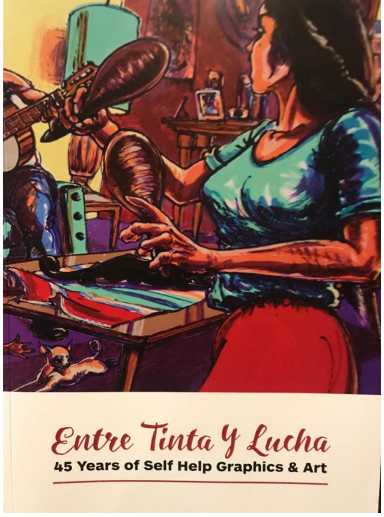
What has your professional career been like and how did Chicana(o) and Latina(o) Studies impact your career? My professional career was that of a teacher and union activist. The Chicana(o) and Latina(o) Studies department and the Chicano Movement emphasized the theme of giving back to the community. As a teacher, I wanted children to see visions of their future successes. My first-year teaching, a colleague and I developed an after-school bilingual-bicultural program. Later, I joined a district language arts committee to select books for English learners, and about a year later, I volunteered for a school committee, to develop criteria for students to transition from limited English speakers to proficient ones.

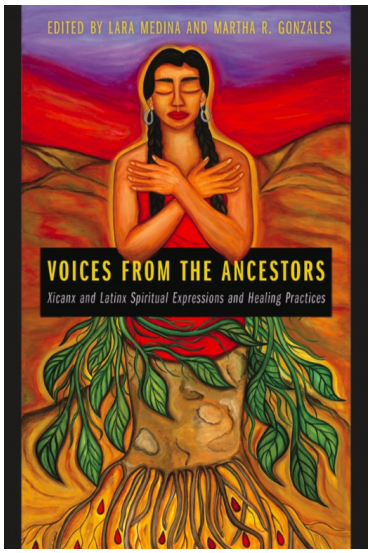
Can you share a little bit about your philanthropic work? In the 1980s, two significant issues concerned Chicanos: they were the undocumented and civil war victims in Central America. I, along with a group from San Gabriel Mission had fundraising dinners and had a Central American and one Claretian Priest offer testimonials on the civil wars. About 1986, Fr. Gonzáles, the then Pastor of the San Gabriel Mission called upon me and two other parishioners to attend a workshop on a law that offered the undocumented a process to become legalized. I worked on the project with the coordinators and volunteers for about a year. By 1996, I established at Cal State LA, a scholarship endowment entitled, "The New World Scholarship." Later, I began three more endowments. Over four years ago, I approached my former alma mater, San Gabriel Mission High School and established an essay-scholarship contest. Last year, the high school asked me to take part in a program called Adopt-a-Student. The program's goal is for a sponsor to support a low-income family whose child wants to attend Mission High.

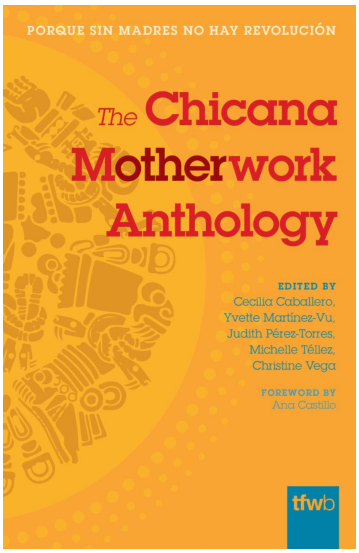
What about the department and Cal State LA brings you back? I returned to the Chicana(o) Latina(o) Studies department to see how the program had changed over the decades. When I first became part of the master's program, I saw how the courses laid out formed the building blocks for a unique university degree. The then professors and students built the department to what it is today. Being the 50th anniversary for the CLS Department motivated me to gain insights into its current and future status. Also, I wanted to let the CLS chair know that I wish to offer my services to help in future conferences by being an active participant in forming future programs. With my varied experiences, I have much to contribute to a team that will continue the marvelous work that Roberto Cantú and others began. I know the department's past, and by visiting with the chair, I was assured that today's "architects" are building a lasting future.

¡FELICIDADES FACULTAD!
FACULTY NEWS AND RECENT PUBLICATIONS









Anguiano, José. (April, 2019). *Listening to the Audience of the Art Laboe Connection*. Pop Conference, Museum of Pop Culture. Seattle, WA.

Cisneros, Nora., Hidalgo, L., Vega, C., & Martinez-Vú, Y. (2019). Mothers of color in academia: Fierce mothering challenging spatial exclusion through a Chicana feminist praxis. In C. Caballero, Y. Martinez-Vú, J. Perez, M. Telléz, & C. Vega (Eds.), *The Chicana M(other)work Anthology: Porque sin madres no hay revolución*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press.

Aguilar-Hernández, J. M., & **Delgado Bernal, Dolores**. (2018). 50th and 25th Anniversaries: Historical Lessons of Chicana/o Student Activism in Los Angeles. CCRS Research Brief, no. 12. Los Angeles, CA: Center for Critical Race Studies at UCLA.

Ellis, Helen. (March, 2019). *Innocents Abroad? Representations of Aztecs Traveling in Europe in the Age of Exploration*. Presented at El tornaviaje at Universidad Pablo de Olavide, Seville, Spain.

Leal, Jorge. N. (2018). "Aquí y Allá : ¡Yo Voy a Existir! Young Latina/o Ingenuity, Sounds, Solidarity in Late Twentieth Century Los Ángeles 1980-1997." Doctoral Dissertation. University of California, San Diego.

López, Michelle. L & Viesca, Victor. (2018). *Entre Tinta y Lucha: 45 Years of Self Help Graphics & Art*. Los Angeles, CA: Cal State LA.

Ramos, Leda & Montes, Felicia. (April, 2018). *Mujeres Que Luchan:*

Chiapas to LA/LA to Chiapas. Presentation at Encuentro: 25 Years of Zapatismo Across Time and Space at California State University, Los Angeles.

Yugar, Theresa A. (2019). Letter to Eva. In *Voices From the Ancestors: Xicanx and Latinx Spiritual Expressions and Healing Practices*, edited by Lara Medina and Martha R. Gonzales. Chicago, IL: The University of Arizona Press.

A special felicidades to **Jorge N. Leal** who earned his Ph.D. in fall 2018. Leal accepted a Postdoctoral Scholarship and Teaching Fellowship in the Department of History and the American Studies and Ethnicity department at the University of Southern California, and he continues to be a lecturer in our department.

A special gracias to **Leda Ramos** who is stepping down from three years as the faculty advisor for MEChA de Cal State LA and three years of leading visual communication and graphic design for the department!

¡Felicidades Facultad!

50TH ANNIVERSARY AND OTHER EVENTS







Grammy-winning **Quetzal Flores** and Mexican-born Australian rapper and songwriter **Maya Jupiter** use songwriting and performance as radical transformative tools for social justice work with Pan-African Studies (PAS) and CLS students. *(left photo)*

CLS students engage in free speech to oppose the campus move toward declaring impaction. *(middle photo)*

Women writers/poets of color, **Karina Alma**, **Olga Garcia Echeverria**, **Cynthia Guardado**, and **Bridgette Blanca**, pose for a pic after their powerful poetry/essay reading. *(right photo)*







Sylvia Mendez of the Mendez vs Westminster 1946 case joins CLS faculty and students after presenting at the Chicanx Education Film Series. *(left photo)*

MALCS de Cal State LA members who are CLS students attend the National Association for Chicana and Chicano Studies conference. *(middle photo)*

Students in Theresa Yugar's Environmental Justics classes participate in Earth Day and gear their scholar-activist work towards caring for Mother Earth. *(right photo)*





Roberto Cantú poses with **Alejandra Flores** and other cast members of *I am Frida* Kahlo at the Mexican Muralist conference. *(left photo)*

Students, faculty, and staff gather for an Intergenerational Plática on Love, Family & Movement Building. *(right photo)*

SAVE THE DATE

Pride Grad Celebration May 16, 2019
Raza Graduation May 19, 2019
Chicana(o) & Latina(o) Studies Department Graduation May 21, 2019

Have questions? Stop by our office located in King Hall C4069

GIVE NOW

Give today to support the Department of Chicana(o) and Latina(o) Studies.

Newsletter Editor: CLS M.A. student, Giovanna Diaz