

## Introduction

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# The Chicana/o/x Dream Among First-Generation College Students

When Mexico sends its people, they're not sending their best. They're not sending you. They're not sending you. They're sending people that have lots of problems, and they're bringing those problems with us. They're bringing drugs. They're bringing crime. They're rapists. And some, I assume, are good people.

—Donald J. Trump, June 16, 2015<sup>1</sup>

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA was established as a land of immigrants with the idea of the American dream premised on equality, freedom, and individualistic success; that presumption, however, was erected on a foundation of coloniality, xenophobia, and racist nativism that resulted in the dispossession of Indigenous peoples and the enslavement of people from Africa.<sup>2</sup> Needless to say, immigrants and people incorporated through force built the nation.

Contemporary immigration from Mexico has historically been a contested issue resulting in people of Mexican descent being consigned to second-class citizens, denied access to education, and relegated to menial labor. The highly conflicted and heated political issue of immigration has presently created an overwhelming crisis—a crisis of the American heart and soul. The crisis is a profound juxtaposition between the promise of a welcoming society based on immigrant integration and one that seeks to keep out, marginalize, and further the “othering” of Chicana/o/x people with the symbol of a border wall to please a narrow nationalist base and the right-wing media.<sup>3</sup> The wrath of extreme racism, nativism, xenophobia, sexism, and homophobia in today’s America is evident, particularly

in preK–12 schools and higher education institutions. Moreover, these interrelated structures of inequality have become even more palpable during these unprecedented times of the COVID-19 global pandemic and protests against systemic racism and all forms of violence. Yet it is these most painful experiences that can also empower communities to maintain hope, resist inequality, and access resources to succeed academically. At the center of today's turbulent America are the Students of Color, who, with the support of institutional resources, challenge inequality head on and succeed despite incredible odds.

This book shares the lived experiences and perspectives of first-generation Chicana/o/x college students who—despite being affected by marginalization, immigration, poverty, and education policies—navigate successfully through inequality in US society and culture. Such experiences and perspectives divulged in the book are rooted in the understanding that feminist theories, Chicana studies, and ethnic studies courses contribute to students' development of a critical consciousness and can also be utilized to contextualize the experiences of Chicana/o/x students in the institutions of preK–12 schooling and higher education.<sup>4</sup> We build on the feminist scholarship in the field of education that has interweaved Anzaldúan concepts, such as *atravesado* (transgressor), *nepantla* (in-between), *la facultad* (ability to see beneath the surface), and *nepantlera* (individuals who navigate in-between spaces).<sup>5</sup>

Using interviews, *testimonios*, and Chicana feminist theories, this book addresses the institutional mechanisms that shape the aspirations, expectations, and achievements of Chicana/o/x students who grew up in marginalized communities and navigated unequal school contexts. In so doing, the book looks toward the future by highlighting the actions that Chicana/o/x students take in creating bridges: they create bridges from preK–12 to college for themselves and future generations; they create bridges between their communities and higher education; and they create bridges to challenge the preestablished pathways out of education. Fundamentally, this book helps define the heart and soul of tomorrow's America and elucidates that Chicana/o/x college students maintain hope, enact resistance, and succeed against injustice—the *Chicana/o/x Dream*.

## The Tales of Two Chicana/o/x UC Berkeley Golden Bears

*The Chicana/o/x Dream* is informed by Anzaldúan theories and represents the hope present in Chicana/o/x communities, despite the continued marginalization that results in Chicana/o/x students being treated as *atravesados*—transgressors—in US schools. Chicana feminist scholar Gloria Anzaldúa gave us the gift of theories to put our combined pain into action and to challenge an unjust society—especially in the realm of education: “You experience nature as ensouled, as sacred. Este saber, this knowledge, urges you to cast *una ofrenda* (an offer) of images and words across the page *como granos de maiz*, like kernels of corn. By redeeming your most painful experiences you transform them into something valuable, *algo para compartir* or share with others so they too may be empowered.”<sup>6</sup> Anzaldúa’s offering to current and future generations of scholars and activists provides language to explain and theorize the lived experiences of Chicana/o/x in the United States. Guided by her call for a blend of internal reflexivity and outward collaborative actions in pursuit of social justice, we take a step back to conceptualize the education system as one that contributes to both despair and hope.

*The Chicana/o/x Dream* serves as a clear indication that the next generation of Chicana/o/x students will continue the historical legacy of resistance to marginalizing efforts. The book serves as a framework that contextualizes both the never-ending and ever-adapting racism in US institutions and the hope and resistance enacted by Chicana/o/x students who continue to persist in education because they identify it as one avenue toward success for themselves, their communities, and society writ large.<sup>7</sup> We, the coauthors, exemplify such efforts as the children of Mexican immigrant farmworkers and tenured university professors.

What follows are our own testimonios of maintaining hope, enacting resistance, and succeeding against odds to introduce, illuminate, and contribute to *The Chicana/o/x Dream*. Our experiences as higher education faculty are not in alignment with the majority of Chicana/o/x individuals; in fact, our experiences are unique and far from reality. Our combined experiences attest to Anzaldúa’s theorizing of borderlands, *atravesados*, *la facultad*, and *nepantlera*. We center the notion of hope as part of this book because, in order to survive marginalizing structures, *atravesados* have to maintain hope and the aspiration for a better future. We include a focus on

resistance because through la facultad, Chicana/o/x students are able to see beneath the surface of marginalizing structures so as to question and challenge inequities. Finally, the (overused) term *success* is used to represent the abilities of nepantleras to use la facultad as they navigate conflicting spaces in pursuit of higher education with the end-goal of building bridges that the next generation can use. The interdisciplinary frameworks serve to provide a road map for fostering institutional opportunities and academic success for Chicana/o/x college students.

Our educational journeys have contributed to our efforts as nepantleras to foster college access and success for current and future generations of Latina/o/x students—one of us raised in a semiurban context and the other in a rural agricultural one. Our contexts have fostered hope. We have learned how to resist. Through our research, teaching, service, and activism, we develop different opportunities for Latina/o/x and other Students of Color to succeed in education and beyond. We ask that you join the journey with us and help dismantle historic racial oppression and reclaim the dream and promise of public education.

### *Gil's Testimonio*

I was born in 1969 to my father, José, and my mother, Evelia Conchas, Mexican immigrants from San Jerónimo, a small farming town in the state of Jalisco. I am their third son and I have two older brothers, Celso and José (called Joe), one younger brother, Jessie, and a sister, the youngest—Jenny. Married in México, José and Evelia already had two sons when the elder José applied in 1966 to be a guest worker for the United States Bracero program, which legally allowed for temporary importation of Mexican contract laborers. He was accepted. Leaving his wife and children behind, he traveled alone for three or four years, throughout the Southwest, picking strawberries, tomatoes, and grapes. Later, José avoided discussing these years, but when he did, he spoke of clashes with teamsters over competition for jobs and getting sprayed by his employers with lice-killing chemicals. When the guest worker program ended, my father stayed in the United States and, no longer considered a legal worker, he began to experience police raids on top of his other ongoing issues due to his undocumented status.

Back in México, my mother went months without receiving money from her husband. She soon began taking in sewing and making cheese

and yogurt to earn income. When she had saved enough, she headed for California to find her husband. Because my mother's parents were landowners, a privileged group when it came to getting visas to visit the United States from México, she was able to fly legally to California with her two little boys.

She located the address of her husband's dwelling in San Diego and, with their two boys standing behind her, knocked on the door. José, not knowing of his family's arrival, stood frozen in shock. Evelia nudged their two sons forward—past responsibilities come to life—a resurrection of the family. Taking back its space in José's life, the family moved forward. My two brothers are what we call now the *1.5 generation*. During this period, I was conceived, and in 1969, I was born.

The family moved to southeast San Diego, to a predominately African American neighborhood near Logan Heights, where we lived through my kindergarten year. My father obtained a job as a welder, and my parents rented a cockroach-ridden, dirty duplex, which my mother feverishly sanitized. To this day, my mother, at seventy-eight years of age, keeps her home spotless—even the dirt floor outside her home “shines” clean.

In 1972, when I was three, a woman knocked on doors throughout the neighborhood, telling parents about a new program, Head Start, that would prepare preschoolers for kindergarten. José and Evelia had third- and fourth-grade educations, respectively, but they knew the value of education and decided to enroll me. That was the beginning of an extraordinary venture for me—an important initiation to the power of education.

Head Start, launched in 1965, was a comprehensive program offered to families at the dawn of Lyndon B. Johnson's Great Society. The components of the program included social services, health, nutrition, education, and parent involvement. At first, I was an unwilling preschooler recruit. I didn't want to go, and my dad carried me, while I was kicking and screaming, to the first day of the program. But after being forced to attend, I loved Head Start. This exceptional opportunity launched the intellectual hunger—*conocimiento*—for a schoolboy born and raised in an urban barrio. I eventually enacted *la facultad* and excelled throughout public school, enrolled at UC Berkeley as an undergraduate, and obtained a PhD in sociology at the University of Michigan.

Although my father did not live to hear about my academic work as a sociologist nor especially to see his son as a Harvard professor, tenured professor at the University of California, endowed professor at the

Pennsylvania State University, and senior officer at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, my teaching and my research represent my parents' commitment to and perseverance for equity and social justice. My parents opened the door for me, and my undergraduate experience provided the social scaffolds to acquire and activate the necessary social capital to further expand upon the limited opportunities afforded to the son of poor immigrant laborers.

All of this would not have been possible without the support and guidance I experienced as an undergraduate at the University of California, Berkeley. I was fortunate to have been part of three significant institutional processes that laid the foundation for my eventual matriculation at the University of Michigan's prestigious graduate program in sociology. The first came from living in the Chicano/Latino theme house, Casa Joaquin Murietta, on the Berkeley campus. At Casa, I was fortunate to have received the structural and cultural aspects of the undergraduate experience that privileged classes all too often take for granted. I was exposed to caring and supportive adults, peer mentoring, cultural activities, and, above all, a safe and high-achieving atmosphere. I clearly recall that as a freshman at UC Berkeley, I spent countless hours in the computer lab working on my "developmental" English class assignments. I did not pass my English essay exam and therefore had to enroll in a catch-up intensive writing course. I was such a horrible writer, and I struggled with my essays. In one semester, I had to unlearn the five-paragraph rule that I had wrongly learned in high school English classes. I was fortunate to have been exposed to peers who had a great high school education and who took the time to tutor me and guide me through the processes of articulating my thoughts on paper: they created bridges. "Gil, don't be lazy and go back down and rewrite this piece," my peer would constantly state. What a challenge, but what an experience! Had it not been for the access to computers in the first place and to being exposed to high-achieving and supportive peers, I might not have made it past Subject A English at UC Berkeley. It was this high-achieving and supportive climate that exposed me to my second and perhaps strongest influence.

Through contacts gleaned from living at Casa, after my sophomore year I was introduced to a Chicana sociologist at the University of California, Santa Barbara, where I secured an internship. The summer program, Summer Academic Research Institute, forever changed my identity. I embraced graduate school and wholeheartedly embraced an identity

as a sociologist. Again, this was an important event—*conocimiento*—in my undergraduate experience that shaped my intellectual interests in research related to social equity. In addition, I believe that I impressed the professor—for one sunny day on the UCSB campus, she suggested that I apply for the American Sociological Association’s Minority Opportunity Summer Training (MOST). I was consequently chosen to participate in MOST on the Berkeley campus the following summer.

MOST represents the third scaffold of my undergraduate experience. MOST sought to recruit, prepare, and help admit the next generation of Students of Color into top doctoral programs in sociology. I had the honor to not only work with renowned sociologists but also be exposed to equally impressive peers. This was an opportunity that began to mold my identity as a budding sociologist. While I did not write a formal thesis for this internship, I took several courses with other MOST peers and had the honor to dialogue with imminent professors who conduct research on race relations and social stratification. We also attended seminars and cultural events throughout the Bay Area. MOST introduced us to and prepared us for graduate school life and initiated important professional networks in academia. You have to keep in mind that the majority of MOST participants were first-generation college students. Through MOST, it was not enough to emphasize enrollment in graduate school; completion and eventual acquisition of a PhD was key.

My individual determination was not enough to complete college, obtain a PhD, and acquire tenure. I benefited from institutional bridges that mediated my engagement—*el animo*—and success. It all began with my parents’ hard work and the institutional agents along the way that paved the path for me. Now, I try to mentor and create bridges for the next wave of scholars who embrace equity and social justice. I believe that we must remember those that came before us, those that opened the door for us, and those that will come after us. Let us all make our parents proud and always be *para la raza*.

### *Nancy’s Testimonio*

I was raised in the agricultural fields of Northern California. On my mom’s side, my grandfather was a Bracero. With the help of her older brothers, my mother, Gloria Rivas de Acevedo, managed to *arreglar sus papeles*, against her father’s wishes. Challenging gendered expectations

was not new to her as she learned to resist patriarchy at a young age. She worked in the fields in Rio Vista, California, and learned to drive on its curvy roads surrounded by fields and the river. After multiple attempts, my dad, Rodimiro Acevedo, crossed the border at the age of sixteen with the help of a *coyote* and lived in Santa Ana, California, under the roof of *Doña* Altagracia, who would offer room and board for twenty-five dollars a week to recent immigrants until they secured a job. My parents married in 1983 and my mom refused to stay behind in Mexico, like so many women were expected to do. By 1986, my dad was eligible to apply for US residency through the Immigration Reform and Control Act. My parents worked in the tomato fields for many years, and we lived in the middle of the fields, in rural Yolo County.

Although there was a local Head Start program that I could have attended, my mom never wanted me to enroll, because she assumed that if I was supposed to spend so many years in schooling, I should not have to spend an additional year sitting still. At four years old, I began elementary school as an English learner. I was the first child picked up by the school bus, and I would ride the bus for an hour before being dropped off at school. I remember clearly that one day, I got home and my parents were not there. Instead of panicking, I jumped on my bicycle and pedaled to the end of the dirt road and on to the street to find my parents under the walnut trees on the side of the road. To this day, I cannot explain how I *knew* that my parents were collecting ripe walnuts off the ground; we would do this often and then sell them at the market. Reflecting back, maybe my *facultad*—that sixth sense—allowed me to think that they would be out there working. Once I arrived, I helped with the “harvest.”

Although I was an only child at the time, I was not alone because I grew up with older cousins. One of my cousins, Francisco (Panchito) Rivas, was like a brother to me and would ride the bus with me every day; we were in the same class, but our educational journeys would soon diverge. The bus driver, Margaret, would say we were too loud, so she would send him to the last row with the sixth graders, and I would stay in the front row. By third grade, I was selected to stay after school for the MESA/GATE program and my cousin was not. I had no idea about the meaning of the program, but a teacher offered to drive me home on her way home. By sixth grade, we were placed with different teachers, and by junior high school, I was part of the UC Davis Aggies academy and he was

not. Somehow, I was enrolled in the UC Davis Early Academic Outreach Program and would sit through college-going workshops—without really understanding what the advisors were talking about. Throughout this process, my parents reinforced the need to earn a college degree so that I could avoid the heat of the agricultural fields; they instilled in me the hope to believe that that another life was possible.

By eighth grade, my family moved, and despite being in advanced-level math (algebra), the counselor at the new school placed me one year behind, in prealgebra. Thankfully, by ninth grade, Rafael Rivera walked in to my English classroom to recruit students for admission to the UC Davis TRiO Educational Talent Search Program. I applied because I knew that I needed the support to prepare for college admission. Over four years, Rafael advised me as to what classes to take, took us on field trips to visit colleges, led college-going workshops, and supported me with both the college admission and financial aid processes.

Although I am a first-generation college student, I have thirty cousins on my mom's side, three of whom were college graduates (at that time). Rafael was instrumental in supporting my abilities to prepare for college admissions, but it was my three cousins who were key during my college choice and transition process. My cousin, Yesenia Rivas Bejarano, had helped me in elementary school when I could not grasp the concept of fractions; years later, it was she who called me unexpectedly the day before my Student Intent to Register form was due. After her trying to convince me for what felt like an hour, based on her (partially truthful) advice that I could attend UC Berkeley for one year and then transfer “anywhere else” if I did not like it, I agreed to enroll at UC Berkeley. As I was preparing to attend college, my cousin Mane (Jose M. Mandujano) taught me that the prestige of the school I attended did not matter; if I did not gain adequate job experience during college, I would not be hired anywhere once I graduated. Thus, once I got to college, I tried my best to find a job in education, to gain career skills. My first year in college, I realized that I was not the first person in our Rivas family to attend UC Berkeley; my oldest cousin, Jose G. Rivas, was an alum. A couple times per semester, he would treat me to dinner so that we could check in and I could explore foods that were all new to me at the time.

Academically, I struggled; despite being in Advanced Placement courses in high school, I could not write an essay, resulting in a few failed

courses. I had to enroll in a writing preparation course, and by luck, the printed course schedule said the course would be located in a certain classroom. But on the first day of class, I learned there was a change in the schedule and I was not enrolled in that specific section. Instead of having me figure out where the course was, the instructor allowed me to sign up for her section. It was in her course that I began to understand the basics of writing, like having to explain a quote with your own words, which to me, at the time, seemed rather pointless and repetitive because I assumed everyone would interpret quotes in the same way. By my fourth year, I was ready to graduate with a double major in social welfare and legal studies—that is, until I had courses with Dr. Blas Guerrero and Professor Josefina Castillo Baltodano. They reignited my aspirations and opened my eyes to the possibilities of pursuing a PhD as an avenue to improving the educational system for Chicana/o/x students. Seeing Josefina as a *profesora*, mother, and wife and seeing the pictures of Blas walking across the stage with his kids and earning his PhD, I envisioned the possibilities of pursuing such a pathway.

However, the key event that served as my *arrebato* (breakthrough) in my process toward *conocimiento* happened in the Chicanos and Education course, taught by Blas. I still remember clearly walking into the class. I had just come back tanned from a sunny trip to the snow and was wearing my baggy Oakland Athletics black jersey and hat that evening because I was supposed to rush to the game after class. As I stepped into the classroom in Dwinelle Hall, Blas stopped me and told me in what row to sit. This had never happened before—we were free to sit wherever we wanted—but I did not question him and just sat down. In the same manner, he chose the seat for every student in our class. He proceeded to walk us through a lesson plan, and throughout the class, he would talk to each student using different tones and would move one or two students into another row. He then asked us to look around and reflect on what was happening. Simply put, we were being “tracked.” The few white and Asian students were on one end of the room, by the window; their desks were spaced out nicely so that they would not be crowded, and he spoke to them with respect and validating words. Those of us who were dressed down and/or had darker skin color were placed at the other end of the room, next to the door; our desks were crowded next to one another and we were ignored. Blas then gave us permission to change seats, if we wished, and he transitioned into

discussing the readings on educational tracking. At that moment, all I could remember was my cousin Panchito and our diverging pathways. I realized that he was tracked out of the education system. There was nothing “special” about me; I was simply the quiet and shy girl who “could never” misbehave, as teachers would tell other students when I should have been disciplined for fighting. He actually learned to talk and read English well before I did, but instead of teachers recognizing his academic potential, they reprimanded him for talking. That *arrebato* motivated me to pursue a PhD with the intent to challenge the deficit and inequitable schooling experienced often by Latina/o/x students.

Although I had taken various education and Chicano studies courses during my four years at UC Berkeley, it was Blas’s teaching that allowed me to understand the “vast veil.”<sup>8</sup> I decided I would resist the educational inequities to the best of my abilities. At that time, it meant that, as a college advisor for a TRiO program, I would be strategic with how I advised, guided, and advocated for high school students as they prepared to enter higher education. Blas’s course set me on the path toward a PhD. Although I had walked the graduation stage in May, in the summer, I ran into a friend, Gustavo Buenrostro, on my way to a third-round interview for a full-time college advisor position. We had taken education courses together, one of them being a research course. I explained that I was on my way to an interview but what I really wanted to do was pursue a PhD, which would require a letter of recommendation from a tenured faculty member. His advice was “stay as long as you can”—and I canceled my interview on the spot. Days later, I met with Laura Jimenez-Olvera, who encouraged me to major in Chicano studies because I was so close to earning that degree; as a first-generation student, it never occurred to me that I should major in something that I *actually* enjoyed. By then, I was familiar with advocating for high school students during the application process, so it was easy for me to appeal my going over the maximum number of units allowed and explain that I would complete a third major in Chicano studies.

That following spring, I processed the notion of *nepantla* (an in-between space) that I read in Anzaldúa’s *Borderlands: La Frontera* book as I sat in Dr. Nelson Maldonado-Torres’s class. He drew a mirror on the chalkboard to explain Anzaldúa’s theories. As a college advisor, I found the Chicana feminist theories helpful when I realized that the Chicana/o/x “achievement gap” was not due simply due to lack of cultural capital. I

understood that students did not have access to college-going guidance and resources at their schools. I “uncovered the lie” by looking behind the mirror and knew that if I wanted to support their college aspirations, I had to network and access resources to support their transition to higher education.<sup>9</sup> As a *nepantlera*, I intended to create a bridge for students from under-resourced schools with college-going information.

I was also able to transpose these skills so that I could advocate for myself and seek out resources to help me along my pathway to the PhD and to the professoriate. My abilities to enact *la facultad* and serve as a *nepantlera* for students who aspired to be the first in their family to earn a college degree were strengthened once I read Anzaldúa’s work. I was able to see that students needed more than information; they needed structural shifts to navigate higher education pathways. Now, as faculty, I continue on my journey of *conocimiento* by resisting educational inequities through my research, teaching, and service so that I can contribute to building the bridges that future generations of Chicana/o/x students can use as pathways toward success in higher education.

### Overview of Book Chapters

The case studies in this volume provide a critical examination of the sources and types of inequity that continue to plague disenfranchised populations, as well as the value of the case study method for illuminating the same. In so doing, we go beyond presenting critical case studies of social inequality and education and (1) use Anzaldúan theories to take a look at the intersectional experiences of Chicana/o/x students at both two-year and four-year colleges, (2) connect the lingering history of coloniality with contemporary schooling experiences, (3) illuminate Chicana/o/x students developing pathways toward higher education for future generations, and (4) pave the way for educational leaders to acknowledge and foster assets such as *la facultad* and the abilities of students to develop community partnerships as a form of engagement. Thus, we engage asset-based and interdisciplinary perspectives to highlight the various strategies that Chicana/o/x students use to foster hope, resistance, and success in the education system. The book continues with seven chapters and a methodological appendix. The book is separated into three sections.

Section I, “Multiple Systems of Oppression along the Educational Borderlands,” is comprised of chapters 1 and 2. In chapter 1, we provide a brief overview of postsecondary outcomes of Chicana/o/x students, propose the framework of education borderlands, and establish the conceptual *Framework of Atravesada/o/xs Nepantleando (FAN)*. To do so, we explain that critical race theory in education serves as an epistemological foundation of the book, which allows us to envision and develop the context of education borderlands for Chicana/o/x students. The chapter uses coloniality, deservingness, and borderlands to contextualize and explain the dehumanizing and marginalizing education policies and practices that Chicana/o/x students have to navigate. We contend that these policies frame Chicana/o/x students as *atravesados*, transgressors who were not meant to belong in the US education system but who eventually enact *la facultad* to maintain hope, resist inequality, and reach success—we coin this process within FAN as the *Facultad de los Atravesada/o/xs*. Chapter 2 then explains the notion of *la facultad* to conceptualize and illustrate that first-generation Chicana/o/x students can understand the inequalities fostered by education borderlands.

The second section of the book, “The Chicana/o/x Dream in the Community College Borderlands,” comprises chapters 3 and 4. We use interviews and *testimonios* to transition to the second section of the book by establishing that within the education borderlands, Chicana/o/x students maintain hope, resort to resistance, and redefine success as they move from being *atravesadas* to *nepantleras* who navigate higher education. Chapter 3 focuses on the intersectionality of the prison industrial complex, the community college, and student-parenting. Chapter 4 shares the experiences of Chicana/o/x community college students who have a disability and who major in STEM fields. The chapters exemplify that students manage to maintain hope, despite being pushed away from education, and that they use their hope and pursue educational resources as a form of resistance with the intention to support their families and become an example for future generations. The section challenges the traditional understanding of the community college and reframes the sector as one that can help bridge the aspirations of Chicana/o/x students with academic success.

In the third section, “The Chicana/o/x Dream in the Four-Year University Borderlands”—chapters 5 and 6—we continue to be guided by intersectional identities of Chicana/o/x students in a four-year university.

Drawing on six *testimonios*, we show that the multiplicative forms of marginalization to which Chicana/o/x college students are subject inform their academic trajectory and empowerment. This section highlights that Chicana/o/x students also represent nepantleras in four-year universities as they navigate hostile education contexts and build bridges between higher education and their communities. Both chapters in this section highlight contemporary experiences of three Chicana and three Chicano students who identify as undocumented, in mixed-status immigration families, queer, and/or as having disabilities.

In the concluding chapter 7, we provide a broader discussion of what we believe the findings of our book suggest for preK–12 and higher education. In so doing, we contextualize our analysis and empirical results within the current higher education climate, given the developments by the Trump administration and the simultaneous rise in white supremacist hate groups and diversity initiatives in higher education. As such, we conclude by recommending specific practices, pedagogical approaches, and policies that address experiences relevant to the intersectional identities students embraced and discussed throughout the book.

As Gloria Anzaldúa (2002) echoes: “We are ready for change. Let us link hands and hearts together find a path through the dark woods step through the doorways between worlds leaving *huellas* (footprints) for others to follow . . . *si se puede* (yes we can).”<sup>10</sup> We hope this book contributes to the change needed to enact hope, resistance, and educational success for social justice—hence, *The Chicana/o/x Dream*.