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Introduction

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Introduction

Bernadette M. Calafell and Michelle A. Holling

The study of Latina/os' communicative expressions is a dynamic area that attracts scholars from diverse sub-field areas in Communication. For example, in the 1970s and early 1980s scholarly inquiry reflects two pathways: analyses of the rhetoric from leaders of the Chicano movement or social scientific examinations of Mexican American or Puerto Rican speech. The late 1980s reflect increased attention in the production of cross-cultural comparative studies and/or examinations of Latina/os' use of media technologies and/or portrayals in media. As reflected throughout the 1990s up to today, scholarship about Latina/os spans most areas of communication and continues to develop as evidenced at regional, national or international conferences and journal and book publications (refer to Appendix). Yet, the availability of scholarship, for instance about Latina/o representations, rhetoric or performances should not be taken as an overabundance of scholarly production nor as indicative of smooth pathways toward the production of research about Latina/os in the field of communication. As discussed by González (see chapter one in this book), "the project of bringing our voices to communication studies is at once precious and tenuous." Precious, due to knowledge generated about the process of communication amongst, by and about Latina/os and tenuous, due to social, political or economic factors that reveal themselves during the process of communication. Moreover, moving through the publication process presents additional challenges for scholars pursuing work about Latina/os (or, race more broadly), particularly those who utilize non-canonical theories and/or methods (Calafell and Moreman, 2009a).

One theory that attests to the importance of studying voices that are both "precious and tenuous" is that of vernacular discourse by Kent Ono and John Sloop (1995). Briefly, vernacular discourse takes as its starting point the examination of discourse by marginalized groups as a means to reveal community and/or identity formations. Vernacular discourse reflects two characteristics (i.e., cultural syncretism and pastiche) and acknowledges the role of power. Power operates within and makes communities possible through the forms or manifestations of vernacular discourse. Theorizing its properties also asks that critics account for the

cultural specificities and nuances shaping communities and their discourse(s).[1] Following Ono and Sloop's call to be attentive to everyday discourses and specific communities, this book, *Latina/o Discourse in Vernacular Spaces: Somos de Una Voz?,* does that by offering critical examinations of a myriad of forms reflecting Latin@ discourse.

Before continuing we note here our use of "Latina/o" which we use interchangeably with "Latin@" throughout this introduction.[2] The choice of which label to use and spelling (i.e., Latina/o, Latino/a, Latin/o, or Latin@) contextualizes and structures the nature and content of contributions to this project as well as the ways in which contributors, directly and indirectly, address the question *somos de una voz?* [are we of one voice?]. "Latin@s" names the subjects (and, objects) centralized in this volume that brings forth the weight of history, governmentality, and grassroots organizing that reflect acts of self- and group assertion, thereby producing ideological struggles over how Latin@s are understood socially. Tapping into the politics of labeling and self-naming is Wallerstein (2005). He deftly captures what is at stake in naming Latina/os: "Names define the boundaries of identity. Names define claimed historical legacies. . . . Names define what one is not. If one is a Latin@, one is not a Hispanic, or at least that is true for most people. *And names of course symbolize alliances*" (emphasis added, p. 36). In the case of this book, the boundary of identity conveyed by and through "Latin@" is gender inclusivity and equity. The "@" symbol expresses an intertwining of Latina and Latino subjects that contrasts with the often used "Latino/a" within which masculine privilege is embedded linguistically. As will become evident in subsequent chapters are the "historical legacies" implicated in individual case studies pursued by contributors. That is, Latin@ discourse directs attention to accounting for the discrete histories that inform and shape the experiences of Latin@ peoples. Finally, use of "Latin@" (or, "Latin/@") is a way to "symbolize alliances"—past, present and future ones—between and amongst U.S. Latin@s and Latin American Latina/os and their struggles, discursively or otherwise.

Contributors to *Latina/o Discourse* chose the label(s) most appropriate to the nature of their case study. A couple of contributors follow suit and use "Latin@" in their chapters (i.e., Córdova; Garza). Several other contributors rely upon "Latina/o" or "Latino/a" to signal a representational pan-ethnicity (Anguiano and Chávez; Avant-Mier; Calvente; González; Sowards and Pineda). These scholars in particular, but extending to all contributors, acknowledge the (real or assumed) commonalities and differences attached to the sign "Latina/o," take seriously the need for ongoing interrogation of the label to reveal its deployment in public discourse, recognize the political impulse behind the label's origin, and for some "Latina/o" signifies political alliance with Latin Americans. Last, several contributors invoke specific ethno-national identifiers such as "Mexican," "Puerto Rican," or "Bolivian" to call attention to national citizenship and/

or indigenous heritages (i.e., Enck-Wanzer; Garza; Scholz; Sowards and Pineda) or, creatively employ "Latin/o" as a means to situate Latin@ identities and/or performances in between the U.S. and Latin America (i.e., Westgate). In sum, as this book examines renderings of Latin@ *voices* the choice was the authors as to which form of the pan-ethnic label they preferred.[3]

Binding the contributors in this book, regardless of the specific label they use, is their tacit acceptance of the vernacular dimension in studying Latin@ communication. That is, "Latin@ vernacular discourse" refers to Latin@s' self-produced texts and performances that interact with and against prevailing discourses about and/or concerning Latin@s. As a result, fashioned are critical understandings of community formation and Latin@ identity along with exposing latent libratory and constraining dimensions inhering in Latin@ discourses.[4] In our pursuit to contribute to and reveal new pathways in the study of Latin@ communication, we draw upon the organizing principle of "voz" [voz] and its plural "voces" [voices]. It problematizes the bivalence prevailing in extant literature and discourses regarding Latin@s. In what follows we first briefly address the exploration of voice within communication scholarship followed by its manifestation in Latin@ communication scholarship and end with voz/voces as it/they shapes the contours of and contributors' chapters compiling this book.

The theme of voice has been explored and continues to be prominent within Communication Studies, particularly emanating from feminist, queer, and critical studies of race. A key example of the centrality of voice to communication studies was when Editor Leah Vande Berg (1997) published a special series focused on the theme in the *Western Journal of Communication* (see Bell, 1997; Clair, 1997; Dow, 1997; Nakagawa, 1997; Nakayama, 1997; Ono, 1997; Owen, 1997; Petronio, Flores, and Hecht, 1997; Schwartzman, 1997; Strine, 1997). As Vande Berg wrote at the time, the essays "grapple with the theoretical, personal, social and political issues related to the voices in which we write and the voices of those we study and about whom we write" (p. 87). Individually the essays both demonstrated and questioned the centrality of voice to sub-areas of the field, while collectively they demonstrated the power of voice and its attendant questions to span the depth and continuum of Communication Studies. Certainly, within qualitative research, particularly autoethnography, performative writing, and performance ethnography, the theme of voice figures prominently as scholars negotiate the personal in relation to the social, cultural, political, and economic spheres (Corey, 1998; Holman Jones, 2005; Pelias, 2005; Pollock, 1998b). Amongst these critical qualitative scholars "voice" is political with multi-layered ideological reverberations; it has the potential to enable change, gesture toward new possibilities, and reveal systems of power and oppression. For qualitative researchers concerns with voice are not only driven by subject or research

area, but also by methodological issues such as reflexivity. Not only must we be concerned with Others' voices, but also how we engage with them as co-participants or researchers dialogically (Conquergood, 1985). The responsibility of voice lies not only in the ability to shed light on a phenomenon or power relations, but also of the researcher to ethically illuminate her/his own positionality (or voice) and stake in the work. In a similar vein, Watts (2001) stresses the ethical dimension implicated in examinations of voice. He advocates that "'voice' is a particular kind of speech phenomenon that pronounces the ethical problems and obligations incumbent in community building. . . . 'Voice,' then, is the *sound* of specific experiential *encounters* in civic life" (p. 185, original emphasis).

As we move specifically into the study of Latin@ communication, scholars contribute to disciplinary understandings of voice by working at the intersections of rhetoric, performance studies, and Chicana/o-Latina/o Studies to apprehend the workings of Latin@ discourse. Within these works, "voice" is a trope that calls attention to marginalized speaking subjects who rely upon distinct cultural forms as a means of self-assertion to reject and/or challenge oppressive social and political conditions. Flores (1996), Delgado (1998a; 1998c) and Holling (2006b) each underscore the importance of turning to Chicana literature, Chicano rap and/or magazines, and Chicano academic listserves, respectively as sites within which specifically Chicana/o voices may be discerned. In so doing, those scholars shed light on the counter-hegemonic efforts engaged in by Chicana/os that contribute to extant work regarding feminism, ideology, resistance, and identity (self-) construction. Continuing with a focus on Chicana/o voices yet broadening the focus to account for Latina/o voices are Calafell (2004), Holling and Calafell (2007) and Moreman (2009a). Gleaned from them are scholarly and performative interventions that compel scholars to reconsider which voices we hear in historically racially divided regions, to see the power of performance to voice Other narratives, and to hear emergent hybrid identities, respectively. In sum, these works collectively demonstrate the tensions that manifest in Chican@ and Latin@ communities not only to voice perspectives, but also to be heard in a variety of ways, and in different positionalities.

Additional ways of engaging voice is on the level of the personal-performative. Work completed by multiple scholars suggest "voice" as embodied, anchored in particular experiences and reflections that tie the individual to social structures, narratives, and discourses. From this literature a few observations are in order. First is the invocation of Malintzin Tenepal, a Mexicana and Chicana cultural figure, to engage her voice in relation to the scholarly voice as a means to expose constraining cultural narratives and to reclaim agency (de la Garza, 2004; Calafell, 2005). The second observation is the highly performative and embodied nature of voice, particularly as Latin@ communities both stake claims for spaces to perform identities and create spaces for resistance (Calafell, 2008; More-

man, 2008, 2009b; Moreman and McIntosh, 2010). A final observation regards the expression of voice within social institutions, which Delgado (2009) and Rivera-Servera (2009) demonstrate. Each scholar implies that voice manifests as a verbalization, an expression of a set of experiences, or as aural sounds heard in academic settings or in the Smithsonian that belie the inflections of race, ethnicity, class, sexuality and gender positionalities. Combined, these studies situate the theme of voice or voicing as a way to locate the relevance of the personal in relationship to the social, political, cultural, and economic, thereby adding clarity to the everyday challenges of Latin@s performing within and against ideological barriers.

Lending one more layer of specificity to prior pursuits of "voice" are the voces captured in *Latina/o Discourse in Vernacular Spaces*. On the one hand, we mean "voces" in regard to contributing authors. They reflect scholars already recognized as working in the area of Latin@ communication and scholars emerging in this area of intellectual inquiry. Such a range of contributors and their placement in the field mirror to an extent the development of Latin@ communication studies. In the 1970s, Chicano communication as it was then recognized was a fledging area that contained a modicum of essays that slowly increased throughout the 1980s. Not until the 1990s and more so the 2000s did Chicano communication broaden to Latin@ communication (Holling, 2008) within which there has been an increase in scholarship and scholars who centrally locate themselves in Latin@ communication studies.

Our use of "voces" is also intended to reflect the voces captured in and placed under scrutiny by contributors. Public discourse often speaks in terms of "a Latino voice" that occludes the multivocality that in actuality informs Latin@s' voces. The essays composing the book problematize the assumed univocality and uniformity amongst Latin@s. By questioning and examining whether Latin@s and Latin@ communication is of una voz [one voice], this book reveals the complexity embedded in Latin@ voces. Conceptually speaking "voz/voces" contains possibilities for investigating whose voices are heard within public and localized communities, exploring the ways "Latin@ voces" are written within and against marginalized and dominant discourses, and advancing understandings of and struggles to come to, maintain or advance Latin@ voces, generally and vernacular voices, specifically. In short, voz/voces functions as an organizing term to explore the discursive construction of a Latin@ identity, the tensions inhering in localized and marginalized communities as well as a trope to expand the ways Latin@ communication may be thought of in regard to bodily or cultural performances that act as a voice for Latin@s, and the spaces in which Latin@s struggle for rights or representation.

Guiding the book's organization is a foreword by Kent A. Ono and John M. Sloop, and an introduction followed by three sections relevant to

the exploration of Latin@ vernacular discourse, nominally 1) Locating Foundations, 2) Acts of In/Exclusion, and 3) Trans/National Voces. Sections move from explicit theoretical forays into the meanings of and shifts needed to continue advancing Latin@ vernacular discourse to critical examinations of Latin@ vernaculars that reveal internal democratizing struggles, discursive constructions of mediated images and voices, and implicit questions about the place of trans/national voices within Latin@ voces. Composing each section are original essays that were selected on the basis of innovativeness and originality of topics and issues structuring Latin@ discourse, theoretical sophistication and methodological soundness, and contributions made to creating spaces for continued advancement of Latin@ vernacular discourse. That many of the chapters operate from a critical cultural tradition broadly, and rhetorical or performances studies specifically, aligns with recent observations that these areas compose the bulk of scholarship constituting Latin@ communication to date (Holling, 2008). Furthermore scholars in performance have similarly theorized and argued for the study of vernacular expressions of historically marginalized groups (Conquergood, 2002), and have started to articulate the importance of connecting the study of vernacular discourses both in rhetoric and performance studies (Calafell, 2010).

The first of three sections composing the book we entitle "Locating Foundations." This section implicitly questions where and/or when Latin@ scholarship begins—is it in the fields, literally and figuratively, is it at the point of disciplinary recognition vis-à-vis the establishment of a caucus or through publication, or is the beginning tied to cultural narratives and the development of theory that constitutes Latin@ vernaculars? Combined the chapters craft an understanding of distinct (yet, related) influences in the pursuit of Latin@ vernaculars that highlight the confluence of culture, theory and disciplinarity. Ordering chapters in the way we do moves readers from a distinct historical vantage point that begins within the discipline moving outward. Specifically each chapter delineates a unique launching point from which authors situate Latin@ voices in the discipline of communication (González), theorize the development and contours of Latin@ vernaculars (Holling and Calafell), and centralize Mexica myth to shed light on contemporary renderings of voice (Garza).

González in "Listening to Our Voices" offers a narrative of disciplinary origins followed by a reflection on vernacular practices of Latin@s in Ohio, thereby connecting and making even more significant these foundations. His chapter points to the singularity of voice; that is, it is fleeting and temporal coming together in recognition of and response to disciplinary imperfections needing to be rectified so as to account for racial-ethnic voices occluded in research, communities and political decisions. Yet, he reminds readers "to always remember the voices that are not a part of and did not contribute to that 'single voice.'" Our own essay, "Tracing the Emergence of Latin@ Vernaculars," follows González's be-

cause while his essay lays the historical foundation for the development of Latin@ Communication Studies in the field, our essay begins theorizing the properties of Latin@ vernacular discourses; properties which will be echoed in subsequent chapters. We take up Ono and Sloop's (1995) call for critics to attend to the vernacular discourses of various communities by advancing a guiding framework for understanding Latin@ vernacular discourse [LVD]. Identified are three characteristics shaping LVD—identity tensions, processes of decolonization and dilemmas surrounding the critic/al role—that offer important considerations when examining and advancing instances of Latin@ vernaculars. Where we outline how to proceed in the study of Latin@ vernaculars as a means to comprehend voz/voces, Garza's contribution "The Rhetorical Legacy of *Coyolxauhqui*" renders insights about who and what needs to be reconsidered in relation to advancing LVD implicitly, and Latin@ voces [voices] explicitly. She offers a critical reading of a distinctly gendered and individual voz in the Mexica legend of *Coyolxauhqui* that continues to reverberate in contemporary discourses. In so doing Garza reveals the collective dimension implicated in voz made visible in three forms of vocality (i.e., univocality, multivocality and hypervocality). Her chapter emphasizes "the power of individual and collective voice" given her excavation of a cultural narrative that is rife with vocality layerings and followed by differing (perhaps even competing) re-collections of *Coyolxauhqui*'s voz. Together the three essays offer disciplinary, historical and theoretical foundations for the study of Latin@ voces that demonstrate the multivocality of Latin@ identities.

Having established (and, potentially challenged) disciplinary foundations in the first section of the book, we follow with "Acts of In/Exclusion." Section II is meant to capture both historical and contemporary inclusions and exclusions, discursively and performatively, of Latina/os from realms of society. Recent legislation in the state of Arizona (i.e., SB 1070 and HB 2281) reflects very contemporary acts of (neo-colonial) exclusion that exists in relation to prior acts of exclusion, which contributors in the second section pursue. Contributors direct the mainstay of their attention to acts of inclusion carried out by Latin@s, while also referencing the acts of exclusion on the basis of social visibility and citizenship (cultural or legal) that provoke response from Latina/os. Organized temporally, the four chapters offer rich studies in historical social movement artifacts to contemporary mediated texts through deft analyses of vernacular voices in multiple sites such as social protest (Enck-Wanzer), a website (Anguiano and Chávez), song (Córdova), and television programming (Sowards and Pineda). Revealed are inventive acts of inclusion in spite of the challenges to advance counter-hegemonic voces.

Enck-Wanzer in "Gender Politics" examines issues of gender and sexuality present in the embodied, verbal and visual discourses produced by the Young Lords of New York during the 1970s. Yielded is an under-

standing of the Young Lords' anti-essentialist stance that emerged through the female members' voces and an advancement of "a Third World (proto-feminist) *demand*" rooted in intersectionality. Furthermore, Enck-Wanzer's examination of the Lords' vernacular discourse demonstrates the possibilities for democratic citizenship as well as extends theoretical understandings of *différance* and vernacular rhetorics. Continuing to address the themes of citizenship and transformational politics, Anguiano and Chávez in "DREAMers' Discourse" centralize a Latin@ voz yet to be heard within scholarship pertaining to Latina/os within Communication Studies generally, and Latin@ vernacular discourse specifically, that of Latin@ undocumented immigrant youth. Their voces are heard in the "DREAM Act portal" website that enables Latin@ undocumented immigrant youth to confront hegemonic notions of citizenship while also articulating their support for the DREAM Act, a federal legislation caught in congressional stalemate. Anguiano and Chávez reveal the "normalizing strategies" invoked by the youth to articulate their place of belonging and citizenship in the United States. Continuing an exploration of citizenship, as it interacts on symbolic and cultural levels, Córdova's chapter "*Nuestro Himno* as Heterotopic Mimicry" addresses the controversy surrounding the song "*Nuestro Himno*," a Latin@ rendition of the National Anthem. His analysis reveals the complex effort to craft a Latin@ voice that expressed solidarity with while also responding to dominant concerns of Latin@ immigrants' belonging within the nation-state. Ultimately, however, Córdova addresses where "*Nuestro Himno*" falls short of transforming hegemonic ideas about immigration and by implication Latin@ identities. Further addressing the challenges of attempting to shift hegemonic ideologies, particularly as they converge around issues of representations is Sowards and Pineda in "Latinidad in *Ugly Betty*." They examine the complications of (self) representation through a case study of *Ugly Betty*, a U.S. television show based on a hugely popular Latina American *telenovela*. Tracing the proliferation of the television show, Sowards and Pineda lay bare the efforts to offer "authentic" representations that rely upon latinidad, subsequently producing a "paradox of representation." From the paradox stem implications for how Latin@ identities are understood relationally and socially, both of which are complicated by the mediation on specific social issues that maintain hegemonic idea(l)s. Taken together these chapters challenge facile or static notions of Latin@ citizenship through provocative case studies that demonstrate the diversity of Latin@ communities and discursive practices.

Finally, the chapters composing section III, "Trans/National Voces," call attention to the politics of voice and Otherness, modes of recuperating voz, agency, and practices of resistance. These themes operate from diverse understandings of "trans/national" that indicate a condition governed and transformed by globalism and/or as an action compelling scholarly attention to move beyond or perhaps outside of the confines of

the nation so as to hear the voces navigating between, across and within (trans)national politics and constraints. Our arrangement of chapters juxtapose two chapters that each regard Latin/@s and music, thus instigating potential conversation about the interplay of gender, national positionings and ethnic identifications in an industry that circumscribes categories. Recognizing the performative dimension inherent in music, we follow with a third essay that narrates a performance of alliance while literally crossing national borders. These three chapters capture the movement of voces navigating trans/national borders whereas the concluding chapter forefronts a transnational voice that originates outside of U.S. borders. More specifically the chapters problematize the role of nationalism in Latin(o) rock (Avant-Mier), advance "the body of voice" to unseat prevailing notions about Latina musical artists subsequently resisting singular national positionings (Westgate), posit the possibilities of solidarity through the notion of blackness (Calvente), and reclaim "speaking for" as productive and necessary to Latin@ voicings (Scholz).

Beginning this section, Avant-Mier's "Of Rocks and Nations" teases out the conditions (e.g., politics of cataloguing music genres or industry award ceremonies) and complexities within which "Latin(o)" musical artists operate that are often otherwise ignored within popular understandings of music. In so doing he illuminates the intersection of nationalisms (U.S. and Mexican) evident in the case study of a comparable Chicano and Latin(o) rock group that create a context for "Latina/os to become 'una voz' (one voice)" that may facilitate a unified identity between U.S. Latin@s and Latin Americans. Complementing Avant-Mier's work, Westgate's chapter "When Sexual Becomes Spiritual" blurs the line in discerning a trans- or national voz in the work of singer-songwriter Lila Downs. Through his concept of "body of voice," the substantive sounds of spirit and soul in mediated performance, revealed are the various mediations on the sexual emphasis confronting Latina artists simultaneously how Downs transforms it. Together Avant-Mier and Westgate call our attention to Latin/@ artists' voces existing within but also seeking to challenge the confines of ideological and trans/national borders. Outlining a possibility is Calvente in her essay "This is One Line.'" She seeks to transgress the constraints of national and racialized identities by advocating blackness as a political strategy toward socio-political justice for and amongst marginalized people. Her experience as a Puerto Rican crossing the geopolitical border separating the U.S. and Mexico brings to the fore the possibilities of becoming and practicing blackness as a political strategy. In so doing her voz is grounded in a national space but also one altered by a transnational experience that calls forth additional ways of repudiating racism within and across Latin@ and Other communities. Contrasting with Calvente's personal voz is Scholz's "Hablando Por (Nos)Otros." Like Calvente, Scholz examines the relationships between individuals, voice, and community. Both she and Calvente wrestle with

issues of Latin@ heterogeneity and perceived homogeneity. Calvente is lumped in with a Mexican subjectivity, while Scholz examines how testimonio gives voice to not only an individual, but also a community experience. She accounts for a neglected voz that is the voz and voces of the subaltern, particularly that of "Latin American women" residing outside of U.S. boundaries. Her chapter brings to the final section an engagement with a non-Western/U.S. voz, sparsely accounted for within (Latin@) communication studies, that underscores the import of trans/national voces. Scholz illuminates the rhetorical process of how voz and "speaking for others" characterize non-Western rhetorics; in addition they are rhetorical constructions made manifest in testimonios in order to challenge the oppressiveness of imperialist-capitalistic systems. Combined, the final four essays traverse borders most closely defining trans/national interactions to those with which we may perceive to have the least identification with yet, indicating a likely identification.

In sum, the chapters in *Latina/o Discourse in Vernacular Spaces: Somos de Una Voz*? describe, offer, advance, and interrogate Latin@ voces in their multiplicity of forms. Purposefully, we have postponed answering the question "*Somos de Una Voz*?" that forms the second half of the book's title. In our own reflections and conversations we remain acutely attentive to the fact that being de una voz [of one voice] offers transformative prospects in various realms and structures in which we reside intellectually, politically, economically, socially and academically. Simultaneously we remain cautiously suspicious of discourses and/or performances that would situate themselves as advancing a voz on behalf of Latin@s in light of the diverse communities comprising such an identity. Therefore, in revisiting the book's title, we consider the following questions (and ask the reader to do so as well). For example, how might an answer to "somos de una voz?" delimit possibilities for expressions of identity or politics? What would be the political, ideological, and cultural ramifications of answering this question? What are the benefits of leaving the question unanswered? Finally, in what ways do the essays collected for this book leave readers with answers to the question of the singularity of voice? Our hope is that *Latina/o Discourse in Vernacular Spaces* not only demonstrates by example how to proceed in the study of Latin@ communication and communities, provides a resource from which to understand Latin@ identities and experiences, but also suggest the potential efficacy of being of una voz versus the possibilities of hetereogeneity.

NOTES

1. What we offer in-text is a brief explanation of "vernacular discourse" (Ono and Sloop, 1995). We further elaborate on the theory of vernacular discourse in chapter two as do some of the contributors in subsequent chapters.

2. We prefer to use "Latin@s" throughout this introduction and book title. However, with regard to the book title, we opted for "Latina/o" in order to facilitate database searches amongst potential readers.

3. Elsewhere multiple scholars, along with some contributors, explain the origins of and politics embedded within and communicated by ethnic labels such as Hispanics, Latina/os, Puerto Ricans, or Chicana/os. We encourage readers to consult the Appendix for sources.

4. Explicating "Latin@ vernacular discourse" is our concern in chapter two.