

Chapter Two: The Chicano side

2.1 The Chicano Movement

The Chicano Movement, which greatly influences how we understand Chicanos today, has its roots in events following World War II. As was mentioned briefly in Chapter One, World War II brought about dramatic change for Chicanos. In an effort to gain acceptance by the mainstream, thousands of Chicanos enlisted in military service during the war. They came out as one of the “most highly decorated groups”¹⁰³ and the size and existence of the Chicano middle class rose out of anonymity. The military gave Chicanos a myriad of options, including job opportunities and the chance to work with a diverse group. However, the most important opportunity that Chicanos had was that which the G.I. Bill offered. On June 22, 1944, President Roosevelt signed “one of the most powerful legislative forces for social change in American history which paid for the education of 7.8 million soldiers reentering civilian life, many of them Chicano veterans.”¹⁰⁴ During this time, many Chicanos also chose to move to urban areas where job opportunities were greater. By 1960, “about two thirds of the [Chicano] population was urban”¹⁰⁵ and was highly concentrated in the Southwest. Impressive social and economic gains were made by Chicanos as demonstrated by higher high school graduation rates and the entrance of Chicanas into the workforce. It seemed that everything was going well for Chicanos, but the numbers reflected another reality.

While great strides were made during this era, the effects would not last through the 1960s. The best indicators of socioeconomic status are education, occupation, and

¹⁰³Manuel G. Gonzales, *Mexicanos: A History of Mexicans in the United States* (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1999), 162.

¹⁰⁴ Gonzales, 164.

¹⁰⁵ Meier, Matt S. and Feliciano Ribera. *Mexican Americans- American Mexicans: From Conquistadors to Chicanos*, new and rev. ed. (New York: Hill and Wang, 1993), 185.

income” but Chicanos “ranked close to the bottom in all three categories.”¹⁰⁶ These deficiencies were explained by various reasons: “recent immigration, lack of job skills, a scarcity of capital, and language problems.”¹⁰⁷ By the 1960s, the situation was not improving for Chicanos and they felt something had to be done.

A few years earlier in 1955, the Black civil rights movement began through the efforts of Rosa Parks who initiated a bus boycott in Alabama as part of a strategy to end the discrimination Blacks encountered. Following the lead of the Black, or African American, community, for their stance against discrimination, Chicanos began their own movement. “Seminal initiating forces were the Farm Workers Union, the Alianza, the Crusade for Justice, student organization, and eventually, La Raza Unida.”¹⁰⁸ The Movement was not only created through the efforts of many organizations, but also had a dispersed ideology. The categories encompassed those who “sought to work within the system, those who called for a major restructuring of the system, and the moderate and radical wings of the movement.”¹⁰⁹ The radical side of the Chicano Movement can also explain why nowadays, some are cautious to use the term to self identity, especially when speaking to those who lived through this politically charged era. In regards to the radical side of the Chicano Movement, one such example is the August Twenty- Ninth Movement, founded in 1974 and named after the August 29, 1970 Chicano Moratorium against the Vietnam War, in Los Angeles. The August Twenty- Ninth Movement was born from the Labor Committee of the La Raza Unida in Los Angeles, and was known by many to be far more to the left than other La Raza Unida Party chapters.

¹⁰⁶ Gonzales, 194.

¹⁰⁷ Juan Gomez- Quiñones, *Chicano Politics: Reality and Promise 1940-1990* (Albuquerque, New Mexico: University of New Mexico Press, 1990), 37.

¹⁰⁸ Gomez- Quiñones, 103.

¹⁰⁹ Meier and Ribera, 219.

For this organization, the question as to whom can be considered Chicano “would not arise” and they note “one of the particularities of Chicanos is that they inhabit a border region which shares considerably with Mexico by way of history and culture”¹¹⁰ The August Twenty- Ninth Movement was characterized by a shallow view of Mexican culture, a narrow focus on oppression, and an acknowledgement that being *Chicano* is not the same as being *Mexicano*. While some argued that “Chicanos were struggling to isolate or separate themselves from the United States, and that Chicanos desired the fragmentation of American society as suggested by the rejection of many Chicanos of coercive cultural assimilation,”¹¹¹ many others, such as Ortiz and Zimmerman comment that it is “far from the case.”¹¹² While radicalism did pervade the era, it must first be acknowledged that “Chicanos were engaged in a variety of struggles; however, the activism is aimed at structures of oppression that serve to obstruct integration on the basis of equality characterized by authentic cultural pluralism.”¹¹³ Thus, while some Chicano activists sided with the radical aspects of the Movement, not everyone did so, nor maintained that radicalism alive.

The Chicano Movement became a medium through which Chicanos let the United States, and even Mexico, know that they stood as their own minority group within the U.S. The emergence of “Chicanos as a ‘minority’ and indeed the adoption of the term Chicano was very much of the 1960s.”¹¹⁴ The Movement was an attempt at the mobilization of Chicanos to fight for better social, political and economic status which in

¹¹⁰ August Twenty- Ninth Movement, *Fan the Flames: A Revolutionary Position on the Chicano National Question* (n.p., 1975), 17.

¹¹¹ Ortiz and Timmerman, 87.

¹¹² Ortiz and Timmerman, 87.

¹¹³ Ortiz and Timmerman, 87.

¹¹⁴ George Yúdice, Jean Franco, and Juan Flores, eds., *On Edge: The Crisis of Contemporary Latin American Culture* (Minneapolis, Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1992), 207.

itself also helped to gain a sense of ethnic pride. Activists of the Chicano Movement attempted to change the way they were labeled, and in doing so, they would establish a new way to understand their reality and experience in the United States. While the Chicano Movement lacked some coherence in terms of ideology, overall, it would be said that the Chicano Movement tried to remedy five forms of oppression: “cultural imperialism, exploitation, marginalization, powerlessness, and violence.”¹¹⁵ The record of success in these areas is “mixed because of class, ideological, geographical, rural-urban, and age differences among Chicanos.”¹¹⁶ Because of the rhetoric surrounding the Movement, many came to connect the term “Chicano” with a political alignment and in turn regard the “Mexican American” as a person who did not form a part of the Movement, a sell-out.

In the meantime, the Chicano and Mexican migrant population kept growing. According to the U.S. Census, the population labeled as Hispanic saw one of its greatest expansions in this decade. In 1960, the census reported slightly more than “3 million Hispanics living in the United States but by 1970, that number had grown to 9 million and by 1990 to 20 million” with Hispanics “constituting more than a third of all legal immigrants to the United States after 1960.”¹¹⁷ While other groups, such as the Puerto Ricans and Cubans also expanded, without a doubt, the most numerous were those of Mexican heritage.

¹¹⁵ Isidro Ortiz and Paula Timmerman, “Contemporary Chicano Struggles,” in *Multiculturalism from the Margins: Non-Dominant Voices on Difference and Diversity*, ed. Dean A. Harris, (Westport, Connecticut: Bergin & Garvey, 1995), 88.

¹¹⁶ Lopez, 85.

¹¹⁷ Alan Brinkley, *The Unfinished Nation: A Concise History of the American People* (New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc, 1993), 845.

Not only were Chicanos part of one of the fastest growing groups, but they also found themselves have a lower level of education than either White or blacks and hence, less well prepared for high paying jobs. Although first generation Chicanos had the U.S. citizenship, their poor English further limited their employment prospects and as a result, many Chicanos composed the majority of the workers in the poorly paid service sector jobs. Chicanos responded to the highly charged climate of the 1960s “by strengthening their ethnic identification and by organizing for political an economic power. In the Southwest, they elected Mexican Americans to seats in Congress and to governorships.”¹¹⁸

The Chicano Movement came about at a troublesome time, especially considering it accompanied the Vietnam War, urban riots, the antiwar movement, and Watergate. The era, accompanied by conflicts between Chicanos and police, led to violence. "Between January 1, 1965, and March 31, 1969, the United States Justice Department received 256 complaints of police abuse against Chicanos in the Southwest."¹¹⁹ Over a two-year span, the American Civil Liberties Union of Southern California filed 174 complaints of serious police brutality against Chicanos."¹²⁰

The movement had several major components:

Cesar Chavez and the United Farm Workers (UFW) in California, Reies-Lopez Tijerina's Alianza de Pueblos Libres (Alliance of Free Peoples) and the land-grants struggle in New Mexico, Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales and the Cruzada (Crusade for Justice) in Colorado, and the electoral movement of Jose Angel Gutierrez in South Texas.¹²¹

¹¹⁸ Brinkley, 847.

¹¹⁹ Mary Romero, “State Violence, and the Social and Legal Construction of Latino Criminality: From El Bandido to Gang Member,” 78 *Denver University Law Review* (2001): 1094.

¹²⁰ Lopez, 80.

¹²¹ Fred A. Lopez III, “Reflections on the Chicano Movement,” 19 *Latin American Perspectives* (Fall 1992): 79.

One of the most recognized elements of the time is César Chávez and the United Farm Workers. As an Arizona-born Mexican American farm worker, he became the leader of one of the most visible efforts to organize Mexicans in California via an effective union of farm workers. The United Farm Workers launched a long-drawn-out strike in 1965 against growers to meet their demands which prioritized the recognition of the union and asked for increased wages and benefits. When employers refused to collaborate, Chavez asked for the cooperation of college students, churches, and civil rights groups while also organizing nationwide boycott, first of table grapes and then of lettuce. In 1970, he won a substantial victory when the growers of half of California's table grapes signed contracts with his union.

Another component of this politically charged time was La Raza Unida Party. The party was born in the 1970s and had some influence in southern California and the Southwest in the 1970s. Many Chicanos joined the new La Raza Unida Party which tried to achieve representation of all people by a local government that served the "needs of individual communities as well as an end to poverty and injustice."¹²² One of La Raza Unida's major successes occurred in Crystal City, Texas, a town heavily populated with Chicanos and Mexican migrants. During the 1960s the La Raza Unida Party became a leading political force in the area, and by 1970 Chicanos had won control of the school board and city council. Its short-lived success included the hiring of more Chicano teachers, teacher aides, and administrators, the starting of bilingual programs, and the addition of Chicano history to the public school curriculum. Although its life was shortened by a weak leadership and scarce resources, Raza Unida Party raised an

¹²² Gloria Sandrino-Glasser, "Los Confundidos: De-Conflating Latinos/as' Race and Ethnicity," 19 *Chicano Latino Law Review* (Spring 1998): 80-81

awareness of politics and prompted Chicanos to participate in politics. Their vision died out by the 1980s, when Chicanos identified “no longer with the La Raza Unida Party but rather with the State Democratic party.”¹²³ Similar political parties have tried to surge within American politics without much luck.

Not only was the Chicano Movement aimed at dispelling oppression, in each of its five major forms, but it also aimed to change how Chicanos were labeled by White America. The decade of the 1960s “witnessed the rise of social and political movements that triggered an intense search for new racial and ethnic identities on the part of people of color”¹²⁴ in the United States. Prior to that time, the “identity labels of ‘Negroes,’ ‘Spanish Americans,’ ‘Orientals,’ and ‘Indians’ had generally been imposed by those in control of society’s institutions.”¹²⁵ Movement activists considered the hyphenated “Spanish-American” and “Mexican-American” labels “manifestations of the ideological hegemony of the state, which promoted assimilation into the mainstream of white society.”¹²⁶ These movements contributed to the rejection of those labels. The Chicano Movement was able to change the way those of Mexican heritage were seen just by changing the label that was used to describe them.

Changing the labels with which they were described changed more than ethnic rhetoric. The Chicano Movement not only sought to fight for rights for Chicanos, but it also challenged the idea of the United States as melting pot. This movement, according to Haney Lopez, challenged the “‘common sense’ idea that Mexicans were a ‘white,’ rather

¹²³ Sandrino Glasser, 81.

¹²⁴ Martha E. Gimenez, Fred A. López III, Carlos Muñoz, Jr, “The Politics of Ethnic Construction: Hispanic, Chicano, Latino...” 19 *Latin American Perspectives* (Autumn 1992): 3.

¹²⁵ Martha E. Gimenez et al., 3.

¹²⁶ Martha E. Gimenez et al., 3.

than ‘brown,’ race within this country's racial hierarchy.”¹²⁷ During this era, African Americans, Indians, and Latinos all challenged the assimilationist idea and advocated instead a culturally pluralist society, in which “racial and ethnic groups would preserve not only a sense of their own heritage (which older, more assimilationist ethnic groups did as well) but also their own social and cultural norms.”¹²⁸

While the Chicano Movement aimed to overcome racial oppression, education about their indigenous roots was also promoted. On March 31, 1969 the Crusade for Justice, a Chicano civil rights organization, organized the Chicano Youth Liberation Conference held in Denver, Colorado, where Alberto Baltazar Urista “recited the ‘Epic Poem of Aztlán’ and introduced the seminal outline of the Mexican American’s indigenous foundations.”¹²⁹ The conference was organized to discuss how racism impacted the Chicano experience in the United States. The empowerment that many had gained through the movement was evident in the organizing of such events.

However, while the Chicano Movement had some important successes, it also had some large problems. Some of the biggest criticisms of the Chicano Movement were the lack of leadership, lack of consistent ideology, conflicting goals, lack of effective organization, and scarcity of resources. Furthermore, the Movement rejected those who were not part of it by classifying them as sellouts. Another failing included the tendency to define Chicano identity in terms of “nineteenth-century ideas that tied race to ancestry, culture, and group destiny, as well as to patriarchal gender roles.”¹³⁰ Chicano militants

¹²⁷ Ian F. Haney Lopez, *Racism on Trial: The Chicano Fight for Justice* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2003), 23.

¹²⁸ Brinkley, 845.

¹²⁹ Martha Menchaca, *Recovering History, Constructing Race*, (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2001), 19.

¹³⁰ Ian Haney Lopez, “White Latinos,” 6 *Harvard Latino Law Review* (Spring 2003), 4.

tended to believe that race was “fixed by blood, and in turn that race, that is, nature, determined aspects of culture, group history, and gender relations.”¹³¹ With its adoption of a non-white identity, the Chicano Movement worked against some of the more harmful aspects of Mexican American racial politics. The movement saw the community as united by oppression and so rejected the notion that citizenship formed a pertinent divide. The rejection of citizenship as a dividing line continues, as evidenced by the advocacy that many Chicanos lead to curtail hostility towards migrants.

Some also attribute the acceptance of cultural pluralism to the successes of the Chicano Movement. Recognition of the special character of particular groups was cemented in federal law through a wide range of affirmative action programs, which were extended not only to blacks, but Latinos, and others as well. As a result of the Black and Chicano Movements of the 1960s and 1970s, ethnic studies programs proliferated in schools and universities with the University of California at Santa Barbara being the first to establish a Chicano Studies department. The acceptance of cultural pluralism eventually led to the acceptance of multiculturalism of the 1980s and 1990s “which challenged the ‘Eurocentric’ basis of American education and culture and demanded that non-European civilization be accorded equal attention.”¹³²

As has been mentioned, the Chicano Movement forced the U.S. government to recognize the group as a minority, and it appears that Chicanos became an official minority upon the assignment of Hector García to the U.S. Civil Rights Commission. HEW examiners began to accumulate evidence of discrimination against Mexican Americans only after Hector Garcia, in his new role as a member of the U.S. Civil Rights

¹³¹ Lopez, 4.

¹³² Brinkley, 846.

Commission, “rebuked OCR for failing to answer Mexican Americans' complaints.”¹³³ In 1967, HEW began publishing data on black, white, and other ethnic groups. The last category included “any racial or national origin group for which separate schools have in the past been maintained or which are recognized as significant 'minority groups' in the community.” Other examples HEW gave included: “Indian American, Oriental, Eskimo, Mexican American, Puerto Rican, Latin, Cuban, etc.”¹³⁴ Later, HEW published separate statistics on “Spanish Surnamed Americans” and issued a series of Mexican-American Studies. Yet, despite the emergence around the same time of a new militant attitude, this shift from “official ‘other white’ status to ‘other minority’ confused some Mexican Americans of both the younger and the older generations.”¹³⁵

The Chicano Movement was based on the collaboration of many organizations, and one of the surviving organizations is the Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán. A brief introduction is presented because the majority of the participants that were a part of the study to be discussed further ahead are members of the group or have other close connections to it. The founders of the student group credit the Chicano Movement as the catalyst for its creation and for fostering “cultural and historical pride in our people.”¹³⁶ The creation of the organization leads back to March of 1969 in Denver, Colorado where the Crusade for Justice organized the National Chicano Youth Conference that drafted the basic premises for the Chicana/Chicano Movement in El Plan de Aztlán. This plan created the guidelines for one of the strongest student organization in the country to date. Briefly, the Plan declares:

¹³³ Wilson, 177.

¹³⁴ Wilson, 177.

¹³⁵ Wilson, 177.

¹³⁶ “The Philosophy of Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán.”

1) We are Chicanas and Chicanos of Aztlán reclaiming the land of our birth (Chicana/Chicano Nation); 2) Aztlán belongs to indigenous people, who are sovereign and not subject to a foreign culture; 3) We are a union of free pueblos forming a bronze (Chicana/Chicano) Nation; 4) Chicano nationalism, as the key to mobilization and organization, is the common denominator to bring consensus to the Chicana/Chicano Movement; 5) Cultural values strengthen our identity as La Familia de La Raza; and 6) EPA, as a basic plan of Chicana/Chicano liberation, sought the formation of an independent national political party that would represent the sentiments of the Chicana/Chicano community.¹³⁷

While MEChA remains one of the few student organizations that survived, it also had its problems. As with the majority of college student organizations, the enthusiasm that inspired the organization initially could not be sustained after the original leaders left college. The remaining leadership was also greatly divided by which issues should take precedence and under what ideology. Chicanas also abandoned the group because they “found MEChA reluctant to deal with feminist issues.”¹³⁸ Although many leaders of the Chicano Movement had hoped that student involvement would be one essential part of keeping the movement alive, the student organization was fraught with the same problems the movement founders faced.

Overall, it took the Chicano Movement of the 1960s and 1970s to finally to force yet another examination of American society and the inclusion of Chicanos as part of its diversity. Haney Lopez argues that the Chicano Movement "remade Mexican racial identity but did so while accepting and in turn proclaiming that race determined individual identity, gender relations, and group destiny."¹³⁹ It is without a doubt that the memory of the Chicano Movement lingers in the minds of young Chicanos as well as historians who are now focused on revisionist approaches of the time period. Chicano

¹³⁷ “The Philosophy of Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán.”

¹³⁸ Manuel G. Gonzales, *Mexicanos: A History of Mexicans in the United States* (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1999), 211.

¹³⁹ Haney Lopez, 11.

history thus explains the importance of ethnic identity and the struggle of the group to find a niche within the United States. While Mexican's main criticism of Chicanos is their lack of identity, Chicano history demonstrates that finding a place even in their home country was difficult, making the attempt to find a place within Mexican society nearly impossible.

2.2 The Chicano Side

While Chicanos primarily form a segment of U.S. society, as a people who identify with the border, it is undeniable that they may sometimes also want to keep in touch with their Mexican roots. The discussion of the Chicano Movement evinced that ties to Mexico and references to its history and tradition often evoked a deep sense of nationalism in the previous generation of Chicano activists. Given much of the recent scapegoating of Mexican immigrants and Mexico as a “poor, undemocratic, and corrupt country, it is important to assess the cultural ties and views that students hold towards their ancestral homeland.”¹⁴⁰ A literature review of the relationship between Chicanos and Mexicans, at least from the U.S. side, revealed a paucity of material. This can be explained by the taking of center stage by Mexican migration, which leaves the relationship between Chicanos and Mexicans who have not migrated and/or of the middle class aside.

In regards to Chicano ties to Mexico, should any exist, the literature reveals that they are mostly cultural. The reading of any Chicano history book will reveal the nostalgia that characterized those who identified with the nationalistic elements of the

¹⁴⁰ Maria Eva Valle, “MEChA and the Transformation of Chicano Student Activism: Generational Change, Conflict, and Continuity.” Ph.D. diss, University of California, San Diego, 1996.

Chicano Movement. Furthermore, it is also clear that should Chicanos hold onto their Mexican roots, several icons, such as the Virgen de Guadalupe and Mexican food, are included. Chicano literature also reveals nostalgic sentiments through the inclusion of Spanish phrases. Famous Chicana writers, such as Sandra Cisneros and Gloria Anzaldua, write about their experiences as women who form part of a minority in the United States, and they do so effectively by including Spanish phrases to remember the years of childhood when what one spoke was limited to Spanish. Cultural connections aside, there is little common ground that Chicanos and Mexicans share. In the United States, the major issue which has joined Mexicans and Chicanos is the issue of Mexican migration, where Chicanos and Mexicans are interested in protecting immigrant rights, albeit with varying degrees of solutions and measures they are willing to take.

However, although Chicanos and Mexicans have little in common, the Mexican government has made some effort to reach out to Chicanos. Concerted efforts were made in the 1970s during the presidencies of Luis Echeverria Alvarez, and Miguel de la Madrid (1982-1988). However, it was clear that the Mexican interest in Chicanos was not selfless. In fact, many believed that Mexico hoped to utilize the increasing empowerment of the Mexican-American community economically and politically. Efforts to reconnect with the Chicano community further intensified under President Salinas de Gortari (1988-1994), in an effort to gain Chicanos on Mexico's side. President Salinas de Gortari was very aware that his country needed the economic growth that NAFTA promised, and so, he chose to turn to Chicanos for aid in lobbying. One of the most important moves of the Salinas de Gortari government was to create the Directorate General of Mexican Communities Abroad (DGMCA) and the Program for Mexican Communities Abroad

(PCME) in 1990. Although Mexico tried to influence Chicanos to side with Mexico, once the negotiations were over, it was evident that Mexico needed Chicanos more than Chicanos needed Mexico.

While Jorge Bustamante spurred the debate as to whether Chicanos and Mexicans would be able to work towards a common goal, ideally political, and organizations like Fundación Solidaridad Mexico Americana keep that dream alive through their work, here it is believed that for many reasons, these two groups will be unable to do so and mostly likely, be unwilling to do so. The most prolific writer of the topic is Rodolfo O de la Garza. In an article published in 1980, Rodolfo O. de la Garza wrote:

The response to closer ties with Mexico is mixed. Some, such as Velma Martinez, head of the Mexican American Legal Defense Fund, see closer ties with Mexico as the means for improving the Chicano internal political situation. 'We all understand that Washington will finally listen to us because of Mexico.'¹⁴¹

However, it must be noted that the above statement was made at a time when Mexico was graced with an oil boom which ended two years later. It was believed that because Mexico would become more important to the United States, any association with the country would be of benefit. That opportunity vanished with the oil boom.

Moreover, it is clear that the majority of the contact and collaboration with Mexicans would come from the part of government and academia. Mexican interest in Chicanos has significantly grown as will be discussed in Chapter Three. Thus, the best understanding of Chicanos comes from scholars and government officials who have come more and more into contact with them. Yúdice et al. feel that "increasingly, there is a deeper and denser dialogue between Latinos in the United States and their cultures of

¹⁴¹ Quoted in "Chicanos and U.S. Foreign Policy: The Future of Chicano- Mexican Relations" by Rodolfo O. de la Garza, *The Western Political Quarterly*, 33 (Dec. 1980), 577.

origin.”¹⁴² Whereas at one time U.S. Latinos might have felt inclined to ‘seek recognition and approval from their cultures of origin, Mexico for Chicanos,’ at least in the 1990s, the exchange became “more reciprocal.”¹⁴³

Furthermore, de la Garza also argued that supporting the Mexican position on immigration policy might also be considered an area in which Chicanos could be interested because migrants could become allies in the future.¹⁴⁴ Furthermore, a close relationship with Mexico, according to this perspective, will also provide Chicanos with an international forum for “voicing grievances, and many Chicano scholars see this as particularly valuable since the American press and other public forums have been so inaccessible.”¹⁴⁵ Recent actions on the part of Chicanos demonstrate that siding with the Mexican government is rarely chosen. When President Fox of Mexico proposed an all-or-nothing-type of migration reform in 2000, U.S. President Bush responded with a guest worker program a few years later. Indicating their alliance with the U.S. side, Chicanos preferred Bush’s plans, albeit with major modifications that advocacy groups, such as the National Council of La Raza proposed. Furthermore, we would be assuming that Chicanos have a united stance on immigration, which is untrue.

To state the obvious, not all (and perhaps not many) Mexican-Americans favor open borders with Mexico. Indeed, about 25% of Latino voters, all citizens who are more-or-less integrated into the political community supported California’s now infamous Proposition 187 which bars undocumented persons from receiving public benefits. Such restrictionist sentiments make it uncertain where undocumented Mexican immigrants fit into the broader Latino community.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴² Yúdice et al., 213.

¹⁴³ Yúdice et al., 213.

¹⁴⁴ De la Garza, 576.

¹⁴⁵ Rodolfo O. de la Garza states that those holding this view include Dr. Gilbert Cardenas, Dr. Oscar Martinez, University of Texas at El Paso, and Dr. Cesar Sereseres, 578.

¹⁴⁶ Johnson, 202.

Johnson explains that it is easy to understand why Chicanos and Mexican immigrants at some level have different group identities “considering the two groups’ different experiences and social positions in the United States.”¹⁴⁷ Moreover, Johnson explains that tensions that are felt many times also deal with the misunderstanding and prejudices that each group may have of the other. In essence, “the tension in part reflects Chicano’s adoption of dominant society’s racial attitudes and values. Some assimilation inevitably results from extended immersion in a different culture.”¹⁴⁸

This leads us to the next point. Chicanos have made great strides in politics on their own, with Chicano leaders present in the representation of Southwestern states. Furthermore, after the Chicano Movement, Chicanos were able to gain recognition which allowed them to benefit from affirmative action and similar programs which permitted their inclusion into universities and the middle class. Certainly, this is not the case for every Chicano. The 1975 Extension of the Voting Rights Act substantially altered states and local political processes, enabling an increasing numbers of Chicanos to be elected at these levels¹⁴⁹ and there are now more high-level Chicano and Hispanic federal political appointees than ever before. Furthermore, the 1986 Immigration Regulation and Control Act allowed for many Mexican migrants to eventually gain suffrage, the main way to exert political power in the United States. This factor could also explain the increasing success of Chicanos to hold political office.

¹⁴⁷ Johnson, 204.

¹⁴⁸ Johnson, 205.

¹⁴⁹ Charles Cotrell and Jerry Polinard, “The Impact of the 1975 Voting Rights Acts on the Texas Electoral System,” a paper presented at the Western Political Science Association Meeting, April 1977; John García, “The Extension of the Voting Rights Act: The Case of Arizona,” a paper presented at the Western Political Science Association Meeting, April 1977. Quoted by Rodolfo O. de la Garza, 579.

Although several arguments have been presented as to why Chicanos might want to join Mexicans in a collaborative effort, it is highly uncertain they would be willing to do so because their loyalties lie in their present condition- life in the United States. For many Chicanos, Mexico is simply a part of their past, if that. It is highly dubious that Chicanos hold a working knowledge of the issues that are of highest importance in Mexico, and the same goes for Mexicans' knowledge of issues that affect Chicanos.

Even the largest Chicano advocacy organizations, League of United Latin-American citizens, the Mexican Legal Defense and Education Fund, and the National Council of La Raza emphasize member's belonging to the United States and the "American way of life" by stressing efforts to lobby, get out the vote, and defend their rights. De la Garza argued that by openly seeking Mexico's support of lobbying for pro-Mexican policies, "Chicanos might raise the specter of disloyalty, and the legitimacy of their new found status would be questioned." Nativists and anti-immigration advocates and scholars, such as Samuel Huntington, would be likely to side with this argument. Indicative of the risks inherent in a closer association with Mexico is the fact that those "Chicano leaders who have most actively pursued this relationship are Jose Angel Gutierrez ad Reies Lopez Tijerina."¹⁵⁰ Each of these leaders had varying motivations for their actions, and their accomplishments for the Chicano Movement are marked, but it is also clear that neither was able to enter the American political arena for the stances they took. Thus, since "neither stands to gain much dealing with U.S. policy makers, they have little to lose and everything to gain from working with Mexico."¹⁵¹

¹⁵⁰ De la Garza, 579.

¹⁵¹ De la Garza, 579.

It is highly unlikely that Chicanos will go out of their way to collaborate with Mexicans simply based on their cultural commonalities. One area in which this does not apply is the financial area. While Chicanos and Mexicans have not had, and probably won't have, political convergence, they have had business convergence for many years. The implementation of NAFTA further increments this business convergence, but this only makes sense because it is driven by economics. On a political level, even if "this relationship develops, it is dubious that Chicanos will, for the foreseeable future, be in a position significantly to influence U.S. policy toward Mexico."¹⁵² Studies of the impact that ethnic groups have on U.S. foreign policy indicate that a group's success depends on five factors:

its importance as a pivotal voting block, its ability to contribute financially to campaigns, its ability to dominate or influence an important sector such as labor or the media, its ability to demonstrate group solidarity, and its advocacy of policies that are not discordant with American interests."¹⁵³

Because Chicanos have not achieved these five goals, it is unlikely that they will collaborate with Mexicans while they still have many issues to take on at home. While the academic perspective has been presented here, the study's questionnaire and its results will be used to measure the degree of accuracy of Chicano perceptions of a collaborative effort. In terms of the academic perspective, the likelihood that a coalition will arise between Chicanos and Mexicans is highly dubious, and now, it is hoped to ascertain the updated perspective of Chicanos with the Mexican perspective following in Chapter Three.

¹⁵² De la Garza, 581.

¹⁵³ Herschelle Sullivan Challenor, "The Influence of Black Americans on U.S. Foreign Policy Toward Africa," in Abdul Aziz Said, ed. *Ethnicity and U.S. Foreign Policy* (New York: Praeger, 1977), p. 140. Quoted in Rodolfo O de la Garza, 581.

2.3 Chicano perceptions today

Building upon earlier studies,¹⁵⁴ the current study aimed to discern the perceptions that Chicanos have of Mexicans and vice versa. In order to do so, similar questionnaires were created for each group. The participants for this study were 155 self identified Chicanos and/or Mexican Americans in the United States (students or recent graduates of Harvard University, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Amherst College, Smith College, and Mount Holyoke College) and were recruited by means of an electronic email group created for members of the East Coast Chicano Student Forum, a student organization which these schools partly compose. The participants were asked via email during February 2005 to complete an online questionnaire and did not receive any compensation for their participation. Those who replied to the online questionnaire but were not current students or graduates of the schools listed above were excluded to maintain a control of the location of participants. The demographic characteristics of the self identified Chicanos are listed in Table 1.

The Mexican side was composed of 152 Mexican citizens (students from Universidad de las Americas, Puebla) recruited by asking professors within the Schools of Arts & Humanities, Sciences, Social Sciences, Engineering, and Business to allow the questionnaires to be filled out during class time throughout February and March 2005. In order to make sure the Chicano and Mexican student groups were comparable in age,

¹⁵⁴ Design for the questionnaires was based on three major studies: Rodolfo de la Garza, Louis DeSipio, F. Chris García, John García, and Angelo Falcon, *Latino Voices: Mexican, Puerto Rican, and Cuban Perspectives on American Politics* (San Francisco: Westview Press, 1992), Rodolfo de la Garza, Harry P. Pachon, Eds, *Latinos and U.S. Foreign Policy: Representing the "Homeland"?* (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2000), Anthony Gary Dworkin, "Stereotypes and Self Images Held by Native Born and Foreign Born Mexican Americans," in *Mexican Americans in the United States: A Reader*, edited by John Burma, 397-409. (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Canfield Press, 1970).

Mexican graduate students were not included in the study. The Mexican side of the results will be discussed in their respective section, Chapter Three.

The Chicano participant pool was composed of slightly more women (58.06%) than men (41.94%). The age range of participants was from 18-27 with the average age of 22.51 years old reflecting that the majority of the participants were in either their junior (16.7%) or senior (25.2%) year of college. Furthermore, the participants were from three of the states¹⁵⁵ with the largest Mexican population: California (28.4%), Texas (25.8%), and Illinois (9.7%). Finally, the participant's mean family income level was \$25,000-\$49,000. Additionally, participants reported locating themselves on the Liberal (52.3%) end of political affiliations.

Table 1. Demographics of Chicano participants

	Response	<i>N</i>	(%)
Gender	Male	65	41.94%
	Female	90	58.06%
Age	18-19	15	9.7%
	20-21	43	27.7%
	22-23	49	31.6%
	24-25	34	21.9%
	26-27	14	9.0%
Top three states of birth	California	44	28.4%
	Texas	40	25.8%
	Illinois	15	9.7%
Family income	Less than \$25,000	38	24.51%
	\$25,000-\$49,999	54	34.83%
	\$50,000- \$74,999	35	22.58%
	\$75,000- \$99,999	9	5.8%
	Over \$100,000	17	10.96%

¹⁵⁵ Other birth states: AK (1), AZ (6), CO (2), CT (1), FL (2), ID (1), IA(2), KS (4), MA (1), MI (2), NM (2), NY (3), NC (1), OH (2), OK (2), PA (1), UT (1), WA (2), WI (2), WY (1).

Education	First year in college	27	17.4%
	Second year in college	35	22.6%
	Third year in college	26	16.7%
	Senior year in college	39	25.2%
	Graduated	28	18.1%
Political affiliation	Far right	1	.6%
	Conservative	10	6.5%
	Middle of the road	49	31.6%
	Liberal	81	52.3%
	Far left	14	9.0%

In order to understand the ethnic self identification of participants, in the next section of the questionnaire, students were asked to choose the ones they used to personally self identify from a list of common ethnic identity terms. The most preferred self identifying label was Latino(a) (78.06%), followed by Mexican American (76.13%), Mexican (66.45%), Mexicano(a) (59.35%), and Hispanic (52.25%). It must be further noted that participants chose an average of 4.46 of the ethnic identity labels from the list they were given. Lastly, participants were asked to specify which term they preferred to use to identify and most preferred was “Mexican” (29.69%). This particular choice for participants goes along with the findings of the Latino National Political Survey. Between 1989-1990 Rodolfo O. de la Garza¹⁵⁶ and his colleagues set out to provide empirical evidence about how Latinos see themselves and concluded that the most popular self-referent among people of Mexican heritage in the United States was the term “Mexican.”

¹⁵⁶ Rodolfo de la Garza, Louis DeSipio, F. Chris García, John García, and Angelo Falcon, *Latino Voices: Mexican, Puerto Rican, and Cuban Perspectives on American Politics*, (San Francisco: Westview Press, 1992):40.

Table 2. Ethnic Identity

	Response	<i>N</i>	(%)
Self identification	Latino(a)	121	78.06%
	Mexican American	118	76.13%
	Mexican	103	66.45%
	Mexicano (a)	92	59.35%
	Hispanic	81	52.25%
	Chicano(a)	80	51.61%
	American	49	31.61%
	Raza	25	16.12%
	Other	14	9.03%
	Spanish	7	4.5%
	Spanish American	2	1.3%
Preference for self-identification	Mexican	46	29.68%
	Mexican American	41	26.45%
	Chicano	27	17.41%
	Latino	24	15.48%
	Hispanic	9	5.8%
	American	3	1.9%
	Undecided	2	1.3%
	Brown	1	.07%
	Mestizo	1	.07%
Raza	1	.07%	

The next section of the questionnaire was aimed at understanding the Chicano participants' connection to Mexico by asking them a series of questions about their experience with the country. First, participants were asked to give the birthplace of their parents and the answers varied greatly. The top location for mother's birthplace was Texas (14.83%) and the father's top birthplace was also Texas (14.83%). Next, participants were asked whether they had visited Mexico and the overwhelming majority (93.5%) had done so. In fact, the majority (69.03%) replied that they had visited Mexico from one to twenty five times. Their main reason for visiting Mexico was to visit family (74.84%) and to travel [which did not include family visits] (51.0%). These results

indicated a relative level of knowledge of the country from the visits participants reported.

Table 3. Connection to Mexico

	Response	<i>N</i>	(%)
Top 5 locations- Mother's birthplace	Texas	23	14.83%
	California	14	9.03%
	Jalisco	13	8.4%
	Chihuahua	10	6.5%
	Michoacán	6	3.9%
Top 5 locations- Father's birthplace	Texas	23	14.83%
	California	12	7.74%
	Michoacán	12	7.74%
	Jalisco	11	7.1%
	Chihuahua	8	5.2%
Visited Mexico	Yes	145	93.5%
	No	10	6.5%
Number of visits	0	10	6.5%
	1-25	107	69.03%
	26-49	8	5.2%
	50-99	5	3.2%
	100+	25	16.1%
Reason for visit	Visit family	116	74.84%
	Travel	79	51.0%
	Other	41	26.5%
	Study abroad	14	9.03%
	Work	9	5.8%
	School trip	6	3.9%

The following section of the questionnaire asked participants to provide information to understand the level of contact with those of Mexican heritage in their home towns, excluding immediate family and the results are summarized in Table 4. Of these, 44.5% answered that they live near a Latino community and the majority (63.2%) live near people of Mexican heritage, whether they be migrants or U.S. citizens. Furthermore, a good portion (45.2%) replied that they interacted with Latinos on a daily

basis and with those of Mexican heritage (54.2%) daily. Aside from personal contact they were then asked about representation of Mexicans in the media. As can be ascertained from Table 3 & 4, the Chicano participants had a great deal of contact with people of Mexican heritage, whether directly or through a media source.

Table 4. Contact at permanent residence

	Response	<i>N</i>	(%)
Live near Latino community [excluding those of Mexican heritage]?	Yes	69	44.5%
	No	44	28.4%
	Don't know	11	7.1%
	Not specified	31	20.0%
Live near people of Mexican heritage?	Yes	98	63.2%
	No	20	12.9%
	Don't know	6	3.9%
	Not specified	31	20.0%
Interaction with Latinos [excluding those of Mexican heritage]	1-2 times a week	19	12.3%
	3-4 times a week	9	5.8%
	5-6 times a week	5	3.2%
	Daily	70	45.2%
	Never	21	13.5%
Interaction with those of Mexican heritage	1-2 times a week	14	9.0%
	3-4 times a week	5	3.2%
	5-6 times a week	10	6.5%
	Daily	84	54.2%
	Never	10	6.5%
Frequency with which participant watched television programming in Spanish	1-2 times a week	26	16.8%
	3-4 times a week	14	9.0%
	5-6 times a week	6	3.9%
	Daily	42	27.1%
	Never	35	22.6%
Frequency with which participant sees information or stories about Mexican illegal immigrants in the media	1-2 times a week	53	34.2%
	3-4 times a week	22	14.2%
	5-6 times a week	7	4.5%
	Daily	24	15.5%
	Never	18	11.6%
	Not specified	31	20.0%

In order to determine their perceptions of Mexicans of the middle and upper class, participants were asked to complete two tasks in the last two sections of the questionnaire. The first entailed answering a series of free response questions about the relationship between Chicanos and Mexicans as well as the perception they have of themselves as a collective group. The second task asked participants to rank their degree of agreement on a five point scale, ranging from completely disagree to highly disagree, with statements about Mexicans as a collective group (Appendix A). A list of adjectives commonly used to describe and sometimes stereotype Mexicans was used to measure the degree to which Chicanos would reject or accept them, as seen in Table 5. Due to space, the full results of Table 5 are included as Appendix C. In order to complete the task, participants were asked to fill in the blank space with an adjective listed in Table 5 of the following statement: “Mexicans, excluding those who have migrated and instead taking into account the middle class, can be considered ____.”

The participants were mostly Neutral the following items: well educated (31.0%), active in their communities (32.3%), hypocritical (40.6%), corrupt (35.5%), conformist (42.6), honest (38.1%), assimilated into US culture (29.7%), politically aware (31.6%), and marginalized (54.8). The participants Completely Disagreed on the following items: lazy (65.2%) and little family loyalty (65.2%). On the other hand, the participants Somewhat Agreed on the following items: prejudiced (38.7%), victims of their social condition (34.8%), friendly (42.6), and humble (45.2%). It was Somewhat Disagreed (36.1%) that Mexicans can be characterized as materialistic and Completely Agreed (49.0%) that Mexicans can be characterized as proud of their history and hard working (52.9%). The chart was mainly used to get a general idea of the perceptions that

Chicanos have of Mexicans, and their free response answers were the main source from which to measure their perceptions.

Table 5. Partial perceptions of Mexicans

	Degree of agreement	<i>N</i>	(%)
Well educated	Completely disagree	3	1.9%
	Somewhat disagree	38	24.5%
	Neutral	48	31.0%
	Somewhat agree	47	30.3%
	Completely agree	12	7.7%
	Not specified	7	4.5%
Prejudiced	Completely disagree	9	5.8%
	Somewhat disagree	13	8.4%
	Neutral	53	34.2%
	Somewhat agree	60	38.7%
	Somewhat disagree	13	8.4%
	Not specified	7	4.5%
Corrupt	Completely disagree	41	26.5%
	Somewhat disagree	27	17.4%
	Neutral	55	35.5%
	Somewhat agree	22	14.2%
	Completely agree	3	1.9%
	Not specified	7	4.5%
Proud of their history	Completely disagree	2	1.3%
	Somewhat disagree	2	1.3%
	Neutral	17	11.0%
	Somewhat agree	51	32.9%
	Completely agree	76	49.0%
	Not specified	7	4.5%
Hard working	Completely disagree	1	.6%
	Somewhat disagree	-	-
	Neutral	24	15.5%
	Somewhat agree	41	26.5%
	Completely agree	82	52.9%
	Not specified	7	4.5%

Upon an examination of the data, it was dubious whether Chicanos were able to exclude their perceptions of Mexican migrants in answering the free response and Mexican Perceptions Chart sections of the questionnaire [Appendix A]. While the participants were asked to answer a few questions dealing with Mexican migrants in two

of the six pages of the online questionnaire, it was also specified in the instructions that they should be excluded in other sections. They were given the following instructions for answering the free response and Mexican Perceptions Chart sections of the questionnaire:

In this section, we are limiting the term "Mexican," to mean persons born AND living in Mexico while **excluding** those who have migrated, legally or illegally, to the United States.

Since it was difficult to discern whether Chicano participants were able to exclude their perceptions of migrants in their responses to the Mexican Perceptions Chart, it was decided to analyze their side from their free responses instead. Chicano's free response answers were an average of 3.13 sentences and an average of 51 words each, giving us a better understanding of their perceptions than from the responses which were obtained through the Mexican Perceptions Chart.

With this caveat in mind, the first question of the free response section was analyzed. Participants were first asked to answer the question: What is your perception of Mexicans? Their answers fell into three categories summarized in Table 6.: a very positive view which mentions the richness of their culture, their work habits, and overall "Mexico lindo" nostalgia. The second category revealed a critical opinion about Mexican social and economic classes as well as hints of understanding political or economic aspects of Mexican life. The third category was for those who did not answer the question or left it blank. The overwhelming majority of the participants fell into the positive view- one hundred and six (68.4%) participants. In order for the reader to gain a sense of some of the replies to the free response sections of the questionnaire, the participants' responses which embodied each category best were included in each upcoming table.

Table 6. Chicano perceptions of Mexicans in free response section

What is your perception of Mexicans?			
Category	Positive	Critical	Not answered
<i>N</i>	106 (68.4%)	32 (20.6%)	17 (11.0%)
Example	My perception of Mexicans is largely positive. From my travels in Mexico and my interactions with family members, I perceive Mexicans in general to be honest hard-working and friendly people. Most of those with whom I interact come from humble means and are strongly focused on family.	I believe there are differences in the people according to region, lifestyle, and their position in society. I think that some people in Mexico are born into a position or find other means to escape mass poverty that plagues many Mexicans. Also there is a class of indigenous people that are sometimes forgotten when talking about Mexicans as many people have a narrow view that all Mexicans are the same and believe similar beliefs.	-

The second question asked participants to talk about whether they felt any differences between themselves and Mexicans. As we can see in Table 7, the participant's answers fell into five categories. The plurality of participants felt that the main difference between them was their culture (36.8%) followed by the combination of language and culture (34.2%). Interestingly, twenty seven participants felt that there was no difference between themselves and Mexicans, which was earlier reflected by the choice of the majority of participants to use the self identifier of "Mexican." The choice for Chicano participants not to acknowledge even a citizenship difference indicates to us that these participants must either have immediate family in Mexico, be closely connected to migrants in the United States, or some other form of a close, personal connection to Mexico.

Table 7. Chicano perception of differences in free response section

Many Mexicans identify themselves with the Virgen de Guadalupe, the country's food, and Spanish, just as many Chicanos do. However, do you feel there is a difference between yourself as a self identified Chicano and/or Mexican American, and persons born in Mexico? If you feel there is a difference, such as cultural or language based, how would you explain it?					
Category	No difference	Language and culture	Culture	Citizenship	Language
<i>N</i>	27 (17.4%)	53 (34.2%)	57 (36.8%)	9 (5.8%)	9 (5.8%)
Example	I do not feel there is a difference- some are in Mexico and some are in the US.	I was never taught Spanish so I do not identify with that language. Neither do I identify with many Mexican customs such as the quinceañera or the <i>Virgen</i> I guess because my parents were born in the U.S. and their parents probably stopped those practices after coming here.	There is a difference. The difference is cultural norms, ideals, values, and perceptions. We both think differently. We stereotype each other. '	The only difference is that Chicanos have papers and a lot of Mexicans don't.	Language is the only difference. Once a "Chicano" no longer has the ability to speak the language it makes a cultural difference in the people.

The third question asked participants what they thought when they heard the term “Chicano.” Their answers varied greatly but they were categorized into five groups. The first group was characterized by the political connotations that the term had for them. The second group simply defined the term. The third group included a bit of history with their response, including mentioning key figures of the Chicano Movement. The fourth group included stereotypes that mainstream society might have of this minority. The fifth group did not answer the question. Forty three (27.7%) participants composed the first group.

The second group was composed of forty six (29.7%) participants. Thirty two (20.6%) included a historical context for their answer. Eighteen (11.6%) composed the fourth group and sixteen (10.3%) did not answer the question. Due to the fact that the participants were recruited from a Chicano student organization, it is not surprising that the majority of the association with the term “Chicano” dealt with a definition or political associations.

Table 8. Associations with “Chicano” in free response section

When you think about the term “Chicano,” what comes to mind?					
Category	Political	Definition	History	Stereotype	Not answered
<i>N</i>	43 (27.7%)	46 (29.7%)	32 (20.6%)	18 (11.6%)	16 (10.3%)
Example	Mexican-American political activist.	Someone of Mexican descent born in the United States.	When I think about the term "Chicano" I think of my parents when they were in college. They both attended the University of Texas in Austin in the early 1970s when the Chicano Movement was in full swing. I feel that that term identifies with an attitude of social change reminiscent of the zeitgeist of the era in which my parents attended college.	Los Angeles ghetto low-riders.	-

The fourth question asked participants to answer whether they agree or not with the statement: Chicanos do not belong in either the United States or Mexico. As we can see in Table 9, the responses fell into three clear categories: disagree, agree, or did not answer the question. The majority of participants (53.5%) indicated that they agreed with the statement, thus indicating that Chicanos are aware of their identity as a people who

live between cultural borders. For those who disagreed with the statement (35.5%), it was evident from their replies that they felt they do belong and furthermore, they are a part of the United States and stand as a minority.

Table 9. Border identity in free response section

Frequently, Chicanos identify their experience in the United States with the following statement: “Chicanos do not belong in either the United States or Mexico.” Do you agree, and why or why not?

Category	Disagree	Agree	Not answered
<i>N</i>	55 (35.5%)	83 (53.5%)	17 (11.0%)
Example	No. Chicano means American. We are Americans. But why does American have to mean WHITE. It doesn't. That's what we've allowed ourselves to think. I feel Mexicans might envy a bit of the U.S. rights we have, but they certainly don't want us in Mexico. I worked with an indigenous cooperative and when I insisted I was an American, the Mexicans insisted that I was Mexican, but maybe it's because they knew I attended Harvard.	I agree you are caught in between two cultures if you are not raised traditionally Mexican. You are not fully accepted by Mexicans and definitely not by Whites in the U.S.	-

Participants were then asked to answer the fifth question: What perception do you think Mexicans have of Chicanos and/or Mexican Americans? In order to analyze the varying answers, their answers were read and it was clear that the tendencies in the answers fell into four categories: positive image, informed view, negative perception, and ‘not sure.’ The positive image responses were characterized by positive language. The informed view responses were characterized by a mention that Mexicans might not understand the Chicano experience or mention that the perceptions could not be generalized for a reason which was specified. The negative perception responses were

characterized by their mention of stereotypes. Those who fell in the last group, ‘not sure,’ specified that they were not sure nor had thought of what Mexicans might think of Chicanos. Once divided into the four groups, it was found that nine (5.8%) participants believed that Mexicans had positive views of them, thirty (19.4%) were more critical of the Mexican perception, ninety-seven (62.6%) believed Mexicans had a negative view of Chicanos, and nineteen (12.6%) were not sure of the perceptions that Mexicans have of Chicanos.

Table 10. Chicanos’ perception of Mexican view of Chicanos in free response section

What perception do you think Mexicans have of Chicanos and/or Mexican Americans?				
Category	Positive	Informed	Negative	Not sure
<i>N</i>	9 (5.8%)	30 (19.4%)	97 (82.6%)	19 (12.6)
Example	No difference in perception. I haven’t seen any dissension between the two.	I think that some Mexicans don’t understand Chicanos and what they stand for so their perception of them maybe very negative because it just seems like their too good to call themselves Mexicans. I also think that some Mexicans judge Mexican Americans because they may seem like they think they are better than them also. But I also think that some Mexicans don’t really have a stance or issues with the two groups at all.	From the perception I receive from family, their outlook doesn’t seem to be very positive. They tend to believe that my family thought themselves too good to stay in Mexico that they had to leave. They feel that my family has turned their back on their culture and have left their children to be brought up in a “heathen” American way of life. Yet they don’t mind crossing the border a few times a year to shop. I don’t like to think all Mexicans feel this way though.	I’m not sure.

Finally, Chicanos were asked how they would feel about working with Mexicans such as government officials or not-for-profits to promote any part of the Chicano and/or Latino agenda in the United States. Their answers revealed a great deal and were categorized into four groups: first, those who thought it was a good idea, second, those who felt cautious about it, and third those who opposed it, and fourth, those who did not answer the question. Here, an overwhelming majority, one hundred seventeen (75.5%) responded that they would be willing to work with Mexicans.

Table 11. Chicanos' prospective for collaborative efforts in free response section
 How do you feel about working with Mexicans, such as government official or not-for-profits, to promote any part of the Chicano and/or Latino agenda in the United States?

Category	Support	Cautious	Opposed	Not answered
<i>N</i>	117 (75.5%)	25 (16.1%)	4 (2.6%)	9 (5.8%)
Example	That would be wonderful. To receive support from Mexicans who are a part of these systems could help sway any animosity that Chicanos/Latinos feel toward Mexicans and vice-versa. Perhaps this support could lessen this " <i>ni de alli ni de alla</i> " sentiment.'	I don t think it is a problem as long as they understand the differences between us and them and accept them. They also need to know and accept the cause they will be promoting for the Chicano and or / Latinos in the United States.	No, I don't see what in their agenda they would have in common.	-

The responses received for the first question were the main reason the Chicano side had to be heavily based on their free response answers. The majority of Chicanos had a very nostalgic view of Mexico and an accompanying positive view of Mexicans. However, because their responses included words and phrases such as “mi gente,” “el pueblo,” “rancho,” and “border,” it was difficult to discern whether they had heeded the

instructions which asked them not to include their perceptions of Mexican migrants. Furthermore, their responses were very indicative of a positive image that they associated with the family that they may have in Mexico. It is possible that Chicanos have such images from their visits to Mexico as well as family connections. As one may recall, 69.03% of the participants reported that they had gone to Mexico one to twenty- five times and 74.84% reported visiting family as the main reason for visiting the country. It is possible that the majority of the participants' main contact with Mexico and its people is only from those trips and contact with extended family. Furthermore, because 63.2% of the Chicano participants replied that they lived in a community with people of Mexican heritage, it is possible that this further clouded their ability to separate their perceptions of Mexicans in general from their image of migrants.

Additionally, participant's responses to their associations with the term "Chicano" could be used to explain why the preferred term for self identification was "Mexican" (29.68%), followed by "Mexican American" (26.45%), and then "Chicano" (17.41%). While the term has evolved greatly in regards to the connotations that are associated with it, both in the U.S. and Mexico's eyes, the answers were peppered with comments about the political connotation of the term, reminiscent comments about the Chicano Movement, and stereotypes that are associated with the term.

The Chicano perception of what Mexicans think of Chicanos as a collective group also gives us interesting insight into the Chicano- Mexican relationship. Only a small group believed that the perceptions Mexicans had of them were positive, while the rest felt that Mexicans either held a negative view, or outright felt that Mexicans do not understand Chicanos as a minority in the United States. The most insightful comment,

which highlights the complexities of the relationship and the barriers that prevent a closer connection between Chicanos and Mexicans follows:

- Mexican and Mexican-American conflicts will always be there because cultures are different. However I think it takes understanding ourselves and history to overcome these. Unfortunately those that can't see that connection and can't tolerate the different upbringings different people will continue to have these issues. The bottom line is that we need to be tolerant of each other and try to understand where each one is coming from- a dialogue that we lack.

However, only thirty (19.4%) of the participants understood these factors. It has been argued here that in order for Chicanos and Mexicans to be able to coalesce, it is necessary for them to understand each other- not just culturally, but how they fit in the societal scheme of their respective countries so that they may better understand their agendas and needs. A very small group understood these elements and as such, the degree of misunderstanding stands as a barrier.

These findings are further cemented by the fact that a majority of Chicanos did not question whether working with the Mexican government would be beneficial or negative to their own efforts. Those who outright opposed the idea held that Mexicans were not aware of their agenda as their main reason. However, this group was only comprised of four participants. Furthermore, although a large number, ninety-seven (62.6%), believed Mexicans had a negative view of Chicanos, they were still openly and unquestioningly willing to work with them. While these findings seem contradictory, it may well be that these Chicanos feel there is such a need for reforms and policy be pushed through to promote the Chicano/Latino agenda that it makes them more willing to work with allies.

In the beginning, it was hypothesized that Chicanos would not be able to remove the image of Mexican migrants, even when asked specifically to do so, from their responses to questions about Mexican nationals who had not migrated. As Shibutani's interactionist approach to social psychology holds, Chicanos were steadfast in maintaining this image because the people they most contact, whether in their home residences or through their families, are related to migration. The implications of these findings will be discussed following the findings of the Mexican side of the questionnaire.