Introduction

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In 2007, the volume *Teaching and Writing with Latino/a Students: Lessons Learned at Hispanic-Serving Institutions* by editors Cristina Kirklighter, Diana Cárdenas, and Susan Wolff Murphy, was published. At that time, the editors were responding to a need to address the increasing presence of Latinx students in higher education and the increasing number of Hispanic-Serving Institutions. The conversation in composition studies focused on how students transitioned, should transition, to academic discourses to reflect more on how students could navigate a broad range of discourse communities (communities of practice). Our volume, *Bordered Writers: Latinx Identities and Literacy Practices at Hispanic-Serving Institutions*, continues the work of the previous volume. Following the collections by Kells and Balester (1999) and Kells, Balester, and Villanueva (2004), as well as other scholarship on multilingual writers and students of color, the previous collection highlighted the scholarship of faculty of color and those working at Hispanic-Serving Institutions, many of which were two-year community colleges. In 2007, protests about immigration and English Only legislation were in the news; today, we face anti-Mexican/immigrant rhetoric, attempts to restrict voter access and disenfranchise people of color and the poor, and attacks on race in higher education admissions policies.

How Have Things Changed?

In the face of these eruptions, we find ourselves in higher education reflecting on similar questions of identity, race, and language, including how to teach writing in ways that do not privilege a monolingual, Standard or Edited American English measure of writing. But some things have shifted. Institutional racism in the form of profiling, inequitable treatment, and police-caused violence and death, and resulting protest have reemerged in mainstream awareness. On a more positive note, the legal rights of LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered) people have expanded significantly. Questions of identity—and self-defined "identification"—have become more mainstream, and yet challenges of race and the related issues of language use and literacies continue, persistent and not easily dismissed. In our field of writing studies, scholars have shown how our classroom practices, placement decisions, and responses to student writing, among other things, have privileged Standard or Edited American English and "Western" rhetorical strategies and values (Inoue, 2015). Discussing writing teaching and assessment, Asao Inoue proposes "theorizing writing assessment in ways that can help teachers cultivate antiracist agendas in their writing assessment practices" (2015, p. 3). This collection expands this antiracist focus (translingualism, rhetorical dexterity, transcultural repositioning) to classroom practices, curricula, and program design.

Our purpose in this edited volume is to extend the conversations about student success, racial identity, and Latinx students that exist by providing work focused on the programs and experiences of students and faculty at Hispanic-Serving and Minority-Serving Institutions from across the country. We want to advocate for pedagogies and curricula that center on the culturally diverse populations being served at the nation's Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs). We also want to give voice to past and present Latinx scholars, rhetoricians, and students in both academic articles and *testimonio* narratives.

We hope our collection will speak to graduate faculty and writing program administrators (WPAs) preparing graduate students to teach writing with culturally diverse students, students in graduate seminars on pedagogy/practicums, administrators seeking to innovate and/or build program designs, and centers for teaching excellence who might use the book in faculty development seminars/book clubs/discussions. As not all of our readers will teach or attend an HSI or a campus with a large population of Latinx students, our introduction provides some background by explaining the context and difficulties of the Hispanic-Serving Institution label. We explore the demographics of the Latinx student population in the United States in order to show some recent changes and to counter some stereotypes. In these sections, we refer to resources such as *Excelencia* in Education, which can be helpful to any scholars interested in this area.

Our introduction also discusses some of the terms we have chosen to use. Terms used to describe the population of peoples who originate from México, Central or South America are contentious and evolving. We explain our choice of Latinx and our use of "bordered writers."

Last, we have chosen to include *testimonios* as interludes between chapters. As this is somewhat of an unusual genre in academic work, we discuss it below. The collection as a whole is organized into four sections that arise from the different places where writing occurs in the undergraduate experience, and the sections appear chronologically in the students' experiences: developmental English and bridge programs, first-year writing, professional and technical writing, and writing centers and mentored writing. At the end of the introduction, we explain these four sections and some relationships we see between the different chapters.

What is a Hispanic-Serving Institution?

Hispanic-Serving Institution is a designation applied by the U.S. Department of Education to an eligible institution of higher education that enrolls at least 25% undergraduate, full-time equivalent Hispanic students (U.S. Department of Education). The Department, however, does not provide a list of HSIs for public use. As a result, organizations such as the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) and *Excelencia* in Education create their own lists using government data. The most recent list compiled by *Excelencia* uses data from the Department of Education's Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) from 2016–2017 and lists 492 two- and four-year institutions (*Excelencia*, 2018).

What being an HSI means to the identity and mission of an institution varies. As it is based solely on enrollment percentages, the designation does not necessarily reflect the mission or vision of an institution. As Cristina Kirklighter mentions in the foreword, it is the choices that administrators and faculty at an HSI make that determine whether the space of the university is a place where Latinx scholars and students can flourish and whether serving Hispanic students is actually a goal or a feature of that institution.

Student Demographics, Identity, and Language Use

This volume is deliberately titled, "Bordered Writers" for several reasons. We want to recognize that while identity is self-defined to an extent, it is also mandated by external forces and experienced in concrete, embodied terms. Students are bordered or marginalized for many reasons, not all of which relate to race or language. Not all students at HSIs are Latinx; not all Latinx students attend HSIs; not all writers at HSIs are bordered. Some of the elements of writers being bordered relate to their racial identity, language use, and country of origin; it may also relate to their gender, sexual orientation, physical abilities, etc.

Demographics of the United States population of traditional-aged college students (18–24 years) are shifting. While numbers of White and Black students have declined since 2012, numbers and percentages of Asian and Latinx students of the undergraduate population have increased (Stepler & Brown, 2016; Brown & Patten, 2014). Eighteen percent of 18–24 college students are Latinx, and their number has increased by 121,647 since 2012 (Stepler & Brown, 2016; Brown & Patten, 2014). Of U.S. born 18- to 24-year-old Latinx, 38.3% are enrolled in higher education (compared to 44% of White, 36% Black, and 65% Asian) (Stepler & Brown, 2016; Brown & Patten, 2014). As the largest minority and growing undergraduate population, Latinx students, their interests, needs, and goals, and those of their families will reshape the landscape of higher education in the United States, especially as colleges and universities compete for students and their tuition dollars in times when budgets are increasingly dependent on those funds.

One of the topics addressed in the chapters that follow is language use. While 72% of Latinx millennial students speak Spanish at home, the percentages are declining; more than one-quarter speak only English at home, and three-quarters of Latinx millennials are proficient English speakers (Patten, 2016). Those students who live along the U.S./México border, however, are more likely to be bilingual/translingual code meshers/mixers, and many are Mexican nationals who cross the border to attend a college or university. People who study multilingualism know that it is the norm for most humans on the planet; operating in more than one language provides many cognitive and social benefits. If colleges and universities can abandon their position as gatekeepers of monolingualism, perhaps we can help combat the generational linguistic acculturation of Latinx students, both in our students and in the teachers we prepare.

Regarding national origin, this anthology focuses mostly on the experiences of Mexican-origin Latinx in Texas, California, and Florida, with some representation from the New York/New Jersey area. This focus is reflective of the college-age population: 65% of Latinx Millennials are of Mexican origin, and 65% are born in the United States (Patten, 2016).

Why Latinx?

Latinx (pronounced "La-Teen-ex") is a modification of Latino/a, which is inclusive of all gender identities, including those outside the masculine and feminine binary, by avoiding the gender markers of -a/-o required in the

Spanish language. “The x [in Latinx],” as queer, non-binary femme writer Jack Qu’emi explains, “is a way of rejecting the gendering of words . . .” (qtd. in Van Horne, 2016). As part of a “linguistic revolution” on the Internet (Crystal), Latinx emerged online within left-leaning and queer communities in 2004 and gained momentum in usage by 2014 (Padilla, 2016). Social media platforms, advocates for LGBT community members, student groups, intersectionality scholars, journalists, and others use the term. Given that the use of Latinx is a move of advocacy, it has inspired resistance. Guerra and Orbea of Swarthmore College published several objections to the term (2015) which were countered by “The Case FOR ‘Latinx’: Why Intersectionality Is Not a Choice,” by Maria Scharrón-Del Rio and Alan Aja (2015), who name the use of term as liberatory praxis. We are following their lead, and we hope this volume fulfills our goal of being inclusive and respectful of the identity choices of all people, including those who are bordered writers.

Who are Bordered Writers?

Academic spaces create many borders, and nowhere are these borders more evident than between college-ready and underprepared students, traditional and nontraditional students, academic and nonacademic lives, formal and vernacular discourses or literacies, as well as college and everyday literacy practices. These borders establish the foundation for *border literacies*, “the altered literacy practices that students are already familiar with which become relevant in a college context” (Carmichael et al., 2007, p. 79). Such altered literacy practices, bordered no less, are “reading and writing practices in *other* domains of students’ lives—home, work, community—that are, or have the potential to be, situated also in the educational domain” (emphasis added, Ivanič et al., 2009, p. 22). Thus, we embrace the construct of *bordered writers* first to support such altered literacy practices in academic spaces, and second to broaden the scope of student writers considered bordered in academic spaces by hegemonic, conventional, monolingual discourses. We find such student writers, especially Latinx writers, are necessarily bordered no longer by geographical boundaries or defined solely by their ethnic or racial status. These student writers are bordered “because they have constructed spaces of linguistic and bodily performativity shaped by realities of literal and constructed place” as Mendez Newman and García claim and, as a result, are “*bordered subjectivities* . . . that highlight the embodiment of borders or bordered cultures,” as Hinojosa and de León-Zepeda introduce. What these definitions reveal is how closely borderedness parallels with characteristics of otherness. Bordered literacies, so to speak, are more closely associated with those literacies, or participants for that matter, from nondominant categories, rather than dominant. This perspective would suggest, then, that the term *border* denotes what has been acknowledged as constituting otherness, a perspective that aligns with Brenda J. Allen (2011), who suggests difference usually "refers to how an individual or a group varies from, or compares to, the unspoken norm of the dominant group" (p. 4). As such, border literacies are more likely representational spaces of marginalized bodies. Therefore, in our attempt to address classroom/writing center practices and/or program design, we adopt bordered writers as a construct in order to reconceive of the purpose of the HSI and to complicate the ideas of Latinx students, staff, and faculty, especially at HSIs. Also, the phrase bordered writers is our attempt to connect a writer's identity and literacies to the concrete, material, lived experiences of a particular place, and, at the same time, to question the essentialized nature of ethnic and racial identity. These are concepts that have come from the new research and scholarship by Latinx/Chicanx scholars.

What are *Testimonios* and Why Do We Include Them?

In addition to the traditional scholarly chapters, we have interspersed *testimonios* in this volume. These firsthand, empowering personal narratives give voice to Latinx scholars and students who have personally experienced, in very concrete and material ways, education, language use, and literacy expectations in the United States. Kalina Brabeck (2004) describes a *testimonio* as "voices that speak from the margin . . . [that] offer an individual account that encompasses and expresses the reality of a whole people and can only be understood within the context of belonging to a community" (p. 43). John Beverly (2004) adds to this definition in *Testimonio: On the Politics of Truth*, stating that a *testimonio* is told in the first person by a narrator "who is also the real protagonist or witness of the events he or she recounts, and whose unit of narration is usually a 'life' or a significant life experience" (Beverly, 2004, p. 31). In *testimonio*, it is the "intentionality of the narrator that is paramount" (Beverly, 2004, p. 32). The "situation of narration in testimonio has to involve an urgency to communicate, a problem of repression, poverty, subalternity, imprisonment, struggle for survival, implicated in the act of narration itself" (Beverly, 2004, p. 32). *Testimonio* is concerned with "a problematic collective social situation in which the narrator lives" (Beverly, 2004, p. 33).

The *testimonios* in this collection include the voices of men and women, young and mature, first-, 1.5-, and second-generations of Mexican-Americans from Arizona, Texas, New Mexico, and California, and a *Cubana* from San Angelo, Texas. They all operate in translingual hybrid spaces with various levels of confidence and ability in code-switching/code-meshing and have found their ways into academia. In these stories, we can see the importance of mentoring and combating linguistic prejudice and racism. There are complications of skin tone and whiteness—the concrete and material experience of race and of being a minority in America, on a university campus, or in higher education in general (both in "allies" and Latinx). Themes of first-generationality for college students emerge, including challenges of acculturation, feelings of belonging and separation from home and school, and misunderstandings of the demands of college and family, both on the side of the family and student and those of higher education faculty and staff. These *testimonios* help both students and faculty/staff recognize the reality for these men and women and the issues they might be experiencing, and hopefully, reassure those attempting to join the academy that others have experienced what they have experienced, and been successful.

How is the Collection Organized?

This volume is organized in four parts, each providing a different location or perspective where questions of serving Latinx and bordered writers arise, which should appeal to different audiences with particular interests. These four spaces/perspectives are: developmental English and bridge programs, first-year writing, professional and technical writing, and finally, writing centers and mentored writing. Each part is paired with a *testimonio* written by Latinx authors who use that narrative form to talk about their experience. Grouping our chapters in these ways presents themes of translingualism and rhetorical dexterity in first-year composition, developmental English (ALP and bridge), identity and language in professional development, and Latinx identity in various institutional locations, including the writing program and writing center.

The collection as a whole is prefaced by the *testimonio* of Steven Alvarez, who speaks about his working-class, Spanish-speaking household in Arizona, earning a PhD in English, and the various moments of assimilation culturally and linguistically that he experienced. In doing so, he provides a glimpse of the transition many of our students are making as they move through the various levels of education and American (White/mainstream) culture.

Part I: Developmental English and Bridge Programs opens with Corcoran and Wilkinson's argument that we can promote multilingualism and rhetorical awareness among our students by assigning language autoethnographies. In this way, we can reduce the sense and/or need for the assimilative moves made by Alvarez. Another program that reduces assimilation to institutional norms is the successful "Dream Catchers" program (whose name has been recently changed to "Project Ascender"). Doran studied the paired-class first-year intervention that includes developmental courses in several community colleges in Texas. This program connects the classroom to families in several ways, including a family event called *Noche de Familia*. Dream Catchers also encourages using first languages and writing assignments that help faculty learn about their students.

Echoing Alvarez's *testimonio* is Lloyd's examination of the institutional rhetoric of transitional programs and how these impact students' perceptions of belonging (or not) in higher education. We close Part I with the *testimonio* by Christine Garcia who poignantly demonstrates the importance of the simple presence of people and scholars of color in our readings—graduate and undergraduate—that is necessary for students to feel respected and included.

Part II: First-Year Writing opens with a chapter that bends genre expectations by weaving the voices of Hinojosa and de León-Zepeda, narrating their experiences as students and scholars of color, with a theoretical discussion of how to bring Chicanx thought, Chicana feminist thought specifically, to bear on the first-year composition classroom, and what that would mean for students' cultural and political literacies. The embodied, concrete experiences combined with theorized consideration of identity connects strikingly to Alvarez and Garcia, as well as the lessons from the academic chapters that discuss institutional rhetoric and classroom pedagogies and assignments.

The next chapter also advocates for ways of teaching that are culturally sensitive, consider the whole student, and are sustainable. Sánchez, Nicholson, and Hebbard outline their "*Familismo Teaching*" approach, formed within the challenges and opportunities of teaching in the Rio Grande Valley. Also studying the students and faculty in the region, Mendez Newman and García argue for a celebration of "translingual hybridity" rather than an impulse to move students toward monolingual aptitude.

This first-year writing section closes with the *testimonio* by Heather Lang, who reflects on her role as a graduate teaching instructor in Las Cruces, New Mexico, and the student, Valeria, who challenged her to define her role as a teacher. Valeria is a student who "brought the border with her" into class, revisiting the questions raised by all the authors in this section. Lang critiques her decisions, her relationships, and her practices within this "bordered" teaching space, reminding us we are all in this "borderland" or contact zone of cultures, languages, races, etc.

Part III: Professional and Technical Writing expands our focus to technical and professional writing courses. Chapters by Leon and Enríquez-Loya and Gonzales consider how these courses and programs should be designed at HSIs, taking into account students' cultural and linguistic assets.

Leon and Enríquez-Loya, at a newly designated HSI, consider the design of their professional and technical writing course. Gonzales demonstrates how service-learning, cross-cultural communication, and translation activities can be incorporated into technical communication programs to highlight and develop the strengths of Latinx students, and how the students' cross-cultural and linguistic expertise is drawn out by those innovations. This section closes with professional and technical writing scholar Isabel Baca's *testimonio* which reflects on her own bilingualism and the loss of that which frequently occurs in second and third generations. This *testimonio* reminds us how investing institutional weight in bilingualism can help our students (perhaps) avoid that loss, and see bi- or translingualism as a strength, with economic reward.

The chapters in Part IV: Writing Centers and Mentored Writing provide rare glimpses into the importance of considering these spaces in our discussions of race, language, and writing. These spaces/activities can promote (or deny) inclusion. Nancy Alvarez's chapter both demonstrates how these spaces are traditionally exclusive and monolingual and suggests how they can be made more diverse and deliberately translingual/transcultural. Falconer's chapter on mentored writing in the sciences (a model many of us are unfamiliar with) demonstrates how our students' goals for education and constraints (i.e., supporting a family) can run counter to the ambitions of faculty who are promoting graduate school and more traditionally academic literacies. Falconer's chapter reminds us that we cannot define "success" for our students; they will define success on their own terms. Part IV closes with the *testimonio* of Kaylee Cruz, a first-generation Latina student and undergraduate writing center tutor. Cruz shows how her experiences at a peer-tutoring conference, among other things, demonstrated how not coming from a White, upper-middle-class background, not her academic preparation, is what made her "underprepared." Cruz's statement, "I was shocked too to realize that race and ethnicity had been at the center of my experiences in higher education, without me being aware," is a powerful statement of the pervasive impact that race, class, language, and ethnicity have on our students' (and our) lives.

As the ethnic/racial configuration of the United States shifts toward a "minority-majority," scholars and teachers must rethink their paradigms and move the margin to the center. We must also push back against the racist responses this shift is inspiring in our nation. We hope this volume will help writing studies researchers and scholars understand how WPAs and practitioners are changing the teaching of writing at Hispanic-Serving Institutions to be more inclusive and welcoming, how Latinx students, scholars, and researchers are experiencing both classrooms and the field of writing studies, and the lessons we must learn from student and activist Latinx rhetorics.

We see our book making a significant contribution to the conversation in writing studies about students of color, linguistic diversity, and pedagogies and practices. Bordered writers are being heard and are growing in numbers in higher education, while scholars of color and those located at HSIs are contributing to the fields of literacy, language, rhetoric, and writing studies.

It is our hope that this book connects to all bordered writers and educators, making higher education stronger and more representative of the nation's population. Bordered writers, in and outside Hispanic-Serving Institutions, have a voice that must be heard and should not be ignored.

Best,
Isabel, Yndalecio, and Susan

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