

WOMEN AS FOUNDATIONS OF TRANSNATIONAL COMMUNITIES

by

Laura Gonzalez, Ph.D.

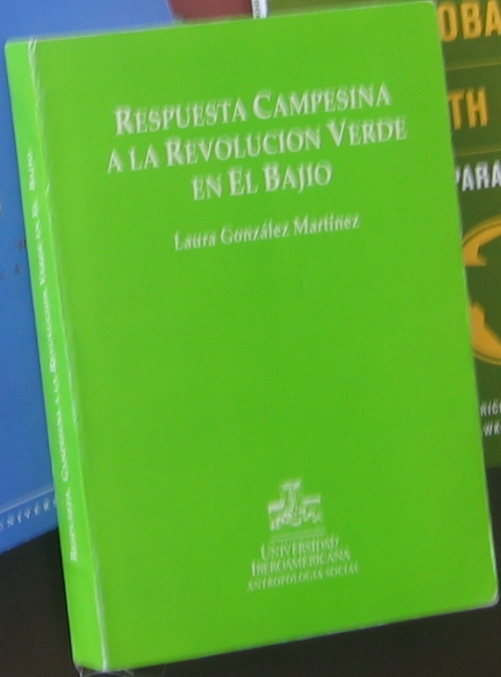
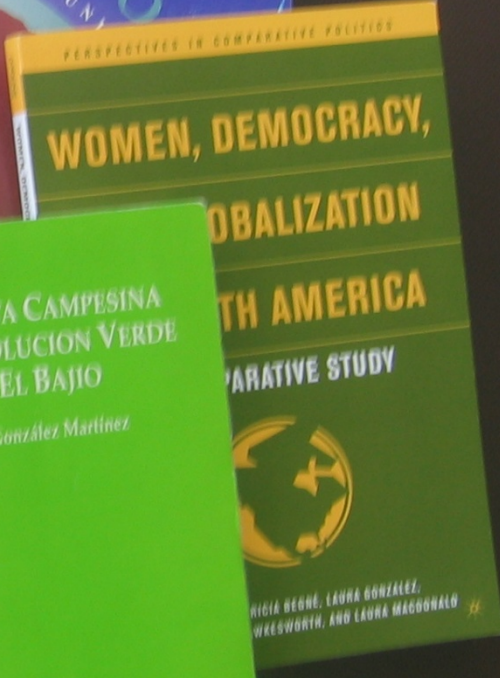
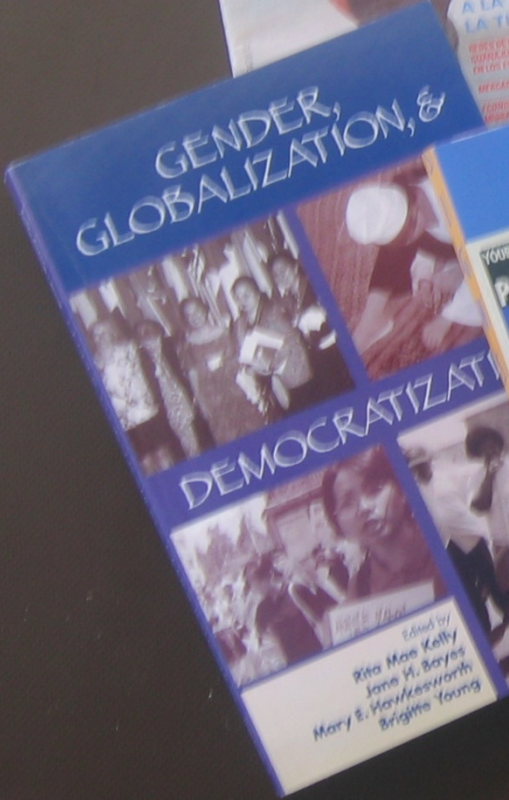
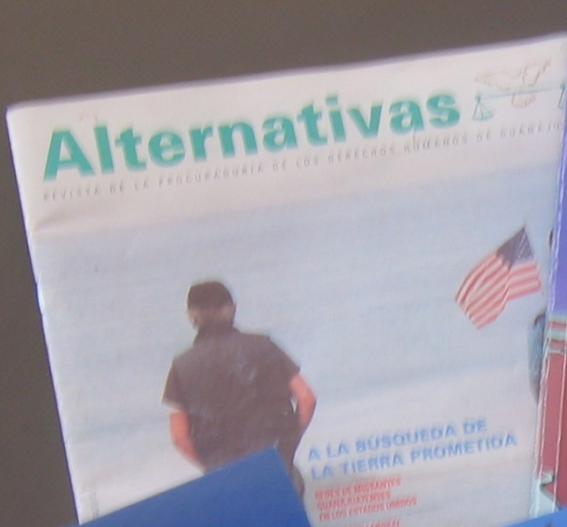
2009 UNT Immigration Conference
“Perspectives on Immigration:
Strategies for the 21st Century”
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Presentation Outline

- Research Perspective
- International Labor Migration & Immigration as a Binational System
- The Role of Women as Foundations or Anchors in the Binational System

Research Perspective

- Ethnographic, Holistic, Genealogical Approaches
- Thirty-three Years of Ethnographic Research
- Binational Research
 - Mexico (mainly in the State of Guanajuato)
 - United States (California, Pennsylvania, Texas)
 - Guanajuato as a Pot or Seedling where the GUA-PA, GUA-TEX, and CALI-GUA Networks Grow.



International Labor Migration and Immigration as a Binational System

- Conceptualizing Labor Migration & Immigration
 - Labor Migration & Immigration are a Binational System (sometimes International) w/ Origins in More than One Country
 - Binational System Comprised of a Transnational Population that Creates and Maintains Social Networks that facilitate the flow of multiple resources (e.g., labor, remittances, information, technology, and culture) across borders

Gender & Labor Migration Research

- Existing Research on Gender & Labor Migration
 - Most Research Views Labor Migration as a Male Phenomenon
 - Migration through Well-Established Social and Male-Based Networks
 - Recent Research Concentrates on Women as Migrants
 - Migration through Male-Based Networks
 - Little Research on the Role of Women as Non-Migrants in the Labor Migration Process

Non-Migrating Women & Labor Migration

- Need to Include Non-Migrating Women in Studies of Labor Migration
- The Role of Non-Migrating Women in the Absence of Males
 - Examples: Abigail Quiroz and Marili Lopez
 - Care of Immediate and Extended Family
 - Resolves Family Problems
 - Looks After Family-Based Resources, such as Land & Livestock
 - Manages Remittances

Gender & Immigration

- **Need for More Research on the Role of Women in Immigration**
 - Existing Research views women as secondary players; as responding to male decision making only.
 - New Research needed on the key roles of women in the Immigration Process
 - Women are anchors; are important to reproducing, transplanting, rooting families and creating new transnational communities

Women as Anchors in the Binational System

- What do I mean by “women as anchors”?
- Anchor Processes
 - Examples: Silvia Tlaseca and Ramona Ortiz
 - Rooting the family (school, church, health system)
 - Raising children and grandchildren
 - Wage labor
 - Political participation

Conclusions

- What we see is not an unilinear system that starts and finishes, or a social phenomenon that can be explained by push and pull factors.
- What we see is a permanent movement of people; a significant and thriving socio-economic and binational system comprised of thousands of families located in different regions and countries; articulated by kinship and other social ties and the flow or exchange of resources.
- We see women as the key components of this system because they anchor the social networks, they root the communities, they allow the reproduction and maintenance of the system in more than one locale by connecting the men with other entities, by raising children, by taking care of the elderly and the sick, and by transmitting and transforming the culture.

For more information on women and immigration and on the social networks of international migrants originally from Guanajuato, working temporarily or permanently established in Texas, California and Pennsylvania, please see:

Gonzalez, Laura

2008 “Liderazgo Femenino en el Nivel Transnacional: El Caso del Consejo Consultivo del Instituto de los Mexicanos en el Exterior (CC-IME).” En Co-autoría con Jane Bayes. Traducción al español del artículo publicado en inglés como “New Transnational Opportunities and Challenges for Women’s Leadership: The Consejo Consultivo del Instituto de los Mexicanos en el Exterior (CC-IME)” en la Revista ***SIGNS, a Journal of Women in Culture and Society***. Co-authored with Jane Bayes. Vol 34, Num 1, Autumn by the University of Chicago Press. pp 37- 41. All rights reserved 00979740-2008-3401-0007\$10.00 con motivo del *Simposio sobre Perspectivas Comparativas: Desafíos del Liderazgo Femenino* llevado a cabo en la Universidad de Umea, Suecia en Julio del 2007. Las dos versiones - en inglés y en español -, pueden consultarse en la página de web de la Universidad de Chicago Press (www.journals.uchicago.edu/signs/home.html) y la versión en español puede también consultarse en las páginas de web de la Fundación Comunitaria del Bajío (www.fcbajio.org) y del Oak Cliff Center for Community Studies (www.oakcliffccs.org).

- 2006 “Women and Globalization in Mexico.” In ***Women, Democracy, and Globalization in North America. A Comparative Study.*** Co-authored with Jane Bayes, Patricia Begne, Lois Harder, Mary Hawkesworth, and Laura MacDonald. New York: Palgrave. pp 107-130.
- 2001 “Mexico/U.S. Migration and Gender Relations: The Guanajuatense Community in Mexico and the United States.” In Kelly, Mae Rita, Jane H. Bayes, Mary E. Hawkesworth, and Brigitte Young, eds, ***Gender, Globalization, and Democratization.*** Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, pp. 75-94.
- 2000 “Guanajuatenses and Other Mexican Immigrants in the United States: New Communities in Non-Metropolitan and Agricultural Regions.” ***Julian Samora Research Institute Short Monograph Series***, Number 47, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan. Co-authored with Victor García, 10 pp.
- 1998 Coordinator and de facto editor, *Proceedings of the International Colloquium on Mexican Migration to the United States (Memoria del Coloquio Internacional Sobre Migración Mexicana a Estados Unidos)* Joint publication among Gobierno del Estado de Guanajuato, La Universidad de Guanajuato and Consejo Estatal de Población, 36 chapters, 392 pp.
- 1998 “Presentación: Guanajuatenses en Estados Unidos” y “Las Redes y Organizaciones de Migrantes Guanajuatenses en Estados Unidos” en ***Memoria del Coloquio Internacional Sobre Migración Mexicana a Estados Unidos.*** pp. 4-8 y 225-232.

- 1997 “Redes de Migrantes Guanajuatenses” y “Migrantes. Quiénes son y cuántos son?” En *Alternativas. Revista de la Procuraduría de los Derechos Humanos de Guanajuato*. Año 2, Num 4, 8 pp.
- 1997 “The Mariana Case, an Alternative Model to Study Migration.” *Cuadernos del CICSUG*, Número 12, 30 pp. Reproduced and widely distributed for teaching purposes by colleagues at the University of California, Santa Barbara, UC Berkeley, UC Riverside, Princeton, Michigan State University, Indiana University of Pennsylvania and other universities in Canada as well as in Mexico. Translated from the Spanish version originally published in 1994 in *Revista Regiones*, listed below as “Los Migrantes y los Censos de Población.”
- 1994 “Los Migrantes y los Censos de Población, un Enfoque Antropológico.” *Revista Regiones* Vol. II No. 4, abril-julio, pp. 127-144.
- 1992 *Respuesta Campesina a la Revolución Verde en El Bajío (Peasant Response to the Green Revolution in the Bajío)*. Mexico: Universidad Iberoamericana Press, 319 pp.

QUESTIONS ?

Dr. Laura Gonzalez
gnzlr@sbcglobal.net

Senior Research Scientist
Research Institute
Indiana University of Pennsylvania