

Bernadine Marie Hernández  
Assistant Professor  
The University of New Mexico  
Department of English

Center for Latin American Studies (CLAS) Stanford Libraries Travel Access Grant REPORT

*Collections Consulted*

During my tenure in Special Collections at Stanford University, I was in the archives from Monday, July 21, 2017 – Friday, August 4, 2017 from 9AM – 4:30PM. It was a fruitful work experience that will benefit my research on gender and sexual violence on the borderlands. The collections I consulted were as followed, along with a brief statement of how they pertain to my research. The first collections were the Victor Salandini Papers, box 1 and the James Vizzard Papers, box 1 and 2. Victor Salandini was a priest that was very involved in the labor movement with Cesar Chávez during the grape strike. He petitioned in behalf on the farm workers to different organizations. James Vizzard was a Jesuit priest who spent more than thirty years lobbying, writing and speaking on behalf of migrant laborers, braceros and the rural poor in the United States. I read both their personal and professional letters and letters to different Catholic and political organizations speaking of the violences that farmworkers had to endure. This background information is what I need to frame my article that looks at how we understand the productivity of Mexican male sexuality in relation to the state when subjected to exploitative labor conditions. Next, I examined the Frank Bardacke paper, box 1 and 2. These boxes contained the manuscript draft of *Trampling Out the Vintage: Cesar Chavez and the Two Souls of the United Farm Workers*. I was looking at these manuscripts to compare the short stories to the final draft and look at the author and editorial notes. Next, I examined a Manuscript letter book kept by private investigator, Alfred B. Lawson, 1889-1893. This letterbook includes copious correspondence related to the Lawson Detective Agency's investigative role in murders, dishonest land deals, forgeries, **prostitution** (my own bold), bigamy and horse thefts as well as the search for lost individuals in Los Angeles California during the nineteenth-century. My book manuscript examines gender and sexual violence in CA, NM, AZ, and TX during the nineteenth-century so I was looking for specific prostitute names and names attached to gendered murder. Next, I consulted box 1 and 2 of the Latino Comic book collection. This was mostly for my future research on sexual excess in the contemporary moment for Chicana and Latina subjects. Next, I consulted box 1 and box 2 of the Arturo Islas papers. These two boxes consisted of his correspondences and journal entries in regards to his short love affair with Jay Spears, his drug addiction, and his medical records recording his journey with HIV and AIDS. I will produce an article about this work separate from my specialty focus on gender and sexual violence on the borderlands. Lastly, I consulted 5 boxes from the Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund (MALDEF) concentrating on the Chicana Rights Project and particularly the cases of forced sterilization during the 1960s and 1970s. This relates directly to my research and I plan on writing an article on the sterilization archives and the historical event proper.

*Development of Project*

I have three major projects in development after this research residency at Stanford. The first one is an article on Farmworker masculinity and violence. In 2007, Frontline led an investigative report titled 'Rape in the Fields.' Frontline told the story of the hidden price many

migrant women working in America's fields and packing plants pay to stay employed and provide for their families. While the sexual assault and rape of women working the fields as farm workers is a serious situation endemic to the structure of the labor and patriarchy, what often times goes untold is the historical construction Mexican and Central American males suffer through exploitative labor and further more become a target as hypersexual and even 'rapist.' More importantly, how do we understand the productivity of Mexican male sexuality in relation to the state when subjected to exploitative labor conditions? The hypersexual Mexican male is a pathologized figure in the US nation-state national imaginary, however, by examining the archives and court cases of the farmworkers from the 1960s and 1970s, this article argues that the exploitative labor conditions of farm workers is a social institution where different forms of sexual relations and gendered positionalities emerge and are constitutive of these very structures of exploitation. Said differently, the availability of any racialized body to the state and to any form of violence begs us to reconstitute how we think about gendered violence. Rape is built in to the availability, not an additive. When Mexican men are constructed as hyper masculine it represents pathologies of the farmworkers rather than the already sexualized structure of historical exploitative labor. My article is titled "'Silent Summers: 'Masculinity' and the Sexual Structural Violence of Farm Work.'" This piece interrogates how the state and capital produces emergent sexual formation that exceeds the racialized boundaries of gender and sexual ideals. I interrogate the notion of modern sexuality as it emerges through state violence in the Southwest for Mexican/Mexican American/Chicano men on the borderlands and how these material and discursive processes work to create certain pathologies on Mexican American men that deem them 'disposable' or 'over sexual.'

The second and third projects are less fully constructed. The second project is going to consider how the archive attempts hides while simultaneously makes visible the spectrum of oppression, colonialism, racism, and sexual violence in the Americas through the contemporary moment of the forced sterilization of Chicana women in LA in the 1960s and 70s. The archive, whether it likes to or not, participates in the transfer and continuity of knowledge – Chicana genealogies that draw on the historical repression of sexual violence against women in the borderlands. The third project is an article on Arturo Islas' papers in relation to *the Rain God*.

### *Plans for Future Projects*

During my tenure at Stanford, I made contact with Elizabeth Saenz-Ackermann and am planning on setting up a talk at the Center for Latin American Studies.