Andrea Barron

**Project title:** The Journey for Mexican Youth: Transnational and Returnees

**Keywords:** immigrant parents, higher education, bilingualism, parent support

Latino immigrant parents face a number of obstacles in their involvement in their children’s education. While research has focused on these issues at the elementary and high school level, very little research has examined immigrant parents of college students. As most immigrant parents have not gotten a college degree, they may not always feel they know how to relate to their children’s experiences. Moreover, their children may feel a sense of distance or separation from their families as they see their life trajectories moving in a different direction. My senior thesis project focuses on Latino immigrant parents and their involvement in their adult child’s education. I interviewed five Latino young adult college students in the Champaign-Urbana area, as well as one of each of the participants’ parents. I asked the young adults about their experiences with the educational system, and asked their parents about their involvement in their child’s early education and how that relationship has impacted the way in which they are involved in their child’s higher education. The purpose of this project is to explore how Latino immigrant parents support their child with regard to higher educational attainment and how college attendance affects family dynamics.
Juan Mora
[graduated December 2013]

**Project title**: Becoming the Young Lords: The Struggle for Puerto Rican Liberation and Politicization in 1960s and 1970s Chicago

**Keywords**: Lords, Chicago, Social Movements, Latinos

The Young Lords, a Chicago turf gang turned political activist organization that emerged in the late 1960s as radical leaders of the Puerto Rican nationalist movement and the fight against the urban renewal projects of Lincoln Park. This politicized group not only gave voice to the Puerto Rican community but also exemplified new political imaginings, aligning themselves with the Black Panthers and the Young Patriots. Studying how this turf gang became the Young Lords during the tumultuous 1960s will illuminate both the issues Puerto Ricans faced in Chicago and how this community organization sought to address them. Making extensive use of several Chicago newspapers, oral histories, and DePaul’s The Young Lords Collection, this project will examine the history of this radical community rights organization and the manner in which the Young Lords presented themselves and the Puerto Rican plight as well as how others represented this “gang” and its effort to transform itself into a political movement for the Puerto Rican people. I argue that the emergence of this movement was a harbinger of Puerto Rican and Latino political organization and mobilization at a grassroots level, which offered a vision of hope and new political imaginings. The YLO offers numerous lessons to the historiography of social movements. Although the organization was only sustained for a short period of time, the Young Lords demonstrated the potential that confrontational methods can be vital to the success of a social movement. They also demonstrated that if given the proper community support,
health care, child care, and other social services could be sustained and flourish without the
influence of large neighborhood institutions. The Young Lords also demonstrated the potency
that a multi-racial, multi-ethnic, and class-based grassroots mobilization could have on political
coalition building and mainstream politics.
Yesenia Olvera

**Project title:** The History of Latinos and Higher Education: Implementing Programs for Latino Recruitment and Retention in Chicago during the 1970s

**Keywords:** higher education, Latinos, retention, recruitment

The purpose of this project is to demonstrate how Latino students in Chicago took on a racial consciousness seeking equity in the universities they attended because of their marginalization in the city. Although there were federally funded programs and policies to encourage universities to help students of all backgrounds, Latino students felt their universities did not do enough to help them as underrepresented people. Therefore, these same students took the initiative and demanded the creation of programs to fit the needs of Latino students. In this project, I looked into the development of two programs: University of Illinois at Chicago’s Latin American Recruitment and Educational Services Program (LARES) and Northeastern Illinois University’s Proyecto Pa’ Lante, both created and established in the early 1970s to help Latino students academically, financially, and with counseling through active recruitment and retention. I also examine the history of Chicago to demonstrate how the Latino community in Chicago developed an ethnic consciousness, after being denied the resources to access public institutions, by discussing higher education in the analysis of the present to demonstrate that work still needs to be done in regards to helping Latino students.
Antonio Ortega

**Project title:** The Conservative Vice Lords Inc. and Young Lords Organization: Agents of Change

**Keywords:** Young Lords, Vice Lords, gangs, Chicago

This study will look specifically at two organizations that attempted to transform themselves from gangs to agents of change. The Conservative Vice Lords and the Young Lords were both formed in the late 1950s and by the late 1960s were on their way to becoming an incorporated organization and a revolutionary group. They worked on bettering their communities through programs that included breakfast programs, daycare centers, and free clinics. They were also apart of movements throughout the city that sought the creation of jobs for minorities and that were against urban renewal. While discussing the history and transformation of these organizations, newspaper articles from the *Chicago Defender* and the *Chicago Tribune* will be explored to examine the question of whether these organizations were really advocates of change in their community. Although they attempted to change the perception of themselves within their community, they were not able to the rid themselves of the gang label from the media. Although the *Chicago Defender* brought to light their many good deeds in the community, the Vice Lords were not able to shake off the negative stigma propagated by the *Chicago Tribune*. The Young Lords were not able to rid themselves of such an identity from both the *Defender* and the *Tribune*. By the beginning of the 1970s, these two organizations did not have the same publicity and growth. The Vice Lords reverted back to their former gang orientation and the Young Lords became a shell of its former self.