In this paper I examine the educational experience of young Mexican transnational and returnee students. Due to the increasing numbers of returning migrants to their native country, Mexico is experiencing a flow of backwards migration. This new wave of migrants are incorporating themselves into the schools in Mexico and are creating a whole new demographic for teachers to focus on. Through a combination of scholarly works, newspaper interviews, and educational journals I make an attempt in understanding these students’ journey across the border. My thesis aims to first make a comparison schooling between the United States and Mexico. By contextualizing the educational system in two countries, examining adjustment programs (or lack thereof), and discovering innovative ways teachers aid this student population; allows us the opportunity to make a more informed critique of the ways in which the Mexican government is excluding transnational and returnee students.
This essay analyzes how surveillance and discipline policies within the Chicago Public School (CPS) system serve to perpetuate the *school-to-prison pipeline*. Michel Foucault’s theories on discipline and punishment describe the methods in which individuals are carefully molded into obedient subjects, so as to not challenge state power. Through a Foucauldian framework, I compare CPS to suburban high schools in an effort to illustrate how youth of color are targeted and harshly disciplined. This serves to take them out of an educational setting to one that resembles a prison structure. Furthermore, since the Reagan era, youth of color have been afforded fewer opportunities as legislative peculiarities have pushed them further into the periphery of society and the *War and Drugs* has funneled them into the prison system where they are once again under the control of the state. The United States has evolved into the capital of mass incarceration as it boasts the highest imprisonment rate in the world. I argue these discipline policies only further exacerbate racial inequality within this country as young men of color are consistently under the watchful eye of the state. It would be more beneficial to adopt progressive policies that effectively combat the issues of crime without creating such a problematic dynamic in order to break the cycle of black and brown incarceration.
Yesenia Gonzalez

**Project title:** Gentrification and the Tourism Effect: The Case of Humboldt Park

**Keywords:** gentrification, Chicago, tourism, demographic change, urban renewal

Seventy-seven distinct community areas and a plethora of diverse neighborhoods make Chicago a great city with much to offer visitors. Tourism, as with any big city, plays a large role in Chicago’s economic prosperity and popularity. In Chicago one place stands out for its uniqueness and distinct cultural influence within the city; this place is the historically Puerto Rican neighborhood of Humboldt Park. Humboldt Park commands one of the biggest Latino populations in Chicago. Its culture and traditions are visible simply by walking through the neighborhood or attending its Puerto Rican festival held every year since 1966. This neighborhood represents the rich history of Puerto Ricans who have migrated to the city since the 1940s. Unfortunately, one of the biggest issues facing Humboldt Park is gentrification. With the displacement of Puerto Ricans in the neighborhood, we are witnessing the Puerto Rican cultural influence being replaced by commercial culture and people with economic affluence. In light of these concerns, the question that I seek to answer in this paper is: How might tourism help Humboldt Park maintain a sense of ethnic authenticity and Puerto Rican cultural appeal in the face of changing demographics and persistent urban renewal efforts?
Andrea Herrera

**Thesis title:** Si pero no: A Critique of the Eugenicist Underpinnings of Mestizaje

**Keywords:** Indigenismo, mestizaje, indigeneity, eugenics

In this thesis I will critique the eugenicist underpinnings in Jose Vasconcelos’s work *La raza cosmica* and Gloria Anzaldúa’s book *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* using Maria Josefina Saldaña-Portillo’s *The Revolutionary Imagination in the Americas and the Age of Development* and Nicole M. Guidotti-Hernández’s *Unspeakable Violence: Remapping U.S. and Mexican National Imaginaries*, because of both Saldaña-Portillo and Guidotti-Hernández critical examination of Mexican and Chicana/o history for dispelling myths surrounding indigeneity. By looking at the history of both mestizaje and indigenismo, I trace how each is used and deployed in different struggles such as the Mexican Independence movement, the Mexican Revolution, the Chicano Movement, and the present day Immigration Movement. This shows how the ideology surrounding mestizaje and indigenismo surface throughout time and influence each other. I specifically examine how the construction of “Indian difference” by the Spanish Colonial regime influenced Jose Vasconcelos and how he subsequently influenced Gloria Anzaldúa, thus showing how both drew influence from the theory of Eugenics.
Project title: Latina Teenagers: Caught in the Crossfire of Discourses on Latina Fertility and Teen Pregnancy

Keywords: fertility, Latino threat, motherhood

The purpose of this research is to examine how images of Latina teen mothers are constructed through the analysis of discourses on Latina fertility and teen pregnancy. This research is a review of the literature that has been created around these two rhetorics and the implications they can have for young Latina mothers. The first portion of this paper will look at narratives of Latina fertility and discuss how Latinas are seen as hyperfertile and dangerous. Additionally, I will examine how teen pregnancy has been framed as a public health problem and pathologized. The conclusive argument is that narratives on teen pregnancy combined with ideologies on Latina fertility can create negative perceptions and approaches to Latina teen mothers. This research is importance because society’s perception on young Latina mothers can influence how they are serviced through various public institutions and what opportunities they are offered.
Nicole Talis

**Project title:** Making Bilingual Education Work: A Comparative Approach of Schools in Chicago and Champaign

**Keywords:** education, equality, Chicago, Champaign, language, politics, teaching methods

In this paper I argue that bilingual education encounters problematic discrimination and prejudice against children who are seeking for an opportunity to succeed academically, socially and culturally. My thesis will provide the history, politics and importance of bilingual education from the time it was first administered all the way through the recent changes that have just been implemented. The central research questions of this study are: what methods produce success and how can we make bilingual education work in our country? I will focus on the similarities and differences between the teaching methods of two demographic locations: Chicago and Champaign, IL. This research is made possible through formal writings, informal interviews with teachers and staff members, and one-on-one time spent with the students in the bilingual education program. My thesis will deconstruct all of the aspects of bilingual education and purpose my educated opinion concerning the topic.
Thesis title: Mi Casa es su Casa?: How Public Transit Fosters Gentrification in Pilsen, Chicago

Keywords: gentrification, Pilsen, CTA, Pink Line, people of color

Neighborhood gentrification and mass public transit strongly characterize the City of Chicago. Among all people of color, Latino/as in Chicago rely on rail transit to commute without having to budget hefty car expenditures. Living near a train line is especially beneficial for Latino/as with fewer economic resources that depend on public transit to get to areas of employment and school. Previous research has rarely linked gentrification with the investment of transit because gentrification is increasingly thought of through a traditional framework. My research challenges the notions of gentrification beyond the common indicators of property value and income that are used to measure its existence. While transit is not the only cause of gentrification, it contributes to Pilsen’s “revitalization” process. In 2006, the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) embarked on a series of changes in Pilsen’s rail access with the incorporation of the Pink Line. By isolating the Pink Line as a space of “color,” the CTA fostered gentrification in Pilsen by making transit to downtown more appealing to white middle class professionals. My thesis investigates how this transit process unraveled, and argues that CTA’s approach to the Pink Line in Pilsen failed to consider the interests and concerns of objecting residents. This subsequently made CTA an overlooked contributor of Pilsen’s gentrification process, and has marked the transit agency as an endorser of “transit racism.”