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T W E N T Y - F O U R

Checkered Choices, Political Assertions: The Unarticulated Racial Identity of La Asociación Nacional México-Americana

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The current century has witnessed a vibrant conversation surrounding Latina/o racial identity. This discussion has been triggered by scholarship that troubles the assumption that Mexican Americans have always identified as a nonwhite population. Martha Menchaca, looking back to the nineteenth century, has shown how the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo's (1848) requirement that conquered Mexicans be eligible for U.S. citizenship conflicted with the 1790 Naturalization Act, which set whiteness as a precondition for naturalization and citizenship. From their incorporation, then, Mexicans' citizenship rights were violated and their racial status was rendered ambiguous. This in turn put pressure on Mexicans, especially Mexican Indians, to claim whiteness and denounce markers of nonwhiteness in a defensive posture against a broader society that was hostile to their incorporation. Neil Foley, looking at the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) in the 1930s, demonstrated that activists in Texas resisted state-led efforts to categorize Mexicans as nonwhite. And Ian Haney-Lopez, focusing on the Los Angeles Chicana/o movement of the 1960s and 1970s, argued that previous to *el movimiento*, Mexican Americans did not embrace wholly a nonwhite identity. Since then

1 numerous historians and legal scholars have explored the question of Mexican
2 racial subjectivity.¹ Collectively this work suggests that Mexican Americans
3 have not hesitated to claim whiteness as a strategy to overcome racial discrim-
4 ination and that discussions of their racial subjectivity are far more complex
5 that often presumed. This is particularly the case in Texas, which has been the
6 site of the majority of studies.

7 Latina/o racial subjectivity is also a pressing contemporary issue because of
8 the U.S. census. For several decades now a significant portion of the Latina/o
9 population has chosen Some Other Race (SOR) rather than claim an officially
10 sanctioned racial category. Indeed, 97 percent of all persons checking the SOR
11 box are Latinas/os. Given that Latinas/os are now the largest racial or ethnic
12 group in the United States, the nation is grappling with the fact that up to
13 40 percent of that population does not racially “conform.”² Accordingly social
14 scientists have sought to understand what variables are associated with par-
15 ticular racial identities. Key variables include age, gender, nativity, number of
16 years in the United States, as well as education and income. While the overall
17 results of this literature do suggest some relationship between racial identity
18 and level of integration in U.S. society, they are hardly conclusive and point to
19 a vast complexity in racial choices and strategies.³

20 One of the features that characterizes both literatures is the desire to as-
21 certain a “true” Latina/o racial identity. For example, Thomas Guglielmo
22 and Brian Behnken, both of whom provide compelling evidence of Mexican
23 Americans’ commitment to whiteness as an antidiscrimination strategy,
24 suggest that this desire for whiteness was not limited to middle-class Lati-
25 nas/os and elites but extended to the working class.⁴ Indeed in an other-
26 wise excellent book, Behnken acknowledges that working-class Mexican
27 Americans may have had alternative racial subjectivities, but he overlooks
28 them because LULAC, a large and established organization, best represents
29 the trajectory of mid-twentieth-century Mexican American racial subjectiv-
30 ity.⁵ What interests me is our desire to develop a singular racial narrative re-
31 garding Latina/o racial identity. Why is this so important? What gets left off
32 the table? What are the implications for building an antiracist movement?
33 One of the consequences of the historical literature is that it compels us to
34 see Mexican racial identity as a choice. For some Chicana/o studies scholars
35 this is an uncomfortable literature, as it becomes painfully obvious that some
36 ethnic Mexicans embraced white supremacy in order to alleviate their own op-
37 pression. While there has not been sufficient research across space and time
38 to draw definitive conclusions about the larger *Mexicana/o* population out-
39

side of Texas, there is no doubt that Latinas/os, as one of the most racially subordinated groups today, have a checkered history when it comes to their relationship with whiteness and nonwhiteness.

As a critical ethnic studies scholar I am particularly interested in the political responses and interpretations of such findings. I welcome this scholarship as it provides a more accurate picture of Latina/o racial subjectivity both past and present. As any U.S. Latina/o knows, our families and communities are filled with a diversity of racial and political identities. Too often it is assumed and hoped that Latinas/os, as racially subordinated people, should get their act together, identify as nonwhite, and join the antiracist struggle. But one reason there has been uneven movement in this direction is because a significant number of Latinas/os insist on whiteness as their racial identity. And as Chicana/o studies scholars we have been slow to accept that fact.

Eduardo Bonilla-Silva has tried to capture some of this complexity by suggesting that U.S. Latinas/os are shifting to a triracial structure similar to Latin America's.⁶ The top of the hierarchy consists of those considered white. Second are the "honorary" whites, and at the bottom is the "lumpen black," which comprises those who cannot pass as white, immigrants, and the working class. Part of the power of Bonilla-Silva's analysis is that he does not claim that any single racial identity is more authentic than others. And the evidence is compelling that Latinas/os are becoming increasingly fragmented along economic, political, immigration, and racial lines.⁷

In this essay I argue that we need to accept that a segment of the Latina/o population is invested in claiming whiteness. Equally important, however, is the fact that others are invested in claiming nonwhiteness. While these positions may be associated with such variables as income and education, they are first and foremost *political decisions* that are informed by one's experiences and environment. Reading recent quantitative analyses of Latina/o racial identity, it is easy to forget that political agency is involved. Often researchers position Latinas/os as gravitating toward whiteness because it represents the best strategy to counter discrimination. Alternatively Latina/o racial identity is seen as a function of specific variables or racial markers. In her study of naturalized Mexican immigrants who voted along conservative lines, Carleen Basler argues that conservative voting was an active and conscious way of declaring one's whiteness and distancing oneself from recent immigrants, dark-skinned Latinas/os, and African Americans.⁸ Her work illuminates the agency involved in articulating a racial identity, as well as how white supremacy informs such responses.

1 I explore these issues by examining one particular case of Mexican American
2 racial identity: the Asociación Nacional México-Americana (ANMA), a
3 radical political organization in the southwestern United States in the 1940s
4 and 1950s that was connected to the Communist Party and the International
5 Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers (aka Mine Mill). Though it did
6 not articulate an overt racial identity, a close reading of the archives indicates
7 an implicit but strong and consistent nonwhite racial subjectivity. Some may
8 dismiss ANMA because of its relatively small size or the fact that it lasted only
9 five years, but that is missing the point. Disregarding ANMA because it is not
10 necessarily “representative” not only reproduces the idea that there is a single
11 or true Mexicana/o racial identity or political voice, but it also overlooks the
12 power that collective action can yield. ANMA created power among its indi-
13 vidual membership as well as within the larger community and across the
14 larger political landscape. Although small and fleeting, ANMA represents an
15 important segment of the Mexican American population who consciously
16 and actively articulated a nonwhite identity in solidarity with other people of
17 color. Instead of seeing ANMA as an outlier that can be dismissed, we should
18 see it as part of a much richer tapestry of Mexican American racial politics, one
19 that is especially important to acknowledge prior to *el movimiento*. ANMA as-
20 serted a nonwhite racial identity by never claiming whiteness, by allying with
21 other minoritized groups, and through the development of an antiracist,
22 materialist analysis.

23 24 25 The Roots of the Asociación Nacional México-Americana

26 ANMA was initially the political arm of Mine Mill, which had roots in the mil-
27 itant Western Federation of Miners.⁹ The Federation was notable for its Wob-
28 bly influence, which contributed to a strong class identity that facilitated the
29 formation of worker organizations across racial lines. In the U.S. Southwest,
30 Mine Mill was composed largely of ethnic Mexicans with strong Mexican
31 American leadership. ANMA was created because of the need for a perma-
32 nent, national organization to defend Mexican Americans’ rights. It emerged
33 in 1949 in Albuquerque, and its founding convention was in Phoenix.¹⁰ The
34 influence of mining culture can be seen in figure 24.1, in which both a smelter
35 and the earth from which the metals and minerals are drawn are depicted in
36 the background.¹¹

37 Although ANMA was linked to Mine Mill, the Communist Party quickly
38 saw its strategic importance, as it sought to partner with Mexican Americans
39 during this period.¹² Consequently the Communist Party and ANMA were

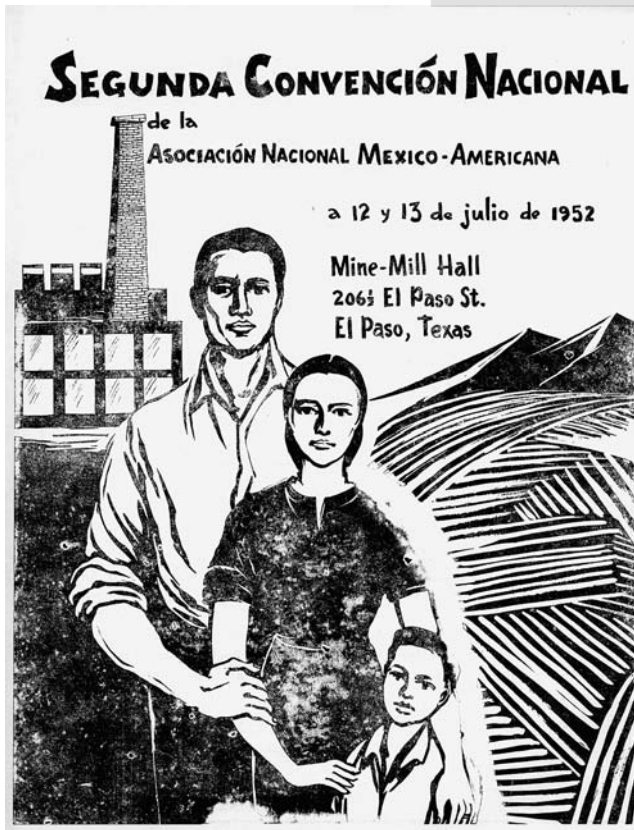


FIGURE 24.1.
Program cover of
ANMA's second
National Conven-
tion, 1952. Source:
Program of Segunda
Convención Na-
cional, July 1952. El
Paso Public Library,
Nathalie Gross
Collection, 1948-75,
Archive 819, Mexi-
can American Box 1,
Folder Mexican
American—Civil
Rights—ANMA.
Courtesy of the
Nathalie Gross
Collection.

close, as were ANMA and Mine Mill and various other labor organizations.¹³ ANMA's national office relocated from Albuquerque to Los Angeles in 1951. In addition each state had its own central office and numerous local offices; for instance, in Colorado there were locals in Denver, Boulder, Pueblo, Walsenburg, Trinidad, and Greeley.¹⁴ Many of the locals were formed in response to police abuse, a key concern of ANMA.¹⁵ It is difficult to say how large ANMA was. According to one source, it claimed four thousand members, but Mario Garcia found a source claiming fifty thousand.¹⁶ It would seem that the smaller figure is more likely.

As a political organization ANMA described itself as "a national association for the protection of civil, economic, and political rights, and for improving the education, culture, and progress of the Mexican people in the United States."¹⁷ ANMA did this in a variety of ways, including through its newspaper, *Progreso*, which reported the various activities of the state chapters and locals

1 and was also an educational tool to promote its political ideology. Its slogan,
2 “In the field and in the city, in the factory and the home ANMA educates, ben-
3 efits, and protects,”¹⁸ attests to the organization’s efforts to reach all spheres of
4 Mexican American life.

5 While there were some issues that all chapters engaged in, such as opposi-
6 tion to the Korean War, the deportation of immigrants, and the McCarren
7 Walter Act, ANMA also pursued very specific causes. In one case ANMA de-
8 fended Mexican culture by successfully boycotting the Colgate Palmolive
9 Petty Company, which sponsored the Judy Canova radio show; ANMA op-
10 posed its stereotypic depictions of Mexicans.¹⁹ Locals focused on geograph-
11 ically specific concerns. As an active promoter of the Spanish language, the
12 Chicago chapter ran the Lazaro Cardenas School, which taught English,
13 Spanish, and art classes.²⁰ In Los Angeles members established the Los An-
14 geles Trade Union Committee of ANMA, which spearheaded an organizing
15 drive to improve Mexicans’ standard of living and to protect their economic
16 rights.²¹ In New Mexico there was tremendous support for the mining strike
17 in Bayard, depicted in the film *Salt of the Earth*.²² It appears that all locals reg-
18 ularly held dances and celebrated Cinco de Mayo and other cultural events
19 that honored Mexican culture.

20 Despite the intensity of its activities, ANMA folded in 1954. The primary
21 reason for its demise was the intense red-baiting of the cold war era. Mine
22 Mill was expelled from the Congress of Industrial Organizations because of
23 its leftist tendencies, which had a significant affect on ANMA. The union had
24 provided various forms of support to ANMA, including giving a New Mexi-
25 can local funds to attend an ANMA convention in Los Angeles and providing
26 lodging to ANMA delegates participating in a convention in New Mexico.
27 But perhaps more important, as Shana Bernstein has documented, was the
28 intense pressure on less radical organizations to break ties with explicitly left
29 groups in order to save themselves. This can be seen most vividly in such
30 legislation as the Internal Security Act of 1950 that sent a chill through all
31 progressive organizations.²³ It is important to point out that ANMA did not
32 quietly acquiesce to political attacks. When the *El Paso Herald Post* of Texas
33 described a forthcoming ANMA convention as “red submarines in the Rio
34 Grande,” ANMA responded with a scathing critique emphasizing the domi-
35 nant society’s unwillingness to recognize and act upon the hardship and dis-
36 crimination that Mexican Americans faced—and thus the need for ANMA.²⁴

The Racial Subjectivity of the Asociación Nacional
México-Americana

Examining the historical record indicates little explicit mention of ANMA's racial subjectivity or that of its membership. This should not be terribly surprising for several reasons. First, as has been noted by other scholars, Mexican Americans, particularly during midcentury, frequently collapsed race, ethnicity, and language in their discussions of difference. This practice was especially pronounced in New Mexico, where there has been a long tradition of eschewing "racial difference" in favor of "cultural" and "ethnic conflict."²⁵ Nevertheless the archive reveals a robust discourse on racial subjectivity in which ANMA clearly positioned itself as nonwhite. This can be discerned in three ways. First, ANMA and its members never claimed to be white. This may sound insignificant, but it is not when compared to the dominant antidiscrimination strategies of contemporaneous Mexican Americans. Second, ANMA regularly identified with and aligned itself with other people of color. Again this may not sound significant by today's standards, but we know that this was not a widely popular choice among Mexican Americans at the time. Third, ANMA advocated a clearly antiracist approach to solving social problems.

During the 1940s and 1950s many Mexican American political organizations sought to challenge discrimination and Mexicans' subordinated status. A common strategy, especially in Texas, was to insist that Mexicans were Caucasian and therefore should not be discriminated against. Not surprisingly, this generated numerous assertions of whiteness on the part of Mexican Americans. Indeed at one point activists tried to pass a Texas law that declared Latinas/os to be Caucasian. (It never passed.)²⁶ However, nowhere in the historical record could I find evidence of ANMA's claiming whiteness, let alone pursuing a whiteness strategy. The organization never used the terms *white*, *Anglo*, or *Caucasian* to refer to itself collectively or to individual members. Instead it consistently referred to itself and its members as Mexican Americans or Mexicanas/os, both of which were imbued with a nonwhite racial meaning. There is no doubt that ANMA was aware of other Latina/o civil rights organizations and their strategies. Although it was closest to labor and antiracist left organizations, ANMA tried to maintain civil and respectful relations with more mainstream Latina/o groups.²⁷ Accordingly its silence on whiteness should be read as salient.

While many contemporary scholars have been critical of the whiteness strategy, Maria Josefina Saldaña-Portillo offers an alternative interpretation by reminding us that racial subjectivity is not simply a matter of choice.

1 Drawing on the work of Haney-Lopez, she points to the degree to which
2 the law establishes available racial categories. While I appreciate Saldaña-
3 Portillo's intervention, I argue that ANMA did in fact *choose* to identify as
4 nonwhite.²⁸ It was cognizant of the strategies of the LULAC and the GI Forum,
5 another civil rights organization and consciously chose an alternative path
6 precisely because it disagreed with the political implications of such racial
7 subjectivities.

8 ANMA's racial subjectivity is also evident in how and the degree to which
9 it identified with other minoritized groups. In its publications, speeches,
10 and events it is apparent that ANMA consistently sought to align itself with
11 "other minorities." It insisted that a coalition could more vigorously attack the
12 white power structure rather than each group individually. For example, one
13 publication points out, "Mexican Americans represented only one of several
14 minorities, who in some cases were worse off than Mexicans. The struggle
15 and gains of one minority aid those of the rest. We should unite with Blacks
16 who suffer from similar conditions as our own, and in this way reinforce both
17 groups."²⁹ Certainly ANMA was not alone in partnering with other people of
18 color; however, its strategy was distinctive. For example, in *Mendez v. West-*
19 *minster* the American Jewish Congress, the National Association for the Ad-
20 vancement of Colored People, and the Japanese American Citizens League
21 all supported Mexican Americans' struggle against school segregation. How-
22 ever, interracial support was slow to develop, emerging only in the appeals
23 process. In other cases such interracial alliances were hindered by questions
24 of racial subjectivity—namely Mexican American resistance to seeing them-
25 selves as a racial minority.³⁰

26 In contrast ANMA articulated a more organic and comprehensive culture
27 of solidarity. Publications routinely asserted the need to ally with "Negros," as
28 well as Jews and sympathetic whites.³¹ Besides encouraging general solidar-
29 ity, ANMA also offered specific support to African Americans. Virginia Ruiz,
30 ANMA's executive secretary, "pledg[ed] . . . joint action of the ANMA with the
31 Negro people against another legal lynching such as the Martinsville Seven,
32 the Lt. Gilbert Case and the Trenton Six."³²

33 Interracial solidarity can also be seen in ANMA's events. *Semana de His-*
34 *toria y Cultural Mexicana* was held in Belvedere in 1950, and both Jewish
35 and Black groups were invited to perform.³³ Similarly ANMA observed Negro
36 History Month and on another occasion hosted a lecture titled "Negro His-
37 tory."³⁴ Importantly, there appears to be some reciprocity with communities of
38 color. In the program for its second national convention, for instance, there is
39 a prominent message of support from the Los Angeles Negro Labor Council.

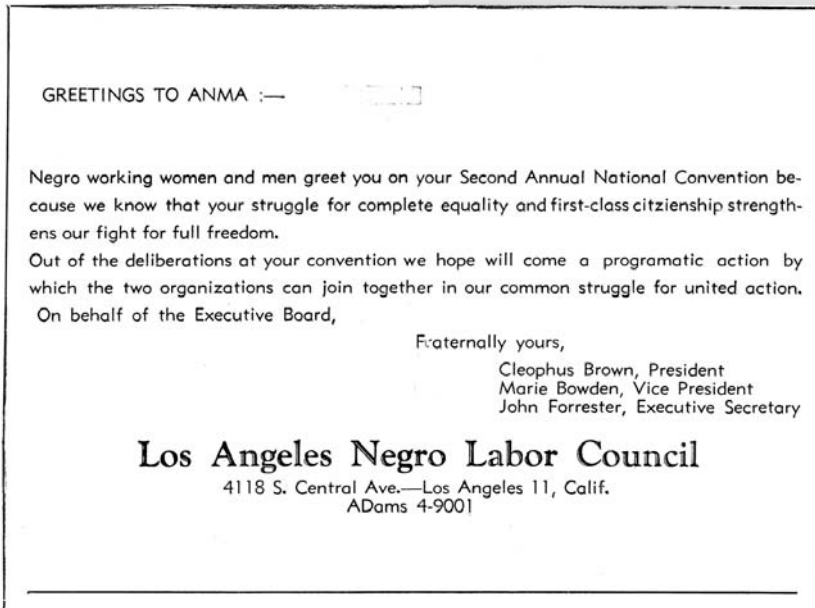


FIGURE 24.2. Message of solidarity from the Los Angeles Negro Labor Council to ANMA, 1952. Source: Program of Segunda Convención Nacional, July 1952. El Paso Public Library, Nathalie Gross Collection, 1948–75, Archive 819, Mexican American Box 1, Folder Mexican American—Civil Rights—ANMA. Courtesy of the Nathalie Gross Collection.

These values and practices stand in stark contrast to Behnken’s research on Latina/o and African American solidarity in Texas, or rather the lack thereof. He provides dramatic evidence of antiblack racism on the part of Felix Tijerina, a LULAC leader who would not serve African Americans in his restaurant and actively opposed Black civil rights protests.³⁵ In comparison ANMA took the question of solidarity to a whole different level—with important implications for its racial subjectivity. Solidarity was not merely strategic; it was a central part of ANMA’s political identity. As numerous writers have pointed out, participating in antiblack racism is one of the steps through which non-white immigrants assert whiteness. This is painfully evident in Behnken’s account of Tijerina, who was so terrified of his proximity to blackness that he consciously participated in white supremacy. ANMA did not fear blackness because it saw itself in a similar racial position and was committed to joining forces to end white supremacy. Such an understanding was predicated on its larger political ideology.

1
2 The Conception of Racism in the Asociación Nacional
3 México-Americana

4 This brings us to the third manifestation of ANMA's racial subjectivity: its
5 conception of racism and how to fight it. Coming from a Marxist perspec-
6 tive, ANMA insisted that "Mexicans were exploited as cheap labor, but they
7 were also oppressed as a distinct ethnic racial community."³⁶ While ANMA
8 understood that anti-Mexican racism could not be challenged solely via
9 class struggle, the organization insisted there was a link between racism and
10 capitalism. It saw racism as a tool that was used to divide the working class
11 and to keep Mexicans (and other people of color) in a subordinated state.
12 Because of this analysis, in its discussions of racism—which frequented its
13 publications—writers never berated Anglos per se, but they were critical of a
14 white, racist power structure. For instance, in a meeting of the local chapter of
15 Downey, California, members "discussed three instances of 'White Supremacy'
16 involving several Mexican American families." Ultimately the members
17 were able to "provide relief" for those families.³⁷ The very acknowledgment
18 of the concept of white supremacy is a powerful marker of ANMA's racial con-
19 sciousness. How could ANMA ever claim whiteness knowing its role in an
20 oppressive racial structure?

21 Conversely ANMA did not attribute Mexicans' inferior social position to
22 "cultural misunderstandings" or to Mexican Americans' alleged shortcom-
23 ings. Instead Mexicans' subordinated status was seen as a function of racism,
24 which in turn was a function of capitalism. The existence of this worldview
25 contributed to a fuller understanding of what racism was and how it worked:
26 racism was not an unknowable, unpredictable, irrational force; it was a know-
27 able thing that needed to be systematically challenged.

28 This understanding of racism is evident in how ANMA conceptualized
29 larger social problems—beginning with how Mexicans saw themselves.
30 Among oppressed peoples there are always those who seek acceptance by at-
31 tempting to make themselves more acceptable to the dominant group. ANMA
32 would have none of that: "Discrimination has forced some of us to deny our
33 heritage. The word 'Mexicano,' which refers to the country and culture of our
34 ancestors has been given a bad connotation. As a result, there are some of us
35 who have sought refuge in labels like, 'Spanish-American, Latin-American,
36 Spanish Californian, Spanish-speaking' etc. Discrimination has made us do
37 this."³⁸ Here we see a direct challenge to those who would adopt a more ac-
38 commodating or conservative politics. ANMA understood *why* people might
39 do so, but would still not accept it. In another instance ANMA discussed hous-

ing segregation at length in *Progreso*. The author, writing in a mocking tone, suggests that the most “advanced” Mexican Americans (who often pass as “Spanish” or “Nice Mexicans”) articulate highly problematic understandings of the causes of segregation: “La raza is responsible; if everyone behaved well we would not all lose-out because of one person’s behavior. . . . No one takes me to be a Mexican. I can live wherever I want. But I do care about the others. . . . It is not certain that segregation actually exists; if you are decent, you have nothing to fear.”³⁹ The author offers a series of “common-sense” understandings of Mexican racial inferiority that were (and still are) in circulation. These explanations are largely linked to blaming the victim and the merits of passing. ANMA demonstrates a fairly sophisticated understanding of how racism operates and the degree to which it had been internalized by Mexican Americans. The solution, according to ANMA, was certainly not to pass nor to claim whiteness but to embrace their *Mexicanidad*, including its nonwhite elements, specifically indigeneity. This solution required ANMA to challenge fellow Mexicans who were too accommodating and to unite with like-minded people.

Summary

Even though ANMA did not explicitly articulate a racial identity, its larger discourse and practice were in fact based on a nonwhite racial subjectivity that was manifest in at least three ways. First, the fact that ANMA never claimed whiteness is quite significant, as this claim was common at the time. Second, the consistency and depth with which ANMA sought to ally with other nonwhite groups suggests a deep commitment to solidarity with other people of color. This position makes it difficult to believe that ANMA would have pursued a strategy that advanced Mexican American rights while further subordinating others. Third, ANMA conceptualized social problems in clearly antiracist terms. Its particular conception of racism was firmly linked to a larger materialist analysis that saw racism as a function of capitalism.

The contemporary politics of Latina/o racial subjectivity has enormous implications for the evolving U.S. racial formation, in particular, antiracist strategies. Hence it needs to be taken very seriously by ethnic studies scholars. The first wave of scholarship has dispelled the idea that Latinas/os, especially Mexicans, are an unambiguously nonwhite population. But perhaps in our quest to trouble the inherited wisdom of Chicana/o studies—that ethnic Mexicans are unambiguously nonwhite—we have lost sight of the fact that racial identity can in some places and sometimes be a choice—a political

1 choice. And just as some ethnic Mexicans insisted on whiteness as an antidis-
 2 crimination strategy, some also insisted on being a person of color.

3 The fact that researchers have uncovered such differing racial subjectivities
 4 should not be a surprise. The Latina/o community continues to reflect such
 5 splits today. It is our task to understand these dynamics as completely as possi-
 6 ble in order to develop the most effective strategies to achieve social justice.

7
 8
 9 NOTES

10 1. Menchaca, “Chicano Indianism”; Foley, “Partly Colored or Other White”; Haney-
 11 Lopez, *Racism on Trial*; Gomez, *Manifest Destinies*; Guglielmo, “Fighting for Caucasian
 12 Rights”; Saldaña-Portillo, “‘How Many Mexicans [Is] a Horse Worth?’”; Wilson,
 13 “Brown over ‘Other White’”; Gross, *What Blood Won’t Tell*; Behnken, *Fighting Their*
 14 *Own Battles*; Blanton, “George I. Sanchez, Ideology and Whiteness in the Making of the
 15 Mexican American Civil Rights Movement.”

16 2. See Rodriguez, *Changing Race*, for a detailed discussion of the Census Bureau’s
 17 efforts to address this problem. Since 1980 the state-sanctioned racial choices include
 18 American Indian, Asian/Pacific Islander, black, white, and SOR. In 2000 the category
 19 “multiracial” was added. However, the Census Bureau has proposed making “Hispanic”
 a racial category in the 2020 census.

20 3. Part of this ambiguity is due to the fact that researchers employ a variety of
 21 methodological approaches and data sources. For a sampling of this literature, see
 22 Tafoya, *Shades of Belonging*; Michael and Timberlake, “Are Latinos Becoming White?”;
 23 Logan, “How Race Counts for Hispanic Americans”; Golash-Boza and Darrity, “Latino
 24 Racial Choices”; Dowling, *Mexican Americans and the Question of Race*; Pulido and Pas-
 tor, “Where in the World Is Juan.”

25 4. Guglielmo, “Fighting for Caucasian Rights”; Behnken, *Fighting Their Own Battles*.

26 5. While it is true that LULAC was a large established organization, it is also true that
 27 it has an excellent set of records—an important point to appreciate. I am grateful to
 28 David Hernandez for this insight.

29 6. Bonilla-Silva, “From Bi-racial to Tri-racial.”

30 7. See, for example, Vallejo, *Barrios to Burbs*; Ochoa, *Becoming Neighbors in a Mexican*
American Community.

31 8. Basler, “White Dreams and Red Votes.”

32 9. The fullest treatment of ANMA is Garcia, “Mexican American Radicals and the
 33 Cold War.” On Mine Mill, see Garcia, “Border Proletariats.”

34 10. On the founding of ANMA, see Garcia, “Mexican American Radicals and the Cold
 35 War,” 200–204; “Una Breve Historia,” Convención Nacional Fundadera de ANMA, pro-
 36 gram, El Paso Public Library, Nathalie Gross Collection, 1948–75, Archive 819, Mexican
 37 American Box 1, Folder Mexican American—Civil Rights—ANMA (hereafter Nathalie
 Gross Collection).

38 11. Equally important is the heteropatriarchal nature of the family, which is beyond
 39 the scope of this chapter.

12. FBI report 100-5176, Denver, May 3, 1951, 11-12; FBI report 100-31499, San Francisco, August 20, 1951, 12-13. All FBI reports obtained under the Freedom of Information Act. 1
13. The FBI generated over 1,500 pages on ANMA through its informants. The number of informants ranged from twenty-seven in Los Angeles to four in Arizona and focused on ideological and membership overlap between ANMA and the Communist Party. According to Garcia, the FBI investigated ANMA in order to prove a link with the Communist Party and thus declare ANMA subversive. For example, it was reported that ANMA's president, Alfredo Montoya, was seen acting as secretary at CP meetings (FBI Report 100-30990, Los Angeles, July 5, 1951, 5). However, Garcia questions the significance of these observations, pointing out that shared politics does not necessitate collusion. While Garcia is correct, I am more apt to believe that there was in fact significant overlap between the two organizations based on their similar organizational culture, their objectives, the allies each group associated with, and the tendency toward solidarity among the Left during the cold war. As an example, the FBI submitted the ANMA document, "Resolution on the Mexican People" as evidence that the Communist Party controlled the San Francisco chapter. While there is no evidence of actual control, it does suggest overlap. FBI report 100-31499; Garcia, "Mexican American Radicals and the Cold War," 222-26. 2
14. FBI Report 100-5176, May 3, 1951, Denver, 1. 3
15. Urrutia, "An Offspring of Discontent"; FBI report 100-3464, Phoenix, May 17, 1951, 5-6; FBI report 100-30990, Los Angeles, July 5, 1951, 7. 4
16. Garcia, "Mexican American Radicals and the Cold War," 202. 5
17. "Constitucion de la Asociación Nacional Mexicana-Americana," Nathalie Gross Collection, translation mine. 6
18. *Progreso* 4.9 (1952): 2, Nathalie Gross Collection, Folder Mexican American—Civil Rights—ANMA—*Progreso*. 7
19. "Sigue en Pie," *Progreso*, April, 1952, 4, Nathalie Gross Collection; FBI Report 100-5176, January 5, 1952, Denver, 19-20. 8
20. FBI report 100-22449, Chicago, July 2, 1951, 5. 9
21. *Eastside Sun*, August 7, 1952, Chicano Resource Center, Los Angeles County Public Library. 10
22. FBI report 100-4596, El Paso, November 24, 1951, 2. 11
23. Bernstein, *Bridges of Reform*, especially chapter 4. On efforts to resist, see Healey and Isserman, *California Red*. 12
24. Letter to Mr. Pooley, editor, *El Paso Herald Post*, from ANMA, no date, Nathalie Gross Collection. 13
25. See Gomez, *Manifest Destinies*, 79. 14
26. Guglielmo, "Fighting for Caucasian Rights." 15
27. Garcia, "Mexican American Radicals and the Cold War," 221-22. 16
28. Saldaña-Portillo, "'How Many Mexicans [Is] a Horse Worth?'" 17
29. Alfonso Sena, "Discurso Principal Conferencia Estatal de Colorado," Nathalie Gross Collection; see also Garcia, "Mexican-American Radicals and the Cold War," 208. 18
30. On *Mendez v. Westminster* more generally, see Strum, *Mendez v. Westminster*. On the complexities of interracial alliances, see Robinson and Robinson, "The Limits of 19

1 Interracial Coalitions”; Blanton, “George I. Sanchez, Ideology and Whiteness in the
2 Making of the Mexican American Civil Rights Movement.”

3 31. Asian Americans make only rare appearances in ANMA’s discourse. This is consis-
4 tent with subsequent Chicana/o political organizing. See Pulido, *Black, Brown, Yellow*
5 *and Left*, chapter 5.

6 32. FBI Report 100–31499, San Francisco, August 20, 1951, 11.

7 33. “ANMA Inicia Su Gran Campaña Pro-Cultura,” *Progreso* 2.4 (1950): 1, Nathalie
8 Gross Collection.

9 34. Garcia, “Mexican American Radicals and the Cold War,” 222; FBI Report,
10 100–30990, Los Angeles, July 5, 1951, 14.

11 35. Behnken, “Elusive Unity”; Behnken, *Fighting Their Own Battles*, chpt. 2 While it
12 is undoubtedly true that Tijerina was an outlier, it is also true that he was repeatedly
13 elected to LULAC office.

14 36. Garcia, “Mexican American Radicals and the Cold War,” 205.

15 37. FBI Report, 100–30990, July 5, 1951, 19.

16 38. Alfonso Sena, “Discurso Principal Conferencia Estatal de Colorado,” translation
17 mine.

18 39. “Segregan a los Mexicanos Aqui: Venden Propiedades con Restricciones Racia-
19 les,” *Progreso* 2.4 (1950): 5, Nathalie Gross Collection.