

## **“Programas Sin Vergüenza (Shameless Programs)”: Mapping Chicanas in Community Radio in the 1970s**

Monica de La Torre

*Women are not being presented fairly in public broadcasting media;  
moreover, the viewing and listening publics are shown a distorted image of  
women and women’s role in society.*

—Report of the Task Force on Women in Public Broadcasting

*When they called in, they’d tell us they’d had to leave home to use the corner  
pay phone—God forbid their husbands should overhear them calling in to  
this programa sin vergüenza—this ‘shameless’ radio program.*

—María Martin, “Crossing Borders”

When President Lyndon B. Johnson spoke at the passing of the Public Broadcasting Act of 1967—the last piece of his Great Society legislation—he affirmed that the airwaves belonged to *all* people, for the “enlightenment” of all people (Johnson 1967). This act formed lasting institutions: the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), National Public Radio (NPR), and the Public Broadcasting System (PBS). With these new entities, the 1970s witnessed an unprecedented surge of public broadcasting, including radio programs that continue to sound out of our radios to this day, notably NPR’s *Morning Edition* and *All Things Considered*. Radio shows currently being uncovered like *Somos Chicanas* (We are chicanas) and *Mujer* (Woman) demonstrate that this moment of radio possibility led to much innovation by Chicana/o community broadcasters. Yet, even seven years after the Public Broadcasting Act was authorized, its promise to dedicate the airwaves to all people had yet to come to fruition. In 1974, the CPB commissioned a Task Force on Women in Public Broadcasting that signaled to a problem endemic to public media—not *all* people were being represented or employed in what promised to be a medium for all. Four years later, the CPB commissioned the Task Force on Minorities in

Public Broadcasting (1978), once again affirming that the possibilities of public broadcasting needed to be reimagined.<sup>1</sup> These Task Forces can be cast as a result of the social-movement activism of the 1970s, notably the women's and civil rights movements of this era. These reports provide a historical record of the state of women and minorities in public broadcasting, and the record shows women of color were neither equitably represented nor employed in this arena. Yet, beginning in 1975 and through the end of the decade, Chicanas harnessed community radio technologies in new and radical ways. I spin this historical record once more to listen for the tactics and strategies deployed by Chicana radio activists within programming and hiring, while amplifying their role as leaders of Chicana/o-controlled community radio stations.

A small yet potent number of Chicanas in technical and leadership roles had a significant impact on the fabric that constitutes community radio broadcasting. Their model of alternative public media included programming for Chicanas and farmworkers, segments of the population that had not been addressed by mass media; a national Spanish-language news network; and the training of other women as producers and technical staff. The effects are lasting to this day, and yet there is little scholarship that documents and analyzes these strategies. I draw from the experiences of Chicanas at two Chicana/o-controlled community radio stations—KBBF-FM in Santa Rosa, California, and KDNA in Granger, Washington—as examples of women making community radio in the 1970s to provide insights into the radical ways women were in fact creating cutting-edge programming while learning the technical skills to produce radio broadcasts they desired. Working-class women of Mexican descent may not be the first population we think of when we consider the deployment of feminist tactics in radio. Yet in the 1970s, Chicanas on community airwaves altered the cultural landscape of public broadcasting by incorporating just such tactics in *programas sin vergüenza* (shameless programs) designed to reach women farmworkers who had never before been directly addressed by radio. Interviews with María Martín, KBBF-FM producer, and Rosa Ramón, KDNA cofounder and station manager, provide rich resources for mining feminist histories within community radio. This article is a prelude to a new line of inquiry regarding Chicanas and their tactics to imagine the possibilities of community broadcasting for Chicana/os living and working in rural areas in the United States, which did not exist before the 1970s.

Throughout the 1970s, female radio producers at KDNA and KBBF-

FM were bringing their community to the airwaves while also elaborating a more personal politicized identity—Chicana—to sound out their bi-cultural life experiences of living on the borderlands. An emergent Chicana feminist consciousness strongly resonated with women of Mexican descent actively involved in community mobilization and social protest “who viewed the struggle against sexism within the Chicano movement and the struggle against racism in the larger society as central ideological components of their feminist thought” (García 1997, 5). In the 1970s to claim “I am Chicana” was a conscious and strategic enactment of a personal and political standpoint whereby Chicana radio producers entered this new broadcasting arena with one foot in the recording studio and the other in community organizing, which audiences heard in the invocation of “Chicana” and “Chicano” on the airwaves.<sup>2</sup>

Audio archives are often nonexistent at community radio stations that typically do not have the financial stability or resources to preserve audio reels, while the programs that do exist may not be preserved and risk becoming magnetic dust. Community radio stations often had to reuse audio reels, recording over early programming. During my interviews, I asked radio producers if they saved any audio recordings or were aware of any audio archives. When I asked María Martín, with sadness she responded, “Unfortunately, no. I returned to KBBF to look for *Somos Chicanas* because we would tape all of the programs. And, this broke my heart, I realized that the station had reused the reels because it was a poor station and they would reuse tapes over and over. They had taped over the program with music” (Interview by the author, February 24, 2014). Emergent digital platforms can be imagined as new methods of collecting and preserving community radio’s recordings, namely through tools that assist in the digitization and preservation of aural artifacts, images, program guides, institutional documents, and other station ephemera. In order to excavate the hidden histories of Chicanas developing community radio, I place a variety of materials in conversation with one another, including the Task Force reports as well as oral-history interviews I conducted with Chicana radio producers. This project fashions a critical genealogy of Chicana radio activists who are instrumental in excavating a history of community radio activism that was deeply entangled with 1970s political mobilizations that shaped the programming, hiring, and leadership at Chicana/o-controlled community radio stations.

### Women in Public Broadcasting: On a Second Wave(length)?

Media activism in the 1970s was a continuation of 1960s organizing to democratize the airwaves and increase the representation and employment of marginalized groups within commercial and public broadcasting. In order to understand the significance of Chicanas entering public broadcasting, a brief overview of the institutional infrastructure and funding streams that made this broadcasting possible in the first place is needed. While commercial and public radio were already in existence in the 1970s, this decade proved to foster a different kind of broadcasting platform that centered on a community in formation as defined by those that created content for broadcast. In *Sounds of Belonging: U.S. Spanish-Language Radio and Public Advocacy*, Dolores Inés Casillas's interdisciplinary investigation tunes our scholarly attention to how Latino communities utilized Spanish-language commercial and bilingual community radio throughout the twentieth century as an "acoustic ally" to negotiate language, class, gender, race, and citizenship (2014). Particularly important to my own study is Casillas's analysis of the legislation and infrastructure that facilitated the production of community radio and the emergence of "Chicano sound activism." Building on Casillas's timely study, my research extends our understanding of how audiences were constituted in and through an emergent Chicana feminist consciousness by examining how Chicanas forged an autonomous space for women to participate in community radio production.

The 1970s ushered in a new era of broadcasting in contradistinction to commercial media practices and as a reimagining of public broadcasting that "became underground, free-form radio and represented a communal and activist approach to reclaiming the 'public' in public broadcasting" (Casillas 2014, 61). Linda K. Fuller defines community media as "a concept referring to how individuals and organizations involve publics in participatory means of airing issues" (2007, 1). Chicana/o community radio stations established in the 1970s were inline with Crispin Maslog's tenets of community media from 1997:

1. Owned and controlled by people in the community;
2. Usually smaller and low-cost;
3. Provides interactive two-way communication;
4. Nonprofit and autonomous, therefore, noncommercial

5. Has limited coverage or reach;
6. Utilizes appropriate, indigenous materials and resources;
7. Reflects community needs and interests;
8. Its programs or content support community development.

(quoted in Fuller 2007, 3)

The 1973 establishment of the Bilingual Broadcasting Foundation, Inc., and the founding of KBBF-FM 89.1 in Santa Rosa, California, by farmworkers and Sonoma State undergraduates marked the beginning of Chicana/o community radio movement of the 1970s. On December 19, 1979, Radio KDNA (pronounced “cadena,” meaning chain) transformed the airwaves, becoming the first full-time Spanish-language, noncommercial radio station in the United States. These community radio stations were built around the tenets of community media described above and also served as the grounds for Chicanas to become active in radio production. These stations leveraged CPB’s mandate to diversify the airwaves by applying for funding and training programs that facilitated acquiring the skills to produce Chicana/o community-based programming. Community radio made it possible for Chicana/o broadcasters to access funds for technical training through women and minority training grants offered by the CPB, an opportunity María Martin seized in order to become the news and public affairs director at KBBF-FM in 1978.

Radio stations like KBBF-FM and KDNA were representative of a “new generation of alternative noncommercial stations more diverse in character, often serving smaller and more sharply defined communities across the nation” (Engelman 1996, 67). Rosa Ramón describes KDNA’s community ethos in the following way:

The staff and volunteers who were on the air came from the same communities that we wanted to serve. A warm relationship was created. It was like a family. And that’s the way it should be. Community radio is about people. If there isn’t an open door, then community radio isn’t doing what it’s suppose to be doing. Radio waves were supposed to belong to the people; and, I think that’s the whole philosophy of community radio. It’s part of the community and they take care of, support, and trust what’s theirs. The very special bond that can exist between community radio and its listeners, I believe, is very difficult to achieve with other mediums. (Interview by the author, March 9, 2012)

As Ramón explains, alternative noncommercial stations fostered a special bond engendered by a model of media production that cast producers as listeners and listeners as producers. KBBF-FM also followed this producer-listener model and is exemplified in María Martín's tenure at this station. Martín remembers how listening to KBBF's bilingual airwaves was a welcomed surprise:

One day in the mid-70s, in the wine country of northern California, I was absent-mindedly turning the radio dial when I heard something I'd never, *ever* heard before: it was in English *and* in Spanish. The station played reggae, rancheras, and *dedicas* (dedications) on the oldies show, and covered public affairs. For the first time in my life, I heard media that reflected my reality as a bilingual and bicultural person of Mexican *and* American heritage . . . I was hooked on this pioneering little radio station and on making radio that cut across cultural lines. (2010, 158)

Martín recalls the awe of hearing for the first time radio programming that could reflect her bilingual and bicultural experience. KBBF's bilingual and bicultural programming included shows like *Hora Medica* (*Health Hour*), *Chicano Youth and the Law*, NPR news in English, and *Women's Spaces*. KDNA's programming consisted of shows like *Jardín de los Niños* (*Children's Garden*), *Raíces Culturales* (*Cultural Roots*), and *Oportunidades de Trabajo* (*Job Opportunities*). The community radio activists and broadcasters at KDNA and KBBF-FM were committed to transforming the airwaves to sound out locally produced programming that addressed the needs of Chicana/o and farmworker communities in Santa Rosa, California, and Granger, Washington. This resulted in KDNA being referred to as *la voz del campesino* (the voice of the farmworker) and KBBF-FM as *la voz del pueblo* (the voice of the people). These monikers were constitutive of an emergent "Chicano Public Radio," a term utilized by station managers that "characterize[d] their early station identity, indicative of the political moment's focus on taking back the public airways as well as invoking the Mexican American population as Chicanos" (Casillas 2014, 52–53).

The founding of the CPB and the work of both Task Forces created the conditions of possibility for women to enter public and community broadcasting, not as secretaries or support staff, but as producers and news directors who emerged as leaders of this medium. As a public entity, the CPB was subject to reports reviewing their efficacy. These reports provide valuable and underutilized documents that offer a trace of women

in public broadcasting. I read the *Report of the Task Force on Women in Public Broadcasting* as a second wave intervention in broadcasting that provides a historical landscape of women in public media in the 1970s. I briefly discuss this document to provide a context for Chicanas in public radio. In May of 1974, the Advisory Council of National Organizations (ACNO)—comprised of forty-five major national organizations advocating for public radio and television—provided the CPB with a position paper that defined women’s programming. ACNO concluded that women were not being fairly represented in public media, to which the CPB responded with the establishment of a National Task Force on Women in Public Broadcasting, chaired by Dr. Gloria L. Anderson with Caroline Isber as the director of the research design and management. The Task Force on Women in Public Broadcasting would address three major areas of women in public broadcasting (including television and radio): (1) to evaluate the level of employment of women, including in policy making and operations positions; (2) to examine the representation of women and the inclusion of issues relevant to women in public broadcasting; and (3) to make recommendations to the CPB based on their findings (Isber and Cantor 1975, 7).

In their study, the Task Force found that while women were involved in public broadcasting, their employment in the industry was not equitable to that of men. Women were disproportionately represented in secretarial and clerical positions regardless of education or experience in public broadcasting. Not surprisingly, and perhaps as a result of this job segregation, men were seen and heard on the air at higher rates than women. In addition to a survey of public broadcast programming, the Task Force also developed a questionnaire to which 2,141 public broadcasting employees replied. The questionnaire included a question regarding racial identification, and approximately 90 percent of employees were white.<sup>3</sup> This statistic not only indicates how white the industry of public broadcasting was but also suggests why many Chicanas chose to participate in the creation of new community radio stations rather than enter these white- and male-dominated stations. Indeed, Chicana radio activists harnessed radio technologies by fashioning themselves into roles typically cast as male—radio producers, engineers, station managers—to produce feminista frequencies on community radio airwaves.

An analysis of Chicana community radio activism shifts how we cast the second wave feminist movement of the 1970s as a more dynamic and

multifaceted intersectional struggle that decenters hegemonic narratives of white middle-class women's movements. Chicana feminist historian Maylei Blackwell recasts women of color feminist activism in the 1970s not through a framework that simply claims, "women of color were there, too," but through a theoretical and methodological intervention that reveals "multiple feminist insurgencies of women of color and multiple sources and practices of this consciousness" (2011, 16). Feminist activism as multiple insurgencies changes our categorization of these movements from a waves model that has a clearly delineated start and end point to a wavelengths approach that extends the effects of Chicana feminist activism to the present. Indeed, the feminist wavelengths enacted through community radio production encompass a broader reading of 1970s feminist movements that shows the interconnectedness between women of color organizing. The work by Chicanas in community radio displayed a feminist praxis that was personally and politically driven, a standpoint the Combahee River Collective in 1978 identified as "the political realization that comes from the seemingly personal experiences of individual black women's lives" (2014, 272). In fact, Chicanas harnessed the power of community radio to speak out on issues relevant to their communities. Similar to the Combahee River Collective's projects involving sterilization abuse, abortion rights, battered women, rape, and healthcare, Chicana radio producers at KBBF-FM and KDNA addressed similar issues in the programs *Somos Chicanas* and *Mujer*. When KDNA invited a clinical counselor to discuss incest within the Chicano community, the topic created an unprecedented response from the audience, primarily comprised of women, who began to share their experiences not only with incest but also other forms of abuse and harassment.

University and college campuses also created spaces for Chicanas to gain knowledge of their reproductive rights. At Sonoma State University, Martin enrolled in a course titled "La Chicana" taught by Christina Cuevas. Out of this class, some students formed a group called *Mujeres por la Raza* (Women for the People), and the group was invited to do an interview at KBBF:

In 1975 I joined a Chicana group at Sonoma State University called *Mujeres por la Raza* who had been invited to do an interview at KBBF. I was just discovering KBBF myself. When I turned on the dial to 89.1 FM, it was the first time I heard something that reflected my reality as



a bilingual and bicultural Chicana. I'd never heard anything on media that reflected who I was. *Mujeres por la Raza* was invited to produce a program and we were given a Friday night slot. We were totally green radio producers and in some ways we did not know what we were doing and in other ways we did have an agenda, which was to allow the women listening to the radio to have access to information they might not have access through other means. We had many ideas that included music, poetry, and invited guests. We were playing radio but with a very serious agenda. (Interview by the author, February 24, 2014)

The development of Chicana/o studies had a direct influence on the type of programming that María Martin and her fellow *Somos Chicanas* producers were creating. The topics included birth control, abortion, and women's sexuality, among other controversial topics. As the opening epigraph highlights, female listeners of *Somos Chicanas* feared having their husbands know that they listened to this program. What made this show “shameless” to some was how it questioned the idea of a woman's purity, piety, and submissiveness, particularly for those women who grew up in a traditional Mexican or Chicano household. Martin affirms, “Women—especially Latinas, and particularly low-income farm-working women—had *never* had the media address them directly” (2010, 158). An emergent Chicana feminist consciousness was present in the programming produced by Martin and her fellow *Somos Chicanas* producers. Their work demonstrate how radio provided a space for intersectional programming and reaffirms that Chicanas during the second wave approached their organizing through an intersectional register.

Martin became the producer for *Somos Chicanas* not so much by choice but by chance. Martin recalls, “After several weeks of working with the engineer, who was usually a male engineer, it became clear to us that he did not want to be there. I made the decision to be self-sufficient and learn the technical skills required to produce the program. The program lasted for several years” (Interview by the author, February 24, 2014). Martin's experiences in community radio reveal the importance of university spaces not only in politicizing young people but also in providing many Chicanas with the opportunity to learn about the emerging field of Chicana studies. Indeed, her involvement with a Chicana feminist student organization meant that the activism from this group was also reflected on the airwaves.

## Las Chicanas of Community Radio

In 1975 María Martín began as a volunteer at KBBF-FM. During this same time, approximately 672 miles north of Santa Rosa, California, Rosa Ramón was in the beginning stages of bringing the dream of communication technologies to Chicana/os and farmworkers of the Yakima Valley. While KDNA would not officially go on the air until 1979, Ramón, along with Ricardo García, Daniel Roble, Julio Cesar Guerrero, and Estella Del Villar, would begin broadcasting in Seattle at community radio station KR-AB-FM. While Martín and Ramón represent a small sample of the thousands of public broadcasting employees and volunteers, their experiences provide insights into how Chicanas were able to navigate the male-dominated public radio sphere, emerge as leaders at their respective stations, and create programming that reflected their Chicana identities and those of their communities.

### Programming

Chicana radio activists utilized radio programming to galvanize existing feminist networks built on an intersectional analysis of women's lives and experiences. They were bringing the ethos of "the personal is political" to the airwaves. Here, the personal is political took on aural dimensions and was carried out through the sound work of radio production.

Community radio programming provides us with evidence that Chicana activists did not focus on single-issue topics but rather integrated an intersectional feminist approach. As previously mentioned, conversations regarding abortion and women's sexuality were already happening in emergent Chicana feminist spaces such as Chicana studies classes. The inclusion of these topics on community airwaves meant that a wider audience could tune in to this content. Because claiming a Chicana identity was a political choice for these women, it was also a political act to transmit this subjectivity onto the airwaves. In doing so, Chicanas in community radio participated in the creation of a Chicana community and audience, and engaged in what radio scholar Susan Douglas refers to as the "I-you mode of address" (2004, 233), creating woman-centered programming and the building of community with shows like *Mujer* and *Somos Chicanas*.

*Mujeres por la Raza* secured a regular time slot on Friday evenings for *Somos Chicanas* with the goal of having a specific audience of women lis-

tening to the radio, providing them access to information that they may otherwise not have had access to through other means. Chicana listeners like Martin who grew up in bilingual and bicultural families possessed border-crosser sensibilities characteristic of Chicana programming (Anzaldúa 1999). She recalls, “The borders I’ve crossed all my life, and the bridges of cross-cultural understanding I’ve attempted to create through radio, all began right in my family” (Martin 2010, 157). At KDNA, music constituted a significant portion of the station’s programming (Anzaldúa 1999), and KDNA’s Chicana producers were cognizant of the impact music could have on their audience. Aware that some songs carried patriarchal messages disguised by beautiful melodies, Estella Del Villar vetted all records for sexist or misogynist content and labeled these songs as unfavorable for airing. For instance, the musicality in “Señor Magistrado” by Ivan Cruz hides the song’s violent narrative of a man who justifies killing his lover because he felt betrayed. These misogynist songs were replaced by socially conscious music of the era by artists such as Mercedes Sosa. This policy created a musical repertoire with Chicana feminist underpinnings, making KDNA’s airwaves a model for how to ensure that community radio reflected a Chicana political consciousness.

### **Hiring**

Airing locally produced programming at Chicana/o-controlled community radio stations was the standard rather than the exception, which differed from practices at commercial radio stations that brokered weekly one to two hour time slots to Spanish-language programming, typically at undesirable hours (e.g., early mornings or late nights). In order to make programming to fill a twelve to eighteen hour broadcast day, Chicana/o-controlled stations needed to employ broadcasters to produce programming. However, the hiring of male and female broadcasters was not uniform. From 1975 to 1978, Martin’s capacity at KBBF was as a volunteer as opposed to paid staff. When Martin began volunteering for KBBF-FM she noticed “most if not all of the Chicanas served in administrative positions as receptionists or secretaries. There were no Chicanas in any decision-making positions” (Interview by the author, February 24, 2014). It was not until Gabriela Castelán was hired at KBBF-FM as the public affairs director, a position she held from 1976 to 1979, that Martin was hired as a news intern.

At Radio KDNA, Chicanas influenced station policies and hiring prac-

tices from the beginning. As station manager, Rosa Ramón was able to make hiring decision that employed women in positions other than secretarial or clerical staff—positions the task force report revealed most women occupied. As the station went on air in 1979, staff included Rosa Ramón, station manager; Julio Cesar Guerrero, program director; Mario Alvarez, news and public relations director; Estella Del Villar, volunteer and training coordinator; Berenice Zuniga, national news network producer; Elisabeth Ortiz, secretary-bookkeeper; Gabriel Martinez, traffic control; Roberto Alvizo, reporter; and Daniel Roble, project director. While a woman did occupy the secretarial role that the task force report pointed to, at KDNA we also see women in technical roles and in positions of leadership, which demonstrates the importance of having women in positions of leadership who then hired other women as staff in production positions and not just as volunteers or support staff.

In 1974 there were no women engineers in public broadcasting, but by the late 1970s Chicanas became the first wave of female community radio engineers. The fact that KDNA had several women as engineers and had a policy to continue to train women to produce radio was revolutionary for its time. Estella Del Villar, whose career in radio began February 15, 1978, was one of these emerging Chicana radio engineers and producers. Two weeks after she was hired as a secretary for Seattle's first community radio station—KRAB-FM—Del Villar stepped from behind the desk to the front of the microphone when four male radio announcers were fired and there was no staff to cover airtime (Marionneaux 2000). Del Villar became KDNA's main producer and on-air personality. The early grassroots emergence of Radio KDNA's innovative programming was cultivated in Seattle at KRAB-FM. Using the station's Subsidiary Communications Authorization (SCA) signal, KDNA's founders produced the first nationally syndicated Spanish-language news network, often referred to as the Spanish National News Service or National Chicano News Network. During KDNA's early beginning at KRAB-FM, Ramón credits Del Villar for keeping the station on air: "She was a wonderful producer and almost single-handedly, I should say womanned not manned, the radio station in Seattle. She produced and played music for twelve hours a day seven days a week" (Interview by the author, March 9, 2012). The opportunity to work at the nation's first full-time Spanish-language radio station also connected Del Villar to her cultural, familial, and linguistic roots in Eagle, Texas, where she traveled for some time to be immersed in the Spanish language.

Community radio took her back to the borderlands, and she extended the borderlands to the Pacific Northwest through language. As a Chicana community broadcaster, Del Villar was able to claim a language and voice that made it possible for her to speak *sin vergüenza*.

### Leadership *Sin Vergüenza*

The direct translation of *sin vergüenza* is “shameless,” but there is a cultural meaning behind the word that is not captured by its English language referent. To be called a *sin vergüenza* is an act of discipline and regulation that reminds the individual that they are not performing a sanctioned (and highly gendered) script of approval, acceptance, and legitimacy within any given community. Within Mexican culture, *sin vergüenza* carries different connotations for women and men, enacting a gendered policing that can be used to shame women and intimidate them to conform to a traditional heteropatriachal script. Chicana radio producers took on a leadership style *sin vergüenza* that enacted a Chicana feminist deployment of being a *sin vergüenza* that utilizes “a bold language and stance that does not anticipate or reproduce social codes and norms” (Davalos 2008, 155–56). These radio programs were powerful and worked to inform women and to break the silence of discussing sex, sexuality, and reproductive rights on the airwaves. Rather than conducting them in private spheres, Chicanas were bringing these conversations to the public airwaves, giving women the knowledge that they may not have received elsewhere. The wavelengths of *sin vergüenza* leadership and programming tactics continue to reverberate today, making a lasting impact on the historical significance of Chicana community radio production. As María Martin states:

Women were not taken into account and there was sexism present in many community radio stations. But I think that happened to a lesser extent at Radio KDNA because the women there really set the agenda, from the fact that they had decision-making positions to the fact that they did not allow sexist music on the air. That’s a major victory for women, what they stood for, and the legacy that they gave to that station. (Interview by the author, February 24, 2014)

## Conclusion

Public broadcasting continues to be an important place for the creation of locally produced and culturally relevant community media. In the contemporary moment, the Low Power FM movement is positioned to inspire a new generation of media makers and audiences, yet the dismal representation of women and people of color in production continues to haunt us today. Signed into law by President Obama in January 2011, the Local Community Radio Act mandates the Federal Communications Commission to license new noncommercial FM radio licenses in the United States. Media justice advocates—including the Prometheus Radio Project—lobbied for ten years for the passage of this legislation, which opened the airwaves to a variety of community-based organizations, nonprofits, schools, churches, and unions, including farmworker unions, among others. Current statistics show that people of color hold just over 7 percent of radio licenses while women hold less than 7 percent of all TV and radio station licenses (Free Press 2014). Given that these statistics are not much different than those from 1975 or 1978, this article is a call for us to learn from and implement these tactics today if we are to increase the participation of women, feminists, and other radical people in community radio. The current Low Power FM movement can set the stage for resurgence in community-based radio productions, similar to the founding of the Chicana/o stations that I described above.

Reaching back into the early history of public and community radio with a critical focus on the strategies deployed by Chicana and Chicano activists who accessed these airwaves reveals that public media's history is diverse and radical. This study of Chicanas in community radio indicates that, at certain radio stations during the 1970s, women were able to influence the station's structural politics. Significantly, when women were in positions of leadership—as producers, station managers, or news directors—their presence directly influenced the hiring policies and programming choices that centered a Chicana experience. Chicana radio producers María Martín, Rosa Ramón, and Estella Del Villar brought an intersectional framework to the airwaves allowing us to hear to an emergent Chicana feminist consciousness *sin vergüenza*.

**Monica de La Torre** is a PhD candidate in the Department of Gender, Women & Sexuality Studies at the University of Washington. Her dissertation, “Feminista Frequencies: Tuning In to Chicana Radio Activism, 1975–1990,” takes an innovative Chicana feminist theoretical and methodological approach to community radio production.

## Notes

1. During the 1960s and 1970s, African American and Chicano activists worked toward broadcast reform with the goal of creating more diverse media institutions. Notably, the *Office of Communication of the United Church of Christ v. Federal Communications Commission* (1966) is a legal milestone for activists working to rectify the underrepresentation of minorities in the media. For an excellent overview of legislation and policies leading to the diversification of the public airwaves, see Casillas 2014.
2. Chicana feminist thought and activism stemmed from a critique of Chicano cultural nationalism based on a masculine subject and heteropatriarchal family structure. A Chicana feminist standpoint situates and remembers a Chicana/Mexicana feminist legacy by reclaiming a genealogy of feminist activism rooted in the intersectional analysis of race, class, and gender, while working to eradicate systems of inequity.
3. Of the 2,141 public broadcasting (including both television and radio) employees that responded to the questionnaire, 1,459 were male and 682 were female. The questionnaire also included a sampling of other demographics including education, age, marital status, and the number of children. For more, see Isber and Cantor 1975.

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