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Research in the Chicano Community:
Preliminary Guidelines and Observations

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ABSTRACT

Guidelines and observations are presented for conducting research in the Latino community. These were derived while the author served as principal investigator in a study of 105 Latino men residing in the Bay Area, Southern California, and San Antonio. An important issue addressed is whether there is a need for a separate Chicano methodology. Is the bias which has characterized research on Chicanos and other racial/ethnic groups the result of improper use of existing methods or the absence of appropriate or adequate methods?

It is argued that Chicano methodology is a separate, distinct entity. Traditional social science biases in research on Chicanos have generally *not* resulted from overt racism or the improper use of existing methodologies, but from methods and procedures which are grounded in dominant societal norms and values and are inappropriate for studying Chicanos. These emphasize objectivity, value neutrality, and universalism, which conflict with basic Chicano cultural beliefs and values such as personalism, subjectivity, and particularism. If research is to be successfully carried out in Latino communities, it must be socially committed, culturally sensitive, and responsive to indigenous beliefs and values. Minority researchers cannot, and should not seek to remain detached, indifferent, or aloof. Research relationships, moreover, are not inherently exploitative, as has been suggested, but can be structured to maximize direct and indirect benefits to participants.

Research in the Chicano Community: Preliminary
Guidelines and Observations

During the late 1960s and early 1970s racial and ethnic minorities and women began to challenge the validity of prevailing social science paradigms and to introduce theories and methodologies that were said to be not only less pejorative but firmly grounded in an alternative world view. Prevailing conceptions, theoretical frameworks, and methodologies, it was argued, reflected the life experiences, concerns, values, and world views of the profession which was made up principally of white, middle class, heterosexual males. Oppressed groups sought recognition of their own distinctive perspectives (Moore 1973, p. 65) and their incorporation into social science paradigms.¹¹

Over the past fifteen years or so a paradoxical situation has emerged--as racial/ethnic minorities and women have been increasingly incorporated into sociology and other social sciences, there appears to have been a concomitant decline in "minority oriented" research and scholarship. That is not to say that minorities are not doing research. They are doing research and making significant contributions to scholarship,²⁰ but utilizing conventional social science theories and methodologies. As a result, very few contemporary minority scholars are working toward the development of alternative paradigms. During the early 1970s, for example, a series of works emerged within a field of study that was termed the "New Black Sociology" (see, Ladner 1973;

Staples 1973, 1976a and b; Wilson 1974; Blackwell and Janowitz, 1974; and Watson 1976). Today, I am not aware of a single Black scholar that is working in this field.

Chicano Sociology is even less well defined and developed. A number of the early Chicano scholars, most notably Octavio Romano (1968a and b, and 1970), Miguel Montiel (1970), Nick Vaca (1970), and Deluvina Hernández (1970), wrote excellent critiques of historical and social science depictions of the Chicano experience. The predominant theme of this early protest literature, according to Maxine Baca Zinn, was that it "challenged the legitimacy of both existing societal practices and values and a sociology which justified those practices and values" (1981, p. 256). Although these were significant works, they were in the form of journal articles which were preliminary statements, rather than full-fledged paradigms or major works. These statements, moreover, were not extended or developed more fully by the next generation of Chicano scholars. Although a full-fledged paradigm with its own exemplars, theories, image of the subject matter, and distinct methodology has yet to appear, I contend that the elementary roots of such a paradigm can be found in the early protest literature.

The major objective of this paper, thus, is to present some preliminary observations from an on-going study of Chicano men that, hopefully, can be used to generate guidelines for conducting research in the Chicano community. While my focus is on research methodology, rather than theory, and I did not set out on the

study to develop an alternative paradigm, my intent clearly is to resurrect this early literature and to work toward the development of a Chicano paradigm.

The paper addresses a number of important questions in carrying out research in the Chicano community, but it does not provide definitive answers to these questions. First, should there be a separate and distinct Chicano methodology? In other words, is the bias which has traditionally characterized social science research on Chicanos and other racial/ethnic groups the result of inadequate methods, or the result of the improper use of existing methods? Closely related is the issue of "insiders" and "outsiders." Who is best equipped to conduct research in the Chicano community? How do cultural beliefs and values impact on the research enterprise? To what extent are social science norms and conventions universal and to what extent are they culture specific? Finally, is it necessary or desirable to maintain objectivity and value neutrality in conducting Chicano research?

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

During the 1985-86 academic year I was awarded a postdoctoral fellowship to carry out a study of Latino fathers. The stipend enabled me to take a leave of absence from my regular teaching duties and to initiate a study of Latino men in the Bay Area. The major objective of the study was to analyze the role of the male in the family.

The fellowship provided only a very modest budget that

covered research costs such as books, xeroxing, typing, and postage but not interviewing. As a result all of the initial interviews in the Bay Area and subsequent interviews in San Antonio were done by the principal investigator. Interviewing in Southern California was carried out by two additional persons who worked closely with the principal investigator. These budgetary restrictions had both positive and negative consequences. A negative consequence is that because the interviews were long and time-consuming the sample size is not as large as would have been desirable. The positive results far outweighed the negative in that I became intensely involved with all aspects of the research process, including typing and reproducing the interview schedule, arranging and conducting interviews, and coding the data. This made for a less efficient research operation but it produced invaluable insights which may well have escaped principal investigators that employ larger and more bureaucratic research teams where many of these activities are delegated to research assistants and clerical staff. Even when interviewing was delegated, the principal investigator worked very closely and was in constant interaction with the interviewers. Both were personally trained and supervised by the principal investigator. Stated simply, I learned a great deal as a result of my personal involvement in collecting and analyzing the data.

Several months were devoted to preparation of the interview schedule. The first phase was to carry out an extensive review of relevant literature on Latino male roles and, specifically, the

father role. Pertinent literature on masculinity and various measures of masculinity were also appraised and colleagues were consulted during each phase of preparation.

The end result was a lengthy 20-page schedule. In-depth personal interviews were conducted with a sample of 105 Latino men residing in three areas with a high concentration of Hispanics--Northern California, Southern California, and San Antonio, Texas. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish, usually lasted between one and one-half and two hours, and covered six major areas: (1) background information (e.g., education, income, language preference, and household composition), (2) the Bem Sex Role Inventory (BSRI) (an established measure of masculinity and femininity), (3) the Latino Masculine Role Inventory (LMRI) (a measure of sex role orientation derived from traditional Latino values and beliefs regarding appropriate gender role behavior), (4) open-ended questions on attitudes toward masculinity, machismo, and traditional gender roles, (5), marital adjustment and decision-making in the household, and (6) values and ideals regarding children, child-rearing, and the father role.

THE INTERVIEWS

Many of the generalizations concerning Latino culture and Latino men have been derived from research carried out by outsiders who all too often lacked genuine knowledge and understanding of the cultural patterns they observed. The present study differs in that the principal investigator and staff were

bilingual and bicultural and, thus, sensitive to and knowledgeable of Latino cultural and linguistic patterns. Spanish and English versions of the interview schedule were prepared and respondents were given the option of being interviewed in either language. In point of fact, however, Spanish and English were often intermingled.

Being an insider may help in creating a more culturally sensitive interview schedule but it does not grant one automatic access to the Latino community. Maxine Baca Zinn (1979) has observed that while minority researchers have a number of advantages in carrying out research in minority communities, they also encounter a number of obstacles. The most immediate problem that we faced was gaining legitimacy from potential respondents in order to elicit their cooperation in the study. Although as Latinos we were insiders, in most cases we were not residents of the communities where the interviews were conducted. Thus, we were what Robert Merton (1972) has termed "insider-outsiders," rather than "insider-insiders." This problem was compounded by the fact that many of the questions in the interview schedule dealt with personal or private matters that Latinos, especially men, will not readily discuss with strangers. We anticipated, for example, that the question of machismo would prove to be a relatively sensitive and controversial topic for Latino men.

Two other factors set limits on the study. The first was financial in that we did not have the resources to employ interviewers or to draw a very large sample. The second, was that

the nature of our study population, Latino fathers who are married and living in an intact household, made it impossible to identify the total universe from which a sample could be drawn. All of these factors made collection of a random sample unfeasible. Instead, the decision was made to collect a snowball sample that was internally diverse and purposely selected so as to include both working- and middle-class respondents, foreign and native-born persons, and individuals residing in three diverse geographical regions. Thus, while our sample may not be representative it is diverse and includes a broad cross-section of the Latino population.

A major advantage of the snowball sample is that it enabled the principal investigator to utilize key resource persons to identify and contact potential respondents. Resource persons were first approached and briefed on the nature of the study. They were told that the principal investigator was a professor of sociology conducting a study of Latino fathers and their role in the family, who was interested in identifying persons who would participate in a study. The general criteria for inclusion in the sample was that the person be a Latino father with at least one child living at home (roughly between the ages of 4 and 18) and that he be willing to be interviewed. We wanted to include persons who were actively involved in fathering and to avoid those whose children were either grown up and out of the household or infants. Sometimes the resource person got in touch with potential interviewees and obtained some initial interest in the

project prior to being contacted by the principal investigator, but *typically* the respondent was approached directly by telephone. The objectives of the study were explained and the person was asked to participate in the project. After they were interviewed, interviewees became resource persons and recommended others as participants. The study gained additional credibility when a would-be respondent could be told that the person who recommended them for the study had already been interviewed.

Resource persons served an important function; they were "insider-insiders" who acted as a liaison between the study respondents and the interviewer. This process was a two-way street, however. Quite often the resource person was a friend or acquaintance of the principal investigator or one of the other two interviewers. They were individuals, in other words, who knew and trusted the principal investigator and his staff. They, in turn, recommended friends, relatives, *compadres*, neighbors, co-workers, or other acquaintances. Obtaining *confianza*, or legitimacy, is critical in carrying our research in the Latino community. If I call someone and tell him that I am a personal friend of let us say *el Señor Mendoza*³ and that *el Señor Mendoza* has given me his name and recommended him as a potential participant in the study, the individual is likely to respond more favorably. In fact, the response to the study was overwhelmingly positive. A common reply to my request by telephone to set a time and place for an interview was "*Sí como no, sería un honor para nosotros*" ("Yes, of course, we would be honored"), or "*¡Seguro que si!*" ("Yes, of

course!"). This appeared to be especially true among respondents who maintained close ties with Latino culture and were relatively unassimilated into American society.

The positive response to the study was very gratifying and stood in sharp contrast to the way that much research has been conducted in the past. In carrying out social science research it is usually assumed that the respondent is doing the researcher a favor by cooperating in the study. Maxine Baca Zinn (1979), for example, has noted that the issue of reciprocity in social science research has not been adequately addressed and that the research relationship is inherently unequal so that researchers, even minority researchers, invariably receive far more than they give to respondents. Baca Zinn adds that "gestures of reciprocity do not by themselves, alter the unequal nature of research relationships. Nor is having research conducted by insiders sufficient to alter the inequality that has characterized past research" (ibid., p. 218).

Our overall experience differed from Baca Zinn's and does not support the contention that research relationships are inherently unequal. The relationships established with respondents did appear to entail mutual exchange and reciprocity. The researcher was obviously obtaining valuable knowledge and information and establishing rewarding relationships, but the respondents also gained benefits. First, they often seemed to be genuinely pleased to be selected as participants in the study. Second, they were honored that a *profesor* would come to their home to ask their

opinions on their role as *padres de familia* (parents). Finally, and perhaps most significantly, the interview process generally had a cathartic or therapeutic effect. Respondents volunteered that this was an important area of study and that they were glad to have had the opportunity to reflect on their role and responsibility as fathers. The interview situation, moreover, seemed to provide them with an outlet to express feelings and concerns that they had not had an opportunity to express elsewhere. The interview covered many significant aspects of their lives such as childhood experiences, marriage, child-rearing practices, conceptions of masculinity, and their role as fathers, over which they have strong opinions and beliefs. But our distinct impression was that respondents did not often have a chance to vent these feelings. Many also seemed keenly aware and dissatisfied with stereotypical depictions of Latino males in the media and by the public at large. One person told me, for example, that "there is a big lie out there about us that people have bought." In short, the interview situation appeared to provide a forum for expressing their views on issues that are a central part of their lives. The response was so overwhelming that we completed the interviews while obtaining almost no refusals. One person failed to show up for the interview at a cafe on three separate occasions, but when he was subsequently contacted by telephone he apologized profusely and indicated that because he worked as a courier, it was difficult for him to know exactly when he would return home from work. Two or three other

persons were not able to schedule the interview because it fell during the busy Labor Day week-end.

Of the interviews completed one-third were carried out in each of the three locales. All of the interviewees are Latino *Americanos* and the vast majority are of Mexican origin. Although most are bilingual, some of the respondents are only limited English speakers. Approximately one-third of the interviews were conducted in Spanish and two-thirds in English, although many persons intermixed the two languages. Some persons who spoke Spanish extensively opted to do the interview in English because they felt that their Spanish was not very good or very proper. It was Chicano Spanish, in other words, with a lot of *caló* and intermixing of the two languages.

RESEARCH IN THE LATINO COMMUNITY: PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS

Rather than discussing the many complex issues surrounding the development of an alternative paradigm and methodology, my intent here is simply to share some observations on conducting research in minority communities. A basic thesis advanced is that traditional science, or "scientism," with its emphasis on objectivity, value neutrality, and universalism has worked directly and indirectly to perpetuate the subordination of Chicanos and other socially oppressed groups. Rather than developing new theories, perspectives, or methodologies that are derived from our cultural experiences, traditional sociology (i.e., the Sociology of Chicanos), forced our experiences to "fit"

existing models and paradigms. My vision of a Mexicano/Chicano Sociology on the other hand, is that it would be derived from, and consistent with, our culture and world view.

The tenets of scientism, on the other hand, hold that one should be objective, indifferent, and detached in conducting research. The implication clearly is that, as "insiders," we would somehow have difficulty carrying out valid research in our own communities due to our emotional involvement and lack of objectivity and detachment. Research in minority communities was ideally to be carried out by "outsiders" or by insiders who were trained to be objective and detached. Had this norm been applied uniformly, which it was not, it would have led to the conclusion that members of the dominant group were also incapable of studying themselves. Howard Becker (1967) has noted, however, that the issue of bias is usually raised when one takes the side of the poor, the oppressed, or members of subordinate groups. Curiously enough, research from the perspective of the dominant group or those in positions of power, authority, or responsibility tends to be viewed as being somehow objective, balanced, and devoid of values. There exists a hierarchy of credibility so that "in any system of ranked groups, participants take it as given that members of the highest group have the right to define the way things really are" (ibid., p. 241). It is generally assumed, for example, that the statements of law enforcement are somehow more credible than those of criminals, those of prison authorities more credible than those of inmates, those of teachers more credible

than those of students, and those of the dominant group more credible than those of minority group members. The issue of bias is generally raised when the subordinate perspective is assumed because then both the hierarchy of credibility and conventional wisdom are being called into question.

The emphasis on objectivity and value neutrality, however, is in direct conflict with another norm of social science--that researchers develop rapport with, and gain the acceptance of their respondents. This places researchers in a "Catch-22" situation because as they become involved with respondents and gain their acceptance, they invariably become more emotionally attached to them. Their observations become suspect because they have broken what Gouldner has termed the sacred commandment of value-free science--"thou shalt not commit a value judgement" (Gouldner 1962, p. 199).

Contrary to this view, I subscribe to the position that it is neither possible nor desirable to conduct research that is objective or detached and free of personal or political values. If to have values is to be human, the value-free ethic has posed a false dichotomy between objectivity and neutrality. The issue then, is not really whether to take sides, since we inevitably will, but deciding, as Howard Becker has noted, whose side we will be on (Becker 1967, p. 239). Those who adopt prevailing paradigms and perspectives or who profess to be value-free knowingly or unwittingly take the side of the dominant group.

I do not seek to be detached, indifferent, or objective. If

one were truly indifferent, there would be very little motivation for undertaking a particular study. As a Latino, a male, and a father, I am not detached from the issues discussed here. One of the reasons for undertaking the study was precisely to more closely scrutinize prevailing conceptions of Latino culture and family life which have been proposed largely by outsiders who are often neither knowledgeable nor sensitive to the nuance and complexity of the phenomena they are studying. The question is not whether it is possible for me to be objective and detached but whether it is possible for anyone to be so. The point simply is that all too often the rhetoric of objectivity and scientific detachment has been used to veil pejorative and culturally myopic portrayals of Latino culture.

Being a Latino male and a father afforded definite advantages in carrying out the research. It greatly facilitated approaching men and developing rapport with them. The objectives of the study were explained to resource persons and respondents as an attempt to present an inside view of Latino men and Latino fathers. They were told that while a great deal has been said and written about the role of the male in Latino culture and family life, much of this has been negative, stereotypical, and not based on research. They were, thus, informed that the proposed study and book would be the first complete and comprehensive study of Latino men. The goal of the study, thus, was to give an inside look at Latino men and their role as fathers in the family that captured the reality of the Latino experience and the internal diversity of the group.

When I approached people, I presented myself as a *profesor* and a social scientist. But rather than being detached and indifferent, I was a concerned person who wanted to know their opinions on a number of issues such as conceptions of masculinity, marriage, and, most importantly, raising children. I attempted to foster the belief that their opinions on these matters were important and that by sharing them with me, they would be contributing to the development of a more accurate, complete, and non-stereotypical depiction of Latino men and gender roles.

Another characteristic of scientism is adherence to the norm of universalism, which holds that scientific generalizations must apply to many individuals and groups across time and space. Science is assumed to be universalistic rather than particularistic. According to Robert Merton, the norm of universalism holds that "the acceptance or rejection of claims entering science is not to depend on the personal or social attributes of their protagonist; his race, nationality, religion, class and personal qualities are as such irrelevant" (Merton 1963, p. 553).

This norm conflicts with Latino cultural values which stress particularism and personalism. It has been my experience that Latinos do not typically respond well to being treated as faceless and nameless respondents. When first contacted, they were told that their name had been given to me by the resource person who had "recommended" them as possible participants. In many cases, simply mentioning the name of the resource person elicited

a positive response and an expression of willingness to participate.

The importance of personal contacts and referrals can be illustrated by relating two incidents that occurred. In the first instance, Mr. Art González, was contacted and told that he had been recommended by Mr. Ray Ortiz. Unfortunately, Mr. González responded that he did not know anybody by that name and admonished the caller "to get his facts straight before he went around contacting people." I learned subsequently that Mr. González apparently did know Mr. Ortiz but did not remember him.

The second case involved a woman who gave me the names of several Mexican nationals who worked for her ex-husband. Since she only knew them by their first names and she did not have their home telephone numbers, she suggested that I call and ask to speak to them at the shop. Unfortunately, her "ex" answered the telephone. When I asked to speak to the men, he responded very aggressively and wanted to know why I wanted to speak to them. I proceeded to explain the project and identified his "ex" as the person who had suggested that I contact the workers. He became very irate and refused to let me talk to the employees, even though I assured him that she was not involved in the project in any way and had simply given me a list of potential interviewees which included his workers. He said that, on the one hand, he could see that the project had nothing to do with him personally and he was tempted to help me out, but that, on the other hand, it *did* have something to do with him. In retrospect, it was clear

that mentioning her name was "the kiss of death," and that he would have been much more receptive if someone else had been the contact person. These incidents are exceptions that prove the rule that in a culture that emphasizes personal relations, a negative referral is worse than no referral at all. In both instances, I would have been better off approaching the party without a referral.

. Because I was in residence as a postdoctoral fellow when the project was initiated, I was required to submit the project to the Human Subjects Committee of the University. It was necessary for me to prepare a standard caveat when I elicited cooperation from respondents that clearly indicated that they would be guaranteed anonymity and that they would not be identified when the results of the study were reported. While this is standard procedure in social science research, it is one that may not always be appropriate in the Latino community. While few respondents would want very intimate or personal aspects of their lives revealed in print, neither do they wish to be anonymous. Most are proud fathers and identify with what they say and believe. In Latino culture a strong value is placed on being *una persona que cumple con su palabra* (a person of his word). A person is, therefore, expected to "back up" or "stand behind" what he says or believes. The response to my admonition of anonymity was often indifference or reassurance that they did not wish or expect anonymity as a condition of participation. One man, for example, said "Hey man, use my name, it's okay!" The point simply is that, except when

discussing intimate personal or family problems, the Latino ethic is to be proud of and to stand behind your beliefs. It should be noted that many of the questions dealt with general attitudes and beliefs that most respondents would be not only willing, but eager to reveal and discuss publicly. Another way of viewing this is that from a Latino perspective, it is incomprehensible why one would take the time to complete a one-and-one half or two hour interview expressing their attitudes and beliefs and, then, opt to remain anonymous.

Personal and collective pride is an essential ingredient of Latino culture. Pride not so much in oneself and individual accomplishments but in the accomplishments of one's family and friends. Many individuals were clearly proud to have been selected to participate in the project. They were proud not only to participate but that a fellow Latino was writing a book about them. Respondents showed a keen interest in the book and many wanted to know how they could get a copy. Some said they wanted a copy, even if their name was not going to be in it! One man told me at the beginning of the interview, "Listen, one thing I wanted to tell you is that a condition of doing this, is that I get a copy of the book when it comes out, and I'm willing to pay for it. Is that understood?" Another said, "Even though you are not going to use any names, I'm very interested in seeing how you are going to interpret all of this information that you're getting."

While some interviews were conducted in public places like restaurants and bars, most were held in the respondents' homes.

The wife was often present when I arrived, but she would usually excuse herself and go about her chores while I sat in the living room or dining room and interviewed the husband. Some women, however, were very curious about the study and wondered why I was not interviewing them, almost as though they had been slighted. I apologized and explained that ideally I would want to interview both husband and wife but that my resources were very limited and I was not able to do this at this stage of the research. In one case, I was interviewing a man at the home of his *compadre* (co-parent). The *compadre*, who had already been interviewed and served as a resource person, was barbequing *fajitas* on the patio and serving members of the two families outdoors. As we sat in the dining room doing the interview, the *compadre* would come in and out of the house as he prepared the meal, but he locked the sliding door and restricted access into the house. After the interview, I visited with the two couples outside and the women started kidding the *compadre* and chastising him for not letting anyone into the house. The women also wanted to know more about what I was doing, what I had found out so far, and how their husbands "ranked." They also wanted to know whether I was getting the full picture in that I was not interviewing women. In a sense, they were complaining because they were not interviewed. They also felt it was unfair that the *compadre* got to "listen in" and they did not. He said that he was not listening and that he was just being respectful in trying to keep the noise down while the interview was in progress. Curiously, the *compadre* prepared and

served the entire meal, while the women were complaining about his chauvinism.

Another incident which occurred illustrates how the norm of "universalism" in social science is often used to perpetuate dominant societal values. The following protocol, used as an introduction to the interview, was submitted to the Human Subjects Committee of the University for approval:

We are carrying out a study of men and their attitudes toward different issues. You can help us a great deal by simply answering some questions. There are no right or wrong answers. We are interested in what you think about these things. Please give us your honest opinion on each question. We will not ask your name or attempt to identify you in any way. Your answers are strictly confidential and will not be given out to anyone. You are free to not answer any question that you do not want to.

The response of the Committee was very interesting. They felt that the protocol and the interview schedule itself were acceptable but the Committee was concerned that I did not indicate anywhere that I was doing a study of Latino men. They felt that the protocol should say that I was studying Latino men only. My response was to ask the Committee whether they would require someone who was studying Anglo men to also indicate this on their protocol. The Bem Sex Role Inventory (BSRI), for example, was normalized and validated on a predominantly Anglo population of

college students at Stanford University and a nearby community college. Yet, the issue of race is not typically raised when evaluating the validity of her instrument. My preliminary findings suggest that several masculine traits assumed by Bem to be universal, are, in fact, culture specific. Joseph H. Pleck (1981) similarly has written a major work entitled *The Myth of Masculinity*, yet the index does not contain a single reference to Chicanos, mexicanos, Latinos, macho, or machismo.

These examples illustrate that both the norm of universalism and the hierarchy of credibility are alive and well today. Chicano men are men; no more or less so than are Anglo men. There is, thus, an unstated assumption in social science that findings and generalizations obtained with white samples and reflecting dominant theories, perspectives, and ideologies are generalizable to the population as a whole, whereas studies of Latinos and Blacks are studies of subpopulations or specialized groups. A study of Latino men is somehow viewed as being less universal than is a study of Anglo men. Would the Human Subjects Committee have requested that Bem call her instrument the Bem Anglo Sex Role Inventory or that the title of Joseph H. Pleck's book be changed from the *The Myth of Masculinity* to *The Myth of Anglo Masculinity*?

CONCLUSION

This paper has presented some preliminary observations relative to conducting research in the Chicano community that were derived from a larger study of Latino fathers residing in the Bay

Area, Southern California, and San Antonio. Since I did not set out to develop an alternative methodology when I first embarked on the study, many of the observations are serendipitous. My conclusions should, therefore, be seen as preliminary observations or guidelines, that, together with other relevant works (see, Paredes 1977; Baca Zinn 1979), would constitute the building blocks for formulating an alternative methodology.

• The following are proposed as tentative conclusions and guidelines for conducting research in the Chicano community:

Basic Tenets

1. Chicano research/methodology is a separate, distinct entity that is not subsumable under either traditional disciplinary boundaries or conventional science.
2. The bias which has characterized social science research on Chicanos is not generally the result of overt racism or the improper use of existing social science methodologies.
3. The research bias results largely from the fact that existing methods and procedures are grounded in dominant societal norms and values and, therefore, are inappropriate for studying Chicanos.
4. There is an unstated assumption in social science research, and the society at large, that the Anglo experience is somehow more universal than the "minority" experience so that findings obtained or validated with white samples are generalizable to the population as a

whole, whereas studies of Latinos and Blacks are only applicable to these specialized, esoteric groups.

Scientism

5. The tenets of scientism which extol the virtues of objectivity, value neutrality, and universalism are inconsistent with Chicano cultural beliefs and values.
6. The norm of universalism is antithetical to Latino cultural values which emphasize particularism and personal relations.
7. It is neither possible nor desirable for minority researchers to remain detached, indifferent, or objective.
8. The norms of objectivity, value neutrality, and universalism serve not only to neutralize minority researchers but to perpetuate the subordinate status of Chicanos and Blacks.

Research

9. While research on Chicanos is generally best conducted by "insiders," being an insider does not automatically grant one access to the community.
10. In order to carry out Chicano research successfully, it is necessary to first obtain *confianza*, or legitimacy from the community.
11. Chicano respondents are much more responsive to personal appeals and referrals than to universal, impersonal, anonymous norms, and such referrals are essential for

conducting research in the Chicano community.

12. There is a need to develop measures and procedures that are culturally relevant to Chicanos and validated in the Latino community.
13. Research relationships are not inherently unequal or exploitative and can be structured so that the interview experience is rewarding and beneficial for respondents.

NOTES

¹A unique women's sociology, as distinguished from the "sociology of women," for example, was proposed (see, Freeman 1975a and b; Firestone 1972; Ladner 1971; Smith 1977).

²I contacted three prominent black sociologists and they generally agreed with this assessment.

³In order to protect the anonymity of respondents, the names have been changed.

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