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Introduction

It is not common for a graduate publication reaching its XL issue. Mester, and its ecosystem—graduate students, GSA, subscribers, authors, professors—is now the longest standing graduate student publication of all UCLA, and one of the longest of the whole UC system.

We have changed a lot since our first issue. Mester owes a debt of gratitude to Gabriela Venegas, the previous editor, for initiating the digitalization of our journal, and also to Prof. Hildebrando Villarreal for lending us his copy of the first Mester, that we were missing. Now, with every number available online, Mester jumps to a future in which both our past and our present are available. All of this would have been impossible without the generous help of Stacey Meeker.

Of course, at the core of a journal we find its authors and editors. Mester is a graduate student journal, which means that the editorial work is always graduate student work. We also count with the advice of a Professor—in this case Prof. Parodi to whom I am personally indebted for all her support—, but everything else, fro the selection of the manuscript to the voting of new members, is the result of a graduate student collaboration. As Editor-in-Chief, I want to express my debt of gratitude to my *compañeros* that have donated their time, effort and intelligence to the pursuit of what you have today in your hands or—*o tempora, o mores!*—, what you read on your screen.

It is because of all of them that I have been able to edit this volume about the Voices in the United States. Voices that do not speak English, but other languages spoken all around the continent. Voices that tell us stories about dislocation, desplazamiento, betrayal, colonialidad, absence and, above all, identity.

Covadonga Lamar Prieto
Editor-in-Chief