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Introduction

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Introduction

Nancy Pérez

The first two volumes of *Courageous Cuentos* were handed to me my first semester here last Fall of 2018. While navigating a space that felt so strange to me, I would return to the journal every so often—it became a guide that helped direct and ground me. The stories in the book were very familiar to me, and being so far away from home and family it was comforting to read that I was not alone thinking about where my journey began, who I am in a new space, and the large community that got me here. Many friends gifted me guides to local hiking trails, which I loved. But my go to guide was *Courageous Cuentos*.

For those of you who are new to *Courageous Cuentos*, the journal first began as an idea from students in the ES 107 Chican@/Latinx Lives Course taught by professor Maria Corral-Ribordy. In that class, students read literary works by Chicana/o and Latinx writers and did a lot of self-reflection writing and sharing, finding themselves transformed by each other's stories. They saw the potential that these stories carry in countering the erasure and silencing of their voices and experiences. As Maria noted in the previous volume, students wanted to illustrate the power that came with telling their stories in their own terms—uncensored, multilingual, and with unflinching candor—both as a form of community building and in resistance to dominant stories about themselves.

In this volume, the same spirit of defiance and magic continues. In the wake of mass organizing on campus in response to the murder of David Josiah Lawson, the bringing down of the McKinley statue, and the work that went into making Humboldt a sanctuary city for immigrants—students have become empowering leaders and organizers in demanding social justice and advocating for change both within the institution and in surrounding communities. This relentless spirit is seen in new works in this volume, with pieces like “Say His Name” and “Family Tradition,” which honor these ancestral, generational histories of resistance they inherit and are

inspired by. Stories also discuss forms of everyday resistance that oftentimes goes unnoticed, like fleeting moments of joy with friends, conversations that challenge white, cis-heteronormative identities and histories, and places of care and refuge for students living on campus. Most, if not all of these stories pay homage to their families and communities back home, whether it be adversities they overcame or the hard work of parents that inspired them to be where they are at today.

In all, the writings you will encounter will take you on a journey that will challenge and shift you. They will present you with desires that collectively, become the thread that ties this entire volume together. Like migration, they become a nomadic force that move and disrupt exclusionary, violent arrangements of space and time. An act of crossing normative boundaries of identities and creating transnational experiences, all while processing a loss of what used to be, to what will become. Those queer acts, as Jose Esteban Muñoz calls them, are worldmaking projects and visions that many writers in this volume process and share. Altogether, they share and make space for each other, and collectively organized, this volume is essentially a gift, a proposal to connect and reflect on the ways we can make, with all our multiplicities, another world where all worlds fit – possible.

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