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Jorge A. Aquino, editor

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PERSPECTIVAS: OCCASIONAL PAPERS

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In 1998 the Hispanic Theological Initiative (HTI) initiated the publication of Perspectivas: Occasional Papers to support its efforts in highlighting Latino scholarship in theology and religion and to provide a resource that will stimulate further dialogue and research. The scant number of journals dedicated to featuring the contributions of Latino scholars in theology and religion makes the creation of Perspectivas a welcome presence.

Past and present publications feature the work of HTI mentors, awardees, HTI Regional Conference speakers, and HTI Book Prize winners. The present publication is the ninth in the series.

Perspectivas is sent to seminaries throughout the United States and Puerto Rico, and to theology departments in universities and other institutions. We continue to be happy to accommodate requests from faculty and/or students for additional copies and/or copies of back issues when available.

We trust you will find the present articles engaging and insightful. We welcome comments and responses to any of the articles.

Joanne Rodríguez
Director, HTI

The theme running through this edition of *Perspectivas* is that of *hidden histories:* hidden historical texts, important-but-forgotten intellectuals of the Américas—even the marginalization of contemporary Latina/o voices who are producing multicultural theology for the 21st century.

Michelle González testifies to the shock she felt as a graduate student on first encountering the work of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz (1648-1695). Despite the vast theological resources to be found in Sor Juana's writings, González says she had never heard theologians celebrating this nun and dramaturge of *La Nueva España* (Mexico), whom González calls "the first woman theologian of the Américas." Prompted by her advisor, Alejandro García-Rivera, González embarked on a study that concluded with the publication of her outstanding book, *Sor Juana: Beauty and Justice in the Americas* (Orbis 2003).

"I was horrified," she told an audience at Princeton Theological Seminary, in a 2004 talk she gave on winning the Hispanic Theological Initiative's annual book prize for best new work from a junior scholar. "I realized that there was an entire theological history that was being ignored. ... After my research on her I became committed to debunking the notion that a theological concept had not been uttered in Latin America prior to the 1960s."

As a response to González's work, we present a cornucopic essay by Yolanda Martínez-San Miguel. She asks how the present-day reception of Sor Juana into the canons of Chicana and Latina literary studies could inform theological studies, especially on the question of how a "political or ideological appropriation of Sor Juana's works" by theologians could help "decenter Euro- and Anglo-centric approaches to the study of literature, culture, politics [and] theology."

That passion for retrieving displaced history is shared by Hjamil Martínez-Vázquez, who narrates for us his committee's important work on the Latin American Religious Studies Bibliographical Project. This HTI project seeks to retrack genealogies of Latin American and U.S. Latina/o religious history that have been lost in the imperial reshufflings of subaltern knowledge.

"In the fields of religious studies, resources from Latin America in their original languages have not been fully accepted as 'academic' materials within the U.S. Academy," Martínez-Vázquez writes. This is partly a problem of faculty ignorance, and partly of language requirements that tend to exclude Spanish and Portuguese from the theological curriculum. "To uncover this silencing of Latin American religious history and experience, we have to deconstruct the rationales behind such practices, and educate the North American theological academy against the grain of its biases."

Alongside Martínez-Vázquez's final report on the bibliography committee's work, this issue features another report from a team of sociologists who have been evaluating the HTI's programs and its prospects for the future. The report documents the HTI's formidable progress, and lays out some of the significant challenges ahead, as the HTI presses on in its mission to create a critical mass of Latina/o theological scholars.

"University and seminary environments continue to be challenging places for Latino scholars," writes principal author Caroline Sotello Viernes Turner. "While the HTI is very successful and is enthusiastically supported by many affiliated with the program, it is also vulnerable and has a lot further to go to fully achieve its goals."

Jorge A. Aquino
Editor

Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz: Latin American Church Mother

Michelle González

Lecture given at Princeton Theological Seminary for the 2004 HTI Book Prize Award

Dr. Michelle A. González received her Ph.D. in Systematic and Philosophical Theology at the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, California in 2001. She received her M.A. from Union Theological Seminary in 1994. Her research and teaching interests include Latina/o, Latin American, and Feminist Theologies, as well as inter-disciplinary work in theological aesthetics. She is the author of *Sor Juana: Beauty and Justice in the Americas* (Orbis Books, 2003) and is currently working on a book on the Afro-Cuban dimensions of Cuban religiosity.

I fell in love with Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz during the first semester of my Ph.D. work at the Graduate Theological Union. I wish I could say I had discovered her on my own, but I must give credit to my doctoral advisor, Alejandro García-Rivera, for suggesting I examine her work for a course I was taking with him. I am eternally grateful to him for this. I remember my initial reactions to reading the work of this seventeenth-century woman were elation and horror. I was elated to find a Latin

American woman theologian who had a sophisticated and comprehensive body of work. I was horrified, for this discovery made me question my theological education, one that only turned its gaze to Latin America with the twentieth-century writings of liberation theologians. I realized that there was an entire theological history that was being ignored and that Sor Juana was only a small piece of a larger story.

I must confess that, while I am trained as a systematic theologian, in many ways I am a historical theologian in disguise. While I continue to be motivated and inspired by the contemporary questions and struggles of Latina/o and Latin American peoples, it is the historical voices and experiences that most animate me. I fully attribute this to my work on Sor Juana, for she inspired me to return to the past in order to shed light on the historical questions of the present. Also, after my research on her I became committed to debunking the notion that a theological concept had not been uttered in Latin America prior to the 1960s.

My book on Sor Juana had two overarching goals. First, I wanted to introduce her life and work into the discourse of theology. Second, I hoped to examine the intersection of justice and aesthetics within Sor Juana's corpus and its significance within contemporary theology. Let us first turn to Sor Juana, however, before examining the implications of her work for us today.

Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz is the first female theologian of the Americas. Long praised for her literary genius, it is only recently that Sor Juana the theologian has been the subject of study. Beatriz Melano Couch, perhaps the first scholar to name Sor Juana as a theologian, in a short article entitled, "Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz: the First Woman Theologian in the Americas," writes, "Scholars who have studied Sor Juana speak of her greatness as a literary figure, philosopher, and woman of science. My study of her works has brought me to the conclusion that she was also a theologian: indeed, the first woman theologian in all the

Americas."[1] In his 1991 monograph on the life and theology of Sor Juana, George Tavard claims her work to be the first Mexican theology.[2] More recently Pamela Kirk has written an extremely comprehensive introduction to Sor Juana's life and theological contribution.[3]

Even with these studies, Sor Juana is still often considered a humanist; her work may touch on religious themes, but it is not necessarily viewed as theological. In her times Sor Juana openly transgressed the prevailing societal construction of the woman religious—that of the emotive mystic—by participating in what was then considered the "male" discourse of theology. In colonial Mexico, women were prohibited from writing theology and philosophy, for those were considered the realms of truth elaboration. Through an examination of the events that led to her eventual silencing, I propose Sor Juana as a theological interlocutor who must continue to be recovered as a significant resource for historical and contemporary theology.

Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz lived in the second half of the seventeenth century in colonial Mexico, or New Spain. She spent part of her life as a lady-in-waiting at the vice-regal court, and eventually took the veil in the order of St. Jerome. Her time in the convent was focused primarily on intellectual study and scholarship. Throughout her life she was very much in demand as a poet and playwright, and most of her work was written on commission. In 1690, however, Sor Juana's critique of a sermon given by the Jesuit Antonio Vieira was circulated publicly without her authorization. Accompanying her critique was a letter written under the pseudonym Sor Filotea (which means "lover of God"), criticizing Sor Juana's intellectual pursuits. Sor Juana scholars today generally acknowledge that the author of this critique was the Bishop of Puebla, Manuel Fernández de Santa Cruz, and that Sor Juana was aware of his role in these events. Her response to that publication, *The Answer (La Respuesta),* an autobiographical defense of a

woman's right to intellectual pursuits, was completed the following year. Within four years of the publication of *The Answer,* Sor Juana renounced her public life. In 1695 she died from an epidemic in the convent. While not wanting to gloss over the immense achievements of Sor Juana's career as a public intellectual[4], I will be focusing on these last years of her life. They offer us insight into both the construction of gendered discourse in Sor Juana's era, as well as the theological weight of her work.

While not the only woman religious writing in colonial New Spain, Sor Juana is exceptional both in her brilliance and in her entry into the public realm of male-circumscribed discourse. Her female contemporaries wrote primarily in the language and style of mysticism, which was the "acceptable" form of female writing. Their emotive expressions were judged as subordinate to "rational" theology. As noted by literary scholar Jean Franco in her exceptional historical study of women in Mexico, scholastic theology was reserved for the male clergy, while "feeling" mysticism was for women.[5] Thus the voice of the woman was an interiorized, private, emotional flight, in contrast to the public and rational voice of the male clergy. In addition, their confessors carefully monitored the writings of women religious. The male clergy, therefore, not only was the public theological voice, but also regulated the private spiritual realm.

Sor Juana was not a mystic, and her writing is strikingly different from her contemporaries. Did she have an awareness of the transgressive nature of her writing, and the social construction operating in her era? While not imposing a modern understanding of the individual — or even of feminism — onto Sor Juana's writing, there are many writings within her corpus where she expresses an understanding of the social construction of gender as constrictive.[6] I do not, however, label Sor Juana as a feminist. While acknowledging that within Sor Juana's corpus there is a clear defense of women's rights, I do not agree with the categorization of a seventeenth-century figure into the terms and paradigms of modern scholarship. In other words, while Sor Juana was aware that she was excluded from various activities because of her sex, this does not correspond to feminism as scholars understand it today.[7] Sor Juana never criticizes the male discourse of her day in and of itself. She is critical of women's exclusion from that discourse, both as sources and as constructive voices. However, as we shall shortly see, due to her social location as a cloistered woman, in her efforts to engage the male philosophical and theological disciplines of her day, she transforms them.

Let us now turn to the controversial events of the last years of Sor Juana's life, which were initiated by her critique of Vieira's sermon. The sermon was a distinct form of public theology in Sor Juana's era.[8] Thus in her critique of that sermon, Sor Juana enters into the public realm of male discourse.[9] Her superiors saw her scholarship as theology, and thus sought to chastise her for daring to enter this domain of thought. Sor Juana's transgression is due to her intellectual work as theological, and women were excluded from engaging in theology, both privately and publicly.

Often when one studies Sor Juana, one finds her treated in isolation. This is a grave flaw in much of Sor Juana scholarship. In fact, she is not the only woman writing in the seventeenth century Americas, though her genius and her subject matter clearly set her apart. A simplistic read of the above-emphasized events could lead one to interpret the controversy surrounding her writing as based merely on the very fact that she is writing. In other words, the act of her writing is interpreted as her wrongdoing. This is not the case. The same year that Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz began writing her autobiographical defense to Bishop Manuel Fernández de Santa Cruz, María de San José, a woman religious also in New Spain, was asked by that same bishop to begin writing her spiritual autobiography.

Turning to Jean Franco's work we must emphasize, as she

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writes, that "Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz ... not only trespassed, at least symbolically, on clerical terrain, but directly defied the clergy's feminization of ignorance."[10] In doing so, she transformed the very nature of the male discourse in which she boldly entered. This is most clearly seen in her inclusion of daily life, or *lo cotidiano*—as Latino and Latina theologies emphasize—into her writings. In an excerpt of *The Answer*, we find Sor Juana recounting a time when she was ordered to discontinue reading for three months. This did not, however, prevent Sor Juana from studying. As she writes, "But with regard to avoiding study absolutely, as such a thing does not lie within my power, I could not do it. For although I did not study in books, I studied all the things that God created, taking them for my letters, and for my books all the intricate structures of this world."[11] What did Sor Juana study? She studied the architecture of the dormitories to learn geometry; she studied girls playing with a top; she led experiments in the kitchen. We find her experiments with eggs lead her to write one of the most delightful lines in her corpus, "Had Aristotle cooked, he would have written a great deal more."[12]

What is the significance of these anecdotes Sor Juana shares about her daily life? In equating the knowledge acquired in the private women's sphere to that of the great philosophers and theologians she read extensively, Sor Juana reconstructed the woman's private arena as a space for rational reflection. While not offering a systematic critique of women's place in society, Sor Juana changes the very significance and meaning of that place.[13] Sor Juana also transforms the very nature of the theological task through the aesthetic form of her theology.

The intersection of aesthetics and ethics within Sor Juana's corpus is perhaps best demonstrated in her allegorical dramas. Today I would like to discuss with you the *loa* preceding the allegorical drama *El Divino Narciso*. In this play she transforms the myth of Narcissus into the drama of Christ's Passion, Death and

Resurrection. Unlike the Narcissus of classical mythology, Sor Juana's Christ Narcissus gazes at his image in a fountain, and sees in his image Human Nature blessed by Grace. Christ Narcissus falls in love with the Beauty of humanity, this reflection of himself, and the incarnation occurs. Weaving classical mythology, medieval theology, and Scriptural passages, this play is the culmination of Sor Juana's dramatic and theological genius.

All three of Sor Juana's allegorical dramas are preceded by *loas*. A *loa* is a brief theatrical prologue to a principal play.[14] The four main characters of Narciso's *loa* are Occidente (Occident), América (America), Celo (Zeal), and Religión (Religion). Occident, a male, and America, a female, are both Indigenous. Zeal (a male) represents the Spanish military force, and Religion is Roman Catholicism as represented by a Spanish lady. America and Occident are celebrating the feast of the *dios de la semillas*, their god of the harvest. America praises its God as such: "Moreover, his protection of us is not limited to bodily sustenance to material food, indeed, he feeds us with his own flesh (having been purified before of every corporeal stain), he purifies our soul from every stain."[15] Sor Juana has the voices of the indigenous use language that is clearly analogous to Christianity to describe their pre-Christian beliefs and practices. Zeal and Religion arrive during the festivities. Religion attempts to introduce Christianity to them, but they do not listen to her and continue with their ritual. This enrages Zeal, who, as the self-proclaimed wrath of God, attempts to instigate a battle with America and Occident, who retreat from him. Zeal's efforts in the conquest and "conversion" of the indigenous are reduced to military force.

Religion, however, has a different tactic. After pleading with Zeal to withdraw his force, Religion attempts to reason with America and Occident.[16] Her goal is not forced aggression or murder; instead she wants to convert them to Christianity. In an interesting gender twist, the female Religion is depicted as ration-

al, while Zeal is portrayed as irrational and emotional. She first asks America and Occident about the god they worship, *el dios de las semillas*. After listening to Occident, she despairs that they are attributing features of the Christian God to their deity. She informs them that they are worshiping a false idol, and that the works they attribute to *el dios de las semillas* are in fact the works of the Christian God. America then asks if there is an idol of the Christian God, similar to the ones made of human blood for *el dios de las semillas*. Religion answers by informing her that while the Christian God is infinite and unbound, this God resembles humanity. Occident then asks if there is a sacrifice in Christianity similar to the one they offer their gods. Religion replies that the sacrifice is found in the Eucharist.[17]

America and Occident then ask to see the Christian God. Religion assures them that they will, once they are baptized. After having baptism described to them, Occident notes that the practice resembles one of their purity rituals.[18] Both America and Occident want to know more about the Christian God. The allegorical drama that then follows is offered as an allegorical, catechetical, and theological device to explain the Christian mystery.

In the *loa*, Sor Juana manages to give historical information on the Conquest, argue for the establishment of the Eucharist, and enter her work in the Spanish canon of allegorical dramas, while adding elements of the culture and context of New Spain. The internal plot of the *loa* revolves around the instruction of the indigenous concerning Catholic doctrine. However, the *loa* is in fact a means of demonstrating to the Spanish audience the dignity and complexity of indigenous peoples, through its exposition of their history and customs. This is based on its intended performance in Madrid, as noted in its closing scene. *El Divino Narciso* is written for performance in Spain, not colonial Mexico. As Pamela Kirk has noted, "Though the fiction at the preface of the play is that the sacramental drama, *El Divino Narciso*, will teach the

Indians the mysteries of the Catholic doctrine of the Eucharist, it is again clear that the play is really intended to convince the audience at the Spanish court of the dignity and piety of the Indians and of the complexity of their history, customs, and religion."[19] While the *loa* seems to address the evangelization of indigenous peoples, it is in fact the Spanish audience that will be "evangelized" by Sor Juana's *loa*.

The literary form of the majority of Sor Juana's corpus poses a methodological challenge to contemporary theology. This leads us to the second major impulse of my book, the organic relationship between Beauty and Justice within historical and contemporary theology. Through her introduction of the aesthetic within the theological task, Sor Juana makes the symbolic a privileged form of theology. She goes as far as stating that the aesthetic is *the most appropriate form* of theological expression. Accompanying the aesthetic form of her theology is an interdisciplinary understanding of theology that saturates Sor Juana's corpus. Theology is not merely limited to what contemporary scholars deem today "theological" texts. Instead, literature, poetry, and drama become central forms of theological expression. In the contemporary era, the aesthetic also becomes a vital historical resource for liberation theologies.

In the mid twentieth century a group of Roman Catholic European theologians, under the heading of *ressourcement,* began rediscovering historical Christian sources and exploring their implications for contemporary theology. Years later, across the Atlantic, liberation theologians in the United States began their own projects of historical retrieval, incited, however, by concerns that were very different from their European counterparts. While European theologians sought to *rediscover* traditional Christian sources, liberation theologians struggled to *discover* the voices of forgotten and marginalized people within Christian history. Theirs was not merely a return to established historical sources, but an active rewriting of Christian history and theology. For fem-

inist theologians like Rosemary Radford Ruether, this project entails retrieving the theologies of marginalized women throughout Christian history, with special attention to the United States.[20] For Black liberation theologian Dwight Hopkins, this involves a recovery of slave narratives as a vital theological resource for contemporary theology.[21] Liberation theologians situate their *ressourcement* of historical sources in light of their preferential option for the oppressed and marginalized throughout history. Surprisingly to some, many of the resources that appear as a result of this historical research are aesthetic. In other words, literature, music, and art become theological interlocutors within the recovery of marginalized voices.

The importance of the interrelationship between aesthetics and ethics is at the center of this recent impulse in theological aesthetics. Aesthetics cannot be emphasized in spite of, or in place of, ethics. Instead, the Good and Beauty, and the True for that matter, must remain organically united, existing in their interrelationship. Beauty is not a distraction from Justice, but instead is the motivation behind it. The use of aesthetic sources within liberation projects affirms the unity of the two.

Within Latina/o theology, theological aesthetics is increasingly emphasized by various voices. Today, however, I would like to briefly discuss the role of aesthetics within Latin American liberation theology, an often ignored dimension of this theology. Theological aesthetics is not new to Latin American liberation theology. However, with the heavy emphasis on ethics, Beauty has often been sidelined in the writings of Latin American theologians. The marginalization of Beauty, however, did not go unnoticed. Theologian María Teresa Porcile articulated the urgent need to recover Beauty within Latin American theology over fifteen years ago. "It is necessary and urgent to 'recover' the dimension of beauty in Theology. Theology has to be an expression of desire and attraction, of eros. This dimension will be united to the poet-

ic and the contemplative, and at the same time prophecy and wisdom."[22] In linking the contemplative to the prophetic, Porcile emphasizes the relationship between aesthetics and ethics. The prophetic needs the aesthetic; social justice is futile without a vision behind it.

Porcile is not alone in her assertions. Within María Pilar Aquino's theology, the role of the "primacy of desire" represents an aesthetic accent. Emphasizing the primacy of desire, Aquino holds, is a means of contesting the possibility of a detached, decontextualized, and purely abstract rationality. The primacy of desire highlights the role of emotion and desire in theological elaborations. This has implications for the very form of theological writings and sources. Aquino writes, "Therefore the language of poetry, play, and symbol become an appropriate way of expressing the understanding and wisdom of the faith, because it is the means of expressing the human person's deepest and most genuine aspirations and desires."[23] Sor Juana's writings, therefore, are a means of tapping into this primacy of desire that Aquino holds to be a central feature of Latina feminist theology. Again we find a privileging of the aesthetic as the most appropriate means of religious expression.

Aquino is not alone in her emphasis on desire within the theological task. María Clara Bingemer, whose work is foundational for Aquino, writes, "The cold circumspection of purely scientific inquiry must give way to a new sort of systematics springing from the impulse of desire that dwells at the deepest level of human existence. ... Born of desire, theology exists as theology only if it is upheld and supported by desire."[24] Desire, for Bingemer, is in fact central to the theological task. In both Aquino and Bingemer there is an aesthetic turn in their theological writings, informing a broader change in the form of theological method. This aesthetic emphasis is understood as the only adequate means of expressing the human's deepest faith and sentiments. As Ivone Gebara notes,

"In other words, to some extent this procedure means returning the poetic dimension of human life to theology, since the deepest meaning in the human being is expressed only through analogy; mystery is voiced only in poetry, and what is gratuitous is expressed only through symbols. Purely rational concepts do not take into account the meaning, desire, flavor, pleasure, pain, and mystery of existence."[25] Aesthetic form is the fullest expression of desire, emotion, and faith, which Aquino, Gebara, and Bingemer see as central to both the theological task and an understanding of the human. Purely rational concepts are not adequate vehicles for expressing the fullness of the human.

Rubem A. Alves is the only male Latin American liberation theologian that has placed aesthetics centrally in his theology. Within his aesthetics, Alves emphasizes the non-innocent nature of Beauty. "But there is no way out: if one wants the supreme joy of beauty, one must be prepared to cry. Sadness is not an intruder in beauty's domains."[26] Alves also laments the demise of aesthetics within theology. He sees this as directly related to the primacy of ethics in liberation theology. "And yet, how marginal beauty has been in our theological meditations! ... Have we separated goodness from beauty? Is this the reason why our theological discourse has been dominated by the ethical motif—the divine imperative—as opposed to the aesthetical—the divine delight? ... The ethical is not the end; it is only a means."[27] Alves sees the ethical as solely a means to the aesthetic. An ethics that ignores the aesthetic, in his eyes, leads to the objectification of peoples in the ethical process. In addition, Alves sees the ethical imperative of liberation theologies as an emphasis on works at the expense of grace. An ethics that is not grounded in beauty will result in a "heartburn" that leads to bitterness. Instead, Alves calls for political action based upon Beauty. "I am trying to suggest that human beings are moved by beauty. If we want to change the world, we need first of all to be able to make people dream about beauty. This has been

totally forgotten by the Church."[28] The aesthetic is therefore that which grounds and informs the ethical. Given the earlier emphasis on Sor Juana's play *El Divino Narciso*, it is interesting to note that Alves uses the myth of Narcissus on his own theological aesthetics. For Alves, "Somehow God is like Narcissus: they both want to see their beauty."[29] In a similar vein to Sor Juana (and Aquinas), Alves sees the role of Beauty as pivotal within an understanding of the divine and creation. "The myths of creation are another version of Narcissus' myth. God created the universe as a mirror where his/her/its beauty could be seen. The beauty that we see in the world is the beauty which abides in our bodies."[30]

The methodological implications of theological aesthetics are profound. Such an emphasis forces a comprehensive transformation of what is deemed theological discourse. The sources and methods of theology are expanded to include alternative expressions. Form and content are reunited. Beauty and glory return as central theological categories. Theology is no longer reduced to analytic, scientific discourse. However, the aesthetic in no way compromises theology's ability to make truth claims, or to speak meaningfully about this world. The aesthetic also does not downplay the role of justice, but is instead a means of expressing it. Theological aesthetics redefines how one can speak authentically about the religious dimension of humanity. Sor Juana's theology, emerging at a time and place where this aesthetic expression was vital to the theological task, offers an essential resource within theological aesthetics, through both the form and content of her writings.

A few reservations continue to haunt me as I consider my work on Sor Juana. I am well aware that Sor Juana was part of an elite, for as a cloistered woman she had privileges that the masses of women in New Spain did not. The image of her in her cell, surrounded by her books and instruments, is one that, as an academic, I identify with—and this worries me at times. I know that those

of us in the academy can get lost too easily in the printed word and forget the everyday lives and struggles that do not grace the pages of our illustrious texts. Also, as a *criolla*, Sor Juana represents a privileged social class in comparison to the Indigenous and Africans that populated New Spain.

Why is Sor Juana such a significant source for contemporary theology? Gloria Inés Loya writes, "She is a source/*fuente* for theology because through her work she examined and expressed her religious concerns and theological understandings."[31] I would push the point a bit further. Sor Juana is a source for contemporary theology because she is an intellectual foremother to Christian theologians; she offers a challenge to contemporary understandings of the theological task; and she sought to address the broader concerns of Christian theology and philosophy, while remaining grounded in the concerns and issues of her context and era. Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz was a vibrant figure who offers an entry point into these and many other theological arenas. I find it only fitting to incorporate her words in my concluding comments. In a poem written for the dedication of a church to Saint Bernard she writes, "The Church, Bernard and Mary, these would be good circumstances for me to tell you if I were a preacher: But no, no, no, no: I am not cut from such fine cloth. But what if I was, what would I say, moving from text to text looking for connections? But no, no, no, no: I am not cut from such fine cloth."[32] If she were a preacher, Sor Juana notes, she would say these things. But no, she says, she is not cut from that cloth. Many would argue that she is not cut from the cloth of a theologian. I disagree. Sor Juana is in fact cut from such fine cloth. Not only is she a brilliant and graceful theologian, she is, in fact, a Latin American Church Mother.

NOTES

[1] Beatriz Melano Couch, "Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz: the First Woman Theologian in the Americas," in *The Church and Women in the Third World*, edited by John C.B. and Ellen Low Webster (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1985), p. 54.

[2] George Tavard, *Juana Inés de la Cruz and the Theology of Beauty: The First Mexican Theology* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Same Press, 1991).

[3] Pamela Kirk, *Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz: Religion, Art, and Feminism* (New York: Continuum, 1998).

[4] Sor Juana's work was widely known in intellectual circles, and scholars and international well wishers often visited her in her *locutorio* (visiting room). She also wrote various pieces for official occasions, including her *Neptuno Alegórico*, a triumphal arch constructed to welcome the viceroy, Tomás Antonio de la Cerda. This included not only the arch itself, but also a lengthy poem accompanying it. Also, several of Sor Juana's poems were read, and her plays performed publicly.

[5] "They could not speak on learned matters in public, since they were not allowed to preach." Jean Franco, *Plotting Women: Gender and Representation in Mexico* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989), p. 4.

[6] Pamela Kirk notes, "This text substantiates Sor Juana's consciousness of her independence as a woman, an intellectual, and as a lay person." Pamela Kirk, *Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz: Religion, Art and Feminism* (New York: Continuum, 1998), p. 36.

[7] In the simplest terms, I understand feminism as the belief in the political, social, cultural, intellectual, and economic equality of the sexes, and as the social movements organized around these beliefs.

[8] As noted by Pamela Kirk, "When published, a sermon could reach a diverse and extended audience, becoming a form through which theological discussion entered broad public debate." Kirk, *op cit.*, at p. 82.

[9] A crucial point in these events is highlighted in Kirk's study. As stated above, it is generally accepted that the bishop of Puebla, Manuel Fernández de Santa Cruz, was the intended addressee for both the critique of the sermon and the later *Answer*. The original title Sor Juana gives to her study is *Critique of a Sermon*. When the bishop circulates the critique, he changes the title to *Letter Worthy of Athena*. "In doing so," Pamela Kirk writes, "he has taken her out of the 'inappropriate' public sphere of a critic of sermons, and put her back into the ostensibly private sphere of letter writing." Kirk, 101.

[10] Franco, *op. cit.*, at p. 23.

[11] In order to provide accessibility to Sor Juana's work for an English-speaking audience, translations of Sor Juana's work will be used in the body of my text. Whenever possible, I have used published translations of Sor Juana's corpus. Unfortunately, the entirety of her work has not been published in English. In the cases where an English translation is unavailable, translations are my own. In addition, I will include references to the most recent edition of Sor Juana's works: Alfonso Méndez Plancarte and Alberto Salceda, editors, *Obras Completas de Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz*, 4 vols., (México: Instituto Mexiquense de Cultura; Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1995). I will note all citations using the abbreviation OC, followed by volume: page number, verse/poem number. The verse numbers will be cited for the longer works, and poems will be cited by their poem numbers. Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, *The Answer/La Respuesta: Including a Selection of Poems*, critical edition and translation, Electa Arenal and Amanda Powell, 73. OC 4:458.738-745.

[12] Sor Juana, *The Answer/La Respuesta*, 75. OC 4:460.814-815.

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[13] Franco, *op.cit*. at p. 93.
[14] Octavio Paz, *Sor Juana, Or, The Traps of Faith*, translated by Margaret Sayers Peden (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988), p. 513.
[15] OC 3:5.59-68
[16] "In order to subdue them you used your strife, but now it's time for my mercy in order to conserve life: because to defeat them by force was your effort, but to [make them] yield with reason is mine, with my gentle persuasion." OC 3:11.210-217
[17] OC 3:16.356-369.
[18] "I already know, that before I arrive at the rich table, I must bathe, for that is my ancient custom." OC 3:17.384-387
[19] Kirk, *Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, op. cit.*, at p. 50.
[20] See Rosemary Radford Ruether, *Women and Redemption: A Theological History* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1998).
[21] See Dwight N. Hopkins and George C.L. Cummings, editors, *Cut Loose Your Stammering Tongue: Black Theology in the Slave Narratives* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1991); Dwight Hopkins, *Down, Up, and Over: Slave Religion and Black Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000). For a critique of Black theology's use of the slave narratives see Victor Anderson, "Critical Reflections on the Problems of History and Narrative in a Recent African-American Research Program," in *A Dream Unfinished: Theological Reflections on America from the Margins*, edited by Eleazer S. Fernandez and Fernando F. Segovia (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2001), pp. 37-51.
[22] Maria Teresa Porcile, "El derecho de la belleza en América Latina," in *El Rostro Feminino de la Teología*, edited by Elsa Tamez (Costa Rica: DEI, 1986), p. 105.
[23] María Pilar Aquino, *Our Cry for Life: Feminist Theology from Latin America* (New York: Orbis, 1993), 111. As noted by Richard Viladesau, "Because they relate to a transcendent object, many of religion's expressions are appropriately nonverbal, and a 'negative' hermeneutic must be applied even to its verbal expressions. The latter are more related to the metaphorical speech of poetry, which addresses Richard Viladesau, *Theological Aesthetics: God in Imagination, Beauty, and Art* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), *Theological Aesthetics*, 17.
[24] María Clara Bingemer, "Women in the Future of the Theology of Liberation," in *Feminist Theology from the Third World: A Reader*, edited by Ursula King (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1994), p. 311.
[25] Ivone Gebara, "Women Doing Theology in Latin America," in *Feminist Theology from the Third World: A Reader*, edited by Ursula King (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1994), p. 56.
[26] Rubem A. Alves, *The Poet, The Warrior, The Prophet* (London: SCM Press; Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1990), p. 114.
[27] *Ibid.*, p. 127.
[28] Rubem A. Alves, "From Liberation Theologian to Poet: A Plea that the Church Move from Ethics to Aesthetics, from Doing to Beauty," *Church and State*, 83:23 (1993).
[29] Alves, *The Poet, The Warrior, The Prophet*, p. 52.
[30] *Ibid.*, p. 126.
[31] Gloria Inés Loya, "Considering the Source/*Fuentes* for a Hispanic Feminist Theology," *Theology Today* 54 (January 1998): 491-8.
[32] OC 2:202.342.

Response to Michelle González

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Yolanda Martínez-San Miguel is an Associate Professor at the Department of Romance Languages, University of Pennsylvania. She has also taught at the University of Puerto Rico, Princeton University and Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey. She is the author of *Saberes americanos: subalternidad y epistemología en los escritos de Sor Juana* (Iberoamericana, 1999) and *Caribe Two Ways: cultura de la migración en el Caribe insular hispánico* (Callejón, 2003), and a compilation of essays, co-edited with Mabel Moraña, *Nictimene ...sacrílega. Estudios coloniales en homenaje a Georgina Sabat-Rivers* (Claustro de Sor Juana and Iberoamericana 2003). She is currently working on a new book entitled *From Lack to Excess: Colonial and Minority Discourse in Latin America*.

I am pleased to add Michelle González to the long list of scholars and critics that have allowed me to learn with, and from, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz. I have read her book *Sor Juana: Beauty and Justice in the Americas*, and I am delighted to see how many new things I have learned about one of my favorite persons and artists. I would like to review with you some of the most interesting proposals of her book, and to suggest questions that González's study makes possible to encourage others to learn with and through Sor Juana. I should preface my comments by saying that I read this book as a scholar trained in literary studies, and as a Latin Americanist who has always admired and empathized with the Liberation Theology. I am not, therefore, an

expert in religious or theological studies; so that made my reading all the more fascinating. For me, a good study is one that not only answers, but creates new questions, and my comments will reflect precisely that exciting and productive combination of modes of learning that made this reading so pleasing and intriguing.

Sor Juana: Beauty and Justice in the Americas identifies a Latin American church mother by analyzing the role of the three transcendentals—Beauty, the Good, and the True—in Sor Juana's writings. González uses historical ressourcement—or "an appeal for theologians to return to historical sources to inform contemporary understandings" (8)—as her methodological point of departure for her study of Sor Juana's significance for a Latin American and Latina theology. An important aspect in this study is the use of "imaginative literature" as a source for her theological analysis. The author persuasively justifies her use of literary texts to propose an epistemological, ethical and theological analysis of Sor Juana's work, and as a result this book establishes a crucial link between "beauty," "aesthetics," "literature," and "theology." As a well-trained historical theologian, González begins her book with two chapters reviewing the disciplinary debates in Liberation and minority theologies, as well as the historical context in which Sor Juana lived and wrote. González has read widely and carefully the voluminous bibliography devoted to the life and works of this colonial nun.

There are, however, a couple of questions that I would like to pose to encourage the author, and others, to continue the process of learning with, and from, Sor Juana. First, the author states that the "colonial era, which frames the Baroque in New Spain, is one of the least examined eras of Mexican history" (37). I wonder if she is referring here to studies on the Baroque and theology in the Américas, as there are many studies on the "barroco americano." Works by Octavio Paz, Mariano Picón Salas, Leonardo Acosta, Rafael Catalá, Irlemar Chiampi, Janice Theodoro, Mabel Moraña, Georgina Sabat Rivers, and John Beverley, among many others

come to mind. Very recently the Claustro de Sor Juana began a master's program in "viceregal studies," devoted completely to New Spain; the Baroque period receives significant attention in its curriculum. Perhaps it would be necessary to define better what are the areas that are not studied, as much about the colonial and Baroque period in the New Spain.

Another question that could be further developed is the definition of a colonial or Latin American theology that is used in the book. If, as González points out, Sor Juana's work could be considered "the first Mexican theology," what does it mean, precisely, to speak of a "Mexican theology," and what are some of the traces of the indigenous and African cultures that Sor Juana not only represents in her work, but also incorporates as perspectives that need to be taken into account for any Catholic evangelization process to be effective. González should broaden her definition of theology to incorporate the indigenous and local perspectives that are so present in Sor Juana's work, as the author carefully notices in other sections of her book.

Chapters 3 through 5 propose a close reading of Sor Juana's work that is extremely creative and clever. González notices that Sor Juana's education and writing has an "unsystematic nature," so in order to be able to trace the development of certain concepts in her works, it is necessary to do a combined reading of a diverse selection of her texts in which a particular topic is treated. In her analysis of the meaning of "beauty" in Sor Juana's works, the book traces the link between aesthetics and the representation of the Virgin Mary as the human being who most resembles God (62). Her analysis of the *auto sacramental, El Divino Narciso*, is perhaps the best section of her book; here González is able to establish a link between the myth of Narcissus and the theological meaning of beauty in Sor Juana's work:

> A clear emphasis for Sor Juana is an understanding of Christ in terms of beauty and desire. Christ-

> Narcissus's incarnation is a result of this: his captivation with humanity's beauty as reflective of him, and his consequent desire for her as a result of it (80).

In her reading of one of the most difficult dramatic pieces written by Sor Juana, the author is able to identify the complexity of the nun's arguments; she even includes the incorporation of the indigenous perspectives, as well as the fact that the *auto* was written to be presented in Madrid, as relevant elements of this colonial reappropriation of Roman Catholic theology. However, González should continue her exploration of the institutional role of the Roman church in the colonization of the Américas. Given González's interest in liberation and minority theologies, it would be useful to develop further a reading of Sor Juana's work in the context of an asymmetric relationship of power that effectively repressed other forms of religiosity and spiritual sensitivity. Sor Juana's works call into question many of the official discourses on evangelization, to incorporate the perspectives of other ethnic populations that were influential in her conceptualization of the Roman Catholic faith. Luis Rivera Pagán's *Evangelización y Violencia: La Conquista de América*, could be a crucial reading to enrich and strengthen González's understanding of a colonial theology.

The analysis of theology and gender proposed in Chapter 4 is also remarkable. Given that gender has been widely studied in the case of Sor Juana — especially after the publication of Stephanie Merrim's *Feminist Perspectives on Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz* — it is fascinating to see how González proposes her own reading of gender and theological conceptions in Sor Juana's works. The author is careful to make a very subtle distinction between Sor Juana as a feminist or proto-feminist, and her criticism of women's exclusion from public religious and educational arenas. Chapter 5 proposes an analysis of the link between theology and philosophy, or Sor Juana's views on truth and epistemology. I am excited to find here another reading of the "Primero Sueño" that questions Octavio Paz's secular, and more

modern, approach to this text, by focusing on how gender and theology "illuminate" the ending of the poem. González is able to propose a theological reading that enriches the text:

> Did revelation occur, or was Sor Juana's soul merely unable to grasp it in its entirety? Created in the image of God, the human being reflects God, but is not God. Therefore, divine Truth is accessible, yet only in a fragmentary way. The failure of the soul to attain Truth does not challenge its existence (134).

This theological approach adds another dimension to the vital contextualization of knowledge that is so pervasive in Sor Juana's works. If the human condition limits our access to truth — and knowledge — then gender, ethnicity, colonialism, and class are all additional dimensions of our socialized humanity that actually limit or define the "ways of knowing" of each and every one of us.

The theological reading of the *villancicos* is also new, as González traces the incorporation of gender and ethnicity in a Catholic setting. It would be fascinating to develop this idea further, specifically by comparing how indigenous cultures are incorporated in Sor Juana's *villancicos*, with the representation of colonial perspectives in the *autos* and other pedagogical pieces produced by Franciscan and Dominican missionaries during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. What are the major differences and similarities of the ways in which Catholic discourse incorporated indigenous and African perspectives in order to convert them to Catholicism? I am also interested in reading more about the New World perspectives that are incorporated into Sor Juana's reassessment of theology. González's sections on "Race and Ethnicity" (114-120) and "Lo Americano" (143-145) leave her reader wondering about the real impact of Sor Juana's localized knowledges — feminine, colonial, Creole, viceregal — and her rearticulation of theological discourses. In her theological ressourcement, as an act to "discover the voices of the forgotten

and marginalized people within Christian history," I would like to see more analysis of the reconfiguration and transformation of traditional Catholic notions about belief and spirituality produced by the interaction with indigenous and African religions, without ignoring Sor Juana's mediation as a Creole subject. This is a topic that is currently being researched in more detail by Paola Marín in a brief study entitled *Sor Juana: Teología y Conciencia Criolla* (2005). But it is clear that González's approach, from a theological, rather than a literary and historical perspective, is crucial for a deeper understanding of Sor Juana's life and works that supplements quite well Pamela Kirk's study entitled *Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz: Religion, Art, and Feminism*.

Chapter 6 and the conclusion of the book function as a final articulation of all the different components already analyzed in this study—Sor Juana's life and works; her incorporation of beauty, the good, and the true from a theological perspective; the rearticulation of gender, and ethnicity—to trace Sor Juana's impact on Latin American, Latino, Liberation and minority theologies. This is the most speculative section of this study, and here we find a crucial tension in the methodological approach of the book. On the one hand, her use of notions such as "Latin American," "Latino," and "theology" in a colonial context reminds me of Enrique Dussel's call for an historical reconstruction of our disciplinary terminology to question the hegemonic Eurocentric paradigms of many of our fields of study (95-132). González begins this process, but should continue exploring the complex terrain of what it means to consider a colonial writer from a Latin American or Latino perspective. Part of this tension arises from the fact that the author traces a historical approach to Sor Juana's work that is extremely persuasive: According to González, Sor Juana could be a theologian in her plays and poems, because she used literature as an alternative discourse to express her views and questions about Catholic theology as a colonial nun living in New Spain. If

that is the case, one possible approach for this study could be to recover and historically reconstruct her theological assertions. However, there is another possible approach that González also includes in her book: the political and ideological gesture of recovering Sor Juana as a conscious or unconscious theologian, whose works are significant for a contemporary formulation of a Latin American, Latino, or minority theology. The first approach will be the one commonly used by a historical theologian, the second one will be useful for a contemporary theologian. By keeping this internal tension in her work, González is able to produce a thought-provoking book, but I am convinced that by choosing to explore in more detail each one of these two options, she could also offer a significant contribution in the future.

I have some questions for the historical theologian. I remain curious about a closer examination of the relationship between theology and epistemology in the second half of the seventeenth century. Given that theology and secular knowledge were not completely separated or even at odds in the New World of the second half of the seventeenth century, it would be interesting to analyze further how Sor Juana links theology to secular knowledge to legitimize her intellectual aspirations. I would also like to know more about the institutional relationship between the church, the university, and the centers of viceroyal and metropolitan power, precisely at the verge of the beginning of modernity. After reading González's book, I am more than convinced that Sor Juana had a theological "inclination" — to use that word that she loved so much. But we should know more about how the incorporation of ethnicity, gender, and colonialism transformed the hegemonic views of the discursive and social arenas in which she was intervening.

This book proposes a very thought-provoking link between theology, aesthetics, beauty and literature, a complex and very nuanced relationship, magnificently analyzed through the *auto*

sacramental, El Divino Narciso. However, so much more could be said about this fascinating topic if a historical approach were further developed, specifically to acknowledge the existing relationship between "aesthetics," "theology," and "knowledge" during the time Sor Juana was producing what we today classify as "literary texts." For example, some of the links established between "aesthetics" and "philosophy" seem to come from Platonic notions. At the same time, the use of literary or aesthetic discourses to express philosophical and spiritual concerns was a common practice among the Náhuatl cultures, as seen in the studies by Miguel León-Portilla of the *flor y canto*, and of indigenous philosophy. Rafael Catalá's careful reading of the syncretism of European and Mexican cultural motives and imaginaries to study Sor Juana's works should encourage us to identify in our readings the multiple dimensions of transculturation present in the nun's conception of theology.

On the other hand, since the function and social role of literature, and many of the literary genres analyzed in this book were so different from our contemporary conception of religious literature, an historical analysis of these and other aspects would shed light on what is undoubtedly a complex relationship between Sor Juana and her quest and passion for secular and religious knowledge. Modern definitions of "beauty," "aesthetics," and "literature," or specific definitions of "desire" and the way it articulates beauty, should also be questioned to reconstruct how these notions were conceived and understood during the Baroque (see the works of Dalia Judovitz, Enrique Dussel, Aníbal Quijano, and Walter Mignolo included in the final list of references).

I have different questions for the liberation theologian who is interested in recovering Sor Juana for contemporary debates. I would like to know more about how the political or ideological appropriation of Sor Juana's works from a theological perspective can be a productive endeavor. It would also be useful to compare

González's reading of Sor Juana as a foundational voice for Latino theologies, and the appropriation of the nun's works by Chicano and Latino scholars and artists. Following Stephanie Merrim's recent comments on Alicia Gaspar de Alba's text entitled *Sor Juana's Second Dream* (1999), I would also like to ask when and how a desired or imagined theological discursive community becomes a functional "imagined community" (Merrim, "Hemispheric Colonial Studies," pp. 10-11). It is evident that Sor Juana did not conceive herself as a Latina writer or intellectual, yet Latinas find in her words sources of encouragement and identification. So even though I am delighted that Sor Juana has become a vital part of a Latina/o imagined community, I would like to know how to do this while avoiding contemporary rearticulations that become anachronistic, or dismiss our need to learn about the historical past in a way that informs our *cotidianidad*.

We should investigate further how the incorporation of Sor Juana to a Latin(o) American religious and intellectual tradition is a legitimate strategy to decenter Euro- and Anglo-centric approaches to the study of literature, culture, politics, theology, and the like. In this same direction, González makes an important observation when she questions Eurocentric and Anglo-American definitions of what can be considered philosophy or theology (192). But her argument could benefit from analyzing the links between "colonialism" and the still predominant marginalization of Latin America, Africa and Asia from theoretical debates on epistemology, philosophy and politics. (For more information, see Mignolo's book, *Local Histories/Global Designs* and Juan Poblete's compilation, *Critical Latin American and Latino Studies*). The incorporation of these debates would also allow us to distinguish between a theological appropriation of literature, and von Balthasar assumption that all literature can be conceived as theological (179). Finally, Walter Mignolo has also analyzed the importance of the "locus of enunciation" for our scholarly work as Latin

Americanists, and the relationship between "coming from," "being at", and "being from." It would be fascinating to know more about how the author conceives the relationship of these loci of enunciation in her work. I am also convinced that González would enjoy linking liberation theology's use of *lo cotidiano* with Donna Haraway and Walter Mignolo's examination of "situated" or "localized" knowledges.

Let me conclude this commentary by referring to my anecdotal link with Sor Juana. I remember as a graduate student reading Enrico Mario Santí's essay "Sor Juana, Octavio Paz, and the Poetics of Restitution," with elation and horror — to quote González's words once more: elation for how our experiences inform, illuminate and limit our ways of knowing; and horror because I did not want to construct a Sor Juana "diversa de [sí] misma," only a reflection of myself, my needs, and my passions. Today, after reading *Sor Juana: Beauty and Justice in the Americas*, I can say I am not that concerned about writing from *mi cotidianidad*. González's passion for theology "illuminates" new dimensions in Sor Juana's work while it redefines and reconfigures Latin American, Latina and Liberation Theology. It also allows us to find new meanings and readings of Sor Juana's works, so we keep learning with her and from her. That is perhaps the best way to acknowledge Sor Juana: as an intellectual and an artist, a philosopher and a theologian, who was not only capable of acquiring knowledge, but also of producing knowledge with, and in, others. Her work keeps doing this thanks to passions like González's, yours and mine. The many questions this book answers and make possible keep Sor Juana's passion alive; her constant quest for knowledge becomes the here-and-now through our own critical work.

Almost fourteen years ago I began this profound intellectual relationship with Sor Juana through her works. Sor Juana has also become the mediator and the motive behind so many conversa-

tions with colleagues, friends, mentors, students, and family members. Perhaps I would have found her anyway, but the reality is that I reached her through my own experience of displacement and loss of the most familiar: my native land and a beloved member of my family. Therefore, I dedicate this talk to the very context that made possible my encounter with Sor Juana. It is thanks to that troubling and painful *cotidianidad* that I found the infinite possibility of learning that has also been a source of joy. I hope that for González, as for the lyric voice of the "Primero Sueño," every day and every night engenders new quests for knowledge that are constantly renewed and fulfilled. I would also like to thank Michelle González for allowing me to learn once more through and with Sor Juana, and I congratulate her on what I hope is also the beginning of a long journey of questioning and learning—not only to understand the past, but also to illuminate our present.

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The Latin American Religious Studies Bibliographical Project: Final Report

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It is no secret that, in the fields of religious studies, resources from Latin America in their original languages have not been fully accepted as "academic" materials within the U.S. Academy. In this sense, these materials have been covered and silenced. The three major features of this current state are: 1) Spanish and Portuguese are not usually recognized as "scholarly" languages that doctoral students may elect at the time of their language examinations; 2) there exists a widespread prejudice that materials from Latin America have more to offer "local" or "contextual" religious or theological understandings, than to "universal" ones; and 3) there is widespread ignorance concerning the availability and location of these materials. To uncover this silencing of Latin American religious history and experience, we have to deconstruct the rationales behind such practices, and educate

the North American theological academy against the grain of its biases.

Through "Discovering the Silences: The Latin American Religious Studies Bibliographical Project," the Hispanic Theological Initiative set out to 1) challenge the traditional stance the U.S. theological academy has taken with respect to "scholarly" languages; 2) build a bibliography of major Latin American resources in the different fields of religious studies; 3) make this list available to students and scholars so new voices may offer theoretical and methodological alternatives to those traditionally dominant in religious studies.

The project was undertaken in two stages. First, we dealt directly with the issue of required languages in doctoral programs, and with the student's freedom to include works in Spanish in her/his doctoral examinations. In the second stage of the project we produced a list of resources from Latin America.

In this essay, the final report of the project, I will discuss each stage separately, offer an overview of the project, and specify some of the challenges ahead. My purpose is not merely to discuss the final analysis of the project, but also to serve people in the fields of religious studies in their research, and to promote changes in the traditional structures of programs in these fields.

First Stage: Challenging the Traditional Structure

Most Ph.D. programs in religion have a language requirement, which often includes two modern languages — German and French. Of course, in particular fields, like biblical studies, there are more language requirements. German and French have become the authoritative "scholarly" languages in the area because of the long tradition of works from scholars in these countries. The problem with this requirement is that it legitimizes these two languages as the only "scholarly" languages, leaving out others. In this sense, languages like Spanish and Portuguese, the languages of most of the religious works published in Latin

America, do not enter the curricula for advanced religious study unless they are translated into English. Since students have to complete the requirements, they will be more likely to access works in the required languages than in another foreign language, and the doctoral examination will likely omit these "other" works.

In the first stage of the project, I gathered information from present and former HTI Latina/o students to analyze the status of language requirements and the use of resources in the languages of Latin America within doctoral examinations. These individuals were asked to respond to three major questions:

1. Which languages are required in your doctoral program, and did you or could you use Spanish as one of the requirements?
2. What was the procedure for creating doctoral examination bibliographical lists in your institution? Were you required to use existing lists? Or could you create your own lists, with out without negotiation with your advisor?
3. Did you or could you use Spanish resources in those lists? Why? Would you have known where to find Latin American resources in Spanish in your field, or if they are available?

After an email was sent to 55 individuals with these questions, 37 responded, representing 26 different institutions. Regarding the first question, 76 percent (28) commented that they were allowed to substitute one of their required languages with Spanish or Portuguese. On the other hand, 22 percent (8) answered that they were not allowed to use Spanish. Five of these eight individuals explained that they were not allowed, or never asked, because their field was biblical studies; the other three mentioned that their institutions do not allow any substitution. These three insti-

tutions are Harvard University, Fordham University, and the University of Virginia.

The second question drew five different responses:

- 46 percent (17) negotiated their lists with the advisor and/or committee;
- 35.1 percent (13) constructed their own lists;
- 8.1 percent (3) constructed their lists based on existing ones;
- 5.4 percent (2) answered that their advisor/committee constructed the lists; and
- 5.4 percent (2) mentioned that in their institutions there were already existing lists.

These numbers indicate that 89 percent of the people who responded at least had some say in the content of their bibliographical lists. This has to be taking into consideration in interpreting responses we received to the third question: 73 percent (27) included bibliographical resources in Spanish on their lists, while 27 percent (10) did not.

The reasons and circumstances of the individuals varied and it is important to mention them in order to understand the difference in experiences. Those in the majority reported a range of experiences — from being severely limited in their use of Latin American languages, to having no restrictions of any sort. Nine individuals mentioned they had no problem finding these resources, either because the institution's library had a great collection, because the advisor helped in the search, or because they knew where to look. On the other hand, nine other individuals expressed difficulty finding these resources, either because they got no help from librarians in their school, or because they did not know where to find resources about particular topics. Of the other 27 percent, some said they could not find resources because of

poor library search tools; others gave up the search, whether for reasons having to do with their topic, or because their advisor could not read the materials.

The results from this first part of the project reveal much about the situation Latinas/os confront as doctoral students in religious studies. Aside from those in biblical studies, most Latinas/os, are able to use Spanish to fulfill one of their language requirements, even if their institution has not formally adopted it as an official academic language. Such institutions bear the responsibility to accept bibliographical resources in Spanish. Second, by admitting Spanish, institutions must commit to expanding bibliographical resources in this language for the library. It is important to mention these challenges because, even though most schools are able to include some resources in Spanish, and even though most students have some say in the creation of their doctoral-examination bibliographies, many had problems finding these resources in their institution's library or did not know how to go about searching for them.

Our findings raise other questions as well: Why are these resources hard to find? How can we make these resources in Spanish more available, not only for Latinas/os, but for the academy in general? I restructured the second stage of the investigation to seek answers to such questions.

Second Stage: Discovering the Links

Originally, this phase of the project was designed to gather lists of bibliographical resources from Latin America in their original languages. Each list was to be dedicated to a different area within the field of religious studies and theology. In the process, it became clear to me that it would be more helpful to research the ways students and scholars can go about searching and finding these resources. While concise lists (about 20 per area of study) are definitively of great help to students, it seemed more helpful to actually guide them in searching through different resources in

their particular areas of study, following their topics and interests. So, in this section, I will introduce the findings of this process, which are accompanied by a couple of lists (see the appendices).

The first step was to search among different institutions in Latin America for existing bibliographical resources in Latin American religious literature. The biggest bibliographical resource, available in many libraries in the United States, is the *Bibliografía Teológica Comentada del Área de Iberoamérica*. This annual annotated bibliography was produced by ISEDET (Instituto Superior Evangélico de Estudios Teológicos) in Buenos Aires, Argentina. The first volume contains data for 1973, but for economic reasons the project was discontinued in 1998, with the last volume containing bibliography for work produced in 1996. Every institution should carry these volumes, as a major resource for the benefit of their entire population. Contacting ISEDET, I was informed that other institutions have been trying to get a similar project off the ground, but as an electronic resource. As I write this essay, I continue to search for other such projects.

The second step was to contact 15 different libraries in the United States to ask about the presence of Latin American resources in languages other than English, and about the difficulty of making them available. No formal interviews were conducted — only casual conversations by phone or email.[1] Out of these conversations, it became clear that many libraries do not acquire foreign-language resources from Latin America because of: 1) the availability of translations; 2) the low usage of existing foreign-language works in their library; and 3) the slack demand for such works from faculty and students. Hence, it is imperative that students and faculty alike request these resources in order to "pressure" their own institutions to commit money to the acquisition of them. At the same time, it is important to pressure schools to include these resources as part of their main curricula, not only for classes in liberation theology, but also for the inclusion of Spanish

and Portuguese as academic languages. On the other hand, while the libraries of many institutions such as Princeton Theological Seminary, the University of Texas, Austin; the University of California, Berkeley; and the University of Notre Dame, among others, carry abundant resources from Latin America, it is essential that libraries establish good connections with libraries and publishing houses in Latin America in order to expand their holdings. It is a matter for faculty and students to work in developing and challenging library policies at their own institutions.

But the question remains of how to go about finding these resources in the first place? It is important to know where to look, and to be persistent. The first step should be to ask the librarian to acquire the ATLA CD-ROM Database (Latin America), published by the American Theological Library Association. Although this is not complete by any means, it is an excellent first step for a library to commit to. If the library already carries it, ask the librarian to take steps to make it more accessible, since sometimes students really do not know that the library has such a resource. Another important way of searching for these works is to review footnotes and bibliographies from articles and books. This is why it is important that we, Latinas/os in the United States, use these resources in our own writings, so people can actually be aware of them and of their importance.

The next step to search for these materials is the Internet, where one can directly seek out libraries, authors, publishing companies or organizations, in Latin America and elsewhere. In order to help scholars and students, I developed two different lists, which should be updated periodically, since they in no way are complete, but serve as a good way to begin a search. The first one is a compilation of web addresses (Appendix I). The second includes a list of several prolific authors from Latin America and some of their works, followed by a mini-bibliography by area of research (Appendix II). The links in the first list can open new horizons in

research. Beyond the bibliography, the second list allows students to contact publishing houses that can help them search for materials for their particular topics.

How to complete the discovery?

This project is just one step in the process of mapping the silencing of Latin American theological voices. The time has come for us to start pressuring our institutions to do away with the stances and rationales that keep most Latin American voices out of the academic discussions. As the results from this project indicate, most students can use Spanish to fulfill one of their language requirements, but this is too often seen as merely a substitution for another "more legitimate" theological language. Neither Spanish nor Portuguese are officially recognized as academic languages in many places, which means that works in these languages still do not make it into the U.S. Academy. It is our task to confront such conceptions and move beyond them. In this essay, I have proposed different ways of pressuring institutions in order to transform them, but these challenges should be accompanied by our individual work in the process of scholarly discovery.

The first step for individual un-silencing is to search for these resources and use them in our research. By using them we are resisting the idea that they are useful only in the Latin American setting, and have nothing to say to the rest of the world. At the same time, we challenge the notion that some works are universal and other aren't. Second, it is important to spread the word about these resources, their locations, and the ways they could be acquired. The worst mistake most students make is to think that there is nothing out there in a particular topic or area, and give up their search. By spreading the word about these resources, we can make sure that those who come after us get the benefit of multiple voices.

The third way every individual can help in the process of discovery is by being subversive. Bookmark links about Latin

America in your computer for your personal use, but also bookmark them in your institution's library. Whenever asked to read a translation of a book originally published in Spanish, read the original and talk about the different points lost in translation. This way people know about that work being a translation, and that translations are already interpretations of a work. Let's also quote the original text in our works, not the English translation. In this sense, it is important to be subversive and transgress the established rationale in order to discover the silences, and make sure they do not get covered over again.

[1] I used this more informal method to minimize defensiveness in my subjects' responses. Thus, I will not mention names or institutions in this part of the report.

APPENDIX I

Red Latinoamericana de Información Teológica
http://www.ibiblio.org/rlit/instituciones/institucionesalt.html
Here you can find a comprehensive lists of theological libraries in Latina America.

Religion and Theology in Latin America
http://lanic.utexas.edu/la/region/religion
Probably the most comprehensive database on Latin America religions, not just Christianity. It includes links to religious organizations, publications and others, and is divided by country.

Resources in Latina/o and Latin American Catholicism
http://www.sandiego.edu/theo/ref-latino.html
A very comprehensive compilation of links that deal with Catholicism and more. It includes links to religious organizations, archives, churches, journals, and publications, among others.

Comisión para el Estudio de la Historia
de la Iglesia de América Latina y el Caribe (CEHILA)
http://www.cehila.org
This is the most prestigious organization dedicated to the study of the history of the church in Latin America. Here you can find their publications, calendar of activities and projects.

Departamento Ecuménico de Investigaciones
http://www.dei-cr.org/
Autonomous association that among many things has a publishing company, and a journal called *Pasos*.

Revista RELat
http://servicioskoinonia.net/relat/

An electronic theological journal containing articles from multiple authors and regions in Latin America.

PRAXIS: La Revista Virtual de la Comunidad Teológica de Honduras
http://www.ccdhonduras.org/praxis/index.html
Virtual journal created by the theological community in Honduras.

RIBLA
http://pagina.de/RIBLA
Website of the Revista de Interpretación Bíblica Latinoamericana with access to past volumes and some other works.

Handbook of Latin American Studies
http://lcweb2.loc.gov/hlas
Although not specifically dedicated to religious studies, this is a great multidisciplinary database about Latin America.

Sources and General Resources on Latin America
http://www.oberlin.edu/faculty/svolk/latinam.htm
Although not specifically dedicated to religious studies, this website includes links for resources both from and about Latin America.

ISEDET
http://www.isedet.edu.ar/
Official website of this institution of higher education in Argentina. They have their library catalog online, as well as information about their publications and projects.

APPENDIX II
SOME KEY AUTHORS

Elsa Támez
Capitalismo: Violencia y anti-vida. La opresión de las mayorías y la domesticación de los dioses, 2 vols. (Costa Rica: EDUCA, 1978) – Ed. con Saúl Trinidad.
Santiago: Lectura latinoamerica de la epístola (San José: DEI, 1984)
El rostro femenino de la teología (San José: DEI, 1986) – Et. al.
Contra toda condena: La justificación por la fe desde los excluídos (San José: DEI, 1991)
Justicia de Dios: Vida para Todos (San José: SEBILA, 1991)

Gustavo Guitiérrez
Teología de la liberación (Lima: CEP, 1971)
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Historia de la filosofía latinoamericana y la filosofía de la liberación (Editorial Nueva América, 1994)
Resistencia y Esperanza: Historia del Pueblo Cristiano en América Latina y el Caribe (San José: DEI, 1995)
Ética de la liberación en la edad de la globalización y la exclusión (Madrid: Trotta, 1998)

José Míguez Bonino
Ama y haz lo que quieras: Una ética para el hombre Nuevo (Buenos Aires: Editorial Escatón, 1976)
La fe en busca de eficacia (Salamanca: Ediciones Sígueme, 1977)
Los rostros del protestantismo latinoamericano (Buenos Aires: ISEDET, 1996)

Orlando Costas
La iglesia y su misión evangelizadora (Buenos Aires: La Aurora, 1971)
Hacia una teología de la evangelización (Buenos Aires: La Aurora, 1973)
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El Precio de la Vocación Profética (México: El Faro, 1994)
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La Iglesia, Signo y Primicia del Reino: Reflexiones Pastorales desde el Caribe y América Latina (Chicago: Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, 2003)

Jon Sobrino
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Memoria subversiva y esperanza para los pueblos crucificados (Madrid: Trotta, 2004)

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Filosofía de la realidad histórica (San Salvador: UCA Editores, 1990)
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Escritos teológicos (San Salvador: UCA Editores, 2000)

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Levántate y anda: Algunos aspectos del caminar de la mujer en América Latina (Ediciones Dabar, 1995)
Intuiciones ecofeministas: Ensayo para repensar (Madrid: Trotta, 2000)
El rostro oculto del mal (Madrid: Trotta, 2003)

Juan José Tamayo
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An Evaluation: Perspectives on the Hispanic Theological Initiative

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides a comprehensive evaluation of the Hispanic Theological Initiative (HTI), a program founded in 1996 to increase the representation of Latino students and faculty in graduate theological education.

Based on interviews, focus groups, analysis of program documents and recent research, the report assesses HTI's success at meeting its stated goals of (1) using scholarships to recruit and fund a diverse group of Latino students; (2) assisting students to overcome the challenges of doctoral studies through mentoring, networking and other activities; (3) increasing the number of Latina/o candidates for faculty positions in seminaries, schools of theology and universities; (4) creating and nurturing a quality community of Latino scholars; and (5) preparing Latinos to serve as church and community leaders.

Overall, HTI has met these objectives remarkably well. The evaluation notes quantitative and qualitative accomplishments as well as positive aspects and challenges related to each goal. It concludes by discussing some of the future challenges and opportunities that HTI will face as it seeks to institutionalize its success.

I. INTRODUCTION

Since 1996, the Hispanic Theological Initiative (HTI) has sought to create and nurture a community of Latina and Latino[1] scholars and prepare a new generation of faith leaders for service. The Initiative meets a critical need. Latinos in the United States now number 40 million, representing close to 14% of the total US population. Hispanic churches are among the most visible and dynamic institutions serving the Latino community. Yet despite the growing need for church leadership, Latinos comprise only 3.6% of students and less than 3% of faculty at seminaries and theological schools in the United States and Canada.[2] Since 1989, the number of Hispanic faculty at such institutions has increased a modest 1.5 percent, largely due to programs such as the Fund for Theological Education,[3] the Hispanic Summer Program,[4] and HTI.

Religious leaders have long lamented the inadequate number of Latino students and faculty in theological education. To address

the problem, HTI began with a focus on master's and doctoral-level education for students from throughout the United States and Puerto Rico. Today, HTI awards scholarships primarily at the doctoral level, but its contribution goes beyond providing multi-year funding for graduate study. To support Latina and Latino scholars at every phase in the educational pipeline, HTI underwrites mentoring and professional skill development workshops and awards prizes for special achievement. HTI has also provided dissertation and postdoctoral awards for those in later stages of doctoral education and at critical junctures in their faculty careers.

Through its scholarship program, HTI seeks to increase representation of highly talented Latinos who may not consider graduate theological education due to financial and other constraints. Through its mentoring, networking and community building components, HTI prepares students to face the many challenges they encounter in doctoral programs and throughout the academy. Both strategies address the need to recruit and retain Hispanic students in theological education and create and sustain a cadre of Latino scholars who, through their teaching, research, and community activities, can prepare future leaders for both the academy and the church.

Launched with a grant from The Pew Charitable Trusts in 1996, HTI was originally housed at Emory University. In 1999, it moved to its current home at Princeton Theological Seminary. The Pew Charitable Trusts has sustained HTI with grants totaling over $8.35 million since its inception, most recently with an award in 2005. In 2004, the Lilly Endowment awarded HTI a grant for $888,000 to fund the program's doctoral scholarship component.

While these awards represent a major commitment on the part of Pew and Lilly, both of these sources of funding will conclude in 2008. In 2002, the board of trustees of Princeton Theological Seminary (PTS) voted to assume responsibility for HTI's future. PTS now funds some activities and overhead, but major new sup-

port will be needed to underwrite scholarships and other key components if HTI is to continue beyond 2008.

II. ABOUT THIS EVALUATION

Caroline Sotello Viernes Turner, Edwin Hernández and Milagros Peña, with the assistance of Juan Carlos González and Kate Dillon Hogan, conducted the primary research for this evaluation. Elizabeth Station combined their findings with analysis of other key documents to tell HTI's story in this report. The authors are grateful to HTI program administrators and affiliated faculty and students, who gave generously of their time and effort as we prepared the evaluation.

The authors used various methods of data collection to evaluate HTI in light of its stated overarching goal to create and nurture a community of Latina and Latino scholars. Interviews and focus groups addressed such questions as: (1) In what ways has the HTI been a factor in students' ongoing academic progress? (2) How have HTI workshops contributed to their progress? (3) What is the perceived impact of faculty mentoring on the career paths and academic development of HTI awardees?

Sources for this report include:

(1) Interviews with HTI faculty participants,[5] two of whom served as HTI administrators;
(2) Four interviews with HTI administrators,[6] two of whom are now also faculty;
(3) Five focus group interviews with students (involving 27 participants)[7];
(4) Demographic data about program participants collected since 1997 by HTI administrators;
(5) 26 evaluation surveys completed by HTI students, mentors, workshop guests and selection committee members from 1999 to 2003;

(6) Other documents that helped place the data collected in a broader context, including HTI's own program descriptions, grant proposals and reports to funding agencies; an evaluation of HTI programs conducted in 2000; and the preliminary results of a recent study of Latinos in theological education.

To let the unique voices and perspectives of faculty, students and administrators be heard, this document also includes many direct quotes from interviews.

We have organized this report into six sections. Following the introduction and explanation of methods (Sections I and II), Section III outlines key components of the Hispanic Theological Initiative. The heart of the report, Section IV, assesses HTI's impact in light of its stated goals. The final two sections (V and VI) present ongoing challenges for HTI and opportunities for the future.

III. KEY COMPONENTS OF THE HISPANIC THEOLOGICAL INITIATIVE

From its inception, HTI has aimed first to help identify and train educators and leaders with the best tools available, and second to build a strong national network of Hispanic religious scholars that will increase the Hispanic tenured presence in the field of religion and theology in seminaries, colleges and universities. To achieve these goals, HTI has focused on the pipeline through which candidates for graduate study become senior faculty.

Program components have reflected HTI's evolving strategy in meeting its mission. As noted, HTI started out as a scholarship program for master's and doctoral level training. However, in 2001 the scholarship program began to target doctoral students exclusively, in the belief that focusing on the doctorate-to-faculty phase of the pipeline was the best investment of scarce financial resources. At that time, the post-doctoral component was also dis-

continued. In 2002, the book prize and dissertation series were added.

Currently, HTI's key components include:

1. Scholarship and Networking Funds

a. The Doctoral Component

Following a rigorous selection process, HTI provides a $15,000 annual stipend to four full-time graduate students for three years, and another $1,000 yearly per student for networking purposes. The funding schedule provides a strong base of support for the students' graduate careers. In addition, each awardee's educational institution is expected to provide a fellowship or assistantship in the fourth and fifth year, and a tuition scholarship for the entire program. This expectation is formalized through a contract letter between HTI and the institution.

b. The Dissertation Component

Currently the program provides nine one-year stipends of $16,000 each in the form of a Dissertation Award to assist students in the completion of their dissertations. The award is contingent upon the candidate not seeking full-time employment during the funding year. Awardees also receive $1,000 to put toward networking activities, subscriptions to professional journals (such as *Apuntes* or *The Journal of Hispanic/Latino Theology*), and memberships to the Asociación para la Educación Teológica Hispana (AETH) or the Academy of Catholic Hispanic Theologians in the United States (ACHTUS).

2. HTI Book Prize and Lectureship

Inaugurated in 2002, this component motivates junior Latino scholars to publish through a prestigious annual award that highlights their contribution to the field. The prize and lectureship's immediate goal is to recognize, reward and publicize the best book written by a Latina/o junior scholar on theology and/or religion. In the long-term, it is hoped that this component will both encourage faculty to use Latina/o books in their required and recommended readings for courses and provide models that will inspire further contributions from Latina/o scholars.

3. Mentoring

a. Doctoral Awardees

Each new doctoral awardee is paired with a senior Latino scholar in his or her field of study who is not employed by the institution the awardee is attending. The mentoring begins with a weekend training session in which both the mentor and mentee are trained on the meaning and expectation of mentoring, and each is asked to make a three-year commitment to a mentoring relationship. During this period, the mentor is asked to relate both with the student personally, and with colleagues at the institution where the awardee is enrolled—specifically the awardee's advisor—to assure that the institution is responsive to the student's particular needs and interests or that other avenues are found to meet those needs and interests. Another key function of the mentor is to assure that the awardee moves as close as possible to selecting a dissertation topic during the first year.

Mentors receive an annual stipend of $1,000 for mentoring doctoral students. The stipend helps to assure greater commitment and to compensate for time related to the mentoring function. HTI also covers travel, lodging and meal expenses incurred during two visits per year to the mentee.

b. Dissertation Awardees

At the dissertation level, awardees are required to attend two Writer's Workshops, one during the Summer Workshop and the other as the dissertation approaches its completion. During the year each awardee is assigned an editor, who is usually someone employed as an editor by a publisher in the field of

religion. The editor works with the awardee on stylistic and syntactic matters and on developing the argument of the dissertation.

Editors receive a stipend per student as well as the cost of travel, lodging and meal expenses incurred during the two Writer's Workshops.

4. Group Networking Activities

Community building and support are critical strategies for developing Latina/o scholars. Activities seek to address the problems that scholars consistently identified in research conducted by Pew—a sense of isolation, marginalization, and lack of a supportive environment. HTI awardees are encouraged to form networks with each other and with established Latina/o and non-Latino religious leaders and scholars. To facilitate this networking, HTI funds the following key activities:

a. Summer Workshop:
This annual four-day event gathers new and continuing HTI doctoral and dissertation awardees. It also brings together mentors, selection committee members, advisory committee members and editors. All awardees and mentors are required to attend, at HTI's expense. Experts in dissertation writing, writing for publication, teaching, career management and other concerns pertaining to academia are invited as consultants. Workshop sessions focus on writing, teaching, research, publishing, technology and spirituality.

b. Networking Funds:
These funds give awardees the opportunity to establish contacts outside of their particular academic, denominational and research circles, which further enables them to get their voices heard in the academy. Awardees also use these funds to attend annual professional meetings (such as those of the American Academy of Religion and the Society of Biblical

Literature), to visit professors in their field who are not located at their institution, and to do research in the United States and abroad.

c. Regional Conferences:
Until their discontinuation in 2004, these events provided opportunities for awardees and other Hispanic students and faculty from a specific region to meet for networking, mentoring, community building and scholarly discussions and presentations. The meetings also served a recruiting function by increasing the pool of applicants for the scholarship and mentoring program.

d. HTI Reception at the American Academy of Religion/Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting:
For the last seven years, this gathering has provided an important networking, publicity and community building opportunity for HTI awardees. The reception attracts publishers, deans, presidents of schools, professors and prospective awardees. Over 125 people attended the 2003 reception.

5. Information and Publications

To assure the sustained presence of Latina/o scholars in academia by providing opportunities for publication and for networking via written communication, HTI publishes:

a. HTI Annual Brochure:
Used to announce new and renewal awardees, and list past awardees and the institutions they attended. Sent to all ATS-accredited institutions as well as colleges and universities, the brochure specifically announces HTI as a resource for information on candidates.

b. HTI Website:
Located at www.htiprogram.org, this is a resource for downloading applications and forms for current awardees and men-

tors, for placing job announcements and for accessing academic links.

c. HTI Newsletter:
This newsletter, Journeys, informs past and present awardees, mentors and institutions about recent developments, and is also a venue for highlighting potential candidates for employment with new PhDs and publications.

d. Perspectivas:
An important resource for publishing and showcasing the work of awardees, this occasional papers series is sent to more than 300 recipients, including all ATS schools as well as colleges, institutions and libraries in the United States and Puerto Rico. Since it was launched in 1998, eight issues have been published (each of which includes several papers).

e. HTI Dissertation Series Collection:
Inaugurated in 2002, this collection, housed at Princeton Theological Seminary's Speer Library, has provided scholars across the nation with access to an array of dissertations written by HTI scholars and others focusing on Latino issues. Currently there are 23 works in the collection, and more are added every year.

IV. OVERALL IMPACT

What impact has HTI had, in light of the goals it has set for itself over the years?[8] This section provides an overview of HTI's achievements by looking at both quantitative measures and qualitative commentary from interviewees and focus group participants. For each of HTI's five goals, we list accomplishments, positive aspects, and challenges cited by study participants.

***GOAL #1:** Use scholarships to recruit and fund a diverse group of Latino students in graduate theological education.*

Accomplishments:

- HTI has made 260 awards to 128 fellows for master's and doctoral-level work.
- About 30% of awardees have been women and 70% have been men.
- Scholarship awardees pursuing doctoral studies represent over 17 countries and the Caribbean.
- Scholars are an ecumenical group that includes Evangelicals, Roman Catholics and Mainline Protestants.
- Awardees have been based at 62 different schools in the United States.

Positive Aspects:

Recent research shows that financial difficulties –- including debt – represent a major obstacle for Latinos who wish to pursue graduate theological education.[9] On its own, the fact that *HTI scholarships removed or greatly reduced financial concerns for 128 awardees* is a major accomplishment.

For the individuals involved, HTI awards have made a major difference. In an earlier evaluation of HTI, Daryl G. Smith noted that the awards give students "support, focus and validation," and that having the scholarships "seemed to increase the visibility and prominence of the students at their institutions. Many mentioned being taken more seriously as a result of receiving national recognition" (Smith, 2000).

Moreover, as the numbers indicate, *HTI has successfully met its goal of funding a diverse array of students*. With a breakdown of scholarship recipients that is 62% Protestant and 38% Catholic, the group does not mirror the religious orientation of Latinos in the general population, since Catholics are the largest single

group of HTI awardees, as Figure 1 illustrates:

Figure 1
HTI Doctoral Awardees 1997-2005 – Denomination
(Total: 82 Awardees)

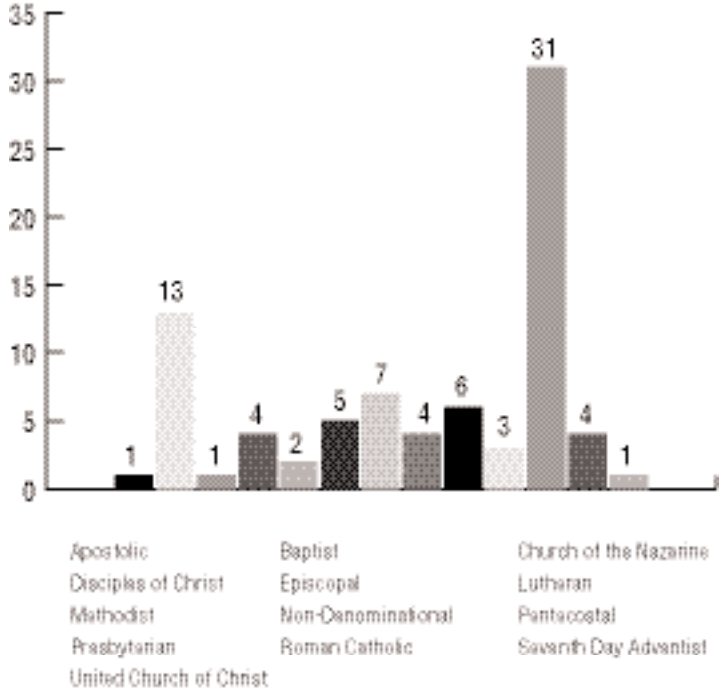
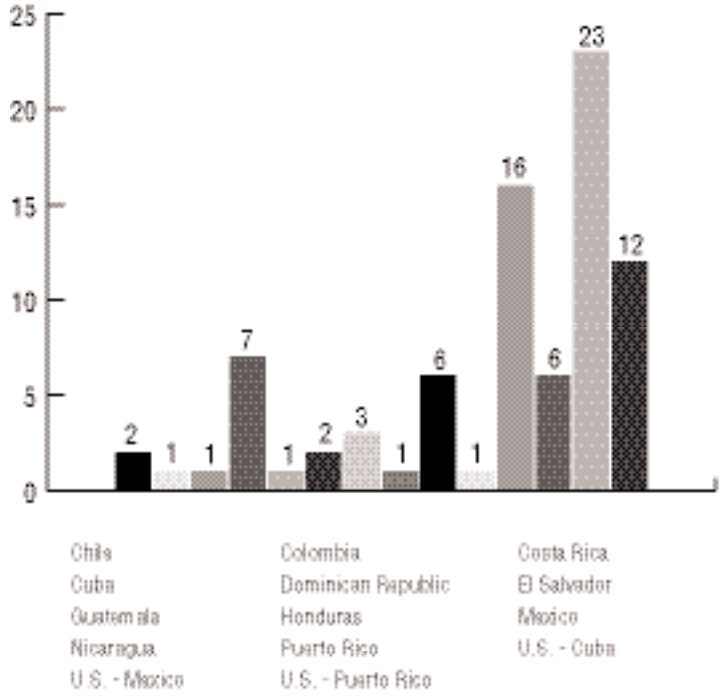


Figure 2
HTI Doctoral Awardees 1997-2005 – Country of Birth/Ethnicity
(Total: 82 Awardees)



In terms of country of birth and ethnicity, HTI students represent a broad cross-section of US Latino society, although their distribution varies from that of the Latinos in the general population. As Figure 2 on the next page illustrates, the largest group of awardees was born in the United States, with Puerto Ricans born on the island and the mainland following in second and third place, respectively.

As Table 1 shows, HTI has provided a total of 260 awards to 128 awardees since 1997.

Table 1
Number of Awards Given by HTI from 1997 to 2004, by Award Type, Year, and Gender

	97-98		98-99		99-00		00-01		01-02		02-03		03-04		04-05		97-05
	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	Award Totals
Master*	2	7	5	15	9	15	8	12	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	77
Doctoral*	1	5	3	7	1	9	4	9	3	12	2	12	4	6	3	7	87
Special Mentoring	0	0	0	2	3	1	1	6	1	6	1	5	2	8	1	2	39
Dissertation*	4	5	2	4	3	3	1	2	3	2	0	6	2	4	2	3	46
Post-Doctoral	2	0	0	1	1	3	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10
Gender Totals:	9	17	10	29	17	31	14	32	9	22	3	23	8	18	6	12	F-76 M-184
Yearly Totals:	26		39		48		46		31		26		26		18		260

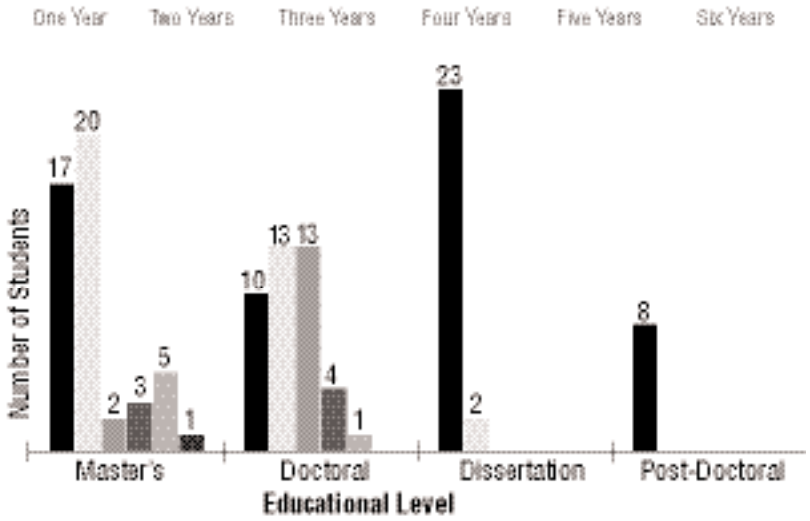
* Includes Renewal Students

Of all of the awards given, 76 (or 29%) have been for women and 184 (or 71%) for men. The highest number of awards given by HTI in any year was 48 in 1999-2000, with the annual number of awards declining in subsequent years.

The amount of time that awardees spend earning their degrees is another measure of success. For awardees that received doctoral grants from HTI, the average time to degree was 4.85 years. Figure 3 shows the number of years that HTI awardees remained in their programs as of 2004.

Figure 3

Number of Years HTI Awardees Stay in the Program by Number per Year and Educational Level



According to HTI's 1997-2004 statistics, only two master's level, two doctoral, and one dissertation awardee have dropped out of the program. Further, of the 41 individuals who received dissertation fellowships, 32 have completed their dissertations and 12 are actively working on completing their dissertations.[11] Thus *excellent persistence and degree completion rates have been a hallmark of HTI since the scholarship program began*.

Challenges:

Access to HTI remains an issue. Some students who were interviewed expressed concern about the program's exclusivity. For example, one student noted how speaking Spanish won him acceptance during the selection process:

> There was a level of skepticism that I felt [at first] …

> and they didn't know how to come out and ask if I was Hispanic. I knew the staff at HTI, the interviewers, so I switched to speaking Spanish and then they knew I was Nicaraguan. After that initial icebreaking, I felt more accepted and comfortable.

Another awardee's story illustrates how the competitive process for acceptance can be initially discouraging:

> In the spring of 1999, [an HTI representative] visited my seminary and talked about ideas already resonating in my mind -– about marginalization, feeling alone as a Mexican American, discriminatory attitudes in a seminary dominated by the Bible belt. This led me to search for ways to get in contact with the community she was talking about… because HTI would finally allow me to feel like a part of the community, not marginalized, and allow me to express my experiences… I applied, but kind of haphazardly, soon to discover that there was a true process of competition. It made me realize that this institution was really trying to attract the elite, those who had potential. I was again denied, and I felt frustrated because this is the community that I needed. But then I got some emails from [another HTI representative], telling me to give it one more try. I increased my references and GPA, and finally applied a third time. I was finally invited to come to the interview, and that process was an achievement. I had a sense of belonging; I … was now part of something that was very much a part of my whole experience.

For administrators and faculty, it is often challenging to understand the potential contributions of Latina/o students who may not initially seem like obvious candidates for HTI. One administrator described the phenomenon the following way:

> We think that if you're an excellent writer or if you're a good presenter, you're an educated person. But [what I've learned with HTI is that] sometimes you get a wealth of knowledge and wisdom from people that do not express themselves well at all in those arenas. They're not good writers; they're not good speakers, but they're artists … either with paint, with music, or [in] dealing with people and caring for people. And they're educated and intelligent and they bring great wealth to the larger community because of their unique gifts…

Although one-third of HTI awardees are Latinas, *women are still underrepresented in HTI*, which is another important challenge. Three students who participated in a focus group expressed their concern about this:

> Student #1: I want to point out the problem of the decreasing number of women in HTI. It is not the fault of the [selection committee] – it just happened. It is still a concern and a necessity to include more women in our midst.
>
> Student #2: Women bring a different perspective.
>
> Student #3: The people who are targeting [candidates] should look out more for women, [do] advertising, [be] assertive ... and not just [say] "let's see whoever comes."

GOAL #2: *Assist Latino students to overcome the many challenges encountered in pursuing doctoral studies through mentoring, networking, professional development and community building.*

Accomplishments:

- 82 of the 128 fellows have pursued doctoral studies.
- HTI has trained over 36 senior scholars to be mentors to graduate awardees during their doctoral studies. Nine mentors were past HTI awardees themselves.
- HTI has contracted six editors from various publishing houses who have helped 29 dissertation awardees edit and complete their dissertations. HTI-sponsored writer's workshops have strengthened writing skills of awardees.
- 32 awardees have completed their dissertations.
- Another 53 are in the pre-dissertation or dissertation writing phases of doctoral programs. Given HTI awardees' high completion rates for doctoral studies, this represents a significant cadre of talented scholars poised to enter the faculty pipeline.

Positive Aspects:

HTI's comprehensive approach – which includes community building, mentoring, networking and academic support activities – makes a critical difference. Beyond financial support, HTI provides participants with a chance to develop the personal and professional skills they need to succeed in academia. According to one faculty member, "HTI has helped those particular students understand how to go through their career path, and it provides them with mentoring; it provides them with help and understanding [of] what kinds of decisions they have to make."

Students frequently describe the program as a "familia." One student said, "[the] treasure of HTI is the sense of collegiality." Another added, "I was overwhelmed at the sense of community [at HTI], a genuine desire to give the resources [and] empower us to be authentic to our interests." One student saw HTI as a "mechanism to grieve" about the difficulties students confront at their institutions, because "HTI is more of a family than anything else"

and problems can be shared within a family. Another student appreciated HTI as a place of "affirmation of the community… They had the same questions and journeys. Sharing with them made the difference."

Students consistently gave high rankings to HTI's structured academic experiences, including the summer program and writer's workshop. One student said, "these experiences help you with the research component of faculty life, and they are practical experiences that build writing skills requisite to finishing a dissertation."

Writing support was critical to this Latina adjunct professor:

> HTI found out the hard time I was having and they [found] ways to encourage [me]… They welcomed me to the writer's workshop… HTI has continued to support me; they let me come here and stay a week when things get too distracting; they find editors who are willing to talk with me … I am very grateful. They have gone above and beyond, and they have walked an extra five miles, and I don't think I would have gotten as far as I got without their support.

An assistant professor recalls how writing support from HTI helped her to finish the dissertation:

> When I got the HTI support, I asked for a … short time to write, away from my institution. So I got a couple of months to [finish], which I did. And the writing workshop was very helpful. I was away for a whole week. And that's when I actually finished the first draft of my dissertation, during that time.

Mentoring is one of HTI's best components, participants say, because it provides socialization to academia and a collaborative model of scholarship. One student's remarks were representative of this appreciation:

> My mentoring experience was awesome. My men-

> tor…has a great commitment to HTI, to the community and to me, too. We have seen each other five times this year, [and on] official visits in the fall, he met with everyone and even read my faculty advisor's book before he got there to see what her research is in. He lets me know what conferences he is planning to attend to see if I am going too, and he is conscious about introducing me to tons of people in the field. [He's] very interested in the personal level, excited about my work; I have a cheerleader, and I have someone that I am accountable to … [This] is one of the most important components [of HTI, which] would be tragic and different without mentoring.

Some younger faculty interviewees had received HTI scholarships for doctoral study. They reported meeting mentors through HTI who provided introductions into professional networks. One male assistant professor said of his mentor:

> He opened doors for me because he had the contacts...When I was writing my dissertation, there was a seminar at [X University], and he knew someone there and he talked to him and he fit me in for a presentation on my dissertation…For me it was a great thing. This professor put me on his agenda and gave me a forum.

As a side benefit, many faculty respondents noted that the relationships they have built with other prominent Latino theologians as mentors for HTI students not only advanced the students' progress but their own development as scholars. Most faculty who expressed contentment with their roles had connections to Latino theologians nationally. One female associate professor had this to say about HTI's role in relationship building:

> The system that's been developed where you're able to support people, giving them writing workshops and

> helping them to address publishing and mentoring … I think that's really very helpful. [Students receive] mentoring in their own work with their dissertation so that they don't get lost. And it's already creating good networking so that they know Latino students in their field and beyond their field, and they establish a network of friends and colleagues. I think that's really important.

According to a male professor:

> The nourishment [through relationships] that has come through the context outside of my institution, through what has happened in the last 20 years, the coming together of the HSP, the emergence of HTI, the Fund for Theological Education…[were] key in supporting me through my doctoral work.

Networking is a central component of HTI from which faculty and students benefit greatly. Many faculty described mentoring and networking as central components of their career progress and success. Because there are so few Latino faculty in theological schools and seminaries, HTI provides a forum not only for students to meet and work with Latino faculty, but also for faculty to network with other Latino scholars to create community. As one male professor remarked:

> The mentoring and networking are very important for Latinos because you feel so alone…I felt like I found an oasis in the desert; it was refreshing. Even now, I feel refreshed—I see my friends, the cultural life, the celebrations, and instead of the constant fight to let people know what you are about, it is a space to renew and grow and learn.

An administrator described the practical impact of HTI's networking activities:

> That is the key and the critical part because it helps people develop communities and support systems that they didn't have before… The networking helps somebody find out about a job that they would not have known about before, or an opportunity somewhere, or they say to each other "let's lecture here, let's write this together." So that is critical, and it's worked very well for the Latino community. And it's connected us…

One student said, "I think the networking component has been important. I have an African American mentor…. [My mentor] …introduced me to important scholars who hopefully will be colleagues in a few years."

Although HTI's academic support components have some level of measurability, interviews and focus groups revealed that for many, the most important aspects and benefits are less quantifiable. As one student put it, "HTI is giving us a sort of dignity, like having a PhD after your name ... It is important for other Hispanics to see that we are getting PhDs, because with our presence I am telling them that it can be done." Another remarked that with HTI, "there is the possibility to *sobresalir* (stand out) [in graduate studies]. I support the rigor [that comes with being involved with HTI] …It is for a reason. We are setting precedents and the bar has been raised high."

Challenges:

When discussing mentoring, *some students complained that their mentors were not good matches*, but understood that this was a function of the shortage of available scholars for the task. Generally only a few expressed reservations about their mentors, such as this student:

> I'm in [field X], but my mentor is [in field Y]. You put your choices down and HTI works hard at getting you the mentor you want, but sometimes it is not possible.

> Although my mentor is a great person, he said, "If you want to go to someone else, I'm OK with this." So there is a deficiency in the types of mentors we have to tap into in our specific fields. I think it is a problem of availability and the number of mentors we have. My mentor works well in other ways; he knows a lot of people.

Another student said awardees make contact with scholars who are not selected as their mentors, but do so with some reservations:

> Yes, I like my mentor, and I took the initiative to email [another mentor] and he responded, but I didn't feel as comfortable because he was not my mentor, even though he had offered. As we get more scholars, it will be less of a problem.

Administrators observed that students need mentoring at earlier stages of their academic careers, which HTI does not presently provide. In working with some doctoral students, administrators encounter a range of issues that could be minimized if mentoring started earlier, perhaps at the master's or bachelor's levels of a student's education. One administrator had this to say about the situation:

> I think we started too late. I really think that we need to either begin at the college level or the master's level. I find people … struggling still at the dissertation level, sometimes with self-esteem issues, not believing that they have the skills to do the work. Some have difficulty writing ... I find that there are people that have achieved certain levels [who] still feel very isolated in their own academic community. They still don't feel supported enough to be able to voice what it is that they need… The process of not being afraid of speak-

> ing to people, and challenging an institution, and looking for [resources] is something that the Latino community needs more training in …

Some faculty thought that HTI should facilitate more opportunities for faculty networking, including this Latina professor:

> We need to have some monies for faculty to have some way of networking… Catholics have a Hispanic Catholic Theological Association, so once a year, most of us see each other, and right now we're still so few that most of us know each other… [Some, but not all, Latino theologians attend the American Academy of Religion annual meeting, but] …there are over 6,000 people participating, so you don't even run into each other. There is a small group called *La Comunidad*, which is supposed to be for Hispanic theologians, but there's no funding for it. We really don't have the energy; we're tired… I mean, nothing, nothing comes easy… But I think [this] is something that's needed.

Workshops were one aspect of HTI that students felt needed improvement. Many had strong feelings about the workshops, as the following comments from different students illustrate:

> In the writer's workshop, we would write our presentations in English, but we do not have editors for Spanish. The editor this morning was making comments like, "this sentence was long; you are thinking like Germans." No, we are thinking like Costa Ricans, or Puerto Ricans, because we have long sentences in Spanish. So we have to be consistent; some of us will also probably write in Spanish.
>
> I would change the whiteness of the program. Being associated with Pew, without putting Pew down, it

> works as a white program; you can see it in the administration, in the ethos. It is a white program for Latinas/os. I think it was thought up by Latinas/os, but those giving the money were not.
>
> The scheduling is hard, coming from a heavy academic setting. I look forward to it here, but it is [also] intense and I dread it. [There are] so many meetings and classes, so I am tired when I get home after the workshops with HTI. There should be time for leisure.
>
> It feels too fragmented; [there's] no time to digest all of it. You walk in and there's a bag full of books; I read one and I wish there was a workshop on the content of that book. It could change the rest of my academic career. There is no mention of writing style or why those books are there … Why do they just give us the books and not follow up on it?
>
> One negative that has stuck out – I don't know whose fault it is – but sessions are supposed to be led by professors. One was on the "Joy of Scholarship" but the [people] who led the discussion just complained and talked about how the field is full of backstabbing… So I thought, why do I want to go into this field? It was depressing; they are venting [but] we are preparing to go into the field and don't need that kind of negative feedback at this point. Let me experience that on my own time.

This group of students felt that the some of the workshops lacked structure and focus:

> Another disappointment was in my meeting about my discipline. Someone asked what we were supposed to do and no one knew, so there was a lack of structure. In that meeting, we decided to share what our projects

were but it never got to my turn. I would have liked to share.

The writer's workshop this morning was too short and generic.

[The writer's workshop was] crazy because it did not work … It was hard; everyone was at different stages. It [got] a bit out of hand, and [the instructor] pointed out the wrong things in each person's work and criticized them …

GOAL #3: *Increase the availability of Latino/a candidates for faculty positions in seminaries, schools of theology, and universities.*

Accomplishments:

- 96% of the 32 individuals who completed PhDs with HTI support are working and teaching in the academy.
- 25 of the 32 are in full-time teaching positions. Four are adjunct faculty members and the others work in administration, research and the non-profit sectors.
- Five of these faculty members have been tenured and five are in tenure-track teaching positions.

According to ATS data, before HTI there were 67 Latina/o theological scholars in full-time faculty positions in the United States and Canada, while in 2003 there were 105. Thus, it is quite possible that the 25 HTI-trained faculty members in full-time teaching positions represent roughly two-thirds (67%) of the overall growth in Hispanic faculty in ATS schools since 1996. By HTI's own estimates, its efforts helped to increase the representation of Latina/o faculty from 2% in 1994 to 3% in 2003. This impact on the academy is indeed a success worth celebrating.

Positive Aspects:

Without a doubt, *HTI's most important contribution has been to increase the number of Latino faculty in theological education.* HTI has increased its presence nationally across theological seminaries, such that many institutions contact HTI in search of Latina/o academics that they would like to hire. Many faculty interviewees landed their first jobs because of their HTI mentors and networks, such as this male associate professor:

A Latina faculty member…pushed them to give me an interview for the position. It is good that she was there, but she was not part of the selection process at all. The point here, also, is not that they get job interviews because they are HTI students. The point is that because they have a relationship with HTI, then they are more visible, more likely to have more connections, more likely to get interviews.

While creating a critical mass of Latina/o faculty nationwide is essentially a quantitative task, *HTI's efforts have also made a qualitative difference to institutions and to the field*. As Daryl Smith noted in an earlier evaluation, signs of this impact were already evident in 2000:

[O]ne begins to see the development of a coherent body of scholarship—books published through dissertations and postdoctoral fellowships and now serving as center-pieces and reference points not only for Hispanic scholars but for those other scholars interested in developing new areas of expertise…[Though] this may have occurred through the work of individuals, it would not have had the synergy or be as powerful without the collective context given by HTI.

Challenges:

As noted earlier, *the overall number of Latina/o faculty in theological education remains very small and has grown inadequately in the last decade*. HTI calculates that there are currently just 116 Latina/o faculty members in ATS-affiliated institutions in the United States and Canada. This figure is lamentable given the size of the Latino population and the urgent need for Hispanic leaders in academia, community and church. Our interviews and other research indicate that existing Latino faculty members are stretched alarmingly thin. Even if HTI meets its goal of getting 90% of its awardees into the faculty pipeline, their numbers would still lag behind the need.

GOAL #4: *Create and nurture a quality community of Latina and Latino scholars in the academy, as evinced not only by their numbers but by their publications and impact on their institutions.*

Accomplishments:

- Faculty members who were HTI awardees have produced publications that serve as reference points for Hispanic and other scholars.
- Institutions that wish to hire Latina/o faculty routinely contact HTI, proof of the Initiative's national visibility and the growing demand for Hispanic scholars.
- The HTI Dissertation Collection, established at Speer Library of Princeton Theological Seminary in 2002, is a resource for scholars in Latino theology.
- HTI's Latinas in Theology group has created a supportive, productive national network of Hispanic women in theological education.
- The HTI Book Prize brings recognition to Latino scholars and to HTI's activities.

Positive Aspects:

One male professor summarized how HTI has contributed to building a scholarly community:

> There should be an intensive attempt to preserve HTI…[It is] creating a network of people…[sharing] experiences and ideas and email messages and gathering [at] regional meetings and presenting papers. I can see the difference in the quality of the discussions of the students when I was here in July [2002], in comparison with 1997… It's not only that now there are more people than then, of course, but I can see the fact that they really know each other…they have written papers… I can see the development of some kind of theological network of conversation, of dialogue, and sense of admiration [among] this community, which I think is good.

As faculty *these scholars offer a non-traditional perspective to the field and to their institutions*, infusing their unique individual perspectives and experiences into the academy. Their impact on their institutions is significant.

HTI funding has contributed both directly and indirectly to scholarly output, supporting authorship of publications that are impressive in quantity and remarkably diverse in terms of their topics and approaches. HTI awardees are making important contributions to academic debate in theological studies. Although it was beyond the scope of this evaluation to assess the quality of these publications, the excellent job placement record of scholarship recipients indicates that they are producing top-tier work.

Significantly, HTI administrators reported that *Princeton Theological Seminary offered a welcoming environment and critical support for Latinos and for the HTI*, which helped to nurture the community of Latino scholars within and beyond PTS. One professor mentioned that the HTI office's central location on the campus

helps to integrate the program into the life of the seminary. The same respondent praised the PTS library, saying, "they have rich resources in Spanish, from the Latin American churches."

This faculty member went on to note that past PTS president John A. MacKay, who is credited with helping create a new ecumenical era for theological education, was a significant force in the development of such enhanced library resources.

> Princeton had always had a relationship to churches in Latin America, because [John] MacKay came to Princeton from Latin America. He had been to several places there, working in different positions… He was Scottish… he studied in Peru and Spain, Lima and Madrid, and was fluent in Spanish…When he came here, he provided the library [with an incentive] to get good collections from Latin America and special documents, which they still have. The library is excellent in that realm.

Following in that tradition, in 2002 *the HTI Dissertation Collection was created and housed in the PTS library, providing special visibility and access to these documents*. The following sample of dissertations from the collection reveals their diversity of topics and approaches:

- Rodríguez, Jesús. (2003). "Empathy Studies with Mainline Protestant Latino/a Clergy in the Context of Individual Pastoral Care Relationships."
- Torres, Theresa Lynn. (2003). "Our Lady of Guadalupe in the Society of the Guadalupanas in Kansas City, Missouri: An Empirical and Theological Analysis."
- Alanís, Javier R. (2002). "Dignity for the Foreigner: A Study of the Doctrine of the Imago Dei from a Lutheran Hispanic/Latino Perspective."
- Valentín, Benjamin. (2001). "Going Public: Exploring the Intersections of an Hispanic/Latino and American Public Theology."
- Barton, Paul Thomas. (1999). "In Both Worlds: A History of Hispanic Protestantism in the US Southwest.
- Conde-Frazier, Elizabeth. (1998). "Case Study of Two Hispanic Bible Institutes in Massachusetts: Their Mission, Educational Philosophy and Pedagogy."
- Medina, Lara. (1998). "Hermanas: Chicana/Latina Religious-Political Activism, 1971-1997."
- Aponte, Edwin David. (1998). "Latino Protestant Identity and Empowerment: Hispanic Religion, Community, Rhetoric, and Action in a Philadelphia Case Study."
- Dalton, Frederick John. (1998). "Moral vision of Cesar E. Chávez: An Examination of His Public Life from an Ethical Perspective."
- Pantoja, Segundo S. (1998). "Religion and Parental Involvement in the Education of Hispanics."

Finally, administrators mentioned how the *broader academic and theological communities are interested in learning more about HTI* because they know Latino academics that the program has supported. This interest is something HTI can and should pursue as it seeks to build partnerships with other institutions in the future.

Challenges:

The faculty we interviewed called for HTI to *better support its former awardees as they land their first faculty positions and begin moving along the academic tenure track*. Young faculty articulated a need for continued mentoring, including these two professors:

> The weak side of [HTI] is that we are getting students to be doctors but there is not sufficient [support] to get them to tenure and beyond… We had the research and the grants, but that is going away. Even when we had it, there was no network to help people in the tenure track.

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> HTI does need enhancing and expanding, either through other institutions or through the HTI itself. I think it is not only before people become PhDs … they need mentors and support as much after they get their first faculty position; they need coaching and mentoring in the unwritten rules… What not to do or to do in terms of publications, exposure, participation in professional meetings, or networking with other colleagues.

Another concern is that *HTI awardees who are now professors are not necessarily moving into tenure-track positions. Of the 25 who hold full-time faculty positions*, five are tenured and five are in tenure-track jobs. The reasons for this are not entirely clear. Even at prestigious institutions, it is common for theology faculty to hold renewal contracts that do not involve tenure. But whether HTI or Latino faculty members disproportionately hold non-tenure track positions is a question worth exploring further.

GOAL #5: *Prepare Latinos to serve as church and community leaders.*

Accomplishments:

- Scholarship awardees remain active in their church and faith communities during and after their graduate studies.
- Many faculty are active themselves and their scholarship addresses issues related to the growth and development of churches and faith communities.

Positive Aspects:

To some degree, HTI has met its goal of promoting work in Latino faith communities. Along with scholarship, work experience in the Latino community is an important criterion in the selection of student awardees. The program seeks to create bridges that join the

academic and practical aspects of faith leadership. As one male professor noted:

> What is exciting now is how HTI is making possible the ecumenical linkage, so individual pastors who work in the community have to be connected with broader local, regional and national agendas. [It is also] helping students to see the connections across their particular ministry with the broader economic and social needs of the community that requires conjoined actions.

HTI's culture fosters the value of community involvement in its students. A male assistant professor explained the rationale for this approach:

> We have to try to identify people early in the process, to shorten the period they have to spend isolated from reality. Studying should be intensive, and in order to concentrate, we need isolation, but then this support helps you to build bridges with reality as you finish so that you can go into the world and connect with the vocation that you have. The idea is that students in isolation finish and don't know where to go. But if they are able to concentrate and be connected to the larger community through the mentorship and meetings, we need to be the bridges.

An administrator spoke further about HTI's role as a bridge in their community:

> It was necessary for us to also feel a part of this community…to serve the larger community and the immediate area. There's a huge population of Latinos in this area…[and] all of a sudden everyone wanted to know what the Latino community was about, [since] they were attending our worship services… We would

> [conduct services] in Spanish and English so that we wouldn't exclude any other person who wanted to participate... It was a way of educating and inviting people to the culture, to the theological resources, to Hispanic theological research, and to the worship life of the Hispanic/Latino community.

One student focus group participant added:

> What I like about HTI is that it is a *Hispanic* Theological Initiative. In its mission statement, it talks about this relationship with the leadership of the Hispanic churches. It has fulfilled this goal, and it is a way of strengthening civil society and it is important to keep it that way.

Many HTI students and faculty see community involvement as a central responsibility and maintain their ties and work in the community despite their academic responsibilities. Students explained how such commitments were difficult, but worthwhile:

> I had to go to another community to do work because my father was a pastor. I remember how hard it was to do it with integrity. I am a student and an activist, but in comparison to others who are full-time activists, how could I say that I was active? I took on a lesser role at the church because of graduate work. I couldn't do it faithfully. It is a different type of commitment, equally valuable but different.

> I think that there is a danger of getting bigheaded in the HTI program. Going back to the community helps me to be balanced. When you are standing in front of a youth group that doesn't care what you are doing outside of that, it keeps you humble. I understand my role as being able to be a servant of the pastors, to provide them with the tools when what they are preaching

> addresses the needs of the community. It helps me to be real, to keep walking in the right path.

Challenges:

Juggling academics and service to Latino faith communities is a difficult task for many students and faculty, a fact that HTI must recognize. One student focus group participant said:

> I have been taught that you can't cut down trees efficiently if your ax is not sharpened. So I thought I had to limit my involvement … because of the level of exhaustion that graduate work involves. It takes a toll on you and your involvement in community life. So many people involved in the Hispanic religious community do not understand what I am doing, so how can I communicate to them that I cannot lead Bible study or head a conference? More and more I have to lessen my commitment to the community because of my studies.

The rigors of academic work lead many to view community involvement as problematic, and for many, involvement lessens as academic commitments increase. Furthermore, although HTI values community work, some students learned early from faculty that the tenure system does not reward it. These focus group students talked about their personal experiences with this dilemma:

> When I saw that requirement of a letter of recommendation from a community leader, it was a strain for me, but I felt it was necessary for the program.

> At [University X], [Professor X] was clear that he was not going to the trenches; his commitment is only with scholarship, but he is very clear about it. Others are not clear. I respect those that have a commitment and write, but in general the community might not see it

that way. It is about what you have done in the *barrio*, in the trenches.

When HTI students become faculty members, many continue their involvement in the community. Yet doing so is stressful and not surprisingly, others prefer to focus on tenure and promotion. Many faculty feel they must choose either the community or the academy, since time does not allow for both. One very active female associate professor spoke about this balancing act:

> I always keep active with publishing and articles, and my scholarly work continues. In terms of my community service, I have a sense … that I have more involvement in my community than a lot of my non-Hispanic colleagues, specifically my Anglo colleagues. I do more work because I work in both communities... I'll go to universities and lecture. I'll do workshops in seminaries in English. But then I'll also do pastors' retreats. I'll do Latino pastor retreats, or I'll do [a] continuing education program, where they need a Spanish-speaking professor. So I end up doing … double the community work. And so I'm busier. I find that [time that could be devoted] to research is really given to these other things. I try to combine them so that what I'm researching falls into the areas that I'm lecturing on, so I can feed both of them without feeling the stress of it. But sometimes it's overwhelming because I really think that I should respond to both communities.

Another female associate professor spoke further about this tension:

> You need someone who is going to network with the Hispanic community [but]…I cannot do that and also be up for tenure in the next year… I would be a good citizen of the school, but I wouldn't necessarily get

tenure, would I?

Despite the tension inherent in balancing academics and service, at least one student believed that *HTI could do more to facilitate community involvement*:

> Part of what I got from the interview process was the belief that everyone is connected to the community. That is how it was painted for me. I am involved, but I did not think it was to the extent that the program required, so I think one of the things that is not occurring is fostering that part of our commitment. I don't know what the others are doing; it is just assumed but it is not part of our conversation.

Overall, these varied experiences and concerns regarding community involvement as an HTI goal reveal a need to have more conversations around this topic.

Conclusion

On balance, do students, faculty, and administrators support HTI's goals and contribute to ensuring that they are achieved? While the data reveal areas of perceived weakness and a need for improvement, the overall findings indicate that the answer to this question is a resounding "Yes!" In short, HTI does:

- Create and nurture a community of Latina and Latino scholars.
- Support and graduate Latinas/os who take leadership roles in contributing to the scholarly dialogue in theological education.
- Train scholars who address issues related to the growth and development of the church.
- Increase the number of Latina/o scholars, both at the student and faculty levels, in the academy.
- Increase representation through its scholarship program of highly talented Latinas/os considering theological educa-

tion at the graduate level.

- Assist students through its mentoring, networking and community building components to overcome the many challenges encountered by Latinos pursuing doctoral studies in theological education and throughout the academy.
- Work to recruit and retain students in theological education.
- Prepare Latinos to serve communities through the creation of a cadre of Latino scholars who, through their teaching, research and community activities, can help prepare other future leaders for the academy and for the church.

Though the data collected for this report reflect many of these achievements, perhaps the most significant benefit of the program is one that is not easily quantified: the self-esteem and respect that HTI gives to so many. Comments like "HTI is giving us a sort of dignity" provide encouragement and energy to all of those working toward a greater representation of Latinas/os in theological education.

Although these goals are being met, under-representation of Latina/o faculty in theological education continues. University and seminary environments are challenging places for Latino scholars. While HTI is very successful and enjoys the enthusiastic support of its affiliates, its programs are not self-sustaining, and its future funding remains uncertain. The challenges and opportunities that this situation implies are discussed in the next two sections.

V. ONGOING CHALLENGES

Greater strides must be made to increase representation of Latino faculty and students in theological education. HTI needs to address several challenges in this process, including:

- **Attention to students at the master's level, whether this means**

providing more support for master's level study, recruiting more students from master's programs into doctoral study programs, or both.

By all accounts, HTI is extremely important to the support and development of Latino theological scholars. But an ongoing problem is that while HTI offers support to doctoral students, it no longer has the resources to fund master's level students. HTI's decision to invest in doctoral students was a strategic one. Several years into the program it was clear that not many HTI-supported master's students were going on to doctoral studies,[12] and so to establish a faculty pipeline the program targeted its investment to doctoral studies.

Yet many of the faculty interviewed for this report suggested that this rationale could be rethought. They argued that a new program be implemented to provide both financial and programmatic support for master's students; otherwise the path for Latino students can be quite narrow, with only a few making it "through the eye of the needle" (Gándara, 1995). One female assistant professor suggested that mentoring be a critical part of the process:

> I think that mentoring needs to go on even before someone makes that decision [to do graduate work]. We need to catch people… to pull people out and say, "Look, you would be someone who could do this." And begin the mentoring there – at the MDiv level or the master's level.

A student echoed the view that mentoring is important to create a pipeline for those who wish to enter into doctoral studies:

> My other concern is with the master's students. The level of mentoring doesn't need to be so rigorous, but it would help if they got mentoring or something along those lines. If it weren't for master's awards I would not be a doctoral awardee. It needs to be invested in.

• **Achieving better gender balance among awardees.**

As noted earlier, 29% of HTI awardees have been women and 71% have been men. At first glance these statistics might seem discouraging, but they are comparable to the overall percentage of women now enrolled in graduate theological programs nationwide. According to ATS data for 2003-04, women represented 34% of students in all US graduate theology degree programs.[13] Moreover, the representation of Latinas among HTI awardees is almost identical to that of Latinas in graduate theological education overall. In 2003-04, 28% of all Hispanics enrolled in US programs were women.

The task of achieving better gender balance among awardees is thus a shared one. Recent research shows that Latinas' enrollment in graduate theology programs is disproportionately more part-time than it is for Latino men. Many Latinas attending seminary say that the environment is less supportive of women than it is of men.[14] Based on these factors, both HTI and the institutions that enroll its awardees should endeavor to learn more about the recruiting and retention practices of schools that have achieved a better-than-30% enrollment of women in their programs, and apply some of these lessons to their own efforts.

• **Relieving the burden on overstretched young Latina/o faculty members and assisting them toward tenure and promotion.**

Experience has shown that this task is not a simple one, even during the years when HTI was able to award post-doctoral grants to young faculty. In making those awards, HTI expected that the awardees' institutions would give them time off to write and focus on meeting tenure requirements. Yet in many cases the institutions did not give them such time and instead expected them to work part-time during their post-doc.

The Hispanic Church Research Initiative's survey of faculty recently revealed that all Latino faculty – not just those involved

with HTI – face similar hurdles to promotion and tenure. Among the most frequently cited obstacles were competing demands on their time (from work, family, students and community service), and administrative burdens (including committee work), that detract from research and teaching. Discrimination and prejudice were also mentioned.[15] As one faculty member lamented, "The values that we embrace are not perceived as valuable by tenure evaluators. Our difference is valued as a presence but not affirmed as a professional contribution to theological education." Thus despite HTI's considerable success in creating a community of scholars, it must also endeavor to socialize institutions to realize that the task of nurturing faculty is an ongoing one.

• **Getting institutions to invest financially and programmatically in HTI's objectives, so that the task of increasing the Latino presence in seminaries, theological schools and universities is a shared one.**

Administrators expressed the need for more scholarship funding for talented and promising Latino theological students. They also spoke of a need to get more people involved in the task of disseminating HTI's success story in the theological education community and in so doing, leveraging more financial support for its programs – particularly scholarships.

One administrator explained the need to market the HTI model for recruiting and retaining students and faculty in theological education in the following way:

> Two [non-Latino] professors… that are part of Princeton's faculty…are mentors for us. We're constantly trying to bring in new and more people, at least to participate in the activities and say this is a worthwhile program … But more of that has to continue to happen. We just have to keep getting more and more people involved [to ensure that] this program contin-

ues to grow.

Princeton Theological Seminary has played a key leadership role in this task. As one HTI administrator remarked:

> Last year a sustainability committee was organized to find HTI a permanent home. Their goal was achieved when Princeton decided to adopt the program, after Pew stops its funding at the end of 2008. So that's a good thing.

It is worth mentioning that additional resources would also help relieve the burden on HTI administrators, who talked about being underpaid and overworked in comparison to other positions across the university:

> It's just a lot of work, but it's a non-profit [organization], and everybody knows that when you decide to do non-profit [work], you're not going to get paid as well…

Getting other institutions involved in funding HTI in a sustained way is undoubtedly the key challenge, since support from Pew and Lilly will end in 2008. Because no other foundations can be expected to invest in theological education at the level that these two have, other strategies and opportunities – outlined in the next section – must be explored.

VI. OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE FUTURE

> *"We need the HTI for at least one or two generations, sixty more years."*
>
> – Professor, male

The growth of the Latino population represents both a challenge and an opportunity for churches, educational institutions and community organizations throughout the United States. By

training a new generation of leaders and scholars who will reflect and shape the faith life of the Latino community, HTI has the opportunity to contribute uniquely to a major social transformation.

As this report has demonstrated, HTI has successfully met its original goal of creating and nurturing a community of Latino theological scholars – "organic intellectuals" who contribute to the academy, community and church. This is an accomplishment worth celebrating. At the same time, HTI must now ensure its financial future in order to build upon that legacy and continue its important and influential work.

The HTI advisory committee (which includes PTS leadership and program administrators) has already begun to develop a strategic plan for sustaining HTI in the future. Some of the opportunities being discussed include:

- Involving other partners in HTI by creating a consortium of graduate programs at seminaries and schools to support Latinas/os' doctoral level training.
- This could involve asking the institutions that have most frequently hosted HTI scholarship students to begin funding their graduate studies directly, beginning in 2008 when the Lilly and Pew grants end.
- Under this scheme, PTS and HTI would continue to shoulder the program's administrative costs and would provide support for networking, mentoring and publications.
- Efforts would begin to raise an endowment that would permanently sustain HTI's scholarship component.
- Throughout the process, HTI would work to raise its visibility among the institutions that do not know about it, in order to attract participation and leverage additional financial support.

Once stability is ensured through these mechanisms, HTI could consider a number of other opportunities:

- Awarding more post-doctoral awards to support young Latina/o faculty as they pursue tenure and promotion.
- Replicating HTI's successful mentoring and networking models so that more institutions can assist their Latino doctoral students (not just HTI scholars) in completing PhD programs.
- Expanding HTI to reach students earlier in their career, perhaps by restoring funding for master's level scholarships and mentoring.
- Increasing the number of awards so that more students are able to participate.
- Brokering a national effort to encourage theology graduate programs to consider awarding transfer credit for courses taken at bible institutes, where enrollment of Latino students is higher.

All of these efforts would help to bring in and move Latino scholars through the student-to-faculty pipeline and contribute further to the long-term growth and development of a Hispanic theological community.

Undoubtedly, the HTI advisory committee can give valuable direction to this process from start to finish. The group's collective and individual networks and expertise (in minority education, management of fellowship programs, fundraising, research, etc.) represent a tremendous asset for HTI to tap. Moreover, Princeton Theological Seminary has taken a pivotal leadership role that includes financial support for the HTI book prize, the newsletter *Perspectivas*, equipment purchases and staff benefits. In doing so, PTS serves as a model for other institutions that might wish to collaborate in a university consortium. It also provides a prestigious and hospitable home for HTI as it traverses the critical period ahead.

In the immediate future, the key task will be to identify and secure commitments from new partners who agree not only to host HTI students but to provide permanent financial support for

scholarships or other activities. These "new partners" are quite likely to be old friends from among the 62 institutions that have received and nurtured HTI student and faculty awardees over the past decade, and who recognize the contribution that HTI has made to theological education.

Why should institutions invest in this effort? Primarily because though HTI has been a remarkable catalyst of institutional change, it cannot and should not have to single-handedly solve the problem of Hispanic under-representation in theological education. Further, both anecdotal evidence and empirical research demonstrate that Hispanic faculty members add value to their institutions. The presence of Latino and Latina faculty helps to stimulate library acquisitions in Latino theology, increase enrollment by Latina/o students, expand multicultural course offerings and increase Latino representation in campus governance.[17] When Latino faculty are hired and retained it both strengthens the presence of Latina/o voices and contributions at a given theological school, and leads to qualitative improvements in the overall educational experience. As our society and its institutions become more diverse, everyone stands to gain.

NOTES

[1] There is no consensus within the Hispanic/Latino/Chicano community as to how its members should be collectively described. Often the terms "Latino" and "Hispanic" are used interchangeably, but some people who do not want to be associated with Spain or Europe use "Latino" exclusively to highlight their origins in Latin American countries. Hispanics may be of any race; most trace their ancestry to a Spanish-speaking country. The term "Chicano" usually refers to people of Mexican origin, whether born in the United States or Mexico. In this document the terms Latino and Hispanic are used interchangeably.

[2] 2003 data from the Association of Theological Schools (ATS), which has recorded ethnic diversity at its member institutions since 1989.

[3] Begun in 1954 with the goal of supporting excellence in the profession of ministry, the Fund for Theological Education (FTE) has provided gifted women and men with nearly 5,000 fellowships and generated innovative new programs for theological and ministerial support. Further information is available at www.thefund.org.

[4] Since 1988, the Hispanic Summer Program has provided Hispanic theological students with an opportunity to study with Latina/o peers and professors. Designed primarily for seminary students, every year it also includes a number of pastors pursuing continuing education. The program brings together approximately 100 participants from the United States, Canada, and Puerto Rico, and from a wide variety of denominations. Further information is available at www.hispanicsummer-program.org.

[5] Ten men and eight women faculty were interviewed. Of those who identified their religious affiliation, 11 were Protestant and six were Roman Catholic. The largest ethnic group consisted of Puerto Ricans with seven faculty respondents. There were also three Cuban American, six South/Central Americans, one Chicano/Mexican American, and one Spanish American. Eight faculty worked at east coast institutions, five were on the west coast, three in the south, one in the Midwest, and one in Canada. Multiple roles for HTI-affiliated faculty are common. For example, one faculty member served both as a mentor and a member of the selection committee. Some had also been recipients of HTI awards earlier in their careers; one had applied and been rejected. Of the 18 faculty interviewed, 11 were mentors, seven were dissertation year awardees, two served in the directorship capacity for HTI, two were post-dissertation awardees, two were selection committee members, and one was a dissertation of the year recipient.
For conference presentations including these faculty data see: (1) Turner et al. (2003, April 22). *Hispanic Faculty in Theological Education: Emerging Perspectives*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Chicago, Illinois, and (2) Turner et al. (2003, November 14). *Latino Faculty in Theological Education: Comparing Institutional Support Systems and Challenges Across Higher Education*. Paper presented at the 28th annual conference of the Association for the Study of Higher Education, Portland, Oregon.

[6] Four administrators (three female and one male) connected to HTI were interviewed; one was indirectly related to the programming efforts of the initiative. Two of these respondents were faculty at the time of the interviews but had past administrative experience with HTI. Two interviewees had been HTI award recipients.

[7] To attain a student perspective, five focus groups were conducted with HTI students. In total they included 27 students – 20 were pursuing a PhD and seven an MDiv. Only four females participated in the focus groups. Of the students who provided information about ethnicity, seven were Puerto Rican, five were Chicano/Mexican American, three were from Central America, and one was Cuban American. Also, 12 had received doctoral-level awards, seven had received the master's level award, three the dissertation year award, and two the special mentoring award. Some received more than one of these awards.

[8] Bulleted data represents the 1996-2004 period and is taken from HTI's February 2004 narrative report to The Pew Charitable Trusts and from its program overview presented at the November 2004 AAR/SBL meeting.

[9] A forthcoming study conducted by Milagros Peña, Edwin I. Hernández and Caroline Sotelo Turner as part of the Hispanic Church Research Initiative (HCRI) contains important new findings on this topic. See "Preliminary Findings from the Latino/a Seminary Student Survey" (offprint), October 2004.

[10] According to recent data from The Pew Trusts' project on Hispanic Churches in American Public Life, the US Latino population is approximately 70% Catholic and 23% Protestant and "other Christian."

[11] HTI scholarship recipients apparently transition quickly into their professional careers. Currently, of the 12 who have not finished their dissertations, one is tenured, four have secured tenured track positions, four are adjunct teaching, two are ministers, and only one is solely working on the dissertation.

[12] Ten out of 49 HTI master's awardees went on to pursue doctoral studies.

[13] "Head Count Enrollment by Degree Program, Race or Ethnic Group, and Gender, Fall 2003," Table 2.13 of Data Tables on Association of Theological Schools website (www.ats.edu).

[14] Preliminary findings of the Hispanic Church Research Initiative, Latino seminary survey, October 2004.

[15] Preliminary findings of the Hispanic Church Research Initiative, Faculty Survey, October 2004.

[16] ATS, 2001.

[17] HCRI Preliminary Findings, Faculty Survey, October 2004.

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HTI DISSERTATION COLLECTION AT PTS' SPEER LIBRARY

On Monday, July 15, 2002 a ribbon cutting ceremony at Speer Library marked the opening of the HTI Dissertation Collection. Doctoral dissertations written by graduates of the HTI program, or dissertations dealing with Latino issues written by other individuals, are now available to patrons on campus for a two-hour period with renewals available as long as no one else needs them. For patrons off campus, they may search the online catalog via the web (http://catalog.ptsem.edu). To access and view the list of dissertations online, these can be found under the titles HTI or HTI dissertation collection. They may also visit their local library and request an interlibrary loan through OCLC in order to have the material shipped. This material is available for a four-week loan period with in-library use only.

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