Raza Womyn—Making it Safe to be Queer: Student Organizations as Retention Tools in Higher Education

Anita Tijerina Revilla, *University of Nevada, Las Vegas*

Abstract

Latinas in higher education often encounter hostile or alienating campus climates. Many Latinas come from historically marginalized communities with limited access to the university, and they encounter various forms of discrimination on and off campus. Using a participatory action research paradigm, this article presents the experiences of Chicana/Latina student activists engaged in multidimensional struggle against homophobia, racism, classism, and sexism. This article illustrates that Raza Womyn, a Chicana/Latina student organization at UCLA, serves as a social and academic counterspace within the institution that provides a safe and supportive space for its members while also educating them and providing the skills they need to fight for social justice. In particular, the members create a queer-friendly environment that does not exist in several other spaces that they occupy. Overall, Raza Womyn is a retention tool for marginalized women in higher education and provides the support and resources needed to navigate through the university and society.

The 1960s and 1970s saw the rise of many student organizations with a social-justice vision. Student activists sought to create a "revolution" through their actions. What revolution meant and looked like, however, varied drastically depending on the organization, the members, and the time. Many people in these groups learned that "revolution" did not always include racial/ethnic justice; women's liberation; lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) inclusion; or other aspects of various struggles. On student campuses across the country, there were numerous groups that formed in political

Black Women, Gender, and Families Spring 2010, Vol. 4, No. 1
©2010 by the Board of Trustees of the University of Illinois

opposition to racist, sexist, classist, or homophobic campus climates (Rhoads and Martinez 1998; Muñoz 1989; Boren 2001).

Unfortunately, many of these organizations functioned on a single dimension of analysis when it came to assessing the need for social justice. Some race-based organizations prioritized a racial struggle at the expense of gender and sexuality; similarly, gender- and sexuality-based organizations were often accused of racism and classism; and class struggle–based organizations regularly ignored race, gender, and sexuality. For the past several decades we have been reading from feminist and race scholars about the lessons of the past, and still those of us who are familiar with activists' spaces of today know that very little has changed. In fact, when groups are truly committed to combating more than one axis of power, we are often surprised. Thus, when I encountered members of a Chicana/Latina student organization, called Raza Womyn, who described their goal as "the fire that burns within us to destroy the many 'isms,' such as sexism, racism, homophobia, and classism, that attempt to dismantle our communities," I was intrigued (Raza Womyn 1998). As a scholar that focuses on both intersectionality and student movements, I am particularly drawn to documenting the experiences of students engaged in intersectional or multidimensional struggle (Davalos 2008).[1]

In 1999, I attended the Raza Womyn annual Chicana/Latina conference at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) and found some of the organizers wearing t-shirts that read "Re-constructing Revolution" across the back of the shirt. I became fascinated with this concept and decided I would spend some time learning what they meant by this phrase. I spent the next five years studying the group, participating in it, and learning tremendous lessons from their quest for social justice.

This article presents a case study of Raza Womyn de UCLA as an example of an organization whose vision of social change is multidimensional and specifically includes anti-oppressive struggles with regards to sexuality, queer identity, anti-heteronormative goals in an attempt to promote a broader, more encompassing goal of social transformation. Furthermore, I discuss ways in which Raza Womyn, as an organization, created a safe space for queer Chicanas/Latinas to foster a connection to the university and retain marginalized students in higher education.[2]

Theoretical Frameworks

Many students, activists, educators, and scholars advocate social change using student resistance and critical pedagogy as tools. Paulo Freire's *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed* is often the theoretical roadmap for this goal (Freire 2000). Building on his work, critical educators teach students to resist oppressive conditions both inside and outside of school (McLaren 2000; Steiner et al. 2000; Giroux 1983a, 1983b). My research follows in this vein of scholarship, but it further examines strategies used by students to create not only safe spaces but also "counterspaces" of resistance within academia—that is, spaces in which they are actively resisting mainstream perspectives, particularly those that uphold white supremacist, imperialist, patriarchal, heteronormative, and citizenist ideologies. Tara Yosso writes, "Instead of separating from our communities to help ease some of the pain from such a hostile [campus] climate, we often create new communities—counterspaces—on and around campus" (2005, 121).[3] As a scholar who was trained in the field of education, whose research focuses on feminist and queer (including lesbian, bisexual, transgender, gay, questioning, and nonheteronormative) students, and who is a professor of women's studies, I draw on at least three theoretical groundings to contextualize and analyze my research—critical pedagogy, critical race theory in education, and queer/Chicana/Latina feminist epistemologies.

Critical Race Theory (CRT) and Agencies of Transformational Resistance

Of most importance for this project is the need to identify ways in which student activism plays a role in the development of a critical consciousness, the survival of marginalized students in higher education, and a commitment to a broad vision of social change on and off campus. Critical race theory (CRT) scholars in education Daniel Solórzano and Dolores Delgado Bernal have documented and theorized the antisubordination struggles of some students as "transformational resistance," in which students' actions are motivated by social justice and an awareness or critique of social oppression (Solórzano and Delgado Bernal 2001). Their case studies of the 1968 East Los Angeles student walkouts and the 1993 UCLA Chicana/o studies protests are examples of students engaged in transformational resistance. Resistance theories emphasize that students have agency and ability to create change in their own social conditions. Alejandro Covarrubias and I build on the work of Solórzano and Delgado Bernal as they describe organizations that help develop students' skills and commitments to social justice, which they refer to as agencies of transformational resistance (ATRs). The development of

a *multidimensional consciousness* is one of the most crucial goals of these organizations:

> [We] re-conceptualize "awareness" as a dynamic and achieved multidimensional consciousness that consists of a sophisticated critique of how multiple, intersecting structures of domination (e.g., racism, capitalism, sexism, heteronormativity, etc.) interact with each other and impact one's social and political situation as part of an historical condition. Consciousness is understood as a fluid process within which those who are developing it will be at different levels at different times in their lives. . . . Furthermore, one can achieve a high degree of consciousness along one dimension (e.g., a race consciousness), but can be unconscious along another dimension (e.g., gender consciousness). (Covarrubias and Revilla 2003, 466)

Hence, the organizations they describe and study seek to provide their members with the awareness (a critical multidimensional consciousness) and skills needed to successfully struggle for social justice. If members lack one area of consciousness, the organization or collective of activists works together to educate them in the area of need, so they can collectively build a more nuanced, multidimensional consciousness. This is an effort that is extremely difficult to accomplish, as is evident in the many stories of organizations that reproduce inequality even while they are attempting to create social change.

Queer/Chicana/Latina Feminist Epistemologies

While research on the experiences of queer Chicanas/Latinas (nonheteronormative, lesbian, bisexual, and/or transgender *mujeres*) is still limited, there are several key texts that address the experiences of queer *mujeres*.[4] In particular, *Living Chicana Theory* offers some very important theoretical models for this work. In the essay "Speaking Secrets: Living Chicana Theory," Deena Gonzalez asserts, "I feel that if we are to change the institutions of higher learning in this society, spaces need to exist for new dialogues borne in feminist praxis, women-of-color discussions. . . . Chicanas—one of the most severely underrepresented groups in the professoriate [and the university in general]—will recognize the value of new languages and a better discourse community" (1998, 46). Gonzalez urges the stories and wounded experiences of Chicana lesbians to be discussed openly, even if it risks the alleged harmony that a community is trying to foster or present to outside audiences. I share the experiences of the members of Raza Womyn in a similar fashion,

to "speak secrets" and to offer the critiques that are often muted of other players in Chicana/o communities, namely men and/or heterosexuals but also queer and women allies. Furthermore, this research is a response to Gonzalez's call to action against misogyny. Her discussion of misogyny among "the" Chicano is particularly relevant to this research as she points out that "the" Chicano archetype is an old model of patriarchy designed to uphold a mythical masculinity rooted in hatred and/or dismissal of Chicanas/women. She publicly confronts wrongs that have been done to her in academia as a way to put an end to this kind of destructive behavior. Likewise, I publicly confront the continued sexism and homophobia that plagues Chicana/o student organizations and leaders in social-justice work.

This project also responds to Yolanda Chavez Leyva's urgings that we "listen to the silences" of lesbian mujeres, which I extend to include bisexual, fluid, questioning, and/or queer women. She writes, "Naming ourselves, occupying our spaces fully, creating our own language, is essential to our continued survival, particularly in these times of increased violence against us as Latinas and lesbianas" (Leyva 1998, 432).

Many Chicana lesbian feminist scholars speak of the silences and the need to (re)tell the stories that describe their experiences. Emma Perez describes the power of "*sitios y lenguas*" (sites and discourses)—the separate "countersites" and the strategic essentialist strategies used for naming Chicana lesbians—that are needed to foster their internal growth and resistance to oppression (Perez 1998, 432). Furthermore, Gloria Anzaldúa's mestiza consciousness paradigm specifically outlines the retelling and reconstruction of her/history, which is the "mestiza way"—crucial for the shedding of colonialist, patriarchal definitions of Chicanas and their communities (Anzaldúa 2007).

In *Queer Latinidad*, Juana Maria Rodriguez points out that "Activism implies *coraje y corazón*, a willingness to listen to the voices [of the past] and interpret their traces within new worlds of meaning" (2003, 38). The idea that love, *corazón* [heart], and courage guide activism is affirmed in the findings I present below. Rodriguez specifically addresses the connection between activism and identity, indicating that activism is directly connected to queer Latinas'/os' resistance and survival as they occupy multiple hostile and dangerous locations. She pushes us to consider both the utility and the challenges of "identity politics" organizing: "Rather than a nostalgic yearning for a unified and transparent historical subject, . . . or the search for a position of innocence in relation to domination, I am interested in a different set of questions in order to begin to imagine a postmodern activist practice"

(Rodriguez 2003, 45-46). In doing so, her research presents a multiplicity of queer Latina/o voices, as does the Raza Womyn narrative that goes beyond the binaries of heterosexual and queer, or "straight" and lesbian, to include a variety of nonheteronormative sexual identifications. The guidance of Chicana lesbian/queer writings is intimately connected to the theoretical groundings of Raza Womyn de UCLA.

Chingón Politics

Elizabeth "Betita" Martinez's article "Chingón Politics Die Hard" further "speaks secrets" as she directly critiques the "Chicano dinosaur," or Chicanosaur behavior of male activists at the Twentieth Anniversary Chicano Activist Reunion held in 1989, whose actions resonated with the early 1960s and 1970s when women were dismissed as leaders and instead called upon to help with strictly gendered responsibilities such as cooking and typing (Martinez 1998). At the reunion, panels and honors were dominated by males and once again overlooked female participants. According to Martinez, "chingón politics" roughly translates into "tough-guy" politics. *Chingar*, a very popular Spanish-language curse word, is the root word of *chingón*, literally meaning "to screw." *Chingón* or *chingóna* means "the bad-ass." Common amongst Chicana/o activists is the desire to "prove" who is more committed to Chicanismo and activism. As Anzaldúa (2007) writes in *Borderlands*, we try to "out-Chicano" one other. As a side effect of oppression and consciousness-building, activists/academics sometimes overcompensate by trying to be the most radical, authentic Chicana/o activist, often making others feel as if they are not as hard-working or authentic as they are. In some cases, the aspects of Chicana/o identity that would normally be reasons to discriminate against Chicanas/os outside of activist spaces become badges of honor. For example, those who are or were poor/working class, Spanish-speaking, dark-skinned, indigenous, from a historically Chicano/a neighborhood, or a longtime activist, have an edge in "proving" their worthiness as a Chicana/o. While these are all aspects of identity in which Chicana/o activists find pride and for which they reject negative stereotypes, they can also be used as criteria by which to exclude and/or police Chicana/o identity.

Amongst Raza Womyn, chingón politics was equated with patriarchal, competitive behavior and was consistently rejected when both males and females engaged in it. In juxtaposition to chingón politics, the women often referred to longtime Chicana feminist activists as veteranas/veterans who offered guidance and mentorship. While some did not agree with the terminology because of the militaristic implications, early Raza Womyn members

were honored as veteranas of a common struggle for queer/Chicana/Latina feminism.

Related Studies

In the field of education, Robert Rhoads has made a strong case for the importance and significance of student activism to the broader goals of cultural diversity, university campus reform, and wide-scale social-change efforts. His studies include various populations, including Chicana/o, American Indian, African American, queer, and women student activists, across the nation (Rhoads 1995, 1998; Rhoads and Solórzano 1995; Rhoads and Martinez 1998). He writes, "Armed with the tools of civil disobedience and a spirit radicalized by witnessing the American Dream betrayed, thousands of college students committed themselves to transforming campuses into sites of social and political change" (Rhoads 1998, 2). Overwhelmingly, what he found is a significant commitment from marginalized student populations to demand justice for their group and others both on and off campus. He found that many of these students were engaged in grassroots efforts to ensure that others from their communities survive at their institutions of higher education, often doing the retention work that the institution fails to do with such students. Rhoads et al. (2004) found that there is a new trend of student-initiated retention programs (SIRPs) that are largely responsible for the success of marginalized students in institutions of higher education. They write:

> Campus organizations representing students of color increasingly have united for the purpose of enhancing academic support for students from underrepresented or marginalized ethnic or racial backgrounds. Student organizations representing African American, Asian American, Latino, and Native American students have pooled their resources and political clout in order to enhance retention efforts. The programs and activities developed by such efforts are largely student initiated (1).

While these kinds of student organizations have existed for many years, Rhoads and his colleagues argue that today students are being more creative and are working across race/ethnic lines to create stronger unity and alliances, especially in the face of anti–affirmative action and conservative backlash against Civil Rights Movement gains. They urge educators to support student-retention initiatives as powerful mechanisms of survival for marginalized students in higher education. Furthermore, Rhoads's earlier

research on gay and bisexual male college students is compelling as he calls on new methods of research and alternative social scientific approaches to studying diverse populations that are overwhelmingly ignored or overlooked. He believes that social science and education researchers are still largely afraid or unwilling to conduct research on gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender students. Unfortunately, this leads to overgeneralizations and misconceptions of this student community as well as a missed opportunity to learn from their strengths and visions. My research seeks to fill this continued gap.

This research was guided by the following questions: (1) How do queer Chicanas/Latinas experience and resist multidimensional struggle/discrimination based on racism, classism, sexism, and homophobia? (2) How can institutions of education draw on the experiences of student activists to better meet the needs of marginalized students? From the data collected, a strong theme about the construction of queer-friendly space emerged. This is the area of focus for this article.

Method

This was a five-year ethnographic study of a university student organization and its members. I conducted participant observations, surveys, document examination, focus-group interviews, and in-depth interviews. It is a participatory action research project as I participated in Raza Womyn as a member committed to the goals and actions of the group (McIntire 2008). Furthermore, the members of the organization were extremely involved in the co-construction and trajectory of the entire research project. We worked in collaboration to decide the research questions, design (what needed to be included and how it was to be presented), data collection, and analysis. I identify this research as muxerista/feminist action research because, as an activist scholar, I conducted this research through the lens of a Chicana/Latina feminist dedicated to social justice. I employed a Chicana feminist epistemology in this research. Dolores Delgado Bernal describes feminist epistemology as "a standpoint that . . . is grounded in the unique life experiences of Chicanas" and that draws on four sources of cultural intuition: personal experience, existing Chicana/Latina literature, professional experience working with and studying Chicanas/Latinas, and "the analytical process we engage in when we are in a central position of our research and our analysis" (1998, 10). I am, however, building on this model by introducing a queer Chicana/Latina "intuition," based on academic study, personal experience

and connection to several Chicana/Latina queer professional and activist communities that bear with them a collective memory, shared secrets, and a different "discourse community" than the one described by Delgado Bernal, which is still heavily based on heterosexual models of cultural intuition.

Raza Womyn members are actively engaged in developing theory that explains their lived experiences. I collected written and electronic documents, interviews, and oral communications from members of Raza Womyn in which they provide theoretical and philosophical explanations about their racial, class, gender, and sexual experiences. Thus, this project is a grounded theory qualitative project during which many theoretical contributions emerged in the actual process of conducting the research and collecting data (Glaser and Strauss 1967). The organization was chosen specifically because they professed a commitment to social justice that was based on a multidimensional vision of social justice focused on at least four areas of interest—race, class, gender, and sexuality. The purpose of the study was to learn if, indeed, this organization was committed to all of these areas of struggle, and if so, how they accomplished this task.

The overall project entailed weekly observations (over five years) during meetings, events, and gatherings (each two to six hours in duration), thirty-one surveys, fifteen one-on-one interviews, three in-depth interviews (ranging from eight to twelve hours long), and five focus-group interviews (three to four hours long). Based on data collected from the survey, participants included 31 women, between the ages of 18 and 31. Most were first generation (18.5) and immigrants (6); most identified as "poor" to "working class" (20) and "working" to "middle class" (7); most identified as Chicanas (19.5) or Latina (6), and Central American (4.5).

The sexual identities of the women were fluid and varied. The results of the survey indicated the following self-identifications: queer (9), bisexual (5), two-spirited (1), lesbian (4), tortillera (4), heterosexual (16), "presumed heterosexual, but I don't like to identify" (1) and "heterosexual, but not by choice" (1).[5] Participants resisted heteronormative identities, but they also resisted static, confined identities connected to lesbian, bisexual, or gay labels.

Some participants identified with any of one of these labels or several of them at the same time, depending on the day and the location. Often, sexual identities changed over time. For example, some women who initially identified as heterosexual later identified as queer or bisexual. Some who identified as lesbian later identified as bisexual or vice versa. Frequently, heterosexually identified participants underwent a process of "questioning,"

in which they questioned why they identified as heterosexual. In some cases, questioning led to "coming out" as queer. In other cases, they felt affirmed in their heterosexual identities but were glad they engaged in the questioning process. At times, even if they were practicing heterosexuals, they still rejected the heterosexual or "straight" identity, seeing it as oppressive/restrictive and preferring not to identify with any sexual identity, calling themselves queer, or passing as queer to signify that they were not advocates of heteronormativity. Questioning sometimes led to other sexual identities such as "fluid," "omni-sexual," "hetero-flexible," "bi-curious," and "open." Although many of the women who filled out the survey identified as heterosexual, the presence of women who were queer, bisexual, lesbian, two-spirited, and/or *tortilleras* was large.[6] In fact, much of the leadership in the organization came from queer mujeres. Because of the queer leadership, Raza Womyn developed a "lesbian," "man-hater," and "radical feminist" identity.

The limitation of this research is that it is based on one organization of queer mujeres/women at a university campus. They are a privileged group with access to higher education at a research university—few members of their community have this experience. However, because these women are members of multiple marginalized communities (poor, working class, women, queer, immigrant, undocumented, people of color, etc.) and they have access to an activist organization guided by social-justice principles and consciousness-raising goals, they are able to be self-critical and discuss both their privileges and oppressions in their own words. Research involving these kinds of multiple intersecting identities is scarce; thus, this project draws on the voices and experiences of this group of women to fill this gap. Furthermore, this research specifically draws on the feminist and queer theoretical understandings represented by the participants' actions and perspectives to address a larger concern about social-justice organizing and pedagogy.

Findings

Creating a "Queer-friendly Space" and De-constructing Chingón/a Politics

The founders and Raza Womyn members during the 1980s and early 1990s, for the most part, did not deal with queer sexuality; in particular, they did not

address homophobia. Several Raza Womyn alumnae I interviewed (from the 1980s and 1990s) remarked that sexuality was never an issue that they dealt with or that they felt comfortable discussing. Most often, the women came from homes, communities, and friendships where sexuality was taboo or repressed. In fact, most mujeres indicated that there was extreme silence about the topic of sexuality in their homes. Thus, this aspect of identity and life experience was sorely unexplored or ignored in the face of dealing with issues related primarily to race, class, and gender, including issues of family, immigration, religion, politics, and education. According to the members of Raza Womyn, this resulted in both a homophobic and sexually repressive environment because in order to develop a sexually liberated and queer-friendly space—including critical consciousness about sexuality—dialogue, questioning, and educating needed to take place around the issue.

I begin with the experiences of Osa,[7] a twenty-four-year-old "dykefabulous, working-to-middle-class, Chicana" from Pico Rivera, and Cristina, a twenty-four-year-old "working class, Queer/[bi], Chicana/Latina" from Oxnard. I use their stories for a few reasons. First, they were largely responsible for the development of a queer-friendly environment within Raza Womyn because they were the first women in the organization to "come out"; secondly, they served as the primary role models for how to integrate queer rights advocacy into a race/ethnicity/gender-based organization. Lastly, their narratives are representative of and similar to several other *mujeres'* experiences within the organization. In 1998, when many of the members had graduated from UCLA and only a handful of members remained, these two women emerged as leaders of the organization, and they had a strong conviction to continue the work of Raza Womyn. Both had been active members of MEChA (Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán) and had served as workshop coordinators of the annual Raza Youth Conference. Prior to leaving MEChA, they described a period of rejection and ostracism they encountered for their decision to allow a workshop that was proposed by the queer Chicana/o and Latina/o organization, La Familia de UCLA. La Familia wished to discuss historical and continued homophobia within MEChA. According to Osa, the MEChA leaders at the time were unwilling to be self-critical about sexism and homophobia; therefore, the governing body of MEChA made the decision to purposely exclude this workshop. They told Osa and Cristina, "Some members from La Familia have spoken out against MEChA and condemned us with homophobia, and we're not homophobic." She scoffed at the assumption and remarked, "like a homophobic [person] has the right to say they're not homophobic?! So they thought they were immune because they had a gay [member]—two 'out'

gay men [in the organization]." The backlash for Osa and Cristina's decision to accept La Familia's proposed workshop was that they were purposefully shut out of meetings and decisions related to the workshops for the conference. After a long and drawn out struggle and much disappointment, the two women decided to leave MEChA. They found refuge in each other and in Raza Womyn.

Osa recalled another very disappointing experience that finalized her departure from MEChA. When she "came out" as queer to her fellow MEChistas, she felt she was met with coldness. She remembers the empty stares and the lack of validation she receive, saying: "I came out in MEChA.... After that, no one said anything. You know when people come out, you need to give them a hug, you need to show them love, that 'I'm so proud of you.' No. One guy came up to me, and he was like, 'I didn't know you were gay, but that's cool.'" She often talked about her experience in MEChA because it was within this organization that she developed her Chicana ethnic and political consciousness. The strength and skills she developed in the organization were invaluable, but it was also the place where she experienced the fiercest rejection of her feminism and her sexuality. Consequently, she reminded us often that she "had to kick [herself] out of MEChA" for her own survival. As connected as she was to the vision of the organization, as a queer feminist, she no longer felt safe in the organization, so she immersed herself in growing Raza Womyn as an organization and as a "home" within the university.

Although Osa and Cristina felt more comfortable in Raza Womyn than they did in MEChA, this did not mean that they were free of some of the same oppressive behaviors that they fled. Osa admitted that much of the "chingón politics" that she learned in MEChA followed her into Raza Womyn, and she and the other *mujeres* had to consciously work to create a different environment, free of patriarchal constructs, within Raza Womyn. She said, chingón politics comes "from Betita Martinez. 'Yo soy mas chingón.' Like, I'm the one who you can't fuck with because I'll fuck with you.... It's very penis driven, phallic driven, patriarchy driven, and it is embraced and expected in many organizations." Osa was determined to free herself and Raza Womyn of those kinds of destructive politics.

Cristina noted that both she and Osa were growing inside and outside of Raza Womyn, especially with regard to sexuality. Cristina was beginning to question her own sexuality while she was attending several conferences in her role as a member of student government, and within these conferences, the discussion of LGBT issues was common. She asserted, "It's natural that when you start talking about these issues, you begin to question. We're socialized

to never consider these things by the environment that we're in, but once you start hearing people talk about it, you start thinking about it." She remembers discussing the issues with others at the conferences, then bringing the conversation back to Raza Womyn. Eventually, she and Osa created an intimate space where they could openly dialogue about sexuality and homophobia, and they began to connect their sexuality to their ethnic/cultural experiences. The fact that both of them "came out" as queer in Raza Womyn, coupled with them being two very active leaders in the organization and throughout campus student politics, distinctly changed the Raza Womyn space and identity at UCLA—hence, the feminist and lesbian identity of the entire organization developed.

Some members of the organization did not welcome the intimacy of the organization. Cristina believed that Raza Womyn always had a small number of participants for this reason—because of the closeness and because it is a queer-friendly space. She remembered being envious of the large membership of other organizations and wanting Raza Womyn to increase their numbers:

> I remember at one point I was like "We need to get more people involved." . . . And then I had to go through my own process and be like, "You know, we have to deal with a lot more of these issues, taboos that all these other organizations don't. They don't have the deep connections or the spaces and conversations that we do." . . . And that's what I think is the beauty of Raza Womyn, but it was also why it was so small—because a lot of people are afraid of that.

She added that Raza Womyn was different because although they knew it was important to organize against the anti–affirmative action Proposition 209, immigrant backlash in Los Angeles (Proposition 187), sexual abuse from the Greek men on campus, and many other injustices, they also believed that it was just as important to provide support and understanding to each other. Cristina believed that because Raza Womyn dealt with homophobia directly and had open discussions about their own sexuality, many women were scared of that environment. She reconciled this conflict, saying, "The women were there definitely because they wanted to be there. Our group was not about building a resume at all . . . We got the really dedicated women."

Cristina and Osa began taking classes in LGBT studies, Chicana/o studies, women's studies, and labor studies, and they brought the knowledge that they acquired in class to their meetings. They connected the historical experiences of early Chicana feminists to their own experience within MEChA. They real-

ized that their experiences were not abnormal at all; rather, they were historical reoccurrences. As a result, they became furious and even more dedicated to ensuring that other young activists knew this her/history. In fact, they insisted that I write about it in my work to ensure the knowledge was not lost or ignored.

Osa felt that the way a person is treated during that process of coming out is reflective of the commitment or lack of commitment to queer rights on behalf of the person or student organization. She described coming out in Raza Womyn as a natural process, and she clearly remembered the night it happened:

> With Raza Womyn, it wasn't like "Let's have a meeting, I want to come out to you." . . . One time we were just going through madness. . . . We were in a meeting, and I go, "I think we're all going through a lot of shit and I think it'll be good if we close the meeting right now and we just talk about what's going on in our life." So it must have been about seven or eight of us, and we sat around the round table and we were holding hands, going around crying. Everyone was crying. . . . I was telling them about me trying to come out to my mom, how hard it is; and that's when I came out to everyone else. No one judges me. No one treated me different. No one ignored me. We all gave each other a hug, then we did the cinnamon roll hug,[8] all these little things that we did. I felt loved. And if you want a revolution, that's what you need. You need love.

Osa's last statement is a reminder of the vision of social justice that the women espoused, which was related to the concept of "re-constructing revolution." By connecting her coming out experience to "revolution" and arguing that a revolution has to include love, Osa was critiquing the experience she had when she came out in MEChA, where she felt a lack of love and acceptance. Thus, for Osa, an activist organization that does not have love, queer consciousness, and acceptance is not fulfilling the goal of social justice.

Once Cristina and Osa came out, several other women followed. Cristina was not sure why that was, but she offered some theories:

> Once you start talking about [sexuality] and you are open about it, the process of questioning in that safe space is just catchy. You start doing it with everything. "Am I really political? Am I really down?" . . . It's a natural process. Everyone starts questioning themselves. . . . We're going to keep talking about it. We're going to go to straight places, gay places. We're going to dance with whoever we want. And people just started slowly questioning

> themselves. I don't know if people that are questioning were particularly drawn to the organization, like subconsciously maybe they were drawn to it, or if it's just a natural thing that if you're in this kind of space that you just start questioning yourself. It could be two different things. But from what I've noticed is that everyone really questions themselves; they become open to loving all sorts of people. They kind of release that barrier. And then it even transcends sexuality and just becomes the ability to love people at a different level.

The sentiments that Cristina voiced resonated and re-created themselves within Raza Womyn even after she graduated from UCLA. Members of the organization that never met Cristina but experienced the same thing she did years later voiced the same theories. Over the five years of this study, there were at least three different waves of women who came out as queer in Raza Womyn. Cristina and Osa were the first in 1997, and there were three other women in their cohort that followed. For some of them, it took place after they graduated. In 2000-2001, five women came out and three who were already out joined Raza Womyn. In 2001-2002, a woman who adamantly identified as straight when she first joined the organization was in a relationship with a woman by the spring quarter. That same year, four of the *mujeres* who identified as "straight" or heterosexual before they became involved with Raza Womyn came out. There were three women that were out prior to joining Raza Womyn but were drawn to Raza Womyn because of the safety they felt being "out" in that space.

A few members of Raza Womyn whom I interviewed indicated that they did not feel "safe" in La Familia, the Queer Latina/o organization on campus for various reasons. Some felt that members of La Familia did not accept them if they were still in the process of coming out or if they identified as bisexual; others felt that their queer politics were constantly being questioned. In other words, they felt that they had to prove their "queer-ness" to be a part of the organization. Still another critique was that La Familia was not politically active enough in the community and social-justice struggles off campus.

Erica, a twenty-three-year-old "Queer, working-class Chicana" from South Central Los Angeles, was active in MEChA and La Familia before joining Raza Womyn. She later wished she had started out in Raza Womyn, saying: "[For me,] it was very much a transition from a race-conscious organization to not wanting to be in the Latino queer organization—not because it was a queer organization, but because there were already assumptions made about how I was not queer enough for those folks." Erica's point that people assumed she was "not queer enough" further illustrates the issue of chingón politics. In this

case, it was a queer chingón politics that came with a host of assumptions about what a "queer" person should be like and to whom her alliances should be. Erica was heavily criticized for continuing her membership in MEChA while participating in La Familia. She was told that she was a token queer within MEChA. Some time later, she came to agree with this critique, but at the time, she was still extremely committed to working within MEChA because she believed in the wider goals of the organization. She said, "I stayed [in MEChA] for a while longer until I felt completely dissed and disempowered by the male leadership and by the chingón politics that went on within the Mesa, which is the board, the decision-making board of MEChA as opposed to the general body." Eventually, the chingón politics, or patriarchal, sexist behavior, within the leadership of MEChA pushed her out of the organization and into Raza Womyn. At the same time this was happening, she tried attending meetings with La Familia, but she felt a different kind of chingón politics taking place in which she was being bullied into leaving MEChA before she was ready to do so. She argued that Raza Womyn was a safer space than both other organizations because it was a place where she did not have to "prove" her loyalty, Chicana-ness, or queer-ness in order to be accepted and valued. More importantly, she was not judged for working with other organizations (even if they were patriarchal and homophobic), and she was also allowed to make her own decisions about what organization to support or not. Eventually, Erica helped with La Familia's youth conference, but she was still critical of the lack of feminist, activist consciousness of the organization. She said, "I felt that their organization was like, 'Oh come meet cute queer Latino people,' but I didn't find the activism that I had in MEChA or that I was doing in Raza Womyn at the time." During that period, La Familia was male-dominated, social-oriented, and not feminist-identified. This has changed over time, depending on who has been active in the organization.

Essentially, Erica and several other Raza Womyn felt a strong urgency for a feminist, intimate, "safe space" (counterspace/countersite) where they could practice a multidimensional activist struggle while also feeling "safe" to be their most authentic self. As Paula, a queer Chicana from the Bay Area, indicated:

> I think that a lot of the organizations that we've all once been a part of, and had to leave for one reason or another, who talk a lot of revolution talk, are exactly the people who are hurting us and are doing the things that are pushing us down and silencing us. They are not giving us the space to be who we are. So that I feel personally that I can't be part of a movement if I can't even be myself, and if I can't say what I need to say and if I'm constantly being silenced.

While some people fled to Raza Womyn in search of a refuge from negative experiences in other organizations, others were drawn to the organization because they knew it was a welcoming space for feminist and queer women. Some had no knowledge of the politics of the organization. They thought it was merely an organization for Chicanas and Latinas on campus. They soon learned that the organization was that and much more.

Raza Womyn as a Counterspace

Marina (a pseudonym), a twenty-four-year-old "working-class, bi, fierce femme, feminista, Chicana," attested to the power of Raza Womyn in her survey response: "I don't think I would have gotten through UCLA without Raza Womyn. Raza Womyn gave me the support I needed when I felt I couldn't go on."

Again and again, the *mujeres* of Raza Womyn told me that this organization changed their lives or that it was the reason they made it through UCLA. One *mujer* thanked me for doing the research that I was doing, saying, "Thank you soooo much for all of the work that you are doing with Raza Womyn. It really is a spectacular organization that I can say saved my life and has helped me in sooo many different ways." The idea that an organization can "save" your life and be the reason that you are able to get through college is powerful. Yet, these kinds of student organizations are marginalized, and their efforts are minimized rather than supported by institutions of education, faculty, and peers.

Tara Yosso, whose work focuses on the experiences of Chicanas/os in education, points out that "Social counterspaces [such as student organizations] allow room, outside of the classroom confines, for students to vent frustrations and to get to know people who share many of their experiences" (2006, 121). The personal connections and comfort achieved within Raza Womyn attest to this kind of social counterspace, as is evident in the following survey response from Anayvette, a twenty-three-year-old "Gua-Nica (Salvadorian and Nicaraguan), Bi-sexual ('two-spirited'), muxerista, writer, poet, artist, activist, lover, mariposa femme.": "I felt a beautiful sense of comfort and home in the *mujer* group. I think Raza Womyn is an amazing circle of *mujeres* who make you feel good about yourself and are continuously there for support. We each share the same vision of sisterhood, *familia*, *amor*, friendship and loyalty. It is a space you feel comfortable claiming as your own not only individually, but collectively." Personal and emotional support was at the

center of the short- and long-terms goals of the organization. Regardless of what area of activism was being focused on, comfort, safety, and personal connections were always the priority. Yosso further asserts that some spaces are both social and academic counterspaces, wherein "[t]hey can foster our learning at the university and nurture a supportive environment where our experiences are validated and viewed as important knowledge" (Yosso 2006, 120). Raza Womyn also served as an academic counterspace because many of the women engaged in a process of dialectic education through their weekly meetings, organized events, annual conferences, and community actions. Often, they did not have the language to discuss and analyze the oppressions and social struggles they faced throughout their lives, but through their participation in Raza Womyn and other social-justice efforts, they acquired this awareness as well as the ability to share the information. Angelica, a twenty-four-year-old "hetero, Chicana feminista muxerista of working-class background," explained that the knowledge she gained through Raza Womyn was what pushed her to develop a more multifaceted critical consciousness. She said, "[Raza Womyn] is a space where everything comes together (*politica, sexualidad, cultura*, [politics, sexuality, culture,] organizing) but through a feminist of color perspective. It is a space for womyn to deconstruct shit and basically be heard. It is a space where I have grown and learned so much from other *muxeres* [Chicana/Latina feminist activists] through dialogue and just spending time together."

Moreover, many other student organizations were not meeting the needs of these women to have a feminist, queer-friendly, politically active organization. Raza Womyn not only served the role of an academic and social counterspace within the university but also was a political activist counterspace that reached beyond the university. The work that the women did within this organization to create a safe space for growth and development extended their efforts into multiple communities throughout California and the United States. Claudia, a twenty-four-year-old self-identified "Chicana, tortillera, lesbian, immigrant, queer, Mexicana, womyn of color, farm worker, *vaquera*, *norteña* lover, *activista*, political, hocicona, tortillera del norte," remarked, "I continue my involvement with Raza Womyn because it is an organization that has allowed me to grow as a womyn struggling with issues of sexism, homophobia, internalized racism, classism, labor exploitation, and xenophobia, that are all too often unrecognized in other organizations."

Additionally, Raza Womyn was the connection that the women needed to feel rooted within the university. Several of them explained that during their first couple of years on campus, they commuted to UCLA, attended

class, and rushed home immediately after. Once they joined Raza Womyn, they looked forward to staying on campus for the weekly meetings that took place once a week in the evenings, usually lasting at least three to four hours. The more time they spent in the Raza Womyn office or organizing on campus, the more they felt entitled to their education and their right to be there. Furthermore, they mentored each other and advised each other on what classes to take, how to study, what to major in, how to find financial support, and much more. Raza Womyn allowed these students to claim a space at UCLA. According to Alejandra, a twenty-two-year-old "working-class, hetero, Guatemalteca,"

> UCLA, with all of its "majesty," it's really easy to get lost in it, and Raza Womyn definitely allows you to get a hold of things and think about other things that are just as important as school. But it also allows you to discuss your role in school and helps you along with the college career process. For this, I am very grateful because since Latina womyn are a very small minority on this campus, I still feel like I fit in somewhere.

Ultimately, Raza Womyn provided the skills and strength for its members to maintain a relationship with both the university and their communities, while also building their consciousness and political agenda. According to Paula, "There's a really safe space to go [in Raza Womyn], where you can go and be who you are. What that's doing is it's giving you the energy and the language and the courage and the strength to go out and use that in other parts of your own activism, or in the collective activism of the group."

Conclusion

This research found that Raza Womyn, as an organization, promoted a multidimensional consciousness specifically in the areas of race/ethnicity, class, gender, and sexuality. When members of the organization did not have a high level of consciousness about one of these areas of concern, other members did the work of bringing light to these issues through dialogue, programming, and activism. Raza Womyn promoted a multidimensional consciousness; nurtured a commitment to social justice; provided and developed skills and services that made it possible for participants to engage in empowering changes; and created and sustained a community of inclusiveness—thus, I

identify this organization as an agency of transformational resistance (Covarrubias and Revilla 2003). The women of Raza Womyn accomplished all of this through a process of critical pedagogy and praxis I refer to as *muxerista* pedagogy—a pedagogy that is guided by a Chicana/Latina feminist consciousness rooted in race/ethnicity, class, gender, and sexuality *conscientización*.

A *muxerista* is both a Chicana/Latina/o feminist vision of social change *and* an activist commitment to eliminating all forms of oppression and social injustice. Literally, *mujer* means "woman" and *mujerista* means "womanist/feminist." A *muxerista* is a Chicana/Latina/o who considers herself/himself a feminist or womanist. The x replaces the j to signify a connection to indigenous ancestry and anti-colonial struggle, as well as the multiplicity/intersectionality of the women's identities. The term muxerista was coined and defined by the members of this organization. They also use the term muxer instead of mujer because it carries with it the recognition that race/ethnicity, culture, class, gender, sexuality, immigration status, nationality, and critical consciousness intersect to create their identities—their activism is a crucial element of this constructed identity.

Using *muxerista* pedagogy, a Chicana/Latina feminist approach to education and activism, the members of this organization nurtured the commitment to social justice and provided the skills to do so through their continued and persistent self- and community education. This article details the ways in which the members of Raza Womyn responded to the marginalization and discrimination they experienced because of their gender/feminist and sexuality/queer identities. As a result, the women became dedicated to making it safe to be queer and feminist in their organization, the university, the community, and their homes. The mentorship aspect of the organization was crucial to the continued growth of a multidimensional consciousness that always included gender and sexuality aspects. The idea that just because the organization was at one point "safe" for queer women was never taken for granted. There was a constant reminder that, for Raza Womyn to remain safe, there had to be a persistent commitment to maintaining the consciousness and commitment that was introduced by earlier members in this area.

This provided the ability for all members to develop a higher critique of homophobia and heteronormativity, while also committing to activism and education for the elimination of sexual identity/orientation discrimination. Most importantly, they created and sustained a community of inclusiveness, essentially by working continuously to provide a safe space for all. They recognized racial/ethnic organizations as places where students can

connect with one another and feel comfortable. Paula explained that Raza Womyn served as a space for her to discuss various aspects of her identity and allowed her to organize for social change outside of the university—in her community—and to have the support to do so. She added,

> [Raza Womyn is] a collective of women that provides a safe space for us to talk about issues that pertain to women and pertain to women of color, Chicanas and Latinas, where we begin to talk about things that are not talked about within our families, within our cultures, or within other spaces where women feel like they're silenced. So this is a space where we can begin to talk about those things, and also where we can come together to organize. Because I think that organizing is one of the things that I think is really important from Raza Womyn, to plug ourselves into the community and to see the larger picture.

I came away from this research learning something that many student activists already know and experience but few scholars recognize, that student activism and critical consciousness serve as a means of survival for many marginalized students at historically and predominantly white institutions of higher education. Moreover, this study illustrates ways that women build community for themselves and how they use that community to struggle against the subordination they encounter in their schooling experience. Many of the members of Raza Womyn did not find a safe space outside of Raza Womyn because of the sexism and homophobia that they encountered in school, home, and other organizations. Likewise, some came across hostile and uninviting spaces in predominantly white feminist organizations. Thus, it was in Raza Womyn that they found their niche or "safe space."

Often, the feeling of connecting with other women from similar cultural backgrounds alone was enough to help the members of Raza Womyn feel that they had a place at the university; more importantly, the process of growth and consciousness-raising that took place within Raza Womyn was a source of strength. As members of this organization, they learned to organize social, cultural, and political events off and on campus. They also gained knowledge and academic skills for maneuvering their educational programs and endeavors. Overwhelmingly, these women were preparing to become educators, organizers, and advocates for marginalized communities. Their commitment to education was very strongly connected to their vision of social justice and the need to work with marginalized communities and to increase the number of underrepresented students in higher education.

I observed and participated in profound acts of Raza Womyn/*muxerista* pedagogy in which the *mujeres* educated each other and themselves about race/ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality, and so much more through the act of love. Muxerista pedagogy fundamentally depends on love, hope, fun, safeness, and intimacy. "Safe space" was a theme that came across very strongly in all of the interviews because it was the most sought out and neglected aspect in the lives of the *mujeres/muxeres* at the university and sometimes even in their homes and communities. In terms of sexuality, this research shows that when you create queer/feminist consciousness and safe space in an organization that is both hetero and queer there are many possibilities. In Raza Womyn, this led to the following:

Queer *mujeres* felt comfortable, accepted, and/or empowered.

Heterosexually identified mujeres questioned their sexuality and/or their own homophobia.

Mujeres who were in the process of coming out were supported and encouraged.

Mujeres who previously identified as "straight" sometimes came out as queer.

Activism and organizing against homophobia and sexual discrimination became key components of the organization's vision of social justice.

This study ultimately reveals that the historical vision of creating a revolution persists into the present as activists rally around cries for "revolution" and protest the unfair treatment of people of color, laborers, students, poor people, immigrants, women, gays, lesbians, bisexuals, transgender people, elderly, disabled, and many other marginalized communities. Raza Womyn is a testament to this work. As Paula shared:

> Revolution is not about creating a revolution or deconstructing the old revolution, but it is our own movement toward ourselves and toward social justice, we are re-constructing revolution. It is revolution when you start becoming a woman who speaks for yourself. It is real when you're making real changes in your life or affecting other people and when your organization is changing people's lives. When you create a space that has never existed, like the space we created in Raza Womyn . . . [that is revolution].

Thus, re-constructing revolution was about creating safe spaces for Chicanas/Latinas (hetero and queer) in higher education and in activist organi-

zations—these spaces were meant to develop critical consciousness in an environment that was inclusive of multiple identities and struggles while supporting student success/retention and activist goals. "Re-constructing revolution" is a critique of organizations that advance ideologies of "revolution" but focus on very narrow definitions of social change—overwhelmingly this includes organizations that reassert patriarchy and heteronormative/homophobic practices.

Special attention must be paid to the success stories as well as the struggles of these kinds of organizations because they can serve as new/different models of pedagogy, especially useful for those of us who have a hand in shaping the educational institutions and teachers of this nation.

Notes

1. I write this article in the first person to signify a distinctly feminist, woman of color approach to scholarship.

2. I use "hetero," as the members of Raza Womyn did, to refer to women in the organization who identified as heterosexual/straight and "queer" as an umbrella term to include all lesbian, bisexual, fluid, and nonheterosexual members. At the time of this study, none of the women identified as transgender, but afterward some of them developed gender queer and transgender identities—further illustrating the fluidity and social construction of gender and sexual identities. "Queer" was also a political identity for those members who did not identify with a heterosexual identity or heteronormative beliefs/practices.

3. Citizenism is anti-immigrant behavior and/or ideologies that result in an ideology of superiority of people who are classified by the state as citizens of a nation. This state- and federal-sanctioned classification results in a system of unearned advantages for citizens and unwarranted discrimination of noncitizens, such as denial of basic human rights, a living wage, and dignity.

4. I use the word mujeres, literally meaning "women," to indicate that I am speaking about Chicanas/Latinas and to signify the intersection of race, ethnicity, culture, and gender using one word.

5. Two-spirited is the chosen identity by some people who identify as bisexual and who connect their sexual identities to their indigenous heritage. According to Native American scholars, people who are two-spirited contain both masculine and feminine elements within them (see Jacobs, Thomas, and Lang 1997).

6. I will hereinafter use "queer" as an umbrella term that encompasses all nonheterosexual and nonheteronormative identities.

7. "Osa" is a pseudonym. She did not wish to have her real name used in this research. In response to a survey question about how she identifies, she replied "soft butch, dramatic impassioned lesbian teacher letting the educational system have it. I used to think I was a boy when I was a little [Osa] because I liked girls, but I'm a woman loving type of woman."

8. The cinnamon roll hug begins with the group standing in a circle holding hands. One person moves to the center of the circle, still holding hands with the person to their left and leaving the person on the right and the rest of the circle still holding hands in the circle. The person who was to the right of the center person begins to walk clockwise around the circle. Everyone follows her. They spiral in tighter and tighter until they are a snug pinwheel. Once the pinwheel is complete, the participants give each other a strong embrace. The activity ends with laughter and more hugs.

References

Anzaldúa, Gloria. *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*. San Francisco: Aunt Lute Press, 2007.

Boren, Mark. *Student Resistance: A History of the Unruly Subject*. New York: Routledge, 2001.

Covarrubias, Alejandro, and Anita Tijerina Revilla. "Agencies of Transformational Resistance." *Florida Law Review* 55, no. 1 (2003): 459-77.

Davalos, Karen Mary. "Sin Vergüenza: Chicana Feminist Theorizing." *Feminist Studies* 34, no. 1-2 (2008): 151-71.

Delgado Bernal, Dolores. "Using a Chicana Feminist Epistemology in Educational Research." *Harvard Educational Review* 68, no. 4 (1998): 555-81.

Freire, Paulo. Pedagogy of the Oppressed. New York: Continuum, 2000.

Giroux, Henry. "Theories of Reproduction and Resistance in the new Sociology of Education: A Critical Analysis." *Harvard Educational Review* 53 (1983a): 257-93.

——. *Theory and Resistance in Education: A Pedagogy of the Opposition*. South Hadley, MA: Bergin and Garvey, 1983b.

Glaser, Barney, and Anselm Strauss. *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research*. Chicago: Aldine, 1967.

Gonzalez, Deena. "Speaking Secrets: Living Chicana Theory." In *Living Chicana Theory*, edited by Carla Trujillo, 46-77. Berkeley, CA: Third Woman Press, 1998.

Jacobs, Sue Ellen, Wesley Thomas, and Sabine Lang, eds. *Two-Spirit People: Native American Gender Identity, Sexuality, and Spirituality*. Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1997.

Leyva, Yolanda Chavez. "Listening to the Silences in Latina/Chicana Lesbian History." In *Living Chicana Theory*, edited by Carla Trujillo, 429-34. Berkeley, CA: Third Woman Press, 1998.

Martinez, Elizabeth "Betita." *De Colores Means All of Us: Latina Views for a Multi-Colored Century*. Cambridge, MA: South End Press, 1998.

McIntire, Alice. *Participatory Action Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2008.

McLaren, Peter. *Che Guevara, Paulo Freire, and the Pedagogy of Revolution*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2000.

Muñoz, Carlos. *Youth, Identity, and Power: The Chicano Movement*. New York: Verso, 1989.

Perez, Emma. 1998. "Irigaray's Female Symbolic in the Making of Lesbian Sitios y Len-

guas." In *Living Chicana Theory*, edited by Carla Trujillo, 87-101. Berkeley, CA: Third Woman Press.

Raza Womyn. "Fourth Annual Chicana/Latina Conference Program." Los Angeles: UCLA, March 1998.

Rhoads, Robert. 1995. "Critical Multiculturalism, Border Knowledge, and the Canon: Implications for General Education and the Academy." *Journal of General Education* 44, no. 4 (1995): 256-73.

———. *Freedom's Web: Student Activism in the Age of Cultural Diversity*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1998.

Rhoads, Robert, and Sylvia Solórzano. "Multiculturalism and the Community College: A Case Study of an Immigrant Education Program." *Community College Review* 23, no. 2 (1995): 3-16.

Rhoads, Robert, and Julio Martinez. "Chicana/o Students as Agents of Social Change: A Case Study of Identity Politics in Higher Education." *Bilingual Review* 23, no. 2 (1998): 124-38.

Rodriguez, Juana Maria. *Queer Latinidad: Identity practices, discursive spaces*. New York: New York University Press, 2003.

Solórzano, Daniel G., and Dolores Delgado Bernal. "Examining Transformational Resistance through a Critical Race and LatCrit Theory Framework: Chicana and Chicano Students in an Urban Context." *Urban Education* 36, no. 3 (2001): 308-42.

Steiner, Stanley, Mark Krank, Peter McLaren, and Robert Bahruth, eds. *Freirian Pedagogy, Praxis and Possibilities: The New Millennium*. New York: Falmer Press, 2000.

Yosso, Tara. 2005. *Critical Race Counterstories along the Chicana/o Educational Pipeline*. New York: Routledge, 2006.