

LA VOZ DE BERKELEY

Spring 2010

THE COLONIALITY OF ORGANIZING AT UC BERKELEY: NOVEMBER 2ND SPEECH¹

Xamuel Bañales

I begin by addressing the question: why am I here and why are the problems of public education important to me?

I grew up in California and have only attended public education. I had many—and I do mean MANY—problems in the public education system, (perhaps familiar to many here), such that, by the time I was in my 1st year of high school, I was pushed out of the system, a system that was short from being completely dreadful. In essence, I only completed one year of formal high school.

What followed was a time of confusion and personal struggle, but fortunately also a time of self-discipline and empowerment. After a difficult journey beginning with taking several classes at my local community college, while working two jobs simultaneously, and also being involved in my community, I was able to make my way to UC Berkeley. Given my trajectory, sometimes I find it a miracle that I am graduate student here at CAL, and being at this university is a privilege indeed (albeit one that involves many struggles, nevertheless). My path into this university is NOT common—BUT—unfortunately, my life experience and challenges ARE. Many—and I do mean MANY—young people of color, from working class/poor/immigrant backgrounds, like myself, are constantly pushed out of public schools (and other sectors of society). The difference is that the majority do not find their way into institutions of higher education: instead, there are systematic routes that lead young people of color towards the streets, into jobs that exploit or further marginalize them, prisons, and/or death.

Why is this the norm? What explains this? Perhaps we can address this question by asking yet another question: what is it that people of color have in common?

One answer: we have a shared history of colonization from Western Europe (by which we experience a dehumanizing process of racialization in the US), and I want to address this since it relates to my concerns and frustrations with current organizing efforts around what many have called “the crisis” of public education.

The domination from Western Europe essentially involved two things: the colonization of space and time. Space because the rest of the world outside of Western Europe was brutally and violently taken, the Americas

for example, where the people already here were seen as abstract beings—in other words, inhuman. And the colonization of time in which Western Europe placed itself at the forefront of owning history (thus, they were now the “MODERN”), while the rest of the world was relegated to either “the ancient” (like Asia, seen as possessing a history or great civilizations, but outdated or archaic), and other parts of the world were rendered “primitive,” that is, out of time, or before time, without a history (like the Americas and Africa).

Now, some would argue that there is no longer colonization since we are no longer in “colonial” times. In a legal sense—that is, *de jure*—one could argue this. However, many scholars argue that *coloniality* of power continues to exist, which is the idea that the LOGIC of colonization is still present. In other words, coloniality is another way to talk about the logic of colonization still prevalent in contemporary society.



“We’re Bleeding” in Upper Sproul. Photo by Jorge M. Gonzalez.

So, how does coloniality relate to my concerns and frustrations with current organizing efforts around what many have called “the crisis” of public education? Well, it relates in that I have found a *coloniality of organizing* taking place guised under liberal/democratic politics conducted in a typical modernist fashion. I will explain. After the September 24th day of action, when a diverse crowd of 5000 people showed up at Sproul plaza, I saw organizing efforts by a majority white, upper/middle-class mix of socialist and liberals. They planned for a Cali-

fornia “statewide mobilizing conference” to take place on October 24 to “save public education,” which in essence reflected the project of colonization of space and time. That is, what I saw (and experienced) was, the coloniality of organizing.

All of a sudden, the discourse, the talks, and the organizing that took place at lightning speed generally operated with the logic of colonization. For example, the coloniality of organizing around “the crisis” with regards to space: first, there was a disregard for the groups that are already established on campus and have a long, sustained history of organizing. Many of these groups are of color, and have been organizing around educational issues, such as affirmative action, for many years. In fact, student of color organizing dates as far back as the late 1960s when the Third World Liberation Front (twLF) organized around racial concerns with public education—but all of this was as if it never existed.

Second, not only were people organizing in the general campus spaces without giving respect to what had been done, or to the different groups

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Dear Readers

We are very proud to present to you the first of two publications that will be produced this Spring semester of 2010. We are at a crossroad similar to the one in 1996. This was the year that prop. 209 passed that restrained most working-class communities of color from a higher education in California. We find ourselves at a time when administrators use police brutality, along with the threat of fear, as seen with the recent militarization of the UC Berkeley campus to shut us out. We continue our struggle in solidarity with communities of color, brothers and sisters of *all* colors, and hope you stay on the side of struggle for public higher education.

This issue is a testament to the struggle of communities of color. Inside it, you will find the struggle of the third world Liberation Front (twLF) to create a Third World College and a *relevant* higher education. In the words of our writers you will see their courage to stand, to speak, and act in this struggle for social justice.

We are grateful to everyone who contributed their words and artwork to this issue of La Voz de Berkeley. It is for this reason that we are here: to give you *a voz*. For this purpose, we need your support for the upcoming issue. We invite students and community members to contribute articles, poetry, and art to our next issue. Please send them via email. We humbly ask you to afford us the opportunity of being *your voice*, of being *tu voz*.

Sinceramente,
La Voz Staff

"La voz tambien es un arma."
-El Gran Silencio

WHERE DID OUR MOVEMENT GO?

Elma Martinez Padilla
UC Berkeley Undergraduate

Last semester I took a cinema course that focused on social and political struggles in Latin America. Although I really enjoyed the course, it was hard to concentrate while there was so much turmoil on campus concerning the budget cuts. I felt that we were losing our right to an affordable education and found it hard to put anything before the fight to protect that right. During class discussions, we would talk about Latin American struggles and the harsh realities that the people depicted in the films faced. There was little or no connection between these struggles and the student of color struggles we are currently facing. It was until we saw Jorge Sanjines' film *El coraje del pueblo* (1971), about a community of Bolivian miners in San Juan, who decided to fight for basic human rights, that I realized that we are all connected by one continuous struggle as underprivileged people.

"Coraje" is one of those Spanish words that is impossible to fully translate into English without losing its meaning and power. It means both courage and anger and it is the perfect word to describe the emotions of the people who have fought and continue to fight for their communities. At the beginning of the film, Sanjines shows el pueblo, the common people, marching through the mountains towards the city with coraje only to face a group of armed soldiers ready to kill them all. This community of miners faced death because they were being treated as if they didn't exist and therefore had nothing to lose. Like Subcomandante Ramona said about the Zapatistas' dangerous fight for liberation, "for all intents and purposes we are already dead, we meant absolutely nothing." As students of color, we are barely present on UC campuses and the budget cuts will only eliminate more of us. It is for that reason that we must unite with coraje and fight for our rights to have equitable and affordable access to higher education.

After watching this film I was ready to move forward, ready to join all other students of color in a fight for our rights. I assumed that everyone felt the way I did, but I was wrong. When classes were cancelled because of the walkout on September 24 and during the three day strike in November, some of my classmates were extremely upset. They said they had worked hard to pay for their tuition only to lose hours of instruction because of protestors. Other students of colors claimed that they couldn't get involved because they were part of apolitical organizations and therefore couldn't take a stand on any issue. Salvador Allende once said, "To be a student and not a revolutionary is a contradiction," but my community manifests such contradiction by choosing to ignore the issue at hand. El pueblo is losing its access to higher education and closing their eyes and covering their ears and mouths, refusing to see, listen and speak up. We cannot continue to conform; it is this conformity that will leave us behind.

Last semester while all of this was going on, my mother, who I hadn't seen in eight months, decided to come visit me. When I explained to her what was going on in the University she couldn't understand why I cared so much and she asked me not to get involved. She told me to be grateful for being accepted into the University and not fight those who had given me this opportunity. This is exactly what Bolivian miners, civil rights activists, Zapatistas, and other who have chosen to not to conform have heard, "Be grateful for what you have been given by those above you and don't fight them because you will never win." I'm tired of this colonized mentality that we shouldn't step out of the line that has been drawn out for us, that we must accept it as our fate and be thankful. I refuse to be another student of color who sits back and watches as those at the top take away our dreams, our access to higher education and the gains we have made in the past forty years.

It has been forty years since the Third World Liberation Front stood up and fought for us to be here—to have an Ethnic Studies department, to have retention and recruitment centers, and a Multicultural Community Center. All of these spaces are suffering right now because of the cuts. El coraje del pueblo, ends by stating "we are with you university student...el pueblo in its entirety, to say with you, no more..." Around the world university students have been the ones to demand changes and see them through. We are celebrating 40 years of Ethnic Studies yet we are in a situation where we are losing all that we've acquired throughout people's struggles. We need to stop celebrating what our people did for us and truly honor them by protecting their gains and finishing what they started for our future generations.



A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION? THE STRUGGLE CONTINUES...

"We are a mirror. We are here to see and be seen, for you to see us, for you to see yourself, for the other to see himself in our image. We are here and we are a mirror. Not reality, just a reflection. Not light, but just reflected light. Not the road, but just a few steps. Not the guide, but just one of many paths which lead to the morning."

-Subcomandante Marcos || March 11, 2001, Mexico City

Ricardo "Bearcardo" Gomez
UC Berkeley Undergraduate

When I went back home this winter break I talked to one of my little cousins for the first time in four years. The last time I had seen him he was a scrawny little trouble maker who knew every single cuss word and offensive phrase in both English and Spanish, and deployed them every other second as he terrorized his fellow cousins. Now, he is still scrawny, but he's calmed down a lot and is in middle school, the age where I started talking to my relatives about college and the UC's A-G requirements. I reminded him that I'm in college and I asked him if he wanted to pursue a higher education. Unlike some of my other cousins, he said that he did. But when I asked him if he knew how to get into college he said he didn't have a clue.

I asked him if he knew about the UC system, the system I attend, and he said that he did. He read about the fee increases and how the UC is no longer affordable. On the outside, I responded by telling him what he needed to know and that he too could attain a higher education. On the inside, my heart responded by breaking. The only thing my little cousin knew about higher education was that he couldn't afford to get one.

I had come back home after a semester of protests and helping organize the September 24th Walkout and a Berkeley contingent to the November UC Regents meeting to find the very real effects of the budget cuts on my own family. Low-income, first generation, and students of color are being erased from our state's public institutions of higher education.

Then in January, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger announced in State address that he will submit a constitutional amendment to the California legislature "so that never again do we spend a greater percentage of our money on prisons than on higher education." In addition, his proposed budget includes hundreds of millions of dollars in restorations to the UC, CSU, and CC systems.

The governor's chief of staff Susan Kennedy is quoted in the New York Times saying, "those protests on the U.C. campuses were the tipping point. Our university system is going to get the support it deserves."

Last semester, together and across all levels of politicization, from those who joined Facebook groups against the cuts, to those who informed their friends of impending fee increases, to those who stood together in the thousands at rallies. To those who staged sit-ins across the state; those of us who stood for and did something for what we believe in, forced the Governor's hand. The Governor did not suddenly realize the value of public education after years of gutting it. The governor did not realize the value of higher education just because some well-connected person lobbied him, or because someone sent him a letter. It was our collective effort that moved him to change his mind. It was our work and determina-

tion that set the example, Governor Schwarzenegger was following our lead.

But my family is Mexican-American, and my people have known since the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, not to believe in words alone, at least not those passed from above to those of us below.

Although many of us may welcome this change in priorities, our struggles to protect the public good in this state are far from over. We must remember that words are only words. The battle against the cuts and privatization, not only to the UC but to the public sector as a whole, should not end when the rhetoric from the top changes.

The same day that the Governor announced his new-found respect for public higher education, the CA Senate passed legislation that opened the door for the privatization of our state's public K-12 education system, which will only intensify the inequality and segregation that plagues it. Even within his plan to increase funds for higher education, the governor proposed to do so by privatizing the state's bloated prison system. This will establish the kind of private correctional system that led to the brutal and fatal beating of 14 year old Martin Lee Anderson at the hands of correction facility camp guards in Florida. This will establish the same kinds of logics used in the inhumane detention camps that house thousands of undocumented persons in the Southwest and Southern United States.

Affordable higher education in California should not come at the cost of dignity and life for others, the vast majority of whom are low-income and people of color. Those "others" are also us, are also part of the same struggle, but they wage that struggle in a different institution.

We must mobilize. We now know that mass mobilization, including actions that bring business as usual to a screeching halt, really do work. This has always been the case. Look back on history and pretty much every *right* we currently enjoy--the end of *de jure* segregation, the right to vote, ethnic studies, disability rights, affirmative action, etc.--is a direct result of direct action organizing. We need to keep it up, and support each other.

There are always plenty of ways to make your voice heard. Inform your friends, arm yourself with ideas and information, organize your own actions and coordinate your friends. I encourage you to take part in and organize for the March 4th state-wide Strike and Day of Action for Public Education. I also encourage you to join the UC Berkeley text message alert service, or create a group for your own campus, if you are interested in being informed or-informing others about actions in support of public education (<http://freepubliceducation.org>).

The governor's reaction to our protests shows us that our actions indeed matter. But he has, thus far, only heard part of our message. Let us continue to organize so our full voice is heard.

In Solidarity,

Ricardo "Bearcardo" Gomez

NOVEMBER 2ND SPEECH

XAMUEL BAÑALES

that have been doing similar work, but these organizers were now even entering spaces that people of color struggled to attain, like the Multicultural Community Center (MCC), which came out of the 1999 2nd wave of the twLF struggle. Walking into the MCC I all of sudden now see large groups of majority white people occupying this space to have meetings. That is, the organizing infrastructure that has been created by people of color, the history that has been carved out with blood and struggle, and ultimately the players and people themselves were rendered, abstract, invalid, and invisible. Even the spaces people of color have struggled for are slowly taken over.

To highlight the colonality of organizing around "the crisis" with regards to time, suddenly after September 24, there was a tidal wave of liberal discourse (clouded with socialist rhetoric) which claimed that "this movement is historic"; that these "new" (majority middle-class white) actors are "creating history!" In meetings, I have heard over and over, "we are organizing the October 24 conference for the rest of California." When I interjected by questioning who this "we" was, the response was changed to "I am organizing this movement for the rest of California." When I interjected again to ask who this "I" was, rather than taking this opportunity to analyze this question seriously, the question was dismissed. Thus, rather than joining sustained organizing efforts that are already taking place, or instead of reaching out to those (people of color centered) groups that have historically been struggling around issues that concern public education, this "new movement" decided to take over. They are now the heroes of time and the rest of us are left to play "catch-up," left to ask for permission to enter into their organizing arena.

Part of the logic of the colonality of time and space manifests through the language of current organizing. I hear problematic "universal" terms and principles like, "we are building a mass democratic movement, we have to fight the budget cuts, we are in crisis, one person equals one vote," and lots of talk about fighting, fighting, and fighting. Not to mention the fact that I also hear the problematic discourse of racial inclusion: "We want people of color in these spaces. If they aren't here to vote, we can't do anything about that; I tell people of color to come, but they don't show up to our mass democratic meetings."

Myself, along with other vocal people of color, raised several racial/class concerns at these meetings/events. They were ignored. They were raised again. They were dismissed. They were raised again. They were granted 2 minutes at the following meeting. They were raised again, they were granted 5 minutes at the following meeting. In the end, our efforts seemed futile, and my energy was running low as I hit a white-brick wall at a dead-end of a liberal movement that does not want to deal with explicit race/class concerns. And, when others do address these concerns, it is through an additive basis, and not because they are integral to the movement.

So, generally speaking, how do people of color organize differently? For one, people of color organize through a "we" consciousness—that is, we are more attuned to the heterogeneity and intersectionality within our racial/ethnic communities, and thus we organize sustained movements based on groups—not just individuals. In other words, the "we" consciousness makes it imperative that we have relationships not only among ourselves in a group but also with respective communities at large. In fact, coalition-based/alliance organizing (or similar models) has been critical in some movements. For example, The Black Panther Party invited the Gay Liberation Front (GLF) to take part in the September 1970 Revolutionary People's Constitutional Convention, where Nine members of Third World Gay Liberation and one lesbian member of GLF attended a planning meeting for the convention that summer.

Second, based on the several years of experience as an organizer, I argue that a general organizing method for people of color is based on a politics of decolonization. What is decolonization? One way to explain decolonization is that it is an intervention where the reconfiguration, reconstitution, and transformation of power, being, and knowledge becomes imperative. This calls for another way of conceiving the state, politics, economy, identity, worldview, history, epistemology, knowledge production, and ultimately humanity, and the many ethnic "power" movements of the late 1960s are examples of this decolonizing politics.

Thus, the "crisis" that many currently refer to in relation to public education, from a decolonizing perspective, really began when Western Europe initiated mass colonization, and the inception of mass public education during the industrial era was reflective of an always already unjust, faulty, and straight-up hypocritical democracy that claims that (individual) voting is the means to representing an equal voice. "Budget cuts" translates to the further exclusion of many working class/person of color at this university, and a "mass democratic movement" really means a

deceitful liberal form of accepted racism and classism. According to a liberal perspective, the concern is mainly with budget cuts, with "saving public education," in other words, mostly concerned with reform. People of color, through decolonizing organizing methods, demand, instead, to reconfigure, reconstitute, and ultimately transform public education altogether. Frankly, I am not interested in "saving" that public education system that pushed me out in high school, and the same system that continues to push out many people of color from the university. Also, through a decolonizing methodology in organizing opens up the possibility to forge connections to other movements, such as those organized around immigrant rights, ending current wars, or with prison abolitionism.

The beauty of decolonizing as a people of color organizing methodology is that it is about a principle that is not strictly tied to DNA/ethno-racial composition. One example of this is Richard Aoki who was a black panther of Japanese descent. By the same principle, this is why there are people of color who have little problem organizing in the aforementioned problematic white-middle class spaces, and in turn, why you can have white people who are not comfortable in those spaces because they too embody a decolonial practice in their organizing. In other words, when considering decolonizing as principle method of people of color organizing, it's not a question if "whites" can be allies, but whether they embody a decolonizing worldview, which, in turn, aligns them to people of color decolonizing efforts.

Related to decolonizing principles, I want to talk about something extremely central to this. This is the principal of love. Love is central to the decolonizing methodology in organizing—that is, decolonizing cannot be successful if love is not integral to this project. I am not talking about the liberal conception of love that pretends that "we are the world, we can all hold hands, we can all be equal." I am talking conceptions of decolonial love like scholar Chela Sandoval's describes. This is defined by affiliation, attraction, and blending, where, despite differences, relations are nonetheless created, fostered, and sustained and nurtured, and where accountability, responsibility, and listening, and receptive generosity serve as the base. I am talking about the decolonial love that creates the bridges that cross borders—the ones that Queer Chicana theorist Gloria Anzaldúa advocated for. I am talking about the decolonial love and understanding that Black scholar Frantz Fanon argued would rupture the perverted logic of colonization so that we re-humanize again.



September 24th walkout, sit-in on Telegraph and Bancroft. Photo by Jorge M. Gonzalez.

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SI FUERA POSIBLE: UPON THE FORTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF ETHNIC STUDIES*

Forthcoming from Duke University Press in *A Xicana Codex of Changing Consciousness – A Decade of Discourse*, 2011.

© 2009 by Cherrie L. Moraga

Cherrie L. Moraga

Forty years is a long time. Forty years ago, there were true activist visionaries and mass movements to enact those visions. Forty years ago, there was the recently murdered Martin Luther King, the also assassinated Malcolm X, the emergent Black lesbian poet Audre Lorde. There was a Cesar Chávez and a viable Farm Workers Movement, propped up by the agit-prop of a teatro para un movimiento campesino. There was soon to be the Stonewall Rebellion (forty years old this June) on one coast; and a year later on the opposite coast, the Chicano Moratorium, which culminated in the murder of Journalist Ruben Salazar by the Los Angeles police. At the same time Filipino Americans held firm in a nine-year anti-eviction campaign in support of their elders in San Francisco's Manilatown International Hotel. Forty years ago, there was a military draft, which people of conscientious opposition to the Vietnam War could resist, not the mercenary military apparatus we witness today. On November 20, forty years ago, the American Indian Movement began a nineteen-month occupation of Alcatraz Island.

Forty years ago, revolution was on the mind of all Americans, even the most timid and conservative. How could it otherwise as it reflected off brown faces, shouting "Boycott Grapes!" beneath protest placards on every other Los Angeles street corner. It exploded in Agent Orange Technicolor and in the napalm droppings onto Southeast Asian jungles and villages displayed on evening news. It slept in the burnt rubble of a ghetto liquor stores after a black night's black rebellion.

Like so many of my generation, coming of age in those times, I had imagined that by 2009 the seeds of radical transformation that had been sown in the fields of such struggle would have by now sprouted into fully coalesced people of color self-sustaining communities -- con voz y vota -- throughout the country. Of course, forty years ago we could never have accounted for a technological revolution, which helped elect the first Black president. Nor could we have anticipated the current state of globalization and the corporate privatization of the planet, including its most precious resource, water. We did not predict global warming forty years ago. Pity that we had not.

"Back in the day" . . . I am sure you students are tired of hearing about it -- from your aging professors and your still bearded Uncle Chato -- beer in one hand, television remote in the other. But I do not wax nostalgic about forty years ago. I use it as a point of critical departure in order to ask, *what happened to people of color movement?* I am here to echo the words of the late Richard Aoki, a Sansei Black panther and activist in the Third World Liberation Front, which birthed Ethnic Studies, when he stated: "We didn't lose in the sixties, we just didn't finish the job."¹

* This essay was originally presenting at the 2009 Ethnic Studies Department Commencement on May 15 at the Zellerbach Playhouse, UC Berkeley. It drew in part from remarks made at the Future of Minority Studies symposium at Spelman College in Sep-

As recently as last weekend, I was present when veterano Chicano teatrasta, Luis Valdez, nearing seventy, spoke -- his voice voluminous with rage -- against this country's continual denial of its entrenched racism.² He indicted a deluded America that imagined that with a black man in the white house the country had eradicated racism, even as we stand by and witness the most flagrant human rights abuses leveled against the Mexican immigrant. Anti-Mexican sentiment is justified in the face of weakening economic system and threats of international contagion.³ But what disease is the Mexican immigrant passing across the border except the illness of impoverished dislocation engineered by the corrupt treaties

between governments fueled by corporate interest? We are no better off than we were forty years ago in terms of the racialization of poverty.

Why? What happened to our U.S. Third World Movement besides cointelpro?⁴ By the 1980s and the election of Ronald Reagan to the White House, we had failed to sustain the mass movements generated in the late 1960s. The same man, who as governor of California had called in troops to repel the Third World student strikes on this very campus in 1969, initiated "Reaganomics" as President. His administration's infamous "trickle-down" economic theory laid the groundwork for the corporate welfare state we suffer today.

I confess that my naiveté (*or is a poet's longing?*) resurfaced in the last months of the Bush Regime, when I had hoped -- as I had after 9/11 -- that the country's imminent economic collapse would provide our legislators and us with

a *second* chance at national self-reflection. Was it too much expect that the most militarized profit-hungry nation in the world might take a few weeks, months, or even years to reevaluate the fundamental problems with a unregulated globalized market economy? One might have begun the inquiry by asking a Mixtec day laborer in front of the Kragen's Auto Supply in the Fruitvale Barrio what had become of his plot of maize in Oaxaca since the implementation of NAFTA.

Hypocritically, right-wingers called Obama a socialist, even as the Bush Administration nationalized the losses of Corporate America. Still, Obama, made no protest against the "bail out." Along with the rest of our national legislators, he picked up the congressional shovel to dig the rich man out of the grave of his own greed, while all along we were told that

tember 19, 2008. I had presented with M. Jacqui Alexander on the subject of women of color feminism in the academy and its current distance from activist engagement.

1. Born in 1938, Ricard Aoki was an Oakland-based Japanese American who served as a key leader in the Third World Liberation Front Strike to form a Third World College at UC Berkeley. During World War II he and his family had been interned in a camp in Topaz, Utah. Aoki died three months before this address on March 15, 2009.

2. Luis Valdez spoke at the Retirement Celebration for Chicano Theater Historian, Professor Jorge Huerta at the Potiker Theater, UC San Diego.

3. The disease, of course, referred to here is colloquially called, the "swine flu," now the H1N1 virus. The 2009 outbreak of this influenza was believed to have originated from pig farms in Mexico, and further aggravated anti-Mexican immigrant sentiment by fears of contagion in the United States.

4. Cointelpro is an acronym for FBI counterintelligence programs, which operated from 1956 to 1971. Cointelpro infiltrated politically dissident organizations in the effort to discredit, subvert, and ultimately dismantle them. These included socialist, communist, civil rights, Black Power, Chicano, Native and women's movement groups.



Third World Liberation Front strike, 1969. Manuel Delgado (center) was a leader in the Mexican American Students Confederation, one of the four groups that banded together to form the Third World Liberation Front. Their demands for an autonomous Third World College resulted in the formation of the Ethnic Studies Department. [Source from lib.berkeley.edu]

the death of capitalism would mean the death of us. But wasn't this the economic collapse for which we critics of Corporate America had been waiting? The threatened failure of the U.S. economy sent First World and dependent Third World economies spiraling into an inevitable downspin. Marx had predicted as much. Did not this international earthquake in the fault-line of transnational pirateering offer our nation the opportunity for foundational economic reconstruction?

The cure-all notion that the way to save the economy is to get Americans "buying" again -- at all costs -- is at its base, antithetical to any common sense understanding of long-term economic and environmental sustainability. One might remember that after 9/11 we were told the same thing -- that buying was the most patriotic thing we could do. Still, even after the bail-outs, that so-called spending money (which would be better secured by viable employment) has failed to "trickle down" to Main Street as promised. Meanwhile, Wall Street recovers its losses and ruthlessly continues the business of profit as usual.

We don't need more cars, more vacation homes, more suburban four-bedroom-plus-family-room-plus-three-car-garage-single-family dwellings devouring what little green space left surrounding our major cities. Nor do we need the impossible mortgages and debt that accompany them. We need truly effective mass transit systems linking metropolitan areas and railways linking regions. We need affordable, built-to-last fuel-efficient housing for everyone, that makes renting and group ownership a stable and attractive alternative to the individual property mortgage. We need a national health care program and a reconstituted public education system -- from pre-school to ph.d. In short, we need to reconstruct the "American Dream" so that it is environmentally responsible and ethically sound, built upon the idea of reciprocity among community members and their environment, instead of an alienated individual consumerism.

What happened to our movement? The current economic crisis makes its patently evident. It was literally bought off. As graduates, you came of age in a time where for at least a quarter century consumerism had been unequivocally conflated with citizenship. You have gleaned no other message from the mass media, except to maintain your individual freedom by maintaining the 'free enterprise' of those who have enslaved you to this new American ethic. What the Declaration of Independence described as an unalienable right -- "the pursuit of Happiness" -- has been reconfigured within the popular imagination as the 'pursuit of purchasing power.' Even the so-called public university system, which cost you considerably to attend, is being sustained by corporate interests and ethics of competitive privatization. So, in many ways you are not to blame, but you *are responsible* because it will be up to your generation and those that follow to literally stop passing the buck to the rich guys.

What is our response as progressives to these times of economic upheaval? Do we look to Corporate America to protect our rights and our pocketbooks, to define our family life styles and educate our children, even after the ruling class betrayed its own ever-trusting middle-class by robbing it of a lifetime of savings and the homes they were programmed to purchase? Where is the protest?

In having the great privilege to speak to you, graduates, what I want to say to you is that the change mandated by true political consciousness requires confrontation with power through organized activism. There is no other way to achieve it. We do not forget that Ethnic Studies was the *compromise* to the TWLF's demands; that the original struggle called for the establishment of an autonomous Third World College. As people living in what Rodolfo Acuña called "Occupied America," we never wanted mere inclusion in the education systems of Euro-America; we wanted to create curriculum where our ethnicities' histories, philosophies, religions, sciences and technologies, cultural values and aesthetics served as the grounding point to interpret and intersect with Europe, Euro-America and other cultures of the world. Without an equitable playing field, which can only be realized through autonomy, what does integration achieve? The original founders of the concept of a Third World College probably could have predicted the outcome of the required compromise of an Ethnic Studies Department: the gradual erosion of the cultural integrity of

our studies, a less than complete investigation of own theories of knowledge, and the institutional devaluation of street knowledge" honed from direct social activism. Ethnic Studies did not mean merely training ourselves to be translators between our home cultures and the United States Academy; and yet, perhaps that is what it has become.

Malinche, my sister-translator -- who imagined those ships on the horizon, contained a new day. Only to reveal with history that they professed the demise of all that she had known as people.

It has taken me years to figure out that my resistance to many academic considerations, especially the framing of ethnic studies within the context of postmodernism, is that so many people of color -- even here in the United States -- have never been a full members of *modern* society; that many of us were born and/or raised with some other source within us that summoned us to the page, the poem, the protest; that we held other ways of knowing that modernity did not reflect; that we were, in fact, without the language to articulate it.⁵

By the late 1970s, women of color activist-writers began a search for that language, a way to create theory out of the conditions of our lives in the plain effort to improve women of color lives. We were responding, critically and in political practice, to the impositions of a post-industrialized (post) modern nation-state that we knew instinctually and experientially did not completely locate us. This approach drastically changed the face of ethnic studies as it intersected with feminism and queer issues, which had also emerged from political movement.

Then something got lost for us along the way, I think. I, for one, lost a thread of connection somewhere along the way. Perhaps I, too, was one of those for a time, who, as Jacqui Alexander puts, "had journeyed far in the mistaken belief that books were the dwelling place of wisdom." ("Pedagogies," 289) As a young woman, I had once imagined a newly emergent body of radical feminists of color activists-thinkers in the teaching fields of América. But, now . . . ? Now I have come to believe that the majority of "minority"⁶ scholars are in conversation with the Imperial West first, even if in the effort to distinguish themselves from the West. A paradox most academics may be forced to suffer.⁷ I confess for a time I stopped reading anything the academy might consider "theory." I wandered, often alone, or with a handful of others, in search of ideas outside the (mentally) gated communities of the University. I found them in the writings of the repressed bodies of young people, in the mad sculpture and paintings of a Xicana Indígena lesbian, in the impossible sacrifice of mothering, in the pronouncements of tribal leaders, as much as in my own mother's lucidity in the torment of dementia.

This was *Bridge's* hope, to make theory like that, from the flesh of the "discontents" of modernity. I am still a citizen of that place. For us, there is no post-modern, no post-colonial -- in the literally sense of those words -- for we remain so colonized from within and without, and especially and specifically as mujeres. We unwittingly continue to do the white man's bidding. Not all of us, no. But all of us have to struggle against a profound internalized colonization. Of her own journey as a writer Jacqui Alexander writes, "She could no longer rely on what was written in books to convey or even arrive at truth." ("Pedagogies," 315) Indeed, the lessons we learned from a world without letter -- that female and "colored" inheritance -- are almost lost to us, as we continue to put more empty words between ourselves and memory.

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Continues on pg. 13



March 24, 2009, Upper Sproul. Photo by Jorge M. Gonzalez.

5. These 'knowings,' of course, often have to do with sacred knowledges, which (post) modernity dismisses as "tradition." M. Jacqui Alexander writes: "Yet, it is not only that (post)modernity's secularism renders the Sacred as tradition, but it is also that tradition, understood as an extreme alterity, is always made to reside elsewhere and denied entry into the modern." ("Pedagogies," 296)

6. "Minority" in the context of academia.

7. Gloria Anzaldúa's works serves as an effective counterpoint in this regard. In *The Gloria Anzaldúa Reader*, she discusses how her ideas were often considered derivative of theorists such as Foucault, Derrida and the French Feminists. Gloria retorts "I hadn't read them" and goes on to point out how "Third World women were quintessential of 'the postmodern condition,' which Chela Sandoval corroborates in *Methodology of the Oppressed*."

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Ethnic Studies in Its 40th Birthday and the Dream of the Third World College

Nelson Maldonado-Torres¹

"It is from our shared identity as the systemic set of negative Ontological Others and from our complementary systemic role that we can derive potentially innovative contributions to the de-objectification of our present systems of theoretical absolutism and to the urgently needed transformation of our present episteme and its now objectified mode of rationalistic knowledge.... To disenchant discourse will therefore be to desacralize our 'cultures' and their systems of rationality by setting upon our literary and cultural heritages and their orders of discourse rather than by continuing to adapt to their generating premises and non-conscious systems of inference as we do now."

Sylvia Wynter. "On Disenchanting Minority Discourse: 'Minority' Literary Criticism and Beyond."

"We find hate and revolution is being taught in their books...." "We found a denigration and disparagement of American values and a subversion of our history."

Laura Leighton, Tucson Resident commenting about books taught in a Raza Studies Program in Arizona (April 2008).

"I think that the only efficient and emancipatory way to confront neoliberal globalization is to oppose it with an alternative, counter-hegemonic globalization. Counter-hegemonic globalization of the university-as-public-good means that the national reforms of the public university must reflect a country project centered on policy choices that consider the country's insertion in increasingly transnational contexts of knowledge production and distribution.... The reform must be focused on responding positively to the social demands for the radical democratizing of the university, putting an end to the history of exclusion of social groups and their knowledges for which the university has been responsible for a long time, starting long before the current phase of capitalist globalization."

Boaventura de Sousa Santos. "The University of the 21st Century: Toward a Democratic and Emancipatory University Reform."

We are celebrating 40 years of Ethnic Studies as a field in the academy and this provides a motivation to think about the past, present, and future of the field. Any reflection about what Ethnic Studies is and should be must be grounded on an account of its peculiar origin and mission. It should begin with the recognition that Ethnic Studies is an exceptional intellectual space and institutional formation in the Western Academy that to a large extent became institutionalized in spite of, instead of because of, mainstream work done in the traditional letters and sciences—including English, Sociology, Political Science, and Area Studies to name only some of the more obviously connected with Ethnic Studies.

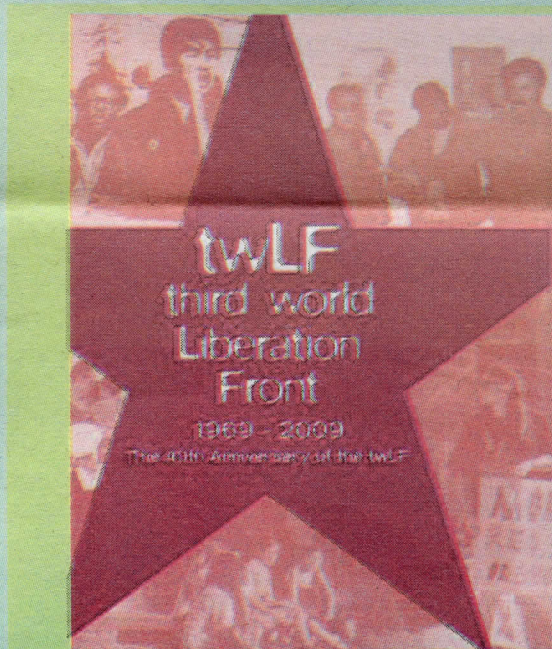
Just like Black Studies and Women's Studies, Ethnic Studies became an official part of academia because of social and political pressures arising from social movements of marginalized and excluded peoples. This is one reason why when reflecting about Ethnic Studies, it is important to have Black Studies (and African American and Africana Studies) as well as Women's Studies (as well as Gender and Women's Studies) very much in mind. They arguably have a unique and special affinity, and could be all considered emancipatory fields or sciences.

Black Studies, Ethnic Studies, and Women's Studies emerged in 1968, 1969, and 1970, respectively. It is often said that they are children of the 1960s, and that is to some extent true, since, for instance, the 60's were an important moment of consciousness raising and change that involved the spread and strength of discourses of minoritized populations that inspired the groups that came for the defense of Ethnic Studies. It is also true that in the late 1960's, the Third World Liberation Fronts at San Francisco State University and UC Berkeley, among similar groups in other campuses challenged the exclusion of bodies of color and the histories, cultures, and knowledges that were important to or were an intrinsic part of those 1, Nelson Maldonado-Torres is Associate Professor of Ethnic Studies at the University of California, Berkeley.

communities. This was a demand not only for desegregating the space of the university, but also for decolonizing the methods and presuppositions of what counts as valid and adequate knowledge.

The demand for a Third World College was arguably an expression of that desire, of aiming to advance and still incomplete project of decolonization. But whenever the Third World College is mentioned it is typically countered with the judgment that this is, just like Ethnic Studies itself, an anachronistic space that only made sense in the turbulent and excessive context of the late sixties. The irony in the judgment of those who see the ideal behind the notion of a Third World College as anachronistic or passé is that they often make it without questioning the extent to which they remain loyal to a model of knowledge production based, not on 1960s upheavals and critical thought, but in 19th century epistemologies and in a model of the university that emerged in a context of renewed imperialism, and of racist, sexist, and homophobic national constructions and expansions.

The Third World College has represented for a number of communities of colored in the second part of the twentieth-century and still in the twenty-first century, something similar to what the modern research university based on insights from Kant and Humboldt represented for Europeans in the 19th century: the affirmation of the value of the human and a rejection of a concept of education that is limited by dogma. But while Europeans were primarily concerned with legitimizing scientific truth, combating religious dogma, and defining the human as a projection of themselves, people of color who fought for the Third



World College were more interested in exorcizing still existing racist and dehumanizing ideas that found a comfortable space in the 19th century sciences and the emerging university model, which is the one that is still dominant now. In that sense, the Third World College is, perhaps more than anything, not a relic from a radical past, but an unfinished project that envisions the decolonization of knowledge and of our very idea of the human.

However, as much as Ethnic Studies and the Third World College have to be understood in relation to the achievements of the 1960s, including the powerful coalitional and inter-relational spirit of the Third World Liberation Fronts at SFSU and UCB, it is not true that Ethnic Studies is just the product of the 60's. In fields such as African American Studies, for instance, the most quoted scholars wrote much of their work well before the 1960s. W.E.B. Du Bois classic *The Souls of Black Folk*, for instance, was published in 1903, and Anna Julia Cooper had already defended a doctoral dissertation on *The Attitude of France on the Question of Slavery Between 1789 and 1848* in 1925. Also, a considerable amount of the ideas that animated U.S. Third World nationalism in the 1960's came from decolonization movements in the Third World from the 1940's and even before until the early 1960's. Ethnic Studies and the Third World College represent a very important moment, but a moment only nonetheless, in a very long struggle by different communities of color to critique and rethink the basis of the systems of domination that they have encountered since the last five hundred years.

Also, just like some fundamental ideas in Ethnic

Studies originated well before the 1960's, others only became more central to the field after that decade. Such is the case, for instance, with the critique of women of color feminists of the patriarchy implied in mainstream versions of ethno-racial nationalisms, and their simultaneous critique of white women feminism, typically anchored in Women's Studies departments. There were surely important limits in the practices and demands of multiple groups in the 1960s. Some of them could be explained in terms of commitments to still limited ideas of the human, and others to lack of awareness about the full extent¹² of the challenges to society and the academy that were finding a strong voice then. Sylvia Wynter warns us that

because of our non-consciousness of the real dimensions of what we were about [in the 1960's and early 70's], we asked at first only to be incorporated into the normative order of the present organization of knowledge as add-ons, so to speak. We became entrapped, as a result, in... enclaves labeled 'ethnic' and 'gender' and/or 'minority studies.' These enclaves then functioned, as David Bradley notes, *inter alia*, to exempt English Departments from having to alter their existing definition of American literatures. Even more, these enclaves functioned to exempt the callers for the new studies from taking cognizance of the anomaly that confronted us, with respect to a definition of American literature which lawfully functioned to exclude not only Blacks, but all the other groups whose "diverse modalities of protest" in the 1960's and 1970's had fueled the call for new studies. ["The Ceremony Must be Found: After Humanism," *boundary* 2, vol. 12, no. 3 (Spring-Autumn 1984), pages 37-38]

If, according to Wynter, ethnic studies scholars "became entrapped" by the institutionalization of ethnic studies in the Western academy, then how are we to break with such entrapment and give a more consistent expression to decolonial heresy and the new form of *studia humanitas* that are part of it. I think that the main responsible for the creation of ethnic studies, the Third World Liberation Front, had a sense of these imperatives when they called not actually for compartmentalized enclaves called departments, but for an entire new school of third world studies: the third world college. The goal for some of the leaders was, of course, not only to secure a relatively autonomous space for intellectuals committed with the project of social and epistemological decolonization to advance and test their ideas in continued dialogue, but to facilitate the decolonization of the entire university, its disciplines, methods, and fields of knowledge. In that sense we can understand Ethnic Studies not just as an interdisciplinary area in the modern research university, but, ultimately, as an alternate model of what is to be an university—even when many of those who occupy that space may not necessarily conceive it in that way. The long history of resistance to Ethnic Studies testifies not only to remnants of racism in the academy, but also to a struggle for paradigmatic normativity. To exist, Ethnic Studies must be included as a field in the existing model of the university, and the more that Ethnic Studies activist-scholars insist in the more fundamental project of decolonizing the academy, the more they are read as irrational and anachronistic figures who are only driven by the worst kind of identity politics.

It was to be expected then that Ethnic Studies (which, if understood as I am describing them should be rather called Decolonial Studies, or Decolonial Frameworks and Practices) have grown in a very contested and hostile territory. Leaders in these areas are often said to have no rigor, and are portrayed as representatives of the worst kind of sectarian identity politics. They and the social movements that led to the creation of the spaces that they occupy today are often referred to as excessive and obsolete: skeletons of an old era that the nation and contemporary scholarship in the traditional departments have fundamentally overcome or superseded.

One of the reasons why it is important to honor and celebrate Ethnic Studies and related fields, is that the traditional accusations of Black Studies, Ethnic Studies, and Women's Studies are reemerging very strongly today in what has become an age of imprisonment, trafficking of 2. Sylvia Wynter, "The Ceremony Must be Found: After Humanism," *boundary* 2, vol. 12, no. 3 (Spring-Autumn 1984): 37-38.

women and “femicides,” and war against immigration and “terror,” among other long-standing dehumanizing practices such as the denial of sovereignty to indigenous peoples and the implementation of neo-colonial conditions of dependency throughout the globe. For example, a propos of disciplinary actions on Ethnic Studies professor Ward Churchill, who went through what many consider an unfair review process after the conservative media focused on comments that he made in the context of 9/11, a columnist in the Los Angeles Times referred to Ethnic Studies faculty in general as the worst offenders in academia, “craven emotional warriors in the arena of identity politics,” whose “scholarship wasn’t tested in the highstakes, high profile competition that hones other academic and fields.” They and others who find a place in comparative literature and gender studies departments and programs are “academia’s hidden crackpots.”³ More recently, in April 3. Gregory Rodriguez, “Academia’s Hidden Crackpots,” in Los Angeles Times (July 30th, 2007). See <http://www.latimes.com/news/opinion/la-oe-rodriguez30jul30,0,7719652.column?coll=la-opinion-righttrail> [consulted on May 9, 2008].

2008, a Raza Studies program in Arizona was accused of selecting books for its classes that allegedly promote hate and revolution, as well as denigrate “American values” and subvert “our history.” Arizona politicians quickly responded with a legislation that sought to take state funding away from courses that “denigrate American values and the teachings of Western civilization.”⁴ The legislation also targeted student groups and associations that use race or ethnicity as a criterion for their organization (such as MEChA, and others).

It is often said that “Ethnic Studies are well, but ethnic communities are doing badly.” Instead, I suggest that their fate is intimately related, and that neither one nor the other is doing very well today. They are both communities at risk that face old and new forms of discrimination by emerging uncritical patriotisms and liberal discourses in a moment of war, rapid demographic change, 4. See Howard Fischer, “Measure Backs ‘American Values’ in State Schools,” in East Valley Tribune (April 16, 2008). See <http://www.eastvalleytribune.com/story/114048> [consulted on May 9, 2008].

economic recession, and of furious neoliberal policies that seek the privatization of public services and goods.

The 40 years anniversary of Black Studies, Ethnic Studies, and Women’s Studies, their common origin in social movements, and the common situation in which they find themselves today offer an opportunity to pay more attention to the linkages and initiatives for contact and cross-fertilization that have existed throughout their history. These linkages have largely been prompted by women of color, who often occupy and challenge more than one of these spaces at the same time, and by many scholars who have done serious work in more than one area of scholarship in ethnic studies. Instead of considering these initiatives as the exception, it is possible to build from them to continue the path of unfinished decolonization, and the deracialization, and depatriarchalization of knowledge and society which is undoubtedly what appears so threatening to many today. The unfinished project of the Third World College cannot be encapsulated in a few lines, but, in addition to what I have indicated above, it arguably has to be at least in some form conceived as an effort to make academic knowledge more relevant to the lives of communities in struggle, as a critical and inventive rethinking of our most fundamental concepts and presuppositions, and as a serious attempt to link and mobilize multiple subaltern knowledges in the direction of producing a counter-hegemonic globalization. These are all 21st century tasks.

Occupation of the Campanile

Jennie Marie Luna [Reprinted from April 1997, Vol. 6 Issue 4]

Around the world, the people are feeling the unrest and need to uprising. The passing of Proposition 209 and the subsequent protests must be viewed as part of that current world struggle. Every movement that is occurring is a sign that the people are in distress and will not be silenced.

After an arduous campaign against 209 by student and community organizations that spent months prior to the vote walking precinct, phone banking and rallying, the passage felt like another defeat after Proposition 187. This second time around, though, the cause to mobilize became only stronger and more firm.

When it was somewhat confirmed that 209 was indeed going to pass, student activists from the University of California at Berkeley got the word out that students were going to gather at Casa Joaquin Murrieta, the independent Xicano Co-op housing facility near the Berkeley campus.

Over 60 student organizers and leaders crammed the Co-op’s living room, including students from Casa Joaquin Murrieta, MEChA (Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán) and Students Against 209. After brainstorming and generating a plan, the house began to fill with activity as students painted banners and posters, wrote lists of supplies, and typed demands and press releases. The organizing and planning was carried out by a diverse group of students with different backgrounds, yet the same cause and desire to maintain Affirmative Action.

The following day, time was crucial. As thousands gathered on Sproul Plaza to rally and protest in opposition of 209, police had riot gear prepared and ready in department quarters. After a rally filled with speakers, songs and chants, the protest took on the streets, stopping traffic, blocking intersections, and eventually leading the police to believe that they were going to take on the freeway. Unbeknownst to the police and even to some protesters, there was no intention to even attempt taking on a freeway. Rather, the plan was taking place back at the Campanile Clock Tower on campus.

Student protesters had strategically planned to enter the Campanile tower during regular business hours with the intention of civil disobedience by chaining their bodies to the tower and declaring an occupation. These Berkeley students chained included Maria Brenes, Evangelina Camarena, Jennie Luna, Maritza Madrigal, and José Palafox. The others who helped in the chaining and occupation were Solis Aguilera, Jesús Barraza, and Kahlil Jacobs-Fantauzzi. The police and the rest of the Berkeley community were completely unaware that this was going on, due to the quick planning and ability to keep it all on the under.

The marchers could be viewed at the top of the tower as they made their way back to support and defend those chained atop. As the announcement was made as to what was going on it became clear why the Campanile Tower was the perfect place to protest and occupy. The tower, being a symbol representing the University, had become an ivory tower of elitism and exclusionism. Protesters defied the passage of 209 and had declared the occupation to be an act of resistance and reclamation.

The protesters chained had also made a commitment to fast the evening before in order to purify their bodies and strengthen their spirits. The tower, which stands on top of Ohlone land, stores within its walls the bones of many Native/Indigenous people. The chained protesters, who are all Xicano, wanted to recognize this fact in order to make the point that the University only wants these people when they are dead and not when they are alive. Demanding respect for the land, its people and the many broken

treaties, protesters demanded the genocide end, beginning with 209. The occupation became not only political, but a spiritual struggle as well. What the protesters were doing was no different than what warriors for justice around were trying to do: defend their people, protect their land and human rights. As protesters spent the night at the campanile, they began to share their stories and even though each person was of a different background, each one could relate to the other. The entire group would go from chanting songs related to the struggles in South Africa to singing traditional songs of the farmworker and labor movements. This in itself showed the world struggles beginning to unify as one larger struggle of the people as a whole.

Protesters realizing that they were not going to be asked to leave, made themselves comfortable on top and bottom of the tower. Protesters made sure to block the inside and outside entrance to the campanile. Communication from those chained on top to organizers on the bottom was made by cell phones, pagers, and walkie talkies.

Two university vice chancellors took the time to visit, listen to the demands and attempt to negotiate with the chained students. They were the only administrators to actually check on the well being of the students.

Amazingly enough, the thousands of protesters remained as long as they could. Many brought food and blankets, others kept the spirits up through songs, chants, and words of encouragement. Since the elevators had been shut down, students who climbed to the top came to play and ring the tower bells or join in drum songs.

Several hundred remained overnight as the peaceful occupation continued. This peace did not last. At approximately 5:30 in the morning, the police began to disrupt and end the occupation. Students who had been sleeping were surprised by such a rude awakening. Without an official warning for disbursement, police began to clear the way and move protesters to the side.

Students hung on as long as they could and chanted, “No Violence!” repeatedly as police used pain-hold tactics, and what most would consider excessive force, to get protestors to move. After two protestors pairs of glasses had been smashed, a wheelchair had been broken with the person pushed off, and someone’s scratched eye was bleeding, police officers used enough force to get protestors out of the way to finish the arrests that had already begun. By the time the officers reached the top, protestors drummed, singing, “Through my people speaks the spirit, the spirit never dies.” After reading the demands aloud, the officers gave the protesters at the top of the campanile, one last opportunity to leave, then arrested them after breaking the chains.

The protestors continued throughout the day, disrupting classes, demanding air time on the campus radio station, ripping apart the “Daily Californian” which had endorsed 209, holding sit-ins, negotiating meetings with the vice chancellors, and strategizing for future actions.

UC Berkeley, being in solidarity with all the other state campuses that protested and screamed to make their voice heard, ignited a flame that continues to burn in the spirit of social justice, human rights and equality. While the reactionary protests sent stronger messages throughout the nation, the real work begins now. The real work means maintaining the spirit of activism, continuing to fight for what is right, dealing with bureaucracy, and negotiating with the institution. What will happen is an increased need to support our youth, the children that are going to need us now more than ever to guide, support, and protect what they deserve to inherit—hope and the right to an education which will lead them towards the knowledge and wisdom to create a better future. ¡Viva la Causa!

Coming out to America

By
Yazmin Sanchez

Latina? Chicana? O Mexicana?

Who am I?

I am an indocumentada

Or according to this country

“illegal alien”

Stripped of my identity

Stripped of my heritage

Stripped of my ancestry by coming to America

When will it stop?

How will it stop?

Who will make it stop?

Is it up to me?

Is it up to my people?

Who are my people?

Is it the Mexican-Americans? Is it the Chicanos?

Is it the Aztlán? Is it the Latinos?

Why the division?

Why the categories?

Are we all not meztizos?

Are we not brown and black and white?

I guess not!

Because every time I look around, I see division!

Division within my people

Division within my soul

Who am I?

Im what you make me to be

And what you make me to be

Its not what I am

Then why you make me something that Im not?

ENOUGH!!

I am defining myself today!

I am a strong brown-skinned woman

I am my mother and my father!

I am mi abuelita y mis tias

I am a leader!

I am a young brown woman lost in America

I am a MUJER!!

So go ahead and keep labeling yourself, but take me out.

Because today I define myself!

MUJER!! MUJER!! MUJER!!

Mujer independiente

Mujer perseverante

Mujer fuerte, Que sale adelante!

march 4th ed



fotos by phi nguyen

a day of action to defe

FROM DIEGO TO THE BAY

education belongs in the hands of the people



end public education

design by crystal marich

COLONIALITY OF ORGANIZING

XAMUEL BAÑALES

To conclude, because colonization dehumanizes both the colonized and colonizer, as Albert Memmi argues, decolonizing—hence, transformation—is the only way to go since it is through decolonial love that we will be able to reconfigure the problematic root colonial relationship and its logic evident in the current system of public education. Perhaps people engaged in other organizing efforts outside of people of color spaces will cross over to employ a decolonizing methodology. Even if they do not, decolonial love would allow for, despite differences, meeting at points of intersection in this struggle to change public education. Decolonial love ultimately shifts the terrain of the logic, symbols, and language of coloniality.

With regards to this movement around public education, although anger and frustration can serve as productive means for change, there is a danger in cultivating this. I say this because Caribbean scholar Aimé Césaire has argued that Hitlerism was a product of the brutal, violent, and dehumanizing practices of colonization. That is, Hitlerism was a reflection of colonization turned in on itself within Europe. Likewise, the more we generate this type of destructive energy of violence and aggressiveness, evident in the recent usage of statements like, “fight the budget cuts, fight for public education, such and such group fights back,” the more this type of energy is generated, the more this can also turn on us—and the last thing I want to do is fight with one another.

Through a people of color decolonial methodology where decolonial love is central, what we are facing, then, is really the love inside of us that yearns for social justice, the passion inside our hearts that desires another educational system that will serve the many needs of people, and the love for thinking, feeling, acting, existing in more humane ways. Before I finish, I want to put this type of decolonial love into practice. Will you join me? Ok, repeat after me:

Ain't no power like the power of love cuz the power of love don't stop (say what?) Aint no power like the power of love cuz the power of love don't stop (louder!) Aint no power like the power of love cuz the power of love don't stop!

How do you feel? Keep this feeling, this energy, this decolonial love with you as we organize to transform public education.

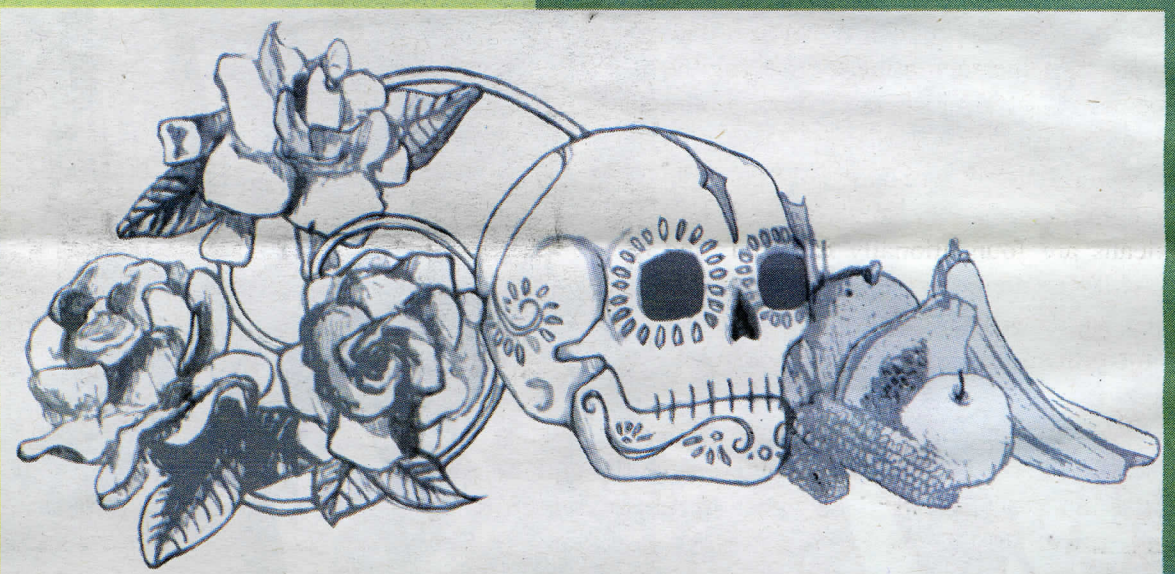
Thank you.

Xamuel Bañales is a graduate student in Anthropology at UC Berkeley. He has a background in Latin American literature and Ethnic Studies, and has many years of experience organizing with diverse youth of color in California

1. I gave a version of this speech at the “Activism from Below: People of Color Organizing to Transform Public Education” panel on November 2 at the Multicultural Community Center at UC Berkeley, which finalized a week of events centered on the “crisis of the university.” Drawing upon my extensive involvement in activist/organizing spaces, a multiplicity of perspectives, different sources, scholars, conversations and histories at UC Berkeley, and my experience as a graduate student instructor in Ethnic Studies (Humanities Methods and History of Ethnic Studies courses taught by Nelson Maldonado-Torres). I treated this piece as an intervention and contribution to a collective process of thinking about organizing and the current movement in response to the privatization of the public university.



Shattuck and Bancroft St. in Berkeley sit-in by students.



Danza in Telegraph and Bancroft St.

Continued from pg. 5

SI FUERA POSIBLE

Cherríe L. Moraga

You tell me what has changed. You tell me what a Black president means for the average black American? Tell me how it is humanely permissible to hold undocumented immigrants in detention camps, outfit pregnant women with electronic bracelets to track their whereabouts, and to uphold a war where indepted monies continue to be spent on the violent militarized occupation of foreign countries, instead of indigenous-originated programs to rebuild the broken infrastructure resultant of failed regimes. As historian and social activist, Howard Zinn, states, "If you want to end terrorism, stop being a terrorist."⁸

This includes terrorism at home. On New Year's morning 2009, a nervous trigger-happy white transit cop 'accidentally' murders Oscar Grant, a young unarmed African American male. In videos, Grant can be seen with his face down in the cement and hands behind his back when the shooting takes place. The twenty-two-year-old's death should tell us a great deal about the state of our ever internal colonization in White America. In 2009, the average Joe Six Pack cop still commutes into the inner city from suburbs all over this country to police people of color. Forty years after the radical activism of the Sixties, people of color communities still do not have access to the skills, training and funding to govern our own communities.

A few months after that murder of Oscar Grant, four dead white cops are lauded as heroes when they were killed by a fleeing Lovelle Mixon, an African American parolee, who was also gunned down in a final shootout. At the memorial service for the policemen, black officials kept a low profile because the subtext was that the Oakland's black community is foundationally culpable for the murders, like the south of the border Mexicans are foundationally diseased; and they will, no doubt, infect us, if we don't remain vigilant and keep that border between North and South and Black and White closed.

My fifteen-year-old son complains to his parents – "not everything is political." I know he is burdened by our relentless quotidian critique and is trying to figure out how to rebel against the rebel-parents in a way that will not align him with the enemy. For it is a war, we tell him, not always so kindly, when as women beyond the half-century mark, we can testify to the relentless attrition of the values of a real social democracy in the United States let alone democratic socialism.

I'd like to believe you graduates here today are the special ones. In many ways, I still hold the belief that Ethnic Studies provides for students of color a much-needed legitimization of our home cultures within the Academy. For me, the "ethnic studies" classroom is a small piece of unclaimed territory -- this ten week dialogue I have with my students --, a kind of extended 'si fuera posible' moment. If it were possible, what questions would we ask of our elders, our storytellers, our ancestors, our scribes and scientists?

So let us think, si fuera posible...

Ten years from now, upon the 50th anniversary of The Third World Strike I would like to be able to say that I had witnessed in the decade that lies ahead of us a radical change in consciousness.

Si fuera posible, I would still like to believe ...

that somehow some way you and the generations that follow you will subvert the University, make the University yours somehow;

that you will never stop demanding;

not settle for integration but instead require distinction of yourselves independent of the Academy's sanction;

that teaching and learning as women and men of color means something distinct from the structures that houses that learning;

that as feminists and race activists, you will remain renegades of the system;

that you will become very precise about language, not lazy; not appropriate other more insidious colonial tongues, but draw as fiercely as you can from the languages shaped by your origins and the critical education you acquire along the way toward revolt;

that you will remain wide-and eagle-eyed in your amazed perception

of the ever-cleverness of colonization, its myriad forever-shifting disguises, its friendly liberal countenance;

that you will never relax, but remain always on our flexed always-suspect toes, wary of cooptation;

that you will serve as great models of hope for the next generation in your insistence on the free life of the mind.

And the body will follow, I promise.

"What does this have to do with the price of beans?" My partner, Celia asks. So, I ask you, too. Where is your work? What are you reading? Whom are you listening to? Who will be your teachers and whom will you teach? How will you put yourselves in those sites where you continue to question systems of power? As you construct your families, to what degree will you challenge United States' cultural impositions on the minds of your children? To what degree will you cooperate with mainstream expectations

about progress, coupling in sex and in marriage, a spirituality devoid of progressive activism?

Do not waste your time. Choose life work, not a career, one that grows and moves with you as you evolve. Stop depending economically on your parents. Learn autonomy and self-sufficiency, so that you can come home free men and women. If your family is in need, help them. But as hard as it may be to accept, you did not get your degrees to serve *their* dreams, but to give back to your larger family, su pueblo, in the way your conscience and consciousness will dictate.

What does *education* have to do with the price of beans? Everything. The fact that forty years after the Third World Strike, the UC Berkeley catalogue now lists hundreds of courses dealing with race is an impressive achievement, but it does not mean the job

was finished, as Richard Aoki noted, because the power differential in the University system has not shifted, as it has not shifted for our communities. Neither more race-related courses nor more people of color occupying the academic hierarchal positions of white men indicate equity within the University system. What is required is the equity of ideas that impacts people and public policy

As people of conscience, we write /we think/we work in the face of death. Some days it seems that it is the only thing worth doing, to counter injustice in this way; for injustice – for perpetrator and victim – kills spirit. We are in search of ideas that can separate the strands of human exploitation and its consequent environmental ruin in order to illuminate the causes for the utter holocaust of the planet's heart. We want to stop the destruction, I imagine, that is why we imagine. We proceed with some infinite faith that if we say it/write it/walk it well enough that it will matter somehow – that spirit can be materialized as consciousness can be materialized. We hope. And this is what I hope for you, as a new generation of conscientized world citizens that in this manner, you will (not) "finish the job" that Richard Aoki and the Third World liberation movements started forty years ago, but *continue* to re-imagine and re-activate it, so that public education – at all levels -- fulfills its mandate to provide a socially just learning environment, which serves to illuminate the lives and critical minds of its students.⁹

Ometeotl.

© 2009 by Cherríe L. Moraga

9. The bad news and the good news. As a result of dire financial crisis in which the state of California finds itself (in its refusal to raise corporate taxes and to change the law requiring a 2/3 majority to pass a state budget), the UC system has instituted major budget cuts including the lay off of hundreds of workers, imposing unpaid furloughs on nonunion employees, and reducing courses. The Board of Regents has also proposed a 45 percent increase (of more than \$3,000) over last year's tuition, which would prevent many lower and middle income students from continuing their education. On September 24, 2009, a state-wide organized protest took place on UC campuses throughout California, where thousands of students and workers walked out. At UC Berkeley, a two-hour rally on Sproul Plaza, attended by an estimated 5,000 students, spontaneously took to the streets. As a result of the cutbacks, a new student activism is beginning to reemerge throughout the state.

8. KPFA radio interview. No date.

PA' LANTE: MARCH 4TH!

crystal marich

I am grateful and blessed to have had the opportunity to create the centerfold poster for this issue of La Voz. There have been so many beautiful posters, arts and words that have graced the pages of the La Voz publication throughout its existence and I am glad to be a part of that legacy. Tlazo!

When I was asked to create a poster for this issue I knew I wanted to create a poster that is reflective the current political situation and movement at Cal. Being a huge advocate of community organizing and action, I felt a poster connecting past actions with more recent actions would help showcase the continuity of our struggle for justice. I also felt like this would be a great opportunity to help publicize for the March 4th day of action many of our community members are organizing.

Now that I have completed the poster I want to share with you all about why I used the images I did and why I feel it is important to participate in the organizing that pushes for educational justice.

FUCK SHIT UP

"There is a rebel in me Shadow-Beast. It is a part of me that refuses to take orders from outside authorities. It refuses to take orders from my conscious will, it threatens the sovereignty of my rulership. It is that part of me that hates constraints of any kind, even those self-imposed. At the least hint of limitations on my time or space by others, it kicks out with both feet. Bolts." – Gloria Anzaldúa

This image speaks to something deep inside my soul and spirit every time I see it. The first time I ever saw this image was when I was helping clean the bridges office my first year and I ran into a stack of 11x17 inch old school newspaper articles and defeat Proposition 209 posters. This image was included in an article from the Daily Cal that was covering an anti-209 action in 1996.

There is no doubt why this image was chosen to be in that newspaper: It is brash, upfront, raw and easily misinterpreted. During my second year we had a twLF rally to demand that the university follow through on its promise to establish a permanent multicultural center. Inspired by this image included in the La Voz poster were several signs at the rally that read “Fuck Shit Up” in March 2008. Again, Daily Cal chose to mention this poster as representative of our organizing.

I feel that the spirit of "Fuck Shit Up" is representative of the organizing we do, though, not for the reasons you may think. "Fuck Shit Up" is a homage to that feeling I get when I see this image and poster; that something I feel deep inside my soul and spirit. To me, this is the fire that burns inside me and calls me to resist and rebel. It is my inner-instigator that speaks up and says, "Why?" or calls things out in class as unfair and/or racist. It is a part of my being that rejects the status quo and calls for change by any means necessary. It is the part of me that grows tired of having to legitimize and articulate my revolutionary politic and, sometimes, burns out of my mouth as three words: "Fuck Shit Up".

To me, "Fuck Shit Up" is a homage to that voice inside you that tells you that you are surrounded by injustice. It is our intuition and inner-voice as oppressed people that inspires us to challenge the system and take action to proactively transform the world we live in.

I believe that all people who have ever faced injustice have a little bit of this “Fuck Shit Up” spirit. In some of us, the fire burns so tall and bright that it is constantly pouring out of our mouths and manifesting itself into our actions. In others, it’s quiet as a whisper and as simple as a spark. I believe that this inner-voice manifested in our spirits that calls us to rebeldia is beyond powerful in any form, in any person.



gry because I had never been surrounded by so few people of color in my life. I did not understand why there were so few people of color at Cal but I was determined to find out why.

That anger and frustration I felt pushed me to become a bridges intern my first year where I learned about educational policies such as California's Master Plan for Higher Education and Propositions such as 187 and 209. This education began my political development. It helped me make sense of my anger and frustration and, by extension, better understand my experience as one of the few people of color from my community who made it to Cal. bridges gave me opportunities and the tools and skills I needed to begin organizing and taking action to defend what I believed was right and just for our communities.

Most importantly, the political education I received led me embrace my struggle as means of uplifting my community and continuing the fight for our people's liberation.

I believe that all of the people featured on the poster I created for La Voz are people who are also defending what they believe is right and just for their communities. It is grounding and reassuring to know that we are part of a movement that has continued before us and will continue after us. However, to see a visual representation of that is powerful. It is powerful to see groups of people protesting together rejecting policies that build borders to restrict people of color from reaching higher education.

EDUCATION FOR OUR LIBERATION

"There's no reason for the establishment to fear me. But it has every right to fear the people collectively – I am one with the people."

— Huey P. Newton

When we walk side by side with our comrades on March 4th it is important to contemplate why we put our bodies on the line for what we believe. Why do we do what we do besides the fact that it must

be done? I feel that our fight to defend our right to public education goes beyond looking into the faces of younger siblings and feeling sad that they do not have an equal chance at reaching the university. To me, it is about the fact that the people who control educational institutions in California have looked at our communities and have created policies that systematically reject and devalue us. The educational system in California is not committed to the success and upliftment of marginalized communities.

We need public education because education belongs in the hands of the people. When people are educated about the injustices that surround them they can be held responsible to changing these realities. It is deeper than saying that education is a human right. When our people are educated and informed about the crooked capitalistic and imperialistic system we live in, our inner-“Fuck Shit Up” spirit and our will to resist grows stronger. When we are armed with a relevant and community-based education that teaches us the truth about the realities of our lives and barrios we can make strides towards the liberation of our communities.

LOVE LIFE ENOUGH TO STRUGGLE

"My life wasn't beautiful and creative before I became politically active. My life was totally changed when I began to struggle."

— Assata Shakur

I believe that it is my inner-“Fuck Shit Up” voice that has guided me to gain a revolutionary education that guides me through my life everyday. This inner-voice pushes me to engage in critical and challenging conversations with authority, my peers, my environment and myself. The revolutionary education I have gained has expanded both my consciousness and reality and has deepened my understanding of the world and systems around me.

This inner-voice spoke loudly to me when I first stepped onto Sproul Plaza as a first year and was drowned in what felt like a sea of whiteness. I felt like (I still feel like this, actually) being a person of color on this campus was like being a part of an endangered species – numbers and demographics dwindling and changing rapidly. I felt frustrated and an-

How does "El Día de los Muertos" and the "Calavera" relate to the movement to transform public education?

Anonymous

At the 21st annual UC statewide Student of Color Conference that took place at UCSD, Nov. 13-15, 2009, keynote speaker and Ethnic Studies Professor Wayne Yang made reference to "The Death and Rebirth of the Public University" actions that took place at UC Berkeley on Nov. 2nd. In his motivating talk that aimed at providing a "social movement framework" for people of color, he suggested the "calavera" as a mobilizing symbol to signify the "death" of public education. Towards the end of the conference, people of color had a collective dialogue about this proposal, and contextualized and developed the idea further.



"A democracy needs education for the masses not the elite," Día de los Muertos. November 2, 2009. Photo by Jorge M. Gonzalez.

At this dialogue, students from UC Berkeley that participated/helped organize the Nov. 2nd event, explained that the actions that took place at UC Berkeley were not in vain, or about "tokenizing" or appropriating "El Día de los Muertos." That is, the "Death and Rebirth of the Public University" actions were done in a respectful manner that honored the holiday, its spiritual meanings, and Mexican-indigenous

roots. Thus, the students of color in this dialogue concluded that the "calavera" could serve as a symbol for mobilization, but on the basis that it would also have a spiritual/respectful meaning.

In other words, the use of the "calavera" would not only signify the death of public education (and matters related to this, such as affirmative action), but also honor our many ancestors that have come before us—like family members, revolutionary warriors, cultural figures, and spiritual leaders. By the same light, the "calavera" would also signify the rebirth of another public education system—one grounded in a decolonial framework where reform (status quo) is not the goal, but transformation, reconfiguration, and reconstitution; and this rebirth perspective would also honor the responsibility we have now to the future generations yet to come.

You may see "calavera" t-shirts with statements like, "First Generation/Last Generation," making reference to first generation college students and the end of this legacy. This points to a reality that many working-class and/or people of color face in relation to higher education now as well as historically. In other words, with the spiritual implication of the "día de los muertos calavera" in mind, this t-shirt also underscores the violent history of colonization, racialization, and capitalism that is embedded in systems of higher education and society that many of our ancestors struggled to change, and the imperative of why this current generation needs to mobilize to transform public education (and society) now.

Yo Soy by Harold W. Wilson

Consecuente (y ya casi por inercia) a lo que implica migrar al norte, muchas veces nos encontramos con preguntas que posiblemente nos puedan parecer irrelevantes. Una de ellas, la que sin lugar a duda, capturo más mi atención, fue una pregunta tan simple pero a la vez muy compleja; "What are you?", esto me llevo a buscar una respuesta inmediata y fácil debido a que no calcule su magnitud ni capacidad de "destrucción masiva". En ese proceso me di cuenta de "que no soy": no soy el muerto que camina por en medio de cabezas claras, no soy la voz que no se escucha pero si cuenta en las estadísticas, no soy blanco, negro, azul, marrón, o rojo, no soy un producto del periodismo, no soy un corredor de fronteras o violador de leyes, no soy uno más ausente, no soy mudo, no soy un número, no soy simplemente el 16 por ciento de la sociedad estudiantil; no lo soy.

Para ser sincero nunca descubrí "que era", pero en este proceso absurdo, de auto identificación caí en cuenta de Quién soy: soy el hijo de la Pacha Mama, el hijo de las pampas Argentinas y de los llanos de Venezuela, soy el agua del Río de la Plata, soy la corriente del Paraná y del Magdalena, soy el canto de las aves del Manu, soy parte del aire que corre libre por la Patagonia. Soy residente de la Sierra Maestra y la Sierra Madre, soy el hijo del Orinoco y del Amazonas, soy quien sumerge la vida en el

Lago Titicaca, soy la piel que duerme en la falda de los Andes, soy el hermano de las palmas del Caribe, soy el hijo de la zafra cubana, soy el resultado de la caña y del sudor de mis hermanos. Soy el indomable puma que cuida la Sierra sudamericana y el feroz otorongo que vigila y protege sigiloso la selva amazónica. Soy la miel que emana de los plátanos del Ecuador y del camote boliviano, soy quien goza de la lúcuma, quien se deleita el paladar con la infinidad de peces del Pacífico y el Atlántico. Soy grama de la Islas de Pascua, soy la tierra de las Líneas de Nazca, soy barro Mochica y soy piedra de Tenochtitlán. Soy hijo de Atzimba y el Señor de Sipan. Mi casa está en la cumbre de Chichen Itza y Machu Picchu.

Soy saya, marinera, cueca y tango; soy pisco, chicha, ron de caña y tequila, soy un gaucho y un chalan. Soy por quien peleó José Martí, Bolívar y San Martín; soy para quien escribió Neruda y soy quien yace en las Tradiciones de Palma. Soy a quien Silvio, Sosa, Milanés y Chabuca Granda cantan.

Soy linaje de Inca, Maya, Azteca, y corona. Soy, hermano mío, la mano que ayuda y la voz de tus ojos. Mi bandera es blanca y mi suelo es infinito. Soy revolución, paz y canto, soy aliento y trabajo; soy sudor y gloria, soy historia, lágrimas, sangre y heroísmo. Soy tú en otro cuerpo y tú eres yo en mi cuerpo. Soy tu hermano.

Ana of "los 80's"

by Esperanza Navarro

The 80's don't exist anymore
Not in this world not in Berkeley.

The 60's don't exist anymore
Only remains the struggle,
the reminder of promises of change
that have been slowly reversed by the President
who has yet to receive your "Christmas gift"
who has yet to stop seeing you as a "Dirty Mexican"
For not Yudof, not even the university can understand why, why you left poetry to men
and their "self-aggrandizing perceptions"

The 60's, the 70's, the 80's don't exist
however, their legacy is still imprinted in us,
the people still want you to know...
the people who are not all brown, black, or yellow
the people who intend to stay and keep moving forward...that even if...
Even if you take away our access to education,
courses, work, and our rights ...
we will continue to fight
for 500 years of struggle is nothing
to what true freedom is
to what recognition is
we are survivors...

So I tell you Ana,
self-labeled Xicana poet and writer of protest poetry
Things have not changed...
The women are still waiting
in that room
for those numbers to be called
they are still waiting for those coupons that are
printed behind the desk
they are still being told to "arrive temprano"
still being ignored and not acknowledged as people
but a number...

We are still being asked our origin
as if our citizenship and birthright did not make us
American

our words, our thoughts are still being cut short

i may have never known who you are Ana
Ana of "los 80's"
if the Chicano Studies department was cut out
i might have never know other women like you
because i no longer have access
Classes are being cut short
There is no more money for us
There is only money for those at the top.

So i ask you Ana
Ana of "los 80's"
If this is not a poem
and a manifestation
or simply a letter
Then what is it?
What do i do now?
What can you make of it?
When nothing has changed,
Our voices are whispers
and we are left alone
to merely hope
to wait...

The women are still waiting...
and our voices are being silenced.



PROTECT YOUR EDUCATION!

RESIST - MOBILIZE - TRANSFORM

March 4, 2010



RAISING LITTLE RESISTORS

Angela Aguilar
UC Berkeley Alum

I work with a kindergarten class in East Oakland. Kindergarten?! Yes!!

Having no formal training as a teacher (and thus having only basic knowledge of child development), I have learned a lot about what teaching for social justice can look like at the level of early childhood education. Actually, I've just learned quite a bit about our little brothers and sisters.

Franz Fanon quotes Nietzsche several times when he states that "the tragedy of man is that he was once a child." When I first read this statement a few years back, I pondered over it for quite some time. "Classic" (White) psychoanalysis posits that adult mental illness is, more often than not, a result of early childhood (familial) trauma. As Fanon explains in *Black Skin, White Masks*, for people of color, the trauma is exacerbated by our contact with a white world that despises us, that wants to erase our cultural memory or worse.

The logic of white, modern normativity, even in our "multi-cultural" society, is introduced when a child enters the public education system in the United States. So how do we / can we, as teachers/activists who work in favor of our communities and against an oppressive and colonizing system, displace this logic that is embedded at an early age in our society? The answer for higher-education and more recently, high school, has been the demand and constant struggle for Ethnic Studies and exposure to its decolonial theories. So what can this look like for younger students? It is in education that we as Ethnic Studies activists/organizers/scholars can put into practice the decolonial logic that we embody.

Every day I go to work I am deeply disturbed by what I see. First, the community surrounding the school is slowly but surely becoming gentrified and many of the students no longer live in the neighborhood. The after-school program coordinator informed me recently that the home owners in the area proposed that the school be converted into a private school. I am assuming that most of the immediate residents do not send their children to this school. Second, in the after-school school program that I teach in, the student population is comprised of exclusively black and brown youth, with only two staff members of color (myself and the newly appointed program coordinator). Essentially, we have a classic picture of urban schooling in U.S. America: White teachers working with black and brown youth. Many of us know what this translates to: namely, a lack of understanding or even a concern for the realities of many of these stu-

dents lives. For example, some teachers wonder why some kids are so tired or always asking for second snacks ; or acting like "grown-ups", etc.

Considering all of this, I was not very enthused when we were given the task of preparing for a Black History Month showcase at the end of February. I wondered what the White teacher from Vermont would teach his young Black students about Black folks.

So, instead of focusing on Black History "Month", I decided to try something different. While the rest of the classes are gearing up to showcase African-American "trailblazers" (Rosa Parks, Michael Jackson!), the kindergarten class is learning about and practicing community solidarity and, love for the people. Specifically, we are learning about the Survival Programs introduced and sustained by the Black Panther Party

are being taught in the classroom. Even in an after-school program, where we have the liberty to be more creative and loving, teachers spend energy and often times seek out negative patterns and characteristics in our children.

So what does Ethnic Studies look like in early-childhood education? For the kindergarten after-school program at a school in East Oakland it consists of:

1) High expectations. I have high expectations for all of my youngsters. Just because they are 5 (and black and brown) doesn't mean we should expect less of them.

2) I am you, you are me (In Lak'Ech). An intricate concept/philosophy/theory of the ultimate kind of Love. Introducing Kindergartener's to THEORY! In teaching community (the kindergarten class/the school at large) and solidarity (with other communities) this concept has been introduced to displace the idea of individualism, a very modern, colonial ideology that has destroyed land and people. We also learn that this theory is not just in relation to other human bodies but to nature. The sun, the flowers, the little squirrels on the play-yard. ERRRthang.

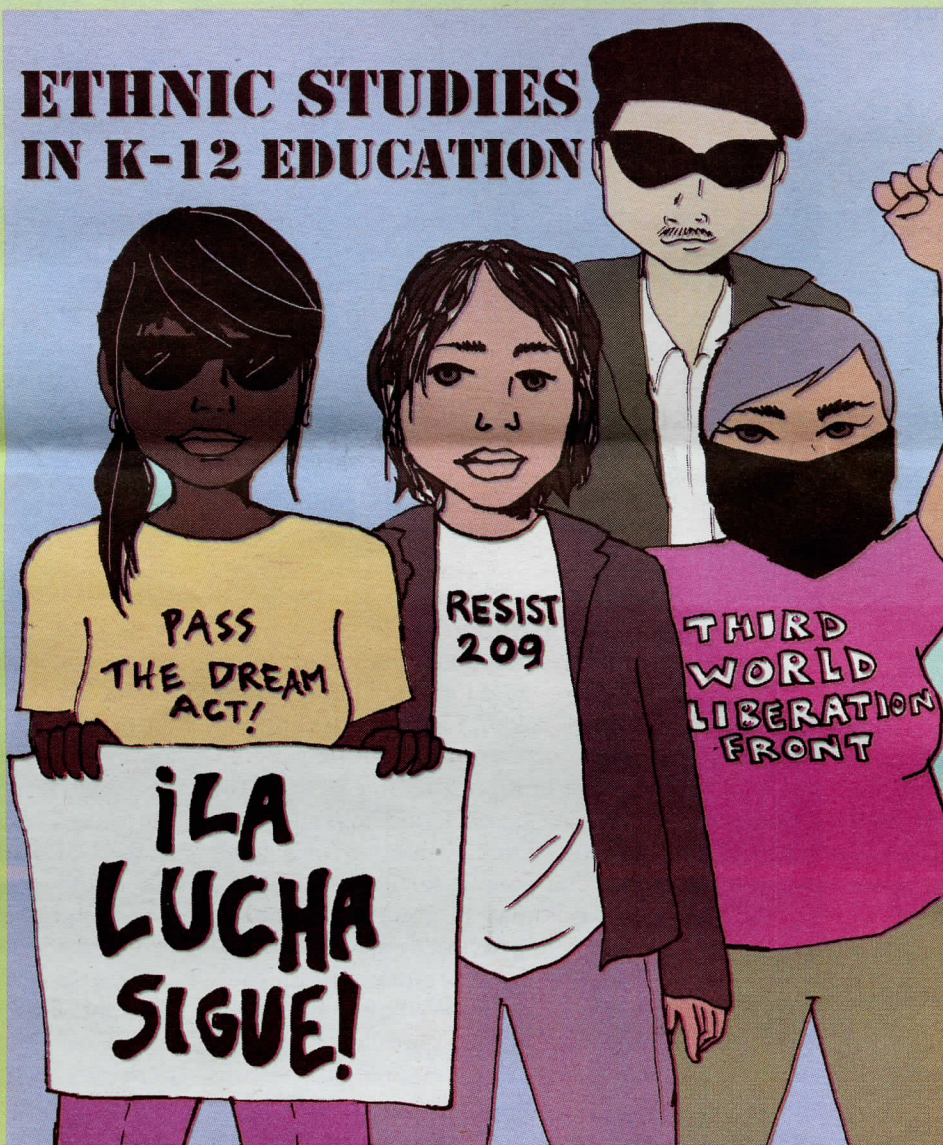
3) Nurturing creativity and thoughtfulness. Through art (directed and non-directed) and music. And through thoughtful activities that go beyond learning how to share and encourage students to problem solve their (MANY!) conflicts. Really, with patience, this can be very rewarding for us as teachers and empowering for the students.

4) Encouraging voice, spoken word--for too many of us remember what it was like to be silenced. Of course there should be some respect rules laid down so everyone can be heard, but I encourage my kids, especially when they aren't following directions or have done something that warrants disciplinary action, to talk about what just happened. They say some really cool

things (I spoke to one of my youngsters during a time-out, after he hit another kid because he wasn't going down the slide fast enough. I asked him, "What happened? What makes you think it's okay to hit?" he sighed heavily and put his hands up, "I don't know! Its like, something got in me!" Me: "Oh yeah, what did it feel like" Student: "If felt like a, a spider or something...it got a hold of my brain and and made me crazy!").

And of course, none of this could be done without knowing the histories and needs of the communities that we work in. For this, too, is Ethnic Studies in action. Transformative and progressive education should begin at the youngest age possible. It's never too early to teach resistance to oppression. A decolonial consciousness is medicine for everyone.

ETHNIC STUDIES IN K-12 EDUCATION



Art by Julio Salgado || California State University, Long Beach.

legacy. Some programs, such as the Breakfast for Children program still exist in some form in parts of Oakland to this very day.

But teaching this is hard work, no doubt about it! They are kindergarteners after all. Everything in small increments!

For those who have worked with the Pre-K and Kindergarten populations, you understand that these little people have a strong, untapped and forgotten drive to create and invent and a deep will to be compassionate and thoughtful- all necessary components of what Fanon refers to as "a new humanism." But in school, besides learning how to share, these characteristics are overshadowed by the strong arm of discipline and academic "standards". And for young students of color in urban schools, the issue of discipline and control often times takes precedence over ensuring that enriching and empowering curriculum

My Dad Who Sells Bread

by Cecilia Caballero

My dad who sells bread
Cracks eggs with rough fingers
Into the center of a white flour crater
Kneading together a rich dough of
Milk, sugar, melted piloncillo, and
Little spears of shredded cinnamon.
My dad who sells bread
Works the golden dough softly,
His calloused palms shape sugary
Conch shells, shiny piglets,
Ears of corn, and little goat horns.

My dad who sells bread thought he
Escaped this when he escaped Mexico
When he was a boy who made pan dulce
Every day before the sun and roosters
were up.

My Dad who sells bread used to
Carry his creations in a canasta
Balanced across his thin shoulders
Walking the earthen paths of his pueblo
Calling out, ¡Pan dulce! His friends,
Who sold corn on the cob, chicle,
Fruits con chile y limon, kept him
Company in the hot Michoacan sun.

My dad who sells bread
Followed his brothers up North
To work in the scorching fields
And gritty construction sites.
His fingers thickened with the brute force
Of labor, and he almost forgot the softness
Of sweet dough in his cracked palms.
But who knew Mexico had followed him
To the construction sit, where a water pipe
Simply split the bones in his skull and
neck
As easily as one breaks pan dulce in half.

My dad who sells bread can no longer
Lift loads or crouch close to the earth
But he can still form delicate sugar loops,
Swirls and curls with his thick fingers.
My dad who sells bread from the bed
Of his pick-up truck to other Mexicanos
With the same tired eyes.

SIEMPRE PA' LANTE: MARCH 24TH
CRYSTAL MARICH

CONTINUED FROM PG. 14

Only with a strong education can truly begin to fight back and act instead of simply reacting.

Education, much like organizing, is a collective process. If it is not community-based and rooted in the truth of people's hXstories and experiences, the result will be weak. However, if we stand together and make a commitment to act and learn together, we are powerful and unstoppable. Only through unity can we serve the needs of our people. When we say all our relations we should mean ALL our relations. It is our connections and relationships with each other that make us beautiful and strong.



<http://upload.wikimedia.org>

Nikú T'arhechu T'arhesi

As a newly admitted transfer student at Cal I've had to adjust to my new environment, much like any other student new to the bay area, but have had my transition eased. For example, the other night I arrived home, greeted by my tembunga, as I pondered a pair of linguistic concepts from lecture. After no less than a few seconds I was coerced out of my meditative state by the aroma of Churipu and k'orhundas. I wouldn't blame you for wondering what the exotic combination of letters forming utterances alien to the English (or Spanish) speaking mind might mean. Simply put, a Churipu is a type of stew and a K'orhunda is a type of tamal. The dish is a favorite among my fellow P'urhépecha, a delicacy that invokes an ecstatic nostalgia reflective of our festive spirit. Another uncertainty lingering in your mind may be "who are the P'urhepecha?" To put the accurate answer in perspective I will give a few erroneous responses. A possible answer given by non-P'urhépechas of Mexican origin may include, but, not be limited to, "Los indios and/or los inditos," while inhabitants raised in the United States may simply state "oh, just some more Latinos and/or Hispanics." While not "indios" nor "inditos" we certainly are not Hispanic nor latinos. We P'urhépecha are an aboriginal group of the Americas, mostly residing in the state of Michoacán Mexico, although many P'urhépechas have migrated into the United States. Although I may be mistaken, I believe myself to be the sole P'urhépecha on campus, a familiar theme, but a reminder of the unique situation shaping my experience at Cal. At times I find myself struggling to describe this unique situation in a manner intelligible to other people, not so they can live my experience, as this may be impossible, but so they can achieve an approximation of the situation. I have concluded that "solitude amid a multitude of people is possible." What is meant by the phrase "solitude amid a multitude of people" is not the inability to forge personal friendships based on common personal interests and taste, instead I am addressing the culturally and historically rooted experiences and perceptions that form a collective consciousness by other P'urhépecha, something abstract, yet present that cannot easily be shared with non-P'urhépechas. Lets say I start a conversation with another Mexican or a Chicano/a, or even someone from central or South America, immediately it is assumed that we are both Latino or Hispanic, that are culturally shaped paradigm is one and the same. I am placed in a awkward situation when individuals speak to me about our fellow "latinos or hispanos" should I began to correct

their view-affirming my identity and explaining the fundamental differences of our cultural paradigms-or simply remain silent in disapproval? I assure you this is not a case of paranoia, as my tembunga herself constantly confronts these issues of ascribed identity. She recently filled out a few forms at our child's school district, and naturally marked Native American then wrote as a side note indicating name of our ethnicity. The receptionist, a Spanish speaking person, immediately asked my tembunga if she was "Hispanic or Latina." The initial response was brief, as my tembunga Xara said "I am P'urhépecha," a few moments later she was questioned again, infuriating Xara as she explained that she was born of P'urhépecha parents and raised in a P'urhépecha indigenous community in Mexico, her first language is P'urhépecha, so what is the problem? The problems described exist because of the historical relationship between P'urhépechas and non-P'urhépechas, an intricate interaction involving the dissolution of the P'urhépecha voice. Our voice as a form communication; Our ethnic voice as power. I can attest that we P'urhépecha truly are familiar with modes of thinking that differ from our own, it is common to be raised simultaneously understanding the way non-P'urhépecha Mexicans give meaning to the world and also how P'urhépechas give meaning to the world. Yet, are we ever allowed to actively determine our existence and present our unique voice among non-P'urhépecha Mexicans and Americans? In Mexico, the non-P'urhépecha ascribes an identity onto P'urhépechas that shape and have been shaped by value judgments regarding our culture and ethnicity- it is at times believed our blood carries a stigma or the public display of our language or culture restrains us from "progress." Likewise, in the U.S we are stripped of our voice, we are non-existent, erased from time by being incorporated into a category incapable of providing us the opportunity to speak. At Cal, much like in society in general, there is no problem in developing personal friendships based on mutual interest and taste, however, the opportunity to develop relationships based on cultural commonality is scarce. It is difficult to write a lifetime of experience, along with a multitude of collective ethnic experiences, into a few sentences, but hopefully my attempt set in motion the space needed so that we may affirm our existence and express our voice.

* P'urhepecha word: Tembunga- a term applied to the female partner of a male in a serious relationship leading to marriage.

I am grateful to all of the people who have been part of my educational process both on and off campus during my time here at Cal. I feel blessed to have earned an education that has positively transformed me to be a better person and organizer. I am proud to be able to hold in my hands all that I have learned from my professors, comrades, elders, youngstas and loved ones because everyday I use what I have learned by balling up my left fist and throwing it into the air keeping the legacy of resistance alive.

Pa'lante mi gente! March 4th!

NO QUALIFIERS

Carlos Lopez Nai
UC Berkeley Undergraduate

In bullfighting the toro (bull) enters the ring from a specific entrance. Right outside of this entrance el matador (the bullfighter) waits for the bull. He is usually waiting by either kneeling or squatting behind a red flag/cape. As soon as the bull enters, the first thing the bull sees is the red cape, and the matador hiding behind it. Instantly a connection is made. Red cape equals matador; to get to him, he must go through the cape.

For the remainder of the show, and the bull's life, the bull keeps purposely searching for the matador behind this red cape. The matador's role is to always gracefully move and avoid being horned by the bull. He must calculate, and assess the distance of the horns, of the bull, from his own body. The closer the distance, the more exciting the show. This elegant dance continues regardless of the futile efforts of the bull to hurt him. The bull is never in control. He just goes through the motions and attempts to fulfill its only goal: to kill the matador.

This translates to more than just bullfighting. There are certain rules that you have to follow in order to achieve what you want to achieve. Like the bull, there is always a red cape that you have to strive for to get to the matador. This form of thinking isn't foreign to anyone that has done anything with their lives. For example, if you want to lose weight, you cut down your calories, and you work out. Easy. If you want to gain weight, do the opposite. Much easier.

Unfortunately for us, the rules are not always as clear-cut as we'd like them to be. Usually, at least in terms of fulfilling our goals, the matador isn't always behind the red cape. Accepting this, realizing this, understanding this had been a challenge for me. A challenge that none other than my absent father addressed when I sat and shared a cup of coffee with him in Buenos Aires in December of 2008.

Sitting across from me was this older looking guy to whom I had no affection. No love. It had been twelve years since I had seen him. After my parent's divorce he simply stopped fulfilling all of his responsibilities- financial and emotional. This had been, up until this cup of coffee, my biggest source of insecurity. He didn't do what he was supposed to do. I was the matador, and he was the bull, and he never strived to get me.

After receiving our coffees, he stirred his and began to say: "There are many things that I want to say to you, as I'm sure there are even more that you want to say to me. But when shit hits the fan everyone gets dirty, regardless of who threw the feces to the fan or who turned the fan on. I think that we've lost enough time already. I think that we should put the past behind us and accept that life is."

He stopped to take a sip of his coffee. Looked at me, and added:

"Life is. No qualifier. No comparison. Life is, and you try to make the best of it. And sometimes, when you look back, you realize that you've made mistakes."

This has been my philosophy lately. It has freed me from always being the bull, and sometimes thinking that I'm the matador. I've stopped trying to control everything, and stopped trying to allow others to control me. My only task is to live life as it is. Without ifs and buts, simply fulfilling the only task I have been assigned: to play my hand with the cards I got, and not with the cards that I wished I had. To live life with no comparisons, with no qualifiers to live.

LIBERACIÓN SIN PAPELES: THE QUEER AND GENDERED MIGRANT UPRISING

Daniel Carillo

THE SITUATION

From Palestine to Mexico to Honduras to Afghanistan to Iraq, the U.S. corporate, imperialist machine wages a war against many marginalized people, like poor folks and indigenous communities all over the world. Capitalism causes the displacement of entire communities, and as a consequence we see the largest migration trends in the history of humanity, leading to over 5,000 migrant deaths on the US/Mexico border alone. As Obama pushes for an increase of funds to further militarize this border, this militarization continues to extend into our communities, in forms of raids, deportations and detentions. This state sponsored terror manifests in the 32,000 migrants who are currently locked up in detention facilities on any given day, and is a testament to the prison industrial complex's vested economic interest in Department of Homeland Security's effort to execute "Operation Endgame" and deport all 12 million "removable aliens" by the year 2012.

In Arizona, anti-migrant bills are proposed; Minutemen (white supremacist vigilantes) murder an 8 year-old Mexican girl and her family; Sheriff Joe Arpaio disappears people and violates human rights on a daily basis in Maricopa County; the Arizona-Sonora desert has become the largest cemetery along the 2,000 mile border; and the former Arizona governor Napolitano and President Obama promise to expand anti-migrant policies of the Bush-era beyond Arizona and into the entire United States.

REFORMIST STRATEGY

After the massive 2006 uprisings in favor of migrant rights, the youth and militant nature of the Migrant Rights Movement was co-opted and pacified by the Hispanic establishment and white power structures. The activist momentum began to fizzle and grassroots organizing did not massively flourish. Within the Migrant Rights Movement, the debate/analysis has been uniformly reformist—meaning that solutions and visions are limited to voting, comprehensive immigration reform, lobbying, border security, etc. Understanding that reformist strategies have many limitations, we envision building revolutionary strategies that go beyond the state by focusing on activism centered on the autonomy and self-determination of our communities, incorporating the many identities and experiences we embody, and integrating a critical analysis that better reflects these visions.

QUEER AND GENDER STRUGGLES

While the Gay Rights Movement avoids talking about race, the Migrant Rights Movement tends to avoid homophobia, heterosexism and patriar-

chy. The reality is that there are structural/historic interconnections between queerness, gender, sexuality, and migrant struggles, evident in recent scholarship that highlights how the U.S. border is not just a site for regulating gender identity, but also for challenging, constructing, and negotiating sexuality.

As we move forward in this struggle, we need a migrant rights analysis that makes the many complexities of our humanity central. It is time to move queer and womyn struggles from the margins to the front and center of our work. We must strive to have our community organizing spaces better reflect a society we want to live in: "A WORLD WHERE MANY WORLDS FIT!"

RECENTLY

Checkpoints have been on a rise these past months throughout South Central Los Angeles (and other areas where our communities live) under the banner of checking for drunk drivers. However, many local community organizations suspect that these checkpoints are an excuse to target those without papers. Hundreds of cars have been impounded as a result, many people have been taken into detention centers, and many others deported. One is left to question if these are not checkpoints to catch drunk drivers, but just another affirmation that the police state continues to terrorize marginalized communities for profit.

For some, it may be alarming that over 4 million tax dollars went to special grants administered by the UC Berkeley, Traffic Safety Center (TSC), to various Police Departments through California solely to conduct checkpoints. Los Angeles Police Department received \$295,000 for 2008- 2009 alone, all to conduct these checkpoints. Thus, these checkpoints that many have been witnessing in South Central Los Angeles are being funded, in part, by UC Berkeley Traffic Safety Center.

THE CALLOUT

This is a callout for all Raza/Xican@s/indigenous people and others that agree with social justice and decolonizing principles of transforming society to come together for the purpose of:

- * Analyzing the current war against migrants and other marginalized people
- * Reflecting on the historical legacy of colonization and activism/social movements
- * Strategizing for taking concrete next steps
- * Creating a space where many worlds fit

We are currently building a movement in the regions of Southern California, Northern California, and Arizona. If you are interested in more information or getting involved, please send an email to: xin.papelex@gmail.com

A photograph of a protest scene in Berkeley, California. In the foreground, a large black pig mascot is visible, with a person's arm and hand resting on its side. In the background, a line of police officers in riot gear stands in formation. The scene is outdoors with trees and a crowd of people in the distance. The text "LA VOZ DE BERKELEY" and "SPRING 2010" is overlaid on the image.

