

Introduction

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The 1980s were a time of economic growth but also of greed; a time when concrete, ideological walls crumbled as conceptual (and equally ideological) walls were erected; a time when the language of diversity and pluralism was reintroduced to the banquet table of democracy but when intolerance and xenophobia also took their place at that same table. These were but a few of the contradictory trends during the past several decades that serve as a backdrop for this book.

The demographic facts of the nineties provide a reality check on the status of our diverse population. For example, one out of every four persons living today in the United States is of color, but one out of three will be a person of color in the year 2000. Demographic facts of this kind are having an inevitable impact on our educational institutions, from kindergarten to graduate school. They also place in a new context the racial and ethnic insensitivity, discrimination, outright racism, and other institutional and personal acts of inequality that have been considered “normal” in our society, including academia.

Although our American political system has made a consistent and noble attempt at freedom and democracy for all people, these efforts have been greatly undermined by acts of figurative or actual exclusion perpetrated by institutions and individuals who consciously or unconsciously fear the loss of white privilege. McIntosh (1989) contends that “white privilege is like an invisible weightless knapsack of special provisions, maps, passports, code books, visas, clothes, tools and blank checks” (p. 10). Thus, white privilege is an ontological knapsack where social reality is constructed to perpetuate the hegemonic structures that are deemed “normal.”

Apple (1985) is well aware of the serious danger in overusing the concept of hegemony to explain the dominant cultural and economic reproduction observed by McIntosh (1989) as “white privilege” and

expressed metaphorically as an “invisible knapsack.” But as evidenced by the personal narratives contained in this book, the concept of hegemony can provide an organizing framework for understanding some of the experiences of Latina and Latino professors in American universities. Clearly, hegemony is not “free-floating.” It is bound to the social reality of the state. As Apple (1985) indicates, hegemony is not an accomplished social fact but “a process in which dominant groups and classes manage to win the active consensus over whom [sic] they rule” (p. 29). The state itself (which includes the institutions within the state) can be, and many times is, a site of racial group, gender, and class conflicts where “it must either force everyone to think alike or generate consent among a large portion of these contending groups. Thus, to maintain its own legitimacy the state needs [to] gradually but continuously . . . integrate many of the interests of allied and even opposing groups under its banner” (Apple 1985, 29–30). The whole process involves conflict, compromise, and active struggle to maintain hegemony.

The authors in this volume, through the power of narrative action, challenge the hegemony that is fostered and maintained by the colleges and universities in which these Latina and Latino academics function on a daily basis. Each of the writers presents the reality of the everyday; their stories and their experiences define the temporal structure that provides historicity and determines for these writers their situation in the world of “everyday life” (Berger & Luckmann 1967). This everyday life extends beyond the campus as the mass media provide a pathway to the “everyday world” that forms the context for the everyday life of individuals. The Latinos and Latinas in this volume were born in a certain era (post World War II), entered school in another era, and started working as professionals sometime during the seventies. “These dates, however, are all ‘located’ within a much more comprehensive history, and this ‘location’ decisively shapes [the writers’] situation” (Berger & Luckmann 1967, 28). Thus, the authors in this volume all experienced and were shaped to a greater or lesser degree by a specific historical context: The civil rights struggles of the fifties and sixties, Sputnik, the new math, the countercultural movement, the Cuban missile crisis, the assassinations of the Kennedys, Martin Luther King, and Malcolm X, Vietnam, moon landings, affirmative action, the grape boycott, Watergate, Bangladesh, ethnic studies, the Carter years, the Reagan years, arms for hostages, James Baldwin, César Chávez, Dolores Huerta, El Teatro Campesino, La Raza Unida Party, Rudolfo Anaya, Rodolfo Acuña, Sandra Cisneros, Edward James Olmos, Gabriel García Márquez,

Marti's poetry and vision, Nuyorican salsa, *pan dulce*, *arroz con pollo*, graduate school, sending out résumés and job applications, attending professional meetings, teaching, ethnic cleansing, the savings and loan debacle, apartheid, Mandela and de Klerk, the ever-growing national debt, AIDS, the Tomahawk chop, Zapotec guerrillas, NAFTA, Bill Clinton, dropouts, drive-by shootings, Rush Limbaugh, multicultural education, TV newsmagazines, political correctness, the changing demographics, and more.

The temporal structure of everyday life in the everyday world imposes predefined social structures on the "agendas" of any single day in the lives of the authors of this volume, as well as on their writings as a whole. "Within the co-ordinates set by this temporal structure [we] apprehend both daily 'agenda' and overall biography" (Berger & Luckmann 1967, 28). Indeed, the clock and the calendar compel our Latina and Latino authors to be women and men of their time. For it is within a temporal structure that everyday life retains its accent of reality.

Even though Latino and Latina academics may have been disoriented by covert and overt prejudices, marginalized, and made to question their own humanity in the everyday experience of academic life, these individuals have instinctively reoriented themselves. They have reasserted and reclaimed their authenticity through words and actions, through reading of the world, and through narratives such as those voiced in this volume. They have thus tried to reconfigure the reality of everyday life through pensive catharsis and contemplative historicity.

Each chapter in this book is an allegorical montage. Each reflects the context and complexity of the writer whose voice transcends the sense of individuality and isolation to unite with an ethnic community in order to access truth that is wrought not from physical or domineering power but from deep commitment to fairness, respect, and understanding of human strengths and shortcomings. Collectively, the narratives are connected by three overlapping themes. The first theme encompasses the writers' personal struggles, in varying degrees and in various forms, with covert and overt forms of racism. The second theme, marginality, is rooted in the questioning of prevailing and respected paradigms in established disciplines that despite universalistic claims display a provincialism that in the long run is neither reflective of nor responsive to the experiences of Latinas and Latinos. The third theme, valuing the self, focuses on personal identity and provides insightful discussions on how one might reconcile self-identity as a Latino or Latina with the behavioral expectations of academia.

Racism

Weinberg (1977) defines racism as a system of privilege and penalty based on one's race. It consists of two facets: (1) a belief in the inherent superiority of some people and the inherent inferiority of others, and (2) the acceptance of the way that goods and services are distributed in accordance with these judgments. Jones (1981) places racism into three categories: individual, institutional, and cultural. Individual racism is closest to racial prejudice and suggests a belief in the superiority of one's own race over another, while behaviorally it enacts an invidious distinction between races. Institutional racism is an extension of individual racism but also includes the manipulation of institutions so that one group benefits and maintains an advantage over others; institutional racism supports practices that operate to restrict on a racial basis the choices, rights, mobility, and access of groups or individuals. Although not necessarily sanctioned by law, these practices are nevertheless real. Cultural racism includes the individual and institutional expression of the superiority of one race's cultural heritage over that of another race.

The writers in this volume have in varying degrees encountered or witnessed all three categories of racism. Institutional racism was experienced by Richard R. Verdugo as ideological and institutional pressures that reinforce and maintain social order so that they can restrict entry into academia. In spite of possessing a doctoral degree, he was consistently denied opportunities in higher education. His publications were evaluated by a sociology professor even though they appeared mostly in economics journals. Verdugo's scholarly presentations were not sufficiently taken into account, nor was the fact that he was working outside of academia and thus did his research before and after working hours. His is by no means simply a victim's story. The loss to academia that this story represents can be made to bear fruit only if it stimulates those involved in hiring decisions to rethink job announcements, the interview process, and the invisible double standard that too often is invoked in the name of quality.

Covert institutional practices of racism are well illustrated by Raymond V. Padilla's "narrative memos," where he critiques the processes that he encountered in his applications for promotion to full professor. In one case, Padilla informs his department chair of the inadequacy of the review process. Two associate professors were judging his work. One of the associates had only one year in rank, the other lacked experience with doctoral students, and the full professor on the committee was not familiar with Chicano education, Padilla's area of expertise. Moreover, favor-

able judgments by knowledgeable full professors outside his department were accorded secondary importance. Reading between the lines, one can detect the department chair's protection and perpetuation of the status quo in the face of a review process that was clearly flawed.

Within the various networks in which most of us are engaged, we have heard many stories of the undeniable bigotry and intolerance that is experienced by Latinas and Latinos and about the privilege and power that is usually concentrated in the European American old guard (and increasingly the nouveau guard of special interest groups). We foresee that the narrative by Tatcho Mindiola, Jr., will surely become a classic description of how racist hegemony unfolds and how individual, institutional, and cultural racism are threaded into everyday life. Mindiola's department chair told him that tenure and promotion standards had changed during his employment, and that he now needed more publications. This revelation was made in the context of Mindiola's having knowledge that the wife of one of the tenured professors in the department also was "going up" for tenure in the same department and that the tenured professor and his nontenured wife were part of the "influential political group in the department." The department chair, under the guise of being a supporter, provided advice to Mindiola and after the third meeting told Mindiola that he would probably be denied tenure.

Mindiola's tenure and promotion story is filled with intrigue and implicit malice and contempt for his person as evidenced by the arbitrary changing of rules that eventually led to a discrimination lawsuit filed against the university. After retaliatory behavior against Mindiola by his chair, the lawsuit was amended to include an "allegation of retaliation." It would be simplistic to think that the denouement of the complex social drama narrated by Mindiola rested entirely on one incident. Nonetheless, the public act in which the university president called him "Taco," instead of Tatcho, illustrates the banal and sometimes cavalier way in which institutional racism manifests itself. A university president presumably serves as the moral, ethical, and academic helmsperson of a public institution. Strangely, Mindiola believes that the opposition to his bid for tenure was motivated not so much by prejudice but more by a department's need to tenure "one of its own." Yet university documents revealed that other non-Chicano faculty with equal or lower accomplishments had been promoted and tenured. Thus, Mindiola's narrative reveals the fine texture of institutional patterns that conceal the practice of discrimination and resist its elimination.

Hermán S. García's narrative describes what he experienced as institutional discrimination. His academic work questioned, he responded

by decentering faculty from the dominant culture and challenging students' positivistic notions of culture, knowledge, and truth. He demanded that they frame their critique of his work from a less domineering and ethnocentric point of view that does not totalize "truth." He uses a critical theory lens to perceive his Otherness as a Chicano, as an academic, and as a person who simply wants to teach and learn within the academic culture. This is juxtaposed against an institution's "unearned entitlement" (McIntosh 1989) to cultural capital and how it uses that gratuitous entitlement to undermine García's humaneness. This narrative reads like a rear-view mirror with the inscription "Objects in mirror are not what they appear to be."

Dulce M. Cruz challenges the subtle and not so subtle manifestations of institutional racism. She was assigned to teach composition to "foreign" students. She learned that the assignment was based on her own foreignness, although she was raised and socialized in the United States. People were "stunned" when Cruz revealed her research interest in nineteenth-century British literature; they would ask why she wasn't interested in the literature of "her people." Later, when her own intellectual preoccupations led her to focus on ethnic literature, she found herself facing the "brown-on-brown" research taboo (Reyes & Halcón 1988). Reflecting on a conversation she had, Cruz writes:

When I explained that I had done research on highly literate Dominican Americans . . . [the] immediate response was "Oh, so you must be a Dominican American yourself." "Yes I am," I answered, and by the end of the conversation I was angry. It is a no-win situation. Had I done research on a typical mainstream subject, my right and ability would have been questioned. I do research on my own community and I am suspect, considered narrow, ethnocentric, and incapable of being objective.

Racial incidents in higher education, similar to the ones described by our narrators, were not well documented by the popular media until the late sixties and early seventies when civil rights legislation compelled most universities to employ members from ethnically distinct groups. Once employed, such individuals and groups became a source of challenge to prevailing personnel practices in higher education, particularly with respect to employee retention, tenure, and promotion. When individuals reported discrimination, bias, or underrepresentation of ethnically distinct groups, too often the university authorities considered them as "isolated incidents" even though they resulted in stereotyping, condescension transmitted as compliment, and the second-guessing and

undermining of the academic work of Latino and Latina professors, not to mention of their talents and humanity. Such incidents are invisibly normal and endemic to the academic landscape (Aronowitz 1981). To characterize them as “isolated” only serves to perpetuate the status quo and stifles the dialogue that is needed to overcome them. In this context, the present volume is not about “isolated incidents,” just as it is not an attempt to chastise anyone by personalizing injustices that the authors have seen and experienced. It is, rather, a cogent and disturbing portrait of academic life in American universities as experienced by Latina and Latino academics.

Marginality

Practicing democracy is very much a subjective act—an act based on personal agency and a conviction for action, dialogue, and interaction with other selves in everyday activities. One also must continuously recreate the cultural terrain that enhances and sustains democratic practice. If not practiced as a subjective act, democracy remains, for all practical purposes, an abstract ideal better left to rhetorical debate. As a subjective practice, democracy creates a lifestyle that is ruled by committed personal action and an implicit commitment to historicity.

The academic cultural terrain, as lived by the contributors to this volume, suggests a constricted democratic practice where the very act of living can reside on the margins. So these narrators have created epistemological constructs that will promote a more democratic practice. To do so it has been necessary for them to step out from the margins onto the unknown and face the complexity of their humanity as well as the covert and overt racist acts carried out by entrenched forces in academia. As Rosaldo (1989) insightfully reminds us, “we often improvise, learn by doing, and make up things as we go along” (p. 92). Life, as it is lived, continuously forces us to live with ambiguity, uncertainty, and even a simple lack of knowledge. Then the day arrives when life’s experiences clarify matters.

Even though marginality has many aspects that are difficult to pin down, it is a central theme for many of the writers in this volume. The narrators are marginalized but somehow integrated into their respective institutions. Although not necessarily marginalized in an economic or political sense, they are exploited in various ways, and many times their creativity is repressed. While not necessarily marginalized socially and culturally, they are nonetheless stigmatized and excluded from many of

the social networks in academia (see Perlman 1975). In introducing her edited volume of short stories and poetry, Anzaldúa describes marginality within the context of “womaness” and “of color,” but her observations are relevant to the present discussion:

The world knows us by our faces, the most naked, most vulnerable, exposed and significant topography of the body. When our *caras* do not live up to the “image” that the family or community wants us to wear and when we rebel against the engraving of our bodies, we experience ostracism, alienation, isolation and shame. Since white AngloAmericans’ racist ideology cannot take in our faces, it, too, covers them up, “blanks” them out of its reality.” . . . Some of us are forced to acquire the ability, like a chameleon, to change color when the dangers are many and the options few. Some of us who already “wear many changes/inside of our skin” have been forced to adopt a face that would pass. (Anzaldúa 1990, xv)

Marginality becomes a constant “balancing act” that undermines the humanity and ethnic integrity of many of the writers. Dulce Cruz, for example, wrestles with an oppressive hegemony and conquers it by accepting her cultural complexity—a complexity that is created by crossing cultural borders. She actively rejects stereotyping and racial myths that abound in our race-conscious American culture. Cruz tells how she was “designated as the spokesperson for all Hispanics and Blacks.” She remembers the condescension of a faculty member who thanked her for “giving voice to the oppressed” when in actuality the faculty member was “congratulating herself for being liberal enough to ‘empower’ [Cruz] as if power can or should be given!” Cruz painfully speaks of her marginalization. “No matter what we do (get a Ph.D., become wealthy, move out of the neighborhood), we are still separated and boxed into categories like ‘ethnic’ and ‘minority.’ ”

The account by Adalberto Aguirre, Jr., is only incidentally about a poor farmworker who excels in academia. The marginality Aguirre experiences comes as institutional hypocrisy and the feigned efforts to fulfill the mission of diversity in a multicultural world. He challenges pseudomulticultural academic values by “speaking the unpleasant” and thus gives us insight into what it is like to live as a “stranger in academic paradise.” To his students and to his academic colleagues, Aguirre is a “stranger” who by his strangeness is kept at the margins. He argues that minority faculty are placed in an “organizational niche from which [minorities] emerge only when academe needs them to legitimate its own response.” Aguirre, along with many of the other writers in this

volume, believed in the myth that publishing was the brass ring to tenure, promotion, and academic success. Yet maintaining an “academic presence” within those networks that would indeed assist in one’s academic career has been tenuous. Aguirre threads several examples that poignantly illustrate the hegemonic qualities of reciprocal exclusivity (Fannon 1963) expected by those in power. That is, ethnically distinct men and women, and to a lesser degree European American women, are compartmentalized into a climate that fosters academic apartheid by keeping such groups on the margins.

The marginalizing of a group can be very useful for those in power. The case study by Gerardo M. González, Francisco A. Ríos, Lionel A. Maldonado, and Stella T. Clark reveals what can happen when ideological crossfire is used to undermine and eventually divide the forces working for a more democratic nation. Besides being a story of the insidiousness of racism in everyday life and the calculated heavy-handed use of power and privilege, the authors’ account illustrates the “unearned advantage” (McIntosh 1989) that can be used by a community inside as well as outside the university as a bully stick to forge its hegemonic superiority and shape the hypocritical ideology of a university campus. The case study revolves around an incident where a state senator made a statement about migrant workers that was widely interpreted as racist. Adding to the controversy, the new administration building at the authors’ university campus was to bear that senator’s name. The case study methodically illustrates how members of the Latino association on campus were alienated and compartmentalized (i.e., marginalized). Their marginalization gave the majority community the ability to bestow the senator’s name on the new building. Yet critical lessons were learned about the significance of bringing those who are marginalized into the mainstream via the practice of coalition politics. So the “margins” can become frontiers—cultural borders of the academic terrain where the Other takes a central role in configuring a counterhegemonic epistemology and pedagogy. As Giroux (1992) reminds us:

Indeed, such a task demands a rewriting of the meaning of pedagogy itself. It means comprehending pedagogy as a configuration of textual, verbal, and visual practices that need to engage the processes through which people understand themselves and the ways in which they engage others and their environment. It recognizes that the symbolic presentations that take place in various spheres of cultural production in society manifest contest and unequal power relations. As a form of cultural production, pedagogy is implicated in the construction and

organization of knowledge, desires, values, and social practices. At stake here is developing a notion of pedagogy capable of contesting dominant forms of symbolic production. (p. 3)

María Cristina González's personal narrative contests dominant forms of symbolic production by dragging from the academic margins to her ontological heart the value of personal and familial story, as language linkages not only to her rich past but to a deeper understanding of the dominant society that marginalized her in the first place. She recontextualized her cultural past, her traditional indigenous self, and the learning of "principles implicitly, etching them indelibly into [her] character." González challenges the positivist reader by illustrating that intellectual pursuits are more than one-dimensional jaunts into a mythic monocultural world that truly does not exist today (if it ever did). She writes honestly about her graduate school socialization and the entrenched positivism that would drive a wedge between her Chicana and her academic voices. The irony of her self-imposed exile from the margins into the perceived academic mainstream was a loss of her "creative" voice in an aseptic terrain that rewarded memorization and rebuffed originality and deep-felt insights. Throughout her narrative she weaves the remembrances of Papa M.R.'s traditional wisdom and shares with the reader her anguish and surprise as she finally realizes that the margins she roams are the terrain where we can "construct our own rhetorics of strength and dignity." She encircles and re-authenticates her ethnic, linguistic, and cultural richness, and thus turns the marginal into the essential. González redraws and expands the boundaries of the ideological turf that prescribes how an academic can think, act, and practice her calling.

Valuing the Self

After reading each of the narratives in this volume, one is left with a sense of overwhelming unease. The reader will encounter covert and overt anti-Latino prejudice in each of the stories. One quickly realizes how racism is an ideological poison that is historically and socially created and that is introjected into "social practices, needs, the unconscious, and rationality itself" (Giroux 1992, 113). At the same time, each narrative communicates some form of marginality. In this context, valuing the self becomes vital to personal and academic survival. In order to face the adversity of everyday life in academia, valuing the self becomes a necessity. Indeed, valuing the self becomes the metaphorical glue that all of the authors

adhere to in order to protect authenticity and preserve their integrity. Yet valuing of self is an ontological struggle, a negotiation between two distinct typificatory schemes (Berger & Luckmann 1967) of the Latina or Latino academic's everyday life: that of ethnic identification as opposed to academic socialization as a scholar. While the narrators do genuinely value their persons, some of them display a glimpse of guilt as they find success in academia. Others, in their efforts to be forthright but not resentful, seem conspicuously ambiguous about their success.

María E. Torres-Guzmán frankly describes her journey through academia and the choices that any professor going through the tenure process must confront. Yet, as she is a person of color and a single mother, her choices reveal a portrait of the Other that attests to the rethinking of academic social systems and what undergirds their existence. Accepting a social system at the workplace is one thing, accepting its cultural sterility and its intolerance for diversity is another. By valuing her person, Torres-Guzmán challenges the paradigm of institutional intolerance and ignorance. She assists the reader to reconfigure the multiple and diverse conceptions that undergird an academic social system. Torres-Guzmán covers several topics circumstantial to her face-to-face encounters with the Other. The Other are students, departmental colleagues, the institution itself that implicitly devalued and set limits on her naturalistic knowledge base, her ethnicity, and her bilingual/multicultural capacities. She learned to "value the self" by setting limits not on herself but on those around her who devalued her every move, her expertise, her essence as a human being, and her time.

A. Reynaldo Contreras's story hides more than it tells. His valuing of self is expressed not so much as a declaration of autonomy by an academic, but more as a negotiation to nurture his deep-felt sense of connectedness to his family and to his community. Valuing the self, as Contreras teaches us, can become one's commitment to helping others and seeing them through the rough spots. In Contreras's story, however, there is an underlying demureness that hides the destructiveness of accepting the status quo. His story poignantly illustrates how the myth of meritocracy within academia is used as a backdrop to undermine needed reforms of the hiring, tenure, and promotion process. His "playing by the rules" only served to ghettoize his position by perpetuating the one-slot-for-minorities hiring rule. There is also a contradiction to his story that needs resolution: He naively accepted the meritocratic ideology of the institution—an institution with no conscience and no loyalty that continued the pervasive cycle of racial prejudice under the guise of "academic standards."

Ana M. Martínez Alemán illustrates the energy and commitment that it takes to value the self when one's cultural sphere becomes a tiny island in the sea of the Other. Not valuing one's cultural complexity may lead to complicity in one's oppression, as Ana M. Martínez Alemán suggests: "To be a professor is to be an Anglo; to be a Latina is not to be an Anglo. So how can I be both a Latina and a professor?" She concludes: "To be a Latina professor means to be unlike and like me. *¡Qué locura!* What madness!" Her fear of losing her cultural roots (and her resolve not to) leads her on a journey of self-doubt and reaffirmation that gives her narrative a poetic quality. Her narrative serves as a testimony to the importance of diversity and the courage that it takes to share that diversity with the Other within an interactive climate of difference.

The epilogue of this volume, by Roberto Haro, clearly portrays the social forces and hiring practices that Latinas and Latinos face in higher education administration. This chapter captures the theme of valuing the self in its "opposite." That is, this chapter exemplifies how higher education as an institution spreads its racist poison by subtly devaluing, undermining, and creating double standards for Latinas and Latinos who aspire to higher academic administration. It seems almost incomprehensible to what extent the devaluing process is practiced and accepted in order for an institution to hire its own. Yet Haro patiently and thoroughly takes the reader through his data-gathering techniques, research methods, and, finally, several most interesting subheadings, including academic preparation, experiential background, and scholarly/teaching accomplishments. Each of the subheadings adds to the entire puzzle, which finally reveals a disturbing portrait of the hiring process of academic administrators in higher education. To admit that such double standards exist today in the selection of vice presidents and presidents in higher education is to admit to one's complacency. Yet collectively we let such practices continue.

Ontological Holograms

The various chapters in this volume are ontological holograms of Latina and Latino survival and success in academia. They also envision the reconstruction of academia so that, among other things, it will have a more diverse professoriate. The stories, the portraits, the holograms (depending on the perspective that the reader wishes to take), provide insights into American academic life at the end of the twentieth century. These narra-

tives express a “language of hope and possibility” (Giroux 1988) that reaches into the reader’s ontological innerworkings and demands both a reflective evaluation of authentic human interactions and a rejection of anesthetized thoughts and feelings in the face of inequality and exclusion.

We hope that this book will stimulate academia to rethink how it produces, reproduces, and re-presents the meaning and practice of democracy (Giroux 1992) in the hiring, retention, tenure, and promotion of Latinas and Latinos in academia. This book suggests to presidents, vice presidents, deans, department chairs, search committees, and faculty that the concept of democracy must be reconstructed to include the voices of the Other. The authors included in this volume directly and indirectly declare that they too are part of our living democracy—sometimes meekly asking, at other times consciously challenging, and at still other times saying: “We are here. We will not go away. We will not change to meet your notions of what an academic should be or how an academic should look or act.” This stand in support of fundamental democracy is in sharp contrast to recent examples of so-called educational reformists who have wanted to suppress democratic expression by eliminating opposition and difference (Bloom 1987; DiSouza 1991; Hirsch 1987; Ravitch 1990; Ravitch & Finn 1987).

Within our popular culture there are innumerable images of a not-too-distant past that portray acts of undeniable violence, such as hate crimes. San Juan (1992) points out the still-prevalent manifestations of racism that continue to be as violent as in the near and distant past. During the past decade, examples of such hate crimes have ranged from the killing of African Americans in the Howard Beach and Bensonhurst incidents, to urban rebellions in the early and late eighties in Miami, Florida, antibusing attacks, the 1982 killing of Albert Chin (a Chinese American mistaken for a Japanese) by unemployed auto workers, the harassment of students of color at several campuses throughout the country, the slaying of a man of Ethiopian descent by neo-Nazi skinheads in Portland, Oregon, and the willful murder of five Asian children and the wounding of thirty others by a white gunman with a hate psychosis. These are only a few of the many examples of the racial violence that has been endured by people of color—the Other. San Juan reports that, in the eighties, “racial attacks increased from 99 in 1982 to 276 in 1986” (1992, 1). As San Juan argues, by no means can these be construed as “isolated incidents.”

It is characteristic of the human condition to emphasize our successes and strengths and to deemphasize our failures and weaknesses. We do not want to think about or feel the uncomfortable. Institutions

and the people that make those institutions are not any different. However, we can let discomfort become a path to reflection and democratic action in our practice. The stories contained in this book, although sometimes uncomfortable and by no means "isolated incidents," genuinely share with the reader experiences that will further the dialogue and that may enhance the recruitment, retention, tenure, and promotion of Latinas and Latinos. The authors do not write from the standpoint of "victims." Rather, they write as authorities who "speak the unpleasant," as Aguirre suggests in this volume. Each author places before the reader a story rich in introspection, and sometimes self-doubt, but almost always with the rediscovery of courage within.

Each story is a perspective, a slice of academic life. Collectively, the multiple perspectives in this volume provide a totality that is penetrating and disturbing but essential if we are genuinely to diversify our present and future professoriate. Equally important, the accounts capture and challenge the topography of the academic cultural terrain as it is constructed and perceived by the writers: a cultural terrain that has been created to limit and exclude, based on and bound to cultural, racial, gender, religious, and class manifestations and oppressive hegemonic traditions. The power of the narratives is that they constitute a counterhegemonic force, a force that if actively engaged will enhance the practice of democracy for all.

The Leaning Ivory Tower, then, is a critical collection of multiple constructed realities that can be understood best if placed in a holistic framework (Lincoln & Guba 1985). Each author, struggling with her or his own reality, is a study in authenticity and the engagement of liberation through self-critique. Through struggle with an oppressive academic world, the authors not only pursue their own liberation but simultaneously serve as liberating sponsors by restoring humanity back to those who oppress them. As Freire (1972) noted a generation ago:

It is only the oppressed who, by freeing themselves, can free their oppressor. The latter, as an oppressive class, can free neither others nor themselves. It is therefore essential that the oppressed wage the struggle to resolve the contradiction in which they are caught; and the contradiction will be resolved by the appearance of a new man: neither oppressor nor oppressed, but man in the process of liberation. If the goal of the oppressed is to become fully human, they will not achieve their goal by merely reversing the terms of the contradiction, by simply changing poles. (p. 42)

Thus *The Leaning Ivory Tower* is not just a metaphor for what is. It also confronts, reconfigures, and challenges us to redraw our paradigm-

matic and conceptual borders so that the democratic process will be a liberating practice evidenced throughout academia.

Finally, we want to alert the reader to the need to continue to make public the lived experiences of Latina and Latino professors in American universities. This book breaks new ground in that the private stories of Latino and Latina professors are finally brought out into the public discourse. Many more such stories need to be told. After such narrative materials become abundant, there needs to be a collective effort to engage in analysis and critique of these experiences. Only such critical study will permit us to reap the positive results of having made our abode in a leaning ivory tower.

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