

Women Who Wake With The Roosters And Other Xicana Sacred Spaces:

Our Art Is Our Weapon.

Malinches Protest Art Of HB 2281

by

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ABSTRACT

As a response to the banning of Ethnic Studies in the Tucson Unified School district and other oppressing forces within the movement the students fighting HB 2281 created a Sacred Xicana Space. In this thesis I will examine the role that protest art has in the fight against HB2281. I will also analyze its role in cultural expression, identity and representation. The research question guiding this research is What role does protest art have in social justice? Specifically I will analyze the cultural production of protest art against HB 2281, the ethnic studies ban in Tucson Arizona, and its role in cultural expression, identity and representation.

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I dedicate this Thesis to my sons Nick Yoakam and Chris Emerson and to my granddaughter Mia Moore.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

On May 11, 2010 Governor Jan Brewer, a member of the Republican party and 22nd governor of the United States State of Arizona, signed into law HB 2281. A law that banned the teaching of Chicana/o studies in public and charter schools in Arizona. Those schools found violating this law would face loss of 10% of their state funds which would equal to approximately 15 million a year (Morales, 2011).

This thesis examines the role of protest art in HB 2281. The research question guiding my research is: What role does protest art have in social justice? Specifically I analyze the cultural production of protest art against HB 2281, which resulted in closing (or banning) the Mexican American Studies program in the Tucson Unified School District in Arizona. I am interested in examining protest art as cultural expression, representation of social struggle and identity. This topic is important for me because I am the first in my family to go to a university and believe that this could not have been possible for me without the Chicana/o studies classes.

My own art activism started as a young girl when I would design altar installations with my grandmothers and grow medicinal herbs in our gardens for healing. As early as second grade with Ms. Martin I wrote an award winning testimony about my mother and grandmothers life growing up in Guadalupe, AZ. I was living with my parents, two sisters, and a brother in a one-bedroom home in Barrio Campito. El Campito is in Phoenix Arizona North of Buckeye Road between 7th street and 16th streets. It was named the camp because this was once the outskirts of the city and city dwellers would see campfires out in this location because that is where the migrants lived. The teacher

told me I had a flare for writing. After this I wrote all our grief, pain, and suffering into the stories and design of installations in the forms of altars and cajitas.

My grandmother lived in a house with no air conditioner in the heat of the Arizona desert. She carved a small room, she planted a healing herb garden, and she hung cloths to darken the room. I would run out and water the evaporative cooling. It often would appear as if no one was home. The whole family picked cotton in fields with no bathrooms and the whole family worked and it was necessary many times that they work rather than go to school. My mother picked cotton as a child laborer in the fields of Arizona. My mother tells a story about how the family got water. When my mother was a young girl, her family did not have running water in the home. They had to walk to the end of the canal with a wagon for water. She tepidly splashed and washed because once she almost drowned in the canal. She does not give detail to this story, just saying that she almost drowned once in the canal. They would boil the water for cooking. These stories are only two of many that show up like old battle scars on my body. I carry my mother's battle scars on my own. Inheritance or lived, If the story lives in the mother it continues as resonance from birth to her daughters. I never carried water across the town to boil and drink but my body's cells remembers the diseases transmitted, skips one generation and lives in my gut. When I sleep I see the snakes head enlarged threatening to eat me-eats at my vital nutrients, zaps away my force but I imagine a new story into being when I talk back to the old limiting reality and create a new art and a new story into existence. In the new story I float in harmony with water and it becomes purified with the suns rays on my face as I become one with the lake, with all living beings, I coexist. I float still like my grandmother's bunny in her burrow, limbs cool from the mud, one with

the earth mother. This story is my mother's story and her mother's story of resistance and survival through our activism and art. Chicana/o studies is in the business of saving lives and not one day goes by as I walk the path to my classes in the ivy tower and step around almost dead bodies in the barrios that I do not forget. In the art lies an activism that enables me and many other art activists to recreate us new.

How we got here and what happened.

On May 11, 2010 Governor Jan Brewer signed into law, which went into effect January 2011, the "law prohibiting classes that advocate overthrowing the government, are designed for students of one ethnic group or advocate ethnic solidarity instead of treating pupils as individuals. " Those schools found in violation will lose 10% of their state funds (about \$15 million a year). Several artists, students, teachers and community members protested and committed to fight the legislation against ethnic studies.

On May 13, 2010 14 students were arrested for refusing to leave the State Capitol building and chaining themselves there in protest. Tom Horne went to TUSD to promote the bill had been passed. He ignored the students and left the grandstand to go into a press conference. The students moved to the building where he was having the press conference. Their hope was to have him hear their demands. Their demands were as follows

"1. WE WANT OUR ETHNIC STUDIES CLASSES TO CONTINUE TO MEET CORE SOCIAL SCIENCE REQUIREMENTS. □2. WE WANT THE REPEAL OF HB 2281. □3. WE WANT ETHNIC STUDIES PROGRAMS TO EXPAND EVERYWHERE: FROM K-12 TO UNIVERSITY. □4. WE WANT NO SCHOOL TURN-AROUNDS, NO SCHOOL CLOSURES AND FULL SUPPORT FOR RINCON HIGH AND PALO VERDE HIGH SCHOOL COMMUNITIES. □5. WE WANT A TUSD

GOVERNING BOARD THAT IS ACCOUNTABLE AND WILL STAND UP FOR ALL STUDENTS. □6. WE WANT AN EQUITABLE EDUCATION FOR ALL. □7. WE WANT AN IMMEDIATE END TO ALL RACIST, ANTI-MIGRANT, ANTI-INDIGENOUS POLICIES. □8. WE WANT FULL COMPLIANCE WITH OUR CIVIL AND HUMAN RIGHTS. □9. WE WANT ATTORNEY GENERAL TOM HORNE, STATE SUPERINTENDENT JOHN HUPPENTHAL AND GOVERNOR JAN BREWER IMMEDIATELY REMOVED FROM POWER. □10. WE WANT LOCAL CONTROL OF OUR EDUCATION” (“UNIDOS Present Ten Point Resolution on Arizona Ethnic Studies Crisis: “We Want an Educational System Where Many Cultures Fit”).

On April 26, 2011 a TUSD school board meeting was scheduled to discuss making some of the Mexican American studies courses into electives and no longer using them to satisfy core curriculum requirements. U.N.I.D.O.S.¹ students and community members took over the school board meeting by forcing their way into an already crowded room up where the school board members sit and then chaining themselves together. As they chanted, “Our education is under attack, what do we do? Fight back?” security attempted to remove the students from the school board chairs. School board officials cancelled the school board meeting and later installed metal detectors. The photograph taken by Dr. Cintli Rodriguez in which a small boy is scanned with the metal detector while he is entering the school board meeting. Further, I will analyze this photo.

These protests patterned after the walkouts and protests for Chicana/o studies during the 1970s. In the effort to gain support and bring awareness to the cause students

¹ United Non-Discriminatory Individuals Demanding Our Studies are the group of students from the Tucson Unified school district who organized to protest against the Chicano studies ban.

made a movie called *Precious Knowledge* for the public and Chicana/o studies community at large. The student movement appeared to take on a life of its own as mobilizing efforts gained nationwide attention across the span of Mexican American studies programs across college campuses. During the movie premiere in Tucson, AZ, a leading female student advocate, was sexually assaulted by one of the members of the of the movie production team Dos Vatos. This incident divided students into two different camps. Similarly to the Chicano movement, female students began to mobilize in separate spaces and advocate for safer and more equal conditions for women in the movement. As feminist scholar Maylei Blackwell (2011) documented in her book *Chicana Power! Contested Histories of Feminism in the Chicano Movement*, “Chicana Power illuminates how Chicana organizers were influenced not only by the awakening of racial consciousness and cultural renewal generated by the Chicano movement but also by the struggles over gender and sexuality within it” (p.1). A group of young women involved in the struggle for Mexican American Studies created a Zine called MalintZine to get their voices heard. They chose to remain anonymous, stating, “malintZINE wasn’t the beginning of recognition on part of the injustices against Chicanas by their fellow Chicanos, but has been a catalyst to verbally combat the hetero-patriarchy that has thrived within the Ethnic Studies movement for too long” (Zine, 2013) The Name MalintZine has historic meaning in Mexican and Chicano tradition, myth and legend. It refers to a Malintzin, or La Malinche who in patriarchal discourse symbolizes treachery, but who for Chicana feminists symbolizes intelligence and strength. The role of traitor to her “race” was developed in the 19th Century after Mexico gain independence from Spain. In efforts to construct the nation, early Mexican nationalist said she was a traitor to her race

because she “assisted” Cortes in conquering the Mexica peoples in the 16th Century (Elenes, 2011). Malintzin had an ability to learn languages and was able to translate for Cortés after she was given to him as a slave. Chicana Feminist scholar, Norma Alarcón (1981), reappropriated the story and restored Malinche’s proper role in history. Alarcón retold the story from an empowering perspective stating that Malinche had no choice but to mediate between Cortes and the Mexica people. Some say she created a new nation with her linguistic abilities. Norma Alarcon writes in “Chicana Feminist Literature: A Re-Vision Through Malintzin/ or Malintzin: Putting Flesh Back on the Object” there are no choices for slaves only between lesser evils. The Zine chose its name to honor and give voice to the choices and historic material conditions that women of color resist and survive on a daily basis.

Through activism, a term coined by Chela Sandoval and Guisela Latorre in “Chicana/o Activism: Judy Bacas Digital Work with Youth of Color” artists protested the ban of Mexican American Studies in the Tucson Unified High School District. Moreover, this ban is part of the anti Mexican sentiment in Arizona. Throughout the 2000s, Arizona legislators and voters passed a series of laws and propositions aimed at “undocumented” immigrants. Three weeks before signing the new law aimed at banning ethnic studies, Governor Jan Brewer signed into law the controversial bill SB 1070. A bill that ordered police officers to stop and interrogate anyone they suspect is an undocumented immigrant. SB 1070 targets all Mexican Descent peoples who are phenotyped as Mexicans. State police can detain and check for immigration status. Students, community members and supporters from other states gathered to protest SB 1070 in what has been

the largest protest in Arizona. An aspect of resistance in protests has been Protest art or activism.

Artivism and Xicana Sacred Spaces

Chicano/a protest art began during the Chicano Movement of the 1970s when students, teachers and community members took to the streets to demand better working conditions, Chicano studies classes and several social justice issues being addressed across the nations civil rights movements (Walkouts2006). Chicana feminist scholar Laura Perez writes in *Chicana art* “Art becomes social imagination through which essential worldviews and identities are constructed, reproduced, and even redefined” (p.23).

The pieces I will be analyzing in this protest art are MalintZine art in their first printed issue; Dr. Cintli Rodriguez’s photograph at a school board meeting; Tanya Alvarez mural art; and one installation from my own collection of protest art against HB 2281.

MalintZine bloggers created a Zine and as of this writing have printed their first Zine. Dr. Cintli, an assistant professor of Mexican American Studies at the University of Arizona, took a photograph of the first school board meeting immediately after the one in which students took over the school board. Following this event school officials installed metal detectors in place of entry. The photo depicts a small boy approximately six years old with a security officer as he is being checked with a metal detector, his arms out across his sides, wearing a batman t-shirt. From my own art and collection I examine installations in the form of cajitas. These works were produced and later exhibited during the protests in Tucson and in action research class with Prof. C. Alejandra Elenes in

which we organized a Day of Solidarity Event to bring attention to the student protests against HB 2281. Tanya Alvarez, Chicana artist residing in Tucson Arizona, also displayed a mural art in which small animals are depicted with a computer, a doctor's gown and books.

This thesis examines the role that protest art plays in the struggle for Ethnic Studies and how these cultural productions represented identity, expression and resistance. I examine how these Chicana/o artists created a Xicana Sacred Space with their protest art. I discuss the book banning which is when the law and administrators removed from the curriculum and students' hands books, and how this collective cultural trauma is being healed through cultural productions of protest art. As of this writing the struggle for Ethnic Studies against the backdrop and aftermath of HB 2281 continues. In March 2014 Dolores Huerta visited Tucson, AZ to honor and celebrate that the city made Cesar Chavez birthday (March 31st) a paid holiday. This gathering included a weeklong celebration. The main event of the celebration will be held at the Tucson High School where the books were removed from the students and boxed up in front of them just two years ago. Students said the banned books were seized from their classrooms and out of their hands. Crying students stated it was like Nazi Germany and they were unable to sleep since it happened. On the afternoon of March 11, 2014, Tucson Unified School District held a meeting to decide weather or not the paid holiday Cesar Chavez and gathering violates HB 2281.

In this chapter I gave a brief overview of the law banning Chicana/o studies in the Tucson Unified School district and offer an introduction to the protest art that I will examine in the proceeding chapters. I further examine what role does protest art have in

social justice. Specifically I analyze the cultural production of protest art against HB 2281 and its role in cultural expression, identity and representation.

In chapter two I give a review of the literature. I also introduce the student protestors and the banning of the books. I discuss how the students broke off in separate camps due to structural violence within the movement.

In chapter three I ground my story and this story in theory developed by Gloria Anzaldua and Cherrie Moraga's theory in the flesh. I also apply memory and trauma studies to further frame the story. I utilize Xicana Sacred Spaces as a source of securing a space for Chicanas to heal and create.

In chapter four I conclude with observational research from Tucson's current Ethnic Studies program and activism in the community since the ban of the Chicana/o studies. The methodology I apply includes a historical analysis of protest art. Protest art is art that examines and questions the inequalities in social structures. I will examine the relationship between myths and legends about Chicana and Mexican women and how resistance against gender norms is manifested in protest art. Utilizing autoethnography and four pieces of protest art I examine and contextualize arts role in the cultural expression, identity and representation.

CHAPTER 2

HB 2281: HISTORICAL CONTEXT AND COMMUNITY ACTIVISM

HB 2281, which in effect banned the Mexican American Studies program in the Tucson Unified School District was not the first bill Arizona legislators introduced that would ban ethnic studies. HB 2881, Arizona Revised Statutes 15-111 and 15-112, and as an amendment to section 15-843, describes standards for public education:

“Pupils should be taught to treat and value each other as individuals and not be taught to resent or hate other races or classes of people,” and adds that courses may not do any of the following: 1) promote the “overthrow of the United States government,” 2) “promote resentment toward a race or class of people,” 3) be designed “primarily for pupils of a particular ethnic group,” or 4) “advocate ethnic solidarity instead of the treatment of pupils as individuals.” When I learned about the history of colonization, and later on as a teacher, I realized that part of this process includes a resentment and grief over ancestral peoples past and present who have been treated less than human. For example, when I learned about the Cesar Chavez movement I remembered my uncle dying from pesticide in the fields. I was a little girl when this happened and did not make the connections to the pesticides until I learned to contextualize my experiences through a social political human rights lens.

There are many problems with HB 2281 as it is based on many stereotypes and unfounded fears about ethnic studies in general and more specifically Mexican American studies. Indeed half of the law deals with disciplining students. The legislation’s rhetoric devises, as “promote resentment” are not specifically defined, and left to broad interpretations, such as the one highlighted in the Comedy Central program *The Daily*

Show with Jon Steward, during an interview with correspondent Al Madrigal with TUSD school board member Michael Hicks. Brining the point in comedic way Madrigal interjected: “I’m a black kid. Try to teach me about slavery without me feeling resentment”. That is, Madrigal using comedy showed that when teaching about oppression, it is not possible to avoid resentment.

Even though this is an anti-ethnic studies legislation, the bill goes on to state that it does not “restrict or prohibit” several topics, such as “courses of classes for Native American pupils that are required to comply with federal law.” And “The grouping of pupils according to academic performance, including capability in the English language, that may result in a disparate impact by ethnicity” is also not prohibited. The law, as well, “enables schools, on behalf of the state, to separate immigrant students for English language performance reasons” (Stevens & Stovall, 2010 p.296). “Controversial aspects of history,” and “instruction of the holocaust, any other instance of genocide, or the historical oppression of a particular group of people based on ethnicity, race, or class” are also allowed. Only discussions of “historical” oppression are allowed.

HB 2281 was one of several efforts by Republican leaders in Arizona to shut down the Mexican American Studies (MAS) program. In both the 2008 and 2009 legislative sessions, various Republican legislators introduced bills that attacked the ethnic studies program in Tucson and would have similar effects had they passed through committee or not vetoed by former Governor Napolitano

Senator Harper introduced SB 1108 to the Government committee during the 2008 regular session. Russell Pearce amended the bill to read:

The primary purpose of public education is the inculcation of the values of American citizenship.

States that public tax dollars used in public schools should not be used to denigrate American values and the teachings of Western civilization. The public tax dollars should not be used to promote political, religious, ideological, or cultural values as truth when such values are in conflict with the values of American citizenship and the teachings of Western civilization.

[And] prevents public schools in Arizona from including any courses, classes, or school sponsored activities within the program of instruction that feature or promote as truth any political, religious, ideological, or cultural values that denigrate or overtly encourage dissent from the values of American democracy and Western civilization, including democracy, capitalism, pluralism, and religious toleration.

In 2009 SB 1069 was introduced by Senator Jonathan Paton the bill was subsequently amended to read:

The legislature finds and declares that public school pupils should be taught to treat and value each other as individuals and not based on ethnic background. A school district or charter school in this state shall not include in the program of instruction any courses or classes that either are designed primarily for pupils of a particular ethnic group. Advocate ethnic solidarity instead of the treatment of pupils as individuals.

Both bills were written and proposed by Tom Horne, the then Arizona State School Superintendent. Horne argued that the role of the public schools is to develop the student's identity as Americans and as strong individuals, and stated that It's not the job of the public schools to promote ethnic chauvinism. Much later in the session, two exceptions were added to SB 1069, ensuring that the federally mandated Native American Studies and English learners classes would be exempt (Arizona Central, June 2009). When describing the reasoning behind the ban on ethnic studies, in the same interview Horne said that the classes were "harmful and dysfunctional."

Neither bill was introduced into the Education Committee. Senator Harper introduced SB1108 to the Government Committee under the title "Homeland Security

Advisory Councils.” In its original form, the bill was completely devoid of any language regarding education, ethnic studies or school district policy. Later, Senator Russell Pearce amended the bill with a “strike everything” amendment that changed one hundred percent of the bill’s language to ultimately become that which is noted above. Similarly, Senator Paton introduced SB 1069 in 2009 to the Judiciary Committee (he also chaired that committee at the time of the proposal) as the “Justice Court Fees” bill. Paton later proposed a “strike everything” amendment, which changed the bill from one that exclusively dealt with the fees for particular judicial transactions to a bill that was entirely devoted to the banning of ethnic studies curriculum. While the content of the bill changed entirely, neither the name nor the committee to which it was introduced was changed.

If schools were found in violation of the law they risked losing 10% of their state funding which would amount to 15 million a year. As soon as the law was in effect, on December 30, 2010, Tom Horne declared TUSD MAS to be out of compliance with ARS 15-112(Cabrera, 2011, p.20). The classes were found to be in violation of the law’s requirements and if not eliminated within sixty days, the district was threaten with losing ten percent of its funding monthly, which equates to bankruptcy over an extended period of time in most districts (Teitelbaum n.p.). Huppenthal, Horne's successor, in 2011, gave the district the 60 days to comply with to the law by cutting the classes (Teitelbaum, np). This proves there was no way for the Mexican American studies program to be compliant with the legislation.

Mexican American Studies and Desegregation Orders

The attacks on Ethnic Studies has roots in several historical events that date as far

back as The Black Codes of 1860s segregation, which Stevens and Stovall discuss as an historical precedent in racist educational practices, with a legacy continuing into H.B. 2281 (Stevens & Stovall, 2010, p.297). Winkler-Morey also historicizes HB 2281 with the “kill the Indian, save the man” violent rhetoric of indigenous assimilation through white-centric education within Native boarding school abuses in the United States (Winkler-Morey p.52). Historically Native Americans were forced to leave the reservations and were taken to schools in Phoenix to become assimilated into American Schools. They went so far as to have a street in Phoenix named Indian School after these schools.

Specifically, the timeline of attacks on Ethnic Studies, and the Mexican American Studies program in Tucson began with activist Dolores Huerta's comments to Tucson High School students in 2006 (Teitelbaum n.p.), that “Republicans hate Latinos.” These comments disturbed Tom Horne, (Lundholm, 2011, p.1042), thus the struggle for the Mexican American Studies program in the Tucson Unified School District began. Horne sent Deputy Superintendent Dugan to the same high school for a speech about how students should learn “how to think for themselves” in opposition to Huerta's comments. At least 200 students were not allowed to ask questions so they taped their mouths and walked out in protest.

The reality is that Horne used Huerta’s comments as a platform for his future political pursuits. In June 2007, Horne wrote a letter to the citizens describing how Ethnic Studies should be eliminated (Teitelbaum np). From 2006-2010, Horne drafted the three pieces of legislation I already alluded to trying to eliminate the program (Cabrera, 2011, p.21). However it was not until after the fervor of anti-migrant rhetoric in 2010

coinciding with SB 1070, that a bill attacking ethnic studies, this time HB2281, could be successfully passed by the legislature and signed by the Governor.

What many people do not know is that the ethnic studies program in TUSD was the result of a court case that went back to a 1978 desegregation case between the district and the then federal Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. The TUSD was found in violation of desegregation laws, and agreed to develop ethnic studies programs to be in compliance. The desegregation order was not lifted until December 2009 (Teitelbaum np).

Political Supporters of HB 2281

As I have showed thus far, there are many Arizona politicians involved in drafting, passing, and eventually signing into law the anti-ethnic studies bill. It would be beyond the scope of this thesis to highlight all of them, I will focus on four key figures: Tom Horne, John Huppenthal, Russell Pierce, and Jan Brewer.

Tom Horne is an immigrant to the United States. He arrived in 1954 when he was only eight years old. His parent migrated to Canada from Poland to escape the Holocaust. His parents left behind friends and extended family members who died in Poland because of the Holocaust. Tom Horne was elected Arizona Attorney General in 2010. He was a litigation attorney in private practice for more than 30 years. During that time he also served as a Special Assistant Attorney General, Superior Court Judge Pro Tem and Court of Appeals Judge Pro Tem. He is the author of a legal text published by the State Bar of Arizona. While practicing law, Mr. Horne served on the school board of Arizona's third largest school district for 24 years, ten as its president. He served four years in the Arizona Legislature, was a member of the Judiciary Committee, and was Chairman of the

Academic Accountability Committee. In the 1970's Horne's company filed bankruptcy. He later went on to enforce as Attorney General of Arizona border laws with legislation known as SB 1070. When faced with bankruptcy Horne filed false financial reports with the commission.

John Huppenthal has personal experience in Tucson, Arizona. He graduated high school from Salpointe Catholic in Tucson. His public service career includes being a member of the Chandler City Council, State Senator, and State Representative. In 2005, there was an effort to recall him. The voters stated he was out of touch with the district 20 communities. In June 2010, a high school student interviewed Huppenthal. The video portrayed Huppenthal in a negative light as he was shown contradicting himself and eventually walking out of the interview. With his career floundering Huppenthal ran for Superintendent of Public Instruction on the backs of ethnic studies as he used the platform of "stopping La Raza" in his successful campaign. When researching Huppenthal I found that he will go down in our history books as the politician who removed numerous books from the curriculum including William Shakespeare's *The Tempest*.

Jan Brewer, 22nd governor of the state of Arizona, has been in office since 2009 and is a member of the Republican Party. She has supported the progression of several anti Mexican sentiment legislative measures including SB 1070.

Russell Pierce, another supporter of the law spent 23 years of his political career with the Maricopa County Sherriffs Office. Under the notorious Joe Arpaio he became Chief deputy where he authored, created and developed tent city known for its human rights abuses of inmates. He also authored SB 1070 and created his political career on

the backs of the poor and disenfranchised. He went on to become senator and later was recalled as a result of voters seeing he was not in touch with their needs.

Book Banning

After the State banned the Tucson Unified School District Ethnic Studies program they confiscated the books used in the curriculum, directly from the students' hands and boxed them up during their school hours in front of them. This created great outrage among the book authors and Tucson community members, and eventually among Ethnic Studies supporters across the nation. Authors such as Sherman Alexie spoke out on the book ban. He stated, "legislation has attacked Tucson Unified School District and banned Chicano Studies from their curriculum including books by minority authors such as Sherman Alexi, Sandra Cisneros, Leslie Marmon Silko and Stella Pope Duarte to name a few, and these books included Shakespeare's *The Tempest*" (Progressive, April 2012).

Critics of the ban deemed the books as outlawed. Tony Diaz, founder of El Librotraficante Movement, started a caravan throughout the Southwest holding book readings, setting up book clubs and establishing underground libraries. He named his caravan El Librotraficante Movement. Starting out in Houston, Texas Librotraficante traveled across the country creating libraries of banned books in the barrios and ethnic enclaves where many Mexican youth could have access to the books. Librotraficante dispensed donated copies of the books that have been removed from the classrooms in the ban. Different writers spoke out on their banned books. Sherman Alexis stated, "You give those brown kids some books about brown folks and what happens? Those brown kids change the world. In the effort to vanish our books, Arizona has actually given them

enormous power. Arizona has made our books sacred documents now”(The Progressive, April 2012)

In the independent bookstore, Antigone, in Tucson, Arizona the books are displayed in an altar-like setting with other artifacts and signs that symbolized the power the books now enjoy as a result of the district restrictions. We always knew the books were gold but now the value of our books has multiplied. The irony is that they pour lava on our books and programs and our power mutates, multiplies and migrates. Then again, we come from a long line of migration and survival from within the eye of the storm.

A library of banned books is now being housed in a community classroom in South Tucson. The U.N.I.D.O.S students have organized and found a casita in South Tucson where they will continue their MAS studies. Librotraficante plans to continue to smuggle the books. U.N.I.D.O.S youth will continue their studies with a new fervor, despite the personal and legal attacks being leveraged against them, their teachers and the ethnic studies courses.

The Struggle for Ethnic Studies

On October 2010, the TUSD Ethnic Studies department issued lawsuit against the State Board of Education, Governor Jan Brewer, and Tom Horne regarding the unconstitutionality of HB 2281. Without an immediate injunction to block the law while a decision was made, the financial detriment in the law (10 percent school budget being eliminated while they maintain programs that violate the law) was impossible to cope with (Teitelbaum np).

When the students took over TUSD school board meeting by chaining themselves to the chairs where the school board members sat on April 26, 2011, the student activists

continued to work not only to reinstate Ethnic Studies, but also to expand it. These students, organized under the name U.N.I.D.O.S. have built a multi-pronged campaign that seeks to reinforce the importance of ethnic studies as a curriculum, underscore the ways in which the Mexican-American Studies (MAS) program facilitates positive outcomes for students, and assert their rights to identify as an ethnic group and protect their cultural heritage within the education system. Fundamentally, the students (and former students) of U.N.I.D.O.S. are asserting their human rights to education, non-discrimination, and identity.

High school students who had been or were currently enrolled in Mexican American Studies courses in the Tucson Unified School District created U.N.I.D.O.S. Their primary objective was to stall or halt the banning of these courses and to raise awareness about what was at stake in their education, and the education of future generations should these courses be discontinued. To this effect, U.N.I.D.O.S. drafted and released a ten-point resolution, which they unveiled at the first (and arguably most well- documented) protest at the school board. According to Biggers, the MAS students made the following demands on April 26, 2011:

“1. WE WANT OUR ETHNIC STUDIES CLASSES TO CONTINUE TO MEET CORE SOCIAL SCIENCE REQUIREMENTS. □ 2. WE WANT THE REPEAL OF HB 2281. □ 3. WE WANT ETHNIC STUDIES PROGRAMS TO EXPAND EVERYWHERE: FROM K-12 TO UNIVERSITY. □ 4. WE WANT NO SCHOOL TURN-AROUNDS, NO SCHOOL CLOSURES AND FULL SUPPORT FOR RINCON HIGH AND PALO VERDE HIGH SCHOOL COMMUNITIES. □ 5. WE WANT A TUSD GOVERNING BOARD THAT IS ACCOUNTABLE AND WILL STAND UP FOR ALL STUDENTS. □ 6. WE WANT AN

EQUITABLE EDUCATION FOR ALL. □7. *WE WANT AN IMMEDIATE END TO ALL RACIST, ANTI-MIGRANT, ANTI-INDIGENOUS POLICIES.* □8. *WE WANT FULL COMPLIANCE WITH OUR CIVIL AND HUMAN RIGHTS.* □9. *WE WANT ATTORNEY GENERAL TOM HORNE, STATE SUPERINTENDENT JOHN HUPPENTHAL AND GOVERNOR JAN BREWER IMMEDIATELY REMOVED FROM POWER.* □10. *WE WANT LOCAL CONTROL OF OUR EDUCATION*” (“UNIDOS Present Ten Point Resolution on Arizona Ethnic Studies Crisis: “We Want an Educational System Where Many Cultures Fit”).

It should be noted that each number included a detailed rationale and any historical precedent that lent support to their demands and to their overall argument that public education should ultimately empower and not restrain. Ten point resolutions have a long and detailed genealogy that is, unfortunately, well beyond the scope of this work to fully trace. However, it should be noted that the strategy employed by U.N.I.D.O.S. is one with a powerful history that is intricately woven throughout revolutionary movements. Likely the most well known group to issue a radical ten-point resolution was the Black Panther Party in 1966 (“The Black Panther Ten-Point Program” 16).

From the text of the U.N.I.D.O.S. ten point resolution as well as the press releases and statements made by members of the group, the group clearly states their opposition to white privilege and Eurocentrism as normalized and standardized in the education system. They draw links between the designation of Ethnic Studies courses as “second class” and their identities as minority or “second class” individuals. They refute the idea that their cultures and the authors that speak from those cultures are less important or relevant than the authors celebrated in the Eurocentric curricula supported by the school

board.

U.N.I.D.O.S.' ten point resolution also clearly links the legislation outlawing Ethnic Studies with other legislation aimed at building "racism and xenophobia" throughout the state. The student organizers do not shy away from pointing the finger at the increase in "racist, anti-migrant and anti-Indigenous" policies that are intentionally creating a culture of fear in communities of color throughout the state, and demanding that it be known that HB 2281 is clearly part of this strategy. U.N.I.D.O.S. is also demanding that the Tucson Unified School District disrupt the cycle of school turn-around and closings that affect primarily students of color and their teachers. They regard the threat of school turn-around as a tool to ensure that fewer minority students succeed academically and are funneled into the prison industrial complex (Biggers "UNIDOS Present Ten Point Resolution on Arizona Ethnic Studies Crisis: "We Want an Educational System Where Many Cultures Fit").

U.N.I.D.O.S. goes on to demand a higher level of accountability and representation throughout the educational bureaucracy. They demand the outright replacement of those individuals who they consider to be attacking their rights and the support of institutions that claim to exist to protect those rights. To enumerate these rights, U.N.I.D.O.S. looks to the United Nations and the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which states "we have 'the right to maintain, control, protect and develop [our] cultural heritage, traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions.' Basically," they state, "Ethnic Studies is a human right" (Biggers "UNIDOS Present Ten Point Resolution on Arizona Ethnic Studies Crisis: "We Want an Educational System Where Many Cultures Fit"). By framing their struggle as an

international human rights issue, the students are able to leverage enormous force whose roots extend from local communities to international human rights law, allowing them to draw support from a geographically and ideologically diverse arena.

From this place of power and extraordinary legal precedent, U.N.I.D.O.S. has enacted a number of unique but interrelated tactics to build awareness and support for their cause. In a dramatic effort to bring attention to their cause, on April 26, 2011 U.N.I.D.O.S. members and hundreds of supporters held a protest at a School Board of Directors meeting in Tucson, Arizona. Supporters chanted while nine Mexican-American Studies (MAS) students chained themselves to the directors' seats and refused to allow the directors to vote on the bill banning the program (Huicochea n.p.). Other strategies include walkouts, in which students organized within schools throughout the district to leave campus in protest. The students then convened in a neutral location to engage in a student-led teach-in, in which MAS curriculum was used to create an alternative educational experience for students who wished to continue their work in this area of study despite their inability to do so within official school settings. U.N.I.D.O.S. members have also travelled throughout the state of Arizona to speak out against H.B. 2281. They have appeared at Universities, official meetings of various government agencies and have become truly engaged community activists in their own right, despite many of them being minors who are currently enrolled as full-time students. In order to ensure that their messages are being heard and discussed broadly, the students have turned to social media, academia and news organizations to spread awareness and generate support (Biggers "College- Bound Students Defy Arizona's Witch Hunt with Boycott: Exclusive Interview with Ethnic Studies Students").

U.N.I.D.O.S. is not simply organizing to fight H.B. 2281. Clearly stated in their ten-point resolution as well as their official press statements is an unmistakably direct vision of the future of Ethnic Studies. They demand that the Ethnic Studies programming not only be restored to the high schools in Tucson Unified School district, but that the program is expanded. They want to see ethnic studies offered at more grade levels and in schools not just in Tucson or Arizona, but also throughout the country.

Augustine Romero currently works in TUSD as director of the Department of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy and Instruction and is co-founder of SJEP. He was cofounder of the Mexican American Studies Program in Fall of 2002. The courses used Arizona State Standards, critical pedagogy and critical race theory. Shawn Arce was director of the Mexican American Studies program and has been part of the efforts to save and restore the program. He was honored with the Zinn Education award for his continued advocacy and work. When receiving the award the Zinn awardees stated he was receiving this award for “His leadership role in “one of the most significant and successful public school initiatives on the teaching of history in the U.S.”(Huffington Post 1). Shawn Arce was removed by the Tucson Unified School District from his position soon after the ban.

On Jan 3, 2011 TUSD school board president Mark Stegeman introduced the Stegeman Resolution, which supposedly valued “diversity” in its compromise with legislation but would change Mexican American Studies classes to electives. The resolution was to be voted on April 26, 2011 but never happened because of school board takeover thus saving program for a little bit more (Cabrera, 2011, p.22). The schedule for the next board meeting after the take over and arrests occurred was on May 3, 2011.

Mexican-American Studies was left temporarily intact thanks to all protests (Cabrera, 2011, p.21). Moreover, HB2281 drew criticism from UN experts (Kunnie, 2010, p. 16).

The Student and Community Protests

The Students protesting the Ethnic Studies ban broke off in separate camps as a result of the sexual assault of a leading student activist by a member of the Dos Vatos production team of the film *Precious Knowledge* after the premiere of the film.

Unfortunately, gender violence, sexism, and heteropatriarchy have plagued the movement to defend Mexican American Studies in similar ways that happened during the Chicano movement of the 1970s (see Blackwell, 2011). Chicana feminist scholar Clarissa Rojas states in “Architecture of Violence,” (2007) “that forms of violence manifest and are shaped and intended through the archetypes of violence that structure, produce and reproduce and legitimate social inequalities”(p.12).

She argues that violence is played out against the backdrop of the archetypes of violence, which include colonial, sex/gender heteronormative, poverty and neo-colonial violence, and racial violence. “Violence is ubiquitous to injustice”(Rojas, 2011, p. 15). Rojas also examines how violence plays out in social movements and among communities of color. This speaks to the violence experienced by the MalintZine women and how they combat this violence in their activism. “The multiple enactments and reenactments of colonial and neocolonial violence and their legacies are very much alive”(p. 87).

The activist leader sexually assaulted in the incident with the producer of *Precious Knowledge* did not go to the police or report the incident. Instead she fled the country in an effort to hide her shame at what had happened to her.

For many communities going to the cops is not an option. Many have experienced harm at the hands of law enforcement. To many women of color, and their

communities, the semiotic resonance between cops echoes as police brutality, sexual violation, deportation, incarceration, and labor exploitation. As alternative responses, community accountability practices invite communities to create options for responding to violence from within and to envision and create violence-free spaces and relationships. Community accountability strips away the deception of our current dependence on law enforcement and prisons. As we practice it, we are reminded that we are all implicated in the violence that occurs in our communities. We live, breathe, exist in, and help to create communities that are saturated with rape and violence. We are all affected and learn, model, ignore and advance violence either consciously or unconsciously, even while we are simultaneously surviving it” (Rojas, 2011, p. 78).

Sexual violence is so pervasive that it codes Latinas as they cross into the United States” (Rojas, 2011, p.80). When I worked for a domestic violence shelter as victims advocate it was not uncommon that women of color would not call the police on their partners. They stated that their partners would threaten to have them deported or many times the victims also went to jail for trying to protect themselves. I think this is why women of color have least incident reporting of their abuse. This is unfortunate due to funding sources such as the Violence Against Women Act, which depends on reporting for their funding from government grants.

“Like most other university students they have experienced or witnessed intimate violence in their own lives or in the lives of those they love” (Rojas, 2011, p. 82). They are motivated to learn how to respond and reach the mostly shared goal of ending violence.

Literature Review

Cammarota and Romero (2009) stated that “Knowledge based in social justice principles provides young people with a sense of hope and the drive to challenge inequities limiting their potential to help themselves as well as others to experience a full, unmitigated humanity”(p.57). Ladson Billings (2009) wrote that successful teaching occurs when

Chicana/o culture is seen as an asset rather than an impediment. She further discusses a study where teachers of African American students saw teaching as “digging knowledge out of students” (p. 8). She states that students come to school with cultural capital and knowledge and that should be explored and utilized. The education of Chicana/o studies changed the way I viewed the world. This change in effect changed my understanding by contextualizing my experiences and placing them in a shared knowledge of experiences. These stories were no longer my own but that of my colleagues and a community as a whole. We became united and whole rather than isolated and alone in our struggles for freedom and social justice.

The history of ethnic studies as an educational initiative in the United States is known to be controversial. As the civil rights era created intellectual space and political will for recognizing and addressing inequity throughout institutions in the United States, frustration with the lack of diverse course offerings and limited opportunities for students and professors of color grew to a groundswell (O’Leary and Romero p.13).

Julio Cammarota found that research; particularly Paul Willis’s research on working class youth in Britain reveals how culture is the mode through which young people express their agency. Furthermore, he shows how youth do not always follow the exigencies of dominant forces but sometimes act autonomously and resist. This agency of resistance-expressed through cultural practice-functions to construct and preserve specific characteristics of identity (Cammarota, 2008, p.4).

CHAPTER 3

THEORY IN THE FLESH, XICANA SACRED SPACES, MEMORY AND TRAUMA

In this chapter, I develop the theoretical framework that I use as a lens to analyze Chicana art's revolutionary aspects and commitments to social justice. The three frameworks I use are: Theory in the Flesh, Xicana Sacred Spaces, and Memory and Trauma. I examine the MalintZines blog; poster art about the movement to defend Mexican American Studies; mural arts; and my cajitas as representations of activism, which links art and social justice. More specifically, the MatinZines blog is a form of confronting sexism within the movement. At the National Association for Chicana and Chicano studies conference in Chicago in March 30, 2002, legal Chicana feminist scholar Margaret Montoya in her plenary talk noted that the Chicano community must come to terms with sexuality. She said that Chicanas must speak about the sexual secrets in our families and the surrounding silencing. She claimed that even our educational success depends on our coming to terms with sexuality. She proposed that secrets are maintained out of loyalty; and I believe they are about boundaries, borders, imagined and real in our families, among each other and within society at large. Montoya argued that,

Many of us have had to learn painstaking lessons about loyalty, secrets, about health and fitness, about death, about boundaries through sexual desire. Many of us have faced sexual assault or sexual abuse. We've gone through unwanted pregnancies, abortions, miscarriages, sexually transmitted disease and sexual harassment. And I personally have gone through every form of dysfunctional relationship. Those of us who are older admit to a wisdom that has been paid for with sex."(Montoya, 2002, np.)

The women involved in MalintZine art blog have broken this silence in their community and have shattered the myths in order to recreate themselves and create a hope and survival in and among themselves and their communities. In the book *this*

bridge we call home, Chicana feminist scholar Gloria Anzaldua states, “In the process of creating the composition, the work of art, the painting, the film, you’re creating culture. You’re rewriting culture, which is very much an activist kind of thing-writers have something in common with people doing grassroots organizing and acting in the community. It’s all about rewriting culture”(Anzaldua, 2002, p.9).

Theory In The Flesh

In the book *This Bridge Called My Back* published in 1981, Chicana feminist scholars Cherríe Moraga and Gloria Anzaldúa started to develop theory in the flesh, as a way for Chicanas to come to terms with their own suffering and as they work in collaboration with other women of color in the process of liberation. They define theory in the flesh as “one where the physical realities of our lives-our skin color, the land or concrete we grew up on, our sexual longings- all fuse to create a politic born out of necessity”(Moraga & Anzaldúa, 1981, p.23).

Montoya states that “Like Moraga I insist on the necessity to theorize and conceptualize from the “flesh,” as the site on or which the woman of color experiences the painful material effects of living in her particular social location (Moraga, 1981, p. xviii). Moraga also states that if we are interested in building a movement that will not constantly be subverted by internal differences, then we must build from the inside out, not the other way around. Coming to terms with the suffering of others has never meant looking away from our own.”

Xicana Sacred Spaces

Diaz, Soto, Cervantes-Soon, Villarreal, and Campos (2009) proposed an innovative epistemological, theoretical and methodological framework, which they

named, Xicana Sacred Spaces (XSS). This framework “Is a method for reflexivity that relies on critical discourses and material practices aimed at nurturing, cultivating, and questioning epistemologies” (Diaz Soto et al, 2009, p. 756). The foundations of Xicana Sacred Spaces are Chicana feminist epistemologies and ontologies, standpoint, collective intellectual and political struggle, decolonizing indigenous knowledge, and reflexivity.

In explaining how they developed Xicana Sacred Spaces Diaz Soto, et al (2009) inform us,

We often shared our research projects, information, literature, poetry, videos, and family knowledge in untraditional ways more conducive to building trust and legitimizing each member’s knowledge. One member shared a picture of a bare existence in a one room home that was once a chicken coop in the Texas Rio Grande where her mother, an undocumented immigrant was a migrant worker. Her young face shines in the humble back drop captured in a photograph that could not predict her current life as a graduate student and educator. (p. 765)

The sacred is about communal exchange and relationships, and important for my analysis here about protecting our cultural knowledge and memory “from forces that will obliterate its core” (Diaz Soto et al, 2009, p. 756). In this sense, XSS emanates from Chicana standpoint and social location. That is, XSS results from a critical examination of social location, and engage in oppositional struggle against elements of oppression. It gives voice to collective struggles, and recognizes “a sense of political urgency to take efforts to the community in the form of social justice, and pursuing self-and collective consciousness” (p. 761).

Writing Xicana with an “X” is symbolic because the X functions as a borderland, a crossroad that brings together multiplicity of ideas and methodologies. Xicana Sacred Spaces offer decolonizing strategies that help struggle against the oppressive practices instigated by the State of Arizona and the School Board. Banning Mexican American

studies and our “sacred documents” is a form of dehumanizing and a violent act. It is a form of power and control. When children renew their relationships to their culture through a contextualizing lens they gain a sense of power over themselves and their futures. Similar to when Chicanas reclaim Aztec goddesses in art and story and the malintZine women reclaiming their voices. June Nash (1978) found that by looking at the goddesses² who disappeared in the 15th Century we could see the loss of women’s power in society. Through examining the origins of female subordination Nash documented that when women lost the ability to gain the resources to establish communities, grow crops, and have legal and economic rights showed the changing structure of authority in Mexica society. At one point, women had property rights; they were healers, professional doctors, and merchants in local trade and priestesses. Theological doctrines, flowery wars and sacrificial ceremonies paralleled the structural changes in Aztec society. Michel Foucault (1984) writes “in feudal society power functioned essentially through signs and levies. If this was a form of balancing and gaining power in past societies then I propose that reclaiming our banned books, our “sacred documents,” our rituals, are forms of remembering our power.

Leslie Marmons Silkos’ *Ceremony*, both written and symbolic, is a form of gaining power and control. In a similar way, Chicanas/os are gaining power by reconnecting to their history in books like the reimagined Aztlan, and some of our sacred texts such as *Rethinking Columbus*, Acuña’s *Occupied America*, and Anzaldúa’s *Borderlands/La Frontera* to name but a few. Through ritual and ceremony our banned

² Goddess is not the correct term to describe Nahua deities.

books, “sacred documents,” disrupt power, reclaim our power, weaved through power, and reassemble the dismembered parts of ourselves.

Karl Marx wrote in Volume One of Capital, that capitalism separates the working class person from his/her body and labor, which creates dismembered bodies. I further state that ethnic studies, Chicana/o art, sacred documents, the written word, Chicanas rewriting La Virgen de Guadalupe, and the malintZines Zine take the dismembered parts of Chicanas/os and reclaims them thus resisting how capitalism takes Mexicana/o bodies and makes them commodities. Thus the sacred, the story, the art and history are never static. It is all happening the past, present, and future; they create a life of their own and we read and write ourselves back together, crossing borders, imagined and real. Who is to say that robbing a people of their language is less violent than war? (Anzaldúa, 1999, p.75). Banning books and Mexican American Studies in Tucson is a violent act.

Crossing borders includes what Anzaldua describes as loosening our borders. In the book *this bridge we call home* she states that “We define who we are by what we include-what I call the new tribalism. Though most of us live entremundos, between and among worlds we are frustrated by those who step over the line, by hybridities, and ambiguities, and by what does not fit our expectations of race and sex (Anzaldua,2002, p. 3). Two of the artists do not identify as Xicana yet became our strongest allies in protesting and defending Chicana/o studies.

Memory and Trauma: Cultural Recovery

LauraTohe, states that “memory is transmitted in the silences.” Resonance is a life giving force. At the conference on Memory and Countermemory, hosted at ASU West (2012), Laura Tohe stated that it takes 5 generations for a family to heal from

historical trauma. I believe the women in my family are healing their dismembered bodies; and the activist community in Tucson is also healing. “Memory is transmitted in the silences” and my memory remembers a woman being murdered in Juárez. My body remembers the assaults experienced by the malintZine members and the many Chicanas who experience these assaults. A woman who may have been me was dismembered. One day a family member who grew up in Juárez told me in a joking manner “You do what I say, remember chiquitita, I am from Juárez.” I stared at him with all the courage I could muster in my small not even 5 foot frame and barely 110 pounds and stated, to his six foot 200 pound frame, “Well, I am not scared of you. You should be scared of me, because I am an educated Chicana from the South Phoenix barrio, which makes me more dangerous than you.” My thinking was that the pen is mightier than the sword. But in reality as we have seen with the reporters and teachers of Juárez the pen may not always be mightier than the sword in a state of exception and war zone.

I think of the poet Javier Sicillia and the loss of his son to the drug wars in Mexico. He stated he stopped writing poetry because there were no words after his son’s death. I felt the resonance of his loss. At the memory conference interdisciplinary scholar Arthur Sabatini stated that we could remember things that did not even happen directly to us, but that happen to our collective community. He called this a resonance of memory and the effects of indirect reception. I believe this is what happens to me when I see, speak or write about the women of Juárez, their dismembered bodies, or when I hear Javier Sicillia speak of the murder of his son. I clutch my young adult and teen sons before they go out for the weekends of parties and fun. I clutch them close and tell them I love them. I hold on a bit longer to the youngest one almost ready to fly the nest and go

out on his own. I tell him you can stay a bit longer if you so choose. He tries to ready me for the loss by making me create my own prezi. Usually I do the content he does the computing. He says what would you do without me mom! I say I would flunk graduate school without you! This boosts his energy because he is unsure in his first year of college and finals. He is the first in our family going straight to college from high school without having to work first. In an anonymous story named Night Walk in the MalintZine they state, “The women walked through the alley and never came back. Women walked home and never got there. Women yelling and screaming with no one was around to hear” (Zine, pg. 8)

Michael Rothenburg, a speaker at the memory conference, stated that in his research with Jewish survivors recovering from the Nazi past he found an intergenerational cosmic distancing. I think this is what my family member did when he jokingly stated that he was from Juárez. In his research Rothenburg discusses a film in which an immigrant to the U.S. states I used to be guest worker but now I am just a guest. He used this as an example of cosmic distancing. He also stated that Jewish youth today wanted to show solidarity with their loved ones but did not want to inherit the Jewish victimhood. In response they had their arms tattooed with the markings similar to their loved ones during the holocaust. It was their way of showing their connection to their past and their loved ones.

Another artist and scholar at the memory conference showed a small film about Jamie Blacks art project in Canada. In this project artists displayed a red dress in public spaces and art galleries. Each dress represented an aboriginal woman. This project

reminded me of the women of Juárez and how their mothers started placing pink crosses in public spaces. Each cross signified a missing or dead daughter.

When the males in our family who grew up in Juárez, Chihuahua get frustrated with the American born Chicana/os in our family, I now realize that we come from two different sets of cultures even though our inheritance of this culture comes from the same source. It is like my two sons born ten years apart. It is as if they had two different mothers and they are like night and day in their memory of me.

There are vast differences between the half of the family that grew up in the United States and the part that grew up in Mexico. In Juárez the material conditions for women are vastly different than Chicanas in the United States. In Juárez the woman working in the Maquiladoras in the borderlands is similar to a slave. She must leave her home and family from the inland and move into the big city to work. This leaves her stateless. In the maquilas she is deemed cheap labor with little voice for unionizing. This removes her political status. Lastly she is murdered and mutilated. This final loss is a loss of rights over her body (Mbembe, 2003, p. 21). Yet at the same time that I am free I am inheriting the resonance of this mutilation. In inheriting this resonance of memory there are no borders. The malintZine women inherit this memory as all Chicanas do. “When you live on the frontera you have your finger on the other countries pulse”(anonymous).

After presenting my questions in reference to protest art and culture to the participants at the memory conference I ran across the Moreno family, father and son, who participated in a commissioned works with Village Voice to display their protest art of SB 1070 in publications nationwide. I found one picture that caught my eye very intriguing. I asked the family about the picture. The son stated his father had painted it.

When speaking to Martin Moreno, local muralist and artist, I told him about my thesis. He walked me over to his portrait and pointed out the name of his portrait that I showed in class. He called the picture “The New Jew.” He also showed me how he had painted the Jewish markings on his arm as the Jews had when they were in the camps. Lastly he pointed out the pink undergarments that signified Arizona’s notorious sheriff Joe Arpaio’s tent city and abuses in our local jails.

My favorite portrait was the one done by a local south phoenix female artist. She drew children wailing as their parents were being deported. This is the one that spoke to me the most. I believe this picture speaks to the legend of La Llorona (the weeping woman) in Mexican culture and how Chicanas continue to rewrite her into history as an empowered woman. In the traditional story La Llorona, was a woman who lost her children. There are several variations about why she lost them but the basic premise was that it was her fault that her children drowned in the arroyo. She was not caring for them properly or in one story she drowned them herself when her husband left her for another woman. What I do remember though is that there was always this threat that the mother would lose her children. This is the fear that Chicana Mexican women live with daily. If they get deported they will lose their children.

The resonance lies in my own mothers’ story. She was the oldest living daughter to Martha Chavarria and the oldest sibling to 11 younger ones. The oldest daughter would have been the girl who came before her but she died in an accident while my grandmother was pregnant with my mother. She drank kerosene from under the sink. My mother and her siblings grew up in Guadalupe, Arizona. Later more siblings and

husbands were lost due to maladjustments that affect a family growing up in a third world space but surrounded by a first world culture.

My grandmother always hid her pain through her smile. She always presented a very cheerful attitude for the children. She lived a long life outliving many of her children. She was amazing. She fared well despite her troubles unlike my mother who carried the whole family's burdens and grief. My family says I am a lot like my grandmother Martha Chavarria. Her mother was murdered when she was three years old. My grandmother didn't have a mother. When my family from Juárez makes fun of me for never learning how to make tortillas I remember that when there is a loss of a mother then a whole level of culture is lost also.

Perhaps this is where the resonance exists within me. The loss of my grandmothers mother created a chain of reactions that lost us all to our mothers. I know that when those children who are being placed in foster care grow up they will be a political force to be reckoned with. The United States has not even seen the real force and power that exists within the sleeping giant of the Latino presence. When those children grow up the minority will be the majority and the power, memory and energy for justice will be fierce. Those children will be on fire with their stories of struggle and survival. I wrote this story after a boy was shot walking his livestock on the Mexican side of the border:

The Arizona US border in Nogales Arizona continues to militarize the border. More equipment more night vision lighting and sensory detectors to send the poor back home to die of starvation while Americans die of over consumption. The marines in camouflage and armed with m-16's watching a suspected drug trafficking route shoot and kill an eighteen year old boy. The boy was tending to the family goats on a daily trail target shooting with a 22-caliber rifle. Immediately following this shooting patrols were pulled out. Military activities temporarily suspended. This story is one of many of an example human cost of

the growing military presence at the border. Ten foot high chain link fencing, helicopters, electronic intrusion-detection ground sensors and transmitters aerial spotlights, infrared radar night vision scopes tripod-mounted starlight infrared scopes, vehicle mounted infrared telescopes, television surveillance systems all designed to detect, track like animals, observe and intimidate human beings undocumented along the border. A Berlin Wall dividing nations who share labor, cultures, language and people. Beatings, shootings, US citizens inappropriate use of firearms, sexual assaults, illegal searches, reckless high speed chases is the war zone of the border. Civil rights, human dignity ignored. Fact: Over half of all immigrants in this country never go near the Mexican border but enter with legal visas through the interior Ports of entry and simply fail to leave. Ranchers along the border patrolling their property with guns detaining immigrants claiming they are protecting their livelihood from invasion. A low intensity warfare aimed to create an atmosphere of fear and intimidation.

When I watched the 2012 presidential final running night on television all the newscasters commented on the changing demographics and new face of America. The Romney headquarters showed mostly middle class and upper middle class white people. The Obama headquarters was a mixture of all kinds of cultures: Chinese, African, Latinos, Whites to name just a few. The face of America is changing. Change is hard. Those in distress over the fear of immigrant “invasion” are perhaps finding themselves displaced from a privileged position. Their anxiety speaks to the changes in the new face of America. Their place in society is becoming less of a privilege and more of an equitable distribution of land, freedom and liberty. In essence, the vigilante and violence against Mexicans and Chicana/os is a sign of movement and social change occurring.

I will close this chapter with a poem and story I wrote about my mother who grew up hungry in Guadalupe, Arizona.

1st world
meets third
world,
A pound of

Soup worth
20 miles across a
Desert for to
Stay would
Mean starvation
While in the
1st world food is
Forgotten,
Starvation and
Hunger a distant
Memory of
Yesterday, another
Lifetime ago,
Before assimilation,
Education, a
Forgotten language
A forgotten past
Before crossing
Over to the
American
Dream where
Bread, cheese
And butter only
A luxury and no
Longer just
A hunger dream.

CHAPTER 4

REMEMBER TO REMEMBER: A HUMAN RIGHT

I write to remember. Gloria Anzaldúa.

We³ want to remember why? So our stories are not erased. So that we see that we had a pivotal role in building this great nation; so that we see and remember our worth. We write and create art like remembering to eat our vegetables and brush our teeth. The ultimate form of self-caring is to follow and live our vision. So many of our ancestors' lives were short and did not get to develop their lives. A basic premise of human rights is to have the right to live a life, to be loved, to have children and raise them if we so choose. Historically Chicana/os were not always afforded access to food, water, and healthcare and not always allowed to have a life. In one of my favorite pieces of the protest art of HB 2281 there is a girl situated in front of the Aztec calendar. This speaks to a girl having a right to study and to reach her full potential in life. Having the right to read a book, to relax, to have access to clean water. Many times protest art suggests our dreams and aspirations for a better tomorrow. Protest art reimagines, visualizes and depicts conditions that threaten our futures.

What role does protest art have in social justice? In this chapter, I analyze the cultural production of protest art against HB 2281, the ethnic studies ban in Tucson, Arizona, and its role in cultural expression, identity and representation. Protest art, within the Chicano movement, goes back to the 1960s and 1970s. Cesar Chavez and the Farm Workers movement used it as a means to educate the farmers about their rights. This art was used because many of the farmworkers' children were removed from school

³ We is referring to Chicana/o advocates, students, teachers and activists of the Chicana/o studies programs.

to work and their gaps in education left many farmworkers unable to read and write. The first protest art was in the form of cartoons displaying the conditions of the fields and had a comical twist with a serious message. Protest art and social justice in reference to HB 2281 is about the right to a meaningful education, to preserve our customs and culture, about our human rights and social justice. Protest art and social justice in reference to HB 2281 is about the right to health, the rights to preserve our customs and culture, the rights to our land, the rights to food that does not kill us. The four pieces I will analyze are Dr. Cintlis photo of a young boy being policed as he enters the school board meeting. The second piece I examine is Tanya Alvarez animals gazing into the night sky. The third and fourth piece is the MalintZine Zine and the fourth is my own cajita of banned book protest art.

Policing the lives of Latino Youth

The first piece I will analyze is Dr. Cintli Rodriguez photo taken at the second school board meeting following the students taking over the school board and chaining themselves to the school board members' chairs. At the next school board meeting school officials decided to install metal detector systems that monitored, enforced and policed the public entering the school board meeting at the Tucson Unified School district office in Downtown Tucson. Policing the lives of Latinos is not an uncommon occurrence among youth in the United States. In this picture photographer Dr. Cintli Rodriguez captures a photo where a young Latino boy of approximately 8 years in age is entering the school board meeting. The kid is wearing a batman t-shirt and as he is walking through the district security entrance an officer conducting an electronic search to the boy

wit a metal detector wand. The boy has his arms stretched outward as he is being policed.

The photo speaks in large part to the way youth of color have been historically policed and institutionalized. Today's working class youth encounter a radically different world than they would have encountered just a few decades ago. These young people no longer "learn to labor" but instead "prepare for prison." The transnational global economy has created a transition from social welfare to social control and security societies (Rios, 2011, p. 24). Historically young black, Latino and poor Anglo youth lacking economic opportunities have encountered criminalization and attacks by way of crime control tactics. Increased job losses equals increased policing of juveniles. Thus, the law banning ethnic studies serves to meet the demands of the state to produce criminals for profit and prohibit these potential criminals to escape their fate through education. The Mexican American Studies program was a response to high drop-out rates among Latino youth in public schools in Tucson, Arizona and the aforementioned desegregation suit. The program was so successful that it threatened the system that seeks to criminalize these youth. All of a sudden the youth were becoming empowered to further their educations and go on to college.

Chicana/o studies places a root beneath a floundering tree and provides the support, encouragement, knowledge of self and others. Thus the Chicana/o subject gains a better understanding of self in relations to society and its whole. When this empowerment occurs the student is empowered to move through these systems and become a part of the whole society as opposed to the margins as high school dropouts or statistics. Thus I would argue that Chicana/o studies saves lives. However, the state is not

in the business of saving Mexican youths lives. The state is in the business of policing the lives of Latino youth and placing them in the margins of society.

Historian Donna Jean Murch (2010) found that in Oakland racial anxieties about the city's rapidly changing demographics led to an increased integration of school and recreational programs with police and penal authorities. "In this context, the discourse of 'juvenile delinquency' took on a clear racial caste, leading to wide scale policing and criminalization of Black youth"(Murch, 2010, p.68). While extensive police harassment and arrest of Black migrants started during the population influx of World War II, it vastly intensified in the period of economic decline that ensued. Some scholars have argued that today's U.S. criminal justice system has become a central mechanism for controlling and managing "surplus" populations.

We are in a particular place in society where the Internet connects so many to social movements that allow us to move through oppressing social systems at a faster rate than ever before. As in the civil rights movement era State control uses criminalization of youth to repress these movements. I also argue that in Tucson as in Oakland racial anxieties have escalated as a result of a growing and changing demographic of Mexicans moving into power positions.

When I lived in Tucson the principal of my son's magnet school was Mexican. One of my Mexican American Studies professors was a product of the civil rights movement era. There were many Mexican American politicians. Business owners were increasing predominately Mexican and Mexicans ran most of South Tucson. Tucson was a town unlike I had never seen before. The food in my son's cafeteria was Mexican. The predominant newspaper, radio show, dress and style in clothing were Mexican. The

predominant culture and majority population in Tucson was Mexican. Increasingly the powerhouse players in politics and small business owners are Native Tucsonans with deep roots, connections and culture in Tucson. Removing the MAS program from these children is a way to disrupt this growing majority and increasingly economic power. The structural conditions set in place do not allow for success from minority youth. As we have seen from our past history the structural conditions in place seek to close down access to freedom in the forms of education.

Victor Rios writes in *Policing the Lives of Latino Youth* how The Black Panther Party was started as part of the civil rights movement in Oakland, California. Although the party started in colleges it quickly emerged as a youth movement and reaction to policing of youth in Oakland. As Rios' book suggests policing of youth is not a current trend. What most interested me about the Black Panther movement is the agency of the youth. Out of community concerns grew this political consciousness and activist work. For example, in the ghettos of Oakland there existed an intersection, which needed a traffic light due to the fatality of numerous youth attempting to cross the street. Members of the Panther organizations, Newton and Seale, had tried numerous times to advocate with the city to put up a stop sign. After failed attempts to have their voices heard they took it upon themselves to start directing traffic at this dangerous crossroads. Their strategy worked because shortly thereafter the city installed a signal. The Panthers also followed the police with law books in hand to document any brutality. Before the Panthers started several of the leaders had themselves spent time in juvenile corrections. Ironically during their time in corrections they studied Martin Luther King and Malcolm X thus setting the stage for the movement. There existed a saying among black youth that

stated, "There are only three ways a black man can get an education: college, prison and military." I find it fascinating that they used their time in corrections to exercise agency and create an ideology and vision of their future resistance. In David Hilliards autobiography he writes about one of the Panthers stating, "Eldridge inspired me on a personal level,....He was left to destroy himself in a prison cage, Instead he has mastered language and made the entire society listen to him." In 1966 the Black Panther Party created a platform and program that listed a ten-point plan. They stated they wanted freedom and the power to determine their destiny. We want employment for our people. We want an end to the robbery of Black communities. They further stated that forty acres and two mules was promised them 100 years ago as restitution for slave labor and mass murder of black people. We want decent housing fit for human beings and education for our people that exposes the true nature of this decadent American society. We want education that teaches our true history and our role in the present day society. We want an immediate end to police brutality and murder of black people. I find it sad that this was the plan some forty years ago, before I was even born! Yet, here we are history repeating itself with the policing of our youth entering a school board meeting to advocate on their behalf for a right to an education that teaches the history of our role in history and now.

Learning in the Desert

The second piece I chose to examine was Tanya Alvarez's Aztec art painting, which depicts several small animals in the desert. One animal that resembles a dinosaur is studying on a laptop. Another one resembling a cat is gazing into a telescope into the night sky. Another one is wearing a doctor's gown and gazing into telescope. There are

several Aztec symbols in the picture. I am not an art critic so the scope of this analysis will not go into detail about the meanings of these symbols, however, I do believe the picture with animals speaks to native teachings about shape shifting and movement through power structures and inequalities. The picture is situated in a mystic land and situates the viewer in a galaxy far off setting in a desert. This also speaks to the spirituality in native and Chicana/o cultures. Before colonization there were priestesses and goddesses who had the power to heal and bring about rain in droughts.

MalintZine as Social Justice

The third piece I chose to examine is the MalintZine blog printed Zine. There are several pieces in the Zine but my favorite one is a cassette tape with the words MalintZINE Mixtape. Around the mix tape are names of songs that speak to the injustices women of color have experienced and how they have resisted these labels and restrictions placed on them. For example, one of the song titles is *Just a Girl* by No Doubt. The lyrics state I am just a girl in the world, this world is forcing me to hold your hand. The first time I heard this song my son was playing it for me on a stereo when I was working on my undergraduate degree in Women's Studies. My sons would often speak to me through their music if they had something they were not ready to say out loud. He said this is what you are examining within your life mom. I loved the song and later when No Doubt came into town and he bought us tickets and we went to the concert. I was honored that my preteen son would invite his mother to a concert; women's studies transformed my relationship with my sons. It was as if I was freeing them from gender-designated roles at the same time I was freeing those around me and myself. They were free to study, learn, and ponder. They did not go to the army or have babies as teens. They used birth control

and talked about it out loud between me and to each other. In my home as a youth we did not talk of such things. It was never a choice about whether or not you would get married and have babies. After I graduated I went through a divorce. Chicana/o studies so drastically uproots systems that this is what happens when one is catapulted into a fourth dimension of existence and become privileged to live an examined life. Both my sons are strong feminists and have been active in their schools and communities to empower youth of color marching along GLBTQ youth and as they grew my home became a hub of activity for marginalized youth seeking a safe place to be themselves. One day I came home from working at the Domestic Violence shelter, having been in court all day, I was exhausted. I asked my son why is there a girl living in the garage? This is not a shelter. He told me, “mom you are a shelter.” And this is when I knew that being a Chicana is a Sacred Space. Our art is sacred and when we create this sacred Xicana space within ourselves it holds space for others to create their own spaces.

This year (2014) a book was published about the struggle for Raza studies in the Tucson Unified School Districts. As outlined in Chapter 2, there have been several publications and articles to educate the public and educators about the struggle for Chicana/o studies in the Tucson Unified School District. In all these publications there has only been one mention of the MalintZine women who have been instrumental in the movement. The spring 2014 issue of *Chicana/Latina Studies: the Journal of Mujeres Activas en Letras y Cambio Social* will be giving voice to their story and struggle with sexual and domestic violence within the movement. These schisms, traumas and incidents in our memory and history erase our stories as Chicana women. Recollecting these stories and situating them in the history of the movement connects our

dismembered bodies back together again. Theory in the flesh calls for us to theorize from the body, el cuerpo, lo sexual (Moraga & Anzaldúa, 1981 p.).

My Own Cajita Protest Art

The last piece I will analyze is my own protest art created while taking Professor Elenes Action Research class. I read all the books, joined her groups where she mentored, I followed her around campus and led a small army of women who followed in her footsteps. Her class gave me a sense of hope and dignity in my experiences that I had never had. Her belief in me led to me becoming the first woman president of MEChA At Arizona State University West. I became a leader and did not even know I had one in me until these classes. I became the first of many after this. I became the first person in my family to graduate from College. I was the only woman of color on the Maricopa Association of Governments Human Services Committee. I became the first to bring a judge into the shelter to help the women who could not leave due to childcare or disability. Where once I felt shame about being a poor Latina from South Phoenix I felt pride at having survived and made it all the way to the university. Her classes taught and said to me *la mujer tiene la palabra*. And I believed her and I studied her and her books and her every word. I was honored when she recruited me for the social justice MA program one day while I was in church with my father in Guadalupe. My grandmother had recently passed and I was missing her terribly and felt like a lost child. Again her words and books gave me hope and reminded me that I was a survivor and was stronger than I felt or believed.

I read the sacred texts again and saw that I was not my story but that my story was being rewritten every day with every word and every act of resistance. These classes save

lives. They saved my life as I was drowning in lack of identity and yearning to know my language and myself. I found myself in these banned books, banned teachers and banned classes. I found my voice, my passion, my calling and in Professor Elenes' action research class I found I was a gifted protest artist too.

The last piece I will analyze is my own cajita protest art. I started making art installations in the forms of altars and cajitas with my grandmothers. My grandmothers always kept an altar in the garden and in the home. They placed flowers during special times of the year. They placed special momentos, worries and pictures of loved ones. Jackie Kennedy was on my grandmother's altar when I was a child. From this I created cajitas as protest art. The one I will analyze for this thesis is the protest art book cajita I made during my action research class. This cajita has cut out book covers of three banned books. I chose Dagoberto Gilb's cover woodcuts of women because the picture portrays a woman leisurely sitting on a car with clouds around her. The title speaks to Chicana women. The second cut is *Justice* by Roberto Rodriguez. This spoke to the social justice issues around banning books by Chicana/o authors. Magic blood speaks to the sacred power of our books that Sherman Alexie voices in his quote about the banned books, which place inside the box with the cover of his book *The loan ranger and Tonto Fist fight in Heaven* and *Ten Little Indians*. On the cover of the cajita is another cover of Louis Mendoza's book with a picture of the Virgen and a bicycle at her praying hands. The cover reads *Conversations across our America* at the bottom is another bubble stating Talking about Immigration and the Latinoization of the United States. In the background of the picture is an outline of the United States.

All these book covers are strategically placed on the protest cajita as a sign or levy speaking to the changing face and demographics of America. The banned books and programs are just another form of colonization, however with our sacred books we mutate, transform, migrate and shapeshift into a new culture, art and story. The books have transformed a generation of leaders that cannot be undone.

In March 2014 as Cesar Chavez was being honored in a movie debut and we took a day of observance in Arizona to honor his legacy I recall his words. “Once social change begins it cannot be reversed. You cannot uneducate the person who has learned to read. You cannot humiliate the person who feels pride. You cannot oppress the people who are not afraid anymore. We have seen the future and the future is ours.” The school advisors in Tucson’s Unified School District advised students that they had better not take the ethnic studies curriculum because they would ruin their chances at college acceptance into the University of Arizona. They can deny us a place at the table but we being adaptive rasquache maiz centered people, transplant and grow and multiply ourselves in adaptive ways.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

Long Live La Milpa and Maiz People

March 2014 at the Chavez premiere in Tucson Arizona on top of the movie where they announce what movie is showing it said, Chavez Coalition. The current Tucson Unified School District teachers in Mexican American Studies were passing out t-shirts and people wore their UFW buttons and Cesar t-shirts. It was so amazing to be part of the movement where Ethnic studies is banned. They had a theatre with a special premiere for the Coalition. The teachers who now teach ethnic studies for Pueblo High school were there with their MeChA clubs passing out t-shirts. Banning Chicana/o studies is a social justice issue because a people's customs and culture is imperative to the cultures survival.

Arizona's toughest sheriff in the nation Joe Arpaio, Jan Brewer, Tom Horne and other politicians who have been a part of the banning of Raza studies, banning of our sacred books, SB 1070 and other punitive laws that speak to the anti Mexican sentiment in Arizona have created a low intensity war fare and state of exception in Arizona. Children and families have been separated and severed from their loved ones due to deportations. The borderlands are increasingly growing a militant presence, interrogation, surveillance, intimidation and encroachment upon our human rights.

While writing my thesis I sat less than a two blocks from Tucson High School where the books and classes were banned. I sat across from a banned book display in a coffee house on Fourth Avenue. Armando Bernal joins me at the table to solicit my signature for his son who is running for school board. We start to talk and he becomes intrigued with my thesis. He insists I meet his son and daughter in law. Later that day I

met his son who is a MeChista and a young engineer running for Tucson's Unified District school board. His girlfriend was student teaching when the program was eliminated. She completed her degree in Mexican American Studies from the University of Arizona. She now teaches in the new program. She recounted stories about how she was advised not to take the Raza studies program because this would diminish her chances of entering the university. Later that week I was invited by Armando Bernal, a government teacher in Nogales, and father to the MeChista youth Running for school board, to the Cesar Chavez premiere where the Pueblo High School Mexican American studies teachers and MeChistas were passing out Cesar Chavez t shirts and the crowd gathered all around the building to enter. Raul Grijalva's supporters and aid were passing out flyers for the march and rally the next morning. The Chavez coalition filled their own theater. They held a fundraiser to raise monies for students who could not afford to pay for the movie fees. They were a force unlike I have ever seen in my many years of activism. I imagined this is what educator Sal Castro felt like during the student walkouts of the 1970's. It was a good day to be a Chicana and I felt honored to have been invited to be a part of their celebration and activism. Teachers, activists and little children exited the theaters with their Cesar Chavez t-shirts and United Farm Worker buttons. The theater became a hub of organizing and activism.

The teachers, the local Chicano politicians, the students and community created a Xicana Sacred Space in the midst of their struggle and despite a law that bans their work. I started taking pictures. Soon several people were asking me to take their pictures. It was a historic event and I wanted to collect, archive, process and document this moment so that someday I could recount it to the future generations the way teachers once

recounted to me the students activism of the 1970's. So that during times of drought and struggle they will know that long live the milpa, si se puede and long live the maiz people and their legacy.

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