

Feministas

U n i d a s



A Coalition of Feminist Scholars in Spanish,
Spanish-American, Luso-Brazilian, Afro-Latin American,
and U.S. Latina/o Studies

Selfa A. Chew-Smithart

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About the Artist

Selfa A. Chew-Smithart holds a BA in Communication Sciences from the UNAM (National Autonomous University of Mexico) and a MFA in Creative Writing from the University of Texas at El Paso. She has been an editor for *Border Senses*, *Rio Grande Review* and *Revista de Literatura Mexicana Contemporánea*. She also coordinates the Mexican Contemporary Literature Conference and teaches creative writing. Her work (poetic, graphic, literary and editorial) has been published by a number of periodicals and anthologies in Peru, Spain, Mexico and the United States. Currently, Selfa is a graduate student in the History Department at the University of Texas at El Paso.



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Dear Colleagues and Friends:

As the semester quickly draws to a close and spring finally begins to bud in Buffalo, I send greetings to all.

At the MLA meeting in Philadelphia I had the pleasure of meeting new members and reacquainting myself with founding members as well. Despite the fear that one will hold a meeting and no one will show up, people did make it and we were able to conduct the 2004 Feministas Unidas meeting and set up sessions for the 2005 MLA meeting. Those present at the meeting included Ann Sittig, Stacey Schlau, María Elena Soliño, Sharon Ugalde, Joanna Mitchell, Electa Arenal, Vicki McCard and Sara Cooper.

Given that the last two years we did not succeed in drawing large numbers to the business meeting during a regularly scheduled slot, we decided to go back to the old format and use both slots for panels: one on research and the other on pedagogy. As in the past, we will hold the business meeting in a hotel room and schedule it right before the Presidential address. The two sessions we planned for the 2005 MLA meeting are “Real women have . . . : Teaching the Visual” to be chaired by María Elena Soliño and “Blurring Borders: Theorizing Gloria Anzaldúa” by Sara Cooper.

As I am sure you are aware from the different email exchanges we have been having all semester, we have added new members to the executive ranks. Carmen de Urioste was elected Vice-President and Carmela Ferrdans will now be in charge of the newsletter and the webpage. Please join me in congratulating them for their courage and commitment to the association.

Finally, I would also like to congratulate Emily Hinds for winning this year’s essay contest. Special appreciation to the readers and evaluators: Bernardita Llanos, Cynthia Tompkins, Candyce Leonard and Roselyn Costantino. As usual, the quality of the essays was high and the readers had to make difficult decisions. Thanks to all who submitted essays and please continue to encourage your graduate students to participate as well.

Please keep in mind that we are still planning to celebrate our organization’s 25th anniversary with the edition of a collection of essays of feminist readings in the five areas the organization represents: Spanish, Spanish-American, Luso-Brazilian, Afro-Latin American, and U.S. Hispanic Studies. My idea is to include seminal essays that initiated feminist studies in our respective fields as well as unpublished scholarship that points to new directions. Therefore, I would like to invite current and past members to submit to me or to Beth Jorgensen abstracts and/or essays to be considered for publication, as well as suggestions of essays that you deem ground-breaking.

Have a great summer and hope to see you at the MLA if not before.

Cordially yours,

Margarita Vargas
President of Feministas Unidas



27 de abril de 2005

Mis queridas/os colegas:

Me he puesto triston(a) al pensar que es el último newsletter que sale de ASU, son muchos años (1996-2005)... Sin embargo, confío en que Carmela nos dé el ímpetu para que la publicación se convierta en una revista. Creo que sería más atractivo institucionalmente, ya que entonces habría fondos y servicios disponibles ... Espero que todas/os la ayudemos para que este sueño se haga realidad.

Habrà una transición, y en teoría distribuiríamos la función. Carmela sería la editora del newsletter y de la página web. Su servidora, de secretaria, difundiría las noticias por el listserv y seguiría de *liaison* con el MLA.

Vaya mi reconocimiento a todas las compañeras que han ocupado cargos en *Feministas Unidas*. Como verán en la sección dedicada al 25 aniversario, la lucha ha sido larga y mucha. Cabe pensar en el camino recorrido, tomar conciencia del ingente esfuerzo de las fundadoras, y de todas/os las/las que han colaborado para afianzar esta coalición de *Feminist Scholars in Spanish, Spanish-American, Luso-Brazilian, Afro-Latin American and U.S. Latina/o Studies* a lo largo de cuarto de siglo. Es alentador e impresionante ver cómo se ha ido institucionalizando la disciplina y cómo han progresado nuestras compañeras ...

En términos más prosaicos, quisiera agradecerle a Selfa A. Chew-Smithart el habernos permitido diseminar la obra que adorna la tapa. ¡También a Carmen Amato, cuya intercesión lo hizo posible! A Christine Henseler, como siempre, por el *template*... A Margarita Vargas, por las actas. A Candyce, por todo el trabajo que insume tesorería, por los informes, las listas de membresía, la celeridad de los cheques y ¡la paciencia, cuando lo perdí!

Los mensajitos de las últimas semanas me dejaron muy conmovida, quisiera agradecerles a todos el haberme brindado la oportunidad. H sido un privilegio editar los newsletters. Supongo que en la vida académica son tan pocos los momentos en que vemos algo tangible, así que cada edición brinda una sensación de bienestar.

Es muy difícil no caer en el lugar común, y aunque estoy a los tumbos, siento que la asociación está llena de vida. Las interacciones con todas/os ustedes son las pulsaciones...

Espero que disfruten de las vacaciones, mil disculpas por el atraso de este número...

Con el cariño de siempre, ¡vaya un abrazo!

Cynthia Tompkins



1981 - *Feministas Unidas's* 2005 First 25 Years

Elizabeth Starcevic
(1982-1988)

We were energetic, passionate, insistent and inclusive as we met and talked and talked and talked about how to be visible in a huge organization like the MLA that seemed not to have gotten the message that WOMEN and FEMINISM were part of the present and would be the future. In our hotel rooms, on the floor, on chairs, on the beds, we sat and organized. We wrestled with our name - not the Feministas Unidas part, but the descriptive words that would tell ALL WOMEN in our disciplines that they were welcome and that they should come and take part in this new organization. We worked on our vision, on our structure and as we worked we wove friendships that have lasted to this day. Marilyn Cuneo, our first president, led us to think about structure and institutionalization. Gloria Waldman and I shared the presidency next. We pushed to become an allied organization of the MLA and that status, which continues till today, meant that we were assured of having our sessions included and that we no longer had to meet in someone's hotel room. Conscious of our role as feminist academics our sessions have focused on the "how" we teach as well as the "what" we teach. So many wonderful women have been president, vice president and secretary since then. You have all moved us forward in so many important ways. Our existence as an academic organization has helped many women move forward in their careers. As a network of women at all stages of our professional lives, sisterhood has meant including women on panels so that they can be visible to their institution, writing letters for tenure cases, reviewing the new books of our colleagues, making a call on behalf of a new teacher or to someone who needs a bit of support. The backbone of our organization has been our newsletter heroically produced for so many years by our dear colleague Linda Fox. To the editors that have followed, please keep the newsletter coming.

Of course things are different today. The pressures on us as part of an academic climate that is under siege are intense. Yet our need to be part of the ongoing discussions about the future of our institutions and to be visible to the students who attend them remains a constant. Wherever we are in our careers and personal chronology, we have so much to contribute! So adelante dear hermanas, adelante.



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(2005-06)



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Marilyn Cuneo
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Rosemary Geisdorfer Feal
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Lynn Talbot
Treasurer (1995-1999)

Candyce Leonard
Treasurer (1999 - present)

Secretary

Roslyn Frank
Secretary (1981)

Lisa Vollendorf

Feministas Unidas gave me a grant that helped fund my first trip to the MLA Convention in 1995. I remember going to the business reception and meeting many wonderful feminists whose work I admired deeply. It was clear at the meeting that the group was committed to politically progressive research and teaching, and also to intergenerational support of scholars at all ranks. In this way, feminists helped initiate me into a positive sub-culture of academia, giving me hope that feminist networks existed that would help nurture me and other junior people like me as I moved through the ranks. I am pleased to say that Feministas helped give me confidence to be a profesora feminista, and also that some of the most important intellectual and professional contacts I have made have been through our organization. I feel indebted to Feministas Unidas for keeping me connected to other feminists in the academy.

Catherine Bellver

I remember when Feministas Unidas meetings consisted of dozens of us crowding into someone's small hotel room at the MLA. We often had to sit on the bed or the floor. We not only discussed possible topics for MLA sessions, but also strategies for securing allied status as well as the advisability of using the word "Feministas" in our name. Many of those early members have over the years made a mark on the profession as leader in many different organizations, as published scholars, or as enduring feminists. Feminism has become established in the Academy and for some is a thing of the past superseded by gender and cultural studies, but when Feministas Unidas began, feminist criticism could be professionally risky. The organization encouraged the efforts of female Hispanists entering this new field and it contributed, by its very existence, the legitimization of feminist studies evident today.

Luzma Umpierre

Feministas Unidas ha sido un verdadero apoyo en mi carrera en tiempos de horrores y alegrías. A través de los años me he sentido parte de un grupo de personas que, en su mayoría, tiene ideales en épocas en que vivimos o hemos vivido en este país donde los ideales son pisoteados en el mundillo académico. No todo ha sido "smooth sailing" pero siento que esta organización alberga mas diversidad que el caucus de mujeres del MLA y por ello, me alegra mucho que sobreviva, a pesar de los pesares, como decimos en Puerto Rico. Gracias a Linda Fox por habernos hecho entender que aunque no estuviéramos de acuerdo con otras mujeres, todas teníamos albergue y el poder de nuestra voz con igualdad en esta organización.



Newsletter Editors



Cynthia Margarita Tompkins

Newsletter Editor & Secretary
(1996 - 2005)

(Secretary 2005--)

Carmela Farrandans

Newsletter Editor
(2005 - present)

Linda Fox

Newsletter Editor (1981 - 1996)

Puesto que soy una de las socias fundadoras de Feministas Unidas (y conste que el nombre de Feministas Unidas - el cual discutimos mucho, mucho - vale tanto hoy como en aquella época) os quiero expresar a vosotras el placer que todavía siento al haber sido la primera editora del Newsletter tantos años (entre 1980-1995 - ¿o fue hasta 1996, Cyn?). En aquellos tiempos solía “alquilar” el tiempo de alguien que me lo pudiera pasar a máquina (en el comienzo no había computadora), con anuncios fotocopiados intercalados. Después de hacerlo copiar, me sentaba en el piso de mi despacho universitario a colocar las etiquetas a mano, preparando todos los ejemplares para el correo en forma “bulk mail.” Y fui yo - no teníamos estudiantes graduados. A pesar de lo mucho que hemos progresado, lo que no han desaparecido son la unidad al compartir entre nosotras noticias e información tanto en el Newsletter como en MLA y en otros sitios y el deseo de alentar a las nuevas generaciones de mujeres a que sobrevivan y sobresalgan en la vida. Da orgullo que esta asociación celebre ahora 25 años de existencia. ¡Adelante, hermanas, a los 25 próximos, y con orgullo de ser tanto feministas como unidas!



About the New Editor

Queridas colegas y amigas,
antes de nada, agradecer a Cynthia Tompkins y al comité ejecutivo por brindarme la oportunidad de editar el Newsletter y de encargarme de la página web de *Feministas Unidas*. Es una tarea que asumo con muchísimo entusiasmo. También debo agradecerle a mi colega en Illinois Wesleyan Joanna Mitchell por haberme dado los primeros contactos con Cynthia. Mi sueño sería poder hacer de este Newsletter una de las revistas de crítica cultural más reconocida y respetada en la academia. Estoy intentando buscar dinero para este proyecto, y por supuesto, estoy abierta a vuestras sugerencias e ideas.

Suerte con todo el trabajo de fin de curso y que tengáis un verano estupendo y relajado.

Un abrazo,

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tf 309 556315



Feministas Unidas Sessions at the MLA

Blurring Borders: Theorizing Gloria Anzaldúa

Chair: Sara E. Cooper
California State University, Chico

AnaLouise Keating
Texas Women's University
"Revolutionizing Contemporary Theories: Anzaldúa's Politics of Spirit"

Cristina Ferreira-Pinto Bailey
Independent Scholar
"Gloria Anzaldúa's 'New Mestiza' and Her Sisters: Language, Resistance, and Female Identity"

Mikko Tuhkanen
East Carolina University
"Gloria Anzaldúa and Involuntary Queer Theory"

Suzanne Bost
Southern Methodist University
"Mourning Gloria: Moving Beyond the Body's Borders in the Wake of Anzaldúa's Death"

Real Women Have...: Teaching the Visual

Latinas, Sex and the City: From Real Women Have Curves to María Full of Grace.
Juanita Heredia, Northern Arizona University

Magazines, Newspapers and Prime Time: How to Use Print and Visual Media in the Classroom.
Emma R. García, Colby College

Beyond Frida: Enriching a Postmodern Literature Course with Art by Spanish American Women
Joanna Bartow, St. Mary's College of Maryland

Skirting the Virtual Minefields: Using the Internet to Teach the Visual Arts
María Elena Soliño, University of Houston



Publications

Carlota Caulfield

Carlota Caulfield's *Ticket to Ride* is a collection of poems, essays, and interviews. It is an autobiographical evocation of the author's family history, in particular, a beautiful homage to her mother. Written over a period of years—from 1995 to 2005—these pieces make up a life as it is being lived and imagined. In them we find the poet's playful irony. Caulfield, like her beloved painter Giuseppe Arcimboldo, loves intellectual puzzles.

"With *Ticket to Ride*, Carlota Caulfield celebrates her 17 years as an internationally recognized poet of her time, revealing to readers eager to delve into the mystery of the creative enterprise the alchemical sources of her unique voice.

"

—Cecile Pineda, author of *Fishlight: A Dream of Childhood*

"Carlota Caulfield's work combines intelligence and charm with a taste for both history and the surreal. Sometimes heartbreaking, often humorous, always passionate, this collection of essays and poems by one of the most imaginative and original Cuban writers displays her captivating versatility and allows us to enter into that special space called 'poetry.'"

—Jack Foley, Author of *O Powerful Western Star. Poetry & Art in California*

"A 'calico woman' indeed, Carlota Caulfield beautifully weaves her diverse ethnic and cultural background, family reminiscences and memories of exile with her love for art, friendship, mystery, and life. *Ticket to Ride*, a lyrical memoir, is at the same time a talented poet's look at a disconcerting world and a magical journey of personal discovery."

—Teresa Dovalpage, author of *Posesas de La Habana*

Like a good perfume, Carlota Caulfield's *Ticket to Ride* has a signature. She creates an unusual *sillage*—that olfactory wake that trails behind her words and remains with you.

—Tobías Wincklemann, author of *Ça sent bon: I'm a virtual perfumer*

Awarded the First Hispanic American International Poetry Prize "Dulce María Loynaz" and other honors, Carlota Caulfield is the author of nine collections of poetry. She lives in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Published by Hurricane, An imprint of *InteliBooks* Publishers

ISBN 0-9711391-6-4

FOR MORE INFORMATION Contact: Franco González/ InteliBooks@mail2web.com



Rosario Torres

Rosario Torres publicó “La mujer en la publicidad” en Cruz, Jacqueline Cruz & Barbara Zecchi. *¿Evolución o involución?: Mujer, cultura y sociedad en la España del cambio de siglo* Icaria: Barcelona, 2004

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www.lalibreriadelaU.com

(tal cual con U mayuscula)
 Click sobre U. Javeriana
 Luego Click sobre categorías
 Sociología, sociedad y cultura
 Y allí aparecerá
 A partir del 1 de mayo, 2005.

Chloe Rutter

Chloe Rutter publicó *Pasarela Paralela: Escenarios de la estética y el poder en los reinados de belleza*. Centro Editorial Javeriana, Bogotá, 2005. Es una compilación de 8 capítulos que tratan el tema de las reinas desde diversas perspectivas (incluyendo historia, ciencia política, literatura, estudios de raza, estudios queer, antropología, y movimiento corporal). El objetivo de este libro es analizar las representaciones de las reinas y los reinados con el fin de desnaturalizar los discursos que rodean el reinando, el cuerpo femenino y la identidad nacional en Colombia. Este libro responde a la sentida necesidad de disponer de textos actuales y críticos de estudios culturales en nuestro medio que ofrezcan perspectivas sobre lo colombiano.

<http://www.lalibreriadelaU.com/catalog/>

News

Luzma Umpierre

The Margarita Poems and ...y otras desgracias by Dr. Luzma Umpierre have been chosen to be part of a project on Latino Literature by Alexander Street Press. The project publishes the books on the web through one time purchase of perpetual rights or through annual subscription.

Umpierre's poetic dialogue with Sandra Esteves will appear in the Fifth Edition of the Norton Anthology of American Literature.

Several new poems have appeared in *Chicana/Latina Studies* 4.1 (Fall 2004).

She was a Guest Writer at Williams College as part of a Celebration of Diversity



Book Reviews / Reseñas

Berg, Mary G. Ed. *Open Your Eyes and Soar: Cuban Women Writing Now*. Buffalo, New York: White Pine Press, 2003. 188pp.

Starting in the late 1990s, Cuban writers and U.S. academics began to collaborate in the much needed task of introducing contemporary Cuban fiction and poetry to American audiences eager to hear new voices from the island. The most recent anthology of that kind, edited by Mary Berg, *Open Your Eyes and Soar*, represents a valiant effort of traveling to Havana on a regular basis, consulting with major Cuban literary critics such as Luisa Campusano, and compiling hundreds of short stories from which to edit and then translate. This anthology is a most wonderful resource for those of us who teach Cuban, Caribbean or Latin American literature in translation.

Berg's collection, translated by a team of seven translators and academics from various American universities, provides a much needed introduction not only to the already known, but also newly emerging writers who respond to Cuba's reality of the nineties: the Special Period, emigration of mothers and the consequences to children left behind, depression, tourism, prostitution (jineterismo), definition of women's sexuality and love, and the reaction to the presence of Soviets in Cuban culture (Vega Serova's "Russian Food"). This anthology responds to what Luisa Campusano, director of the Women's Studies program at Casa de las Américas, has termed "an explosion of feminine narrative" starting in the 1990s. According to Campusano, in the introduction to the collection, these narratives record "the contradictions between life conditions achieved by women during the revolutionary period, the seeming reversal of these achievements in the early '90s, and the subsequent strategies with which women have risen to this challenge" (11). She goes on to state that "the difficulties of the 90s are approached laterally, with humor and irony" (12).

Open Your Eyes and Soar collects short fiction from ten Cuban writers and provides an excellent bibliography of the author's works and of their available criticism. This anthology chooses to include two stories from each of the writers, thus providing depth to their voices. Some of these stories allude structurally to cinematic, popular and literary models such as Franz Kafka as in Sonia Bravo Utrera's "Sandra," in which the narrator states: "Rather than become a Kafkaesque insect to protest an unfair society I became a *puuuuta*, but of course I did it as an act of genuine protest" (172). In "At the Back of the Cemetery," Ena Lucía Portela gives us a new version of Julio Cortázar's "House Taken Over," as an allegory of the disintegration of Cuban morality and the invasion of home spaces by civil bureaucracy. In "Mare Atlanticum," Mylene Fernández Pintado alludes to the nostalgia of a Cuban song by Silvio Rodríguez; in "The Eye of the Night," Karla Suárez inverts the ending of *Rear Window* by Alfred Hitchcock so that the character being observed by the insomniac is not a murderer but a happy man. This short story also dialogues with Gutiérrez Alea's *Memories of Underdevelopment*. Mirta Yáñez writes a cinematically crafted tale of a hurricane devastating a group of young revolutionaries in "Fifita Calls Us in the Morning." The most touching stories, at least to this reader, engage the topic of emigration as it affects those who stay behind, particularly children. These include Ana Lidia Vega Serova's "Pied Piper Picked a Peck," and Ena Lucía Portela's "At the Back of the Cemetery."

Mary Berg's collection must be applauded for establishing a dialogue with Cuban writers and critics and by opening our eyes to a contestatory literary period in Cuba. Besides, it is a very good read.

Flora M. González,
Emerson College



Jimenez Faro, Luzmaría, *Beloved Angels* (traducido por Roberta Gordenstein), Madrid: Torremozas 2004.

La exquisita poesía de la poeta española Luzmaría Jiménez Faro nos llega, por primera vez en inglés, en un breve volumen publicado por la editorial Torremozas. Titulada *Beloved Angels (Amados ángeles)* la colección de veinte poemas no por breve deja de ser abarcadora: desde los míticos o cabalísticos arcángeles (Gabriel, Miguel, Raziél) hasta los más habituales ángeles de la guarda y la expresión popular “ha pasado un ángel”, la poeta nos adentra en un refinado universo donde lo sublime y lo cotidiano (y lo sublime de lo cotidiano) se entrelazan para producir una hermosa experiencia poética que es, a la vez, sutil y directa.

El prólogo al poemario es un excelente ensayo escrito por el poeta Juan M. Aguirre, quien pasa una mirada perspicaz a los poemas, ubicando al lector en el mundo de referencias (religiosas, literarias, de la vida diaria) relevantes a su lectura.

Traducir poesía es difícil, casi imposible dirán algunos. Traducir un poema implica re-escribirlo; un delicado balanceo de versiones que terminan complementándose. Por lo general, la traductora (Roberta Gordenstein) realiza una cuidadosa labor, a pesar de que hay algunos poemas donde se pierde la fluidez (de forma y sentido) del original. Esto puede deberse a la complejidad o al lenguaje de un poema en particular, pero a veces son las palabras escogidas en la traducción. Pienso, por ejemplo, en el extraordinario poema *Angeles sin alas*. Simplemente, hay que leerlo en el original. Asimismo, escoger otra palabra (o no escogerla) hubiera mejorado la versión en inglés de otros poemas de la colección. Por ejemplo, en el poema *Angel de la guarda*, hubiera sido preferible eliminar la palabra “their” para que quedara claro que es en las bocas de otros donde las niñas pierden su inocencia. Sin embargo, la traducción del poemario, visto en su totalidad, refleja la excelencia del original y hay que reconocer el talento de la traductora. Algunas de las traducciones mejor logradas son: *Angel de la poesía*, *Los ángeles pequeños de las cosas*, *El ángel caído*, *Angel del cementerio*, *Extásis angélico*, *Arcángel Raziél*, *Coro de ángeles*.

Por último, quisiera lamentar el hecho de que los lectores no podamos apreciar, lado a lado, ambos poemas: el original y su versión al inglés. Al relegar los textos en español al final del libro, aglomerados y en letra pequeña, se le impide al lector la experiencia del original junto a su traducción, lo que constituye, en mi opinión, una verdadera edición bilingüe. Aunque el lector no sea bilingüe. Porque hay algo de homenaje (necesario) en la experiencia de una lectura que reconoce su origen mientras refuerza su condición de versión. Leemos la fragilidad implícita en toda traducción y de alguna manera — especialmente cuando se trata de poesía de tan alta calidad como la de Luzmaría Jiménez Faro — participamos de la doble fuerza de lo frágil: el misterio nombrado, el misterio reconocido. Por lo demás, la edición cuidadosamente preparada del libro es de alta calidad, como solemos esperar de la prestigiosa editorial Torremozas. Le damos la bienvenida (al inglés) a esta gran poeta española.

Blanca Anderson
Loyola University New Orleans



Natalia Gómez. *Lur*. Madrid: Ediciones Torremozas/Jacarandá, 2004.

In these minimalist impressions, meditations on language the poet harnesses and transforms ordinary events and encounters. At times we tunnel up from memory. Or we're engaged humbly, directly via Charlie Chaplin's "docto delincente" of whom the poet asks "sólo tu ropa" while skipping, performing mental piruetas, and the Chaplin-esque play. She reminds us teachers how any "exam" might be "de conciencia." Also recalling the mournful Tramp is the meditation on envelopes with no return address ("Sin Remitente"), a delicate metaphor for absence and loss.

Many of the poems spin out from deliciously undefined, open-ended subjects ("Entre Espacios" and "La Ciudad") but maintaining, like a tightrope artist, a fine balance of abstract with concrete. The more mysterious the onset, as in "Palabrerías," the clearer the commitment to readers as interlocutors. Thus in writing of "tiempo": "el tiempo se compra/se tira, se cambia/se intercambia,/se prostituye;/es propiedad privada." Verses offer alternatives to time-as-money, name the immediate, the shared: "el tiempo amado...el momento, la emoción/el ofrecimiento, la respiración/...el pellizo del alma/al servicio del corazón."

The carefully chosen vocabulary of LUR (Basque for Earth, *Terruño*) redefines abstractions, balancing the definiteness of landscape with the metaphysics of sleep, absence. The poems most anchored in abstractions, such as "Norte," are paradoxically the most concrete in establishing identity. The poet details with aching clarity the too-familiar experience of having one's sense of belonging stripped away: "Dicen que no pertenezco a mi tierra...dicen, que no tengo tierra." The antidote is compassion, as in the Chaplinesque poet, or as in "Norte": "pueblo del norte, te llevo con dolor." By way of compassion, the topic of time's slow passage, even in facing death, in "Idilio de Muerte" rises above the ego, but without renouncing the tactile. The creation of intimate landscapes in open, generous language might be best exemplified in the two brief poems bearing the title "cuentos de infancia." Intimate landscape likewise opens out: "Sanidad en Santiago" puns on "Sanidad" in this homage to César Vallejo.

Many of these poems open as puzzles and become adivinanzas that play with the magic circle of alma and historia. Thus "Juegos de Azar," which begins with the open invitation of "Medito sobre el puzzle de tu cuerpo" and closes with the evocative promise, "en sus manos guardo el aroma del sueño." These poems offer a luminous dialogue from a poet who, roaming this round and wrinkled world, finds hope in paradox: "Amanecer de luna, el día empieza."

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Mujeres y cine en América Latina. Coordinación de Patricia Torres San Martín. Guadalajara: Universidad de Guadalajara. 2004. 182 pp.

Este libro es una memoria del “Encuentro de mujeres y cine en América Latina” que se llevó a cabo del 5 al 7 de marzo de 2002 en la ciudad de Guadalajara en el marco de la XVII Muestra de cine mexicano. Patricia Torres San Martín, investigadora de cine de la Universidad de Guadalajara, se dio a la tarea de convocar a una serie de realizadoras de países tales como Brazil, Colombia, México, Perú, Puerto Rico y Venezuela. En primer término, se debe reconocer la importancia de un encuentro de esta naturaleza que viene a revalorar el cine realizado por mujeres en América Latina. Aunque las mujeres han sido, desde los inicios del cine, una parte integral del proceso de la actividad cinematográfica como editoras, guionistas y directoras, no se les ha dado el valor y reconocimiento que merecen. Este volumen es una muestra inobjetable de su valiosa contribución al cine latinoamericano y de su papel cada vez más activo en la producción filmica del continente.

El volumen no sólo recopila las intervenciones de las cineastas sino que además incluye las presentaciones que de ellas hicieron diversos especialistas en cine latinoamericano, así como las preguntas del público asistente al evento. La memoria publicada conserva el mismo orden temático del encuentro. “De la crónica al poema” recoge las intervenciones de cuatro documentalistas: Margot Benacerraf (Venezuela, 1926), Marta Rodríguez (Colombia, 1938), Mari Carmen de Lara (México, 1957) y Sonia Fritz (ésta última nacida en México en 1963 y radicada desde 1985 en Puerto Rico). Al segundo día del encuentro correspondió la mesa de discusión titulada “Los relatos de la historia y las historias de ficción”, en la que se presentaron los trabajos de Marcela Fernández Violante (México, 1941), Marianne Eyde (Perú, 1949) y Berta Navarro (México, 1943). Ésta última habló fundamentalmente de su labor como productora de cintas como *El norte*, *Cabeza de Vaca*, *Cronos*, *Men with Guns*, entre otras. “Rupturas, encuentros y diversidad de lenguajes y narrativas” fue el tema de la tercera sesión y tocó el turno a las obras filmicas de Tata Amaral (Brazil, 1961) y Eva López-Sánchez (México, 1954). Finalmente, el último día del encuentro estuvo dedicado a las videoastas Ximena Cuevas (México, 1963) y Naomi Uman (Estados Unidos, 1962) en la sesión “Aquelarre, la magia experimental”. El volumen está bellamente ilustrado con fotografías de las realizadoras y de los filmes en cuestión.

Mujeres y cine en América Latina pone a dialogar a cineastas de por lo menos tres generaciones que han incursionado tanto en el cine de ficción como en el documental. Se dieron cita en Guadalajara desde pioneras como Margot Benacerraf y Marta Rodríguez hasta las más recientes promociones de directoras como Mari Carmen de Lara o videoastas como Ximena Cuevas. El diálogo fue fructífero: se habló de la concepción de sus obras filmicas, de las prácticas cinematográficas actuales, de los problemas de la distribución de los filmes latinoamericanos, de los nuevos lenguajes en el ámbito audiovisual, entre otros temas. También estuvo presente el cuestionamiento de si el cine de mujeres supone o no una intervención necesariamente feminista. Fue interesante constatar que muchas de las cineastas se negaron a admitir que sus propuestas cinematográficas estuvieran pautadas por su género. ¿Acaso la propuesta de una visión feminista en el cine hecho por mujeres es más una preocupación de la crítica especializada que de las propias realizadoras? ¿Estamos en presencia de una de las tretas del débil? En el volumen se incluyen dos ensayos que abordan esta problemática escritos por dos de los estudiosos del cine que estuvieron presentes en el encuentro, Julia Tuñón (México) y José Carlos Avellar (Brazil).

El cine de América Latina forma parte de una memoria colectiva sujeta a constantes reformulaciones. Es esencial la participación de los/las cineastas, al lado de académicos e investigadores, para la preservación de esta memoria. La publicación de este encuentro de mujeres directoras vendrá a enriquecer en gran medida el acervo documental del cine latinoamericano. Más allá del dato académico o la anécdota interesante, el lector encontrará en este volumen el testimonio de la firme voluntad de tomar una cámara de cine para convertirse en sujeto de un discurso imaginativo, íntimo, emancipador, libre, que es esencial para comprender el mundo de nuestros días.

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Espido Freire *Cuentos malvados*. Madrid: Suma de Letras, 2003.

Cuentos malvados compila 99 relatos hiperbreves desarrollados en sendos párrafos organizados en torno a 7 temas propios de los cuentos de hadas, la mitología, las leyendas urbanas y el folclore. Antes de convertirse en el año 2000 en la más joven ganadora del Premio Planeta, Espido Freire (Bilbao, 1974) ya había experimentado prolíficamente con la escritura jugando a modificar narrativas tradicionales. Fruto de la anotación durante años de sus ideas más espontáneas y atrevidas de adolescente, la escritora publica en edición de bolsillo este conjunto de ocurrencias inquietantes.

Después de abordar diversos géneros literarios (entre ellos la novela, la poesía y el ensayo), Espido Freire recurre al relato hiperbreve con el propósito de revisar ficciones familiares para el lector. Sus diminutos cuentos malvados complican y ponen en entredicho nociones tradicionales del bien y del mal, insinúan nuevas formas de percibir la realidad y recrean un universo habitado por madrastras que se sienten solas y lloran tras envenenar a Blancanieves o ángeles sin alas ni espíritu. La alusión a historias y leyendas extraídas del imaginario colectivo resulta constante, pero se realiza de forma original y crítica de la mano de Cenicientas de pies hinchados (imposibles de calzar tras un día caluroso) y herederas que rompen moldes: “En la noche de bodas el príncipe descubrió que ella no era virgen. La princesa no se creyó obligada a dar ningún tipo de explicaciones. Al fin y al cabo, ¿a quién le importaba lo que hubiera ocurrido hacía ciento dos años?”¹

Cuentos... se inscribe coherentemente en la trayectoria narrativa de Freire desde el punto de vista temático; en el año 2000, su ensayo *Primer Amor* ofrecía una reflexión sobre los orígenes de las nociones de amor romántico, de feminidad y de masculinidad contemporáneas; tras analizar en dicho volumen los arquetipos contenidos en las historias para niños, esta colección de ingenios retoma el tema para transformar tales prototipos fácilmente reconocibles, cuyo sentido depende de la diferenciación mutua, en imprevisibles protagonistas. Los cuentos de hadas relatados por la escritora no abastecen de validaciones míticas del comportamiento considerado tradicionalmente como femenino, sino que sugieren su carácter más bien escapista o nostálgico, apuntando a la diferencia entre la práctica y la idealización romántica. Desde su breve formato, estos 99 discursos sugieren una revisión considerable de narrativas más convencionales. Cabría añadir al respecto que probablemente sorprendan a la seguidora de Freire tanto esta técnica, como el formato en edición de bolsillo; frente a la riqueza descriptiva o la accesibilidad de sus libros anteriores, *Cuentos malvados* se caracteriza por la concisión, el hermetismo y lo personal del estilo.

¹ Espido Freire. *Cuentos Malvados*. Madrid: Suma de letras, 2001, 104.

Rosario Torres
Penn State Berks-Lehigh Valley College



Feministas Unidas Essay Prize

El ensayo premiado se titula: “De Rosario Castellanos al Hombre Ilustre, o, Entre dicho y hecho hay un problemático pecho” y su autora es Emily Hind.



January 26, 2005

A Third Degree of Alienation: Chicana, Lesbian, and Feminist Identities in Gloria Anzaldúa's
Autobiographical Work.

María Claudia André

Because I, a *mestiza*,
continually walk out of one culture
and into another,
because I am in all cultures at the same time.

It is indeed thanks to Gloria Anzaldúa and Cherrie Moraga's groundbreaking anthology *This Bridge Called My Back* (1981)¹ that we are now able to discuss and even begin to conceive theoretical approaches on the works of Chicanas, Latinas and minority women writers in the United States. In the years following the publication of this influential collection there has been an increasing interest in the critical study of texts written by women of color worldwide and, even more recently, researchers and scholars have come to understand the urgency to further explore gender, ethnic and class relationships within the multiple disciplines in order to determine the extent to which such relationships are being affected or manipulated by hegemonic structures of power. Using the metaphor of her own back as a bridge, Anzaldúa's critical essays are among the first texts to encourage minorities and subaltern groups not only to continue to gather, but also to create new strategies for social change.

Both in her collections of creative pieces as well as in her own autobiographical accounts, Anzaldúa reflects on the conflictive experience of growing and surviving in a conglomerate of cultures not always receptive and accepting of each other's values, morals, and behavioral patterns. Being herself a product of a complex socio-cultural environment, most of her critical writings focus on those historical, racial, and political differences among marginal segments living on the periphery, or "borderlands," particularly pinpointing the mechanisms that perpetuate their oppression and their exclusion from society's mainstream discourses.

For their innovative approach and diversified multicultural perspectives, Anzaldúa's critical collections have become immediate bestsellers, and are today a significant part of the third-world literary tradition. It is in her autobiographical accounts, however, that the Chicana writer brings her readers closer to the core of her spiritual, intellectual, physical, and emotional quest as she reveals very intimate aspects of her personal life and her own struggle for individual and collective freedom. As it would be impossible to fully explore the implications of Anzaldúa's racial politics, critical discourses, and creative acts as manifested in all of her literary works, in the following essay, I intend to outline a brief cartography on the many constellations of the writer's kaleidoscopic identity as reflected in her autoreferential writings and personal interviews. Such a mapping of Anzaldúa's multiple configurations will not only allow us to visualize the complexities and the level of sophistication of the writer's discourse, but within a wider context, it will also enhance our understanding of the ways in which psychoanalytic theories of gender identity and gender acquisition may work to improve the quality of life of minority women and marginal sectors of society today. To accomplish this task, we must first begin by exploring the extent [in -> to] which post-structuralist theoretical discourses, such as postmodernism and deconstruction, have influenced Anzaldúa's work and vision.

Perhaps one of the most significant features of Anzaldúa's ideological agenda consists of the reconfiguration of totalizing theories of identity into new paradigms of social criticism unrestrained by traditional categorizations of Western logic. Completely detached from hegemonic schools of thought, Anzaldúa's narratives ascribe to an increasing volume of third world literature working as an antidote to what Valentine Moghadam calls Westoxication or Westitis, "a plague from the West, a phenomenon of excessive Westernization that renders



members (usually those with a Western education) of the community alienated from their own culture.”²

The growing challenge presented by deconstructive and postmodern discourses over traditional notions of truth, reality, and knowledge as interpreted by Western traditions has enabled the diversification of theoretical approaches regarding social and cultural expression. Such reconfigurations have shaken the foundations of institutionalized systems of oppression based on gender, race, and socio-cultural differences. Anzaldúa’s works stem directly from this intricate network to speak in favor of minority sectors of society that, through the years, have been discriminated and ostracized from relevant circles of political performance.

Contrary to the beliefs of feminist critics such as bell hooks and Marilyn Edelsteing³ who perceive that postmodernism—upon problematizing identity and questioning its essence—eliminates the possibility of both individual and collective agency, Anzaldúa’s reflections on identity and subjectivity never fail to demonstrate how agency may be acquired and become a powerful tool to change oneself and/or the world. For the Chicana writer, critical consciousness is a fundamental component that may both enable a person to achieve agency and, at the same time, disarm those psychological mechanisms that may tarnish an individual’s perception of him/herself. In fact, in order to fully comprehend how subjectivity and autonomy are constructed, one must take a closer look at Anzaldúa’s reflexive writings in which she “re-members”⁴ her own life experiences while simultaneously “dismembers” her own individuality into the literary text. In her autobiographical accounts, the writer’s narrative persona is allowed to roam, to reposition, and to conceptualize him/her/itself into a myriad of alternative or “borderland” identities that reside within her own being. Such disintegration and reformulation of her essence serves, on the one hand, as a favorable tactic of resistance against becoming tokenized, and on the other, it becomes an invaluable tool to disrupt homogeneous configurations of femininity and womanhood.

Seeking to dismantle codified constructs of women and in constant pursuit of polysemic figures through which identity and gender limitations may be transformed, the Chicana tejana lesbian-feminist poet’s⁵ autobiographical “I” shifts from a communal “We” to a self-referential “I,” and then to a comprehensive “Us” narrator who continually switches from English into Spanish, then from Mexican-Spanish into Caló, or Spanglish, and so on, to further explore other avenues of identity and language.⁶ As Anzaldúa’s narratives consistently reveal, neither the Chicana nor the lesbian identity are constituted and fixed within a particular frame, but are fluid, always in the process of becoming, and as such, they challenge the rigid systems of representation constructed by Western thought.

Resisting categorization of any kind, Anzaldúa’s complex subject also sets up to dismantle the idea of sexual “in-difference” which, as Luce Irigaray proposes, restraints every representation of sexuality.⁷ In her essay on identity politics and self-representation tactics in marginal discourses, Ana Louise Keating’s notes that self-identified lesbians of color, like Anzaldúa, develop configurations of identity that efface bipolar constructs by challenging traditional humanist notions of a unitary self. Along this process, “They use their epistemic privilege performatively to negotiate diverse sets of socially constructed spaces.”⁸ Writers like Anzaldúa, who their subjectivity through writing, assume both complex and multiple speaking positions from which they are able to further explore and “interlock”⁹ a whole spectrum of issues dealing with ethnic, sexual, cultural and social class.

Judith Roof endorses Anzaldúa’s perception that the legitimization of plural identities and the inclusion of alternative systems of representation that challenge the foundations of institutionalized power both strengthen and diversify postmodern mappings of feminist territories of gender, race, and class. In her essay, “Lesbians and Lyotard: Legitimization and the Politics of the Name,” Roof explores how postmodern and lesbian discourses – emerging from similar historical conditions– have sought to represent the divergent and the unrepresentable (or that which attempts to represent it). For Roof, “the lesbian and the postmodern appear to be analogous, if not a related phenomena. Their connection is further nourished by the haunting similarity of at least some of their



cultural configurations such as the questioning of subjectivities, knowledge, and truth.”¹⁰ The postmodern stress on fragmentation, plurality of discourses, and the rejection of organic unity of thought are, according to Roof, empowering elements that continually redefine gender positions and identities making them more significant within the context of broader issues relevant to the socio-cultural praxis.

Reflecting upon her own experience, Anzaldúa’s writings —such as *Borderlands* and *This Bridge*— exceed the margins of traditional self-narrative forms fitting into the frame of “testimonio”, a hybrid genre which, as John Beverly identifies “is told in the first person by a narrator who is also the real protagonist or witness of the events he or she recounts, and whose unit of narration is usually a ‘life’ or a significant life experience.”¹¹ The narrator of the “testimonio” speaks as an agent in the name of a social class or a whole community about issues dealing with repression, poverty, subalterity, imprisonment, and political struggle. Marked by the desire of being heard, the testimonial voice “constitutes an affirmation of the individual self in a collective mode.”¹² In recent years, testimonial narratives that reflect upon the life experiences of Chicanos have become increasingly popular since, as Francisco Lomelí and Donaldo Urioste note, “...the uniqueness of Chicano reality is such that non-Chicanos rarely capture it like it is” and as such, it requires specific codes of representation that reflect upon punctual configurations and features characteristic of this ethnic group.¹³

Testimonies of Chicana writers often explore how their minority status has shaped their upbringing and affected their present lives. Longing for equal opportunities to become independent from racial, class and gender discrimination, younger Chicana women often feel guilty about their personal choices as their family and community often condemn any expression of feminine individuality. The dreams of individual and sexual freedom are, as Tey Diana Rebolledo examines, “internal ones, self-reflective and not revealed even to female friends and relatives, yet now, surprisingly enough, revealed to us, the readers. The confessional tone of their narratives reflect upon societal restrictions and conventions that undermine younger women’s individuality and self-confidence.”¹⁴

So as to avoid rejection from the community, Chicana lesbians, in particular, have learnt to repress those unacceptable or deviant aspects that might be condemned by the rest of the community, finding it extremely hard to balance social expectations and demands with the needs of their own sexual identity.¹⁵ In her testimonies, Anzaldúa refers to such internalized oppression or “intimate terrorism,” as the Shadow-Beast, a part of herself that refuses to take orders from outside authorities. According to the author, the Shadow-Beast “refuses to take orders from my conscious will, it threatens the sovereignty of my rulership. It is a part of me that hates constraints of any kind, even those self-imposed.”¹⁶

However, such rebellious feelings and alienation are assuaged by entering what Anzaldúa calls the “Coatlicue” state, an empowering and deep level of meditation that allows both the positive and the negative sides of identity to emerge. The Pre-Columbian goddess creator stands for Anzaldúa, as a symbol of the instinctual in its collective impersonal, in the pre-human form. She embodies the symbol of the dark sexual drive, the underworld, “the feminine, the serpentine movement of sexuality, of creativity, the basis of all energy and life.”¹⁷ The Coatlicue State, in Anzaldúa’s perception, is a means to mediate and survive between the borders of Mexican, Anglo, and various indigenous cultures, languages, and values as it allows for the formulation of a metaphysical realm where issues of gender, race, and class may be identified, and perhaps internally resolved. In this conciliatory zone in which bipolar constructs are allowed to bleed into one another, sexual as well as oral components are able to intermingle producing a hybrid language and a collective being that “captures the multiplicity within the speaking subject and resists the seductive call to recuperation into the power of the one and the same tongue.”¹⁸

Triggered by an intense connection to the feminine libidinal economy and channeled through the act of writing, such propitiatory site enhances the identity’s capacity to efface the borders between the spiritual and the physical, the semiotic and the symbolic, the conscious and unconscious, thus transporting the authorial voice into the realm of the ancestral collective. Significantly, Anzaldúa’s perception towards self-expression and the creative practice matches that of French feminist critic Hélène Cixous, who sees writing as a self-empowering tool to



reconfigure traditionally misconstrued subjectivities of the feminine, of womanhood, and above all, of the self. Cixous believes that, in order to find our true voice, we must first lose ourselves in writing, because, “one can write ‘only’ by losing oneself, by going astray.”¹⁹ In many ways, however, Anzaldúa exceeds Cixous’s perception since her writing is also a mechanism for the development of an epistemology of transcendence that inscribes all women as well as all aspects of life:

By writing I put order in the world, give it a handle so I can grasp it....I write to record what others erase when I speak, to rewrite the stories others have miswritten about me, about you. To become more intimate with myself and you. To discover myself, to preserve myself, to make myself, to achieve self-autonomy. To convince myself that I am worthy... Finally I write because I’m scared of writing but I am more scared of not writing.²⁰

Placing herself as a role model, the Chicana author urges us to ease ourselves into the dynamics of writing through the abandonment of the self, by letting go of all signs of internal censorship, by surrendering to the internal tension of oppositions, and by falling into the “metate” (grinding stone) to be ground with corn and water to finally be constructed as Nahuatl, an agent of transformation.²¹ By insisting upon the pleasures of open-ended textuality and sexuality, Anzaldúa adopts a vision of the body and the text that, once again, mirrors Cixous’s theories on feminine expression and eroticism. For Cixous, the deconstruction of the patriarchal logic is accomplished by allowing the language of the body to manifest, “the language of 1,000 tongues which knows neither enclosure nor death. To life she refuses nothing. Her language does not contain, it carries; it does not hold back, it makes it possible.”²² Cixous’s perception of the body as an “eroti-seized” text enables us to understand how both the realm of the erotic and the act of writing may reflect upon Anzaldúa’s overtly assumed “queerness,” which, as the writer explains, comes as a personal choice, almost a logical consequence of her multicultural upbringing, her bilingual background, and her own homosexual tendencies. “Being lesbian and raised Catholic, indoctrinated as straight. I made the choice to be queer (for some it is genetically inherent). It’s an interesting path, one that continually slips in and out of the white, the Catholic, the Mexican, the indigenous, the instincts. In and out of my head.”²³

Through the expression of an androgynous and “ex-centric” identity in constant repositioning, the Chicana poet cleverly disengages from compartmentalized configurations of a univocal and monogenic self, consciously avoiding the implications of prescriptive discourses or the reductive constructs of gender based systems of representation. Sidonie Smith defines Anzaldúa’s nomadic voice as a diasporan “I” which lies both inside and outside identities, constantly mediating within a personal space of appreciation and critique. According to Smith, “if the diasporan subject, in its homelessness, is always a resident outsider in all the cultures that cross its tongue, it is also intimately tied to community as the other tongue crosses over its tongue endlessly and the other of the tongue speaks. Moves by incorporation other than by exclusion.”²⁴

Recent works of contemporary Latinas, Chicanas, and Latin American feminist writers endorse Smith’s perception. As their works suggest, the process of restoration of the feminine subject begins primarily with the recognition of their roots and their historical past as well as an inner recognition on the need to decolonize both their political and their physical bodies.²⁵ “For the body to give birth to utterance,” says Anzaldúa, “the human entity must recognize itself as carnal –skin, muscles, entrails, brain, belly. Because our bodies have been stolen, brutalized or numbed, it is difficult to speak from/through them.”²⁶ The act of writing, as Anzaldúa suggests, not only enables the libido to manifest in a variety of ways other than the physical and the sexual, but also disrupts outmoded set of phallogocentric demarcations that repress alternative language and gender constructs to come forth.

In spite of its positive and life affirming aspects, writing is not an easy task for a Chicana to accomplish as the Spanish-English linguistic dichotomy is a hard one to overcome. Feelings of inadequacy for not being able to express properly either in English or in Spanish, or simply having to choose one language over the other,



generates a sense of displacement and dissolution, a sense of being “deslenguada,” that invalidates the legitimacy of a language or tongue with which to express oneself. The struggle to become the subject of their own discourse has led Chicana writers to produce alternative systems of cultural representation that call for acknowledgement and respect of all aspects of human expression including language since, as Anzaldúa explains, “If a person, Chicana or Latina, has a low estimation of my native tongue, she also has a low estimation of me... I will no longer be made to feel ashamed of existing. I will have my voice: Indian, Spanish, white.”²⁷ Indeed, even though the voices of Chicanas have gained certain degree of recognition within the U.S. academia women of color must still face issues of racism and displacement along with the challenge of making other minority and subaltern voices heard loudly enough to finally become incorporated within the political agenda of mainstream organizations and ruling institutions. For many feminists and human rights activists, the fight against racism begins with white women’s education. Third-world feminist socio-critics Debra Castillo, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, and Sylvia Molloy are among the many who agree that before promoting the so-called “culture of sisterhood” with women around the world, white socialist feminists still need to acknowledge and solve their own issues of racism.²⁸

As herein examined, the versatile essence of Anzaldúa’s autobiographical writings has expanded the postmodern landscape, renegotiating and replenishing alternative modes of representation (and disenfranchisement) of social and sexual relationships between heterosexuals, lesbians, and gays of diverse hierarchical structures. Historian, witness, ethnographer, storyteller, and translator, Anzaldúa has not only developed the much-needed critical and personal language with which to challenge the foundations of cultural and social order, but has also reinstated the rich arsenal of symbols and myths of indigenous cultures for minorities and Mexican-American women to feel proud about themselves and about their own ancestral traditions. Bread within borderland cultures, but socially and politically aware, younger generations Chicana women are now able to claim a space and a language to call their own. As Anzaldúa notes,

This new mestiza is sensitive to and aware of her ethnic and cultural mestizaje. She is politically aware of what goes on in these different communities and worlds and therefore brings a different perspective to what is going on. She is no longer just a Chicana. That is not all that she is. She is the feminist in the academy, the dyke in the queer community, and the person working in straight America.”²⁹

In sharing their own experiences, Chicana lesbian feminist authors and social activists, continue to encourage others to write and to create their own interpretations on cultural diversity, gender perspectives, and alternative life styles as significant factors to develop a true culture of sisterhood that may eventually “radicalize others into action, to put words into practice, to educate the oppressor, to convince her *comadres*, to persuade men...”³⁰

In Memoriam, Gloria Evangelina Anzaldúa (1942-2004).

Notes

¹ Gloria Anzaldúa and Cherrie Moraga, eds. *This Bridge Called my Back: Writings of Radical Women of Color*. Watertown, Mass.: Persephone Press, 1981.

² Valentine M. Moghadam in *Identity. Politics and Women: Cultural Reassertions and Feminisms in International Perspective* (Boulder, Co.: Westview Press, 1994), p. 20.

³ Marilyn Edelstein, “Resisting Postmodernism: Or, ‘A Postmodernism of Resistance’: bell Hooks and the Theory Debates,” in *Other Sisterhoods: Literary Theory and U.S. Women of Color*. Sandra Kumamoto Stanley, ed. and introd.



(Urbana, IL: U of Illinois Press, 1998), pp. 86-106.

⁴ I am borrowing this expression from Shari Benstock's essay "The Female Self Engendered: Autobiographical Writing and Theories of Selfhood," in *Women and Autobiography*, Martine Watson Browenley and Allison B. Kimmich eds. (Wilmington, DE: SR Books, 1999), pp. 3-13.

⁵ Author's self-definition in the last page of *Making Face, Making Soul, Haciendo Caras: Creative and Critical Perspectives by Feminists of Color* (San Francisco: Aunt Lute, 1990).

⁶ The lack of a concrete subject identification or definition may become problematic for most readers, however, as Leigh Gilmore has noted, the autobiographical "I" is already a linguistic shifter that does not produce a proper referent since autobiographical codes of referentiality deploy the illusion that there is a single I, sufficiently distinct from I it narrates to know it and to see it from the advantage experience [...] All of this depends on not looking too closely at the profound shakiness caused by the motion of these I's." See from Gilmore, *Autobiographics: A Feminist Theory of Women's Self Representation* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1994), p. 44.

⁷ From *This Sex Which is Not One*, trans. Catherine Porter and Caroline Burke (Ithaca: Cornell University, 1985), quoted in Diana Fuss's, *Inside/Out: Lesbian Theories, Gay Theories* (New York and London: Routledge, 1991), p. 3.

⁸ See "(De)Centering the Margins? Identity Politics and Tactical (Re)Naming," in *Other Sisterhoods: Literary Theory and U.S. Women of Color*, pp. 24-25. Also consult Keating's "Myth Makers: (Re)Visionary Techniques in the Works of Paula Gunn Allen, Gloria Anzaldúa, and Audre Lorde," in *Critical Essays: Gay and Lesbian Writers of Color*. Emmanuel S. Nelson, ed. (New York: The Haworth Press, 1993), pp.73-96.

⁹ Term coined and frequently used by Anzaldúa to address the connection between multiple networks and systems of subject expression or representation within the socio-political locus.

¹⁰ Judith Roof "Lesbians and Lyotard: Legitimization and the Politics of the Name." In *The Lesbian Postmodern*. Laura Doan, ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994). P. 49.

¹¹ According to Beverly, some testimonial accounts may fit into the realm of autobiography, interview, memoir, oral history, and confession. See "The Margin at the Center: On Testimonio," in *De/Colonizing the Subject: The Politics of Gender in Women's Autobiography*. Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson, eds. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1992), pp. 91-114.

¹² Beverly, 91-114.

¹³ In Francisco A. Lomelí and Donaldo W. Urioste, *Chicano Perspectives in Literature* (Albuquerque-N.M.: Pajarito Publications, 1976), p.12.

¹⁴ Tey Diana Rebolledo's *Women Singing in The Snow: A Cultural Analysis of Chicana Literature* (Tucson and London: The University of Arizona Press, 1995), p. 111.

¹⁵ In *Borderlands*, Anzaldúa examines the level of rejection defiant/deviant women may experience within the community, "Women are at the bottom of the ladder one rung above the deviants. The Chicano, mexicano, and some Indian cultures have no tolerance for deviance. Deviance is whatever is condemned by the community.... The queer



are the mirror reflecting the heterosexual tribe's fear: being different, being other and therefore lesser, therefore sub-human, in-human, non human." (18)

¹⁶ *Borderlands*, p. 16.

¹⁷ *Borderlands*, p. 16-17.

¹⁸ Sidonie Smith's, *Subjectivity, Identity and the Body*, p. 176.

¹⁹ Hélène Cixous "We Who Are Free, Are We Free?" In *Freedom and Interpretation*. Barbara Johnson, ed. (New York, NY: Harper Collins Publishers, 1992), p. 19.

²⁰ *This Bridge*, p. 169.

²¹ *This Bridge*, p. 74.

²² Cixous's, "The Laugh of The Medusa," p. 345. In *Feminisms: An Anthology of Literary Theory and Criticism*. Robyn Warhol and Diane Price Herndl, eds. (New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1991): 334-349.

²³ *Borderlands*, p. 19. According to Theresa de Lauretis, this term intends to address evident differences "between and within lesbians, and between and within gay men, in relation to race and its attendant differences of class or ethnic culture, generational, geographical, and socio-political location." In "Queer Theory: Lesbian and Gay Sexualities: An Introduction." *Differences* 3 (Summer 1991): xviii.

²⁴ *Subjectivity, Identity and the Body*, p. 124.

²⁵ According to Smith, "Anglo culture renders the Chicano body as one of the abject, but the shade of the body determines the relative degree of abjection within both dominant and marginal cultures and the degree of fluidity in both the self-assignment and communal assignment of racial identity." In *Subjectivity, Identity and the Body*, p.141.

²⁶ *Making Face, Making Soul*, p. xxii.

²⁷ *Borderlands*, pp. 58-59.

²⁸ Debra Castillo's *Talking Back: Toward a Latin American Feminist Literary Criticism*. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992). Also see Sylvia Molloy et al., eds. *Women's Writing in Latin America* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1991) and from Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Displacement and the Discourse of Woman." In *Displacements: Derrida and After*. Mark Krupnick, ed. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1983), pp. 169-195.

²⁹ Interview with E. Hernández "Re-Thinking Margins and Borders: An Interview." In *Discourse* 18 1-2 (1995-96): 7-15.

³⁰ Anzaldúa, *This Bridge*, p. 25.

See also *Victoria García Serrano's* work on Gloria Anzaldúa:

1. “Gloria Anzaldúa y la política de la identidad,” *Revista Canadiense de Estudios Hispánicos* 19.3 (1995): 479-94.
2. “‘La herencia de Coatlicue’ de Gloria Anzaldúa: una interpretación” (*Actas del Congreso Género y géneros: escritura y escritoras iberoamericanas* celebrado en Madrid en el 2004. forthcoming)
Victoria

Business Meeting

Dear Colleagues,

Even though this year our meeting was set for the last day, the last hour, I would consider it a success. Eight women showed up, which were two more than last year, and we were able to go ahead and set up the sessions for next year. Those present at the meeting included Ann Sittig, Stacey Schlau, María Elena Soliño, Sharon Ugalde, Joanna Mitchell, Electa Arenal, Vicki McCard and Sara Cooper.

Everyone agreed that they preferred to have two sessions and to conduct the meeting in the President’s suite. Should we poll the rest of the association? I don’t know how much more expensive suites are in Washington, but I was surprised to find out that in Philadelphia they were as little as \$150 at the Marriott Courtyard and the one I saw was quite splendid and spacious. The ones at the Embassy Suites were a dump but they were spacious and guests got free breakfast downstairs at TGIFs and snacks in the late afternoon.

In any case, we came up with these sessions: Pedagogical: “Real women have . . . : Teaching the Visual” to be chaired by María Elena Soliño. Research: “Blurring Borders: Theorizing Gloria Anzaldúa.” Sara Cooper agreed to chair this session.

Margarita Vargas



MID-Years Treasurer's Report 2005
Submitted by Candyce Leonard

A. GENERAL FUND

Previous Balance	\$ 6,253.00
Deposits	3,107.00
	<u>\$ 9,360.00</u>
Debits (1) web page formatting	225.00
(2) MLA business meeting	598.00
(3) Fall 2004 newsletter	891.00
(4) Renewal reminders & ballot	381.00
(5) Spring 2005 newsletter (partial)	800.00
	<u>\$ 2,895.00</u>
Current General Fund Balance	\$ 6,465.00

B. SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Previous Balance	\$ 2,575.00
Contributions	<u>415.00</u>
Current Scholarship Fund Balance	\$ 2,990.00



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New Member/Renewal Form for JAN-DEC 2005 _____ (year/s for which you are renewing/joining)
JAN-DEC 2006 _____
JAN-DEC 2007 _____

Feministas Unidas is a Coalition of Feminist Scholars in Spanish, Spanish-American, Luso-Brazilian, Afro-Latin American, and U.S. Hispanic Studies. Now in our 26th year, *Feministas Unidas* publishes a Newsletter in April and December, and as an Allied Organization of the Modern Language Association, we sponsor panels at the Annual convention. Please remember that our organization is interdisciplinary and includes all fields of studies relating to Hispanic women, and encourage participation from your colleagues

- Professor (\$20)
- Associate Professor (\$20)
- Assistant Professor (\$15)
- Instructor (\$10)
- Graduate Student (\$10)
- Other (\$10)
- Institution (\$25)

Name _____

E-Mail, if new (please print clearly) _____

Preferred Mailing address (if new): _____

I would like sponsor a young scholar or graduate student with membership in Feministas Unidas:

Individual that you are sponsoring _____

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IMPORTANT NOTE: In addition to writing your e-mail address on this form for our general database files, please also send all *new* or *corrected* e-mail address to the following list request address: femunidas-request@clio.fiu.edu You should write “subscribe” as the subject and body of your message, and you should get a message back saying that you are now subscribed. Many thanks for your help in keep our list updated.



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