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# Transformational Learning Experiences Among Latinas Who Have Attained A Tenure Status in Academia

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**TRANSFORMATIONAL LEARNING EXPERIENCES AMONG LATINAS  
WHO HAVE ATTAINED A TENURE STATUS IN ACADEMIA**

**BY**

**ANDREA L. SALAZAR**

B.A., Economics, Saint Mary's College, 1994  
MBA, College of Santa Fe, 1997

DISSERTATION

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the Degree of

**Doctor of Philosophy**  
**Organizational Learning and Instructional Technology**

The University of New Mexico  
Albuquerque, New Mexico

**May, 2011**

## **Dedication**

To  
my beloved father,

Leroy Gilbert Salazar,

who inspired me to make all of this possible.

To  
my mother,

Gloria Ann,

for dreaming of a better life for her girls.

And to my sisters Laura and Lisa,

for their imagination.

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**ABSTRACT**

This qualitative research investigation was designed to understand the transformational learning experiences among Latinas in academia and how these experiences affect their academic experience and teaching styles. Specifically, the following research questions were addressed: (1) How do Latinas that reach a tenure status interpret their journey and experiences within academia? (2) How do they describe organizational culture in which they work and teach? (3) What types of leadership skills do they possess? (4) How do they describe their experiences in relation to their larger community? Latina women that have reached a tenure status are extremely committed to improving the plight of the marginalized, are dedicated to changing the organization, encourage diversity, and promote social change. Despite the challenging journey through academia, the Latina women displayed a resilient attitude, and described the process as truly transformative. Their experiences provided them with skills to subvert sub-oppressive tactics and to challenge the system to instill fair and equitable educational practices. Negative perceptions of women of

color in academia continue to prevail and universities continue to reify socially constructed race and gender theories. Diversity programs have a large impact on student outcomes and success but are subject to budget cuts. A review of the admissions criteria and the long-term impact and benefit of diversity programs are recommended, as well as an analysis of the relationships among academic leaders and the impact on educational policy.



## Table of Contents

<b>List of Figures.....</b>	<b>xii</b>
<b>List of Tables .....</b>	<b>xiii</b>
<b>Chapter One Introduction .....</b>	<b>1</b>
Statement of the Problem.....	3
Class difference.....	4
The Question.....	8
Purpose of the Study .....	8
Significance of the Study .....	9
Assumptions.....	10
<b>Chapter Two Review of the Literature.....</b>	<b>11</b>
Organizational Learning .....	11
Leadership in Learning Organizations.....	13
Individual Learning.....	16
Gender Roles in Organizations .....	18
Organizational Culture.....	19
Latinas in Academia .....	21
Promotion and Tenure.....	25
Transformational Learning Theory.....	27
Summary .....	34
<b>Chapter Three Methodology.....</b>	<b>35</b>
Methodological Design.....	36
Methods for Data Collection.....	39

Semistructured interviews.....	42
Data Analysis .....	47
Ethical Considerations .....	49
Limitations of the Study.....	49
Summary of Methods.....	50
<b>Chapter Four Findings.....</b>	<b>51</b>
Preface.....	51
Participants.....	52
The Life Stories of the Latinas.....	52
Anna. ....	53
Maria. ....	60
Lucia. ....	70
Rosa. ....	83
Theresa.....	95
Celia. ....	98
Major Thematic Areas .....	115
THEMATIC AREA 1: The Navigation through Academia .....	115
Preparedness. ....	115
Financial constraints and family obligations. ....	117
Lack of diversity: Students, mentors, and instructors.....	117
Discrimination as space for transformational learning. ....	119
Changes in the stability of relationships. ....	121

Intermittent rewards because of scholarships, fellowships, grants, work study. .....	124
<b>THEMATIC AREA 2: Transition from Individual Success to Providing an Equitable Education to All Students of Color.....</b>	<b>126</b>
Creating diverse curricula. ....	127
Mentoring.....	129
Focus on increasing retention rates.....	132
<b>THEMATIC AREA 3: Changing the Organization.....</b>	<b>135</b>
Gatekeeping within the tenure and promotion process, getting beyond the steel bars.....	136
Breaking down structural barriers: Deconstructing negative stereotypes.....	138
Diversification of departments.....	140
Active participation in tokenism. ....	142
Legitimizing Brown research and contributions to the literature. ....	143
Organizing.....	144
Voice. ....	145
<b>THEMATIC AREA 4: Critical Social Reciprocity .....</b>	<b>147</b>
Social activism.....	147
Subverting sub-oppression tactics.....	150
Helping others despite mental, spiritual, and physical anguish.....	150
Generosity despite misfortune. ....	153
Summary.....	156
<b>Chapter Five Analysis of the Data.....</b>	<b>158</b>

Research Participants .....	160
Research Questions and Purpose of Chapter .....	162
Summary of the Analysis.....	163
Research Sub Question 1: How do Latinas describe the organizational culture in which they work and teach?.....	165
Research Sub Question 2: What motivates these Latinas to reach their personal goals? .....	166
Research Sub Question 3: What types of leadership skills do they possess? .....	169
Research Sub Question 4: How do they describe their experiences in relation to their larger community? .....	170
Limitations of the Study.....	171
Implications.....	171
Implications to theory and practice in academia.....	171
Implications to Transformational Learning Theory.....	176
Implications to Resilience Theory. ....	178
Recommendations for Future Research .....	181
Conclusion .....	182
Researchers Note .....	185
<b>References .....</b>	<b>187</b>

## List of Figures

Figure 2.1 Review of the Literature .....	33
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## **List of Tables**

Table 3.1 Major Interview Questions .....	40
Table 3.2 Progression of the Study.....	42
Table 4.1 Participant Data.....	52
Table 4.2 Analysis of Various Types of Data – What I Learned.....	112
Table 4.3 Class Observation Data.....	113
Table 4.4 Themes that Emerged from an Analysis of the Data .....	114

## **Chapter One**

### **Introduction**

*My primary employer defines itself as a learning organization, that has an important national mission and a company vision that serves the scientific community. The structure of the organization is complex with various levels of management and a governing board of directors. The leaders in the company are predominantly White males, have several years of experience, and have mostly acquired doctoral degrees. The company is made up of a multi-cultural workforce, with ethnic groups of color occupying mid-level and lower level management positions. The diversity numbers have not made significant gains in the 57 year history of the organization. As I consider the formal training and backgrounds of the leaders and style of leadership in this company, I realized various colleges and universities provided the instruction and official certifications to the company leaders. I wonder if a diverse curriculum was offered and if the structure of their formal education varied significantly.*

*Young adults are transformed at various stages of their college experience. The undergraduate experience is unique to each student and my undergraduate experience built an important framework in terms of my governing principals which remains strong in my adult life. There are various organizational cultures among academic environments. Individual success may be largely impacted by the selection of an academic structure that complements individual learning style, is familiar, and provides access to various student programs. Finding the appropriate programs that match individual goals and objectives is critical for success and ultimately plays an important role on graduation and retention rates. However, often there is a lack of diversity within the student population, among staff, and among student programs. I am amazed at the existing prejudices of professors,*

*administrators, and support staff in various colleges and universities and have witnessed an intolerance of non-White students. But I remain optimistic that the learning environment can be vastly improved for Hispanic women in academia if well-developed diversity programs with a focus on recruitment and retention are made available. I attended a Midwestern college with a predominantly homogenous student population which did not have a diversity program. The majority of the faculty, students, and administration at this college were representative of the elite White class.*

As I reflect upon the journey through my undergraduate and graduate studies, I have come to the realization that although there were great leaders employed within the college setting, there were a minuscule number of engagement programs targeting minority and low-income students. The majority of diversity programs in America are funded by grant programs with a strict guidelines and nominal project periods. Although the college I attended was a professional learning environment, there were other mitigating factors that affected my performance outcomes. For example, there weren't any Hispanic professors that I knew of, the majority of my instructors were White males, and there was a lack of Hispanic mentors and role models. The college I attended did not have a diverse workforce, and the staff and administration was made up of primarily White people. The circumstances for minorities in predominantly White schools have not changed significantly since I completed my undergraduate coursework over 15 years ago, after the implementation of inclusion and equity programs.

When I entered college, I referred to myself as a Hispanic but as I progressed as a student, many of my classmates profiled me as a Mexican student. I experienced several identity issues and have considered myself a Hispanic, Chicana, Native American, and



Mexican. My mother is of Spanish European decent, as well as of Mexican-American decent, and my father was of Mexican-Native American decent. My own struggle was echoed by:

And then as an adult I had to decide if I wanted to call myself Latino or Latina. I was and still am uncomfortable about using *Latino*, since it is a sanitized Anglo word imposed by the United States Census Bureau...I think that both Latino and Latina are confusing misnomers that perpetuate subsumption into a moonlight. But I have decided to use them because in some circumstances it is valuable to have a collective identity...I prefer *Latina*, though because it resonates with political consciousness, and because unlike the English word *Latino*, Latina has gender (Cruz, 1995, p.96).

How I refer to myself ultimately depends on the audience. Latinas will self-identify based on their professional affiliation, cultural affiliation, and social affiliation. From this point forward, I will use the term women of color or Latinas to identify with a collective group of Spanish speaking women representing Mexicanas, Chicanas, Hispanas, Dominicanas, and Puerto Riquenas represented in this particular research study. I now choose to refer to myself as a Chicana as my professional, cultural, and social affiliation.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The United States Census Bureau (2008) predicts Hispanics will represent 51% of the American population by 2020. Academic institutions will need to assess their cultural diversity programs and consider how they will serve the Hispanic population. Addressing questions such as, what existing employment policies should be evaluated to determine the effectiveness of how diversity policies are instilled, monitored, improved, and executed in academic settings, requires a basic understanding of the organizational culture in academia. Cultures in academic institutions include the values, norms, and behaviors of people.

Changing the culture in academia is a difficult process and is not easily achieved. I was interested in the experiences of Latina professors in academia that have attained tenure

status. In particular, I was interested in how they define their transformational learning experiences and how those experiences might affect their attitude towards teaching students and also if those experiences affect how they approach trying to make structural, as well as policy changes, in academia. How might the Latina faculty that has attained a tenure status subscribe to theories of resiliency in their lived experience and how do they play out in their leadership styles? How do they share their lived experiences with other Latino students? How do they attempt to improve the learning environment? Finally, how do organizational structures in learning institutions impact the careers of Latina instructors that have reached tenured status?

**Class difference.** In the United States of America, there are distinct social differences that include an upper, middle, and lower class. The distinction of classes affects how organizations accept qualified individuals. “*Social classes* carry different class cultures. Social class is associated with educational opportunities and with a person’s occupation or profession” (Hofstede, 2005, p.35). Socio-economic status influences entry to professional organizations, elite affiliations, organized groups, and acceptance into colleges and universities. The White upper class has an entry advantage into such groups. White families with a privileged upbringing, education, and support systems, have a distinct economic advantage over those families of middle or lower socio-economic status. Access to a fair and equitable education is limited for the Hispanic population. Much of the success experienced by the elite population is a byproduct of established networks, professional affiliations, and protected memberships.

Affluent communities tend to experience greater levels of achievement in society as a result of access to good schools, solid learning foundations, and safe and controlled

environments. A good infrastructure complete with supportive businesses, neighborhoods, access to public libraries, cutting-edge technology, technologically advanced companies, and youth programs is enjoyed by the upper-class while the lower-class endures greater hardship economically, socially, and emotionally. White-privileged youth are well prepared for future employment opportunities as a result of an affiliation with an elite social structure while underprivileged marginalized groups struggle to identify within their existing cultural groups in an attempt to enter mainstream America (Stanton-Salazar, 2002).

Gender roles and expectations are socially constructed and today there remains large wage differentials (fair and equitable pay) between men and women. Various marginalized cultures experience a larger fraction of wage discrepancies and opportunities for career growth, yet, many of the problems stem from an earlier stage. In a study conducted by Stanton-Salazar (2002) concerning the social support networks and the help-seeking experiences of adolescents from immigrant families, the author highlights the life experiences, developmental challenges, and risks that students face in schools. In their findings, immigrant students not only faced many challenges within the school system, but also within the acculturated family lifestyles in their respective neighborhoods. Such students became so desensitized to their predicaments, that it becomes increasingly challenging to counter-stratify the compartmentalization of immigrant youth. The author identifies many of the support systems that shape the youth of immigrant descent and how many of those existing structures perpetuate social inequality.

Immigrant youth face many barriers within their own social context including impoverished neighborhoods, family expectations and obligations, and the shaping of good moral character. These youth are often surrounded with violence, crime, drug abuse, and an

infrastructure that is not conducive to social progress among communities of low socio-economic status. Attempts to shape the moral character of low-status minority youth usually occur without adequate provision of institutional support and resources necessary to overcome the stratification forces. Traditional educational systems are not structured to embrace various cultures.

An educational system which puts into practice an implicit pedagogic action, requiring initial familiarity with the dominant culture, and which proceeds by imperceptible familiarization, offers information and training which can be received and acquired only by subjects endowed with the system of predispositions that is the condition for the success of the transmission and the inculcation of the culture (Brown, 1973, p.80).

Minority students tend to display a survival mentality in their neighborhoods, in their schools, and in their communities but little emphasis can be placed on pursuing an education beyond the high school level (Stanton-Salazar, 2002). This is a disadvantage for students that have access to better schools with greater resources. “High schools with ample resources have slightly fewer dropouts and send slightly more students to college than high schools with scanty resources” (Lynn, 1990, p.173)

Cultural circumstances of low-status minority children are often dismal and may include an inability to address the structural shortcomings of impoverished neighborhoods. Lynn (1990) reviewed the presence of institutional resources such as schools, police protection, strong neighborhood organization, and community centers, by which neighborhoods influence a child’s experience. The amount of resources available to community members was reviewed and according to the analysis, disadvantaged children would perform better when they reside in affluent neighborhoods. “Children raised in the areas of concentrated poverty are therefore isolated from the conventional values and

networks that would support their mainstream development” (Brooks-Gunn, 1997, p.26). Low-status adolescents develop the survival instinct but without the help of the appropriate personnel such as the teachers, parents, counselors, social workers, to guide them and help provide a better social network (Stanton-Salazar, 2002). There is also a communication gap that exists among parents and students due to the low educational (and/or language) levels of parents (or guardians) which prevents relevant and realistic dialogue among the family members. Adolescents were noted as saying, “I almost never talk to my parents about school because I feel they don’t understand” (Stanton-Salazar, 2001, 14).

Marginal groups are often portrayed as outsiders: ethnic minorities, the poor, the disabled, to name a few. Mainstream American culture largely derived from society traditions and value of White European immigrants (Adams and Stother-Adams, 2001) is not open to the notion of accommodation and inclusion of immigrants and minorities (Doran, et.al, 2000). The relationships among community leaders, students, parents, counselors, and teachers can be vastly improved. Latino students that survive the secondary educational system and enter a college or university face even greater challenges. German schools were designed with a clear design of centralizing instruction and the delivery of distinct orders instead of the traditional American design of preparing students to be self-reliant (Gatto, 2003). When minorities enter college, they are subject to an unfamiliar undergraduate learning environment that promotes individuality, whereas the Latin culture promotes a collective learning environment. Minority students are unaware of this difference and it may take several semesters to adjust to the new situation which creates great challenges. The drastic change in the learning environment has severe negative consequences.

It took me three years to emerge as the student that I knew I could be. After one year spent in failure, and two years spent marinating in academics, and university values and culture, I was finally prepared to take on challenges that had previously intimidated me and caused me to regress (Orozco, 2003, p.133).

Many resilient minority students eventually adapt to the college environment and survive the experience and some of the survivors opted to become instructors. Their journey through academia presents a new dimension of obstacles, as well as many organizational challenges to overcome.

### **The Question**

Academic institutions represent an inherent organizational culture and structure. Latina professors that have attained tenured status have unique stories and personal experiences and the cultural make-up of this particular group is predominantly homogenous. I conducted a qualitative research study based on the following question: *How do Latinas that reach a tenure status interpret their journey and experiences within academia?* In order to explore the research question, other sub-questions will be considered:

1. How do they describe the organizational culture in which they work and teach?
2. What motivates these Latina to reach their personal goals?
3. What types of leadership skills do they possess?
4. How do they describe their experiences in relation to their larger community?

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this proposed research study was to examine the transformational learning experiences among Latinas that have attained tenure status in academia and how those experiences affect their leadership styles. This study focused on how Latinas identify with incremental transformational experiences throughout their educational careers and how

those experiences allow Latinas to develop their professional identities. The academic structure and learning environment was explored to determine how ethnic identities are formed. The behaviors, attitudes, and values of Latinas that have attained tenured status were reviewed to understand whether or not incidents of actual transformative moments are realized, discussed, and shared with others within the organizational culture to promote social change. Exploring whether experiences drive Latinas to break down cultural barriers, become active participants in their organizations to achieve academic success and influence others is significant. Understanding how those experiences drive behavior to improve performance and initiate changes in educational policy was crucial for improving the learning condition for Latinas.

### **Significance of the Study**

Researching this topic included using a multi-disciplinary theoretical approach that includes theories of organizational culture, organizational leadership, educational policy, race and gender, transformative learning concepts, and resiliency theory. In the very near future colleges and university admissions will be largely impacted by the number of Latina/o applicants. Providing access to this particular group and attempting to improve retention rates may alter educational policies. This research should assist in improving the empowerment opportunities of the Latina population by promoting social change and supporting educational attainment. Although colleges and universities support and promote cultural diversity, the existing programs do not account for external factors such as lack of preparedness, family obligations, financial constraints, and a lack of diversity. Little research has been conducted and published concerning the critical topic of Latinas in

academia. This research may contribute significantly to the understanding of organizational culture in academia and may particularly positively impact the Latina population.

### **Assumptions**

With the advent of “exploding” U.S. Census Bureau Hispanic population predictions, feminist activism, affirmative action, and the creed of “equality” in organizations, Latinas are not achieving levels of success at an equitable rate (Chapa, 2006). Competition in the 21<sup>st</sup> century may have an impact on academia (the Latino population come from a different mindset). With the economic crisis, people are struggling to meet financial, spiritual, and family needs and the realities of working conditions are intensified. I assumed transformational learning experiences affect the Latinas that have achieved tenured status, their teaching and leadership styles. Secondly, I assumed the study participants have experienced transformative learning episodes, were able to not only share their stories, but maintain a desire to further explore the significance, and understand the long-term impacts on their lives, on the organization, as well as on their students. Third, I assumed the participants experienced similar transformative experiences in academia allowing them to endure the slow rate of the cultural and organizational change process. Fourth, I assumed Latinas have specific achievement goals and objectives that are focused on improving the retention rates of Latinas students. Finally, I assumed the participants are active citizens and are interested in promoting social change.



## **Chapter Two**

### **Review of the Literature**

The purpose of this research study was to examine the transformational learning experiences among tenured Latinas in academia and how those experiences affect their leadership and teaching styles. Narrowing in on this topic required a thorough description of the academic journey up to, and beyond, the tenure process. Attempting to understand the phenomena of the marginalization of Latinas that reached a tenure status in academia was challenging. It required deciphering through multiple layers and layers of organizational structure theory, and exploring the various concepts presented in the literature (see Table 2.1). Addressing the topic required considering theories of learning organizations, cultures in organizations, socialized gender structures, socially constructed race theories, leaderships styles, race and gender issues in learning organizations, and resiliency theory.

#### **Organizational Learning**

“Organizational learning is a representation of the dynamic human processes required to increase the cognitive capacity of the total organization” (Schwandt, 2000, p.26).

Learning organizations create a shared vision, a strong mission statement, and develop employee buy-in. These types of organizations create knowledge management systems (Hildreth, 2000), continually assess the importance in investing in the appropriate technology that meets the organizations needs, transfer knowledge among the respective divisions, constantly improve communication, and build a strong corporate culture. Organizations must adapt, change, and make great efforts to become learning organisms. “Learning must transfer from individual to collective to organizational to inter-organizational, and vice versa, and “must” result in changes in behavior” (Dimitriades, 2002, p.204). In order for

organizations to learn several concepts and theories must be present and operationally functional. “Organizational learning is accomplished when individuals make their mental models explicit and mutually modify them to create shared organizational mental models” (Freidman, 2001, p. 400). In these utopia organizations, all people are created equal, have specific skills and abilities, and are cooperative.

Organizational learning will occur when teams align and develop their actions with the company vision. “Organizational learning is acquiring and applying knowledge at the individual, the small-group, and whole-organization level in order build the capacity of the organization to achieve its strategic goals” (Gill, 2000, p. 121). There are several phases in team development including; the fragmented phase - where teams learn but do not change, the pooled phase where people share personal perspectives but no attempt to reconcile opposite viewpoints, and finally the synergistic learning phase where teams jointly construct meaning which lead to developed solutions.

Survival learning (adaptive learning), generative learning which enhances our capacity to create and learn, systems thinking, creating a shared vision, and building collaborative teams, are concepts that represent learning organizations. Systems theory is a good tool to assess the interrelationship between the whole organization and the sum of its processes (Senge, 1990). Organizations should constantly be looking at both internal and external environments and assess how processes are being implemented so the organizational mission can be achieved and sustained. Moving the organization in the right direction will only happen if the environment fosters openness which allows the organization to move beyond their entrenched beliefs and practices, and encourage experimentation and innovation.

There is a key difference between organizational learning and learning organizations. Organizational learning does not mean understanding changes in process rather; it does mean a focus on the transfer of knowledge among departments. Learning organizations create a shared vision, a strong mission statement, develop employee buy-in, and manage the knowledge created and shared both verbally, and formally (documented). This is often referred to as knowledge management in the literature.

Knowledge management, the sharing of information and the creation of communicative systems allows the organization to create an open system where changes can be realized in an efficient manner. Cooperation, collective decision making, and the exchange of shared meaning will create an exchange of new meaning across teams. Open communication and the creation of meaningful dialogue in this type of learning environment fosters creativity. The encouragement of risk-taking is also a critical component of a learning organization. “Whose participation is encouraged or inhibited is a central concern for understanding and enacting workplace learning” (Billet, 2001).

### **Leadership in Learning Organizations**

In the United States of America, many organizations operate under a hierarchal structure. “Hierarchal leaders put energy into maintaining the lines of authority and communication represented by the organizational chart, and do not generally seek and use information from inside and outside of their functional area” (Gill, 2000, p.101). Senge (1990) discusses decentralizing the role of leadership in organizations in an effort to enhance the capacity of all people to work productively toward common goals. Good leaders will facilitate good dialogue sessions and create an environment that will capture the conversation/data for future reference.

Leaders network with other experts to solve problems. Networking allows employees to create relationships with others that have similar interests and backgrounds. Leaders will build partnerships and develop new and innovative approaches to operating based on common interests. They are incredibly ambitious, but the focus is based on the greatness of the institution and not necessarily for individual gain (Collins, 2001). Active participation results in the creation of new programs and approaches to learning if the appropriate tools are available. The evaluation of existing programs will determine whether desired outcomes are measurable.

A supportive corporate culture fosters a feeling of trust and promise and will value good leadership. A good leader elevates, motivates, inspires, problems solves, is respectful, fosters a trusting environment, is ethical, is adaptive, and develops cooperative working relationships (Rothwell, 1995). Employees that feel they are working in a safe and trusting environment will look to either become emergent leaders or to align themselves with individuals that demonstrate good leadership skills. Good leaders will mentor other individuals and motivate their employees. Good leaders will coach their employees to identify whether they are motivated intrinsically or extrinsically and create a sustainable working environment where individual learning will flourish. Each individual employee must take a pro-active approach to learning and should enhance his/her skills by active participation and taking personal ownership of his/her own career goals, objectives, and aspirations.

It is also important to have leaders that are supportive, invest the time and energy, to create a learning environment. Passion doesn't proliferate. Effective leaders recognize their own needs, the needs of their employees, the needs of the organization, and facilitate action

inclusive oriented programs. When employees have passion at work, they are more productive, will work harder, and become more committed (Boverie & Kroth, 2001).

According to Gill (2002) there are nine personal characteristics common among effective leaders which include:

1. Charisma: Instills faith, respect, and trust. Conveys a strong sense of mission.
2. Individual Consideration: Coaches, advises, and teaches people who need it.
3. Intellectual stimulation: Gets others to use reasoning and evidence, rather than unsupported opinion.
4. Courage: Willing to stand up for ideas, even if they are unpopular.
5. Dependability: Follows through and keeps commitments.
6. Flexibility: Functions effectively in changing environments. Changes course when the situation warrants it.
7. Integrity: Does what is morally and ethically right.
8. Judgment: Reaches sound and objective evaluations of alternative courses of action through logic, analysis, and comparison.
9. Respect for Others: Honors and does not belittle the opinions or work of other people, regardless of their status or position (p. 57).

The Argyris and Schon Theory-of-Action (1978) approach discusses how good leaders will execute their daily activities based on engaging with others, and aligning their behaviors to the mission of the organization. Good leaders will take steps to achieve double-loop learning, the ability to uncover errors and company problems that lead to the deterioration of the company (Argyris & Schon, 1978)

Leaders will concentrate on corporate strategies and the consequences of strategies through critical reflection. They will determine whether the driving core values need to be addressed, re-assessed, and if they need to be changed. An effective leader has the ability to identify barriers to learning. They will break down the barriers to learning by promoting change, discussing the “indiscussables”, empowering their employees, and focusing on both short and long-term goals. Good leaders will ensure employees develop their individual learning styles so that the goals of the corporation as well as individual goals can be met.

### **Individual Learning**

In order to create effective, creative, and productive employees, there are specific conditions that must be present. Individuals must feel their work is meaningful. “Individuals need to find meaning in their activities and worth in what is afforded to them to participate and is appropriate” (Sanders, 2001, p.6). Each employee must have the volition to meet the mission and objectives of the organization must have personal mastery, and become life-long learners Senge (1990). These types of individuals tend to be pro-active but reflective, have realistic aspirations, are critical but committed, and are independent but cooperative. “...The more that individuals recognize their own role in creating their images of reality and in shaping the context in which learning occurs; the more proactive they can be in determining their space of free movement” (Freidman, 1999, p. 411). According to Lewin (1948), free movement leads to individual goal attainment. Achieving this individual state will create the sense of self-efficacy and self-actualization allowing individuals to truly become change agents.

Participation in communities of practice provides an incredible opportunity for individuals to develop as professionals, share tacit knowledge (Nonaka, 1991), and build new

knowledge with others in the industry. Communities of practice represent an attitude, a desire, or an emotion that allow a sharing of knowledge in free-flowing creative ways which fosters new approaches to solving problems (citation, Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder, 2002). Dialogue and actual communication takes place when communities of practice have management support and the appropriate communication structure is in place. Meetings of communities of practice are self organized; the group sets their own boundaries, and come together for a common objective, goal, or purpose. Information is shared among the various disciplines. The dialogue is spontaneous, and the meetings are informal. Isaacs (1999) discusses dialogue as enabling a free flow of meaning with the potential to transform power relationships and no one person can legislate nor control the flow of dialogue. There are several benefits to having communities of practice, they allow employees to take risks, and much of the tacit knowledge can be articulated and made explicit under the right leadership.

Although the individual employees must take a pro-active approach to learning and enhancing their skills by active participation, they can be groomed and mentored by the individuals who possess the characteristics of good facilitators. The individuals must become motivated both intrinsically and extrinsically and must take personal ownership of his/her career goals and aspirations. Employee must have personal mastery (Senge, 1990) and must become life-long learners. Senge (1990) emphasizes focusing on the individual and the following concepts; appreciative inquiry (AI), personal mastery, self reflection, humbleness, and confidence. Effective leaders have a natural knack for practicing AI which is the act of recognizing the best in people or in the world around us, and looks at the future with the intention of shifting paradigms to create conscious evolution.

Critical reflection is the constant evaluation and re-evaluation of the processes in an organization that will promote creativity and contributes to the innovation of a company. Employees that view themselves as adult learners will ask for formal training, to gain the expertise, and develop the tools necessary to be proficient in their respective work areas. Employees will feel inhibited if they don't believe they have support from their management. According to Philip Sadler (2001) "the scope of leaders to act as agents of organizational learning is influenced not only by expectations created by gender or national culture but also by such contextual factors as organizational structure and organizational culture" (p. 422). Effective leaders will recognize and identify barriers and strategize to break down existing cultural barriers and ignore gender stereotypes.

### **Gender Roles in Organizations**

The socialization of gender roles has a significant impact on the structural framework in organizations. Social norms dictate a general inequality among men and women. "Male achievement reinforces masculine assertiveness and competition; female care reinforces feminine nurturance and a concern for relationships and for the living environment" (Hofstede, 2005, p.118). The socialization process begins at an early age. "*Socialization* means that both girls and boys learn their place in society, and once they have learned it, the majority of them want it that way" (Hofstede, 2005, p.128). The United States is a masculine society with a hierarchal structure that supports different levels of employee ranking. "All too often the views of lower-ranking employees, women, and/or minorities have not been sought, deeply understood, or fully incorporated into theories of organization" (Martin, 1992, p.5). Male achievement and performance is viewed differently than female achievement. Feminism is an ideology that wants to change the perception of female attainment in society.



Understanding how gender roles affect cultural structure is critical in determining whether fair and equitable wage compensation can be achieved as well as help determine whether organizations can become learning organizations. In racial reform, “storytelling”, “counterstorytelling”, and “naming one’s own reality” is a key obstacle to the recognition of injustice and implementation (Stefancic, 1997). The practice and promotion of storytelling is inconsistent across learning organizations.

### **Organizational Culture**

There are inherent gender, culture, and class differences among the work force in colleges and universities. “Class and culture erect boundaries that hinder our vision – blind us to the logic of error and the ever present stirring of language - and encourage the designation of otherness, difference, and deficiency” (Rose, 1990, p. 200). According to the psychologist, Nisbett (2003), people of different cultures view the world from a different lens. There are three basic differences he discusses which include:

First that members of different cultures differ in their “metaphysics” or fundamental beliefs about the nature of the world. Second that the characteristic thought process of different groups differ greatly. Third, that the thought processes are of a piece with beliefs of the nature of the world. People use the cognitive tools that seem to make sense – given the sense they make of the world...If people really do vary profoundly in their systems of thought – their worldview and cognitive process – then differences in people’s attitudes and beliefs, and even their values and preferences, might not be a matter of merely of different inputs and teachings, but rather an inevitable consequence of using different tools to understand the world (p.xvii).

Nisbett (2003) presents a fundamental idea; culturally people think and act differently because their cognitive approach to decision-making is driven by how their brains are programmed. He categorizes cultures into two basic orientations; a Western culture and Eastern culture. The author presents this idea by illustrating the difference in philosophy, science, and the socially dynamic differences among Ancient Greece and China and

discusses how throughout history, and to this very day, the cultures have basically maintained their cultural differences (Nisbett, 2003). Another example includes the Western and Eastern cultures and the vast differences in their approaches to learning and according to how those approaches to learning are slow to change.

Culture and the learning environment have a profound effect on how individuals think, feel, and act. Categorizing people into two basic cultures however, is far too great of a generalization. Issues such as gender differences are buried in the oversimplification as a result of this. More importantly, there are extreme cultural differences among the Western and Eastern cultures that contradict many of the examples presented in the research. There are many distinct cultural differences. For example, recent research has revealed that language intelligence tests that are being used to measure cognition are culturally biased and have a negative impact on marginalized cultural groups (Nisbett, 2003).

Organizations are programmed to uphold social inequality and heighten gender inequity. The psychological frameworks to address gender and ethnic identity differences in the 21<sup>st</sup> century are even more challenging for acculturated and self-empowered Latinas. Nancy Lopez (2003) discusses the learning environment of Dominican-American, West Indian-American, and Haitian American impoverished youth, and how many White Americans view marginalized groups as uneducated, unmotivated, and complacent people lacking basic skills. The American White class does not desire to break down those invisible social barriers because it will disrupt the balance of power. Where do such ideologies stem from? They all trace back to the formal educational system in America, the schools. Most professionals receive their formal training at colleges and universities where social inequalities permeate. In theory, this type of organization is the premiere repository for

scientific theory representing most disciplines. Colleges and universities promote this typology and instruct based on organizational learning principals, but in reality, they exist under the traditional hierarchal structure. Who are the leaders in colleges and universities? They are largely represented by the tenured faculty.

According to the National Center for Education Statistics for the year 2006-2007, Hispanic students earned 7.5% of bachelor's degrees, 5.8% of master's degrees, and 3.4% of doctoral degrees, as opposed to the number of White students attaining degrees. This indicates that minority graduates face several barriers affecting not only academic achievement, but also integration into the labor force, especially into academia. "The literature – where involving statistical studies, field investigations, or other forms of scholarly inquiry – documents continued underrepresentation of faculty of color in American colleges and universities" (Turner, 2000, p.23). According to the NCES (2007) there are few tenured Latinas in academia. Why is this phenomenon occurring? "As a result of gender and ethnicity (the double minority effect), Latinas may experience the depreciation in the work environment and can find themselves fighting gender stereotypes, sexism, and discrimination" (Canul, 2003, p.172).

### **Latinas in Academia**

The socialization of gender roles affects cultural change in academia in several ways. "When upper-and middle-class White men predominate in the top levels of an organizations (as they usually do in Western industrial societies) they tend to hire and promote similar others who share their values" (Martin, 1992, p.58). Furthermore, "...White men used to working primarily with other White men may come to believe that they are working in a sexually or racially neutral world, rather than in a world where White men dominate"

(Martin, 1992, p.136). Women and men are not integrated fairly into organizations. When asked, the male respondent's espoused perceptions may not be in alignment with their actual behavior. "To complicate matters further what cultural members say or do can also depend on who is observing" (Martin, 1992, p.7).

In the Latino community, the socialization of gender roles occurs at an early age. Understanding marianismo, the Latina gender socialization construct, is critical because it emphasizes the "rich interconnections of cultural, historical, sociopolitical, and economic forces on Latinas and the essentialness of this understanding in shaping new models and research agendas..." (Arredondo, 2002, p.319). Many Latinas are not expected to attend a college or a university. They are expected to work, and if they are allowed to go to college, the expectation is for them to live at home or go to a community college (Arredondo, 2002). "Frequently minority college students face race-related assumptions about their academic ability, ambition, and high school preparation, as well as more general faculty perceptions of minority students" (Anaya & Cole, 2002, p.101).

Latinas have difficulty communicating college experiences to their main support system, the family. For example "...despite my parents understanding the value of an education, they did not understand its demands" (Orozco, 2002, p.128). If parents are unaware of the demands and workings of the educational system, they often are unable to value their children's efforts or provide the type of support and encouragement needed to influence goal achievement and academic attainment (Gloria, 1997). Many Latinas are first generation college students. Latino students are further impacted by their minority status, intimidation by the campus climate, and limited positive academic role models (Gloria, 1996).

High attrition rates for Latinos are associated with limited financial means (Castellanos & Jones, 2003). Financial constraints also lead to higher stress levels for Latinos (Quintana, 1991). “The students reported that family and family related financial obligations, as well as the need to take on adult roles, were the key variables in the decision to drop out for most students” (Castellanos & Jones, 2003, p.5). The socio-economic status of Latinos forces many family members to work in order to meet the basic human needs. The number of hours worked weekly by Chicana students impeded them from graduating on time and/or dropping out (Young, 1992). The high costs of attaining a college degree have a greater impact on Latino families and require a great share of family income especially for the minority class who occupies the bottom tier of the economic ladder that have little reserve to draw on and who are reluctant to secure loans that exacerbate the family debt (Rendon, 1997). According to Nora (1991) there are three constructs that exert a pulling-away effect both on the student’s decision to remain enrolled in college and on his or her social academic integration on campus: family responsibilities (such as taking care of a sibling, grandparent, or an entire family); working off-campus while enrolled in college courses; and commuting to college every day. The Latina student is not a “traditional” student.

Hurtado (1994) found more than one in four Latino students reported substantial campus racial conflict. Latino students are also homogenized into one cultural group. Racial group and tension begins among the Latino groups as well as with other ethnic groups. In a study by Nora (1996), the authors found that Latina students were more prone to experience discrimination and prejudice in the classroom and on campus and that those perceptions were subsequently found to affect their academic performance. Additionally, it affected their

academic experiences with faculty, their social experiences on campus, and their commitment to the institutions. Indirectly, their decisions to remain in college were impacted by the negative factors. The college curriculum is not enriched with diverse cultural historical issues especially lacking Latin content. “Time and time again, these students find an invalidating and intimidating college environment, coupled with a faculty that is predominately White with little understanding of minority cultures, a Euro-centered curriculum, racism, and fiercely competitive learning environments” (Nora, 2002, p.55).

In many White college and university classes, there may be only one Latina/o student. I, like others before me, felt the pressure of being representative of the entire culture. Many ethnic and minority students are “constantly reminded that they do not belong” (Caroll, 1983, p.83). Things have not changed in the past 30 years. For example,

Graduate education traces its roots to a German research model, which in turn incorporates the values of academic cultures that evolved within institutions dedicated to a singular contextual format – scientific exploration – for exploring knowledge...In short, many Latinos in academia are imprinted with cultural contexts and cognitive skills that are at odds with the cultural contexts and predominant cognitive designs found throughout academia (Ibarra, 2001, p.17).

There aren't many formal, informal, nor alternative mentoring methods and “...women in academia have continued to face barriers in acquiring nurturing mentorships which subsequently appear to have limited the number of women who achieve prominence in their field” (Kamler, 2005, p.1). The lack of the various types of mentoring programs for Latinas in academia has a negative impact on engagement, performance, and communication. “Alternative mentoring which may be delivered in a variety of forms, emphasizes group

interactions and often fosters relationship and promotes professional development” (Kamler, 2006, p.301). Without mentoring programs, Latinas will continue to be negatively impacted.

Language itself can serve as a gatekeeper for cultural access and acceptance. “What is felt to be a message in one language does not necessarily survive the translation process” (Hofstede, 2005, p.333). Latinas often speak more than one language and dialect. Because of code switching, and Spanish accents, the assimilation into the multi-cultural groups in learning organizations, and the integration of minority group members may never fully occur.

Even before man thinks or speaks, being speaks to man and renders language, logic and thought possible. But we see to what an extent the method and ambition of phenomenology has been attenuated. This “voice of being” and this “non-spoken word” this ontological language is no longer the bearer of human meanings; it is a sort of sacred language or mysterious symbol, a sort of revelation of being in the absence of all human words (Thevenaz, 1962, p.62).

### **Promotion and Tenure**

The tenure process is an established process that is managed by colleges and universities. The politically driven promotion and tenure process is not conducive to promoting Latinas. Changing this perception and this type of practice is virtually impossible because it is managed and protected by a well-established network of significant White players. The decision-makers are board members and the selection process is based on networking, and belonging to a predominantly White society. “To be sure, an individual faculty member, a university administrator, or a member of the community may play a role in someone’s candidacy; in general, however, (1) the departmental chair, (2) the dean and/or provost, (3) the president and board of trustees, and (4) the external reviewers are the principle players” (Tierney, 1996, p.32). Latinas are underrepresented in each of these groups. The tenured Latina faculty group navigates through the complex layers of learning

organizations. The experiences are rich at all levels and based on the presented literature, there are some common transformational learning threads.

There are examples of covert racism in higher education (Reyes, 1991) that have an impact on the promotion and tenure process for Latinas which include:

Tokenism: “The assumption is that minority faculty are ‘mere tokens...hired without the appropriate credentials, experience, or qualifications...[Thus]there is unspoken pressure put on minority academics to continually prove that they are as good as White academics” (p.304).

The Typecasting Syndrome: “An underlying attitude that [minorities] can only or should only occupy minority-related positions” (p.304).

The “Brown on Brown” Research Taboo: If you are Chicano and study Chicano literature, for example, then such “research interests are dismissed as minor or self-serving. The general perception is that minority related topics do not constitute academic scholarship and that they are inappropriate and narrow in scope...[whereas] White-on-White research is accorded legitimacy...” (p.207).

The Hairsplitting Concept: “A potpourri of trivial technicalities, or subjective judgment calls, which prevent minorities from being hired or promoted” (p.308).

In many cases, Latinas are not being promoted and are not reaching the tenure process (NCES, 2007). “Added to this burden of being passed over for promotion is the sense of being expected to work harder than Whites, the perception that faculty of color must be twice as good just to be equal” (Turner, 2000, p.90). Being in the “spotlight, faculty of color feel they are under constant scrutiny- they must always be at their best and must constantly exceed what Whites do in comparable situations” (Turner, 2000, p.90). The Latina graduates that attain a doctoral degree are never completely liberated from marginalization. “No matter what we do (get a Ph.D., become wealthy, move out of the neighborhood), we are still separated and boxed into categories like ‘ethnic’ and ‘minority’” (Cruz, 1995, p.94). “Now as I get ready to start a tenure-line assistant professorship in the mid-Atlantic region I cannot



avoid stepping back and examining what I have learned – how, for example, being “different,” the “only” and the “other” has prompted a struggle with the labels that make my ethnic identity” (Cruz, 1995, p.91).

If there is a premature ascension into the administration role, the focus then is shifted to serve on committees that address cultural issues and mentoring programs, instead on focusing on the tenure process. “If you put yourself out there as someone who is committed to transforming the institution, you will most likely be called upon to serve on various task forces, search, committees, advisory boards, etc” (Herrera, 2003, p.117). “Personalismo is the avoidance of conflict and emphasis on harmony and are qualities encouraged within Latina/o culture” (Canul, 2002, p.170). As children, Latinas are taught not to question authority, period. So, when asked to serve on committees, finish a report that requires working over the weekend, you will find many Latinas will not say “no” (Castellanos, 2003). Latinas take on non-traditional professorate roles and are held to a higher standard. Meeting the higher standard is challenging and introduces a whole new level of complexity, including the promotion and tenure process. The navigation through the promotion and tenure process may be transformational for many Latinas.

### **Transformational Learning Theory**

Transformative learning theory encompasses complex ideas and requires cognitive thinking. In a transformative learning experience, one may be engaged in dialogue, may challenge their belief systems, shift paradigms, actively participate, and critically think about synthesizing thought patterns for the creation of new approaches to learning and operating. Perry (1970) refers to this as a journey from the naïve and simplistic thinking to complex and relativistic thinking. According to Mezirow (2000), the individual must be liberated from

internal constraints to critically self-reflect. Transformative learning requires transcending from the typical level of consciousness and partaking in a higher order of thinking with the intention of reaching a state of self-actualization.

The learning environment is essential for elevating the thought process that can be enhanced by education to create a new learning experience. Mezirow (2000) discusses the importance of disorienting dilemmas, tragedies (moments of clarity), and the impact they have on sparking a potential transformative learning moment. Such occurrences may transform frames of reference into more permeable and inclusive ones but the process requires various steps. Mezirow (2000) assumes transformations often follow:

1. disorienting dilemma
2. self-examination with feelings of fear, guilt, anger, or shame
3. critical assessment of assumptions
4. recognition that one's disconnect and process of transformation are shared
5. exploration of options for new roles, relationships, and actions
6. planning a course of action
7. acquiring skills and knowledge for implementing one's plans
8. provisional trying of new roles
9. building self-confidence and competence in new roles and relationships
10. A reintegration into one's life after the conditions are met, dictates one's new perspective (p.22).

Kegan (1982) describes this process as an upward spiraling helix where one bridges a frame of reference to another frame of reference resulting in growing and new learning experiences.

The transformative theory process requires critical reflection (Mezirow, 1990). According to Brookfield (1995) this requires three common assumptions which include paradigmatic assumptions that structure the world into fundamental categories, prescriptive assumptions about what we think ought to be happening in a specific situation and causal relationships about how the world works and how it may be changed. Transformations can be epochal with sudden dramatic reorienting insight, or they can be incremental as a result of a progressive series of transformations. Habermas (1984) discusses critical theory to include: enlightenment and emancipation, practical intersubjective thinking, and emancipatory/critical self awareness, specifically, emancipation from domination.

Individuals change their point of view by trying on another's point of view, but individuals are unable to do this without addressing habits of mind. Those habits of mind lead to a set of assumptions and become expressed as point of view. Learning then occurs in one of four ways: elaborating existing frames, learning new frames, transforming points of view, or transforming habits of mind. According to Mezirow (2000) transformative learning may occur through the process of subjective re-framing which involves a critical reflection of one's assumptions of the following:

1. A narrative – reflective insight from someone else's narrative to one's own experience.
2. A system - economic, cultural, political, educational, communal, or other – as in Friere's (1970) *conscientization*, consciousness raising in the women's movement and the civil rights movement
3. An organization or workplace – Argyris's (1982) “double loop learning”
4. Feelings and interpersonal relations - psychological counseling, or psychotherapy

5. The ways one learns, including one's own frames of reference, per se, in some adult education programs – as in Isaacs' (1993) "triple loop learning" (p.23)

Understanding individual assumptions, as well as other people's assumptions is an important step in the transformational learning process. Autonomous thinking is acquired through the learning process, and by understanding other people's assumptions, a new understanding can be developed through the practice of effective participation.

"Effective participation in discourse and in transformative learning requires emotional maturity – awareness, empathy, and control Goleman (1998) calls 'emotional intelligence' – knowing and managing one's emotions, motivating oneself, recognizing emotions in others and handling relationships – as well as clear thinking" (Mezirow, 2000, p.11). Effective participation in discourse requires Emotional Intelligence (EI) which is primarily awareness, empathy, and self control. The Latinas that have reached tenure status have large capacities of EI, and carefully participate in discourse while attending to diversity issues in the departments, as well as when teaching in their classrooms.

Goleman (1998) discussed the importance of self-regulation, trustworthiness, and the importance of maintaining a standard of honesty and integrity. In order to achieve EI, you will need the following: accurate and complete information, freedom from coercion and distorting self-perception, an openness to alternate points of view, empathy, and an ability to weigh evidence and assess arguments objectively. Having a greater awareness of the context of ideas allows for a reflective review of assumptions, creating an equal opportunity to participate in various roles of discourse, a willingness to seek understanding, and establishes an agreement to accept the resulting best judgment.

Transformational learning cannot be achieved without critical reflection. Reflective “discourse in the context of transformation theory, is that specialized use of dialogue devoted to searching for a common understanding and assessment of the justification of an interpretation or belief” (Mezirow, 2000, p.10). In this process there is a critical assessment of assumptions used to search for the collective experience. Spiritual growth and holistic education will prepare individuals for a collective experience. Understanding spirituality and the connection with the earth is essential for growth. A holistic approach to learning allows the individual to appreciate and value the importance of existing in a harmonic world. Relational theory is the source of growth and development in the process of relating to create transformative moments, where people have a choice to respond to shifting patterns of relating to or inviting new shared meaning. “Through shared reflection, dialogic conversation and attending to mutuality, people expand their deeply embedded stores of their social group identities to embrace those of others who stories are significantly different from their own” (Fisher-Yoshida, 2005, p.559).

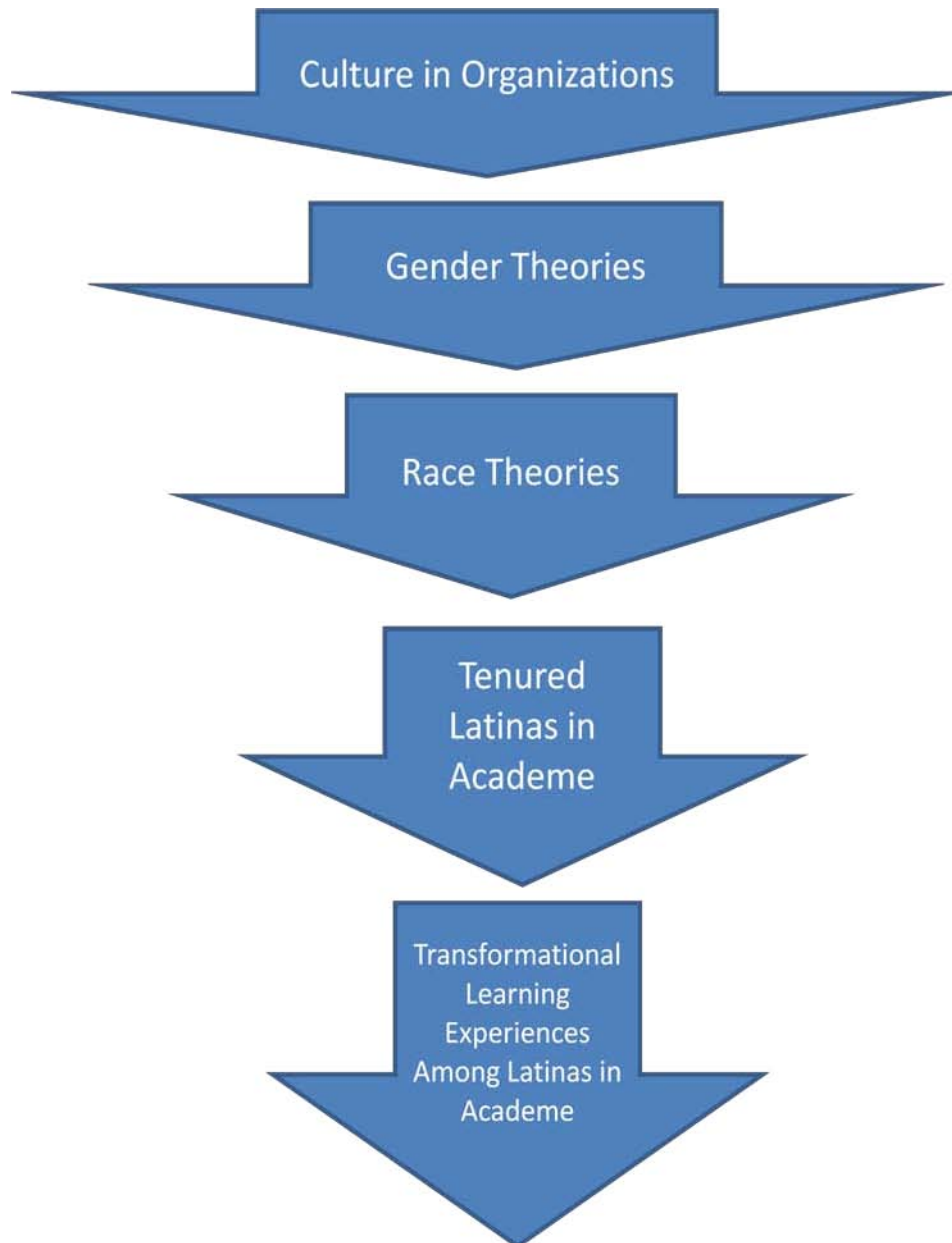
David Abalos (1998) discussed a model of transformational education for social change in the Latino community and argued that in order for social transformation to occur, both individuals and cultural groups need to explore how the mechanisms imposed by cultural hegemony and colonialism have affected their four faces; the personal face, the historical face, the political face, and the sacred face. “When such incorporation of their ways of knowing occurs in the context of community, people connect and begin to reclaim their political faces and are often moved to social action and transformation on behalf of themselves and their own cultural groups or as allies to another cultural group” (Tisdell, 2001, p.371). The tenured Latina cultural group must be cognizant of the assumed versus

actual cultural hegemony and if the community approach is not applied, a multi-cultural state will never be reached.

According to Abalos, in the transformative education model, spirituality plays a role in reclaiming cultural identity and purposively moving to social action (Abalos, 1998). I want to simply note that spirituality is an essential component of the Latina cultural model and it often plays a role on the decision-making process of Latinas. Spiritual affiliation and spirituality in general have an effect on the degree of social participation, action, and responsibility. Being socially responsible is when people act in ways that help create optimal states in others (Goleman, 2005).

There is a phenomenon occurring in academia, many Latinos are not attaining tenure status (NCES, 2007) and the investigation of transformational learning theory will allow for an exploration of the culmination of tenured Latina faculty experiences. Such an exploration may help determine whether the shared experiences have impact on their academic roles and career objectives. The basic concepts presented by the transformative literature assumptions underscore the collective engagement process. This is especially the case in terms of how culture and learning environments affect participation, the storytelling process, and the dialogue used to communicate with others in academia. Storytelling is a tool for improving and expanding communication and learning in organizations (Gargiulo, 2005). Relational theory appears to be the most appropriate and plausible theory in explaining how Latinas interact with others in the academic setting because of an inherent desire to share and create to meaning, especially related to cultural issues.

The literature review process included a critical review of culture in organizations, gender theories, race theories, the navigation through academia, the promotion and tenure process, and finally the transformational learning theory listed as Figure. 2.1.



**Figure 2.1 Review of the Literature**

## **Summary**

This chapter reviewed the literature concerning how organizations learn, how leaders emerge from learning organizations, how culture impacts the structure of organizations, and how change can be achieved through transformational learning. Transformative learning theory provides a mechanism to explore how Latinas operate within academia thus giving Latinas an opportunity to communicate their experiences and determine if experiences affect their leadership abilities. There are additional obstacles that Latinas face within the academic organization as they consider the promotion and tenure process.



## Chapter Three

### Methodology

A review of the literature regarding Latina experiences in academia led to the development of the following research questions: *How do Latinas that reach a tenure status interpret their journey and experiences within academia?* In order to explore the research question, other sub-questions were considered:

1. How do Latinas describe the organizational culture in which they work and teach?
2. What motivates these Latina to reach their personal goals?
3. What types of leadership skills do Latinas that have reached a tenure status possess?
4. How do Latinas that have reached a tenure status describe their experiences in relation to their larger community?

Examining the experiences of Latinas in academia provided an understanding of organizational culture from a feminist perspective. Analyzing the narratives of tenured Latinas in a learning organizations and exploring the organizational culture perspective helped relate the experiences within a Division I university to other organizational culture in colleges and universities.

The creation of this study was based on a research internship funded by a government sponsored project. The program aimed to build community of involvement and engagement between students, staff, and faculty in order to promote innovative programs leading to increased retention rates of minority and low income students. This study was also impacted by of an informal study of Latinas in education in various departments across a Division I university as well as influenced by Dr. Roberto Ibarra's 2001 Latino research findings. One of the primary objectives of Dr. Ibarra's study was to show how the struggle for academic

success directly relates to the conflict between contextually different populations and specific contextuality and value systems historically engrained within the institutional cultures themselves. The study introduced many concepts and issues Latinas faced almost two decades ago, which according to the research presented in the literature review, continue to exist. Not only are the issues still present, but over the past twenty years the tenured Latina conditions have intensified. The experiences reviewed in the literature among the researchers appeared transformative. I have evaluated my own personal experiences in corporate America and in academia and recognize similar transformational learning experiences.

### **Methodological Design**

In order to properly explore the research question, the most appropriate methodological approach was based on a qualitative “interpretive” research design. Qualitative studies often examine small samples with detailed and comprehensive methods (Creswell, 1994). The quantitative approach is governed by a scientifically research-based approach, whereas, the qualitative approach is governed by the human element. A qualitative paradigm assumes the goal of comprehending a human problem through a detailed description in a natural setting (Creswell, 1994). This design will focus on women’s narratives of their experiences in a multicultural learning organization, specifically, Latinas who have reached a tenure status in academia.

The major strength of qualitative research is the rich range of methodological tools available to study meaning, social processes, group variations, and stresses in-depth contextualization with a small sample size. The sampling techniques while nonrandom are usually attentive to a demographic and theoretical dimension. “The combination of small

and in-depth samples chosen for theoretical relevancy allows for qualitative research findings, a degree of significance or generalizability beyond individuals or single cases and provides opportunities to demonstrate rigor in all phases of a qualitative research project” (Lamont & White, 2005, p.4). The intent of qualitative research is to open up new understanding with a high quality, systematic and rigorous qualitative analyses. The rich contextualization of qualitative research could be used to more fully understand relations between racial/ethnic and class identities, political actions, and policy-making processes across institutions (Lamont & White, 2005). In addition, “qualitative methods are particularly useful for studying timely topics such as group identities and boundaries; globalization at the micro level; race, class, gender, and age and health outcomes, and social and cultural meanings of health sciences” (Lamont & White, 2005, p.5).

Qualitative research encompasses a set of rich methodological tools that can be used either on their own or in tandem with quantitative data gathering techniques to explore a wide range of substantive problems (Lamont & White, 2005, p.10). Such techniques, including interviews, archival research, and ethnography are particularly well-suited for examining complex social structures, processes, and interactions that require consideration of numerous dimensions and levels of analysis (Lamont & White, 2005, p.10). Robust research designs should address specific design requirements. The sample included participants that shared social experience, interaction, and long-standing relationships with academic institutions. Qualitative methods were used because it helped uncover causal processes and relationships that occurred over decades.

Qualitative methods were applied at all stages of the research cycle especially within the analytical process. A smaller sample size was used because small sample sizes can yield

rich and rigorous results. Many theoretical considerations were implicit in the design and each participant was educated concerning the complexity of transformational learning theory.

A phenomenological research design was used for this particular study.

“Phenomenology is the study of human experience and of the ways things present themselves to us through such an experience” (Sokolowski, 2000, p.2). The German Edmund Husserl (1859-1938) was the founder of phenomenology, and his work *Logical Investigations* introduced various philosophical concepts (Sokolowski, 2000). Husserl (1906) defines phenomenology as a critique of reason to understand the mystery of knowledge and its roots. “Phenomenology is precisely this sort of understanding: *phenomenology considers the human mind and human reason as ordered toward truth*” (Sokolowski, 2000, p.6).

Phenomenology explicitly addresses philosophy from an epistemological perspective and focuses on the elements of human reason. It is ordered toward evidence and truth and through consciousness and may be able to comprehend the structures of the intentional world, and, above all, the universe of its meaning (Thevenaz, 1962).

When studying phenomenology the researcher searches for intentionality. “The core doctrine in phenomenology is the teaching that every act of consciousness we perform, every experience that we have, is intentional: it is essentially “consciousness of” or an “experience of “something or other” (Sokolowski, 2000, p.8). The importance of Heidegger’s contributions to philosophy and especially to phenomenology lies in his notion of experience-of-the world and not merely consciousness which is intentional (Husserl, 1906) but human reality as a whole (Thevenaz, 1962). The tenured Latina participants in this study will have an opportunity to explore their experiences in academia and intentionally evaluate how those experiences affect their total being.

By instituting a phenomenological research approach, the participants have an opportunity to challenge their internal mental states and explore their convictions. The experiences for Latinas in academia are profound and an evaluation of the philosophical approaches to learning and teaching allowed the participants to explore such experiences for a deeper meaning. Phenomenology "...validates the philosophical life as a culminating human achievement. Phenomenology does not only remedy our intellectual distress; it also opens the door to philosophical exploration for those who wish to practice it" (Sokolowski, 2000, p.2). In the study of phenomenology, the study of being is important because it allows the researcher to understand the theme of methodological investigations clarifying the obscurity of existence (Thevenaz, 1962). The lived experiences of the Latinas in academia are critical for understanding the social dynamic of interactions among different cultures and how such interactions affect negotiated teaching outcomes.

There are some major philosophical concerns. "...phenomenology calls for a major readjustment in the understanding of what philosophy is, and many people cannot free themselves from their background and their cultural context" (Sokolowski, 2000, p.62). Cultural context was considered at every stage in this research study which was critical for the overarching goal. Understanding the cultural issues within the chosen Division I university and how cultural issues in this study may generally relate to cultural issues at other colleges and universities was critical for evaluation.

### **Methods for Data Collection**

My participation in the Title IV internship allowed me to review the content derived from the values and social meanings of the Latina culture in academia and were critical for this research study. The participants were selected based on purposive sampling (Bernard,

2002). Additionally, the participants were purposefully selected according to specific criteria needed to answer the research question (Creswell, 1994). The research questions were designed based on my Division I university research internship, my experiences as a teaching assistant, and on the research and design of Ibarra's (2002) published work. The interview questions were tested to determine whether they answered the research questions (Table 3.1).

The Latinas I worked with during my internship were asked to provide suggestions concerning identifying interview participants, otherwise known as snowball sampling. These types of respondents tend to be more honest and willing to divulge personal information to researchers who have been validated by someone they know, enabling the researcher both to gather more accurate data and to speak to individuals who otherwise may have declined to participate with a stranger. The identification of key expert participants for the study enriched the research responses.

### **Table 3.1**

#### **Major Interview Questions**

1. Why did you decide to pursue an academic career?
2. How has your teaching style developed as a scholar?
3. How has your culture impacted your teaching style?
4. What are your research/writing interests?
5. Are they supported by your department?
6. Have you conducted any research dealing with ethnicity? Latinas? Gender issues?
7. Do you have a mentor? If yes, how has that mentor impacted your career?
8. What are your major programmatic responsibilities?
9. What transformational learning experiences have you gone through to get you where you are today?
10. How would you describe the overall attitude towards Latina faculty within your academic institution?

11. Are many Latinas entering the academic institution? Many leaving?
12. What helped you change your perceptions of learning institutions?
13. What are the major issues among Latina tenured faculty? Among Latina students?
14. How have your values changed in academia?
15. What has shaped you into becoming the type of academic professor you are today?
16. Describe the organizational culture of the academic institution and the impact it had on your tenure process.
17. Given your experiences how have you helped breakdown cultural barriers?
18. Do you feel the perception of Latina scholars has changed in the past twenty years?
19. What role do you play in your community as a researcher and scholar?

Participants were selected based on their affiliation with diversity programs and committees they are associated with on campus. People were interviewed and asked to suggest participants who worked with Latina Scholars at various capacities. Specific criteria was created to include, the participants were Latinas, United States citizens, and attended U.S. colleges and universities. If the participants attended schools that were not predominantly White, but the instructor to student ratio of White scholars was greater, the participants were included in the research process. The representative sample included participants who taught undergraduate courses, graduate courses, mentored other Latina students, worked with diversity programs, or served in an administrative role. The participants Curriculum Vitas were reviewed to determine the academic, education, and scientific research interests. Publications were reviewed to determine if the participants were interested in Latina race and gender issues which met the research design criteria. I contacted the five identified tenured Latinas and asked for their participation in the study, and another participant was identified as a key participant based on the purposive sampling technique. Participants were selected to reflect a cross-section of ethnicity and national origin.

**Semistructured interviews.** The interviews were set up in a semi-structured fashion but were flexible enough to allow for follow-up questioning (Creswell, 1994). A semi-structured interview was utilized with a general scribe (researcher) who covered a list of topics (Bernard, 2002). This allowed for the participants to respond from their own perspective. “Semi-structured interviewing works very well in projects where you are dealing with high-level bureaucrats and elite members of a community – people who are accustomed to efficient use of their time” (Bernard, 2002, p. 205). Such an interview practice frees the researcher to follow new leads and shows the researcher is prepared and competent, yet is not trying to exercise excessive control (Bernard, 2002).

### **Table 3.2**

#### **Progression of the Study**

1. Diversity program participants who work with Latina scholars across the University were asked to suggest names of participants.
2. The researcher scheduled face-to-face appointments to meet the potential participants and asked them to participate in the study.
3. Initial interviews were scheduled.
4. Consent forms were provided.
5. One hour interviews were conducted.
6. Interview data was analyzed.
7. The researcher identified transformative learning moments to discuss with the participants.
8. Follow-up interviews were scheduled with each participant to discuss preliminary findings. The participant validated the preliminary findings.
9. The interview data was transcribed and provided to the participants for another level of validation.
10. Recording devices were provided with a digital recording capability for the data reflection process.



11. Participants were asked to record one month of reflection data via the recording device.
12. At the beginning of each week, the researcher promoted the participant a topic related to the interview questions via an email reminder to reflect on the interview topics and transformative learning experiences based on their life experiences, or based on interactions that occurred during the week in academia. The participants were asked to record their thoughts on the recording devices.
13. The data was collected on a weekly basis via a jump drive, or a compact disc by the researcher.
14. The reflection data was analyzed.
15. The researcher worked with the participant to schedule class observations. The researcher attended undergraduate as well graduate courses for observation.
16. Class observation findings were analyzed.
17. A focus group was held.
18. The researcher the participant's curricula and published works.
19. The published work data was analyzed.
20. The data was triangulated and the findings were analyzed.
21. The findings were presented.

I, as the researcher took notes during the semi-structured interviews to describe physical gestures, movement, etc. which are an important part of how Latinas communicate. Studying the language and expression of the participants was critical to understanding the transformative learning experiences among the academics. The Latin culture is quite expressive and uses language, body gestures, voice inflection, etc. to express themselves. I digitally recorded the interviews and transcribed the data. At the conclusion of the study, the recorded interviews will be destroyed to protect the identity of the participants. The notes created during the interviews were coded to protect the participant identities and the departments in which they worked, were protected.

Based on the research goals, the researcher used a questionnaire to guide the interview. The goal of the interviews was to help the participants reflect on their own experiences to uncover their own “inner voice”. Interviews were scheduled for at least one hour to allow for data gathering. Great attention was paid to the environmental and situational factors among the various learning environments to fully explore social patterns. The researcher requested for the initial interview to take place in their academic offices. This site was chosen to allow the researcher to identify professional and personal interests based on the items located in the offices. The location also presented a safe and comfortable environment. The goal of the interview process was to capture the true and heartfelt experiences of the Latina participants. Great emphasis was placed on capturing their stories to uncover the shared experiences in the academic setting.

I assumed the participants would openly share their experiences and describe the experiences from their own unique perspectives. The qualitative data based on transformative learning experiences in a learning organization, academia, was extremely meaningful and representative of the Latina population in higher education. The study aimed to refine and challenge existing theories in an effort to generate and test a new hypothesis. The in-depth interviews provided rich descriptions of the various cases presented and were compared across research settings to determine how processes emerge and evolve. A qualitative design allowed the researcher to gather detailed data about the experiences of the participant, within social contexts that conventional quantitative survey research designs cannot generate. The qualitative design also provided an engaging exchange environment among the researcher and the participants which allowed for greater dialogue and clarification of responses as and meanings. I, as the researcher had an opportunity to adapt to

the learning environment to become more knowledgeable about the social context of the participants lived experiences. The participants also agreed to allow data to be published in the dissertation.

Follow-up meetings were scheduled with the participants to validate the collected information, the reciprocity process. The interview data was used to answer the specific research questions. Oakley's (1981) feminist model of research-based interviewing was utilized. Feminist research aims to validate the experiences of women and the researcher will approach the participants as friends rather than subjects. The objective of this research design was to validate the experiences of Latina scholars that reached a tenure status and to understand if the transformative experiences impacted their academic careers, and leadership styles. It also considered how those experiences shape both their professional and social behaviors.

I attended the participant's classes and observed the instruction style, leadership style, and communication styles in the classroom. In some cases more than one course was attended representing undergraduate, graduate, and post-graduate students. The various instructional styles were compared among the different course levels. The data was transcribed into a second data set for analysis.

Reflection is an essential component of the transformative learning theory. Once the interviews were completed, each participant was asked to reflect on the interview questions and the responses provided. The participants were provided ipod 6<sup>th</sup> generation recording devices, or digital voice recorders, as well as blank recordable/rewritable compact discs and jump drives. They were asked to record their reflective thoughts using either the ipod recording feature, or the digital recorders. The participants were asked to share a story about

the questions, discuss their emotions (before, during, and after the interview), and provide more data concerning their initial responses. On a weekly basis, the participants were emailed a prompt such as a quote from a section of the interview to deeply reflect on the learning experience. Such a practice allowed the participants to provide testimony in real time to other transformative experiences that have either occurred, triggered additional memories, or reinforced the meaningfulness of the responses provided during the semistructured interviews. This process further enhanced the research data gathering process. The time frame for this data collection period included four weeks of reflective recordings. The reflections were downloaded to a compact disc or downloaded directly to the jump drive and the researcher acquired the compact discs and jump drives at the end of the four week period in person. The researcher transcribed the data into a fourth data set for analysis.

At the conclusion of the reflection data collection process, the participants met in a focus group setting. A set of follow-up questions was developed based on the initial semistructured interview questions and the reflection data collection process to determine if there were similar responses, themes, and shared experiences among the tenured Latina participant group. At the start of the focus group session, the participants were asked to talk about the semistructured interviews and the reflection process to determine if there is shared meaning among the responses. The focus group conducted was quite interactive, lively, filled with dialogue, and generated rich information. I also attended undergraduate courses, and graduate courses to observe the Latinas teaching styles. This was a great opportunity to gather more information. I served as facilitator, moderator, and data collector. The information was recorded, transcribed, and considered as a fifth data set for analysis. I

reviewed some of the published work of the participants. Articles, books, and chapters were reviewed for race and gender themes. Resumes and CVs were also reviewed for additional information concerning the participant's research interests.

### **Data Analysis**

I triangulated the qualitative data from the semistructured interviews, the data collected from the reflection process, the focus group data, the class observation, and reviewed much of the participant's published materials. In order to maintain internal validity in this qualitative research design, I worked with the participants and asked them to verify the data was captured correctly and represented the truth based on intentionality. I provided a copy of the transcribed data and asked the participants to make comments, or provide additional information. According to Creswell (2000), a validity process allows for the researcher to self-disclose their assumptions, beliefs, and biases and describe those beliefs and biases. The identification process allowed the researcher to minimize biases as the study progressed. "This validity procedure uses the lens of the researcher but is clearly positioned within the critical paradigm where individuals reflect on the social, cultural, and historical forces that shape their interpretation" (Creswell, 2000, p.127). The validity procedure also allowed the researcher, early in the research process, to identify the researcher position.

The researcher used narrative and performance analysis. "In narrative analysis, the goal is to discover regularities in how people tell stories or give speeches" (Bernard, 2002,p.451). During the storytelling of the participant's academic background they assume their listeners share many assumptions about how the world works and they may leave out information they believe everyone should know (Price, 1987). I used a grounded-theory approach. "The grounded-theory approach is a set of techniques for (1) identifying

categories and concepts that emerge from the text and (2) linking the concepts in substantive and formal theories” (Bernard, 2002, p.463). According to Bernard (2002), the analysis process includes specific mechanics which are to:

1. Produce transcripts of interviews and read through a small sample of text.
2. Identify potential analytic categories – that is, potential themes – that arise.
3. As the categories emerge, pull all the data from those categories together and compare them.
4. Think about how the categories are linked together.
5. Use the relations among categories to build theoretical models, constantly checking the models against the data – particularly against negative cases.
6. Present the results of the analysis using exemplars, that is, quotes from interviews that illuminate the theory. (p.463)

I identified themes in the texts and included inductive code the texts for the presence or absence of themes which were then turned into nominal variables (Bernard, 2002). The interview data, the reflection data, the classroom interaction, and the focus group data were the units of analysis. The coding procedure was discussed, criticized, and modified to determine if additional codes needed to be added, deleted, or rephrased throughout each stage of the analysis process. Along the data analysis, the dissertation committee members critiqued the process and provided comments concerning the process. The questionnaire responses, evidence directly from the text, narratives, and shared stories were analyzed and were included in the results. The use of native language and code switching was also analyzed. The researcher served as the sole coder to improve the reliability of the text data and content analysis.

## **Ethical Considerations**

The data collected methods in this study were designed to minimize the potential of an adverse impact on the participants. It was critical that the participants felt they could continue to trust me as the researcher, and more importantly, the participants felt comfortable during the research process and were able to honestly and openly provide feedback. The questions and topics solicited emotional responses that had a considerable impact on the participants in the study. There were many negative experiences that were also reported and I assured the participants the identities and the departments they represent at the Division I university will remain confidential. Pseudonyms were used for all participants and the departments they represent.

## **Limitations of the Study**

I have pondered this research topic for over 15 years and believe this introductory, phenomenological research study will have a lasting impact on the Latinas that have reached a tenured status in academia, the research participants. I believe the study created unique meaning as well as shared meaning. As a business professional, educator, and researcher, I have had experiences that closely connect me to this study's literature topics. The careful selection of the participants represented various colleges and universities, various geographic regions, and various Latina cultures. The diversity of the participants adds to the multicultural learning organization body of literature. While conducting the classroom observations, my presence as a researcher may have had an impact on the instructor and the specific behavior displayed during that process. This phase of the process was planned early in the semester to provide the illusion of another student joining the class as a late registrant and preventing disruption among the students.

As a researcher I relate to the plight of the marginalized Latinas and readers should consider my familiarity of the topic a potential limitation. But, I believe my familiarity of the topic improved the data collection process. I've made every effort to monitor my own biases as a researcher. I am sensitive to the limitations of the study and made a conscience effort to control my biases, and create an objective view of the lived experiences of the participants.

### **Summary of Methods**

The data collection methods were carefully considered, as well as the limitations of the study. Specifically, I was sensitive to the cultural, gender, and political issues that have arisen. Consideration of such issues was evaluated based on the information presented in the literature review. This study is important for several reasons. A major strength of qualitative research is the ability to identify areas of research that have not been previously investigated. Another goal of this study was to provide insight in the following areas: the communication patterns of Latinas in academia, their behavioral patterns, their leadership styles, and whether their presence in academia contributes to creating change in organizations. To date, there are few studies concerning cultural and organizational change in academia focusing on gender and diversity issues.



## **Chapter Four**

### **Findings**

#### **Preface**

This chapter explores the analysis of the six cases and presents the major themes that emerged based on the primary research question and the secondary questions. The case studies were developed through interviews, class observations, a focus group, and a review of the participant's published curricula, articles, journals, and books. The six tenured Latina Leaders who participated in this research study are profiled based on their heritage and family lineage. Each participant is introduced with background information to provide a glimpse of their history and academic journey and each participant has been given a pseudonym to protect their identity. The participants have also been categorized based on their socio-economic status (SES). The socioeconomic status is based on family income, parental education level, parental occupation, and social status in the community (Anderson, 1993) Families with a high socioeconomic status typically have access to a wider range of resources to promote and support young children's social, emotional, and cognitive development. Children of high SES often are better prepared for school. An analysis of the primary and secondary research questions is also presented as well as the various themes that emerged, and the chapter concludes with the summary of the data findings. The region the Latinas were educated was included to explore whether there were trends in different areas of the United States in terms of treatment of minority students.

## Participants

**Table 4.1 Participant Data**

Name	Ethnic Heritage	Pseudonym	Region Educated	Discipline	Socio-Economic Status	Years of Tenure
Participant 1	Father-Peruvian, Mother- Mexican	Anna	Mountain	Languages	Low	26
Participant 2	Father-English, Mother - Dominican Republic	Maria	Eastern	Social Sciences	Low	3
Participant 3	Father-Mexican, Mother Mexican	Lucia	Mountain	Social Sciences	Low	15
Participant 4	Father-Mexican, Mother Mexican	Rosa	Mountain	Special Education	Low	16
Participant 5	Father-Mexican, Mother Mexican	Theresa	Mountain	Social Science, Government	Middle	11
Participant 6	Father-Hispanic, Mother-Puerto Rican	Celia	Western	Health Sciences	Low	20

### The Life Stories of the Latinas

The purpose of the study of the life stories examined the transformational learning experiences among Latinas that have reached a tenure status in academia and to explore how those experiences affect their leadership styles. At the conclusion of the interview process, and the follow-up interview process, I included the identified transformational learning experiences along their academic journey, as described by the participants. I have also presented some of the major transformational learning events based on the participant's life stories.

**Anna.** Anna is a daughter of a Peruvian man who left his country at an early age to attend college in the United States of America. He eventually became a short story writer and a professor. When Anna turned six years old, the family moved to the east coast so her father could instruct at a college for women. He was a member of a theater club and enjoyed acting. Anna's mother was from Mexico and her mother received much of her education at a convent. Although her mother did not finish high school, she loved to read and write short stories. Anna spent her early years in a small town with a large Hispanic population. When the family moved to the East Coast, there were very few Hispanics which was quite a culture shock for Anna. There was a large Jewish population and Anna befriended a little girl who remains a close friend to this very day. Like her mother, Anna developed a love of reading at the young age of two years old. "And as a little girl, I was always getting praised for getting good grades." "My favorite thing even then was to go to the library... my mother used to go to the library a lot...And that's an interesting thing because a lot of Chicano writers, in their writing talk about how important the library has been to them, the public library." Her love of reading continued into adulthood. "I am a compulsive reader and you know, I'll start with an author and I begin with their first book and go all the way through their whole work."

Anna suffered a major tragedy. "When I was 13, my father died, and of course that, threw my family into total chaos." The college where Anna's father was working was concerned for both Anna and her mother. The administrative staff was able to provide a librarian position for Anna's mother.

She had no training, but at that point, she always said to me, you know you really have to take a look at me, you know I didn't have an education, and if you're going to survive, you need to get an education.

At that point Anna realized the importance of acquiring an education. She earned a scholarship and attended a woman's small college in the East Coast. "It was full of really upper-class, wealthy young women." Anna enjoyed her college experience but faced adversity early in her academic career. Her major professor did not support her senior thesis because it had an ethnic focus. The professor did not view ethnic studies as scholarly work.

And by the time I got to be a senior, I was a little rebellious, I would say, or pretty rebellious, however you want to say it. I don't know. I learned a couple of things along the way, and that was when I started questioning everything.

Anna wanted to write her thesis on two Latin American poets, but her advisor thought "Latin American Literature was a bunch of garbage." When she presented her senior proposal, he said "... no, you can't do that". She went to the dean and explained her situation and fortunately her dean was supportive of the chosen topic. Anna completed her senior thesis, "but the end result was that he (the professor) denied me honors."

Anna shared a story from her undergraduate experience that helped shape the type of person she is today.

Well...it was when I was a sophomore in college. I was taking a psychology class. In those days, they were doing these psychology experiments. Nowadays, you get told exactly what the experiment is about because you have to have permission...just like you interviewing me. In those days, they didn't tell you. They asked me if I wanted to participate in a depth perception study. I said okay because I was going to get \$10.00. I was really broke. I don't exactly remember what happened, but this is sort of what happened. They said, come over at two o'clock. I am in my dorm room and I get a telephone call at about 1:30 saying, you're not here and we're doing the study. I said, but you told me two o'clock. They said, no, no, no, we told you 1:30. I went running over there and when I get there, the room was already filled with people. This is natural because I am late. In that room, there was Olga. She was another Latina who was a close friend. [Participant points to her desk to provide a visual representation of the research room] They seat me here and there are all these other people, maybe eight or ten. Olga is the last person over here. They show you this chart in which column A is here, and column B is here. The supposed study is which is taller? I am the first person, and I said, A. And then I chose, A, A, A... The heights change and sometimes B is taller, and sometimes A is taller. Then they start with

Olga and she is the first person, and I am the last person. I chose A, B, A, and then they ask Olga. She chooses A. It looks to me like B is a little shorter but she's closest to the thing, and at first I chose B. We do it again and this time she says B. And A is clearly taller, and I'm processing this in my mind, and I'm thinking, what's going on? Can I see? So, I start rationalizing. Can I see these things correctly? Is she closer? A couple of times when she says A, I say B. But then I think...its Olga! She must be right! I am really kind of troubled by this. I get called in so they can give me the results. I found out it had nothing to do with depth perception, it had to do with whether you agreed with...what socialization does to you. If everybody says A, are you strong enough to say B? Well, clearly I wasn't. Olga, who is one of my best friends, afterwards, she apologized. She said, when I saw you come into that room I was devastated! [Researcher sighs] We have another friend who later joined us...But Olga said to me, you should have seen Lillian! Lillian, no matter what anybody said, she NEVER...she ALWAYS gave the right answer! Oh yeah, well if you knew Lillian, you think I am a trouble maker? She was much worse! She was unbelievable. But, I was so devastated to find out that I gave into social pressure! [Whispering] I was just devastated! [Researcher laughs] I told this story to Margarita and she wrote about it in a book. You know, it was unconscionable! It's unconscionable, BUT! After that, I said, I am never doing this again! Not the test, but if somebody says A, and I see B, it's going to be B!.. "People committed suicide! That's how bad it was.

Upon reflection of this experience, Anna she gave into social pressure and betrayed herself and vowed to always speak her mind and believe in her convictions regardless of the outcome.

Anna expressed great admiration of her father, and like him, she decided to become a professor. Soon after she met a man "And after I got my graduate degree, we got married, and I think I married him because he was going to be a Latin American Professor, sort of like my dad, and you know, that was what I was going doing to do." Anna's husband understood she was a feminist and an activist.

My husband always said, I used to walk around the University with a big "C" on my head for Chicana because I was the only one in the whole university! [Researcher laughs loud] I would go in and see the president and say, Anna Caucus has come to talk to you! [Researcher laughs] One day I went it to see him about something. He said, well, we just doubled the number of the Anna Caucus! We hired one other person! We didn't have any Latinas in Sierra but what we did have was a Minority Caucus. There were a couple of African Americans, there was a Chinese, a Japanese-

American, there was me, and there were a couple of other people. We would have lunch deliberately in the faculty dining room and we would all get together. It never failed, somebody would come when we were having lunch, and say, "Are you plotting something?" We did it deliberately. [Researcher laughs] See? You get more than one minority person together, and you're plotting, even though we may be having a discussion about the latest issue on campus!

The idea that a group of Chicanos gathering for discussion incorrectly presumes the group is conspiring against White people motivates Anna to continue to organize and discuss important issues such as race and gender. Anna's behavior reflects her passion and convictions to inform administrators of a need to focus on the "inclusion" of people of color.

Anna had a daughter with her husband but the marriage did not last very long. "I became really unhappy and I wanted to go back to work or to school and my husband who had come from a divorced family, really didn't want me to do that." She started teaching Spanish courses at the community college. "But why they hired me as a Spanish teacher, I honest to God these days believe I have had an enormous amount of luck sometimes, I would say." Although she was fortunate to obtain a teaching position, she was exposed to wage differentials based on gender differences. For

...those two years that I taught at the community college, I learned a lot. I also learned that I was killing myself, and I making \$2,000.00 a year and my husband who was teaching as many classes as I was making \$15,000.00 a year. And I you know, DUH! I was like, what is wrong here? [Laughs] You know, what is wrong? Okay, what is wrong is he has got a PhD and I don't. Now, I enjoyed teaching those two years. But, it was kind of clear that something was kind of screwed. So, then I started applying to graduate school, and that was the end of my marriage.

Once the divorce was finalized, Anna decided to enter a graduate program, one that was safe enough to raise her daughter in a friendly, safe environment. Anna attended a graduate school in the west with few Latinos students. While in school, Anna met a woman, also a single mother, who later became a poet and a writer. They became really good friends,

mostly because they were both struggling through graduate school. The two young women became the first Chicana students to get a prestigious Foundation Scholarship. "...those fellowships were very instrumental, I think, in helping Chicano students finish their PhDs."

Anna would seek out other Chicana writers and what started out as a social network, became an important support system. "And there was a very close connection between the writers, and the academics because the writers were just beginning to write, and the academics were just beginning to instruct." This connection and commitment grew stronger over the course of their careers. "We all know each other and we still all know who we are. It became a very close knit group of, of young people, who were interested in Chicano Literature, because we didn't have any mentors." Anna remains close friends with the early writers and academics.

In 1985, the two good friends became collaborators and wrote an important literary work for Chicano studies. The two became active Chicana feminists and attended a national conference. During the presentation made by the friend, a male attendee didn't agree with the feminist movement, and in a vicious act, he slipped Anna's friend some LSD in her drink and the friend had a total mental breakdown. The obtrusive act reinforced the importance of Chicano literature and a need to publish additional works.

As a professor, Anna does not feel supported in her department. She currently teaches at a university located in the southwest. When she first started out, she was hired as the Director of the Women's Studies Program (which was not a department) and began her teaching career at the University teaching Latin American Literature and poetry. She taught courses in modernism, and the vanguard which are two movements in Latin America from 1880 to the contemporary period, and courses focusing on Latin America women writers.

There was one other Chicana teaching in the heavily male dominant department and the two became very good friends. Later the department hired another Chicana as the coordinator of a heritage language program. The three collaborated on Chicano studies projects and published some work.

...and this department just went crazy because my joke always is that you have one Chicana in the department, you are diverse. You have two Chicanas in the department and things are not so good. You have three Chicanas in the department, and the department's going to hell." There was actually a letter that one of the people in our department, before.... at that time when we came, the department was a department of modern and classical languages. It was not just Spanish, but we had French, and German, and now we're two different departments, but they were all together. And you know, there was hell to pay. They just thought that we were bringing the quality of the department down. There was a letter that was sent to the dean, anonymously by someone in the department that said this was a "guy-nocracy" and that the "Southwest element" was destroying the department, and there's another letter saying that Illeana had been a pretty good person until I had arrived and that I was corrupting her. And these were all letters that we got shown by a sympathetic dean, several years later. We didn't know it was happening.

There were many other episodes and similar situations that occurred throughout Anna's academic career. There was also a situation in which the partner of the woman who was the chair of the department wrote a short story in "which he satirizes and says... and calls us lesbians and all kinds of stuff." Anna was appalled to read this story and realizes this particular man could not believe that two women could collaborate in southwest studies without being stigmatized, stereotyped, and disrespected. Anna stated that "things were tough" because in this department, they concentrated on Peninsula Literature which they viewed as the only "good" literature.

Anna is dedicated to upholding the minority student retention rates in her department. She has created programs, and solicited funding through grants to preserve and continue to assist Heritage speaker students. Heritage speakers are those students that learned to speak



English as a young age and later in life, they chose to learn Spanish. Becoming a heritage speaker is not an easy endeavor. “We still have...there’s at least one person in this department that thinks Southwest studies is a bunch of garbage and has actively, actively, worked against it...but we know who it is, and so, you just work around them.” Anna actively mentors students of all backgrounds. “We talk about where they are, what problems they are having, and what they need to do.” “I tell them often about Santana (her graduate advisor) and about how he said Chicano Lit is a bunch of garbage. I tell them that story and I tell them other things that have happened to me, and you know, just try to talk things out with them.” She helps them financially, directs her research funds to other students, and recognizes the importance of helping the community. “You know people helped me out when I was in need and I think you should give back.” She feels it is the teacher’s responsibility to help students at all capacities even though others in her department do not share the same sentiment.

The perception of Chicanas in the department is awful because Chicanas are perceived in a negative manner. “I think that they think, we are an unnecessary evil.” But, Anna will not tolerate the maltreatment of people of color. “That’s what anger can do for you...[Pause] And the feeling that you are somehow being mistreated.” Anna’s experiences in academia helped shape her leadership style and have given her great inner-strength.

“It’s made me kind of tough. I question everything. I am kind of a pain in the neck, a troublemaker, I am known as that in my department. I think all of the “Are you any good” stuff toughens you up a little bit. And you start saying...one time I remember when Illeana and I were being accused of all this stuff, Illeana was in my office. She said, [in an excited voice] “What is going on?” I said to her, Illeana, do you know what? The problem is they think that we have some power. And she said to me [in an excited voice] “But we don’t!” I said, I know, but if they think we’ve got it, let’s use it. I do think it is a matter of perception. Some of my students aren’t afraid of me, but I think some of my colleagues are afraid of me. Because I will go in, and I will tell

them what I think! I don't yell, but I have had some run-ins with some of my male colleagues in here, that would make you blush! Honest to God! .... Over the years, I used to be a very timid person. Not timid, but in our culture, we are sort of taught that you don't...my mother always used to say to me, "*Boca cerrada no entren moscas*". But you learn not to shine, especially in the '50's, myGod! I am so admiring of my students who come in with purple hair. [Researcher laughs] I just go like, oh wow! I wish I could have done that! But in the fifties, you didn't make yourself stand out. At Plymouth College (pseudonym), excuse me! That was hard to get over. I think the feminist movement really helped me a lot. I think divorcing my first husband really helped me a lot too, I will have to say. But, I have had to learn to speak up. I do remember [Participants giggles], once, when we first got married, I said to him, "Oh, you know, I think I need to go to an assertiveness training". [Researcher and participant laugh] And he said to me, "Please, please stop!" You know, that was kind of funny. I think he already thought I spoke too much. [Researcher laughs]

Anna self-identifies as a Chicana. "I know that a lot of people don't, but to me Chicana means activism, political activism, [pause] political awareness. A lot of residents in a state located in the southwest will say, don't call me that! That's a terrible name... but my dominant culture is really American." Anna prefers to be considered as a woman of color in America, and not categorized as a woman of minority status.

**Maria.** When the participant was asked why she entered academia, she responded, "The reason I decided to go into academia is that I lived through so much inequality." This participant endured hardships and overcame many challenges in her academic career. I asked why Maria decided to teach and she responded:

It was a whole complicated mess, but part of the reason I went into academia, this is a long answer to your question, is because of what I went through as an undergrad with the smiling liberals, saying, yeah we support your initiative on Latino studies but meanwhile, behind the scenes, were supporting a completely different initiative that did not deal with oppression, did not deal with... that with what was considered safe. We'll talk about Latino culture and language, but we're not going to deal with the reality of de-facto segregation, and on-going discrimination, and the kinds of things that I was interested in having through a real Latino studies program.

Maria is the oldest daughter of immigrants from the Dominican Republic. Her parents worked in factories through the sixties and seventies in poor conditions. She was raised in a

large city located on the East Coast in de-facto segregated public housing. She attended a large comprehensive public high school for girls with a population of over 4,000 students. Over the four year period, the graduation rate was a low 25%. Of those students that graduated, only 1% earned college bound honors. Of those college bound students, there weren't *any* white students, 60% black students, 30% Latinos, and most of those students were Afro-Latinos, black Latinos from Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, Cuba, Panama, etc. The objective of the school was to train the students to become LPNs, licensed practical nurses, because there was very little in the way of academic preparation.

Maria's father was not very supportive of her education, and for the most part, was uninvolved in her family upbringing. He had an extramarital relationship with another woman and left the family when Maria was very young. Maria was in her pre-adolescent years and her four siblings were also of a young age. Her mother, on the other hand was an extremely supportive and an active parent.

She was always in parent-teacher conferences and in communication with the teachers, and she was just there. Even though she didn't speak English very well [laughing] to date. She does, she gets by but it's not like she was able to have a meaningful conversation. She was always telling us, we came here just to make sure that you guys have what we never had. We never had the opportunity to go to school. And my father would say similar stuff to us too but she was the one who was the day to day.

Although Maria was of a low socio-economic status, her parents always assumed she would attend college. "It was never a question and you know sometimes it disturbs me because you hear, oh, in Hispanic cultures, there's this sense that women should be married, that was never, even from my father, part of the equation!" She was independent and wasn't hesitant to search for opportunities to gain access to an undergraduate education. For example:

I didn't have this mentoring experience, I was working in a library filing books, and trying to save enough money to pay my student contribution, as a work study student, I nevertheless, always went, you know, to the things I was allowed to go to, through advice. And I sought out the mentorship regardless, so I have never been one who is afraid to ask for help. In fact, I remember my college advisor, kind of being upset of the fact that I was always in her office and asking for more information [laughing]. For fellowships, I was always a go-getter, if someone told me, and these were women of color, at the school that I worked, I mean this high school I went to, they said, you shouldn't be applying to Columbia, Cornell, and so forth, and Brown, and whatever, "You're never going to make it." I've heard that from white teachers, from teachers of color, and I always said, "Really? Watch me!" And I still did it. I still applied for those scholarships. So, it's very interesting because even here, I still find the same thing. There is no real, formal mentoring, It's more informal and I'm grateful, because I have been mentored by senior level scholars, particularly, those of color, but, I always seek it (laughs).

Maria learned about scholarship opportunities through the upward bound program and applied for all of them but, "I was not awarded *any* of those! At all!" Other students were awarded the scholarships and when Maria questioned the scholarship criteria with the program administrator, it became clear, there was a hidden agenda. Maria was told, at the time, that the program administrators were allowing people with a private school education were considered "less risky", were to be awarded the scholarships to insure programmatic success. The scholarship guidelines were contradictory. The program administrator stated Maria's SAT scores were "too high". SAT scores are actually an indicator of college success, but other recipients with lower scores were given the scholarships, the process was illogical! Maria endured racial comments with several negative connotations. For example, "I had high school teachers who said, all Dominican women were sluts because he had slept with all of them and this was a man of color." This angered Maria but she was undeterred by the negative stereotyping and decided to dispel the negative perception.

I became interested in Maria's bravado and determination. I asked where this stemmed from and how it is cultivated. She replied:

I think it's related to hearing what my mother went through, through what my grandmother went through, and realizing that in many ways I have dealt with blatant racism, and oppression in so many directions that I always think back to the fact that here was my grandmother with 16 kids to raise, and no support whatsoever, and she was able to do it. My mom came to this country with a second grade education, and somehow was able to find employment, and navigate this far,....I'm like, even though I am having trouble, even though I lived in a public housing project which people got shot on a regular basis, and it was scary, I thought, I think I can handle this because my mom's been through worse, and so was my grandmother. I always got back to the hardships, my mom had as a child, and how she would describe going through so much trouble. Plus, I got to see where they worked in the factories. On Saturdays, we were there with the mice, and everything else, with the most unsanitary and dangerous conditions. This was in the 70's, where they would work overtime. Even when my parents were still together, and seeing that they were heating their lunch in aluminum foil, on a radiator. That was the situation there, and that my mom was employed in piece work, you know for a while, which meant that they weren't paid an hourly wage, which was completely illegal. But I think I felt like I had privileges that they never had. So, that was always in the back of my mind, no matter what I went through.

Maria admired the resilient behavior of the two influential women in her life. In turn, she set high expectations of herself, expected more from others, was not afraid to demand a quality education from her teachers.

When I had teachers that wouldn't teach, I would go and confront the (laughing) head of the department and I would specifically remember, we had a chemistry teacher who would just sit there and read his newspaper. We were planning to take regents, and not just pass, but get 100's, because of course we knew this was going to determine whether or not we got to go to college. The head of the department, I confronted him, and he said, well you just need to give him a chance. Well I don't care that the head of the department said, we're not going to do anything about it, we organized. And it was a group of us. We were all the children of immigrants for the most part, parents from Jamaica, Ghana, you name it, the Dominican Republic, and we approached another teacher who was from Africa. I remember his name, but he was just wonderful, and said, "You're not our regents teacher, but we need to get a 100 on this regent's and could you help us?" He would come in an hour early, for I don't know how long; it was probably at least a semester, if not, longer. And sure enough, we all, I can't remember, we all got either 95's or 100's on our regents. But again it was that literal group of the regents classes, we just were the so called "honor students" and we all had the same classes for the four years, so we were all friends, and yeah, we always organized somehow.

Maria is incredibly determined and dedicated to her convictions. She participated in a program sponsored through local University as part of the Upward Bound program. She became familiar with the college campus, had access to a system that would allow her to apply to colleges and universities, and was mentored by members of the program.

There were questions of whether Maria would attend school in state, or out of state. Her mother was worried about her well being and wanted Maria to attend a nearby school. Although she was accepted into several colleges out of state, when the time finally arrived to make a selection, Maria decided to remain close to her family and attend the local university. Her mother also posed the question “who is going to watch over you?” Maria realized her mother was concerned for her well being and decided “... I definitely felt like I couldn’t leave. I couldn’t leave my mom with four younger kids that she had to raise on her own. I was a subway ride away and when the drama hit, there I was.” This decision to remain in the city allowed Maria to immediately assist her family when they were in need, because they were a short train ride away and Maria felt she exercised good judgment.

There were other external factors that affected Maria’s college experience. Graduate school was quite challenging because

...throughout graduate school, I had responsibilities, at one point my mom was raising four kids, my younger siblings, and I had to help clothe them. All throughout my undergrad, and my grad, I had to pay for my siblings! And buy any of the things they needed for school, and so on. So, going to grad school was a luxury, but even throughout, I was able to do it. And in fact, because my brother was the youngest, and the only boy, and I knew exactly the kind of high school that we went to [giggling], and how different it is for girls versus boys, which ended up being my dissertation, I did decided to send him to a Catholic School.

Maria initially aspired to become a medical doctor but introduced to Latin American studies. She quickly realized building a career in this field would allow her to actively address the

issues of inequality to impact change for other people of color, which is exactly she decided to do at an early age. Maria earned a degree in regional studies in Latin America with a minor in Spanish and was consistently told by other professors not to concentrate on a Spanish minor, nor focus on Dominican Research.

I remember specifically, one incident with racial profiling where a group of us driving up to Boston, and of course they flagged us a whole group of... And for the most part, we were of African ancestry, I would say most of us were either Dominicans, or Puerto Ricans, we looked conspicuously black. Being harassed and searched for drugs and alcohol, when we had none of that. When we went to eat in Cambridge, I'm trying to remember exactly where, but it was right by Harvard, and remember not being served, being told they were building prisons for us colored people, I mean, things like that which made it clear and apparent to me. It didn't matter if we earned our degrees, from whatever institution; we were still going to be treated differently. So, those were things that made me more passionate about pursuing social justice.

Courses were taken by Maria in political science, history, and sociology to explore the phenomenon of racial profiling and the effects on society.

After the completion of undergraduate studies, Maria taught at a local community college in the inner-city, in a poverty stricken area. She was a young woman and provided a glimpse of her negative experiences.

... I was probably younger than most of the people in the class. I was 23 and having that experience of going to a community college and looking at the privileges I had, when I was an undergrad at the University, in that, I was on campus. And granted I had two, three jobs, to make ends meet, I could never ask mom for help. In any case, that really did shape how I taught because I realized that even though I had it,...it was rough, but I had it easy too. I was on a meal plan. I didn't have to worry about purchasing meals, really, I was on campus. I didn't have to worry about commuting...I realized, a lot of these women were single mothers, it was mostly women, Latinas, and I said, Gee. I have some privileges that some of these women will never enjoy because they are at a community college with very few resources and huge obstacles, because they have children, in the sense that they had to negotiate that other domain. I always try to make my teaching relevant to their lives, and apply it to their lives, so that it's meaningful. And, I will never forget those women.

Maria is closely connected to her research topics, and in many ways they're an

...extension of what I have lived. My research interests have always been anchored in trying to understand Latino communities and Dominicans in particular...The other part is understanding race, and how that shapes your class, status, networks, power, looking at the intersection of race and gender, definitely interested in understanding how educational inequalities continue generations after generations. That kind of thing is something that I am very passionate about.

When I interviewed Maria, the images of ground-breaker, record-setter, and pioneer would come to mind. Nine years ago, she began a tenure track position at a university on the east coast. It was a joint appointment in sociology and an institute where the focus was on Latino Development and Public Policy and she remained in that position for two years. “Again, [emphasis], I was in a department where they had never had, as far as I know, a woman of color in a tenure track position, ever! And, there was hostility; I mean very blatant hostility there.” There were other cases of antagonistic situations in the department. There were “...innuendos that were directed at me, which may have been directed towards my white colleagues too, but in a very racialized way.”

In graduate school, Maria was in a formalized mentoring program which benefitted her research studies. A designated mentor was assigned to her and she felt like she was being validated and supported in ways that most other faculty members were not. Maria feels part of the reason she was able to secure a tenure track position at the current university is because she was able to accomplish many things in two years such as publishing a book, publishing articles, and mentoring other students of color.

There was great anticipation to join the faculty at the current university but the environment was less supportive, friendly, and progressive.

I was the first woman of color hired here on the tenure track (in her department). And it was very hard. It was definitely very hard. I wondered sometimes if...if they had actually seen what my research interests were because this department, even though it's a social sciences department, really has marginalized race as an area of study. So,



I...it has been difficult. Let me give you a concrete example. One of the things I noticed when I arrived here was that we had no requirement whatsoever, of our students, to ever take a race course. We have a course ...which covers all domains of inequality whether its sexual orientation, disability class, gender, and race. I don't know how many years, we have still been fighting to try to get that passed, it has always been in doubt, we get within one vote, and I think now that a miracle has happened, there will be two other women of color...It has not been passed, maybe the next time that it comes around for a vote.... I have had colleagues tell me that race is not a valid category of analysis.

Maria recognizes the importance of continuing to insist on adding this course to the curriculum and will remain committed until it is finally approved by the department.

There are several examples of blatant profiling and a lack of support for women of color in the department at the university.

When I arrived here, I was one of two women of visible African ancestry. I don't know if that other woman, who is now gone, just left because of a lot of dynamics that happened in her department, was there that night. But the minute I walked into the reception room, I remember a very tall, middle-aged white man pointing at me from the corner of the room! While I am talking to my colleagues, one of whom had just started with me, a white male, my chair at the time, a white female, my husband, Chicano, and he comes up to me without any preface and says, "Why, you look just like Condoleeza Rice". [Researcher laughs in shock] And I looked at him, and I said, "Really? I don't think so. What makes you say that? "And I can't tell you how many colors he turned, and even my chair at the time, was like "Oh My God. This is a can of worms." Well, it just goes to show how marginalized and how I can count on one hand, the number of faculty with color who were, at that time, were starting that year, 2001, but to be a black Latina, on top of that, was very difficult.

Maria feels she has been marginalized and constantly tried to change the culture in the department but faces great obstacles. She has been "asked to serve on so many task forces, where your vote doesn't count, and you're just the token woman of color..." I have served on, I cannot tell you how many search committees, I cannot tell you how many university wide task forces, whether it's the university graduation task force, to the faculty grievance, etc., I continue to turn them down because I literally cannot sit on fifteen committees!"

Students from all over campus that include race in their research studies seek Maria's

expertise and she feels she can't say no because many of those students of color feel have little faculty support. "...a lot of it stems from, the fact that I am the ONLY person of color."

The promotion and tenure process was not an easy for Maria.

When my tenure review came up, they questioned whether or not my scholarship, my book was scholarly, whether it was peer reviewed, I mean things that made no sense. The vote was actually 8 to 4, so a quarter of, a third of the department voted against my tenure. And it's remarkable, because when I think about people who have earned tenure before, not one of them had a book, not one of them had received the type of attention that my work had.

To date, Maria's work is still being questioned and perceived as not being scholarly. "Why? Because it addresses a topic that is not seen as legitimate [giggling], and God forbid, it addresses something I can relate to personally because it has to deal with you know Latino, communities and black communities in New York." Maria deals with this negative perception by counterbalancing her engagement with other meaningful groups and programs. She is a member of an organized black group and has become an active member and major contributor to the group. Most recently, she was asked to consider becoming President of the group. She is currently working on a grant with a with Native American faculty member from the Public Education Department. She is the only non-native scholar, but in this case, being the "only" is a privilege.

Maria had two children before she reached tenure status and had to request for maternity on two different occasions. "That was another delicate thing to handle in the way that was received because in so many words I was told; no one has ever requested two maternity leaves." In this particular university Maria knows for a fact that there are other faculty that have taken more than one maternity leave. The time away from the University was perceived negative in the department "...and in fact was told, when I had to ask for the

second maternity leave, that the impression that the dean's office has is that I am working the system because I have two kids. It's been pretty hostile in that sense and not supportive. It turns out that when I was offered the job, I was not expecting." She felt lukewarm support when she joined the department; they appeared akin to the idea of having the first woman of color as a member of the staff but weren't open to diversifying the department.

Maria is committed to creating a racially diverse department, supports all students interested in race and gender issues, and promotes social change. "It's a joy to work with all students, and it's not only students of color, I have also had Anglo students that are interested in looking into race and gender issues, but they're like, nobody else in my department really is interested in that. So, I have worked with so many." Maria finds this aspect of her job quite rewarding.

Being a tenured Latina comes with a lot of responsibility. Being a mother, a researcher, a lecturer, and active citizen is not without challenge. If one has a supportive husband, it makes it easier to remain fully engaged. "There are moments when he will be completely supportive, but then, there are other moments where I am like, if it were the other way around, this would not be right." When Maria was hired as a professor, the university indicated they would find employment for him, "and I was ignorant enough to think that I could trust their word. And then, they were like, well who told you that? That's not going to happen." In her marriage, the expected parenting roles are unequal. When Maria was a graduate student, the relationship was more equitable but

once we got married and the children came, it was very inequitable. That is a source of constant friction and the fact that, unless you're an academic, it's hard to explain the kind of work that we do because it looks like, well you're not really working right now, because you're only teaching part-time. But, we are working all the time.

Maria works many long hours as a professor. Her dedication to her students, her research, the university, and the quest for social reform requires a large time commitment and Maria views the situation as a difficult balancing act.

I asked if the Maria's values have changed in academia, but she stand firms to her governing principals. She states, "I think my values were always related to social justice. Well, maybe I didn't have the language back then in high school, but I knew that there was something that was not right, and I always spoke out, even if people didn't want to hear it. If, I just think right now in this climate of getting rid affirmative action, and all of these opportunity programs, had I been coming up now, yeah, those doors are closing fast." Maria desires to excite young scholars to do good work that is meaningful that addresses the issues of oppression and social justice. "My whole hope is that 20 years from now when I retire, that things will be different and that some of these battles that I am fighting will be won. That's what keeps me going." When I asked how the participant self-identifies. She responded, "I very much am, and have always been anchored in being Dominican, in which to me, means black. [Laughing] And some people might argue that but it's how it is."

**Lucia.** Lucia's parents were born in the United States of America. Her father had a ninth grade education, and her mother had a seventh grade education. If you ask her parents how they self-identify, they will respond Spanish American. If you ask them in English, they will say, "*Si, yo soy Mexicana*, but it's a small "m", because they have never even been to Mexico. My aunt was 96, my mom was ninety-something, and they never have even been to Mexico." But they do identify with the ancient notion of *Mexicano*. Her paternal father was full Apache but Lucia identifies as Chicana because:

Part of the other identity of being Chicano is colonialism, knowing what colonialism has meant, so I have that memory of colonialism, the memory of that history and connection. Chicana, Chicano, embodies all of that for me, it embodies history, it embodies culture, it embodies race, it embodies politics. I just can't imagine a more perfect term for me."

After getting to know Lucia, I totally agree with her assessment. She is the youngest of the children in her family, and was the first to attain an undergraduate degree. Her oldest brother started out in junior college, had gone to the military, went to work for the railroad, got married, and eventually earned his B.A. Her sister was a nun, earned a B.A., and then later earned an M.A. Her other brother started out at a junior college, but decided to join the navy. Lucia attributes much of her success because of the support of her family. "There was always structure, I grew up with structure, and discipline, and as a Catholic student, a catholic school girl, a lot of self-discipline [stomps finger]. We are like the working class kids whose parents pay a little bit more to go to a Catholic school..."

As a young girl, Lucia loved school. She liked learning, reading, math, all the socializing, and was very active in many different clubs. In high school Lucia was a part of the debate and speech team, a student representative in the student council, both her freshman and sophomore year, and was also involved in many different student organizations in high school. This would set the stage for her activist attitude, belief, and behaviors later in life. Lucia was born in a small town in the mountain region. "My dad's aspirations were that I would be a legal secretary and that I would be a secretary in the court house." Her father worked for several years and hoped his daughter would work as a legal secretary to a top judge. Lucia's mother spent her career as a secretary.

Lucia would seek out fellowship opportunities and applied for many different fellowships and different scholarships. She qualified for the scholarships created for students

of low socio-economic status, and was awarded a full tuition scholarship to a nearby university in what she considered the “big city”. Lucia’s parents didn’t want her to attend the university and hoped, instead she would attend the junior college in her home town. They thought she would eventually quit school and get married. Even though they were reluctant to allow her to leave, they agreed to pay for her first year of tuition and housing. Lucia handled her own finances thereafter.

Lucia grew up in a modest small town with very few white people. She remembers entering her first year at the university with an “eager beaver” attitude. She attended a university that was “99% white which was an incredible cultural shock! And not only were they 99% white, but I couldn’t say exactly the figure, but well over 90% wealthy white.” She felt lost in this foreign environment. Many of the students that attended the university were the “sons and daughters of corporate executives, and big money people that came to the University...did so because they could go skiing and so they could get business degrees from the University...and go on to work, and follow in their daddy’s footsteps.” Lucia felt if the wealthy students would have been better students academically, they may have attended Ivy League schools. “And the question I *always* got, I remember being in the dorms, just anywhere, and I would be standing at the elevator and I always got some variation of the following question, “What are you?” Or they were like, “Where are you from?” They found Lucia’s appearance very intriguing because of her unique indigenous background. Lucia has features of a woman of an indigenous background which include dark black hair, and dark brown skin which was uncommon in the private college. Many students would ask her about her ethnicity but the questioning made Lucia uncomfortable and she had thoughts of transferring to another school.

Lucia felt like she did not belong, or fit in. “The beginning of my sophomore year, I talked to one of my professors, about transferring, and he said, “Where do you want to go?” I told him I want to go to the University of Montezuma. He was like, no you don’t want to go, and it’s too big. You’re not going to get the... you know, he gave me all of these reasons why I didn’t want to go.” Instead, she took a social sciences class offered by this professor, and Lucia fell in love with the course and the subject matter. She then told herself, “I’m not a quitter” and although she faced obstacles, she decided to remain at this university and performed well academically. Later that winter quarter, Lucia did not have any plans and decided “...I don’t know where...I got this, I said, I would really like to do research this summer...it still baffles me to this day...you know that’s when you feel there’s divine intervention or something...” Serendipitously, the young student knew of a professor who was recently awarded a research grant and was planning on hiring students to conduct research that summer. Lucia boldly discussed her research interests with the professor and was awarded a position on the spot. She was the youngest researcher on the project.

That summer, Lucia worked with a team of two professors, a half a dozen students, and a couple graduate students. She was introduced to a multi-method research design and conducted the entire base analysis for the study. Lucia also gathered the bulk of the qualitative data and became the “survey star.” She wasn’t afraid of neither working in the “tough” Chicano neighborhoods nor talking to the people. The memory of the experience included talking to the “*viejitas* who had been there for many years.” She enjoyed the interaction with the students,

“But it was because as a kid, I had sold Girl Scout cookies, door to door, and because as a Catholic girl, a Catholic school girl, I had gone around and sold Catholic statues,

and all the things we had to sell every year. So, it didn't faze me to walk up to somebody's door and ring and ask them for something..."

The Chicana enjoys interacting with the communities, and in a more recent case, she was conducting surveys with some of her university students. She challenged them to "keep up with her", only to retain her "survey star" status.

Lucia moved downtown, and although she had a car, she would ride the bus to school because she enjoyed interacting with members of the community. At the end the summer a professor that supervised the social sciences statistics laboratory, asked Lucia if she would qualify for a work study. If so, would she be interested in running the statistics lab. She happily agreed although she received little direction in running the lab. For example, the professor was working on a large grant and required data analysis. He said, "this is the data we need. Go and read the manual and figure out how to get that data." This was also during the time when computers occupied the entire room, and students had to make data cards, with the old card puncher, students had to create instructions card, and the "batch processing" system was used. Students would drop off their data and the lab workers would pyramid the data until results were identified. The process took around 24 hours. Lucia interacted with students, graduate students, and professors, and developed a affinity for data analysis.

Lucia described herself as an organizer. "Since I was a little kid, I would always organize lemonade stands, or parties, or something, even when I was in middle school..." She also organized softball games with the people in the Sociology department, and organized other events for faculty, for graduate students, and for herself. She became the department's "little mascot, and they all came to really care about me." She was also encouraged to publish a research article later that year. With their help, she designed the



questionnaire and the testing instrument, got the data, ran the data, analyzed the data, and presented the results at a Social Sciences Conference, her senior year.

Lucia described herself as a linear thinker. During her undergraduate studies, she took several math classes, statistic classes, calculus, and other methodology classes.

I think the other advantage is, when you are doing math, so much of it is proofs, so much of it is analysis, and logic, and the logic of what you are ruling out, I think that...I didn't realize it until year later, how much that shaped my ability to analyze. I think that's part of why, I am very analytical."

She believes math forces the building of analysis, and provides the logic to help lay things out. This process comes easy for Lucia partly because of the way her brain works, but also because she finds the work interesting. "Our culture is taught to be more circular. And I value that but my way, and the way I speak is actually more linear."

Faculty, mentors, and other graduate students encouraged Lucia to attend graduate school. She decided to pursue her degree, because of "a desire to understand and a desire to work for social change." However, at the end of her senior year, she decided not to attend graduate school. Lucia's supporters were quite surprised by this decision but she assured them she would eventually return to the university and attend graduate school. Although the faculty members recommended Lucia for a university position, she decided to travel with a young man. "You know, and it's funny, in our *cultura*, women go off with a guy, and you're always like... they're going to come back pregnant?" This was also a great fear of Lucia's mother but the situation was avoided.

Lucia returned to the university after three years. Her supporters were happy to see her and encouraged to work for the university as a recruiter. The admissions office was expanding and decided to take a new approach to increasing the admission rate through

increased recruitment efforts. The university set up regional director positions and the southwest position remained unfilled. Within two weeks, Lucia “was packing up my 64 Chevy and driving out to Anaheim.” She lived there for a year, and traveled all around Northern California, Southern California, Arizona, and Nevada recruiting for the University. She excelled as a recruiter, and was asked to continue to work in that region, but she declined. She was then asked to work for the Rocky Mountain region which she accepted. Lucia saved some money, purchased a home, and worked as a recruiter in the Rocky Mountain area. For a year, she had many adventures but the university soon asked that she recruit in the local area.

Lucia lived with other graduate students. She admired one in particular, because she worked at the university as a researcher, thought she was “super smart, hard working, had a dynamic personality, and was a great friend.” The roommate asked, “Alright Lucia, when are you going back to school?” The other roommates encouraged her to return to school and apply for scholarships. Lucia applied for a Fellowship, was awarded the fellowship, which meant she could attend the school of her choice. She was accepted into several schools but because she had a heavy quantitative background she opted to attend a school with a quantitative emphasis. “A school on the west coast was my first choice because I knew the school on the west coast was a place I could understand where I would learn and understand poverty and class issues of equality, inequality, and other stuff. So, I didn’t really necessarily know what all that stuff was, but I knew that I wanted to understand it.”

There were many people who supported Lucia, loved her, mentored her, nurtured her, and steered her in a positive direction. This provided a positive undergraduate experience, but her graduate experience was much different. In her words, she “took to the school on the

west coast like a fish to water.” She loved being there, and displayed the same eagerness, was “...happy to be there, was nice, very friendly, and displayed a positive attitude. I remember one of the graduate students telling me later on, [in a sarcastic voice] ‘Everybody was wondering why you were being so nice.’ The environment was unfriendly, competitive, and elitist. “[Laughing] You know they would look at me like I was so fricken’ weird! You know, the Chicanos weren’t a whole lot better either.” Later she was asked to present at a conference in the Midwest, to minority fellows, and many of her colleagues. A fellow Chicano student traveled to the conference but Lucia did not “gel” with him.

I came off to him as way too sure of myself. And he went back to the school on the west coast, and told everybody at the school on the west coast, that this new Chicano that was coming in was aloof, [Pounding her finger on the table] and stuck up.” When she returned to the university, “[Pounding her finger on the table] that is...that’s how they treated me, the pressure they put on me...I think he felt rejected by me or something. He went back, and by the time I arrived, because everybody knows when there’s new Chicanos coming to the departments, so when I arrived, there was this sort of expectation, people were set up to dislike me by the time I got there.

She had to deal with that perception for the remainder of her career in graduate school. “I tell you most of the injustices, yeah, there are institutionalized injustices, but most of ... injustices that I ever experienced, have come from other *raza*, hands down....and women, especially women.” These types of interactions surprised Lucia. The situation “got worse in a sense because even some of the organizing and stuff I was doing with Chicanas, well part of it, I think is what happens to a lot of women...” Meanwhile, Lucia’s parents were in awe of her accomplishments, were both very proud of her, and never imagined that she would achieve that level of success.

Lucia attended a graduate school ranked number one in the field at that time. The school created high academic standards and had great expectations of their students. Lucia

felt she was unprepared, especially in terms of her writing skills. For example, she had knowledge of symbolic interaction theory and social organizational theory, but lacked expertise in political economy theory. She opted to attend this particular university to specifically focus on political economy theory, but instead she was expected to be the expert in this area. For example:

I remember staying up all night to write, actually several nights... trying to write this paper. He wrote back to me, and said this is more like a set of rough notes than a real paper. And it was. He wasn't being mean; it was like a set of rough notes. I didn't know how to put together a fricken paper!

When asked how this made her feel, she felt discouraged, but not surprised. "I didn't know how to write, I didn't have a vocabulary and I didn't have a background in political economy, the reason I went there. Now they really have a reason to make fun of me right?" Instead,

I told myself, I am not going to allow them to hold me responsible for already knowing something that I came here to learn [tapping her finger on her desk] and that was my mantra...I just took this attitude; this is why I am here. I am here to learn this, and the fact that you expect me to already know it is unfair. I will learn it and that's why I'm here.

Being in this type of ultra-competitive environment did not fit in with Lucia's lifestyle. "I've always been about community. Always, since I was a little kid. That's just always what I had valued and I got that from my parents, the values placed in the neighborhood. I was always friends with the older folks in the neighborhood as well as with all the kids." She would visit with all of her neighbors, because she valued community and always thought the most important thing was to be nice to others. She also shared when we was a young teenager, she would see people downtown she knew rather than hang out with her friends, she would prefer to converse with the mature crowd. Her mother would later hear of the interaction and would

say, “they were so thrilled you spoke to them.” This is a quality Lucia has passed on her to son.

Lucia looked to her mentors and was quite successful in her academic studies. She participated in organized assemblies, and she, along with other women of color, started anti-apartheid work. They also started the first women of power conference which has just celebrated 25 years, a graduate student union, and was heavily involved in city politics. Lucia was appointed to the city planning commission and was excited to do “real work”. She “started to not let petty people stop me. You know there were a lot of moments when Chicanas really hurt me from just being.....hateful.” Organizing around Chicana feminism and being around other Chicanas was very rewarding but her aspirations were much higher, they transcended the above groups that included people of color, the work she was most passionate about included networking with others to create coalitions. These coalitions were cross-cultural, cross-class, cross-race, cross-gender, and cross-political. She worked with an African-American mayor who served as the planning commissioner. By the time she left the area, she had become the vice-president of the planning commission.

Lucia was very happy on the west coast and had no intention leaving for quite some time. She was involved in an anti- apartheid demonstration in the disinvestment from Africa, when someone approached her and said “hey, I have been looking for you. There’s this job in Chicago and I think you should apply for it.” She had no intention of leaving to go to Chicago but a university was looking for someone interested in community work. That peaked her interest, because of progressive white people from Chicago and all the coalition work being done; there was a great interest in black and Latino issues. Lucia decided to schedule an interview and “the stars came together”, when she was awarded the position.

When she arrived in Chicago, the chair of the department, a male, debriefed her concerning expected roles and responsibilities, and discussed who he felt “she was supposed to hate and who she was supposed to like” and at that point, she was fearful she may have made the wrong decision.

Lucia was working in the Latino studies program, but it was the efforts of Puerto Ricans, Chicano activists, the Chicano-Latino activists, that helped create that department. There were mostly white people in that department but they were trying to sustain a small section of Latino studies. She was asked to teach: Introduction to the *barrio*, Latinos in Chicago I, and Latinos in Chicago II. Although Lucia felt she did not know enough about the subjects, she was forced to teach the courses. To her surprise, she loved the subject matter and published an article based on power relations in the University.

The first thing that they resented was that right away I developed a following of students. Students were hungry. When I started teaching classes like introduction to the *barrio* to Latinos, and I did it in a way that engaged them. I got them involved and that was the first thing they resented, it was, that I was too close to the students. That pissed them off.

Here again she was viewed as “too good, too nice, and too good of a teacher”. Lucia also was awarded a grant but this made the department angry because she had not received “their anointment to do that” which angered people in the department. “AND THEN what made it worse, is I associated with people on that list of people that I wasn’t supposed to talk to.” As it turns out those were the people that were actually working with the students, were engaged, and were connected to other people in the community. “To make a long story short, they were real assholes! I couldn’t wait to get out of there! Before I even went up for tenure, I was like; I don’t want to be here anymore!” She remained in that position for some time because of the connection with her students.

Lucia was awarded a national research council fellowship, and decided she was unable to deal with the horrible, extremely oppressive environment, and was tired of dealing with “awful people”. “The Puerto Rican that was there, oh my God, he was such a pig and an asshole! He was middle-class, upper-middle-class Puerto Rican, [whispering] he was such a pig!” Lucia went on to describe the uncomfortable working environment, expressed great regret, and discussed how she suppressed the memories for a long time because they were so painful. Meanwhile, she was doing what she does best, organizing, hosting conferences, and bringing people together. She married a man who was listed on the chair’s list of people not to associate with which added additional stress to the situation. The couple had a son, and migrated to a mountain state because she wanted to re-connect with Chicanos in a better working environment. She joined Women’s Studies with a joint appointment in another department. She developed this introduction into Chicana studies class, which used to be called “*La Chicana*”. She loved the students but the Governing Board was committed to maintaining their own power, rather than being true to the spirit of women’s studies.

Lucia found a new position and tried to build Chicano Studies but there were many people questioning her motives. “But I watched some dirty [speaking slowly] dirty politics, [whispers] dirty politics.” By this time some of it was directed at me, but mostly it wasn’t.” Her past experiences taught her not to take the politics personally. The dean asked her if she wanted to continue the joint appointment, and she decided one department was preferable to the other department especially in terms of developing her career even though she loved the students and the mission of Women’s Studies department. They were upset “because what I had done is, I removed myself, from their opportunity to be abusive to me, and that pissed them off even more.” Plus, when it came time for tenure, it was very clear, the people in the

one department were not going to be supportive. Luckily, “the two deans actually came up with a process to protect me, to make sure I had a fair review.”

During that time is when she got very connected to the study of Chicano studies and Chicano communities.

To me, my whole commitment to Chicano studies is about, based on the preamble, on the values and ideologies of the preamble. So when these people would say to me, and they would pull all of these *movidas* to keep Chicano studies down, we reviewed this whole process, we involved all these people and came up with this plan, because it was when Tony was attempting this re-structure, and I watched him screw over this student, and that student, and this person and that person, but we had gone through this whole huge process, a beautiful process. We hired a facilitator, we had break out groups, and involved lots people, and I remember these two women, Chicanas who were also involved, and when they walked in, they basically said, we don't really care what you've done, whatever you did, or whatever you came up with, we're not going to abide by it. [Tapping her finger on the desk] At the end of the day, they came up with that crap, and everybody was just like [pause]... Then I watched them, after that, and I think I already got to the point, yeah so I think that when I thought, there's no point trying to convince these people. I'll just start my own center, and that's what I did. I came over here full time and I started a center.

For the next ten years she worked on projects in the community she believed were important.

Lucia used her position to connect with people of the community. She flourished in this center and produced “ALL KINDS OF WORK.” She built new ties with the community, became involved with corporations, and worked with graduate organizations. She no longer leads the center but she has recruited the right people to sustain her legacy. When asked her if she felt remorse for leaving her position, she responded:

...you also go where you can be most effective. So it's like choosing your battle, choosing your arena, but never giving up the fight, never giving up the purpose, never giving up the pursuit to make that connection between your University and your community... If I ever get involved in a struggle, it's a very conscious decision because I understand it to be a part of something larger. But I never get involved in the pettiness. I have no interest in it, I have no inclination for it, it serves no purpose, and it has no value. I don't like petty squabbles, do I don't get involved with them, I just stay away from them.



Lucia has perfected the art of maneuvering her way around negative stereotypes and directing her talents to potential positive interactions without being forceful or purposely intimidating others.

**Rosa.** Rosa was born in 1952, and is a descendent of a migrant Mexican family. Her parents had little more than a grade school education and no one in her family had ever obtained a college degree. Since the young age of 8, Rosa knew she was going to attain a college degree. She grew up in a southwestern, small, and very segregated farming town. The African-Americans were partitioned in one section of town, the Mexican-Americans in another, and the more affluent white Anglos in yet section of the town. The groups never mixed and the structure of the education system supported a segregated social structure. Things were slow to change in this isolated community. When Rosa was in the second grade, things were changing around the world, but not in this community. The people of color faced discrimination, experience prejudice, and were segregated. Schools were specifically created for African-American students. Other schools were created for Mexican American and White students.

Rosa's parents only spoke Spanish and her primary language was Spanish. Rosa was heavily influenced by her grandparents because they shared her home. They were Spanish monolingual and although her grandmother was born in this country, she refused to speak English. Her grandfather emigrated from Mexico during the Mexican Revolution. She had fond first grade memories because she had a wonderful teacher, and having a cousin that was one year older than she, who served as the language broker and the cultural broker was helpful. The first and second grade students were combined in one classroom. Her older cousin taught her "the ropes", and guided her through the school system. Rosa's teacher was

a wonderful woman, was white, was very warm, and very caring. The teacher's husband, also white, taught the third and fourth grade. The married couple were really loving people and basically supervised the school with a caring and nurturing style.

Rosa moved to another town and had to repeat the first grade, but without a negotiator or a support system. Rosa hoped she would have a similar positive experience and looked forward to attending the new school. The situation was completely different and unlike the former, kind, first grade teacher, the new teacher "was something else". Rosa shared the following story:

I went into the second grade feeling the same way about her, but then I began to notice that she would almost be belligerent and angry if you as a Mexican kid was in any way, trying to get close to her. She was kind of an odd person and I also began to notice in my own little young mind, that she treated the kids differently. She treated the white kids differently than the Mexican-American kids, and I don't know how I reacted. But I probably withdrew in that class. In any case, I had been out ill for a whole week with the flu. I came back to school and we had a test on the Roman numerals, and I was not excused from taking the test because I had been out ill. I had to take it with everybody else. Of course, I didn't know ANYTHING, anything about Roman numerals, and in fact to this day, I don't know anything about Roman numerals [participant chuckles] I did awful. I am sure I didn't get anything correct, so I flunked the test. She passes out the papers later in the week and she calls me up to the front of the room. And she proceeds to pull up my dress, she must have said something about flunking the test, or something, pulls up my dress, and spansks me in front of the whole class! [Participant is overcome with emotion and begins to cry softly] So, it was at that point that ...that life, you know I still get emotional when I talk about it. There is just so much pain attached to that situation [pause] where so much humiliation [long pause], so much fear...fear of being viewed "less-than" because that was made obvious, right? By bringing me to the front of the class, so it was at that point, that I knew I was going to be a teacher. I knew that I was going to be a teacher and influence the classroom experience for people like me, so they wouldn't have to go through the same thing I did. My whole career has been based on dealing with underrepresented students and making the educational experience better for them, so that they could succeed.

The path to redemption was not an easy one for Rosa because of several obstacles. "I still had to go through the hazing of that school system and that was very, very...I could tell you

stories, that were very, very unfair to kids of color.” This unfair treatment of kinds of color never sat well with Rosa.

In the 1960’s segregation ended and schools were mandated to allow children of other races and cultures intermix. Kids from the African American schools were allowed to join the “white” schools. This mandate worked well in theory, but in this particular community, the Mexican kids were labeled as white, and the Mexicans were sent to the black schools to meet the criteria to create the illusion of inclusion. The Anglo kids remained in the white schools and were not required to attend school with other students of color. Rosa became well aware of the situation and noticed similar circumstances in other communities.

Even at that young age, it didn’t make sense to me. And then the Hispanic community started to protest because that had happened. I was distinctly aware of the turmoil that was creating, not just among the Hispanic community, but between the communities because now there was conflict. That solidified, and affirmed my need to do something about this. One of the things I noticed when I started school, we were the Hispanic kids in the school, we were about half and half, half Hispanic, and half Anglo. By the time I finished high school, I was one of two Hispanic kids that graduated from high school.

Rosa realized after several years, the circumstances did not change in the community, and suspected there were extreme inequalities in other parts of the world. “It kind of re-ignited my passion and my need to really do something about it.” When Rosa finished high school, she told her father she had plans of attending college. He questioned her motives, and asked, “Why are you going to go to college? You’re just going to get married and have kids, and no, you are not going.” Rosa’s father was a traditional Chicano male, and demanded respect from his children. Although Rosa never went against her father’s wishes, she said, “Dad, you may not want me to go to college but whether you say yes, or no, I am going. I am

going! And if it will make you feel better, I will go live with my aunt...” So she ended up leaving home, and went to live with an aunt in a nearby town.

Rosa registered at a private college but did not consider the high costs of attending college. Her parents could not afford to pay for tuition and by the time Rosa realized financial aid was no longer available, she was unable to register for the semester and was forced to return home without a college education. “There I am, I am back home, and I ended up having to get a job, but it wasn’t over, for me, it was not over!” Rosa established a friendship with an Italian gentleman from the east coast, ten years her senior. The Italian completed his college degree and their relationship went from a friendship, to romantic involvement. “In hindsight now, I really think he was my ticket out. I wouldn’t tell him that, because he’s my ex-husband now...”. The two ended up getting married a year later.

Rosa’s husband was attending graduate school in the east coast with an emphasis on Asian studies. Once the two were married, Rosa would soon be able to fulfill her dream of attending college. The transition from a small farming community to a large city on the east coast was a difficult one. Rosa began her college education at a downtown community college, in a dangerous area, with a cultural make-up of 98% African-American students.

That was a very interesting experience because I witnessed that, even though these individuals were getting a higher education, they were not in an institution that provided them with the best education, nor were they in an institution that was the most conducive to learning because it was, if you can imagine, a building several stories high, a few of the floors...

The demographics of the students varied from militant African-American students, to students that “were there, just to blow off some time, and I found needles in the bathroom, and there were a lot of...”unsafe conditions”. But, Rosa felt she was in a good place, because she was a college student and felt she learned a great deal in this community college.

Rosa experienced racial profiling. “One, I learned about the fact that, nobody knew who I was. What are you? You’re not Puerto Rican, you’re not Cuban, and you’re not black. What are you?” This was the first time the student attended school without a Mexican-American population. “It was very fertile learning ground for me and a great experience for me in that sense.” She remained there for a year and soon transferred out to a suburban university that included yet another class of people, specifically, middle-class Italians, some African-Americans, and a large international student population including several Cubans. There was a “real difference in the equity and what is provided, and what is passed along, as education...” Rosa remained in the suburb for a year. Her husband’s Asian Studies Graduate Program required the students to read, write, and speak Chinese. The couple decided to migrate to Taiwan for a year. “That was another very interesting experience as well, the gender differences in terms of the education, you had women going the school at Doyle University and in Taiwan, there was not so much the cultural differences, but there were gender and class differences in terms of who had access to education.” Rosa worked at Doyle, applied for grants and scholarships, and took classes at the local university. She paid for her own education because of her “sweat and effort”.

In Taiwan, Rosa was able to secure a part time position as both an English and Spanish teacher at Doyle University, even though she had not completed her undergraduate degree. Rosa also took Chinese language classes, interacted with the local people, and because she needed to purchase items at the local market to fill her basic needs, she was forced to become fluent in Chinese. She learned Chinese “...better than my husband who was sitting in a class.” When they returned to the United States, they lived in Washington, D.C. for a short while. Her husband hoped to work with the Foreign Service, but was unable

to attain a position. Instead, he worked for the Civil Service. “I still hadn’t finished my degree, but there was a lot of determination to finish that degree.” In Washington D.C., Rosa enrolled at a historically Black college.

That experience taught me something very different about race, ethnicity, and higher education, and also the difference in...this is almost South, and a different African American population than I had experienced in the other east coast state.

The black students in this college were not militant, were very complacent, and weren’t interested in social issues or social change and “it was a time when things were still happening in the country and there were no political agendas there, no awareness of any of that stuff that was going on around them.” This community was also segregated and seemed familiar to Rosa.

Rosa finally completed her undergraduate degree in Early Childhood Development. She still had a burning desire to become a teacher and decided to work as a Kindergarten teacher, or a first grade teacher. She hoped to play a key role in establishing positive learning outcomes for underrepresented young children of color.

I figured if they had a positive experience when they came into school, then it could influence the way they felt about learning, and the way they felt about school so that they might be influenced to continue and to get a college degree. I taught for a while and then realized, first of all the education system was such that, it didn’t matter how much effort you put in as a teacher, if you got there early and left late at night and you were working to be the best teacher you could be, or if you couldn’t wait to get out of there when the bell rang, it didn’t matter.

Rosa worked very hard, and worked many long hours, but she felt she was not being very effective.

Rosa felt there was a great disparity in philosophy and behavior among the other teachers and felt the

...level of commitment, and your level of dedication to those students was not EVER going to be recognized nor was it going to be rewarded in that system. Furthermore, I was only impacting a small group of kids, just my classroom. At that point, I decided, I'm going to leave teaching, and thought I would get another degree and see this could lead me to a place where I feel I could have a greater influence.

She would not find that place for some time. Rosa left teaching to become a mother. She and her husband had a son. When he turned two, Rosa felt restless and needed to make a change, even though it probably was not the most opportune time. She enrolled in a master's program at a University located 75 miles from her residence. Her husband was unsure of the decision but the university was offering her a "full ride, not only that but I had a fellowship working with a program which was the continuation of head start." This was a federally sponsored program focusing on parent involvement and the impact on a child's development. She said to her husband, "I am going to do this. This is an opportunity for me."

Rosa believed this was the right decision but she had to live part time in the other city. She rented a room from another student, would leave on Monday, attend classes, and return home at the conclusion of her Thursday classes. This continued for an entire year. Rosa's husband was especially accommodating and supportive during this time with their son.

He had to take him to day care, he had to give him his bath, and do all of that, the days that I wasn't there. Anyway, there were major worries around that because he was in his terrible twos."

The pursuit of her master's degree stemmed from the desire to "...figure out how people learn, and how could I use that information to impact the learning of language of minority students. Upon the completion of her master's degree, the family moved to the southwest because they decided it was time to be closer to their extended families. The married couple

decided to “apply for jobs and whoever got the job first would go to work, and the other person would stay with our son. I got the job!”

Rosa’s role was to refer young children to a state sponsored rehabilitation facility for young children. She was also the after-care attendant.

They brought kids from all over the state to live there. It wasn’t just the kids from the Bella Valley. Most kids came from all over the state, because there were very few residential treatment centers for kids who had problems. Many of these kids had been adjudicated, had been abused, had been...had some kind of problem. Most of the kids were special education kids. These kids were not any different than you or I, but somehow the system had failed them and they had been labeled.

In this residential facility Rosa was required to remain on call most days. “We had really, really, difficult kids at the Jaco Home.” This was also a convenient working arrangement because she could see her husband and child throughout the day because they too lived on the premises. They ate together, as well as spent quality time with the other children.

Here’s another scenario that adds to the piece of educational inequities because the Jaco Home had predominantly Hispanic, and Native American kids. We had a sprinkling of black kids from other cities within the state. I saw that, and I saw...what is going on? Why are all these kids, kids that were very bright kids, what were they doing in special education? I knew nothing about special education at the time, I thought, this is crazy. This is crazy!

In this particular situation, there were kids that didn’t make it through the system, and then there were kids that were really pushed out by the system. “I really believe that my [pause]...that a path had been laid out for me and I just walked on that path. Because all of my experiences have led me to where I am now, including that one, because that added another piece.” Rosa had several multi-cultural experiences in a short period of time. “I think that was part I needed to follow to get [taps her finger on the desk] the knowledge that I needed to have.” The time at the Jaco home provided Rosa with new insight concerning special education and minority children.



There was a change in direction at state funded rehabilitation facility “and the new director was not child centered at all, and [tapping her finger on her desk] I couldn’t stand it!” So, Rosa left the position to join her husband because by that time, Rosa’s husband secured a position in another city and had been working there for some time. While searching for employment in the new town, Rosa decided she no longer wanted to be a teacher. Although she had a master’s degree, she was unable to find employment in another discipline and did not meet the job qualifications in order to become competitive she needed to take courses at the local state university where she hoped to:

...pick up some kind of a certification of some sort that will help me get a job. I thought, you know, I have been witnessing all of these kids that were at Jaco Home that were in special ed, how did they get there? They got there because somebody gave them a test that prescribed that they belonged in a certain category, there’s something wrong with that! I thought, I am going to get an educational diagnostician certification to be able to, you know, if somebody is playing God with these kids, [both researcher and participant laugh] let me be a part of what is going on there.

Rosa was interested in researching why this injustice was occurring. This new quest would require that she become certified as a special education teacher which meant taking more courses, and teaching for an additional two years. The advisors prescribed that Rosa instead, consider applying for a doctorate degree. The family hoped to return to the former town to build a home on a five acre plot they purchased a few years earlier. The university advisors stated, “We have a title ...VII Fellowship program that we just got and we will pay for your whole degree for the four years.” Rosa felt fortunate to have learned about such a program.

Rosa was advised to speak to the program administrator. He convinced Rosa that participating in the program would allow her to achieve her new goals. Rosa hoped to

fold in cultural language and disability, because I said, I am not doing just special education; I’m not interested in doing just straight special education. I want to find out why those kids that come from a different cultural experience, from a different

language environment, why they're being placed in special education! And they said, we have just the deal for you!

The up and coming new field would allow Rosa to focus on bilingual education as well as include a focus on the language and culture of special education. This was a cutting edge field that would provide her with a competitive advantage and would equip her with a tool to break new ground in special education.

So, I go back and talk to my husband, [in a high tone voice] and say guess what? I am going to get a doctorate! This is a great opportunity for me. He was not as happy. He was not happy. He had a very different plan for us. We pretty much lived his plan, so this is my plan, and all of the sudden it wasn't right. I said, well, I am going to do it. I have to. I have to do it! I am going to do it! I go and do this, and I loved it! I was in my element! It was everything I ever wanted, and more!

Rosa met some wonderful people and was given an opportunity to really begin to impact the field, not to mention she was one of a handful of doctorates in bilingual special education at the time where "there was an overrepresentation of kids in special education that had been labeled as disabled, and an underrepresentation of kids in special education that had been labeled as gifted that came from minority backgrounds." This was yet another example of the inequities of our educational system and an opportunity for Rosa to have a big impact on special education.

At the completion of her doctoral degree, Rosa was hired as an assistant professor in 1987 in the special education department at another university. The department did not exist for much longer and although she remained teaching for five years, she opted to leave because the College of Education was re-structuring. Rosa was going up for tenure, and was unsure whether or not she would be considered for a tenure track position because the department encouraged unfair practices. The department fueled a rivalry among Rosa and another Hispanic professor in the department. The department administration also

encouraged competition among the Chicana professors. This was an unhealthy situation and at the height of the tenure track selection process, Rosa received a telephone call from her alma mater. They asked, "...if we create a position for you, will you come back? They caught me at the right time and at the right moment."

The state university offered Rosa a position as an associate professor with an opportunity to go up for tenure in three years. She quickly decided to return to what she felt was a supportive university.

... I left because my counterpart who was a Hispanic female, I mean, there was just so much competition to the point that I could not be here and do my work and maintain my focus because I always felt that my energy was being dissipated by the negativity...it was at a time when I was having a particularly difficult struggle with her. I had a white female department head that was not helpful. So I left.

This is how Rosa became engaged in the academic environment but "I never intended to end up in academia." At the supportive state university Rosa was mentored by predominantly powerful men. She didn't have any female mentors until she was in a leadership role because in academia,

...even though education is viewed as a predominantly female field, when you get to the higher levels, it's predominantly male. In fact, there was only one woman that was a tenure track professor when I was a doctoral student in my department and she happened to be Japanese. She was a wonderful, wonderful woman but she was not there for very long. I didn't have the opportunity to be mentored by her in the same way that I was mentored by the men. But I had, probably the most powerful man in my department mentor me. [Tapping her finger on her desk] And he didn't take just anybody. He took people he thought were going to make him look good.

The person leading the bilingual education department was Hispanic, was very soft spoken, a very kind man, was dedicated, and very passionate about the work he was doing.

Rosa learned how to lead, how to “be”, what was expected, and “...what you needed [tapping her finger on her desk] to do to make it” because of direction from a White advisor.

Rosa became the chair of her department (also unplanned), and I

“...was the first Hispanic female and the majority of our office staff, was Hispanic. The day that my predecessor left, and I became department head, they were playing Spanish music on the radio...And there was a party!

This was a celebration of culture and an “acknowledgement that finally the Hispanic culture was going to be recognized in my leadership of that department.” The university supported Rosa’s academic interests, and also played a key role in her personal life. They had a Hispanic faculty staff caucus that would get together regularly. But as she began to increase leadership role, “there were certainly some bumps along the way with Hispanic men.” The Hispanic men were not supportive of her being in a leadership role.

Rosa worked her way up to associate provost and held that position for about three years. She was also asked to serve as the deputy secretary for the newly formed department of higher education in the state’s capitol city. The governor of the state established a higher education department which stemmed from the state commission on higher education. The state department requested participation from the state university and specifically asked both Rosa’s President and provost if she could and work with the state department. Rosa was allowed to take a leave of absence from the university for 18 months and was placed on executive loan to the higher education department. During her absence from the university, there was a lot of turmoil and Rosa suspected the provost would be “let go”, along with the president. Upon her return, things changed drastically. When the provost was let go, the interim provost, a Latina, became the interim president. “There was all this stuff going on at the school that involved me to some extent and it was time for me to leave.” A new position

was created at the other university, and when Rosa saw the announcement, “I was like, oh my God, that’s my dream job!” She applied for the position and returned to the former university. Her current

...responsibilities are to oversee all of the diversity initiatives on campus, to facilitate the continuation of those initiatives, to support them, and to coordinate what goes on in terms of diversity, equity, and inclusion on this campus. Beyond that, it’s really about transforming the institution. It’s a heavy role! This job is not one where you can pick up a manual [in a higher voice] oh wow; this is how you do it.

Rosa has a tough road ahead of her, but she remains committed to changing the organization by improving the plight of marginalized students of color.

**Theresa.** Theresa is a daughter of a sociologist and a nurse. Her strict father worked in the local university as an administrator. He was as a social activist and was the first in his family of seven to attain a degree. Her family was progressive and nurtured their children, allowing them to be liberal, open, and opinionated. Her father was adamant about wanting her to be confident and treated both Theresa and her younger brother as equals. Her father’s family was much more traditional and thought “children should be seen and not heard”. At her uncle’s dinner table, he had a rule that kids could not talk. In Theresa’s family, the children were encouraged to engage in all levels of conversation. The entire family would read a novel on the best selling list and discuss the book openly. Her father worked at the university and decided to create a learning environment for his children that prepared them for a life in academia. When her father was an undergraduate student, he was one of the founders of a program representing Mexican-American students.

Because Theresa’s family is considered as middle socio-economic status, she was able to attend reputable universities. She selected traditional prestigious universities because she did not want anyone to question her credentials. Theresa attended a University on the

East Coast for her undergraduate degree but was considered a minority student among the freshman class. She organized with other people of color and decided to attend graduate school on the west coast in search of a more diverse cohort group. Theresa acquired a Ph.D in Social Sciences and a Juris Doctor in law.

Maybe because I have the PhD and most people are law professors, very few law professors have the PhD, that I sort of have a greater authority. Maybe that's part of what I was doing in getting both degrees; was getting those credentials so that I could be more unassailable. People really couldn't challenge me because I was so well credentialed.

This strategy served her well later in academia for faculty meetings as an untenured professor. She was told not to speak too much in meetings, but she could never live that way. She felt the urge to openly speak her mind and exercised her voice regularly.

Theresa's undergraduate experiences were very different than the other participants in this research study. This is partly due to her middle socio-economic status and her ability to interact with affluent people in the community. "I've just been very lucky who I've been working with. I guess it's having the advantage of having gone to the schools that I went to. Nobody questions my credentials." She has,

...never been sexually harassed in a school setting or a work setting. In other words, where someone had power over me and was taking advantage of that power. Now, I can think of one situation but it's not someone who really had that authority over me and I didn't really feel intimidated. It's very different if someone has power over you in some way. I said to them, I just think people don't mess with me. Men do not perceive me as someone, or something they can get away with. I don't want to say it that way but...

I think Theresa has been effective in establishing herself as an equal in her department mainly because the department she works in has a progressive approach to achieve and promote diversity.

When Theresa joined the staff at a university on the East Coast, she had a supportive dean that provided her with a research position for a year, an office, and time to complete her dissertation so that she could begin her tenure status. The dean who supported her was committed to racial diversity which was deeply embedded in the dean's character. She viewed this dean as an example of a person

who wants to make something happen, somebody who says, I want this person to join my faculty, I see the bigger picture and I see that it's going to mean something to have the first Latina here and down the line, I want her to be tenured, I want her to be here. She just said, I'll make this happen...

which is a character trait Theresa would use later in her career. Theresa clerked for a judge and was also very fortunate, "...I ended up with a saint. I have just always been lucky that way. I worked with a really nice person, the kind of person who...just a really warm person." The tenure and promotion process was met with equal ease. During the promotion and tenure process Theresa had great mentors and supporters that assisted her along the way. Her tenure process was interesting in that she was located at another university on a fellowship. Three men were on the committee, one was supportive, the other was neutral, and the final member unsupportive. The report came back negative but the main supporter wrote a 20 page rebuttal (without Theresa's knowledge) and it was on record, that each negative point was refuted. She was angry with the other two for some time but she knew she won and they lost.

Theresa did not feel additional pressure to take on administrative duties but she did recognize the expectations were different for a black woman on the faculty. The black woman also experienced a lot of discrimination,

...but it hadn't been that kind of place for me." "There were two senior male Chicanos who were very supportive of me but who weren't particularly involved in

my scholarship area. These two other white men were much more involved in my research and mentoring me in a sense. The two Chicano guys were incredibly supportive, friends, but they weren't involved in the same way... I guess all of them were people that I helped hire after I got there. There were two black faculty members, who were very close friend of mine, and I was instrumental in getting them hired and we worked very closely together.

Improving the diversity numbers in the school of law, as well as within the other department Theresa was hired on a joint teaching appointment.

I've always have been an informal advisor, and that's a great luxury...I came in as a senior person, I came from a much better law school coming here, in terms of ranking and I didn't come here with those burdens in the same way.

For the most part people of color have been supportive of Theresa. She feels her job is to think about the broader diversity issues to permanently change the organization.

**Celia.** Celia's parents met after World War II, in San Juan, Puerto Rico. Her father was from the southwest, and her mother was from Puerto Rico. She was born in Washington, D.C. and her family moved from the U.S. capital to a small town in the southwest shortly after her birth. Celia's first years were spent in a small community, but her mother felt, "she couldn't deal with my father anymore and left him." Her uncle was a minister in Central California, and the pregnant mother decided to leave her husband, and take her two young daughters to live with her brother who was a Protestant an Episcopal minister.

I was just under three years old when my mother left my father and I remember the train ride to come over to California. I remember sitting at the window of the train in the middle of the night, crying, thinking this car that was coming was my father was going to come and get us and of course, he never came. It was over and then my mother was apparently quite depressed. I think by the time I was three, I had to take care of myself, and take care of my little sister and I think I [pauses] was born very mature.



Celia's father would visit in the summers, and Celia didn't have a lot of contact with him for several years. She was basically raised in the Protestant Church.

Celia's grandfather died in a state asylum."...apparently, after World War I, my uncles came back and sometime in his 50's, my grandfather became very aggressive to my grandmother, so they packed him up and took him to Los Altos and left him there." This had quite an impact on Celia's father.

My father, my poor father, when he was in high school, his dad would have been packed up, and he was the favorite, his dad was packed up and sent to the state hospital. His mother died when he was 17, and his father died the following year.

But, Celia's father was able to recover and he went to college in the southwest on a boxing scholarship.

He actually roomed with Senator Montoya and he went to Georgetown in Washington to study International Affairs and he did have a position as junior council to the Embassy of Spain, but he had a bad temper. He told off his boss and was sent home and ended up doing other things.

Celia's father later became a math teacher.

I suspect my father had some emotional problems but had he gotten help, but he ended up having a good career as a teacher, he was a very good teacher. In fact, I was placed in all these gifted programs because he would tutor me in math whenever he came out to the west coast for the summer. He was only allowed to come 2 hours a day, for two weeks out of the year, and he could only hang out on our front yard because my mother would not let him in our house. But, he was a good teacher, and I think I ended up excelling in math, particularly math, because of him.

Celia's mother was also a school teacher.

...as a matter of fact I had her as a teacher one time. She demands a lot, and was an excellent teacher. I think she has been a strong role model, a professional person, an independent and devoted mother. So I think she has been a good role model for all of us.

It was a given the girls would attend college "Quite frankly, it was a given that I would become a teacher..." Celia was of a low socio-economic status. She felt she grew up

without a father and as a result was heavily influenced by her mother's ethnic identity. She didn't relate to anything Mexican nor Hispanic until several years later. "I could never figure out what my ethnic identity on my father's side was. It just never made any sense to me." All she knew was her father was Spanish from a place in the southwest, but she did not identify with any of that culture and really knew nothing about it. Celia's parents spoke Spanish at home, as well as the many relatives that lived with her in her home including her grandfather, aunts, and cousins. As a result of the interaction, Celia learned to become conversational in the language and she considers herself a heritage speaker. One summer Celia's mother took the girls to Puerto Rico so they could become closer to their family.

One day a mentor and a friend of Celia's asked about her father's ethnicity. She told her friend he was from the southwest, and the friend's comments about her lineage made Celia question her father's Spanish roots. At that point she realized her father's European Spanish lineage was probably a myth, and realized he was probably a *meztizo*, a term traditionally used to describe people of mixed European and Native American heritage or descent. Later her father began self-identifying as a Mexican-American, and even at some point, a Chicano. Growing up without a father was difficult for Celia and she did not earn high marks in school, but she did score very high on her Standardized Aptitude Test (SAT). During that time in the state of California, students of a low socio-economic status, who scored high on the SATs, had the option to attend the school of their choice on an academic scholarship. Celia decided to attend Occidental College. She was recruited into an introductory Chicano program, which was created for Chicano minority students with a low aptitude and low SES status. She was unable to identify with this cohort group. "It was very difficult and I didn't do really well...it was the climate of the times and definitely the

university because it had basically been a rich white kid school.” She established a 2.5 grade point average during her time in college. She was in good company:

President Obama went to Occidental College after I did and I have the sense he left, he transferred for the very same reasons that I did, he left to Columbia after his second year. But, here was a kid that was basically raised white and then this black identity was pushed on him. Occidental was a nice school, and the reason I say that is of all the private schools in the United States, it has the largest population of Hispanic students than any other school. I don’t resent it but I also feel I wasn’t supported the way I should have been. I think I was intelligent and capable enough and could have done very well, but the climate, the world climate, the social climate, at the time was kind of distracting. I think maybe it was all for the best.

Celia graduated with a degree in diplomacy and world affairs and went back to the town she grew up in to seek employment.

I found a job in a mental health center and I loved it! I was mentored by a man there, social worker who was getting his doctorate. I took the GREs and did very well on them, but I had a 2.5 average in college.”

She was put on the waiting list at the northern University of her choice, for the master’s program in social work. She applied to another school in a southern university.

Celia and her younger sister began thinking about their father. They found his phone number and the two decided to make a trip to visit him. Their mother always said his hometown “...is an ugly desert; you don’t even want to go visit there.” But they made the trip and fell in love with the local area. Her sister was getting her teaching certification at the time. They hoped to move to the area, but decided to focus on their education. Celia moved to southern California and started the master’s program in social sciences, but three weeks into the program she discovered she had been accepted into the northern University of her choice.

My sister was going to UC-Suave, my cousins lived in the bay area, and my youngest sister was going to move up there to participate in some program. So, I decided to drop out of San Sol and attend UC-Suave.

Celia earned a master's degree in social work from UC-Suave and excelled as a scholar. She established a 3.8 GPA but she continued to struggle with ethnic issues and a forced unfamiliar identity.

Celia's graduate experiences were quite different than what Celia expected. The social sciences program had their own building, and supported a large cohort group of 40 to 50 students. Celia was in the children and families section. The group was a little more diverse than her undergraduate cohort group. There were Asian American students who believed strongly in social activism which interested Celia. There were about four black women, two other Hispanic women and one Hispanic man, who became very, very close to her. The inclusion among a diverse group of people was eye-opening for Celia because for the first time she realized she was perceived as a minority in the United States. Being accepted into the group was confusing, and actually

... I am not sure I every really accepted that I was a minority, because we basically grew up, I mean my life was in a white Protestant Church. It was like, well you know, we do have all these great things to share, the people of color in this world, and it was a very stimulating, exciting environment, and I thrived in it which is why I really fault my undergrad." But again, it was like I would have never known to go looking for something like that, because I didn't know when I was coming up, and who I really was [giggling].

Members of the faculty in the Sociology department included, a Chinese Psychoanalyst; a black woman that taught social policy, and a couple of Chicano faculty. The Chicanos taught young children, which was also Celia's area. Celia described the staff as an extraordinary group of people. She was 23 when she began first year teaching social work at the first clinical staff at a *clinica* which was one of the first Hispanic urban free clinics in the United States. Celia found this work exciting. Her second year was quite the opposite experience

“...but I was ready for it and I did very well in the Psychoanalytic” area. “And I did, I did very well in all of it. I did really well at my job.” Celia enjoyed helping others which would ultimately lead to a career in the health sciences.

“I had a friend who was also getting her master’s, and she was engaged to this medical student, who was really awful. I used to say, Sarah why don’t you go to medical school?” She could not understand why her friend was so impressed with this male. “I think about the same time, we both clicked and we both said, yeah, we’re going to medical school.” But this was a feeling through because five years would pass before Celia thought again about medical school. She worked for two years as the pediatric social worker, and for three years, half time as a family and child therapist. After that time, Celia decided to actively apply for medical school. She worked half time so she could complete the pre-requisite courses at a Junior College although she considered applying to UC-Suave for Medical School; she found the people “were just awful! They would sabotage each other’s lab books, and everything!” She finished all her pre-requisites and she also had to take the MCATs.

Celia applied to 17 medical schools, 10 were in California, and she was accepted into most of them. Organic chemistry is a requirement, but she did not complete the course until the summer before she left for medical school. Most of the schools in the Midwest thought she was an interesting candidate and as long as she passed organic chemistry, she was granted a provisional acceptance. Celia chose a school in the Midwest because it had 10-15% older population, with a pass-fail structure, and a large cooperative cohort group. By this time, Celia was 30 years old and just met her soon to be husband, but they didn’t make any commitments because he was raising his 11 year old son. She found school absolutely

grueling. Celia rented a room from a woman whose daughter was also in medical school, but one ahead of Celia. This was an ideal living arrangement because they shared meals, and grew to be very close, but the woman was going through a divorce. “The Midwest piece, the weather, the snow and everything, it was a shock” but not “...as big a shock as the amount of studying I had to do and how unprepared I was for it because all I had was the basic prerequisites.”

During Christmas break Celia returned to the west coast and she and her boyfriend “decided we couldn’t live without each other...so we got married. But, I went back by myself and then he came back the following year...” Her step son did not want to move to the Midwest, and decided to move to Texas with his mother. Celia’s husband learned quickly she was studying all the time, often 16 hours a day. He decided to apply to graduate school, and went to school in the mountain area to pursue a Ph.D. in Psychology. The two commuted and she completed most of her 4<sup>th</sup> year of medical school in the state of Wyoming. The two decided they wanted a child so Celia decided not to immediately for residency. She was awarded a fellowship through the National Health Corp and had to begin residency to eventually payback the sponsoring agency. The couple had a son who born in October of ’84 “just about when we planned him.”

The following year Celia was accepted into a residency program at the university where she is currently employed and also happens to be located in the state her father lived in. Celia’s sister completed law school, and decided to also take the bar exam in the same state, and like her sister, she moved to the same cultural city. Celia discovered she was pregnant which unlike the first pregnancy, was unplanned. Celia’s son was only 9 months old, when her 14 year old step daughter decided she wanted to live with the family in the new

city because the child's mother quit speaking to her. The stepdaughter lived with the family for two years and Celia was also getting to know her father, her cousins, and other extended family members. She felt she had a great support system, enjoyed her residency program, but things changed drastically. Celia shared stories of blatant racism in her program. "I never really experienced racism I think, until then." The situation worsened for Celia professionally and personally. Shortly after, she and her husband separated.

The national program provided two choices for Celia's employment; "I had a choice to work at a federal prison for two years, or to the most remote areas of the Navajo Nation, and people told me child care there was absolutely horrible." Neither of the two options was viable, and she later found out about a research option. Celia was able to work on the research fellowship for two years at the conclusion of the four years of required residency to fulfill the program requirements and personal obligations. Celia enjoyed conducting research and also reconciled with her husband.

Celia's husband is from Mexico and early in their relationship was very supportive of her career. He never finished his doctorate, "actually it was finished, all he had to do was polish off the last chapter and he chose never to turn it in." At the local university he worked at the mental health center. He was a therapist for many years, but moved to the Employee Assistance Program until he retired from that position. The husband began another career providing healthcare for the homeless. He worked there "for two years in the state of mental health and he really liked that until his boss criticized him, and he walked out the door." He then moved to another position with a government agency but "was basically pushed out after a year." He hasn't worked since and Celia thinks he may be depressed.

Celia began employment with the same government agency and has worked there for 20 years. She joined the government agency because the university she was attending required a place to train their students. At the university

I am involved with the BA/MD program and am on the admissions committee and the promotions committee for that, and in part, a member of the University executive committee for Geriatric education, and have been involved with that for a number of years.

Unfortunately, “we are losing the funding for that program...” and it may end soon.

Celia has flourished as a Psychiatrist. She is also very interested in conducting research pertaining to Hispanics. Actually, “I ended up switching from psych immunology to Hispanic elderly, and I have done research on depression, memory, and hearing on Hispanics.” She has served on national committees, has a high profile national reputation “which I realize has caused envy, resentment, and jealousy and I think it’s because I’m Hispanic.” She has been on the FDA committee, has served as examiner for the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology and is active in various committees.

At the government agency, Celia has faced blatant and orchestrated discrimination her entire career. Her husband has been supportive and has helped her deal with the situation but she wonders

...how am I going to come out of this? What strength without being damaged by these people’s harassment and abuse of me? Fortunately I work with a group of people that are the close to me, but I think the other piece is, sometimes I wonder, because this has actually been going on for years now.

The situation has worsened and caused her to seek legal representation. Most recently, many of the responsibilities have been taken away from Celia. “I was the supervisor for a clinic concentrating on depression and anxiety.” She used to run the team meetings, represent the team, develop new programs, support staff, and supervise staff, but this is no longer the case.



Then they would block me from all of these promotions, they put someone else in charge of the team that I am on, but by this time I had gotten lawyers and an Equal Employment Officer. Now the EEO is in the process. These two white women Psychiatrists have orchestrated everything.

Celia she was one of two finalists for a director position and did not get the appointment

and the woman that did get it has been after me. They have been harassing the heck out of me and I have had to get attorneys to protect myself. I think the current situation is one because, here I was a finalist, I was the supervisor for the clinic, and then they decided to actually make it a paid supervisory position. I applied for three different supervisor positions, and wasn't selected for any of them. I did file with an EEO but there's also, I realized, because I talked to another pharmacist here who has had to get legal representation of Hispanic leadership in this government agency. They won't allow it, and they push it out... But I have stood my ground, [laughing] and I have been very successful. I think people resent that, they really do.

Celia wonders if she will be able to survive the situation. Specifically,

There are two white women Psychiatrists that have done this, one is the head of Ethics here. I think part of it actually started when my husband was working hired, which he ended up quitting. I actually went to the brand new director of the hiring staff to complain about the Chief of mental health and the way my husband was fired which the head of HR had written this awful letter to him and said if you don't quit, you're going to be fired. Well, of course they take all of that out, the HR files. Well, as a result of that meeting which is not what I intended, I just wanted my husband to have somebody that would hear him.

The government agency has not been very supportive to Celia, nor to her husband and changes do not appear anywhere on the horizon. At the government agency, she was cut back to five eight hour days so she can work three eight hour days at the University to do that.

The University is much more supportive of Celia but her primarily salary comes from the government agency and "Anything I do at the University is really volunteering, or out of

my research time that I get carved out here.” In the geriatric education center, they are very helpful and supportive of her for a number of reasons. Celia loves teaching and looks forward to mentoring all of her students and also thinks the patients “are fascinating!” “My real job is to teach her how to do Psycho-Pharmacology, how to choose medications, how to select medications...” Celia deals with cultural issues and has an appreciation for cultural issues “...because it’s just amazing how many people we see, whether it’s a Hispanic, whether they came from Mexico versus the southwest, there are many very different cultural experiences.”

Celia teaches at the university’s medical school in the neuroscience area. She is currently part of an admissions program. It is a program for students with a focus on rural areas within the state from various Indian reservations. High school students are awarded a full ride all the way through medical school. They have a place reserved in medical school as long as they perform well on their MCATs. She has been involved with this program for about five years now and the cohort group has just begun medical school this year. The direction and leadership of the medical school is changing. Celia shares excerpts from a conversation she had with a mentor of regarding Jewish people. The mentor is a Jewish woman and she stated, “You know, we have taken over the medical School. And I realized that, the Medical School is mostly run by Jewish people and outsiders.” There are many Hispanic qualified individuals that are not considered to the leadership positions.

Working with the Native Americans from many different tribes has also been rewarding. Celia recognizes that

people will tell you but you have to ask and be interested. Teaching cultural issues is important to me when I teach in the mental health profession...I enjoy helping people who haven’t had the exposure to the particularly unique cultures of the southwest and understanding the difference of the Southern, and the Northern, and helping young people who haven’t had that exposure and become aware of it.”

How does Celia become informed of such issues? She chooses to attend various national conferences. She is also asked to make presentations, serve on committees, and on various boards. Keeping at the forefront of cultural issues is critical for success, but requires time investment. Celia's husband was supportive of her career decisions but now he is not as supportive. For example,

...when I started doing these national things, he would say, oh we can't do that because it costs too much money. I said, it's all reimbursed, and I get extra, so I would attend them anyway. I think it's been hard for him, because he has become Mr. Celia, and his name is Sanchez. I think he feels he is in my shadow a lot and that is hard for him, and that's why I'm thinking if we go back to a community marriage, like we had in the past, he can re-ignite his own identity and I won't have to feel like I am just taking care of him, for somebody who is depressed, and won't get treatment, and won't get help, for whatever is going on with him.

Balancing a professional career and managing her personal relationship is challenging. Celia has been struggling in her current professional position, and attempts to demonstrate resilience but the situation is weighing heavily on her conscience. "Because of all of this, I am also in therapy right now." Her therapist is a plastic surgeon, has a master's in counseling and specializes in therapy with physicians and is extremely effective because of his non-traditional training.

Celia wonders how she will deal with her husband's illness especially since he refuses to seek help. She is also concerned with handling "the mental illness" of her patients from the government agency. What will be the outcome of her legal issues? She realizes, "...because I am ambitious, it really has served me well to get involved in national things in a way that none of my colleagues have been able to." She also thinks back to her youth, and remembers her independence since an early age "...because I was the oldest of three little girls, and my mom expected me to set a very good example and I couldn't crumble under that

for anything.” She will not crumble under her current situation because her mother’s influence, to remain strong in the face of adversity.

Celia’s mother taught to her to remain true to her convictions

...because I grew up Puerto Rican in California, and if people said negative things about Mexicans, it kind of went...it didn’t even touch me. And Puerto Rican women, of all Latina women, they are the most assertive and aggressive.

There are times she thinks “people sometimes don’t know what to do with aggressive, Puerto Rican women.” Yet, she feels she will soon be able to run away and start a new life, in another town, at a university with an aspiring and new progressive department. Celia is heavily recruited and most recently has embarked on an amazing career change opportunity. She has accepted a position as a full professor “to start the division of geriatric psychiatry which is my area.” She plans to begin employment real soon, from her new location.

The university is located in the southwest is currently being led by Hispanic leaders and the participant feels the new regime will be an enlightening experience. However,

I think being a woman, is going to be more of a challenge down there because there’s only one other woman who has been there awhile, who has been very isolated, I think, and has never been promoted.

There is also a young Guatemalan Jewish woman she has met and describes as “dynamo” and hopes to build increased cultural awareness in the new department. The participant hopes to find a circle of women who will organize and create mentorship dinners once a month, and cultivate groups like that.

Celia is in the middle of a lawsuit, treats patients, is planning a career change, teaching at the University, and attempting to console her husband. As a researcher, I asked how she is able to manage so many extreme issues. She responded, “I am flying all around the country. I have developed friendships with these people.” She has

... lunch with people, and because it includes academic departments from all over the country that can be so petty, and difficult people open up, and you get wonderful support and feedback, and new great ideas, and creative ideas on how to manage things.

Her national colleagues help her to deal with the extreme situations she deals with on a daily basis.

When asked how she self identifies, she stated,

I do probably say Hispanic more than anything. I do consider myself Hispanic and Mexican-American. I consider myself both and now after 20 years, I actually understand, because I got to know my dad's family and I understand where he came from, what his culture was in a way that I didn't before...In terms of being Hispanic, I think I never expected so much racism in the southwestern state. I don't think I have experienced this much in other places. Like I said, around the country, I am recruited because I am Hispanic. I am a Hispanic professional and faculty.

Celia sees herself as a wife who tends to rescue too much but rescuing others is a talent and as a medical doctor and professor, she has an opportunity treat people and change their lives.

I think being a woman, [long pause] I am not sure the struggles for me are related to being a woman. But, I think the racial stuff and the discrimination against Hispanics at the University is just a shock to me and I think it took me a long, long time to realize that.

Based on the six interviews, the reflection data, the classroom observation, review of curricula, focus group session, there were a lot of common threats as expressed by the participants (see Table 4.2).

**Table 4.2**

**Analysis of Various Types of Data – What I Learned**

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**I. Interviews**

- a. The participants had many negative experiences along their journey through academia because they faced many obstacles.
- b. It was incredibly difficult for the participants to discuss their negative past experiences. Five out of the six participants shed tears when discussing their life stories.
- c. Many stories and emotions were suppressed for several years, but discussing the topic of promotion and tenure resurrected painful memories.

**II. Reflection Data**

- a. The participants do not separate their professional lives from their home lives. The Latinas work evenings and weekends to help their students, and while on personal leave, there is always a professional element, they somehow conduct activities related to their work. For example: On Maria's family vacation, she read draft copies of student dissertations. While Theresa was flying to a conference, she planned on using the travel time to grade homework for her students.
- b. Family is very important to the participants in this study.
- c. The women in this study are extremely compassionate, persistent, and always help others.
- d. The participants in this study operate above the fray.

**III. Classroom Observations**

- a. When the Latinas notice women of color are not speaking up, they will make statements such as "I want to hear from the women".
- b. The males in the classroom speak with authority and in a louder voice than the women.
- c. The participants in this study listen to their students, establish eye contact, and affirm responses. For example, they would often respond, "Very worthwhile to think about those ideas", "Great example", "Good question".

**IV. Curricula/Published Work**

- a. Most of the published work is based on Brown Research.
- b. The participants are committed to improving the plight of the marginalized.

**V. Focus Group Data**

- a. The women felt at ease, and were eager to discuss race and gender issues.
  - b. The participants felt comfortable, were open, and were extremely supportive of each other.
  - c. There were several instances, when an idea was shared, the participants were surprised to identify with the subject area and shared similar sentiment.
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The classroom observations yielded interesting data in terms of gender responses and classroom interaction (see Table 4.3). Six class observations were conducted, but the data for two classes was not captured in a uniform fashion, and was not included in the table.

**Table 4.3**

**Class Observation Data**

Level	Total Number of Students	Total Responses	Class Demographics Female	Class Demographics Male	No. of Female Responses	No. of Male Responses	No. of White Male Responses	No. of Chicano Male Responses	No. of White Female Responses	No. of Female WOC Responses	No. of Professor Interactions
Undergraduate Course	23	60	4WM, 9CF, 9WF=Total 22F	1CM	50F	12M	8	2	30	20	51
Undergraduate Course	30	36	3 CF, 1 NAF, 1 AF, 10 WF = Total 15F	3 CM, 12 WM = Total 15M	10F	26M					44
Graduate Course (Taught in Spanish)	11	40	4WF, 3CF= Total 7F	2WM, 1CM, 1HM=Total 4M	28	12		2CM			25
Graduate Course	17	136	6WF, 1CF, 2NAF =Total 9F	4WM, 1BM, 2CM= Total 7M	57F	80M	60WM	3CM, 16BM	22WF	24CF, 11NA F	55

Key: BM = Black Male, CF=Chicana Female, CM=Chicano Male, M=Male, F=Female, NA= Native American, WM= White Male, WM = White Male,

In general, male responses were greater in proportion to the number of females (except in one case, where there were 22 females and one male). The males spoke with confidence, authority, and tended to exercise a louder tone of voice in comparison to the females. The Latina professors were aware of the dynamic and often directed the questions towards the females, to balance the power in the classroom. The professors demonstrated excellent facilitation skills, leadership skills, but also, provided a safe environment for all students of color to feel welcome and encouraged to voice their opinions in the classroom. Each Latina

instructor had a different style, but there were praises, a strong display of body language (such as clapping of hands, shaking of the fist, smiles, and verbal expressions of confirmation and agreement). I was quite impressed with the instruction styles of the Latina women. There were major themes that emerged from the triangulation of the data with various subcategories in each thematic area (see Table 4.4). Each thematic area and subcategory will be discussed separately.

**Table 4.4**

**Themes that Emerged from an Analysis of the Data**

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I. Navigation Through Academia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>d. Preparedness</li> <li>e. Financial Constraints &amp; Family Obligations</li> <li>f. Lack of Diversity: Students, Chicano Mentors, and Instructors</li> <li>g. Discrimination as a Space for Transformational Learning</li> <li>h. Changes in the Stability of Relationships</li> <li>i. Intermittent Rewards because of Scholarships, Fellowships, Grants, and Work Study</li> </ul>
II. Transition from Individual Success to Providing an Equitable Education to all Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>d. Creating Diverse Curricula</li> <li>e. Mentoring</li> <li>f. Focus on Increasing Retention Rates</li> </ul>
III. Changing the Organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>c. Gatekeeping within the Promotion and Tenure Process: Getting Beyond the Steel Bars</li> <li>d. Breaking Down Structural Barriers: Deconstructing Negative Stereotypes</li> <li>e. Diversification of Departments</li> <li>f. Active Participation in Tokenism</li> <li>g. Legitimizing Brown Research and Contributions to the Literature</li> <li>h. Organizing</li> <li>i. Voice</li> </ul>
IV. Critical Social Reciprocity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>d. Social Activism</li> <li>j. Subverting Sub-Oppression Tactics</li> <li>g. Helping Others Despite Mental, Spiritual, and Physical Anguish</li> <li>e. Generosity Despite Misfortune</li> </ul>

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## **Major Thematic Areas**

There four major thematic areas that emerged from the analysis of the data which include: The Navigation through Academia, a Transition from Individual Success to Providing an Equitable Education to all Students, Changing the Organization, Critical Social Reciprocity. In this section I will discuss the various themes and the various subcategories within each thematic area.

### **THEMATIC AREA 1: The Navigation through Academia**

The first major thematic area included the navigation through academia. In this thematic area, the participants discussed the level of preparedness for college, the financial constraints they encountered, family obligations, a lack of Chicano mentors and instructors, and the participants faced discrimination at varying levels. Each thematic area and subcategories will be discussed. Throughout each thematic area, each participant referred to the idea of validation of the self. At every stage in their career, the participants felt a need to validate their work and validate their purpose among their peers, families, and colleagues.

**Preparedness.** Each participant expressed the importance of attaining an education and felt they would be successful in college. As a high school student, Maria was independent and searched for opportunities to gain access to an undergraduate education. She worked in the high school library and asked her college advisor about fellowships and scholarships. Even though she was told, “You’re never going to make it”, she became motivated to prove the teachers of color wrong. Maria’s bravado stems from the stories of her grandmother and her mother. Her grandmother raised 16 kids on her own, and her mother came to the United States with a second grade education and also raised five children

on her own. Maria did not feel she was prepared for college because she attended a high school where "...there was very little in the way of academic preparation. There were no advanced placement courses. Maria was extremely determined to do well in school and prove to her high school teachers she was capable of achieving an education.

Theresa felt she was prepared to enter college, but realized early on, that she was not prepared for the college curriculum. She shared,

I don't think I realized when I was actually in high school how inadequate my schooling was because I was taking all of the honors classes, I took all the highest math, and all the highest English, and this and that. I don't think I really realized how much more I could have been learning until I got there and then I realized that there were these kids that had taken five advanced placement classes, and they [laughing] already had all these credits!" She didn't feel like it was so far behind "but I think I had to work really hard to do well (Interview).

Theresa did eventually excel in her undergraduate work. In college, Celia did not earn high marks. In graduate school her academic marks improved, but when she entered medical school she was again unprepared. She states, "I was studying all the time" (Interview). Her cohort group of 100 organized, created good friendships, and scheduled several study groups. Lucia earned good grades at the undergraduate level, but at the graduate level, she was going to the number one school in her field and felt she was "unprepared in terms of writing skills." She worked diligently, worked with student support services, memorized long lists of words, and eventually became a great writer.

Rosa attended a community college and a few other colleges and universities before she attained her undergraduate degree and agreed she was not quite prepared for the college curriculum. In Anna's undergraduate program she felt unprepared. She chose graduate school because she felt it was a safe place to raise her daughter but she did not research the make-up of the faculty and program. As she looks back now, she thought "you were crazy!

You were just not prepared! You didn't know how to do things. Really, we didn't know how to do things" (Interview).

**Financial constraints and family obligations.** Five of the participants in this study were of a low SES status and faced financial constraints. "When it became time for me to go to college, we didn't have any money, and I knew I could not go to college unless, I got a scholarship" (Celia, Interview). Maria had serious financial constraints and family obligations. As an undergraduate "I was asked to contribute my earnings, because my parents couldn't, based on need, contribute anything. My mom certainly couldn't contribute anything, but I just contributed my work study checks, every time I worked at whatever institute, or library, here you go ... here's my contribution" (Interview). On weekends Maria had to seek other employment, worked full time throughout her undergraduate years and through graduate school. Maria's father left her mother when she was thirteen and she and her mother were left to raise her four siblings. She felt attending graduate school way a luxury because while there she was on a meal plan, did not worry about transportation, had shelter, and access to the university library. She did have to work two and three jobs to make ends meet.

Rosa had to work and earn her own money to attend college. Lucia was provided her first year's tuition by her parents, but after her first year, she was financially responsible for the remainder of her financial obligations. Anna was only able to attend college because she earned scholarships. Theresa did receive many scholarships but wasn't financially sound.

**Lack of diversity: Students, mentors, and instructors.** While in undergraduate school, there was a lack of diversity among the students, and a lack of Chicano mentors and role models. "I was the only Latina in my college period...until my sophomore year, when a

Cuban student came in” (Anna). “But of those that went on to college, there were just two of us out of 400” (Celia). The Latino students felt along as if they were the “only” student of color and would seek out other departments in search of other students of color. “I recognized there was a real need, the fact that I could count on one hand, the number of Latino teachers I had in high school, not to mention when I was an undergrad, or in grad school. That was part of the reason; I went into academia because I saw a real need, for a diverse voice there and in the policy making position” (Maria).

Anna created a support group with the students of color. They became a close knit group, “of young people, who were interested in Chicano Literature, because we didn’t have any mentors. Well, we had mentors in other fields, but not in Chicano Lit.” Lucia faced a much more hostile environment in her graduate program. “...we didn’t have a lot of role models for what we did. I think I mentioned to you, the one that sort of, or at least in a couple of cases, where they were really nasty, but [Tapping her finger] that’s them!” In her graduate program she found the attitude to be quite elitist. She shared,

it didn’t make sense to go to this place where people that they were hot shots and they could be snobby just because they were graduate students, or professors at Eliteville. So what? That doesn’t give you the right to be assholes. That never sat well with me! NEVER!

She would counsel from her fellow Chicanas and people of color but also would seek out her own mentors.

Maria felt like she was mentored by senior faculty members in her graduate program, “there weren’t any Latina senior folk... And I sought out the mentorship regardless. I have never been one who is afraid to ask for help.” Celia did not have many mentors in her department and decided to start “a little group of four Hispanic women physicians... and we

would have a wonderful time...” They all helped each other and mentored each other. As a result, each person that was employed in the University was promoted within the University. There was only one woman in the group who worked outside of the University, but she was promoted in her workplace.

Theresa attended an undergraduate university that “...never had any Chicano faculty.” In the student population, there were few Latinos. Instead there was “a much greater focus on African Americans. In her joint graduate program she was an anomaly. “I stuck out like a sore thumb because there were very few people who had done that.”

Later in the participant’s careers, they realized they were the “only” or the first women of color. Theresa discussed the recruiting and hiring process for professors.

They called me after the interview, and they said, we’d like to have a sit in on your behalf, a sit in from the dean’s office and I said sure; you can have a sit in because I didn’t think I was going to get hired. I didn’t feel like it went that well you know in the sense that there was a little bit of hostility within the faculty. I thought, I am not going to get this job which is fine. I interviewed at Harvard, NYU, Columbia, and none of those schools had ever hired a Latina. Harvard still has never hired a Latina. Columbia has never hired Latina, NYU did like about maybe, six or seven years ago. A lot of the schools, I felt interviewed me because there was pressure from the students, that’s why they were interviewing me.

She accepted a teaching position, and realized “there hadn’t ever been another Latina teaching there period!” When Theresa left that position after nine years, “there were no Latinos on the faculty, zero.”

When Maria accepted her tenure track position, she was the first woman of color *ever* to join the department at that capacity.

**Discrimination as space for transformational learning.** Lucia felt she has been treated unfairly by white people, and experienced discrimination many times in her career and endured emotional turmoil.

I was always baffled by white people, when people would be mean to me. I never understood it. Why are they being mean? I didn't deserve that, I didn't do anything to deserve that kind of... maybe I made a mistake, maybe I said something I shouldn't have said, maybe I came across a certain way, but whatever it is, I may have done, it didn't merit that response, and that kind of brutality. I was always baffled by it. And, here is the part that took years to get over, somehow, I always also would do what they wanted me to do, which was to assume the responsibility, the blame for it, that if they're treating me that way somehow it must be my fault. I always searched for, I would always go, after a wound, a stab wound, I would go through days, or weeks, or trying to recover, because it was trying to sort of recover from the healing of blaming myself. And it took years, really, to get to a point where, you know what? That really wasn't about me. So that when somebody hurts me now, I can really separate out now what is mine, and what isn't much more clearly, much quicker {snaps fingers}, almost immediately. And though the stab wound may be there from the hurt..., the hurt might still stay there, but at least I am not blaming myself for it.

As a researcher during the interview, I could feel some of the anguish that still remains in Lucia. In addition, she became quite emotional and tears began to form.

Celia has faced blatant discrimination in her position and has also suffered immensely from the negative experiences.

Then when this woman came in, I think he gave her the mandate to come after me. Then they orchestrated, they took away my research, they were able to find some little things in my research, because my research assistant hadn't been keeping good records, so they stopped it. They took away my research for a year which I am now going to apply back for. They took away all of my teaching time. They took away my leadership of the geriatric fellowship here and they would call me and one thing after another, they would take away... Then they would block me from all of these promotions, they put someone else in charge of the team that I am on, but by this time I had gotten lawyers and an EEO. Now the EEO is in the process. These two white women Psychiatrists have orchestrated everything... I think they hope that I will just quit and just go away. They are jealous of me and they're racist! And there's nothing I can do about it. That's what they are, and they do have that power.

When Celia shared her experiences with me, she also began to softly cry.

Rosa has a great passion and desire to make a difference in the educational system for the minority students that do not have access because of her memories of being discriminated

against. “I have experienced a lot of challenges in my life. That is in of itself [tapping her finger] has made me stronger and I have learned from every single experience” (Rosa).

As an undergraduate, Maria went to school

...with the smiling liberals, saying, yeah we support your initiative on Latino studies but meanwhile, behind the scenes, were supporting a completely different initiative that did not deal with oppression, did not deal with... that which was considered safe. We'll talk about Latino culture and language, but we're not going to deal with the reality of de-facto segregation, and on-going discrimination, and the kinds of things that I was interested in having through a real Latino studies program.

It is was then that she decided to become a professor so that she would be able to educate others concerning the hypocrisies and contradictions of theory and practice in multicultural studies programs.

Rosa is concerned:

I am not so sure we can reverse the rhetoric out there and the racist commentary that is out there. I am really concerned that we are moving backward, instead of forward. That's why I am really concerned how we can affect that because it just seems to be gaining momentum. As you look at the national political climate, it's gaining momentum. And let me think, as you watch Sarah Palin on the television and you watch some of these tea partiers, and you go, people are listening to this? People are awed by this? Are you kidding me? But that's what we are.

Rosa is frustrated, but remains undeterred. She, along with the other participants, continue to remain active players in the fight against unfair and unjust practices. The University should be serving the people and cultures within the state, and not take actions that will primarily benefit the white race. Maria suggests, “To point out the contradiction, here we are a Hispanic serving Institute with a significant amount of Native Americans, we need to go to the press with this contradiction, with this hypocrisy.”

**Changes in the stability of relationships.** While sharing their stories about their journey through academia, the participants discussed the importance of relationships and how

they changed over time. There were marriages, divorces, and re-marriages. Maria has an interesting relationship with her family. Since she was a young girl, she felt there was a lot

...of internalized oppression about being of African ancestry, around hair texture, and facial features. The minute a child is born, are they *fino* or are they *ordinario*? *Fino* meaning, more European looking, or *ordinario* meaning more so called African looking, etc. Do they have good hair? Or bad hair? I remember being very young, and saying, I don't want to hear that language. And if I ever have children, I don't ever want you saying that around them...And when my youngest daughter was born, her hair had a little bit of blonde highlights and her hair is very straight. It doesn't have a curl. And of course the language was oh look, *la rubia, la rubia* and in the meanwhile my older daughter is darker skinned and has curlier hair, not as curly as mine, but certainly, it can be seen, of African ancestry. And the same kind of language was used. It wasn't to the degree that they would say good hair, or bad hair, but it was clear who was being praised, and who wasn't. I to date, still, and I kind of heard that also in my husband's family as saying the same, but in a different way.

Since an early age, it became very clear there were specific cultural views of blacks and women of color. But part of her quest is to shift those paradigms and mindsets, even within her own family, to educate people about managing negative perceptions.

The Latinas that have reached a tenured status struggle with the perceptions of independence in the professional environment as well as in a personal environment. Anna married her husband after she received her graduate degree, but she thinks she thinks she “married him because he was going to be a Latin American Professor, sort of like my dad, and you know that was what I was going to do.”(Anna) But in the middle of the marriage, she had a daughter, and became really unhappy. She decided to go back to school. Her husband had come from a divorced family, did not want to her pursue a doctoral degree. He went to Chile for the summer study and when he returned he was not happy with Anna. He was unhappy that in her words, “just went out of control [Laughs]” (Anna). She “started applying to graduate school, and that was the end of my marriage, [Laughing] A, because he



really didn't want me to, and B, because I really didn't want to be married to him any longer." Anna has remarried.

Lucia married after graduate school. They were great partners

...because when I first met him, he was working with the student retention programs. He worked with students and there was nobody better! There's nobody better that does the kind of work that he did and everybody that knew him, admired him for it. He would help you right there and then. He wasn't like, oh go talk over there, go talk to financial aid, you go talk to financial aid, stand in line, they can't help you. They would do it, they would help you. If you come here, I will help you. I will get you; I will help you maneuver through the University. Oh, you're having trials and tribulations? I'll deal with your trials and tribulations, and they did. There's nobody better that can do the work that they did and the student services V.P. that came in about ten years ago, got rid of all, this whole slew of professionals, there was probably a dozen of them, all interconnected, all so fricken' good at the work that they did, all the statistics showed that the programs, the peer-mentorship, summer bridge programs, and the research programs all these great programs, he basically just dismantled the entire system.

Lucia's marital relationship suffered great strain because of the grueling tenure process. It was stressful and weighed heavily on Lucia and eventually her marriage came to an end. She was shocked when the partnership ended because her husband was supportive of her work and career during their 17 year relationship, but the two ultimately divorced.

Celia married when she was in medical school. Her husband was very supportive of her initially, but

when I started doing these national things, he would say, oh we can't do that because it costs too much money. I said, it's all reimbursed, and I get extra, so I would attend them anyway. I think it's been hard for him, because he has become Mr. Celia... I think he feels he is in my shadow a lot and that is hard for him, and that's why I'm thinking if we go back to a community marriage, like we had in the past, he can rekindle his own identity and I won't have to feel like I am just taking care of him...or somebody who is depressed, and won't get treatment, and won't get help, for whatever is going on with him.

Celia hopes her new career opportunities will re-engage her husband and the two can begin another phase of their marriage together in a new Hispanic rich community.

Rosa married a man ten years older than she, one year after she graduated from high school. Her husband finished college, and was interested in pursuing a master's degree. "In hindsight now, I really think he was my ticket out. I wouldn't tell him that, because he's my ex-husband now..." (Rosa). Her husband was not happy that she was going to pursue a doctoral degree. "He had a very different plan for us. We pretty much lived his plan, so this is my plan, and all of the sudden it wasn't right. I said, well, I am going to do it, I have to." Rosa did feel supported by her husband until that time.

Maria married a Chicano while in graduate school. For the most part he has been quite supportive of her career choices. "There are moments when he will be completely supportive, but then, there are other moments where I am like, if it were the other way around, this is not right" (Maria). The marriage roles were equitable but once the two daughters were born, the situation changed. "That is a source of constant friction and the fact that, unless you're an academic, it's hard to explain the kind of work that we do because it looks like, well you're not really working right now, because you're only teaching part-time. But, we are working all the time" (Maria). Marriage is a balancing act for the Maria. Theresa has never married.

Being a Latina woman of tenure status in academia does have an impact on relationships. Three women divorced their spouses, one woman separated from her husband, one woman struggles with being viewed as "equal" in her marriage, and one woman has never married.

**Intermittent rewards because of scholarships, fellowships, grants, work study.** Scholarships, grants, and work study programs are incredibly important to the participants. If it weren't for this financial support, their tenure status may have been quite different. Rosa

worked, applied for grants and scholarships, and paid for her entire education on her own “sweat and effort”. Celia was working in the social work arena, and applied for a national fellowship. She was awarded the fellowship which allowed her to attend medical school but she was required to pay back the fellowship at the completion of her studies. Celia identified a program that allowed her to conduct research which qualified as re-payment of the fellowship. She worked with a psychiatrist doing research in the laboratory for two years on immunology related to psychiatric diseases. “I think it gave me a foot ahead, having worked in the lab, I actually had a funded research laboratory here for two years, but then my funding was cut short, and I ended up switching my research areas but it gave me at least a direction, on how to get an academic career, that you have to be involved in research if you really want to national presentations, you want to do publishing, you want to be involved in national things, as well as local” (Celia).

Before Theresa found out she was pregnant, she applied for fellowships to go spend a year at a University Humanities Center. The fellowship allowed her to take a year of, complete her first book, and begin a new research project. Anna benefitted tremendously from the fellowship. Anna was one of the first Ford Foundation Scholars, which was the only access to the graduate program. “In fact, at that time I was the only woman in the graduate school, in my class” (Anna).

...in the beginning, those fellowships were very instrumental I think, in helping Chicano students finish their PhDs. Now, later on, the Ford Fellowships expanded and now I think... it is just a matter of observation as I look at the names and what they're doing. It seems to me, they have more of them. But they're also giving more of them to Black students, instead of to Chicanos. So a lot of our Chicano students apply and hardly any of them get them anymore.

In one particular department in this study, the only way students of color are entering graduate programs is through scholarships. They are being admitted but are not generally funded. “In the nine years that I have been here, I can only count on one hand the number of minority students that are funded” (Anna). She also states:

And this is a former grad advisor, before I was grad advisor he says, the statement conveys the sense that racial equity and inclusion is a serious problem in the department. Meanwhile in 2006 we had a program review that specifically cited the lack of representation in our graduate program in terms of graduate student enrollment. We only have 10% in the past 10-15 years that are students of color. It is not clear that this is the case. We imagine that there may be considerable debate in the department about this, but even if it were, it doesn't seem like a message we would encourage graduate students or faculty applicants of any background. The purpose would be better served to have a more positive tone.

Fellowships, grants, and scholarships were instrumental in Maria's academic career. She helped raised her siblings and was also able to navigate her way through academia because of her due diligence. If it weren't for those programs, she felt she may have never reached tenure status.

According to Anna, Maria, and Lucia the shift in the economy has created a reduction of the number of grants, fellowships, scholarships, etc. that are being awarded to people of color in their departments. This shift of the economy will have a large impact on students of color and will prevent other Latinos from sharing their knowledge because if they do not receive the assistance, they will not be present to help other people of color.

## **THEMATIC AREA 2: Transition from Individual Success to Providing an Equitable Education to All Students of Color**

In many colleges and universities, success is largely associated with the number of publications, grants, awards, that instructors receive. If adjunct professors expect promotions, it is also supposed they will make significant contributions to the literature

which in turn attracts a larger number of students. Latina professors that have reached a tenure status do indeed enjoy academic freedom to pursue their own interests, but when the interests reside within academic areas focusing on culture and race and gender issues, creative freedom may be stifled. The participants in this study realize the informal rules in this environment, and often dangerously operate with intentions of defying the norms, and take specific actions to provide an education with a curriculum filled with race and gender topics.

**Creating diverse curricula.** Each of the participants discussed the absence of diversity in the college curriculum. Theresa capitalized on her joint appointment and creates and teaches courses more focused on the social construction of race in the legal system. She is able to teach courses she interested in. She is demanding of her students, partly, because I think that those were the teachers she felt she learned the most from, when required their students to work hard. She likes to push her students, sets great expectations. She thinks “Maybe some of that is because I want to work against the stereotype, if there is a stereotype of well, she’s easy, or she doesn’t take it that seriously kind of thing.” Theresa is interested in writing about race and inequality. “I have written about gender, and gender and equality, and I imagine in my work, those will continue to be big subjects in my work in the future. My identity as a scholar is related to who I am as a person.” (Theresa)

Maria teaches courses in Social Sciences and teaches her students to think like sociologists, in their domain. “I think that was my goal. I would often use a lot of my own personal history and life experience” (Maria). She has also taught bilingual courses for immigrant women. Her past experiences have influenced her teaching

...because it shapes what content I bring into the class... And, I always tell them, that I would like them to produce some kind of research project that could be shared outside of the classroom. So that if it's a video, or an art exhibit, or a panel you want to put together in your neighborhood that will count too, in addition to the generic research that we share with each other. That's definitely affected my teaching.

Maria believes there is a need to introduce racially diverse topics into the curriculum, to faculty meetings, and to the community as a whole. Each participant has participated on a committee with the intent of representing people of color to ensure the candidates are considered fairly and are represented in the candidate pool. Maria has worked actively to solicit qualified candidates and to recruit people of color in her department. In her words, "I have served on, I cannot tell you how many search committees, I cannot tell you how many university wide task forces, whether it's the university graduation task force, to the faculty grievance, I continue to turn them down because I literally cannot sit on fifteen committees!" There are undue, and some self-imposed excessive administrative expectations that were placed on some of the participants because of their desire to create social change. Maria has overloaded her committee participation rate because of her desire to honor all requests for assistance, and her desire to act as an active public servant.

Sharing lived experiences is important to the tenured Latinas. Lucia brings in a lot of life experiences to her lectures. For example,

A lot of what I know is because I was the chair of the board of the community development corporation, or worked alongside grass roots organizations (tapping finger), or because of my own personal experiences. The main way I have characterized my teaching is the integration of research, faculty, and action. They all kind of come together. At the same time, even my work as a Chicana organizer, as a Chicana feminist, or I organize around Chicana feminism with that voice. It was anti-patriarchy, and it was anti-colonialism, but it was also about voice. That belief in the importance of voice also shows up in my planning work.

Lucia also likes to teach “in terms in terms of issues, how to view issues, how to view the complexities, how to view the interrelated factors, that are affecting this or that.” She always teaches through the community lens and considers how actions will ultimately affect the community. Anna will continue to introduce southwest studies topics and hope to weave them into the curriculum. She will continue to provide the voice for the people of color. In Celia’s new position, she plans to build a diverse curriculum rich with race and gender topics in the medical school program. She will create working groups, and build healthier communities, mentally, physically, and emotionally.

Theresa uses the classroom to challenge her students to consider the importance of civil engagement and to exercise their constitutional rights. In a class lectures, she provides insight concerning Affirmative Action. When she was being interviewed she recognized referrals and reputation play a role in identifying candidates. In one job interview she realized other candidates with lesser qualifications were hired for teaching positions. The individuals were selected because of their connections, because of the mentors the candidates were associated with, and perhaps luck.

I have never been persuaded by those arguments of oh, well you’re going to be so stigmatized or you’re going to have an inferiority complex because of affirmative action...In other words, I don’t think I buy into the idea of merit...How do you know it? And then it’s incredibly subjective how you decide who you are going to hire. It’s not obvious whose better who’s more meritorious, in those highly subjective, highly selective kinds of things. A lot of it is who did you know? How did you get your foot in the door?

The participants feel diversifying the curriculum will provide an equal opportunity for students to receive a valuable education.

**Mentoring.** Participants discussed the importance of mentoring and the impact those relationships had on their professional careers. Theresa feels she has been quite fortunate

during her academic career. She worked with two Chicano males who were incredibly supportive, and were great friends. This was probably due to the fact that "...all of them were people that I helped hire after I got there. There were two black faculty members, who were very close friend of mine, and I was instrumental in getting them hired and we worked very closely together" (Theresa). When Theresa joined the staff at a university on the East Coast, she had a supportive dean that provided her with a research position for a year, an office, and time to complete her dissertation so that she could begin her tenure status. The dean supported her and was committed to racial diversity which was deeply embedded in her character. She viewed this dean as an example of a person "who wants to make something happen, somebody who says, I want this person to join my faculty, I see the bigger picture and I see that it's going to mean something to have the first Latina here and down the line, I want her to be tenured, I want her to be here. She just said, I'll make this happen..." which is a character trait Theresa actively exercises in her career.

Maria did have good mentoring in her career. She felt she would never have been considered for the current position,

...if not for the mentoring and intervention very early on, and so, I am hoping to do the same. I have tried to do the same with other junior faculty in other departments because we haven't had that until just recently. I just mentioned we just had (giggling) the second woman of color converted from a lecturer position, to a tenure track. We will be getting, in part because of a joint appointment with the ... foundation, the first native faculty this department has *ever* had!

In turn Maria focuses on mentoring all students of color, across departments. Students from all over campus seek Maria's wisdom and ask for her assistance on research topics that are related to race issues. She can't say no to students, junior faculty, nor colleagues because there is little faculty support elsewhere in the university. In terms of administrative duties,



for years she was the “only” and felt she had to serve of committees even though she was the “token” woman of color because of the importance of being the representative voice for people of color.

Mentoring others is critical for personnel development, retention, diversifying the department, and changing the organization. Celia has served as executive on one particular committee “for a number of years, and that was helpful too because I would share things with them...and because it includes academic departments from all over the country that can be so petty, and difficult for people to open up and you get wonderful support and feedback, and new great ideas, and creative ideas on how to manage things” (Celia). Anna mentors many Chicana graduate students, but she also mentors non-Chicano students. Most recently a situation occurred where Anna felt it necessary to advise one of her graduated students.

...I was in a meeting. We’re having a big conference in the spring on the new Latino literary Imagination. We’re working through the college of fine arts, and one of my graduate students Sophia is sort of our graduate student liaison on that committee, and we were there and the people who were the running the program said, oh Alicia why don’t...we would like you to organize the night of which we’re going to do recognition of a Chicano Author, and you know, you could think it through and do it. And I looked at them and I said no! I’m sorry but I don’t that’s fair. This committee should be responsible for organizing the event, not Sophia.

She also shares many of the negative situations she faced with her students, and the objective approaches she took to resolve the conflict based on her personal experiences in hopes of preventing future negative situations. Anna prepares her colleagues mentally and emotionally.

The participants aim to improve student performance. Rosa has incorporated an additional focus in her department on student performance, success, and professional outcomes. “You bring them in, and what? Is it okay that they leave without a degree? No.

Let's make sure that if we bring them in, we deliver on that promise of giving them a degree, or having them leave here with a degree." She values education and is concerned with creating a framework for the next generation to negotiate positive outcomes. Rosa also focuses on Leadership development. She believes she is very effective at identifying good leaders and mentoring future leaders and is hoping to lead others for as long as she is able. She loves teaching because of the content she can offer which is a narrow and unique field in special education. "I train teachers which means I am able to impact what those teachers do in the classroom." She is at the forefront of education and it breaking down cultural barriers. Other students have also shared the impact Rosa has had on their lives. One student shared, "...you know, I would not be [stomping her finger on the desk] in a leadership position, if it weren't for you! I still remember what you taught, and she said, [tapping her finger] and I try to emulate some of the things that you taught us, and I learned by watching you. I thought, oh my God, there's no greater gift in the world than to have someone over 20 years later, come and tell you that, and you know that you've impacted...Beyond that, it's really about transforming the institution" (Rosa).

**Focus on increasing retention rates.** Rosa is not teaching a course this semester but she does remain connected with the students and faculty. In terms of faculty recruitment, her department is looking at the retention rates of faculty in academia. She recently hired a post-doctoral student because she was a master at looking at data, and hopes she will figure out how the data will play into the identification future goals and planning. Rosa enjoys working with doctoral students.

It's working with them individually and figuring out... and I've had lots of doctoral students. I loved being a faculty member because I could mentor and work with doctoral students. Many of my doctoral students have remained lifelong friends.

Figuring out what it is people need, and your own professional development, and giving them that or giving them opportunities to get that is important... I'm not the full package. I can't offer them everything that they need, but I can certainly point them in the right direction.

Identifying leaders and developing their skills base is a main focus for Rosa. Years of experience and a desire to assist other people of color helps create an informal leadership program which is precisely what Rosa aspires to ultimately create.

Rosa meets regularly with her staff to capitalize on mentoring opportunities. She also works individually with her staff, and encourages conference, workshop, and meeting attendance. This provides an opportunity for her staff to observe Rosa in action. Most recently, she served as a co-facilitator at a leadership institute. The majority of the people that were in attendance aspire to become leaders, and the session was focusing on building leadership capacity in the academic affairs area.

Anna recognizes the importance of creating an environment where students can relate to the course material and content. She is focused on upholding the minority retention rates in her department. For example,

In my graduate course, I have three students who are not Chicanos, out of eleven. So, it's still an extremely high percentage. So, I think it was that, and we have always had a heritage language program here. Heritage language is a little different than Southwest studies in the minds of people. So, finally we did get the proposal through. Okay. We still have, there's at least one person in this department that thinks Southwest studies is a bunch of garbage and has actively, actively, worked against it. But we know who it is, and so, you just work around them. Yeah, it's established and we have support. There is another Chicana in the department right now, Sylvia Romero but she teaches Peninsula Literature and she doesn't really identify with that part that much, except that she is very supportive when we need her.

Anna is of retirement age, but chooses to remain an active participant in her department. She realizes it has taken 25 years for the Chicano movement to create a lasting presence in the literature. Leaving the department would create the possibility of the dissipation of Heritage

speaker program and is too great a risk for Anna. Instead, she remains loyal to her students. Anna will continue to uphold the retention rates of the heritage students in her department.

Lucia has endured various perspectives concerning the volatility of retention rates in the university. Her husband understood the importance of serving students, not just on paper, but truly helping students navigate their way through the university system. The university removed the student retention programs and quickly forgot how important these programs were for students of color. Senior leaders have posed the following questions, “Gee, why are our retention rates so low? Maybe it’s because of the quality of the students we are letting in, so maybe we need to raise our admissions standards and force freshman students coming in to choose a major, and get with a university college” (Lucia). These ideas have a negative impact on student performance. Lucia played a large role in teaching a freshman learning course which precisely addressed retention rates and equipped the students with tools and access to the university support services. This course has become obsolete, as is the emphasis on retention rates among Chicanos.

Lucia helps mentor her staff and students by giving them access to as many resources as she can.

That’s a whole array of things. Sometimes it means connecting them to money, sometimes it means connecting them to literature, whatever, just helping give them access to the resources. Some of it is really bugging them on the preciseness of the language, bugging them on how they formulate their arguments, don’t say that if you can’t back it up, substantiate things with evidence. The rigor, and the excellence, I am always pushing. But at the same time, having been through so many struggles around learning how to write well and getting through a dissertation process, or something like that, part of it is I really understand the struggles. There are times when you really have to kick somebody, and there are other times when you have to be really sympathetic to them. Part of it is giving them strategies how to pass the tough times, the times when you are down on yourself, so I am always also talking strategies. Sometimes it just involves pep talks, or you try to gear it towards something they need. Sometimes it means hooking them up with another person.

At every turn, Lucia seeks opportunities to improve the plight of the marginalized Latinos. Each participant clearly understands the importance of improving the retention rates of students of color.

### **THEMATIC AREA 3: Changing the Organization**

The women in the research study have a clear and specific goal, to change the organization. The participants described the negative stereotypes they faced in their departments during the promotion and tenure process, and the importance of diversifying the university departments. “Brown research”, that is, research focused on race and gender issues, is not considered legitimate in many departments, necessitating a great effort to legitimize research focusing on race and gender issues, especially to broaden the literature in Chicano Studies.

Lucia has worked to create a department that strives to make progress, move the organizations forward, and shift paradigms.

Yeah, probably, but the one thing I haven't said is how important it is to me to be in my department that I am in. (tapping her finger) I completely love my colleagues! [Slowly] I completely, completely, love the department that I am in! We are very, it's not that we don't socialize after work, a couple of them do, but we don't socialize a lot outside this department, but we really have a lot of love for one another. A lot of love, and a lot of respect, and I was even thinking about that this morning, just about the, you know through thick and thin, they have been there for me. We do things by consensus, we've never voted, we apply our own planning process as to how we make decisions, everybody comes at it, I don't want to say pure, but almost pure motivation. We're all committed to community; we're all committed to community based practice. We're committed to our tools to be used for that purpose, we're committed to one another, we're committed to this department, we're committed to our students, we're committed to higher education, we're committed to planning education, we're committed to the connection to our work as planners, to communities around planning issues.

She hopes to continue this work at least until the age of 96, which is the age an aunt that she admires. “No, you never know when you’re going to go but...I think I am a hard worker and that I will always be a hard worker. But I think there are certain ways that we change how we work, even if it still continues to be hard work” (Lucia). She was worked many long hours, and has made many changes within her organizations. There are plans to write more, but for now, she is training her staff to uphold the standards she has created in her department.

**Gatekeeping within the tenure and promotion process, getting beyond the steel bars.** The tenure and promotion process is one of the greatest challenges for women of color. The quality of their work is often questioned and rated unfairly. When Maria entered academia as a professor, she was the first ever women of color in a tenure track position. She decided to migrate from the East Coast to the Midwest and again was the first women of color in a tenure track position. She remained the only woman of color for nine years, and actively works to diversify the department. Service is not valued in the tenure process.

Research and teaching is alive but I am saying here on main campus [tapping her finger on the table] the kind of work that we do on a day to day basis is never valued. The work that I did when I was grant advisor, and I was untenured, I took a lot of heat for the changes I instituted, that I tried to address and the institutional racism in the department is never valued, or never counted. That’s one small change and the response I got, was well, that is up to the faculty. The faculty decided what their tenure and promotion criteria are. So maybe, that’s one small thing (Maria).

Service continues to be undervalued each of the department each participant represents.

The promotion and tenure process standards are not equal for White people, and women of color. Rosa was in a tenure track position but the department created a negative working environment. For example,

...there were two us, Chicanas in my program and in some ways, we had a white female department chair who kind of set it up so that the two of us would be in competition and begin fighting. I eventually left, not just because the college... was undergoing restructuring, because it became so difficult. The situation was difficult between the two of us, the two Chicanas who I had expected we would rally around and work together and then we are set up to be in competition with each other.

She received little support from her department and the dean created a competitive environment among the only two Chicanas in the department. Instead, Rosa transferred to another university with clearly established guidelines and expectations, and a great support system. Theresa found the tenure process difficult, challenging, and contradictory in the requirements. She “knew there were some people on the faculty who didn’t like me because I was never quiet about things.” And she would never be. “I always spoke my mind at faculty meetings. When we were hiring people, I always spoke up and I knew there were some people who didn’t like me because we disagreed.” It never occurred to her the promotion would be a problem. She felt her work, teaching, and writing would speak for itself and knew she had plenty of friends on the faculty; plenty of allies, the dean, and the associate dean were supportive of her. She received a copy of the report, and it was written by three of my colleagues; it was a committee of three men. One of them, who is a good friend and ally, one she knew didn’t like her and initially didn’t want to hire her and taught in the same area, and the third didn’t particularly agree with Theresa politically. It was a very negative report. Once the report was published, the true supporter wrote a response to the dean on her behalf and without her knowledge, and the promotion was granted. Luckily she had great mentors and supporters that assisted her and specifically provided her with strategic actions that were instrumental in the process.

When Anna went up for tenure, her department Chair questioned her publications in Chicana journals and stated

... well, we don't know anything about these journals. Tell us how many people read them and how many subscribers they have and who's on the editorial board which they had never made anybody else ever do. Well, that really pissed me off! I went and looked and found out that a lot of the Chicano journals had subscribers with numbers that represented around 400 people, etc., etc. Then, I looked up all the academic credentials of the people that were on these boards and found they had gone to schools like Yale and Harvard, and other schools. Then, just because I was so angry, I went and looked up the journals that our French Medievalist, which everybody in our department thought the French Medieval was such an intellectual, he was like the "Sacred Cow". And I was like, damn, I am going to go see how many people read those journals! [Researcher laughs] I looked him up, and there would be like fifteen...or forty! The people who ran the journals were totally obscure. So I said, well damn! Why are they giving him that intellectual status and they're not giving it to me? So...I wrote a letter. I said, look, here's who's reading me, and here's who's reading "what's his name"! I said where is the equity in this?

Anna was very brave and actively tried to demand a fair process. It is very clear there are unfair and unsubstantiated promotion and tenure processes.

**Breaking down structural barriers: Deconstructing negative stereotypes.** The negative stereotypes in many of the departments in this university are disturbing. In Anna's department, "I think that they think we are an unnecessary evil...I think they don't think they can get rid of us." After several years of being in Anna's department, she discovered, a husband of one of her colleagues, and a Sociologist, wrote a short story in which "he satirizes and says... and calls us lesbians and all kinds of stuff." This man could not believe two Chicanas could collaborate in southwest studies without being romantically linked. When she joined her department, others thought the "the department's going to hell" (Anna). The type of Literature she taught was undervalued and constantly criticized. "So, things were tough" (Anna). She has contributed to the feminization of her department and of the profession because she felt the feminist helped her a lot in her career because "That's what



anger can do for you...[Pause] And the feeling that you are somehow being mistreated”

(Anna). I asked Anna if perceptions have changed in the department, and she stated there have been minor changes, but not significant improvements over the many years she has been in the department. Anna stated those were tough times her career and had several examples of unfair treatment and negative stereotypes such as:

There was one professor, who was a classicist and he just obviously thought that we weren't worth anything and actually wrote letters to the dean in which he stated that when Ileana had first come to the department, she was okay, but when I had come, I ruined her. We started advocating for a Chicano studies program and equality, and getting more Chicano students in Latino graduate school and that sort of thing, and struggling with them in every way. He said very clearly that we were dragging the quality of the program down and then we had another colleague that came in to be our TA coordinator, and by that time, I used to have this joke, I say, you know if you have one Chicana in the department, it's a liberal department, if you have two Chicanas in the department, things aren't so great anymore, if you have three Chicanas in the department then the department's going to hell, you know it's never going to be able to recover its academic reputation. And they made life pretty miserable for us.

Maria shared the following story:

I remember about three years ago, we were discussing this issue, I am not going to do into detail, but I had made an argument. We had to take a vote, and it was like two besides me, one other faculty member that shared my point. Two years later, a white male faculty, said the EXACT same thing, with the exact same argument I made, and the entire department supported him. I actually brought that up. I said, I am so glad you agree with me now, because when I raised this issue two and a half years ago, I remember I was one of two people who supported this idea and now...I think people were taken aback by the fact that I confronted them. I said, Gee, I guess I just have to just change my gender and my race and say things, and maybe people will listen! It was really poignant.

The conditions have not improved over the last decade.

It's gotten to the point where even for a faculty vote, that normally has occurred for a job search that has normally occurred through email votes, and people leave early and the day that this particular vote was happening, was a day that I had announced I had organized an activity that I couldn't participate in the vote at that time, and when it came for a vote for the executive committee or our department, they said, oh no, we won't allow you to vote if you leave early. I said, well this is a double standard

because I can name all these instances and I said, if I have to file a grievance, I will. But, I am going to get to vote” (Maria).

Maria was actually able to vote, but only because she pointedly exposed the unequal treatment and contradictory standards of the behavioral practices of the people in her department. In another example, Maria also shared:

You know I have had colleagues tell me that, things like, the model minority Hispanic stereotype is a compliment and they really believe that. I am trying very clearly to explain, no, this is not, and this is why it’s not. This means something differently that if you are not someone who is subjected to this type of stereotype.

Sharing examples and explaining to others the impact of negative stereotypes is critical for raising awareness but the negative perceptions continue to prevail in most of the departments.

**Diversification of departments.** Each participant recognizes the lack of diversity in the department faculty and staff. The participants feel they are not supported by the White people in their departments. This lack of support exacerbates the problem of racial inequality. White people are taking over the departments. “...the medical school and school of Psychiatry have pushed out 20 women in the last three years, women of color, all women. Health Sciences is very sexist and very dominated by white men and they make it very clear” (Celia).

A major goal of each participant is to diversify the staff. Lucia actively promotes diversity in her department. “We just voted to hire a Native American woman, a senior person, and we’re probably going to hire three more positions. We’ve done very well in terms of hiring for the past few years, with minorities” (Lucia). Increasing the number of women of color will help diversity perspectives. Rosa is instructing her staff to focus on outreach programs. She has hired a Native American student as a communications specialist, and to manage the diversity programs. “This year we are going to have a new tracking

system and we will actually identify goals and measure our progress on those goals...”

(Rosa). She hired a Chicano to put together a fellow’s program offering funding to undergraduate students for an academic year.

Maria served as a graduate advisor and recognized a major flaw in the admissions requirements. Before she served as a graduate advisor students could not apply to the PhD program without a master’s degree which was creating a hurdle for many students meaning they were unable to apply for various types of funding. The other departments at the university did not have this admissions requirement. Students weren’t able to apply for other types of doctoral funding. Changing this requirement required creating allies and changing practices within the institution. Maria also created other programs to diversity the department.

Maria also attempts to diversity the department through small actions. She shared her experiences with trusted people and often in the faculty meetings.

I think that people are not aware of because privilege blinds. I remember during a job search, it came down to choosing a person of color, who had lived and experienced things that the other candidate hadn’t, and the example this candidate gave, was one that was clearly anchored in his experiences as a middle class white male. And saying, you know the fact that this Native American student raised this question of colonialization and crime, and was completely dismissed. That’s not to say a white colleague couldn’t understand that but because they have not experienced that level of oppression, [pause] it, you know, it begs the question of, how could we try to diversify our faculty so that we have diverse perspectives?

Maria is excited about the addition of the first Native American tenured track faculty member the department has ever had! “I am hoping to play a very active role there and I have already begun than over the summer, before this newest addition to our faculty is joining us. I am definitely working with my graduate students in terms of what the strategies are for getting a

job, how to negotiate tenure and things like that.” Maria works literally, with hundreds of students, campus wide.

**Active participation in tokenism.** Maria will continue to convince her department there is a huge need for other faculty of color and will probably continue to serve on various committees.

I have served on, I cannot tell you how many search committees, I cannot tell you how many university wide task forces, whether it’s the UNM graduation task force, to the faculty grievance, I continue to turn them down because I literally cannot sit on fifteen committees! Students from all over campus that are doing anything that is related to race, are often asking me to serve on their committees, whether it’s comps or whatever, and I feel that I can’t say no! Because I know that many of them are the only ones in their departments as well, and they have very little faculty support in terms of administrative duties, a lot of it stems from, the fact that I am the ONLY person of color. I’ve had people come knocking on my door while I’m sitting already on two different search committees and saying, “Can you please serve on this committee?” I literally cannot. I cannot. We need to hire more faculty! And I am sorry, because, we have to have AT LEAST one member from another representative group.

I have the feeling Maria will continue to serve on more committees.

Anna mentioned the importance of serving as many students, junior faculty, and pretty much anyone else that solicits her assistance because she recognizes the negative perceptions of people of color and she hopes to eventually dispel those perceptions. Theresa has served on the admissions committee for many years. Prior to her appointment, another Latina served for two years as the committee but Theresa felt she

...did a better job than she did because I was more willing to take risks that she wasn’t. But, I don’t fault her for that but I just think people do things in different ways. But, I think that was an accomplishment that we got some really good groups of students in here. I think it’s nice to be in a faculty where there are all kinds of us, we all can be ourselves, and we don’t have to represent Laura view or whatever. I think just by being, every day I break down barriers everyday because people see me not being the stereotype of what they expect.

Improving the diversity numbers in the school of law, as well as within the other departments is very important to Theresa. She works within based on a joint teaching appointment. “I’ve always have been an informal advisor, and that’s a great luxury...I came in as a senior person, I came from a much better law school coming here, in terms of ranking and I didn’t come here with those burdens in the same way” (Theresa). Now Theresa is focused on thinking about the broader diversity issues to permanently change the organization and will continue to increase the diversity numbers and advocate the recruitment of people of color.

Theresa was not recruited for the position she currently holds in the current university, she was not recruited; instead, she contacted the University and indicated many top law schools were interviewing her and was wondering if the university would consider her for a position in the law school. “They didn’t say, well we’re going to have retirements coming up and maybe you can come over as a visitor and then there would be a retirement. There wasn’t any affirmative action in that regard; there wasn’t any focus on somebody who we could actually hire that we normally wouldn’t have a chance of hiring her” (Theresa). Other law schools created succession plans, but this university recruits for replacement. Theresa is attempting to alter the former hiring practices. The department is much more forward thinking, embraces diversity, and actively promotes multi-cultural strategic hiring actions. The departments in the university lack diversity which has had an impact on the tenured Latinas. Serving on committees, even though the Latinas are often the “token” members, is okay by the participants, because it is an opportunity to improve diversity.

**Legitimizing Brown research and contributions to the literature.** During Maria’s early career, she recognized a gap in the research concerning the Dominican Republic. She was told “that I shouldn’t even think about doing any work on the Dominican Republic

because we didn't have any literature" (Maria). She is one of a few undergraduate students who worked at a highly visible program office and quickly realized there was a need to include Latino studies in the curriculum because it was absent. "So I put together a proposal that I submitted to the dean at the time but was completely co-opted by some other folks in the Spanish department, which made into Hispanic studies and it was mostly literature" (Maria).

Anna chose a topic on Latin American Literature because she was interested in two specific poets. Her advisors said, "no, you can't do that. Okay. You can't do that because Latin American research is not worth studying..." She went to the dean and shared her passion for the research topic. Finally she was allowed to conduct her research but the end result was that her advisor denied her honors. The resilient Latinas that have reached a tenure status feel an obligation to legitimize brown research and are excited to contribute to the literature. They focus much of their work on race issues. Maria sees her research interests as "an extension of my lived experiences." Yet, each woman of low-SES status shared stories where other people of color were not supportive of their research, and in some cases, of the person in general. Celia conducts research on Hispanics and Native Americans.

**Organizing.** Lucia is extremely collaborative, collective, an organizer, a "mover and a shaker" and can make things happen. She attributes her upbringing to the morals and values bestowed upon her by her parents. They taught her basic human decency, to be kind to others, to respect and value the older generation, and to be kind. As a child, she visited all her neighbors, and took care of their needs; she learned the importance of serving her community and the impact of working for the collective. Lucia focuses on overcoming trials and tribulations and attempts to understand what is required to successfully overcome those

obstacles. She feels people need to work together so the self can become an emergent product and a function of that interaction.

Sometimes it requires organizing for change. In a former position, Lucia created

...panels that led to the creation of Chicano studies... I was the one pushing them all the way. When it came time, they didn't want to write it up. I said, no, we need to write this up. Well then you do it. Okay, I will. Now, it's out there and it's got the organization's name on it, because that's how I do things. My name is not there, but it's the organization, and I always put it out the collective. The other part of the story is a different story but (tapping her finger fast and hard) you still do those things in the name of this sort of larger goal, larger principles, these larger values that are important to you.

Rosa ensures her program works closely with the community. She has built a staff that recognizes the important of aligning university goals and actions with those of the community.

Theresa attended a University on the East Coast for her undergraduate degree and was a minority among the freshman class. She organized with other people of color and decided to attend graduate school on the west coast in search of a more diverse cohort group.

**Voice.** At a very young age, Latina women's roles are socialized within their culture. The men play the dominant role in relationship, and children are taught to be respectful.

Anna has learned to exercise her voice, as well as speak on behalf of other Latinas.

Over the years, I used to be a very timid person. Not timid, but in our culture, we are sort of taught that you don't...my mother always used to say to me, "*Boca cerrada no entren moscas*". But you learn not to shine, especially in the '50's, my God! I am so admiring of my students who come in with purple hair. [Researcher laughs] I just go like, oh wow! I wish I could have done that (Anna)!

Anna has high expectations of her students, she builds trust and often many students feel so comfortable with her that they will see her about their personal issues. Beneath the shy

surface, there exists a tough Chicana. She learned to be tough in academia; because of her many negative experiences. She shared:

It's made me kind of tough. I question everything. I am kind of a pain in the neck, a troublemaker, I am known as that in my department. I think all of the "Are you any good" stuff toughens you up a little bit." And you start saying...one time I remember when Illeana and I were being accused of all this stuff, Illeana was in my office. She said, [in an excited voice] "What is going on?" I said to her, Illeana, do you know what? The problem is they think that we have some power. And she said to me [in an excited voice] "But we don't!" I said, I know, but if they think we've got it, let's use it. I do think it is a matter of perception. Some of my students aren't afraid of me, but I think some of my colleagues are afraid of me. Because I will go in, and I will tell them what I think! I don't yell, but I have had some run-ins with some of my male colleagues in here, that would make you blush! Honest to God!

The participants want to give other students a voice. "And I tell my students now, you know, they do these kinds of things, you fight back! You figure out ways, you have to be clever to survive" (Anna)! Celia commented the important of exercising voice, but in an objective manner. They also mentor their students by sharing their lived experiences with their students in an effort to prepare their students mentally and emotionally.

Maria exercises her voice and represents the people of color in her department whenever an opportunity presents itself. She states:

For a lot of reasons I am sure people in this department think, there she goes again in asking. Before when I was grad advisor, we would always have an annual review of students to see how we were doing, that was always closed off. Only faculty were a part of that and it became very apparent to me that we had a pattern of, a lot of, not a lot of, but the few students of color who were admitted would quickly leave. And I would always raise that, I would be the only one, and thank goodness I had a senior faculty member, Latino faculty member that would also probe, "Well how come you haven't reported on these people who left? What were the reasons?" "Oh, well its family." Oh, well let's look at what's going on here. Why are these people feeling so alienated and mistreated? I can't tell you how many times people have shared stories of unjust treatment and what's happening. Why aren't we addressing the structural problem?



Maria will raise the issues of structural problems at faculty meetings, in organized lectures, and committee meetings. She feels one day she will eventually be heard. Anna will also exercise her voice and stand up for others.

The participants create programs for Latinos because they feel they have an obligation to represent their students. It is clearly understood there is need to be the voice of the Latino students and they actively participate in building and preserving programs that benefit students of color. Americana is of retirement age, but she refuses to do so because she fears leaving her department may be the demise of the program she has built and managed for several years, to support women of color. She refuses to retire because she has maintained this program for several years and is a central focus of her intentions to attract and retain minority students.

#### **THEMATIC AREA 4: Critical Social Reciprocity**

**Social activism.** Theresa was raised in a family that believed in social activism. Her father was a Sociologist, and Theresa opted to attain a PhD in Social Sciences but also wanted to attain a law degree because she “thought I might be able to be more involved with politics or policy. That was my thinking. If I do both of these, then I’ll have more impact you know?” (Rosa) Anna has always been engaged with Chicana Literature and the importance of providing a voice to Chicano scholars. Chicano literature allows people of color to share their experiences and educate citizens to understand the importance of social reform. Then it was viewed as “...a bunch of gunk. It’s just a bunch of bad writers, who are they anyway? Are they any good? etc. etc. So, right away, that was a real struggle [Long Pause]” (Anna). She sees her role as a “...actor in that whole movement which was The Chicano Movement.” She thinks she has helped shape Chicana Literature.

I am really just another actor in that whole movement which was The Chicano Movement. I came late to it. I am older than most people that were active. Because when the Chicano Movement started in the 1968, I am already in my 30's and I already had a child. I wasn't in college like a lot of the students in high school and college and that was the experience. In that sense, I am just another part. Now, have I helped shape Chicana literature? I think I have. I think Ileana and I did with our Anthology. It was good enough, and I think the critical stuff has been good enough. We were kind of "foremothers" of the field. We were there at the right time. I don't think we knew what we were doing, but I do think after we did it, we were like, oh! That's what we did! It was just one of those things. So, I do think in that sense that things have changed. Chicanas have had to struggle you know? At the beginning of the movement, the men didn't want them to open their mouths! It was also a situation where you had to be with the movement, or against it, or you're going to be a *malinche*. [the embodiment of treachery] That's what happened to Margarita. Margarita was a very outspoken person and she went to a conference, and while reading her political poem, somebody slipped her some LSD. She had a nervous breakdown because of it! She went crazy. [Researcher gasps] What she remembers is, running down the streets of San Antonio, and going crazy not knowing where she was.

Her friend eventually recovered from the episode, but the friend must continue to take medication because of the breakdown. Anna's friend has recovered and remains a creative and active scholar. This ludicrous act reinforces the importance of what the Chicano Movement represents.

Really, they didn't understand that women's issues should be their issues too. If you read the literature, there are lots of early poems that...DeCervantes has a poem about, she calls it, *Para una revolucionario*, where she says, we can't stay in the kitchen making tortillas while you guys are in the living room talking about a revolution. The women who were there at the time, they felt this very strongly. I remember one conference where the guys were out there talking and there were graduate students with some babies there, and one of the babies cried. Mario Garcia, a professor at the University of California Santa Barbara said, [Screaming] "Will somebody get that child out of here?" Well they got her out but that was the last time anybody said that because the women formed outside that room and said, we aren't going to put up with this anymore! They went back to Knox with demands and said, if you don't want us to have children, then you need to get child care and that's when Lucia Caucus started. The women would always laugh because of Mario Garcia.

Anna remains active, continues to write about Chicano issues, and teaches her students the importance to being socially engaged in the community.

Theresa acquired a Ph.D in Social Science, and Juris Doctor in law. She selected traditional prestigious universities because she did not want anyone to question her credentials.

Maybe because I have the PhD and law degree, very few law professors have the PhD, that I sort of have a greater authority. Maybe that's part of what I was doing in getting both degrees, was getting those credentials so that I could be more unassailable. People really couldn't challenge me because I was so well credentialed.

This strategy served her well later in academia for faculty meetings as an untenured professor. She was told not to speak too much in meetings, but she could never live that way. She felt the urge to openly speak her mind. "I've just been very lucky who I've been working with. I guess it's having the advantage of having gone to the schools that I went to. Nobody questions my credentials." She has

...never been sexually harassed in a school setting or a work setting. In other words, where someone had power over me and was taking advantage of that power. Now, I can think of one situation but it's not someone who really had that authority over me and I didn't really feel intimidated. It's very different if someone has power over you in some way. I said to them, I just think people don't mess with me. Men do not perceive me as someone, or something they can get away with. I don't want to say it that way but...

Maria's values have not changed in academia, they have always related to social justice.

My whole hope is that 20 years from now when I retire, that things will be different and that some of these battles that I am fighting will be won. That's what keeps me going. And that the next groups of scholars are going to do good work that is meaningful to address the issues of oppression, that's what keeps me going, the next generation.

Lucia is also motivated to give back to her community.

Part of what motivates me so much is, knowing how important my education was to my family. Knowing that part of why I had the opportunity to get an education was because of affirmative action, struggles for affirmative action, fights for affirmative action. People put themselves on the line to make it possible for people like me to be able to have access to education. That means my education isn't mine. My education is a community asset, and therefore, I have a responsibility to use my education to

benefit my community. That's what guides me. As I get through this, I always kind of remain a little bit above... I can remain above the... I don't get involved in the pettiness, because that's not why I am here. I have always operated above the fray.

Each participant feels strongly about giving back to their community and promoting social change.

**Subverting sub-oppression tactics.** Navigating through academia is challenging especially when the White people do not support people of color. The situation becomes even bleaker when people of color undermine, challenge, and do not support other women of color. Lucia felt this lack of support. "But then the other things is that the other kind of response to it is in your feelings of insecurity and lost sense of self, people can get really mean and cruel, and I think that's what a lot of the Chicanos did, a lot of Chicanas, more than the Chicanos." Theresa shared the same sentiment. She shared,

...the very people that I thought would quite frankly, would rally around this position which would be the people of color on this campus, have been the most difficult to convince. When I deliver a message that we have fought for the crumbs for so long, the only way we are going to survive is if we come together and unite, so that means if you're Hispanic, you're not just for Hispanics, if you're an African-American, you're not just for the African Americans, if you're American Indian, you're not just for the American Indian, but we really have to be there for each other. If we're going to build this institution, to really prioritize, and to think about diversity first, we have to make it important because nobody else is going to make it important. There's such a decentralization of that thought process. Like before you mentioned you were working with the special education department, and you had good funding levels, and now they seem to have dissolved. Quite frankly, I think a lot of it has to do with the economy, and the situation that we're in, but nevertheless, if you are unified, you work together and find a common ground.

**Helping others despite mental, spiritual, and physical anguish.** Lucia, angered by the hateful practices of her former colleagues, was forced to sever certain unhealthy relationships. The management of professional relationships is influenced by other greater social actions. Relationships may be sustained if potential risky situations warrant future

participation. “But you figure out who to stay away from and who to be friends with, and then sometimes you hang out with them for the organizing part of it, but you keep your distance otherwise.” The situation was so negative Lucia decided to leave. There are times when the only sane action is to remove yourself from the situation altogether. In this university, they restructured the Chicano studies program.

You do what you can, you do what you need to there, but then you go off, you just don't stay there. [Tapping her finger] Because if you stay there, you don't survive emotionally, I think is the answer you don't. If that's your only world, they eventually, I think, ruin your self...And I think part of it comes from...academia like any other institution, whether it is the military, or the convent, or whatever it is, but part of the institutionalizing process is to erode your sense of self. They strip you of an identity to then be replaced by another identity. I mean, what is boot camp about? The same thing with academia, we will break your spirit, and that's the same thing that schools do with young boys now, right? We will break your spirit, destroy who you are, and then we will rebuild you in the way we want you to be. That process of having your spirit broken, people can deal with that in multiple ways. You can find your way to survive, and still hold on to your spirit or you can become like them, go ahead and accept the social de-...that part of being re-socialized, and then identify, and replicate that behavior. So that's why [changes her voice to a deep male voice and talks very slowly] academics, they have a particular way of speaking. You know? People will do that.

Chicanas chose the battles they are going to fight and they fight them as hard as they can, for as long as they can. “So it's like choosing your battle, choosing your arena, but never giving up the fight, never giving up the purpose, never giving up the pursuit to make that connection between your University and your community” (Lucia).

Lucia feels if a person remains in that mindset,

...and if you only stay there, then you can be corrupted, corrupted in the sense of being undermined. That's the first answer, if you are around other people, you don't just stay there, you work with other people and you get out. I want to do real work, so I was dealing with real people, doing real work, engaged in real social change and not dealing with this other pettiness. That's one answer. A second answer, I think, is that, first of all I shed a lot of tears. I mean, they did hurt me, my feelings, a lot. There were always the, the tears, and the recovery from those sore stabs, and those

wounds. That was just the process of rebuilding; it was the process of healing, and rebuilding from that.

I think what's happened over time, I am much more trusting of myself, of my intentions, and my own actions, and of my own perceptions, and instincts. I have a lot more trust of what I know what motivates me comes from a place of goodness. My true authentic self is wound up in being good. Now, if I make a mistake, it is much easier to forgive myself because I know it's not compounded by the, you know, there's something wrong with me, it's like no, I just blew that, and so it's easier of forgiving a mistake, because I don't compound that mistake with the sense that somehow it makes me a terrible person.

Lucia remains resilient in her attitude and continues to help her students to focus on improving the plight of the marginalized, and creating holistic approach to teaching which benefits the entire community.

Each participant is heavily involved in their departments. For many, the combination of being the only, being discriminated against, and being undervalued is too much. The hostile environment in Maria's department has caused emotional distress. For example,

When I come into that faculty meeting, my health suffers, my mental health suffers, and I have to gather the courage to go in to raise all of these issues over and over again. I am hoping that things will change but the only thing that keeps me going is recognizing I have the right to be here. Even after my tenured vote, I have people saying are you going to stay? My colleagues ask me, what am I going to stay? I mention all of the support that I have especially outside of the department and increasingly within but it's not easy being here. You have to have some other reason to continue coming back [Giggles].

During one of the follow-up interviews with Maria, I sensed the emotional drain and the fatigue of this woman and it impacted me as well. Teaching is a great love of Maria's because of the impact she has on her students and the connections she made with former students. They share their gratification and appreciation of what they learned in her classes, and the long-term impact those lessons had on their lives, as well as the lives of other people in the community.

As a young child Rosa was demoralized, ridiculed, and belittled because of her minority status by her teachers. She became well aware of the hyper-sensitivity to racial and multicultural issues and nurtured this innate quality and ability to affect the educational system by teaching teachers to embrace diversity and to treat all students fairly.

**Generosity despite misfortune.** Despite the trials and tribulation, each participant mentioned they felt fortunate in their careers. While in graduate school Anna and her husband were unable to pay rent for that month. A professor loaned them the money. When her father passed away, the people at the college he was teaching at were also very generous and helpful. These acts of kindness established the value of giving which in turn created a lifetime of generous acts of kindness. Anna will help her students in ANY way possible to ensure their success in academia. Her behavior is based on a belief of social responsibility and a feeling that it is her responsibility as an educator to serve but in ways other than formal instruction. The 70 year old Anna has no intention of retiring, because she has a greater purpose. She must continue to uphold the retention rates of Heritage speakers in her department, she must be the voice of silenced Chicanas, and feels compelled to add to the body of Chicano Literature.

Anna states,

One of the fortunate things, and this is why I tell you I think I have been very fortunate, was that there was a woman there who had been teaching. She was much younger than I am... But Illeana was really interested in expanding things. I mean, she was a really bright person who started teaching Latin American women writers. I was in her class the first time she ever taught it...Also in that class was a young woman, who also had a couple of young kids, and she was a single mom and her name was Manuelita and she's a poet and a writer. And Manuelita and I became really, really good friends.

The women became colleagues, collaborated, and were all instrumental in the development and establishment of Chicano Literature.

Maria states:

In many ways, I think I have had it easy here. Yeah, I am very...fortunate. They are closing fast (scholarship opportunities). So, I feel very, very fortunate, because there were some doors that were opened for me. That no matter how hard I tried, if they hadn't been there, there was no way I was going to have access.

Lucia feels blessed to finally be in an environment she helped shape where women and people of color feel they are effective professionally. Feeling supported and appreciated in the work environment as well as feeling emotionally content, allows workers to flourish. I asked Lucia to share the importance of operating in a changing organization, she states:

Lucia: It's a perfect place for me! No matter what else...

Researcher: You're so happy here.

Lucia: Oh, God, I am so blessed! I know that I am blessed.

Researcher: Wonderful.

Lucia: I know that I am blessed. And we know, *we know* how unusual that is.

Researcher: This is a very unique situation.

Lucia: We are also known for it, both within the university and nationally. We are known for having a really collegial department.

Existing in a hostile environment, a department that is not supportive, is racist, and is sexist would deter many Latinas from remaining faculty members. Yet, the Latinas in this study do stay. One of the main reasons they endure so many trials and tribulations is because of the love they have for teaching.

The reason I love teaching is that I continue to get calls from students, sometimes that I taught ten years ago, or even emailing me, saying, you know I just wanted to tell you how I really appreciated what I learned in your class and I'm still thinking about



those things. I still have those books, or I can never watch TV the same way, that they were able to take something that they saw in a new light, and still apply it to their life, wherever they are. I don't care if they became teachers or not, I don't care if they're a sociologist or not, that somehow, I made a connection with them, and stayed with them, is the reason why I continue to teach.

Celia's real job in the university is to teach students practical and on the job skills. She also teaches her students how to function in a research and laboratory setting. There are other agendas with cultural issues, and an appreciation for the diversity of cultural issues is important to Celia. Many southwest citizens identify in distinct forms because of the subtle yet important differences among the counties, tribes, pueblos, and geographic locations.

"...it's a whole different world and people will tell you but you have to ask and be interested. Teaching cultural issues are important to me when I teach in the mental health profession."

(Celia)

Lucia has taught for many years and there were moments where she felt discouraged.

Sometimes you encounter the students that doesn't appreciate it, or expects too much, or hurt your feelings somehow because you had too high expectations, or gave too much. I am not saying that teaching has always been a bed of roses, but I am always setting myself up with new challenges. I don't have to, I only have to teach one course, but I am teaching two courses. I am teaching a 100 level, and in fact my nephew was like, you're the chair of your department and you're teaching a 100 level course? I'm like, I love it. I love teaching this class. But I am also teaching a Ph.D. level class, we don't have a Ph.D. program, but I teaching a Ph.D. level seminar. Why? This gives me a chance to stay up on the literature on globalization for example, and this one forces me to have to articulate the world of planning to the world of planning to people at that level.

Building connections with the university and the community is always a focus for Lucia. She sincerely cares about her students, her staff, her friends, her family, and the community.

Networking with others has been necessary for all of the participants. When they felt they were not being heard in the departments, felt they were not being supported, felt they

were treated unfairly, they would network with others outside their departments and universities. Lucia has many networks and she knows how to

...operate in these difference networks. I might think about something, but I know when to run it by them, that's what they want me to do. If I have something I need to turn into the dean, I dropped them an email and say, I'd like to run it by you, and can I have thirty minutes of your time and hold a meeting...?

The participants in this study expressed the importance of networking, collaborating, and organizing with others because helping others, being generous of their time, and improving the plight of the marginalized, is more of a need to fulfill, than an obligation. Celia hopes to continue to serve as a positive role model for other Hispanics, and will continue to display a resilient attitude in her new career. She is strong, aggressive, and assertive Puerto Rican who plans on organizing, creating mentorship programs to cultivate successful Hispanic educational programs.

## **Summary**

The participants' journey through academia has been challenging and many themes emerged from the data. The Navigation through Academia was difficult for all of the participants. They felt they were unprepared for the college curricula, were constrained financially, and had other family obligations that required either their time or financial assistance. There was a lack of diversity in the colleges and universities, a lack of Latino mentors and instructors. Often the participants faced discrimination and many of the stable relationships either with family, friends, or partners changed significantly. Scholarships, grants, and work study programs were instrumental in achieving an education, as well as allowing the participants to reach tenure status. The participants were unselfish and felt strongly about creating an equitable education to all students of color by creating diverse

curricula, mentoring, and a focus on improving retention rates. The participants are all committed to changing the organization. They have instituted change because they break down structural barriers by deconstructing negative stereotypes. The Latinas actively promote diversity in the departments, and legitimize brown research by making significant contributions to the literature. Organizing is a joy because it serves multiple purposes and benefits all students of color. Finally, the participants recognize the importance of social reciprocity. They believe in teaching, mentoring, networking, and helping others despite knowing the road to redemption requires great suffering.

As the researcher, I was seriously impacted by the stories shared by the Latinas in this study. I discovered many common threads along their journey through academia which were similar to my personal experiences as a woman of color, as a student, as an instructor, and as a professional employee outside of academia. When the participants cried, it was difficult play the role of the researcher. There were several times I hoped to share a similar story or discuss a transformational learning moment, but I remained objective. I was not surprised there were many negative experiences but what was surprising was the level of impact, how quickly the wounds re-surfaced, and depth of some “scars”. But what is truly remarkable, is the spirit of the Latinas, and their willingness to remain commitment to their profession with an incredibly resilient attitude.

## **Chapter Five**

### **Analysis of the Data**

The United States of American will experience a radical demographic shift of the population traditionally viewed as the minority group. In short, the minority will become the majority and a new category and classification system may need to be considered in terms of referencing people of color. The number of potential college and university students will increase in the next decade, according to fertility rates. Yet, the number of people of color attaining doctoral degrees is not proportionate to the growth in the population. In order to understand this phenomenon, a closer look at the academic institutions awarding advanced degrees was necessary. Gaining a greater understanding of what existing educational policies in academia are being employed was critical for understanding the challenges Latinas that have reached a tenure status face on a daily basis. Also, an understanding of the effectiveness of how diversity policies are instilled, monitored, and executed in academic settings based on the organizational culture is important for transformational learning theory. Specifically, it is critical to gain an understanding of how Latinas that have reached a tenured status interpret their experiences through the promotion and tenure process and how it affects their teaching and leadership styles. I wanted to explore how they define their transformational learning experiences and understand if those experiences affect their approaches to making structural as well as policy changes in academia, and if those experiences affect their the level of engagement. A clearer understanding of the organizational structures in learning institutions is necessary to understand if academic institutions truly embrace diversity.

I chose to study Latinas that have reached a tenure status because this process is challenging and commands a certain level of respect among intellectuals in the academic community via purposive sampling (Bernard, 2002). The participant group was selected based on an assumption that many of these women promote social change in the institution, as well as within the community. The participants were U.S. citizens, attended U.S. colleges and universities, and self-identified as Latinas. The participants were asked to share their stories of their journey through academia.

I have considered the major theories from the literature including Hofstede's Theories of Culture in Organizations, as well as race and gender theories to understand how race is socially constructed. Mezirow's Transformational Learning Theory was selected to evaluate why the efficacy of Hispanics is being limited as a result of the disproportionate number of advanced degrees being awarded to people of color. The findings were presented based on the case studies related to tenured professors and the challenges they faced in various colleges and universities, but also in their current position at a Division I level University. These findings were drawn from an analysis of the data collected from participants in the forms of in-depth interviews, journals, curricula, talks, class observations, published books and works, a critical reflection process, and a focus group.

Chapter IV presented the findings in response to the primary research question and the secondary research questions. Four themes emerged: The Navigation Through Academia, the Transition Individual Success to Providing an Equitable Education to All Students of Color, Changing the Organization, and Critical Social Reciprocity. This chapter presents an analysis of the characters, a summary of the findings in relation to the literature, implications and recommendations, as well as suggestions for future research.

## **Research Participants**

Anna is a shy, Latin American Linguist. She grew up poor, struggled during her adolescence, but ultimately became a rebellious scholar. Anna questioned everything early in her graduate career, challenged the system, and was insistent upon researching topics related to her interests in Chicano Literature and Latin writers. While in graduate school, she learned the importance of standing up for what she believed in, even though the consequences were costly. “I have never liked being mistreated.” Anna is a self-declared “flash in the pants scholar”. She has held prestigious positions and has directed her career towards the establishment of sustainability of Chicano Literature. Beneath the shy surface, there exists a tough Chicana. She has high expectations of her students, builds trust, and is extremely generous with others.

Maria is a ground breaker, a record setter, and epitomizes resiliency. She was raised in a large city in de-facto segregated public housing. The daughter of immigrants, and raised by a single mother, she is the oldest of five children. Maria helped raise her siblings as well as financially assisted her mother. Her bravado stems from a long line of determined and passionate women. Maria’s grandmother raised 16 kids on her own and although her mother came to the United States with a second grade education, she encouraged Maria to excel in school. In high school she was told by a teacher that she would not succeed in an academic career and rather than lose self-interest and become discouraged, she was determined to deal with issues concerning segregation, discrimination, and racial profiling. In her first joint appointment at an institute, Maria was the first black woman in a tenure track position. She opted to move to a Division I university, where again, she was the first woman of color in a tenure track position. She felt the department marginalized race as an area of study,

continues to face blatant racial profiling, but is totally committed to improving the academic environment for people of color and dedicated to changing the organization. She is extremely generous with her time and feels it is her responsibility to collaborate with people interested in race and gender issues.

Lucia embodies social activism and community. There is a center of goodness within Lucia and she is very clear about that focus. She possesses many good traits, is very self-critical and can sometimes be viewed as too serious. Lucia has based her professional career on the convergence of community development work and Chicano studies. There is a center of goodness within Lucia and she is very clear about that focus. She possesses many good traits, is very self-critical and can sometimes be viewed as too serious. In her graduate program, there was overt discriminatory and flat out mistreatment of women of color.

...what a fricken snob she was, and I mean most academics are snobs, let's face it. And again, that's why you're doing this study, right? Because how do we exist? How do we maneuver, how do we find our way in this kind of world? How do we navigate our way through this strange world?

Lucia's academic journey has not been easy. She has been hurt many times emotionally.

Theresa is a daughter of a Sociologist and a nurse and grew up in a family of middle socio-economic status. Her strict father worked in the local university as a social activist and university administrator but was the first in his family of seven to attain a degree. Her family was progressive and nurtured their children, allowing them to be liberal, open, and opinionated. Theresa's father created a learning environment where his children would be prepared for a life in academia.

The journey through academia was interesting for Rosa. She attended a few schools prior to attaining her undergraduate degree. Acquiring a master's degree was challenging

because the school she was attending was located more than 70 miles away from her husband and son which required residency in two different cities, and plenty of time spent away from her family. Rosa's graduate experience was much easier and much more rewarding because she embarked on a unique opportunity in a specialized field, special education. Rosa sincerely marvels at her mother and the impact her mother has had on her career. Even though her mother is not an educated person, she is very calm, strong, was the glue that held the family together.

Celia is the daughter of a school teachers and the expectation was set early on that she would become a teacher as well. Racial identification and cultural acceptance criteria have seemed to have been critical components of Celia's academic journey. The exploration of multi-cultural issues began when she was in graduate school where she worked in Social Sciences. Celia attended medical school at the age of 30. Celia worked for a government agency and experienced orchestrated discrimination her entire career at the agency because of her Hispanic identity. She has been harassed and is suffering tremendously from the ordeal but Celia has found the will and desire to survive and rise above the negative situation. She is working and operating in two distinct learning environments: as a Medical Doctor, a Psychiatrist, in a local hospital serving the local population and also as a neuroscience medical instructor at a university. She enjoys working with the local community among people of color. Specifically, she enjoys working with the Native Americans, Hispanics, and the elderly.

### **Research Questions and Purpose of Chapter**

The primary research question of this study was: How do Latinas that reach a tenure status interpret their journey and experiences within academia?



The secondary research questions of this study were:

1. How do Latinas describe the organizational culture in which they work and teach?
2. What motivates these Latina to reach their personal goals?
3. What types of leadership skills do they possess?
4. How do they describe their experiences in relation to their larger community?

The purpose of this chapter is to further consider the research questions and discuss the significance of understanding the role of tenured Latinas in Academia and the impact they have on their extended communities. This chapter does not presume to generalize about all women of color in academia. Instead, it offers observations and insights drawn from the rich data on the six professors who participated in the research study.

### **Summary of the Analysis**

**The research question: How do Latinas that reach a tenure status interpret their journey and experiences within academia?**

Each of the participants in this research study mentioned their journey through academia has been challenging, yet rewarding, and truly transformational. The theme that emerged from the data was the challenging navigation through academia. Through various stages along their journey, each participant felt a sense of lack of preparedness. Early in their careers, they were unprepared for the university curriculum. Each participant agreed university students suffer a “shock” and struggle with making the transition from a high school student to a college student. Anna thinks “...that anytime students go from high school to college, they are not prepared. I believe in public education but I do think that public education does not necessarily prepare you for college.” Public high school education is serving the needs of some students but not all students. Public schools located in affluent

communities tend to prepare their high school graduates more than public schools located in poorer counties. Maria made reference to the high school graduation requirements twenty years ago. What once was considered “honors” is now considered the standard. K-12 program and graduate rates are on the decline.

The participants mentioned they were often the “only” Latinas in their classes and in their departments. Not only was there a lack of diversity among the student population, but especially among the instructors. Mentoring was extremely crucial for their academic success, and far too few people of color serve as mentors. The participants faced discrimination, and described the negative experiences in academia as transformational learning experiences. Personal relationships suffered during their journey through academia. There were marriages, divorces, and separations from their spouses because of the stress of being involved in the academic environment. All of the participants faced financial constraints and had family obligations that added additional strain. Anna shared a story a student who cared for his father during a battle with a terminal illness. The family situation was distracting for the student and affected his participation in the classroom, so Anna gave the student money so he could visit his father. The student was extremely grateful and was able to continue with his studies. Anna has continues to support her mother, and sometimes other family members, financially and emotionally based on the expectation she established since early childhood. Celia’s mother is quite ill, and she is taking several trips to California to care for her. Maria helped raised four siblings while she was in undergraduate and graduate school. Her mother is currently living in the projects in New York, and Maria continues to provide financial assistance to her mother as well as her siblings.

Scholarships, grants, and work study assignments were crucial for these Latina's academic success and survival. Each participant felt as though they had to validate themselves in terms of ability and right to a fair and equitable education. The five participants of low-SES all mentioned the word "struggle" and a desire to "survive". The participants also mentioned many of their students of color struggle in their courses, face challenges in their departments, lack mentoring, and share many sentiments about their navigation through academia that are strikingly similar to the participants journey through academia.

**Research Sub Question 1: How do Latinas describe the organizational culture in which they work and teach?**

All five women of low-SES background mentioned experiencing discrimination, sexism, and negative profiling. Anna experienced a significant wage differential because of her double minority status (Canul, 2003), being a female, and being a Latina. Theresa avoided the situation by establishing accreditation as a lawyer, and doctor of philosophy to limit racial profiling. Maria experiences racial profiling regularly. She shared written information concerning a committee she is working with "... it gives you the sentiment, and the flavor for why they think I am ruining the department." Maria has experienced blatant racism, negative stereotypes, and struggles on a daily basis to dispel the misconception that race is not a valid category of analysis. Maria feels she has to work twice as hard as her colleagues and has to struggle to survive.

According to the participants many White scholars continue to elude the legitimization of "Brown Research". Brown Research includes minority related topics which are not considered scholarly by White academics. Students of color continue to face

challenges conducting brown research because they do not receive the appropriate support from their professors, colleagues, and departments. In their professional lives, when the departments would not support brown research the participants decided to collaborate with others in different departments. Each participant discussed the importance of having a diverse curriculum. Often the departments do not support diversity topics, and the participants feel the departments do not deal with issues raised in faculty meetings concerning discrimination and unfair practices, nor do the departments support programs that benefit Latinos. In the Division I University where Maria currently teaches, a course on race and discrimination has been introduced as a curriculum requirement, but it has never been approved. Maria advocated diversifying the curriculum to address these issues which highlights a major downfall and begs the question, if the Social Sciences Department is not breaking new ground in this area, how are other departments expected to introduce similar topics into their programs? Social reform will occur at a snail's pace.

Anna has faced many negative stereotypes in her career. When she joined her department, others thought the “the department’s going to hell” (Anna). The type of Literature she taught was undervalued and constantly criticized. She described her journey through academia as “tough.” Anna has contributed to the feminization of her department and to the profession because she felt the feminist movement provided her the courage to excel because “That’s what anger can do for you...because of the feeling that you are somehow being mistreated” (Anna).

**Research Sub Question 2: What motivates these Latinas to reach their personal goals?**

The Latinas want to change the organization culture and structure by improving the environment for all their students, but especially for people of color. Each participant in this

study mentioned the importance of participation in various committees that benefit others. The committee may have a race and gender focus, but ultimately the tenured Latinas in this study felt an inherent desire to help others. They believe their role as educators is to provide the best level of education possible to ALL races and genders. Theresa mentioned the importance of the Chicano movement and her father's participation to the movement which motivated her to improve the plight of the marginalized. Anna discussed the importance of Chicano studies and the benefit to minority students. She and her colleagues believe in working diligently to widen the body of literature. Theresa includes the topic of Affirmative Action (AA) in her classes which stimulates dialogue and establishes a safe space for students of color. Theresa instructs her students to think about the implications of AA, and to become active citizens. She proudly shares her political views and discusses her Chicana status. Celia is experiencing race and gender issues in her current situation. Soon, she will begin teaching at another university and vows to use the negatives experiences as real life topics to improve the working and learning conditions for people of color.

Students continue to face financial constraints and are unable to equip themselves with the tools necessary to meet performance criteria. To alleviate this situation, Anna provides grant and research funding opportunities for her students. Anna and Maria place books on e-reserves in the library, and give students textbooks when additional copies are available to ensure students receive a fair opportunity to compete with other financially sound students.

The number of Chicano instructors and mentors continues to remain small even in a university that claims to target and serve the Hispanic population. The lack of role models and instructors has an impact on the student experience. The participants overcome with

frustration, organize and create clubs, support systems, committees, and working groups. The university sponsors diversity initiatives but there are several organized groups attempting to serve the students of color population and instead of collaborating, they are competing against each other for funding which further complicates the situation for students of color. Sponsorship of diversity programs with unified objectives enhances communication, participation, and cooperation.

The Latinas mentor their students by sharing their lived experiences in an effort to prepare their students mentally and emotionally for their journey through academia. There is a conscious effort to create and uphold the retention rates of minority students. This is accomplished through the building and preservation of programs. Anna is of retirement age, but she refuses to do so because she fears leaving her department may be the demise of the program she created to support women of color. She has maintained the program for several years, which is a central focus of her intentions to attract and retain minority students.

Every participant in this study expressed a love for teaching. While their reasons were different, the level of passion was consistent. They also mentioned a desire to improve the conditions for minority students. Rosa shared a desire

...to create a change however little it might be in terms of creating some kind of change in the education system to feel like one person can impact it. So you as a teacher can impact it. It's your responsibility to do so. So, that's why I think it's important to share the story because it's also relaying the message that as teachers they have a responsibility to bring up students and to ensure that underrepresented students are successful.

Each participant mentioned the importance of impacting change in their respective departments, as well as for the university.

### **Research Sub Question 3: What types of leadership skills do they possess?**

The participants in this study expressed a desire to change the organization. Maria decided to become a Social Scientist because in high school “I had the opportunity to witness all the inequalities that existed in society.” She shares her lived experiences with other people and discusses the effects of race and gender theories because she thinks “people are not aware of because privilege blinds”. Maria recognizes many White people have not faced oppression and various stereotypes. Many of the Latina’s goals are related to this concept and their actions are based on a desire to educate others on race and gender issues. “I’ve had colleagues repeatedly tell me that race isn’t a valid category of analysis” (Maria). “I have had colleagues tell me that we don’t have a problem with equity and inclusion” (Anna). The apathetic attitudes of the participant’s colleagues in higher education towards race and gender and issues are disturbing. Therefore, the participants have vowed to engage in actions that make the “unfamiliar”, quite familiar. An obvious means to enlightenment is through publishing scholarly work focused on inequality and remaining resilient in spite of adversity.

The Latinas in this research study are brave, loyal, committed, and are caring. They want to change the organization by breaking down structural barriers, especially through the deconstruction of negative stereotypes. They serve on committees, organize, and create programs in an effort to diversify their departments. By doing so, faculties of color are able to introduce diverse topics into their curricula. The participants also choose research topics with race and gender issues to legitimize brown research which significantly contributes to Chicano literature. Most importantly, the participants speak on behalf of people of color. They speak up in faculty meetings, public forums, organized lectures, and committee

meetings on behalf of people of color. The participants want to give their students a voice. They encourage their students to fight back, but in an objective manner. The participants in this study are committed to diversifying their departments. They will serve on committees, and although they are “token” Latinas, they will serve with purpose, to attract more faculty people of color which will ultimately benefit all students of color.

**Research Sub Question 4: How do they describe their experiences in relation to their larger community?**

The participants in this study definitely promote social change and recognize the importance of critical social reciprocity. The Latinas that reached tenure status create lectures, talks, and research results within the community at large. The participants in the study network with other academic leaders and establish relationships outside the university. This is viewed as critical for intellectual stimulation, creative freedom, emotional support, and quite frankly, to preserve their sanity. The state of Arizona has opted to remove “...ethnic studies or any curriculum that has in some way has an inkling of social justice” (Maria). Theresa agrees this is a step in the wrong direction. Anna also recognizes a missed opportunity to educate the ignorant.

The participants subvert sub-oppressive tactics imposed by the university. There are also sub-oppressive tactics imposed by other people of color. In other words, rather than Latinos unifying to help each other, they often hurt each other. I believe many people of color experience the difficulty of navigating through academia and experience similar challenges. The negative stereotyping, discrimination, feelings of inferiority and inadequacy are powerful and I think these people feel because they have struggled and were negatively impacted, they feel that others should also endure the physical, emotional, and financial



strain as well. The promotion and tenure process is viewed as an earned right, and therefore, everyone should endure the hardship. The women in this study, rise above this perception, and instead help others in hopes of improving the situation for people of color.

### **Limitations of the Study**

The limitations of this study are based on the methodology used to conduct the research. The researcher looked at Latinas that have reached a tenure status at a Division I university and did not include Latinas that have reached a tenure status at a college. The study did not include participants that are in the tenure process which may have a bearing on the data results. The analysis of the data was viewed through the lens of Transformational Learning Theory and the data gathered was based on a qualitative interpretive methodology which is not generalizable. This study is descriptive in nature and is not intended to test theory but is intended to strengthen Mezirow's Transformative Learning concepts, Hofstede's Theories of culture in organizations, and Resiliency Theory. This study focused on Latinas that have reached a tenure status, and did not include a multi-generation approach for understanding experiences of Latinas defined as early career academics. The study included women of color with mostly a low socio-economic status and did not include women of various socio-economic backgrounds.

### **Implications**

**Implications to theory and practice in academia.** Educational reform in this country is on the decline. Changing the culture in academia is a difficult process and is not easily achieved. Universities are giving people of color lip service and really aren't attempting to improve the plight of the marginalized. Students are not prepared for the university curricula, and the lack of preparation is forcing first year university students to

drop out of the university and attend the local community colleges. Students are spending additional time taking remedial courses which also requires additional credit hours (NCES, 2007). More importantly, the community college credits are not considered valid when the student attempts to transfer the credits to the university, thus requiring the student to extend the time required to complete the university curriculum. The students are not considered traditional which impacts the statistics and has a bearing on the future funding of programs. This cycle perpetuates the situation and contributes to the widening of the performance gap.

A contributing factor to the decline in the number of women of color receiving PhDs is a decrease in the number of tenure track positions for women of color. The number is not increasing proportionately to the growing number of minorities. Budget cuts have reduced the number of tenure track positions in academia and reductions in budgets have forced universities to create more on-line courses. While there are several benefits to on-line courses, there are also some major shortcomings. On-line courses can reach the masses of students, are more convenient for students, and provide flexibility for both students and instructors. Yet, professors feel they lose the face-to-face interaction. Anna states, “And here, we’re being encouraged to teach these online courses which would eliminate, and rid of us teaching face to face, with our students.” On-line class interactions and engagements are more challenging to initiate and manage. The structure of the on-line course allows socially constructed perceptions of race to persist. There is a sense of lost opportunity to dispel negative perceptions of race and gender issues.

Budget reductions are forcing departments to reduce the number of teaching assistant positions as well as graduate assistant scholarships which is negatively impacting minority students. Specifically, the lack of diversity programs has adversely impacted minority

groups. Many Chicano teaching assistants and instructors rely on scholarships, grants, programs, and fellowships to remain in academia. With the decline in the number being awarded, Chicanos cannot remain in graduate programs, and eventually leave academia. “We have a very high number of minority students in our department which depend on fellowships. They do, and they’re about 60% Latino I would say” (Anna).

Diversity programs which directly serve and benefit minority students and the community as a whole are being cut. The reduction of these programs will continue to adversely impact minority students. “We’re talking about negative (impact); it’s harder for certain students to even get access because they’re taking away the services that make it possible for them to be there.” (Lucia) Faculty and staff are also impacted with the absence of the programs and the services they provide. The diversity programs facilitate dialogue, improve communication, align objectives, and efficiently create and sustain functions that benefit the students, the faculty, the staff, and the local community. From a macroeconomic perspective, programs can be managed at the university level and provide overall benefits.

As diversity programs dissolve, each department is forced to identify individuals unfamiliar with university objectives and programs that fall outside the mission of the university. When those programs disappear, so will the graduate students of color. This also has an effect on the number of minority students that enter PhD programs. With the reduction of teaching assistants, junior faculty members are asked to do more with less, are feeling overwhelmed, and are becoming discouraged. Colleges and universities have dedicated shrinking budgets to diversity programs that provide students with the illusion of equitable access. These programs instead, should help prepare minority students for the navigation

through academia, and provide strategies addressing family obligations, financial constraints, and unpreparedness.

Colleges and universities need to raise the consciousness of White people to be aware of the obstacles people of color face and overcome. They should train future teachers to be culturally sensitive and accommodating in their curricula topics. It should be required that students, faculty, administrators, etc., be required to take courses focusing on race and gender, with an emphasis on culturally sensitive topics. Statistics show if the curriculum is diversified, and the topics are relational to student experiences, performance will improve. The senior leaders should be educated on importance of diversity programs, the importance of grants, scholarships, and work study programs. Department administration should review the promotion and tenure process and ensure public service such as organizing and working with the community, is valued and assigned the same weight as publishing.

It is critical to increase the graduation and retention rates of students of color. Changing the admissions requirements to attract more prepared students is not the answer, but attracting a more diverse workforce will improve student performance. The governing board is focusing on a short-term solution and not the longer-term impact. Rosa states:

Well, raising the graduation standards is the easy fix. It's not the real fix. That's the easy fix and what happens then is that you end up admitting fewer of our students. Most of the students that are going to go through the diversity program are, even the Latinos and the Native American students are going to end up at the local community college. And we're going to have more white students here and so that's the easy fix. But, it's about the curriculum; it's about doing other things to ensure those students graduate. And it's also about providing that support. I mean, who are we serving?

People of color that are employed at colleges and universities must be allowed to conduct Brown research, or else they will become disengaged and will seek organizations that promote and embrace diversity. The more Latinos are educated, the better the quality of life

for everyone. Organizational learning theories include creating a shared vision, developing employee buy-in, and making mental models explicit (Friedman, 2001), but it is interesting that the very department that teaches these theories does not subscribe to the execution of those “best practices”. Survival learning and adaptive learning, increases the capacity to create and learn, but moving the organization in the right direction will only happen if the environment fosters openness. This is not occurring in academia.

There are several scholars approaching retirement age which is an opportunity for people of color to compete for the vacant positions and may result in a lost opportunity for the diversification of departments in academia. Due to increasing budget cuts, and “...because of all the pressure, and people are just using the excuse of budget cuts not to hire” (Theresa). What is the recourse for not adhering to fair and just hiring practices in colleges and universities? I am not convinced there is any recourse.

Clearly, Latinas that have reached a tenure status are amazing leaders. According to Rothwell (1995) good leaders elevate, motivate, inspire, problem solve, are respectful, foster a trusting environment, are ethical, are adaptive, and develop cooperative working relationships. Latinas that have reached a tenure status are incredible because they do all these things in spite of discrimination, and unsupportive departments. Stefancic (1997) discussed the importance of storytelling, counter storytelling, and naming one’s own reality as being key to recognition of injustice and implementation: 14 years later, there remains little progress in the way of racial reform. According to Rose (1990), class and culture differences erect boundaries that encourage difference and deficiency. Martin (1992) discussed how Latinas experience depreciation in the workplace; this is especially true in

academia. Upper-and-middle class White people are continuing to hire and promote others with similar values.

The political climate of the institution, is not improving the situation. There is a lack of human decency. According to Lucia,

It stems from that FOX news where you talk over people, you're mean to them, you shout at people. I read all of these articles on bullying, with all the kids right? People act like they are so confused about bullying. Besides, you don't get the commentary, you get the bullying, and that's what the ideological tools and relationship has been about, training people. In that sense, that is what is making me angry, we're not even talking about Republicans potentially taking over because my Republicans are part of the ones that are being attacked as well, but it's all of these crazy folks, on behalf of the wealthy. The crazy folks are super wealthy, they fund it, and they're going to be the beneficiaries of it. Meanwhile, what the rest of us are going to be left with...the impact of this concentrated wealth and power, but besides that, this kind of nastiness. You're not going to be able to have a conversation and be able to meet at any point on the plane, it's going to be so nasty, you won't be able to have conversations with them.

Minority students grapple with perceptions of ability and capability, feel insecure, and question their academic ability. They wonder if they are they capable of producing scholarly work. Doubts fill their heads and they wonder if they compete for research and grants, will they be equally considered equally by the screening committees? They wonder if their work will make a significant impact on the literature. Are they willing to face all of the challenges of being minority students and a person of color in a competitive university? How will colleges and universities answer these questions without embracing and promoting diversity?

**Implications to Transformational Learning Theory.** According to Mezirow, an individual must be receptive to alternative expressions of meaning, and the ego plays a central role in the process of perspective transformation. Boyd and Myers place an emphasis on logic to a definition that is more psychosocial. The critical thinking process is largely based on a constructivist approach to education, which implies people make their own

meaning. It would be interesting to reproduce his study with an emphasis on culture to determine if the study would produce similar results. The Latinas in the research study have described their experiences as transformational, but conducting a study to determine whether others have been transformed because of their interactions with their tenured professors would contribute to the literature. Goleman (1998), in the Transformational Learning Theory model, lists trustworthiness, emotional intelligence, honesty, integrity, as critical components of transformational learning. I don't necessarily agree, because in academia, there isn't an equal opportunity to participate in various roles of discourse that lead to best judgment. The participants shared stories of deception and dishonest practices. Their colleagues were not always honest. Despite the negative circumstances, the participants experienced transformative moments.

Goleman also states, in order to be socially responsible people must create optimal states. The participants in the study err on the side of mistrust and are skeptical of White people, because of their lived experiences. The school of hard knocks has made them this way. Habermas (1984) stated critical theory results in emancipation from domination. Latinas are not completely emancipated from domination and I wonder if they ever will feel free from White domination.

There were several references to transformative experiences along the journey through the academic system. Being a woman of color in academia and attaining a tenure status was clearly viewed as transformational for the participants because of the lack of clarity of the institutional guidelines, the misinterpretation of the rules, and the systematic unfair practices of White people. The Latinas transformed the institutions because of their commitment to their belief systems and the desire to pave the way for their future students of

color. The negative experiences became motivational forces to change educational policy, change the culture in their departments, and create an environment for a fair and equitable education for all people.

**Implications to Resilience Theory.** Resiliency theory has many definitions, but I prefer to discuss the psychological definition, which is the positive capacity for people to cope with stress and adversity (Richardson, 2002). The women in this study regularly deal with extremely stressful situations, but they always manage to focus on the potentially positive outcomes. During the focus group session, the participants were asked how they felt about sharing their stories. At the focus group, the participants responded:

It's kind of interesting to think of all the things that have happened in such a short time...it was kind of emotional... (Theresa).

I was just surprised that I remembered that level of detail. It was like, oh My God, geez where did that come from? It was like taking several decades of your own personal history and encapsulating it and capturing probably what are some of the most significant details of your own personal story (Rosa).

I thought it was empowering at the same time because, well, we did go through a lot of trials and tribulations but we are also in a very privileged position, and while it is disturbing to think about everything that we have endured, we also resisted. That in some way is an empowering emotion (Maria).

I agree with the Dominican. I find it very hard to talk about myself, I have decided. We are not really supposed to, you know (Anna)?

I found it focusing too, because I am ready for a big transition, and to be able to be forced to look back at summarizing which makes it easier to decide, where am I going to go from here (Celia)

The research study was equally viewed as extremely important for educational policy. The Latinas were allowed an opportunity to critically reflect on their past experiences as Latinas that have reached a tenure status, with promotions at various levels. The details included in this study were viewed as transformational and serve as reminders and motivating factors to



transform the learning institution. The past experiences also serve as anchors and provide the participants with a sense of purpose to lead others to become active citizens in their colleges and universities as well as their communities. However, change is slow and requires addressing and overcoming several obstacles.

The display of a resilient attitude does not go unnoticed among Latinas that have reached tenure status. Whether in a personal or in a professional relationship, the women of color continue to validate their purpose and worth in university programs. Dedication to their convictions and having a social responsibility to build a legacy for other Latinas to follow can be costly. The constant engagement in the fight to provide an equitable education for all people of color is emotionally, mentally, and physically draining. The battles are tough, and can be completely overwhelming. Providing access to minorities and the struggle to qualify that race and gender are valid categories of constant misconceptions and misinterpretation. Latinas that have reached a tenure status are resilient, because they are soldiers, they are beacons of hope, they believe in making academia a safe and open space for learning. But, many other tenured Latinas are leaving academia seriously wounded.

The emotional and physical state of a few of the participants is delicate. Maria feels overwhelmed and also great physical fatigue. Her health has been impacted by the high level of service to her family, to her students, to her colleagues, to her department, and to the potential thousands of students she opens her office door to serve. Celia is overwhelmed by the issues of discrimination and inequality, and is now seeking mental counsel, and medical treatment for physical ailments. Lucia recognizes an inability to manage her self-imposed social obligations and is now training others to replace her appointments. Theresa fears budget cuts and the change of the political climate will end programs in her department.

Anna is really discouraged, feels the university is focusing on the budget and not on education, and feels the young faculty doesn't have any hope. Rosa worries about the future of minority students. There is a strong sense some participants feel disenfranchised and partially jaded but each participant displays a resilient attitude and vows to change the institution at some level. If the situation in academia doesn't change and promote diversity, many women of color may not self actualize, and Latino students may be unable to navigate their way through academia. Society as a whole, may suffer tremendously if this happens.

With the inevitable explosion of the Latino culture, academic institutions will be forced to re-think how the existing organizational structure will serve the minority (majority) population. In the United States of America, the fate of minorities, social progress, social equality, and the betterment of humanity balance on the hinges of a fair and equitable educational system currently provided by academic institutions. First generation Latino scholars are largely employed by managers and trainers who are products of US College and University systems. Second generation Latinos will also be instructed by US undergraduate teachers who are also products of the educational system. In the broad sense, in order for organizations to attract, and retain the ever-present minority (majority) population, a better understanding of the Latino educational experience in academia is critical for development and sustainability of academic institutions.

There are resilient Latina women such as the participants in this study, that desire to change the organization and have the ability to overcome adversity. Latinas that have reached a tenure status are well versed in academic policy and take actions to improve the conditions for students of color. Their vast experiences provide them with the tools necessary to challenge the system, organize, and take action for the betterment of society.

## **Recommendations for Future Research**

Suggestions for future research projects were identified and the results of this research study support the following recommendations:

1. A review of the admissions criteria and the risk associated with changing standards.
2. A review of the long-term impact and benefit of diversity programs. A review of the connection between scholarships, fellowships, and grants for minority students.
3. An analysis of the relationship among Professors, Chairs, Deans, Provosts, and Regents, the communication among them, and the vision of the university.

Colleges and universities place a great emphasis on admissions criteria and because of gatekeeping impose strict guidelines for admitting students. An analysis of the impact of high school graduate rate criteria and the relationship of preparedness for college and university students would identify the risks associated with changing the standards and the negative impact it would have on students of color.

Diversity programs are created to help minority students. When colleges and experiences experience budget shortfalls, diversity programs are adversely impacted. As stated in the literature, and based on the results of this study, the services diversity programs provide to students of color is critical for success. Instead, a review of revenue streams of active programs would be beneficial and would shift the focus on decreasing budgets, to enhancing programs and serving more students.

An analysis of the relationship among Professors, Chairs, Deans, Provosts and other governing committees would strengthen the relationship among the leaders in academia. It is unclear whether the senior management considers the volatility of the relationships and if important issues such as race and gender, are discussed at the governing level. Determining

whether marginalized groups are considered when instituting educational policy is imperative for ratifying social reform.

## **Conclusion**

The negative perceptions of women of color continue to prevail in many sections of academia. Colleges and universities have diversified on paper, but many of the socially constructed race and gender issues remain prevalent. The philosophies of retaining a hierarchal structure and the retention of class elitism mentalities prevail. Women of color that attempt to mitigate and expose the contradictory mind-sets of leaders are often met with resistance and outright defamation. Women of color in academia are treated unjustly and unfair expectations are imposed on teaching assistants, junior faculty, untenured professors, and on tenured professionals. The pre-existing biases and prejudices of their White colleagues continue to exist and reify racial discrimination.

The challenges women of color face in academia are significant and have varying levels of impact mentally, emotionally, and often physically. The Mexican poet and feminist, Sor Juana Inez de la Cruz published work in the 1600's (Merrim, 1991) on the double standard of men and the role of women. Women have been silenced for centuries; Anzaldua (1987) refers to the silencing of Chicana woman as "*deslenguadas*" (without tongue, unable to speak). Chicanas have been attempting to create a space where their voices can be heard. In academia, the philosophy is to create a learning organization where qualified individuals collaborate to create a mechanism for students of all races to unify for a common goal, the betterment of society.

Diversity programs are present in many colleges and universities and should include programs that identify potential leaders, and identify people who have the cognitive ability to

embrace transformative learning theory to shift paradigms and change frames of reference. More importantly governing agencies must be open (hear, listen, ponder) to embrace the stories of others who have been socially conditioned to act in a specific manner and yet have the capacity and ability to realize transformative individual and group moments. Group members must encourage storytelling through engaged dialogue to provide a holistic education and an academic environment where cultural differences are embraced, appreciated, supported, and promoted.

The Latina professors in this study managed to achieve prestigious statuses, doctors of philosophy, doctor of law, and a doctor of medicine. But a PhD is not enough! The doctorate is the highest honor in formal education and levels the playing field for scholars alike, in theory. Achieving this status should provide a mechanism for civil engagement held justly, but this is not always the case in academia. Tenured Latina professors have to fight and challenge the patriarchy and the balance of power in the university. Professors and instructors are public servants but service is not viewed as important for consideration in the tenure process. Each tenure process is managed by the department dean and chair without uniform guidelines or goals for the various departments.

The participants in this study challenge authority, question leadership, and aspire to diversify the university. They exercise their voice, albeit on a superficial level. The poor leadership that is detrimental to the organization is questioned and attempting to understand the qualities and styles of leaders is only one component. Understanding communication styles, interpersonal skills, historical contributions, qualifications and achievements, risk-based approaches to managing, and productivity reflect the business philosophy is important for organizational learning, but concentrated efforts often ignore humane factors.

Incorporating an understanding of leadership and organizational change that includes the impact on people of various cultures, backgrounds, and experience would improve the plight of the marginalized and better serve the university.

The university supports diverse organized groups and programs that attempt to introduce the impacts of management decisions and outcomes on represented groups, but negative perceptions of people of a minority status remain. Diversity programs have a short shelf life because the services they provide are not valued. People of color are not always unified. Instead of unifying and engaging in conversation, they are digressing. Mentoring programs lack organization and are evanescent, and leadership training programs are futile.

Rosa offers:

One of the things I've learned is that in order for me to survive on a daily basis, is to rally around those people that really care about diversity in the workforce, and the work that I am doing here. Because there are people that have the same passion, and I just need to find them. They may not be as visible or come out of the woodwork, because they are so busy doing their work, but I have to find them.

Despite the obstacles in academia, women of color remain engaged and committed to their passions with great fervor.

The life stories of the participants revealed that although there were many trials and tribulations along the path, because of their rich experiences, they manage to celebrate and encourage diversity. Although they have fought many battles during their academic journey, they have been radically transformed by their experiences. They have resilient attitudes despite the battle wounds and scars, and they constantly seek to alter the plight of the marginalized women of color. The participants manage to overcome racist and discriminatory practices, but not without a price. The participants have endured hardship and are constantly looking for opportunities to prevent others from experiencing negative

stereotypes or varying forms of profiling. The most admirable characteristic they possess is their willingness to change the organization to improve the educational experiences for students, faculty, and administration members of all color.

The study participants gained new insight and acquired a regeneration of enthusiasm for instructing students, mentoring and networking with others. The interaction of the Latinas that have reached a tenured status in the study represented various departments at the selected Division I university and highlighted a commitment to the profession. A resurgence and renewal of the commitment to improve the conditions of Latinas and the plight of the marginalized, in academia, emerged. Considering how organizational culture and employee expectations affect professional outcomes, diversity numbers will not improve unless the organizational culture supports and promotes a diverse workforce. There will always be people that make a difference in student's lives but sometimes the only path to true change is on the road to revolution.

### **Researchers Note**

The management of the operating budget is impacted by the governing agency and the funding sources. Election Day was held on November 2, 2010 and the anticipation of the outcome weighted heavily on the participants during the focus group session which was scheduled on November 2, 2010. The Republican Party and Democratic Party have opposing views of educational reform. The Republicans have control of Congress and the change in party will have an impact on the philosophy of education and the steps taken to organize and execute educational agendas. Throughout President Obama's service as President, budgets have decreased for public universities. For the past three years universities have expended a lot of time, energy, and resources addressing budget constraints which have stifled growth

and impacted programs that directly benefits students of color. The focus on financial management, the impact of the decision making process, and the lack of focus on the vision of their own university may have impacted the participant's responses during this study. Budgets are not the only contributing factor to the success of students in academia but the conversations have a negative impact on morale, decrease motivation, and exude negative perceptions and opinions. Each participant mentioned how detrimental the last three years of budget cuts have been on morale, and how they have negatively impacted programs supporting minority students. The political climate is volatile and played a role on the responses of the participants during the focus group.



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