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# Engendering Strategies: NACCS and the Challenge of Multiple Oppressions

Yolanda Broyles-Gonzalez  
*University of Arizona*, [yjb@email.arizona.edu](mailto:yjb@email.arizona.edu)

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# II

*The National Association for  
Chicana and Chicano Studies  
1996 Scholar Award—  
Professor Yolanda Broyles-  
González*

# *Engendering Strategies: NACCS and the Challenge of Multiple Oppressions*

**Yolanda Broyles-González\***

University of California, Santa Bárbara

**M**y words are dedicated to three sets of women. One set consists of important elders in my life: mi abuelita Polita Rodríguez; Guadalupe Castillo, Raquel Rubio-Goldsmith, Pilula Khus, and Antonia Castañeda. I dedicate these words equally to women warriors Guadalupe Compean Acuña, Millie Escobedo, and Sylvia Argueta. And these words also include *con todo cariño a las niñas* Angela Acuña, Esmeralda Broyles-González, Gabriela Alexis Garza-Vázquez and the seven generations yet to come.

I want to thank the Chicana Caucus and the National Association for Chicana and Chicano Studies (NACCS) for the very special honor of addressing this Chicana Plenary. This plenary entitled "Engendering Strategies: NACCS and the Challenge of Multiple Oppressions" is in some ways an outgrowth of a panel at last year's NACS' entitled "Gender, Power, and Institutional Backlash: Chicana Stories from the War Zone." And it is an outgrowth of the daily multiple oppressions faced by Chicanas of all economic walks of life . . . And of our responses and challenges to oppression.

Yet this Chicana Plenary theme also is responding to the overall conference theme which significantly mentions only racist and not sexist and homophobic policies. How will NACCS help remedy the multiple oppressions we face: oppressions of race certainly, but also of gender, class, sexuality, and environmental degradation? And why are we—as women entering a new millennium—having to smuggle ourselves back into the NACCS picture? I am referring to the fact of gender oppression being

subsumed under “Racist Policies” in this year’s conference theme. What happened to gender? As we know, fighting racism does not necessarily mean a betterment for women of color. The ratio of Chicanas to Chicanos on most campuses—and a comparison of their disparate wages—should tell us something. Mapping Strategies within NACCS must necessarily involve an engagement with our multiple oppressions.

Today I want to explore the mapping of strategies against oppression through the vehicle of personal testimonio. In other words, I want to talk strategy not in the abstract but in terms of what I have learned from my own experience, particularly that of the last ten years as a tenured professor at a research university. In doing so I selectively organize this presentation around three interlocking areas or focal points: (1) the gender lessons of the successful civil rights litigation against the University of California (UC) by Professor Rudy Acuña; (2) suggestions for increased NACCS political advocacy; and (3) reflections on power, struggle, and crossing the fear threshold.

### **The Gender Lessons of the Acuña Civil Rights Litigation**

In 1992 Chicano/a studies Professor Rudy Acuña succeeded in filing the first employment discrimination lawsuit by a Chicano against the University of California. By the time he won in Federal Court four years later, the UC had spent almost five million taxpayer dollars in unsuccessfully defending its discriminatory hiring and promotion practices. It is important to point out that this employment discrimination lawsuit against the University of California produced an immense archive of hiring and promotion information and documents formerly withheld from public scrutiny—and even withheld from professors undergoing personnel review. It also produced an archive full of sworn testimony giving insight into the very subjective and political personnel review process at the University of California. Innumerable volumes of confidential documents finally saw the light of day. That litigation has produced the information needed to understand the internal logic of an elitist system; more than providing “information,” those documents expose the institutional politics and culture of the University of California which have for generations systematically excluded minorities, but above all Chicanas. In the hundreds of press conferences and rallies pertaining to the litigation, Acuña and his attorneys have always highlighted the less than 1% Chicana faculty presence within the UC. The Chicana faculty presence on the nine campuses of the University of California is currently at about one-half of one percent. On the Santa Bárbara campus that translates into four Chicanas within a permanent faculty pool of over 700 professors.

The landmark Acuña litigation has furthermore laid bare the blueprint

of how discrimination actually works: it has exposed all the dirty tricks and elegant mechanisms of institutionalized discrimination that affect and exclude Chicanos in general, but Chicanas with even greater force. We already officially knew that discrimination was systemic: an official 1992 University of California study from the Office of the President revealed that women and minority professors get lower pay and fewer promotions, even after controlling for experience, field, credentials and employment status.<sup>2</sup> An official UC newsletter (*UC Focus* 1992) further elaborated on that study, stating, "Data drawn from the study also suggested that white men may have been promoted more readily than women and minorities" and that investigators believe "that similar disparities exist at all UC campuses." Also in that newsletter (now former) Berkeley Chancellor Chang Lin Tien took responsibility—a rare and principled position for an administrator, most of whom will deny that any form of discrimination exists. Then Chancellor Tien indicated: "There is sometimes a subconscious difference in treatment that we've got to overcome" (*UC Focus*). On at least two University of California campuses efforts are underway to diminish that "subconscious difference in treatment" known as the gender pay gap and effected through the personnel review process. (Considerable resistance to such efforts is also present.)

But it took an Acuña case to enable us and the larger California taxpaying public to fully understand the discriminatory dynamics of the academic personnel review process, including all the backchannel communications; the ways a general (political, gender, race) suspicion towards a person under review overrides important factual evidence in the case; the ways most personnel case reviewers do not even read what is in the personnel file; the ways letters from outside peer reviewers of color are distrusted and their credibility dismissed because other people of color are regarded as mere "cronies." This litigation laid bare the discrimination tactics and strategies which have for generations kept Chicana academics on the outside looking in.<sup>3</sup> For every Chicana who gains entry at a so-called research institution like the University of California, hundreds of others have been turned away through the University of California's elaborate so-called "peer review process" which historically often amounts to little more than a disguised good-old-boy filter network. It was the Acuña litigation that allowed me to most tangibly perceive and understand the institutional power structures, practices, and policies which marginalize and exclude Chicanas to a far greater extent than Chicanos. This litigation has disrobed the institution and many of its players; it has unmasked the faces which publicly spew the liberal rhetoric of diversity and secretly ("confidentially") practice discrimination, while they also undermine the autonomy, growth, and self-determination of the Chicano Studies Department—of course with the assistance of some Chicano Studies faculty.

The Acuña lawsuit brought a new knowledge and foundation to my speculations concerning why in 1985 I had become the first woman of any color to ever be tenured at the University of California, Santa Barbara. Why did it take almost into the 21st century for the University of California system to tenure even a sprinkling of Chicanas/Latinas/indigenous women? The documents and proceedings of the litigation and trial also vastly deepened my understanding of why I became the first—and to this day the only Chicana full professor at that institution.<sup>4</sup> The hiring and promotion committees of the institution have historically consisted only of full-professor white-male professors and thus they privilege eurocentric white male centered research; racial “difference” tends to trigger suspicion, and even hostility. Acuña reviewers, for example, referred to Chicano Studies as “an inchoate discipline.”

Let me also elaborate on other valuable lessons learned through my own body. My life in the UCSB Department of Chicano Studies certainly experienced a change after being part of a 1989 NACS panel which exposed the misogyny and gendered hierarchy which dissenting women experience in the Chicano Studies Department at UCSB.<sup>5</sup> Needless to say, my life as a University of California Chicana professor also intensified when I was elected chair by the untenured faculty of the Department of Chicano Studies in 1990—against the palpable opposition of higher ranking male faculty. (Thus I also became the first indigenous woman—to my knowledge—to chair any academic department in the UC system.) In this inversion of power relations I became the first woman chairperson and, like many women who come to occupy positions coveted by males, had to contend with male resentment which remains unabated to this day. As chairperson in 1991 I wrote the departmental letter recommending appointment of Professor Rudy Acuña into the Department of Chicano Studies at UC Santa Barbara. After Acuña was denied appointment by the administration he requested an explanation and—upon being treated rudely by administrators—demanded an apology. Instead of apologizing, the university stonewalled. Acuña’s lawsuit was spearheaded by the Center for Constitutional Rights in Washington, D.C. charging race, political and age discrimination. As the Acuña litigation moved through the courts and as I publicly spoke in support of Acuña I began to experience the full display of adverse retaliatory measures reserved for Chicana women who publicly challenge institutions. Noted journalist Elizabeth Martínez wrote one of the most detailed exposés both of the trial and of the retaliation against me.<sup>6</sup> The actions taken by the University against me have included multiple forms of retaliation; denial of due process; demotion from the departmental chairship; direct and indirect threats by UC attorneys; discriminatory wage and advancement inequities; efforts at preemptive silencing and other forms of backlash against me and the Department of Chicano Studies.

Thanks to those oppressions because they have provided me with an invaluable training and power; I have understood and learned to cultivate the incomparable power that comes from refusing to be silenced about institutionalized gender and race discrimination, for example. The handful of Chicanas who have gained entry as faculty are typically not only subject to unusual scrutiny and suspicion but also expected to become “good citizens”; to internalize the elitist values of the institution, and be silent about our differential treatment and about our excluded sisters—not to mention the 90% of raza<sup>7</sup> who will never set foot at a UC campus.<sup>8</sup> Nonetheless we do have a responsibility to publicly speak out about the exclusion of Chicanas. Our speaking truth to institutional power needs to happen not only in plenaries and in research findings but at press conferences, in schools, labor organizations, and community organizations. But whether we speak out or not, we as Chicanas more easily fall into the persona non grata or salvaje or mujer ingrata category. The fall from grace is as rapid as the institutional grab for a convenient scape-goat or whipping-girl. Perceived outsiders make great scapegoat and Chicanas as a group are the most marginal of academic outsiders.

Many valuable lessons can be learned from the Acuña civil rights lawsuit against the University of California. And as much as I admire what Rudy Acuña has withstood in challenging the University of California, I know his struggle would have been much harder had he been born a woman. It is primarily by virtue of my gendered politics that the UCSB administration so unthinkingly violated my civil rights. Yet I am grateful for the gendered oppression which ultimately motivated me to read the Civil Right Act and to file charges of employment discrimination with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. I urge all Chicanas facing similar circumstances to take these and other steps of self-empowerment.

Keep in mind that challenging the institutionalized structures of oppression will also bring you into collision with other Chicanas and Chicanos who uphold those institutional structures and who are generously rewarded for it. Most university administrations have a management system of reward and punishment by which minorities are divided and conquered. The Good Mexicans who protect the institution and act as its shock absorbers are rewarded while the outspoken Bad Mexicans are punished. At UCSB, for example, the two (remaining) Chicano/a faculty who sided with the administration (behind the back of the Department and its faculty) to stop Acuña's appointment and who then testified in court for the university promptly received directorship posts in the Chicano Studies units. One of them is a Chicana professor who university attorneys publicly thanked (in flyers distributed to all faculty on the campus) for her “devotion to the university” in assisting the attorneys working against Acuña. Before the directorship post, she also magically received a one-

year "management internship" which freed her of any teaching duties. As it were, the internship was awarded in violation of affirmative action policies: there was no call for applicants and no application process. Many women colleagues complained to the administration concerning the flagrant use of favoritism. In court that same Chicana witness could "not remember" if she did or did not receive \$30,000 in research monies from the University of California after Acuña publicly announced his intention to file his lawsuit.

Being a Good Mexican is lucrative and being a Bad Mexican is certainly not glamorous. However, active non-cooperation with oppressive structures has a resonance and power that money cannot buy. I will not detail all civil rights violations I have faced, but I do want to proudly point out that my own non-cooperation with structures of inequality currently involves preparation of a lawsuit against the University of California which prominently cites gender discrimination, but also political discrimination and retaliation. Our major cause of action revolves around the issue of the gender pay gap. My attorneys—the team that defended Acuña—is able to show that my pay as a university full professor falls approximately 40% short of that enjoyed by similarly situated males.<sup>9</sup>

### **NACCS and the Challenge of Multiple Oppressions: a Plan for Public Advocacy**

My purpose in telling you all this is strategic: there is nothing to be gained by Chicanas and Chicanos quietly accepting institutional civil-rights violations. When universities engage in unlawful activity it must be exposed and challenged publicly and with all means at our disposal. NACCS is one of those means at our disposal. Yet NACCS urgently needs to expand its roles as a organization so as to heighten its capability of responding to problems faced by raza scholars and the community at large. NACCS must strengthen its structures of organized political response to the multiple challenges and oppressions we currently face. Terms such as "Mapping Strategies" against oppression must develop from a mere conference theme to a more fully implemented plan for publicly visible advocacy. NACCS has certainly been supportive of a progressive agenda. I am also grateful for the expressions of support for me and also for the Acuña litigation. But that support has to grow teeth. Here are some suggestions for discussion:

1. We must work to augment the power of NACCS resolutions. The current practice of passing resolutions which are then forgotten is in need of attention. Resolutions which address current struggles need to be made public in more aggressive ways. I am suggesting that all resolutions be published and also delivered as press releases at press conferences organized by the NACCS national and regional leadership and membership. For example, one year ago-1995-the Chicana Plenary unanimously passed



a resolution demanding from the University of California and the California Legislature an investigation into the much-publicized sexual assault charges, investigation, and verdict brought against Professor Mario García at Yale.<sup>10</sup> That resolution was also unanimously passed at the NACCS General Business meeting by the entire organization. Publicly visible advocacy for women would mean the release of that resolution at a press conference in front of the UCSB administration building and in Sacramento. What we witnessed was quite the opposite of publicly visible advocacy for women. Even the Chicana Caucus hushed the matter up by reporting in *Noticias de NACCS* about “a resolution about a named faculty member.” We must profess our faith outside the temple.

Other resolutions, such as those in support of Professor Rudy Acuña’s litigation, need to be released through press conferences at relevant sites. These press conferences can be organized by the regional NACCS leadership and general membership. One very positive organizational precedent is the 1995 NACCS filing of an amicus letter against Colorado’s anti-gay rights Amendment 2. NACCS also provided \$1000 to cover filing fees.

2. NACCS should organize investigative teams to look into specific instances of gender/race/sex/class oppressions at universities. Investigative teams can issue reports and findings through, again, a press conference. This would be another means of assuming an advocacy role and bringing political pressure to bear against the multiple oppressions we face.

3. I recommend that NACCS support and tie itself into the new Foundation to be established from the Acuña lawsuit against the UC. The FOR Chicana/o Studies Foundation will provide economic and legal assistance for Chicana and Chicano faculty who face employment discrimination. Historically, we have been unable to reclaim our civil rights through lawsuits because of the enormous expense and expertise involved in legally challenging these mega-institutions. Our people have historically been filtered out not only in tenure decisions but through the hiring process itself. Rudy Acuña could file and win his lawsuit because a team of lawyer-like attorneys Moisés Vázquez (the lead attorney), Robert Racine, Millie Escobedo, Elliot Grossman or Pat Fukushima—was gradually constituted and developed insight into the UC, because they worked for free, and because community and student organizations across the Southwest held fund-raisers to pay court costs. We should not have to rely on such superhuman efforts. The new Foundation will make the litigation process easier.

I have proposed that as many of us as can afford it contribute \$10 per month into the Foundation. We must each subscribe to justice, through activism and economically. I also propose that the Foundation make discrimination lawsuits by women of color its highest priority.

4. I propose that NACCS establish a structure for monitoring and

advocating for the institutionalization of the Chicano Studies discipline; and that it intervene whenever the autonomy of Chicana/o Studies programs are threatened. The NACCS organizational presence must be felt, for example, whenever there is a student hunger strike for Chicana/o Studies; or whenever a Chicano Studies Department is threatened with dismantlement. The UCSB administration's backlash against the Chicano Studies Department after the 1994 UCSB Chicano/Latina Student Hunger Strike paralyzed the Department for two years. The administration took the department into "receivership" status, against the vote of three fourths of the faculty. Thereafter, the administration further violated departmental autonomy by unilaterally appointing as chairperson a professor who testified against Acuña. (We call this the "Witness Protection Program".) That new chairperson quickly "rescinded" the national chair search promised by the administration to the hunger strikers.<sup>11</sup> (In essence he "traded" it for an assistant professor search.) Although a majority of faculty protested both his permanent appointment as chair and his exchange of a full professor chairship search for an assistant professor search, the UCSB administration was quite pleased with the arrangement. These stories illustrate the need for NACCS focus to monitor and intervene within institutional politics which undermine the Chicana/o Studies discipline and its progressive institutionalization. With regard to the Chicana/o Studies Ph.D. degree proposal (about which I constantly receive inquiries), I want to point out that in 1994 the administration promised the UCSB Hunger Strikers to "fast-track" the Ph.D. degree program which the Department put forward during my tenure as chair. The current Department leadership has, however, not taken any steps to act on that pledge to the Hunger Strikers.

Needless to say, increased vigilance and advocacy require a renewed and strengthened activist commitment to NACCS by its membership and leadership. Given the current national state of siege faced by children and youth in particular; by working Chicanas; and by undocumented workers, we cannot afford passivity. The wave of anti-immigrant legislation and propositions coming from California and the nation's capital mark a new wave of oppression for raza and many immigrant peoples. We must make far greater use of existing organizational structures and of our privileged positions to advocate for a progressive agenda, both for the Chicana/o Studies discipline at universities and for raza outside the universities.

### **Reflections on Power and Crossing the Fear Threshold: Coming into Powers**

We all know it is not a pleasant experience to face off with oppressive administrations or departmental colleagues. In fact, as a beginning

assistant professor I never imagined that I would. For a number of years I idealized higher education and universities simply because I grew up in a working-class family aspiring to higher education and I did not know these institutions the way I know them today. Fear of reprisal was certainly also a factor that kept me silent once I started to understand the unequal treatment of raza professors within the system. Fear is a powerful emotion and cannot be simply dismissed. I remember how César Chávez talked about that fear when he taught a Chicano Studies course at UCSB in 1993, the year before he died: the fear of facing up to los patrones; the fear of publicly demanding social changes. We must all learn to overcome that fear; sometimes the struggle we face is with our own spirit first and only then can we challenge oppressive institutions. An internal struggle is necessary in order for us to give up a narrowly defined material self-interest; it is a struggle to take a position against your own fears and live by it. The first victory must be over yourself. Once that is accomplished the external struggle becomes the victory. Learning to survive and even flourish in the course of difficult struggle is a necessary lesson of self-empowerment. Indeed, one can and must learn to struggle in joyous ways which fully preserve and augment our human qualities, i.e. we must struggle out of a sense of love and not out of any anger or bitterness. I could not undertake a lawsuit against the University of California other than as an affirmative act, as an act of love, and as a step toward healing the planet. Our token presence at universities and its crippling effect upon the seven generations must be challenged with our bodies and spirits firmly planted in the power of the four directions. That is the meaning of walking in beauty. I speak here from a deep indigenous conviction that what we do outwardly as human political actors will only be as good or as bad as the spiritual motor driving the politics. My own Native American ancestry (and modern physics) teaches me that the world is a unified field and that we must always be (and act) deeply conscious of the interconnectedness and intrinsic equality of all persons and life forms, of everything. Thus we cannot be satisfied with our own privileged being while inequality, devaluation, and environmental degradation continue to exist.

In our struggles for Chicana individual and collective empowerment we must invoke and summon alternative powers. I am pleased to say that the University's retaliatory actions against me generated an alternative power dynamic and also galvanized for me new coalitions which we will need for the 21st century. The strong support I have received from politicians, from colleagues, from student organizations, from regional and national community-based organizations, professional organizations and civic groups revealed to me the multiple powers that can be brought to bear upon the institution's oppressive and exclusive power machine. There are marvelous ways to turn adversity into strength. Yet the greatest power

must come from our own individual centering and rootedness; from the positive power of service to others and love for others.

At this point I enjoy far more power than I ever did before. Yet it is not the power of holding an administrative post at the university. There are other greater powers from a different source or sources. I am talking about spiritual power which is really inseparable from our political vision. To speak with Gandhi: "I do not believe that the spiritual law works on a field of its own. On the contrary, it expresses itself only through the ordinary activities of life. It thus affects the economic, the social and the political fields."<sup>12</sup> The quality of our political struggles is ultimately in close relationship to the quality of the connection we have to our source, to the powers that animate the universe and manifest themselves in us as amor propio, respeto, and proactive love for the seven generations to come. This is to underscore the very positive, sometimes lonely, yet always self-empowering and affirmative, even mystical, nature of struggle and of fighting the good fight. In the struggle for justice, even if you lose you win, because nothing can be more important than to stand up for human dignity and life in all its forms. Además, por esas luchas llega una a ser quién es. To accept injustice without naming it and opposing it is to negate our human dignity, the struggles of those who went before us, and our birth and life right as women. Our collective survival and that of our children is at stake.

Muchas gracias. All my relations!

### **A Postscript on the Eve of the New Millennium: 1999**

Much has come to pass since I delivered the NACCS Chicana Plenary in 1996. Since that Plenary address the need for Chicana/o advocacy and for crossing the fear threshold vis-à-vis elitist institutions has only grown. Numerous events have very negatively impacted the social climate in California and the nation. Indeed California has been the leader in the backlash against immigrants, women, and peoples of color. White supremacist ideologies have carried the day in the elimination of bilingual education in this state (effective in fall 1998) through Proposition 227.<sup>13</sup> Before that, Proposition 209 ended affirmative action; yet the UC Regents were one step ahead of California and voted to end affirmative action even before the state did. Proposition 187 banned undocumented children from school attendance and undocumented mothers from neo-natal care. That proposition is still tied up in litigation and will probably be decided in the United States Supreme Court. All of these measures (including so called Welfare Reform and the Hopwood decision in Texas) have come as a major attack upon women and peoples of color, opening the flood-gates of formerly

repressed or disguised racist, sexist, homophobic sentiments and actions. Needless to say, all of these trends impact severely upon access to education among broad sectors of women and raza peoples in general. At the University of California raza enrollments have generally declined. In this social climate there are also increased adverse effects upon the hiring and retention of faculty of color.

Almost in tandem with these attacks we witness the denial of tenure for many raza assistant professors. Rather than name the dozen or so that come to mind I want to return to my earlier discussion concerning the need for advocacy and provide an update on some of the gains made through the FOR<sup>14</sup> Chicana/o Studies Foundation established from the damages which the University of California paid Professor Rudy Acuña. As I write, the Foundation has launched the employment discrimination lawsuit for Professor Juana Mora against the California State University system. She was denied even an interview for a deanship post at California State University at Northridge although her qualifications matched and even exceeded those of the finalists selected. After several months of litigation the university extravagantly hired an outside law firm to help them; recently, however, both parties entered into settlement negotiations whose outcome we await. Win or lose, Professor Juana Mora has already won a major victory simply by filing the lawsuit. It is my opinion that these lawsuits shake up institutions; they expose long-standing discriminatory policies and practices; they motivate change. Also important: they send ripples of hope to those experiencing similar injustices.

Another recent victory obtained through the FOR Chicana/o Studies Foundation was the tenure decision reversal of Professor Alfred Arteaga at UC Berkeley. He was denied tenure in the English Department in spite of his strong publication record. After the Foundation spearheaded a lawsuit the UC Berkeley administration reversed the unfavorable tenure decision and offered Professor Arteaga a tenured position in Ethnic Studies.

Finally, I want to report on the very positive outcomes of my own lawsuit which we filed in 1996. Yolanda Broyles-González vs. The Regents of the University of California received national press attention because it was the historical first gender pay gap lawsuit against the University of California. We filed the lawsuit in both federal and state court, focusing much of our attention on the historical pay gap disparities which disproportionately impact women and people of color. The facts were very much in our favor, but in addition to the factual evidence being strong, I benefited enormously from the legal expertise, dedication, and legal genius of attorney Moisés Vázquez who with a team of other attorneys have established themselves as experts in litigation against the University of California. Also working in our favor was a national study on the gender pay gap conducted by The Monthly Forum on Women in Higher Education

(12/95). That study ranked the University of California at Santa Bárbara as the ninth worst offender nationally with regard to gender inequality of professor salaries. The data, gathered by the American Association of University Professors, found a \$12,000 yearly salary margin of difference between male and female professors. Similarly, the March/April 1994 issue of the journal *Academe* reported that men professors earn more than women in 1993-94 at all nine UC campuses. The reported male-female margin of salary difference reported is \$8000 among professors.

Although my lawsuit was settled within one year, the publicity it brought to the issue of unequal pay for women was considerable.<sup>15</sup> Thanks to a strong national support committee, I began to receive many invitations to speak on this issue at university campuses as well as before women's and civic groups coast to coast. To this day I continue to lecture on the gender pay gap and actually receive far more invitations than I can fit in my work calendar. I was also asked to speak on the issue on my own campus which has only reluctantly begun to slowly move on this issue in 1998. More could have been accomplished by now if the "Pay Equity Committee" established in 1996 and chaired by the Vice Chancellor for Academic Personnel had in fact met in the two years it "existed." That committee came under attack because many women faculty felt that it was unwise for the fox (the personnel director) to pretend to guard the chickens (women faculty unhappy with the personnel review system).

My lawsuit was settled out of court with terms we consider very favorable. During the settlement I refused to accept a "gag order" which would bar me from speaking about the terms of the agreement. Such gag orders are typically used to suppress bad publicity for the university. The extent of gender discrimination lawsuits at the UC (usually fought at the assistant professor level) was, however, uncovered by a journalist who broke the gag orders of many years under the Freedom of Information Act. He published his investigation entitled "University of California Spends Millions of Tax Dollars on Sex-Bias Cases" in the *San Jose Mercury News* (7/7/96). The most dramatic term of my lawsuit settlement is the permanent court injunction (a court judgment against the University of California and all its agents) to which the university submitted. The injunction mandates that the University cease its gender and race discrimination as well as retaliation. As such the permanent injunction creates a protective space for me against gender, race, and political discrimination. The injunction places UC discriminatory actions within permanent court scrutiny and custody, as well as providing me with instant remedy before the court if that protective order is violated. The permanent injunction is an important and enduring marker in the struggle for women's rights.

Beyond the injunction the university agreed to pay damages, costs, and all my attorneys' fees, a sum which exceeded \$100,000. Yet my lawsuit

was never about money. (I am blessed with more than enough money.) My lawsuit was about the dream of equality and freedom. I filed the lawsuit not as an act of anger or revenge, but as an act in harmony with principles of justice, dignity, and respect. I value the dream of equality far more than I value any institutional rewards accorded to those who are silent and/or condone the institutional status quo. That status quo has historically kept the number of Chicana/native women professors within the UC at less than half of 1%. Our recent entry into the University of California as a result of affirmative action has not altered our token status, and the institutional practices and structures of exclusion continue to disproportionately impact women and faculty of color who openly speak out against unfair labor practices and discrimination.

Interest in the issue of the gender pay gap has skyrocketed in the last two years because the Clinton administration has also made this issue a national priority. In the interests of bringing much needed publicity to this issue the White House last summer (1998) held a celebration of the 35th anniversary of the Equal Pay Act. President Bill Clinton and First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton not only invited me to that ceremony but the White House also featured my lawsuit as the contemporary example of the on-going struggle for women's pay equity. (We had sued the University of California under the Equal Pay Act.) In addition to receiving the congratulations of the President I was honored by Vice-President Gore for "struggling for full economic equality for women in the U.S.A." Senator Barbara Boxer indicated before the many members of Congress in attendance: "Professor Broyles-González's 1996 lawsuit against the University of California exposed the fact of unequal payment of women. Her case served as a wake-up call to all women, including those in academia, to fight to receive the pay they are entitled to." The fact of receiving national kudos for challenging "los patrones" is particularly ironic, yet showcasing my lawsuit no doubt also provides encouragement to the millions of women who statistically earn 74 cents for every dollar earned by a man at exactly the same job. In the national arena, the Democratic leadership of the Congress this year introduced new legislation named the Paycheck Fairness Act which (if passed) would provide stronger enforcement to the Equal Pay Act-including sanctions against employers. That bill has been endorsed by the Clinton administration, yet it still faces considerable opposition. Yet I am very pleased to see that Al Gore has put the issue of equal pay for women at the top of his platform in his bid for the presidential nomination.

In closing I want to say that I never imagined I was underpaid until I began to pay close attention and compare my pay—after 15 years in academia—to similarly situated and similarly experienced colleagues. In 1993 I wrote a letter to the UCSB administration documenting how the male Chicano Studies professors had been hired with "off-scale" (augmented

salaries), while all female Chicano Studies Professors had been hired with “on-scale” salaries; we successfully challenged that pattern. Sometimes we simply do not expect inequality. Other times inequality has become so naturalized and internalized that we do not see it when it is in plain view. Similarly, we as academics sometimes keep ourselves at arm’s length from the devastating inequality faced by the 35 million people below the official poverty line (currently \$16,400 for a family of four) or the 40% of raza children who are nutritionally at risk. Most academics do not visit the schools, the rescue missions, the homeless shelters, the sweat shops. Yet we cannot afford to stay away. So again I affirm that within the NACCS organizational structure we can and must develop stronger forms of advocacy which bridge our professional lives as academics with the reality of all our relations.

\* Professor Yolanda Broyles-González received the NACCS Distinguished Scholar Award in 1996 at the XXIII NACCS Annual Conference in Chicago. She also delivered a Chicana Plenary Address entitled “Engendering Strategies: NACCS and the Challenge of Multiple Oppressions.” That 1996 Chicana Plenary address is reproduced here, yet augmented with footnotes and a 1999 update.

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## Notes

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1. Note that prior to 1996 the NACCS organization was known as NACS, or the National Association for Chicano Studies.
2. A 1992 University of California study conducted through the Office of the President revealed that women and minorities are paid less and promoted less easily than similarly situated white male professors.
3. A full treatment of those discriminatory dynamics and of the ideological structures which produce discriminatory outcomes is examined in great depth in Rodolfo Acuña’s most recent book *Sometimes There Is no Other Side. Chicanos and the Myth of Equality*, Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1998.
4. As of 1997 there are two Chicana full professors; however, two other UCSB Chicana faculty have now resigned and gone elsewhere.
5. That panel was entitled: “Whose Side Are You on Anyway? Intra-ethnic Gender Relations in Chicano Studies” and created much controversy.
6. See her article: “Brown David vs. White Goliath” in *Z Magazine*, January 1996, reprinted in her recently published book, *De Colores Means All of Us: Latina Views for a Multi-Colored Century*, Cambridge: South End Press, 1998.
7. The term *raza* means “the people” and is used by indigenous peoples (in many different languages) to self-designate. I use it interchangeably with Mexican American/Native American/native/indigenous/mexicana/mexicano.
8. Upon resigning from the UCSB English Department (to join the faculty at Brown University), Professor Josefina Saldaña spoke publicly (in the *Santa Barbara News Press*) concerning institutionalized racism and sexism at UCSB.
9. I want to direct your attention to the advocacy organization WAGE (“We Advocate Gender Equity”) established by University of California women “to end gender bias and achieve gender equity in the hiring, retention, promotion and compensation of academic women within the University of California system.” I currently serve on its governing board.



- The organization provides an important network of support and information for women. For membership information write to: P.O. Box 8244, Berkeley, CA 94707.
10. This was reported in the *Chronicle for Higher Education* on Dec. 9, 1992, vol. XXXIX, number 16 ("Chicano-studies scholar left Yale amid Harassment Charges") but first appeared in the *Yale Daily News* in the headline story "University Investigated Professor for Assault" (11/19/92), as well as in the *Yale Daily News* of 12/4/92, 1/14/93, 1/23/93, and as an editorial ("Shameful Quiet. UCSB Needs to Know of Findings") on 12/9/92. The *Santa Barbara News Press* also reported "UCSB Historian Confirms Yale Sex Charge on 1/20/93, and the UCSB Daily Nexus on 2/10/94 and 12/3/92. At UCSB, Associate Vice-Chancellor Julius Zelmanowitz instructed concerned women faculty to not speak about the matter, while also indicating that UCSB has "contacted Yale about the matter." In a press statement Yale University denied any such communication from UCSB.
  11. This "arrangement" was worked out between that faculty member and the administration without any consultation with faculty. The letter written by the new Chicano Studies chair (to the administration) urging the trade-off of a full professor search for an assistant professor search was discovered by the other faculty in the xerox machine. So much for democratic governance!
  12. Cit. in Richard Attenborough, *Mahatma Gandhi: The Words of Gandhi* (New York: Newmarket Press, 1992): 75.
  13. I do not wish to imply that all those who support the elimination of bilingual education are white supremacists. However, most of the public rhetoric and campaign funding against bilingual education came from that white supremacist camp and ideology.
  14. The abbreviation FOR stands for "Friends of Rudy" and honors all those who contributed to his defense fund during the litigation against the UC system.
  15. Some of the media coverage for my lawsuit includes: Roberto Rodríguez, "UC Professor Wins Gender Discrimination Lawsuit," *Black Issues in Higher Education*, 12 June 1997, p. 7; Frances Lee, "Professor Wins Struggle for Gender Pay Equality," headline article for *UCLA Daily Bruin*, May 14, 1997; Lilian de la Torre-Jiménez, "Demanda por Discriminación de una Catedrática Termina Fuera del Tribunal," *La Opinión*, Los Angeles, May 15, 1997; "NACCS Scholar Honored at the White House. Dr. Yolanda Broyles-González Wins Struggle for Equal Pay," *Noticias de NACCS*, vol. 25, num. 5, Dec. 1998; "UCSB Faculty Member Honored at White House for Her Work on Equal Pay," *UC-AFT Perspective*, v. 11, num. 1, Fall 1998; "University of California Yaqui-Chicana Professor Honored at the White House," *La Voz de Esperanza*, Newsletter of the Esperanza Peace and Justice Center, July/August 1998, p. 20.